The Effigies of John Flavell

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THE WHOLE

WORKS

Of the Reverend Flavell

Mr. JOHN FLAVEL,

Late Minister at *DARTMOUTH* in *DEVON*.

In Two VOLUMES.

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CONTAINING,

The Life of Mr. *Flavel*.
The Fountain of Life opened; or, A Display of Christ in his Essential and Mediatorial Glory.
The Method of Grace in bringing home the Eternal Redemption.
A Treatise of the Soul of Man.
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THE LIFE OF Mr. JOHN FLAVEL, Minister of DARTMOUTH.

THose of the Name of *Flavel*, derive their Pedigree from one who was the Third Great Officer that came over with *William the Conqueror*; but this Worthy Divine was far from that Weakness and Vanity to boast of any thing of that Nature, being of the Poet's Mind, who said,

Et genus, & proavos, & quæ non fecimus ipsi,
Vix ea nostra Voco ———

His Father was Mr. *Richard Flavel*, a Painful and Eminent Minister: He was first Minister at *Bromsgrove* in *Worcestershire*, then at *Hasler*, and removed from thence to *Willersey* in *Glouscestershire*, where he continued till 1660, that he was Outed upon the Restoration of King *Charles* II. because it was a Sequestred Living, and the Incumbent then alive: This did not so much affect Mr. *Flavel*, as that he wanted a fixed Place for the Exercise of his Pastoral Function. He was a Person of such Extraordinary Piety, that those who convers'd with him, said, they never heard one Vain Word drop from his Mouth. A little before the Turning out of the Nonconformist Ministers, being near *Totness* in *Devon*, He preach'd from *Hosea* 7. 9. *The Days of Visitation are come, the Days of Recompence are come*, Israel *shall know it*. His Application was so close that it offended some People, and occasioned his being carried before some Justices of the Peace, but they could not reach him, so that he was Discharged. He afterwards quitted that Country, and his Son's House, which was his Retiring-Place, and came to *London*, where he continued in a Faithful and Acceptable Discharge of his Office, till the time of the dreadful Plague in 1665. that he was Taken and Imprisoned in the manner following. He was at Mr. *Blake*'s House in *Covent-Garden*, where some People had met privately for Worship: Whilst he was at Prayer, a Party of Soldiers brake in upon them with their Swords drawn, and demanded their Preacher, threatning some, and flattering others to discover him, but in Vain. Some of the Company threw a Coloured Cloak over him, and in this disguise he was, together with his Hearers, carried to *Whitehall*; the Women were dismissed, but the Men detain'd, and forc'd to lie all that Night upon the bare Floor; and because they would not pay Five Pound each, were sent to *Newgate*, where the Pestilence raged most Violently, as in other places of the City. Here Mr. *Flavel* and his Wife were shut up, and seized with the Sickness; they were Bailed out, but Died of the Contagion; of which their Son *John* had a Divine Monition given him by a Dream, as we shall observe in its proper place. Mr. *Richard Flavel* left two Sons behind him, both Ministers of the Gospel, *viz. John* and *Phineas*.

John the Eldest was Born in *Worcestershire*. It was observable, that whilst his Mother Lay-in with him, a Nightingale made her Nest in the outside of the Chamber-Window, where she us'd to sing most sweetly. He was Religiously Educated by his Father, and having profited well at the Grammar-Schools, was sent early to *Oxford*, and settled a Commoner in *University-College*. He plied his Studies hard, and exceeded many of his Contemporaries in University-Learning.

Soon after his Commencing Batchelor of Arts, Mr. *Walplate*, the Minister of *Diptford*, in the County of *Devon*, was rendred uncapable of performing his Office by reason of his Age and Infirmity, and sent to *Oxford* for an Assistant; Mr. *Flavel*, tho' but young, was recommended to him as a Person duly qualified, and was accordingly settled there by the Standing Committee of *Devon*, *April* 27. 1650. to Preach as a Probationer and Assistant to Mr. *Walplate*.

Mr. *Flavel* considering the Weight of his Charge, applied himself to the Work of his Calling with great Diligence; and being assiduous in Reading, Meditation and Prayer, he increas'd in Ministerial Knowledge daily, (for he found himself that he came raw enough in that respect from the University) so that he attain'd to an high Degree of Eminency and Reputation for his useful Labours in the Church.

About Six Months after his settling at *Diptford*, he heard of an Ordination to be at *Salisbury*, and therefore went thither with his Testimonials, and offer'd himself to be Examin'd and Ordain'd by the Presbytery there: They appointed him a Text, upon which he Preach'd to their General Satisfaction; and having afterwards examin'd him as to his Learning, *&c.* they set him apart to the Work of the Ministry with Prayer and Imposition of Hands, on the 17th day of *October*, 1650.

Mr. *Flavel* being thus Ordain'd, return'd to *Diptford*, and after Mr. *Walplate*'s Death succeeded in the Rectory. To avoid all Incumbrances from the World, and Avocations from his Studies and Ministerial Work, he chose a Person of Worth and Reputation in the Parish (of whom he had a good Assurance that he would be Faithful to himself and Kind to his Parishioners) and Let him the whole Tythes much below the Real Value, which was very well pleasing to his People. By this Means he was the better able to deal with them in private, since the Hire of his Labours was no way a hindrance to the success of them.

Whilſt he was at *Diptford* he Married one Mrs. *Joan Randall*, a pious Gentlewoman, of a Good Family, who died in Travail of her firſt Child without being Deliver'd. His Year of Mourning being expired, his Acquaintance and Intimate Friends advis'd him to Marry a ſecond time, wherein he was again very happy. Some time after this ſecond Marriage, the People of *Dartmouth* (a Great and Noted Sea-port in the County of *Devon*, formerly under the Charge of the Reverend Mr. *Anthony Hartford* deceas'd,) unanimouſly choſe Mr. *Flavel* to ſucceed him. They urg'd him to accept their Call, (1.) Becauſe there were Exceptions made againſt all the other Candidates, but none againſt him. (2.) Becauſe being acceptable to the whole Town, he was the more like to be an Inſtrument of healing the Breaches amongſt the good People there. (3.) Becauſe *Dartmouth* being a Conſiderable and Populous Town, requir'd an Able and Eminent Miniſter, which was not ſo neceſſary for a Country Pariſh, that might beſides be more eaſily ſupplied with another Paſtor than *Dartmouth*.

Elizabeth Morrice.

That which made them more Preſſing and Earneſt with Mr. *Flavel*, was this; at a Provincial Synod in that County, Mr. *Flavel*, tho' but a young Man, was Voted into the Chair as Moderator, where he opened the Aſſembly with a moſt Devout and Pertinent Prayer; he examin'd the Candidates who offered themſelves to their Trials for the Miniſtry with great Learning, ſtated the Caſes and Queſtions propos'd to them with much Acuteneſs and Judgment, and in the whole, demean'd himſelf with that Gravity, Piety, and Serioufneſs, during his Preſidency, that all the Miniſters of the Aſſembly Admir'd and Lov'd him. The Reverend Mr. *Hartford*, his Predeceſſor at *Dartmouth*, took particular Notice of him, from that time forward Contracted a ſtrict Friendſhip with him, and ſpoke of him among the Magiſtrates and People of *Dartmouth*, as an Extraordinary Perſon, who was like to be a great Light in the Church: This, with their having ſeveral times heard him Preach, occaſioned their Importunity with Mr. *Flavel* to come and be their Miniſter; upon which having ſpread his Caſe before the Lord, and ſubmitted to the Deciſion of his Neighbouring Miniſters, he was prevail'd upon to remove to *Dartmouth*, to his Great Loſs in Temporals, the Rectory of *Diptford* being a much greater Benefice.

Mr. *Flavel* being ſettled at *Dartmouth* by the Election of the People, and an Order from *Whitehall* by the Commiſſioners for Approbation of Publick Preachers of the 19th of *December*, 1656. he was aſſociated with Mr. *Allein Geere*, a very Worthy, but Sickly, Man. The Miniſterial Work was thus divided betwixt them, Mr. *Flavel* was to preach on the Lord's Day at *Townſtall*, the Mother-Church, ſtanding upon a Hill without the Town; and every Fortnight in his Turn at the *Wedneſday's* Lecture in *Dartmouth*. Here God Crowned his Labours with many Converſions. One of his Judicious Hearers expreſs'd himſelf thus concerning him: "I could "ſay much, tho' not enough, of the Excellency of "his Preaching, of his Seaſonable, Suitable and "Spiritual Matter, of his Plain Expoſitions of Scri-"pture, his Taking Method, his Genuine and Na-"tural Deductions, his Convincing Arguments, his "Clear and Powerful Demonſtrations, his Heart-"ſearching Applications, and his Comfortable "Supports to thoſe that were Afflicted in Conſci-"ence. In ſhort, that Perſon muſt have a very "ſoft Head, or a very hard Heart, or both, that "could ſit under his Miniſtry unaffected.

By his unwearied Application to Study, he had acquir'd a great Stock both of Divine and Human Learning. He was Maſter of the Controverſies betwixt the *Jews* and *Chriſtians*, *Papiſts* and *Proteſtants*, *Lutherans* and *Calviniſts*, and betwixt the *Orthodox*, and the *Arminians*, and *Socinians*. He was likewiſe well read in the Controverſies about *Church-Diſcipline*, *Infant-Baptiſm*, and *Antinomianiſm*. He was well acquainted with the *School-Divinity*, and drew up a Judicious and Ingenious Scheme of the whole Body of that Theology in good *Latin*, which he preſented to a Perſon of Quality, but 'twas never printed. He was ſingularly well Vers'd and Exact in the Oriental Languages. He had one way of improving his Knowledge, which is very proper for Young Divines; Whatever remarkable Paſſage he heard in private Conference, if he was familiar with the Relator, he would deſire him to repeat it again, and inſert it into his *Adverſaria*: By theſe Methods he acquir'd a Vaſt Stock of proper Materials for his popular Sermons in the Pulpit, and his more elaborate Works for the Preſs.

He had an Excellent Gift of Prayer, and was never at a Loſs in all his Various Occaſions for ſuitable Matter and Words; and which was the moſt remarkable of all, he always brought with him a Broken Heart and Moving Affections; His Tongue and Spirit were touch'd with a Live Coal from the Altar, and he was evidently aſſiſted by the Holy Spirit of Grace and Supplication in that Divine Ordinance. Thoſe who Liv'd in his Family ſay, That he was always full and copious in Prayer, ſeem'd conſtantly to exceed himſelf, and rarely made uſe twice of the ſame Expreſſions.

When the Act of Uniformity turn'd him out with the Reſt of his Nonconforming Brethren, he did not thereupon quit his Relation to his Church, he thought the Souls of his Flock to be more precious than to be ſo tamely neglected: He took all Opportunities of miniſtring the Word and Sacraments to them in private Meetings, and join'd with other Miniſters in Solemn Days of Faſting and Humiliation, to Pray that God would once more reſtore the Ark of his Covenant unto his Afflicted *Iſrael*. About four Months after that fatal *Bartholomew-day*, his Reverend Collegue, Mr. *Allein Geere*, died, ſo that the whole Care of the Flock devolv'd upon Mr. *Flavel*; which tho' a heavy and preſſing Burden, he undertook very cheerfully.

Upon the Execution of the *Oxford*-Act, which Baniſh'd all Nonconformiſt Miniſters Five Miles from any Towns which ſent Members to Parliament; he was forced to leave *Dartmouth*, to the great Sorrow of his People, who followed him out of Town, and at *Townſtall* Church-yard they took ſuch a Mournful Farewel of one another, as the Place might very well have been call'd *Bochim*. He remov'd to *Slapton*, a Pariſh Five Miles from *Dartmouth*, or any other Corporation, which put him out of the Legal Reach of his Adverſaries. Here he met with Signal Inſtances of God's Fatherly Care and Protection, and Preach'd twice every Lord's Day to ſuch as durſt adventure to hear him, which many of his own People and others did, notwithſtanding the Rigor and Severity of the Act againſt Conventicles. He many times Slipp'd privately into *Dartmouth*, where by Preaching and Converſation he edified his Flock to the great Refreſhment of his own

own Soul and theirs, tho' with very much Danger, becauſe of his Watchful Adverſaries, who conſtantly laid Wait for him, ſo that he could not make any long ſtay in the Town.

In thoſe Times, Mr. *Flavel* being at *Exeter*, was invited to Preach by many good People of that City, who for Safety choſe a Wood about Three Miles from the City, to be the Place of their Aſſembly; where they were broke up by their Enemies, by that Time the Sermon was well begun. Mr. *Flavel*, by the Care of the People, made his Eſcape thro' the middle of his enraged Enemies; and tho' many of his Hearers were taken, carried before Juſtice *Tuckfield*, and Fined; yet the reſt being nothing diſcourag'd, reaſſembled, and carrying Mr. *Flavel* to another Wood, he Preach'd to them without any Diſturbance; and after he had concluded, rode to a Gentleman's Houſe near the Wood, who, tho' an abſolute Stranger to Mr. *Flavel*, entertain'd him with great Civility that Night, and next Day he returned to *Exeter* in Safety. Amongſt thoſe taken at this Time, there was a Tanner who had a numerous Family, and but a ſmall Stock: He was Fined notwithſtanding Forty Pounds; at which he was nothing diſcourag'd, but told a Friend who ask'd him how he bore up under his Loſs, *That he took the Spoiling of his Goods joyfully for the Sake of his Lord Jeſus, for whom his Life, and all that he had, was too little.*

As ſoon as the Nonconformiſts had any Reſpite from their Trouble, Mr. *Flavel* laid hold on the Opportunity, and return'd to *Dartmouth*; where, during the firſt Indulgence granted by King *Charles* II. he kept open Doors, and Preach'd freely to all that would come and hear him: And when that Liberty was revok'd, he made it his Buſineſs notwithſtanding to Preach in Seaſon and out of Seaſon, and ſeldom miſs'd of an Opportunity of Preaching on the Lord's Day. During this Time, God was pleas'd to deprive him of his Second Wife, which was a great Affliction, ſhe having been a Help meet for him; and ſuch an one he ſtood much in need of, as being a Man of an Infirm and Weak Conſtitution, who labour'd under many Infirmities. In convenient Time he married a Third Wife, Mrs. *Anne Downe*, Daughter of Mr. *Thomas Downe*, Miniſter of *Exeter*, who lived very happily with him Eleven Years, and left him Two Sons, who are Youths of great Hopes.

The Perſecution againſt the Nonconformiſts being renew'd, Mr. *Flavel* found it unſafe to ſtay at *Dartmouth*, and therefore reſolv'd to go to *London*, where he hop'd to be in leſs Danger, and to have more Liberty to exerciſe his Function. The Night before he embark'd for that end, he had the following Premonition by a Dream: He thought he was on Board the Ship, and that a Storm aroſe, which exceedingly terrified the Paſſengers; during their Conſternation, there ſat writing at the Table a Perſon of Admirable Sagacity and Gravity, who had a Child in a Cradle by him that was very froward; he thought he ſaw the Father take up a little Whip, and give the Child a Laſh, ſaying, *Child, be quiet; I will diſcipline, but not hurt thee.* Upon this Mr. *Flavel* awak'd, and muſing on his Dream, he concluded that he ſhould meet with ſome Trouble in his Paſſage: His Friends being at Dinner with him, aſſur'd him of a pleaſant Paſſage, becauſe the Wind and Weather were very fair; Mr. *Flavel* replied, *That he was not of their Mind, but expected much Trouble becauſe of his Dream*; adding, *That when he had ſuch Repreſentations made to him in his Sleep, they ſeldom or never fail'd.*

Accordingly, when they were advanc'd within Five Leagues of *Portland* in their Voyage, they were overtaken by a dreadful Tempeſt, inſomuch that betwixt One and Two in the Morning the Maſter and Seamen concluded, That unleſs God chang'd the Wind, there was no Hope of Life; it was impoſſible for 'em to Weather *Portland*, ſo that they muſt of Neceſſity be Wrack'd on the Rocks or on the Shoar. Upon this Mr. *Flavel* call'd all the Hands that could be ſpared into the Cabbin to Prayer; but the Violence of the Tempeſt was ſuch, that they could not prevent themſelves from being thrown from the one Side, unto the other, as the Ship was toſs'd; and not only ſo, but mighty Seas broke in upon them, as if they would have drown'd them in the very Cabbin. Mr. *Flavel* in this Danger took hold of the Two Pillars of the Cabbin-Bed, and calling upon God, begg'd Mercy for himſelf and the reſt in the Ship. Amongſt other Arguments in Prayer, he made uſe of this, *That if he and his Company periſh'd in that Storm, the Name of God would be blaſphem'd, the Enemies of Religion would ſay, That tho' he eſcaped their Hands on Shoar, yet Divine Vengeance had overtaken him at Sea.* In the midſt of Prayer, his Faith and Hope were rais'd, inſomuch that he expected a gracious Anſwer; ſo that committing himſelf and his Company to the Mercy of God, he concluded the Duty. No ſooner was Prayer ended, but one came down from the Deck, crying, *Deliverance! Deliverance! God is a God hearing Prayer! In a moment the Wind is come fair* Weſt! And ſo Sailing before it, they were brought ſafely to *London*. Mr. *Flavel* found many of his Old Friends there; and God rais'd him New ones, with abundance of Work, and extraordinary Encouragement in it. During his Stay in *London*, he married his Fourth Wife, a Widow Gentlewoman (Daughter to Mr. *George Jefferies*, formerly Miniſter of *King's-Bridge*) but now his ſorrowful Relict.

Mr. *Flavel*, while he was in *London*, narrowly eſcaped being taken with the Reverend Mr. *Jenkins*, at Mr. *Foxe's* in *Moorfields*, where they were keeping a Day of Faſting and Prayer. He was ſo near, that he heard the Inſolence of the Officers and Soldiers to Mr. *Jenkins*, when they had taken him; and obſerv'd it in his Diary, that Mr. *Jenkins* might have eſcap'd as well as himſelf, had it not been for a Piece of Vanity in a Lady, whoſe long Train hinder'd his going down Stairs, Mr. *Jenkins* out of his too great Civility having let her paſs before him.

Mr. *Flavel* after this return'd to *Dartmouth*, where with his Family and dear People, he bleſs'd God for his Mercies towards him. He was a little time after confin'd cloſe Priſoner to his Houſe, where many of his dear Flock ſtole in over Night, or betimes on the Lord's Day in the Morning, to enjoy the Benefits of his Labours, and ſpend the Sabbath in Hearing, Praying, Singing of *Pſalms*, and Holy Diſcourſes.

Mr. *Jenkins* above-mentioned dying in Priſon, his People gave Mr. *Flavel* a Call to the Paſtoral Office among them, and Mr. *Reeves* his People did the like. Mr. *Flavel* communicated thoſe Calls unto his Flock, and kept a Day of Prayer with them to beg Direction from God in this important Affair; he was graciouſly pleas'd to anſwer them by fixing Mr. *Flavel's* Reſolution to ſtay with his

Flock

Flock at *Dartmouth*. Many Arguments were made uſe of to perſuade him to come to *London*, as that ſince he was turn'd out by the *Act of Uniformity*, he had had but very little Maintenance from his Church; that thoſe at *London* were Rich, and numerous Congregations; that he had a Family and Children to provide for; and that the City was a Theater of Honour and Reputation: but none of thoſe Things could prevail with him to leave his poor People at *Dartmouth*.

In 1687, when it pleas'd God ſo to over-rule Affairs, that King *James* II. thought it his Intereſt to diſpenſe with the Penal Laws againſt them; Mr. *Flavel*, who had formerly been confin'd to a Corner, ſhone brightly, as a flaming Beacon upon the Top of an Hill. His Affectionate People prepar'd a large Place for him, where God bleſs'd his Labours to the Conviction of many People by his Sermons on *Revelations* 3. 20. *Behold, I ſtand at the Door and knock.* This encourag'd him to Print thoſe Sermons under the Title of *England*'s *Duty*, *&c.* hoping that it might do good abroad, as well as in his own Congregation. He had made a Vow to the Lord under his Confinement, That if he ſhould be once more entruſted with publick Liberty, he would improve it to the Advantage of the Goſpel: This he perform'd in a moſt conſcientious manner, Preaching twice every Lord's Day, and Lectur'd every *Weſneſday*; in which he went over moſt of the Third Chapter of St. *John*, ſhewing the indiſpenſible Neceſſity of Regeneration. He Preach'd likewiſe every *Thurſday* before the Sacrament, and then after Examination admitted Communicants. He had no Aſſiſtance on Sacrament-Days, ſo that he was many times almoſt ſpent before he diſtributed the Elements. When the Duty of the Day was over, he would often complain of a ſore Breaſt, an aking Head, and a pained Back; yet he would be early at Study again next *Monday*. He allow'd himſelf very little Recreation, accounting Time a precious Jewel that ought to be improv'd at any rate.

He was not only a Zealous Preacher in the Pulpit, but a Sincere Chriſtian in his Cloſet; frequent in Self-Examination, as well as in preſſing it upon others; being afraid, leſt while he Preach'd to others, he himſelf ſhould be a Caſt-away. To prove this, I ſhall tranſcribe what follows from his own Diary.

" To make ſure of Eternal Life, ſaid he, is the " great Buſineſs which the Sons of Death have to " do in this World. Whether a Man conſider the " Immortality of his own Soul, the ineffable Joys " and Glory of Heaven, the extreme and endleſs " Tormets of Hell, the unconceivable Sweetneſs " of Peace of Conſcience, or the Miſery of be- " ing ſubject to the Terrors thereof; All theſe " put a Neceſſity, a Solemnity, a Glory upon " this Work. But, Oh! the Difficulties and Dan- " gers attending it! How many? and how great " are theſe? What Judgment, Faithfulneſs, Reſo- " lution, and Watchfulneſs, doth it require? Such " is the Deceitfulneſs, Darkneſs, and Inconſtancy " of our Hearts, and ſuch the Malice, Policy, " and Diligence of Satan to manage and improve " it, that he who attempts this Work had need " both to watch his Seaſons for it, and frequently " look up to God for his Guidance and Illumina- " tion, and to ſpend many ſad and ſerious " Thoughts, before he adventure upon a Deter- " mination and Concluſion of the State of his " Soul.

" To the end therefore that this moſt important " Work may not miſcarry in my Hands, I have " collected, with all the Care I can, the beſt and " ſoundeſt Characters I can find in the Writings " of our Modern Divines, taken out of the Scri- " pture, and by their Labours illuſtrated and pre- " pared for Uſe, that I might make a right Appli- " cation of them.

1. " I have earneſtly beſought the Lord for the " Aſſiſtance of his Spirit, which can only mani- " feſt my own Heart unto me, and ſhow me the " true State thereof, which is that thing my Soul " doth moſt earneſtly deſire to know; and I hope " the Lord will anſwer my Deſire therein accord- " ing to his Promiſes, *Luke* 11. 13. *John* 14. 26.

2. " I have endeavoured to caſt out and lay aſide " Self-love, leſt my Heart being prepoſſeſſed there- " with, my Judgment ſhould be perverted, and " become partial in paſſing Sentence on my Eſtate. " I have in ſome meaſure brought my Heart to be " willing to Judge and Condemn my ſelf for an " Hypocrite, if ſuch I ſhall be found on Trial, as " to approve my ſelf for Sincere and Upright. " Yea, I would have it ſo far from being grievous " to me ſo to do, that if I have been all this " while miſtaken and deceived, I ſhall rejoice and " bleſs the Lord with my Soul, that now at laſt it " may be diſcovered to me, and I may be ſet right, " tho' I lay the Foundation new again. This I " have laboured to bring my Heart to, knowing " that Thouſands have daſhed and ſplit to Pieces " upon this Rock. And indeed he that will own " the Perſon of a Judge, muſt put off the Perſon " of a Friend.

3. " It hath been my Endeavour to keep upon " my Heart a deep Senſe of that great Judment- " Day throughout this Work; as knowing by Ex- " perience what a potent Influence this hath on " the Conſcience, to make it Deliberate, Serious, " and Faithful in its Work. And therefore I have " demanded of my own Conſcience before the " Reſolution of each Queſtion, O! my Conſci- " ence, deal faithfully with me in this Particular, " and ſay no more to me than thou wilt own and " ſtand to in the Great Day, when the Counſels of " all Hearts ſhall be made manifeſt.

4. " Having ſeriouſly weighed each Mark, and " conſidered wherein the Weight and Subſtance of " it lieth, I have gone to the Lord in Prayer for " his Aſſiſtance, e'er I have drawn up the Anſwer " of my Conſcience; and as my Heart hath been " perſuaded therein, ſo have I determined and re- " ſolved; what hath been clear to my Experience, " I have ſo ſet down; and what hath been dubi- " ous, I have here left it ſo.

5. " I have made choice of the fitteſt Seaſons I " had for this Work, and ſet to it when I have " found my Heart in the moſt quiet and ſerious " Frame. For as he that will ſee his Face in a " Glaſs, muſt be fix'd, not in Motion or in the " Water, muſt make no Commotion in it; ſo it " is in this Caſe.

6. " Laſtly, To the end I may be ſucceſsful in " this Work, I have laboured all along carefully to " diſtinguiſh betwixt ſuch Sins as are Grounds of " Doubting, and ſuch as are only Grounds of " Humiliation: Knowing that not every Evil is a " Ground of Doubting, tho' all, even the ſmalleſt " Infirmities, adminiſter Matter of Humiliation. " And thus I have deſired to Enterprize this great " Buſineſs. O Lord, aſſiſt thy Servant, that he " may not miſtake herein! But if his Conſcience

" do

" do now condemn him, he may lay a better " Foundation whilſt he hath time: And if it ſhall " now acquit him, he may alſo have Boldneſs in " the Day of Judgment.

Theſe Things being previouſly diſpatch'd, he tried himſelf by the Scripture-Marks of Sincerity and Regeneration. By this means he attained to a well-grounded Aſſurance, the raviſhing Comforts of which were many times ſhed abroad in his Soul: This made him a powerful and ſucceſsful Preacher, as one who ſpoke from his own Heart to thoſe of others. He preached what he felt, what he had handled, what he had ſeen and taſted of the Word of Life, and they felt it alſo.

We may gueſs what a ſweet and bleſſed Intercourſe he had with Heaven, from that Hiſtory we meet with in his Πνευματολογία, *P.* 547. which I refer to, and likewiſe from that Revelation he had of his Father and Mother's Death, *P.* 572. He was a mighty Wreſtler with God in ſecret Prayer; and particularly begg'd of him to Crown his Sermons, Printed Books, and private Diſcourſes, with the Converſion of poor Sinners, a Work which his Heart was much ſet upon. It pleas'd God to anſwer him by many Inſtances, of which the two that follow deſerve peculiar Notice.

In 1673, there came into *Dartmouth* Port a Ship of *Pool*, in her Return from *Virginia*; the Chirurgeon of this Ship, a luſty young Man of 23 Years of Age, fell into a deep Melancholy, which the Devil improved to make him murder himſelf. This he attempted on the Lord's Day early in the Morning, when he was in Bed with his Brother; he firſt cut his own Throat with a Knife he had prepared on purpoſe, and leaping out of the Bed, thruſt it likewiſe into his Stomach, and ſo lay wallowing in his own Blood, till his Brother awak'd and cry'd for Help: A Phyſician and Chirurgeon were brought, who concluded the Wound in his Throat mortal. They ſtitch'd it up however, and applied a Plaiſter, but without Hopes of Cure, becauſe he already breathed thro' the Wound, and his Voice was become inarticulate. Mr. *Flavel* came to viſit him in this Condition, and apprehending him to be within a few Minutes of Eternity, labour'd to prepare him for it; he ask'd him his own Apprehenſions of his Condition, and the young Man anſwered, that he hop'd in God for Eternal Life. Mr. *Flavel* replied, that he fear-ed his Hopes were ill-grounded; the Scripture tells us, that *no Murderer hath Eternal Life abiding in him*: Self-murder was the groſſeſt of all Murder, *&c.* Mr. *Flavel* inſiſted ſo much upon the Aggravations of the Crime, that the young Man's Conſcience began to fail, his Heart began to melt, and then he broke out into Tears, bewailing his Sin and Miſery, and ask'd Mr. *Flavel*, If there might yet be any Hope for him? He told him there might; and finding him altogether unacquainted with the Nature of Faith and Repentance, he opened them to him. The poor Man ſuck'd in this Doctrine greedily, prayed with great Vehemence to God that he would work them on his Soul; and intreated Mr. *Flavel* to pray with him, and for him, that he might be, tho' late, a ſincere Goſpel Penitent, and ſound Believer. Mr. *Flavel* prayed with him accordingly, and it pleas'd God exceedingly to melt the young Man's Heart during the Performance of that Duty. He was very loth to part with Mr. *Flavel*, but the Duty of the Day obliging him to be gone, in a few Words he ſumm'd up thoſe Counſels that he thought moſt neceſſary, and ſo took his Farewel of him, never expecting to ſee him any more in this World. But it pleaſed God to order it otherwiſe; the young Man continued alive contrary to all Expectation, panted earneſtly after the Lord Jeſus, and no Diſcourſe was pleaſing to him, but that of Chriſt and Faith. In this Frame Mr. *Flavel* found him in the Evening; he rejoiced greatly when he ſaw him come again, intreated him to continue his Diſcourſe upon thoſe Subjects, and told him, Sir, the Lord hath given me Repentance for this and for all my other Sins; I ſee the Evil of them now, ſo as I never ſaw them before: O, I loath my ſelf! I do alſo believe, Lord, help my Unbelief. I am heartily willing to take Chriſt upon his own Terms; but one thing troubles me, I doubt this bloody Sin will not be pardoned. Will Jeſus Chriſt, ſaid he, apply his Blood to me, that have ſhed my own Blood? Mr. *Flavel* told him, That the Lord Jeſus ſhed his Blood for them that with wicked Hands had ſhed his own Blood, which was a greater Sin than the ſhedding of his: To which the wounded Man replied, I will caſt my ſelf upon Chriſt, let him do what he will. In this Condition Mr. *Flavel* left him that Night.

Next Morning his Wounds were to be opened, and the Chirurgeon's Opinion was, that he would immediately expire: Mr. *Flavel* was again requeſted to give him a Viſit, which he did, found him in a very ſerious Frame and pray'd with him. The Wound in his Stomach was afterwards opened, when the Ventricle was ſo much ſwoln, that it came out at the Orifice of the Wound, and lay like a livid diſcoloured Tripe upon his Body, and was alſo cut through; every one thought it impoſſible for him to live: However, the Chirurgeon enlarg'd the Orifice of the Wound, fomented it, and wrought the Ventricle again into his Body; and ſtitching up the Wound, left his Patient to the Diſpoſal of Providence.

It pleaſed God that he was cured of thoſe dangerous Wounds in his Body; and upon ſolid Grounds of a rational Charity, there was ground to believe that he was alſo cured of that more dangerous Wound, which Sin had made in his Soul. Mr. *Flavel* ſpent many Hours with him, during his Sickneſs; and when the Chirugeon return'd to *Pool* after his Recovery, Mr. *Samuel Hardy*, that worthy Miniſter there, thank'd Mr. *Flavel*, in a Letter, for the great Pains he had taken with that young Man, and congratulated his Succeſs, aſſuring him, that if ever a great and thorough Work was wrought, it was upon that Man.

The Second Inſtance is this; Mr. *Flavel* being in *London* in 1673, his old Bookſeller, Mr. *Boulter*, gave him this following Relation, *viz.* That ſome time before, there came into his Shop a Sparkiſh Gentleman to enquire for ſome Play-Books; Mr. *Boulter* told him he had none, but ſhew'd him Mr. *Flavel*'s little Treatiſe of *Keeping the Heart*, intreated him to read it, and aſſur'd him it would do him more good than Play-Books. The Gentleman read the Title, and glancing upon ſeveral Pages here and there, broke out into theſe and ſuch other Expreſſions, What a damnable Phanatick was he, who made this Book? Mr. *Boulter* begg'd of him to buy and read it, and told him he had no Cauſe to cenſure it ſo bitterly; at laſt he bought it, but told him he would not read it: What will you do with it then, ſaid Mr. *Boulter*? I will tear and burn it, ſaid he, and ſend it to the Devil; Mr. *Boulter* told him then he ſhould not have it: Upon this

the

the Gentleman promis'd to read it; and Mr. *Boulter* told him, if he diſlik'd it upon reading, he would return him his Money. About a Month after, the Gentleman came to the Shop again in a very modeſt Habit, and with a ſerious Countenance beſpeaks Mr. *Boulter* thus; Sir, I moſt heartily thank you for putting this Book into my Hands; I bleſs God that mov'd you to do it, it hath ſaved my Soul; bleſſed be God that ever I came into your Shop; and then he bought a Hundred more of thoſe Books of him, told him he would give them to the Poor who could not buy them, and ſo left him, praiſing and admiring the Goodneſs of God. Thus it pleaſed God to bleſs the Sermons, Diſcourſes and Writings of Mr. *Flavel*.

He never delighted in Controverſies, but was oblig'd, contrary to his Inclinations, to write againſt Mr. *Cary*, the principal Anabaptiſt in *Dartmouth*, with whom however he maintain'd a Friendly and Chriſtian Correſpondence; when he wrote his *Planelogia, or, Blow at the Root*, he declar'd to his Friends, that tho' thoſe Studies were very Neceſſary, he took no Pleaſure in them, but had rather be employed in practical Divinity. When he compos'd his *Reaſonableneſs of Perſonal Reformation*, he told an intimate Acquaintance of his, that he ſeldom had a vain Thought to interrupt him, which made him hope it would do the more good in the World. He purpos'd to have enlarg'd his Book of *Sacramental Meditations*, and had moſt judiciouſly ſtated and handled ſeveral Caſes of Conſcience on that Occaſion, which he deſign'd to have inſerted in the next Edition, but liv'd not to finiſh them for the Preſs.

Many times when he preach'd Abroad, he has had Letters ſent him from unknown Perſons, informing him how God had bleſſed his Miniſtry to their Souls, and converted them from being bitter Enemies to Religion. This encouraged him when he rode Abroad, not only to accept of Invitations to preach, but many times to offer his Labours unto thoſe that would be pleas'd to hear him; tho' for this he had no Occaſion where he was known, the People being generally Importunate with him. One Day after a long and hard Journey, an Intimate Friend of his, out of a tender Regard to him, preſs'd him with Cogent Arguments to forbear preaching at that Seaſon, but could not prevail with him; his Bowels of Compaſſion to needy and periſhing Souls made him over-look all Conſiderations of himſelf; he preach'd an excellent Sermon, by which there was one converted, as he declar'd himſelf afterwards upon his admiſſion to the Lord's Table.

The laſt Sermon that he preach'd to his People at *Dartmouth*, was on a publick Day of Faſting and Humiliation; in the Cloſe of which he was enlarg'd in ſuch an extraordinary Manner, when offering up Praiſes to God for Mercies received, that he ſeem'd to be in an Extaſie; this happened about a Week before his Death, and may juſtly be accounted a Foretaſte of thoſe heavenly Raptures that he now enjoys amongſt the bleſſed Spirits above.

The laſt Sermon he preach'd was on the 21ſt of *June* 1691, at *Aſhburton*, from 1 *Cor.* 10. 12. *Wherefore let him that ſtandeth, take heed leſt he fall.* It was a very Pathetical and Excellent Diſcourſe, tending to awaken careleſs Profeſſors, and to ſtir them up to be Solicitous about their Souls. After having preach'd this Sermon, he went to *Exeter*, and at *Topſham*, within three Miles of that City, he preſided as Moderator in an Aſſembly of the Nonconformiſt Miniſters of *Devonſhire*, who unanimouſly Voted him into the Chair; the Occaſion of their meeting was about an Union betwixt the Presbyterians and Independants, which Mr. *Flavel* was very Zealous to promote, and brought to ſo good an Iſſue in thoſe Parts, that the Miniſters declar'd their Satisfaction with the Heads of Agreement concluded on by the *London* Miniſters of thoſe Denominations. Mr. *Flavel* cloſed the Work of the Day with Prayer and Praiſes, in which his Spirit was carried out with wonderful Enlargement and Affection.

He wrote a Letter to an Eminent Miniſter in *London*, with an Account of their Proceedings that ſame Day that he died; Providence ordering it ſo, that he ſhould finiſh that good Work his Heart was ſo intent upon, before he finiſhed his Courſe.

The Manner of his Death was ſudden and ſurprizing; his Friends thought him as well that Day in the Evening of which he died, as he had been for many Years. Towards the End of Supper, he complain'd of a Deadneſs in one of his Hands, that he could not lift it to his Head. This ſtruck his Wife, and his Friends about him, into an Aſtoniſhment; they us'd ſome means to recover it to its former Strength, but inſtead thereof, to their great Grief, the Diſtemper ſeiz'd upon all one ſide of his Body. They put him to Bed with all Speed, and ſent for Phyſicians, but to no purpoſe; his Diſtemper prevail'd upon him ſo faſt, that in a ſhort time it made him Speechleſs. He was ſenſible of his approaching Death; and when they carried him up Stairs, expreſs'd his Opinion that it would be the laſt time; but added, I know that it will be well with me; which were ſome of his laſt Words. Thus died this Holy Man of God Suddenly, and without Pain, not giving ſo much as one Groan. He exchanged this Life for a better, on the 26th Day of *June* 1691, in the 64th Year of his Age.

His Corps was carried from *Exeter* to *Dartmouth*, attended by ſeveral Miniſters, and a great many other Perſons of good Quality; abundance of People rode out from *Dartmouth*, *Totneſs*, *Newton*, *Aſhburton*, and other Places, to meet the Corps; when it was taken out of the Hearſe at the Water-ſide, his People and other Friends could not forbear expreſſing the Senſe of their great Loſs by Floods of Tears, and a bitter Lamentation. It was Interr'd that ſame Night in *Dartmouth* Church, and next Day Mr. *George Troſſe*, a Miniſter of *Exeter*, preach'd his Funeral Sermon from *Eliſha*'s Lamentation upon the Tranſlation of *Elijah*, 2 Kings 2. 12. *My Father, my Father, the Chariot of Iſrael, and the Horſemen thereof.*

We ſhall conclude with a Character of Mr. *Flavel*. He was a Man of a Middle Stature, and full of Life and Activity. He was very thoughtful, and when not diſcourſing or reading, much taken up in Meditation, which made him digeſt his Notions well. He was ready to learn from every Body, and as free to communicate what he knew. He was Bountiful to his own Relations, and very Charitable to the Poor, but eſpecially to the Houſhold of Faith, and the neceſſitous Members of his own Church, to whom, during their Sickneſs, he always ſent ſuitable Supplies. He freely taught Academical Learning to Four young Men whom he bred to the Miniſtry, and one of them he

he maintain'd all the while at his own Charge. He was exceedingly Affectionate to all the People of *Dartmouth*, of which we ſhall give one remarkable Inſtance. When our Fleet was firſt engaged with the *French*, he called his People together to a Solemn Faſt, and like a Man in an Agony, wreſtled with God in Prayer for the Church and Nation, and particularly for the poor Seamen of *Dartmouth*, that they might obtain Mercy; the Lord heard and anſwer'd him, for not one of that Town was killed in the Fight, tho' many of 'em were in the Engagement. As he was a faithful Ambaſſador to his Maſter, he made his Example the Rule of his own Practice; and was ſo far from reviling again thoſe that revil'd him, that he pray'd for thoſe that deſpitefully us'd him; one remarkable Inſtance of which is as follows. In 1685, ſome of the People of *Dartmouth*, accompanied too by ſome of the Magiſtrates, made up his Effigies, carried it through the Streets in deriſion, with the Covenant and Bill of Excluſion pinn'd to it, and ſet it upon a Bonefire, and burnt it; ſome of the Spectators were ſo much affected with the Reproach and Ignominy done to this Reverend and Pious Miniſter, that they Wept, and others Scoff'd and Jeer'd; it was obſervable, that at the very ſame time, tho' he knew nothing of the Matter, he was heaping Coals of Fire of another Nature upon the Heads of thoſe Wicked Men; for he was then praying for the Town of *Dartmouth*, its Magiſtrates and Inhabitants; and when News was brought him, upon the Concluſion of his Prayer, what they had been doing, he lift up this Prayer unto God for them in our Saviour's Words, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

THE

Fountain of Life opened:

OR,

A Display of Christ in His Essential and Mediatorial Glory.
Containing Forty-Two Sermons on Various Texts.

To his much Honoured and Beloved Kinsman, Mr. JOHN FLAVEL of *London*, Merchant, and his Virtuous Consort, the Author wisheth Grace, Mercy, and Peace.

My Dear and Honoured Friends,

IF *my Pen were both able and at leisure to get Glory in Paper, it would be but a Paper-glory when I had gotten it: but if by displaying (which is the design of these Papers) the transcendent Excellency of Jesus Christ, I may win Glory to him from you, to whom I humbly offer them, or from any other into whose Hands Providence shall cast them, that will be Glory indeed, and an occasion of glorifying God to all Eternity.*

It is not the design of this Epistle to compliment, *but to* benefit *you; not to blazon your Excellencies, but* Christ's; *not to acquaint the World how much you have* endeared *me to yourself, but to increase and strengthen the* Endearments *betwixt Christ and* you, *upon your part. I might indeed (this being a proper Place for it) pay you my Acknowledgments for your great Kindnesses to me and mine; of which I assure you I have, and ever shall have, deep Resentments: but you and I are Theatre enough to one another, and can satisfy our selves with the inclosed Comforts and Delights of our mutual Love and Friendship: But let me tell you, the whole World is not a Theatre large enough to shew the Glory of Christ upon, or unfold the one half of the unsearchable Riches that lie hid in him. These things will be far better understood, and spoken of in Heaven, by the Noon-day Divinity, in which the immediately illuminated Assembly do there Preach his Praises, than by such a stammering Tongue, and scribling Pen as mine, which doth but marr them.*

Alas! I write his Praises but by Moon-light; I cannot Praise him so much as by halves. Indeed, no Tongue but his own (as Nazianzen *said of* Basil) *is sufficient to undertake that Task. What shall I say of Christ? The excelling Glory of that Object dazzles all Apprehension, swallows up all Expression. When we have borrowed Metaphors from every Creature that hath any Excellency or lovely Property in it, till we have stript the whole Creation bare of all its Ornaments, and cloathed Christ with all that Glory; when we have worn our Tongues to the stumps, in ascribing Praises to him, alas! we have done nothing, when all is done.*

Yet wo is me! how do I every Day behold reasonable Souls most unreasonably disaffected to my lovely Lord Jesus! denying Love to one who is able to compel Love from the stonyest Heart! yea, though they can never make so much of their Love (would they set it to sale) as Christ bids for it.

It's horrid and amazing to see how the Minds of many are captivated and ensnared by every silly trifle; and how others can indifferently turn them with a kind of spontaneity to this Object, or to that (as their fancy strikes) among the whole Universe of Beings, and scarce ever reluctate, recoil, or nauseate, till they be perswaded to Christ; and then 'tis as easy to melt the obdurate Rocks into Sweet Syrup, as their Hearts into Divine Love.

How do the great Men of the World ambitiously court the Honours and Pleasures of it? The Merchants of the Earth trade and strive for the dear-bought Treasures of it; whilst the Price of Christ (alas! ever too low) falls every day lower and lower upon the Exchange of this World! I speak it as a sad Truth, if there were no quicker a Trade (as dead as they say it is) for the perishing Treasures of the Earth, than there is for Christ this Day in England; *the Exchange would quickly be shut up, and all the Trading Companies dissolv'd.*

Dear Sir, Christ is the peerless Pearl hid in the Field, Mat. 13. 46. *Will you be that* wise Merchant *that resolves to win and compass that Treasure, whatever it shall cost you? Ah Sir, Christ is a Commodity that can never be bought too dear.*

My dear Kinsman, my Flesh and my Blood; my Soul thirsteth for your Salvation, and the Salvation of your Family. Shall you and I resolve, with good Joshua, *that whatever others do,* we and our Families will serve the Lord; *That we will walk as the* Redeemed *of his Blood, shewing forth his Virtues and Praises in the World? That as God hath made us one in Name, and one in Affection; so we may be one in Christ: That it may be said of us, as it was of* Austin *and* Alippius *long ago, that they were* sanguine Christi conglutinati, *glued together by the Blood of* Christ.

For

For my own part, I have given in my Name to him long ſince; wo to me, if I have not given in my Heart alſo: For ſhould I deceive my ſelf in ſo deep a Point as that, how would my Profeſſion *as a* Chriſtian, *my* Calling *as a* Miniſter, *yea, theſe very* Sermons *now in your hands, riſe in Judgment to condemn me? Which God forbid.*

And doubtleſs, Sir, your Eyes have ſeen both the Vanity of all Creatures, and the Neceſſity and infinite Worth of Chriſt. You cannot forget what a Vanity the World appeared to you, when in the Year 1668, *you were ſummoned by the Meſſengers of Death (as you and all that were about you then apprehended) to ſhoot the Gulf of vaſt Eternity; when a malignant* Fever *and* Pleuriſie *(whereof your* * *Phyſician hath given an Account to the World) did ſhake the whole Frame of the Tabernacle wherein your Soul through Mercy yet dwells; and long may it dwell there, for the Service and Praiſe of your great Deliverer. I hope you have not, nor ever will forget how the vain World appeared to your Eye; when you looked back (as it were over your ſhoulder) and ſaw how it ſhrunk away from you. Nor will you ever forget the awful Apprehenſions of Eternity, that then ſeized your Spirit, or the Value, you then had for Chriſt; which things I hope ſtill do, and ever will remain with you.*

* Dr. *Thomſon's* Αἱματίωσις, p. 91.

And for you, Dear Couſin, as it becomes a Daughter of Sarah, *let your Soul be adorned with the Excellencies of Chriſt, and Beauties of Holineſs. A King from Heaven makes ſuit for your Love. If he eſpouſe your Soul now, he will fetch it home to himſelf at Death in his Chariot of Salvation; and great ſhall be your Joy, when the Marriage of the Lamb is come. Look often upon Chriſt in this Glaſs; he is fairer than the Children of Men. View him believingly, and you cannot but like and love him.* For *(as one well ſaith)* Love when it ſeeth, cannot but caſt out its Spirit and Strength upon amiable Objects, and things love-worthy. And what fairer things than Chriſt! O fair Sun, and fair Moon, and fair Stars, and fair Flowers, and fair Roſes, and fair Lillies, and fair Creatures! but O ten thouſand, thouſand times fairer Lord Jeſus! Alas, I wronged him in making the Compariſon this way. O black Sun and Moon; but O fair Lord Jeſus! O black Flowers, and black Lillies, and Roſes; but O fair, fair, ever fair Lord Jeſus! O all fair things, black, deformed and without Beauty, when ye are ſet beſide the faireſt Lord Jeſus. O black Heavens, but O fair Chriſt! O black Angels, but O ſurpaſſingly fair Lord Jeſus! Ep. S. R.

I hope you both are agreed with Chriſt, according to the Articles of Peace propounded to you in the Goſpel; and that you are every day driving on Salvation-work, betwixt him and you in your Family, and in your Cloſets.

And now, my dear Friends, if theſe Diſcoveries of Chriſt, which I humbly offer to your Hands, may be any way uſeful to your Souls, to aſſiſt them either in obtaining, or in clearing their Intereſt in him, my Heart ſhall rejoice, even mine: for none under Heaven can be more willing (though many are more able) to help you thither, than is

From my Study in *Dartmouth, March* 14. 1671.

Your moſt affectionate and obliged Kinſman and Servant,

JOHN FLAVEL.

To the Chriſtian Readers, eſpecially thoſe in the Town and Corporation of *Dartmouth*, and Parts adjacent; who have either befriended, or attended theſe Lectures.

Honoured and Worthy Friends,

KNowledge is Man's Excellency above the Beaſts that periſh, Pſal. 32. 9. *the Knowledge of Chriſt is the Chriſtian's Excellency above the Heathen,* 1 Cor. 1. 23, 24. *Practical and ſaving Knowledge of Chriſt is the ſincere Chriſtian's Excellency above the ſelf-cozening Hypocrite,* Heb. 6. 4, 6. *but methodical and well-digeſted Knowledge of Chriſt is the ſtrong Chriſtian's Excellency above the weak,* Heb. 5. 12, 13, 14. *A ſaving, tho' an immethodical Knowledge of Chriſt, will bring us to Heaven,* John 17. 2. *but a regular, and methodical, as well as ſaving Knowledge of him, will bring Heaven into us,* Col. 2. 2, 3.

For ſuch is the Excellency thereof, even above all other Knowledge of Chriſt, that it renders the Underſtanding judicious, the Memory tenacious, and the Heart highly and fixedly joyous. How it ſerves to confirm and perfect the Underſtanding, is excellently diſcovered by a Worthy Divine of our own, in theſe words.

Mr. *Baxter's* Directions to the Converted for their Eſtabliſhment, *p.* 96.

A young ungrounded Chriſtian, when he ſeeth all the fundamental Truths, and ſeeth good Evidence and Reaſons of them, perhaps may be yet ignorant of the right Order and Place of every Truth: It's a rare thing to have young Profeſſors to underſtand the neceſſary Truths methodically; and this is a very great Defect. For a great part of the Uſefulneſs and Excellency of particular Truths, conſiſteth in the reſpect they have to one another. This therefore will be a very conſiderable Part of your Confirmation, and Growth in your Underſtandings, to ſee the Body of the Chriſtian Doctrine as it were at one View, as the ſeveral Parts of it are united in one perfect Frame; and to know what Aſpect one Point hath upon another, and which is their due places. There is a great difference betwixt the ſight of the ſeveral Parts of a Clock or Watch, as they are diſjointed and ſcattered abroad, and the ſeeing of them conjoined, and in uſe and motion. To ſee here a Pin, and there a Wheel, and not know how to ſet them all together, nor ever ſee them in their due places, will give but little ſatisfaction: It is the frame and deſign of holy Doctrine that muſt be known, and every part ſhould be diſcerned as it hath its particular uſe to that Deſign, and as it is connected with the other parts.

By this means only can the true Nature of Theology, together with the Harmony and Perfection of Truth, be clearly underſtood. And every ſingle Truth alſo will be much better perceived by him that ſeeth its Place and Order, than by any other: For one Truth exceedingly illuſtrates, and leads in another into the Underſtanding.-- Study therefore to grow in the more methodical Knowledge of the ſame Truths, which you have received; and tho' you are not ripe enough to diſcern the whole Body of Theology in due method, yet ſee ſo much as you have attained to know, in the right order, and placing of every part. As in Anatomy, it's hard for the wiſeſt Phyſician to diſcern the courſe of every branch of the Veins and Arteries; but yet they may eaſily diſcern the Place and Order of the principal Parts, and greater Veſſels, (and ſurely in the Body of Religion there runs not a Branch of greater or more neceſſary Truth than theſe) ſo it is in Divinity, where no Man hath a perfect View of the whole, till he come to the State of Perfection with God; but every true Chriſtian hath the Knowledge of all the Eſſentials, and may know the Orders and Places of them all.

And as it ſerves to render the Mind more judicious, ſo it cauſes the Memory to be more tenacious, and retentive of Truths. The Chain of Truth is eaſily held in the Memory, when one Truth links in another; but the looſing of a Link endangers the ſcattering of the whole Chain. We uſe to ſay, Order is the Mother of Memory; I am ſure it's a ſingular Friend to it: Hence it's obſerved, thoſe that write of the Art of Memory, lay ſo great a Streſs upon Place and Number. The Memory would not ſo ſoon be overcharged with a Multitude of Truths, if that Multitude were but orderly diſpoſed. It's the Incoherence, and Confuſion of Truths, rather than their Number, that diſtracts. Let but the Underſtanding receive them regularly, and the Memory will retain them with much more facility. A bad Memory is a common Complaint among Chriſtians. All the benefit that many of you have in Hearing, is from the preſent Influence of Truths upon your Hearts. There is but little that ſticks by you, to make a ſecond and third Impreſſion upon them. I know it may be ſaid of ſome of you, that if your Affections were not better than your Memories, you would need a very large Charity to paſs for Chriſtians. I confeſs it's better to have a well-ordered Heart, than a methodical Head; but ſurely both are better than either. And for you that have conſtantly attended theſe Exerciſes, and followed us through the whole Series and Deduction of theſe Truths, from Text to Text, and from Point to Point; who have begun one Sabbath, where you left another; it will be your inexcuſable Fault, if theſe things be not fixed in your Underſtanding and Memories, as Nails faſtned in a ſure place; eſpecially Providence hath now brought to your Eyes, *what hath been ſo often ſounded in your* Ears, *which is no ſmall Help to fix theſe Truths upon you, and prevent that great Hazard of them, which commonly attends bare Hearing: for now you may have recourſe as often as you will to them, view, and review them, till they become your own.*

But tho' this be a great and ſingular Advantage, yet it is not all you may have by a methodical underſtanding of the Doctrine of Chriſt: *It's more than a judicious underſtanding them, or faithful remembring them that you and I muſt deſign, even the warm, vital, animating Influences of theſe Truths upon our* Hearts, *without which we ſhall be never the better; yea, much the worſe for knowing and remembring them.*

Truth is the ſanctifying Inſtrument, Joh. 17. 17. *the Mould into which our Souls are caſt,* Rom. 6. 17. *according therefore to the Stamps and Impreſſions it makes upon our Underſtandings, and the Order in which Truths lie there, will be the depth and laſtingneſs of their Impreſſions and Influences upon the Heart; as the more Weight is laid upon the Seal, the more fair and laſting Impreſs is made upon the Wax. He that ſees the Grounds and Reaſons of his Peace and Comfort moſt clearly, is like to maintain it the more conſtantly.*

Great therefore is the advantage Chriſtians have by ſuch methodical Syſtems. Surely they may ſet down among the deſiderata Chriſtianorum, *the moſt deſired Things of Chriſtians.*

*Divers worthy modern Pens have indeed undertaken this noble Subject before me, ſome more * ſuccinctly, others more † copiouſly: Theſe have done worthily, and their praiſes are in the Churches of Chriſt? Yet ſuch a* Breadth *there is in the Knowledge of Chriſt, that not only thoſe who have written on this Subject before me, but a thouſand Authors more may employ their Pens after us, and not one interfere with, or ſtraiten another.*

* Mr. *Wall's* None but Chriſt.
† Mr. *Iſaac Ambroſe* his Looking to Jeſus.

And ſuch is the Deliciouſneſs *of this Subject, that were there ten thouſand Volumes written upon it, they would never cloy, or become nauſeous to a gracious Heart. We uſe to ſay* one thing tires; *and it's true that it doth ſo, except that one thing be vertually, and eminently all things, as Chriſt is; and then one thing can never tire: For ſuch is the variety of Sweetneſs in Chriſt, who is the* deliciæ humani generis, *the Delights of the Children of Men, that every time he is opened to Believers, from Pulpit or Preſs, it is as if Heaven had furniſhed them with a new Chriſt; and yet he is the ſame Chriſt ſtill.*

The Synopſis *prefixed to this Treatiſe will ſhew you, that the Method is wholly new; and the Treatiſe it ſelf will ſatisfy you, that I have not boaſted in another Man's Line, of things made ready to my Hand: which I ſpeak not in the leaſt to win any Praiſe to my ſelf from the Undertaking, but to remove Prejudice from it; for I ſee more defects in it, than moſt of my Readers will ſee, and can forethink more Faults to be found in it, than I ſhall now ſtand to tell thee of, or make Anſwer for. It was written in a time of great Diſtractions; and didſt thou but know how oft this Work hath died, and revived under my Hand, thou would'ſt wonder that ever it came to thine.*

I am ſenſible it may fall under ſome cenſorious (it may be envious) Eyes, and that far different Judgments will paſs upon it; for pro captu lectoris habent ſua fata libelli: *And no wonder if a Treatiſe of Chriſt be, when Chriſt himſelf was to ſome a* ſtone of ſtumbling, and a rock of offence. *I expect not to pleaſe every Reader, eſpecially the envious;* magna debet eſſe eloquentia, quæ invitis placet. *It is as hard for ſome to look upon* other *Mens Gifts without* Envy, *as it is to look upon their* own *without* Pride: *nor will I be any farther concerned with ſuch Readers, than to pity them; well knowing that every proud Contempt and envious Cenſure is a Granado that breaks in the Hand of him that caſts it.*

But to the ingenious and candid Reader, I owe Satisfaction for the Obſcurity of ſome part of this Diſcourſe, occaſioned by the Conciſeneſs of the Stile; *to which I have this only to ſay, that I was willing to crowd as much Matter as I could into this number of Sheets into thy Hand, that I might therein eaſe thee, both in thy Pains and Purſe. I confeſs the Sermons were preached in a more relaxed Style, and moſt of*

theſe

theſe things were enlarged in the Pulpit, *which are deſignedly contracted in the* Preſs, *that the Volume might not ſwell above the Ability of common Readers. And it was my purpoſe at firſt to have compriſed the ſecond Part,* viz. *the* Application of the Redemption that is with Chriſt unto Sinners, *in one Volume, which occaſioned the contraction of this; but that making a juſt Volume it ſelf, muſt await another Seaſon to ſee the light. If the Reader will be but a little the more intent, and conſiderate in reading, this Canciſeneſs will turn to his advantage.*

This may ſuffice to ſhew the uſefulneſs of ſuch Compoſures, and to prevent offence; but ſomething yet remains with me, to ſay to the Readers in general, *to thoſe of this* Town *in ſpecial, and to the* Flock *committed by Chriſt to my Charge more eſpecially.*

1. *To Readers in general, according as their different States and Conditions may be, there are ſix things earneſtly to be requeſted of them.*

(1.) *If you be yet Strangers to Chriſt, let theſe things begin, and beget your firſt acquaintance with him. I aſſure thee, Reader, it was a principal part of the Deſign thereof; and here thou wilt find many Directions, Helps, and ſweet Encouragements, to aſſiſt a poor Stranger, as thou art, in that great Work. Say not, I am an Enemy to Chriſt, and there is no hope of Reconciliation; for here thou wilt ſee, how* God was in Chriſt, reconciling the Word to himſelf. *Say not, all this is nothing, except God had told thee ſo, and appointed ſome to treat with thee about it;* for he hath committed unto us the Word of this Reconciliation. *Say not, Yea, that may be from your own Pity and Compaſſion for us, and not from any Commiſſion you have for it; for* we are Ambaſſadors for Chriſt, 1 *Cor.* 5. 19.

Say not, O but my Sins are greater than can be forgiven; the difficulties of my Salvation too great to be overcome, eſpecially by a poor Creature as I am, that am able to do nothing, no not to raiſe one penny towards the diſcharge of that great Debt I owe to God: for here thou wilt find upon thy Union with Chriſt, that there is Merit *enough in his* Blood, *and* Mercy *enough in his* Bowels *to juſtify, and ſave ſuch an one as thou art. Yea, and I will add for thine encouragement, that it is a righteous thing with God to juſtify and ſave thee, that canſt not pay him one penny of all the vaſt Sums thou oweſt him, when by the ſame Rule of Juſtice he condemns the moſt ſtrict, ſelf-righteous Phariſee, that thinks thereby to quit ſcores with him. It is righteous for a Judge to caſt him that hath paid ninety-nine Pounds of the hundred which he owed, becauſe the Payment was not full; and to acquit him, whoſe Surety hath paid all, tho' himſelf did not, and freely confeſs that he cannot pay one farthing of the whole Debt.*

(2.) *If thou be a ſelf-deceiving Soul, that eaſily takeſt up thy ſatisfaction about thine Intereſt in Chriſt, look to it as thou valueſt thy Soul, Reader, that a fond and groundleſs Conceit of thine Intereſt in Chriſt do not effectually and finally obſtruct a true and ſaving Intereſt in him. This is the common and fatal Error in which Multitudes of Souls are enſnared and ruined: for look, as a conceit of great Wiſdom hinders many from the attaining of it; ſo a groundleſs Conceit that Chriſt is already thine, may prove the greateſt Obſtacle betwixt Chriſt and thee. But here thou wilt meet with many Rules that will not deceive thee, Trials that will open thy true Condition to thee.*

Quam multi ſapuiſſent niſi ſe prius ſapere putaſſent? *Sen.*

Thou ſometimes reflecteſt upon the State of thy Soul, and enquir'ſt, is Chriſt mine? May I depend upon it, that my Condition is ſafe? Thy Heart returns thee an Anſwer of Peace, it ſpeaks as thou would'ſt have it; but remember (Friend) and mark this Line, Thy final Sentence is not yet come from the Mouth of thy Judge; and what if after all thy Self-flattering Hopes, and groundleſs Confidences, a Sentence ſhould come from him quite croſs to that of thine own Heart? Where art thou then? what a confounded Perſon wilt thou be? Chriſtleſs, ſpeechleſs, and hopeleſs all at once?

O therefore build ſure for Eternity; take heed leſt the loſs of thine eternal Happineſs be at laſt imputed by thee to the deceitfulneſs, and lazineſs of thine own Heart; leſt thy Heart ſay to thee in Hell, as the Heart of Apollodorus *ſeemed in his Sufferings to ſay to him,* I am the Cauſe of all this Miſery to thee. Ἐγὼ σοὶ τῶν ἀπὰ.

(3.) *If thou be one whoſe Heart is eagerly ſet upon this vain World, I beſeech thee to take heed, leſt it interpoſe it ſelf betwixt Chriſt and thy Soul, and ſo cut thee off from him for ever. O beware leſt the Duſt of the Earth getting into thine Eyes, ſo blind thee, that thou never ſee the Beauty or Neceſſity of Chriſt: the God of this World ſo blinds the Eyes of them that believe not. And what are the ſparkling Pleaſures that dazle the Eyes of ſome, and the diſtracting Cares that wholly divert the Minds of others, but as a Napkin drawn by Satan over the Eyes of them that are to be turned off into* Hell? 1 Cor. 4. 3, 4.

Some general Aims, and faint Wiſhes after Chriſt you may have; but alas! the World has centered thy Heart, entangled thy Affections, and will daily find new diverſions for thee from the great Buſineſs of Life: So that if the Lord break not this Snare, thou wilt never be able to deliver my Soul.

(4.) *If thou be a looſe and careleſs Profeſſor of Chriſt, I beſeech thee, let the things thou ſhalt read in this Treatiſe of Chriſt, convince, ſhame, and reclaim thee from thy vain Converſation. Here thou wilt find how contrary thy Converſation is to the grand Deſigns of the Death and Reſurrection of Chriſt. O methinks, as thou art reading the deep Humiliation, and unſpeakable Sorrows Chriſt underwent for the expiating of Sin, thou ſhouldeſt thenceforth look upon Sin as a tender Child would upon that Knife that ſtabb'd his Father to the Heart! Thou ſhouldeſt never whet, and ſharpen it again, to wound the Son of* God *afreſh. To ſuch looſe, and careleſs Profeſſors, I particularly recommend the laſt* general Uſe *of this Diſcourſe, containing many great Motives to Reformation, and ſtrict Godlineſs, in all that call upon the Name of the Lord Jeſus.*

(5.) *If thou haſt been a profane and vain Perſon, but now art pardoned, and doſt experience the ſuper-abounding Riches of Grace; my Requeſt to thee is, that thou love Jeſus Chriſt with a more fervent Love than ever yet thou haſt for him. Here thou wilt find many great Incentives, many mighty Arguments to ſuch a love of Chriſt. Poor Soul! conſider what thou haſt been, what the Morning of thy Life was; what Treaſures of Guilt thou laidſt up in thoſe Days; and then think, Can ſuch a one as I receive Mercy, and that Mercy not break my Heart? Can I read my Pardon, and mine Eyes not drop? What! Mercy for ſuch a Wretch as I! a Pardon for ſuch a Rebel! O what an ingenious Thaw ſhould this cauſe upon thy Heart! if it do not, what a ſtrange Heart is thine!*

Did the Love of Chriſt break through ſo many Impediments, to come to thee? Did it make its way through the Law, through the Wrath of God, through the Grave, through

through thine own Unbelief and great Unworthineſs, to come to thee? O what a Love was the Love of Chriſt to thy Soul! And is not thy Love ſtrong enough to break through the Vanities and Trifles of this World which entangle it, to go to Chriſt? How poor, how low and weak is thy Love to Chriſt then?

(6.) *Laſtly, Art thou one that haſt through Mercy at laſt attain'd Aſſurance, or good Hope, through Grace, of thy Intereſt in Chriſt? Rejoice then in thy preſent Mercy, and long ardently to be with thine own Chriſt in his Glory. There be many things diſperſed through this Treatiſe of Chriſt, to animate ſuch Joy, and excite ſuch Longings. It was truly obſerved by a worthy Author, (whoſe Words I have mentioned more freely than his Name in this Diſcourſe)* that it is in a manner as natural for us to leap when we ſee the New *Jeruſalem*, as it is to laugh when we are tickled. Joy is not under the Soul's Command, when Chriſt kiſſeth it. *And for your deſires to be with Chriſt, what Conſiderations can you find in this World ſtrong enough to rein them in! O when you ſhall conſider what he hath done, ſuffered, and purchaſed for you, where he is now, and how much he longs for your coming, your very Hearts ſhould groan out thoſe Words,* Phil. 1. 23. I deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt. The Lord direct your Hearts into the Love of God, and into the patient waiting for of Chriſt.

2. *Having delivered my Meſſage to the Reader in general, I have ſomewhat more particularly to ſay to you of this Place.*

You are a People that were born under, and bred up with the Goſpel. It hath been your ſingular Privilege, above many Towns and Pariſhes in England, *to enjoy more than ſixty Years together an able and fruitful Miniſtry among you. The Dews of Heaven lay upon you, as it did upon* Gideon's *Fleece, when the Ground was dry in other Places about you. You have been richly watered with Goſpel-Showers: You, with* Capernaum, *have been exalted to Heaven in the Means of Grace. And it muſt be owned to your Praiſe, that you teſtified more Reſpect to the Goſpel, than many other Places have done, and treated Chriſt's Ambaſſadors with more Civility, whilſt they prophеſied in Sackcloth, than ſome other Places did. Theſe things are praiſe-worthy in you. But all this, and much more than this, amounts not to that which Jeſus Chriſt expects from you, and which in his Name I would now perſwade you to. And O that I (the leaſt and unworthieſt of all the Meſſengers of Chriſt to you) might indeed prevail with all that are Chriſtleſs among you,* (1.) *To anſwer the long-continued Calls of God to you, by a thorough and ſound Converſion,* that the long-ſuffering of God may be your Salvation, *and you may not* receive all this Grace of God in vain. *O that the Damned might never be ſet a wondering, to ſee a People of your Advantages for Heaven, ſinking as much below many of themſelves in Miſery, as you now are above them in Means and Mercy.*

Dear Friends, my Heart's Deſire and Prayer to God for you is, that you may be ſaved. O that I knew how to engage this whole Town to Jeſus Chriſt, and make faſt the Marriage-knot betwixt him and you, albeit after that I ſhould preſently go to the place of Silence, and ſee Man no more, with the Inhabitants of the World. Ah Sirs, methinks I ſee the Lord Jeſus laying the merciful Hand of a Holy Violence upon you; methinks he calls to you, as the Angel *to* Lot, *ſaying,* Ariſe, leſt ye be conſumed: and while he lingred, the Men laid hold upon his hand, the Lord being merciful unto him. And they brought him without the City, and ſaid, Eſcape for thy Life, ſtay not in all the Plain; eſcape to the Mountain, leſt thou be conſumed, Gen. 19. 15. *How often (to allude to this) hath Jeſus Chriſt in like manner laid hold upon you in the Preaching of the Goſpel, and will you not fly for Refuge to him? Will you rather be conſumed than endeavour an eſcape? A Beaſt will not be driven into the Fire, and will not you be kept out? The merciful Lord Jeſus, by his admirable Patience and Bounty hath convinced you, how loth he is to leave or loſe you. To this Day his Arms are ſtretched forth to gather you, and will you not be gathered? Alas for my poor Neighbours! Muſt ſo many of them periſh at laſt? What ſhall I do for the Daughter of my People?*

Lord, by what Arguments ſhall they be perſwaded to be happy? What will win them effectually to thy Chriſt? They have many of them eſcaped the Pollutions of the World through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour. They are a People that love thine Ordinances, they take delight in approaching to God; thou haſt beautified many of them with lovely and obliging Tempers and Diſpoſitions. Thus far they are come, there they ſtick; and beyond this no Power but thine can move them. O thou to whoſe Hand this Work is, and muſt be left, put forth thy ſaving Power, and reveal thine Arm for their Salvation: Thou haſt glorified thy Name in many among them; Lord, glorify it again.

(2.) *My next Requeſt is, that you will all be perſwaded, whether Converted or Unconverted, to ſet up all the Duties of Religion in your Families, and govern your Children and Servants as Men that muſt give an Account to God for them in the great Day. O that there were not a Prayerleſs Family in this Town! How little will your Tables differ from a Manger, where Beaſts feed together, if God be not owned and acknowledged there, in your Eating and Drinking? And how can you expect Bleſſings ſhould dwell in your Tabernacles, if God be not called on there? Say not, you want Time for it, or that your Neceſſities will not allow it; for had you been more careful of thoſe Duties, it's like you had not been expoſed to ſuch Neceſſities: Beſides, you can find time to be idle, you can waſte a part of every Day vainly: Why could not that Time be redeemed for God? Moreover, you will not deny, but the Succeſs of all your Affairs at home and abroad depends upon the Bleſſing of God; and if ſo, think you it is not the right way, even to temporal Proſperity, to engage his Preſence and Bleſſing with you, in whoſe Hand your All is? Say not, your Children and Servants are ignorant of God, and therefore you cannot comfortably join with them in thoſe Duties; for the neglect of theſe Duties is the cauſe of their Ignorance; and it is not like they will be better, till you uſe God's means to make them ſo.*

Beſides, Prayer is a part of natural Worſhip, and the vileſt among Men are bound to pray, elſe the neglect of it were none of their Sin. O let not a Duty, upon which ſo many and great Bleſſings hang, fall to the Ground, upon ſuch ſilly (not to ſay wicked) pretences to ſhift it off. Remember, Death will ſhortly break up all your Families, and disband them; and who then, think you, will have moſt Comfort in beholding their Dead? The Day of Account alſo haſtens, and then who will have the moſt comfortable appearing before the Juſt and Holy God? Set up, I beſeech you, the ancient and comfortable Duties of reading the Scriptures, ſinging of Pſalms, and Prayer in all your dwelling-places; and do all theſe conſcientiouſly, as Men that

have

have to do with God; and try the Lord herewith, if he will not return in a way of Mercy to you, and reſtore even your outward Proſperity to you again. However, to be ſure, far greater Encouragements than that lie before you, to oblige you to your Duties.

3. *More eſpecially I have a few things to ſay to you, that have attended on the Miniſtry, or are under my overſight in a more particular manner, and then I have done. And,*

1*ſt*, *I cannot but with deep reſentments obſerve to you the Goodneſs of our God, yea, the Riches of his Goodneſs:*

Who freely gave Jeſus Chriſt out of his own Boſom for us, and hath not withheld his Spirit, Ordinances and Miniſters, to reveal and apply him to us. Here's Love that wants an Epithet to match it!

Who engaged my Heart upon this tranſcendent Subject in the courſe of my Miniſtry among you: A Subject which Angels ſtudy and admire as well as we.

Who ſo ſignally protected and overſhadowed our Aſſembly in thoſe Days of Trouble, wherein theſe Truths were delivered to you. You then ſate down under his Shadow with great delight, and his Fruit was ſweet to your Taſte. His Banner over you was Love; your Bread was then ſure, and your Waters failed not. Yea, ſuch was his peculiar Indulgence, and ſpecial Tenderneſs to you, that he ſuffered no Man to do you harm; and it can hardly be imagined any could attempt it, that had but known this, and no worſe than this, to be your only deſign and buſineſs.

Who made theſe Meditations of Chriſt a ſtrong Support, and ſweet Relief to mine, *now with Chriſt, and no leſs to me, under the greateſt Exerciſes and Trials that ever befel me in this World: Preſerving me yet (though a broken Veſſel) for ſome farther uſe and ſervice to your Souls.*

Who in the Years that are paſt left not himſelf without witneſs among us, bleſſing my Labours to the Converſion and Edification of many; ſome of which yet remain with us, but ſome are fallen aſleep.

Who hath made many of you that yet remain, a willing and obedient People, who have in ſome meaſure ſupported the Reputation of Religion by your Stability and Integrity in Days of abounding Iniquity; my Joy, and my Crown; ſo ſtand ye faſt in the Lord.

Who after all the Days of Fears and Troubles, through which we have paſt, hath at laſt given us and his Churches reſt; that we being delivered out of the hands of our Enemies, might ſerve him without Fear in Righteouſneſs and Holineſs (*which doing, this Mercy may be extended to us*) all the Days of our Life.

In Teſtimony of a thankful Heart for theſe invaluable Mercies, I humbly and cheerfully reer up this Pillar of Remembrance, inſcribing it with EBENEZER, *and* JEHOVAH JIREH.

2ly, *As I could not but obſerve theſe things to you, ſo I have a few things to requeſt of you, in neither of which I can bear a denial; ſo deeply doth Chriſt's, your own, and my Intereſt lie in them.*

(1.) *Look to it (my dear Friends) that none of you be found Chriſtleſs at your Appearance before him. Thoſe that continue Chriſtleſs now, will be left ſpeechleſs then. God forbid that you that have heard ſo much of Chriſt, and you that have profeſſed ſo much of Chriſt, ſhould at laſt fall into a worſe Condition than thoſe that never heard the Name of Chriſt.*

(2.) *See that you daily grow more Chriſt-like by converſing with him, as you do, in his precious Ordinances. Let it be with your Souls, as it is with a piece of Cloth, which receives a deeper Dye every Time it is dipt into a Fat. If not, you may not expect the continuance of your Mercies much longer to you.*

(3.) *Get theſe great Truths well digeſted both in your Heads and Hearts, and let the power of them be diſplayed in your Lives; elſe the Pen of the Scribe, and Tongue of the Preacher, are both in vain. Theſe things that ſo often warm'd your Hearts from the* Pulpit, *return now to make a ſecond Impreſſion upon them from the* Preſs. *Hereby you will recover and fix thoſe Truths, which it's like are in great part already vaniſh'd from you. This is the Fruit I promiſe my ſelf from you; and whatever Entertainment it meet with from others, in this Chriſt-deſpiſing Age, yet two things relieve me; one is, that future Times may produce more humble and hungry Chriſtians than this glutted Age enjoys, to whom it will be welcome: The other is, that Duty is diſcharged, and Endeavours uſed to bring Men to Chriſt, and build them up in him; wherein he doth and will rejoice, who is a Well-wiſher to the Souls of Men.*

Dabit poſterior ætas tractabiliores forte animas, mitiora pectora, quam noſtra habent ſecula. *Arſt. Prob.*

JOHN FLAVEL.

Ὑποτύποσις TOTIUS OPERIS.

Redemption hath Two Parts, *viz.* Meritorious IMPETRATION, *Part* I. and Efficacious APPLICATION, *Part* II. In the Impetration of it, after a Preliminary Commendation of the Subject, *Sermon* 1.
We therein consider,

- I. The Redeemer, who is considered Two ways, *viz.*
  - 1. As eternally delighting in his Father's Bosom. — *Serm.* 2.
  - 2. As prepared for this work by Five Eminent Qualifications, *viz.*
    - 1. His Covenant with his Father. — *Serm.* 3.
    - 2. His Father's Donation of him. — *Serm.* 4.
    - 3. His Assumption of our Nature. — *Serm.* 5.
    - 4. His Commission under the Great Seal. — *Serm.* 6.
    - 5. His Solemn Consecration to that Work. — *Serm.* 7.
- II. The Work of Mediation he came about, opened in general. — *Serm.* 8.
- III. The Offices fitting him for that Work, *viz.*
  - 1. *Prophet*, as such,
    - 1. Faithfully revealing God's Mind to Men. — *Serm.* 9.
    - 2. Opening their Understandings to receive it. — *Serm.* 10.
  - 2. *Priest*, in which Office are considerable,
    - 1. Its general Nature and Necessity. — *Serm.* 11.
    - 2. Its Parts, *viz.*
      - 1. Oblation. — *Serm.* 12.
      - 2. Intercession. — *Serm.* 13.
    - 3. Its Fruits, *viz.*
      - 1. Satisfaction. — *Serm.* 14.
      - 2. Acquisition. — *Serm.* 15.
  - 3. *King*, whose Kingdom is either,
    - 1. Internal and Spiritual. — *Serm.* 16.
    - 2. External and Providential. — *Serm.* 17.
- IV. The Execution of them in his double state, *viz.* of,
  - 1. Humiliation, *viz.* in his,
    - 1. Conception and Birth. — *Serm.* 18.
    - 2. Life and Conversation. — *Serm.* 19.
    - 3. Death, wherein we consider,
      - 1. The Preparatives to it, by,
        - 1. Blessing his Family. — *Serm.* 20.
        - 2. Instituting his Supper. — *Serm.* 21.
        - 3. Prayer in the Garden. — *Serm.* 22.
        - 4. *Judas* his Treason. — *Serm.* 23.
        - 5. Trial and Sentence. — *Serm.* 24.
        - 6. Going to *Golgotha*. — *Serm.* 25.
      - 2. Execution of it on the Cross. — *Serm.* 26.
      - 3. The manner of his Suffering it, *viz.*
        - 1. Innocently. — *Serm.* 27.
        - 2. Solitarily. — *Serm.* 28.
        - 3. Patiently. — *Serm.* 29.
        - 4. Instructively in his seven last Words, *viz.*
          - 1. Word. — *Serm.* 30.
          - 2. Word. — *Serm.* 31.
          - 3. Word. — *Serm.* 32.
          - 4. Word. — *Serm.* 33.
          - 5. Word. — *Serm.* 34.
          - 6. Word. — *Serm.* 35.
          - 7. Word. — *Serm.* 36.
        - 4. Burial. — *Serm.* 37.

      In all which, among many others, four great and principal Ends were accomplished. — *Serm.* 38.
  - 2. Exaltation in the Four famous Steps or Degrees thereof, *viz.*
    - 1. His Wonderful Resurrection. — *Serm.* 39.
    - 2. His Triumphant Ascension. — *Serm.* 40.
    - 3. His Session at God's Right Hand. — *Serm.* 41.
    - 4. His Coming to Judgment. — *Serm.* 42.

The

The Fountain of Life.

SERMON I.

Opens the Excellency of the Subject.

1 COR. ii. 11.

For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

THE former Verse contains an Apology for the plain and familiar Manner of the Apostle's Preaching, which was not (as he there tells them) with Excellency of Speech, or of Wisdom, *i. e.* he studied not to gratify their Curiosity with Rhetorical Strains, or Philosophical Niceties. In this he gives the Reason;

Non τεχνολογεῖ sed θεολογεῖν.

For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, &c.

I determined not to know.] The Meaning is not, that he simply despised, or contemned, all other Studies and Knowledge; but so far only as they stand in Competition with, or Opposition to, the Study and Knowledge of Jesus Christ. And it is, as if he should say, It is my stated settled Judgment, not a hasty inconsiderate Censure; but the Product and Issue of my most serious and exquisite Enquiries. After I have well weigh'd the Case, turn'd it round, and view'd it exactly on every Side, ballanced all Advantages and Disadvantages, pondered all Things that are fit to come into Consideration about it, this is the Result and final Determination, that all other Knowledge, how profitable, how pleasant soever, is not worthy to be named in the same Day with the Knowledge of Jesus Christ. This, therefore, I resolve to make the Scope and End of my Ministry, and the End regulates the Means. Such pedantick Toys, and airy Notions, as injudicious Ears affect, would rather obstruct than promote my grand Design among you: Therefore wholly waving that Way, I applied my self to a plain, popular, unaffected Dialect, fitted rather to pierce the Heart, and convince the Conscience, than to tickle the Fancy. This is the Scope of the Words, in which three Things fall under Consideration.

Ἐκεῖνα significat æstimare, aut eximium ducere; *in hoc autem non temnit, nec damnat omnem aliam scientiam, nisi ut opponitur scientiæ Christi, &c. Wall.*

First, The Subject-matter of his Doctrine, to wit, *Jesus Christ*. *I determined to know nothing*, i. e. to study nothing my self, to teach nothing to you, but *Jesus Christ*. Christ shall be the Center to which all the Lines of my Ministry shall be drawn. I have spoken and written of many other Subjects in my Sermons and Epistles, but it is all *reductively* the Preaching and Discovery of Jesus Christ: Of all Subjects in the World this is the sweetest: If there be any thing on this side Heaven worthy our Time and Studies, this is it. Thus he magnifies his Doctrine, from the Excellency of its Subject-matter, accounting all other Doctrines but airy Things, compared with this.

Secondly, We have here *that special Respect or Consideration of Christ*, which he singled out from all the rest of the excellent Truths of Christ, to spend the main Strength of his Ministry upon; and that is, *Christ as crucified:* And the rather, because hereby he would obviate the vulgar Prejudice raised against him upon the Account of his Cross: For *Christ crucified was to the* Jews *a Stumbling-block, and to the* Greeks *Foolishness*, Chap. 1. 23. This also best suited his End, to draw them on to Christ: As Christ above all other Subjects, so Christ crucified above all things in Christ. There is therefore a great Emphasis in this Word, *And him crucified.*

Vehementem habet ἐμφασιν quod adjecit, & hunc crucifixum. *Pet. Mart. in loc.*

Thirdly, The Manner in which he discoursed this transcendent Subject to them is also remarkable: He not only preached Christ crucified, but he preached him assiduously and plainly: He preached Christ frequently; and when ever he preached of Christ crucified, he preach'd him in a crucified Style. This is the Sum of the Words; to let them know that his Spirit was so intent upon this Subject, as if he neither knew or cared to speak of any other: All his Sermons were so full of Christ, that his Hearers might have thought he was acquainted with no other Doctrine. Hence observe,

Christum crucifixum stylo crucifixo prædicabat.

Doct. *That there is no Doctrine more excellent in it self, or more necessary to be preached and studied, than the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*

All other Knowledge, how much soever it be magnified in the World, is and ought to be esteemed but Dross, in comparison of the Excellency of the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, *Phil.* 3. 8. *In him are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge*, Col. 2. 3.

Eudoxus was so affected with the Glory of the Sun, that he thought he was born only to behold it: Much more should a Christian judge himself born only to behold and delight in the Glory of the Lord Jesus.

The Truth of this Proposition will be made out by a double Consideration of the Doctrine of Christ.

First, Let it be considered *absolutely*, and then these lovely Properties with which it is naturally clothed, will render it superior to all other Sciences and Studies.

Qui scientiam secularem præponit studio aut cognitioni huic sacræ, is thesauro quisquilias præfert. *Daven. in Col.* 2. *v.* 3.

1. The Knowledge of Jesus Christ is the very Marrow and Kernel of all the Scriptures; The Scope and Center of all Divine Revelations: Both Testaments meet in Christ. The Ceremonial Law is full of Christ, and all the Gospel full of Christ: The blessed Lines of both Testaments meet in him; and how they both harmonize, and sweetly concenter in Jesus Christ, it is the chief Scope of that excellent *Epistle to the Hebrews*, to discover; for we may call that *Epistle* the sweet Harmony of both Testaments. This argues the unspeakable Excellency of this Doctrine, the Knowledge whereof must needs therefore be a Key to unlock the greatest Part of the sacred Scriptures: For it is in the Understanding of Scripture, much as it is in the Knowledge Men have in Logick and Philosophy. If a Scholar once come to understand the bottom Principle, upon which, as upon its Hinge, the Controversy turns, the true Knowledge of that Principle shall carry him through the whole Controversy, and furnish him with a Solution to every Argument: Even so the right Knowledge of Jesus Christ, like a Clew, leads you thro' the whole Labyrinth of the Scriptures.

2. The Knowledge of Jesus Christ is a *fundamental Knowledge*; and Foundations are most useful, tho' least seen: The Knowledge of Christ is fundamental to all *Graces*, *Duties*, *Comforts* and *Happiness*.

(1.) It's fundamental to all Graces: They all begin in Knowledge; *Col.* 3. 10. *The new Man is renewed in Knowledge.* As the old, so the new Creation, begins in Light; the opening of the Eyes is the first Work of the Spirit. And as the Beginnings of Grace, so all the after Improvements thereof depend upon this increasing Knowledge; 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. *But grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour.* See how these two, Grace and Knowledge, keep equal Pace in the Soul of a Christian; in what Degree the one increases, the other increases answerably.

(2.) The Knowledge of Christ is fundamental to all Duties: The Duties, as well as Graces of Christians, are all founded in the Knowledge of Christ. Must a Christian believe? That he can never do without the Knowledge of Christ. Faith is so much dependent upon his Knowledge, that it is denominated by it, *Isa.* 53. 11. *By his Knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many*: And hence, *Joh.* 6. 40. Seeing and Believing are made the same thing. Would a Man exercise Hope in God? That he can never do without the Knowledge of Christ; for he is the Author of that Hope, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. He is also its Object, *Heb.* 6. 19. its Ground-work and Support, *Col.* 1. 27. And as you cannot believe or hope, so neither can you pray acceptably, without a competent Degree of this Knowledge. The very Heathen could say, *Non loquendum de Deo sine lumine*, (i. e.) Men must not speak of God without Light: The true Way of conversing with, and enjoying God in Prayer, is by acting Faith on him through a Mediator: So much of Faith and Christ as is in a Duty, so much Comfort and true Excellency there is in it, and no more. O then how indispensable is the Knowledge of Christ to all that do address themselves to God in any Duty!

(3.) It's fundamental to all Comforts; all the Comforts of Believers are Streams from this Fountain. Jesus Christ is the very Object-matter of a Believer's Joy, *Phil.* 3. 3. *Our Rejoicing is in Christ Jesus*: Take away the Knowledge of Christ, and a Christian is the most sad and melancholy Creature in the World. Again, let Christ but manifest himself, and dart the Beams of his Light into their Souls, it will make them kiss the Stakes, sing in Flames, and shout in the Pangs of Death, as Men that divide the Spoil.

Lastly, This Knowledge is fundamental to the eternal Happiness of Souls: As we can perform no Duty, enjoy no Comfort, so neither can we be saved without it. *John* 17. 3. *This is Life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* And if it be eternal Life to know Christ; then it is eternal Damnation to be ignorant of Christ: As *Christ* is the *Door* that opens Heaven, so *Knowledge* is the *Key* that opens Christ. The excellent Gifts, and renowned Parts of the Moral *Heathens*, tho' they purchased to them great Esteem and Honour among Men, yet left them in a State of Perdition, because of this grand Defect: They were ignorant of Christ, 1 *Cor.* 1. 21. Thus you see how fundamental the Knowledge of Christ is, and essentially necessary to all the Graces, Duties, Comforts, and Happiness of Souls.

3. The Knowledge of Christ is profound and large: All other Sciences are but Shallows; this, a boundless, bottomless Ocean: No Creature hath a Line long enough to fathom the Depth of it: There is Height, Length, Depth, and Breadth ascribed to it, *Eph.* 3. 14. yea, it passeth Knowledge: There is *a manifold Wisdom of God in Christ*, Eph. 3. 10. It is of many Sorts and Forms, of many Folds and Plights: It is indeed simple, pure and unmix'd with any Thing but it self, yet it is manifold in Degrees, Kinds, and Administrations. Tho' something of Christ be unfolded in one Age, and something in another, yet Eternity it self cannot fully unfold him. I see something (said *Luther*) which blessed *Austin* saw not; and those that come after me, will see that which I see not. It is in the studying of Christ, as in the planting of a new discovered Country; at first Men sit down by the Sea-side, upon the Skirts and Borders of the Land, and there they dwell; but by Degrees they search farther and farther, into the Heart of the Country: Ah, the best of us are yet but upon the Borders of this vast Continent!

Πολυποίκιλος σοφία θεοῦ. multiformis sapientia Dei, *Car. in Job.* 11. 6.

4. The Study of Jesus Christ is the most noble Subject that ever a Soul spent it self upon, those that rack and torture their Brains upon other Studies, like Children, weary themselves at a low Game: The Eagle plays at the Sun it self; the Angels study this Doctrine, and stoop down to look into this deep Abyss: What are the Truths discovered in Christ, but the very Secrets that from Eternity lay hid in the Bosom of God? *Eph.* 3. 8, 9. God's Heart is opened to Men in Christ, *John* 1. 18. This makes the Gospel such a glorious Dispensation, because Christ is so gloriously revealed therein, 2 *Cor.* 3. 9. and the studying of Christ in the Gospel, stamps such a Heavenly Glory upon the contemplating Soul, *ver.* 18.

5. If

nnis cog-
o tuæ ve-
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& amœ-
ma eti-
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ue ſeſe
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ntimis
etralibus
onditam
id te ha-
, multiſq;
is, & repagulis clauſam? *Brightman in Cant.*

5. It is the moſt ſweet and comfortable Knowledge; to be ſtudying Jeſus Chriſt, what is it, but to be digging among all the Veins and Springs of Comfort? And the deeper you dig, the more do thoſe Springs flow upon you. How are Hearts raviſhed with the Diſcoveries of Chriſt in the Goſpel? What Extaſies, Meltings, Tranſports, do gracious Souls meet there? Doubtleſs, *Philip*'s Extaſy, *John* 1. 45. Εὑρήκαμεν Ιησοῦν, *We have found Jeſus!* was far beyond that of *Archimedes*. A Believer could ſit from Morning to Night, to hear Diſcourſes of Chriſt; *his Mouth is moſt ſweet*, Cant. 5. 16.

Secondly, Let us compare this Knowledge with all her Knowledge, and thereby the Excellency of it ill further appear.

Firſt, All other Knowledge is natural, but this holly ſupernatural; *Matth.* 11. 27. *No Man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any the Father, ſave the Son; and he to whomſoever the Son will reveal him.* The wiſeſt *Heathens* could never make a diſcovery of Chriſt by their deepeſt Searches into Nature; the moſt eagle-ey'd Philoſophers were but Children in Knowledge, compared with the moſt illiterate Chriſtians.

Secondly, Other Knowledge is unattainable by many: All the Helps and Means in the World would never enable ſome Chriſtians to attain the learned Arts and Languages: Men of the beſt Wits, and moſt pregnant Parts, are moſt excellent in theſe; but here is the Myſtery and Excellency of the Knowledge of Chriſt, that Men of moſt blunt, dull, and contemptible Parts, attain (thro' the Teaching of the Spirit) to this Knowledge, in which the more acute and ingenious are utterly blind. *Matth.* 11. 25. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou haſt hid theſe Things from the Wiſe and Prudent, and haſt revealed them unto Babes.* 1 Cor. 1. 26, 27. *You ſee your Calling, Brethren, how that not many wiſe Men after the Fleſh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath choſen the fooliſh Things of the World to confound the wiſe*, &c.

Thirdly, Other Knowledge, tho' you ſhould attain the higheſt Degree of it, would never bring you to Heaven, being defective and lame, both in the *Integrity of Parts*, the principal Thing, *viz.* Chriſt, being wanting, and in the *Purity of its Nature*: For the knowing *Heathens* grew vain in their Imaginations, *Rom.* 1. 21. and in the *Efficacy* and *Influence* of it on the Heart and Life, *They held the Truth in Unrighteouſneſs*: Their Luſts were ſtronger than their Light, *Rom.* 1. 18. But this Knowledge hath potent Influences, changing Souls into its own Image, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. and ſo proves a ſaving Knowledge unto Men, 1 *Tim.* 2. 4. And thus I have, in a few Particulars, pointed out the Tranſcendency of the Knowledge of Chriſt.

The Uſe of all this I ſhall give you in a few Inferences, on which I ſhall not enlarge, the whole being only preliminary to the Doctrine of Chriſt; only for the preſent I ſhall hence infer,

Inference 1.

The Sufficiency of the Doctrine of Chriſt, to make Men wiſe unto Salvation. *Paul* deſired to know nothing elſe, and indeed nothing elſe is of abſolute Neceſſity to be known: A little of this Knowledge (if ſaving and effectual upon thy Heart) will do thy Soul more Service than all the vain Speculations, and profound Parts that others ſo much glory in. Poor Chriſtian, be not dejected, becauſe thou ſeeſt thy ſelf out-ſtript, and excell'd by ſo many in other Parts of Knowledge: If thou know Jeſus Chriſt, thou knoweſt enough to comfort and ſave thy Soul. Many learned Philoſophers are now in Hell, and many illiterate Chriſtians in Heaven.

Plene ſapit, qui evangelium didicit; prorſus inſanit, qui cognitionem ſalutarem alibi quærit; hic enim omnes Theſauri, *Dan. in Col.*

Inference 2.

If there be ſuch Excellency in the Knowledge of Chriſt, let it humble all, both Saints and Sinners, that we have no more of this clear and effectual Knowledge in us, notwithſtanding the excellent Advantages we have had for it. Sinners, concerning you I may ſigh, and ſay with the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 15. 34. *Some have not the Knowledge of Chriſt, I ſpeak this to your Shame.* This, O this is the Condemnation; and even for you that are enlightned in this Knowledge, how little do you know of *Jeſus Chriſt*, in compariſon of what you might have known of him? What a Shame is it, that you ſhould need to be taught the very firſt Truths, *when for the Time you might have been Teachers of others?* Heb. 5. 12, 13, 14. That your Miniſters cannot ſpeak unto you as ſpiritual, *but as unto carnal, even as unto Babes in Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 3. 1, 2. O how much Time is ſpent in other Studies, in vain Diſcourſes, frivolous Pamphlets, worldly Employments? How little in the Search and Study of Jeſus Chriſt?

Inference 3.

How ſad is their Condition, that have a Knowledge of Chriſt, and yet, as to themſelves, it had been better they had never had it! Many there be that content themſelves with an unpractical, ineffectual, and meerly notional Knowledge of him; of whom the Apoſtle ſaith, *It had been better for them not to have known*, 2 Pet. 2. 21. it ſerves only to aggravate Sin and Miſery: For though it be not enough to ſave them, yet it puts ſome weak Reſtraints upon Sin, which their impetuous Luſts breaking down, expoſes them thereby to a greater Damnation.

Vid. Zanch. in Eph. 4. p. 161. de duplici cognitione Chriſti.

Inference 4.

Fourthly, This may inform us by what Rule to judge both Miniſters and Doctrines; certainly that is the higheſt Commendation of a Miniſter, to be an able Miniſter of the New Teſtament; not of the Letter, but of the Spirit, 2 *Cor.* 3. 6. He is the beſt Artiſt, that can moſt livelily and powerfully diſplay Jeſus Chriſt before the People, evidently ſetting him forth as crucified among them; and that is the beſt Sermon that is moſt full of Chriſt, not of Art and Language. I know that a holy Dialect well becometh Chriſt's Miniſters; they ſhould not be rude and careleſs in Language or Method: But ſurely the Excellency of a Sermon lies not in that, but in the plaineſt Diſcoveries, and livelieſt Applications of Jeſus Chriſt.

Inference 5.

Let all that mind the Honour of Religion, or the Peace and Comfort of their own Souls, wholly ſequeſter and apply themſelves to the Study of Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified. Wherefore ſpend we our ſelves upon other Studies, when all Excellency, Sweetneſs and Deſireableneſs is concenter'd in this one? Jeſus Chriſt is fairer than the Children of Men, the chieſeſt among ten Thouſands; *as the Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood*; *Quæ facium diviſa beatum*,

beatum, in hoc mixta fluunt; these things which singly ravish and delight the Souls of Men, are all found conjunctly in Christ. O what a blessed Christ is this! whom to know is eternal Life. From the Knowledge of Jesus Christ do bud forth all the Fruits of Comfort, and that for all Seasons and Conditions. Hence *Rev.* 22. 2. he is call'd *the Tree of Life, which bears twelve manner of Fruits, and yields its Fruit every Month, and the very Leaves of this Tree are for Healing.* In Christ Souls have, (1.) All Necessaries for Food and Physick. (2.) All Varieties of Fruits, twelve manner of Fruits, a distinct Sweetness in this, in that, and in the other Attribute, Promise, Ordinance. (3.) In him are these Fruits at all times, he bears Fruit every Month; there is precious Fruit in Jesus Christ, even in the black Month; Winter Fruits as well as Summer Fruits. O then study Christ, study to know him more *extensively*. There be many excellent Things in Christ, that the most eagle-ey'd Believer hath not yet seen: Ah 'tis Pity, that any thing of Christ should lie hid from his People! Study to know Christ more *intensively*, to get the experimental Taste, and lively Power of his Knowledge upon your Hearts and Affections: This is the Knowledge that carries all the Sweetness and Comfort in it. Christian, I dare appeal to thy Experience, whether the Experimental Taste of Jesus Christ in Ordinances and Duties have not a higher and sweeter Relish than any created Enjoyment thou ever tasted in this World? O then separate, devote and wholly give thy self, thy Time, thy Strength, to this most sweet transcendent Study.

I am sure (saith a holy one) the Saints at their best are but Strangers to the Weight and Worth of the incomparable Sweetness of Christ: He is so new, so fresh in Excellency every Day, to those that search more and more into him, as if Heaven could furnish as many new Christs (if I may so speak) as there are Days betwixt him and us; and yet he is one and the same still: O we love an unknown Lover, when we love Christ!

Inference 6.

Lastly, Let me close the whole with a double Caution, one to our selves, who by our Callings and Professions are the Ministers of Christ; another to those that sit under the Doctrine of Christ daily.

First, If this Doctrine be the most excellent, necessary, fundamental, profound, noble, and comfortable Doctrine, let us then take heed, lest while we study to be exact in other things, we be found ignorant in this. Ye know it's ignominious, by the common Suffrage of the civiliz'd World, for any Man to be unacquainted with his own Calling, or not to intend the proper Business of it. It's our Calling, (as the Bridegroom's Friends) to woo and win Souls to Christ, to set him forth to the People, as crucified among them, *Gal.* 3. 1. to present him in all his attractive Excellencies, that all Hearts may be ravished with his Beauty, and charmed into his Arms by Love: We must also be able to defend the Truths of Christ against undermining Hereticks, to instil his Knowledge into the Ignorant, to answer the Cases and Scruples of poor doubting Christians. How many intricate Knots have we to untie? What Pains, what Skill is requisite for such as are employed about our Work! And shall we spend our precious Time in frivolous Controversies, philosophical Niceties, dry and barren scholastick Notions? Shall we study every Thing but Christ? Revolve all Volumes but the sacred ones! What is observed even of *Bellarmin*, that he turn'd with Loathing from School-Divinity, because it wanted the sweet Juice of Piety, may be convictive to many among us, who are often too much in love with worse Imployment than what he is said to loath. O let the Knowledge of Christ dwell richly in us!

Secondly, Let us see that our Knowledge of Christ be not a powerless, barren, impracticable Knowledge: O that in its Passage from our Understandings to our Lips it might powerfully melt, sweeten, and ravish our Hearts! Remember, Brethren, a holy Calling never saved any Man, without a holy Heart: If our Tongues only be *sanctified*, our whole Man must be *damned*. "We and our People "must be judg'd by the same Gospel, and stand at "the same Bar, and be sentenc'd on the same "Terms, and dealt with as severely as any other "Men: We cannot think to be saved by our Cler-"gy, or to come off with a *Legit ut* "*Clericus*, when there is wanting the "*Credidit, & vixit ut Christianus*;" as an eminent Divine speaks. O let the Keepers of the Vineyards look to, and keep their own Vineyard. We have a Heaven to win or lose as well as others.

Gildas Salvianus, *p.* 27.

Thirdly, Let us take heed that we with-hold not our Knowledge of Christ in Unrighteousness from the People. O that our Lips may disperse Knowledge, and feed many! Let us take heed of the Napkin, remembring the Day of Account is at Hand. Remember, I beseech you, the *Relations* wherein you stand, and the Obligations resulting thence: Remember the great Shepherd gave himself for, and gave you to, the Flock; your Time, your Gifts, are not yours but God's. Remember the pinching Wants of Souls, who are perishing for want of Christ; and if their Tongues do not, yet their Necessities do bespeak us, as they did *Joseph*, Gen. 47. 15. *Wherefore should we die in thy Presence? give us Food, that we may live, and not die.* Even the Sea-Monsters draw forth their Breasts to their young ones, and shall we be cruel! cruel to Souls! Did Christ think it not too much to sweat Blood, yea to die for them? and shall we think it much to watch, study, preach, pray, and do what we can for their Salvation? O let the same Mind be in you which was also in Christ!

We may apply to Ministers, what Tacitus speaks of Magistrates; Ita nati estis, ut bona malaq; vestra ad rempubl. pertineant. *Tacit. Anal. lib.* 4.

Secondly, To the People that sit under the Doctrine of Christ daily, and have the Light of his Knowledge shining round about them.

First, Take heed ye do not reject and despise this Light. This may be done two Ways: First, When you despise the Means of Knowledge by slight and low Esteems of it. Surely, if you thus reject Knowledge, God will reject you for it, *Hosea* 4. 6. It is a Despising of the richest Gift that ever Christ gave to the Church: and however it be a Contempt and Slight, that begins low, and seems only to vent it self upon the weak Parts, inartificial Discourses, and untaking Tones and Gestures of the Speakers; yet (believe it) it's a daring Sin, that flies higher than you are aware; *Luke* 10. 6. *He that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.* *Secondly*, You despise the Knowledge of Christ

Cavete ne germinante indies arbore scientiæ, sola sterilescat arbor vitæ; cavete ne donis spiritus contenti, donum spiritum nihili æstimetis. *S. Ford. amb. Sacr. p.* 35.

Peritum esse, & sine Doctrina pietatis periturum. *Aug.*

Melius est ut nos reprehendant grammatici, quàm ut non intelligant populi—non quanta eloquentia, sed quanta evidentia; non rhetoricè sed Apostolicè; non diserta, sed fortia. Quod à studiis scholasticæ theologiæ averteretur fere nauseabundus, quoniam succo carebant liquidæ pietatis. *Fuligat. in vita Bel.*

Chriſt, when you deſpiſe the Directions, and loving Conſtraints of that Knowledge; when you refuſe to be guided by your Knowledge, your Light and your Luſts conteſt and ſtruggle within you: O 'tis ſad when your Luſts maſter your Light; you ſin not as the Heathens ſin, who know not God; but when you ſin, you muſt ſlight and put by the Notices of your own Conſciences, and offer Violence to your own Convictions; and what ſad Work will this make in your Souls? How ſoon will it lay your Conſciences waſte?

Secondly, Take heed that you reſt not ſatisfied with that Knowledge of Chriſt you have attained, but grow on towards Perfection. It's the Pride and Ignorance of many Profeſſors, when they have got a few raw and indigeſted Notions, to ſwell with Self-conceits of their excellent Attainments: And it's the Sin even of the beſt of Saints, when they ſee (*veritas in profundo*) how deep the Knowledge of Chriſt lies, and what Pains they muſt take to dig for it, to throw by the Shovel of Duty, and cry, *Dig we cannot.* To your Work, Chriſtians, to your Work; let not your Candle go out, ſequeſter your ſelves to this Study; look what Intercourſes and Correſpondences are betwixt the two Worlds; what Communion ſoever God and Souls maintain, it is in this way: Count all therefore but Droſs, in compariſon of that Excellency which is in the Knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt.

SERMON II.

Sets forth Chriſt in his Eſſential and Primeval Glory.

PROV. VIII. 30.

Then was I by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his Delight, rejoicing always before him.

THeſe Words are a Part of that excellent Commendation of Wiſdom, by which in this Book *Solomon* intends two things, *Firſt*, Grace, or Holineſs, *Prov.* 4. 7. *Wiſdom is the principal thing*; *Secondly*, *Jeſus Chriſt*, the Fountain of that Grace: And look as the former is renown'd for its Excellency, *Job* 28. 14, 15. ſo the latter in this Context, wherein the Spirit of God deſcribes the moſt bleſſed State of Jeſus Chriſt, the Wiſdom of the Father, from thoſe eternal Delights he had with his Father, before his Aſſumption of our Nature: *Then was I by him, &c.* that long *ævum* was wholly ſwallowed up and ſpent in unſpeakable Delights and Pleaſures. Which Delights were two-fold, (1.) The Father and Son delighted one in another, (from which Delights the Spirit is not here excluded) without communicating that their Joy to any other, for no Creature did then exiſt ſave in the Mind of God, *ver.* 30. (2.) They delighted in the Salvation of Men, in the Proſpect of that Work, tho' not yet extant, *ver.* 31. My preſent Buſineſs lies in the former, *viz.* the mutual Delights of the Father and Son, one with and in another: The Account whereof we have in the Text: Wherein conſider,

1. The glorious Condition of the non-incarnated Son of God, deſcribed by the Perſon with whom his Fellowſhip was, *then was I by him*, or with him; ſo with him, as never was any, in his very Boſom, *John* 1. 18. the only begotten Son was in the Boſom of the Father; an Expreſſion of the greateſt Dearneſs and Intimacy in the World: As if he ſhould ſay, wrapt up in the very Soul of his Father, emboſomed in God.

2. This Fellowſhip is illuſtrated by a Metaphor, wherein the Lord will ſtoop to our Capacities, [as *one brought up with him*] the *Hebrew* word אָמוֹן is ſometimes rendred a cunning Workman, or curious Artiſt, as in *Cant.* 7. 1. which is the ſame Word. And indeed Chriſt ſhewed himſelf ſuch an Artiſt in the Creation of the World; *for all things were made by him, and without him there was nothing made, that was made*, Joh. 1. 3. but *Montanus*, and others, render it *nutritius*, and ſo Chriſt is here compared to a delightful Child, ſporting before its Father: The *Hebrew* Root שָׁחַק which our Tranſlation renders *rejoicing before him*, ſignifies to laugh, play, or rejoice; ſo that look as Parents delight to ſee their Children ſporting before them, ſo did the Father delight in beholding this Darling of his Boſom.

3. This Delight is farther amplified by the Perpetuity and Uninterruptedneſs thereof; *I was day by day his Delights, rejoicing always before him*: Theſe Delights of the Father and the Son one in another, knew not a Moment's Interruption or Diminution: Thus did theſe great and glorious Perſons mutually let forth their fulleſt Pleaſure and Delight each into the Heart of other: They lay as it were imboſomed one in another, entertaining themſelves with Delights and Pleaſures ineffable, and unconceivable. Hence we obſerve,

יוֹם יוֹם מְשַׂחֶקֶת
Die, die ludens.

Doct. *That the Condition and State of Jeſus Chriſt before his Incarnation, was a State of higheſt and moſt unſpeakable Delight and Pleaſure, in the Enjoyment of his Father.*

John tells us, he was in the Boſom of his Father: To lie in the Boſom is the Poſture of deareſt Love, *John* 13. 23. *Now there was leaning on Jeſus Boſom one of his Diſciples, whom Jeſus loved*: But Chriſt did not lean upon the Father's Boſom, as that Diſciple did on his, but lay in it: And therefore in *Iſa.* 42. 1. *The Father calls him mine elect, in whom my Soul delighteth*, which is * variouſly render'd; the Septuagint, *quem*

אָמוֹן fidelem artificem ſignificat; placuit hoc nomen ſibi aſſumere, ut declararet tandem converſionem cordis non à ſeipſis proficiſci, ſed ab hoc fideli artifice. *Brightman in Cant.* 126. Ridere, שָׂחַק ludere, lætari, *ἀνθρωποπρεπῶς*, ſimilem ſe fecit nutritio, ſtanti apud patrem. *Lavat. in loc.*

John 1. 18. Metaphorice intima communio filii Dei cum patre innuitur, quæ conſiſtit in æterna generatione, tum in arctiſſima unitate naturæ, tum in ardentiſſima *dilectione*, denique in ſecretiſſimorum communicatione. *Claſſ.*

* *Hieron.* Quem approbat: *Pagn. & Mont.* complacuit animæ meæ. *Sept.* quem ſuſcepit anima mea.

ſuſcepit;

Suſcepit, whom my Soul takes, or wraps up: Others, *complacuit*, one that highly pleaſes and delights my very Soul: And 2 *Cor.* 8. 9. he is ſaid in this Eſtate, wherein I am now deſcribing him, to be *rich:* And *Phil.* 2. 7. *To be equal with God, and to be in the Form of God*, (i. e.) to have all the Glory and Enſigns of the Majeſty of God; and the Riches which he ſpeaks of, was no leſs than all that God the Father hath, *John* 16. 15. *All that the Father hath is mine:* And what he now hath in this his exalted State, is the ſame he had before his Humiliation, *Joh.* 17. 5. Now to glimpſe out (as we are able) the unſpeakable Felicity of that State of Chriſt, whilſt he lay in that bleſſed Boſom, I ſhall conſider it three ways, *Negatively*, *Poſitively*, and *Comparatively*.

1. Let us conſider that State *Negatively*, by removing from it all thoſe Degrees of Abaſement and Sorrow, which his Incarnation brought him under: As,

Firſt, He was not then abaſed to the Condition of a Creature, which was a low Stoop indeed, and that which upon the matter undid him, in point of Reputation; for by this (ſaith the Apoſtle) *he made himſelf of no Reputation*, Phil. 2. 7. it emptied him of his Glory: For God to be made Man, is ſuch an Abaſement as none can expreſs: But then not only to appear in true Fleſh, but alſo in the Likeneſs of ſinful Fleſh, as *Rom.* 8. 3. O what is this!

Secondly, Chriſt was not under the Law in this Eſtate.. I confeſs it was no Diſparagement to *Adam*, in the State of Innocency, to Angels in their State of Glory, to be under Law to God; but it was an unconceivable Abaſement to the abſolute independent Being to come under Law; yea, not only under the Obedience, but alſo under the Malediction and Curſe of the Law, *Gal.* 4. 4. *But when the Fullneſs of Time was come, God ſent forth his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law.*

Thirdly, In this State he was not liable to any of thoſe ſorrowful Conſequents and Attendants of that frail and feeble State of Humanity, which he afterwards aſſumed, with the Nature: as, (1.) He was unacquainted with Griefs; there was no Sorrowing nor Sighing in that Boſom where he lay; tho' afterwards he became *a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief*, Iſa. 53. 3. *a Man of Sorrows*, as if he had been conſtituted and made up of pure and unmixed Sorrows: Every Day converſing with Griefs, as with his intimate Companions and Acquaintance. (2.) He was never pinched with Poverty and Wants, while he continued in that Boſom, as he was afterwards, when he ſaid, *The Foxes have Holes, and the Birds of the Air have Neſts, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his Head*, Mat. 8. 20. Ah bleſſed Jeſus! thou needeſt not to have wanted a Place to have lain thine Head, hadſt thou not left that Boſom for my ſake. (3.) He never underwent Reproach and Shame in that Boſom, there was nothing but Glory and Honour reflected upon him by his Father, tho' afterwards he was deſpiſed and rejected of Men, *Iſa.* 53. 3. his Father never looked upon him without Smiles and Love, Delight and Joy, tho' afterwards he became a Reproach of Men, and deſpiſed of the People, *Pſal.* 22. 6. (4.) His holy Heart was never offended with an impure Suggeſtion or Temptation of the Devil; all the while he lay in that Boſom of Peace and Love, he never knew what it was to be aſſaulted with Temptations, to be beſieged and batter'd upon by unclean Spirits, as he did afterwards, *Matth.* 4. 1. *Then was Jeſus led up of the Spirit into the Wilderneſs, to be tempted of the Devil.* It was for our ſakes that he ſubmitted to thoſe Exerciſes of Spirit, *to be in all points tempted like as we are, that he might be unto us a merciful and faithful High-Prieſt*, Heb. 4. 14. (5.) He was never ſenſible of Pains and Tortures in Soul or Body, there were no ſuch things in that bleſſed Boſom where he lay; tho' afterwards he groan'd and ſweat under them, *Iſa.* 53. 5. The Lord embraced him from Eternity, but never wounded him till he ſtood in our Place and Room. (6.) There were no Hidings or Withdrawments of his Father from him, there was not a Cloud from Eternity upon the Face of God, till *Jeſus Chriſt* had left that Boſom: It was a new Thing to Chriſt to ſee Frowns in the Face of his Father; a new thing for him to cry, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Matth. 27. 46. (7.) There were never any Impreſſions of his Father's Wrath upon him, as there were afterwards: God never delivered ſuch a bitter Cup of Wrath into his Hands before, as that was, *Matth.* 26. 39. Laſtly, There was no Death, to which he was ſubject, in that Boſom. All theſe things were new things to Chriſt, he was above them all, till for our ſakes he voluntarily ſubjected himſelf unto them. Thus you ſee what that State was not.

2. Let us conſider it *poſitively*, what it was, and gueſs by ſome particular Conſiderations, (for indeed we can but gueſs) at the Glory of it: As, (1.) We cannot but conceive it to be a State of matchleſs Happineſs, if we conſider the Perſons enjoying and delighting each in other: he was with God, *John* 1. 1. God, you know, is the Fountain, Ocean and Center, of all Delights and Joys, *Pſal.* 16. 11. *In thy Preſence is Fulneſs of Joy.* To be wrapt up in the Soul and Boſom of all Delights, as Chriſt was, muſt needs be a State tranſcending Apprehenſion; to have the Fountain of Love and Delight letting out it ſelf ſo immediately, and fully, and everlaſtingly, upon this only begotten Darling of his Soul, ſo as it never did communicate it ſelf to any; judge what a State of tranſcendent Felicity this muſt be. Great Perſons have great Delights.

(2.) Or if we conſider the Intimacy, Dearneſs, yea, Oneneſs of thoſe great Perſons one with another: The nearer the Union, the ſweeter the Communion: Now Jeſus Chriſt was not only near and dear to God, but one with him, *I and my Father are one*, John 10. 30. one in Nature, Will, Love, and Delight: There is indeed a moral Union of Souls among Men by Love, but this was a natural Oneneſs; no Child is ſo one with his Father, no Huſband ſo one with the Wife of his Boſom, no Friend ſo one with his Friend, no Soul ſo one with its Body, as Jeſus Chriſt and his Father were one. O what matchleſs Delights muſt neceſſarily flow from ſuch a bleſſed Union!

(3.) Conſider again the Purity of that Delight with which the bleſſed Father and Son embraced each other; the beſt Creature-Delights one in another, are mixed, debaſed and allayed: If there be ſomething raviſhing and engaging, there is alſo ſomething cloying and diſtaſting. The purer any Delight is, the more excellent. Now there are no Chriſtal Streams flowing ſo purely from the Fountain, no Beams of Light ſo unmixed from the Sun, as the Loves and Delights of theſe holy and glorious Perſons

He that was in the Boſom of the Father: *An Expreſſion ſhewing the intimate, cloſe, and ſecret Delight and Love he had from the Father. How unſpeakable is it that he ſhould deprive himſelf of the Senſe of it? To put himſelf as it were out of Heaven into Hell; this is deeper Love than ever we can imagine, or conceive: No Wonder the Apoſtle calls it* περιοσσεον *and* υπερπεριοσσεον, *the unſearchable Riches of Grace: we are never able to go to the bottom of it, but ſtill there is more Grace and Love behind.* Mr. *Anthony Burgeſs*, Lect. in *John* 17. *p.* 503.

Persons were: The holy, holy, holy Father embraced the thrice holy Son with a most holy Delight and Love.

(4.) Consider the Constancy of this Delight: It was from everlasting, as in *ver.* 23. and from Eternity; it never suffered one moment's Interruption: The ever-flowing Fountain of God's Delight and Love never stopt its Course, never ebbed; but as he speaks in the Text, *I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.* Once more, consider the fulness of that Delight, the perfection of that Pleasure; *I was delights:* So the word is in its original; not only plural delights, all delights, but also in the abstract *Delight* it self: As afterwards from the abundance of his sorrows, he was stiled, a Man of Sorrows, so here, from the Fulness of his delights: As who should say, even constituted and made up of pleasure and delight.

3. Once more, let us consider it *comparatively*, and this State will yet appear more glorious, comparing it with either the choicest delights that one creature takes in another, or that God takes in the creature, or that the creature takes in God: Measure these immmense delights betwixt the Father, and his Son, by either of these lines, and you shall find them infinitely short: For, (1.) Tho' the delights that creatures take in each other, be sometimes a great delight; such was *Jacob*'s delight in *Benjamin*, whose Life is said *to be bound up in the lad's life*, a dear and high Expression, *Gen.* 44. 30. such was that of *Jonathan* in *David*, whose Soul was knit with his Soul, *and he loved him as his own Soul*, 1 *Sam.* 18. 1. and such is the Delight of one Friend in another, *there is a Friend that is as a Man's own Soul*, Deut. 13. 6. yet all this is but Creature-delight, and can in no particular match the Delights betwixt the Father and the Son: For this is but a finite delight, according to the measure and abilities of Creatures; but that *is* infinite, suitable to the infinite Perfection of the Divine Being: This is always mixed, that perfectly pure. (2.) Or if you compare it with the delight that God takes in the Creatures; it is confessed that God takes great delight in some Creatures, *The Lord takes pleasure in his Saints, he rejoices over them with singing; and resteth in his Love*, Zeph. 3. 17. Isa. 62. 5. But yet there is a great difference betwixt his Delight in Creatures, and his Delights in Christ; for all his delight in the Saints is *secondary*, and for Christ's sake: But his Delights in Christ are *primary*, and for his own sake: We are accepted in the beloved, *Eph.* 1. 6. he is beloved, and accepted for himself. (3.) To conclude, compare it once more with the delights that the best of Creatures take in God and Christ, and it must be confessed that is a choice Delight, and a transcendent Love, with which they love and delight in him, *Psal.* 23. 75. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee! and on Earth there is none that I desire besides thee.* What pangs of Love? what raptures of Delight did the Spouse express to Christ? O *thou whom my Soul loveth!* But surely our delight in God is no perfect Rule to measure his Delight in Christ by: For our Love to God (at the best) is still imperfect, that's the burden and constant complaint of Saints, but this is perfect: Ours is inconstant, up and down, ebbing and flowing, but this is constant. So then to conclude, the Condition and State of *Jesus Christ* before his Incarnation, was a state of highest and matchless Delight, in the enjoyment of his Father. The Uses follow.

Amo te, Domine, pluſquam meos, pluſquam mea, pluſquam me. *Bern.*

Suppose (saith one) there were a Hell betwixt me and Christ, and Christ should say, put in thy Foot and come through, or thou shalt have none of me, would I not do it?

Use of Information.

Inference 1. What an astonishing act of Love was this then, for the Father to give the Delight, the Darling of his Soul, out of his very Bosom, for poor Sinners? All Tongues must needs pause and falter, that attempt the expression of his Grace; expressions being here swallowed up: *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son*, John 3. 16. here is a *sic* without a *sicut*; so loved them: How did he love them? Nay, here you must excuse the Tongues of Angels; which of us would deliver a Child, the Child of our Delights, an only Child, to death, for the greatest Inheritance in the World? What tender Parent can endure a parting pull with such a Child? When *Hagar* was taking her last leave (as she thought) of her *Ishmael*, *Gen.* 21. 26. the Text saith, *she went and sate her down over against him, a good way off; for she said, Let me not see the Death of the Child; and she sate over against him, and lift up her Voice, and wept:* Tho' she were none of the best Mothers, nor he the best of Children; yet she could not give up a Child. O 'twas hard to part! What an Outcry did *David* make, even for an *Absalom!* wishing he had died for him. What a Hole (as I may say) hath the Death of some Children made in the hearts of some Parents, which will never be closed up in this World? Yet surely, never did any Child lie so close to a Parent's Heart, as Christ did to his Father's; and yet he willingly parts with him, tho' his only One, the Son of his Delights, and that to Death, a cursed Death, for Sinners, for the worst of Sinners. *O miranda Dei Philanthropia!* matchless Love, a Love past finding out! Let all Men therefore, in the Business of their Redemption, give equal Glory to the Father with the Son, *John* 5. 23. if the Father had not loved thee, he had never parted with such a Son for thee.

Infer. 2. From one Wonder let your Souls turn to another, for they are now in the midst of Wonders: Adore, and be for ever astonished at the Love of Jesus Christ to poor Sinners; that ever he should consent to leave such a Bosom, and the ineffable Delights that were there, for such poor Worms as we are. O heights, depths, lengths, and breadths of unmeasurable Love! O see *Rom.* 5. 6, 7, 8. read, and wonder; how is the Love of Christ commended in ravishing Circumstances to poor Sinners! You would be loth to leave a Creature's Bosom, a comfortable Dwelling, a fair Estate, for the best Friend in the World; your Souls are loth to leave their Bodies, tho' they have no such great content there: But which of you, if ever you found by experience what it is to be in the Bosom of God by Divine Communion, would be perswaded to leave such a Bosom for all the good that is in the World? And yet Jesus Christ, who was embraced in that Bosom, after another manner than ever you were acquainted with, freely left it, and laid down the Glory and Riches he enjoyed there for your sakes; and as the Father loved him; even so (Believers) hath he loved you, *John* 17. 22. What manner of Love is this! Who ever loved as Christ loves? who ever denied himself for Christ, as Christ denied himself for us?

It is admirable that Christ should not only put himself out of comfort, but also from the enjoyment of that manifested Glory and Honour he might have retained to himself; for he prayeth here for that Glory which he had with the Father from the beginning of the World: He had it in Right, *but not in* Possession: *He voluntarily divested himself of that to accomplish our Redemption.* Burges *on* John 17. *v.* 19.

Infer.

Infer. 3. Here we are informed, *That Intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt is the true way to all ſpiritual Preferment in Heaven.* Do you covet to be in the Heart, in the Favour and Delight of God? Get Intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt, and you ſhall preſently be there. What old *Iſrael* ſaid of the Children of his beloved *Joſeph*, thy Children are my Children, the ſame God ſaith of all the dear Children of Chriſt, *Gen.* 48. 5, 9. You ſee among Men, all things are carried by Intereſt; Perſons riſe in this World, as they are befriended; Preferment goes by Favour: So 'tis in Heaven, Perſons are preferred according to their Intereſt in the Beloved, *Epheſ.* 1. 6. Chriſt is the great Favourite in Heaven; his Image upon your Souls, and his Name in your Prayers, makes both accepted with God.

Infer. 4. How worthy is Jeſus Chriſt of all our Love, and Delight? You ſee how infinitely the Father delighteth in him, how he raviſhes the Heart of God; and ſhall he not raviſh our Hearts? I preſent you a Chriſt this Day, able to raviſh any Soul that will but view and conſider him. O that you did but ſee this lovely Lord Jeſus Chriſt! Then would you go home ſick of Love: ſurely he is a drawing Saviour, *John* 12. 32. Why do ye laviſh away your precious Affections upon Vanity? None but Chriſt is worthy of them; when you ſpend your precious Affections upon other Objects, what is it but to dig for Droſs with golden Mattocks? *The Lord direct our Hearts into the Love of Chriſt.* O that our Hearts, Loves and Delights did meet and concenter with the Heart of God in this moſt bleſſed Object! O let him that left God's Boſom for you, be emboſomed by you, tho' yours be nothing to God's; he that left God's Boſom for you, deſerves yours.

Infer. 5. If Chriſt be the beloved Darling of the Father's Soul, think what a grievous and unſufferable thing it is to the Heart of God, to ſee his dear Son deſpiſed, ſlighted, and rejected by Sinners: Verily there is no ſuch Cut to the Heart of God in the whole World. Unbelievers trample upon God's Darling, tread under foot him that eternally lay in his Boſom, *Heb.* 10. 29. Smite the Apple of his Eye, and how God will bear this, that Parable, *Mat.* 21. 37, to 40. will inform you; ſurely he will miſerably deſtroy ſuch wretched Sinners. If you would ſtudy to do God the greateſt deſpight, there is none like this. What a diſmal word is that, 1 *Cor.* 16. 22. *If any Man love not our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, let him be Anathema Maranatha,* (*i. e.*) let the great Curſe of God lie upon that Man till the Lord come. O Sinners! you ſhall one day know the Price of this Sin, you ſhall feel what it is to deſpiſe a Jeſus, that is able to compel Love from the hardeſt Heart. O that you would ſlight him no more! O that this Day your Hearts might fall in love with him! I tell you, if you would ſet your Love to ſale, none bids ſo fair for it as Chriſt.

2. *Uſe of Exhortation.*

1. To Saints; If Chriſt lay eternally in his Boſom of Love, and yet was content to forſake and leave it for your ſakes; then, (1.) Be you ready to forſake and leave all the Comforts you have on Earth for Chriſt; famous *Galleacius* left all for his Enjoyment. *Moſes* left all the Glory of *Egypt*. *Peter*, and the other *Apoſtles* left all, *Luke* 18. 28. But what have we to leave for Chriſt, in compariſon of what he left for us? Surely Chriſt is the higheſt pattern of Self-denial in the World. (2.) Let this confirm your Faith in Prayer: If he that has ſuch an Intereſt in the Heart of God intercede with the Father for you, then never doubt of Audience and Acceptance with him; ſurely you ſhall be accepted through the Beloved, *Epheſ.* 1. 6. Chriſt was never denied any thing that he asked, *John* 11. 42. the Father hears him always; tho' you are not worthy, Chriſt is, and he ever lives to make Interceſſion for you, *Heb.* 7. 25. (3.) Let this incourage thy Heart, O Saint, in a dying Hour, and not only make thee patient in Death, but in a holy manner impatient till thou be gone; for whither is thy Soul now going, but to that Boſom of Love whence Chriſt came? *John* 17. 24. *Father. I will that they alſo whom thou haſt given me, be with me where I am:* and where is he, but in that Boſom of Glory and Love where he lay before the World was? *Ver.* 5. O then let every Believer incourage his Soul; comfort ye one another with theſe words, I am leaving the Boſom of a Creature, I am going to the Boſom of God.

2. To Sinners, exhorting them to embrace the Boſom-Son of God: Poor Wretches! Whatever you are, or have been; whatever Guilt or Diſcouragement at preſent you lie under, embrace Chriſt, who is freely offered you, and you ſhall be as dear to God as the holieſt and moſt eminent Believer in the World: But if you ſtill continue to deſpiſe and neglect ſuch a Saviour, ſorer Wrath is treaſured up for you than other Sinners, even ſomething worſe than dying without Mercy, *Heb.* 10. 28. O that theſe diſcoveries and overtures of Chriſt may never come to ſuch a fatal Iſſue with any of your Souls, in whoſe Eyes his Glory hath been this day opened!

SER-

SERMON III.

Opens the Covenant of Redemption betwixt the Father and the Redeemer.

ISA. LIII. 12.

Therefore will I divide him a Portion with the great, and he ſhall divide the Spoil with the ſtrong; becauſe he hath poured out his Soul unto Death: And he was numbred with the Tranſgreſſors, and he bare the Sin of many, and made Interceſſion for the Tranſgreſſors.

IN this Chapter the Goſpel ſeems to be epitomized, the ſubject Matter of it is the Death of Chriſt, and the glorious Iſſue thereof; by reading of it, the Eunuch of old, and many Jews ſince, have been converted to Chriſt. Chriſt is here conſider'd *abſolutely* and *relatively*; abſolutely, and ſo his Innocency is induſtriouſly vindicated, *Ver.* 9. Tho' he ſuffer'd grievous Things, yet not for his own Sins, *for he had done no Violence, neither was there any Deceit in his Mouth*; but relatively conſider'd in the Capacity of a Surety for us: So the Juſtice of God is as fully vindicated in his Sufferings; *Ver.* 6. *The Lord hath laid upon him the Iniquity of us all.* How he came to ſuſtain this Capacity, and Relation of a Surety for us, is in theſe Verſes plainly aſſured to be by his Compact and Agreement with his Father, before the Worlds were made, *Ver.* 10, 11, 12.

Norton's Orthodox Evangeliſt, *pag.* 41. *The Call of the Lord Jeſus unto Office, includes Election on the Father's Part, and Acceptation on the Mediator's Part; and is ſet down after the Manner of mutual Tranſaction between God and Chriſt, whereby he was deſigned thereunto, as it were, by way of Covenant.* If his Soul ſhould ſet it ſelf an Offering for Sin, (*for ſo according to the Original do good Authors read the Text*) he ſhall ſee his Seed, prolong his Days, and the Pleaſure of the Lord ſhall proſper in his hand, *ver.* 10.

In this Verſe we have, (1.) His Work. (2.) His Reward. (3.) The Reſpect or Relation of each to the other. (1.) His Work, which was indeed a hard Work, *to pour out his Soul unto Death*, aggravated by the Companions, with whom, *being number'd with Tranſgreſſors*; the Capacity in which, bearing all the Sins of the Elect, *he bare the Sins of many*; and by the Manner of his bearing it, *viz.* meekly, and forgivingly, *he made Interceſſion for the Tranſgreſſors*; this was his Work. (2.) The Reward or Fruit which is promiſed him for this Work, *Therefore will I divide him a Portion with the great, and he ſhall divide the Spoil with the ſtrong*; wherein is a plain Alluſion to Conquerors in War, for whom are reſerved the richeſt Garments, and moſt honourable Captives to follow the Conqueror as an Addition to his Magnificence and Triumph; theſe were wont to come after them in Chains, *Iſa.* 45. 14. ſee *Judg.* 5. 3. (3.) The Reſpect or Relation betwixt that Work and this Triumph: Some will have this Work to have no other Relation to that Glory than a meer Antecedent to a Conſequent: Others give it the Reſpect and Relation of a meritorious Cauſe to a Reward. 'Tis well obſerved by Dr. *Featly*, that the *Hebrew* Particle לָכֵן which we render, *therefore*, noting Order, it is not worth ſo much Contention about it, whether it be the Order of *Cauſality*, or meer *Antecedency*; neither do I foreſee any Abſurdity in calling Chriſt's Exaltation, the Reward and Fruit of his Humiliation: However 'tis plain, whether one or other, 'tis that the Father here agrees and promiſes to give him, if he will undertake the Redemption of the Elect, by pouring out his Soul unto Death; of all which this is the plain Reſult,

Doct. *That the Buſineſs of Man's Salvation was tranſacted upon Covenant Terms, betwixt the Father and the Son, from all Eternity.*

I would not here be miſtaken, as tho' I were now to treat of the Covenant of Grace, made in Chriſt betwixt God and us; it is not the Covenant of Grace, but of Redemption I am now to ſpeak to, which differs from the Covenant of Grace both in regard of the *Federates*; in this 'tis God the Father, and Jeſus Chriſt, that mutually covenant; in that it's God and Man: They differ alſo in the *preceptive* Part; in this it is required of Chriſt that he ſhould ſhed his Blood, in that it is required of us that we believe: They alſo differ in their *Promiſes*; in this God promiſes to Chriſt a Name above every Name, ample Dominion from Sea to Sea; in that to us Grace and Glory: So that theſe are two diſtinct Covenants.

The Subſtance of this Covenant of Redemption is Dialoguewiſe expreſt to us in *Iſa.* 49. where (as Divines have well obſerved) Chriſt begins at the firſt and ſecond Verſes, and ſhews his Commiſſion, telling his Father, how he had both called and prepared him for the Work of Redemption; *The Lord hath called me from the Womb— he hath made my Mouth like a ſharp Sword, and made me a poliſhed Shaft,* &c. *q. d.* by reaſon of that ſuper-abundant Meaſure of the Spirit of Wiſdom and Power wherewith I am anointed and filled. My Doctrine ſhall as a Sword pierce the Hearts of Sinners, yea, like an Arrow drawn to the Head, ſtrike point blank into Souls ſtanding at a great Diſtance from God and Godlineſs.

Vid. Goodwin's Triumph of Faith.

Having told God how ready and fit he was for his Service, he will know of him what Reward he ſhall have for his Work, for he reſolves his Blood ſhall not be ſold at low and cheap Rates: Hereupon, *ver.* 3. the Father offers him the Elect of *Iſrael* for his Reward, bidding low at firſt (as they that make Bargains uſe to do) and only offers him that ſmall Remnant, ſtill intending to bid higher: But Chriſt will not be ſatisfied with theſe, he values his Blood higher than ſo; therefore in *Ver.* 4. He is brought in complaining, *I have laboured in vain, and ſpent my Strength for nought*, q. d. This is but a ſmall Reward for ſo great a Suffering as I muſt undergo, my Blood

is much more worth than this comes to, and will be ſufficient to redeem all the Elect diſperſed among the Iſles of the Gentiles, as well as the loſt Sheep of the Houſe of *Iſrael*. Hereupon the Father comes up higher, and tells him, he intends to reward him better than ſo; and therefore, *Ver.* 6. tells him, *It's a light thing that thou ſhouldſt be my Servant, to raiſe up the Tribes of* Jacob, *and to reſt over the preſerved of* Iſrael: *I will alſo give thee for a Light to the Gentiles, that thou mayeſt be my Salvation to the Ends of the Earth.* Thus is the Treaty carried on betwixt them, tranſacting it after the manner of Men.

Now to open this great Point, we will here conſider, (1.) The Perſons tranſacting one with another. (2.) The Buſineſs tranſacted. (3.) The Quality and Manner of the Tranſaction, which is federal. (4.) The Articles to which they agree. (5.) How each Perſon performs his Engagement to the other. And laſtly, The Antiquity or Eternity of this Covenant-Tranſaction.

(1.) The Perſons tranſacting and dealing with each other in this Covenant; and indeed they are great Perſons, God the Father, and God the Son; the former as a *Creditor*, and the latter as a *Surety*: The Father ſtands upon Satisfaction, the Son engages to give it. If it be demanded why the Father and the Spirit might not as well have treated upon our Redemption, as the Father and Son? It is anſwered, Chriſt is the natural Son of God, and therefore fitteſt to make us the adopted Sons of God. Chriſt alſo is the middle Perſon in the Trinity, and therefore fitteſt to be the Mediator and middle Perſon betwixt us and God. The Spirit hath another Office aſſign'd him, even to apply, as Chriſt's Vicegerent, the Redemption deſign'd by the Father, and purchaſed by the Son for us.

Vide *Robert*'s Medulla Bib. *pag.* 1577. & Lyf. Teſt. *p.* 83, 84.

(2.) The Buſineſs tranſacted betwixt them, and that was the Redemption and Recovery of all God's Elect; our Eternal Happineſs lay now before them, our deareſt and everlaſting Concerns were now in their Hands; the Elect (tho' not yet in being) are here conſider'd as exiſtent, yea, and as fallen, miſerable, forlorn Creatures: How theſe may again be reſtored to Happineſs (*ſalva juſtitia Dei*) without Prejudice to the Honour, Juſtice, and Truth of God; this, this is the Buſineſs that lay before them.

Cauſa externa ſatisfactionis à patre decretæ, & à filio ſuſceptæ, eſt miſeria noſtra, id eſt peccata & quidem æternam pœnam promerentia, & exigentia, in quam miſeratio Dei ferebatur, & ob quam pœnas omnes nobis debitas ſubiit filius Dei, ut per eum priſtinæ felicitati reſtitueremur. *Synop. purior. Theol.* p. 350.

(3.) For the Manner or Quality of the Tranſaction, it was *federal*, or of the Nature of a Covenant; it was by mutual Engagements and Stipulations, each Perſon undertaking to perform his Part in order to our Recovery.

We find each Perſon undertaking for himſelf by ſolemn Promiſe; the Father promiſeth that he will *hold his Hand, and keep him*, Iſa. 42. 6. The Son promiſeth he will obey his Father's Call to Suffering, and *not be rebellious*, Iſa. 50. 5. And having promiſed, each holds the other to his Engagement. The Father ſtands upon the Satisfaction promiſed him: And when the Payment was making, he will not abate one Farthing; *Rom.* 8. 32. *God ſpared not his own Son*, (i. e.) he abated nothing of the full Price he was to have at his Hands for us.

And as the Father ſtood ſtrictly upon the Terms of the Covenant, ſo did Chriſt alſo; John 17. 45. *I have glorified thee on Earth*, (ſaith he to the Father) *I have finiſhed the Work thou gaveſt me to do; and now, Father, glorify me with thine own ſelf:* As if he had ſaid, Father, the Work is done, now where's the Wages I was promiſed? I call for Glory as my due, as much my due as the Hire of the Labourer is his Due, when his Work is done.

(4.) More particularly; we will next conſider the Articles to which they do both agree, or what it is that each Perſon doth for himſelf promiſe to the other. And to let us ſee how much the Father's Heart is engaged in the Salvation of poor Sinners, there are *five* Things which he promiſeth to do for Chriſt if he will undertake that Work.

Firſt, He promiſeth to inveſt him, and anoint him to a threefold Office, anſwerable to Miſery that lay upon the Elect, as ſo many Barrs to all Communion with, and Enjoyment of God; for if ever Man be reſtored to that Happineſs, the Blindneſs of his Mind muſt be cured, the Guilt of Sin expiated, and his Captivity to Sin led captive: Anſwerably, Chriſt muſt *of God be made unto us Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification, and Redemption*, 1 Cor. 1. 30. And he is made ſo to us, as our *Prophet, Prieſt*, and *King*: But he could not put himſelf into either of theſe, for if ſo, he had acted without Commiſſion, and conſequently all he did had been invalid; *Hebr.* 5. 5. *Chriſt glorified not himſelf to be made a High-Prieſt, but he that ſaid unto him, Thou art my Son.* A Commiſſion therefore to act authoritatively in theſe Offices being neceſſary to our Recovery, the Father engages to him to ſeal him ſuch a threefold Commiſſion.

He promiſed to inveſt him with an Eternal and Royal Prieſthood, *Pſal.* 110. 4. *The Lord hath ſworn, and will not repent; thou art a Prieſt for ever, after the Order of* Melchiſedeck. This *Melchiſedeck* being King of *Righteouſneſs*, and King of *Salem*, that is, Peace had a Royal Prieſthood: And his Deſcent not being reckoned, it had an Adumbration of Eternity in it, and ſo was more apt to type and ſhadow forth the Prieſthood of Chriſt, than *Aaron*'s was, *Heb.* 7. 16, 17, 24, 25. as the Apoſtle accommodates them there.

He promiſeth moreover to make him a Prophet, and that an extraordinary one, even the Prince of Prophets; the chief Shepherd, as much ſuperior to all others, as the Sun is to the leſſer Stars: So you have it, *Iſa.* 42. 6, 7. *I will give thee for a Light to the Gentiles, to open the blind Eyes*, &c.

And not only ſo, but to make him *King* alſo, and that of the whole Empire of the World; ſo *Pſal.* 2. 6, 7, 8. *Ask of me, and I will give thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance, and the utmoſt Ends of the Earth for thy Poſſeſſion.* Thus he promiſeth to qualifie and furniſh him compleatly for the Work, by his Inveſtiture with this threefold Office.

Secondly, And for as much as he knew it was a hard and difficult Work his Son was to undertake, a Work that would have broken the Backs of all the Angels in Heaven, and Men on Earth, had they engaged in it, therefore he promiſeth to ſtand by him, and aſſiſt and ſtrengthen him for it: So *Iſa.* 42. 5, 6, 7. *I will hold thy Hand*, or take hold of thee with my Hand, for ſo it may be rendred, (*i. e.*) I will under-prop and ſupport thy Humanity when it's even over-weighed with the Burden that is to come upon it, and ready to ſink down under it; for ſo you know the Caſe ſtood with him, *Mark* 14. 34. and ſo it was foretold of him, *Iſa.* 53. 7. *He was oppreſſed*, &c. and indeed

Ego, cujus immenſa ac infinita eſt potentia, ſic tibi favebo, ita te fulciam, ut nihil adverſus te poſſint omnes adverſarii tui. *Marlor. in loc.*

indeed the Humanity needed a Prop of no leſs Strength than the infinite Power of the *Godhead*: The ſame Promiſe you have in the firſt Verſe alſo, *Behold my Servant, whom I uphold.*

Thirdly, He promiſeth to crown his Work with Succeſs, and bring it to an happy Iſſue, *Iſa.* 53. 10. *He ſhall ſee his Seed, he ſhall prolong his Days, and the Pleaſure of the Lord ſhall proſper in his Hand.* He ſhall not begin, and not finiſh; he ſhall not ſhed his invaluable Blood upon hazardous Terms; but ſhall ſee and reap the ſweet Fruit thereof: As the joyful Mother forgets her Pangs, when ſhe delightfully embraces and kiſſes her living Child.

Fourthly, The Father promiſeth to accept him in his Work, tho' Millions ſhould eternally periſh, *Iſa.* 49. 4. *Surely*, (ſaith he) *my Work is with the Lord.* And *(Ver.* 5.) *I ſhall be glorious in the Eyes of the Lord.* His Faith had therein Reſpect to this Compact and Promiſe. Accordingly the Father manifeſts the Satisfaction he had in him, and in his Work, even while he was about it upon Earth, when there came ſuch a *Voice from the excellent Glory, ſaying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.*

Fifthly, He engaged to reward him highly for his Work by exalting him to ſingular and ſupereminent Glory and Honour, when he ſhould have diſpatch'd and finiſhed it. So you read, *Pſal.* 2. 7. *I will declare the Decree; the Lord hath ſaid unto me, Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee.* It's ſpoken of the Day of his Reſurrection, when he had juſt finiſhed his Suffering. And ſo the Apoſtle expounds and applies it, *Acts* 13. 32, 33. For then did the Lord wipe away the Reproach of his Croſs, and inveſted him with ſuch Glory, that he looked like himſelf again. As if the Father had ſaid, Now thou haſt again recovered thy Glory, and this Day is to thee as a new Birth-day.

Theſe are the Incouragements and Rewards propoſed and promiſed to him by the Father. This was *the Joy ſet before him*, (as the Apoſtle phraſeth it in *Heb.* 12. 2.) which made him ſo patiently to *endure the Croſs, and deſpiſe the Shame.*

And in like manner Jeſus Chriſt reſtipulates, and gives his Engagement to the Father; that upon theſe Terms he is content to be made Fleſh, to diveſt (as it were) himſelf of his Glory, to come under the Obedience and Malediction of the Law, and not to refuſe any, the hardeſt Sufferings it ſhould pleaſe his Father to inflict on him. So much is carried in *Iſa.* 50. 5, 6, 7. *The Lord hath opened mine Ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back; I gave my Back to the Smiters, and my Cheeks to them that pulled off the Hair; I hid not my Face from Shame and Spitting: For the Lord God will help me, therefore ſhall I not be confounded; I have ſet my Face as a Flint, and I know that I ſhall not be aſhamed.*

מרחם

When he ſaith, I was not *rebellious*, he meaneth, I was moſt heartily willing and content to accept the Terms; for there is a *Meioſis* in the Words, and much more is intended than expreſſed. And the Senſe of this Place is well deliver'd to us in other Terms, *Pſal.* 40. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. *Then ſaid I, lo I come, I delight to do thy Will, O God, thy Law is within my Heart.* O ſee with what a full Conſent the Heart of Chriſt cloſeth with the Father's Offers and Propoſals; like ſome Echo, that anſwers your Voice twice or thrice over. So doth Chriſt here anſwer his Father's Call, *I come, I delight to do thy Will*; yea, *thy Law is in my Heart.* And thus you ſee the Articles to which they both ſubſcribed, or the *Terms* they agreed on,

(5.) I will briefly ſhew how theſe Articles and Agreements were on both Parts performed, and that preciſely and punctually to a Tittle. For *(1.)* The Son having thus conſented, accordingly he applies himſelf to the Diſcharge of his Work. He took a Body, in it fulfilled all Righteouſneſs, even to a Tittle, *Mat.* 3. 15. And at laſt his Soul was made an Offering for Sin, ſo that he could ſay as it is, *John* 17. 4. *Father, I have glorified thee on Earth, I have finiſhed the Work thou gaveſt me to do.* He went through all the Parts of his active and paſſive Obedience, chearfully and faithfully. (2.) The Father made good his Engagements to Chriſt all along with no leſs Faithfulneſs than Chriſt did his. He promiſed to *aſſiſt, and hold his Hand*, and ſo he did; *Luke* 22. 23. *And there appeared to him an Angel from Heaven, ſtrengthening him.* That was one of the ſoreſt Brunts that ever Chriſt met with, it was ſeaſonable Aid and Succour. He promiſed to accept him in his Work, and that he ſhould be glorious in his Eyes, ſo he did. For he not only declared it by a Voice from Heaven, *Luke* 3. 22. *Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed:* But it was fully declared in his Reſurrection and Aſcenſion, which were a full Diſcharge and Juſtification of him. He promiſed him that *he ſhould ſee his Seed*, and ſo he did, for his very Birth-dew was as the Dew of the Morning; and ever ſince his Blood hath been fruitful in the World. He promiſed glorioufly to reward, and exalt him; and ſo he hath, *Phil.* 2. 9, 10, 11. and that highly and ſupereminently, *giving him a Name above every Name in Heaven and Earth.* Thus were the Articles performed.

(6.) *Laſtly*, When was this Compact made betwixt the Father and Son? I anſwer, It bears Date from Eternity. Before this World was made, then were his Delights in us, while as yet we had no Exiſtence, but only in the infinite Mind and Purpoſe of God, who had decreed this for us in Chriſt Jeſus, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. What Grace was that which was given us in Chriſt before the World began, but this Grace of Redemption, which from everlaſting was thus contrived and deſigned for us, in that Way which hath been here opened? Then was the Council, or Conſultation of Peace betwixt them both, as ſome take that Scripture, *Zech.* 6. 13.

Antequam ab omnibus retro ſeculis tempora fluere inciperent, decrevit Deus hanc nobis ſalutis gratiam per Chriſtum conferre. *Calv. in loc.*

Next let us apply it to our ſelves.

Uſe 1. The firſt Uſe that offers it ſelf to us from hence, is *the abundant Security that God hath given the Elect for their Salvation, and that not only in reſpect of the Covenant of Grace made with them, but alſo of this Covenant of Redemption made with Chriſt for them; which indeed is the Foundation of the Covenant of Grace.* God's ſingle Promiſe is Security enough to our Faith, his Covenant of Grace adds *ex abundanti* farther Security; but both theſe viewed as the Effects and Fruits of this Covenant of Redemption, make all faſt and ſure. In the Covenant of Grace, we queſtion not the Performance on God's Part, but are often ſtumbled at the grand Defects on our Parts: But when we look to the Covenant of Redemption, there's nothing to ſtagger our Faith, both the Federates being infinitely able and faithful to perform their Parts; ſo that there is no Poſſibility of a Failure there. Happy were it if puzzled and perplext Chriſtians would turn their Eyes from the Defects that are in their own Obedience, to the Fulneſs and Compleatneſs of Chriſt's Obedience; and ſee themſelves compleat in him, when moſt lame and defective in themſelves.

2. Hence alſo be informed, *that God the Father, and God the Son, do mutually rely and truſt to one another, in the Buſineſs of our Redemption.* The Father relies upon the Son for the Performance of his Part; as it is, *Iſa.* 42. 1. *Behold my Servant, whom I uphold.* *Montanus* turns it, on whom I lean or depend. As if the Father had ſaid, Behold what a faithful Servant I have choſen, in whom my Soul is at reſt: I know he will go through with his Work, I can depend upon him. And to ſpeak plain, the Father ſo far truſted Chriſt, that upon the Credit of his Promiſe to come into the World, and in the Fulneſs of Time to become a Sacrifice for the Elect, he ſaved all the Old Teſtament Saints, whoſe Faith alſo reſpected a Chriſt to come; with reference whereto it is ſaid, *Heb.* 11. 39, 40. *That they received not the Promiſe, God having provided ſome better thing for us, that they without us ſhould not be made perfect,* (i. e.) without Jeſus Chriſt manifeſted in the Fleſh in our Times; tho' believed on as to come in the Fleſh, in their Times. And as the Father truſted Chriſt, ſo doth Chriſt in like manner depend upon and truſt his Father. For having performed his Part, and left the World again, he now truſteth his Father for the Accompliſhment of that Promiſe made him, *Iſa.* 53. 10. *That he ſhall ſee his Seed,* &c. He depends upon his Father for all the Elect that are behind, yet unregenerated, as well as thoſe already called, that they ſhall be all preſerved unto the Heavenly Kingdom, according to that, *John* 17. 11. *And now I am no more in the World, but theſe are in the World; and I come unto thee: Holy Father, keep through thine own Name thoſe whom thou haſt given me.* And can it be imagined, that the Father will fail his Truſt, who every way acquitted himſelf ſo punctually to the Son? It cannot be.

אֶחְסֶה בּוֹ
Innitar in eo. *Mont.*

Uſe 3. Moreover, Hence we infer *the Validity and unqueſtionable Succeſs of Chriſt's Interceſſion in Heaven for Believers.* You read, *Heb.* 7. 25. *That he ever lives to make Interceſſion:* and *Heb.* 12. 24. *That his Blood ſpeaks for good Things for them.* Now that his Blood ſhall obtain what it pleads in Heaven for, is undoubted; and that from the Conſideration of this Covenant of Redemption. For here you ſee that the Things he now asks of his Father, are the very ſame which his Father promiſed him, and covenanted to give him, before this World was: So that beſides the Intereſt of the Perſon, the very Equity of the Matter ſpeaks its Succeſs, and requires Performance: Whatever he asks for us, is as due to him as the Wages of the Hireling, when the Work is ended; if the Work be done, and done faithfully, as the Father hath acknowledged it is, then the Reward is due, and due immediately: And no doubt but he ſhall receive it from the Hands of a righteous God.

Uſe 4. Hence in like manner you may be informed of *the Conſiſtency of Grace with full Satisfaction to the Juſtice of God.* The Apoſtle, 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. tells us, *We are ſaved according to his own Purpoſe and Grace, which was given us in Chriſt Jeſus, before the World began.* That is, according to the gracious Terms of this Covenant of Redemption; and yet you ſee notwithſtanding, how ſtrictly God ſtands upon Satisfaction from Chriſt: So then, Grace to us, and Satisfaction to Juſtice, are not ſo inconſiſtent as the *Socinian* Adverſaries would make them; what was Debt to Chriſt, is Grace to us: When you hear Men cry out, Here's Grace indeed! pay me all, and I will forgive you; Remember, how all Mouths are ſtopt with that one Text, *Rom.* 3. 24. *Being juſtified freely by his Grace,* and yet he adds, *through the Redemption that is in Chriſt.*

Uſe 5. Again, Hence judge *of the Antiquity of the Love of God to Believers:* What an antient Friend he hath been to us; who loved us, provided for us, and contrived all our Happineſs, before we were, yea, before the World was. We reap the Fruits of this Covenant now, the Seed whereof was ſown from Eternity; yea, it is not only antient, but alſo moſt free: No, Excellencies of ours could engage the Love of God, for as yet we were not.

Uſe 6. Judge hence, *How reaſonable it is that Believers ſhould embrace the hardeſt Terms of Obedience unto Chriſt, who complied with ſuch hard Terms for their Salvation:* They were hard and difficult Terms indeed, on which Chriſt received you from the Father's Hand; it was, as you have heard, to pour out his Soul unto Death, or not to enjoy a Soul of you. Here you may ſuppoſe the Father to ſay, when driving this Bargain with Chriſt for you:

Father. My Son, here be a Company of poor miſerable Souls, that have utterly undone themſelves, and now lie open to my Juſtice! Juſtice demands Satisfaction for them, or will ſatisfy it ſelf in the eternal Ruin of them: What ſhall be done for theſe Souls? And thus Chriſt returns.

Son. O my Father, ſuch is my Love to, and Pity for them, that rather than they ſhall periſh eternally, I will be reſponſible for them as their Surety: Bring in all thy Bills, that I may ſee what they owe thee. *Lord,* bring them in all, that there may be no After-reckonings with them; at my Hand ſhalt thou require it. I will rather chuſe to ſuffer thy Wrath, than they ſhould ſuffer it. Upon me, my Father, upon me be all their Debt.

Father. But, my Son, if thou undertake for them, thou muſt reckon to pay the laſt Mite, expect no Abatements; if I ſpare them, I will not ſpare thee.

Son. Content, Father, let it be ſo: Charge it all upon me, I am able to diſcharge it; and tho' it prove a kind of undoing to me, tho' it impoveriſh all my Riches, empty all my Treaſures, (for ſo indeed it did, 2 *Cor.* 8. 9. *Tho' he were rich, yet for our ſakes became poor*) yet I am content to undertake it. Bluſh, ungrateful Believers! O let Shame cover your Faces. Judge in your ſelves now, hath Chriſt deſerved that you ſhould ſtand with him for Trifles, that you ſhould ſhrink at a few petty Difficulties, and complain, this is hard, and that is harſh? O if you knew the Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in this his wonderful Condeſcenſion for you, you could not do it.

Uſe 7. Laſtly, *How greatly are we all concern'd to make it ſure to our ſelves, that we are of this Number, which the Father and the Son agreed for before the World was, that we were comprehended in Chriſt's Bargain and Compact with the Father?*

Obj. Yea, but you will ſay, Who can know that? there were no Witneſſes to that Bargain.

Sol. Yes, We may know without aſcending into Heaven, or prying into unrevealed Secrets, that our Names were in that Covenant, if (1.) You are Believers indeed; for all ſuch the Father then gave to Chriſt, *John* 17. 8. *The Men that thou gaveſt me,* (for of them he ſpake immediately before) *they have believed that thou didſt ſend me.* (2.) If you ſavingly know God in Jeſus Chriſt, ſuch were given him by the Father, *John* 17. 6. *I have manifeſted thy Name unto the Men thou gaveſt me:* By this they are diſcriminated from the reſt, *Ver.* 25. *The World hath not known thee, but theſe have known,* &c. (3.) If you are Men and Women of another World: *John* 17. 16. *They are not of the World, as I am not of the World.* May it be ſaid of you, as of dying Men, that you are not Men and Women for this World, that you are crucified

cified and dead to it, *Gal.* 6. 14. that you are Strangers in it? *Heb.* 11. 13, 14. (4.) If you keep Christ's Word; *John* 17. 6. *Thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy Word:* By keeping his Word, understand the receiving of the Word in its sanctifying Effects and Influences into your Hearts, and your Perseverance in the Profession and Practice of it to the End; *John* 17. 17. *Sanctifie them through thy Truth, thy Word is Truth*; John 15. 7. *If ye abide in me, and my Words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will.* Blessed and happy is that Soul upon which these blessed Characters appear, which our Lord Jesus hath laid so close together within the Compass of a few Verses in this 17*th* of *John*; these are the Persons the Father delivered unto Christ, and he accepted from the Father in this blessed Covenant.

SERMON IV.

Opens the admirable Love of God in giving his own Son for us.

JOHN III. 16.

For God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, &c.

YOU have heard of the gracious Purpose and Design of God to recover poor Sinners to himself by Jesus Christ, and how this Design of Love was laid and contrived in the Covenant of Redemption, whereof we last spake.

Now, according to the Terms of that Covenant, you shall hear from this Scripture, how that Design was by one degree advanced towards its Accomplishment, in God's actual giving or parting with his own Son for us: *God so loved the World, that he gave,* &c.

The whole precedent Context is spent in discovering the Nature and Necessity of Regeneration; and the Necessity thereof is in this Text argued and inferred from the peculiar Respect and Eye God had upon Believers, in giving Christ for them; they only reaping all the special and saving Benefits and Advantages of that Gift: *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish.*

In the Words are considerable.

1. The original Spring or Fountain of our best Mercies, the Love of God. The Love of God is either *benevolent*, *beneficent*, or *complacential*; His benevolent Love is nothing else but his Desire and Purpose of saving and doing us good: So his Purpose and Grace to *Jacob* is called Love, *Rom.* 9. 13. *Jacob have I loved*; but this being before *Jacob* was, could consist in nothing else but the gracious Purpose of God towards him. His *beneficent* Love is his actual doing good to the Persons beloved, or the bestowing the Effects of his Love upon us according to that Purpose. His *complacential* Love is nothing else but that Delight and Satisfaction he finds in beholding the Fruits and Workings of that Grace in us which he first intended for us, and then actually collated or bestowed on us. This Love of Benevolence is that which I have opened to you under the former Head, God's Compact with Christ about us, or his Design to save us on the Articles and Terms therein specified.

The Love of *Beneficence*, is that which this Scripture speaks of; out of this Fountain Christ flowed to us, and both run into that of Complacency; for therefore he both purposed, and actually bestowed Christ on us, that he might everlastingly delight in beholding the Glory and Praise of all this reflected on himself by his *redeemed* Ones. This then is the Fountain of our Mercies.

2 The Mercy flowing out of this Fountain, and that is Christ: *The Mercy*, as he is emphatically called, *Luke* 1. 72. The Marrow, Kernel, and Substance of all other Mercies. He gave his only begotten Son: This was the Birth of that Love, the like whereunto it never brought forth before, therefore it's expresst with a double Emphasis in the Text, the one it that Particle οὕτω so; he so loved the World: Here is a *sic* without a *sicut*: How did he love it? why he *so loved it*; but how much the Tongues of Angels cannot declare. And moreover, to encrease and aggravate the Mercy, he is stiled his only begotten Son: to have given a Son, had been wonderful; but to give an only begotten Son, that's Love unexpressible, unintelligible.

Hic igitur unigeniti nomen ἐμφατικὸν est ad commendandam in nos amoris divini vehementiam. *Bulling. loc.*

3. The *Objects* of this Love, or the Persons into whose Lap and Arms the eternal Love delivered Christ, and that is the [World] this must respect the Elect of God in the World, such as do or shall actually believe, as it is exegetically expresst in the next Breath, *That whosoever believes in him, should not perish:* Those whom he calls the *World* in that, he stiles *Believers* in this Expression; and the Word [World] is put to signifie the Elect, because they are scattered through all Parts, and are among all Ranks of Men in the World; these are the Objects of this Love: It is not Angels, but Men that were so loved; he is called φιλάνθρωπος, a Lover, a Friend of Man, but never φιλάγγελος, or φιλόκτισος, the Lover or Friend of Angels, or Creatures of another Species.

4. The manner in which this never-enough-celebrated Mercy flows to us from the Fountain of Divine Love, and that is most freely and spontaneously. He *gave*, not he *sold*, or barely parted from, but gave. Nor yet doth the Father's giving imply Christ to be meerly passive; for as the Father is here said to give him, so the Apostle tells us, *Gal.* 2. 20. That he gave himself, *who loved me, and gave himself for me:* The Father gave him out of good Will to Men, and he as willingly bestowed himself on that Service. Hence the Note is,

Doct. *That the Gift of Christ is the highest and fullest Manifestation of the Love of God to Sinners, that ever was made from Eternity to them.*

How

Omnia diligit Deus quæ fecit, & inter ea, magis creaturas rationales, & de illis ea amplius quæ sunt membra unigeniti, & multo magis ipsum unigenitum. *Aug. T. 9. in Johan.*

How is this Gift of God to Sinners signalized in that place of the Apostle, 1 *John* 4. 10. *Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins?* Why doth the Apostle so magnifie this Gift, in saying Herein is love, as if there were Love in nothing else? May we not say, that to have a Being, a Being among the rational Creatures, therein is Love? To have carried our Life so many Years like a Taper in the Hand of Providence, thro' so many Dangers, and not yet put out in Obscurity, therein is Love? To have Food and Raiment convenient for us, Beds to lye in, Relations to comfort us, in all these is Love? Yea, but if you speak comparatively, in all these there is no Love, to the Love expresst in sending or giving Christ for us: These be great Mercies in themselves, but set by this Mercy, they are all swallowed up, as the Light of the Candles when brought into the Sunshine. No, no, herein is the Love, that God gave Christ for us. And it is remarkable, that when the Apostle would shew us in *Rom.* 5. 8. what is the noblest Fruit that most commends to Men the Root of Divine Love that bears it, he shews us this very Fruit of it that I am now opening; *But God* (saith he) *commendeth his Love towards us, in that while we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us:* This is the very Flower of that Love.

The Method into which I will cast this precious Point shall be this: (1.) To shew how Jesus Christ was given by the Father. (2.) How that Gift is the fullest and richest Manifestation of the Love of God that was ever made to the World. (3.) And then draw forth the Uses of it.

1. How was Jesus Christ given by the Father, and what is implied therein.

You are not so to understand it, as tho' God parted with his Interest and Propriety in his Son, when he is said to give him; he was as much his own as ever. When Men give, they transfer Propriety to another; but when God had given him, he was, I say, still as much his own as ever: But this giving of Christ implies,

(1.) His Designation and Appointment unto Death for us; for so you read that it was done *according to the determinate Counsel of God*, Acts 2. 23. Look as the Lamb under the Law was separated from the Flock, and set apart for a Sacrifice; tho' it were still living, yet it was intentionally and preparatively given, and consecrated to the Lord: So Jesus Christ was by the Counsel and Purpose of God, thus chosen, and set apart for his Service; and therefore in *Isa.* 42 1. God calls him *his Elect*, or chosen one.

(2.) His giving Christ, implies a parting with him, or setting him (as the *French* hath it) at some Distance from himself for a time. There was a kind of parting betwixt the Father and the Son, when he came to tabernacle in our Flesh: So he expresseth it, *John* 16. 28. *I came forth from the Father, and am come into the World; again, I leave the World, and go to the Father.* This Distance that his Incarnation and Humiliation set him at, was properly as to his Humanity, which was really distant from the Glory into which it is now taken up, and in respect of Manifestation of Delight and Love: The Lord seemed to carry it as one at distance from him. O this was it that so deeply pierced and wounded his Soul, as is evident from that Complaint, *Psal.* 22. 1, 2. *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from the Voice of my roaring? O my God, I cry in the day-time, and thou hearest not,* &c.

(3.) God's giving of Christ, implies his delivering him into the Hands of Justice to be punished: even as condemned Persons are by Sentence of Law, given or delivered into the Hands of Executioners. So *Acts* 2. 23. *Him being delivered by the determinate Counsel of God, ye have taken, and by wicked Hands have slain:* And so he is said, *Rom* 8. 12. *To deliver him up to Death for us all.* The Lord, when the time was come that Christ must suffer, did as it were, say, O all ye roaring Waves, of my incensed Justice, now swell so high as Heaven, and go over his Soul and Body; sink him to the Bottom, let him go like *Jonah* his Type into the Belly of Hell, unto the Roots of the Mountains. Come all ye raging Storms that I have reserved for this Day of Wrath, beat upon him, beat him down, that he may not be able to look up, *Psal.* 40. 12. Go Justice, put him upon the Rack, torment him in every part, till all his Bones be out of Joint, and his Heart within him be melted as Wax in the midst of his Bowels, *Psal.* 22. 14. And ye Assembly of the wicked *Jews* and *Gentiles*, that have so long gaped for his Blood, now he is delivered into your Hands, you are permitted to execute your Malice to the full: I now loose your Chain, and into your Hand and Power is he delivered.

(4.) God's giving of Christ, implies his Application of him, with all the Purchases of his Blood, and settling all this upon us as an Inheritance and Portion; *John* 6. 32, 33. *My Father giveth you the true Bread from Heaven; for the Bread of God is he which cometh down from Heaven, and giveth Life unto the World.* God hath given him as Bread to poor starving Creatures, that by Faith they might eat and live. And so he told the *Samaritaness*, John 4. 10. *If thou knewest the Gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living Waters.* Bread and Water are the two Necessaries for the Support of natural Life; God hath given Christ you see to be all that, and more to the spiritual Life.

2. How this Gift of Christ was the highest and fullest Manifestation of the Love of God, that ever the World saw: And this will be evidenced by the following Particulars.

God might have redeemed us in another way (for I suppose 'tis opus liberi consilii) *a free Dispensation; but God so loved the World,* (i. e.) *he took this way, that we might love Christ as well as believe in him. He might have redeemed us so much in another way, but he could not oblige us so much in another way.* Manton *on* Jude, *p.* 108. *Mr.* Wall, *in his* None but Christ.

(1.) If you consider how near and dear Jesus Christ was to the Father: He was his Son, his only Son, saith the Text: The Son of his Love: The Darling of his Soul: His other self; yea one with himself: The express Image of his Person: The Brightness of his Father's Glory: In parting with him, he parted with his own Heart, with his very Bowels, as I may say. Yet *to us a Son is given*, Isa. 9. 6. And such a Son as he calls *his dear Son*, Col. 1. 13. A late Writer tells us, that he hath been informed, that in the Famine in *Germany*, a poor Family being ready to perish with Famine, the Husband made a Motion to the Wife, to sell one of the Children for Bread, to relieve themselves and the rest; the Wife at last consents it should be so, but then they began to think which of the four should be sold: and when the Eldest was nam'd, they both refus'd to part with that, being their Firstborn, and the Beginning of their Strength. Well, then they came to the Second, but could not yield that he should be sold, being the very Picture and lively Image of his Father. The Third was named, but that also was a Child that best resembled the Mother.

Mother. And when the Youngeſt was thought on, that was the *Benjamin*, the Child of their old Age; and ſo were content rather to periſh altogether in the Famine, than part with a Child for Relief. And you know how tenderly *Jacob* took it, when his *Joſeph* and *Benjamin* were rent from him. What is a Child, but a Piece of the Parent wrapt up in another Skin? And yet our deareſt Children are but as Strangers to us, in compariſon of the unſpeakable Dearneſs that was betwixt the Father and Chriſt.——— Now that he ſhould ever be content to part with a Son, and ſuch an only one, is ſuch a Manifeſtation of Love, as will be admired to all Eternity! And then,

(2.) Let it be conſider'd, *to what he gave him*, even to Death, and that of the Croſs; to be made a Curſe for us; to be the Scorn and Contempt of Men; to the moſt unparallel'd Sufferings that ever were inflicted or born by any. It melts our Bowels, it breaks our Heart, to behold our Children ſtriving in the Pangs of Death: But the Lord beheld his Son ſtruggling under Agonies that never any felt before him. He ſaw him falling to the Ground, groveling in the Duſt, ſweating Blood; and amidſt thoſe Agonies turning himſelf to his Father, and with a Heart-rending Cry beſeeching him, *Father, if it be poſſible, let this Cup paſs*, Luke 22. 42. To Wrath, to the Wrath of an Infinite God without Mixture, to the very Torments of Hell, was Chriſt delivered, and that by the Hand of his own Father. Sure then that Love muſt needs want a Name, which made the Father of Mercies deliver his only Son to ſuch Miſeries for us.

Dolor Chriſti major fuit omnibus doloribus. *Aquinas.*

(3.) It is a ſpecial Conſideration to enhance the Love of God in giving Chriſt, that in giving him, he gave the richeſt Jewel in his Cabinet; a Mercy of the greateſt Worth, and moſt ineſtimable Value: Heaven it ſelf is not ſo valuable and precious as Chriſt is. He is the better Half of Heaven. And ſo the Saints account him; *Pſal.* 73. 25. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? Ten thouſand thouſand Worlds*, (ſaith one) *as many Worlds as Angels can number, and then as a new World of Angels can multiply, would not all be the Bulk of a Ballance, to weigh Chriſt's Excellency, Love, and Sweetneſs. O what a fair one! what an only one! what an excellent, lovely, raviſhing one, is Chriſt! Put the Beauty of ten thouſand Paradiſes, like the Garden of* Eden, *into one; put all Trees, all Flowers, all Smells, all Colours, all Taſtes, all Joys, all Sweetneſs, all Lovelineſs in one: O what a fair and excellent Thing would that be! And yet it ſhould be leſs to that fair and deareſt well-beloved Chriſt, than one Drop of Rain to the whole Seas, Rivers, Lakes, and Fountains of ten thouſand Earths, Chriſt is Heaven's Wonder, and Earth's Wonder.*

Chriſtus, & cœlum non patiuntur hyperbolem.

Now for God to beſtow the Mercy of Mercies, the moſt precious Thing in Heaven or Earth, upon poor Sinners; and as great, as lovely, as excellent as his Son was, yet not to account him too good to beſtow upon us, what manner of Love is this?

(4.) Once more, let it be conſidered on whom the Lord beſtowed his Son: Upon Angels? No, but upon Men. Upon Man his Friend? No, but upon his Enemies. This is Love; and on this Conſideration the Apoſtle lays a mighty Weight, in *Rom.* 5. 8, 9, 10. *But God* (ſaith he) *commendeth his Love towards us, in that while we were yet Sinners, Chriſt died for us.*——— When we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son. Who would part with a Son for the ſake of his deareſt Friends? but God gave him to, and delivered him for Enemies. O Love unſpeakable!

(5.) Laſtly, Let us conſider how freely this Gift came from him. It was not wreſted out of his Hand by our Importunity; for we as little deſired as deſerved it: It was ſurprizing, preventing, eternal Love that delivered him to us: *Not that we loved him, but that he firſt loved us*, 1 *John* 4. 19. Thus as when you weigh a thing, you caſt in Weight after Weight, till the Scales turn; ſo doth God, one Conſideration upon another to overcome our Hearts, and make us admiringly to cry, what manner of Love is this? And thus I have ſhewed you what God's giving of Chriſt is, and what matchleſs Love is manifeſted in that incomparable Gift.

Next we ſhall apply this, in ſome practical Corollaries.

Corollary 1. Learn hence, *The exceeding Precioufneſs of Souls, and at what a high rate God values them, that he will give his Son, his only Son out of his Boſom, as a Ranſom for them.* Surely this ſpeaks their Precioufneſs: God would not have parted with ſuch a Son for ſmall Matters: All the World could not redeem them; Gold and Silver could not be their Ranſom. 1 *Pet.* 1. 18. So ſpeaks the Apoſtle, *You were not redeemed with corruptible things, as Silver and Gold, but with the precious Blood of Chriſt.* Such an Eſteem God had for them, that rather than they ſhould periſh, Jeſus Chriſt ſhall be made a Man, yea, a Curſe for them. O then learn to put a due Value upon your own Souls: Don't ſell that cheap, which God hath paid ſo dear for: Remember what a Treaſure you carry about you: The Glory that you ſee in this World, is not equivalent in worth to it, *Mat.* 16. 26. *What ſhall a Man give in Exchange for his Soul?*

Corollary 2. If God has given his own Son for the World, then it follows, that *thoſe for whom God gave his own Son, may warrantably expect any other temporal Mercies from him.* This is the Apoſtle's Inference, *Rom.* 8. 32. *He that ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up to Death for us all; how ſhall he not with him freely give us all things?* And ſo 1 *Cor.* 3. 21, 22. *All is yours, for ye are Chriſt's*, (i. e.) They hold all other things in Chriſt, who is the capital, and moſt comprehenſive Mercy.

To make out the Grounds of this comfortable Deduction, let theſe *four* Things be ponder'd, and duly weigh'd in your Thoughts. (1.) No other Mercy you need or deſire, is or can be ſo dear to God, as Jeſus Chriſt is: He never laid any other thing in his Boſom, as he did his Son. As for the World, and the Comforts of it, it is the Duſt of his Feet, he values it not; as you ſee by his providential Diſpoſals of it, having given it to the worſt of Men. All the *Turkiſh Empire* (ſaith *Luther*) as great and glorious as it is, is but a Crumb which the Maſter of the Family throws to the Dogs. Think upon any other outward Enjoyment that's valuable in your Eyes, and there is not ſo much Compare betwixt it and Chriſt, in the Eſteem of God, as is betwixt your dear Children, and the Lumber of your Houſes, in your Eſteem. If then God have parted ſo freely from that which was infinitely dearer to him than theſe; how ſhall he deny theſe, when they may promote his Glory, and your Good? (2) As Jeſus Chriſt was nearer the Heart of God than all theſe, ſo Chriſt is in himſelf much *greater* and more excellent than them all: Ten thouſand Worlds, and the Glory of them all, is but the Duſt of the Ballance, if weighed with Chriſt.

Totum Turcicum imperium, quantum quantum eſt, mica tantum eſt, quam Pater familias projicit canibus. *Luther.*

Theſe

These Things are but poor Creatures, but he is over all, God blessed for ever, *Rom.* 9. 5. They are common Gifts, but he is *the Gift of God*, John 4. 10. They are ordinary Mercies, but he is *the Mercy*, Luke 1. 72. As one Pearl or precious Stone is greater in Value than ten thousand common Pebbles. Now if God have so freely given the greater, how can you suppose he should deny the lesser Mercies? Will a Man give to another a large Inheritance, and stand with him for a Trifle? How can it be? (3.) There is no other Mercy you stand in Want of, but you are entitled to it by the Gift of Christ: It is (as to Right) conveyed to you with Christ. So in the fore-cited, 1 *Cor.* 3. 21, 22, 23. *The World is yours, yea, all is yours; for ye are Christ's.* So 2 Cor. 1. 20. *For all the Promises of God in Christ, in him they are yea, and in him, Amen.* With him he hath given you all Things, εἰς ἀπολαῦσιν, 1 *Tim.* 6. 17. Richly to enjoy. The Word signifies *rem aliquam cum lætitia percipere*, to have the sweet Relish and Comfort of an Enjoyment. So have we in all our Mercies, upon the Account of our Title to them in Christ. (4.) Lastly, If God have given you this *nearer, greater*, and *all-comprehending Mercy*, when you were Enemies to him, and alienated from him; it is not imaginable he should now deny you any inferiour Mercy, when you are come into a State of Reconciliation and Amity with him. So the Apostle reasons, *Rom.* 5. 8, 9, 10. *For if when we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son; much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his Life.* And thus you have the second Inference with its Grounds.

Corollary 3. If the greatest Love hath been manifested in giving Christ to the World, then it follows *that the greatest Evil and Wickedness is manifested in despising, slighting and rejecting Christ.* 'Tis sad to abuse the Love of God manifested in the lowest Gift of Providence, but to slight the richest Discoveries of it, even in that peerless Gift, wherein God commends his Love in the most taking and astonishing Manner, this is Sin with a Witness. Blush, O Heavens, and be astonished, O Earth; yea, be ye horribly afraid! No Guilt like this. The most flagitious Wretches among the barbarous Nations are innocent in Comparison of these. But are there any such in the World? Dare any slight this Gift of God? Indeed if Mens Words might be taken, there are few or none that dare do so; but if their Lives and Practices may be believed, this, this is the Sin of the far greater Part of the Christianized World. Witness the lamentable Stupidity and Supineness; witness the Contempt of the Gospel; witness the Hatred and Persecution of his Image, Laws and People. What is the Language of all those but a vile Esteem of Jesus Christ?

And now let me a little expostulate with these ungrateful Souls that trample under Foot the Son of God, that value not this Love that gave him forth. What is that Mercy which you so contemn and undervalue? Is it so vile and cheap a Thing as your Entertainment speaks it to be? Is it indeed worth no more than this in your Eyes? Surely you will not be long of that Opinion. Will you be of that Mind, think you, when Death and Judgment shall have throughly awakened you? O no, then a thousand Worlds for a Christ! As it's storied of our Crook-back'd *Richard*, when he lost the Field, and was in great Danger by his Enemies that pressed upon him; O now (said he) a Kingdom for a Horse! Or think ye, that any beside you in the World are of your Mind? You are deceived if you think so. *To them that believe he is precious* through all this World, 1 Pet. 2. 7. And in the other World they are of a quite contrary Mind. Could you but hear what is said of him in Heaven, in what a Dialect the Saved of the Lord do extol their Saviour; or could you but imagine the Self-revenges, the Self-torments, which the Damned suffer for this their Folly, and what a Value they would set upon one Tender of Christ if it might but again be hoped for; you would see that such as you are the only Despisers of Christ. Beside, methink it's astonishing that you should despise a Mercy in which your own Souls are so dearly, so deeply, so everlastingly concerned, as they are in this Gift of God. If it were but the Soul of another; nay, less, if but the Body of another; and yet less than that, if but another's Beast, whose Life you could preserve, you are obliged to do it: But when it is thy self, yea, the best Part of thy self; thine own invaluable Soul that thou ruinest and destroyest hereby, O what a Monster art thou to cast it away thus! What! will you slight your own Souls? Care you not whether they be saved, or whether they be damned? Is it indeed an indifferent Thing with you which way they fall at Death? Have you imagined a tolerable Hell? Is it easie to perish? Are you not only turned God's Enemies, but your own too? O see what Monsters can Sin turn Men and Women into! O the stupifying, besotting, intoxicating Power of Sin! But perhaps you think that all these are but uncertain Sounds, with which we alarm you. It may be thine own Heart will preach such Doctrine as this to thee; Who can assure thee of the Reality of these Things? What shouldst thou trouble thy self with an invisible World, or be so much concerned for what thine Eyes never saw, nor didst ever receive the Report from any that have seen them? Well, tho' we cannot now shew you these Things, yet shortly they shall be shewn you; and your own Eyes shall behold them. You are convinced and satisfied that many other Things are real which you never saw. But be assured, That *If the Word spoken by Angels was stedfast, and every Transgression and Disobedience received a just Recompence of Reward: How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation, which at first began to be spoken to us by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by them that heard him, God also bearing them witness?* Heb. 2. 2, 3, 4. But if they be certain, yet they are not near: it will be a long Time before they come. Poor Soul! how dost thou cheat thy self? It may be not by twenty Parts so long a Time as thy own Fancy draws it forth for thee; thou art not certain of the next Moment.

And suppose what thou imaginest, What is Twenty or Forty Years when it is past? yea, what is a Thousand Years to the vast Eternity? Go trifle away a few Days more, sleep out a few Nights more, and then lye down in the Dust; it will not be long ere the Trump of God shall awaken thee, and thine Eyes shall behold Jesus coming in the Clouds of Heaven, and then you will know the Price of this Sin, O therefore, if there be any Sense of Eternity upon you, any Pity or Love for your selves in you; if you have any Concernments more than the Beasts that perish, despise not your own offered Mercies, slight not the richest Gift that ever was yet opened to the World; and a sweeter cannot be opened to all Eternity.

Fie, fie (saith one) *upon this condemned and foolish World, that will give so little for Christ and Salvation: O! if there were but a free Market proclaimed of Christ and Salvation in that Day, when the Trumpet of God shall awaken the Dead; how many Buyers would be there? God send me no more Happiness but that which the blind World* [*to their eternal Woe*] *letteth slip through their Fingers.*

SER-

SERMON V.

Treats of Christ's wonderful Person.

JOHN I. 14.

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, &c.

YOU have heard the Covenant of Redemption opened. The Work therein propounded by the Father, and consented to by the Son, is such as infinitely exceeds the Power of any meer Creature to perform. He that undertakes to satisfie God by Obedience for Man's Sin, must himself be God; and he that performs such a perfect Obedience, by doing and suffering all that the Law required in our Rooms, must be Man. These two Natures must be united in one Person, else there could not be a Concourse or Co-operation of either Nature in his Mediatory Works. How these Natures are united in the wonderful Person of our *Immanuel*, is the first Part of the great Mystery of Godliness: A Subject studied and adored by Angels! And the Mystery thereof is wrapped up in this Text. Wherein we have,

First, The Incarnation of the Son of God plainly asserted,

Secondly, That Assertion strongly confirmed.

(1.) In the Assertion we have three Parts.

1. The *Person assuming*, ὁ λόγος, the Word, *(i. e.)* the second Person, or Subsistent in the most glorious Godhead, call'd the Word, either because he is the Scope and principal Matter, both of the prophetical and promissory Word; or because he expounds and reveals the Mind and Will of God to Men, as *Verse* 18. The only-begotten Son which is in the Bosom of the Father, he hath declared or expounded him.

Verbum substantiale, non prolatum. *Fulgent. lib.* 1.

2. The *Nature assumed*, σὰρξ, Flesh, *(i. e.)* the intire Human Nature, consisting of a true Human Soul and Body. For so this Word σὰρξ in *Rom.* 3. 20. and the *Hebrew* Word בָּשָׂר which answers to it, by an usual *Metonomy* of a Part for the whole, is used, *Gen.* 6. 12. And the Word *Flesh* is rather used here, than *Man*, on Purpose to aggravate the admirable Condescension and Abasement of Christ: there being more of Vileness, Weakness, and Opposition to Spirit in this Word than in that, as is pertinently noted by some. Hence the whole Nature is denominated by that Part, and called Flesh.

Voluit Evangelista uti potius carnis, quam hominis nomine; ut magis appareret, quo se divinum verbum abjecerit, cum caro factum est. Nam & vilior major in carne apparet, & oppositio major cum spiritu. *Maccov. loc. com.*

3. The *Assumption* it self, ἐγένετο, he was made, not *fuit*, he was, (as *Socinus* would render it in Design to overthrow the Existence of Christ's glorified Body now in Heaven) but *factus est*, it was made, *(i. e.)* he took or assumed the true Human Nature, (called Flesh, for the Reason before rendered) into the Unity of his Divine Person, with all its integral Parts, and essential Properties; and so was made, or became a true and real Man, by that Assumption. The Apostle speaking of the same Act, *Heb.* 2. 16. *He took on him*, ἐπιλαμβάνεται, fitly rendered he took on him, or he assumed: Which assuming, tho' *inchoative* it was the Work of the whole Trinity, God the Father, in the Son, by the Spirit forming or creating that Nature; as if three Sisters should make a Garment betwixt them, which only one of them wears; yet *terminative* it was the Act of the Son only; 'twas he only that was *made Flesh*. And when 'tis said, he was made Flesh, misconceive not, as if there was a Mutation of the Godhead into Flesh, for this was performed, * not by changing what he was, but by assuming what he was not, as *Augustine* well expresseth it. As when the Scripture in a like Expression saith, *He was made Sin*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. and made a Curse, *Gal.* 3. 13. the Meaning is not, that he was turned into Sin, or into a Curse: no more may we think here the Godhead was turned into Flesh, and lost its own Being and Nature, because it's said he was made Flesh. This is the Sum of the Assertion.

* Non mutando quod erat, sed assumendo quod non erat. *Aug.*

(2.) This Assertion [*that the Word was made Flesh*] is strongly confirmed. He *dwelt among us*, and we saw his Glory. This was no Phantasm, but a most real and indubitable Thing. For ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, he pitcht his Tent, or tabernacled with us. And we are Eye-Witnesses of it. Parallel to that, 1 *John* 1. 1, 2, 3. *That which was from the Beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our Eyes, which we have looked upon, and our Hands have handled of the Word of Life,* &c. *declare we unto you.* Hence note,

Doct. *That Jesus Christ did really assume the true and perfect Nature of Man, into a personal Union with his Divine Nature; and still remains true God, and true Man, in one Person for ever.*

The Proposition contains one of the deepest Mysteries in Godliness, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. A Mystery by which Apprehension is dazled, Invention astonished, and all Expression swallowed up. If ever the Tongues of Angels were desirable to explicate any Word of God, they are so here. Great is the Interest of Words in this Doctrine. We walk upon the Brink of Danger. The least Tread awry may ingulph us in the Boggs of Error. *Arius* would have been content if the Council of *Nice* would but have gratified

Incarnatio est opus Dei, quo filius Dei secundum œconomiam divini consilii patris, & sui, & spiritus sancti sese humilians, veram, integram, perfectam, sanctamque carnem ex virgine Maria, spiritus sancti operatione, & efficacia, in unitate personæ sibi assumpsit; ita ut caro illa nullam propriam subsistentiam extra Dei Filium habeat, sed ab illo, & in eo vere sustentetur & gestetur: duabus perfectis naturis inter se ἀτρέπτως, καὶ ἀσυγχύτως, ἀδιαιρέτως, καὶ ἀχωρίστως unitis; unde constituitur persona Christi, θεανθρώπου, &c. Synopsis purioris Theologiæ, p. 295.

tified him in a Letter, ὁμοέσι☉, and ὁμοιόσι☉. The *Neſtorians* alſo deſired but a Letter, Θεοδόχ☉, θεοτόκ☉. Theſe ſeemed but ſmall and modeſt Requeſts, but if granted, had proved no ſmall Prejudice to Jeſus Chriſt and his Truths. I deſire therefore the Reader would with greateſt Attention of Mind apply himſelf to theſe Truths. 'Tis a Doctrine hard to underſtand, and dangerous to miſtake. I am really of his Mind that ſaid, * It's better not touch the Bottom, than not keep within the Circle; *melius eſt neſcire centrum, quam non tenere circulum.* He did aſſume a true humane Body; that is plainly aſſerted, *Phil.* 2. 7, 8, &c. *Heb.* 2. 14, 16. In one Place it's call'd taking on him the Seed of *Abraham*, and in the Text *Fleſh.* He did alſo aſſume a true humane Soul, that's undeniable by its Operations, Paſſions, and Expiration at laſt, *Mat.* 26. 38. and 27. 50. And that both theſe Natures make but one Perſon, is as evident from *Rom.* 1. 3, 4. *Jeſus Chriſt was made of the Seed of* David *according to the Fleſh, and declared to be the Son of God with Power, according to the Spirit of Holineſs, by the Reſurrection from the Dead.* So *Rom.* 9. 5. *Of whom as concerning the Fleſh, Chriſt came, who is over all, God bleſſed for ever, Amen.* But that you may have a ſound and clear Underſtanding of this Myſtery, I will, (1.) Open the Nature; (2.) The Effects; and (3.) The Reaſons or Ends of this wonderful Union.

* *Reaſon (ſaith one) can never ſhew it ſelf more reaſonable than in ceaſing to reaſon about things which are above Reaſon.* Quæ ſunt occulta, non ſunt ſcrutanda. Quæ manifeſta, non negligenda. *Proſper.* Nomina concreta non multiplicantur, niſi multiplicentur ſuppoſita. Unum autem cum tantum ſit in Chriſto ſuppoſitum; Unus tantum ſit Chriſtus neceſſe eſt. *Trelcat. p.* 67.

The Nature of the Hypoſtatical Union opened.

Firſt; The Nature of this Union. There be three illuſtrious and dazling Unions in Scripture: That of three Perſons in one God, *Eſſentially.* That of two diſtinct Natures, and Perſons; by one Spirit, *Myſtically*: And this of two diſtinct Natures in one Perſon, *Hypoſtatically.* This is my Task to open at this Time. And for the more diſtinct and perſpicuous Management thereof, I ſhall ſpeak to it both *Negatively* and *Poſitively.*

Non συγχυτικῶς.

1. *Negatively.* Think not when Chriſt aſſumed our Nature that it was united *Conſubſtantially*, ſo as the three Perſons in the Godhead are united among themſelves. They all have but one and the ſame Nature and Will; but in Chriſt are two diſtinct Natures and Wills tho' but one Perſon.

Non φυσικῶς.

2. Nor yet that they are united *Phyſically*, as Soul and Body are united in one Perſon. For Death actually diſſolves that, but this is indiſſoluble. So that when his Soul was expir'd, and his Body interred, both Soul and Body were ſtill united to the ſecond Perſon as much as ever.

Non μυστικῶς.

3. Nor yet is it ſuch a *myſtical Union*, as is between Chriſt and Believers. Indeed that is a glorious Union; but tho' Believers are ſaid to be in Chriſt, and Chriſt in them, yet they are not one Perſon with him. They are not Chriſted into Chriſt, or Godded into God, as blaſphemous *Familiſts* ſpeak.

2dly, Poſitively. But this Aſſumption of which I ſpeak, is that whereby the Second Perſon in the Godhead did take the Human Nature into a Perſonal Union with himſelf, by Virtue whereof the Manhood ſubſiſts in the Second Perſon, yet without Confuſion, both making but one Perſon, Θεάνθρωπ☉; or *Immanuel*, God with us.

ἕνωσις ἔστιν καθ' ὑπόστασιν non quidem ἕτερον ἐξ ἑτέρου, aliud ex alio, ſed αὐταὶ αἱ φύσεις; duæ ipſæ naturæ in perſonam unitæ, *Damaſc.*

So that tho' we truly aſcribe a twofold Nature to Chriſt, yet not a double Perſon. For the Human Nature of Chriſt never ſubſiſted ſeparately and diſtinctly, by any perſonal Subſiſtence of its own, as it doth in all other Men, but from the firſt Moment of Conception ſubſiſted in Union with the Second Perſon.

Humana natura non eſt ἰδιοσύσατ☉, per ſe ſubſiſtens, neque prius humana natura fuit, & poſtea aſſumpta fuit, ſed ἅμα σὰρξ ἅμα θεοῦ λόγου σάρξ, atq; in perſona τοῦ λόγου ſubſiſtit. Et ſic una eſt Chriſti perſona, in qua quidem eſt ἄλλο καὶ ἄλλο, aliud atq; aliud, ſed non ἄλλ☉ καὶ ἄλλ☉, alius atq, alius. Ut *Greg. Naz. apud Theodoret. Dialog.* 2.

To explicate this Myſtery more particularly, let it be conſidered;

Firſt, The Human Nature was united to the Second Perſon *miraculouſly* and extraordinarily, being ſupernaturally fram'd in the Womb of the Virgin, by the over-ſhadowing Power of the Higheſt, *Luke* 1. 34, 35. By Reaſon whereof it may truly and properly be ſaid to be the Fruit of the Womb, not of the Loins of *Man*, but not by Man. And this was neceſſary to exempt the aſſumed Nature from the Stain and Pollution of *Adam*'s Sin, which it wholly eſcaped; in as much as he received it not, as all others do, in the Way of ordinary Generation, wherein Original Sin is propagated: But this being extraordinarily produced, was a moſt pure and holy Thing, *Luke* 1. 35. And indeed this perfect ſhining Holineſs in which it was produced was abſolutely neceſſary, both in order to its Union with the Divine Perſon, and the Deſign of that Union; which was both to ſatisfie for, and to ſanctifie us. The two Natures could not be conjoined in the Perſon of Chriſt, had there been the leaſt Taint of Sin upon the Human Nature. For God can have no Fellowſhip with Sin, much leſs be united to it. Or ſuppoſing ſuch a Conjunction with our ſinful Nature, yet he being a Sinner himſelf, could never ſatisfie for the Sins of others; nor could an unholy Thing ever make us holy. *Such a High-Prieſt therefore became us as is holy, harmleſs, undefiled, ſeparate from Sinners,* Heb. 7. 26. And ſuch an one muſt he needs be, whom the Holy Ghoſt produces in ſuch a peculiar Way, τὸ ἅγιον, that holy Thing.

Secondly, As it was produced miraculouſly, ſo it was aſſumed *integrally*; that is to ſay, Chriſt took a compleat and perfect Humane Soul and Body, with all and every Faculty and Member pertaining to it. And this was neceſſary (as both *Auſtin* and *Fulgentius* have well obſerved) that hereby he might heal the whole Nature of that Leproſie of Sin, which had ſeiz'd and infected every Member and Faculty. Πάντα ἀνέλαβεν ἵνα πάντα ἁγιάζῃ. He aſſumed all, to ſanctifie all; as *Damaſcen* expreſſeth it. He deſign'd a perfect Recovery by ſanctifying us wholly in Soul and Body, and Spirit; and therefore aſſumed the whole in Order to it.

Aug. de Civit. dei, lib. 10. *cap.* 27. *p.* 586. Fulgent. ad Tra. *l.* 1. *p.* 251. Damaſc. *lib.* 3. *cap.* 20.

Thirdly, he aſſumed our Nature, as with all its integral Parts, ſo with all its *ſinleſs Infirmities.* And therefore it's ſaid of him, *Heb.* 2. 17. *That it behoved him,* κατὰ πάντα ὁμοιωθῆναι, according to all Things (that is, all Things natural, not formally ſinful, as it's limited by the ſame

Nec ulla peccati contagio naturam illam humanam Chriſti inficere potuit, cujus ſubſtantiam in ſe alioqui corruptam originarie, ineffabilis ſpiritus ſancti operatio ab omni prorſus macula ſanctificavit & purgavit pleniſſime; & ita fieri debuit, utpote in qua purgatio peccatorum noſtro-

Apoſtle,

rum faciendâ erat. *Piet. Inſtit. p.* 58.

Apoſtle, *Heb.* 4. 15.) to be made like unto his Brethren. But here our Divines do carefully diſtinguiſh Infirmities into *Perſonal* and *Natural*. Perſonal Infirmities are ſuch as befal particular Perſons, from particular Cauſes, ſuch as Dumbneſs, Blindneſs, Lameneſs, Leproſies, Monſtroſities, and other Deformities. Theſe it was no way neceſſary that Chriſt ſhould, nor did he at all aſſume; but the natural ones, ſuch as Hunger, Thirſt, Wearineſs, Sweating, Bleeding, Mortality, *&c.* Which tho' they are not in themſelves formally and intrinſecally ſinful; yet are they the Effects and Conſequents of Sin. They are ſo many Marks, that Sin hath left of it ſelf upon our Natures. And on that Account Chriſt is ſaid to be ſent *in the Likeneſs of ſinful Fleſh*, Rom. 8. 3. Wherein the gracious Condeſcenſion of Chriſt for us is marvellouſly ſignalized, that he would not aſſume our innocent Nature, as it was in *Adam* before the Fall, while it ſtood in all its primitive Glory and Perfection; but after Sin had quite defaced, ruined, and ſpoil'd it.

Neque tamen humanitas hac ratione exaltata, aut in deitatem mutata, aut cum eâdem eſt confuſa; quaſi ullius, quæ deitati peculiaris exiſtit, ſive qualitatis, ſive proprietatis particeps facta: Sed ab eâdem diſtincta manſit uſque, manetque conſtans nempe finito corpore conſimiliq; quoad ſubſtantiam & facultates eſſentiales hominum aliorum omnium anima. *Bradſhaw de Juſtific. p.* 79.

Fourthly, The Humane Nature is ſo united with the Divine, as that each Nature ſtill retains its own eſſential Properties diſtinct. And this Diſtinction is not, nor can be loſt by that Union. So that the two Underſtandings, Wills, Powers, *&c. viz.* The Divine and Humane, are not confounded; but a Line of Diſtinction runs betwixt them ſtill in this wonderful Perſon. It was the Hereſie of the *Eutychians* condemn'd by the Council of *Chalcedon*, to affirm that there was no Diſtinction betwixt the two Natures in Chriſt. Againſt whom that Council determined, that they were united ἀσυγχύτως, without any Immutation, or Confuſion.

Fifthly, The Union of the two Natures in Chriſt, is an *inſeparable Union*; ſo that from the firſt Moment thereof, there never was, nor to Eternity ſhall be, any Separation of them.

Doubt. If you ask how the Union remained betwixt them, when Chriſt's Humane Soul and Body were ſeparated from each other upon the Croſs? Is not Death the Diſſolution of Union betwixt Soul and Body?

Reſolution. True, The natural Union betwixt his Soul and Body was diſſolved by Death for a Time, but this Hypoſtatical Union remained even then as intire and firm as ever. For tho' his Soul and Body were divided from each other, yet neither of them from the Divine Nature. Divines aſſiſt our Conception of this Myſtery by an apt Illuſtration. A Man that holds in his Hand a Sword ſheathed, when he pleaſeth, draws forth the Sword; but ſtill holds that in one Hand, and the Sheath in the other, and then ſheaths it again, ſtill holding it in his Hand: So when Chriſt died, his Soul and Body retained their Union with the Divine Nature, tho' (not during that Space) one with another.

Tollerus rem ſic eleganter illuſtrat.

Quemadmodum homo habens enſem in vagina, quando vult exerit enſem, & tamen unâ manu vaginam tenet, & alterâ enſem; ſic divina perſona per mortem, animam a corpore veluti enſem a vagina ſeparavit, utramque tamen partem ſibi habuit unitam: Per reſurrectionem autem animam corpori copulavit, quaſi enſem reponens in vagina.

And thus you are to form and regulate your Conceptions of this great Myſtery. Some Adumbrations and imperfect Similitudes of it may be found in Nature. Among which ſome * commend that Union which the Soul and Body have with each other; they are of different Natures, yet both make one individual Man. Others † find Fault with this, becauſe both theſe united make but one compleat Human Nature; whereas in Chriſt's Perſon are two Natures: and commend to us a more perfect Emblem, *viz.* That of the *Cyens* and the Tree or Stock, which have two Natures, yet make but one Tree. But then we muſt remember that the *Cyens* wants a Root of its own, which is an Integral Part, but Chriſt aſſumed our Nature integrally. This Defect is by others * ſupplied in the *Miſcletoe* and the *Oak*, which have different Natures; and the *Miſcletoe* ſubſiſts in Union with the *Oak*, ſtill retaining the Difference of Nature; and tho' making but one Tree, yet bears different Fruits. And ſo much to the firſt Thing, namely, the Nature of this Union.

* Juſt. Mart.

† Alex. Alex.

* Roberts *of the Covenant.*

Secondly, For the Effects or immediate Reſults of this marvellous Union, let theſe three be well conſidered.

The Reſults of the Hypoſtatical Union.

1. The two Natures being thus united in the Perſon of the Mediator, by Vertue thereof the Properties of each Nature are attributed and do truly agree to the whole Perſon: ſo that it's proper to ſay, the Lord of Glory was crucified, 1 *Cor.* 2. 8. And the Blood of God redeemed the Church, *Acts* 20. 28. That Chriſt was both in Heaven, and in Earth at the ſame Time, *John* 3. 13.

Yet we do not believe that one Nature doth tranſfuſe or impart its Properties to the other, or that it is proper to ſay the Divine Nature ſuffered, bled or died, or the Humane is Omniſcient, Omnipotent, Omnipreſent: But that the Properties of both Natures are ſo aſcribed to the Perſon, that it is proper to affirm any of them of him in the concrete, tho' not abſtractly. The right underſtanding of this would greatly aſſiſt in teaching the true Senſe of the forenamed, and many other dark Paſſages in the Scriptures.

Proprietates utriuſq; naturæ toti perſonæ, in concreto, verè competunt. Filius hominis, qui eſt perſona duabus conſtans naturis, eſt omnipræſens, æternus, adorabilis, adorandus, nempe ſecundum naturam divinam, cujus hæc ſunt ἰδιώματα; adoramus deitatem incarnatam, ipſa autem deitas eſt proprium & abſolutum Divinæ adorationis objectum.

2. Another Fruit of this Hypoſtatical Union, is the ſingular Advancement of the Human Nature in Chriſt far beyond and above what it is capable of in any other Perſon; it being hereby repleniſh'd and fill'd with an unparallel'd Meaſure of Divine Graces and Excellencies; in which Reſpect he is ſaid to be *anointed above or before his Fellows*, Pſal. 45. 8. and ſo becomes the Object of Adoration and Divine Worſhip, *Acts* 7. 59. This the *Socinians* oppugn with this Argument. He that is worſhipped with a Divine Worſhip, as he is Mediator, is not ſo worſhipped as God: but Chriſt is worſhipped as Mediator. But we ſay, that to be worſhipped as Mediator, and as God, are not oppoſite, but the one is neceſſarily included in the other; and therein is farther included the *ratio formalis ſub qua* of that Divine Religious Worſhip.

Natura humana ita aſſumpta, ſupra creaturam univerſam aſſumptionis hujus virtute; mirum in modum eſt exaltata, *Heb.* 1. 4, 5, 6. *Guil. Bradſhaw*, de juſtificatione, *p.* 79.

3. Hence in the laſt place, follows, as another excellent Fruit of this Union, *The Concourſe and Co-operation of each Nature to his Mediatory Works: For in them he acts according to both Natures.* The Human Nature doing what is Human, *viz.* Suffering, Sweating, Bleeding, Dying: and his Divine Nature ſtamping all theſe with infinite Value; and ſo both ſweetly concur unto one glorious Work and Deſign of Mediation. *Papiſts* generally deny that he performs any of theſe mediatory Works as God, but only as Man; but how boldly do they therein contradict theſe plain Scriptures? See 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. *Heb.* 9. 14, 15. And ſo much as to the ſecond Thing propounded, *viz.* the Fruits of this Union.

The Reaſons of the Hypoſtatical Union.

Thirdly, The laſt Thing to be opened is the Grounds and Reaſons of this Aſſumption. And we may ſay touching that, (1.) That the Human Nature was not aſſumed to any intrinſecal Perfection of the Godhead, not to make that Human Nature it ſelf perfect. The Divine did not aſſume the Human Nature neceſſarily, but voluntarily; not out of Indigence, but Bounty; not becauſe it was to be perfected by it, but to perfect it, by cauſing it to lie as a Pipe to the infinite all-filling Fountain of Grace and Glory, of which it is the great Receptacle. (2.) And ſo conſequently to qualifie and prepare him for a full Diſcharge of his Mediatorſhip in the Offices of our Prophet, Prieſt, and King. Had he not this double Nature in the Unity of his Perſon, he could not have been our *Prophet*: for *as God*, he knows the Mind and Will of God, *John* 1. 18. & 3. 13. and *as Man*, he is fitted to impart it ſuitably to us, *Deut.* 18. 15, 16, 17, 18. compared with *Acts* 3. 22.

In naturâ humanâ ſatisfecit, ſed pretium, dignitas, efficacia & applicatio illius ſatisfactionis à natura divina proveniunt. *Ameſ. Bell. Enerv. lib.* 5.

As *Prieſt*, had he not been Man, he could have ſhed no Blood; and if not God, it had been no adequate Value for us, *Heb.* 2. 17. *Acts* 20. 28.

As *King*, had he not been Man, he had been an Heterogeneous, and ſo no fit Head for us. And if not God, he could neither rule nor defend his Body the Church.

Theſe then were the Deſigns and Ends of that Aſſumption.

Uſe 1. *Let all Chriſtians rightly inform their Minds in this Truth of ſo great Concernment in Religion; and hold it faſt againſt all ſubtle Adverſaries, that would wreſt it from them.* The Learned *Hooker* obſerves, that the dividing of Chriſt's Perſon, which is but one, and the confounding of his Natures, which are two, hath been the Occaſion of thoſe Errors which have ſo greatly diſturbed the Peace of the Church. The *Arians* deny'd his Deity, levelling him with other meer Men. The *Apollinarians* maimed his Humanity. The *Sabellians* affirmed, that the Father and Holy Ghoſt were incarnated, as well as the Son; and were forced upon that Abſurdity by another Error, *viz.* denying three diſtinct Perſons in the Godhead, and affirming they were but three Names. The *Eutychians* confounded both Natures in Chriſt, denying any Diſtinction of them. The *Seleuſians* affirmed, that he uncloathed himſelf of his Humanity when he aſcended, and hath no Human Body in Heaven. The *Neſtorians* ſo rent the two Natures of Chriſt aſunder, as to make two diſtinct Perſons of them.

Ἄληθῶς θεὸς τέλεως ἄνθρωπος, ἀδιαίρετως, ἀσυγχύτως, &c.

But ye (Beloved) *have not ſo learned Chriſt.* Ye know he is, (1.) True and very God. (2.) True and very Man: that, (3.) Theſe two Natures make but one Perſon, being united inſeparable. (4.) That they are not confounded or ſwallowed up one in another, but remain ſtill diſtinct in the Perſon of Chriſt. Hold ye the Form of ſound Words, which cannot be condemned. Great Things hang upon all theſe Truths. O ſuffer not a Stone to be looſed out of the Foundation.

Uſe 2. *Adore the Love of the Father, and Son, who bid ſo high for your Soul; and at this rate were contented you ſhould be recovered.*

1. The Love of the Father is herein admirably conſpicuous, who ſo vehemently willed our Salvation, that he is content to degrade the Darling of his Soul to ſo vile and contemptible a State, which was upon the Matter an Undoing to him, in point of Reputation; as the Apoſtle intimates, *Phil.* 2. 7. If two Perſons be at variance, and the Superior, who alſo is the wronged Perſon, begin to ſtoop firſt, and ſay, you have deeply wronged me, yea, your Blood is not able to repair the Wrongs you have done me; however ſuch is my Love to you, and Willingneſs to be at Peace with you, that I will part with what is moſt dear to me in all the World, for peace-ſake; yea, tho' I ſtoop below my ſelf, and ſeem as it were to forget my own Relation and Endearments to my own Son, I will not ſuffer ſuch a Breach betwixt me and you, *John* 3. 16. *God ſo loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son.*

Nullus jacentem ſuſcitat, niſi inflectione ſui. *Nierem.*

2. And how aſtoniſhing is the Love of Chriſt! that would make ſuch a Stoop as this to exalt us! O 'tis raviſhing to think he ſhould paſs by a more excellent and noble Species of Creatures, refuſing the Angelical Nature, *Heb.* 2. 16. to take Fleſh; and not to † ſolace and diſport himſelf in it neither, not to experience ſenſitive Pleaſures in the Body: for as he needed them not, being at the Fountain-head of the higheſt Joys, ſo it was not at all in his Deſign, but the very contrary, even to make himſelf a Subject capable of Sorrows, Wounds and Tears. It was, as the Apoſtle elegantly expreſſeth it, in *Heb.* 2. 9. ὅπως ὑπὲρ παντὸς γεύσηται θανάτου; that he might ſenſibly taſte what Reliſh Death hath, and what Bitterneſs is in thoſe Pangs and Agonies. Now O that you would get your Hearts ſuitably impreſt and affected with theſe high Expreſſures of the Love both of the Father and Son! How is the Courage of ſome *Noble Romans* celebrated in Hiſtory, for the brave Adventures they made for the Commonwealth! But they could never ſtoop as Chriſt did, being ſo infinitely below him in perſonal Dignity.

† Ideo carnem aſſumpſit, ut per patibile, id quod eſt impatibile, paſſionem ſuſtineret. *Theod.*

Uſe 3. And here the infinite Wiſdom hath alſo left a famous and everlaſting Mark of it ſelf; which invites, yea, even chains the Eyes of Angels and Men to it ſelf. Had there been a general Council of Angels, to adviſe upon a way of recovering poor Sinners, they would all have been at an everlaſting Demurr and Loſs about it. It could not have entred their Thoughts, (tho' they are Intelligences, and moſt ſagacious Creatures) that every Mercy, Pardon and Grace ſhould find ſuch a way as this to iſſue forth from the Heart of God to the Hearts of Sinners. O how wiſely is the Method of our Recovery laid! So that Chriſt may well be call'd θεοῦ δύναμις καὶ σοφία,

Non eſt ingenii vel humani, vel angelici etiam, ejuſmodi aliquem inventum iri; aut excogitatum ſperare. Unde ſi peccator maledictoinis divinæ peccatis ſuis debitæ, ad ejuſmodi inveſtigandum ſibi ipſi relinqueretur; quo magis in negotio iſto deſudaret, eo ſe magis in infinitum horrois & deſperations barathrum præcipitatem daret. *Bradſhaw* de Juſtif. *p.* 74.

καὶ σοφία, 1 *Cor.* 1. 24. the Power and Wiſdom of God, for as much as in him the Divine Wiſdom is more glorified than in all the other Works of God, upon which he hath impreſt it. Hence it is that ſome of the Schoolmen affirm (tho' I confeſs my ſelf unſatisfied with it) that the Incarnation of Chriſt was in it ſelf ſo glorious a Demonſtration of God's Wiſdom and Power, and thereupon ſo deſirable in it ſelf, that tho' Man had not ſinned, yet Chriſt would have been made Man.

Uſe 4. Hence alſo we infer *the incomparable Sweetneſs of the Chriſtian Religion, that ſhews poor Sinners ſuch a fair Foundation to reſt their trembling Conſciences upon.* While poor diſtreſſed Souls look to themſelves, they are perpetually puzzled. That's the Cry of diſtreſſed natural Conſcience, *Mic.* 6. 6. *Wherewith ſhall I come before the Lord?* The *Hebrew is* קדם אקדמנו ס מה how ſhall I prevent or anticipate the Lord? And ſo *Montanus* renders it, *in quo præoccupabo Dominum?* Conſcience ſees God arming himſelf with Wrath to avenge himſelf for Sin; cries out, O how ſhall I prevent him! If he would accept the Fruit of my Body (thoſe dear Pledges of Nature) for the Sin of my Soul, he ſhould have them. But now we ſee God coming down in Fleſh, and ſo intimately uniting our Fleſh to himſelf, that it hath no proper Subſiſtence of its own, but is united with the Divine Perſon; hence it is eaſie to imagine what Worth and Value muſt be in that Blood, and how eternal Love, ſpringing forth triumphantly from it, flouriſhes into Pardon, Grace, and Peace. Here is a way in which the Sinner may ſee Juſtice and Mercy kiſſing each other, and the latter exerciſed freely without Prejudice to the former. All other Conſciences through the World lie either in a deep Sleep in the Devil's Arms, or elſe are rolling (Sea-ſick) upon the Waves of their own Fears and diſmal Preſages. O happy are they that have dropt Anchor on this Ground, and not only know they have Peace, but why they have it!

קדם Antivertit, anticipavit, obvenit. *Buxtorf.*

Uſe 5. *Of how great Concernment is it, that Chriſt ſhould have Union with our particular Perſons, as well as with our common Nature?* For by this Union with our Nature alone, never any Man was or can be ſaved. Yea, let me add, that this Union with your Natures is utterly in vain to you, and will do you no good, except he have Union with your Perſons by Faith alſo. It is indeed infinite Mercy that God is come ſo near you, as to dwell in your Fleſh; and that he hath fitted ſuch an excellent Method to ſave poor Sinners in. And hath he done all this? Is he indeed come home, even to your own Doors, to ſeek Peace? Doth he vail his unſupportable Glory under Fleſh, that he might treat thee more familiarly? And yet do you refuſe him, and ſhut your Hearts againſt him? then hear one word, and let thine Ears tingle at the Sound of it; thy Sin is hereby aggravated beyond the Sin of Devils, who never ſinn'd againſt a Mediator in their own Nature; who never deſpiſed, or refuſed, becauſe indeed they were never offered Terms of Mercy, as you are.

And I doubt not but the Devils themſelves, who now tempt you to reject, will to all Eternity upbraid your Folly for rejecting this great Salvation, which in this excellent way is brought down, even to your own Doors.

Uſe 6. If Jeſus Chriſt has aſſumed our Nature, *Then he is ſenſibly touchd with the Infirmities that attend it, and ſo hath Pity and Compaſſion for us under all our Burdens.* And indeed this was one End of his aſſuming it, that he might be able to have Compaſſion on us, as you read, *Heb.* 2. 17, 18. *Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his Brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High-prieſt in things pertaining to God, to make Reconciliation for the Sins of the People. For in that he himſelf hath ſuffered, being tempted, he is able to ſuccour them that are tempted.* O what a Comfort is this to us, that he who is our High-prieſt in Heaven, hath our Nature on him, to enable him to take Compaſſion on us!

Uſe 7. Hence we ſee, *To what a Height God intends to build up the Happineſs of Man, in that he hath laid the Foundation thereof ſo deep, in the Incarnating of his own Son.*

They that intend to build high, uſe to lay the Foundation low. The Happineſs and Glory of our Bodies, as well as Souls, is founded in Chriſt's taking our Fleſh upon him. For therein, as in a Model or Pattern, God intended to ſhew what in time he reſolves to make of our Bodies; for he will μετασχηματίζει, transform our vile Bodies, and make them one Day conformable to the glorious Body of Jeſus Chriſt, *Phil.* 3. 21. This Fleſh was therefore aſſumed by Chriſt, that in it might be ſhewn, as in a Pattern, how God intends to honour and exalt it. And indeed a greater Honour cannot be done to the Nature of Man, than what is already done it, by this Grace of Union. Nor are our Perſons capable of higher Glory, than what conſiſts in their Conformity to this glorious Head. Indeed the Fleſh of Chriſt will ever have a diſtinct Glory from ours in Heaven, by reaſon of this Union; for being the Body which the Word aſſumed, it is two ways advanced ſingularly above the Fleſh and Blood of all other Men, *viz. Subjectively*, and *Objectively*; Subjectively, it is the Fleſh and Blood of God, *Acts* 20. 28. and ſo hath a diſtinct and incommunicable Glory of its own. And Objectively, it is the Fleſh and Blood which all the Angels and Saints adore. But tho' in theſe things it be ſupereminently exalted, yet it is both the *Medium* and *Pattern* of all that Glory which God deſigns to raiſe us to.

Uſe 8. Laſtly, *How wonderful a Comfort is it that he who dwells in our Fleſh is God!* What Joy may not a poor Believer make out of this? What Comfort one made out of it, I will give you in his own Words. *I ſee it a Work of God,* (ſaith he) *that Experiences are all loſt, when Summons of Improbation to prove our Charters of Chriſt to be counterfeit, are raiſed againſt poor Souls in their heavy Trials. But let me be a Sinner, and worſe than the Chief of Sinners, yea, a guilty Devil, I am ſure my Well-beloved is God, and my Chriſt is God. And when I ſay my Chriſt is God, I have ſaid all Things, I can ſay no more. I would I could build as much on this,* My Chriſt is God, *as it would bear: I might lay all the World upon it.*

God and Man in one Perſon, O thrice happy Conjunction! As Man, he is full of experimental Senſe of our Infirmities, Wants, and Burdens; and as God, he can ſupport and ſupply them all. The Aſpect of Faith upon this wonderful Perſon, how relieving, how reviving, how abundantly ſatisfying is it? God will never divorce the believing Soul and its Conſort; after he hath married our Nature to his own Son, by the Hypoſtatical, and our Perſons alſo by the bleſſed Myſtical Union.

SER-

SERMON VI.

Shews the Authority by which Chriſt as Mediator acted.

JOHN VI. 27.

For him hath God the Father ſealed.

YOU have heard Chriſt's Compact or Agreement with the Father in the Covenant of Redemption; as alſo what the Father did in Purſuance of the Ends thereof, in giving his Son out of his Boſom, *&c.* alſo what the Son hath done towards it, in Aſſuming Fleſh. But tho' the glorious Work be thus far advanced, yet all he ſhould act in that aſſumed Body, had been invalid and vain, without a due Call and Commiſſion from the Father ſo to do. Which is the Import of the Words now before you.

This Scripture is a Part of Chriſt's excellent Reply to a ſelf-ended Generation, who followed him, not for any ſpiritual Excellencies that they ſaw in him, or Soul-advantages they expected by him, but for Bread. Inſtead of making his Service their Meat and Drink, they only ſerved him that they might eat and drink. *Self* is a Thing may creep into the beſt Hearts and Actions; but it only predominates in the Hypocrite. Theſe People had ſought Chriſt from place to place, and having at laſt found him, they ſalute him with an impertinent Compliment, *Rabbi, whence cameſt thou hither? ver.* 25. Chriſt's Reply is partly *diſſwaſive*, and partly *directive*. He diſſwades them from putting the ſecondary and ſubordinate in the Place of the principal and ultimate End; not to prefer their Bodies to their Souls, their fleſhly Accommodations to the Glory of God. *Labour not for the Meat that periſheth.* Wherein he doth not take them off from their lawful Labours and Calling: but he diſſwades them, *firſt*, from minding theſe Things too intently; and *ſecondly*, he diſſwades them from that odious Sin of making Religion but a Pretence for the Belly.

And it is partly *directive*, and that in the main End and Buſineſs of Life. *But labour for that Meat which endures to eternal Life*; to get Bread for your Souls to live eternally by. And that he might engage their Diligence in ſeeking it to purpoſe, he ſhews them not only where they may have it, [*Which the Son of Man ſhall give you*] but alſo how they may be fully ſatisfied that he hath it for them, in the Clauſe I have pitched on; *For him hath God the Father ſealed.*

In theſe Words are three Parts obſervable.

1. The Perſon ſealing or inveſting Chriſt with Authority and Power; which is ſaid to be *God the Father.* Tho' all the Perſons in the God-head are equal in Nature, Dignity and Power, yet in their Operation there is an Order obſerved among them; the *Father* ſends the Son, the *Son* is ſent by the Father, the *Holy Ghoſt* is ſent by both.

2. The Subject in which God the Father lodges this Authority, [*Him*] that is the Son of Man. Jeſus Chriſt, he is the πρῶτον δεκτικον, firſt Receptacle of it. And he muſt here be underſtood excluſively. God the Father hath ſo ſealed him, as he never ſealed any other before him, or that ſhall ariſe after him. No Name is given in Heaven or Earth, but this Name by which we are ſaved, *Acts* 4. 12. *The Government is upon his Shoulders*, Iſa. 9.

3. Here is farther obſervable, the Way and Manner of the Father's delegating and committing this Authority to Chriſt; and that is, by *Sealing him.* Where we have both a *Metonymy*, the Symbol of Authority being put for the Authority it ſelf; and a *Metaphor*, *Sealing*, which is a human Act, for the ratifying and confirming an Inſtrument or Grant, being here applied to God. *Like as Princes, by ſealed Credentials, confirm the Authority of thoſe that are ſent by them:* as the *Dutch* Annotators well expreſs the meaning of it. Hence we note,

Doct. *That Jeſus Chriſt did not of himſelf undertake the Work of our Redemption, but was ſolemnly ſealed unto that Work by God the Father.*

When I ſay, he did not of himſelf undertake this Work, I mean not that he was unwilling to go about it, for his Heart was as fully and ardently engaged in it as the Father's was: So he tells us, *Pſal.* 40. 7. *Lo, I come to do thy Will, O God; thy Law is in my Heart.* But the meaning is, he came not without a due Call, and full Commiſſion from his Father. And ſo it is to be underſtood in Oppoſition to Intruſion, not voluntary Suſception, and this is the meaning of that Scripture, *John* 8. 42. *I proceeded and came from God; neither came I of my ſelf, but he ſent me.* And this the Apoſtle plainly expreſſeth, and fully clears, *Heb.* 5. 4, 5. *And no Man taketh this Honour to himſelf, but he that is call'd of God, as was* Aaron: *ſo alſo, Chriſt glorified not himſelf to be made a High-Prieſt; but he that ſaid unto him, Thou art my Son.* And on the Account of theſe ſealed Credentials, he received from his Father, he is called the Apoſtle and High-Prieſt of our Profeſſion, *Heb.* 3. 1. *i. e.* one called and ſent forth by the Father's Authority. Our preſent Buſineſs then is to open Chriſt's Commiſſion, and view the great Seal of Heaven by which it was ratified.

Nihil aliud poſſe ex dicto Apoſtoli elici, niſi hoc, Chriſtum ab eo vocatum eſſe ad munus mediatorium, à quo genitus eſt. *Cameronis Myrothec. p.* 317.

And to preſerve a clear Method in the Explication of this great Truth, into which your Faith and Comfort is reſolved, I ſhall,

Firſt, Shew what was the Work and Office to which the Father ſealed him.

Secondly, What his ſealing to this Work doth imply.

Thirdly, How and by what Acts the Father ſealed him to it.

Fourthly, Why it was neceſſary that he ſhould be thus ſealed and authorized by his Father. And then improve it in its proper Uſes.

Firſt,

First, What was that Office or Work to which his Father ſealed him? I anſwer more generally, he was ſealed to the whole Work of Mediation for us, thereby to recover and ſave all the Elect, whom the Father had given him: So *John* 17. 2. It was to *give eternal Life to as many as were given him*: It was *to bring* Jacob *again to him*, Iſa. 49. 5. or, as the Apoſtle expreſſes it, 1 *Pet.* 3. 18. *That he might bring us to God.* More particularly, in order to the ſure and full effecting of this moſt glorious Deſign, he was ſealed to the Offices of a Prophet, Prieſt, and King, that ſo he might bring about and compaſs this Work.

1. God ſealed him a Commiſſion to preach the Glad-tidings of Salvation to Sinners. This Commiſſion Chriſt opened and read in the Audience of the People, *Luke* 4. 18, 19, 20, 21. *And when he had opened the Book, he found the Place where it is written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, becauſe he hath anointed me to preach the Goſpel to the Poor; he hath ſent me to heal the Broken-hearted, to preach Deliverance to the Captives, and the recovering of Sight to the Blind; to ſet at Liberty them that are bruiſed; to preach the acceptable Year of the Lord. And he cloſed the Book*, &c. *And he began to ſay unto them, This Day is this Scripture fulfilled in your Ears.*

2. He alſo ſealed him to the Prieſthood, and that the moſt excellent; authorizing him to execute both the Parts of it, *viz. Oblatory* and *Interceſſory*. He called him to offer up himſelf a Sacrifice for us, *I have Power* (ſaith he) *to lay down my Life; this Commandment have I received of my Father*, John 10. 18. And upon that Account his offering up of his Blood, is by the Apoſtle ſtiled an Act of Obedience, as it is, *Phil.* 2. 8. *He became obedient unto Death.* He alſo called him to intercede for us, *Heb.* 7. 21, 24, 25. *Theſe Prieſts were made without an Oath, but this with an Oath; by him that ſaid unto him, The Lord ſware, and will not repent, thou art a Prieſt for ever*: Becauſe his Sacrifice is virtually continued in his living for ever to make Interceſſion, as it is, *ver.* 24. Yea, he call'd him to his Regal Office; he was ſet upon the higheſt Throne of Authority by his Father's Commiſſion, as it is, *Mat.* 28. 18. *All Power in Heaven and Earth is given to me.* To all this was Chriſt ſealed and authorized by his Father.

Secondly, What doth the Father's ſealing of Chriſt to this Work and Office imply? There are divers things implied in it. As,

1. The Validity and Efficacy of all his Mediatory Acts. For by Vertue of this his ſealing, whatever he did was fully ratified. And in this very thing lies much of a Believer's Comfort and Security; for as much as all Acts done without Commiſſion and Authority, (how great or able ſoever the Perſon that doth them is, yet) are in themſelves null and void. But what is done by Commiſſion and Authority, is authentick and moſt allowable among Men. Had Chriſt come from Heaven, and entred upon his Mediatory Work without a due Call, our Faith had been ſtumbled at the very Threſhold; but this greatly ſatisfies.

2. It imports the great Obligation lying upon Jeſus Chriſt to be faithful in the Work he was ſealed to. For the Father in this Commiſſion devolves a great Truſt upon him, and relies upon him for his moſt faithful Diſcharge thereof. And indeed upon this very Account Chriſt reckons himſelf ſpecially obliged to purſue the Father's Deſign and End, *John* 9. 4. *I muſt work the Works of him that ſent me.* And *John* 5. 30. *I ſeek not mine own Will, but the Will of the Father which hath ſent me.* Still his Eye is upon that Work and Will of his Father. And he reckons himſelf under a Neceſſity of punctual and preciſe Obedience to it; and, as a faithful Servant, will have his own Will ſwallowed up in the Father's Will.

3. It imports Chriſt's compleat Qualification or inſtrumental Fitneſs to ſerve the Father's Deſign and End in our Recovery. Had not God known him to be every way fit and qualified for the Work, he would never have ſealed him a Commiſſion for it. Men may, but God will not ſeal an unfit or incapable Perſon for his Work. And indeed whatever is deſirable in a Servant, was eminently found in Chriſt. For *Faithfulneſs*, none like him. *Moſes* indeed was faithful to a Pin, but ſtill as a Servant: But Chriſt as a Son, *Heb.* 3. 2. He is the faithful and true Witneſs, *Rev.* 1. 5. For Zeal, none like him. The Zeal of God's Houſe did eat him up, *John* 2. 16, 17. He was ſo intent upon his Father's Work, that he forgot to eat Bread, counting his Work his Meat and Drink, *John* 4. 32. Yea, and Love to his Father carried him on through all his Work, and made him delight in the hardeſt Piece of his Service; for he ſerved him as a Son, *Heb.* 3. 5, 6. All that ever he did was done in Love. For Wiſdom, none like him. The Father knew him to be moſt wiſe, and ſaid of him before he was employ'd, *Behold my Servant ſhall deal prudently*, Iſa. 52. 13. To conclude, for Self-denial, never any like him; he ſought not his own Glory, but the Glory of him that ſent him, *John* 8. 50. Had he not been thus faithful, zealous, full of Love, prudent, and ſelf-denying, he had never been employed in this great Affair.

4. It implies Chriſt's ſole Authority in the Church, to appoint and enjoin what he pleaſeth. And this is his peculiar Prerogative. For the Commiſſion God ſealed him in the Text, is a ſingle, not a joint Commiſſion; he hath ſealed him, and none beſide him. Indeed there were ſome that pretended a Call and Commiſſion from God; but all that were before him were Thieves and Robbers, that came not in at the Door as he did, *John* 10. 8. And he himſelf foretels, that after him ſome ſhould ariſe, and labour to deceive the World with a feigned Commiſſion, and a counterfeit Seal, *Matth.* 24. 24. *There ſhall ariſe falſe Chriſts, and falſe Prophets, and ſhall ſhew great Signs and Wonders; inſomuch, that if it were poſſible, they ſhould deceive the very Elect.* But God never commiſſionated any beſides him, neither is there any other Name under Heaven, *Acts* 4. 12. Thus you ſee how the Validity of his Acts, his Obligation to be faithful, his compleat Qualifications, and ſole Authority in the Church, are imported in his Sealing.

Omnes antè me (id eſt, me non mittente, ultro, cum non fuerint miſſi, cucurrerunt, ſe pro Meſſia venditarunt) ſunt fures, & latrones; latronum more adulterino quapiam oſtia cœli commenti ſunt, & per ea homines in æternæ damnationis ſpeluncam præcipitarunt. *Dietericus.*

Thirdly, Let us enquire how God the Father ſealed Jeſus Chriſt to this Work, and we ſhall find that he was ſealed by four Acts of the Father.

1. *By ſolemn Deſignation to this Work.* He ſingled him out, and ſet him apart to it; and therefore the Prophet *Iſaiah*, chap. 42. v. 1. calls him *God's Elect.* And the Apoſtle *Peter*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 4. *Choſen of God.* This Word which we render *Elect*, doth not only ſignify one that in himſelf is eximious, worthy, and excellent, but alſo one that is ſet apart and deſigned, as Chriſt was for the Work of Mediation. And ſo much is carried in *John* 10. 36. where the Father is ſaid to ſanctifie him, *i. e.* to ſeparate, and devote him to this Service.

בָּחִיר Electus, *i. e.* eximius, præſtans, excellens.

Vid. *Dutch Annot.* in loc.

2. He

A Christo Christiani dicuntur (*b. e.*) unctionis sanctæ μέτοχοι, non enim titulum gerunt sine re, sed qui dicuntur vere Christiani, χείσμα etiam obtinent. *Glassius.* Dona illa absolute & in se finita fuere, sicut & ipsa Christi natura finita est; nostri namen respectu sunt absq; mensura. Dr. *Al. Explicat. Cat.* pars 2. p. 70.

2. He was sealed not only by solemn Designation, but also *by super-eminent and unparallel'd Sanctification.* He was anointed as well as appointed to it. The Lord filled him with the Spirit, and that without measure, to qualify him for this Service. So *Isa.* 61. 1, 2, 3. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach,* &c. Yea, the Spirit of the Lord was not only upon him, but he was full of the Spirit, *Luke* 4. 1. and so full as never was any beside him: For God *anointed him with the Oil of Gladness above his Fellows,* Psal. 45. 7. Believers are his Fellows, or Copartners of this Spirit: They have an Anointing also, but not as Christ had: In him it dwelt in its Fulness, in them according to measure. It was poured out on Christ our Head abundantly, and ran down to the Hem of his Garment. *God gave not the Spirit to him by measure,* John 3. 34. God filled Christ's human Nature to the utmost Capacity, with all Fulness of the Spirit of Knowledge, Wisdom, Love, *&c.* beyond all Creatures, for the plenary and more effectual Administration of his Mediatorship: He was full *extensively* with all Kinds of Grace; and full *intensively,* with all Degrees of Grace. *It pleased the Father that in him should all Fulness dwell,* Col. 1. 19. as Light in the Sun, or Water in a Fountain, that he might not only *fill all things,* as the Apostle speaks, *Ephes.* 1. 22. but that he might be prompt, expedite, and every way fit to discharge his own Work, which was the next and immediate End of it: So that the holy Oil that was poured out upon the Heads of Kings and Priests, whereby they were consecrated to their Offices, was but typical of the Spirit, by which Christ was consecrated or sealed to his Offices.

Exod. 30. 23, 24, 25, 30, 31, 32.

3. Christ was sealed *by the Father's immediate Testimony from Heaven, whereby he was declared to be the Person whom the Father had solemnly designed and appointed to this Work.* And God gave this extraordinary Testimony of him at two remarkable Seasons; the one was just at his Entrance on his publick Ministry, *Mat.* 3. *ult.* the other but a little before his Sufferings, *Matth.* 17. 5. This Voice was not formed by such Organs and Instruments of Speech as ours are, but by creating a Voice in the Air, which the People heard sounding there; by this God owned, approved, and as by a Seal ratified his Work.

Caryll in Job 1. 7.

4. Christ was sealed by the Father *in all those extraordinary miraculous Works wrought by him,* in which the Father gave yet more full and convincing Testimonies to the World, that this was he whom he had appointed to be our Mediator. These were convictive to the World that God had sent him, and that his Doctrine was of God. *God anointed Jesus of* Nazareth *with the Holy Ghost and Power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil; for God was with him,* Acts 10. 38. And so *John* 5. 36. *I have a greater Witness than that of* John; *for the Works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same Works that I do bear Witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.* Therefore he still referr'd those that doubted of him, or of his Doctrine, to the Seal of his Father, even the miraculous Works he wrought in the Power of God, *Matth.* 11. 3, 4, 5. And thus the Father sealed him.

Fourthly, and lastly, We will enquire why it was necessary Christ should be sealed by his Father to this Work: And there are these three weighty Reasons for it.

1. *Else he had not corresponded with the Types which prefigured him, and in him it was necessary that they should be all accomplished.* You know under the Law, the Kings and High Priests had their Inaugurations by solemn Unctions; in all which, this Consecration, or sealing of Christ to his Work, was shadow'd out: And therefore you shall find, *Heb.* 5. 4, 5. *No Man taketh this Honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was* Aaron: *So also* (mark the necessary Correspondency betwixt Christ and them) *Christ glorified not himself, to be made a High-Priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son.*

2. Moreover, *hereby the Hearts of Believers are the more engaged to love the Father, in as much as it appears hereby that the Father's Love and good Will to them was the Original and Spring of their Redemption.* For had not the Father sealed him such a Commission, he had not come; but now he comes in the Father's Name, and in the Father's Love as well as his Name: and so all Men are bound to ascribe equal Glory and Honour to them both; as it is, *Joh.* 5. 23.

3. And especially, Christ would not come without a Commission, because *else you had no ground for your Faith in him.* How should we have been *satisfied,* that this is indeed the true Messiah, except he had opened his Commission to the World, and shew'd his Father's Seal annexed to it? If he had come without his *Credentials* from Heaven, and only told the World that God had sent him, and that they must take his bare Word for it; who could have rested his Faith on that Testimony? And that is the true meaning of that Place, *John* 5. 31. *If I bear Witness of my self, my Witness is not true.* How so? You will say, Doth not that contradict what he saith, *John* 8. 14. *Tho' I bear Record of my self, yet my Record is true?* Therefore you must understand Truth, not as it is opposed to Reality; but the meaning is, If I had only given you my bare Word for it, and not brought other Evidence from my Father, my Testimony had not been authentick and valid, according to human Laws; but now all Doubtings are precluded. Let us next improve this.

Inf. 1. Hence we infer the *Unreasonableness of Infidelity,* and how little the Rejecters of Christ can have to pretend for their so doing. You see he hath opened his Commission in the Gospel, shewn the World his Father's Hand and Seal to it, given as ample Satisfaction as Reason it self could desire or expect; yet even his own received him not, *John* 1. 11. And he knew it before-hand, and therefore complain'd by the Prophet, *Isa.* 53. 1. *Who hath believed our Report?* &c. Yea, and that he is believed on in the World, is by the Apostle put among the great Mysteries of Godliness, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. A Man that well considers with what convincing Evidence Christ comes, would rather think it a Mystery that any should not believe. But O the brutish Obstinacy and deviliish Enmity that is in Nature to Jesus Christ! Deviliish did I say? you must give me that Word again, for he compell'd the Devils Assent; *We know thee whom thou art.* And it is equally as wonderful to see the Facility that is in Nature to comply (mean while) with any, even the most fooliish Imposture. Let a false Christ arise; and he shall deceive many, as it is, *Mat.* 24. 24. Of this Christ complains, and not without great Reason, *John* 5. 43. *I am come in my Father's Name, and ye receive me not: If another come in his own Name, him will ye receive; q. d.* You are incredulous to none but me: Every Deceiver,

ceiver, every pitiful Cheat that hath but Wit, or rather Wickedneſs enough to tell you the Lord hath ſent him, tho' you muſt take his own ſingle Word for it, he ſhall obtain and get Diſciples: but tho' I come in my Father's Name, *i.e.* ſhewing you a Commiſſion ſign'd and ſeal'd by him, doing thoſe Works that none but a God can do, yet ye receive me not. But in all this we muſt adore the Juſtice of God in permitting it to be ſo, giving Men up to ſuch unreaſonable Obſtinacy and Hardneſs. It is a ſore Plague that lies upon the World, and a Wonder that we all are not ingulphed in the ſame Infidelity.

Inf. 2. If Chriſt were ſealed to his Work by his Father, then *how great is the Sin of thoſe that reject and deſpiſe ſuch as are ſent and ſealed by Jeſus Chriſt?* for look as he came to us in his Father's Name, ſo he hath ſent forth, by the ſame Authority, Miniſters in his Name; and as he acts in his Father's, ſo they in his Authority. *As thou haſt ſent me into the World, even ſo have I alſo ſent them into the World*, John 17. 18. And ſo John 20. 21. *As my Father hath ſent me, ſo have I ſent you.* You may think it a ſmall matter to deſpiſe or reject a Miniſter of Chriſt, (a Sin, in the Guilt whereof, I think no Age hath been plunged deeper than this) but hear, and let it be a Warning to you for ever; in ſo doing you deſpiſe, and put the Slight both upon the Father that ſent Jeſus, and upon Chriſt that ſent them: So that it is a Rebellion, that however it ſeems to begin low in ſome ſmall Piques againſt their Perſons, or ſome little Quarrels at their Parts and Utterance, Tones, Methods or Geſtures; yet it runs high, even to the Fountain-head of the moſt ſupream Authority. You that ſet your ſelves againſt a Miniſter of Chriſt, ſet your ſelves againſt God the Father, and God the Son; Luke 10. 16. *He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me; and he that deſpiſeth me, deſpiſeth him that ſent me.* God expects that you behave your ſelves under the Word ſpoken by us, as if he himſelf ſpake it: Yea, he expects Submiſſion to his Word in the Mouths of his Miniſters from the greateſt on Earth. And therefore it was that God ſo ſeverely puniſhed *Zedekiah, becauſe he humbled not himſelf before* Jeremiah *the Prophet, ſpeaking from the Mouth of the Lord*, 2 Chron. 36. 12. God was angry with a great King, for not humbling himſelf before a poor *Prophet*. Yet here you muſt diſtinguiſh both of *Perſons*, and of *Acts*. This Reverence and Submiſſion is not due to them as Men, but as Men in Office, as Chriſt's Embaſſadors; and muſt involve that Reſpect ſtill in it. Again, we owe it not to them, commanding or forbidding in their own Names, but in Chriſt's; not in venting their own Spleen, but the Terrors of the Lord: And then to reſiſt is a high Rebellion and Affront to the ſovereign Authority of Heaven. And by the way, this may inſtruct Miniſters, that the Way to maintain that Veneration and Reſpect that is due to them in the Conſciences of their Hearers, is by keeping cloſe to their Commiſſion.

Hæc Apoſtolorum à Chriſto miſſionis formula ſatis evidenter comprobat Apoſtolici muneris dignitatem in Apoſtolorum authoritate & poteſtate, quæ fuit ſumma, & incomparabilis. *Cameron.*

Ut ſi herus famulo præſcribat primum quid debeat præſcribere agendum in familia; tum ſubjungeret. Qui te audit, me audit: non inde ſequeretur fieri non poſſe ut ille famulus diſcedat ab heri præſcripto; aut ſic ubi diſceſſerit, ei eſſe parendum. *Camer. Myro.* p. 130.

Inf. 3. Hence alſo we infer, *How great an Evil it is to intrude into the Office of the Miniſtry, without a due Call.* It's more than Chriſt himſelf would do; he glorified not himſelf: The Honours and Advantages attending that Office, have invited many to run before they were ſent. But ſurely this is an inſufferable Violation of Chriſt's Order. Our Age hath abounded with as many Church-levellers as State-levellers. I wiſh the Miniſters of Chriſt might at laſt ſee and conſider, what they were once warned of by a faithful Watchman: 'I believe
'(*ſaith he*) God hath permitted ſo many to intrude
'into the Miniſters Calling, becauſe Miniſters have
'too much meddled with, and intruded into other
'Mens callings.' *Mr.* Strong.

Inference 4. Hence be convinced of *the great Efficacy that is in all Goſpel-Ordinances duly adminiſtred:* For Chriſt having received full Commiſſion from his Father, and by Vertue thereof having inſtituted and appointed thoſe Ordinances in the Church, all the Power in Heaven is engaged to make them good, to back and ſecond them, to confirm and ratifie them. Hence, in the Cenſures of the Church you have that great Expreſſion, *Mat.* 18. 18. *Whatſoever ye bind or looſe on Earth, ſhall be bound or looſed in Heaven.* And ſo for the Word and Sacraments, *Mat.* 28. 18, 19, 20. *All Power in Heaven and Earth is given unto me: Go therefore*, &c. They are not the Appointments of Men; your Faith ſtands not in the Wiſdom of Men, but in the Power of God. That very Power God the Father committed to Chriſt, is the Fountain whence all Goſpel-Inſtitutions flow. And he hath promiſed to be with his Officers, not only the extraordinary Officers of that Age, but with his Miniſters in ſucceeding Ages to the End of the World. O therefore when we come to an Ordinance, come not with ſlight Thoughts, but with great Reverence, and great Expectations, remembring Chriſt is there to make all good.

Inference 5. Again, here you have *another Call to admire the Grace and Love both of the Father and Son to your Souls:* It is not lawful to compare them, but it's Duty to admire them. Was it not wonderful Grace in the Father, to ſeal a Commiſſion for the Death of his Son, for the humbling him as low as Hell, and in that Method to ſave you, when you might have expected he ſhould have ſealed your *Mittimus* for Hell, rather than a Commiſſion for your Salvation? He might rather have ſet his irreverſible Seal to the Sentence of your Damnation, than to a Commiſſion for his Son's Humiliation for you. And no leſs is the Love of Chriſt to be wondred at, that would accept ſuch a Commiſſion as this for us, and receive this Seal, underſtanding fully (as he did) what were the Contents of that Commiſſion, that the Father delivered him thus ſealed, and knowing that there could be no reverſing of it afterwards.

O then, love the Lord Jeſus all ye his Saints, for ſtill you ſee more and more of his Love breaking out upon you. I commend to you a ſealed Saviour this Day: O that every one that reads theſe Lines might, in a Pang of Love, cry out with the enamoured Spouſe, *Cant.* 8. 6. *Set me as a Seal upon thy Heart, as a Seal upon thy Arm; for Love is ſtrong as Death, Jealouſy is cruel as the Grave: The Coals thereof are Coals of Fire, which have a vehement Flame.*

Inference 6. Once more, hath God ſealed Chriſt for you? *Then draw forth the Comfort of his ſealing for you, and be reſtleſs till ye alſo be ſealed by him.*

1. Draw out the Comfort of Chriſt's ſealing for you. Remember that hereby God ſtands engaged, even by his own Seal, to allow and confirm whatever Chriſt hath done in the Buſineſs of your Salvation. And on this Ground you may thus plead with God: Lord, thou haſt ſealed Chriſt to this Office, and

therefore I depend upon it, that thou alloweſt all that he hath done, and all that he hath ſuffered for me, and wilt make good all that he hath promiſed me. If Men will not deny their own Seals, much leſs wilt thou.

2. Get your Intereſt in Chriſt ſealed to you by the Spirit, elſe you cannot have the Comfort of Chriſt's being ſealed for you. Now the Spirit ſeals two ways, *Objectively* and *Effectively*; the firſt is by working thoſe Graces in us, which are the Conditions of the Promiſes; the latter is by ſhining upon his own Work, and helping the Soul to diſcern it, which follows the other both in Order of Nature, and of Time. And theſe Sealings of the Spirit are to be diſtinguiſhed both *ex parte Subjecti*, by their Subject, or the Quality of the Perſon ſealed, which always is a Believer, *Eph.* 1. 13. for there can be no reflex, till there have been a *direct Act* of Faith; and *ex parte Materiæ*, by the Matter of which that Comfort is made; which if it be of the Spirit, is ever conſonant to the written Word, *Iſa.* 8. 20. And partly *ab effectis*, by its Effects; for it commonly produces in the ſealed Soul great Care and Caution to avoid Sin, *Epheſ.* 4. 30. Great Love to God; *John* 14. 22. Readineſs to ſuffer any thing for Chriſt, *Rom.* 5. 3, 4, 5. Confidence in Addreſſes to God, 1 *John* 5. 13, 14. and great Humility and Self-abaſement; as in *Abraham*, who lay on his Face when God ſealed the Covenant to him, *Gen.* 17. 1, 2, 3. This, O this brings home the Sweet and Good of all, when this Seal is ſuper-added to that.

SERMON VII.

Treats of the ſolemn Conſecration of the Mediator.

JOHN XVII. 19.

And for their ſakes I ſanctifie my ſelf.

JEſus Chriſt being fitted with a Body, and authorized by a Commiſſion, now actually devotes, and ſets himſelf apart to his Work. In the former Sermon you heard what the Father did; in this you ſhall hear what the Son hath done towards the farther Advancement of that glorious Deſign of our Salvation: *He ſanctified himſelf for our ſakes.* Wherein obſerve, (1.) Chriſt's ſanctifying of himſelf. (2.) The End or Deſign of his ſo doing.

1. You have Chriſt's ſanctifying of himſelf. The Word ἁγιάζω is not here to be underſtood for the cleanſing, purifying, or making holy that which was before unclean and unholy, either in a moral Senſe, as we are cleanſed from Sin by Sanctification; or in a ceremonial Senſe, as Perſons and Things were ſanctified under the Law? tho' here is a plain Alluſion to thoſe legal Rites. But Chriſt's ſanctifying himſelf, imports, (1.) His *Separation, or ſetting apart to be an Oblation or Sacrifice.* So *Beza, nempe ut ſacerdos & victima*; as the Prieſt and Sacrifice. I ſanctifie my ſelf, imports, (2.) His *Conſecration, or Dedication of himſelf to this holy Uſe and Service.* So the *Dutch* Annotations, I ſanctifie my ſelf, (*i. e.*) *I give up my ſelf for a holy Sacrifice.* And ſo our *Engliſh* Annotations, *I ſanctifie*, (*i. e.*) I conſecrate and voluntarily offer my ſelf a holy and unblemiſh'd Sacrifice to thee for their Redemption. And thus under the Law, when any Day, Perſon, or Veſſel was conſecrated and dedicated to the Lord, it was ſo intirely for his Uſe and Service, that to uſe it afterward in any common Service, was to profane and pollute it, as you ſee, *Dan.* 5. 3.

Sanctificare eſt in uſus divinos ſeparare. *Brentius in loc.*

2. The End of his ſo ſanctifying himſelf, [*for their ſakes*, and *that they might be ſanctified*] where you have the *finis cujus*, the End for whom, for their, (*i. e.*) for the Elect ſake, for them whom thou gaveſt me; and the *finis cui*, the End for which, that they might be ſanctified. Where you alſo ſee that the Death of Chriſt wholly reſpects us; he offered not for himſelf, as other Prieſts did, but for us, that we may be ſanctified. Chriſt is ſo in Love with Holineſs, that at the Price of his Blood he will buy it for us. Hence the Obſervation is;

ſancta Dei vaſa, per revelatum Dei ſpiritum. *Marlorat. in loc.*

Doct. *That Jeſus Chriſt did dedicate, and wholly ſet himſelf apart to the Work of a Mediator, for the Elect ſake.*

This Point is a Glaſs, wherein the Eye of your Faith may ſee Jeſus Chriſt preparing himſelf to be offered up to God for us, fitting himſelf to die. And to keep a clear Method, I ſhall open theſe two Things in the doctrinal part; *Firſt*, What his ſanctifying himſelf implies. *Secondly*, How it reſpects us.

Firſt, What is implied in this Phraſe, *I ſanctifie my ſelf.* And there are ſeven Things carried in it.

1. This Phraſe [*I ſanctifie my ſelf*] implies *the perſonal Union of the two Natures in Chriſt*: For what is that which he here calls *himſelf*, but the ſame that was conſecrated to be a Sacrifice, even his human Nature? This was the Sacrifice. And this alſo was himſelf: So the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Heb.* 9. 14. *He through the eternal Spirit, offered up himſelf to God, without Spot.* So that our Nature by that Aſſumption is become himſelf. Greater Honour cannot be done it, or a greater Ground of Comfort propoſed to us. But having ſpoken of that Union in the former Sermon, I ſhall remit the Reader thither.

Eſt igitur ſenſus; ego ſanctifico meipſum, *i. e.* morior pro iis. Ut ipſi per mortem meam ſpiritu ſanctitatis impleantur, & fiant

2. This Sanctifying or conſecrating himſelf to be a Sacrifice for us, implies *the Greatneſs and Dreadfulneſs of that Breach which Sin made betwixt God and us.* You ſee no leſs Sacrifice than Chriſt himſelf muſt be ſanctified to make Atonement. Judge of the Greatneſs of

of the Wound by the Breadth of the Plaister. *Sacrifice and Offering, and Burnt offering for Sin, thou wouldest not; but a Body hast thou prepared me,* Heb. 10. 5. All our Repentance, could we shed as many Tears for Sin, as there have fallen Drops of Rain since the Creation, could not have been our Atonement: *But God was in Christ reconciling the World to himself.* And had he not sanctified Christ to this End, he would have sanctified himself upon us in Judgment and Fury for ever.

3. This his sanctifying himself, implies *his free and voluntary Undertaking of the Work.* It is not I *am sanctified,* as if he had been meerly passive in it, as the Lambs that typed him out were when pluckt from the Fold; but it's an active Verb that he useth here, *I sanctifie my self*; he would have none think that he died out of a Necessity of Compulsion, but out of Choice: Therefore he is said to *offer up himself to God,* Heb. 9. 14. And in *John* 10. 18. *I lay down my Life of my self: No Man takes it from me.* And altho' it's often said *his Father sent him,* and *gave him*; yet his Heart was as much set on that Work, as if there had been nothing but Glory, Ease and Comfort in it; he was under no Constraint but that of his own Love. Therefore as when the Scripture would set forth the Willingness of the Father to this Work, he saith, *God sent his Son,* and *God gave his Son*; so when it would set forth Christ's Willingness to it, it saith, *he offered up himself, gave himself,* and here in the Text, *sanctified himself.* The Sacrifice that struggled, and came not without Force to the Altar, was reckon'd ominous and unlucky by the Heathen: Our Sacrifice dedicated himself; he died out of Choice, and was a Free-will Offering.

ἐγὼ ἁγιάζω ἐμαυτὸν.

4. His sanctifying himself, implies *his pure and perfect Holiness; That he had no Spot or Blemish in him.* Those Beasts that prefigured him, were to be without Blemish, and none else were consecrated to that Service. So, and more than so, it behoved Christ to be, *Heb.* 7. 29. *Such a High-Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from Sinners:* And what it became him to be, he was. Therefore in Allusion to the Lambs offered under the Law, the Apostle calls him, *a Lamb without Blemish, or Spot,* 1 Pet. 1. 19. Every other Man hath a double Spot on him, the Heart-spot, and the Life-spot; the Spot of Original, and the Spots of Actual Sins. But Christ was without either, he had not the Spot of Original Sin, for he was not by Man: he came in a peculiar way into the World, and so escaped that: Nor yet of Actual Sins; for as his Nature, so his Life was spotless and pure; *Isa.* 53. 9. *He did no Iniquity.* And tho' tempted to sin externally, yet he was never defiled in Heart or Practice; he came as near it as he could for our sakes, yet still without sin, *Heb.* 4. 15. If he sanctifie himself for a Sacrifice, he must be such as the Law required, pure and spotless.

5. His sanctifying himself for our sakes, speaks *the Strength of his Love, and Largeness of his Heart to poor Sinners, thus to set himself wholly and entirely apart for us:* So that what he did and suffered, must all of it have a Respect and Relation to us. He did not (when consecrated for us) live a Moment, do an act, or speak a Word, but it had some Tendency to promote the great Design of our Salvation. He was only and wholly, and always doing your Work, when consecrated for your sakes. His Incarnation respects you; *Isa.* 9. 6. *For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given,* And he would never have been the Son of Man, but to make you the Sons and Daughters of God. God would not have come down in the Likeness of sinful Flesh, in the Habit of a Man, but to raise up sinful Man into the Likeness of God. All the Miracles he wrought were for you, to confirm your Faith. When he raised up *Lazarus,* John 11. 42. *Because of the People which stand by, I said it, that they might believe that thou hast sent me.* While he lived on Earth, he lived as one wholly set apart for us; and when he died, he died for us, *Gal.* 3. 13. He was *made a Curse for us.* When he hanged on that cursed Tree, he hanged there in our room, and did but fill our Place. When he was buried, he was buried for us; for the End of it was, to perfume our Graves, against we come to lie down in them. And when he rose again, it was (as the Apostle saith) *for our Justification,* Rom. 4. 25. When he ascended into Glory, he protested it was about our Business, that he went *to prepare Places for us:* And if it had not been so, he would have told us, *John* 14. 2. And now he is there, it is for us that he there lives: For *he ever lives to make Intercession for us,* Heb. 7. 25. And when he shall return again to judge the World, he will come for us too. *He comes* (whenever it be) *to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in them that believe,* 2 Thess. 1. 10. He comes to gather his Saints home to himself, that where he is, there they all may be, in Soul and Body with him for ever. Thus you see how, as his Consecration for us doth speak him set apart for our Use; so he did wholly bestow himself, Time, Life, Death, and all upon us; living and dying for no other End, but to accomplish this great Work of Salvation for us.

6. His sanctifying himself for us, plainly speaks the *Vicegerency of his Death, that it was in our room or stead.* When the Priest consecrated the Sacrifice, it was set apart for the People. So it's said for the Scape-Goat; *And* Aaron *shall lay both his Hands upon the Head of the Live-Goat, and confess over him all the Iniquities of the Children of* Israel, *and all their Transgressions in all their Sins, putting them upon the Head of the Goat, and shall send him away by the Hand of a fit Man into the Wilderness,* Levit. 16. 21. Thus *Isa.* 53. 6, 7. He stood in our room, to bear our Burden. And as *Aaron* laid the Iniquities of the People upon the Goat, so were ours laid on Christ: It was said to him, in that Day; On thee be their Pride, their Unbelief, their Hardness of Heart, their vain Thoughts, their earthly Mindedness, *&c.* Thou art consecrated for them, to be the Sacrifice in their room. His Death was in our stead, as well as for our good. And so much his sanctifying himself [for us] imports.

7. His sanctifying himself, imports *the Extraordinariness of his Person: For it speaks him to be both Priest, Sacrifice and Altar, all in one; a thing unheard of in the World before.* So that his Name might well be called *Wonderful. I sanctifie my self:* I sanctifie, according to both Natures; my self, that is, my human Nature, which was the Sacrifice upon the Altar of my Divine Nature; for 'tis the Altar that sanctifies the Gift. As the three Offices never met in one Person before, so these three Things never met in one Priest before. The Priests indeed consecrated the Bodies of Beasts for Sacrifice, but never offered up their own Souls and Bodies as a whole Burnt-offering, as Christ did. And thus you have the Import of this Phrase, *I sanctifie my self for their sake.*

Secondly, I shall shew you briefly the Habitude and Respect that all this hath to us; for unto us the Scriptures every where refer it. So in 1 *Cor.* 5. 7. *Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.* Eph. 5. 2. *He loved the Church, and gave himself for it.* See *Tit.* 2. 14. This will be made out by a threefold Consideration of Christ's Death. And,

1. Let it be consider'd, that *he was not offered up to God for his own Sins;* for he was most holy. *Isa.* 53. 9.

No Iniquity was found in him. Indeed the Priests under the Law offered for themselves as well as the People; but Christ did not so, *Heb.* 7. 27. *He needed not daily, as those High-Priests, to offer up Sacrifice, first for his own Sins, and then for the Peoples.* And indeed had he been a Sinner, what Value or Efficacy could have been in his Sacrifice? he could not have been the Sacrifice, but would have needed one. Now if Christ were most holy, and yet put to Death, and cruel Sufferings; either his Death and Sufferings must be an Act of Injustice and Cruelty; or it must respect others, whose Persons and Cause he sustained in that suffering Capacity. He could never have suffered or died by the Father's Hand, had he not been a Sinner by Imputation. And in that respect (as *Luther* speaks) he was the greatest of Sinners; or, as the Prophet *Isaiah* speaks, all *our Sins were made to meet upon him*: Not that he was so intrinsically, but was made so, *&c.* by Imputation, as is clear from 2 *Cor.* 5. 11. *He was made Sin for us, that had no Sin.* So that hence it's evident, that Christ's Death, or Sacrifice, is wholly a respective or relative thing.

2. It is not to be forgotten here, that the Scriptures frequently call the Death of Christ *a Price*, 1 Cor. 6. 20. and *a Ransom*, Mat. 20. 28. or Counterprice. To whom then doth it relate, but to them that were and are in Bondage and Captivity? If it were to redeem any, it must be Captives: But Christ himself was never in Captivity; he was always in his Father's Bosom, as you have heard; but we were in cruel Bondage and Thraldom, under the Tyranny of Sin and Satan: And it's we only that have the Benefit of this Ransom.

λύτρον, ἀντίλυτρον, i. e. pretium ex adverso respondens.

3. Either the Death of Christ must relate to Believers, or else he must die in vain. As for the Angels, those that stood in their Integrity, needed no Sacrifice; and those that fell, are totally excluded from any Benefit by it: He is not a Mediator for them. And among Men that have need of it, Unbelievers have no Share in it, they reject it; such have no part in it. If then he neither died for himself, as I proved before, nor for Angels, nor Unbelievers; either his Blood must be shed with Respect to Believers, or, which is most absurd, and never to be imagined, shed as Water upon the Ground, and totally cast away: So that you see by all this it was *for our sakes* (as the Text speaks) that he sanctified himself. And now we may say, Lord, the *Condemnation* was thine, that the *Justification* might be mine; the *Agony* thine, that the *Victory* might be mine; the *Pain* was thine, and the *Ease* mine; the *Stripes* thine, and the *healing Balm* issuing from them mine; the *Vinegar* and *Gall* was thine, that the *Honey* and *Sweet* might be mine; the *Curse* was thine, that the *Blessing* might be mine; the *Crown of Thorns* was thine, that the *Crown of Glory* might be mine; the *Death* was thine, the *Life* purchased by it mine; Thou paid'st the *Price*, that I might enjoy the *Inheritance*.

We come next to the Inferences of Truth deducible from this Point, which follow.

Inference 1. If Jesus Christ did wholly set himself apart for Believers, *How reasonable is it, that Believers should consecrate and set themselves apart wholly for Christ*; Is he All for us, and shall we be nothing for him? What he was, he was for you. What ever he did, was done for you: And all that he suffered, was suffered for you. O then, *I beseech you, Brethren, by the Mercies of God, present your Bodies*, i. e. your whole selves, (for so Body is there synecdochically put, to signify the whole Person) I say, *present your Bodies a living Sacrifice, holy acceptable to God; which is your reasonable Service*, Rom. 12. 1. As your Good was Christ's End, so let his Glory be your End. Let Christ be the *End of your Conversation*, *Heb.* 13. 7. As Christ could say, to me to live is you; so do you say, *for us to live is Christ*, *Phil.* 1. 21. O that all who profess Faith in Christ, could subscribe cordially to that Profession, *Rom* 14. 8. *None of us liveth to himself, and no Man dieth to himself; but whether we live, we live to the Lord; and whether we die, we die to the Lord: so then whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.* This is to be a Christian indeed. What is a Christian, but a holy dedicated thing to the Lord? And what greater Evidence can there be, that Christ set himself apart for you, than your setting your selves apart for him?

Synecdoche Hebraica, pro vos totos. Sic *Pareus in loc.*

This is the Marriage-Covenant, *Hos.* 3. 3. *Thou shalt be for me, and not for another; so will I be for thee.* Ah what a Life is the Life of a Christian! Christ all for you, and you all for him. Blessed Exchange! Soul, (saith Christ) all I have is thine. Lord, (saith the Soul) and all I have is thine. Soul, (saith Christ) my Person is wonderful, but what I am I am for thee: My Life was spent in Labour, and Travel; but lived for thee. And, Lord, (saith the Believer) my Person is vile, and not worth thy accepting; but such as it is, 'tis thine; my Soul, with all and every Faculty; my Body, and every Member of it, my Gifts, Time, and all my Talents are thine.

And see that as Christ bequeathed and made over himself to you, so ye in like manner bestow and make over your selves to him. He lived not, neither died (as you hear) for himself, but you. O that you in like manner would down with Self, and up with Christ in the room of it. 'Wo, wo, is me (saith 'one) that the holy Profession of Christ is made a 'staggy Garment by many to bring home a *vain* 'Fame; and Christ is made to serve Mens Ends. 'This is to stop an Oven with a King's Robes. Except Men martyr and slay the Body of Sin in sanctified Self-denial, they shall never be Christ's Martyrs and faithful Witnesses. O if I could be Master of 'that House-Idol my self, mine own, mine own Wit, 'Will, Credit, and Ease, how blessed were I! O 'but we have need to be redeemed from our selves, 'rather than from the Devil and the World. Learn 'to put out your selves, and to put in Christ for 'your selves. I should make a sweet Bargain, and 'give old for new, if I could shuffle out Self, and 'substitute Christ my Lord in place of my self; to 'say, not I, but Christ, not my Will, but Christ's, 'not my Ease, not my Lusts, not my Credit, but 'Christ, Christ.——— O wretched Idol, my Self, 'when shall I see thee wholly decourted, and Christ 'wholly put in thy room? O if Christ had the full 'Place and Room of my self, that all my Aims, Purposes, Thoughts and Desires would coast and land 'upon Christ, and not upon my Self.

He set himself apart for you Believers, and no others; no, not for Angels, but for you: Will ye also set your selves apart peculiarly for Christ? Be his, and no other's? Let not Christ and the World share and divide your Hearts in two Halves betwixt them; let not the World step in and say, *half mine*. You will never do Christ right, nor answer this Grace, till you can say, as it is, *Psal.* 73. 25. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and on Earth there is none that I desire in Comparison of thee.* None but Christ, none but Christ, is a proper Motto for a Christian.

He left the highest and best Enjoyments, even those in his Father's Bosom, to set himself apart for Death

Death and Sufferings for you: Are you ready to leave the Bosom of the best and sweetest Enjoyments you have in this World to serve him? If you stand not habitually ready, to leave Father, Mother, Wife, Children, Lands, yea, and Life too, to serve him, you are not worthy of him, *Mat.* 10. 37.

He was so wholly given up to your Service, that he refused not the worst and hardest part of it, even bleeding, groaning, dying Work; his Love to you sweetned all this to him: Can you say so too? Do you *account the Reproaches of Christ greater Riches than the Treasures of* Egypt? *as* Moses *did*, Heb. 11. 26.

He had so intirely devoted himself to your Work, that he could not be at rest till it was finished. He was so intent upon it, that he *forgot to eat Bread*, John 4. 31, 32. So it should be with you; his Service should be Meat and Drink to you. To conclude,

He was so wholly given up to your Work and Service, that he would not suffer himself to be in the least diverted, or taken off from it. And if *Peter* himself counsel him to favour himself, he shall hear, *Get thee behind me, Satan.* O happy were it if our Hearts were but so engaged for Christ! In *Galen*'s time it was proverbial, when they would express the Impossibility of a thing; *You may assoon take off a Christian from Christ.* Thus you see what Use you should make of Christ's sanctifying himself for you.

Inference 2. If Christ have sanctified or consecrated himself for us; learn hence *what a horrid Evil it is to use Christ or his Blood, as a common and unsanctified thing.* Yet so some do, as the Apostle speaks, *Heb.* 10. 29. The Apostate is said to tread upon the Son of God, as if he were no better than the Dirt under his Feet, and to count his Blood an unholy (or common) thing. But wo to them that so do, they shall be counted worthy of something worse than dying without Mercy, as the Apostle there speaks.

And as this is the Sin of the Apostate, so it is also the Sin of all those that without Faith approach, and so prophane the Table of the Lord, unbelievingly and unworthily handling those awful things. Such *eat and drink Judgment to themselves, not discerning the Lord's Body*, 1 Cor. 11. 29. whereas the Body of Christ was a Thing of the deepest Sanctification that ever God created; sanctified (as the Text tells us) to a far more excellent and glorious Purpose than ever any Creature in Heaven or Earth was sanctified. It was therefore the great Sin of those *Corinthians*, not to discern it, and not to behave themselves towards it, when they saw and handled the Signs of it, as so holy a Thing.

And as it was their great Sin, so God declared his just Indignation against it, in those sore Strokes inflicted for it. As they discerned not the Lord's Body, so neither did the Lord discern their Bodies from others, in the Judgments that were inflicted. And as one well observes, God drew the Model and Platform of their Punishment, from the Structure and Proportion of their Sin. And truly if the moral and spiritual Seeds and Originals of many of our outward Afflictions and Sicknesses were but duly sifted out, possibly we might find a great part of them in the Bowels of this Sin.

The just and righteous God will build up the Breaches we make upon the Honour of his Son, with the Ruins of that Beauty, Strength and Honour which he hath given our Bodies. O then, when you draw nigh to God in that Ordinance, take heed to sanctifie his Name, by a spiritual discerning of this most holy, and most deeply sanctified Body of the Lord; sanctified beyond all Creatures, Angels or Men, not only in respect of the Spirit, which fill'd him without measure with inherent Holiness, but also in respect of its Dedication to such a Service as this, it being set apart by him to such holy solemn Ends and Uses as you have heard.

And let it for ever be a Warning to such as have lifted up their Hands to Christ in a holy Profession, that they never lift up their *Heel* against him afterwards by *Apostacy*. The Apostate treads on God's dear Son, and God will tread upon him for it. *Thou hast trodden down all that err from thy Statutes*, Psal. 119. 118.

Inference 3. *What a choice Pattern of Love to Saints have we here before us!* calling all that are in Christ to an Imitation of him, even to give up our selves to their Service, as Christ did; not in the same kind, so none can give himself for them, but as we are capable. You see here how his Heart was affected to them, that he would sanctifie himself as a Sacrifice for them. See to what a Height of Duty the Apostle improves this Example of Christ, 1 *John* 3. 16. *Hereby perceive we the Love of God, because he laid down his Life for us; and we ought also to lay down our Lives for the Brethren.* Some Christians came up fairly to this Pattern in the Primitive Times; *Priscilla* and *Aquila* laid down their Necks for *Paul*, *Rom.* 16. 4. i. e. eminently hazarded their Lives for him; and even he himself could *rejoice if he were offered up upon the Sacrifice and Service of their Faith*, Phil. 2. 17. And in the next Times, what more known, even to the Enemies of Christianity, than their fervent Love one to another? *Ecce quam mutuo se diligunt, & mori volunt pro alterutris!* See how they love one another, and are willing to die for one another!

But alas! the Primitive Spirit is almost lost in this degenerate Age. Instead of laying down Life, how few will lay down Twelve Pence for them? I remember it's the Observation of a late Worthy, upon *Mat.* 5. 40. That he is perswaded there is hardly that Man to be found this Day alive, that fully understands and fully believes that Scripture. O did Men think what they do for them, is done for Christ himself, it would produce other Effects than are yet visible.

Inference 4. Lastly, If Christ sanctified himself, that we might be sanctified by [or in] the Truth; then it will follow by sound Consequence, *That true Sanctification is a true Evidence that Christ set apart himself to die for us.* * In vain did he sanctifie himself (as to you) unless you be sanctified. Holy Souls only can claim the Benefit of the great Sacrifice. O try then, whether true Holiness (and that is only to to be judged by its Conformity to its Pattern, 1 Pet. 1. 15. *As he that called you is holy, so be ye holy*) whether such a Holiness as is, and acts (according to its measure) like God's Holiness in the following Particulars, be found in you.

* Neque enim sic sanctificavit semetipsum Christus pro nobis, ut nos maneamus profani, & alieni a communione spiritus, & sanctificationis illius. Qui illius sunt expertes, frustra sibi commercium Christi pollicentur. *Musc. in loc.*

1. God is *universally holy* in all his Ways; so *Psal.* 145. 17. *His Works are all holy:* whatever he doth, it's still done as becomes a holy God. He is not only holy in all things, but at all times unchangeably holy. Be ye therefore holy in all things, and at all times too, if ever ye expect the Benefit of Christ's sanctifying himself to die for you.

O Brethren, let not the Feet of your Conversation be as the Feet of a lame Man, which are unequal, *Prov.* 20. 7. Be not sometimes hot, and sometimes cold; at one time careful, at another time careless; one Day in spiritual Rapture, and the next in a fleshly Frolick: but be ye holy ἐν πάσῃ ἀναστροφῇ, 1 *Pet.* 1. 15. *in all manner of Conversation*; in every Creek and

and turning of your Lives: And let your Holineſs hold out to the end. *Let him that is holy, be holy ſtill,* Rev. 22. 11. Not like the Hypocrites Paint, but as a true natural Complexion.

2. God is *exemplarily* holy, Jeſus Chriſt is the great Pattern of Holineſs. Be ye Examples of Holineſs too, unto all that are about you. *Let your Light ſo ſhine before Men, that they may ſee your good Works,* Mat. 5. 16. As wicked Men infect one another by their Examples, and diffuſe their Poiſon and Malignity where-ever they come; ſo do ye diſſeminate Godlineſs in all Places and Companies, and let thoſe that frequently converſe with you, eſpecially thoſe of your own Families, receive a deeper Dye and Tincture of Heavenlineſs, every Time they come nigh you; as the Cloth doth, by every new dipping into the Fat.

3. God *delights in nothing but Holineſs, and Holy Ones*; he hath ſet all his Pleaſure in the Saints. Be ye holy herein, as God is holy. Indeed there is this Difference betwixt God's Choice and yours; he chuſes not Men, becauſe they are holy, but that they may be ſo; ſo you are to chuſe them for your delightful Companions, that God hath choſen, and made holy. *Let all your Delights be in the Saints, even them that excel in Virtue,* Pſal. 16. 3.

4. God *abhorrs and hates all Unholineſs,* Do ye ſo alſo, that you may be like your Father which is in Heaven. And when the Spirit of Holineſs runs down thus upon you, a ſweeter Evidence the World cannot give that Chriſt was ſanctified for you. Holy Ones may confidently lay the Hand of their Faith on the Head of this great Sacrifice, and ſay, *Chriſt our Paſſover is ſacrificed for us.*

SERMON VIII.

Gives an Account of the Nature of Chriſt's Mediation.

1 TIM. II. V.

And one Mediator betwixt God and Men, the Man Chriſt Jeſus.

God is moſt holy, Man a Lump of Iniquity. Extremes meet not but by their Middle; ſinful Man can never have Communion with, or Enjoyment of God, but in and by a Mediator.

GReat and long Preparations beſpeak the Solemnity and Greatneſs of the Work for which they are deſigned: A Man that had but ſeen the Heaps of Gold, Silver and Braſs, which *David* amaſſed in his Time, for the building of the Temple, might eaſily conclude before one Stone of it was laid, that it would be a magnificent Structure. But lo, here is a Deſign of God as far tranſcending that, as the Subſtance doth the Shadow. For indeed that glorious Temple was but the Type and Figure of Jeſus Chriſt, *John* 2. 19, 21. and a weak Adumbration of that living ſpiritual Temple which he was to build, cementing the lively Stones thereof, together with his own Blood, 1 *Pet.* 2. 5, 6. that the Great God might dwell and walk in it, 2 *Cor.* 6. 16. The Preparations for that Temple were but of few Years, but the Conſultations and Preparations for this were from Eternity, *Prov.* 8. 31. And as there were Preparations for this Work, (which Chriſt diſpatch'd in a few Years) before the World began; ſo it will be Matter of eternal Admiration and Praiſe, when this World ſhall be diſſolved. What this aſtoniſhing glorious Work is, this Text will inform you, as to the general Nature of it. It is the Work of Mediation betwixt God and Man; managed by the ſole Hand of the Man Chriſt Jeſus.

In this Scripture (for I ſhall not ſpend Time to examine the Words in their Contexture) you have a Deſcription of *Jeſus the Mediator*; and he is here deſcribed four Ways, *viz.* by his Work or Office, a *Mediator*; by the Singularity of his Mediation, *one Mediator*; and by the Nature and Quality of his Perſon, imploy'd in this ſingular Way of Mediation, *the Man*; and laſtly, his Name, *Jeſus Chriſt*.

1. He is deſcribed by the Work or Office he is imploy'd about, Μεσίτης, a Mediator, a middle Perſon. So the Word imports a fit, indifferent, and equal Perſon, that comes between two Perſons that be at Variance, to take up the Difference and make Peace. Such a middle, equal, indifferent Perſon is Chriſt, *A Days-man, to lay his Hand upon both*; to arbitrate and award juſtly, and give God his Due, and that without Ruin to poor Man.

2. He is deſcribed by the Singularity of his *Mediation, One Mediator,* and but one. Tho' there be many Mediators of Reconciliation among Men, and many Interceſſors in a petitionary Way, betwixt God and Men; yet but Εἷς Μεσίτης, one only Mediator of Reconciliation betwixt God and Men: And 'tis as needleſs and impious to make more Mediators than one, as to make more Gods than one. *There is one God, and one Mediator betwixt God and Men.*

3. He is deſcribed by the Nature and Quality of his Perſon, ἄνθρωπος χεὶς Θ; &c. *The Man Chriſt Jeſus.* This Deſcription of him by one Nature, and that the Human Nature alſo; (wherein, as you ſhall ſee anon, the Lord eſpecially conſulted our Encouragement and Comfort) I ſay, his being ſo deſcribed to us, hath through the Corruption of Men been improved to the great Diſhonour of Jeſus Chriſt, both by the *Arians* and *Papiſts*. The former took occaſion from hence to affirm that he was but ψιλὸς ἄνθρωπος, a meer Man. The latter allow him to be the true God, but on this weak Ground affirm, that he performed not the Work of Mediation as God, but only as Man. Thus what the Spirit ordered for our Comfort, is wickedly retorted to Chriſt's Diſhonour. For I doubt not but he is deſcribed by his Human Nature in this Place; not only becauſe in this Nature he paid that Ranſom, (which he ſpeaks of in the Words immediately following) but eſpecially for the drawing of Sinners to him; ſeeing he is the Man Chriſt Jeſus, one that cloathed himſelf in their own Fleſh; and to encourage the Faith of Believers, that

Cur quæſo addidit homo? niſi ad exprimendam naturam, ſecundum quam Chriſtus eſt Mediator? *Bell.* de Chriſto Med. *lib.* 5. *cap.* 3. *tom.* 2.

he tenderly reſents all their Wants, and Miſeries, and that they may ſafely truſt him with all their Concerns, as one that will carefully mind them as his own, and will be for them a merciful and faithful High Prieſt in Things pertaining to God.

4. He is deſcribed by his Names; by his *appellative Name Chriſt*, and his *proper Name Jeſus*. The Name *Jeſus*, notes his *Work* about which he came, and *Chriſt* the *Offices* to which he was anointed; and in the Execution of which he is our *Jeſus*. In the Name *Jeſus*, the whole Goſpel is hid; it is the Light, the Food, the Medicine of the Soul, as one ſpeaks. The note from hence is,

In nomine JESU totum latet Evangelium; hoc nomen eſt lux, cibus, & medicina animæ, *S. Gloſſimus.*

Doct. *That Jeſus Chriſt is the true and only Mediator betwixt God and Men.*

Ye are come to Jeſus the Mediator of the New Covenant, Heb. 12. 24. *And for this Cauſe he is the Mediator of the New Teſtament*, &c. *Heb.* 9. 14. I might ſhew you a whole Vein of Scriptures running this Way; but to keep a profitable and clear Method, I ſhall ſhew,

First, What is the Senſe of this Word Μεσίτης, a Mediator.

Secondly, What it implies, as it is applied to Chriſt.

Thirdly, How it appears that he is the true and only Mediator betwixt God and Men.

Fourthly, In what Capacity he performed his Mediatory Work.

First, What is the Senſe and Import of this Word Μεσίτης, a *Mediator?* The true Senſe and Importance of it, is a *middle Perſon*, or one that interpoſes betwixt two Parties at Variance, to make Peace betwixt them. So that as Satan is *medium disjungens*, a Medium of Diſcord; ſo Chriſt is *medium conjungens*, a Medium of Concord and Peace. And he is ſuch a Middler, both in Reſpect of his Perſon, and Office: In Reſpect of his Perſon, he is a Middler; that is, one that hath the ſame Nature both with God and us, true God, and true Man; and in Reſpect of his *Office* or Work, which is to interpoſe or tranſact the Buſineſs of Reconciliation between us and God. The former ſome call his *ſubſtantial*, the latter his *energetical* or operative Mediation. Tho' I rather conceive that which is call'd his ſubſtantial Mediation, is but the Aptitude of his Perſon to execute the Mediatorial Function; and that it doth not conſtitute two Kinds of Mediation. His being a middle Perſon, fits and capacitates him to ſtand in the midſt betwixt God and us. This, I ſay, is the proper Senſe of the Word; tho' Μεσίτης a Mediator be rendred variouſly; ſometimes an Umpire or Arbitrator; ſometimes a Meſſenger that goes betwixt two Perſons; ſometimes an Interpreter, imparting the Mind of one to another; ſometimes a Reconciler or Peace-maker. And in all theſe Senſes Chriſt is the Μεσίτης, the middle Perſon, in his Mediation of Reconciliation or Interceſſion, that is, either in his mediating by ſuffering to make Peace, as he did on Earth; or to continue, and maintain Peace, as he doth in Heaven, by meritorious Interceſſion. Both theſe Ways he is the only Mediator. And he manageth this his Mediation,

Vocamus mediatorem eum qui inter aliquos diſſidentes, aut certe non conjunctos medium ſe interponit, ut eos redigat ad concordiam, vel novo fœdere conjungat. Nomen Mediatoris in ſua propria ſignificatione non eſt nomen ſubſtantiæ, ſed muneris & officii; ſubſtantia igitur & operatio non conſtituunt duo genera mediationis ſed unum & idem. *Dr.* Ames Bellarm. *lib.* 5. *p.* 157.

Mediator dicitur Chriſtus, tum quà medius, tum quà medians; medius perſona, medians officio. *Tilcat. Inſtit. p.* 78.

1. As an *Umpire* or *Arbitrator*; one that layeth his Hands upon both Parties, as *Job* ſpeaks, *chap.* 9. 33. ſo doth Chriſt, he layeth his Hands, (ſpeaking after the Manner of Men) upon God; and ſaith, Father, wilt thou be at Peace with them, and re-admit them into thy Favour? If thou wilt, thou ſhalt be fully ſatisfied for all that they have done againſt thee. And then he layeth his Hand upon Man, and ſaith, Poor Sinner be not diſcouraged, thou ſhalt be juſtified and ſaved.

Μεσίτης, Sequeſter, Arbiter, Interpres, Conciliator.

2. As a *Meſſenger* or Ambaſſador; ſo he came to impart the Mind of God to us, and ſo he preſents our Deſires to God. And in this Senſe only *Socinus* would allow Chriſt to be Mediator. But therein he endeavours to undermine the Foundation, and to exclude him from being a Mediator by Suretiſhip. Which is,

3. The third Way of this Mediation. So the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Heb.* 7. he is ἔγγυος, the Surety, or Pledge. Which, as the learned *David Pareus* well expreſſeth it, is one that engageth to ſatisfie another, or gives Caution or Security by a Pledge in the Hand for it. And indeed both theſe Ways Chriſt is our Mediator by Suretiſhip, *viz.* in a Way of Satisfaction, coming under our Obligation to anſwer the Law; this he did on the Croſs; and in a Way of Caution, a Surety for the Peace, or good Behaviour. But to be more explicate and clear, I ſhall,

ἔγγυος eſt ſponſor, fidejuſſor, præs, à γύη, manus, & ἐν, quaſi ἐν γυίοις in manibus; vel ut *Suidas* ἀ γῆ, vel γᾶια, terra, quæ eſt firma, ſtabilis, immobilis.

Secondly, In the next Place enquire, what it implies and carries in it, for Chriſt to be a Mediator betwixt God and us. And there are mainly five Things in it.

1. At the firſt Sight, *it carries in it a moſt dreadful Breach and Far betwixt God and Men*; elſe no Need of a Mediator of Reconciliation. There was indeed a ſweet League of Amity once between them, but it was quickly diſſolved by Sin; the Wrath of the Lord was kindled againſt Man, purſuing him to Deſtruction, *Pſal.* 5. 5. *Thou hateſt all Workers of Iniquity.* And Man was filled with unnatural Enmity againſt his God, *Rom.* 1. 30. θεοστυγεῖς, *Haters of God*; this put an End to all friendly Commerce and Intercourſe between him and God. Reader, ſay not in thy Heart, that it's much one Sin, and that ſeemingly ſo ſmall, ſhould make ſuch a Breach as this, and cauſe the God of Mercy and Goodneſs ſo to abhor the Works of his Hands, and that as ſoon as he had made Man; for it was a heinous and aggravated Evil. It was upright, perfect Man, created in the Image of God, that thus ſinned: he ſinned when his Mind was moſt bright, clear, and apprehenſive; his Conſcience pure and active; his Will free, and able to withſtand any Temptation; his Conſcience pure and undefiled: yea, he was a *publick*, as well as a perfect Man, and well knew that the Happineſs or Miſery of his numberleſs Off-ſpring was involved in him.

The Condition he was placed in was exceeding happy. No Neceſſity or Want could arm and edge a Temptation. He lived amidſt all natural and ſpiritual Pleaſures and Delights, the Lord moſt delightfully converſing with him. Yea, he ſinned while as yet his Creation-Mercy was freſh upon him, and in this Sin was moſt horrible Ingratitude, yea, a caſting off the Yoke of Obedience, almoſt as ſoon as God had put it on. God now ſaw the Work of his Hands ſpoiled, a Race of *Rebels* now to be propagated, who in their ſucceſſive Generations would be fighting againſt

gainſt God. He ſaw it, and his juſt Indignation ſparkled againſt Man, and reſolves to purſue him to the Bottom of Hell.

2. It implies *a Neceſſity of Satisfaction and Reparation to the Juſtice of God:* For the very Deſign and End of this Mediation was to make Peace, by giving full Satisfaction to the Party that was wronged. The *Photinians* and ſome others, have dreamed of a Reconciliation with God, founded, not upon Satisfaction, but upon the abſolute Mercy, Goodneſs, and Free-will of God. But concerning that abſolute Goodneſs and Mercy of God, reconciling Sinners to himſelf, there is a deep Silence throughout the Scriptures: And whatever is ſpoken of it upon that Account, is as it works to us through Chriſt, *Epheſ.* 1. 3, 4, 5. *Acts* 4. 12. *John* 6. 40. And we cannot imagine, either how God could exerciſe Mercy to the Prejudice of his Juſtice, which muſt be, if we muſt be reconcil'd without full Satisfaction; or how ſuch a full Satisfaction ſhould be made by any other than Chriſt. Mercy indeed moved in the Heart of God to poor Man: but from his Heart it found no way to vent it ſelf for us, but through the Heart-blood of Jeſus Chriſt: And in him the Juſtice of God was fully ſatisfied, and the Miſery of the Creature fully cured. And ſo, as *Auguſtine* ſpeaks, God neither loſt the Severity of his Juſtice in the Goodneſs of Mercy, nor the Goodneſs of his Mercy in the Exactneſs of his Severity. But if it had been poſſible God could have found out a way to reconcile us without Satisfaction, yet it's paſt doubt now, that he hath pitch'd and fix'd on this way. And for any now to imagine to reconcile themſelves to God by any thing but Faith in the Blood of this Mediator, is not only moſt vain in it ſelf, and deſtructive to the Soul, but moſt inſolently derogatory to the Wiſdom and Grace of God.

De abſoluta enim bonitate, & voluntate ſalvandi, ſcriptura magis muta eſt quam piſcis. *Dieteric.* His poſitis, ſequitur Dei neque naturam, neque Juſtitiam ſummam pati, ut legis tranſgreſſio ulla, ſine compenſatione juſta, dimittatur. *Bradſhaw de Juſtif.* p. 68. Nec in bonitate miſericordiæ perdit judicii ſeveritatem; nec in judicando cum ſeveritate amittit miſericordiæ bonitatem. *Aug. in Pſ.* 100.

And to ſuch I would ſay, as *Tertullian* to *Marcion*, whom he calls the Murderer of Truth, Spare the only Hope of the whole World, O thou who deſtroyeſt the moſt neceſſary Glory of our Faith! All that we hope for is but a Phantaſm without this. Peace of Conſcience can be rationally ſettled on no other Foundation but this: For God having made a Law to govern Man, and this Law violated by Man; either the Penalty muſt be levied on the Delinquent, or Satisfaction made by his Surety. As good no Law, as no Penalty for Diſobedience; and as good no Penalty, as no Execution. He therefore that will be a Mediator of Reconciliation betwixt God and Man, muſt bring God a Price in his Hand, and that adequate to the Offence and wrong done him, elſe he will not treat about Peace; and ſo did our Mediator.

Parce unicæ ſpei totius orbis, O tu qui deſtruis neceſſarium decus fidei. *Tertul. lib. de Carne Chriſti.*

3. Chriſt's being a Mediator of Reconciliation and Interceſſion, implies *the infinite Value of his Blood and Sufferings, as that which in it ſelf was ſufficient to ſtop the Courſe of God's Juſtice, and render him not only placable, but abundantly ſatisfied and well pleaſed, even with thoſe that before were Enemies.* And ſo much is ſaid of it, *Col.* 1. 21, 22. *And ye that were ſometimes alienated, and Enemies in your Minds by wicked Works, yet now hath he reconciled, in the Body of his Fleſh through Death, to preſent you holy, and unblameable, and unreproveable in his ſight.* Surely, that which can cauſe the Holy God, juſtly incenſed againſt Sinners, to lay aſide all his Wrath, and take an Enemy into his Boſom, and eſtabliſh ſuch an Amity as can never more be broken, but to reſt in his Love, and to joy over him with ſinging, as it is, *Zeph.* 3. 17. this muſt be a moſt excellent and efficacious thing.

4. Chriſt's being a Mediator of Reconciliation, implies *the ardent Love, and large Pity that filled his Heart towards poor Sinners.* For he doth not only mediate by way of Intreaty, going betwixt both, and perſwading and begging Peace; but he mediates (as you have heard) in the Capacity of a Surety, by putting himſelf under an Obligation to ſatisfie our Debts. O how compaſſionately did his Heart work towards us, that when he ſaw the Arm of Juſtice lifted up to deſtroy us, would interpoſe himſelf, and receive the Stroke, tho' he knew it would ſmite him dead! Our Mediator, like *Jonah* his Type, ſeeing the ſtormy Sea of God's Wrath working tempeſtuouſly, and ready to ſwallow us up, caſt in himſelf to appeaſe the Storm. I remember how much that noble Act of *Marcus Curtius* is celebrated in the Roman Story, who being informed by the Oracle, that the great Breach made by the Earthquake could not be cloſed, except ſomething of Worth were caſt into it, heated with Love to the Common-wealth, he went and caſt in himſelf. This was looked upon as a bold and brave Adventure: But what was this to Chriſt?

5. Chriſt being a Mediator betwixt God and Men, implies, as *the Fitneſs of his Perſon, ſo his authoritative Call to undertake it.* And indeed the Father, who was the wronged Perſon, call'd him to be the Umpire and Arbitrator, truſting his Honour in his Hands. Now Chriſt was inveſted with this Office and Power *virtually*, ſoon after the Breach was made by *Adam's* Fall; for we have the early Promiſe of it, *Gen.* 3. 15. Ever ſince, till his Incarnation, he was a virtual and effectual Mediator; and on that account he is *call'd the Lamb ſlain from the Beginning of the World*, Rev. 13. 8. And *actually*, from the Time of his Incarnation. But having diſcuſſed this more largely in a former Diſcourſe, I ſhall diſmiſs it here, and apply my ſelf to the third Thing propoſed, which is,

Thirdly, How it appears that Jeſus Chriſt is the true and only Mediator betwixt God and Men. I reply, It's manifeſt he is ſo,

1. Becauſe he, *and no other, is revealed to us by God:* And if God reveal him, and no other, we muſt receive him, and no other as ſuch. Take but two Scriptures at preſent, that in 1 *Cor.* 8. 5. *The Heathen have many Gods, and many Lords*, i. e. many great Gods, ſupream Powers and ultimate Objects of their Worſhip; and leſt theſe great Gods ſhould be defiled by their immediate and unhallowed Approaches to them, they therefore invented Heroes, Demi-gods, Intermediate Powers, that were to be as Agents, or Lord-Mediators betwixt the Gods, and them, to convey their Prayers to the Gods, and the Bleſſings of the Gods back again to them. *But unto us* (ſaith he) *there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we by him*, i. e. one ſupream Eſſence, the firſt Spring and Fountain of Bleſſings; and *one Lord*, i. e. one Mediator, δι' ὃ τὰ πάντα, καὶ ἡμεῖς δι' αὐτοῦ; *by whom are all things, and we by him.* By whom are all things which come from the Father to us, and by whom are all our Addreſſes to the Fa-

Διὰ δαιμονίων πᾶσα ὁμιλία καὶ διάλεκτος μεταξὺ θεῶν καὶ ἀνθρώπων. Plut.

Ὄνομα ἕτερον, i. e. Alia cujuſquam auctoritas. Per nomen, res ipſa, hic Chriſtus ipſe; ὑπὸ τὸν ἀέρωνα,

ther

ther, ſo *Acts* 4. 12. *Neither is there Salvation in any other; for there is none other Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we muſt be ſaved.* No other Name, *i. e.* no other Authority, or rather no other Perſon authorized *under Heaven*, i. e. the whole World: for Heaven is not here oppoſed to Earth, as tho' there were other Interceſſors in Heaven beſides Chriſt; no no, in Heaven and Earth God has given him, and none but him to be our Mediator. One Sun is ſufficient for the whole World; and one Mediator for all Men in the World. So that the Scriptures affirm this is he, and exclude all others.

i. e. uſpiam, Neque enim hoc loco cœlum opponitur terræ, quaſi in cœlo ſint alii præter Chriſtum deprecatores; in terra vero non item: ſed in *Heb.* eſt Pleonaſmus. *Beza in loc.*

2. Becauſe he, and no other, is fit for and capable of this Office. Who but he that hath the Divine and Human Nature united in his ſingle Perſon, can be a fit Day's Man to lay his Hand upon both? Who but he that was God could ſupport under ſuch Sufferings as were by Divine Juſtice exacted for Satisfaction? Take a Perſon of the greateſt Spirit, and put him but an Hour in the Caſe Chriſt was in, when he ſweat Blood in the Garden, or utter'd that heart-rending Cry upon the Croſs, and he had melted under it as a Moth.

3. Becauſe he is alone ſufficient to reconcile the World to God by his Blood, without Acceſſions from any other. The Virtue of his Blood reach'd back as far as *Adam*, and reaches forward to the End of the World; and will be as freſh, vigorous, and efficacious then, as the firſt Moment it was ſhed. The Sun makes Day before it actually riſe, and continues Day to us ſometime after it is ſet: So doth Chriſt, who is the ſame Yeſterday, to Day, and for ever; ſo that he is the true and only Mediator betwixt God and Men: No other is revealed in Scripture; no other ſufficient for it; no other needed beſide him.

Sol nondum conſpectus, illuminat orbem.

Fourthly, The laſt Thing to be explained is, in what a Capacity he executed his Mediatory Work.

About which we affirm, according to Scripture, that he performs that Work as God-Man in both Natures. Papiſts, in denying Chriſt to act as Mediator according to his Divine Nature, do at once ſpoil the whole Mediation of Chriſt of all its Efficacy, Dignity and Value, which riſes from that Nature, which they deny to co-operate, and exert its Virtue in his active and paſſive Obedience. They ſay the Apoſtle in my Text diſtinguiſhes the Mediator from God, in ſaying *There is one God, and one Mediator.* Ours aptly reply, that the ſame Apoſtle diſtinguiſhes Chriſt from Man, *Gal.* 1. 1. *Not by Man, but by Jeſus Chriſt.* Doth it thence follow, that Chriſt is not true Man? Or that, according to his Divine Nature only, he call'd *Paul?* But what need I ſtay my Reader here? Had not Chriſt, as Mediator, Power to lay down his Life, and Power to take it up again? *John* 10. 17, 18. Had he not, as Mediator, all Power in Heaven and Earth to inſtitute Ordinances, and appoint Officers? *Matth.* 28. 18. to Baptize Men with the Holy Ghoſt and Fire? *Matth.* 3. 11. to keep thoſe his Father gave him in this World? *John* 17. 12. to raiſe up the Saints again in the laſt Day? *John* 6. 54. Are theſe, with many more I might name, the Effects of the meer human Nature? Or, were they not performed by him as God-man? And beſides, how could he, as Mediator, be the Object of our Faith, and Religious Adoration, if we are not to reſpect him as God-man? But I long now to be at the Application of this: And the firſt Inference from it is this.

Divinitas ſine humanitate, & humanitas ſine divinitate, non eſt Mediatrix; ſed inter divinitatem ſolam, & humanitatem ſolam, Mediatrix eſt humana divinitas, & divina humanitas. *Aug. Hom.* 2. Appellationes officii competunt Chriſto ſecundum utramque naturam. *Ameſ. Belion. cap.* 5.

Inference 1.

That it is a dangerous thing to reject Jeſus Chriſt, the only Mediator betwixt God and Men. Alas! there is no other to interpoſe and skreen thee from the devouring Fire, the everlaſting Burnings! *O it's a fearful thing to fall into the Hands of the living God!* And into his Hands you muſt needs fall, without an Intereſt in the only Mediator. Which of us can dwell with devouring Fire? Who can endure the everlaſting Burnings? *Iſa.* 33. 14. You know how they ſinged and ſcorched the green Tree, but what would they do to the dry Tree? *Luke* 23. 31. Indeed, if there were another Plank to ſave after the Shipwrack, any other way to be reconciled to God beſide Jeſus the Mediator, ſomewhat might be ſaid to excuſe this Folly; but you are ſhut *up to the Faith of Chriſt*, as to your laſt Remedy, *Gal.* 3. 23. You are like ſtarving Beggars that are come at the laſt Door. O take heed of deſpiſing or neglecting Chriſt! if ſo, there's none to intercede with God for you; the Breach betwixt him and you can never be compoſed. I remember here the Words of *Eli* to his prophane Sons, who cauſed Men to abhor the Offerings of the Lord, 1 *Sam.* 2. 25. *If one Man ſin againſt another, the Judge ſhall judge him; but if a Man ſin againſt the Lord, who ſhall intreat for him?* the Meaning is, in common Treſpaſſes betwixt Men, the Civil Magiſtrate takes Cognizance of it, and decides the Controverſie by his Authority, ſo that there is an End of that Strife: but if Man ſin againſt the Lord, who ſhall intreat or arbitrate in that Caſe? *Eli*'s Sons had deſpiſed the Lord's Sacrifices, which were the ſacred Types of Chriſt, and the ſtated way that Men had then to act Faith on the Mediator in. Now (ſaith he) if a Man thus ſin againſt the Lord, by deſpiſing Chriſt ſhadowed out in that way, who ſhall intreat for him? What Hope, what Remedy remains?

Conculcârant ſacrificia, legeſque omnes divinas, atque ita quantum in ſe erat ſuſtulerunt è medio omnia præſidia. *Sic Grotius in loc.*

I remember, it was the ſaying of *Luther*, and he ſpake it with deep Reſentment, *Nolo Deum abſolutum*, I will have nothing to do with an abſolute God, *i. e.* with God without a Mediator. Thus the Devils have to do with God: but will ye, in whoſe Nature Chriſt is come, put your ſelves into their State and Caſe? God forbid.

Inference 2.

Hence alſo be informed, *how great an Evil it is to join any other Mediators, either of Reconciliation, or meritorious Interceſſion, with Jeſus Chriſt.* O this is a horrid Sin, and that which both pours the greateſt Contempt upon Chriſt, and brings the ſureſt and ſoreſt Deſtruction upon the Sinner! I am aſhamed my Pen ſhould Engliſh what mine Eyes have ſeen in the Writings of Papiſts, aſcribing as much, yea, more to the Mediation of *Mary* than to Chriſt, with no leſs than blaſphemous Impudence, thus commenting upon Scripture: What is that which the Lord ſaith, *I have trod the Wine-preſs alone, and of the People there was no Man with me?* True, Lord, there was no Man with thee, but there was a Woman with thee, who received all theſe Wounds in her Heart, which thou receiv'd'ſt in thy Body. I will not blot my Paper

with more of this, but refer the learned Reader to the Margin, where he may (if he have a mind to see more) be informed, not only what Blasphemy hath dropt from single Pens, but even from Councils, to the Reproach of Jesus Christ, and his Blood.

Mariale Argentinense lib. 1. c. 4. fol. 13. Vincent. Brun. in meditat. fest. B. Virginis, *Colon.* 1559. p. 11. Liber Cantionum Dilingæ, Anno 1577. Concil. Trident. Sess. 25. Psalt. Mariæ, Anno 1573. p. 29.

How they stamp their own sordid Works with the peculiar Dignity and Value of Christ's Blood; and therein seek to enter at the Gate which God hath shut to all the World, because Jesus Christ the Prince entred in thereby, *Ezek.* 44. 2, 3. He entred into Heaven in a direct immediate way, even in his own Name, and for his own sake; this Gate, saith the Lord, shall be shut to all others: And I wish Men would consider it, and fear, lest while they seek Entrance into Heaven at the wrong Door, they do not for ever shut against themselves the true and only Door of Happiness.

Inference 3.

If Jesus Christ be the only Mediator of Reconciliation betwixt God and Men; *then reconciled Souls should thankfully ascribe all the Peace, Favour, and Comforts they have from God to their Lord Jesus Christ.* Whenever you have had free Admission, and sweet Entertainment with God in the more publick Ordinances, or private Duties of his Worship; when you have had his Smiles, his Seals, and with Hearts warmed with Comfort, are returning from those Duties, say, O my Soul, thou may'st thank thy good Lord Jesus Christ for all this! Had not he interpos'd as a Mediator of Reconciliation, I could never have had Access to, or friendly Communion with God to all Eternity.

Immediately upon *Adam's* Sin, the Door of Communion with God was lock'd, yea, chain'd up, and no more coming nigh the Lord: Not a Soul could have any Access to him, either in a way of Communion in this World, or of Enjoyment in that to come. It was Jesus the Mediator that open'd that Door again, and in him it is that we have Boldness, and Access with Confidence, *Ephes.* 3. 12. We can now *come to God by a new and a living way, consecrated for us through the Vail, that is to say, his Flesh*, Heb. 10. 20. The Vail had a double Use, as Christ's Flesh answerably hath: It hid the Glory of the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, and also gave Entrance into it. Christ's Incarnation rebates the Edge of the Divine Glory and Brightness, that we may be able to bear it, and converse with it; and it gives Admission into it also. O thank your dear Lord Jesus for your present, and future Heaven! These are Mercies which daily emerge out of the Ocean of Christ's Blood, and come swimming in it to our Doors. Blessed be God for Jesus Christ.

Inference 4.

If Jesus Christ be the true and only Mediator, both of Reconciliation and meritorious Intercession betwixt God and Men, *how safe and secure then is the Condition and State of Believers!* Surely, as his Mediation by Sufferings hath fully reconciled, so his Mediation by Intercession will everlastingly maintain the State of Peace betwixt them and God, and prevent all future Breaches. *Being justified by Faith, we have Peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ*, Rom. 5. 1. It's a firm and lasting Peace, and the Mediator that made it, lies as a Ledger in Heaven to maintain it for ever, and prevent new Jars, *Heb.* 9. 24. *There to appear in the Presence of God for us*; according to the Custom of Princes and States, who being Confederate, have their Agents Resident in each others Courts, who upon all Occasions appear in the Presence of the Prince, in the Name and Behalf of those whom they represent, and negotiate for.

And here it's proper to reflect upon the profound and incomprehensible Wisdom of God, who hath made an Advantage to us even out of our Sin and Misery. Come, see and adore the Wisdom of our God, that hath so improved, reduced, and disposed the Fall of *Adam*, as to make a singular Advantage, thereby to advance his Offspring to a better State. It was truly said by one of the Antients upon this Account, That *Job* was a happier Man upon the Dunghil, than *Adam* was in Paradice. His Holiness indeed was perfect, his Happiness very great; but neither of them permanent and indefeasible, as our Happiness by the Mediator is. So that in the same Sense some Divines call *Judas* his Treason, *Felix scelus*, a happy Wickedness; we may call *Adam's* Fall, *Felix lapsus*, a happy Fall, because ordered and over-ruled by the Wisdom of God, to such an Advantage for us. And to that purpose *Austin* somewhere sweetly speaks; O how happily did I fall in *Adam*, who rose again more happily in Christ! Thus did the Lord turn a Poison into an Antidote, thus did that dreadful Fall make way for a more blessed and fixed State. Now we are so confirmed, fixed, and established by Christ in the Favour of God, that there can be no more such fatal Breaches and dreadful Jars betwixt God and his reconciled ones for ever. The Bone that's well set is stronger where it's knit, than it was before. Blessed be God for Jesus Christ.

Fœlicior Job in Sterquilinio, quam Adamus in Paradiso.

O quam fœliciter cecidi in Adamo, qui post lapsum fœlicius resurrexi in Christo! *Aug.*

Inference 5.

Did Jesus Christ interpose betwixt us and the Wrath of God, as a Mediator of Reconciliation? Did he rather chuse to receive the Stroke upon himself, than to see us ruined by it? *How well then doth it become the People of God, in a thankful Sense of this Grace, to interpose themselves betwixt Jesus Christ and the Evils they see like to fall upon his Name and Interest in the World?* O that there were but such a Heart in the People of God! I remember it's a Saying of *Jerom*, when he heard the Revilings and Blasphemings of many against Christ, and his precious Truths, *O* (said he) *that they would turn their Weapons from Christ to me, and be satisfied with my Blood!* And much to the same Sense is that sweet one of *Bernard*, *Happy were I, if God would vouchsafe to use me as a Shield.* And *David* could say, *The Reproaches of them that reproached thee fell upon me*, Psal. 69. 9. Ten thousand of our Names are nothing to Christ's Name: His Name is ὄνομα κάλον, a worthy Name; and no Man that gives up his Name as a Shield to Christ, but shall thereby secure and increase the true Honour of it. And tho' wicked Men for the present may bespatter them, yet Jesus Christ will take it out of the Dirt, (as one speaks) wipe it clean, and give it us again. O 'tis the least one can do to interpose our selves and all that is dear to us, betwixt Jesus Christ and the Wrath of Men, when he (as you hear) interposed himself betwixt you and the eternal Wrath of God!

Utinam in me convertant tela, & meo sanguine sanentur. *Jer.* Bonum est mihi, si dignetur Deus me uti pro clypeo. *Bern.*

O if I could be a Bridge over the Water for my Lord Jesus to walk upon; and keep his Feet dry! O if my poor Bit of Heaven could go betwixt my Lord, and Blasphemy and Dishonour! said another Worthy.

SERMON IX.

Opens the first Branch of the Prophetical Office, consisting in the Revelation of the Will of God.

ACTS III. 22.

A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your Brethren like unto me; him shall ye hear in all Things, whatsoever he shall say unto you.

HAving in the former Discourses shewn you the solemn Preparations both on the Father's part, and on the Son's part, for the blessed Design of reconciling us by the meritorious Mediation of Christ; and given you a general Prospect of that his Mediation in the former Sermon; Method now requires, that I proceed to shew how he executes this his Mediation, in the Discharge of his blessed Offices of *Prophet*, *Priest* and *King*.

His *Prophetical Office* consists of two Parts; one *External*, consisting in true and full Revelation of the Will of God to Men, according to that, *John* 17. 6. *I have manifested thy Name to the Men thou gavest me.* The other in *Illuminating the Mind*, and opening the Heart to receive and embrace that Doctrine. The first Part is contained in the Words before us; *A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up*, &c.

Which Words are an Allegation out of *Moses*, recorded in *Deut.* 18. 15. and here by *Peter* pertinently applied to Christ, to convince the incredulous *Jews*, that he is the true and only *Messiah*, and the great Prophet of the Church; whose Doctrine it was highly dangerous to contemn, tho' out of the Mouths of such (otherwise contemptible) Persons as he and *John* were. And it's well observed by *Calvin*, he singles out this Testimony of *Moses* rather than any other, because of the great Esteem they had for *Moses* and his Writings beyond any others. Now in the Words themselves are two general Parts.

First, Christ, according to his Prophetical Office, described.

Secondly, Obedience to him, as such a Prophet, strictly enjoined.

First, You have here a Description of Christ in his Prophetical Office; *A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your Brethren like unto me.* Where Christ is described,

1. By his Title, *Prophet*; and that, *Princeps Prophetarum*, the Prince of the Prophets, or the great and chief Shepherd, as he is stiled, *Heb.* 13. 10. 1 *Pet.* 5. 4. It belongs to a Prophet to expound the Law, declare the Will of God, and foretel Things to come: All these meet, and that in a singular and eminent manner in Christ our Prophet, *Mat.* 5. 21, &c. *John* 1. 18. 1 *Pet.* 1. 11.

2. He is described by his Type; A Prophet like unto *Moses*, who therein typified and prefigured him. But is it not said of *Moses*, in *Deut.* 34. 10. that *there arose not a Prophet since in* Israel *like unto* Moses, *whom the Lord knew Face to Face?* True, of meer Men there never arose so great a Prophet in *Israel*, as *Moses* was; either in respect of his Familiarity with God, or of his Miracles which he wrought in the Power of God: But *Moses* himself was but a Star to this Sun. However, in these following Particulars Christ was like him. He was a Prophet that went between God and the People, carry'd God's Mind to them, and returned theirs to God, they not being able to bear the Voice of God immediately, Deut. 18. 16, 17. *According to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in* Horeb, *in the Day of the Assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the Voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great Fire any more, that I die not.* And upon this their Request, God makes the Promise which is cited in the Text; *Verse* 17, 18. *They have well spoken that which they have spoken; I will raise them up a Prophet like unto thee*, &c. *Moses* was a very faithful Prophet, precisely Faithful, and exact in all things that God gave him in charge, even to a Pin of the Tabernacle. Moses *verily was faithful in all his House, as a Servant, for a Testimony of those Things which were to be spoken after: But Christ as a Son over his own House*, Heb. 3. 5, 6. Again, *Moses* confirmed his Doctrine by Miracles, which he wrought in the Presence, and to the Conviction of Gain-sayers. Herein Christ our Prophet is also like unto *Moses*, who wrought many, mighty, and uncontrolled Miracles, which could not be denied, and by them confirmed the Gospel which he preached. Lastly, *Moses* was the Prophet which brought God's *Israel* out of literal *Egypt*, and Christ his out of spiritual *Egypt*, whereof that Bondage was a Figure. Thus he is described by his Likeness to *Moses*, his Type.

Qui divinam illam majestatem e cœlo loquentem formidarent, jam in assumpta carne delitescentem & similem illis factam, audire non timerent.

Non similis quoad sequentia, nempe familiaritatem cum Deo, & portenta. *Estius in loc.*

3. He is described by his Stock and Original, from which according to his Flesh he sprang; *I will raise him up from among thy Brethren.* Of Israel, *as concerning the Flesh, Christ came*, Rom. 9. 5. And *it's evident that our Lord sprang out of* Judah, *Heb.* 7. 14. He honoured that Nation by his Nativity. Thus the Prophet is described.

Secondly, Here is a strict Injunction of Obedience to this Prophet; *Him shall ye hear in all Things*, &c. By *hearing*, understand Obedience. So Words of Sense are frequently put in Scripture, to signify those Affections that are moved by, and use to follow those Senses. And this Obedience is required to be yielded to this Prophet *only, and universally*, and under great Penalties. It's requir'd to be given to him only, for so [*him*] in the Text must be understood, as exclusive of all others. It's true, we are commanded to obey the Voice of his Ministers, *Heb.* 13. 17. But still it's Christ speaking to them, to whom we pay our Obedience: *He that heareth you, heareth*

Ipsum audies, *i. e.* ipsum solum; sic illi servies *Deut.* 6. 13. exponitur illi soli, *Mat.* 4. 10.

heareth me: We obey them in the Lord, *i. e.* commanding or forbidding in Christ's Name and Authority. So when God said, *Deut.* 6. 13. [*Thou shalt serve him.*] Christ expounds it exclusively, *Mat.* 4. 10. *Him only shalt thou serve.* He is *the only Lord*, Jude 4. and there to him only our Obedience is required. And as it's due to him only, so to him universally; *Him shall ye hear in all Things:* His Commands are to be obeyed, not disputed. A Judgment of *Discretion* indeed is allowed to Christians, to judge whether it be the Will of Christ or no. We must *prove what is that holy, good and acceptable Will*, Rom. 13. 2. *His Sheep hear his Voice, and a Stranger they will not follow: They know his Voice, but know not the Voice of Strangers*, John 10. 4, 5. But when his Will is understood and known, we have no Liberty of Choice, but are concluded by it, be the Duty commanded never so difficult, or the Sin forbidden never so tempting: And this is also required severely, under Penalty of being destroyed from among the People, and of God's requiring it at our Hands, as it is in *Deut.* 18. *i. e.* of revenging himself in the Destruction of the Disobedient. Hence the Observation;

Doct. *That Jesus Christ is called and appointed by God to be the great Prophet and Teacher of the Church.*

He is *anointed to preach* good Tidings to the meek, and sent to bind up the broken-hearted, *Isa.* 61. 1. When he came to preach the Gospel among the People, then was this Scripture fulfilled, *Mat.* 11. 27. Yea, *all Things are delivered him of his Father; so as no Man knoweth who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.* All Light is now collected into one Body of Light, the Son of Righteousness; and *he enlighteth every Man that cometh into the World*, John 1. 9. And tho' he dispenseth Knowledge variously, in the Times past, speaking *in many Ways*, and divers Manners, to the Fathers; yet now the Method and Way of revealing the Will of God to us is fixt and settled in Christ: *In these last Times he hath spoken to us by his Son.*

Twice hath the Lord solemnly sealed him to this Office, or approved and owned him in it, by a miraculous Voice from the most excellent Glory, *Mat.* 3. *ult.* and *Mat.* 17. 5.

In this Point there are two Things doctrinally to be discussed and opened, *viz.* What Christ's being a Prophet to the Church implies: And how he executes and discharges this his Office.

First, What is implied in Christ's being a Prophet to the Church. And it necessarily imports these three Things.

1. The natural Ignorance and Blindness of Men in the Things of God. This shews us that *vain Man is born as the wild Asses Colt.*——The World is involved in Darkness: The People sit as in the Region and Shadow of Death, till Christ arise upon their Souls, *Mat.* 4. 15, 16, 17. 'Tis true, in the State of Innocency Man had a clear Apprehension of the Will of God without a Mediator; but now that Light is quencht in the Corruption of Nature, and *the natural Man receiveth not the Things of God*, 1 Cor. 2. 14. These Things of God are not only contrary to corrupt carnal Reason, but they are also above right Reason. Grace indeed useth Nature, but Nature can do nothing without Grace. The Mind of a natural Man hath not only a native Blindness, by Reason whereof it cannot discern the Things of the Spirit, but also a natural Enmity, *Rom.* 8. 7. and hates the Light, 1 *John* 3. 19, 20. So that until the Mind be healed, and enlightned by Jesus Christ, the natural Faculty can no more discern the Things of the Spirit, than the sensitive Faculty can discern the Things of Reason. The Mysteries of Nature may be discovered by the Light of Nature; but when it comes to the super-natural Mysteries, there *omnis Platonicorum caligavit subtilitas*, as *Cyprian* somewhere speaks, the most subtil, searching, penetrating Wit and Reason, is stalled, and at a loss.

2. It implies the Divinity of Christ, and proves him to be true God, forasmuch as no other can reveal to the World in all Ages the Secrets that lay hid in the Heart of God, and that with such convincing Evidence and Authority. He brought his Doctrine from the Bosom of his Father; *John* 1. 18. *The only begotten Son, who is in the Bosom of the Father, he hath revealed him.* The same Words which his Father gave him, he hath given us, *John* 17. 8. He spake to us that which he had seen with his Father, *John* 8. 38. What Man can tell the Bosom-Counsels and Secrets of God? Who but he that eternally lay in that Bosom can expound them?

Besides, other Prophets had their Times assigned them to rise, shine, and set again by Death, *Zech.* 1. 5. Your Fathers, where are they? And do the Prophets live for ever? But Christ is a fixed and perpetual Sun, that gives Light in all Ages of the World: For he is *the same yesterday, to day, and for ever*, Heb. 13. 8. Yea, and the very Beams of his Divinity shone with Awfulness upon the Hearts of them that heard him. So that his very Enemies were forced to acknowledge, that *never any Man spake like him*, John 7. 46.

3. It implies Christ to be the Original and Fountain of all that Light which is ministerially diffused up and down the World by Men. Ministers are but Stars, which shine with a borrowed Light from the Sun: So speaks the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 3. 6, 7. *For God who commanded the Light to shine out of Darkness, hath shined in our Hearts, to give the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God, in the Face of Jesus Christ.* Those that teach Men, must be first taught by Christ. All the Prophets of the Old, and all the Apostles, Pastors, and Teachers of the New Testament, have lighted their Candles at his Torch: 'Twas Christ that *gave them a Mouth and Wisdom*, Luke 21. 15. What *Paul* received from the Lord, he delivered to the Church, 1 *Cor.* 11. 23. Jesus Christ is the chief Shepherd, 1 *Pet.* 5. 4. and all the under Shepherds receive their Gifts and Commissions from him. These Things are manifestly implied in Christ's Prophetical Office.

Secondly, We shall next enquire how he executes and discharges this his Office, or how he enlightens and teacheth Men the Will of God. And this he hath done variously, gradually, plainly, powerfully, sweetly, purely and fully.

Si doctrina Christi ejusdemq; conciones examinentur, ex iisdem sole clarius patebit, verba ejus non esse verba nudi hominis, aut Prophetæ alicujus, sed ipsius Patris, adeoque veri Dei. Protulit enim non tantum evangelium & doctrinam, suam è sinu Patris, sed & non docuit ut Pharisæi & alii (puri puti) homines, sed ὡς ἐξουσίαν ἔχων, ut habens divinam auctoritatem, *Luke* 4. 23. Id quod Pharisæorum ministri hostes ejus, confitebantur his verbis, nunquam ita locutus est homo ut hic homo; quod si ergo verba ejus, Patris sunt verba, & non humana, sed divina auctoritate prolata sunt, utique & verus Deus erit, cum effectus divinus arguat causam; & sic cum non sit, nisi unus verus Deus, unicus, certe, & ejusdem cum Patre essentiæ Christus erit. *Dieterici Analysis Evang. par.* 3. *p.* (mihi) 341.

Res cœlestes rationis captum excedunt, sunt enim supra rationem rectam; prudentiæ carnis adversantur, sunt enim contra rationem pravam: natura indiget gratia, ut facultas ad supernaturale objectum recipiendum recte disponatur; & gratia utitur naturâ, ut mentis acumine, judicii perspicacia & bonarum literarum luce, feliciores fiant in sacrarum literarum studio progressus. Dr. *Reynold's* Animalis homo.

1. Our

1. Our Great Prophet hath revealed unto Men the Will of God variouſly; not holding one even and conſtant Tenour in the Manifeſtations of the Father's Will, but as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, πολυμερῶς ἠ πολυτρόπως, at ſundry Times, and in divers Manners, *Heb.* 1. 1. Sometimes he taught the Church *immediately*, and in his own Perſon, *John* 18. 10. He declared God's Righteouſneſs in the great Congregation, *Pſal.* 22. 22. And ſometimes *mediately*, by his Miniſters and Officers, deputed to that Service by him: So he diſpenſed the Knowledge of God to the Church before his Incarnation; it was Chriſt that in the Time, and by the Miniſtry of *Noah*, went and preached to the Spirits in Priſon, as it is 1 *Pet.* 3. 10. that is, to Men and Women then alive, but now ſeparated from the Body, and impriſoned in Hell for their Diſobedience: And it was Chriſt that was with the Church in the Wilderneſs, inſtructing and guiding them by the Miniſtry of *Moſes* and *Aaron*, *Acts* 7. 37, 38, and ſo he hath taught the Church ſince his Aſcenſion. He cannot now be perſonally with us, having other Buſineſs to do for us in Heaven; but however, he will not be wanting to teach us by his Officers, whom for that End he hath ſet and appointed in the Church, *Epheſ.* 4. 11, 12.

2. He hath diſpenſed his bleſſed Light to the Church gradually. The Diſcoveries of Light have been πολυμερῶς, that is, in many Parts or Parcels; ſometimes more obſcure and cloudy, as it was to the Old-Teſtament-Believers, by Viſions, Dreams, Urim, Thummim, vocal Oracles, Types, Sacrifices, *&c.* which tho' comparatively it were but a weak glimmering Light, and had no Glory, ſet by that which now ſhines, 2 *Cor.* 3. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. yet it was ſufficient for the Inſtruction and Salvation of the Elect in thoſe Times; but now is Light ſprung up glorioully in the Goſpel-Diſpenſation: *And we all with open Face, beholding as in a Glaſs, the Glory of the Lord.* It is to us not a Twi-light, but the Light of a perfect Day; and ſtill it is advancing in the ſeveral Ages of the World. I know more, (ſaith *Luther*) than bleſſed *Auſtin* knew; and they that come after me will know more than I know.

3. Jeſus Chriſt our great Prophet hath manifeſted to us the Will of God plainly and perſpicuouſly. When he was on Earth himſelf, he taught the People by Parables, and *without a Parable he ſpake nothing*, Mat. 13. 3, 4. He cloathed ſublime and ſpiritual Myſteries in earthly Metaphors, ſtooping them thereby to the low and dull Capacities of Men; ſpeaking ſo familiarly to the People about them, as if he had been ſpeaking earthly Things to them, *John* 3. 22. And ſo (according to his own Example) would he have his Miniſters preach, *uſing great Plainneſs of Speech*, 2 Cor. 3. 12. and *by manifeſtation of the Truth, commending themſelves to every Man's Conſcience*, 2 Cor. 4. 2. Yet not allowing them to be rude and careleſs in Expreſſion, pouring out indigeſted, crude, immethodical Words; no, a holy, ſerious, ſtrict, and grave Expreſſion beſits the Lips of his Embaſſadors: And who ever ſpake more weighti-ly, more logically, or perſwaſively than that Apoſtle by whoſe Pen Chriſt hath admoniſhed us to beware of vain Affectation, and ſwelling Words of Vanity? But he would have us ſtoop to the Underſtandings of the meaneſt, and not give the People a Comment darker than the Text: He would have us rather peirce their Ears, than tickle their Fancies; and break their Hearts, than pleaſe their Ears. Chriſt was a very plain Preacher.

Nec tamen eo tendit hæc Apoſtoli apologia quaſi concionatoribus quaſlibet loquendi ſordes, & quicquid in buccam venerit, effutiendi libidinem, nullo ſenſu, methodo, gravitate, judicio dictaret. Quis enim Paulo noſtro aut conſcientiis hominum altius intonat, aut Argumentorum pondere firmiorem aſſenſum cogit? Quis ſuavi magis, ſed cœleſti vi, effectus in tranſverſum rapit? *Reynold's* ubi ſupra.

4. Jeſus Chriſt diſcovered Truth powerfully; ſpeaking *as one having Authority, and not as the Phariſees*, Mat. 7. 29. They were cold and dull Preachers, their Words did even freeze betwixt their Lips; but Chriſt ſpake with Power, there was Heat as well as Light in his Doctrine: And ſo there is ſtill, tho' it be in the Mouth of poor contemptible Men, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. *The Weapons of our Warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the caſting down of ſtrong Holds:* 'Tis ſtill *quick and powerful, ſharper than a two-edged Sword; and piercing to the dividing aſunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the Joints and Marrow*, Heb. 4. 12. The Bleſſed Apoſtle imitated Chriſt; and being filled with his Spirit, ſpake home and freely to the Hearts of Men. So many Words, ſo many Claps of Thunder, (as one ſaid of him) which made the Hearts of Sinners ſhake and tremble in their Breaſts. All faithful and able Miniſters are not alike gifted in this Particular; but ſurely there is a holy Seriouſneſs and ſpiritual Grace and Majeſty in their Doctrine, commanding Reverence from their Hearers.

Optabat Auguſtinus Paulum audiviſſe è ſuggeſtu, quem tubam appellabat Chriſti, & Dei nubem, ut quot verba, tot tonitrua, auribus ſuis intonare videbantur.

5. This Prophet, Jeſus Chriſt, taught the People the Mind of God in a ſweet, affectionate, and taking Manner. His Words made their Hearts burn within them, *Luke* 24. 32. It was propheſied of him, *Iſa.* 42. 2. *He ſhall not cry, nor lift up, nor cauſe his Voice to be heard on high. A bruiſed Reed he ſhall not break, and ſmoaking Flax he ſhall not quench.* He knew *how to ſpeak a Word in Seaſon to the weary Soul*, Iſa. 61. 1. *He gathered the Lambs with his Arms, and gently led thoſe with young*, Iſa. 4. 11. How ſweetly did his Words ſlide to the melting Hearts about him! He drew with Cords of Love, with the Bands of a Man: He diſcouraged none, upbraided none that were willing to come to him: His Familiarity and free Condeſcenſions to the moſt vile and deſpiſeable Sinners, was often made the Matter of his Reproach. Such is his gentle and ſweet Carriage to his People, that the Church is called the *Lamb's Wife*, Rev. 19. 7.

6. He revealed the Mind of God purely to Men; his Doctrine had not the leaſt Daſh of Error to debaſe it, his moſt enviouſly obſervant Hearers could find nothing to charge him: He is *the faithful and true Witneſs*, Rev. 1. 5. and he hath commanded his Miniſters to conſerve the Simplicity and Purity of the Goſpel, and not to blend and ſophiſticate it, 2 *Cor.* 4. 2.

7. And laſtly, He revealed the Will of God perfectly and fully, keeping back nothing needful to Salvation. So he tells the Diſciples, *John* 15. 15. *All Things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.* He was *faithful as a Son over his own Houſe*, Heb. 3. 6. Thus you have a brief Account of what is implied in this Part of Chriſt's Prophetical Office, and how he performed it.

Inference, 1. If Jeſus Chriſt, who is now paſſed into the Heavens, be the great Prophet and Teacher of the Church; hence we may juſtly infer *the continual Neceſſity of a ſtanding Miniſtry of the Church*: For by his Miniſters he now teacheth us, and to that Intent hath fixed them in the Church, by a firm Conſtitution there to remain to the End of the World, *Mat.* 28. *ult.* He teacheth Men no more Perſonally, but Miniſterially.

His

His Miniſters ſupply the Want of his Perſonal Preſence, 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. *We pray you in Chriſt's Stead.* Theſe Officers he gave the Church at his Aſcenſion, *i. e.* when he ceaſed to teach them any longer with his own Lips; and ſo ſet them in the Church, that their Succeſſion ſhall never totally fail: For ſo the Word ἔθετο, *he hath ſet*, 1 Cor. 12. 28. plainly implies. They are ſet by a ſure Eſtabliſhment, a firm and unalterable Conſtitution, even as the *Times and Seaſons, which the Father hath put* [ἔθετο] *in his own Power*; it's the ſame Word: and it's well they are ſo firmly ſet and fixed there; for how many Adverſaries in all Ages have endeavoured to ſhake the very Office it ſelf? pretending that it's needleſs to be taught by Men, and wreſting ſuch Scriptures as theſe to countenance their Error, *Joel* 2. 28, 29. *I will pour out my Spirit upon all Fleſh; and your Sons and Daughters ſhall propheſie*, &c. And Jer. 31. 34. *Theſe ſhall teach no more every Man his Neighbour, and every Man his Brother, ſaying, Know the Lord; for they ſhall all know me from the leaſt of them to the greateſt of them.* As to that of *Joel*, it is anſwered, That if an Old-Teſtament-Prophecy, may be underſtood according to a New-Teſtament-Interpretation, then that Prophecy doth no Way oppoſe but confirm the Goſpel-Miniſtry. How the Apoſtle underſtood the Prophet in that his Prophecy, may be ſeen in *Acts* 2. 17. when the Spirit was poured out on the Day of *Pentecoſt* upon the Apoſtles. And ſurely he muſt be a confident Perſon indeed that thinks not an *Apoſtle* to be as good an Expoſitor of the *Prophet*, as himſelf. And for that in *Jer.* 31. we ſay,

1. That if it conclude againſt Miniſterial Teachings, it muſt equally conclude againſt Chriſtian Conferences.

2. We ſay that cannot be the Senſe of one Scripture which contradicts the plain Senſe of other Scriptures: But ſo this would, *Eph.* 4. 11, 12. 1 *Cor.* 12. 28.

3. And we ſay, the Senſe of that Text is not *negative* but *comparative*. Not that they ſhall have no Need to be taught any Truth, but no ſuch Need to be taught the firſt Truths; That there is a God, and who is this true God: *They ſhall no more teach every Man his Brother, ſaying, Know the Lord! for they ſhall all know me.* To conclude, God hath given Miniſters to the Church for Converſion and Edification Work, *till we all come into the Unity of the Faith, to a perfect Man*, Eph. 4. 11, 12. So that when all the Elect are converted, and all thoſe Converts become perfect Men; when there is no Error in Judgment or Practice, and no Seducer to cauſe it, then, and not till then, will a Goſpel-Miniſtry be uſeleſs. But (as it's well obſerved) there is not a Man that oppoſes a Goſpel-Miniſtry, but the very Being of that Man is a ſufficient Argument for the Continuance of it.

Inference 2. If Chriſt be the great Prophet of the Church, and ſuch a Prophet; then it follows, *That the weakeſt Chriſtians need not be diſcouraged at the Dulneſs and Incapacity they find in themſelves.* For Chriſt is not only a patient and condeſcending Teacher, but he can alſo, (as he often hath done) reveal that to Babes which is hid from the Wiſe and Learned, *Mat.* 11. 25. *The Teſtimonies of the Lord are ſure, making wiſe the ſimple*, Pſal. 19. 7. Yea, and ſuch as you are the Lord delights to chuſe, that his Grace may be the more conſpicuous in your Weakneſs, 1 *Cor.* 1. 26, 27. You will have nothing of your own to glory in: You will not ſay, as a proud Wretch once ſaid, *Ego, & Deus meus*; I and my God did this. Jeſus Chriſt affects not ſocial Glory, he will not divide the Praiſe with any. Well then, be not diſcouraged; others may know more in other Things than you, but you are not incapable of knowing ſo much as ſhall ſave your Souls, if Chriſt will be your Teacher. In other Knowledge they excel you; but if ye know Jeſus Chriſt and the Truth as it is in him, one Drop of your Knowledge is worth a whole Sea of their Gifts: One Truth ſuckt by *Faith* and *Prayer* from the Breaſt of Chriſt, is better than ten Thouſand dry Notions beaten out by wracking the Underſtanding. It's better in Kind, the one being but natural, the other ſupernatural, from the ſaving Illuminations and inward Teachings of the Spirit: And ſo is one of thoſe better Things *that accompany Salvation.* It's better in Reſpect of Effects; other Knowledge leaves the Heart as dry, barren, and unaffected, as if it had its Seat in another Man's Head: but that little you have been taught of Chriſt, ſheds down its gracious Influences upon your Affections, and ſlides ſweetly to your melting Hearts. So that as one preferr'd the moſt deſpicable Work of a plain Ruſtick Chriſtian, before all the Triumphs of *Alexander* and *Caſar*; much more ought ye to prefer one ſaving Manifeſtation of the Spirit, to all the powerleſs Illuminations of natural Men.

Si mihi daretur optio, eligerem Chriſtiani ruſtici ſordiſſimum & maxime agreſte opus, præ omnibus victoriis & triumphis *Alexandri & Cæſaris.*

Inference 3. If Chriſt be the great Prophet and Teacher of the Church; it follows, *That Prayer is a proper Means for the Increaſe of Knowledge*: Prayer is the Golden Key which unlocks that Treaſure. When *Daniel* was to expound that Secret which was contained in the King's Dream, about which the *Chaldean Magicians* had rackt their Brains to no Purpoſe; what Courſe doth *Daniel* take? Why, *he went to his Houſe*, (ſaith the Text) *Dan.* 2. 17, 18. *and made the Thing known to* Hananiah, Miſhael, *and* Azariah *his Companions; that they would deſire Mercies of the God of Heaven concerning this Secret.* And then was the Secret revealed to *Daniel*. *Luther* was wont to ſay, three Things make a Divine; Meditation, Temptation, and Prayer. Holy Mr. *Bradford* was wont to ſtudy upon his Knees. Thoſe Truths that are got by Prayer, leave an unuſual Sweetneſs upon the Heart. If Chriſt be our Teacher, it becomes all his Saints to be at his Feet.

Tria faciunt Theologum, Meditatio, Tentatio, Precatio. *Luther.*

Inference 4. If Chriſt be the great Prophet and Teacher of the Church, *We may thence diſcern and judge of Doctrines, and it may ſerve us as a Teſt to try them by.* For ſuch as Chriſt is, ſuch are the Doctrines that flow from him; Every Error pretends to derive it ſelf from him: but as Chriſt was holy, humble, heavenly, meek, peaceful, plain and ſimple, and in all Things alien, yea, contrary to the Wiſdom of the World, the Gratifications of the Fleſh; ſuch are the Truths which he teacheth. They have his Character and Image engraven on them. Would you know then whether this or that Doctrine be from the Spirit of Chriſt or no? Examine the Doctrine it ſelf by this Rule. And whatſoever Doctrine you find to encourage and countenance Sin, to exalt Self, to be accomodated to earthly Deſigns and Intereſts, to warp and bend to the Humours and Luſts of Men; in a Word, what Doctrine ſoever directly, and as a proper Cauſe makes them that profeſs it carnal, turbulent, proud, ſenſual, *&c.* you may ſafely reject it, and conclude this never came from Jeſus Chriſt. The Doctrine of Chriſt is after Godlineſs; his Truth ſanctifies. There is a *Guſtus ſpiritualis judicii*, a Spiritual

ritual Taste, by which those that have their Senses exercised, can distinguish things that differ. *The Spiritual Man judgeth all Things*, 1 Cor. 2. 15. *His Ears tries Words, as his Mouth tasteth Meats*, Job. 34. 3. Swallow nothing (let it come never so speciously) that hath not some Relish of Christ and Holiness in it. Be sure Christ never reveal'd any thing to Men, that derogates from his own Glory, or Prejudices and obstructs the Ends of his own Death.

Inference 5. And as it will serve us for a Test of Doctrines, *so it serves for a Test of Ministers*; and hence you may judge who are authorized and sent by Christ the great Prophet to declare his Will to Men. Surely those whom he sends have his *Spirit* in their *Hearts*, as well as his Words in their *Mouths*. And according to Measures of Grace received, they faithfully endeavour to fulfil their Ministry for Christ, as Christ did for his Father: *As my Father hath sent me*, (saith Christ) *so send I you*, John 20. 21. They take Christ for their Pattern in the whole Course of their Ministration, and are such as sincerely endeavour to imitate the great Shepherd in these Six Particulars following.

1. Jesus Christ was a *faithful Minister*, the *faithful and true Witness*, Rev. 1. 5. He declared the whole Mind of God to Men. Of him it was prophetically said, *Psal.* 40. 10. *I have not hid thy Righteousness within my Heart; I have declared thy Faithfulness, and thy Salvation; I have not concealed thy Loving-kindness and thy Truth from the great Congregation.* To the same Sense, and almost in the same Words, the Apostle *Paul* professed, in *Acts* 20. 20. *I have kept back nothing that was profitable unto you*; and *ver.* 35. *I have shewed you all Things.* Not that every faithful Minister doth in the Course of his Ministry, anatomize the whole Body of Truth, and fully expound and apply each Particular to the People: No, that is not the Meaning, but of those Doctrines which they have Opportunity of opening, they do not out of Fear, or to accommodate and secure base low Ends, withhold the Mind of God, or so corrupt and abuse his Words, as to subject Truth to their own or other Mens Lusts. *They preach not as pleasing Men, but God*, 1 Thess. 2. 4. *For if we yet please Men, we cannot be the Servants of Christ*, Gal. 1. 10. Truth must be spoken, tho' the Greatest on Earth be offended.

2. Jesus Christ was *a tender-hearted Minister*, full of Compassion to Souls. He was sent to *bind up the broken in Heart*, Isa. 61. 1. He was full of Bowels to poor Sinners. *He grieved at the Hardness of Mens Hearts*, Mark 3. 5. He mourned over *Jerusalem*, and said, O *Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how oft would I have gathered thy Children as a Hen gathers her Brood under her Wings!* *Matth.* 23. 37. His Bowels yerned when he saw the Multitude as Sheep having no Shepherd, *Matth.* 9. 37. These Bowels of Christ must be in all the under-Shepherds. *God is my Witness* (saith one of them) *how greatly I long after you all in* (or after the Pattern of) *the Bowels of Christ Jesus*, Phil. 1. 8. He that shews a hard Heart, unaffected with the Dangers and Miseries of Souls, can never shew a Commission from Christ to authorize him for Ministerial Work.

In pro instar.

3. Jesus Christ was *a laborious painful Minister*, he put a Necessity on himself to finish his Work in his Day; a Work infinitely great, in a very little time, *John* 9. 4. *I must work the Works of him that sent me, while it is Day: The Night cometh, when no Man can work.* O how much Work did Christ do in a little time on Earth! *He went about doing good*, Acts 10. 38. He was never idle. When he sits down at *Jacob's* Well, to rest himself, being weary, presently he falls into his Work, preaching the Gospel to the *Samaritaness*. In this must his Ministers resemble him; *striving according to his working, that worketh in them mightily*, Col. 1. 28, 29. An idle Minister seems to be a Contradiction *in adjecto*; as who should say, a dark Light.

4. *Jesus Christ delighted in nothing more than the Success of his Ministry*; to see the Work of the Lord prosper in his Hand, this was Meat and Drink to him. When the Seventy returned, and reported the Success of their first Embassy; *Lord, even the Devils are subject to us through thy Name!* Why, saith Christ, *I beheld Satan fall as Lightning from Heaven.* As if he had said, You tell me no News, I saw it when I sent you out at first: I know the Gospel would make Work where it came. *And in that Hour Jesus rejoyced in Spirit*, Luke 10. 17, 18, 21. And is it not so with those sent by him? Don't they value the Success of their Ministry at a high rate? It is not (saith one) the Expence, but the recoiling of our Labours back again upon us, that kills us. Ministers would not die so fast, nor be gray-headed so soon, could they but see the Travail of their Souls. *My little Children* (saith *Paul*) *of whom I travel again in Birth, πάλιν ὠδίνω, till Christ be formed in you*, Gal. 4. 19. As for those that have the Name of Shepherds only, who visit the Flock only once a Year, about shearing time; who have *the Instruments of a foolish Shepherd (forcipes & mulctra)* the Shears and Pail, *Zech.* 11. 15. woful will be their Condition at the Appearing of this great Shepherd.

5. *Jesus Christ was a Minister that lived up to his Doctrine*: His Life and Doctrine harmonized in all things. He pressed to Holiness in his Doctrine, and was the great Pattern of Holiness in his Life, *Matth.* 11. 28. *Learn of me, I am meek and lowly.* And such his Ministers desire to approve themselves, *Phil.* 4. 9. *What ye have heard, and seen in me, that do.* He preacht to their Eyes, as well as Ears. His Life was a Comment on his Doctrine. They might see Holiness acted in his Life, as well as sounded by his Lips. He preach'd the Doctrine, and lived the Application.

6. And lastly, *Jesus Christ was a Minister that minded and maintained sweet, secret Communion with God, for all his constant publick Labours.* If he had been preaching and healing all the Day, yet he would redeem time from this very Sleep to spend in secret Prayer: *Matth.* 14. 23. *When he had sent the Multitude away, he went up into a Mount apart to pray, and was there alone.* O blessed Pattern! Let the Keepers of the Vineyards remember they have a Vineyard of their own to keep, a Soul of their own that must be look'd after as well as other Mens. Those that in these things imitate Christ, are surely sent to us from him, and are worthy of double Honour: They are a choice Blessing to the People.

SER.

SERMON X.

Opens the second Branch of the Prophetical Office, consisting in the Illumination of the Understanding.

LUKE XXIV. 45.

Then opened he their Understandings, &c.

KNowledge of spiritual Things is well distinguished into Intellectual and Practical: the first hath its Seat in the Mind, that latter in the Heart. This latter, Divines call a Knowledge peculiar to Saints; and in the Apostle's Dialect it is ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, Phil. 3. 8. *The Eminency or Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ.*

And indeed there is but little Excellency in all those petty Notions which furnish the Lips with Discourse, unless by a sweet and powerful Influence, they draw the Conscience and Will to the Obedience of Christ. Light in the Mind is necessarily antecedent to the sweet and heavenly Motions and Mountains of the Affections. For the farther any Man stands from the Light of Truth, the farther he must needs be from the Heat of Comfort. Heavenly Quicknings are begotten in the Heart, while the Sun of Righteousness spreads the Beams of Truth into the Understanding, and the Soul sits under those its Wings: yet all the Light of the Gospel spreading and diffusing it self into the Mind, can never savingly open and change the Heart, without another Act of Christ upon it; and what that is, the Text informs you, *Then opened he their Understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures.*

In which Words we have both an Act of Christ upon the Disciples Understandings, and the immediate End and Scope of that Act.

1. Christ's Act upon their Understandings; he *opened their Understandings.* By Understanding is not here meant the Mind only, in Opposition to the Heart, Will and Affections, but these were opened by and with the Mind. The Mind is to the Heart, as the Door to the House: What comes into his Heart, comes in at the Understanding, which is Introductive to it; and altho' Truths sometimes go no farther than the Entry, never penetrate the Hearts, yet here this Effect is undoubtedly included.

Expositors make this Expression parallel to that in *Acts* 16. 14. *The Lord opened the Heart of* Lydia. And it is well observed, that it is one thing to open the Scriptures, that is, to expound them, and give the Meaning of them, as *Paul* is said to do in *Acts* 18. 3. and another thing to open the Mind or Heart, as it is here. There are, as a learned Man truly observes, two Doors of the Soul barr'd against Christ; the Understanding by Ignorance, and the Heart by Hardness; both these are opened by Christ. The former is opened by the preaching of the Gospel, the other by the internal Operation of the Spirit. The former belongs to the first part of Christ's Prophetical Office, opened in the former; the latter to that special internal Part of his Prophetical Office, to be opened in this Sermon.

Ipse est qui aperit cor nostrum in lege suâ. *Cogel. specil. p.* 57.

And that it was not a naked Act upon their Minds only, but that their Hearts and Minds did work in Fellowship, being both touched by this Act of Christ, is evident enough by the Effects mentioned, *ver.* 52, 53. *They returned to* Jerusalem *with great Joy, and were continually in the Temple praising and blessing God.* It is confessed, that before this time Christ had opened their Hearts by Conversion; and his opening is not to be understood simply, but *secundum quid*, in reference to those particular Truths, in which till now they were not sufficiently informed, and so their Hearts could not be duly affected with them. They were very dark in their Apprehensions of the Death and Resurrection of Christ; and consequently their Hearts were sad and dejected about that which had befallen him. *Ver.* 17. But when he opened the Scriptures and their Understandings and Heart together, then things appeared with another Face, and they return blessing and praising God.

2. Here is farther to be considered the Design and End of this Act upon their Understandings; *That they might understand the Scriptures.* Where let it be marked, Reader, That the Teachings of Christ, and his Spirit, were never designed to take Men off from the reading, studying and searching the Scriptures, as some vain Notionists have pretended, opposing those Things which are subordinated; but to make their Studies and Duties the more fruitful, beneficial and effectual to their Souls; or that they might this way receive the End or Blessing of all their Duties. God never intended to abolish his Word by giving his Spirit: And they are true Fanaticks, (as *Calvin* upon this Place calls them) that think, or pretend so. By this Means he would at once impart more Light, and make that they had before more operative and useful to them, especially in such a time of need as this was. Hence we observe,

Neque enim spiritum Deus suis confert, qui verbi sui Usum aboleat; sed potius qui fructuosum reddat; quare perperam Fanatici homines revelationum prætextu spernendæ scripturæ sibi licentiam concedunt. *Calv. in loc.*

Doct. *That the opening of the Mind and Heart, effectually to receive the Truths of God, is the peculiar Prerogative and Office of Jesus Christ.*

One of the great Miseries under which lapsed Nature labours, is spiritual Blindness. Jesus Christ brings that Eye-salve which only can cure it. *Rev.* 3. 18. *I counsel thee to buy of me Eye-salve, that thou mayest see.*

Collyrium oculis inungendum quo cæcitate demptâ homo spirituali visui restituitur. *Glas. Phil.* 2. *part. p.* 340. Ad perfectam & propriam rerum supernaturalium cognitionem, non sufficit ex parte ob-

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Thoſe to whom the Spirit hath applied it, can ſay as it is, 1 *John* 5. 20. *We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an Underſtanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jeſus Chriſt: this is the true God, and eternal Life.*

To the Spiritual Illumination of a Soul, it ſuffices not that the Object be revealed, nor yet that Man, the Subject of that Knowledge, have a due Uſe of his own Reaſon; but it is further neceſſary that the Grace and ſpecial Aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit be ſuperadded, to open and mollifie the Heart, and ſo give it a due Taſte and Reliſh of the Sweetneſs of ſpiritual Truth. By opening the Goſpel, he reveals Truth to us, and by opening the Heart in us. Now tho' this cannot be without that, yet it's much more excellent to have Truth revealed in us, than to us. This Divines call *præcipuum illud ἀποτέλεσμα, muneris Prophetici*; the principal perfective Effect of the Prophetical Office; the ſpecial Bleſſing promiſed in the New Covenant, *Heb.* 8. 10. *I will put my Laws in their Mind, and write them in their Hearts.*

For Explication of this part of Chriſt's Prophetical Office, I ſhall, as in the former, ſhew what is included in the opening of the Underſtanding, and by what Acts Chriſt performs it. And,

First, Give you a brief Account of what is included in this Act of Chriſt; take it in the following Particulars.

1. It implies the tranſcendent Nature of Spiritual Things, far exceeding the higheſt Flight and Reach of Natural Reaſon. Jeſus Chriſt muſt by his Spirit open the Underſtandings of Men, or they can never comprehend ſuch Myſteries. Some Men have ſtrong natural Parts, and by Improvement of them, are become Eagle-ey'd in the Myſteries of Nature. Who more acute than the Heathen Sages? But to them the Goſpel ſeemed Fooliſhneſs, 1 *Cor.* 1. 20. *Auſtin* confeſſes, that before his Converſion, he often felt his Spirit ſwell with Offence and Contempt of the Goſpel: and he deſpiſing it, ſaid *dedignabar eſſe parvulus*; he ſcorned to become a Child again. *Bradwardine*, that profound Doctor, learned *uſque ad ſtuporem*, even to a Wonder, profeſſes, that when he read *Paul*'s Epiſtles, he contemned them, becauſe in them he found not a Metaphyſical Wit. Surely it's poſſible a Man may with *Berengarius*, be able to diſpute *de omni ſcibili*, of every Point of Knowledge; to untravel Nature, from the Cedar in *Lebanon*, to the Hyſop on the Wall; and yet be as blind as a Bat in the Knowledge of Chriſt. * Yea, it's poſſible a Man's Underſtanding may be improved by the Goſpel, to a great Ability in the literal Knowledge of it, ſo as to be able to expound the Scriptures orthodoxly, and enlighten others by them, as it is *Mat.* 7. 22. The *Scribes* and *Phariſees* were well acquainted with the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament; yea, ſuch were their Abilities, and Eſteem among the People for them, that the Apoſtle ſtiles them the *Princes of this World*, 1 *Cor.* 2. &. And yet notwithſtanding Chriſt truly calls them *blind Guides*, Mat. 23. Till Chriſt open the Heart, we can know nothing of him, or of his Will, as we ought to know it. So experimentally true is that of the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14, 15. *The natural Man receiveth not the Things of the Spirit of God, for they are Fooliſhneſs to him; neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned. But he that is ſpiritual, judgeth all Things; yet he himſelf is judged of no Man.* The ſpiritual Man can judge and diſcern the carnal Man, but the carnal Man wants a Faculty to judge of the ſpiritual Man. As a Man that carries a dark Lanthorn, can ſee another by its Light, but the other cannot diſcern him. Such is the Difference betwixt Perſons whoſe Hearts Chriſt hath, or hath not opened.

2. Chriſt's opening the Underſtanding, implies the Inſufficiency of all external Means, how excellent ſoever they are in themſelves, to operate ſavingly upon Men, till Chriſt by his Power open the Soul, and ſo make them effectual. What excellent Preachers were *Iſaiah* and *Jeremiah* to the Jews? The former ſpake of Chriſt more like an Evangeliſt of the New, than a Prophet of the Old Teſtament; the latter was a moſt convictive and pathetical Preacher: Yet the one complains, *Iſa.* 53. 1. *Who hath believed our Report? And to whom is the Arm of the Lord revealed?* the other laments the Succeſsleſneſs of his Miniſtry, *Jer.* 6. 18. *The Bellows are burnt, the Lead is conſumed of the Fire; the Founder melteth in vain.* Under the New Teſtament, what People ever enjoyed ſuch choice Helps and Means, as thoſe that lived under the Miniſtry of Chriſt and the Apoſtles? Yet how many remained ſtill in Darkneſs? *Mat.* 11. 27. *We have piped to you, but ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, but ye have not lamented.* Neither the delightful Airs of Mercy, nor the doleful Ditties of Judgment, could affect or move their Hearts.

And indeed if you ſearch into the Reaſon of it, you will be ſatisfied, that the choiceſt Means can do nothing upon the Heart, till Chriſt by his Spirit open it, becauſe Ordinances work not as natural Cauſes do: For then the Effect would always follow, unleſs miraculouſly hindred; and it would be equally wonderful, that all that hear ſhould not be converted, as that the three Children ſhould be in the fiery Furnace ſo long, and yet not be burned: no, it works not as a natural, but as a moral Cauſe; whoſe Efficacy depends on the gracious and arbitrary Concurrence of the Spirit. *The Wind bloweth where it liſteth, John* 3. 8. The Ordinances are like the Pool of *Bethesda*; *John* 5. 4. At a certain time an Angel came down and troubled the Waters, and then they had a healing Virtue in them. So the Spirit comes down at certain times in the Word, and opens the Heart; and then it becomes the Power of God to Salvation. So that when you ſee Souls daily ſitting under excellent and choice Means, and remain dead ſtill, you may ſay as *Martha* did to Chriſt of her Brother *Lazarus*, Lord, if thou hadſt been here, they had not remained dead. If thou hadſt been in this Sermon, it had not been ſo ineffectual to them.

3. It implies the utter Impotency of Man to open his own Heart, and thereby make the Word effectual to his own Converſion and Salvation. He that at firſt ſaid, *Let there be Light*, and it was ſo, muſt

jecti revelatio, nec ex parte ſubjecti debitus uſus rationis, ſed inſuper requiritur gratia Chriſti, & ſpeciale adjutorium ſpiritus ſancti qua cor aperiatur, emolliatur, & ſupernaturalis veritatis dulcedinis habeat proportionatam ἕξιν & guſtum ſpiritualis judicii. *Reynoldus, Animal. Homo, p.* 23.

Modum inſtitutionis propheticæ duplicem ſtatuimus; immediatum, & mediatum; priore docendi modo & mentes hominum aliquo poſterioris adminiculo intus illuſtrari, & corda ipſorum ad fidei obedientiam inſtari poſſunt. Poſteriore neutrum effectum abſq; prioris ſubſidio produci poteſt. *Synopſis pur. Theol. diſp.* XXVI. *p.* 318.

* *The moſt refined and ingenious Sort of unregenerate Men have nothing in them, which is more excellent than common Grace; and common Grace leaves them in the State of Nature, under the Power of Sin, and in the very Suburbs of Hell, wholly at the Command of Satan. And if any Man think otherwiſe, let him take heed that every Thought doth not nail him faſt to that unregenerate and curſed Eſtate for evermore. Dr.* Chynell's Divin. Trin. p. 410, &c.

Fatendum eſt igitur, nos modis omnibus deficere, ut cœleſtis doctrina non aliter utilis ſit nobis vel efficax, niſi quatenus ſpiritus & mentes noſtras ad eam intelligendam & corda noſtra ad ſubeundum ejus jugum formet. *Calv. in loc.*

ſhine into our Hearts, or they will never be ſavingly enlightned. 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. A double Miſery lies upon a great part of Mankind, *viz.* *Impotency* and *Pride*. They have not only loſt the true Liberty and Freedom of their Wills, but with it have ſo far loſt their Underſtanding and Humility, as not to own it. But alas! Man is become a moſt impotent Creature by the Fall; ſo far from being able to open his own Heart, that he cannot know the Things of the Spirit, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. cannot believe, *John* 6. 44. cannot obey, *Rom.* 8. 7. cannot ſpeak one good Word, *Mat.* 12. 34. cannot think one good Thought, 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. cannot do one good Act, *John* 15. 5. O what a helpleſs ſhiftleſs Thing is a poor Sinner! Suitably to this State of Impotence, Converſion is in Scripture call'd Regeneration, *John* 3. 3. a Reſurrection from the Dead, *Eph.* 2. 5. a Creation, *Eph.* 2. 10. a Victory, 2 *Cor.* 10. 5. Which doth not only imply Man to be purely paſſive in his Converſion to God, but a Renitency, and Oppoſition made to that Power which goes forth from God to recover him.

Cathedram in cœlis habet, qui corda docet.

Laſtly, Chriſt's opening the Underſtanding imports his Divine Power, whereby he is able to ſubdue all Things to himſelf. Who but God knows the Heart? Who but a God can unlock and open it at Pleaſure? no meer Creature, no not the Angels themſelves, who for their large Underſtandings are call'd Intelligencies, can command or open the Heart. We may ſtand and knock at Mens Hearts, till our own ake; but no opening till Chriſt come. He can fit a Key to all the croſs Wards of the Will, and with ſweet Efficacy open it, and that without any Force or Violence to it. Theſe Things are carried in this part of his Office, conſiſting in opening the Heart: Which was the firſt thing propounded for Explication.

Secondly, In the next place, let us ſee by what Acts Jeſus Chriſt performs this Work of his, and what Way and Method he takes to open the Heart of Sinners.

And there are two principal Ways, by which Chriſt opens the Underſtandings and Hearts of Men, *viz.* By his Word and Spirit.

1. By his Word; to this End was *Paul* commiſſionated and ſent to preach the Goſpel, *Acts* 26. 18. *To open their Eyes, and turn them from Darkneſs to Light, and from the Power of Satan to God.* The Lord can, if he pleaſes, accompliſh this immediately; but tho' he can do it, he will not do it ordinarily without Means, becauſe he will honour his own Inſtitutions. Therefore you ſhall obſerve, that when *Lydia*'s Heart was to be opened, *there appeared unto* Paul *a Man of* Macedonia, *who prayed him, ſaying, Come over into* Macedonia, *and help us*, Acts 19. 9. God will keep up the Reputation of his Ordinances among Men: And tho' he hath not tied himſelf, yet he hath tied us to them. *Cornelius* muſt ſend for *Peter*. God can make the Earth produce Corn, as it did at firſt, without Cultivation and Labour; but he that ſhall now expect it in the Neglect of Means, may periſh for want of Bread.

2. But the Ordinances in themſelves cannot do it, as I noted before; and therefore Jeſus Chriſt hath ſent forth the Spirit, who is his *Prorex*, his Vicegerent to carry on this Work upon the Hearts of his Elect. And when the Spirit comes down upon the Souls, in the Adminiſtration of the Ordinances, he effectually opens the Heart to receive the Lord Jeſus, by the hearing of Faith. He breaks in upon the Underſtanding and Conſcience by powerful Convictions and Compunctions: So much that Word *John* 16. 8. imports, *He ſhall convince the World of Sin*; convince by clear Demonſtration, ſuch as inforces Aſſent, ſo that the Soul cannot but yield it to be ſo: And yet the Door of the Heart is not opened, till he has alſo put forth his Power upon the Will, and by a ſweet and ſecret Efficacy overcome all its Reluctations, and the Soul be made willing in the Day of his Power. When this is done, the Heart is opened. Saving Light now ſhines in it; and this Light ſet up, the Spirit in the Soul is,

ἔλεγξις Demonſtratio eſt Syllogiſmus faciens ſcire. Τὸ μὴ δύνατον ἀλλὰς ἐχεῖν ἀλλ' ὅτω ἡμεῖς λέγομεν. *Ariſt.*

1. A *new Light*, in which all things appear far otherwiſe than they did before. The Names of *Chriſt* and *Sin*, the Words *Heaven* and *Hell* have another Sound in that Man's Ears, than formerly they had. When he comes to read the ſame Scriptures, which poſſibly he had read a hundred times before, he wonders he ſhould be ſo blind as he was, to overlook ſuch great, weighty, and concerning Things as he now beholds in them; and ſaith, Where were mine Eyes, that I could never ſee theſe Things before?

2. It is a very *affecting Light*; a Light that hath Heat and powerful Influences with it, which makes deep Impreſſions on the Heart. Hence they whoſe Eyes the great Prophet opens, are ſaid to be *brought out of Darkneſs into his marvellous Light*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. The Soul is greatly affected with what it ſees. The Beams of Light are contracted and twiſted together in the Mind; and being reflected on the Hearts and Affections, ſoon cauſe them to ſmoak and burn. *Did not our Hearts burn within us, whilſt he talked with us, and opened to us the Scriptures?*

3. And it is a *growing Light*; like the Light of the Morning, which *ſhines more and more unto the perfect Day*, Prov. 4. 18. When the Spirit firſt opens the Underſtanding, he doth not give it at once a full ſight of all Truths, or a full Senſe of the Power, Sweetneſs and Goodneſs of any Truth; but the Soul in the Uſe of Means grows up to a greater Clearneſs Day by Day. It's Knowledge grows *extenſively* in Meaſure, and *intenſively* in Power and Efficacy. And thus the Lord Jeſus by his Spirit opens the Underſtanding. Now the Uſe of this follows in five practical Deductions.

Inference 1. If this be the Work and Office of Jeſus Chriſt to open the Underſtandings of Men; hence we infer *the Miſeries that lie upon thoſe Men, whoſe Underſtandings to this Day Jeſus Chriſt hath not opened*; of whom we may ſay, as it is, *Deut.* 22. 4. *To this Day Chriſt hath not given them Eyes to ſee.* Natural Blindneſs, whereby we are deprived of the Light of this World, is ſad; but ſpiritual Blindneſs is much more ſad. See how dolefully their Caſe is repreſented, 2 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4. *But if our Goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt; whoſe Eyes the God of this World hath blinded, leſt the Light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the Image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them:* He means a total and final Concealment of the ſaving Power of the Word from them. Why, what if Jeſus Chriſt withhold it, and will not be a Prophet to them, what is the lo Condition? Truly no better than loſt Men. It is hid τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις, to them that are to periſh, or be deſtroyed. This Blindneſs, like the covering of the Face, or tying the Handkerchief over the Eyes, is in order to their turning off into Hell. More particularly, becauſe the Point is of deep Concernment, let us conſider,

1. The

1. The *Judgment inflicted*, and that's ſpiritual Blindneſs. A ſore Miſery indeed! Not an univerſal Ignorance of all Truths, O no! in natural and moral Truths they are oftentimes acute, and ſharp-ſighted Men; but in that Part of Knowledge which wraps up eternal Life, *John* 17. 2. there they are utterly blinded: As it is ſaid of the *Jews* upon whom this Miſery lies, that *Blindneſs in part is happened to* Iſrael. They are learned and knowing Perſons in other Matters, but they know not Jeſus Chriſt, there is the grand and ſad Defect.

2. *The Subject* of this Judgment, the Mind, which is the Eye of the Soul. If it were but upon the Body, it would not be ſo conſiderable; this falls immediately upon the Soul, the nobleſt Part of Man, and upon the Mind, the higheſt and nobleſt Faculty of the Soul, whereby we underſtand, think, and reaſon. This in Scripture is called πνεῦμα the Spirit, the intellectual rational Faculty, which Philoſophers call τὸ ἡγεμόνικον, the leading directive Faculty; which is to the Soul what the natural Eye is to the Body. Now the Soul being the moſt active and reſtleſs thing in the World, always working, and it's leading directive Power blind, judge what a ſad and dangerous State ſuch a Soul is in; juſt like a fiery high-mettled Horſe, whoſe Eyes are out, furiouſly carrying his Rider upon Rocks, Pits, and dangerous Precipices. I remember *Chryſoſtom*, ſpeaking of the Loſs of a Soul, ſaith, that the Loſs of a Member of the Body is nothing to it; for, ſaith he, if a Man loſe an Eye, Ear, Hand or Foot, there is another to ſupply its Want: *Omnia Deus dedit duplicia*, God hath given us thoſe Members double; *animam vero unam*, but he hath not given us two Souls, that if one be loſt, yet the other may be ſaved. Surely it were better for thee, Reader, to have every Member of thy Body made the Seat and Subject of the moſt exquiſite racking Torments, than for ſpiritual Blindneſs to befal thy Soul. Moreover,

3. Conſider *the Indiſcernableneſs of this Judgment* to the Soul on whom it lies: They know it not, no more than a Man knows that he is aſleep. Indeed it's *the Spirit of a deep Sleep poured out upon them from the Lord*, *Iſa.* 29. 10. like that which befel *Adam* when God opened his Side, and took out a Rib. This renders their Miſery the more Remedileſs: *Becauſe ye ſay you ſee therefore your Sin remaineth*, John 9. 41. Once more,

4. Conſider *the Tendency and Effects of it.* What doth this tend but to eternal Ruin? For hereby we are cut off from the only Remedy. The Soul that's ſo blinded, can neither ſee Sin, nor a Saviour; but, like the *Egyptians* during the palpable Darkneſs, ſits ſtill, and moves not after its own Recovery. And as Ruin is that to which it tends, ſo in order thereto, it renders all the Ordinances and Duties under which that Soul comes, altogether uſeleſs and ineffectual to its Salvation. He comes to the Word, and ſees others melted by it, but to him it ſignifies nothing. O what a heavy Stroke of God is this! Moſt wretched is their Caſe, to whom Jeſus Chriſt will not apply this Eye-ſalve, that they may ſee. Did you but underſtand the Miſery of ſuch a State, if Chriſt ſhould ſay to you, as he did to the blind Man, *Mat.* 20. 33. *What wilt thou that I ſhould do for thee?* You would return as he did, *Lord that my Eyes may be opened.*

Inference 2. If Jeſus Chriſt be the great Prophet of the Church, *then ſurely he will take ſpecial Care both of the Church, and the Under-Shepherds appointed by him to feed them:* Elſe both the *Objects* and *Inſtruments* upon and by which he executes his Office, muſt fail, and conſequently this glorious Office be in vain. Hence he is ſaid *to walk among the Golden Candleſticks*, Rev. 1. 13. and *Rev.* 2. 1. to *hold the Stars in his right Hand.* Jeſus Chriſt inſtrumentally opens the Underſtanding of Men by the preaching of the Goſpel; and whilſt there is an elect Soul to be converted, or a Convert to be farther illuminated, Means ſhall not fail to accompliſh it by.

Inference 3. *Hence you that are yet in Darkneſs, may be directed to whom to apply your ſelves for ſaving Knowledge.* It's Chriſt that hath the ſovereign Eye-ſalve, that can cure your Blindneſs: He only hath the Key of the Houſe of *David*; he opens, and no Man ſhutteth. O that I might perſwade you to ſet your ſelves in his way, under the Ordinances, and cry to him, *Lord, that my Eyes may be opened.* Three Things are marvellouſly encouraging to you ſo to do.

So thick is that Cataract which is grown over the Eye of our Underſtanding, that none but God can couch it. Chriſt was ſent to be a Light to the Gentiles, ſo he enlightens the Medium; and to open the Eyes of the Blind, ſo he heals the Organ: He is the only Oculiſt, Firmin's Real Chriſtian. *p.* 30.

1. *God the Father hath put him into this Office, for the Cure of ſuch as you be*, Iſa. 49. 6. *I will give thee for a Light to the Gentiles, that thou may'ſt be my Salvation to the End of the Earth.* This may furniſh you with an Argument to plead for a Cure. Why do you not go to God, and ſay, Lord, didſt thou give Jeſus Chriſt a Commiſſion to open the blind Eyes? Behold me, Lord, ſuch a one am I, a poor, dark, ignorant Soul. Didſt thou give him to be thy Salvation to the Ends of the Earth? No Place nor People excluded from the Benefit of this Light; and ſhall I ſtill remain in the Shadow of Death? O that unto me he might be a ſaving Light alſo. The beſt and moſt excellent Work that ever thou wroughteſt, brings thee no Glory till it come into the Light; O let me ſee and admire it.

2. It's encouraging to think, that *Jeſus Chriſt hath actually opened the Eyes of them that were as dark and ignorant as you now are.* He hath revealed thoſe Things to Babes, that have been hid from the wiſe and prudent, *Matth.* 11. 25. *The Law of the Lord is perfect, making wiſe the ſimple*, Pſal. 19. 7. And if you look among thoſe whom Chriſt hath enlightned, you will not find *many wiſe after the Fleſh, many mighty, or noble; but the fooliſh, weak, baſe, and deſpiſed; they are they on whom he hath glorified the Riches of his Grace:* 1 Cor. 1. 26, 27.

3. And is it not yet further encouraging to you, that *hitherto he hath mercifully continued you under the Means of Light?* Why is not the Light of the Goſpel put out? Why are Times and Seaſons of Grace continued to you, if God have no further Deſign of Good to your Souls? Be not therefore diſcouraged, but wait on the Lord in the Uſe of Means, that you may yet be healed.

Queſt. If you ask, what can we do to put our ſelves into the Way of the Spirit, in order to ſuch a Cure?

Sol. I ſay, tho' you cannot do any thing that can make the Goſpel effectual, yet the Spirit of God can make thoſe Means you are capable of uſing effectual, if he pleaſe to concur with them. And it is a certain Truth, that your Inability to do what is above your Power, doth no ways excuſe you from doing what is within the Compaſs of your Power to do. I know no Act that is ſaving can be done without the Concurrence of ſpecial Grace; yea, and no Act that hath a remote Order and Tendency thereto, without a more general Concourſe of God's Aſſiſtance; but

herein he is not behind-hand with you. Let me therefore adviſe,

1. That you *diligently attend upon an able, faithful, and ſearching Miniſtry.* Neglect no Opportunity God affords you; for how know you but that may be the Time of Mercy to your Souls? If he that lay ſo many Years at the Pool of *Bethesda*, had been wanting but that Hour when the Angel came down and troubled the Waters, he had not been healed.

2. Satisfie not your ſelves with hearing, but *conſider what you hear.* Allow time to reflect upon what God hath ſpoken to you. What Power is there in Man more excellent, or more appropriate to the reaſonable Nature, than it's reflexive and ſelf-conſidering Power? There is little Hope of any Good to be done upon your Souls, till you begin to go alone, and become Thinking-Men and Women. Here all Converſion begins. I know, a ſeverer Task can hardly be impoſed upon a carnal Heart. It's a hard Thing to bring a Man and himſelf together upon this Account: But this muſt be if ever the Lord do your Souls good. *Pſal.* 4. 4. *Commune with your own Hearts.*

3. *Labour to ſee, and ingenuouſly confeſs the Inſufficiency of all your other Knowledge to do you good.* What if you had never ſo much Skill and Knowledge in other Myſteries? What if you be never ſo well acquainted with the Letter of the Scripture? What if you had Angelical Illumination? This can never ſave thy Soul. No, all thy Knowledge ſignifies nothing till the Lord ſhew thee by ſpecial Light the deplored State of thy own Heart, and a ſaving Sight of Jeſus Chriſt, thy only Remedy.

Inference 4. Since then there is a common Light, and ſpecial ſaving Light, which none but Chriſt can give, *it's therefore the Concernment of every one of you to try what your Light is. We know* (ſaith the Apoſtle) 1 Cor. 1. 8. *that we all have Knowledge.* O but what, and whence is it? Is it the Light of Life ſpringing from Jeſus Chriſt that bright and Morning-ſtar, or only ſuch as the Devils and Damned have? Theſe Lights differ,

1. In their very *Kind* and *Natures.* The one is heavenly, ſupernatural, and ſpiritual; the other earthly, and natural, the Effect of a better Conſtitution or Education, *James* 3. 15, 17.

2. They differ moſt apparently in their *Effects* and *Operations.* The Light that comes in a ſpecial way from Chriſt, is humbling, abaſing, and Soul-emptying Light: By it a Man ſees the Vileneſs of his own Nature and Practice, which begets ſelf-loathing in him; but natural Light on the contrary, puffs up, and exalts, makes the Heart ſwell with ſelf-conceitedneſs, 1 Cor. 8. 1.

The Light of Chriſt is *practical* and *operative*, ſtill urging the Soul, yea, lovingly conſtraining it to Obedience. No ſooner did it ſhine into *Paul's* Heart, but preſently he asks, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* Acts 9. 6. *It brought forth Fruit in the* Coloſſians, *from the firſt Day it came to them*, Col. 1. 6. but the other ſpends it ſelf in impractical Notions, and is detained in Unrighteouſneſs, *Rom.* 1. 18. The Light of Chriſt is powerfully *transformative* of its Subjects, changing the Man in whom it is into the ſame Image, from Glory to Glory, 2 *Cor.* 3. *ult.* But common Light leaves the Heart as dead, carnal and ſenſual, as if no Light at all were in it.

In a word, All ſaving Light *endears* Jeſus Chriſt to the Soul; and as it could not value him before it ſaw him, ſo when once he appears to the Soul in his own Light, he is appreciated and endeared unſpeakably: then none but Chriſt; all is but Dung that he may win Chriſt: None in Heaven but him, nor in Earth deſirable in compariſon of him. But no ſuch Effect flows from natural common Knowledge.

3. They differ in their *Iſſues.* Natural common Knowledge vaniſheth, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* 13. 8. It's but a *May*-flower, and dies in its Month. *Doth not their Excellency that is in them go away?* Job 4. 21. But this that ſprings from Chriſt is perfected, not deſtroyed by Death: It ſprings up into everlaſting Life. The Soul in which it is ſubjected, carries it away with it into Glory. *John* 17. 2. this Light is Life eternal. Now turn in, and compare your ſelves with theſe Rules. Let not falſe Light deceive you.

Inference 5. Laſtly, *How are they obliged to love, ſerve and honour Jeſus Chriſt, whom he hath enlightned with the ſaving Knowledge of himſelf?* O that with Hands and Hearts lifted up to Heaven, ye would adore the free Grace of Jeſus Chriſt to your Souls! How many round about you have their Eyes cloſed, and their Hearts ſhut up! How many are in Darkneſs, and there are like to remain, till they come to the Blackneſs of Darkneſs, which is reſerved for them? O what a pleaſant thing is it for your Eyes to ſee the Light of this World! But what is it for the Eye of your Mind to ſee God in Chriſt? To ſee ſuch raviſhing Sights as the Objects of Faith are? And to have ſuch a Pledge as this given you of the bleſſed Viſions of Glory? For *in this Light you ſhall ſee Light.* Bleſs God, and boaſt not. Rejoice in your Light, but be not proud of it. And beware ye ſin not againſt the beſt and higheſt Light in this World. If God were ſo incenſed againſt the Heathens for diſobeying the Light of Nature, what is it in you to ſin with Eyes clearly illuminated with the pureſt Light that ſhines in this World? You know God charges it upon *Solomon*, 1 *Kings* 11. 9. that he turned from the Way of Obedience, *after the Lord had appeared to him twice.* Jeſus Chriſt intended when he opened your Eyes, that your Eyes ſhould direct your Feet. Light is a ſpecial Help to Obedience, and Obedience a ſingular Help to encreaſe your Light.

SER-

SERMON XI.

Discovers the Nature and Necessity of the Priesthood of Christ.

HEB. IX. 23.

It was therefore necessary that the Patterns of Things in the Heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly Things themselves with better Sacrifices than these.

SAlvation (as to the actual Dispensation of it) is *revealed* by Christ as a *Prophet*, *procured* by him as a *Priest*, *applied* by him as a *King*: In vain is it revealed, if not purchased; in vain revealed and purchased, if not applied. How it is revealed, both to us and in us, by our great Prophet, hath been declared. And now from the Prophetical Office, we pass on to the Priestly Office of Jesus Christ, who as our Priest purchased our Salvation. In this Office is contained the grand Relief for a Soul distressed by the Guilt of Sin. When all other Reliefs have been essayed, 'tis the Blood of this great Sacrifice, sprinkled by Faith upon the trembling Conscience, that must cool, refresh, and sweetly compose and settle it. Now seeing so great a Weight hangs upon this Office, the Apostle industriously confirms and commends it in this Epistle, and more especially in this 9*th* Chapter; shewing how it was figured to the World by the typical Blood of the Sacrifices, but infinitely excels them all: And as in many other most weighty Respects, so principally in this, that the Blood of these Sacrifices did but purifie the Types or Patterns of the heavenly Things; but the Blood of this Sacrifice purified or consecrated the heavenly Things themselves signified by those Types.

Concludit argumenta superiora de necessitate redemptionis, a proportione Typorum, & rerum cœlestium. Si typica sacra necesse fuit purgari sanguine typico; tanto fane præstantiori sanguine mundari oportuit τὰ ἐπουράνια, quanto ipsa sunt præstantiora exemplaribus terrenis: ratio est aperta, quia qualis inter Typos & res, talis inter Typorum & rerum consecrationes debet esse proportio. *Pareus in L.*

The Words read, contain an Argument to prove the Necessity of the Offering up of Christ the great Sacrifice, drawn from the Proportion betwixt the Types, and Things typified. If the Sanctuary, Mercy-seat, and all Things pertaining to the Service of the Tabernacle, were to be consecrated by Blood; those earthly, but sacred Types, by the Blood of Bulls and Lambs, *&c.* much more the heavenly Things shadowed by them, ought to be purified or consecrated by better Blood than the Blood of Beasts. The Blood consecrating these, should as much excel the Blood that consecrated those, as the heavenly Things themselves do in their own Nature excel those earthly Shadows of them. Look what Proportion there is between the Type and Anti-Type, the like Proportion also is betwixt the Blood that consecrates them; earthly Things with common, heavenly Things with the most excellent Blood.

So then there are two Things to be especially observed here: First, The Nature of Christ's Death and Sufferings: It had the Nature, Use, and End of a Sacrifice; and of all Sacrifices the most excellent. Secondly, The Necessity of his offering up: It was necessary to correspond with all the Types and Prefigurations of it under the Law; but especially it was necessary for the expiating of Sin, the propitiating of a justly incensed God, and the opening a Way for reconciled ones to come to God in. The Point I shall give you from it, is,

Doct. *That the Sacrifice of Christ our High-Priest, is most excellent in it self, and most necessary for us.*

Sacrifices are of two Sorts, *Eucharistical*, or Thank-Offerings, in Testification of Homage, Duty and Service; and in Token of Gratitude for Mercies freely received: And *ilastical*, or expiatory, for Satisfaction to Justice, and thereby the atoning and reconciling of God. Of this last Kind was the Sacrifice offered by Jesus Christ for us: To this Office he was called by God, *Heb.* 5. 5. In it he was confirmed by the unchangeable Oath of God, *Psal.* 110. 4. for it he was singularly qualified by his Incarnation, *Heb.* 5. 6, 7. and all the Ends of it he has fully answered, *Heb.* 9. 11, 12.

Sacrificia alia sunt Typica, alia significata: & Utraque vel ἱλαστικα, seu propitiatoria; vel εὐχαριστικα, seu gratiarum actiones. *Lucas Trelcat.* p. 78.

My present Design is from this Scripture, to open the general Nature and absolute Necessity of the Priesthood of Christ; shewing what his Priesthood implies in it, and how all this was indispensably necessary in Order to our Recovery from the deplorable State of Sin and Misery.

First then, we will consider, what it supposes and implies; and then, wherein it consists. And there are six Things which it either pre-supposeth or necessarily includeth in it.

The Nature of Christ's Priesthood opened.

1. At first Sight, *it supposes Man's Revolt and Fall from God*; and a dreadful Breach made thereby betwixt God and him, else no Need of an atoning Sacrifice. *If one died for all, then were all dead*, 2 Cor. 5. 14. dead in Law, under Sentence to die, and that eternally. In all the Sacrifices from *Adam* to Christ, this was still preached to the World; that there was a fearful Breach betwixt God and Man; and that even so Justice required our Blood should be shed. And the Fire flaming on the Altar, which wholly burnt up the Sacrifice was a lively Emblem of that fiery Indignation that should devour the Adversaries. But above all, when Christ that true and great Sacrifice was offered up to God, then was the faireſt Glass that ever was in the World set before us, to see our Sin and Misery by the Fall in.

The Reader may find this Case learnedly and solidly handled by Dr. Twisse, Vindic. gratiæ, *Digress.* 8.

2. *His Priesthood supposes the unalterable Purpose of God to take Vengeance for Sin*; He will not let it pass. I will not determine what God could do in this Case by his absolute Power; and I think it is generally yielded that by his ordinate Power he could do no less than punish it in the Person of the Sinner, or of his Surety.

Nulla alia ratione palam fieri potest odium, adversus peccatum, divinum, quam pœnæ commeritæ infictione. *Brad. de Justific.* p. 61.

Those that contend for such a Forgiveness, as is an Act of Charity, like that whereby private Persons forgive one another, must at once suppose God to part with his Right, *cedendo de jure suo*, and also render the Satisfaction of Christ altogether useless as to the Procurement of Forgiveness; yea, rather an Obstacle, than a Means to it. Surely, the Nature and Truth of God oblige him to punish Sin. *He is of purer Eyes than to look upon Iniquity*, Heb. 1. 13. And beside, the Word is gone out of his Mouth, that the Sinner shall die.

3. *The Priesthood of Christ pre-supposeth the utter Impotency of Man to appease God, and recover his Favour by any Thing he could do or suffer.* Surely God would not come down to assume a Body to die, and be offered up for us, if at any cheaper Rate it could have been accomplished: There was no other Way to recover Man, and satisfie God. Those that deny the Satisfaction of Christ, and talk of his dying to confirm the Truth, and give us an Example of Meekness, Patience, and Self-Denial, affirming these to be the sole Ends of his Death, do not only therein root up the Foundation of their own Comfort, Peace and Pardon, but most boldly impeach and tax the infinite Wisdom. God could have done all this at a cheaper Rate: The Sufferings of a meer Creature are able to attain these Ends: The Death of the Martyrs did it. But who by dying can satisfie and reconcile God? What Creature can bring him an adequate and proportionable Value for Sin? yea, for all the Sin that ever was or shall be transmitted to the Natures, or committed by the Persons of all God's Elect, from *Adam* to the last that shall be found alive at the Lord's coming? Surely none but Christ can do this.

4. *Christ's Priesthood implies the Necessity of his being God-Man.* It was necessary he should be a Man in Order to his Passion, Compassion, and Derivation of his Righteousness and Holiness to Men. Had he not been Man, he had had no Sacrifice to offer, no Soul or Body to suffer in. The Godhead is impatible, immortal, and above all those Sufferings and Miseries Christ felt for us. Besides, his being Man,

Hinc igitur apparet quam necessarium fuit ut Christus mediator esset & Deus & homo; nisi enim homo, non fuisset idoneum sacrificium; & nisi Deus fuisset, sacrificium illud non fuisset sufficientis virtutis. *Amesius Med.* p. 92.

fills him with Bowels of Compassion, and tender Sense of our Miseries: This makes him a merciful and faithful High-Priest, *Heb.* 4. 15. and not only fits him to pity, but to sanctifie us also; for *he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are both of one*, Heb. 2. 11, 14, 17. And as necessary it was our High-Priest should be God, since the Value and Efficacy of his Sacrifice results from thence.

5. *The Priesthood of Christ implies the Extremity of his Sufferings.* In Sacrifices, you know, there was a Destruction, a Kind of Annihilation of the Creature to the Glory of God. The shedding of the Creature's Blood, and burning it's Flesh with Fire, was but an Umbrage, or faint Resemblance of what Christ endured when he made his Soul an Offering for Sin.

6. And lastly, *It implies the gracious Design of God to reconcile us at a dear Rate to himself, in that he called and confirmed Christ in his Priesthood by an Oath, and thereby laid out a Sacrifice of infinite Value for the World.* Sins for which no Sacrifice is allowed, are desperate Sins; and the Case of such Sinners is helpless: But if God allow, yea, and provide a Sacrifice himself, how plainly doth it speak his Intentions of Peace and Mercy? These Things are manifestly pre-supposed or implied in Christ's Priesthood.

This Priesthood of Christ is that Function wherein he comes before God in our Name and Place, to fulfil the Law, and offer up himself to him a Sacrifice of Reconciliation for our Sins; and by his Intercession to continue and apply the Purchase of his Blood to them for whom he shed it: All this is contained in that famous Scripture, *Heb.* 10. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. Or more briefly, the Priesthood of Christ is that whereby he expiated the Sins of Men, and obtained the Favour of God for them, *Col.* 1. 20, 22. *Rom.* 5. 10. But because I shall insist more largely upon the several Parts and Fruits of this Office, it shall here suffice to speak thus much as to it's general Nature; which was the first Thing proposed for Explication.

Sacerdotium Christi est functio quâ coram Deo apparet, ut legem ab ipso acceptam nostro nomine observet; seipsum victimam reconciliationis pro nostris peccatis ipsi offerat; suaq; apud Deum intercessione opem ipsius perennem, ac donationem spiritus sancti nobis impetret, atq; efficaciter applicet. *Synopsis purioris Theol.* p. 318.

Secondly, The Necessity of Christ's Priesthood comes next to be opened: Touching which I affirm, according to the Scriptures, it was necessary in Order to our Salvation, that such a Priest should by such a Sacrifice appear before God for us.

The Truth of this Assertion will be cleared by these two Principles, which are evident in the Scripture, *viz.* That God stood upon full Satisfaction, and would not remit one Sin without it: And that fallen Man is totally uncapable of tendring him any such Satisfaction; therefore Christ, who only can, must do it, or we perish.

1. *God stood upon full Satisfaction, and would not remit one Sin without it.* This will be cleared *from the Nature of Sin*; and *from the Veracity and Wisdom of God.*

(1.) From the *Nature of Sin*, which deserves that the Sinner should suffer for it. Penal Evil, in a Course of Justice, follows moral Evil. Sin and Sorrow ought to go together; betwixt these is a necessary Connexion, *Rom.* 6. 23. *The Wages of Sin is Death.*

(2.) The *Veracity of God requires it.* The Word is gone out of his Mouth; *Gen.* 2. 17. *In the Day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* From that Time he was instantly and certainly obnoxious and liable to the Death of Soul and Body. The Law pronounces him cursed, *that continues not in all Things that are written therein to do them*, Gal. 3. 9. Now tho' Man's Threatnings are often vain and insignificant Things, yet God's shall surely take Place; *Not one Tittle of the Law shall fail till all be fulfilled*, Mat. 5. 18. God will be true in his Threatnings, tho' Thousands and Millions perish.

Certo ac statim morieris. *Dr.* Reynolds *on* Psal. 110. *p.* 409.

(3.) The Wisdom of God, by which he governs the rational World, admits not of a Dispensation or Relaxation of the Threatnings without Satisfaction: For as good no King, as no Laws for Government; as good no Law as no Penalty;

ty; and as good no Penalty, as no Execution. To this Purpose one well observes; "It's altogether un-"decent, especially to the Wisdom and Righteous-"ness of God, that that which provoketh the Execu-"tion, should procure the Abrogation of his Law; "that that should supplant and undermine the Law, "for the alone preventing whereof the Law was "before established". How could it be expected, that Men should fear and tremble before God, when they should find themselves more scared than hurt by his Threats against Sin? So then God stood upon Satisfaction, and would admit no Treaty of Peace on any other Ground.

Object. Let none here object, That Reconciliation upon this only Score of Satisfaction, is derogatory to the Riches of Grace; or that we allow not God what we do Men, *viz.* to forgive an Injury freely, without Satisfaction.

Sol. Free Forgiveness to us, and full Satisfaction made to God by Jesus Christ for us, are not ἀσύστατα, Things inconsistent with each other, as in its proper Place shall be more fully cleared to you. And for denying that to God which we allow to Men; you must know that Man and Man stand on even Ground: Man is not capable of being wronged and injured by Man, as God is by Man, there is no Compare between the Nature of the Offences.

To conclude, Man only can freely forgive Man in a private Capacity, so far as Wrong concerns himself; but ought not to do so in a publick Capacity, as he is a Judge, and bound to execute Justice impartially. God is our Law-giver and Judge; he will not dispence with Violations of the Law, but strictly stands on compleat Satisfaction.

2. Man can tender to God no Satisfaction of his own for the Wrong done by his Sin. He finds no Way to compensate and make God Amends, either by doing, or by suffering his Will.

(1.) Not by doing: This Way is shut up to all the World: None can satisfie God, or reconcile himself to him this Way; for it's evident our best Works are sinful; *All our Righteousness is as filthy Rags*, Isa. 64. 6. And it's strange any should imagine, that one Sin should make Satisfaction for another. If it be said, Not what is sinful in our Duties, but what is spiritual, pure and good, may ingratiate us with God; it is at hand to reply, That what is good in any of our Duties, is a Debt we owe to God; yea, we owe him perfect Obedience; and it is not imaginable how we should pay one Debt by another; quit a former by contracting a new Engagement: If we do any Thing that is good, we are beholden to Grace for it, *John* 15. 5. 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. In a Word, those that have had as much to plead on that Score as any now living, have quitted, and utterly given up all Hopes of appeasing and satisfying the Justice of God that Way. It's like holy *Job* feared God, and eschewed Evil as much as any of you, yet he saith, *Job* 19. 20, 21. *If I justifie my self, mine own Mouth shall condemn me; if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse. Tho' I were perfect, yet would I not know my Soul; I would despise my Life.* It may be *David* was a Man as much after the Heart of God as you; yet he said, *Psal.* 143. 2. *Enter not into Judgment with thy Servant; for in thy Sight shall no Man living be justified.* It's like *Paul* lived as holy, heavenly, and fruitful a Life as the best of you, and far, far beyond you; yet he saith, 1 *Cor.* 4. 4. *I know* (or am conscious to my self) *of nothing; yet am I not thereby justified*: His Sincerity might *comfort* him, but could not *justifie* him. And what Need I say more? The Lord hath shut up this Way to all the World; and the Scriptures speak it roundly and plainly, *Rom.* 3. 20. *Therefore by the Deeds of the Law, there shall no Flesh be justified in his Sight.* Compare *Gal.* 3. 21. *Rom.* 8. 3.

(2.) And as Man can never reconcile himself to God by *doing*, so neither by *suffering*. That is equally impossible; for no Suffering can satisfie God, but such as is proportionable to the Offence we suffer for. And if so, an infinite Suffering must be born: I say infinite, for so Sin is; an infinite Evil, objectively considered, as it wrongs an infinite God. Now Sufferings may be said to be infinite, either in Respect of their *Weight*, exceeding all Bounds and Limits; the letting out the Wrath and Fury of an infinite God: Or in Respect of *Duration*, being endless and everlasting. In the first Sense, no Creature can bear an infinite Wrath, it would swallow us up. In the second, it may be born as the damned do; but then, ever to be suffering, is never to have satisfied.

So that no Man can be his own Priest, to reconcile him to God by what he can do or suffer. And therefore, one that is able, by doing and suffering, to reconcile him, must undertake it, or we perish. Thus you see plainly and briefly the general Nature and Necessity of Christ's Priesthood.

From both these, several useful Corollaries, or practical Deductions, offer themselves.

Corollary 1. This shews in the first Place, *the incomparable Excellency of the reformed Christian Religion above all other Religions, known to, or professed in the World.* What other Religions seek, the Christian Religion only finds, even a solid Foundation for true Peace, and Settlement of Conscience. While the *Jews* seek it in vain in the Law; the *Mahometan* in his external and ridiculous Observations; the *Papist* in his own Merits; the *Believer* only finds it in the Blood of this great Sacrifice: This, and nothing less than this, can pacifie a distressed Conscience, labouring under the Weight of its own Guilt. Conscience demands no less to satisfie it, than God demands to satisfie him. The grand Inquest of Conscience is, Is God satisfied? If he be satisfied, I am satisfied. Woful is the State of that Man, that feels the Worm of Conscience nibbling on the most tender Part of the Soul, and hath no Relief against it; that feels the intolerable scalding Wrath of God burning within, and hath nothing to cool it. Hear me, you that slight Troubles of Conscience, that call them Fancies and melancholy Whimsies; if you ever had had but one sick Night for Sin, if you had ever felt that Shame, Fear, Horror, and Despair, which are the dismal Effects of an accusing and condemning Conscience, you would account it an unspeakable Mercy to hear of a Way for the Discharge of a poor Sinner from the Guilt: You would kiss the Feet of that Messenger that could bring you Tidings of Peace: You would call him blessed, that should direct you to an effectual Remedy. Now, whoever thou art, that pinest away in thine Iniquities, that droopest from Day to Day under the present Wounds, and dismal Presages of Conscience, know that thy Soul and Peace can never meet, till thou art perswaded to come to this Blood of Sprinkling.

The Blood of this Sacrifice speaks better Things than the Blood of *Abel*. The Blood of this Sacrifice is the Blood of God, *Acts* 20. 28. invaluable precious Blood, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18. One Drop of it infinitely excels the Blood of all other Creatures, *Heb.* 10. 4, 5, 6. Such is the Blood that must do thee good. Lord, I must have such Blood (saith Conscience) as is capable of giving thee full Satisfaction, or it can give me no Peace. The Blood of all the Cattel upon a thousand Hills cannot do this. What is the Blood of

Beasts

Beasts to God? The Blood of all the Men in the World can do nothing in this Case. What is our polluted Blood worth? No, no, it's the Blood of God that must satisfie both thee and me.

Yea, Christ's Blood is not only the Blood of God, but it's Blood shed in thy stead, and in thy Place and Room, Gal. 3. 12. *He was made a Curse for us.* And so it becomes Sin-pardoning Blood, *Heb.* 9. 22. *Eph.* 1. 7. *Col.* 1. 14. *Rom.* 3. 26. and consequently, Conscience-pacifying, and Soul-quieting-Blood, *Col.* 1. 20. *Eph.* 2. 13, 14. *Rom.* 3. 26. O bless God, that ever the News of this Blood came to thine Ears. With Hands and Eyes lifted up to Heaven, admire that Grace that cast thy Lot in a Place where this joyful Sound rings in the Ears of poor Sinners. What had thy Case been, if thy Mother had brought thee forth in the Deserts of *Arabia*, or in the Wastes of *America!* Or that if thou hadst been nursed up by a Popish Father, who could have told thee no other Remedy when in Distress for Sin, but to go such a Pilgrimage, to whip and lash thy self, to satisfy an angry God! Surely the pure Light of the Gospel shining upon this Generation, is a Mercy never to be duly valued, never to be enough prized.

Corollary 2. *Hence also be informed of the Necessity of Faith, in order to a State and Sense of Peace with God:* For to what Purpose is the Blood of Christ our Sacrifice shed, unless it be actually and personally applied, and appropriated by Faith? You know when the Sacrifices under the Law were brought to be slain, he that brought it, was to put his Hand upon the Head of his Sacrifice, and so it was accepted for him, to make an Atonement, *Lev.* 1. 4. not only to signifie, that now it was no more his, but God's, the Propriety being transferred by a kind of Manumission; nor yet that he voluntarily gave it to the Lord as his own free Act; but principally it noted the putting off his Sins, and the Penalty due to him for them, upon the Head of the Sacrifice: And so it implied in it an Execration, as if he had said, Upon thy Head be the Evil. So the Learned observe, the *Antient Egyptians* were wont expresly to imprecate, when they sacrificed; *If any Evil be coming upon us, or upon* Egypt, *let it turn and rest upon this Head*, laying their Hand at these Words on the Sacrifice's Head. And upon that Ground, saith the *Historian*, none of them would eat of the Head of any living Creature. You must also lay the Hand of Faith upon Christ your Sacrifice, not to imprecate, but apply and appropriate him to your own Souls, he having been made a Curse for you.

Ponetque manum, significans se & scelera sua, pœnamque iis debitam, conjicere in caput victimæ. Ut Græcis εἰς τὴν ἀυτῆ κεφαλὴν, genus est imprecationis. *Drusius & Menochius.*

Herod. 2. 39.

To this the whole Gospel tends, even to perswade Sinners to apply Christ, and his Blood to their own Souls. To this he invited us, *Mat.* 11. 28. *Come unto me ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you Rest.* For this End our Sacrifice was lifted up upon the Altar. *John* 3. 14, 15. *As* Moses *lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life.* The Effects of the Law, not only upon the Conscience, filling it with Torments, but upon the whole Person, bringing Death upon it, are here shadowed out by the Stingings of fiery Serpents; and Christ by the brazen Serpent which *Moses* exalted for the *Israelites*, that were stung, to look unto. And as by looking to it, they were healed; so by believing, or looking to Christ in Faith, our Souls are healed. Those that loooked not to the Brazen Serpent, died infallibly; so must all that look not to Jesus, our Sacrifice, by Faith. It's true, the Death of Christ is the meritorious Cause of Remission, but Faith is the instrumental applying Cause: and as Christ's Blood is necessary in its Place, so is our Faith in its Place also. For to the actual Remission of Sin, and Peace of Conscience, there must be a Cooperation of all the Causes of Remission and Peace. As there is the Grace and Love of God for an efficient and impulsive Cause, and the Death of Christ our Sacrifice, the meritorious Cause; so of Necessity there must be Faith, the instrumental Cause. And these Concauses do all sweetly meet in their Influences, and Activities, in our Remission, and Tranquillity of Conscience; and are all (*suo genere*) in their kind and place absolutely necessary to the procuring and applying of it.

It is a Rule, that where there is a total and sufficient Cause in Act, there the Effect must needs follow. But if they be partial Causes, then the Causes which succeed in order, do not produce their compleat Effect, until the last Cause be in Act.

What's the near that the Blood of Christ is shed, if I have no Interest in it, no saving Influences from it? O be convinced, this is the End, the Business of Life. Faith is the *Phenix*-Grace, as Christ is the *Phenix*-Mercy. He is *the Gift*, John 4. 10. And this is *the Work of God*, John 6. 29. The Death of Christ, the Offers and Tenders of Christ, never saved one Soul in themselves, without believing Application. But wo is me, how do I see Sinners, either not at all toucht with the Sense of Sin, and so being whole need not the Physician; or if any be stung and wounded with Guilt, how do they lick themselves whole with their own Duties and Reformations! as Physicians say of Wounds, let them but be kept clean, and Nature will find Balsam of its own to heal them. If it be so in spiritual Wounds, what need Christ to have left the Father's Bosom, and come down to die in the Quality and Nature of a Sacrifice for us? O if Men can but have Health, Pleasure, Riches, Honours, and any way make a Shift to still a brawling Conscience, that it may not check or interrupt them in these Enjoyments, Christ may go where he will for them.

And I am assured, till God shew you the Face of Sin in the Glass of the Law, make the Scorpions and fiery Serpents, that lurk in the Law, and in your own Consciences, to come hissing about you, and smiting you with their deadly Stings; till you have had some sick Nights, and sorrowful Days for Sin, you will never go up and down seeking an Interest in the Blood of his Sacrifice with Tears.

But, Reader, if ever this be thy Condition, then wilt thou know the Worth of a Christ; then wilt thou have a Value for the Blood of Sprinkling. As I remember it's storied of our *Crook-back Richard*, when he was put to a Rout in a Field-Battel, and flying on Foot from his pursuing Enemies; he cried out, *O now* (saith he) *a Kingdom for a Horse.* So wilt thou cry, a Kingdom for a Christ; ten thousand Worlds now if I had them, for the Blood of sprinkling.

Corollary 3. Is Christ your High-priest, and is his Priesthood so indispensably necessary to your Salvation? *Then freely acknowledge your utter Impotency to reconcile your selves to God, by any Thing you can do, or suffer*; and let Christ have the whole Glory of your Recovery ascribed to him. It's highly reasonable that he that laid down the whole *Price*, should have the whole *Praise*. If any Man think, or say, he could have made an Atonement for himself; he doth therein

in caſt no light Reproach upon that profound Wiſdom which laid the Deſign of our Redemption in the Death of Chriſt. But of this I have ſpoken elſewhere. And therefore;

Corollary 4. In the laſt Place, I rather chuſe to perſwade you to *ſee your Neceſſity of this Prieſt, and his moſt excellent Sacrifice; and accordingly to make uſe of it.* The beſt of you have polluted Natures, poiſoned in the Womb with Sin; thoſe Natures have need of this Sacrifice, they muſt have the Benefit of this Blood to pardon and cleanſe them, or be eternally damned. Hear me ye that never ſpent a Tear for the Sin of Nature; if the Blood of Chriſt be not ſprinkled upon your Natures, it had been better for you, that you had been the Generation of Beaſts, the Offspring of Dragons or Toads. They have a contemptible, but not a vitiated ſinful Nature as you have.

Your *Actual* Sins have need of this Prieſt, and his Sacrifice to procure Remiſſion for them. If he take them not away by the Blood of his Croſs, they can never be taken away, they will lie down with you in the Duſt; they will riſe with you, and follow you to the Judgment-ſeat, crying, We are thy Works, and we will follow thee. All thy Repentance and Tears, ſhould'ſt thou weep as many as there be Drops in the Ocean, can never take away Sin. Thy Duties, even the beſt of them, need this Sacrifice. It is in the Vertue thereof that they are accepted of God. And were it not God had Reſpect to Chriſt's Offering, he would not regard, or look towards thee, or any of thy Duties. Thou couldeſt no more come near to God, than thou could'ſt approach a devouring Fire, or dwell with everlaſting Burnings.

Well then, ſay, I need ſuch a Prieſt every Way. Love him in all his Offices. See the Goodneſs of God in providing ſuch a Sacrifice for thee. Meat, Drink and Air, are not more neceſſary to maintain thy natural Life, than the Death of Chriſt is to give and maintain thy ſpiritual Life.

O then, let thy Soul grow big whilſt meditating of the Uſefulneſs and Excellency of Chriſt, which is thus diſplayed and unfolded in every Branch of the Goſpel. And with a deep Senſe upon thy Heart, let thy Lips ſay, *Bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt.*

SERMON XII.

Opens the Excellency of our High-Prieſt's Oblation, being the firſt Act or Part of his Prieſtly Office.

HEB. X. 14.

For by one Offering, he hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified.

AFter this more general View and Conſideration of the Prieſthood of Chriſt, Method requires that we come to a nearer and more particular Conſideration of the Parts thereof; which are his *Oblation* and *Interceſſion*, anſwerable to the double Office of the High-Prieſt, offering the Blood of the Sacrifices without the Holy Place, which typed out Chriſt's Oblation; and then once a Year bringing the Blood before the Lord into the moſt holy place, preſenting it before God, and with it ſprinkling the Mercy-ſeat, wherein the Interceſſion of Chriſt (the other Part or Act of his Prieſthood) was in a lively manner typified to us.

My preſent Buſineſs is to open and apply the *Oblation* of Chriſt; the Efficacy and Excellency whereof is excellently illuſtrated, by a Compariſon with all other Oblations, in the precedent Context, and with a ſingular Encomium commended to us in theſe Words, from the *Singularity* of it. It is but one Offering, one not only *ſpecifically*, but one *numerically* conſidered; but once offered, and never more to be repeated: For *Chriſt dieth no more*, Rom. 6. 9. He alſo commends it from the *Efficacy* of it; by it he hath perfected, *i. e.* not only purchaſed a Poſſibility of Salvation, but all that we need to our full Perfection. It brings in a moſt intire, compleat and perfect Righteouſneſs: All that remains to make us perfectly happy, is but the full Application of the Benefits procured by this Oblation for us. Moreover, it's here commended from the *Extenſiveneſs* of it; not being reſtrained to a few, but applicable to all the Saints, in all the Ages and Places of the World: For this indefinite, *them that are ſanctified*, is equivalent to an univerſal, and is as much as if he had ſaid, To all and every Saint, from the Beginning to the End of the World. Laſtly, He commends it from its *Perpetuity*, *It perfects for ever*; that is, it is of everlaſting Efficacy: It ſhall abide as freſh, vigorous and powerful to the End of the World, as it was the firſt Moment it was offered up. All runs into this ſweet Truth

Doct. *That the Oblation made unto God by Jeſus Chriſt, is of unſpeakable Value, and everlaſting Efficacy, to perfect all them that are, or ſhall be ſanctified, to the End of the World.*

Out of this Fountain flow all the excellent Bleſſings that Believers either have, or hope for. Had it not been for this, there had been no ſuch Things *in rerum natura*, as Juſtification, Adoption, Salvation, *&c.* Peace with God, and Hopes of Glory, Pardon of Sin, and Divine Acceptation: Theſe, and all other our beſt Mercies, had been but ſo many *entia rationis*, meer Conceits. A Man (as one ſaith) might have haply imagined ſuch Things as theſe, as he may Golden Mountains, and Rivers of liquid Gold, and Rocks of Diamonds: But theſe Things could never have had any real Exiſtence *extra mentem*, had not Chriſt offered up himſelf a Sacrifice to God for us. It is *the Blood of Chriſt, who through the eternal Spirit offered*

Oblatio Chriſti unica eſt, non tantum ſpecie, ſed etiam numero, quia nulla poteſt eſſe Oblatio Chriſti, niſi intercedente morte ipſius; eoque falſa eſt Sacrificii cruenti & incruenti diſtinctio. *Trelcat. Inſtit. p.* 79.

ed up himself without Spot to God, that purges the Conscience from dead Works, Heb. 9. 14. that is, from the Sentence of Condemnation and Death; as it is reflected by Conscience, for our Works sake.

His appearing before God, as our Priest, with such an Offering for us, is that which removes our Guilt and Fear together; *He appeared to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself*, Heb. 9. 29. Now for as much as the Point before us is of so great Weight in it self, and so fundamental to our Safety and Comfort, I shall endeavour to give you as distinct and clear Account of it, as can consist with that Brevity which I must necessarily use. And therefore, Reader, apply thy Mind attentively to the Consideration of this excellent *Priest* that appears before God, and the *Sacrifices* he offers, with the Properties and Adjuncts thereof; the *Person* before whom he brings, and to whom he offers it; the *Persons for whom* he offers, and *the End for which* this Oblation is made.

First, The *Priest* that appears before God with an Oblation for us, is Jesus Christ, God-man: The Dignity of whose Person dignified, and derived an inestimable Worth to the Offering he made. There are many Priests before him, but none like unto him, either for the Purity of his Person, or the Perpetuity of his Priesthood: They were sinful Men, and offered for their own Sins, as well as the Sins of the People, *Heb.* 5. 3. But *He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from Sinners*, Heb. 7. 2. He could stand before God, even in the Eye of his Justice, as a Lamb without Spot. Tho' he made his Soul an Offering for Sin, yet *he had done no Iniquity, nor was any Guile found in his Mouth*, Isa. 53. 9. And indeed his Offering had done us no good, if the least Taint of Sin had been found on him. They were mortal Men, that *continued not by reason of Death*, Heb. 7. 23. But Christ is a Priest for ever, *Psal.* 110. 4.

Sic Oblationes in vase mundo offere bantur, Isa. 66. 20. *Ravan.*

Secondly, The *Oblation* or Offering he made was not the Blood of Beasts, but his own Blood, *Heb.* 9. 12. And herein he transcended all other Priests, that he had something of his own to offer; he had a Body given him to be at his own Disposse, to this Use and Purpose, *Heb.* 10. 10. *He offered his Body*: Yea, not only his Body, but *his Soul was made an Offering for Sin*, Isa. 53. 10. We had made a Forfeiture of our Souls and Bodies by Sin, and it was necessary the Sacrifice of Christ should be answerable to the Debt we owed. And when Christ came to offer his Sacrifice, he stood not only in the Capacity of a Priest, but also in that of a Surety: and so his Soul stood in the stead of ours, and his Body in the stead of our Bodies. Now the Excellency of this Oblation will appear in the following Adjuncts and Properties of it: This Oblation being for the Matter of it, the Soul and Body of Jesus Christ, is therefore,

Bilson *and* Fevardentius *affirm that Christ only offered up his Body, not his Soul, upon this weak Ground, that if he had offered both, he had not offered one, but two Sacrifices. Against whom the Learned* Parker, *in his excellent Book* de descensu, *urgeth my Text, and thus frees it from that corrupt Glose.* Pulchrè, quasi holocaustum non unum fuit Sacrificium, quia ex pluribus partibus constabat! — Sacrificium Christi unicum dicitur, non in oppositione corporis ad animam, sed in oppositione corporis & animæ semel oblati, ad multa illa Sacrificia quæ non semel, sed multoties, in lege Mosis offerebantur. *Parker de descensu, lib.* III. *p.* 146.

1. *Invaluably precious.* So the Apostle stiles it, 1 *Pet.* 1. 19. *Ye were redeemed* τιμίῳ αἵματι, *with the precious Blood of the Son of God*: And such it behoved him to offer. For it being offered as an expiatory Sacrifice, it ought to be equivalent in its own intrinsick Value to all the Souls and Bodies that were to be redemed by it. And so it was, and more also: for there was a Redundancy of Value, an Overplus of Merit, which went to make a Purchase for the Redeemed; as will be opened in its Place. So that as one rich Diamond is more worth than a thousand Pebbles; one Piece of Gold, than many Counters; so the Soul and Body of one Christ is much more excellent than all the Souls and Bodies in the World.

And yet I dare not affirm, as some do, that by reason of the infinite Preciousness of Christ's Blood, one Drop thereof had been sufficient to have redeemed the whole World: for if one Drop had been enough, why was all the rest, even to the last Drop shed? Was God cruel, to exact more from him than was needful and sufficient? Besides, we must remember, that the Passions of Christ, which were inflicted on him as the Curse of the Law, these only are the Passions which are sufficient for our Redemption from the Curse of the Law; now it was not a Drop of Blood, but Death which was contained in the Curse: This therefore was necessary to be inflicted. But surely as none but God can estimate the Weight and Evil of Sin, so none but he can comprehend the Worth and Preciousness of the Blood of Christ, shed to expiate it. And being so infinitely precious a Thing which was offered up to God, it must,

Id solùm rationem pœnæ habere potest, quod infligitur à judice legi convenienter. Non convenit autem legi, quæ mortem pronunciat, ut ob ejus violationem id infligatur tantum, ex quo guttula sanguinis manet. *Joh. Camer. p.* 364.

2. Needs be a most compleat and all-sufficient Oblation, fully to expiate the Sins of all for whom it *was* offered, in all Ages of the World. The Vertue of this Sacrifice reacheth backward as far as *Adam*, and reacheth forward to the last Person of the Elect springing from him. That the Efficacy of it thus reached back to *Adam* is plain; for on the Account thereof he is stiled, *The Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World*, Rev. 13. 8.

And to the same Sense a Judicious Expositor understands those Words of Christ, *John* 8. 58. *Before* Abraham *was, I am.* And look as the Sun at Mid-day extends his Light and Influence, not only forward towards the *West*, but also backward towards the *East*, where he arose: so did this most efficacious Sacrifice reach all the Elect in the Vertue of it, who died before Christ came in the Flesh. It is therefore but a vain Cavil that some make against the Satisfaction of Christ to render it needless, when they say, many were saved without it, even as many as were saved before the Death of Christ. For they say, the Effect cannot be before the Cause, which is true of *Physical*, but not of *Moral* Causes; and such was Christ's Satisfaction. As for Example, a Captive is freed out of Prison from the Time that his Surety undertakes for him, and promises his Ransom; here the Captive is actually delivered, tho' the Ransom that delivered him be not yet actually paid. So it was in this Case; Christ had engaged to the Father to satisfie for them, and upon that Security they were delivered.

Virtus & gratia Christi, quatenus mundi redemptor est, omnium ætatum communis fuit. *Calv. in loc.*

Causa physica præcedit effectum suum tempore, non item causa moralis. *Cameronis* opera, *p.* 361.

And the Vertue of this Oblation not only reaches those Believers that lived

Nunc servator non est ita ut olim non fuerit; at-

and

and died before Christ's Day, but it extends it self forward to the End of the World. Hence *Heb.* 13. 8. Christ is said to be *the same, Yesterday, to Day, and for ever*; that is, he is not so a Saviour to us that now live, as that he was not their Saviour also, that believed in him before us from the Beginning: Nor yet so a Saviour both to them and us, as that he shall not be the same to all that shall believe on him to the World's End.

que ut non sit servator in æternum. *Camer. myrothec. p.* 337.

To the same Sense are those Words, *Heb.* 11. 40. rightly paraphras'd, *God having provided some better Thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect:* q. d. God hath appointed the Accomplishment of the Promise of sending the Messiah, to be in the last Times: That they (*viz.* that lived before Christ) should not be perfected; that is, justified and saved, by any thing done in their Time, but by looking to our Time, and Christ's Satisfaction made therein; whereby they and we are perfected together. No Tract of Time can wear out the Vertue of this eternal Sacrifice. It is as fresh, vigorous, and potent now, as the first Hour it was offer'd. And tho' he *actually* offer it no more, yet he *virtually* continues it by his Intercession now in Heaven: for there he is still a Priest. And therefore about sixty Years after his Ascension, when he gave the Revelation to *John*, he appears to him in his Priestly Garments, Rev. 1. 13. *Cloathed in a Garment down to the Feet, and girt about the Paps with a Golden Girdle:* in allusion to the Priestly Ephod, and curious Girdle.

Dixon in loc.

And as the Vertue of this Oblation reaches backward and forward, to all Ages, and to all Believers, so to all the Sins of all Believers, which are fully purged and expiated by it: This no other Oblation could do. The legal Sacrifices were no real Expiations, but rather Remembrances of Sins; *Heb.* 9. 9, 12. *Heb.* 10. 3. And all the Vertue they had, consisted in their Typical Relation to this Sacrifice; *Gal.* 3. 23. *Heb.* 9. 13. And separate from it were altogether weak, unprofitable, and insignificant Things, *Heb.* 7. 18. But this Blood cleanseth from all Sins, 1 *John* 1. 7. all Sin, originating, or originated, or actual, flowing from them both. It expiates all fully, without Exception, and finally, without Revocation. So that by his being made Sin for us, we are made not only righteous, but *the Righteousness of God in him*, 2 Cor. 5. 21.

3. And *Lastly*, to name no more; being so precious in it self, and so efficacious to expiate Sin, it must needs be a most grateful Oblation to the Lord, highly pleasing and delightful in his Eyes. And so indeed it is said, *Eph.* 5. 2. *He gave himself for us, an Offering, and a Sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling Savour.* Not that God took any Delight or Content in the bitter Sufferings of Christ simply and in themselves considered; but with relation to the End for which he was offered, even our Redemption and Salvation.

Odoratus Deo tribuitur, quo itidem Dei εὐδοκία, complacentia, & gratia denotatur. Sicut odore bono homo recreatur, eoque delectatur — pertinet huc appellatio רוח נחוחה odor quietis, seu suavitatis, quæ crebro Sacrificiis Deo oblatis tribuitur, *Exod.* 19. 2, 25. *Levit.* 1. 9. *S. Glass. Philolog. Sacra.*

Hence arose the Delight and Pleasure God had in it; this made him take Pleasure in bruising him, *Isa.* 53. 10. God smelt a Savour of rest in this Sacrifice. The meaning is, that as Men are offended with a Stench, and their Stomachs rise at it, and are on the contrary delighted with sweet Odors and Fragrancies; so the blessed God, speaking after the manner of Men, is offended, and filled with Loathing and Abhorrence by our Sins, but infinitely pleased and delighted in the Offering of Christ for them, which came up as an Odor of a sweet-smelling Savour to him, whereof the costly Perfumes under the Law, were Types and Shadows. This was the Oblation.

Thirdly, This Oblation he brings before God, and to him he offers it up: So speaks the Apostle, *Heb.* 9. 14. *Through the eternal Spirit he offered himself without Spot to God.* As Christ sustained the Capacity of a Surety, so God of a Creditor, who expected Satisfaction from him: That is, he required from him, as our Surety, the Penalty due to us for our Sin. And so Christ had to do immediately with God, yea, with a God infinitely wronged, and incensed by Sin against us. To this incensed Majesty, Christ our Priest approacheth, as to a devouring Fire with his Sacrifice.

Fourthly, The Persons for whom, and in whose stead he offered himself to God, was the whole Number of God's Elect, which were given him of the Father, neither more nor less: So speak the Scriptures; He laid down his Life for the *Sheep*, John 10. 15. for the *Church*, Acts. 20. 28. for the *Children of God*, John 11. 50, 51, 52. It is confessed there is Sufficiency of Vertue in this Sacrifice to redeem the whole World, and on that Account some Divines affirm he is called *the Saviour of the World*, John 4. 42. *& alibi*. We acknowledge also, that he purchased the Service of others besides the Elect, to be useful to them, as they many ways are. In which Sense others take those Scriptures that speak so universally of the Extent of his Death.

Docent Theologi Christum pro omnibus sufficienter, pro electis duntaxat efficaciter mortuum esse. *Camero ubi suprà*, p. 535.

Mr. Strong.

We also acknowledge that the Elect being scattered in all Parts, and among all Ranks of Men in the World, and unknown to those that are to tender Jesus Christ to Men by the preaching of the Gospel; the stile of the Gospel (as it was necessary) is by such indefinite Expressions suited to the general Tenders they are to make of him: But that the Efficacy and saving Vertue of this all-sufficient Sacrifice is coextended with God's Election, so that they all, and no others can, or shall reap the special Benefits of it, is too clear in the Scriptures to be denied, *Eph.* 5. 23. *John* 17. 2, 9, 19, 20. *John* 10. 26, 27, 28. 1 *Tim.* 4. 10.

Fifthly, The Design and End of this Oblation was to atone, pacifie, and reconcile God, by giving him a full and adequate Compensation or Satisfaction for the Sins of these his Elect: So speaks the Apostle, *Col.* 1. 20. *And having made Peace, through the Blood of his Cross, by him to reconcile all Things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be Things in Earth, or Things in Heaven.* So 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. *God was in Christ, reconciling the World to himself.* Reconciliation is the making up of that Breach caused by Sin, between us and God, and restoring us again to his Favour and Friendship: For this End Christ offered up himself to God; I say, not for this End only, but more especially: hence it's called ἱλασμὸς, a Propitiation; and so the Seventy render that Place, *Numb.* 15. ἱλασμίνθ-κεί-θ-, *the Propitiating Ram.* But here I would not be mistaken, as tho' the Reconciliation were made only between us and God the Father by the Blood of the Cross; for we are reconciled by it to the whole Trinity. Every Sin being against the Divine Majesty, it must needs follow, that the Three Persons having

the ſame Divine Eſſence, muſt be all offended by the Commiſſion, and ſo all reconciled by the Expiation and Remiſſion of the ſame. But Reconciliation is ſaid to be with the Father, becauſe, tho' the Works of the Trinity *ad extra*, be undivided, and what one doth, all do; and what is done to one, is done to all; yet by this Form and Manner of Expreſſion (as a learned Man well obſerves) the Scriptures point out the proper Office of each Perſon. The Father receives us into Favour; the Son mediates, and gives the Ranſom which procures it; the Spirit applies and ſeals this to the Perſons and Hearts of Believers. However, being reconciled to the Father, we are alſo reconciled to the Son and Spirit, as they are one God in Three Perſons. And if it be objected, that then Chriſt offered up a Sacrifice, or laid down a Price to reconcile us to himſelf; I ſhall more fairly and directly meet with and ſatisfie that Objection, when I come to ſpeak of Chriſt's Satisfaction, which is one of the principal Fruits of this his excellent Oblation. For the preſent this may inform you about the Nature and precious Worth of Chriſt's Oblation. The Uſes whereof follow in theſe Five practical Inferences.

Zanch. de tribus Elohim.

Inference 1. Hence it follows, *That actual Believers are fully freed from the Guilt of their Sins, and ſhall never more come under Condemnation.*

The Obligation of Sin is perfectly aboliſhed by the Vertue of this Sacrifice. When Chriſt became our Sacrifice, he both bare, and bare away our Sins. Firſt, It was laid upon him, then expiated by him: So much is imported in that Word, *Heb.* 9. 28. *Chriſt was once offered to bear the Sins of many. To bear*, the Word is a full and emphatical Word, ſignifying not only to bear, but to bear away. So *John* 1. 29. *Behold the Lamb of God, ὁ αἴρων, that taketh away the Sins of the World:* Not only *declaratively*, or by way of Manifeſtation to the Conſcience; but *really*, making a Purgation of Sin, as it is in *Heb.* 1. 3. καθαρισμὸν ποιησάμενος, word for word, a Purgation being made, and not only declared. Now how great a Mercy is this, that *by him, all that believe ſhould be juſtified from all Things, from which they could not be juſtified by the Law of* Moſes, *Acts* 13. 39. What ſhall we call this Grace? Surely we ſhould do ſomewhat more than admire it, and faint under the Senſe of ſuch a Mercy. *Bleſſed is he whoſe Tranſgreſſion is forgiven, whoſe Sin is covered*, Pſal. 32. 1. or, O the Bleſſedneſs or Felicities of him that is pardoned! who can expreſs the Mercies, Comforts, Happineſs of ſuch a State as this? Reader, let me beg thee, if thou be one of this pardoned Number, to look over the cancelled Bonds, and ſee what vaſt Sums are remitted to thee. Remember what thou waſt in thy natural Eſtate; poſſibly thou waſt in that black Bill, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9. What, and yet pardoned! full and finally pardoned, and that freely as to any hand that thou hadſt in the Procurement of it! What canſt thou do leſs than fall down at the Feet of Free Grace, and kiſs thoſe Feet that moved ſo freely towards ſo vile a Sinner? It is not long ſince thy Iniquities were upon thee, and thou pinedſt away in them. Their Guilt could by no Creature-power be ſeparated from thy Soul. Now they are removed from thee, as far as the *Eaſt* from the *Weſt*, Pſal. 103. 11. So that when the *Eaſt* and *Weſt*, which are the two oppoſite Points of Heaven, meet, then thy Soul and its Guilt may meet again together.

Ἀνίνεγκεν; attollere, vel ſurſum ferre. Sic *Syriac.* ἐβαστάσεν καὶ ἀνήνεγκεν, bajulavit & ſurſum tulit. *Beza Græc. Annot. in* 1 Pet. 2. 24.

O the unſpeakable Efficacy of Chriſt's Sacrifice, which extends to all Sins! 1 *John* 1. 7. *The Blood of Chriſt cleanſeth* from all Sins, Sins paſt and preſent, without Exception. And ſome Divines of good Note affirm, all Sins to come alſo; for, ſaith Mr. *Paul Baines*, Original Sin, in which all future Sins are, as Fruits in the Root, is pardoned; and if theſe were not pardoned, they would void and irritate former Pardons. And laſtly, it would derogate from the moſt plenary Satisfaction of Chriſt. But the moſt ſay, and I think truly, that all the paſt Sins of Believers are pardon'd, without *Revocation*; all their preſent Sins, without *Exception*, but not their Sins to come by way of *Anticipation*: and yet for them there is a Pardon of Courſe, which is applied on their Repentance, and Application of Chriſt's Blood; ſo that none of them ſhall make void former Pardons. O let theſe Things ſlide ſweetly to thy melting Heart!

Inference 2. From this Oblation Chriſt made of himſelf to God for our Sins, we infer *the inflexible Severity of Divine Juſtice, which could be no other way diverted from us, and appeaſed, but by the Blood of Chriſt.* If Chriſt had not preſented himſelf to God for us, Juſtice would not have ſpared us: And if he do appear before God as our Surety, it will not ſpare him; *Rom.* 8. 32. *He ſpared not his Son, but delivered him up to Death for us all.* If Forbearance might have been expected from any, ſurely it might from God, *who is very pitiful, and full of tender Mercy*, Jam. 5. 11. yet God in this Caſe ſpared not. If one might have expected ſparing Mercy and Abatement from any, ſurely Chriſt might moſt of all expect it from his own Father; yet you hear God ſpared not *his own Son.* Sparing Mercy is the loweſt Degree of Mercy, yet it was denied to Chriſt: He abated him not a Minute of the Time appointed for his ſuffering, nor one Degree of Wrath he was to bear: Nay, tho' in the Garden Chriſt fell upon the Ground, and ſweat Clodders of Blood, and in that unparallel'd Agony ſcrued up his Spirit to the higheſt Intention, in that pitiful Cry, *Father, if it be poſſible, let this Cup paſs:* And tho' he brake out upon the Croſs in that Heart-rending Complaint, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* yet no Abatement. Juſtice will not bend in the leaſt, but having to do with him on this Account, reſolves to fetch its Penny-worths out of his Blood. If this be ſo, what is the Caſe of thy Soul, Reader, if thou be a Man or Woman that haſt no Intereſt in this Sacrifice? For if theſe Things be done (in Chriſt) a green Tree, what will be done to (thee) the dry Tree? *Luke* 23. 31. That is, if God ſo deal with me, that am not only innocent, but like a green and fruitful Tree, full of all delectable Fruits of Holineſs; yet if the Fire of his Indignation thus ſeize upon me, what will be your Condition, that are both barren and guilty, void of all good Fruit, and full of all Unrighteouſneſs, and ſo like dry ſeary Wood are fitted as Fewel to the Fire? Conſider with thy ſelf, Man, how canſt thou imagine thou canſt ſupport that infinite Wrath that Chriſt grappled with in the room of God's Elect? He had the Strength of a Deity to ſupport him, *Iſa.* 42. 1. *Behold my Servant, whom I uphold.* He had the Fulneſs of his Spirit to prepare him, *Iſa.* 61. 11. He had the Miniſtry of an Angel, who came poſt from Heaven, to relieve him in his Agony, *Luke* 22. 43. He had the Ear of his Father to hear him; for he cried, *and was heard in that he feared,* Heb.

Τί ταῦτα ποιῆσαι, ἃ ἐμοὶ ἐργάσῃ καὶ ἀθανάτῳ καὶ ἀχράντῳ διὰ τὴν θεότητα. τί γενήται ἐν ὑμῖν ἀνάξιοις καὶ πάσης δικαιοσύνης ζωοποιοῦντος ὑστερημένοις. Ita *Theophilactus* pulcherrime παραφράζει.

Heb. 5. 7. He was assured of the Victory, before the Combat he knew he should be justified; *Isa.* 53. 8. and yet for all this he was sore amazed, and sorrowful even to Death, and his Heart was melted like Wax in the midst of his Bowels. If the Case stood thus with Christ, notwithstanding all these Advantages he had to bear the Wrath of God for a little Time; how dost thou think, a poor Worm as thou art, to dwell with everlasting Burnings, or contend with devouring Fire? *Luther* saw ground enough for what he said, when he cried out, *I will have nothing to do with an absolute God*, i. e. with a God out of Christ: for, *it is a fearful Thing to fall into the Hands of the living God.* Wo and alas for evermore to that Man that meets a just and righteous God without a Mediator! Whoever thou art that readest these Lines, I beseech thee by the Mercies of God, by all the Regard and Love thou hast to thy own Soul, neglect not Time, but make quick and sure Work of it. Get an Interest in this Sacrifice quickly, what else will be thy State when vast Eternity opens to swallow thee up? What wilt thou do, Man, when thine Eye-strings and Heart-strings are breaking? O what a fearful Scriech will thy Conscience give when thou art presented before the dreadful God, and no Christ to screen thee from his Indignation! Happy is that Man who can say in a dying Hour, as one did, who being desired, a little before his Dissolution, to give his Friends a little Taste of his present Hopes, and the Grounds of them, chearfully answered, I will let you know how it is with me; then stretching forth his Hand, said,

Nolo Deum absolutum.

Mr. *William Lyford.*

"Here is the Grave, the Wrath of God, and "devouring Flames, the just Punishment of Sin "on the one Side; and here am I, a poor sinful "Soul, on the other Side: But this is my Comfort, "the Covenant of Grace, which is established upon "so many sure Promises, hath salved all. There "is an Act of Oblivion passed in Heaven: *I will* "*forgive their Iniquities, and their Sins will I remember* "*no more.* This is the blessed Privilege of all with-"in the Covenant among whom I am one". O 'tis sweet at all Times, especially at such a Time, to see the reconciled Face of God through Jesus Christ, and hear the Voice of Peace, through the Blood of the Cross!

Inference 3. Hath Christ offered up himself a Sacrifice to God for us? *Then let us improve in every Condition this Sacrifice, and labour to get Hearts duly affected with such a Sight as Faith can give us of it.* Whatever the Condition or Complaint of any Christian is, the beholding the Lamb of God that taketh away the Sin of the World, may give him strong Support and sweet Relief. Do you complain of the Hardness of your Hearts, and Want of Love to Christ? Behold him as offered up to God for you; and such a Sight, (if any in the World will do it) will melt your hard Hearts. *Zech.* 12. 10. *They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and shall mourn.* It is reported of *Johannes Milius*, that he was never observed to speak of Christ and his Sufferings, but his Eyes would drop. Art thou too little touched and unaffected with the Evil of Sin? Is it thy Complaint, Christian, that thou canst not make Sin bear so hard upon thy Heart as thou wouldst? Consider but what thou hast now read; realize this Sacrifice by Faith, and try what Efficacy there is in it to make Sin for ever bitter as Death to thy Soul. Suppose thine own Father had been stabb'd to the Heart with such a Knife, and his Blood were upon it, wouldst thou delight to see, or endure to use that Knife any more? Sin is the Knife that stabb'd Christ to the Heart; this shed his Blood. Surely, you can never make light of that which lay so heavy upon the Soul and Body of Jesus Christ.

Or is your Heart prest down even to Despondency, under the Guilt of Sin, so that you cry, How can such a Sinner as I be pardoned; My Sin is greater than can be forgiven? *Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the Sins of the World.* Remember that no Sin can stand before the Efficacy of his Blood. 1 *John* 1. 7. *The Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all Sin.* This Sacrifice makes unto God full Satisfaction.

Are you at any Time staggering through Unbelief? filled with unbelieving Suspicions of the Promises? Look hither, and you shall see them all ratified and established in the Blood of the Cross, so that Hills and Mountains shall sooner start from their own Basis and Centers, than one Tittle of the Promise fail: *Heb.* 9. 17, 18, 19.

Do you at any Time find your Hearts fretting, disquieted, and impatient under every petty Cross and Trial? See how quietly Christ your Sacrifice came to the Altar, how meekly and patiently he stood under all the Wrath of God and Men together. This will silence, convince and shame you.

In a Word, here you will see so much of the Grace of God, and Love of Christ, in providing and becoming a Sacrifice for you: you will see God taking Vengeance upon Sin, but sparing the Sinner; you will see Christ standing as the Body of Sin alone, for *he was made Sin for us, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him!* that whatever Corruption burdens, this in the believing Application will support; whatever Grace be defective, this will revive it. *Blessed be God for Jesus Christ.*

SER-

SERMON XIII.

Opens the Intercession of Christ our High-Priest being the second Act or Part of Christ's Priestly Office.

HEB. VII. 23.

Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make Intercession for them.

HAving dispatcht the first Part or Act of Christ's Priesthood, consisting in his *Oblation*; we come to the other Branch of it, consisting in his *Intercession*, which is nothing else but the virtual Continuation of his Offering once made on Earth; that being *medium reconciliationis*, the Means of reconciling; this, *medium applicationis*, the Way and Means of his applying to us the Benefits purchased by it.

Redemptio quam operatus est, fundamentum sit intercessionis—— ac propterea redemptionem, & intercessionem, tanquam duas individuas Christi Sacrificii partes, Scriptura commemorare solet. *Ravanella ad verbum intercedere.*

This second Part, or Branch of his Priesthood, was typified by the High-Priest's entring with the Blood of the Sacrifice and sweet Incense into the holy Place: *Lev.* 16. 12, 13, 14. *And he shall take the Censer full of burning Coals of Fire from off the Altar before the Lord, and his Hands full of sweet Incense beaten small, and bring it within the Vail. And he shall put the Incense upon the Fire before the Lord, that the Cloud of the Incense may cover the Mercy-Seat that is upon the Testimony, that he die not. And he shall take the Blood of the Bullock, and sprinkle it with his Finger upon the Mercy-seat, Eastward,* &c. Christ's offering himself on Earth, answered to the killing of the Sacrifice without; and his entring into Heaven, there to intercede, was that which answered to the Priest's going with Blood, and his Hands full of Incense, within the Vail. So that this is a part, yea, a special Part of Christ's Priesthood, and so necessary to it, that if he had not done this, all his Work on Earth had signified nothing; nor had he been a Priest, that is, a compleat and perfect Priest, if he had remained on Earth, *Heb.* 8. 4. because the very Design and End of shedding his Blood on Earth had been frustrated, which was to carry it before the Lord into Heaven. So that is the principal perfective Part of the Priesthood: He acted the first Part on Earth, in a State of deep Abasement, in the Form of a Servant; but he acts this in Glory, whereto he is taken up, that he may follow on his Design in dying, and give the Work of our Salvation its last compleating Act. So much is imported in this Scripture, which tells us, by Reason hereof he *is able to save to the uttermost*, &c.

The Words contain an Incouragement to Believers, to come to God in the Way of Faith, drawn from the Intercession of Christ in Heaven for them: In which you may take Notice of these three principal Parts.

1. The Quality of the Persons here incouraged, who are described by a direct Act of Faith, as poor Recumbents that are going out of themselves to God by Faith; but conscious of great Unworthiness in themselves, and thence apt to be discouraged.

2. The Incouragement propounded to such Believers, drawn from the Ability of Jesus Christ, in whose Name they go to the Father, to save them to the uttermost, *i. e.* fully, perfectly, compleatly; for so this emphatical Word, εἰς τὸ παντελὲς, signifies, the saving us wholly, throughly, compleatly, and altogether; giving our Salvation its last Act and Complement.

Εἰς τὸ παντελὲς, & εἰς τὸ διηνεκὲς differunt ἐμφάσει, subjectâ materiâ non differunt. Nam διηνεκὲς propriè perpetuitatem temporis significat; παντελὲς non hanc solam, verum etiam omnimodam perfectionem. *Camero.*

3. The Ground or Reason of this his saving Ability: *Seeing he ever liveth to make Intercession*; *i. e.* he hath not only offered up his Blood to God upon the Tree, as a full Price to purchase Pardon and Grace for the Believers, but lives in Heaven, and that for ever, to apply unto us in the Way of Intercession, all the Fruits, Blessings and Benefits that that precious Blood of his deserves, and hath procured as a Price for them. The Words thus opened, the Point I shall single out, from among many that lye in them, as most suitable to my Design and Purpose, is this;

Doct. *That Jesus our High-Priest lives for ever, in the Capacity of a potent Intercessor, in Heaven for Believers.*

Here we will inquire, *First*, What it is for Christ to be an Intercessor. *Secondly*, By what Acts he performs that Work in Heaven. *Thirdly*, Whence the Potency and Prevalency of his Intercession is. *Fourthly*, and lastly, How he lives for ever to make Intercession for us.

First, What it is for Christ to be an Intercessor for us. To intercede in general, is to go betwixt two Parties, to intreat, argue, and plead with one for the other. And of this there are two Sorts; 1. *Ex Charitate, ut Fratres*, that whereby one Christian prays and pleads with God for another, 1 *Tim.* 2. 1, 2. *Ex officio mediatorio*, that whereby Christ, as an Act of Office, presents himself before God to request for us. Betwixt these two is this Difference, that the former is performed not in our own, but another Name; we can tender no Request to God immediately, or for our own Sake, either for our selves or for others: *John* 16. 23. *Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you.* But the latter, which is proper to Christ, is an Intercession with God for us, in his own Name, and upon the Account of his proper Merit; the one is a private Act of Charity, the other a publick Act of Office: and so he is our Advocate or Court-friend, as Satan is our Accuser or Court-adversary. Satan is ὁ ἀντίδικος, one that charges us before God, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. and continually endeavours

deavours to make Breaches between us and God. Christ is ὁ παράκλητος, our Attorney, Advocate, or Ledger, that pleads for us, and continues Peace and Friendship between us and God, 1 John 2. 2. *If any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous.*

And thus to make Intercession, is the peculiar and incommunicable Prerogative of Jesus Christ: None but he can go in his own Name to God. And in that Sense we are to understand that Place, *Ezek.* 44. 2, 3. *Then said the Lord unto me, This Gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no Man shall enter in by it; because the Lord the God of* Israel *hath entred in by it; therefore it shall be shut. It is for the Prince, the Prince he shall sit by it, to eat Bread before the Lord,* &c. The great broad Gate, called here the *Prince's Gate*, signifies that abundant and direct Entrance that Christ had into Heaven by his own Merits, and in his own Name; this, saith the Lord, shall be shut, no Man shall enter in by it; all other Men must come thither as it were by collateral or side Doors, which looked all towards the Altar, *viz.* by Vertue of the Mediator, and through the Benefit of his Death imputed to them.

See Deodati, *and our English Annot.* in loc.

And yet tho' God hath for ever shut up and barr'd this Way to all the Children of Men, telling us that no Man shall ever have Access to him in his own Name, as Christ the Prince had: How do some notwithstanding, strive to force open the Prince's Gate? So do they that found the Intercession of Saints upon their own Works and Merits thereby robbing Christ of his peculiar Glory; but all that so approach God, approach a devouring Fire: Christ only in the Virtue of his Blood thus comes before him, to make Intercession for us.

Pet. Lombard. lib. 4. dist. 45.

Secondly, We will inquire wherein the Intercession of Christ in Heaven consists, or by what Acts he performs this Glorious Office there, And the Scriptures place it in three Things:

Quid vero sibi velit hic ἐμφανισμὸς pro nobis ἐν προσώπῳ θεοῦ, videndum est. Respicit ad ἐπίθεσιν pontificis veteris, qui ingressus intra velum, dicebatur apparere in conspectu Dei pro populo, quatenus se cum sanguine hirci piacularis præsentabat Deo, & precibus suis supplex orabat, ut propter sanguinem, non illum hircinum, sed illo repræsentatum, Christi Mediatoris fundendum, propitius esset peccatis suis, & populi. Doct. *Pareus in loc.*

1. *In his presenting himself before the Lord in our Names, and upon our Accounts.* So we read in *Heb.* 9. 24. *Christ is entred into Heaven it self, now to appear in the Presence of God for us.* The Apostle manifestly alludes to the High-Priest's appearing in the Holy of Holies, which was the Figure of Heaven, presenting to the Lord the Names of the twelve Tribes of *Israel*, which were on his Breast and Shoulders, *Exod.* 28. 9, 12, 28, 29. To which the Church is supposed to allude in that Request, *Cant.* 8. 6. *Set me as a Seal upon thine Heart, as a Seal upon thine Arm.* Now the very Sight of Christ, our High-Priest in Heaven, prevails exceedingly with God, and turns away his Displeasure from us. As when God looks upon the Rainbow, which is the Sign of the Covenant, he remembers the Earth in Mercy: So when he looks on Christ, his Heart must needs be towards us upon his Account; and therefore in *Rev.* 4. 3. Christ is compared to a Rainbow encompassing the Throne.

2. Christ performs his Intercession-Work in Heaven, not by a naked appearing in the Presence of God only, but also *by presenting his Blood, and all his Sufferings to God, as a moving Plea on our Account.* Whether he makes any proper oral Intercession there, as he did on Earth, is not so clear; some incline to it, and think it's countenanced by *Zech.* 1. 12, 13. where Christ our Intercessor presents a proper vocal Request to the Father, in the Behalf of his People; saying, *O Lord of Hosts, How long wilt thou not have Mercy on* Jerusalem, *and on the Cities of* Judah, *against whom thou hast had Indignation these threescore and ten Years? And the Lord answered him with good and comfortable Words.* And so, *Acts* 2. 23. as soon as he came to Heaven, he is said (and that is the first Fruits of his Intercession) *to obtain the Promise of the Holy Ghost.* But sure I am, an interceeding Voice is by an usual *Prosopopeia* attributed to his Blood; which in *Heb.* 12. 24. is said *to speak better Things than that of* Abel. Now *Abel's* Blood, and so Christ's, do cry unto God, as the Hire of the Labourers unjustly detained, or the whole Creation, which is in Bondage through our Sins, is said to cry and groan in the Ears of the Lord, *Jam.* 5. 4. *Rom.* 8. 22. not vocally, but efficaciously. A rare Illustration of this efficacious Intercession of Christ in Heaven, we have in that famous Story of *Amintas*, who appeared as an Advocate for his Brother *Æschylus*, who was strongly accused, and very likely to be condemned to die. Now *Amintas* having performed great Services, and merited highly of the Common-Wealth, in whose Service one of his Hands was cut off in the Field; he comes into the Court in his Brother's Behalf, and said nothing, but only lifted up his Arm, and shewed them *cubitum sine manu*, an Arm without a Hand; which so moved them, that (without a Word speaking) they freed his Brother immediately.

Ælian. Hist. lib. 5. cap. 19.

And thus if you look into *Rev.* 5. 6. you shall see in what Posture Christ is represented visionally there as standing between God and us: *And I beheld, and lo, in the Midst of the Throne, and four Beasts, and in the midst of the Elders stood a Lamb as it had been slain; i. e.* bearing in his glorified Body the Marks of Death and Sacrifice. Those Wounds he received for our Sins on Earth, are, as it were, still fresh bleeding in Heaven: A moving and prevailing Argument it is with the Father, to give out the Mercies he pleads for.

Deodati in loc.

3. And lastly, *He presents the Prayers of his Saints to God, with his Merits; and desires that they may for his Sake be granted.* He causes a Cloud of Incense to ascend before God with them, *Rev.* 8. 3. All these were excellently typed out by the going in of the High-Priest before the Lord, with the Names of the Children of *Israel* on his Breast, with the Blood of the Sacrifice, and his Hands full of Incense, as the Apostle explains them in *Heb.* 7. and *Heb.* 9.

Thirdly, And that this Intercession of Christ is most potent, successful, and prevalent with God, will be evinced both from the Qualifications of this our Advocate, from his great Interest in the Father, from the Nature of the Place he useth with God, and from the Relation and Interest Believers have, both in the Father to whom, and the Son by whom this Intercession is made.

1. Our Intercessor in the Heavens is every Way able and fit for the Work he is engaged in there. Whatever is desirable in an Advocate, is in him eminently. It is necessary that he who undertakes to plead the Cause of another, especially if it be weigh-

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ty and intricate, ſhould be wiſe, faithful, tender-hearted, and one that concerns himſelf in the Succeſs of his Buſineſs. Our Advocate Chriſt wants no Wiſdom to manage his Work; he is the Wiſdom of God, yea, *only wiſe*, Jude 25. There's much Folly in the beſt of our Duties, we know not how to preſs an Argument home with God; but Chriſt hath the Art of it. Our Buſineſs is in a wiſe Hand: he is no leſs *faithful* than wiſe; therefore he is called a *faithful High-Prieſt in Things pertaining to God*, Heb. 2. 17. He aſſures us we may ſafely truſt our Concerns with him, *John* 14. 2. *In my Father's Houſe are many Manſions; if it were not ſo, I would have told you*; q. d. Do you think I would deceive you? Men may cheat you, but I will not; your own Hearts may, and daily do deceive you; but ſo will not I. And for Tender-Heartedneſs, and ſenſible Reſentments for our Conditions, there is none like him: Heb. 4. 15. *For we have not an High-Prieſt which cannot be touched with the feeling of our Infirmities; but was in all Points tempted like as we are, yet without Sin.* We have not one that cannot ſympathize, ſo it is in the *Greek*: And on purpoſe that he might be the better able to ſympathize with us, he came as near to our Conditions, as the Holineſs of his Nature could permit. He ſuffered himſelf to be in all Points tempted like as we are, Sin only excepted.

Μὴ δυνάμενον συμπαθῆσαι. *Tho' he cannot weep or grieve now as he did on Earth, yet he can love now as much as ever he loved; and therefore he looks down from Heaven upon every particular Member: He ſeeth that this Man wants this Grace, and that Man wants that; and the other is in Danger of this Corruption, or that Temptation: and he is daily carrying on the Cure. You ſee not your Phyſician, he ſtands out of your Sight; but he ſeeth you, and it is he that doth all for you that is done.* Baxter's *Treatiſe of Converſion.*

And then for his Concernment and Intereſt in the Succeſs of his Suit; he not only reckons, but hath really made it his own Intereſt, yea, more his own than it is ours: For now by Reaſon of the myſtical Union, all our Wants and Troubles are his, *Eph.* 1. 23. yea, his own Glory and Compleatneſs as Mediator, is deeply intereſſed in it; and therefore we need not doubt but he will uſe all Care and Diligence in that Work. If you ſay, So he may, and yet not ſpeed for all that, for it depends on the Father's Grant: True, but then,

2. Conſider the great Intereſt he hath in the Father, with whom he ſo interceeds. Chriſt is his *dear* Son, *Col.* 1. 13. the beloved of his Soul, *Eph.* 1. 6. Betwixt him and the Father, with whom when he interceeds, there is an Unity, not only of Nature, but Will; and ſo he always hears him, *John* 11. 42. Yea, and he ſaid to this his dear Son, when he came firſt to Heaven, *Aſk of me, and I will give thee*, Pſal. 2. 8. Moreover,

3. He muſt needs ſpeed in his Suit, if you conſider the Nature of his Interceſſion, which is juſt and reaſonable for the Matter, urgent and continual for the Manner of it. The Matter of his Requeſt is moſt equal: what he deſires, is not deſired *gratis*, or upon Terms unbecoming the Holineſs and Righteouſneſs of God to grant; he deſires no more but what he hath deſerved, and given a valuable Conſideration to the Father for. And ſo the Juſtice of God doth not only not oppoſe, but furthers and pleads for the granting and fulfilling his Requeſts.

Here you muſt remember that the Father is under a Covenant Tie and Bond to do what he asks; for Chriſt having fully performed the Work on his Part, the Mercies he interceeds for, are as due as the Hire of the Labourer is when the Work is faithfully done. And as the Matter is juſt, ſo the Manner of his Interceſſion is urgent and continual. How importunate a Suiter he is, may be gathered from that Specimen or Handſel given of it in, *John* 17. and for the Conſtancy of it, my Text tells us, *he ever lives to make Interceſſion*: 'Tis his great Buſineſs in Heaven, and he follows it cloſe. And to cloſe all,

4. Conſider who they are for whom he makes Interceſſion: The Friends of God, the Children of God; thoſe that the Father himſelf loves, and his Heart is propenſe and ready enough to grant the beſt and greateſt of Mercies to: Which is the Meaning of *John* 16. 26, 27. *The Father himſelf loveth you.* And it muſt needs be ſo, for the firſt Corner-ſtone of all theſe Mercies was laid by the Father himſelf in his moſt free Election. He alſo delivered his Son for us; and *how ſhall he not with him freely give us all Things?* Rom. 8. 32. So then there can remain no doubt upon a conſidering Heart, but Chriſt is a prevalent and ſucceſsful Interceſſor in Heaven. There only remains one Thing more to be ſatisfied, and that is,

Fourthly, In what Senſe he is ſaid to live for ever to make Interceſſion. Shall he then be always at his Work? imployed in begging new Favours for us to Eternity? How then ſhall the People of God be perfect in Heaven, if there be Need of Chriſt's Interceſſion to Eternity for them?

I anſwer, by diſtinguiſhing the *Eſſence* and *Subſtance* of Chriſt's Offices, from the *Way* and *Manner* of Adminiſtration. In the firſt Senſe it is eternal: For his mediatory Kingdom, as to the Eſſence of it, is to abide for ever; Chriſt ſhall never ceaſe to be a Mediator; the Church ſhall never want a Head: For *of his Kingdom there ſhall be no End*, Luke 1. 33. However, Chriſt, as Mediator, being employed in a Kind of ſubordinate Way, 1 *Cor.* 3. 23. when he ſhall have accompliſhed that Deſign for which he became a Mediator, *Then ſhall he deliver up the Kingdom* (in the Senſe we ſpake before) *to the Father, and ſo God ſhall be all in all*, 1 Cor. 15. 24. Then ſhall the Divinity of Chriſt, which was ſo emptied and obſcured in his undertaking this temporary diſpenſatory Kingdom, be more gloriouſly manifeſted, by the full Poſſeſſion, Uſe and Enjoyment of that natural, divine, eternal Kingdom, which belongs to all the three co-eſſential and co-equal Perſons, reigning with the ſame Power, Majeſty and Glory, in the Unity of the Divine Eſſence, and common Acts, in all, and over all, infinitely, and immutably for ever.

And ſo Chriſt continues to be our Mediator; and yet that affords no Argument that our Happineſs ſhall be incompleat, but rather argues the Perfection of the Church, which thenceforth ſhall be governed no more as now it is, nor have any farther Uſe of Ordinances, but ſhall be ruled more immediately, gloriouſly, triumphantly, and ineffably in the World to come: The Subſtance of his Mediatorſhip is not changed, but the Manner of the Adminiſtration only.

Uſe 1. Doth Chriſt live for ever in Heaven to preſent his Blood to God in the Way of Interceſſion for Believers? *How ſad then is their Caſe, that have no Intereſt in Chriſt's Blood; but inſtead of pleading for them, it cries to God againſt them, as the Deſpiſers and Abuſers of it.* Every Unbeliever deſpiſes it: The Apoſtate treads it under Foot. He that is an *Interceſſor* for ſome, will be an *Accuſer* of others. To be guilty of a Man's Blood is ſad; but to have the Blood of Jeſus accuſing and crying to God againſt a Soul, is unſpeakably terrible. Surely when he ſhall make Inqui-

Inquiſition for Blood, when the Day of his Vengeance is come, he will make it appear by the Judgments he will execute, that this is a Sin never to be expiated, but Vengeance ſhall purſue the Sinner to the Bottom of Hell. Ah! What do Men and Women do, in rejecting the gracious Offers of a Chriſt! What, tread upon a Saviour! And caſt Contempt by Unbelief and Hardneſs of Heart upon their only Remedy! I remember I have read of a Harlot that kill'd her Child, and ſaid that it ſmiled upon her when ſhe went to ſtab it. Sinner, doth not Chriſt ſmile upon thee, yern upon thee in the Goſpel? And wilt thou as it were ſtab him to the Heart by thine Infidelity? Wo and alas for that Man, againſt whom this Blood cries in Heaven!

Uſe 2. Doth Chriſt live for ever to make Interceſſion? *Hence let Believers fetch Relief, and draw Encouragement againſt all the Cauſes and Grounds of their Fears and Troubles*; for ſurely this anſwers them all.

1. Hence let them be encouraged againſt all their *Sinful Infirmities*, and lamented Weakneſſes. 'Tis confeſſed theſe are ſad Things; they grieve the Spirit of God, ſadden your own Hearts, cloud your Evidences; but having ſuch a High-Prieſt in Heaven, can never be your Ruin. 1 John 2. 1, 2. *My little Children, theſe Things write I unto you, that you ſin not: And if any Man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous.* [My little Children.] Children, eſpecially little Children, when firſt beginning to take the Foot, are apt to ſtumble at every ſtraw; ſo are raw, young, and unexperienc'd Chriſtians: But what if they do? Why tho' it muſt be far from them to take Encouragement ſo to do from Chriſt and his Interceſſion, yet if by Surprizal they do ſin, let them not be utterly diſcouraged: For we have an *Advocate*, he ſtops whatever Plea may be brought in againſt us by the Devil, or the Law; and anſwers all by his Satisfaction: He gets out freſh Pardons for new Sins. And this Advocate is with [the Father] he doth not ſay with his Father, tho' that had been a ſingular Support in it ſelf, nor yet with our Father, which is a ſweet Encouragement ſingly conſidered, but with [the Father] which takes in both to make the Encouragement full. Remember, ye that are caſt down under the Senſe of Sin, that Jeſus your Friend in the Court above, *is able to ſave to the uttermoſt.* Which is as one calls it, a reaching Word, and extends it ſelf ſo far, that thou canſt not look beyond it. "Let thy Soul "be ſet on the higheſt "Mount that any Creature was ever ſet on, and enlarged to take in View the moſt ſpacious Proſpect both of Sin and Miſery, and Difficulties of being ſaved, that ever yet any poor humble Soul did caſt within it ſelf; yea, join to theſe all the Hindrances and Objections that the Heart of Man can invent againſt it ſelf and Salvation: Lift up thine Eyes, and look to the utmoſt thou canſt ſee: And Chriſt by his Interceſſion is able to ſave thee beyond the Horizon and utmoſt Compaſs of thy Thoughts, even to *the utmoſt.*"

Goodwin's Triumph, p. 263.

2. Hence draw abundant Encouragement *againſt all Heart-ſtraitnings, and Deadneſs of Spirit in Prayer.* Thou complaineſt thy Heart is dead, wandring, and contracted in Duty: O but remember Chriſt's Blood ſpeaks, when thou canſt not; it can plead for thee and that powerfully, when thou art not able to ſpeak a Word for thy ſelf: To this Senſe that Scripture ſpeaks, *Cant.* 3. 6. *Who is this that cometh out of the Wilderneſs in Pillars of Smoak, perfumed with Myrrh, and Frankincenſe, all the Powders of the Merchant?* The Duties of Chriſtians go up many Times, as Pillars or Clouds of Smoak from them, more *Smoak* than Fire, Prayers ſmoaked and ſullied with their offenſive Corruptions: But remember, Chriſt perfumes them with Myrrh, *&c.* He by his Interceſſion gives them a ſweet Perfume.

3. Chriſt's Interceſſion is a ſingular Relief to all that come unto God by him, *againſt all ſinful Damps and ſlaviſh Fears for the Juſtice of God.* Nothing more promotes the Fear of Reverence; nothing more ſuppreſſeth unbelieving Deſpondencies, and deſtroys the Spirit of Bondage. So you find it, *Heb.* 10. 19, 20, 21. *Having therefore, Brethren, Boldneſs to enter into the Holieſt, by the Blood of Jeſus, by a new and living Way, which he hath conſecrated for us through the Vail, that is to ſay, his Fleſh; and having a High-Prieſt over the Houſe of God, let us draw near with a true Heart,* ἐν πληροφορίᾳ πίστεως, in full Aſſurance of Faith: Or let us come unto God, as a Ship comes with full Sail into the Harbour. O what a direct and full Gale of Encouragement doth this Interceſſion of Chriſt give to the poor Soul that lay a-ground, or was Windbound before?

If Jeſus be the Mediator of the New Covenant, Believers may go with Boldneſs, and look the Juſtice of God in the Face; for your Debt is ſatisfied. So long as a Man is in Debt, he ſteals by the Priſon-door in the dark; but if his Surety have paid the Debt, he dares come (as you ſay) and whet his Knife at the Compter-door. Chriſt your Surety hath paid the Debt; you may go with Boldneſs, and look Juſtice in the Face, the Devil and all the Serjeants of Hell in the Face. Mr. W. B. *in his Treatiſe of Chriſt and the Covenant,* p. 98.

4. The Interceſſion of Chriſt gives admirable Satisfaction or Encouragement to all that come to God, againſt the Fears of deſerting him again by Apoſtacy. This, my Friends, this is your principal Security againſt theſe Matters of Fear. With this he relieves *Peter*, Luke 22. 31, 32. *Simon* (ſaith he) *Satan hath deſired to have you, that he may ſift you as Wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy Faith fail not, q. d.* Satan will fan thee, not to get out thy Chaff, but boult out thy Flower: His Temptations are levell'd againſt thy Faith; but fear not, my Prayer ſhall break his Deſigns, and ſecure thy Faith againſt all Attempts upon it. Upon this powerful Interceſſion of Chriſt the Apoſtle builds his Triumph againſt all that threatens to bring him, or any of the Saints, again into a State of Condemnation. And ſee how he drives on that Triumph, from the Reſurrection, and Seſſion of Chriſt at the Father's right Hand; and eſpecially from the Work of Interceſſion, which he lives there to perform: *Rom.* 8. 34, 35. *Who is he that condemneth? It's Chriſt that dieth: yea, rather that is riſen again, who is even at the right Hand of God, who alſo maketh Interceſſion for us. Who ſhall ſeparate us from the Love of Chriſt?*

5. It gives ſweet Relief *againſt the Defects and Wants that yet are in our Sanctification.* We want a great deal of Faith, Love, Heavenly-Mindedneſs, Mortification, Knowledge. We are ſhort and wanting in all. There are the ὑστερήματα, the Remains, or Things wanting, as the Apoſtle calls them, 1 *Theſ.* 3. 10. Well, if Grace be but yet in its weak Beginnings, and Infancy in thy Soul, this may incourage, that by Reaſon of Chriſt's Interceſſion, it ſhall live, grow, and expatiate it ſelf in thy Heart. He is not only the Author, but the Finiſher of it, *Heb.* 12. 2. He is ever begging new and freſh Mercies for you in Heaven; and will never be quiet till all your Wants be ſupplied. He ſaves εἰς τὸ παντελὲς, *to the uttermoſt, i. e.* as I told you before, to the laſt, perfective, compleating Act of Salvation. So that this is a Fountain of Relief againſt all your Fears.

Use 3. Doth Christ live for ever to make Intercession? *Then let those who reap on Earth the Fruits of that Work in Heaven, draw Instruction thence about the following Duties to which it leads them as by the Hand.*

1. *Do not forget Christ in an exalted State.* You see tho' he be in all the Glory above, at God's right Hand, an enthron'd King, he doth not forget you: He like *Joseph* remembers his Brethren in all his Glory. But alas, how oft doth Advancement make us forget him? As the Lord complains in *Hosea* 13. 5, 6. *I did know thee in the Wilderness, in the Land of great Drought*: But when they came into *Canaan*, *According to their Pastures so were they filled; they were filled, and their Heart was exalted; therefore have they forgotten me.* As if he had said, O my People, you and I were better acquainted in the Wilderness, when thou wert in a low Condition, left to my immediate Care, living by daily Faith; O then you gave me many a sweet Visit; but now you are filled, I hear no more of you. Good had it been for some Saints, if they had never known Prosperity.

He doth not forget us, tho' he be exalted to his Glory; for he is not like the poor silly Creatures that cannot bear Exaltation without being puffed up, and forgetting both themselves, their Friends and their God. No, his Exaltation is Spiritual and Heavenly, perfecting his human Nature to the greatest Height it is capable of, ——he never was more tender of Jerusalem *when he wept over it, or of his People when he wept, bled, and died for them, than he is now tender over his in Glory.* Mr. Baxter's Treatise of Conversion, *p.* 184.

2. *Let the Intercession of Christ in Heaven for you, encourage you to Constancy in the good Ways of God.* To this Duty it sweetly encourages also, *Heb.* 4. 14. *Seeing then that we have a great High-Priest that is passed into the Heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our Profession.* Here is Encouragement to Perseverance on a double Account. One is, that Jesus our Head is already in Heaven; and if the Head be above Water, the Body cannot drown. The other is from the Business he is there imployed about, which is his Priesthood; he is passed into the Heavens, as our great High-Priest, to intercede; and therefore we cannot miscarry.

3. *Let it encourage you to Constancy in Prayer*: O do not neglect that excellent Duty, seeing Christ is there to present all your Petitions to God; yea, to *perfume* as well as *present* them. So the Apostle, *Heb.* 4. 16. infers from Christ's Intercession; *Let us therefore come boldly unto the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help in Time of Need.*

4. *Hence be encouraged to plead for Christ on Earth, who continually pleads for you in Heaven.* If any accuse you, he is there to plead for you: And if any dishonour him on Earth, see that you plead his Interest, and defend his Honour. Thus you have heard what his Intercession is, and what Benefits we receive by it.

Blessed be God for Jesus Christ.

SERMON XIV.

Asserts and vindicates the Satisfaction of Christ, being the first principal Effect or Fruit of his Priesthood.

GAL. III. 13.

Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us.

YOU have seen the general Nature, Necessity, and Parts of Christ's Priesthood, *viz.* his *Oblation* and *Intercession.* Before you part from this Office, it's necessary you should farther take into Consideration the principal Fruits and Effects of his Priesthood; which are, compleat *Satisfaction*, and the *Acquisition* or Purchase of an eternal Inheritance. The former *viz.* The *Satisfaction* made by his Blood, is manifestly contained in this excellent Scripture before us, wherein the *Apostle* (having shewn before, at *ver.* 10. that whosoever *continues not in all Things written in the Law, to do them, are cursed,*) declares how notwithstanding the Threats of the Law, a Believer comes to be freed from the Curse of it, namely, by Christ's bearing that Curse for him, and so satisfying God's Justice, and discharging the Believer from all Obligations to Punishment.

More particularly, in these Words you have the Believer's Discharge from the Curse of the Law, and the Way and Manner thereof opened.

1. The Believer's Discharge; *Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law.* The Law of God hath three Parts, Commands, Promises, and Threatnings or Curses. The Curse of the Law is its condemning Sentence, whereby a Sinner is bound over to Death, even the Death of Soul and Body. The Chain by which it binds him, is the Guilt of Sin; and from which none can loose the Soul but Christ. This Curse of the Law is the most dreadful Thing imaginable; it strikes at the Life of a Sinner, yea, his best Life, the eternal Life of the Soul; and when it hath condemned, it is inexorable, no Cries nor Tears, no Reformations or Repentance can loose the guilty Sinner; for it requires for its Reparation that which no meer Creature can give, even an infinite Satisfaction. Now from this Curse Christ frees the Believer; that is, he dissolves the Obligation to Punishment, cancels the Hand-writing, looses all the Bonds and Chains of Guilt, so that the Curse of the Law hath nothing to do with him for ever.

2. We have here the Way and Manner in and by which this is done; and that is by a full Price paid down, and that Price paid in the Room of the Sinner; both making up a compleat and full *Satisfaction.* He pays a full Price, every

Quemadmodum qui liber erat, captivum redimit, se vadem constituendo; & induendo vincula alteri exuit: Ita Christus legi servandæ obnoxius esse voluit, ut nobis immunitatem acquireret. Calv. *in* Gal. 4.

every Way adequate and proportionable to the Wrong. So much this Word, ἡμᾶς ἐξηγόρασεν, which we translate *redeemed*, imports; he hath bought us out, or fully bought us; that is, by a full Price. This Price with which he so fully bought or purchased our Freedom from the Curse, is not only called λύτρον, *Mat.* 20. 28. or Ransom, but more emphatically, ἀντίλυτρον, in 1 *Tim.* 2. 5, 6. which might be translated an adequate or fully answerable Ransom. And so his freeing us by his Price, is not only expressed by ἠγόρασας τῷ Θεῷ ἡμᾶς, *Thou hast bought us to God by thy Blood*, Rev. 5. 9. but ἐξηγόρασεν ἡμας he hath fully, perfectly, bought us out.

And as the Price or Ransom paid was full, perfect, and sufficient in it self; so it was paid in our Room, and upon our Account: So saith the Text, *By his being made a Curse for us*, the Meaning is not, that Christ was made the very Curse it self, changed into a Curse; no more than when the Word is said to be *made Flesh*, the Divine Nature was converted into Flesh, but it assumed or took Flesh; and so Christ he took the Curse upon himself; Therefore it's said, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. *He was made Sin for us who knew no Sin*; that is, our Sin was imputed to our Surety, and laid upon him for Satisfaction. And so this Word ὑπὲρ [for] implies a Substitution of one in the Place and Stead of another. Now the Price being full, and paid in lieu of our Sins, and thereupon we fully redeemed or delivered from the Curse; it follows, as a fair and just Deduction, That,

Factus esse dicitur maledictum, & peccatum; non enim ipsummet male-dictum factus est, *sc.* formaliter maledictum; sed maledictum nostrum illi imputatum est. *Cyrillus.*

Doct. *The Death of Christ hath made a full Satisfaction to God for all the Sins of his Elect.*

He (to wit our Surety Christ) *was oppressed, and he was afflicted*, saith the Prophet, *Isa.* 53. 7. it may be as fitly rendred, (and the Words will bear it without the least force) *it was exacted, and he answered.* But how, being either way translated, it establisheth the Satisfaction of Christ, may be seen in our Learned Annotations on that Place. So Col. 1. *In whom we have* ἀπολύτρωσιν διὰ τοῦ αἵματος, *Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sin.* Here we have the Benefit, *viz.* Redemption interpreted by way of Apposition, *even the Remission of Sins*; and the matchless Price that was laid down to purchase it, the Blood of Christ. So again, Heb. 9. 12. *By his own Blood he entred once into the holy Place, having obtained,* αἰωνίαν λύτρωσιν, *eternal Redemption for us.* Here's eternal Redemption, the Mercy purchased; his own Blood, the Price that procur'd it.

Now for as much as this Doctrine of Christ's Satisfaction is so necessary, weighty, and comfortable in it self, and yet so much opposed and intricated by several Enemies to it; the Method I shall take for the clearing, establishing, and preparing it for use, shall be,

First, To open the *Nature* of Christ's Satisfaction, and shew what it is.

Secondly, To establish the *Truth* of it, and prove that he made full Satisfaction to God for all the Sins of the Elect.

Thirdly, To answer the most considerable *Objections* made against it.

And Lastly, To *apply* it.

First, What is the Satisfaction of Christ, and what doth it imply? I answer,

What Divine Satisfaction is.

Satisfaction is the Act of Christ, God-man, presenting himself as our Surety, in Obedience to God, and love to us; to do and suffer all that the Law required of us; and thereby freeing us from the Wrath and Curse due to us for our Sins.

1. It is the Act of God-man; no other was capable of giving Satisfaction for an infinite Wrong done to God. But by reason of the Union of the two Natures in his wonderful Person, he could do it, and hath done it for us. The human Nature did what was necessary in its kind; it gave the Matter of the Sacrifice: The Divine Nature stampt the Dignity and Value upon it, which made it an adequate Compensation: So that it was *opus* θεάνθρωπον, the Act of God-man; yet so, that each Nature retained its own Properties, notwithstanding their joint Influence into the Effect. If the Angels in Heaven had laid down their Lives; or if the Blood of all the Men in the World had been poured out by Justice, this could never have satisfied; because that ἀξίωσις Worth and Value which this Sacrifice hath, would have still been wanting. *It was God that redeemed the Church with his own Blood*, Acts 20. 28. If God redeem with his own Blood, he redeems as God-man, without any Dispute.

Satisfactio hæc valorem habuit sufficientem ex aliqua ratione infinitum: primo, a persona offerentis, qui fuit Deus. 2. A dignitate & præstantia rei oblatæ; obtulit enim semetipsum, Deum & hominem. 3. A modo offerendi, cui divina quædam perfectio infuit, ratione hypostaticæ unionis. Dr. *Amesius medul. p.* 98.

2. If he satisfie God for us, he must present himself before God, as our Surety, in our *stead*, as well as for our good; else his Obedience had signified nothing to us: To this End he was *made under the Law*, Gal. 4. 4. comes under the same Obligation with us, and that as a Surety, for so he is called, *Heb.* 7. 22. Indeed his Obedience and Sufferings could be exacted from him upon no other Account. It was not for any thing he had done, that he became a Curse. It was propheſied of him, Dan. 9. 26. *The Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself:* And being dead, the Scriptures plainly assert it was *for our Sins*, and upon our Account: So 1 *Cor.* 15. 3. *Christ died for our Sins according to the Scriptures.*

And it's well observed by our Divines, who assert the Vicegerency and Substitution of Christ in his Sufferings, that all those Greek Particles which we translate [for] when applied to the Sufferings of Christ, do note the meritorious, deserving, procuring Cause of those Sufferings. So you find, Heb. 10. 12. *He offered one Sacrifice,* ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτιῶν, *for Sins.* 1 Pet. 3. 18. *Christ once suffered,* περὶ, *for Sins.* Rom. 4. 25. *He was delivered,* διὰ, *for our Offences.* Mat. 28. 28. *He gave his Life a Ransom,* ἀντὶ, *for many.* And there are that confidently affirm this last Particle is never used in any other Sense in the whole Book of God: As *an Eye for an Eye, a Tooth for a Tooth*, i. e. one in lieu of another. Just as those whom the Greeks called ἀντίψυχοι. Men that exchanged their Lives, or gave Life for Life, staking down their own to deliver another's, as *Philumene* did for *Aristides.* And so the Poet *Virgil* speaks;

Si fratrem Pollux alterna morte redemit.

And indeed this very Consideration is that which supports the Doctrine of Imputation, the Imputation of our Sins to Christ, and the Imputation of Christ's Righteousness unto us: For how could our Sins be laid on him, but as he stood in our stead? Or his Righteousness be imputed to us, but as he was our Surety, performing it in our place? So that to deny Christ's Sufferings in our stead, is to

Rom. 5. 19.

Specialis hæc imputatio eſt meriti alieni loco ejus admiſſio, quod in ipſo reo ineſſe debet. *Bradſhaw de Juſt.* p. 47.

loſe the Corner-ſtone of our Juſtification, and overthrow the very Pillar which ſupports our Faith, Comfort, and Salvation. Indeed if this had not been, he would have been the righteous Lord, but not the *Lord our Righteouſneſs*, as he is ſtiled, *Jer.* 33. 16. So that it is but a vain Diſtinction, to ſay it was *for our good*, but not *in our ſtead*: For had he not been in our ſtead, we could not have had the Good of it.

3. The internal moving Cauſe of Chriſt's Satisfaction for us, was his Obedience to God, and Love to us. That it was an Act of Obedience, is plain from *Phil.* 2. 8. *He became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Croſs.* Now obedience reſpects a Command, and ſuch a Command Chriſt received to die for us, as himſelf tells us, *John* 10. 18. *I lay down my Life of my ſelf; I have Power to lay it down, and Power to take it again; this Commandment have I received of my Father.* So that it was an Act of Obedience with reſpect to God, and yet a moſt free and ſpontaneous Act with reſpect to himſelf. And that he was moved to it out of Pity and Love to us, himſelf aſſures us: *Gal.* 5. 2. *Chriſt loved us, and gave himſelf for us an Offering and a Sacrifice to God.* Upon this *Paul* ſweetly reflected; *Gal.* 2. 20. *Who loved me, and gave himſelf for me.* As the external moving Cauſe was our Miſery, ſo the internal was his own Love and Pity for us.

Si enim propter Chriſti obedientiam paſſivam ſolam imputatam, à peccatis cujuſq; cujuſcunq; generis, ſive commiſſi illud fuerit, ſive omiſſi, reatu omni immunes habemur; quorſum ad juſtificationem imputetur ulterius activa illa ejuſdem obedientia? *Bradſhaw in Epiſt. Lib. de Juſtif.*

4. The Matter of Chriſt's Satisfaction, was his active and paſſive Obedience to all the Law of God required. I know there are ſome that doubt whether Chriſt's active Obedience have any place here, and ſo whether it be imputed as any part of our Righteouſneſs. It is confeſſed, the Scripture moſt frequently mentions his paſſive Obedience, as that which made the Atonement, and procures our Redemption, *Mat.* 20. 28. and 26. 28. *Rom.* 3. 24, 25. *& alibi:* But his paſſive Obedience is never mentioned excluſively, as the ſole Cauſe or Matter of Satisfaction. But in thoſe Places where it's mentioned by it ſelf, it's put for his whole Obedience, both active and paſſive, by an uſual Trope; and in other Scriptures it is aſcribed to both, as *Gal.* 4. 4. he is ſaid *to be made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law.* Now his being *made under the Law* to this End, cannot be reſtrained to his Subjection to the Curſe of the Law only, but to the Commands of it alſo. So *Rom.* 5. 19. *As by one Man's Diſobedience many were made Sinners; ſo by the Obedience of one ſhall many be made righteous.* It were a manifeſt Injury to this Text alſo, to reſtrain it to the paſſive Obedience of Chriſt only. To be ſhort, this twofold Obedience of Chriſt ſtands oppoſed to a twofold Obligation that fallen Man is under; the one *to do* what God requires, the other *to ſuffer* what he hath threatned for Diſobedience. We owe him active Obedience as his *Creatures*, and paſſive Obedience as his *Priſoners*. Suitably to this double Obligation Chriſt comes under the *Commandment* of the Law to fulfil it actively, *Mat.* 3. 15. and under the *Malediction* of the Law to ſatisfie it paſſively. And where-

Duplex eſt Chriſti obedientia, duplici hominis poſt lapſum obligationi oppoſita; activa, pro culpa; paſſiva, pro pœna; ſeu utraque pro utraque. *Trel. ubi ſupra.*

as it is objected by ſome, if he fulfilled the whole Law for us by his active, what need then of his paſſive Obedience? We reply, great Need; becauſe both theſe make up that one, entire, and compleat Obedience, by which God is ſatisfied, and we juſtified. It's a good Rule of *Alſted, Obedientia Chriſti eſt una copulativa*; The whole Obedience of Chriſt, both active and paſſive, make up one intire perfect Obedience: And therefore there is no reaſon why one Particle either of the one or of the other ſhould be excluded.

5. The Effect and Fruit of this his Satisfaction, is our Freedom, Ranſom, or Deliverance from the Wrath and Curſe due to us for our Sins. Such was the Dignity, Value, and Compleatneſs of Chriſt's Satisfaction, that in ſtrict Juſtice it merited our Redemption and full Deliverance; not only a Poſſibility that we might be redeemed and pardoned, but a Right whereby we ought to be ſo, as the learned Dr. *Twiſs* judiciouſly argues. If he be made a Curſe for us, we muſt then be redeemed from the Curſe, according to Juſtice: So the Apoſtle argues, Rom. 3. 25, 26. *Whom God hath ſet forth to be a Propitiation, through Faith in his Blood, to declare his Righteouſneſs for the Remiſſion of Sins that are paſt, through the Forbearance of God; to declare, I ſay, at this time his Righteouſneſs, that God might be juſt, and the Juſtifier of him that believeth in Jeſus.* Mark the Deſign and End of God in exacting Satisfaction from Chriſt, it was to declare his Righteouſneſs in the Remiſſion of Sin to Believers; and leſt we ſhould loſe the emphatical Word, he doubles it, *to declare, I ſay, his Righteouſneſs.* Every one can ſee how his Mercy is declared in Remiſſion: but he would have us take notice that his Juſtification of Believers is an Act of Juſtice; and that God, as he is a juſt God, cannot condemn the Believer, ſince Chriſt hath ſatisfied his Debts. This Attribute ſeems to be the main Bar againſt Remiſſion; but now it's become the very Ground and Reaſon why God remits. O how comfortable a Text is this! Doth Satan or Conſcience ſet forth thy Sin in all its diſcouraging Circumſtances and Aggravations? God hath ſet forth Chriſt to be a Propitiation. Muſt Juſtice be manifeſted, ſatisfied and glorified? So is it in the Death of Chriſt, ten thouſand times more than ever it could in thy Damnation. Thus you have a brief Account of the Satisfaction made by Jeſus Chriſt.

Chriſtus nactus eſt jus remitendorum peccatorum ſed non ejuſmodi quo poſſint remitti, ſed quo remitti debent omnia [illis] pro quibus per mortem ejus ſatisfactum eſt; alioqui injuſtus eſſet Deus, qui non ageret cum Chriſto filio ſuo, ſecundum exigentiam meritorum ejus. *Twiſſ. de permiſſ. lib.* 2.

Secondly, we ſhall gather up all that hath been ſaid to eſtabliſh the Truth of Chriſt's Satisfaction; proving the Reality of it, that it is not an improper, catachreſtical, fictitious Satisfaction, by Divine Acceptilation, as ſome have very diminutively called it; but real, proper, and full, and as ſuch accepted by God. For his Blood is the Blood of a *Surety*, Rom. 7. 22. who came under the ſame Obligations of the Law with us, *Gal.* 4. 4. and tho' he had no Sin of his own, yet ſtanding before God as our Surety, the Iniquities of us all were laid upon him, *Iſa.* 53. 6. and from him did the Lord, with great Severity, exact Satisfaction for our Sins, *Rom.* 8. 32. puniſh them upon his Soul, *Mat.* 27. 45. and upon his Body, *Acts* 2. 23. and with this Obedience of his Son is fully pleaſed and ſatisfied, *Epheſ.* 5. 2. and hath in Token thereof raiſed him from the Dead, and ſet him at his own right Hand, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. and for his Righteouſneſs ſake acquitted and diſcharged Believers,

vers, who shall never more come into Condemnation, *Rom.* 8. 1, 34. All this is plain in Scripture; and our Faith in the Satisfaction of Christ, is not built on the Wisdom of Man, but the everlasting sealed Truth of God: Yet such is the perverse Nature of Man, and the Pride of his Heart, that whilst he should be humbly adoring the Grace of God in providing such a Surety for us, he is found accusing the Justice, and diminishing the Mercy of God, and raising all the Objections which Satan and his own Heart can invent, to overturn that blessed Foundation upon which God hath built up his own Honour, and his Peoples Salvation.

Thirdly, In the next Place, therefore, we shall reject those Doctrines, and remove the Principal of those Objections that are found militating against the Satisfaction of Christ.

And in the first Place, we reject with deep Abhorrence that Doctrine, which ascribes to Man any Power in whole or in part to satisfie God for his own, or other Mens Sins. This no meer Creature can do by active Obedience, were it so compleat that he could never sin in Thought, Word or Deed, any more, but live the most holy Life that ever any lived: for all this would be no more than his Duty as a Creature, *Luke* 17. 10. and so can be no Sasisfaction for what he is by Nature, or hath done against God as a Sinner. Nor yet by *Suffering*; for we have offended an infinite God, and can never satisfie him by our finite Sufferings.

We also with like Detestation reject that Doctrine which makes the Satisfaction of Christ either impossible, or fictitious, and inconsistent with Grace, in the free Pardon of Sin. Many are the Cavils raised against Christ's Satisfaction; the principal are such as these that follow.

Object. *The Doctrine of Christ's Satisfaction is absurd, for Christ* (say we) *is God; if so, then God satisfies himself, than which what can be more absurd to imagine?*

Sol. I answer, God cannot properly be said to satisfie himself; for that would be the same thing as to pardon simply, without any Satisfaction. But there is a twofold Consideration of Christ; one in respect of his Essence and Divine Nature, in which Sense he is the Object both of the Offence, and of the Satisfaction made for it: Another in respect of his Person and Oeconomy, or Office; in which Sense he properly satisfies God, being in respect of his Manhood another, and inferior to God, *John* 14. 28. The Blood of the Man Christ Jesus is the Matter of the Satisfaction; the Divine Nature dignifies it, and makes it of infinite Value. A certain Family hath committed Treason against the King, and are all under the Condemnation of the Law for it; the King's Son, moved with Pity and Love, resolves to satisfie the Law, and yet save the Family; in order whereunto he marries a Daughter of the Family, whereby her Blood becomes Royal Blood, and worth the Blood of the whole Family whence she sprang; this Princess is by her Husband executed in the room of the rest. In this Case the King satisfies not himself for the Wrong, but is satisfied by the Death of another, equivalent in Worth to the Blood of them all. This Similitude answers not to all the Particulars, as indeed nothing in Nature doth or can, but it only shews what it was that satisfied God, and how it became so satisfactory.

Aliud est de divinitate Christi in se agere secundum naturam ipsius seorsim, aliud qua in supposito. *Tretcat.*

Christus secundum naturam divinam convenit cum Deo, quà homo nobiscum; ut contra, quâ Deus distat a nobis, quà homo, seu Oeconomia voluntaria, à Deo. *Idem ibid.* vid. Daven. *in Col.* 103. & Cameron. p. 361.

Object. *If Christ satisfied by paying our Debt, then he should have endured eternal Torments; for so we should, and the Damned shall.*

Sol. We must distinguish betwixt what is *essential*, and what is *accidental* in Punishment. The primary Intent of the Law is Reparation and Satisfaction; he that can make it at one intire Payment (as Christ could and did) ought to be discharged. He that cannot (as no meer Creature can) ought to lie for ever, as the Damned do, under Sufferings.

Object. *If God will be satisfied for our Sins before he pardon them, how then is Pardon an Act of Grace?*

Sol. Pardon could not be an Act of pure Grace, if God received Satisfaction from us; but if he pardon us upon the Satisfaction received from Christ, tho' it be of Debt to him, it is of Grace to us: for it was Grace to admit a Surety to satisfie, more Grace to provide him, and most of all to apply his Satisfaction to us, by uniting us to Christ, as he hath done.

Object. *But God loved us before Christ died for us; for it was the Love of God to the World that moved him to give his only begotten Son. Could God love us, and yet not be reconciled and satisfied?*

Sol. God's *complacential Love* is indeed inconsistent with an unreconciled State: He is reconciled to every one he so loves. But his *benevolent Love* consisting in his purpose of Good, may be before actual Reconciliation and Satisfaction.

Object. *Temporal Death, as well as Eternal, is a part of the Curse; if Christ have fully satisfied by bearing the Curse for us, how is it, that those for whom he bare it die as well as others?*

Sol. As Temporal Death is a *penal Evil*, and part of the Curse, so God inflicts it not upon Believers; but they must die for other Ends, *viz.* to be made perfectly happy in a more full and immediate Enjoyment of God, than they can have in the Body: and so *Death is theirs* by way of Priviledge, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22. *They are not Death's* by way of Punishment. The same may be said of all the Afflictions with which God for gracious Ends now exercises his reconciled ones. Thus much may suffice to establish this great Truth.

Inference 1. If the Death of Christ was that which satisfied God for all the Sins of the Elect, *then certainly there is an infinite Evil in Sin, since it cannot be expiated, but by an infinite Satisfaction.* Fools make a Mock at Sin, and there are but few Souls in the World that are duly sensible and affected with its Evil; but certainly, if God should damn thee to all Eternity, thy eternal Sufferings could not satisfie for the Evil that is in one vain Thought. It may be you may think this is harsh and severe, that God should hold his Creatures under everlasting Sufferings for Sin, and never be satisfied with them any more. But when you have well considered that the Object against whom you sin, is the infinite blessed God, which derives an infinite Evil to the Sin committed against him; and when you consider how God dealt with the Angels that fell for one Sin, and that but of the Mind; for having no bodily Organs, they could commit nothing externally against God; you will alter your Minds about it. O the Depth of the Evil of Sin! If ever you will see

Per hanc mortem Christi valde excitamur & ad cautelam, & ad detestationem peccati. Mortiferum enim sit necesse est, quod aliter sanari non potuit, quàm morte Christi. Quis igitur serio cogitans, peccata sua non esse aliter expiata quam sanguine ipsius filii Dei, non perhorrescet indies peccando, hunc pretiosissimum sanguinem quasi conculcare? *Daven. in Col. cap.* 1. *v.* 20.

how

how great and horrid an evil Sin is, measure it in your Thoughts, either by the infinite Holiness and Excellency of God, who is wrong'd by it; or by the infinite Sufferings of Christ, who died to satisfie for it; and then you will have deeper Apprehensions of the Evil of Sin.

Inference 2. If the Death of Christ satisfied God, and thereby redeemed the Elect from the Curse: *then the Redemption of Souls is costly; Souls are dear Things, and of great Value with God. Ye know* (saith the Apostle) *that ye were not redeemed with corruptible Things, as Silver and Gold, from your vain Conversation received by Tradition; but with the precious Blood of the Son of God, as of a Lamb without spot,* 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. Only the Blood of God is found an equivalent Price for the Redemption of Souls. Gold and Silver may redeem from *Turkish*, but not from *Hellish* Bondage. The whole Creation sold to the utmost Worth of it, is not a Value for the Redemption of one Soul. Souls are dear Ware; he that paid for them found them so: Yet how cheaply do Sinners sell their Souls, as if they were but low priz'd Commodities! But you that sell your Souls cheap, will buy Repentance dear.

Inference 3. If Christ's Death satisfied God for our Sins, *how unparallel'd is the Love of Christ to poor Sinners!* It's much to pay a pecuniary Debt to free another, but who will pay his own Blood for another? We have a noted Instance of *Zaleucus*, that famous *Locrensian* Lawgiver, who decreed, that whoever was convicted of Adultery, should have both his Eyes put out. It so fell out, that his own Son was brought before him for that Crime; hereupon the People interposing, made suit for his Pardon. At length, the Father partly overcome by their Importunities, and not unwilling to shew what lawful Favour he might to his Son, he first put out one of his own Eyes, and then one of his Son's; and so shewed himself both a merciful Father, and a just Lawgiver; so tempering Mercy with Justice, that both the Law was satisfied, and his Son spared. This is written by the Historian as an Instance of singular Love in his Father, to pay one half of the Penalty for his Son. But Christ did not divide and share in the Penalty with us, but bare it all. *Zaleucus* did it for his Son, who was dear to him; Christ did it for Enemies, that were fighting and rebelling against him: *Rom.* 5. 8. *While we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us.* "O would to God (said a holy one) I could "cause Paper and Ink to speak the Worth and Excellency, the high and loud Praises of our Brother Ransomer! O the Ransomer needs not my "Report; but O if he would take it, and make "Use of it! I should be happy if I had an Errand to "this World but for some few Years, to spread Proclamations, and Outcries, and Love-letters of the "Highness [the Highness for evermore] of the Ransomer, whose Cloaths were wet, and dyed in "Blood; howbeit, that after my Soul and Body "should go back to their Mother nothing."

Valerius, lib. 6. c. 5.

Inference 4. If Christ by dying hath made full Satisfaction, *then God is no Loser in pardoning the greatest of Sinners that believe in Jesus; and consequently his Justice can be no Bar to their Justification and Salvation.* He is just to forgive us our Sins, 1 *John* 1. 9. What an Argument is here for a poor Believer to plead with God! Lord, if thou save me by Jesus Christ, thy Justice will be fully satisfied at one round Payment; but if thou damn me, and require Satisfaction at my Hands, thou canst never receive it: I shall make but a dribbling Payment, tho' I lie in Hell to Eternity, and shall still be infinitely behind with thee. Is it not more for thy Glory to receive it from Christ's Hand, than to require it at mine? One Drop of his Blood is more worth than all my polluted Blood. O how satisfying a Thing is this to the Conscience of a poor Sinner that is objecting the Multitude, Aggravations, and amazing Circumstances of Sins, against the Possibility of their being pardoned! Can such a Sinner as I be forgiven? Yes, if thou believest in Jesus, thou mayest; for so God will lose nothing in pardoning the greatest Transgressors: *Let* Israel *hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is Mercy, and with him is plenteous Redemption,* Psal. 103. 7. *i. e.* a large Stock of Merit lying by him in the Blood of Christ, to pay him for all that you have done against him.

Inference 5. Lastly, If Christ hath made such a full Satisfaction as you have heard, *How much is it the Concernment of every Soul to abandon all Thoughts of satisfying God for his own Sins, and betake himself to the Blood of Christ the Ransomer, by Faith, that in that Blood they may be pardoned?* It would grieve one's Heart to see how many poor Creatures are drudging and tugging at a Task of Repentance, and revenge upon themselves, and Reformation, and Obedience, to satisfie God for what they have done against him: And alas! it cannot be, they do but lose their Labour; could they swelter their very Hearts out, weep till they can weep no more, cry till their Throats be parched, alas, they can never recompense God for one vain Thought: For such is the Severity of the Law, that when it is once offended, it will never be made Amends again by all that we can do; it will not discharge the Sinner for all the sorrow in the World. Indeed if a Man be in Christ, Sorrow for Sin is something, and renewed Obedience is something; God looks upon them favourably, and accepts them graciously in Christ: but out of him they signifie no more than the Intreaties and cries of a condemned Malefactor, to reverse the legal Sentence of the Judge. You may toil all the Days of your Life, and at Night go to Bed without a Candle. To that Sense that Scripture sounds, *Isa.* 50. *ult. Behold, all ye that kindle a Fire, that compass your selves about with Sparks; walk in the Light of your Fire, and in the Sparks that you have kindled: This shall ye have of mine hand, ye shall lie down in Sorrow.* By *Fire*, and the Light of it, some understand the sparkling Pleasures of this Life, and the sensitive Joys of the Creatures: But generally it's taken for our own natural Righteousness, and all Acts of Duties, in order to our Justification by them before God. And so it stands opposed to that Faith of Recumbency spoken of in the Verse before. By their *compassing themselves about with these Sparks*, understand their Dependance on these their Duties, and glorying in them. But see the fatal Issue, *Ye shall lie down in Sorrow:* That shall be your Recompence from the Hand of the Lord; that's all the Thanks and Reward you must expect from him, for slighting Christ's, and preferring your own Righteousness before his. Reader, be convinced, that one Act of Faith in the Lord Jesus pleases God more than all the Obedience, Repentance, and Strivings to obey the Law through thy whole Life can do. And thus you have the first special Fruits of Christ's Priesthood, in the full Satisfaction of God for all the Sins of Believers.

SER-

SERMON XV.

Surveys the bleſſed Inheritance purchaſed by the Oblation of Chriſt, being the ſecond Effect or Fruit of his Prieſthood.

GAL. IV. 4, 5.

But when the Fulneſs of Time was come, God ſent forth his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons.

THIS Scripture gives us an Account of a double Fruit of Chriſt's Death, *viz.* the Payment of our Debt, and the Purchaſe of our Inheritance.

1. The Payment of our Debt expreſſed by our Redemption, or buying us out from the Obligation and Curſe of the Law, which hath been diſcourſed in the laſt Exerciſe.

2. The Purchaſe of an Inheritance for thoſe redeemed ones, expreſſed here by their receiving the Adoption of Sons; which is to be our preſent Subject. *Adoption* is either *Civil*, or *Divine*. Of the firſt, the Civil Law gives this Definition; that it is,

A lawful Act, in Imitation of Nature, invented for the Comfort of them that have no Children of their own. Divine Adoption is that ſpecial Benefit whereby God, for Chriſt's ſake, accepteth us as Sons, and makes us Heirs of Eternal Life with him.

Summa Angel. ad verbum. Adoptio eſt actus legitimus, imitans naturam, repertus ad eorum ſolatium, qui liberos non habent. Adoptio eſt beneficium, quo nos Deus propter Chriſtum in filios recipit, & facit nos cum ipſo hæredes vitæ æternæ. *Ravanel.*

Hic ergo Adoptio capitur (ſicuti *Rom.* 8. 23. redemptio) pro ipſa poſſeſſione. Nam ſicuti ultimo die percipimus redemptionis noſtræ fructum, ita nunc percipimus, &c. *Calv. in loc.*

Betwixt this Civil and Sacred Adoption, there is a twofold Agreement and Diſagreement. They agree in this, that both flow from the Pleaſure and Good-will of the Adoptant; and in this, that both confer a Right to Privileges, which we have not by Nature: But in this they differ, one is an Act imitating Nature, the other tranſcends Nature; the one was found out for the Comfort of them that had no Children; the other for the Comfort of them that had no Father. This Divine Adoption is in Scripture either taken properly for that Act or Sentence of God, by which we are made Sons, or for the Privileges with which the Adopted are inveſted: And ſo it's taken, *Rom.* 8. 23. And in this Scripture now before us. We loſt our Inheritance by the Fall of *Adam*; we receive it, as the Text ſpeaks, by the Death of Chriſt, which reſtores it again to us by a new and better Title. The Doctrine hence, is this,

Doct. *That the Death of Jeſus Chriſt hath not only ſatisfied for our Debts, but over and above purchaſed a rich Inheritance for the Children of God.*

For this End, or Cauſe, he is the Mediator of the New Teſtament; that by Means of Death, for the Redemption of the Tranſgreſſions that were under the firſt Teſtament, they which are called, might receive the Promiſe of the Eternal Inheritance, Heb. 9. 15.

We will here, *firſt*, ſee what Chriſt paid. *Secondly*, what he purchaſed. *Thirdly*, for whom.

First, What Chriſt paid. Our Divines comprize the Virtue and Fruits of the Prieſthood of Chriſt in theſe two Things, *viz. Solutio Debiti, & Acquiſitio Hæreditatis*, Payment, and Purchaſe. Anſwerably the Obedience of Chriſt hath a double Relation, *Relatio legalis Juſtitiæ*, the Relation of a legal Righteouſneſs: an adequate and exactly proportionated Price. And it hath alſo in it *Relatio ſuperlegalis Meriti*, the Relation of a Merit over and beyond the Law.

Parker de deſcenſu. *l.* 3. *p.* 97. Dr. *Reynolds in* Pſal. 110. *Camero, p.* 363, &c.

To object (as ſome do) the Satisfaction of Chriſt was more than ſufficient, according to our Doctrine, and therefore could not be intended for the Payment of our Debt, is a ſenſeleſs Cavil. For ſurely if Chriſt paid more than was owing, he muſt needs pay all that was owing to Divine Juſtice. And truly it is but a bad requital of the Love of Jeſus Chriſt, who beſide the Payment of what we owed, would manifeſt his Bounty by the Redundancy of his Merit, which he paid to God to purchaſe a bleſſed Inheritance for us. This Overplus of Satisfaction (which was the Price of that Inheritance I am now to open) is not obſcurely hinted, but plainly expreſſed twice in *Rom.* 5. 15. *But not as the Offence, ſo alſo is the free Gift: For if through the Offence of one many be dead,* πολλῷ μᾶλλον, *much more the Grace of God, and the Gift by Grace, which is by one Man, Jeſus Chriſt,* ἐπερίσσευσε, *hath abounded, or flowed abundantly unto many.* So ver. 17. *For if by one Man's Offence, Death reigned by one,* πολλῷ μᾶλλον, *much more they which receive,* τὴν περισσείαν, *the Overflowings, or Abundance of Grace, and of the Gift of Righteouſneſs; ſhall reign in Life by one, Jeſus Chriſt.* In both which Places *Chriſt* and *Adam* are compared as the two Roots or common Heads of Mankind, both agreeing in this Property of communicating their Conditions to thoſe that are theirs; yet there is a great Deal of Difference betwixt them; for in Chriſt the Power is all divine, and therefore infinitely more active and effectual: He communicates abundantly more to his, than they loſt in *Adam*; ſo that his Blood is not only ſufficient to redeem all thoſe that are actually redeemed by it, but even the whole World alſo. And were there ſo many Worlds of Men, as there are Men in the World, it would be ſufficient for them alſo; and yet ſtill there would be an overplus

Satisfactio Chriſti fuit plus quam ſufficiens, non igitur ex debito, non ex obligato. *Fevard.* Dialog. 5. p. 382.

Dutch Annot. in loc.

Deodat. in loc.

plus of Value: For all those Worlds of Men would rise but to a finite Bulk; but this Blood is infinite in its Worth and Dignity. Since then there is not a whole World, no, not half, but the far less part redeemed by the Blood of Christ, which was sufficient for so many; how great must be the Surplusage and Redundancy of Merit? Here our Divines rightly distinguish betwixt the *Substance* and *Accidents* of Christ's Death and Obedience. Consider Christ's suffering as to the Substance of it, it was no more than what the Law required; for neither the Justice, nor Love of the Father, would permit that Christ should suffer more than what was necessary for him to bear, as our Surety: But as to the Circumstances, the Person of the Sufferer, the Cause and Efficacy of his Sufferings, *&c.* it was much more than sufficient; a *superlegale meritum*, a Merit above and beyond what the Law required: For tho' the Law required the Death of the Sinner, who is but a poor contemptible Creature, it did not require that one perfectly innocent should die: it did not require that God should shed his Blood; it did not require Blood of such Value and Worth as this was: I say, none of this the Law required, tho' God was pleased, for the Advancement and Manifestation of his Justice and Mercy in the highest, to admit and order this, by way of Commutation, admitting him to be our ἀντίψυχον, or Ransomer, by dying for us. And indeed it was a most gracious Relaxation of the Law, that admitted of such a Commutation as this; for hereby it comes to pass, that Justice is fully satisfied, and yet we live and are saved; which before was a thing that could not be imagined. Yea, now we are not only redeemed from Wrath, by the adequate Compensation made for our Sins by Christ's Blood and Sufferings substantially considered, but to a most glorious Inheritance purchased by his Blood, considered as the Blood of an *Innocent*, as the Blood of God, and therefore as most excellent and efficacious Blood, above what the Law demanded. And this is the meaning of *Athanasius*, when he saith that Christ recompensed or made Amends for small Things with great: He means not, that Sin considered absolutely and in it self, is small; O no, but compared with Christ's Blood, and the infinite Excellency and Worth of it, it is so. And *Chrysostom* to the same Purpose, Christ paid much more (saith he) than we owed, and so much more as the immense Ocean is more than a small Drop. So that it was rightly determined by holy *Anselm*; No Man, saith he, can pay to God what he owes him; Christ only paid more than he owed him. By this you see how rich a Treasure lies by Christ, to bestow in a Purchase for us, above what he paid to redeem us; even as much as his Soul and Body were more Worth than ours for whom it was sacrificed; which is so great a Sum, that all the Angels in Heaven, and Men on Earth, can never compute and sum up, so as to shew us the Total of it: And this was that inexhaustible Treasure that Christ expended, to procure and purchase the fairest Inheritance for Believers. Having seen the Treasure that purchased, let us next enquire into the Inheritance purchased by it.

Quoad substantiam pœnæ nihil plus perpessus est Christus quàm quod per legem debebatur; quoad circumstantias autem, patientis personam, patiendi causam, passionis efficaciam plus quam sufficiens satisfactio Christi à nobis dicitur. *Park. de descens.* l. 3.

Notant qui de legum relaxatione scripserunt, eas esse optimas relaxationes, quibus annexa est commutatio. *Grotius de satisfac.* cap. 5.

Christum parva magnis pensasse. *Athanas. de passione & cruce.*

Multo plura quam debemus Christus pro nobis solvit, tantoque plura, quanto guttulam exiguam pelagus excellit immensum.

Secondly, This Inheritance is so large, that it cannot be surveyed by Creatures; nor can the Boundaries and Limits thereof be described, for it comprehends all Things; 1 *Cor.* 3. 22. *All is yours, ye are Christ's and Christ is God's.* Rev. 21. 7. *He that overcomes shall inherit all Things.* And yet I do not think or say that *Dominium fundatur in gratia*, that temporal Dominion is founded in Grace. No, that's at the Cast and Dispose of Providence: But Christ by his Death hath restored a Right to all Things to his People.

Fidelibus est totus mundus. *Aug.*

But to be more particular, I shall distribute the Saints Inheritance purchased by Christ into three Heads: All *temporal* good Things, all *spiritual* good Things, and all *eternal* good Things are theirs.

1. *All Temporal good Things.* 1 Tim. 6. 7. *He hath given us all Things richly to enjoy.* Not that they have the *Possession*, but the Comfort and *Benefit* of all Things: Others have the Sting, Gall, Wormwood, Baits and Snares of the Creature; Saints only have the Blessing and Comfort of it. So that this little that a righteous Man hath, is (in this, among other Respects) *better than the Treasures of many wicked*: Which is the true Key to open that dark Saying of the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 6. 10. *As having nothing, and yet possessing all Things*: They only possess, others are possessed by the World. The Saints do *uti Mundo, & frui Deo*, use the World, and enjoy God in the Use of it. Others are deceived, defiled, and destroyed by the World; but these are refresht and furthered by it.

Christus meruit nobis omnia bona supernaturalia, & omnia auxilia, sive prævenientia, sive subsequentia; ac universa illa bona etsi bona, sunt nobis extrinseca, quæ rationem induunt mediorum ad nostram salutem. *Vincent. Austricens. de habit. Christi grat. prælect.* q. 5. p. 259.

2. *All Spiritual good Things* are purchased by the Blood of Christ for them; as *Justification*, which comprizes Remission of Sins, and Acceptation of our Persons by God: *Rom.* 3. 24. *Being justified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Christ. Sanctification* is also purchased for them; yea, both *initial* and *progressive* Sanctification: For of *God he is made unto us not only Wisdom and Righteousness, but Sanctification also*, 1 Cor. 1. 30. These two, *viz.* our Justification and Sanctification, are two of the most rich and shining Robes in the Wardrobe of Free-grace. How glorious and lovely do they render the Soul that wears them! These are like the Bracelets and Jewels *Isaac* sent to *Rebecca*. *Adoption* into the Family of God, is purchased for us by his Blood; *For ye are all the Children of God by Faith in Jesus Christ*, Gal. 3. 26. Christ as he is the Son, is *hæres natus*, the Heir by Nature; as he is *Mediator*, he is *hæres constitutus*, the Heir by Appointment, *appointed Heir of all Things*, as it is, *Heb.* 1. 2. By the Sonship of Christ, we being united to him by Faith, become Sons; and if Sons, then Heirs. O *what manner of Love is this, that we should be called the Sons of God!* 1 John. 3. 1. That a poor Beggar should be made an Heir, yea, an Heir of God, and a Joint-Heir with Christ! Yea, that very *Faith*, which is the Bond of Union, and consequently the Ground of all our Communion with Christ, is the Purchase of his Blood also: 2 Pet. 1. 1. *To them that have obtained like precious Faith with us, through the Righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* This most precious *Grace* is the dear Purchase

chaſe of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: Yea, all that *Peace, Joy,* and *ſpiritual Comfort,* which are ſweet Fruits of Faith, are with it purchaſed for us by this Blood.

So ſpeaks the Apoſtle in *Rom.* 5. 1, 2, 3. *Being juſtified by Faith, we have Peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt,* &c. Moreover *the Spirit* himſelf, who is the Author, Fountain, and Spring of all theſe Graces and Comforts, is procured for us by his Death and Reſurrection: Gal. 3. 13, 14. *Chriſt hath redeemed us from the Curſe of the Law, being made a Curſe for us; for it is written, Curſed is every one that hangeth on a Tree: That the Bleſſing of* Abraham *might come upon the Gentiles through Jeſus Chriſt, that we might receive the Promiſe of the Spirit through Faith.* That Spirit that firſt ſanctified, and ſince hath ſo often ſealed, comforted, directed, reſolved, guided, and quickned your Souls, had not come to perform any of theſe bleſſed Offices upon your Hearts, if Chriſt had not died.

3. *All Eternal good Things* are the Purchaſe of his Blood. Heaven, and all the Glory thereof, is purchaſed for you that are Believers, with this Price. Hence that Glory, whatever it be, is called *an Inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reſerved in Heaven for you:* To the lively hope whereof ye are begotten again, *by the Reſurrection of Chriſt from the Dead,* 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4. Not only preſent Mercies are purchaſed for us, but Things to come alſo, as it is 1 *Cor.* 3. 22. Man is a prudent and proſpecting Creature, and is not ſatisfied that it's well with him for preſent, unleſs he have ſome Aſſurance it ſhall be well with him for time to come. His Mind is taken up about what ſhall be hereafter; and from the good or evil Things to come, he raiſeth up to himſelf vaſt Hopes or Fears.

Therefore to compleat our Happineſs, and fill up the uttermoſt Capacity of our Souls, all the good of Eternity is put into the Account and Inventory of the Saints Eſtate and Inheritance. This Happineſs is ineffable; it's uſually diſtinguiſh'd into what is *eſſential,* and what is *acceſſory* to it. The *Eſſentials* of it, as we in our embodied State can conceive, is either the *objective, ſubjective,* or *formal* Happineſs to be enjoyed in Heaven.

The *Objective* Happineſs is God himſelf, Pſal. 73. 25. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee?* if it could be ſuppoſed (ſaith one) that God ſhould withdraw from the Saints in Heaven, and ſay, Take Heaven and divide it among you; but as for me, I will withdraw from you; the Saints would fall weeping in Heaven, and ſay, Lord, take Heaven, and give it to whom thou wilt; it's no Heaven to us, except thou be there: Heaven would be a very *Bokim* to the Saints without God. In this our Glory in Heaven conſiſts, to be ever with the Lord, 1 *Theſſ.* 4. 17. God himſelf is the chief Part of a Saint's Inheritance; in which Senſe, as ſome will underſtand, *Rom.* 8. 7. they are called *Heirs of God.*

The *Subjective* Glory and Happineſs is the Attemperation and ſuiting of the Soul and Body to God. This is begun in Sanctification and perfected in Glorification. It conſiſts in removing from both all that is indecent, and inconſiſtent with a State of ſuch compleat Glory and Happineſs, and in ſuperinducing and cloathing it with all heavenly Qualities.

The Immunities of the Body are its Freedom from all natural Infirmities; which as they come in, ſo they go out with Sin. Thenceforth there ſhall be no Diſeaſes, Deformities, Pains, Flaws, Monſtroſities; their good Phyſician Death hath cured all this, and their vile Bodies ſhall be made like unto Chriſt's glorious Body, *Phil.* 3. 21. and be made a ſpiritual Body, 1 *Cor.* 15. 44. For *Agility,* like the Chariots of *Amminadab*; for *Beauty,* as the Top of *Lebanon*; for *Incorruptibility,* as if they were *pure Spirits.*

The *Soul* alſo is diſcharged and freed from all Darkneſs and Ignorance of Mind, being now able to diſcern all Truths in God, that chriſtal Ocean of Truth. The Leaks of the Memory ſtopt for ever; the roving of its Fancy perfectly cured; the Stubbornneſs and Reluctancy of the Will for ever ſubdued, and retained in due and full Subjection to God. So that the Saints in Glory ſhall be free from all that now troubles them; they ſhall never ſin more, nor be once tempted ſo to do, for no Serpent hiſſes in that Paradiſe; they ſhall never grieve or groan more, for God ſhall wipe all Tears from their Eyes: They ſhall never be troubled more, for God will then recompence Tribulation to their Troublers, and to them that are troubled, Reſt; they ſhall never doubt more, for Fruition excludes Doubting.

The *formal* Happineſs is the Fulneſs of Satisfaction reſulting from the bleſſed Sight and Enjoyment of God, by a Soul ſo attemper'd to him, Pſal. 17. 15. *When I awake, I ſhall be ſatisfied with thy Likeneſs.* This Sight of God in Glory, called the beatifical Viſion, muſt needs yield ineffable Satisfaction to the beholding Soul, in as much as it will be an *intuitive* Viſion. The intellectual or mental Eye ſhall ſee God, 1 *John* 3. 2. The corporeal glorified Eye ſhall ſee Chriſt, *Job* 19. 26, 27. What a raviſhing Viſion will this be? And how much will it exceed all Reports and Apprehenſions we had here of it! Surely the one half was not told us. It will be a *transformative Viſion,* it will change the Beholder into its own Image and Likeneſs. *We ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is,* 1 John 3. 2. As Iron put into the Fire, becomes all fiery; ſo the Soul by converſing with God, is changed into his very Similitude. It will be an *appropriative Viſion*; *Whom ſhall I ſee for myſelf,* Job 19. 26, 27. In Heaven Intereſt is clear and undoubted; Fear is caſt out: No need of Marks and Signs there; for what a Man ſees and enjoys, how can he doubt of? It will be a *raviſhing Viſion*; theſe we have by Faith are ſo, how much more thoſe in Glory? How was *Paul* tranſported, when he was in a viſional way wrapt up into the third Heaven, and heard the unutterable Things, tho' he was not admitted into the bleſſed Society, but was with them, as the Angels are in our Aſſemblies, a Stander by, a Looker on! If a Spark do ſo inflame, what is it to lie down like a *Phœnix* in her Bed of Spices! like a *Salamander* to live and move in the Fire of Love! It will alſo be an *eternal Viſion*; *vacabimus, & videbimus,* (as *Auguſtin* ſaid) we ſhall then be at leiſure for this Imployment, and have no Diverſions from it for ever. No Evening is mentioned to the ſeventh Day's Sabbath; no Night in the new *Jeruſalem.* And therefore,

Laſtly, It will be *a fully-ſatisfying Viſion:* God will then be all in all, *Etiam ipſa curioſitas ſatietur,* Curioſity it ſelf will be ſatisfied. The bleſſed Soul will feel it ſelf bleſſed, filled, ſatisfied in every part. Ah what a Happineſs is here! to look and love, to drink and ſing, and drink again at the Fountain-head of the higheſt Glory! And if at any time its Eye be turned from a direct to a reflex ſight upon what it once was, how it was wrought on, how fitted for this Glory, how wonderfully diſtinguiſhed by ſpecial Grace from them that are howling in Flames, whilſt himſelf is ſhouting aloud upon his Bed of everlaſting Reſt; all this will enhance the Glory.

And ſo alſo will the *Acceſſories* of this Bleſſedneſs, *The Place* where God is enjoyed, the *Empyrean Hea-*

ven, the City of God, whither Chriſt aſcended, where the great Aſſembly are met. Paradiſe and *Canaan* were but the Types of it; more excelling and tranſcending the Royal Palaces of earthly Princes, than they do a Pigeon-hole. *The Company* alſo with whom he is enjoyed, adds to the Glory. A bliſsful Society indeed! Store of good Neighbours in that City. There we ſhall have familiar Converſe with Angels, whoſe Appearances now are inſupportable by poor Mortals: There will be ſweet and full Cloſings alſo betwixt the Saints; *Luther* and *Zuinglius* are there agreed. Here they could not fully cloſe with one another, and no wonder, for they could not fully cloſe with themſelves. But there is perfect Harmony and Unity; all meeting and cloſing in God, as Lines in the Center. This is a bleſſed Glimpſe of your Inheritance.

Thirdly, All this is purchaſed for Believers: Hence it's call'd, *the Inheritance of the Saints in Light*, Col. 1. 12. *All is yours, for ye are Chriſt's*, that is the Tenure, 1 Cor. 3. 23. So Rom. 8. 30. *Whom he did predeſtinate, them he alſo called; and whom he called, them he alſo juſtified; and whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified.* Only thoſe that are Sons, are Heirs, *Rom.* 8. 17. The unrighteous ſhall not inherit, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9. *It's the Father's good Pleaſure to give the Kingdom to the little Flock*, Luke 12. 32.

Inference 1. Hath Chriſt not only redeemed you from Wrath, but purchaſed ſuch an eternal Inheritance alſo by the Overplus of his Merit for you? O *how well content ſhould Believers then be with their Lot of Providence in this Life, be it what it will!* Content did I ſay? I ſpeak too low, overcome, raviſht, filled with Praiſes and Thankſgivings, how low, how poor, how afflicted ſoever for the preſent they are. O let not ſuch Things as grumbling, repining, fretting at Providence be found, or once named among the Expectants of this Inheritance! Suppoſe you had taken a Beggar from your Door, and adopted him to be your Son, and made him Heir of a large Inheritance, and after this he ſhould conteſt and quarrel with you for a Trifle; could you bear it? How to work the Spirit of a Saint into Contentment with a low Condition here, I have laid down ſeveral Rules in another Diſcourſe, to which for preſent I refer the Reader.

A Saint indeed, p. 88, 89, &c.

Inference 2. *With what weaned Affections ſhould the People of God walk up and down the World, content to live, and willing to die?* For Things preſent are theirs if they live, and Things to come are theirs if they die. *Paul* expreſſes himſelf in a Frame of holy Indifferency, *Phil.* 1. 22. *Which to chuſe I know not.* Many of them that are now in Fruition of their Inheritance above, had *vitam in patientia, mortem in deſiderio*, Life in Patience, and Death in Deſire, while they tabernacled with us. "O (cried one) what would I "give to have a Bed made to my wearied Soul in "Chriſt's Boſom? — I cannot tell you what ſweet "Pain, and delightful Torments are in his Love; "I often challenge Time for holding us aſunder; I "profeſs to you, I have no Reſt till I be over Head "and Ears in Love's Ocean. If Chriſt's Love (that "Fountain of Delights) were laid open to me as I "would wiſh, O how drunken would this my Soul "be! I half call his Abſence cruel; and the Mask "and Vail on his Face a cruel Covering, that hideth ſuch a fair, fair Face from a ſick Soul. I dare "not challenge himſelf, but his Abſence is a Mountain of Iron upon my heavy Heart. O when "ſhall we meet! How long is it to the Dawning of "the Marriage-Day! O ſweet Lord Jeſus, take "wide Steps! O my Lord, come over Mountains "at one Stride! O my Beloved, flee like a Roe, or "young Hart, upon the Mountains of Separation! "O if he would fold the Heavens together like an old "Cloak, and ſhovel Time and Days out of the way, "and make ready in haſte the Lamb's Wife for her "Husband! Since he looked upon me, my Heart is "not mine own."

Who can be blamed for deſiring to ſee that fair Inheritance which is purchaſed for him? But truly ſhould God hold up the Soul by the Power of Faith, from Day to Day, to ſuch Sights as theſe, who would be content to live a Day more on Earth? How ſhould we be ready to pull down the Priſon-walls, and not have Patience to wait till God open the Door! As the Heathen ſaid,

Victuroſque dii celant, ut vivere durant.

And truly the Wiſdom of God is in this ſpecially remarkable, in giving the next Creature ſuch an admirable Craſis and even Temper, as that Scripture, 2 *Theſ.* 3. 5. expreſſes, *The Lord direct your Hearts into the Love of God, and patient waiting for of Chriſt.* Love inflames with Deſire, Patience allays that Fervor. So that fervent Deſires (as one happily expreſſes it) are allayed with meek Submiſſion; mighty Love with ſtrong Patience. And had not God twiſted together theſe two Principles in the Chriſtian's Conſtitution, he had framed a Creature to be a Torment to it ſelf, to live upon a very Rack.

Inference 3. *Hence we infer the Impoſſibility of their Salvation that know not Chriſt, nor have Intereſt in his Blood.* Neither Heathens, nor meerly nominal Chriſtians, can inherit Heaven. I know ſome are very indulgent to the Heathen, and many formal Chriſtians are but too much ſo to themſelves: But Union by Faith with Jeſus Chriſt, is the only way revealed in Scripture, by which we hope to come to the heavenly Inheritance. I know it ſeems hard, that ſuch brave Men, as ſome of the Heathens were, ſhould be damned: but the Scripture knows no other way to Glory, but Chriſt put on and applied by Faith. And it is the common Suffrage of modern ſound Divines, that no Man by the ſole Conduct of Nature, without the Knowledge of Chriſt, can be ſaved. There is but one way to Glory for all the World, *John* 14. 6. *No man cometh to the Father but by me.* Gal. 3. 14. *The Bleſſing of* Abraham *comes upon the Gentiles through Faith.* Scripture aſſerts the Impoſſibility of being or doing any thing that is truly evangelically good out of Chriſt, *John* 15. 5. *Without me ye can do nothing*; and Heb. 11. 6. *Without Faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God.*

Scripture every where connects and chains Salvation with Vocation, *Rom.* 8. 30. and Vocation with the Goſpel, *Rom.* 10. 14. To thoſe that plead for the Salvation of Heathens, and profane Chriſtians, we may apply that tart Rebuke of *Bernard*, that while ſome labour to make *Plato* a Chriſtian, he feared they therein did prove themſelves to be Heathens.

Inference 4. *How greatly are we all concerned to clear up our Title to the heavenly Inheritance!* It's horrible to ſee how induſtrious many are for an Inheritance on Earth, and how careleſs for Heaven. By which we may plainly ſee how vilely the noble Soul is depreſſed by Sin, and ſunk down into Fleſh, minding only the Concernments of the Fleſh. Hear me ye that labour for the World, as if Heaven were in it; What will ye do when at Death you ſhall look back over your Shoulder, and ſee what you have ſpent your Time

and

and Strength for, ſhrinking and vaniſhing away from you? When you ſhall look forward, and ſee vaſt Eternity opening its Mouth to ſwallow you up; O then what would you give for a well-grounded Aſſurance of an eternal Inheritance!

O therefore, if you have any Concernment for your poor Souls; if it be not indifferent to you what becomes of them, whether they be ſaved, or whether they be damned, *give all Diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure*, 2 Pet. 1. 10. *Work out your own Salvation with Fear and Trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good Pleaſure*, Phil. 2. 12. Remember it is *Salvation* you work for, and that's no Trifle. Remember it's *your own Salvation*, and not another's. It is for thy own poor Soul that thou art ſtriving; and what haſt thou more?

Remember, now God offers you his helping Hand; now the Spirit waits upon you in the Means, but of the Continuance thereof you have no Aſſurance; for it is of *his own good Pleaſure*, and not at yours. To your Work Souls, to your Work. Ah, ſtrive as Men that know what an Inheritance in Heaven is worth.

And as for you that have ſolid Evidence that it is yours; O that with Hands and Eyes lifted up to Heaven, you would adore that free Grace, that hath entitled a Child of Wrath to a heavenly Inheritance! Walk as becomes Heirs of God, and Joint-heirs with Chriſt. Be often looking Heaven-ward, when Wants pinch here. O look to that fair Eſtate you have reſerved in Heaven for you, and ſay, I am haſtning home; and when I come thither, all my Wants ſhall be ſupplied. Conſider what it coſt Chriſt to purchaſe it for thee; and with a deep Senſe of what he hath laid out for thee, let thy Soul ſay, *Bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt.*

SERMON XVI.

Opens the Kingly Office of Chriſt, as executed ſpiritually upon the Souls of the Redeemed.

2 COR. X. 5.

Caſting down Imaginations, and every Thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the Knowledge of God, and bringing into Captivity every Thought to the Obedience of Chriſt.

WE now come to the *Regal Office*, by which our glorious Mediator executes and diſchargeth he undertaken Deſign of our Redemption. Had he ot as our *Prophet* opened the Way of Life and Salva- on to the Children of Men, they could never have nown it; and ſhould they have clearly known it, xcept as their *Prieſt* he had offered up himſelf, to im- etrate and obtain Redemption for them, they could ot have been redeemed virtually by his Blood; and they had been ſo redeemed, yet had he not lived in he Capacity of a *King*, to apply this Purchaſe of is Blood to them, they could have had no actual erſonal Benefit by his Death: For what he revealed a Prophet, he purchaſed as a Prieſt; and what he revealed and purchaſed as Prophet and Prieſt, he pplies as King; firſt ſubduing the Souls of his Elect his Spiritual Government; then ruling them as his bjects, and ordering all Things in the Kingdom of rovidence for their good. So that Chriſt hath a ofold Kingdom, the one *Spiritual* and *Internal*, which he ſubdues and rules the Hearts of his Peo- e; the other *Providential* and *External*, whereby guides, rules, and orders all Things in the World a bleſſed Subordination to their Eternal Salvation. m to ſpeak from this Text of his Spiritual and In- nal Kingdom.

Theſe Words are conſiderable two ways, either *re- ively* or *abſolutely*. Conſidered *relatively*, they are Vindication of the Apoſtle from the unjuſt Cenſures the *Corinthians*, who very unworthily interpreted Gentleneſs, Condeſcenſion, and winning Affabi- , to be no better than a fawning upon them for f-ends; and the Authority he exerciſed, no better an Pride and Imperiouſneſs. But hereby he lets m know, that as Chriſt needs not, ſo he never uſed ſuch carnal Artifices: *The Weapons of our Warfare* (ſaith he) *are not carnal, but mighty through God*, &c.

Abſolutely conſidered, they hold forth the Efficacy of the Goſpel in the Plainneſs and Simplicity of it, for the ſubduing of rebellious Sinners to Chriſt: And in them we have theſe three Things to conſider.

1. The *Oppoſitions* made by Sinners againſt the Aſſaults of the Goſpel, *viz. Imaginations*, or Reaſonings, as the Word λογισμὸς may be fitly rendred. He means the Subtilties, Slights, Excuſes, Subterfuges, and Arguings of fleſhly-minded Men; in which they fortifie and entrench themſelves againſt the Convictions of the Word: yea, and there are not only ſuch carnal Reaſonings, but many proud high Conceits with which poor Creatures ſwell, and ſcorn to ſubmit to the abaſing, humble, ſelf-denying way of the Goſpel. Theſe are the Fortifications erected againſt Chriſt by the carnal Mind.

Munitiones eleganti metaphora uſurpat pro rationi- eo, in quo hoſtes evangelii contra veritatem cœleſtis verbi ſeſe muniunt, tuentur; qualia ſunt carnalis ſapientiæ, eruditio, & eloquentia. *S. Glaſſius.*

2. We have here the *Conqueſt* which the Goſpel obtains over Sinners, thus fortified againſt it: It caſts down, and overthrows, and takes in theſe ſtrong Holds. Thus Chriſt ſpoils Satan of his Armour in which he truſted, by ſhewing the Sinner that all this can be no Defence to his Soul againſt the Wrath of God. But that's not all; in the next Place,

3. You have here the *Improvement of the Victory*: Chriſt doth not only lead away theſe Enemies ſpoiled, but brings them into Obedience to himſelf, *i. e.* makes them after Converſion, Subjects of his own Kingdom, obedient, uſeful, and ſerviceable to himſelf; and ſo is more than a Conqueror. They do not only lay

down their Arms, and fight no more againſt Chriſt with them; but repair to his Camp, and fight for Chriſt, with thoſe Reaſons of theirs that were before employed againſt him: As it's ſaid of *Jerom*, *Origen*, and *Tertullian*, that they came into *Canaan* laden with Egyptian Gold; that is, they came into the Church full of excellent Learning and Abilities, with which they eminently ſerved Jeſus Chriſt. O bleſſed Victory, where the Conqueror and Conquered both triumph together! And thus Enemies and Rebels are ſubdued, and made Subjects of the Spiritual Kingdom of Chriſt. Hence the Doctrinal Note is,

O beata victoria, ubi victi cum victoribus ſimul triumphant! *Meyer. in loc.*

Doct. *That Jeſus Chriſt exerciſes a Kingly Power over the Souls of all whom the Goſpel ſubdues to his Obedience.*

No ſooner were the *Coloſſians* delivered out of the Power of Darkneſs, but they were immediately tranſlated into the Kingdom of Chriſt the Dear Son, *Col.* 1. 13.

This Kingdom of Chriſt, which is our preſent Subject, is the internal ſpiritual Kingdom, which is ſaid to be within the Saints, *Luke* 17. 20, 21. *The Kingdom of God is within you.* Chriſt ſits as an enthroned King in the Hearts, Conſciences and Affections of his willing People, *Pſal.* 110. 3. And his Kingdom conſiſts in *Righteouſneſs, Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt*, Rom. 14. 17. and is properly monarchical, as appears in the Margin:

Internum Regimen eſt monarchicum & non poteſt non eſſe. Nulli enim tribui debet jus regendi hominum conſcientiam præterquam ei qui idem eſt ſapientiſſimus, & potentiſſimus. Neque in hoc regimine Chriſtus habet vicarium potentiæ, atque poteſtatis ſuæ.

In the Proſecution of this Point, I will ſpeak doctrinally to theſe three Heads.

Firſt, How Chriſt obtains the Throne in the Hearts of Men.

Secondly, How he rules in it, and by what Acts he exerciſeth his Kingly Authority.

Thirdly, What are the Privileges of thoſe Souls over whom Chriſt reigns. And then apply it.

Firſt, We will open the Way and Manner in which Chriſt obtains a Throne in the Hearts of Men, and that is by *Conqueſt*: For tho' the Souls of the Elect are his by Donation, and Right of Redemption; the Father gave them to him, and he died for them; yet Satan hath the firſt Poſſeſſion: And ſo it fares with Chriſt, as it did with *Abraham*, to whom God gave the Land of *Canaan* by Promiſe and Covenant; but the *Canaanites*, *Perizites*, and Sons of *Anak*, had the actual Poſſeſſion of it, and *Abraham*'s Poſterity muſt fight for it, and win it by Inches before they enjoy it. The Houſe is conveyed to Chriſt by him that built it, but the ſtrong Man armed keeps the Poſſeſſion of it, till a ſtronger than he comes and ejects him, *Luke* 11. 20, 21, 22. Chriſt muſt fight his Way into the Soul, tho' he have a Right to enter as into his dearly purchaſed Poſſeſſion. And ſo he doth; for when the Time of recovering them is come, he ſends forth his Armies to ſubdue them; as it is, Pſal. 110. 3. *Thy People ſhall be willing in the Day of thy Power.* The *Hebrew* may as fitly be rendred, and ſo is by ſome, *in the Day of thine Armies*; when the Lord Jeſus ſent forth his Armies of Prophets, Apoſtles, Evangeliſts, Paſtors, Teachers, under the Conduct of his Spirit, armed with that two-edged Sword, the Word of God, which is ſharp and powerful, *Heb.* 4. 12. But that's not all: He cauſes Armies of Convictions, and ſpiritual Troubles, to begirt and ſtraiten them on every Side, ſo that they know not what to do. Theſe Convictions, like a Shower of Arrows, ſtrike point-blank into their Conſciences; Acts 2. 37. *When they heard this, they were pricked to the Heart, and ſaid, Men and Brethren, what ſhall we do?* Chriſt's Arrows are ſharp in the Hearts of his Enemies, whereby the People fall under him, *Pſal.* 45. 5, 6. By theſe Convictions he batters down all their looſe vain Hopes, and levels them with the Earth.

Nam infinita poteſtas, quantumvis vicaria ſit, in hominem nullum cadere poteſt; etiam eſt quoddam genus unionis, quod vicarium omnem excludat, ut Patris & Filii, Mariti & Uxoris; nam hic certe vicariatus non poteſt habere locum. *Maccov. loc. Com. p.* 641.

וְחִלְדֵי בִיוֹם, In die exercitus tui, cum ſcilicet miſſis Apoſtolis, & aliis eccleſiarum doctoribus, voce evangelii inter gentes colliges & conſtitues tibi regnum. *Mol. in loc.*

Now all their weak Pleas and Defences, from the general Mercy of God, the Example of others, *&c.* prove but as Paper-Walls to them. Theſe ſhake their Hearts, even to the very Foundation, and overturn every high Thought there, that exalts it ſelf againſt the Lord. This Day in which Chriſt ſits down before the Soul, and ſummons it by ſuch Meſſengers as theſe, is a Day of Diſtreſs within; yea, ſuch a Day of Trouble that none is like it. But tho' it be ſo, yet Satan hath ſo deeply entrencht himſelf in the Mind and Will, that the Soul yields not at the firſt Summons, till its Proviſions within are ſpent, and all its Towers of Pride, and Walls of vain Confidence, be undermined by the Goſpel, and ſhaken down about its Ears: And then the Soul deſires a Parley with Chriſt. O now it would be glad of Terms, any Terms, if it may but ſave its Life; let all go as a Prey to the Conqueror: Now it ſends many ſuch Meſſages as theſe to Chriſt, who is come now to the very Gates of the Soul, Mercy, Lord, Mercy; O were I but aſſured thou would'ſt receive, ſpare and pardon me, I would open to thee the next Moment! Thus the Soul is *ſhut up to the Faith of Chriſt*, as it is, *Gal.* 3. 23: and reduced now to the greateſt Strait and Loſs imaginable; and now the merciful King, whoſe only Deſign is to conquer the Heart, hangs forth the white Flag of Mercy before the Soul, giving it Hopes it ſhall be ſpared, and pitied, and pardoned, tho' ſo long in Rebellion againſt him, if yet it will yield it ſelf to Chriſt. Many Staggerings, Heſitations, Irreſolutions, Doubts, Fears, Scruples, half-reſolves, Reaſonings for and againſt, there are at the Counſel-Table of Man's own Heart at this Time. Sometimes there is no Hope; Chriſt will ſlay me if I go forth to him, and then it trembles. But then, whoever found him ſo that tried him? Other Souls have yielded, and found Mercy beyond all their Expectations. O but I have been a deſperate Enemy againſt him. Admit it, yet thou haſt the Word of a King for it; *Let the wicked forſake his Way, and the unrighteous Man his Thoughts; and let him turn to the Lord, and he will have Mercy on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon him*, Iſa. 55. 7.

But the Time of Mercy is paſt, I have ſtood out too long: Yet if it were ſo, How is it that Chriſt hath not made ſhort Work, and cut me off? Sent Fire, Hell-fire to my Soul, and withdrawn the Siege? Still he waiteth that he may be gracious, and is exalted that he may have Compaſſion. A thouſand ſuch Debates there are, till at laſt the Soul conſidering, if it abide in Rebellion, it muſts needs periſh; if it go forth to Chriſt, it can but periſh; and being ſomewhat encouraged by the Meſſages of Grace

ſent into the Soul at this Time, ſuch as that, *Heb.* 7. 25. *Wherefore he is able to ſave to the utmoſt all that come unto God by him*; and that, *John* 6. 37. *He that cometh to me, I will in no Wiſe caſt out:* and that, *Mat.* 11. 28. *Come unto me ye that are weary, and heavy laden, and I will give you Reſt:* It is at laſt reſolved to open to Chriſt; and ſaith, *Stand open ye everlaſting Gates, and be ye opened ye everlaſting Doors; the King of Glory ſhall come in.* Now the Will ſpontaneouſly opens to Chriſt; that Fort-Royal ſubmits and yields; all the Affections open to him: The Will brings Chriſt the Keys of all the Rooms in the Soul. Concerning this triumphant Entrance of Chriſt into the Soul, we may ſay, as the *Pſalmiſt* rhetorically ſpeaks concerning the triumphant Entrance of *Iſrael* into *Canaan*, Pſal. 114. 5, 6. *The Mountains skipped like Rams, and the little Hills like Lambs; what ailed thee, O thou Sea, that thou fleddeſt? Thou* Jordan, *that thou waſt driven back?* So here, in a like rhetorical Triumph, we may ſay, the Mountains and Hills skipt like Rams, the fixed and obſtinate Will ſtarts from its own Baſis and Center; the rocky Heart rends in twain. A poor Soul comes to the World full of Ignorance, Pride, Self-Love, deſperate Hardneſs, and fixed Reſolutions to go on in its Way: And by an Hour's Diſcourſe the Tide turns, *Jordan* is driven back: What aileth thee thou ſtout Will, that thou ſurrendereſt to Chriſt? Thou hard Heart, that thou relenteſt, and the Waters guſh out? And thus the Soul is won to Chriſt: He writes down his Terms, and the Soul willingly ſubſcribes them. Thus it comes in to Chriſt by free and hearty Submiſſion, deſiring nothing more than to come under the Government of Chriſt for Time to come.

Secondly, Let us ſee how Chriſt rules in the Souls of ſuch as ſubmit to him. And there are ſix Things in which he exerts his Kingly Authority over them.

It is proper to Chriſt, who rules abſolutely and monarchically over the Souls and Conſciences of Men, to bind them by his own Authority. None but Chriſt can do it, 1. *Becauſe this Authority of Chriſt is infinite.* 2. *Becauſe its the Authority of a Husband which cannot be communicated to any other,* 1 Cor. 2. 21, 22.

1. *He impoſes a new Law upon them, and enjoins them to be ſevere and punctual in their Obedience to it.* The Soul was a *Belialite* before, and could endure no Reſtraint; its Luſts gave it Law: *We our ſelves were ſometimes fooliſh, diſobedient, ſerving divers Luſts and Pleaſures,* Tit. 3. 3. Whatever the Fleſh craved, and the ſenſual Appetite whined after, it muſt have, coſt what it would coſt: If Damnation were the Price of it, it would have it, provided it ſhould not be preſent Pay. Now it muſt not be any longer ἄνομος θεῷ, ἀλλ' ἔννομος τῷ χείσῳ, without Law to God; but under Law to Chriſt. Thoſe are the Articles of Peace which the Soul willingly ſubſcribes in the Day of its Admiſſion to Mercy, Mat. 11. 29. *Take my Yoak upon you, and learn of me.* This *Law of the Spirit of Life, which is in Chriſt Jeſus, makes them free from the Law of Sin and Death,* Rom. 8. 2. Here's much Strictneſs, but no Bondage; for the Law is not only written in Chriſt's Statute-book, the Bible, but copied out by his Spirit upon the Hearts of Subjects, in correſpondent Principles; which makes Obedience a Pleaſure, and Self-denial eaſie. Chriſt's Yoak is lined with Love, ſo that it never galls the Necks of his People: 1 *John* 5. 3. *His Commandments are not grievous.* The Soul that comes under Chriſt's Government, muſt receive Law from Chriſt; and under Law every Thought of the Heart muſt come.

2. *He rebukes and chaſtiſes Souls for the Violations and Tranſgreſſions of his Law.* That's another Act o Chriſt's Regal Authority; *whom he loves he rebukes and chaſtens,* Heb. 12. 6, 7. Theſe Chaſtiſements of Chriſt are either by the Rod of *Providence* upon their *Bodies* and outward Comforts, or upon their *Spirits* and inward Comforts. Sometimes his Rebukes are ſmart upon the outward Man, 1 Cor. 11. 30. *For this Cauſe many among you are weakly, and ſick, and many ſleep.* They had not that due Regard to his Body that became them, and he will make their Bodies to ſmart for it. And he had rather their Fleſh ſhould ſmart, than their Souls ſhould periſh. Sometimes he ſpares their outward, and afflicts their inner Man, which is a much ſmarter Rod. He withdraws Peace, and takes away Joy from the Spirits of his People. The Hidings of his Face are ſore Rebukes. However, all is for Emendation, not for Deſtruction. And it is not the leaſt Privilege of Chriſt's Subjects to have a ſeaſonable and ſanctified Rod to reduce them from the Ways of Sin: *Pſal.* 23. 3. *Thy Rod and thy Staff they comfort me.* Others are ſuffer'd to go on ſtubbornly in the Way of their own Hearts; Chriſt will not ſpend a Rod upon them for their good, will not call them to Account for any of their Tranſgreſſions, but will reckon with them for all together in Hell.

3. *Another Regal Act of Chriſt, is the reſtraining and keeping his Servants from Iniquity, and withholding them from thoſe Courſes which their own Hearts would incline and lead them to:* For even in them there is a Spirit bent to back-ſliding, but the Lord in Tenderneſs over them, keeps back their Souls from Iniquity, and that when they are upon the very Brink of Sin; *My Feet were almoſt gone, my Steps were well nigh ſlipt,* Pſal. 73. 2. Then doth the Lord prevent Sin, by removing the Occaſion providentially, or by helping them to reſiſt the Temptation, graciouſly aſſiſting their Spirits in their Trial, ſo that no Temptation ſhall befal them, but a Way of Eſcape ſhall be opened that they may be able to bear it, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. And thus his People have frequent Occaſions to bleſs his Name for his preventing Goodneſs, when they are almoſt in the Midſt of all Evil. And this I take to be the Meaning of *Gal.* 5. 16. *This I ſay then, walk in the Spirit, and ye ſhall not fulfill the Luſts of the Fleſh;* tempted by them you may be, but fulfil them ye ſhall not: My Spirit ſhall cauſe the Temptation to die, and wither away in the Womb, in the Embrio of it, ſo that it ſhall not come to a full Birth.

4. *He protects them in his Ways, and ſuffers them not to relapſe from him into a State of Sin, and Bondage to Satan any more.* Indeed he is reſtleſs in his Endeavours to reduce them again to his Obedience; he never leaves tempting and ſolliciting for their Return: and where he finds a falſe Profeſſor he prevails; but Chriſt keeps his, that that they depart not again. *John* 17. 12. *All that thou haſt given me I have kept, none of them is loſt, but the Son of Perdition.* They are *kept by the mighty Power of God, through Faith to Salvation,* 1 Pet. 1. 5. Kept as in a Gariſon, according to the Importance of that Word. None more *ſollicited*, none more *ſafe* than the People of God. They are *preſerved in Chriſt Jeſus,* Jude 1. It is not their own Grace that ſecures them, but Chriſt's Care and continual Watchfulneſs. Our own Graces left to themſelves would quickly prove but

Chriſt and all his little ones under his two Wings, and in the Compaſs or Circle of his Arms, is ſo ſure, that caſt him and them in the Ground of the Sea, he ſhall come up again, and not loſe one. An odd one cannot, nor ſhall not be loſt in the telling.

Perfectiones ſibi relictæ, ſunt pondera ad ruinam. *Gerſ.*

Weights

Weights ſinking us to our own Ruin, as one ſpeaks. This is his Covenant with them, *Jer.* 32. 4. *I will put my Fear in their Inwards, and they ſhall not depart from me.* Thus as a King he preſerves them.

5. *As a King he rewards their Obedience, and encourages their ſincere Service.* Tho' all they do for Chriſt be Duty, yet he hath united their Comfort with their Duty; *this I had, becauſe I kept thy Precepts,* Pſal. 119. 56. They are engaged to take this Encouragement with them to every Duty, that he whom they ſeek, is *a bountiful Rewarder of ſuch as diligently ſeek him,* Heb. 11. 6. O what a good Maſter do the Saints ſerve! Hear how a King expoſtulates with his Subjects, *Jer.* 2. 31. *Have I been a barren Wilderneſs, or a Land of Darkneſs to you? q. d.* Have I been ſuch a hard Maſter to you? Have you any reaſon to complain of my Service? To whomſoever I have been ſtrait-handed, ſurely I have not been ſo to you. You have not found the Ways or Wages of Sin like mine.

6. *He pacifies all inward Troubles, and commands Peace when their Spirits are tumultuous.* This *Peace of God rules in their Hearts,* Col. 3. 15. it doth βραβεύειν act the part of an Umpire, in appeaſing Strife within. When the tumultuous Affections are up, and in a hurry; when Anger, Hatred, and Revenge begin to riſe in the Soul, this huſhes and ſtills all. *I will hearken* (ſaith the Church) *what God the Lord will ſpeak, for he will ſpeak Peace to his People, and to his Saints,* Pſal. 85. 8. He that ſaith to the raging Sea, Be ſtill, and it obeys him; he only can pacifie the diſquieted Spirit. They ſay of Frogs, that if they be croaking never ſo much in the Night, bring but a Light among them, and they are all quiet: Such a Light is the Peace of God among our diſordered Affections. Theſe are Chriſt's Regal Acts. And he puts them forth upon the Souls of the People, powerfully, ſweetly, ſuitably.

Brabeutem agit, ſive Agonothetam inter cæteros affectus; nam βραβεύειν, id ſignificat: cum igitur inſurgunt in cordibus noſtris turbidi affectus, iræ, odii, vindictæ, hic pax Dei debet ſuum officium facere, *i. e.* inſtar agonothetæ lites dirimere. *Daven. in Col.*

(1.) Powerfully: whether he reſtrains from Sin, or impels to Duty, he doth it with a Soul-determining Efficacy; For *his Kingdom is not in Word, but in Power,* 1 Cor. 4. 20. And thoſe whom his Spirit leads, go bound in the Spirit, to the fulfilling and diſcharge of their Duties, *Acts* 20. 22. And yet,

(2.) He rules not by Compulſion, but *moſt ſweetly.* His Law is a Law of Love, written upon their Hearts. The Church is the Lamb's Wife, *Rev.* 19. 7. *A bruiſed Reed he ſhall not break, and ſmoaking Flax he ſhall not quench,* Iſa. 42. 2, 3. *I beſeech you by the Meekneſs and Gentleneſs of Chriſt,* ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 10. 1. For he delighteth in *free,* not in *forced* Obedience. He rules *Children,* not Slaves. And ſo his *Kingly Power* is mixed with *Fatherly Love.* His Yoke is not made of *Iron,* but *Gold.*

(3.) He rules them ſuitably to their Natures, in a rational way: Hoſ. 11. 4. *I drew them with the Cords of a Man, with Bands of Love, i. e.* in a way proper to convince their Reaſon, and work upon their Ingenuity. And thus his internal Kingdom is adminiſtred by his Spirit, who is *Prorex,* or Vicegerent in our Hearts.

Thirdly, and Laſtly; We will open the Priviledges pertaining to all the Subjects of this Spiritual Kingdom. And they are ſuch as follow.

1. *Thoſe Souls over whom Chriſt reigns, are certainly and fully ſet free from the Curſe of the Law. If the Son makes you free, then are you free indeed,* John 8. 36. I ſay not, they are free from the Law as a Rule of Life; ſuch a Freedom were no Priviledge to them at all: but free from the rigorous Exactions, and terrible Maledictions of it; to hear our Liberty proclaim'd from this Bondage, is the joyful Sound indeed, the bleſſedſt Voice that ever our Ears heard. And this all that are in Chriſt ſhall hear; *If we be led by the Spirit, we are not under the Law,* Gal. 5. 18. *Bleſſed are the People that hear this joyful Sound,* Pſal. 89. 15.

2. Another Priviledge of Chriſt's Subjects, is *Freedom from the Dominion of Sin.* Rom. 6. 14. *Sin ſhall not reign over them; for they are not under the Law, but under Grace.* One Heaven cannot bear two Suns; nor one Soul two Kings: when Chriſt takes the Throne, Sin quits it. It's true, the Being of Sin is there ſtill; its defiling and troubling Power remains ſtill, but its Dominion is aboliſhed. O joyful Tidings! O welcome Day!

3. *Another Priviledge of Chriſt's Subjects, is Protection in all the Troubles and Dangers to which their Souls or Bodies are expoſed. This Man ſhall be the Peace, when the* Aſſyrian *ſhall come into our Land, and when he ſhall tread in our Palaces,* Mic. 5. 5. Kings owe Protection to their Subjects. None ſo able, ſo faithful in that Work as Chriſt: All *thou gaveſt me, I have kept, and none is loſt,* John 17. 12.

4. *Another Priviledge of Chriſt's Subjects, is a merciful and tender-bearing of their Burdens and Infirmities.* They have a meek and patient King; *Tell the Daughter of* Sion, *thy King cometh meek and lowly.* Mat. 21. 5. Mat. 11. 29. *Take my Yoak, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly.* The meek *Moſes* could not bear the Provocations of the People, *Numb.* 11. 12. but Chriſt bears them all: *He carries the Lambs in his Arms, and gently leads them that be with young,* Iſa. 42. 11. He is one that can have Compaſſion upon the Ignorant, and them that are out of the way.

5. Again, *Sweet Peace, and Tranquillity of Soul, is the Priviledge of the Subjects of this Kingdom:* For this Kingdom *conſiſteth in Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt,* Rom. 14. 17. And till Souls come under his Scepter, they ſhall never find Peace: *Come unto me ye that are weary, I will give you reſt.* Yet do not miſtake, I ſay not, they have all actual Peace, at all times: No, they often break that Peace by Sin; but they have the Root of Peace, the Ground-work and Cauſe of Peace. If they have not Peace, yet they have that which is convertible into Peace at any time. They alſo are in a State of Peace, *Rom.* 5. 11. *Being juſtified by Faith, we have Peace with God.* This is a Feaſt every Day; a Mercy which they only can duly value, that are in the Depths of Trouble for Sin.

6. And Laſtly, *Everlaſting Salvation is the Priviledge of all over whom Chriſt reigns.* Prince and Saviour are joined together, *Acts* 5. 31. He that can ſay, *Thou ſhalt guide me with thy Counſels,* may add what follows, *and afterwards bring me to Glory,* Pſal. 73. 24. Indeed the Kingdom of Grace doth but breed up Children for the Kingdom of Glory. And to ſpeak as the thing is, it's the Kingdom of Heaven here begun. The Difference betwixt them is not *ſpecifical,* but only *gradual*; and therefore this as well as that bears the Name of the Kingdom of Heaven. The King is the ſame, and the Subjects the ſame. The Subjects of this are ſhortly to be tranſlated to that Kingdom. Thus I have named, and indeed but named, ſome few of thoſe ineſtimable Priviledges of Chriſt's Subjects. We next apply it.

Inference 1. *How great is their Sin and Miſery who continue in Bondage to Sin and Satan, and refuſe the Government of Chriſt!* Who had rather ſit under the Shadow of that Bramble, than under the ſweet and powerful Government of Chriſt. Satan writes his Laws in the Blood

Blood of his Subjects, grinds them with cruel Oppreſſion, wears them out with Bondage to divers Luſts, and rewards their Service with everlaſting Miſery. And yet how few are weary of it, and willing to come over to Chriſt!

Gurnall's *Chriſtian Armour*, p. 218.

'Behold (ſaid one of Chriſt's Heraulds) Chriſt is in the Field, ſent of God to recover his Right and your Liberty: His Royal Standard is pitcht in the Goſpel, and Proclamation made, that if any poor Sinners, weary of the Devil's Government, and laden with the miſerable Chains of his ſpiritual Bondage, (ſo as theſe Irons of his Sins enter into his very Soul, to afflict it with the Senſe of them) ſhall thus come and repair to Chriſt, he ſhall have Protection from God's Juſtice, the Devil's Wrath, and Sin's Dominion; in a word, he ſhall have reſt, and that glorious, *Iſa.* 11. 10.'

And yet how few ſtir a Foot towards Chriſt, but are willing to have their Ears bored, and be perpetual Slaves to that cruel Tyrant? O when will Sinners be weary of their Bondage, and ſigh after Deliverance! If any ſuch poor Soul ſhall read theſe Lines, let them know, and I do proclaim it in the Name of my Royal Maſter, and give him the Word of a King for it, he ſhall not be rejected by Chriſt, *John* 6. 37. Come, poor Sinners, come, the Lord Jeſus is a merciful King, and never did, nor will hang up that poor Penitent, that puts the Rope about his own Neck, and ſubmits to Mercy.

Inference 2. *How much doth it concern us to enquire and know whoſe Government we are under, and who is King over our Souls; whether Chriſt or Satan be in the Throne, and ſways the Scepter over our Souls?*

Reader, the Work I would now engage thy Soul in, is the ſame that Jeſus Chriſt will throughly and effectually do in the great Day. Then will he gather out of his Kingdom every thing that offends, ſeparate the Tares and Wheat, divide the whole World into two Ranks, or grand Diviſions, how many Diviſions and Sub-diviſions ſoever there be in it now. It nearly concerns thee therefore to know who is Lord and King in thy Soul. To help thee in this great Work, make uſe of the following Hints; for I cannot fully proſecute theſe Things as I would.

O how many of us would Have Chriſt divided in two halves, that we might take the Half of him only, and take his Office, Jeſus, and Salvation? But Lord *is a cumberſome Word, and to obey; and work out our own Salvation, and perfect Holineſs, is the cumberſome and ſtormy North-ſide of Chriſt, and that we eſchew and ſhift off.*

1. *To whom do you yield your Obedience? His Subjects and Servants ye are to whom ye obey*, Rom. 6. 16. It's but a Mockery to give Chriſt the empty Titles of Lord and King, whilſt ye give your real Service to Sin and Satan. What is this but like the Jews, to bow the Knees to him, and ſay, Hail Maſter, and crucifie him? *Then are ye his Diſciples, if ye do whatſoever he commands you*, John 15. 14. He that is Chriſt's Servant in *Feſt*, ſhall be damned in *earneſt*. Chriſt doth not compliment with you; his Pardons, Promiſes, Salvation are real; O let your Obedience be ſo too! Let it be ſincere and univerſal Obedience, this will evidence your unfeigned Subjection to Chriſt. Do not dare to enterprize any Thing, till you know Chriſt's Pleaſure and Will, *Rom.* 12. 2. Enquire of Chriſt, as *David* did of the Lord, 1 *Sam.* 23. 9, 10, 11. Lord, may I do this or that? Or ſhall I forbear? I beſeech thee tell thy Servant.

2. *Have you the Power of Godlineſs, or a Form of it only?* There be many that do but trifle in Religion, and play about the Skirts and Borders of it; ſpending their Time about jejune and barren Controverſies: but as to the Power of Religion, and Life of Godlineſs, which conſiſts in Communion with God in Duties and Ordinances, which promotes Holineſs, and mortifies their Luſts, they concern not themſelves about theſe Things. But ſurely, *the Kingdom of God is not in Word, but in Power*, 1 Cor. 4. 20. It is not Meat and Drink (that is, dry Diſputes about Meats and Drinks) *but Righteouſneſs, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt; for he that in theſe Things ſerveth Chriſt, is acceptable to God, and approved of Men*, Rom. 14. 17, 18. O I am afraid when the great Hoſt of Profeſſors ſhall be tried by theſe Rules, they will ſhrink up into a little handful, as *Gideon*'s Hoſt did.

3. *Have ye the ſpecial ſaving Knowledge of Chriſt?* All his Subjects are tranſlated out of the Kingdom of Darkneſs, *Col.* 1. 13. The Devil that ruleth over you in the Days of your Ignorance, is called *the Ruler of the Darkneſs of this World*: His Subjects are all blind, elſe he could never rule them: As ſoon as their Eyes be opened, they run out of his Kingdom, and there is no retaining them in Subjection to him any longer. O enquire then, whether you are brought out of Darkneſs into this marvellous Light! Do you ſee your Condition, how ſad, miſerable, wretched it is by Nature? Do you ſee your Remedy, as it lies only in Chriſt, and his precious Blood? Do you ſee the true Way of obtaining Intereſt in that Blood by Faith? Doth this Knowledge run into Practice, and put you upon lamenting heartily your Miſery by Sin? thirſting vehemently after Chriſt and his Righteouſneſs? ſtriving continually for a Heart to believe and cloſe with Chriſt? This will evidence you indeed to be tranſlated out of the Kingdom of Darkneſs into the Kingdom of Chriſt.

4. *With whom do you delightfully aſſociate your ſelves? Who are your choſen Companions?* You may ſee to whom you belong by the Company you join your ſelves to. What do the Subjects of Chriſt among the Slaves of Satan? If the Subjects of one Kingdom be in another King's Dominion, they love to be together with their own Country-men, rather than the Natives of the Place; ſo do the Servants of Chriſt. They are a Company of themſelves, as it is ſaid, *Acts* 4. 23. *They went to their own Company.* I know the Subjects of both Kingdoms are here mingled, and we cannot avoid the Company of Sinners, except we go out of the World, 1 *Cor.* 5. 10. but yet all your Delights ſhould be in the Saints, and in the Excellent of the Earth, *Pſal.* 16. 3.

5. *Do ye live holy and righteous Lives?* If not, you may claim Intereſt in Chriſt as your King, but he will never allow your Claim. *The Scepter of his Kingdom is a Scepter of Righteouſneſs*, Pſal. 45. 6. If ye oppreſs, go beyond, and cheat your Brethren, and yet call your ſelves Chriſt's Subjects, what greater Reproach can ye ſtudy to caſt upon him? What! is Chriſt the King of Cheats? Doth he patronize ſuch Things as theſe? No, no, pull off your Vizards, and fall into your own Places; you belong to another Prince, and not to Chriſt.

Inf. 3. Doth Chriſt exerciſe ſuch a Kingly Power over the Souls of all them that are ſubdued by the Goſpel to him? *O then let all that are under Chriſt's Government walk as the Subjects of ſuch a King.* Imitate your King; the Examples of Kings are very influential upon their Subjects. Your King hath commanded you not only to take his Yoke upon you, but alſo learn of him, *Mat.* 11. 29. Yea, and *if any Man ſay that he is Chriſt's, let him walk even as Chriſt walked*, 1 Joh

Regis ad exemplum totus componitur orbis.

1 John 2. 6. Your King is meek and patient, *Isa.* 33. 7. as a Lamb for Meekneſs: Shall his Subjects be Lions for Fierceneſs? Your King was humble and lowly; *Mat.* 21. 5. *Behold thy King cometh meek and lowly:* Will you be proud and lofty? Doth this become the Kingdom of Chriſt? Your King was a ſelf-denying King; he could deny his outward Comforts, Eaſe, Honour, Life, to ſerve his Father's Deſign, and accompliſh your Salvation, 2 *Cor.* 8. 9. *Phil.* 2. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. Shall his Servants be ſelf-ended, and ſelf-ſeeking Perſons, that will expoſe his Honour, and hazard their own Souls for the Trifles of Time? God forbid. Your King was painful, laborious and diligent in fulfilling his Work, *John* 9. 3. Let not his Servants be lazy and ſlothful. O imitate your King, follow the Pattern of your King: This will give you Comfort now, and Boldneſs in the Day of Judgment, if as he was, ſo ye are in this World, 1 *John* 4. 17.

SERMON XVII.

Opens the Kingly Office of Chriſt as it is providentially executed upon the World, for the Redeemed.

EPHES. I. 22.

And hath put all Things under his Feet, and gave him to be the Head over all Things to the Church.

THE foregoing Verſes are ſpent in a thankful and humble Adoration of the Grace of God, in bringing theſe *Epheſians* to believe in Chriſt. This Effect of that Power that raiſed their Hearts to believe in Chriſt, is here compared with that other glorious Effect of it, even the raiſing of Chriſt himſelf from the Dead: Both theſe owe themſelves to the ſame efficient Cauſe. It raiſed Chriſt from a low Eſtate even from the Dead, to a high, a very high and glorious State; to be the Head both of the *World*, and of the *Church*; the Head of the World by Way of Dominion, the Head of the Church by Way of Union, and ſpecial Influence, ruling the World for the Good of his People in it. *He gave him to be Head over all Things to the Church.*

In this Scripture let theſe four Things be ſeriouſly heeded.

1. The *Dignity* and Authority committed to Chriſt: *He hath put all Things under his Feet*; which implies full, ample, and abſolute *Dominion* in him, and *Subjection* in them over whom he reigns. This Power is delegated to him by the Father: For beſides the *eſſential, native, ingenite* Power and Dominion over all, which he hath as God, and is common to every Perſon in the Godhead, *Pſal.* 22. 28. there is a *mediatory diſpenſed* Authority, which is proper to him as *Mediator*, which he receives as the Reward or Fruit of his Suffering, *Phil.* 2. 8.

2. The Subject recipient of this Authority, which is Chriſt, and Chriſt *primarily*, and *only*: He is the πρώτον δέκτικον, firſt Receptacle of all Authority and Power. Whatever Authority any Creature is cloathed with, is but *miniſterial* and *derivative*, whether it be *Political* or *Eccleſiaſtical*. Chriſt is the *only Lord*, *Jude* 4. the Fountain of all Power.

3. The *Object* of this Authority, the whole Creation; *All Things are put under his Feet:* He rules from Sea to Sea, even to the utmoſt Bounds of God's Creation, *Thou haſt given him Power over all Fleſh*, John 17. 2. all Creatures, rational and irrational, animate and inanimate, Angels, Devils, Men, Winds, Seas, all obey him.

4. And eſpecially, take notice of the *finis cui*, End for which he governs and rules the univerſal Empire: It is *to the Church*, i. e. for the Advantage, Comfort, and Salvation of that choſen Remnant he died for. He purchaſed the Church; and that he might have the higheſt Security that his Blood ſhould not be loſt, God the Father hath put all Things into his Hand, to order and diſpoſe all as he pleaſeth. For the Furtherance of that his Deſign and End, as he bought the Perſons of ſome, ſo the Services of all the reſt; and that they might effectually ſerve the End they are deſigned to, Chriſt will order them all in a bleſſed Subordination and Subſerviency thereunto. Hence the Point is,

In bonum Eccleſiæ obtinet hoc imperium. *Grotius in loc.*

Doct. *That all the Affairs of the Kingdom of Providence are ordered and determined by Jeſus Chriſt, for the ſpecial Advantage, and everlaſting Good of his redeemed People.*

John 17. 2. *As thou haſt given him Power over all Fleſh, that he ſhould give Eternal Life to as many as thou haſt given him.* Hence it comes to paſs, that *all Things work together for Good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his Purpoſe*, Rom. 8. 28.

That Jeſus Chriſt hath a providential Influence upon all the Affairs of this World, is evident both from *Scripture Aſſertions*, and *Rational Obſervations*, made upon the Actings of Things here below.

The firſt Chapter of *Ezekiel* contains an admirable Scheme or Draught of Providence. There you ſee how all the Wheels, that is, the Motions and Revolutions here on Earth, are guided by the Spirit that is in them. And *ver.* 26. it's all run up into the ſupream Cauſe: There you find one like the Son of Man, which is Jeſus Chriſt, ſitting upon the Throne, and giving forth Orders from thence for the Government of all: And if it were not ſo, how is it that there are ſuch ſtrong Combinations, and Prediſpoſitions of Perſons and Things to ſuch Ends and Iſſues, without any Communications of Counſels, or holding of Intelligence with one another? As in *Iſrael*'s Deliverance out of *Egypt*, and innumerable more Inſtances have

have appeared. Certainly if ten Men from ſeveral Places ſhould all meet at one Place, and about one Buſineſs, without any Fore-appointment among themſelves, it would argue their Motions were ſecretly over-ruled by ſome inviſible Agent. How is it that ſuch marvellous Effects are produced in the World by Cauſes that carry no Proportion to them? *Amos* 5. 9. and 1 *Cor.* 1. 27. and as often the moſt apt and likely Means are rendred wholly ineffectual? *Pſal.* 33. 16. In a word, if Chriſt hath no ſuch providential Influx, how are his People in all Ages preſerved in the midſt of ſo many Millions of potent and malicious Enemies, amongſt whom they live as Sheep in the midſt of Wolves? *Luke* 10. 3. How is it that the Buſh burns, and yet is not conſumed? *Exod.* 4.

2.

But my Buſineſs in this Diſcourſe is not to prove that there is a Providence, which none but Athieſts deny. I ſhall chuſe rather to ſhew by what Acts Jeſus Chriſt adminiſters this Kingdom, and in what manner; and what Uſe may be made thereof.

Firſt, He rules and orders the Kingdom of Providence, by *ſupporting*, *permitting*, *reſtraining*, *limiting*, *protecting*, *puniſhing*, and *rewarding* thoſe over whom he reigns providentially.

1. He *ſupports* the World, and all Creatures in it, by his Power. *My Father works hitherto, and I work*, John 5. 17. *And in him* (that is, in Chriſt) *all Things conſiſt*, Col. 1. 17. It's a conſiderable part of Chriſt's Glory, to have a whole World of Creatures owing their Beings and hourly Conſervations to him. The Parts of the World are not coupled and faſtned together as the Parts of a Houſe, whoſe Beams are pinn'd and nail'd to each other; but rather as ſeveral Rings of Iron, which hang together by the Virtue of a Loadſtone. This goodly Fabrick was raſed to the Foundation when Sin entred, and had tumbled into everlaſting Confuſion, had not Chriſt ſtept in to ſhore up the reeling World. For the ſakes of his Redeemed that inhabit it, he doth and will prop it by his omnipotent Power. And when he hath gathered all his Elect out of it into the Kingdom above, then will he ſet fire to the four Quarters of it, and it ſhall lie in white Aſhes. Mean while, he is *given for a Covenant to the People, to eſtabliſh the Earth*, Iſa. 49. 8.

Propter Eccleſiam in mundo durat mundus, alioquin uno momento conflagraret cœlum & terra; quia mundus non eſt dignus uno grano tritici, ſiquidem plenus eſt blaſphemiis & impietate. Niſi oratione & doctrina ſuſtentaret Eccleſia mundum, uno momento perirent omnia. *Luther in Gen.* 30.

2. He *permits* and ſuffers the worſt of Creatures in his Dominion to *be* and *act* as they do. *The Deceived and the Deceiver are his*, Job. 12. 16. Even thoſe that fight againſt Chriſt and his People, receive both Power and Permiſſion from him. Say not that it's unbecoming the moſt Holy to permit ſuch Evils, which he could prevent if he pleaſed. For as he permits no more than he will over-rule to his Praiſe, ſo that very Permiſſion of his is holy and juſt. Chriſt's working is not confounded with the Creatures. Pure Sun-beams are not tainted by the noiſom Vapours of the Dunghil on which they ſhine. His Holineſs hath no Fellowſhip with their Iniquities; nor are their Tranſgreſſions at all excuſed by his Permiſſions of them; *He is a Rock, his Work is perfect*; but *they have corrupted themſelves*, Deut. 22. 4, 5. This holy Permiſſion is but the with-holding of thoſe Reſtraints from their Luſts, and denying thoſe common Aſſiſtances which he is no way bound to give them. *Acts* 14. 16. *He ſuffered all Nations to walk in their own ways.* And yet ſhould he permit ſinful Creatures to act out all the Wickedneſs that is in their Hearts, there would neither remain Peace nor Order in the World. And therefore,

He powerfully *reſtrains* Creatures by the Bridle of Providence, from the Commiſſion of thoſe Things to which their Hearts are propenſe enough. *Pſal.* 76. 10. *The Remainder of Wrath thou wilt reſtrain*, or חגר accinges. *Mont.* gird up; letting forth juſt ſo much as ſhall ſerve his holy Ends, and no more. And truly this is one of the glorious Myſteries of Providence, which amazes the ſerious and conſiderate Soul; to ſee the Spirit of a Creature fully ſet to do Miſchiefs; Power enough, as one would think, in his Hand to do it, and a Door of Opportunity ſtanding open for it; and yet the Effect ſtrangely hindred. The ſtrong Propenſions of the Will are inwardly check'd, as in the Caſe of *Laban*, Gen. 31. 24. or a *Diverſion*, and Rub is ſtrangely caſt in their way; as in the Caſe of *Senacherib*, 2 *Kings* 19. 7, 8. ſo that *their Hands cannot perform their Enterprizes*. *Julian* had two great Deſigns before him, one was to conquer the *Perſians*, the other to root out the *Galileans*, as he by way of Contempt called the Chriſtians: But he will begin with the *Perſians* firſt, and then make a Sacrifice of all the Chriſtians to his Idols. He doth ſo, and periſhes in the firſt Attempt. O the Wiſdom of Providence!

4. Jeſus Chriſt *limits* the Creatures in their acting, aſſigning them their Boundaries and Lines of Liberty; to which they may, but beyond it cannot go. Rev. 2. 10. *Fear none of thoſe Things that ye ſhall ſuffer; behold, the Devil ſhall caſt ſome of you into Priſon, and ye ſhall have Tribulation for ten Days.* They would have caſt them into their Graves, but it ſhall only be into Priſons: They would have ſtretch'd out their Hands upon them all; no, but only ſome of them ſhall be expoſed: They would have kept them there perpetually; no, it muſt be but for ten Days. *Ezek.* 22. 6. *Behold, the Princes of* Iſrael *were in thee, every one to their Power to ſhed Blood.* They went as far as they had *Power* to go, not as far as they had *Will* to go. Four hundred and thirty Years were determined upon the People of God in *Egypt*; and then, *even in that very Night*, God brought them forth; for then *the Time of the Promiſe was come*, Acts 7. 17.

5. The Lord Jeſus providentially *protects* his People amidſt a World of Enemies and Dangers. It was Chriſt that appeared unto *Moſes* in the flaming Buſh, and preſerved it from being conſumed. The Buſh ſignified the People of God in *Egypt*: The Fire flaming on it, the exquiſite Sufferings they there endured: The Safety of the Buſh amidſt the Flames, the Lord's admirable Care and Protection of his poor ſuffering ones. None ſo tenderly careful as Chriſt. *As Birds flying, ſo he defends* Jeruſalem, *Iſa.* 31. 5. *i. e.* as they fly ſwiftly towards their Neſts, crying when their Young are in Danger, ſo will the Lord preſerve his. They are *preſerved in Chriſt Jeſus*, Jude 1. as *Noah* and his Family were in the *Ark*. Hear how a Worthy of our own expreſſes himſelf upon this Point.

Dr. Owen in his inhabiting Sin, p. 200.

'That we are at Peace in our Houſes, at Reſt in our Beds; that we have any Quiet in our Enjoyments, is from hence alone. Whoſe Perſon would not be defiled or deſtroyed? Whoſe Habitation would not be ruined? Whoſe Blood almoſt would not be ſhed, if wicked Men had Power to perpetrate all their conceived Sin? It may be, the Reſtraint of ſome of us hath been conceived a thou-

ſand times. We are beholden to this Providence of obſtructing Sin, for our Lives, our Families, our Eſtates, our Liberties, and whatſoever is or may be dear to us. For may we not ſay ſometimes with the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 57. 4. *My Soul is among Lions, and I lie even among them that are ſet on Fire, even the Sons of Men, whoſe Teeth are Spears, and their Tongue a ſharp Sword?* And how is the Deliverance of Men contrived from ſuch Perſons? *Pſal.* 8. 6. *God breaks their Teeth in their Mouths, even the great Teeth of the young Lions.* He keeps this Fire from burning,—ſome he cuts off and deſtroys: Some he cuts ſhort in their Power: Some he deprives of the Inſtruments whereby alone they can work: Some he prevents of their deſired Opportunities, or diverts by other Objects for their Luſts; and oftentimes cauſeth them to ſpend them among themſelves, one upon another. We may ſay therefore with the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 104. 24. O *Lord, how manifold are thy Works! in Wiſdom haſt thou made them all; the Earth is full of thy Riches.*'

6. He *puniſhes* the evil Doers, and repays by Providence into their own Lap the Miſchief they do, or but intend to do unto them that fear him. *Pharaoh, Senacherib,* both the *Julians,* and innumerable more, are the laſting Monuments of his righteous Retribution. 'Tis true, *a Sinner may do evil a hundred times, and his Days be prolonged;* but oft-times God hangs up ſome eminent Sinners in Chains, as Spectacles and Warnings to others. Many a heavy Blow hath Providence given the Enemies of God, which they were never able to claw off. Chriſt rules, and that with a Rod of Iron, in the midſt of his Enemies, *Pſal.* 110. 2.

7. And Laſtly, He *rewards* by Providence the Services done to him and his People. Out of this Treaſure of Providence God repays oftentimes thoſe that ſerve him, and that with a hundredfold Reward now in this Life, *Mat.* 19. 29. This active vigilant Providence hath its Eye upon all the Wants, Straits and Troubles of the Creatures; but eſpecially upon ſuch as Religion brings us unto. What huge Volumes of Experiences might the People of God write upon this Subject? And what a pleaſant Hiſtory would it be to read the ſtrange, conſtant, wonderful, and unexpected Actings of Providence for them that have let themſelves to its Care?

Secondly, We ſhall next enquire how Jeſus Chriſt adminiſters this providential Kingdom.

And here I muſt take notice of the *Means* by which, and the *Manner* in which he doth it. The Means or Inſtruments he uſes in the governing the providential Kingdom, (for he cannot be perſonally preſent with us himſelf) are either *Angels* or *Men*; the *Angels* are *miniſtring Creatures ſent forth by him for the Good of them that ſhall be the Heirs of Salvation,* Heb. 1. 14. *Luther* tells us they have two Offices, *ſuperius canere, & inferius vigilare,* to ſing above, and watch beneath. Theſe do us many inviſible Offices of Love. They have dear and tender Reſpects and Love for the Saints. To them, God, as it were, puts forth his Children to nurſe, and they are tenderly careful of them whilſt they live, and bring them home in their Arms to their Father when they die. And as Angels, ſo *Men* are the Servants of Providence; yea, bad Men as well as good. *Cyrus* on that account is called God's Servant: they fulfill his Will, whilſt they are proſecuting their own Luſts. *The Earth ſhall help the Woman,* Rev. 12. 16. But good Men delight to ſerve Providence: They and the *Angels* are Fellow-ſervants in one Houſe, and to one Maſter, *Rev.* 19. 10. Yea, there is not a Creature in Heaven or Earth, or Hell, but Jeſus Chriſt can providentially uſe it, and ſerve his Ends, and promote his Deſigns by it. But whatever the Inſtrument be Chriſt uſes, of this we may be certain, that his providential Working is holy, judicious, ſovereign, profound, irreſiſtible, harmonious, and to the Saints peculiar.

1. It's holy. Tho' he permits, limits, orders, and over-rules many unholy Perſons and Actions, yet he ſtill works like himſelf, moſt holily and purely throughout. *The Lord is righteous in all his Ways, and holy in all his Works,* Pſal. 145. 17. it's eaſier to ſeparate Light from a Sun-beam, than Holineſs from the Works of God. The beſt of Men cannot eſcape Sin in their moſt holy Actions; they cannot touch, but are defiled. But no Sin cleaves to God, whatever he hath to do about it.

Non cæco impetu volvuntur rotæ.

2 Chriſt's providential Working is not only moſt pure and holy, but alſo moſt wiſe and judicious. Ezek. 1. 20. *The Wheels are full of Eyes:* They are not moved by *a blind Impetus,* but in deep Counſel and Wiſdom. And indeed the Wiſdom of Providence manifeſts it ſelf principally in the Choice of ſuch States for the People of God, as ſhall moſt effectually promote their internal Happineſs. And herein it goes quite beyond our Underſtandings and Comprehenſions. It makes that medicinal and ſalutiferous, which we judge as deſtructive to our Comfort and Good, as Poiſon. I remember it is a Note of *Suarez,* ſpeaking of the Felicity of the other World; then (ſaith he) the Bleſſed ſhall ſee in God all Things and Circumſtances pertaining to them excellently accommodated and attempered; then they ſhall ſee that the croſſing of their Deſires was the ſaving of their Souls; and that otherwiſe they had periſhed. The moſt wiſe Providence looks beyond us. It eyes the End, and ſuits all Things thereto, and not to our fond Deſires.

Beatus in Deo videt res omnes accommodatas ad ſe pertinentes, & omnes circumſtantias accommodatas. *Suarez.*

3. The Providence of Chriſt is moſt ſupream and ſovereign. *Whatſoever he pleaſeth, that he doth in Heaven and Earth, and in all Places,* Pſal. 135. 6. *He is the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings,* Rev. 19. 16. The greateſt Monarchs on Earth are but as little Bits of Clay, as the Worms of the Earth to him; they all depend on him. Prov. 8. 15, 16. *By me Kings reign, and Princes decree Juſtice: By me Princes rule, Nobles, even all the Judges of the Earth.*

Caput ejus aurum auri, quo ſignificatur præcellens ſuper omnia dignitas regni Chriſti. Aurum enim in capite eſt enſigne regium, ex quo Coronæ fiunt; igitur aurum auri perinde valere videtur, atque Rex Regum. *Brightman in Cant.*

4. Providence is *profound* and inſcrutable. The Judgments of Chriſt are *as the great Deeps, and his Footſteps are not known,* Pſal. 36. 6. There are hard Texts in the *Works* as well as in the *Words* of *Chriſt.* The wiſeſt Heads have been at a loſs in interpreting ſome Providences, *Jer.* 12. 1, 2. *Job* 21. 7. The Angels had the Hands of a Man under their Wings, *Ezek.* 1. 8. *i. e.* they wrought ſecretly and myſteriouſly.

Per montes intelligat arcanum Dei conſilium. *Calv.*

Firmiſſima & inſcrutabilia Dei conſilia. *Druſius.*

5. Providence is irreſiſtible in its Deſign and Motions; for all Providences are but the Fulfillings and Accompliſhments of God's immutable Decrees: *Eph.* 1. 11. *He works all Things according to the Counſel of his own Will.* Hence *Zech.* 6. 1. the Inſtruments by which God executed his Wrath, are called

are called *Chariots coming from betwixt two Mountains of Braſs, i. e.* the firm and immutable Decrees of God. When the Jews put Chriſt to Death, they did but do what *the Hand and Counſel of God had before determined to be done*, Acts 4. 28. ſo that none can oppoſe or reſiſt Providence. *I will work, and who ſhall let it?* Iſa. 43. 13.

6. The Providences of Chriſt are *harmonious*. There are ſecret Chains, and inviſible Connections betwixt the Works of Chriſt. We know not how to reconcile Promiſes and Providences together, nor yet Providences one with another: but certainly they all *work together*, Rom. 8. 28. as adjuvant Cauſes, or Con-cauſes ſtanding under, and working by the Influence of the firſt Cauſe. He doth not do, and undo; deſtroy by one Providence what he built by another. But look, as all Seaſons of the Year, the nipping Froſts, as well as Halcyon Days of Summer, do all conſpire and conduce to the Harveſt; ſo it is in Providence.

7. And Laſtly, The Providences of Chriſt *work in a ſpecial and peculiar Way, for the Good of the Saints*. His providential is ſubordinate to his ſpiritual Kingdom. *He is the Saviour of all Men, eſpecially of them that believe*, 1 Tim. 4. 10. Theſe only have the Bleſſing of Providence. Things are ſo laid and ordered, as that their eternal Good ſhall be promoted and ſecured by all that Chriſt doth.

Inference 1. If ſo, *See then in the firſt Place, to whom you are beholden for your Lives, Liberties, Comforts, and all that you enjoy in this World.* Is it not Chriſt that takes Order for you? He is indeed in Heaven, out of your Sight; but tho' you ſee him not, he ſees you, and takes care of all your Concerns. When one told *Silentiarius* of a Plot laid to take away his Life, he answered, *Si Deus mei curam non habet, quid vivo?* If God take no Care of me, how do I live? how have I eſcaped hitherto? *In all thy Ways acknowledge him*, Prov. 3. 6. It's he that hath eſpied out that State thou art in, as moſt proper for thee. It's Chriſt that doth all for you that is done. He looks down from Heaven upon all that fear him; he ſees when you are in Danger by Temptation, and caſt into a Providence you know not how, to hinder it. He ſees when you are ſad, and orders reviving Providences to refreſh you. He ſees when Corruptions prevail, and orders humbling Providences to purge them. Whatever Mercies you have received all along the Way you have gone hitherto, are the Orderings of Chriſt for you. And you ſhould carefully obſerve how the Promiſes and Providences have kept equal pace with one another, and both gone Step by Step with you until now.

Inference 2. Hath God left the Government of the whole World in the Hands of Chriſt, and truſted him over all? *Then do you alſo leave all your particular Concerns in the Hands of Chriſt too, and know that the infinite Wiſdom and Love which rules the World, manages every Thing that relates to you.* It is in a good Hand, and infinitely better than if it were in your own. I remember when *Melanchton* was under ſome Deſponden-

Monendus eſt Philippus definat eſſe rector mundi. *Melch. Adam.*

cies of Spirit about the Eſtate of God's People in *Germany*, *Luther* chides him thus for it, *Deſinat Philippus eſſe rector mundi*, let *Philip* ceaſe to rule the World. It's none of our Work to ſteer the Courſe of Providence, or direct its Motions, but to ſubmit quietly to him that doth. There is an Itch in Men, yea, in the beſt of Men, to be *diſputing* with God: *Let me talk with thee of thy Judgments*, ſaith *Jeremy*, ch. 12. 1, 2. Yea, how apt are we to *regret* at Providences, as if they had no Conducency at all to the Glory of God, or to our Good, *Exod.* 5. 22. yea, to *limit* Providence to our Way and Time? Thus the *Iſraelites tempted God, and limited the Holy One*, Pſal. 68. 18, 41. How often alſo do we unbelievingly *diſtruſt* Providence, as tho' it could never accompliſh what we profeſs to expect and believe? *Ezek.* 37. 11. *Our Bones are dry, our Hope is loſt; we are cut off for our Part.* So *Gen.* 18. 13, 14. *Iſa.* 40. 17. There are but few *Abrahams* among Believers, who *againſt Hope, believed in Hope, giving Glory to God*, Rom. 4. 20. And it is but too common for good Men to *repine* and fret at Providence, when their Wills, Luſts, or Humours are croſſed by it: This was the great Sin of *Jonah*. Brethren, theſe Things ought not to be ſo. Did you but ſeriouſly conſider, either the *Deſign* of Providence, which is to bring about the gracious Deſigns and Purpoſes of God upon you, which were laid before this World was, *Epheſ.* 1. 11. or that it is *a lifting up of thy Wiſdom* againſt his, as if thou could'ſt better order thine Affairs, if thou had'ſt but the Conduct and Management of them; or that you *have to do herein with a great and dreadful God*, in whoſe Hands you are as the Clay in the Potter's Hand, that may do what he will with you, and all that is yours, without giving you an Account of any of his Matters, *Job.* 33. 13. or whither Providence hath caſt others, as good by Nature as your ſelves, tumbled them down from the Top of Health, Wealth, Honours and Pleaſures, to the Bottom of Hell: Or, laſtly, did you but conſider how often it hath formerly baffled and befool'd your ſelves; made you retract with Shame, your raſh headlong Cenſures of it; and enforced you, by the Sight of its Births and Iſſues, to confeſs your Folly and Ignorance, as *Aſaph* did, *Pſal.* 73. 22. I ſay, if ſuch Conſiderations as theſe could but have place with you in your Troubles and Temptations, they would quickly mould your Hearts into a better and more quiet Frame.

O that I could but perſwade you to reſign all to Chriſt. He is a cunning Workman, as he is called, *Prov.* 8. 30. and can effect what he pleaſeth. It's a good Rule; *De operibus Dei non eſt judicandum, ante quintum actum.* Let God work out all that he intends, have but Patience till he hath put the laſt Hand to his Work, and then find fault with it if you can. You have heard of the Patience of *Job*, and have ſeen the End of the Lord, *Jam.* 5. 11.

Duo habet ſignificata, artificem probatum, & artificem in arte ſua excellentem. *Glaſ.*

Inference 3. If Chriſt be Lord and King over the providential Kingdom, and that for the Good of his People, *let none that are Chriſt's henceforth ſtand in a ſlaviſh Fear of Creatures.* It's a good Note that *Grotius* hath upon my Text; it's a marvelous Conſolation, (ſaith he) that Chriſt hath ſo great an Empire, and that he governs it for the Good of his People, as a Head conſulting the Good of the Body. Our Head and Husband is Lord-General of all the Hoſts of Heaven and Earth; no Creature can move Hand or Tongue without his Leave or Order; the Power they have is given them from above, *John* 19. 11, 12. The ſerious Conſideration of this Truth will make the feebleſt Spirit ceaſe trembling, and fall a ſinging; Pſal. 47. 7. *The Lord is King of all the Earth, ſing ye Praiſes with Underſtanding*: That is, (as ſome well paraphraſe it) every one that hath Underſtanding of this comfortable Truth. Hath he not given you abundant Security in many expreſs Promiſes, that all ſhall iſſue well

Magna conſolatio, quod tantum imperium habet is, qui id exercet Eccleſiæ bono, ſicut caput conſulit corpori. *Grotius.*

for you that fear him? *Rom.* 8. 28. *All Things ſhall work together for Good, to them that love God.* And *Eccleſ.* 8. 12. verily *it ſhall be well with them that fear God*, even with them that *fear before him.* And ſuppoſe he had not, yet the very Underſtanding of our Relation to ſuch a King, ſhould in it ſelf be ſufficient Security: For he is the (*a*) univerſal, (*b*) ſupream, (*c*) abſolute, (*d*) meek and merciful, (*e*) victorious, and (*f*) immortal King.

(*a*) Pſal. 2. 8. (*b*) Prov. 8. 15. (*c*) Rev. 1. 18. (*d*) Mat. 21. 5. (*e*) Pſal. 45. 4. (*f*) 1 Tim. 1. 17.

He ſits in Glory at the Father's Right Hand; and to make his Seat the eaſier, his Enemies are a Foot-ſtool for him. His Love to his People is unſpeakably tender and fervent; he that touches them, touches the Apple of his Eye, *Zech.* 2. And it's hardly imaginable that Jeſus Chriſt will ſit ſtill, and ſuffer his Enemies to thruſt out his Eyes. Till this be forgotten, the Wrath of Man is not feared; Iſa. 51. 12, 13. *He that fears a Man that ſhall die, forgets the Lord his Maker.* He loves you too well to ſign any Order to your Prejudice, and without his Order none can touch you.

See my Saint indeed, p. 70, &c.

Inference 4. If the Government of the World be in the Hands of Chriſt, *then our engaging and entitling of Chriſt to all our Affairs and Buſineſs, is the true and ready Way to their Succeſs and Proſperity.* If all depend upon his Pleaſure, then ſure it's your Wiſdom to take him along with you to every Action and Buſineſs; it's no loſt Time that's ſpent in Prayer, wherein we ask his Leave, and beg his Preſence with us: And take it for a clear Truth, that which is not *prefaced* with *Prayer*, will be *followed* with *Trouble.* How eaſily can Jeſus Chriſt daſh all your Deſigns, when they are at the very Birth and Article of Execution, and break off in a Moment all the Purpoſes of your Hearts? It's a Proverb among the Papiſts, that *Maſs and Meat hinder no Man.* The *Turks* will pray five times a Day, how urgent ſoever their Buſineſs be. Bluſh you that enterprize your Affairs without God: I reckon that Buſineſs as good as done, to which we have gotten Chriſt's Leave, and engaged his Preſence to accompany us to it.

Inference 5. Laſtly, *Eye Chriſt in all the Events of Providence; ſee his Hand in all that befals you, whether it be evil or good. The Works of the Lord are great, ſought out of all them that have Pleaſure therein*, Pſal. 111. 2.

How much Good might we get, by Obſervation of the Good or Evil that befals us throughout our Courſe!

1. *In all the Evils of Trouble and Afflictions that befal you, eye Jeſus Chriſt*; and ſet your Hearts to the Study of theſe four Things in Affliction.

(1.) Study *his Sovereignty and Dominion*; for he creates and forms them: They riſe not out of the Duſt, nor do they befal you caſually; but he raiſes them up, and gives them their Commiſſion, *Jer.* 18. 11. *Behold, I create Evil, and deviſe a Device againſt you.* He elects the Inſtrument of your Trouble; he makes the Rod as afflictive as he pleaſeth; he orders the Continuance and End of your Troubles; and they will not ceaſe to be afflictive to you, till Chriſt ſay, Leave off, it is enough. The Centurion wiſely conſidered this, when he told him, *Luke* 7. 8. *I have Soldiers under me, and I ſay to one, Go, and he goeth, to another, Come, and he cometh*: Meaning, that as his Soldiers were at his Beck and Command, ſo Diſeaſes were at Chriſt's Beck, to come and go as he ordered them.

(2.) *Study the Wiſdom of Chriſt in the Contrivance of your Troubles.* And his Wiſdom ſhines out many Ways in them: It's evident in chuſing ſuch *Kinds* of Troubles for you; this, and not that, becauſe this is more apt to work upon, and purge out the Corruption that moſt predominates in you: In the *Degrees* of your Troubles, ſuffering them to work to ſuch a Height, elſe not reach their End; but no higher, leſt they overwhelm you.

(3.) *Study the Tenderneſs and Compaſſions of Chriſt over his afflicted.* O think if the Devil had but the mixing of my Cup, how much more bitter would he make it! There would not be one Drop of Mercy, no, not of ſparing Mercy in it, which is the loweſt of all ſorts of Mercy: But here is much Mercy mixed with my Troubles; there is Mercy in this, that it is no worſe. Am I afflicted? *It's the Lord's Mercy! am not conſumed*, Lam. 3. 22. It might have been Hell as well as this; there is Mercy in his Supports under it. Others have, and I might have been left to ſink and periſh under my Burdens. *Mercy*, in Deliverance out of it; this might have been everlaſting Darkneſs, that ſhould never have had a Morning. O the Tenderneſs of Chriſt over his Afflicted!

(4.) *Study the Love of Chriſt to thy Soul in Affliction.* Did he not love thee, he would not ſanctifie a Rod to humble or reduce thee, but let thee alone to run and periſh in thy Sin. *Rev.* 3. 19. *Whom I love, I rebuke and chaſten.* This is the Device of Love, to recover thee to thy God, and prevent thy Ruin. O what an Advantage would it be thus to ſtudy Chriſt in all your Evils that befal you!

2. *Eye and ſtudy Chriſt in all the Good you receive from the Hand of Providence.* Turn both ſides of your Mercies, and view them in all their lovely Circumſtances.

(1.) *Eye them in their Suitableneſs*; how conveniently Providence hath ordered all Things for thee. Thou haſt a narrow Heart, and a ſmall Eſtate ſuitable to it. Hadſt thou more of the World, it would be like a large Sail to a little Boat, which would quickly put thee under Water: Thou haſt that which is moſt ſuitable to thee of all Conditions.

(2.) *Eye the Seaſonableneſs of thy Mercies, how they are timed to an Hour.* Providence brings forth all its Fruits in due Seaſon.

(3.) *Eye the peculiar Nature of thy Mercies.* Others have common, thou ſpecial ones; others have but a ſingle, thou a double Sweetneſs in thy Enjoyments, one natural from the Matter of it, another ſpiritual from the Way in which, and End for which it comes.

(4.) *Obſerve the Order in which Providence ſends your Mercies.* See how one is linked ſtrangely to another, and is a Door to let in many. Sometimes one Mercy is introductive to a thouſand.

(5.) And Laſtly, *Obſerve the Conſtancy of them, they are new every Morning*, Lam. 3. 23. How aſſiduouſly doth God viſit thy Soul and Body! Think with thyſelf, if there be but a Suſpenſion of the Care of Chriſt for one Hour, that Hour would be thy Ruin. Thouſand of Evils ſtand round about thee, watching when Chriſt will but remove his Eye from thee, that they may ruſh in, and devour thee.

Could we thus ſtudy the Providence of Chriſt in all the Good and Evil that befals us in the World, then in every State we ſhould be content, *Phil.* 4. 11. Then we ſhould never be ſtopt, but furthered in our Way by all that falls out; then would our Experience ſwell to great Volumes, which we might carry to Heaven with us; and then ſhould we anſwer all Chriſt's Ends in every State he brings us into. Do this, and ſay, *Thanks be to God for Jeſus Chriſt.*

SER

SERMON XVIII.

Opens the Neceſſity of Chriſt's Humiliation, in Order to the Execution of all theſe his bleſſed Offices for us; and particularly of his Humiliation by Incarnation.

PHIL. II. 8.

And being found in Faſhion as a Man, he humbled himſelf, and became obedient to Death, even the Death of the Croſs.

YOU have heard how Chriſt was inveſted with the Offices of Prophet, Prieſt, and King, for the carrying on the bleſſed Deſign of our Redemption; the Execution of theſe Offices neceſſarily required that he ſhould be both deeply *abaſed*, and highly *exalted*. He cannot as our *Prieſt* offer up himſelf a Sacrifice to God for us, except he be humbled, and humbled to Death. He cannot as a *King* powerfully apply the Virtue of that his Sacrifice, except he be exalted, yea, highly exalted. Had he not ſtooped to the low Eſtate of a Man, he had not as a *Prieſt* had a Sacrifice of his own to offer; as a *Prophet*, he had not been fit to teach us the Will of God, ſo as that we ſhould be able to bear it; as a *King*, he had not been a ſuitable Head to the Church: And had he not been highly exalted, that Sacrifice had not been carried within the Vail before the Lord. Thoſe Diſcoveries of God could not have been *univerſal*, *effectual* and *abiding*. The Government of Chriſt could not have ſecured, protected and defended the Subjects of his Kingdom.

The infinite Wiſdom proſpecting all this, ordered that Chriſt ſhould firſt be deeply humbled, then highly exalted: Both which States of Chriſt are preſented to us by the Apoſtle in this Context.

He that intends to build high, lays the Foundation deep and low. Chriſt muſt have a diſtinct Glory in Heaven, tranſcending that of Angels and Men, (for the Saints will know him from all others by his Glory, as the Sun is known from the leſſer Stars). And as he muſt be exalted infinitely above them, ſo he muſt firſt, in order thereunto, be humbled and abaſed as much below them: *His Form was marr'd more than any Man's, and his Viſage more than the Sons of Men.* The Ground-colours are a deep Sable, which afterward are laid on with all the Splendor and Glory of Heaven.

Method requires that we firſt ſpeak to this State of *Humiliation*.

And to that purpoſe I have read this Scripture to you, which preſents you the Son under an (almoſt) total Eclipſe. He that was beautiful and glorious, *Iſa.* 4. 2; yea, glorious as the only begotten of the Father, *John* 1. 14; yea, *the Glory*, James 2. 1; yea, the Splendor and *Brightneſs of the Father's Glory*, Heb. 1. 3. was ſo vail'd, clouded, and debaſed, that he looked not like himſelf, a God, no, nor ſcarce as a Man, for with Reference to this humbled State it is ſaid, *Pſal.* 22. 6. *I am a Worm, and no Man*; q. d. rather write me *Worm*, than *Man*: I am become an *Abject* among Men, as that Word, *Iſa.* 53. 3. ſignifies. This Humiliation of Chriſt we have here expreſſed, in the *Nature*, *Degrees*, and *Duration* or Continuance of it.

וְלֹא־חָמַדְנֻהוּ Ιησῦ χειρῦ τὸ δόξης, ἀπαύγασμα τὸ δόξης, Deriſio virorum, abjectus inter viros. *Montanus.*

1. The Nature of it, ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτὸν, he humbled himſelf. The Word imports both a *real* and *voluntary* Abaſement. *Real*, he did not perſonate a humbled Man, nor act the Part of one in a debaſed State, but was really and indeed humbled; and that not only before Men, but God. As Man he was humbled really, as God in reſpect of his manifeſtive Glory. And as it was real, ſo alſo *voluntary*: It is not ſaid he was humbled, but *he humbled himſelf*; he was willing to ſtoop to this low and abject State for us. And indeed the Voluntarineſs of his Humiliation made it moſt acceptable to God, and ſingularly commends the Love of Chriſt to us, that he would chuſe to ſtoop to all this Ignominy, Sufferings and Abaſement for us.

Loquitur autem non de ſimulata & hypocritica humiliatione, ſed de vera & ſincera. *Zanch. in loc.*

Non ab alio fuit humiliatus, ſicut angeli mali a Deo præcipitati in barathrum infernale; ſed humiliavit ſeipſum. *Ib.*

2. The *Degrees* of his Humiliation; it was not only ſo low as to become a Man, a Man under Law; but he humbled himſelf to become *obedient to Death, even the Death of the Croſs*. Here you ſee the Depth of Chriſt's Humiliation, both *ſpecified*, it was unto *Death*; and *aggravated*, even the Death of the Croſs: Not only to become a Man, but a dead Corps, and that too hanging on a Tree, dying the Death of a Malefactor.

3. The *Duration*, or Continuance of this his Humiliation: it continued from the firſt Moment of his *Incarnation*, to the very Moment of his *Vivification* and Quickning in the Grave. So the Terms of it are fixed here by the Apoſtle; from the Time he was found in Faſhion as a Man, that is, from his Incarnation unto his Death on the Croſs, which alſo comprehends the Time of his Abode in the Grave; ſo long his Humiliation laſted. Hence the Obſervation is,

Doct. *That the State of Chriſt, from his Conception to his Reſurrection, was a State of a deep Abaſement and Humiliation.*

We are now entring upon Chriſt's humbled State, which I ſhall caſt under three general Heads, *viz.* his Humiliation in his *Incarnation*, in his *Life*, and in his *Death*. My preſent Work is to open Chriſt's Humiliation in his Incarnation, imported in theſe Words, *He was found in Faſhion as a Man.* By which you

His paucis verbis confirmat quæ ante dixerat, de vera hominis natura (quam μόρφην δούλου vocavit) à Filio Dei in unitatem personæ assumpta; qua similis per omnia, excepto peccato, factus est hominibus. *Zanch.*

you are not to conceive that he only assumed a Body, as an *assisting Form*, to appear transiently to us in it, and so lay it down again. It is not such an Apparition of Christ in the Shape of a Man, that is here intended; but his true and real Assumption of our Nature, which was a special Part of his Humiliation; as will appear by the following Particulars.

1. The *Incarnation* of Christ was a most wonderful Humiliation of him, inasmuch as thereby he is brought into the Rank and Order of Creatures, who is over all, *God blessed for ever*, Rom. 9. 5. This is the astonishing Mystery, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. That God should be manifest in the Flesh; that the eternal God should truly and properly be called the *MAN* Christ Jesus, 1 *Tim.* 2. 5. It was a Wonder to *Solomon* that God would dwell in that stately and magnificent Temple at *Jerusalem*, 2 Chron. 6. 18. *But will God in very Deed dwell with Men on the Earth! Behold the Heaven, and Heaven of Heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this House which I have built?* But it's a far greater Wonder, that God should dwell in a Body of Flesh, and pitch his Tabernacle with us, *John* 1. 14. It would have seemed a rude Blasphemy, had not the Scriptures plainly revealed it, to have thought, or spoken of the eternal God, as born in time, the World's Creator, as a Creature; the Antient of Days, as an Infant of Days.

The *Heathen Chaldeans* told the King of *Babel* that the *Dwelling of the Gods is not with Flesh*, Dan. 2. 11. But now God not only dwells with Flesh, but dwells in Flesh; yea, was made Flesh, and dwelt among us.

For the Sun to fall from its Sphere, and be degraded into a wandring Atome; for an Angel to be turned out of Heaven, and be converted into a silly Fly, or Worm, had been no such great Abasement; for they were but Creatures before, and so they should abide still, tho' in an inferiour Order or Species of Creatures. The Distance betwixt the highest and lowest Species of Creatures, is but a finite Distance. The Angel and the Worm dwell not so far asunder. But for the infinite glorious Creator of all Things, to become a Creature, is a Mystery exceeding all human Understanding. The Distance betwixt God, and the highest Order of Creatures, is an infinite Distance. He is said to *humble himself, to behold the Things that are done in Heaven.* What a Humiliation then is it, to behold the Things in the lower World! But to be born into it, and become a Man! Great indeed is the Mystery of Godliness. *Behold* (saith the Prophet, *Isa.* 40. 15, 18.) *The Nations are as the Drop of a Bucket, and are counted as the small Dust of the Ballance; he taketh up the Isles as a very little Thing. All Nations before him are as nothing, and they are accounted to him less than nothing, and Vanity.* If indeed this great and incomprehensible Majesty will himself stoop to the State and Condition of a Creature, we my easily believe that being once a Creature, he would expose himself to Hunger, Thirst, Shame, Spitting, Death, or any Thing but Sin. For that once being Man, he should endure any of these Things, is not so wonderful, as that he should become a Man. This was the low Stoop, a deep Abasement indeed.

2. It was a marvellous Humiliation to the Son of God, not only to become a Creature, but an Inferiour Creature, a Man, and not an Angel. Had he took the Angelical Nature, tho' it had been a wonderful Abasement to him, yet ye had staid (if I may so speak) nearer his own Home, and been somewhat liker to a God, than now he appeared, when he dwelt with us: For Angels are the highest, and most excellent of all created Beings. For their *Nature*, they are pure *Spirits*; for their *Wisdom*, *Intelligencies*; for their Dignity, they are called *Principalities* and Powers; for their *Habitations*, they are stiled the *Heavenly Host*; and for their Imployment, it is to *behold the Face of God in Heaven.* The highest Pitch, both of our Holiness and Happiness in the coming World, is expressed by this, we shall be ἰσάγγελοι, *equal to the Angels*, Luke 20. 36. As Man is nothing to God, so he is much inferiour to the Angels; so much below them, that he is not able to bear the Sight of an Angel, tho' in a human Shape, rendring himself as familiarly as may be to him, *Judg.* 13. 22. When the *Psalmist* had contemplated the Heavens, and viewed the Celestial Bodies, the glorious Luminaries, the Moon and Stars which God had made; he cries out, *Psal.* 8. 5. *What is Man, that thou art mindful of him, or the Son of Man, that thou visitest him!* Take Man at his best, when he came a perfect and pure Piece out of his Maker's Hand, in the State of Innocency; yet he was inferiour to Angels. They always bare the Image of God in a more eminent Degree than Man, as being wholly spiritual Substances, and so more lively representing God, than Man could do, whose noble Soul is immerst in Matter, and closed up in Flesh and Blood: Yet Christ chuseth this inferior Order and Species of Creatures, and passeth by the Angelical Nature; *Heb.* 2. 16. *He took not to him the Nature of Angels, but the Seed of* Abraham.

3. Moreover, Jesus Christ did not only neglect the Angelical, and assume the Human Nature; but he also assumed the Human Nature, after Sin had blotted the original Glory of it, and wither'd up the Beauty and Excellency thereof. For he came not in our Nature before the Fall, whilst as yet its Glory was fresh in it; but he came, as the Apostle speaks, *Rom.* 8. 3. *In the Likeness of sinful Flesh, i. e.* in Flesh that had the Marks, and miserable Effects, and Consequents of Sin upon it. I say not that Christ assumed sinful Flesh, or Flesh really defiled by Sin. That which was born of the Virgin was a holy Thing. For by the Power of the highest, (whether by Way of Manufacture, as some; or the energetical Command and Ordination of the Holy Ghost, as others; or by his Benediction and Blessing, I here dispute not) that whereof the Body of Christ was to be formed, was so sanctified, that no Taint or Spot of Original Pollution remained in it. But yet tho' it had not intrinsecal native Uncleanness in it, it had the Effects of Sin upon it; yea, it was attended with the whole Troop of human Infirmities, that Sin at first let into our common Nature, such as Hunger, Thirst, Weariness, Pain, Mortality, and all those natural Weaknesses and Evils that clog our miserable Natures, and make them groan from Day to Day under them.

By reason whereof, tho' he was not a Sinner, yet he looked like one: And they that saw and conversed with him, took him for a Sinner, seeing all these Effects of Sin upon him. In these Things he came as near to Sin as his Holiness could admit. O what a Stoop was this! to be made in the Likeness of Flesh, tho' the innocent Flesh of *Adam*, had been much; but to be made in the Likeness of sinful Flesh, the Flesh of Sinners, Rebels; Flesh, tho' not *defiled*, yet miserably *defaced* by Sin! O what is this! and who can declare it! And indeed, if he will be a Mediator of Reconciliation, it was necessary it should be so. It behoved him to assume the same Nature that sinned, to make Satisfaction in it. Yea, these sinless Infirmities

ties were neceſſary to be aſſumed with the Nature, for as much as his bearing them was a part of his Humiliation, and went to make up Satisfaction for us. Moreover, by them our High-Prieſt was qualified from his own Experience, and filled with tender Compaſſion to us.

But O the admirable Condeſcenſions of a Saviour, to take ſuch a Nature! to put on ſuch a Garment when thread-bare and ragged! Did this become the Son of God to wear? O Grace unſearchable!

4. And yet more, by this his Incarnation he was greatly humbled, in as much as this his Incarnation ſo vailed, clouded, and diſguiſed him, that during the time he lived here, he looked not like himſelf, as God; but as a poor, ſorry, contemptible Sinner, in the Eyes of the World; they ſcorned him. *This Fellow ſaid*, Mat. 26. 61. Hereby *he made himſelf of no Reputation*, Phil. 2. 6. It blotted his Honour and Reputation. By reaſon hereof he loſt all Eſteem and Honour from thoſe that ſaw him, *Mat.* 13. 55. *Is not this the Carpenter's Son?* To ſee a poor Man travelling up and down the Country, in Hunger, Thirſt, Wearineſs, attended with a Company of poor Men; one of his Company bearing the Bag, and that which was put therein; *John* 13. 29. who that had ſeen him, would ever had thought this had been the Creator of the World, the Prince of the Kings of the Earth? *He was deſpiſed, and we eſteemed him not.* Now which of you is there that would not rather chuſe to endure ſuch Miſery as a Man, than to be degraded into a contemptible Worm, that every Body treads upon, and no Man regards it? Chriſt looked ſo unlike a God in this Habit, that he was ſcarce allowed the Name of a Man; a *Worm* rather than a *Man*.

And think with your ſelves now, was not this aſtoniſhing Self-denial? That he who from Eternity had his Father's Smiles and Honours; he that from the Creation was adored, and worſhipped by Angels, as their God, muſt now become a Footſtool for every Miſcreant to tread on; and not to have the Reſpects due to a Man; ſure this was a deep Abaſement. It was a black Cloud that for ſo many Years darkned, and ſhut up his manifeſtative Glory, that it ſhould not ſhine out to the World; only ſome weak Rays of the Godhead ſhone to ſome few Eyes, through the Chinks of his Humanity: As the clouded Sun ſometimes opens a little, and caſts ſome faint Beams, and is muffled up again. *We ſaw his Glory, as of the only begotten Son*: but the World knew him not, *John* 1. 14. If a Prince walk up and down in a Diſguiſe, he muſt expect no more Honour than a mean Subject. This was the Caſe of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, this Diſguiſe made him contemptible, and an Object of Scorn.

5. Again, Chriſt was greatly humbled by his Incarnation, in as much as thereby he was put at a Diſtance from his Father, and that ineffable Joy and Pleaſure he eternally had with him. Think not, Reader, but the Lord Jeſus lived at a high and unimitable Rate of Communion with God, while he walked here in the Fleſh: But yet to live by Faith as Chriſt here did, is one Thing; and to be in the Boſom of God, as he was before, is another Thing. To have the ineffable Delights of God perpetuated and continued to him, without one Moment's Interruption from Eternity, is one Thing; and to have his Soul ſometimes filled with the Joy of the Lord, and then all overcaſt with Clouds of Wrath again; to cry, and God not hear, as he complains, *Pſal.* 22. 2. nay, to be reduced to ſuch a low Ebb of ſpiritual Comforts, as to be forced to cry out ſo bitterly, as he did, *Pſal.* 22. 1. *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* This was a Thing Chriſt was very unacquainted with, till he was found in Habit as a Man.

6. And laſtly, It was a great Stoop and Condeſcenſion of Chriſt if he would become a Man, to take his Nature from ſuch obſcure Parents, and chuſe ſuch a low and contemptible State in this World as he did. He will be born, but not of the Blood of Nobles, but of a poor Woman in *Iſrael*, eſpouſed to a Carpenter: yea, and that too, under all the Diſadvantages imaginable; not in his Mother's Houſe, but an Inn; yea, in the Stable too. He ſuited all to that abaſed State he was deſigned for; and came among us under all the humbling Circumſtances imaginable: *You know the Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, (ſaith the Apoſtle) *how that tho' he was rich, yet for our ſakes he became poor*, 2 Cor. 8. 9. And thus I have ſhewn you ſome few Particulars of Chriſt's Humiliation. Next we ſhall infer ſome Things from it that are practical.

Inference 1. *Hence we gather the Fulneſs and Compleatneſs of Chriſt's Satisfaction, as the ſweet firſt Fruits of his Incarnation.* Did Man offend and violate the Law of God? Behold, God himſelf is become Man to repair that Breach, and ſatisfie for the Wrong done. The higheſt Honour that ever the Law of God received, was to have ſuch a Perſon as the Man Chriſt Jeſus is, to ſtand before its Bar, and make Reparation to it. This is more than if it had poured out all our Blood, and built up its Honour upon the Ruins of the whole Creation.

It is not ſo much to ſee all the Stars in Heaven overcaſt, as to ſee one Sun eclipſed. The greater Chriſt was, the greater was his Humiliation; and the greater his Humiliation was, the more full and compleat was his Satisfaction; and the more Compleatneſs there is in Chriſt's Satisfaction, the more perfect and ſteady is the Believer's Conſolation. If he had not ſtoopt ſo low, our Joy and Comfort could not be exalted ſo high. The Depth of the Foundation, is the Strength of the Superſtructure.

Inference 2. *Did Chriſt for our ſakes ſtoop from the Majeſty, Glory and Dignity he was poſſeſſed of in Heaven, to the mean and contemptible State of a Man? What a Pattern of Self-denial is here preſented to Chriſtians?* What Objection againſt, or Excuſes to ſhift off this Duty, can remain, after ſuch an Example as is here propounded? Brethren, let me tell you, the *Pagan* World was never acquainted with ſuch an Argument as this, to preſs them to Self-denial. Did Chriſt ſtoop, and cannot you ſtoop? Did Chriſt ſtoop ſo much, and cannot you ſtoop in the leaſt? Was he content to become any Thing, a Worm, a Reproach, a Curſe; and cannot you digeſt any Abaſements? Do the leaſt Slights and Neglects rankle your Hearts, and poiſon them with Diſcontent, Malice and Revenge? O how unlike Chriſt are you! Hear and bluſh in hearing, what your Lord ſaith in *John* 13. 14. *If I then your Lord and Maſter, waſh your Feet; ye alſo ought to waſh one another's Feet.* The Example obliges not (as a learned Man well obſerves) to the ſame individual Act, but it obliges us to follow the Reaſon of the Example; that is, after Chriſt's Example, we muſt be ready to perform the loweſt and meaneſt Offices of Love and Service to one another. And indeed to this it obliges moſt forcibly; for it is as if a Maſter ſeeing a proud ſturdy Servant, that grudges at the Work he is employed about, as if it were too mean and baſe, ſhould come and take it out of his Hand; and when he has done it, ſhould ſay, Doth your Lord and Maſter think it not beneath him to do it? And is it beneath you?

Obligas nos ad rationem exempli, magis quam ad individuum actum. *Chemier. Tom.* 3. *l.* 19. *c.* 7.

Quid magis indignum, quid deteſtandum amplius, quid gravius puniendum, quam ut videns Deum parvulum factum, homo ſe magnificet? Intolerabilis eſt impudentia, ut ubi ſeſe exinanivit majeſtas, vermiculus infletur, & intumeſcat. *Bern. Serm.* 1. *de Nativ.*

I remember it is an excellent Saying that *Bernard* hath upon the Nativity of Chriſt; ſaith he, What more deteſtable, what more unworthy, or that deſerves ſeverer Puniſhment, than for a poor Man to magnifie himſelf, after he hath ſeen the great and high God ſo humbled, as to become a little Child? It is intolerable Impudence for a Worm to ſwell with Pride, after it hath ſeen Majeſty emptying it ſelf; to ſee one ſo infinitely above us, to ſtoop ſo far beneath us. O how convincing and ſhaming ſhould it be! Ah how oppoſite ſhould Pride and Stoutneſs be to the Spirit of a Chriſtian! I am ſure nothing is more ſo to the Spirit of Chriſt. Your Saviour was lowly, meek, ſelf-denying, and of a moſt condeſcending Spirit; he looked not at his own Things, but yours, *Phil.* 2. 4. And doth it become you to be proud, ſelfiſh and ſtout? I remember *Jerom* in his Epiſtle to *Pamachius*, a godly young Noble-man, adviſeth him to be Eyes to the Blind, Feet to the Lame; yea, ſaith he, if need be, I would not have you refuſe to cut Wood, and draw Water for the Saints: And what, ſaith he, is this to buffetting and ſpitting, to crowning with Thorns, ſcourging and dying! Chriſt did undergo all this, and that for the Ungodly.

Inference 3. *Did Chriſt ſtoop ſo low as to become a Man to ſave us? Then thoſe that periſh under the Goſpel muſt needs periſh without Apology.* What would you have Chriſt do more to ſave you? Lo, he hath laid aſide the Robes of Majeſty and Glory, put on your own Garments of Fleſh, came down from his Throne, and brought Salvation home to your own Doors. Surely the lower Chriſt ſtooped to ſave us, the lower we ſhall ſink under Wrath that neglect ſo great Salvation. The Lord Jeſus is brought low, but the Unbeliever will lay him yet lower, even under his Feet; he will tread the Son of God under foot, *Heb.* 10. 28. For ſuch (as the Apoſtle there ſpeaks) is reſerved ſomething worſe than dying without Mercy. What Pleas and Excuſes others will make at the Judgment-ſeat, I know not; but once, it's evident, you will be ſpeechleſs. And as one well obſerves, the vileſt Sinners among the *Gentiles*, nay, the Devils themſelves, will have more to ſay for themſelves than you.

Vide *Morning Exerciſe at St. Giles's in the Fields*, p. 256.

I muſt be plain with you; I beſeech you conſider, how *Jews*, *Pagans* and *Devils* will riſe up in Judgment againſt you. The *Jew* may ſay, I had a legal Yoke upon me, which neither I nor my Fathers were able to bear; Chriſt invited me only into the Garden of Nuts, where I might ſooner break my Teeth with the hard Shells of Ceremonies, than get the Kernel of Goſpel-promiſes——In the beſt of our Sacrifices, the Smoak filled our Temple; Smoak, only to provoke us to weep for a clearer Manifeſtation.—— We had but the old Edition of the Covenant of Grace, in a Character very darkly intelligible: You have the laſt Edition, with a Commentary of our *Rejection*, and the World's *Reception*, and the Spirit's *Effuſion*. You had all that Heart could wiſh.—— I periſh eternally, may the poor *Pagan* ſay, without all Poſſibility of Reconciliation, and have only ſinned againſt the Covenant of Works; having never heard of a Goſpel-Covenant, nor of Reconciliation by a Mediator. O had I heard but one Sermon! Had Chriſt but once broke in upon my Soul, to convince me of my undone Condition, and to have ſhewn a Righteouſneſs to me! But wo is me, I never had ſo much as one Offer of Chriſt. But ſo have I, muſt you ſay that refuſe the Goſpel: I have, or might have heard thouſands of Sermons: I could ſcarce eſcape hearing one or other ſhewing me the Danger of my Sin, and my Neceſſity of Chriſt. But notwithſtanding all I heard, I wilfully reſolved I would have nothing to do with him. I could not endure to hear Strictneſs preſt upon me: It was all the Hell I had upon Earth, that I could not ſin in quiet. Nay, may the *Devil* himſelf ſay, it's true, I was ever ſince my Fall maliciouſly ſet againſt God: But alas! As ſoon I had ſinned, God kickt me out of Heaven, and told me he would never have Mercy upon me: And tho' I lived in the Time of all manner of gracious Diſpenſations, I ſaw Sacrifices offered, and Chriſt in the Fleſh, and the Goſpel preached; yet how could all this chuſe but enrage me the more, to have God as it were ſay, Look here, Satan, I have provided a Remedy for Sin, but none for thine? This ſet me upon Revenge againſt God, as far as I could reach him. But alas! Alas! Had God entred into any Covenant with me at all; had God put me on any Terms, tho' never ſo hard, for the obtaining of Mercy; had Chriſt been but once offered to me, What do you think would I not have done? *&c.*

O poor Sinners! Your Damnation is juſt, if you refuſe Grace brought home by Chriſt himſelf to your very Doors. The Lord grant this may not be thy Caſe who readeſt theſe Lines.

Inference 4. Moreover, hence it follows, that *none doth or can love like Chriſt: His Love to Man is matchleſs.* The Freeneſs, Strength, Antiquity, and Immutability of it, puts a Luſtre on it beyond all Examples. Surely it was a ſtrong Love indeed, that made him lay aſide his Glory, to be found in Faſhion as a Man, to become any Thing, tho' never ſo much below himſelf, for our Salvation. We read of *Jonathan*'s Love to *David*, which paſſed the Love of Women; of *Jacob*'s Love to *Rachel*, who for her ſake endured the Heat of Summer, and Cold of Winter; of *David*'s Love to *Abſalom*; of the Primitive Chriſtian's Love to one another, who could die one for another: But neither had they that to deny that Chriſt had, nor had he thoſe Inducements from the Object of his Love that they had. His Love, like himſelf, is wonderful.

Inference 5. Did the Lord Jeſus ſo deeply abaſe and humble himſelf for us? *What an Engagement hath he thereby put on us, to exalt and honour him, who for our ſakes was ſo abuſed!* It was a good Saying of *Bernard*, *By how much the viler he was made for me, by ſo much the dearer he ſhall be to me.* And O that all to whom Chriſt is dear, would ſtudy to exalt and honour him theſe four Ways.

Quanto pro me vilior, tanto mihi charior. *Bern.*

1. *By frequent and delightful ſpeaking of him, and for him.* When *Paul* had once mentioned his Name, he knows not how to part with it, but repeats it no leſs than ten times in the Compaſs of ten Verſes, in 1 *Cor.* 1. It was *Lambert*'s Motto, *None but Chriſt, none but Chriſt.* It is ſaid of *Johannes Milius*, that after his Converſion, he was ſeldom or never obſerved to mention the Name *Jeſus*, but his Eyes would drop; ſo dear was Chriſt to him. Mr. *Fox* never denied any Beggar that asked an Alms in Chriſt's Name, or for Jeſus ſake. *Julius Palmer*, when all concluded he was dead, being turned as black as a Coal in the Fire, at laſt moved his ſcorched Lips, and was heard to ſay, *Sweet Jeſus*, and fell aſleep. *Plutarch* tells us, that when

Plutarch in vita *Tit. Flam.*

Titus

Titus Flaminius had freed the poor *Grecians* from the Bondage with which they had been long ground by their Oppreſſors, and the *Herauld* was to proclaim in their Audience the Articles of Peace he had concluded for them, they ſo preſſed upon him, (not being half of them able to hear) that he was in great Danger to have loſt his Life in the Preſs; at laſt, reading them a ſecond time, when they came to underſtand diſtinctly how their Caſe ſtood, they ſo ſhouted for Joy, crying, σώτηρ, σώτηρ, a Saviour, a Saviour, that they made the very Heavens ring again with their Acclamations, and the very Birds fell down aſtoniſhed. And all that Night the poor *Grecians* with Inſtruments of Muſick, and Songs of Praiſe, danced and ſang about his Tent, extolling him as a God that had delivered them. But ſurely you have more reaſon to be exalting the Author of your Salvation, who at a dearer Rate hath freed you from a more dreadful Bondage. O ye that have eſcaped the eternal Wrath of God, by the Humiliation of the Son of God, extol your great Redeemer, and for ever celebrate his Praiſes!

2. *By acting your Faith on him, for whatſoever lies in the Promiſes yet unaccompliſht.* In this you ſee the great and moſt difficult Promiſe fulfilled, *Gen.* 3. 15. *The Seed of the Woman ſhall break the Serpent's Head*; which contained this Mercy of Chriſt's Incarnation for us in it: I ſay, you ſee this fulfilled; and ſeeing that which was moſt improbable and difficult is come to paſs, even Chriſt come in the Fleſh, methinks our Unbelief ſhould be ſtrangled for ever, and all other Promiſes the more eaſily believed. It ſeemed much more improbable and impoſſible to Reaſon, that God ſhould become a Man, and ſtoop to the Condition of a Creature, than being a Man, to perform all that Good which his Incarnation and Death procured. Unbelief uſually argues from one of theſe two Grounds, Can God do this? Or, will God do that? It's queſtioning either his *Power* or his *Will*; but after this, let it ceaſe for ever to cavil againſt either. His Power to ſave ſhould never be queſtioned by any, that know what Sufferings and infinite Burdens he ſupported in our Nature: And ſurely his Willingneſs to ſave ſhould never be put to a Queſtion, by any that conſider how low he was content to ſtoop for our ſakes.

3. *By drawing nigh to God with Delight through the Vail of Chriſt's Fleſh*, Heb. 10. 19. God hath made this Fleſh of Chriſt a Vail betwixt the Brightneſs of his Glory and us: It ſerves to rebate the unſupportable Glory, and alſo to give Admiſſion to it, as the Vail did in the Temple. Through this Body of Fleſh, which Chriſt aſſumed, are all Out-lets of Grace from God to us, and through it alſo muſt be all our Returns to God again. It's made the great *Medium* of our Communion with God. Decurſus & recurſus gratiarum.

4. *By applying your ſelves to him under all Temptations, Wants and Troubles, of what kind ſoever, as to one that is tenderly ſenſible of your Caſe, and moſt willing and ready to relieve you.* O remember this was one of the Inducements that perſwaded and invited him to take your Nature, that he might be furniſhed abundantly with tender Compaſſion for you, from the Senſe he ſhould have of your Infirmities in his own Body. *Heb.* 2. 27. *Wherefore in all Things it behoved him to be made like unto his Brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High-Prieſt in Things pertaining to God, to make Reconciliation for the Sins of the People.* You know by this Argument the Lord preſſed the *Iſraelites* to be kind to Strangers; for (ſaith he) *you know the Heart of a Stranger*, Exod. 23. 9. Chriſt by being in our Nature, knows experimentally what our Wants, Fears, Temptations and Diſtreſſes are, and ſo is able to have Compaſſion. O let your Hearts work upon this admirable Condeſcenſion of Chriſt, till they be filled with it, and your Lips ſay, Haud ignara mali, miſeris ſuccurrere diſco.

Thanks be to God for Jeſus Chriſt.

SERMON XIX.

Treats of Chriſt's Humiliation in his Life.

PHIL. II. 8.

And being found in Faſhion as a Man, he humbled himſelf, and became obedient to Death, even the Death of the Croſs.

THis Scripture hath been once already under Conſideration; and indeed can never be enough conſidered: It holds forth the humbled State of the Lord Jeſus, during the Time of his Abode on Earth. The Sum of it was delivered you before in this Point;

Doct. *That the State of Chriſt, from his Conception to his Reſurrection, was a State of deep Abaſement and Humiliation.*

The Humiliation of Chriſt was propoſed to you under theſe three general Heads or Branches; of his Humiliation in his *Incarnation*, his Humiliation in his *Life*, and his Humiliation in his *Death*. How he was humbled by Incarnation, hath been opened above in the 18*th Sermon*. How he was humbled in his Life, is the Deſign of this Sermon: Yet expect not that I ſhould give you here an exact Hiſtory of the Life of Chriſt. The Scriptures ſpeak but little of the private Part of his Life, and it is not my Deſign to dilate upon all the memorable Paſſages that the Evangeliſts (thoſe faithful Narrators of the Life of Chriſt) have preſerved for us, but only to obſerve and improve thoſe more obſervable Particulars in his Life, wherein eſpecially he was humbled: And ſuch are theſe that follow.

Firſt, The Lord Jeſus was humbled in his very Infancy, by his Circumciſion according to the Law. For being of the Stock of *Iſrael*, he was to undergo the Ceremonies, and ſubmit to the Ordinances belonging to that People, and thereby to put an End to them;

them; for so it became him to fulfil all Righteousness. Luke 2. 21. *And when eight Days were accomplished for the circumcising of the Child, his Name was called Jesus.* Hereby the Son of God was greatly humbled, especially in these two Respects.

1. In that hereby he obliged himself to keep the whole Law, tho' he were the Law-maker, *Gal.* 5. 3. *For I testifie again to every Man that is circumcised, that he is a Debtor to do the whole Law.* The Apostle's Meaning is, he is a Debtor in regard of Duty, because he that thinks himself bound to keep one Part of the Ceremonial Law, doth thereby bind himself to keep it all; for where all the Parts are inseparably united, (as they are in the Law of God) we pull all upon us, by engaging or meddling with any one. And he that is a Debtor in *Duty* to keep the whole Law, quickly becomes a Debtor in regard of *Penalty*, not being able to keep any part of it. Christ therefore coming as our Surety, to pay both those Debts, the Debt of Duty, and the Debt of Penalty to the Law; he by his Circumcision obliges himself to pay the whole Debt of Duty, by fulfilling all Righteousness: And tho' his Obedience to it was so exact and perfect, that he contracted no Debt of Penalty for any Transgression of his own; yet he obliges himself to pay that Debt of Penalty we had contracted, by suffering all the Pains due to Transgressors. This was that intolerable Yoke, that none were able to bear but Christ, *Acts* 15. 10. And it was no small Abasure of Christ, to bind himself to the Law as a Subject made under it; for he was the Lawgiver, above all Law: And herein that Soveraignty of a God (one of the choice Flowers in the Crown of Heaven) was obscured and vailed by his Subjection.

Circumcisus & oblatus fuit Christus, quia subjiciebat se legi, non æternæ soli, & morali, sed etiam Ceremoniali & cuilibet divinæ. *Ames. Med.* p. 101.

2. Hereby he was represented to the World, not only as a *Subject*, but also as a *Sinner*: For tho' he was pure and holy, yet this Ordinance passing upon him, seeming to imply as if Corruption had indeed been in him, which must be cut off by Mortification. For this was the Mystery principally intended by Circumcision: It served to mind and admonish *Abraham* and his Seed, of the natural Guiltiness, Uncleanness and Corruption of their Hearts and Natures. So *Jer.* 4. 4. *Circumcise your selves unto the Lord, and take away the Foreskins of your Hearts, ye Men of* Judah; *i. e.* the Sinfulness and Corruption of them. Hence the rebellious and unmortified are called *stiff-necked and uncircumcised in Heart*, as it is, *Acts* 7. 51. And as it served to convince of natural Uncleanness, so it signified and sealed *the putting off the Body of the Sins of the Flesh*, as the Apostle phraseth it, *Col.* 2. 11. Now this being the End of God in the Institution of this Ordinance for *Abraham* and his ordinary Seed, Christ in his Infancy by submitting to it, did not only vail his Soveraignty by Subjection, but was also represented as a Sinner to the World, tho' most holy and pure in himself.

Ceremoniales istius ritus observationes totidem fuerunt peccati confessiones: Christus igitur, qui factus est peccatum pro nobis, congruenter etiam illis factus est conformis. *Ames. Med.* p. 101.

Secondly, Christ was humbled by Persecution, and that in the very Morning of his Life: He was banish'd almost as soon as born. *Mat.* 2. 13. *Flee into Egypt* (saith the Angel to *Joseph*) *and be thou there until I bring thee Word, for* Herod *will seek the young Child to destroy him.* Ungrateful *Herod!* Was this Entertainment for a Saviour? What, raise the Country against him, as if a *Destroyer*, rather than a *Saviour* had landed upon the Coast? What, deny him the Protection of those Laws, under which he was born, and that before he had broken the least Punctilio of them? The Child of a Beggar may claim the Benefit and Protection of Law, as his Birth-right; and must the Son of God be denied it! But herein he fulfilled the Scriptures, whilst venting his own Lusts; for so it was foretold, *Jer.* 31. 15. And this early Persecution was not obscurely hinted in the Title of the 22*d Psalm*, that Psalm which looks rather like a History of the New, than a Prophecy of the Old Testament: For as it contains a most exact Description of Christ's Sufferings, so it's fitted with a most suitable Title; *To the chief Musician upon Aijeleth Shahar*, which signifies the Hind of the Morning, or that *Deer* which the Hunter rouzes betimes in the Morning, and singles out to hunt down that Day; and so they did by him, as the 16*th* Verse will tell you; for (saith he) *Dogs have compassed me, the Assembly of the wicked have enclosed me.* Upon which *Musculus* sweetly and ingeniously descants: O what sweet Venison (saith he) is the Flesh of Christ! Abundantly sweeter to the believing Soul, than that which the Nobles of this World esteem most delicate: And lest it should want the highest and richest Savour to a delicate Palate, *Christ* our *Hart* was not only killed, but hunted to the Purpose before he was killed; even as great Men by hunting and chasing, before they cut the Throat of the Deer, to render its Flesh more sweet, tender and delicate: Thus was Christ hunted betimes out of the Country he was born in. And no doubt but where such Dogs scent and wind the Spirit of Christ in any, they would pursue them also to Destruction, did not a gracious Providence rate them off. But to return, how great a Humiliation is this to the Son of God, not only to become an Infant, but in his Infancy to be hurried up and down, and driven out of his own Land as a Vagabond!

O verè cervinam Christi carnem, animæ fideli longe sapidiorem eâ, quam hujus mundi nobiles in deliciis habent. Ac ne quid sapori ac gustui delicato deesset, non simpliciter occisa est nostra cerva, sed antea bene agitata: quemadmodum solent magnates, venando & agitando, antequam capiant & occidant, carnem cervinam suaviorem, molliorem, ac delicatiorem reddere. *Mus. in loc.*

Thirdly, Our Lord Jesus Christ was yet more humbled in his Life, by that *Poverty* and outward Meanness which all along attended his Condition: He lived poor and low all his Days, so speaks the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 8. 9. *Tho' he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor*; so poor, that he was never Owner of a House to dwell in, but lived all his Days in other Mens Houses, or lay in the open Air. His outward Condition was more neglected and destitute than that of the Birds of the Air, or Beasts of the Earth; so he told that Scribe, who professed such Readiness and Resolution to follow him, but was soon cool'd, when Christ told him, *Mat.* 8. 20. *The Foxes have Holes, and the Birds of the Air have Nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his Head.* It was a common Saying among the Jews, *When the Messiah comes, he will not find a Place to sit down in.* Sometimes he feeds upon Barley-bread, and a broiled Fish; and sometimes he was hungry, and had nothing to eat, *Mark* 11, 12. As for Money, he was much a Stranger to it; when the Tribute-money was demanded of him, he and *Peter*

Locus hic manifestè ex iis desumptus est, atq; accommodatus videtur, quide adventu Messiæ etiam tum in παρεμβαδόσοις circumferebant Judæi; quale est quod *Gemaristæ* dicunt: Si veniat non fore locum ubi confideat. ὅτι οὐκ ἔχει πᾶ τὸ σῶμα κλίνη. *Heinsius in loc.*

ter were not so well furnished to make half a Crown betwixt them to pay it, but must work a Miracle for it, *Mat.* 17. *ult.* He came not to be ministred unto, but to minister, *Mat.* 20. 28. not to amass *earthly* Treasures, but to bestow *heavenly* ones. His great and heavenly Soul neglected and despised those Things, that too many of his own too much admire and prosecute. He spent not a careful Thought about those Things that eat up thousands and ten thousands of our Thoughts. Indeed he came to be humbled, and to teach Men by his Example the Vanity of this World, and pour Contempt upon the ensnaring Glory of it; and therefore went before us in a chosen and voluntary Poverty: Yet he lived not a mendicant Life neither; but was sometimes fed by ordinary, and sometimes by miraculous and extraordinary Ways. He had wherewith to support that precious Body of his, till the Time was come to offer it up to God; but would not indulge and pamper that flesh, which he purposely assumed to be humbled in.

Fourthly, Our dear Jesus was yet further humbled in his Life, by the horrid Temptations wherewith Satan assaulted him, than which nothing could be more grievous to his holy Heart. The *Evangelist* gives us an Account of this in *Luke* 4. from the first to the 14*th* Verse: In which Context you find how the bold and envious Spirit meets the Captain of our Salvation in the Field, comes up with him in the Wilderness when he was solitary, and had not a Second with him, *ver.* 1. there he keeps him fasting forty Days and forty Nights, to prepare him to close with his Temptation: All this while Satan was pointing and edging that Temptation, with which at last he resolves to try the Breast of Christ by a home Thrust, *ver.* 2. By this Time he supposes Christ was a hungry (as indeed he was) and now he thought it was time to make his Assault, which he doth in a very suitable Temptation at first, and with *Variety* of Temptations, trying several Weapons upon him afterwards. But when he had made a Thrust at him with that first Weapon, in which he especially trusted, *Command that these Stones be made Bread*, ver. 3. and saw how Christ had put it by, *ver.* 4. then he changes Postures, and assaults him with Temptations to Blasphemy, even *to fall down and worship the Devil.* But when he saw he could fasten nothing on him, that he was as pure Fountain Water in a Christal Vial, how much soever agitated and shaked, no Dregs, or filthy Sediment would rise, but he remained pure still: I say, seeing this, he makes a politick Retreat, quits the Field for a Season, *ver.* 3. yet leaves it *cum animo revertendi*, with a Resolution to return to him again. And thus was our blessed Lord Jesus humbled by the Temptations of Satan; and what can you imagine more burdensome to him that was brought up from Eternity with God, delighting in the holy Father, to be now shut into a Wilderness with a Devil, there to be baited so many Days, and have his Ears *filled*, tho' not *defiled*, with horrid Blasphemy? O how was the Case altered with Christ! from what, to what was he now come? A chast Woman would account it no common Misery to be dogg'd up and down, and sollicited by some vile Russian, tho' there were no Danger of Defilement.

A Man would account it no small Unhappiness to be shut up five or six Weeks together with the Devil, tho' appearing in a human Shape, and to hear no Language but that of Hell spoken all that time: And the more holy the Man is, the more would he be afflicted to hear such Blasphemies malignantly spat upon the holy and reverent Name of God; much more to be sollicited by the Devil, to join with him in it: This I say would be accounted no small Misery for a Man to undergo. How great a Humiliation then must it be to the great God, to be humbled to this! to see a Slave of his House, setting upon himself the Lord! His Jailor coming to take him Prisoner, if he can! A base Apostate Spirit, daring to attempt such Things as these upon him! Surely this was a deep Abasement to the Son of God.

Fifthly, Our blessed Lord Jesus was yet more humbled in his Life than all this, and that by his own *Sympathy* with others, under all the Burdens that made them groan. For he, much more than *Paul*, could say, *Who is afflicted and I burn not?* He lived all his time as it were in an Hospital among the sick and wounded. And so tender was his Heart that every Groan for Sin, or under the Effects of Sin, pierced him so, that it was truly said, *himself bare our Sicknesses, and took our Infirmities*, Mat. 8. 16, 17. It was spoken upon the Occasion of some poor Creatures that were possessed by the Devil, and brought to him to be dispossessed: It's said of him, *John* 11. 33. *That when he saw* Mary *weeping, and the* Jews *also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the Spirit, and was troubled:* And *ver.* 35. *Jesus wept*: yea, his Heart flowed with Pity for them that had not one Drop of Pity for themselves. Witness his Tears spent upon *Jerusalem*, Luke 19. 41. 42. He foresaw the Misery that was coming, tho' they never foresaw, nor feared it. O how it pierced him to think of the Calamities hanging over that great City! Yea, he mourned for them that could not mourn for their own Sins. Therefore it's said, *Mark* 3. 5. *He was grieved for the Hardness of the Peoples Hearts.* So that the Commendation of a good Physician, that he doth as it were die with every Patient, was most applicable to our tender-hearted Physician. This was one of those Things that made him *a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Griefs.* For the more holy any is, the more he is grieved and afflicted for the Sins of others; and the more tender any Man is, the more he is pierced with beholding the Miseries that lye upon others. And it is sure, never any Heart more holy, or more sensible, tender and compassionate than Christ's.

Sixthly, Lastly, That which yet helped to humble him lower, was the ungrateful, and most base and unworthy Entertainment the World gave him. He was not received or treated like a Saviour, but as the vilest of Men. One would think that he who came from Heaven, *to give his Life a Ransom for many*, Mat. 20. 28. He that was *not sent to condemn the World, but that the World through him might be saved*, John 3. 17. He that came *to dissolve the Works of the Devil*, 1 John 3. 8. knock off the Chains, *open the Prison-doors, proclaim Liberty to the Captives*, Isa. 61. 1. I say, when such a Saviour arrived, O with what Acclamations of Joy, and Demonstrations of Thankfulness, should he have been received? One would have thought they should even kiss the Ground he trod upon: But instead of this, he was hated, *John* 25. 18. He was *despised* by them, *Mat.* 13. 55. So reproached, that he became *the Reproach of Men*, as who should say, a Corner for every one to spit in; a Butt for every base

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Sarīs continebat duo drachma, & valet 2 s. 6 d.

Paupertas Christi fuit sine voto singulari, & sine mendicitate. *Ames. Med.* p. 104.

Maxima & frequentissima tentandi occasio illi est, suum rerum secularium appetentes & esurientes, ros videt; sicut Auceps ete suum præparat bruma- potissimum tempore, uando non est quod aes comedant. *Stapleton his compt.* p. 418.

Quantum mutatus ab illo?

Tongue to ſhoot at, *Pſal.* 22. 6. Accuſed of working his Miracles by the Power of the Devil, *Mat.* 12. 24. He was trod upon as a Worm, *Pſal.* 22. 6. They buffetted him, *Mat.* 26. 67. ſmote him on the Head, *Mat.* 27. 30. array'd him as a Fool, *ver.* 29. ſpat in his Face, *ver.* 30. deſpiſed him as the baſeſt of Men, *This Fellow ſaid,* Mat, 26. 61. One of his own Followers ſold him, another forſware him, and all forſook him in his greateſt Troubles. All this was a great Abaſement to the Son of God, who was not thus treated for a Day, or in one Place, but all his Days, and in all Places. *He endured the Contradiction of Sinners againſt himſelf.* In theſe Particulars I have pointed out to you ſomething of the humble Life Chriſt lived in the World. From all which Particulars ſome uſeful Inferences will be noted.

Inference 1. From the firſt Degree of Chriſt's Humiliation in ſubmitting to be circumciſed, and thereby obliging himſelf to fulfil the whole Law, it follows, *That Juſtice it ſelf may ſet both Hand and Seal to the Acquittances and Diſcharges of Believers.* Chriſt hereby obliged himſelf to be the Law's Pay-maſter, to pay its utmoſt Demand; to bear that Yoak of Obedience that never any before him could bear. And as his Circumciſion obliged him to keep the whole Law; ſo he was moſt preciſe and punctual in the Obſervation of it: So exact, that the ſharp Eye of Divine Juſtice cannot eſpy the leaſt Flaw in it; but acknowledges full Payment, and ſtands ready to ſign the Believer a full Acquittance. Rom. 3. 25. *That God may be juſt, and the Juſtifier of him that believes in Jeſus.* Had not Chriſt been thus obliged, we had never been diſcharged. Had not his Obedience been an intire, compleat and perfect Thing, our Juſtification could not have been ſo. He that hath a precious Treaſure, will be loth to adventure it in a leaky Veſſel: Wo to the holieſt Man on Earth, if the Safety of his precious Soul were to be adventured on the Bottom of the beſt Duty that ever he performed. But Chriſt's Obedience and Righteouſneſs is right and ſound; a Bottom that we may ſafely adventure all in.

Juſtificatio eſt actus unus, individuus, perfectus, æqualiter contingens omnibus. *Woleb.*

Inference 2. From the early Flight of Chriſt into *Egypt*, we infer, *That the greateſt Innocency and Piety cannot exempt from Perſecution and Injury. Who more innocent than Chriſt?* And who more perſecuted? The World is the World ſtill. *I have given them thy Word, and the World hath hated them,* John 17. 14. The World lies in wait as a Thief for them that carry this Treaſure; they who are empty of it may ſing before him, he never ſtops them: But Perſecution follows Piety, as the Shadow doth the Body. 2 Tim. 3. 12. *All that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus, muſt ſuffer Perſecution.* Whoſoever reſolves to live *holily*, muſt never expect to live *quietly*. It's *Godlineſs*, and Godlineſs *in Chriſt Jeſus*, i. e. ſuch as is derived from Chriſt, true Godlineſs; and it's true Godlineſs as it's manifeſted in Practice. All that will *live godly*, that will exert Holineſs in their Lives, which convinces and galls the Conſciences of the Ungodly. 'Tis this enrages, for there is an Enmity and Antipathy betwixt them: and this Enmity runs in a Blood; and its tranſmitted with it from Generation to Generation, *Gal.* 4. 29. *As then, he that was born after the Fleſh, perſecuted him that was born after the Spirit; even ſo it is now.* Mark, ſo it *was*, and ſo ſtill it *is*. *Cain*'s Club is ſtill carried up and down redded with the Blood of *Abel*, ſaith *Bucholtzer*; but thus it muſt be, to conform us unto Chriſt: and O that your *Spirits*, as well as your *Conditions*, may better harmonize with Chriſt. He ſuffered meekly, quietly and ſelf-denyingly; be ye like him. Let it not be ſaid of you, as it is of the Hypocrite, whoſe Luſts are only *hid*, but not *mortified* by his Duties, that he is like a *Flint*, which ſeems cold; but if you ſtrike him he is all fiery. To do well, and ſuffer ill, is Chriſt-like.

Multi ad huc ſunt, qui clavam ſanguine Abelis rubentem circumferunt. *Bucholtz.*

Inference 3. From the third Particular of Chriſt's Humiliation, I infer, *That ſuch as are full of Grace and Holineſs, may be deſtitute and empty of Creature-comforts.* What an overflowing Fulneſs of Grace was there in Chriſt! and yet to what a low Ebb did his outward Comforts ſometimes fall? and as it fared with him, ſo with many others now in Glory with him, while they were in the Way to that Glory; 1 *Cor.* 4. 11. *Even to this preſent Hour, we both hunger, and thirſt, and are naked, and buffetted, and have no certain Dwelling-place.* Their *Souls* were richly cloathed with Robes of Righteouſneſs, their *Bodies* naked or meanly clad. Their *Souls fed high*, even on hidden Manna, their *Bodies hungry*. Let us be content (ſaith *Luther*) with our hard Fare; for do we not feaſt with Angels upon that Bread of Life? Remember when Wants pinch hard, that theſe fix no Marks of God's Hatred upon you. He hath dealt no worſe with you than he did with his own Son. Nay, which of you is not better accommodated than Chriſt was? If you be hungry or thirſty, you have ſome Refreſhments; you have Beds to lie on; the Son of Man had not where to lay his Head; the Heir of all Things had ſometimes nothing to eat. And remember you are going to a plentiful Country where all your Wants will be ſupplied: *poor in the World, rich in Faith, and Heirs of the Kingdom which God hath promiſed*, James 2. 5. The Meanneſs of your *preſent*, will add to the Luſtre of your *future* Condition.

Inference 4. From the fourth Particular of Chriſt's Humiliation in his Life, by Satan's Temptations, we infer, *That thoſe in whom Satan hath no Intereſt, may have moſt Trouble from him in this World*, John 14. 30. *The Prince of this World cometh, and hath nought in me.* Where he knows he cannot be a *Conqueror*, he will not ceaſe to be a *Trouble*. This bold and daring Spirit adventures upon Chriſt himſelf; for doubtleſs he was filled with Envy at the Sight of him, and would do what he could, tho' to no Purpoſe, to obſtruct the bleſſed Deſign in his Hand. And it was the Wiſdom and Love of Chriſt to admit him to come as near him as might be, and try all his Darts upon him; that by this Experience he might be filled with Pity to ſuccour them that are tempted. And as he ſet on Chriſt, ſo much more will he adventure upon us; and but too oft comes off a Conqueror. Sometimes he ſhoots the fiery Darts of blaſphemous Injections. Theſe fall as Flaſhes of Lightning on the dry Thatch, which inſtantly ſets all in a Combuſtion. And juſt ſo is it attended with an after Thunder-clap of inward Horror, that ſhivers the very Heart, and ſtrikes all into Confuſion within.

Divers Rules are preſcribed in this Caſe to relieve poor diſtreſſed ones. One adviſeth to think ſeriouſly on that which is darted ſuddenly, and to do by your Hearts as Men uſe to do with young Horſes, that are apt to ſtart and boggle at every thing in the Way; we bring them cloſe to the Things they fright at, make them look on them, and ſmell to them; that Time and better Acquaintance with ſuch Things, may teach them not to ſtart. Others adviſe to Diverſions of the Thoughts, as much as may be, to think quite another way. Theſe Rules are contrary to one another,

another, and I think ſignifie but little to the Relief of a poor Soul ſo diſtreſſed.

The beſt Rule doubtleſs is that of the Apoſtle, *Eph.* 6. 16. *Above all, taking the Shield of Faith, wherewith ye ſhall be able to quench all the fiery Darts of the Wicked.* Act your Faith, my Friends, upon your tempted Saviour, who paſſed through Temptations before you: And particularly exerciſe Faith on three Things in Chriſt's Temptations.

1. Believingly conſider how great Variety of Temptations were tried upon Chriſt; and of what a horrid blaſphemous Nature that was, *Fall down and worſhip me.*

2. Believingly conſider, that Chriſt came off a perfect Conqueror in the Day of his Trial, beat Satan out of the Field. For he ſaw what he attempted on Chriſt was as impoſſible as to batter the Body of the Sun with Snow-balls.

3. Laſtly, Believe that the Benefits of thoſe his Victories and Conqueſts are for you; and that for your ſakes he permitted the Tempter to come ſo near him: As you find, *Heb.* 2. 18.

Object. Heb. 4. 15. If you ſay, true, Chriſt was tempted as well as I; but there's a vaſt Difference betwixt his Temptations and mine: For the Prince of this World came, and found nothing in him, *John* 14. 13. He was not internally *defiled*, tho' externally *aſſaulted*; but I am defiled by them as well as troubled.

Sol. This is a different Caſe. True, it is ſo, and muſt be ſo, or elſe it had ſignified nothing to your Relief. For had Chriſt been internally defiled, he had not been a fit Mediator for you; nor could you have had any Benefit either by his Temptations or Sufferings for you. But he being tempted, and yet ſtill holy, bearing the Burden, and ſtill eſcaping the Defilement of Sin, hath not only ſatisfied for the Sins you commit when tempted, but alſo got an experimental Senſe of the Miſery of your Condition, which is in him (tho' now in Glory) as a Spring of Pity and tender Compaſſion to you. Remember, poor tempted Chriſtian, *the God of Peace ſhall ſhortly tread Satan under thy Feet*, Rom. 16. 20. Thou ſhalt ſet thy Foot on the Neck of that Enemy: And as ſoon as both thy Feet are over the Threſhold of Glory, thou ſhalt caſt back a ſmiling Look, and ſay, Now Satan do thy worſt; now I am there where thou canſt not come. Mean while, till thou be out of his Reach, let me adviſe thee to go to Jeſus Chriſt, and open the Matter to him; tell him how that baſe Spirit falls upon thee, yea, ſets upon thee, even in his Preſence: Intreat him to rebuke and command him off: Beg him to conſider thy Caſe, and ſay, Lord, doſt not thou remember how thy own Heart was once grieved, tho' not defiled by his Aſſaults? I have Grief and Guilt together upon me. Ah Lord, I expect Pity and Help from thee; thou knoweſt the Heart of a Stranger, the Heart of a poor tempted one. This is ſingular Relief in this Caſe. O try it!

Inference 5, Was Chriſt yet more humbled, by his own Sympathy with others in their Diſtreſſes? Hence we learn, that a compaſſionate Spirit towards ſuch as labour under Burdens of Sin or Affliction, is Chriſtlike, and truly excellent: Thus was the Spirit of Chriſt: O be ye like him! Put on as the Elect of God, Bowels of Mercy, *Col.* 3. 12. *Weep with them that weep, and rejoice with them that rejoice*, Rom. 12. 15. It was *Cain* that ſaid, *Am I my Brother's Keeper?* Bleſſed *Paul was of a contrary Temper*, 2 Cor. 11. 29. *Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?* Three Things promote Sympathy in Chriſtians, one is the Lord's Pity for them; he doth as it were ſuffer with them; *In all their Afflictions he was afflicted*, Iſa. 63. 9. Another is, the Relation we ſuſtain to God's afflicted People: They are Members with us in one Body, and the Members ſhould have the ſame Care one of another, 1 *Cor.* 12. 25. The laſt is, we know not how ſoon our ſelves may need from others, what others now need from us. *Reſtore him with the Spirit of Meekneſs, conſidering thy ſelf, leſt thou alſo be tempted*, Gal. 6. 1.

In all the Afflictions, Loſſes, and Troubles that befal Believers, Chriſt ſaith, Half mine: Yea, he not only bears half, but all the Burden, and more than all; for he bears us and our Burden too. O that more of his Spirit dwelt in his People. Aut ſumus, aut fuimus, & poſſumus eſſe quod hic eſt.

Inference 6. Did the World help on the Humiliation of Chriſt by their baſe and vile Uſage of him? Learn hence, *That the Judgment the World gives of Perſons, and their Worth is little to be regarded.* Surely it diſpences its Smiles and Honours very prepoſterouſly and unduly. In this Reſpect, among others, the Saints are ſtiled ſuch Perſons, *of whom the World is not worthy*, Heb. 11. 38. *i. e.* it doth not deſerve to have ſuch choice Spirits as theſe are, left in it, ſince it knows not how to uſe or treat them. It was the Complaint of *Salvian*, above eleven hundred Years ago; If any of the Nobility (ſaith he) do but begin to turn to God, preſently he loſeth the Honour of Nobility; O in how little Honour is Chriſt among Chriſtian People, when Religion ſhall make a Man ignoble! So that (as he adds) many are compelled to be evil, leſt they ſhould be eſteemed vile. And indeed, if the World gives us any Help to diſcover the true Worth and Excellency of Men by, it is by the Rule of Contraries, for the moſt part. Where it fixes its Marks of Hatred, we may uſually find that which invites our Reſpect and Love. It ſhould trouble us the leſs to be under the Slights and Diſreſpects of a blind World. I could be even proud upon it (ſaith *Luther*) that I ſee I have an ill Name from the World. And *Jerom* bleſſed God that counted him worthy to be hated of the World. Labour to ſtand right in the Judgment of God, and trouble not thy ſelf for the raſh and headlong Cenſures of Men. Let wicked Men, ſaith one, cut the Throat of my Credit, and do as they like beſt with it; when the Wind of their Calumnies hath blown away my good Name from me in the Way to Heaven, I know Chriſt will take my Name out of the Mire, and waſh it, and reſtore it to me again.

Si quis ex nobilitate converti ad Deum cœperit, ſtatim honorem nobilitatis amittit. O quantulus in Chriſtiano populo honor Chriſti eſt, ubi religio ignobilem facit! *Salv. Lib* 4. *de Gub. Dei.*

Superbus fio, quod video nomen peſſimum mihi creſcere; gaudeo rebellis dici. *Luth.*

Gratias ago Deo meo, quod dignus ſum, quem mundus oderit. *Hieron.*

Inference 7. From the whole of Chriſt's Humiliation in his Life, learn you to paſs through all the Troubles of your Life with a contented compoſed Spirit, as Chriſt your Forerunner did. He was *perſecuted*, and bare it meekly; *poor*, and never murmured, *tempted*, and never yielded to the Temptation; *reviled*, and reviled not again. When ye therefore paſs through any of theſe Trials, look to Jeſus, and conſider him. See how he that paſſed through thoſe Things before you, managed himſelf in like Circumſtances; yea, not only beat the Way by his

Pattern

Pattern and Example for you, but hath in every one of those Conditions left a Blessing behind him for them that follow in his Steps.
Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ.

SERMON XX.

Opens Christ's Humiliation unto Death, in his first preparative Act for it.

JOHN XVII. 11.

And now I am no more in the World, but these are in the World; and I come to thee: Holy Father, keep through thine own Name, those whom thou hast given me; that they may be one, as we are.

WE now come to the last and lowest Step of Christ's Humiliation, which was in his submitting to Death, even the Death of the Cross. Out of this Death of Christ the Life of our Souls springs up; and in this Blood of the Cross, all our Mercies swim to us. The Blood of Christ runs deep to some Eyes: The Judicious Believer sees Multitudes, Multitudes of inestimable Blessings in it. By this Crimson Fountain I resolve to sit down; and concerning the Death of Christ, I shall take distinctly into Consideration the *Preparations* made for it; the *Nature* and Quality of it; the *Deportment* and Carriage of dying Jesus; the *Funeral Solemnities* with which he was buried; and lastly, the *Blessed Designs, and Glorious Ends* of his Death.

The Preparatives for his Death were six. Three on his own Part, and three more by his Enemies. The Preparations made by himself for it, were the solemn *Recommendation* of his Friends to his Father: The *Institution* of a commemorative Sign, to perpetuate and refresh the Memory of his Death in the Hearts of his People till he come again. And his *pouring out his Soul to God by Prayer in the Garden*, which was the Posture he chose to be found in, when they should apprehend him.

This Scripture contains the first Preparative of Christ for Death, whereby he sets his House in order, prays for his People, and blesses them before he dies. The Love of Christ was ever tender and strong to his People; but the greatest Manifestations of it were at parting. And this he manifested two ways especially; *viz.* in leaving singular Supports, and Grounds of Comfort with them in his last heavenly Sermon in *Chap.* 14, 15, 16. and in pouring out his Soul most affectionally to the Father for them in this Heavenly Prayer, *Chap.* 17. In this Prayer he gives them a *Specimen* or Sample of that his glorious Intercession-work, which he was just then going to perform in Heaven for them. Here his Heart overflowed, for he was now leaving them, and going to the Father. The last Words of a dying Man are remarkable, how much more of a dying Saviour? I shall not launch out into that blessed Ocean of precious Matter contained in this Chapter, but take immediately into Consideration the Words that I read, wherein I find a weighty Petition, strongly followed and set home with many mighty Arguments.

1. We have here *Christ's Petition*, or Request in Behalf of his People, not only those on the Place, but all others that then did, or afterwards should believe on him. And the Sum of what he here requests for them is, that his Father would keep them through his Name. Where you have both the *Mercy*, and the *Means* of attaining it. The *Mercy* is to be *kept*. Keeping implies Danger. And there is a double Danger obviated in this Request; Danger in respect of *Sin*, and Danger in respect of *Ruin* and Destruction. To both these the People of God lie open in this World.

The *Means* of their Preservation from both is the *Name, i. e.* the Power of God. This Name of the Lord is that *strong Tower to which the Righteous fly, and are safe*, Prov. 18. 10. Alas! It is not your own Strength or Wisdom that keeps you, but ye are kept by the mighty Power of God. This protecting Power of God, doth not however exclude our Care and Diligence, but implies it; therefore 'tis added, *Ye are kept by the mighty Power of God through Faith to Salvation*, 1 Pet. 1. 5. God keeps his People, and yet they are to keep themselves in the Love of God, *Jude* 21. to keep their Hearts with all Diligence, *Prov.* 4. 23. This is the Sum of the Petition.

2. The Arguments with which he urgeth and presses on this Request, are drawn partly from *his own Condition, I am no more in the World, i. e.* I am going to die; within very few Hours I shall be separated from them, in regard of my corporal Presence. Partly from *their Condition; but these are in the World; i. e.* I must leave them in the midst of Danger: And partly from *the joint Interest his Father and himself had in them; Keep those that thou hast given me*: With several other most prevalent Pleas, which in their proper Places shall be anon produced and displayed, to illustrate and confirm this precious Truth which this Scripture affords us.

Doct. *That the fatherly Care, and tender Love of our Lord Jesus Christ, was eminently discovered in that pleading Prayer he poured out for his People at his parting with them.*

It pertained to the Priest and Father of the Family, to bless the rest, especially when he was to be separated from them by Death. This was a Rite in *Israel.* When good *Jacob* was grown old, and the Time was come that he should be gathered to his Fathers, then *he blessed* Joseph, Ephraim, *and* Manasseth, *saying, God, before whom my Fathers* Abraham

and

and Isaac *did walk, the God which fed me all my Life long unto this Day, the Angel which redeemed me from all Evil, bless the Lads,* Gen. 48. 15, 16. This was * a Prophetical and Patriarchal Blessing: Not that *Jacob* could bless as God blesses; he could speak the Words of Blessing, but he knew the Effect, the real Blessing it self depended upon God. And tho' he blessed *authoritatively*, yet not *potestatively*; *i. e.* he could, as the Mouth of God, pronounce Blessings, but could not conferr them. Thus he blessed his Children, as his Father *Isaac* had also blessed him before he died, *Gen.* 28. 3. and all these Blessings were delivered Prayer-wise.

* Volebat Jacob benedicere filiis benedictione non vulgari, sed Prophetica, & patriarchali. Noticâ, & patriarchali. Noverat se tantum verba posse proferre, effectum autem ab alio pendere. Petit ergo benedictionem ab eo cujus idem est dicere & facere, *i. e.* a solo Deo. *Ainsworth in loc.*

Benedicere est vel potestatis, *i. e.* bona temporalia solo nutu conferre; vel authoritatis, hoc est, bona temporalia vel æterna ex officio precari, & denunciare conferenda a Deo. *Pareus.*

Now when Jesus Christ comes to die, he will bless his Children also; and therein will discover how much dear and tender Love he had for them: *Having loved his own which were in the World, he loved them to the End,* John 13. 1. The last Act of Christ in this World, was an Act of Blessing, *Luke* 24. 50, 51.

To prepare this Point for Use, I will here open, *First*, The Mercies which Christ requested of the Father for them. *Secondly*, The Arguments used by him to obtain the Mercies. *Thirdly*, Why he thus pleaded for them when he was to die. *Fourthly*, and lastly, How all this gives full Evidence of Christ's tender Care and Love to his People.

First, We will enquire what those Mercies and special Favours were, which Christ begg'd for his People when he was to die. And we find among others, these five special Mercies desired for them in this Context.

1. The Mercy of Preservation both from Sin and Danger: So in the Text; *Keep through thine own Name those whom thou hast given me:* Which is explained, vers. 15. *I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the World, but that thou shouldst keep them from the Evil.* We in ours, and the Saints that are gone, in their respective Generations, have reaped the Fruit of this Prayer. How else comes it to pass, that our Souls are preserved amidst such a World of Temptations, and these assisted and advantaged by our own Corruptions? How is it else, that our Persons are not ruined and destroyed amidst such Multitudes of potent and malicious Enemies, that are set on Fire of Hell? Surely the Preservation of the burning Bush, of the three Children amidst the Flames, of *Daniel* in the Den of Lions, are not greater Wonders, than these our Eyes do daily behold. As the Fire would have certainly consumed, and the Lions without doubt have rended and devoured, had not God by the Interposition of his own hand stopt and hindred the Effect; so would the Sin that is in us, and the Malice that is in others, quickly ruin our Souls and Bodies, were it not that the same Hand guards and keeps us every Moment. To that Hand, into which this Prayer of Christ delivered your Souls and Bodies, do you owe all your Mercies and Salvations, both temporal and spiritual.

2. Another Mercy he prays for, is *the Blessing of Union among themselves.* This he joins immediately with the first Mercy of Preservation, and prays for it in the same Breath, vers. 11. *That they may be one, as we are.* And well might he join them together in one Breath, for this Union is not only a choice Mercy in it self, but a special Means of that Preservation he had prayed for before: Their Union one with another is a special Means to preserve them all.

3. A third desirable Mercy that Christ earnestly prayed for, was that his *Joy might be fulfilled in them*, ver. 13. He would provide for their Joy, even when the Hour of his greatest Sorrow was at Hand; yea, he would not only obtain Joy for them, but a full Joy: *That my Joy may be fulfilled in them.* It is as if he had said, O my Father, I am to leave these dear ones in a World of Troubles and Perplexities, I know their Hearts will be subject to frequent Despondencies; O let me obtain the Cordials of Divine Joy for them before I go: I would not only have them live, but live joyfully; provide for their fainting Hours reviving Cordials.

4. And as a continued Spring to maintain all the forementioned Mercies, he prays *they all may be sanctified through the Word of Truth*, ver. 17. *i. e.* more abundantly sanctified than yet they were, by a deeper Radication of gracious Habits and Principles in their Hearts. This is a singular Mercy in it self, to have Holiness spreading it self over and through their Souls, as the Light of the Morning. Nothing is for it self more desirable. And it's also a singular Help to their Perseverance, Union and spiritual Joy, which he had prayed for before, and are all advanced by their increasing Sanctification.

4. And lastly, As the Complement and Perfection of all desirable Mercies, he prays, *that they may be with him, where he is, to behold his Glory*, ver. 24. This is the best and ultimate Privilege they are capable of. The End of his coming down from Heaven, and returning thither again, all runs into this, to bring many Sons and Daughters unto Glory. You see Christ asks no Trifles, no small Things for his People; no Mercies, but the best that both Worlds afford, will suffice him on their Behalf.

Secondly, Let us see how he follows his Requests, and with what Arguments he pleads with the Father for these Things: And among others, I shall single out six choice ones which are urged in this Text, or the immediate Context.

The first Argument is drawn from the joint Interest that both himself and Father have in the Persons for whom he prays, *All mine are thine, and thine are mine*, ver. 10. As if he should say, Father, behold and consider the Persons I pray for, they are not Aliens, but Christians; yea, they are thy Children as well as mine: The very same on whom thou hast set thy eternal Love, and in that Love hast given them to me; so that they are both thine, and mine: great is our Interest in them, and Interest draws Care and Tenderness. Every one cares for his own, provides for, and secures his own. Propriety (even amongst Creatures) is fundamental to our Labour, Care and Watchfulness; they would not so much prize Life, Health, Estates or Children, if they were not their own. Lord, these are thine own by many Ties and Titles: O therefore keep, comfort, sanctifie and save them, for they are thine. What a mighty Plea is this? Surely, Christians, your Intercessor is skilful in his Work, your Advocate wants no Eloquence or Ability to plead for you.

The second Argument, and that a powerful one, treads as I may say upon the very Heel of the former, in the next Words, *And I am glorified in them: q. d.* my Glory and Honour is infinitely dear to thee; I know thy Heart is intently upon the exalting and glorifying of thy Son. Now what Glory have I in the World, but what comes from my People? Others neither can, nor will glorify me; nay, I am daily blasphemed

blaſphemed and diſhonoured by them: Theſe are they from whom my active Glory and Praiſe in the World muſt riſe. 'Tis true, both thou and I have Glory from other Creatures *objectively*; the Works that we have made and impreſt our Power, Wiſdom and Goodneſs upon, do ſo glorifie us: and Honour we have from our very Enemies *accidentally*; their very Wrath ſhall praiſe us: But for active and voluntary Praiſe, whence comes this but from the People that were formed for that very Purpoſe? Should theſe then miſcarry and periſh, where ſhall my manifeſtive and active Glory be? And from whom ſhall I expect it? So that here his Propriety and Glory are pleaded with the Father, to prevail for thoſe Mercies; and they are both great and valuable Things with God. What dearer, what nearer to the Heart of God?

Arg. 3. And yet to make all faſt and ſure, he adds in the Beginning of this, *ver.* 11. a third Argument, in theſe Words, *And now I am no more in the World.* Where we muſt conſider the Senſe of it as a Propoſition, and the Force of it as an Argument. This Propoſition, *I am no more in the World*, is not to be taken ſimply and univerſally, as if in no Senſe Chriſt ſhould be any more in this World: But only *reſpectively* as to his corporal Preſence; this was in a little time to be removed from his People, which had been a ſweet Spring of Comfort to them in all their Troubles. But now it might have been ſaid to the penſive Diſciples, as the Sons of the Prophets ſaid to *Eliſha*, a little before *Elijah*'s Tranſlation, *Know ye not that your Maſter ſhall be taken from your Heads to Day?* This comfortable Enjoyment muſt be taken from them; this is the Senſe. And here lies the Argument; Father, conſider the Sadneſs and Trouble I ſhall leave my poor Children under. Whilſt I was with them, I was a ſweet Relief to their Souls; whatever Troubles they met with: in all Doubts, Fears and Dangers, they could repair to me; in all their Straits and Wants I ſtill ſupplied them: They had my Counſels to direct them, my Reproofs to reduce them, my Comforts to ſupport them; yea, the very Sight of me was an unſpeakable Joy and Refreſhment to their Souls: But now the Hour is come, and I muſt be gone. All the Comfort and Benefit they had from my Preſence among them is now cut off: And except thou do make up all this to them another way, what will become of theſe Children, when their Father is gone? What will be the Caſe of the poor Sheep, and tender Lambs, when the Shepherd is ſmitten? Therefore (O my Father) look thou after them, ſee to them, for they are thine, as well as mine: I am glorified in them, and now leaving them, and removing out of this World from them.

Arg. 4. And yet to move and engage the Father's Care and Love for them, he ſubjoins another great Conſideration in the very next Words, drawn from the Danger he leaves them in; *But theſe are in the World.* The World is a ſinful, infecting, and unquiet place; *it lies in Wickedneſs:* and a hard Thing it will be for ſuch poor, weak, imperfect Creatures to eſcape the Pollutions of it; or if they do, yet the Troubles, Perſecutions, and ſtrong Oppoſitions of it they cannot eſcape. Seeing therefore I muſt leave thine own dear Children, as well as mine, and thoſe from whom the Glory is to riſe, in the Midſt of a ſinful, troubleſome, dangerous World, where they can neither move backward nor forward without Danger of Sin or Ruin: O ſince the Caſe ſtands ſo, look after them, provide for them, and take ſpecial Care for them all. Conſider who they are, and where I leave them. They are thy Children, to be left in a ſtrange Country; thy Soldiers, in the Enemies Quarters; thy Sheep, in the Midſt of Wolves; thy precious Treaſure, among Thieves.

Arg. 5. And yet he hath not done, for he reſolves to tug for the Mercies he had asked, and will not come off with a Denial: and therefore adds another Argument in the next Words, *And I come to thee.* As his leaving them was an Argument, ſo his coming to the Father is a mighty Argument alſo. There is much in theſe Words, *I come to thee*; [*I,*] thy beloved Son, in which thy Soul delighteth; I, to whom thou never deniedſt any Thing. 'Tis not a Stranger, but a Son; not an adopted, but thy only begotten Son. 'Tis I that [*come.*] I am now coming to thee apace, my Father. I come to thee ſwimming through a bloody Ocean. I come treading every Step of my Way to thee in Blood, and unſpeakable Sufferings; and all this for the ſake of thoſe dear ones I now pray for: Yea, the Deſign and End of my coming to thee, is for them. I am coming to Heaven in the Capacity of an Advocate, to plead with thee for them. And I come to [*Thee*] *my Father, and their Father; my God, and their God.* Now then, ſince I that am ſo dear, come through ſuch bitter Pangs, to thee, ſo dear, ſo tender-hearted a Father; and all this on their Score and Account: Since I do but now as it were begin, or give them a little Taſte of that Interceſſion-work, which I ſhall live for ever to perform for them in Heaven; Father, hear, Father, grant what I requeſt. O give a comfortable Handſel of thoſe good Things which I am coming to thee for, and which I know thou wilt not deny me.

Arg. 6. And to cloſe up all, he tells the Father how careful he had been to obſerve and perform that Truſt which was committed to him; *While I was with them in the World, I kept them in thy Name; thoſe that thou gaveſt me, I have kept, and none of them is loſt but the Son of Perdition,* ver. 12.

And thus lies the Argument: Thou committedſt to me a certain Number of elect Souls, to be redeemed by me; I undertook the Truſt, and ſaid, if any of theſe be loſt, at my Hand let them be required, I will anſwer them every one to thee. In purſuance of which Truſt, I am now here on the Earth, in a Body of Fleſh. I have been faithful to a point. I have redeemed them (for he ſpeaks of that as finiſhed and done, which was now ready to be done) I have kept alſo, and confirmed them hitherto: and now, Father, I commit them to thy Care. Lo, here they are, not one is loſt, but the Son of Perdition, who was never given. With how great Care have I been careful for them! O let them not fall now; let not one of them periſh.

Thus you ſee what a nervous, argumentative, pleading Prayer Chriſt poured out to the Father for them at parting.

Thirdly, The next Enquiry is, why he thus prayed and pleaded with God for them, when he was to die?

And certainly it was not becauſe the Father was unwilling to grant the Mercies he deſired for them: No, they came not with Difficulty, nor were they wreſted by meer Importunity, out of the Hand of an unwilling and backward Perſon. For he tells us in John 6. 27. *The Father himſelf loveth you, i. e.* he is propenſe enough of his own Accord to do you good. But the Reaſons of this exceeding Importunity, are,

1. He foreſaw a great Trial then at hand; yea, and all the After-trials of his People as well as that. He knew how much they would be ſifted and put to in that Hour, and Power of Darkneſs that was coming. He knew their Faith would be ſhaken, and greatly

greatly ſtaggered by the approaching Difficulties, when they ſhould ſee their Shepherd ſmitten, and themſelves ſcattered, the Son of Man delivered into the hands of Sinners, and the Lord of Life hang dead upon the Tree, yea, ſealed up in the Grave. He foreſaw what Straits his poor People would fall into, betwixt a buſie Devil, and a bad Heart; therefore he prays and pleads with ſuch Importunity and Ardency for them, that they might not miſcarry.

2. He was now entring upon his Interceſſion-work in Heaven, and he was deſirous in this Prayer to give us a *Specimen*, or Sample of that part of his Work before he left us; that by this we might underſtand what he would do for us, when he ſhould be out of our ſight. For this being the laſt on Earth, it ſhews us what Affections and Diſpoſitions he carried hence with him, and ſatisfies us that he who was ſo earneſt with God on our behalf, ſuch a mighty Pleader here, will not forget us, or neglect our Concerns in the other World. Yet, Reader, I would have thee always remember, that the Interceſſion of Chriſt in Heaven is carried at a much higher rate than this; it's performed in a way more ſuitable to that State of Honour to which he is now exalted. Here he uſed Proſtrations of Body, Cries and Tears in his Prayers: There it's carried in a more majeſtick way, and with more State, becoming an exalted Jeſus. But yet in this he hath left us a ſpecial Aſſiſtance, to diſcover much of the Frame, Temper, and working of his Heart now in Heaven towards us.

3. And laſtly, He would leave this as a ſtanding Monument of his Father-like Care and Love to his People to the End of the World. And for this it is conceived Chriſt delivered this Prayer ſo publickly, not withdrawing from the Diſciples to be private with God, as he did in the Garden; but he delivers it in their Preſence, *Theſe things I ſpeak in the World*, ver. 13. This ἐλάλησα, with the Circumſtances of Place [in the World] doth plainly ſpeak it to be a publick Prayer. And not only was it publickly delivered, but it was alſo by a ſingular Providence recorded at large by *John*, tho' omitted by the other *Evangeliſts*; that ſo it might ſtand to all Generations, for a Teſtimony of Chriſt's tender Care and Love to his People.

Fourthly, If you ask how this gives Evidence of Chriſt's tender Care and Love to his People? Which is the laſt Enquiry: I anſwer in few Words, for the thing is plain and obvious; it appears in theſe two particulars.

1. His Love and Care were manifeſted in the choice of Mercies for them. He doth not pray for Health, Honour, long Life, Riches, *&c.* but for their Preſervation from Sin, ſpiritual Joy in God, Sanctification, and eternal Glory. No Mercies but the very beſt in God's Treaſure will content him. He was reſolved to get all the beſt Mercies for his People; the reſt he could content ſhould be diſpenſed promiſcuouſly by Providence: But theſe he will ſettle as a Heritage upon his Children. O ſee the Love of Chriſt! Look over all your ſpiritual Inheritance in Chriſt, compare it with the richeſt, faireſt, ſweeteſt Inheritance on Earth; and ſee what poor Things theſe are to yours. O the Care of a dear Father! O the Love of a Saviour!

2. Beſides, what an Evidence of his Tenderneſs to you, and great Care for you, was this, that he ſhould ſo intently and ſo affectionately mind and plead your Concerns with God, at ſuch a Time as this was, even when a World of Sorrow was hemming him in on every ſide; a Cup of Wrath mixed, and ready to be delivered into his Hand; at that very time when the Clouds of Wrath grew black, a Storm coming, and ſuch as he never felt before; when one would have thought, all his Care, Thoughts, and Diligence, ſhould have been imployed on his own account, to mind his own Sufferings? No, he doth as it were forget his own Sorrows, to mind our Peace and Comfort. O Love unſpeakable!

Corollary 1. If this be ſo, that Chriſt ſo eminently diſcovered his Care and Love for his People in his parting Hour: Then hence we conclude, *the Perſeverance of the Saints is unqueſtionable.* Do you hear how he pleads, how he begs, how he fills his Mouth with Arguments, how he chuſeth his Words, and ſets them in order, how he winds up his Spirit to the very higheſt Pin of Zeal and Fervency? And can you doubt of Succeſs? Can ſuch a Father deny the Importunity, and ſtrong Reaſonings and Pleadings of ſuch a Son? O it can never be: He cannot deny him: Chriſt hath the Art and Skill of prevailing with God: He hath (as in this appears) the Tongue of the Learned. If the Heart or Hand of God were hard to be opened, yet this would open them; but when the Father himſelf loves us, and is inclined to do us Good, who can doubt of Chriſt's Succeſs?

By this, that Obſervation is croſſed; Nemo diù tutus, periculo proximus. *None can be long ſafe, that dwells near to Danger: For hereby they are ſafe in the midſt of Danger.*

That which is in motion, is the more eaſily moved. The Cauſe Chriſt manageth in Heaven for us, is juſt and righteous. The Manner in which he pleads is powerful, and therefore the Succeſs of his Suit is unqueſtionable.

Quicquid eſt in motu, facile movetur.

The Apoſtle profeſſeth, 2 *Cor.* 1. 3. *We can do nothing againſt the Truth.* He means it in regard of the bent of his Heart; he could not move againſt Truth and Righteouſneſs. And if a holy Man cannot, much leſs will a holy God. If Chriſt undertake to plead the Cauſe of his People with the Father, and uſe his Oratory with him, there is no doubt but he carries it. Every Word in this Prayer is a choſen Shaft, drawn to the Head by a ſtrong and skilful Hand; you need not queſtion but it goes home to the White, and hits the Mark aimed at. Doth he pray, *Father, keep through thine own Name, thoſe thou haſt given me?* Sure they ſhall be kept, if all the Power in Heaven can keep them. O think on this, when Dangers ſurround your Souls or Bodies, when Fears and Doubts are multiplied within: When thou art ready to ſay in thy haſte, all Men are Liars, I ſhall one day periſh by the Hand of Sin or Satan; think on that Incouragement Chriſt gave to *Peter*, *Luke* 22. 31. *I have prayed for thee.*

Illud poſſumus, quod jure poſſumus.

Corollary 2. Again, hence we learn, *that argumentative Prayers are excellent Prayers.* The Strength of every Thing is in its Joints; there lies much of the Strength of Prayer alſo: How ſtrongly jointed, how nervous and argumentative was this Prayer of Chriſt? Some there are indeed that think we need not argue and plead in Prayer with God, but only preſent the Matter of our Prayers to him, and let Chriſt alone (whoſe Office it is) to plead with the Father; as if Chriſt did not preſent our Pleas and Arguments, as well as ſimple Deſires to God; as if the choiceſt Part of our Prayers muſt be kept back, becauſe Chriſt preſents our Prayers to God. No, no, Chriſt's pleading is one thing, ours another: His and ours are not oppoſed,

Subordinata non pugnant.

but ſubordinate; his pleading doth not deſtroy, but makes us ſucceſsful. God calls us to plead with him, Iſa. 1. 18. *Come now let us reaſon together.* God (as one obſerves) reaſoneth with us by his Word and Providences outwardly, and by the Motions of his Spirit inwardly: But we reaſon with him by framing (through the help of his Spirit) certain holy Arguments, grounded upon allowed Principles drawn from his Nature, Name, Word, or Works. And it is condemned as a very ſinful Defect in Profeſſors, that they did not plead the Church's Cauſe with God; Jer. 30. 13. *There is none to plead thy Cauſe, that thou mayeſt be bound up.* What was *Jacob*'s wreſtling with the Angel, but his holy Pleading and Importunity with God? And how well it pleaſed God, let the Event ſpeak; *As a Prince he prevailed, and had Power with God.* On which Inſtance a Worthy thus gloſſeth: Let God frown, ſmite or wound, *Jacob* is at a point, a Bleſſing he came for, and a Bleſſing he will have; *I will not let thee go* (ſaith he) *unleſs thou bleſs me.* His Limbs, his Life might go, but there is no going for Chriſt without a Pawn, without a Bleſſing. This is the Man, now what is his Speed? The Lord admires him, and honours him to all Generations. *What is thy Name?* ſaith he; *q. d.* I never met with ſuch a Man, Titles of Honour are not worthy of thee: Thou ſhalt be called, not *Jacob* a Shepherd with Men, but *Jacob* a Prince with God. *Nazianzen* ſaid of his Siſter *Gorgonia*, that ſhe was modeſtly impudent with God; there was no putting her off with a Denial. The Lord on this account hath honoured his Saints with the Title of his *Recorders*, Men fit to plead with him, as that Word [*mazkir*] ſignifies: Iſa. 62. 6. *Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not ſilence, give him no reſt.* It notes the Office of him that recorded all the memorable Matters of the King, and uſed to ſuggeſt ſeaſonable *Items* and *Memorandums* of things to be done.

Mr. Cobbet *of Prayer.*

Hoſ. 12. 4. Gen. 32. 24.

Dr. Harris *in his Sermon on* Luke 18. 6, 7, 8.

Rememorantes, vel, qui reminiſci faci res Domini. *Mont.*

By theſe holy Pleadings, *the King is held in his Galleries*, as it is *Cant.* 7. 5. I know we are not heard, either for our much-ſpeaking, or our excellent ſpeaking; 'tis Chriſt's pleading in Heaven that makes our pleading on Earth available: But yet ſurely when the Spirit of the Lord ſhall ſuggeſt proper Arguments in Prayer, and help the humble Suppliant to preſs them home believingly and affectionately; when he helps us to weep and plead, to groan and plead, God is greatly delighted in ſuch Prayers. *Thou ſaidſt, I will ſurely do thee good*, ſaid *Jacob*, *Gen.* 32. 12. It's thine own free Promiſe; I did not go on mine own head, but thou bidd'ſt me go, and encouragedſt me with this Promiſe. O this is taking with God, when by the Spirit of Adoption we can come to God, crying, *Abba, Father*; Father, hear, forgive, pity and help me. Am I not thy Child, thy Son or Daughter? To whom may a Child be bold to go, with whom may a Child have hope to ſpeed, if not with his Father? Father, hear me. The Fathers of our Fleſh are full of Bowels, and pity their Children, and know how to give good Things to them, when they ask them: When they ask Bread or Cloaths, will they deny them? And is not the Father of Spirits more full of Bowels, more full of Pity? Father, hear me. This is that Kind of Prayer, which is Melody in the Ears of God.

Plus gemitibus quàm ſermonibus, plus fletu quàm affatu, cor clamat ad Dominum. *Aug.* *Mr.* R. A. *vind.*

Corollary 3. *What an excellent Pattern is here, for all that have the Charge and Government of others committed to them, whether Magiſtrates, Miniſters, or Parents, to teach them how to acquit themſelves towards their Relations, when they come to die?*

Look upon dying Jeſus, ſee how his Care and Love to his People flamed out, when the Time of his Departure was at hand. Surely as we are bound to remember our Relations every day, and to lay up a Stock of Prayers for them in the Time of our Health, ſo it becomes us to imitate Chriſt in our Earneſtneſs with God for them when we die. Tho' we die, our Prayers die not with us: They outlive us, and thoſe we leave behind us in the World, may reap the Benefit of them, when we are turned to Duſt.

For my own part, I muſt profeſs before the World, that I have a high Value for this Mercy, and do from the bottom of my Heart, bleſs the Lord, who gave me a religious and tender Father, who often poured out his Soul to God for me: He was one that was inwardly acquainted with God; and being full of Bowels to his Children, often carried them before the Lord, prayed and pleaded with God for them, wept and made Supplications for them. This Stock of Prayers and Bleſſings left by him before the Lord, I cannot but eſteem above the faireſt Inheritance on Earth. O it is no ſmall Mercy to have thouſands of fervent Prayers lying before the Lord, filed up in Heaven for us. And O that we would all be faithful to this Duty! Surely our Love, eſpecially to the Souls of our Relations, ſhould not grow cold but when our Breath doth. O that we would remember this Duty in our Lives, and if God give Opportunity and Ability, fully diſcharge it when we die; conſidering, as Chriſt did, we ſhall be no more, but they are in this World, in the midſt of a defiled, tempting, troubleſome World: It's the laſt Office of Love that ever we ſhall do for them. After a little while we ſhall be no longer ſenſible how it is with them; (for, as the Church ſpeaks, *Iſa.* 63. 16. Abraham *is ignorant of us, and Iſrael acknowledgeth us not*) what Temptations and Troubles may befal them, we do not know. O imitate Chriſt your Pattern.

Mr. Richard Flavell, *a faithful and laborious Preacher of the Goſpel at* Haſeler *in* Warwickſhire, *and afterwards at* Willerſay *in* Glocesterſhire, *now with God.*

Corollary 4. To conclude; *Hence ye may ſee what a high Eſteem and precious Value Chriſt hath of Believers*; this was the Treaſure which he could not quit, he could not die till he had ſecured it in a ſafe Hand: *I come unto thee, holy Father, keep through thine own Name thoſe whom thou haſt given me.*

Surely Believers are dear to Jeſus Chriſt; and good reaſon, for he hath paid dear for them: Let his dying Language, this laſt Farewel, ſpeak for him, how he prized them. *The Lord's Portion is his People*, Jacob *is the Lot of his Inheritance*, Deut. 32. 9. *They are a peculiar Treaſure to him above all the People of the Earth*, Exod. 12. 5. What is much upon our Hearts when we die, is dear to us indeed. O how precious, how dear ſhould Jeſus Chriſt be to us, were we firſt and laſt upon his Heart! Did he mind us, did he pray for us, did he ſo wreſtle with God about us, when the Sorrows of Death compaſſed him about? How much are we

ve engaged, not only to love him, and esteem him whilst we live, but to be in Pangs of Love for him, when we feel the Pangs of Death upon us! To be eying him, when our Eye-strings break! To have hot Affections for Christ, when our Hands and Feet grow cold! The very last Whisper of our departing Soul should be this,

Blessed be God for Jesus Christ.

SERMON XXI.

Opens the second preparative Act of Christ for his own Death.

1 COR. XI. 23, 24, 25.

----The Lord Jesus the same Night in which he was betrayed, took Bread: And when he had given Thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my Body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the Cup, when he had supped, saying, This Cup is the New Testament in my Blood; this do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

CHRIST had no sooner recommended his dear Charge to the Father, (but the Time of his eath hasting on) he institutes his last Supper to be e lasting Memorial of his Death in all the Churches, ntil his second coming; therein graciously provid- g for the Comfort of his People, when he should removed out of their sight. And this was the *se- nd preparative Act* of Christ in order to his Death; will set his House in order, and then die.

This his second Act manifests no less Love than e former: It's like the plucking off the Ring from s Finger, when ready to lay his Neck upon the ock, and delivering it to his dearest Friends, to ep that as a Memorial of him: *Take this*, &c. *in re- mbrance of me.*

In the Words read, are four Things noted by the A- stle about this last and lovely Act of Christ, *viz.* e Author, Time, Institution, and End of this holy lemn Ordinance.

Authoritas præcipientis ratio præcepti.

1. The Author of it, *The Lord Jesus*: It's an Effect of his Lordly Power, and Roy- al Authority; Mat. 28. 18. *nd Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All Power given unto me in Heaven and Earth: Go ye therefore. he Government is upon his Shoulder*, Isa. 9. 6. He shall ar the Glory, *Zech.* 6. 13. Who but he that came t of the Bosom of the Father, and is acquainted ith all the Counsels that are here, knows what will acceptable of God? And who but he can give reatures by his Blessing, their sacramental Efficacy d Virtue? Bread and Wine are naturally fit to re- sh and nourish our Bodies; but what Fitness have ey to nourish Souls? Surely none but what they ceive from the Blessing of Christ that institutes em.

2. The *Time* when the Lord Jesus appointed this rdinance; *In the same Night in which he was betrayed*: could not be sooner, because the Passover must first celebrated; nor later, for that Night he was ap- rehended. It is therefore *emphatically* expressed, τῇ νυκτὶ, *in that same Night*, that Night for ever to remembred. He gives that Night a cordial raught to his Disciples before the Conflict: he settles that Night an Ordinance in the Church, for the confirmation and consolation of his People in all Generations, to the End of the World. By institut- ing it that Night, he gives abundant evidence of his Care for his People, in spending so much of that little, very little time he had left, on their account.

3. *The Institution it self*; in which we have the me- morative, significative, instructive Signs, and they are Bread and Wine: And the glorious Mysteries repre- sented and shadowed forth by them, *viz.* Jesus Christ crucified; the proper New Testament Nourishment of Believers. Bread and Wine are choice Creatures, and do excellently shadow forth the Flesh and Blood of crucified Jesus; and that both in their natural Use- fulness, and Manner of Preparation. Their Useful- ness is very great; Bread is a Creature necessary to uphold and maintain our natural Life; therefore it's called *the staff of Bread*, Isa. 3. 1. because as a feeble Man depends and leans upon his Staff, so doth our feeble Spirits upon Bread. Wine was made to chear the Heart of Man, *Judg.* 9. 13. They are both use- ful and excellent Creatures; their Preparations to be- come so useful to us are also remarkable. The Corn must be ground in the Mill, the Grapes torn and squeezed to pieces in the Wine-press, before we can either have Bread or Wine. And when all this is done, they must be received into the Body, or they nourish not. So that these were very fit Creatures to be set apart for this Use and End.

If any object, It's true, they are good Creatures, but not precious enough to be the Signs of such pro- found and glorious Mysteries: It was worth the cre- ating a new Creature, to be the Sign of the new Co- venant.

Let him that thus objects, ask himself, whether nothing be precious without Pomp? The Precious- ness of these Elements is not so much from their own Natures, as their Use and End; and that makes them precious indeed. A *Load-stone* at Sea is much more excellent than a *Diamond*, because more useful. A Penny-worth of Wax applied to the Label of a Deed, and sealed, may in a Minute have its Value raised to thousands of Pounds. These Creatures receive their Value and Estimation on a like account. Nor should

it at all remain a Wonder to thee, why Christ should represent himself by such mean and common Things, when thou hast well considered, that the Excellency of the Picture is in its Similitude and Conformity to the Original; and that Christ was in a low, sad, and very abased State, when this Picture of him was drawn; he was then *a Man of sorrows*. These then, as lively Signs, shadow forth a crucified Jesus, represent him to us in his red Garments. This precious Ordinance may, much more than *Paul*, say to us, *I always bear about in my Body, the dying of the Lord Jesus*: That's the Thing it signifies.

4. Lastly, Take notice of the Use, Design, and End of this Institution. Εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν, *in remembrance*, or for a Memorial of me. O there's much in this: Christ knew how apt our base hearts would be to lose him, amidst such a Throng of sensible Objects as we here converse with; and how much that Forgetfulness of him, and of his Sufferings, would turn to our Prejudice and Loss; and therefore doth he appoint a Sign to be remembred by: *As oft as ye do this, ye shew forth the Lord's Death till he come.* Hence we observe, suitable to the Design of this Discourse,

Doct. *That the Sacramental Memorial Christ left with his People, is a special Mark of his Care and Love for them.*

Dominus noster dum vivens, ejus Sacrificii similitudinem celebrandam in suæ mortis memoriam commendavit. *Aug.*

What! To order his Picture (as it were) to be drawn when he was dying, to be left with his Spouse! To rend his own Flesh, and set abroach his own Blood to be Meat and Drink for our Souls! O what Manner of Love was this! 'Tis true, his Picture in the Sacrament is full of Scars and Wounds; but these are honourable Scars, and highly grace and commend it to his Spouse, for whose dear sake he here received them.

They are Marks of Love and Honour. And he would be so drawn, or rather he so drew himself, that as oft as his People look'd upon that Portraiture of him, they might remember, and be deeply affected with those Things he here indured for their sakes.

Hæc sunt insignia laudis.

These are the Wounds my dear Husband Jesus received for me. These are the Marks of that Love which passes the Love of Creatures. O see the Love of a Saviour! This is that Heavenly *Pelican* that feeds his Young with his own Blood. We have read of pitiful and tender Women that have eaten the Flesh of their own Children, *Lam.* 4. 10. But where is that Woman recorded, that gave her own Flesh and Blood to be Meat and Drink to her Children? Surely the Spouse may say of the Love of Christ, what *David* in his Lamentations said of the Love of *Jonathan*, *Thy Love to me was wonderful, passing the Love of Women.* But to prepare the Point to be Meat indeed, and Drink indeed to thy Soul, I shall discuss briefly these Three Things, and hasten to the Application.

First, What it is to remember the Lord Jesus in the Sacrament.

Secondly, What Aptitude there is in that Ordinance, so to bring him to our Remembrance.

Thirdly, How the Care and Love of Christ is discovered by leaving such a Memorial of himself with us.

Orta memoria, est vis redintegratrix, sive recollectrix earum imaginum, quæ antea quidem memoriæ adhæserunt, postea vero evanuerunt: appellatur uno nomine reminiscentia. *Keckerman. Syst. Phys. l.* 4. *c.* 6. *p.* (mihi) 534.

Remembrance properly, is the Return of the Mind to an Object, about which it hath been formerly conversant: And it may so return to a Thing it hath conversed with before two ways; *speculatively*, and *transiently*; or *affectingly*, and *permanently*. A *speculative Remembrance*, is only to call to mind the History of such a Person, and his Sufferings; that Christ was once put to Death in the Flesh. An *affectionate Remembrance*, is when we so call Christ and his Death to our Minds, as to feel the powerful Impressions thereof upon our Hearts. Thus, *Mat.* 26. 75. Peter *remembred the word of the Lord, and went out, and wept bitterly.* His very Heart was melted with that Remembrance; his Bowels were pained, he could not hold, but went out and wept abundantly. Thus *Joseph*, when he saw his Brother *Benjamin*, whose sight refreshed the Memory of former days and endearments, was greatly affected, *Gen.* 43. 29, 30. *And he lift up his eyes, and saw his Brother* Benjamin *his Mother's Son; and said, Is this your young Brother, whom you spake to me? and he said, God be gracious unto thee my Son. And* Joseph *made haste, for his Bowels did yern upon his Brother, and he sought where to weep; and he entred into his Chamber, and wept there.* Such a Remembrance of Christ is that which is here intended. This is indeed a gracious Remembrance of Christ; the former hath nothing of Grace in it. The Time shall come when *Judas* that betrayed him, and the *Jews* that pierced him, shall historically remember what was done: *Rev.* 1. 7. *Behold he cometh with Clouds, and every Eye shall see him; and they also which pierced him: and all Kindreds of the Earth shall wail because of him.* Then, I say, *Judas* shall remember, This is he whom I perfidiously betrayed. *Pilate* shall remember, This is he whom I sentenced to be hanged on the Tree, tho' I was convinced of his Innocency. Then the *Soldiers* shall remember, This is that Face we spit upon, that Head we crowned with Thorns. Lo this is he whose Side we pierced, whose Hands and Feet we once nailed to the Cross. But this Remembrance will be their Torment, not their Benefit. It is not therefore a bare historical, speculative, but a gracious affectionate, impressive Remembrance of Christ that is here intended: And such a Remembrance of Christ supposes and includes,

1. The saving Knowledge of him. We cannot be said to remember what we never knew; nor to remember savingly what we never knew savingly. There have been many previous, sweet and gracious Transactions, Dealings and Intimacies betwixt Christ and his People, from the time of their first happy acquaintance with him: Much of that sweetness they have had in former Considerations of him, and hours of Communion with him, is lost and gone; and nothing is more volatile, hazardous and inconstant than our spiritual Comforts: But now at the Table there our old Acquaintance is renewed, and the remembrance of his Goodness and Love refreshed and revived: *We will remember thy Love more than Wine; the upright love thee,* Cant. 1. 4.

2. Such a Remembrance of Christ includes Faith in it. Without discerning Christ at a Sacrament there is no Remembrance of him; and without Faith no discerning Christ there. But when the precious Eye of Faith hath spied Christ under that vail, it presently calls up the Affections, saying, *Come see the Lord.* These are the Wounds he received from me. This is he that loved me, and gave himself for me. This is his Flesh, and that his Blood; *sic oculus, sic ille manus*, &c. so his Arms were stretched down upon the Cross to embrace me: So his blessed Head hung down to kiss me. Awake my Love, rouze up my Hope, flam

flame out my Desires; Come forth O all ye Powers and Affections of my Soul; come see the Lord. No sooner doth Christ by his Spirit call to the Believer, but Faith hears; and discerning the Voice, turns about, like *Mary*, saying, *Rabboni*, my Lord, my Master.

3. This Remembrance of Christ includes suitable Impressions made upon the Affections, by such a Sight and Remembrance of him: And therein lies the Nature of that precious thing which we call Communion with God. Various Representations of Christ are made at the Table. Sometimes the Soul there calls to mind the infinite *Wisdom*, that so contriv'd and laid the glorious and mysterious design and project of Redemption: The Effect of this is *wonder* and *admiration*. O the manifold Wisdom of God! *Eph.* 3. 10. O the depths, the heights, the length, the breadth of this Wisdom! I can as easily span the Heavens, as take the just dimensions of it. Sometimes a Representation of the *Severity* of God is made to the Soul at that Ordinance. O how inflexible and severe is the Justice of God! What no abatements! No sparing Mercy; Not to his own Son! This begets a double Impression on the Heart.

Magna amaritudo peccati, quæ tantam amaritudinem peperit. *Aug.*

(1.) Just and deep *Indignation* against Sin. Ah cursed Sin! 'Twas thou usedst my dear Lord so; for thy sake he underwent all this. If thy Vileness had not been so great, his Sufferings had not been so many. Cursed Sin! Thou wast the Knife that stabb'd him: Thou the Sword that pierced him. Ah what Revenge it works! I remember it's storied of one of the Kings of *France*, that hearing his Bishop (as I remember it was *Remigius*) read the History of Christ's Trial and Execution, and hearing how barbarously they had used him, he was moved with so tragical and pathetical a History, to great Indignation against *Pilate*, the *Jews*, and the rude and bloody Soldiers, and could not contain himself; but cried out as the Bishop was reading, O that I had been there with my *French-men*, I would have cut all their Throats, who so barbarously used my Saviour.

To allude to this: When the Believer considers and remembers that Sin put Christ to all that Shame and Ignominy, that he was wounded for our Transgressions, he is filled with Hatred of Sin, and cries out, O Sin, I will revenge the Blood of Christ upon thee! Thou shalt never live a quiet hour in my Heart. And,

(2.) It produces an humble *Adoration* of the Goodness and Mercy of God, to exact Satisfaction for our Sins, by such bloody Stripes, from our Surety. Lord, if this Wrath had seized on me, as it did on Christ, what had been my Condition then! If *these things were done in the green tree, what had been the case of the dry tree?*

Sometimes Representations (and not common ones) are made of the *Love* of Christ, who assumed a Body and Soul on purpose to bear the Wrath of God for our Sins. And when that surpassing Love breaks out in its glory upon the Soul, how is the Soul *transported* and ravished with it! Crying out, What manner of Love is this! Here's a Love large enough to go round the Heavens, and the Heaven of Heavens. Who ever loved after this rate, to lay down his Life for Enemies! O Love unutterable and unconceivable! How glorious is my Love in his red Garments! Sometimes the Fruits of his Death are there gloriously display'd; even his *satisfaction* for Sin, and the *purchase* his Blood made of the eternal Inheritance: And this begets *Thankfulness* and *Confidence* in the Soul. Christ is dead, and his Death hath satisfied for my Sin. Christ is dead, therefore my Soul shall never die. Who shall separate me from the Love of God? These are the fruits, and this is the nature of that Remembrance of Christ here spoken of.

Dum conspicis Dominum, te inter mortales versari censes? ac non potius è vestigio in cœlos transferri? *Chrysost. Hom. lib.* 3.

Secondly, What Aptitude or Conducency is there in this Ordinance, to bring Christ so to remembrance?

Much every way; for it is a Sign by him appointed to that end, and hath (as Divines well observe) a threefold use and consideration, *viz.* as it is *memorative*, *significative*, and *instructive*.

Quoties hæc cœna celebratur, toties Christus moritur; cruce pendentem Dominum videamus. *Aug. in* Psal. 21.

1. As it is *memorative*, and so it hath the nature and use of a pledge or token of Love, left by a dying, to a dear surviving Friend. And so the Sacrament, as was said before, is like a Ring pluckt off from Christ's Finger, or a Bracelet from his Arm; or rather his Picture from his Breast, delivered to us with such words as these; *As oft as you look to this, remember me: Let this help to keep me alive in your Remembrance when I am gone, and out of your sight.* It conduces to it also,

2. As it is a *significative* Sign, most aptly signifying both his bitter Sufferings for us, and our strict and intimate Union with him: Both which have an excellent usefulness to move the heart, and its deepest Affections are the remembrance of it. The breaking of the Bread, and shedding forth the Wine, signifie the former; our eating, drinking, and incorporating them, is a lively signification of the other.

3. Moreover this Ordinance hath an excellent use and advantage for this affectionate remembrance of Christ, as it is an *instructive Sign*. And it many ways instructs us, and enlightens our Mind, particularly in the Truths which are very affecting things.

1. That Christ is the Bread on which our Souls live, proper Meat and Drink for Believers, the most excellent New Testament-food. It's said, *Psalm* 78. 25. *Man did eat Angels food:* He means the Manna that fell from Heaven. Which was so excellent, that if *Angels*, who are the noblest Creatures, did live upon material Food, they would chuse this above all to feed on. And yet this was but a Type and weak Shadow of Christ, on whom Believers feed. Christ makes a Royal Feast of his own Flesh and Blood, *Isa.* 25. 6. all our Delicates are in him.

2. It instructs us that the New Testament is now in its full force, and no substantial Alteration can be made in it, since the Testator is dead, and by his Death hath ratified it. So that all the excellent Promises and Blessings of it are now fully confirmed to the believing Soul, *Heb.* 9. 16, 17. All these, and many more choice Truths, are we instructed in by this Sign: And all these Ways it remembers us of Christ, and helps powerfully to raise, warm, and affect our Hearts with that remembrance of him.

Thirdly, The last Enquiry is, How Christ hath hereby left such a special Mark of his Care for, and Love to his People. And that will evidently appear, if you consider these five particulars.

1. This is a special Mark of the Care and Love of Christ, in as much as hereby he hath made abundant provision for the confirmation and establishment of his Peoples Faith to the end of the World. For this being an evident proof that the New Testament is in its full force,

force, (*Mat.* 26. 28. *This is the Cup of the New Teſtament in my Blood*) it tends as much to our ſatisfaction, as the legal execution of a Deed, by which we hold and enjoy our Eſtate. So that when he ſaith, *Take, eat*, it is as much as if God ſhould ſtand before you at the Table with Chriſt, and all the Promiſes in his hand; and ſay, *I deliver this to thee as my Deed.* What think you, doth this promote and confirm the Faith of a Believer? If it doth not, what doth?

2. This is a ſpecial Mark of Chriſt's Care and Love, in as much as by this he hath made like abundant Proviſion for the enlargement of his Peoples Joy and Comfort. Believers are at this Ordinance, as *Mary* was at the Sepulchre, *with Fear, and great Joy*, Mat. 28. 8. Come Reader, ſpeak thy Heart, if thou be one that heartily loveſt Jeſus Chriſt, and haſt gone many days, poſſibly years, mourning and lamenting becauſe of the inevidence and cloudineſs of thy Intereſt in him; that haſt ſought him ſorrowing, in this Ordinance, and in that; in one duty, and another, if at laſt Chriſt ſhould take off that Mask, that cruel Covering (as one calls it) from his Face, and be known of thee in breaking Bread: Suppoſe he ſhould by his Spirit whiſper thus in thine Ear as thou fitteſt at his Table, *Doſt thou indeed ſo prize, eſteem and value me? Will nothing but Chriſt and his Love content and ſatisfie thee? Then, as ſweet, lovely and deſirable as I am, know that I am thine; take thine own Chriſt into the arms of thy Faith this day:* Would not this breed in thy Soul a Joy tranſcendent to all the Joys and Pleaſures in this World? What thinkeſt thou of it?

3. Here is a ſignal Mark of Chriſt's Care and Love, in as much as this is one of the higheſt and beſt Helps for the mortification of the Corruptions of his People. Nothing tends more to the killing of Sin, than this doth. Chriſt's Blood, as it's food to Faith, ſo it's poiſon to our Luſts. O what a Pill is wrapt up in that Bread! What an excellent Potion is in that Cup to purge the Soul? One calls that Table an Altar, on which our Corruptions are ſacrificed and ſlain before the Lord. For how can they that there ſee what Chriſt ſuffered for Sin, live any longer therein?

4. Moreover his Care and Love appear in providing ſuch Bellows as theſe, to excite and blow up his Peoples Love into a lively Flame. When *Joſeph* made himſelf known to his Brethren, *I am* Joſeph *your Brother, whom ye ſold, be not grieved*; O! What a Shower of Tears and dear Affections was there? How did they fall upon each other's Necks! So that the *Egyptians* wondered at the matter. How doth the Soul (if I may ſo ſpeak) paſſionately love Jeſus Chriſt at ſuch a time? O what a Chriſt is my Chriſt! *The faireſt among ten thouſand.* What hath he done, what hath he ſuffered for me! What great things hath my Jeſus given, and what great things hath he forgiven me! A World, a thouſand Worlds cannot ſhew ſuch another. Here it's melted down by Love at his feet; it's pain'd with Love.

5. To conclude, Chriſt's Care and Love are farther manifeſted to his People in this Ordinance, as it is of the ſtrongeſt bonds of Union betwixt themſelves that can be: 1 *Cor.* 10. 17. *We being many, are one Bread, and one Body; for we are all Partakers of that one Bread.* And tho' thro' our Corruptions it falls out, that what was intended for a *Bond of Union*, proves a *Bond of Contention*; yet in as much as by this it appears how dearly Chriſt loved them; for as much alſo as here they are ſealed up to the ſame Inheritance, their dividing Corruptions here ſlain, their Love to Chriſt, and conſequently to each other, here improved; it is certainly one of the ſtrongeſt Ties in the World, to wrap up gracious Hearts in a bundle of Love.

And thus I have diſpatch'd the doctrinal part of this Point. The Improvement of it is in the following Inference.

Inference 1. Did Chriſt leave this Ordinance with his Church to preſerve his Remembrance among his People? *Then ſurely Chriſt foreſaw, that notwithſtanding what he is, hath done, ſuffered, and promiſed yet to do for his People, they will for all this be ſtill apt to forget him.*

A Man would think that ſuch a Chriſt ſhould never be one whole Hour together out of his Peoples Thoughts and Affections: That where-ever they go, they ſhould carry him up and down with them, in their Thoughts, Deſires, and Delights: That they ſhould let their Thoughts work toward Chriſt as the longing Thought of her that is with Child do work after that ſhe longs for: That they ſhould lye down with Chriſt in their Thoughts at Night, and when they awake be ſtill with him: That their very Dreams in the night ſhould be ſweet Viſions of Chriſt, and all their Words ſavour of Chriſt.

But O the baſeneſs of theſe Hearts! Here we live and converſe in a World of ſenſible Objects, which like a Company of Thieves rob us of our Chriſt, and lay the dead Child in his room. Wo is me, that it ſhould be ſo with me, who am ſo obliged to love him! Tho' he be in the higheſt Glory in Heaven, he doth not forget us; he hath graven us upon the Palms of his Hands; we are continually before him. He thinks on us, when we forget him. The whole Honour and Glory paid him in Heaven by the Angels, cannot divert his Thoughts one moment from us; but every trifle that meets us in the way, is enough to divert our Thoughts from him. Why do we not abhor and loath our ſelves for this? What! Is it a Pain, a Burden, to carry Chriſt in our Thoughts about the World? As much a Burden if thy Heart be ſpiritual, as a Bird is burdened by carrying his own Wings.

Will ſuch Thoughts intrude unſeaſonably, and thruſt greater things than Chriſt out of our Minds? For ſhame, Chriſtian, for ſhame, let not thy Heart play the wanton, and gad from Chriſt after every Vanity. In Heaven nothing elſe takes up the Thoughts of Saints to Eternity; and yet there is no tiring, no ſatiety. O learn to live nearer that heavenly life. Never leave praying and ſtriving, till thou canſt ſay as it is, *Pſal.* 63. 5. *My Soul ſhall be ſatisfied as with marrow and fatneſs, and my mouth ſhall praiſe thee with joyful Lips; whilſt I remember thee on my bed, and meditate on thee in the night-watches.*

Inference 2. Hence alſo we infer, that *Sacrament-ſeaſons are Heart-melting ſeaſons*; becauſe therein the moſt affecting and heart-melting Recognitions and Repreſentations of Chriſt are made. As the *Goſpel* offers him to the *Ear*, in the moſt ſweet affecting ſounds of Grace; ſo the *Sacrament* to the *Eye*, in the moſt taking Viſions that are on this ſide Heaven.

There, Hearts that will not yield a Tear under other Ordinances, can pour out Floods: *Zech.* 12. 10. *They ſhall look upon me whom they have pierced, and mourn.* Yet I dare not affirm, that every one whoſe Heart is broken by the believing ſight of Chriſt there, can evidence that it is ſo by a dropping Eye. No, we may ſay of Tears, as it's ſaid of Love, *Cant.* 8. 7. If ſome Chriſtians would give all the Treaſures of their Houſe for them, they cannot be purchaſed: Yet they are truly humbled for Sin, and ſeriouſly affected with the Grace of Chriſt. For the ſupport of ſuch, I would diſtinguiſh, and have them to do ſo alſo, betwixt what is *eſſential* to ſpiritual Sorrow, and what is *contingent*. Deep Diſpleaſure with thy ſelf for Sin, hearty Reſolutions and deſires of the compleat mortification of it, this is eſſential to all ſpiritual Sorrow; but

Tears

Tears are accidental, and in ſome Conſtitutions rarely found. If thou have the former, trouble not thy ſelf for Want of the latter, tho' 'tis a Mercy when they kindly and undiſſembledly flow from a Heart truly broken.

And ſurely, to ſee who it is that thy Sins have pierced, how great, how glorious, how wonderful a Perſon that was, that was ſo humbled, abaſed, and brought to the Duſt, for ſuch a wretched Thing as thou art, cannot but tenderly affect the conſidering Soul. If it was for a Lamentation in the Captivity, *that Princes were hanged up by the Hands, and the Faces of the Elders not reverenced*, Lam. 5. 12. And if at the Death of *Abner*, *David* could lament, and ſay, *a Prince, and a great Man is fallen in* Iſrael *this Day*, 2 Sam. 3. 38. If he could pathetically lament the Death of *Saul* and *Jonathan*, ſaying, *Daughters of* Iſrael, *weep over* Saul, *who cloathed you in Scarlet; the Beauty of* Iſrael *is ſlain upon the high Places!* Ah how much more ſhould it affect us, to ſee the Beauty of Heaven fallen, the Prince of Life hang dead upon a Tree! O let the Place where you aſſemble to ſee this Sight of your crucified Jeſus, be a *Bokin*, a Place of Lamentation.

Inference 3. Moreover hence it's evident, *that the believing and affectionate Remembrance of Chriſt, is of ſingular Advantage at all Times to the People of God.* For it's the immediate End of one of the greateſt Ordinances that ever Chriſt appointed to the Church.

To have frequent Recognitions of Chriſt will appear to be ſingularly efficacious and uſeful to Believers, if you conſider,

1. If at any time the Heart be dead and hard, this is the likelieſt Means in the World to diſſolve, melt and quicken it. Look hither hard Heart; hard indeed if this Hammer will not break it. Behold the Blood of Jeſus.

2. Art thou eaſily overcome by Temptations to Sin? This is the moſt powerful Pull-back in the World from Sin: *Rom.* 6. 2. *How ſhall we that are dead to Sin, live any longer therein?* We are crucified with Chriſt, what have we to do with Sin? Have ſuch a Thought as this, when thy Heart is yielding to Temptation. How can I do this, and crucifie the Son of God afreſh! Hath he not ſuffered enough already on Earth, ſhall I yet make him groan as it were for me in Heaven? Look as *David* poured the Water brought from the Well of *Bethlehem* on the Ground, tho' he was athirſt, for he ſaid, it is the Blood of the Men; *i. e.* they eminently hazarded their Lives to fetch it; much more ſhould a Chriſtian pour out upon the Ground, yea, deſpiſe and trample underfoot the greateſt Profit or Pleaſure of Sin; ſaying, Nay, I will have nothing to do with it, I will on no Terms touch it, for it is the Blood of Chriſt: It coſt Blood, infinite precious Blood, to expiate it. If there were a Knife in your Houſe that had been thruſt to the Heart of your Father, you would not take Pleaſure to ſee that Knife, much leſs to uſe it.

3. Are you afraid your Sins are not pardoned, but ſtill ſtand upon Account before the Lord? What more relieving, what more ſatisfying, than to ſee the Cup in the New Teſtament in the Blood of Chriſt, which is *ſhed for many for the Remiſſion of Sins? Who ſhall lay any Thing to the Charge of God's Elect? It's Chriſt that died.*

4. Are you ſtaggered at your Sufferings, and hard Things you muſt endure for Chriſt in this World? Doth the Fleſh ſhrink back from theſe Things, and cry, ſpare thy ſelf? What is there in the World more likely to ſteel and fortifie thy Spirit with Reſolution and Courage, than ſuch a Sight as this? Did Chriſt face the Wrath of Men, and the Wrath of God too? Did he ſtand as a Pillar of Braſs, with unbroken Patience, and ſtedfaſt Reſolution, under ſuch Troubles as never met in the like Height upon any meer Creature, till Death beat the laſt Breath out of his Noſtrils? And ſhall I ſhrink for a Trifle? Ah, he did not ſerve me ſo! I will arm my ſelf with the like Mind, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2.

5. Is thy Faith ſtaggered at the Promiſes? Canſt thou not reſt upon a Promiſe? Here's that will help thee againſt Hope to believe in Hope, giving Glory to God, For this is God's Seal added to his Covenant, which ratifies and binds faſt all that God hath ſpoken.

6. Doſt thou idle away precious Time vainly, and live unuſefully to Chriſt in thy Generation? What more apt both to convince and cure thee, than ſuch a Remembrance of Chriſt as this? O when thou conſidereſt thou art not thine own, thy Time, thy Talents are not thine own, but Chriſt's; when thou ſhalt ſee thou art bought with a Price (a great Price indeed) and ſo art ſtrictly obliged to glorifie God, with thy Soul and Body, which are his, 2 *Cor.* 5. 14. This will powerfully awake a dull, ſluggiſh and lazy Spirit. In a word, what Grace is there this Remembrance of Chriſt cannot quicken? What Sin cannot it mortifie? What Duty cannot it animate? O it is of ſingular Uſe in all Caſes to the People of God!

Inference 4. Laſtly, Hence we infer; *Tho' all other Things do, yet Chriſt neither doth, nor can grow ſtale.* Here's an Ordinance to preſerve his Remembrance freſh to the End of the World. The Blood of Chriſt doth never dry up. The Beauty of this Roſe of *Sharon* is never loſt or withered. He is the ſame Yeſterday, to Day, and for Ever. As his Body in the Grave ſaw no Corruption, ſo neither can his Love, or any of his Excellencies. When the Saints ſhall have fed their Eyes upon him in Heaven Thouſands and Millions of Years, he ſhall be as Freſh, Beautiful, and Orient as at the Beginning. Other Beauties have their prime and their fading Time; but Chriſt abides eternally. Our Delight in Creatures is often moſt at firſt Acquaintance; when we come nearer to them, and ſee more of them, the Edge of our Delight is rebated: But the longer you know Chriſt, and the nearer you come to him, ſtill the more do you ſee of his Glory. Every farther Proſpect of Chriſt entertains the Mind with a freſh Delight. He is as it were a new Chriſt every Day, and yet the ſame Chriſt ſtill.

Bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt.

SERM.

SERMON XXII.

Opens the Third preparative Act of Christ for his own Death.

LUKE XXII. 41, 42, 43, 44.

And he was withdrawn from them about a Stone's Caſt, and kneeled down, and prayed; ſaying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this Cup from me: Nevertheleſs, not my Will, but thine be done. And there appeared an Angel unto him from Heaven, ſtrengthning him. And being in an Agony, he prayed more earneſtly; and his Sweat was as it were great Drops of Blood falling down to the Ground.

THE Hour is now almoſt come, even that Hour of Sorrow, which Chriſt had ſo often ſpoken of. Yet a little, a very little while, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the Hands of Sinners. He hath affectionately recommended his Children to his Father. He hath ſet his Houſe in order, and ordained a Memorial of his Death to be left with his People, as you have heard. There is but one thing more to do, and then the Tragedy begins. He recommended us, he muſt alſo recommend himſelf by Prayer to the Father; and when that is done, he is ready, let *Judas* with the Black Guard come when they will.

This laſt Act of Chriſt's Preparation for his own Death, is contained in this Scripture: Wherein we have an account. 1. Of his Prayer. 2. Of the Agony attending it. 3. His Relief in that Agony, by an Angel that came and comforted him.

1. The Prayer of Chriſt; in a praying Poſture he will be found when the Enemy comes; he will be taken upon his Knees: He was pleading hard with God in Prayer, for Strength to carry him through this heavy Trial, when they came to take him. And this Prayer was a very remarkable Prayer, both for the *Solitarineſs* of it; he withdrew about a Stone's caſt, *Ver.* 41. from his deareſt Intimates; no Ear but his Father's ſhall hear what he had now to ſay. For the *Vehemency* and Importunity of it; theſe were thoſe ἱκετηρίας, *Heb.* 5. 7. ſtrong Cries that he poured out to God in the Days of his Fleſh. And for the *Humility* expreſſed in it; he fell upon the Ground, he rouled himſelf as it were in the Duſt, at his Father's Feet. And in divers other reſpects it was a very remarkable Prayer, as you will hear anon.

2. This Scripture gives you alſo an account of the Agony of Chriſt, as well as of his Prayer, and that a moſt ſtrange one; ſuch as in all reſpects never was known before in Nature. It was a Sweat as it had been Blood, which [as] is neither an Hyperbole, as ſome would make it; nor yet a Similitude of Blood, as others fancy, but a real bloody Sweat. For ſo [as] is ſometimes taken for the very thing it ſelf, as *John* 1. 14.

Mr. Ambroſe *looking to Jeſus.*

And as a worthy Divine of our own well notes, that if the Holy Ghoſt had only intended it for a Similitude or Reſemblance, he would rather have expreſſed it, *as it were Drops of Water*, than *as it were Drops of Blood*; for Sweat more reſembles Water than Blood.

3. You have here his Relief in this his Agony, and that by an Angel diſpatch'd Poſt from Heaven to comfort him. The Lord of Angels now needed the Comfort of an Angel. It was time to have a little Refreſhment, when his Face and Body too ſtood as full of Drops of Blood, as the Drops of Dew are upon the Graſs. Hence we note,

Doct. *That our Lord Jeſus Chriſt was praying to his Father in an extraordinary Agony, when they came to apprehend him in the Garden.*

To open and prepare this laſt Act of Preparation on Chriſt's part for our Uſe, I ſhall at this time ſpeak to theſe Particulars. *Firſt*, The *Place* where he prayed. *Secondly*, The *Time* when he prayed. *Thirdly*, The *Matter* of his Prayer. And *laſtly*, The *Manner* how he prayed.

Firſt, For the Circumſtance of *Place*, where was this laſt and remarkable Prayer poured out to God? It was in the Garden; St. *Matthew* tells us it was called *Gethſemane*, which ſignifies (as *Pareus* on the Place obſerves) the Valley of Fatneſs, *viz.* of Olives, which grew in that Valley or Garden moſt plentifully. This Garden lay very near to the City of *Jeruſalem*. The City had twelve Gates, five of which were on the Eaſt ſide of it, among which the moſt remarkable were the *Fountain-gate*, ſo called of the Fountain *Siloe*. Through this Gate Chriſt rode into the City in triumph, when he came from *Bethany*. The other was the *Sheep-gate* ſo called from the Multitude of Sheep driven in at it for the Sacrifice, for it ſtood cloſe by the Temple; and cloſe by this Gate was the Garden called *Gethſemane*, where they apprehended Chriſt, and led him through this Gate, as a Sheep to the Slaughter. Betwixt this Garden and the City, ran the Brook *Cedron*, which roſe from a Hill upon the South, and ran upon the Eaſt part of the City, between *Jeruſalem* and the Mount of Olives: and over this Brook Chriſt paſſed into the Garden, *Joh.* 18. 1. to which the Pſalmiſt alludes in Pſal. 110. 7. *He ſhall drink of the Brook in the Way, therefore ſhall he lift up the Head.* For this Brook running through the Valley of *Jehoſaphat*, that fertile Soil, together with the Filth of the City which it waſht away, gave the Waters a black Tincture, and ſo fitly reſembled thoſe grievous Sufferings of Chriſt, in which he taſted both the Wrath of God and Men.

In locum Gethſemane, Gr. χωρίον; reddunt villam, vel prædium, dictum Gethſemane, *Heb.* גיאשמנים, quod ſonat vallem pinguium, nempe olearum, quæ nimirum iſtic uberius proveniebant. *Par.*

Now Chriſt went not into this Garden to hide or ſhelter himſelf from his Enemies. No, that was not his End; for if ſo, it had been the moſt improper Place he could have choſen, it being the accuſtomed Place where

where he was wont to pray, and a Place well known o *Judas*, who was now coming to ſeek him, as you ay ſee, *John* 18. 2. *And* Judas, *which betrayed him, new the Place, for Jeſus oft-times reſorted thither with his iſciples.* So that he repairs thither, not to ſhun, ut to meet the Enemy; to offer himſelf as a Prey to e Wolves, which there found him, and laid hold pon him. He alſo reſorted thither for an Hour or vo of Privacy before they came, that he might there eely pour out his Soul to God. So much for the ircumſtance of Place where he prayed.

Secondly, We ſhall conſider the *Time* when he en- red into this Garden to pray: And it was in the ſhutting in of the Evening: for it was after the Paſſover and the Supper were ended. Then (as *Matthew* hath it, *chap.* 26. 36.) Jeſus went over the Brook into the Garden, betwixt the Hours of ne and ten in the Evening, as it is conjectured; d ſo he had betwixt two and three Hours time to ur out his Soul to God. For it was about Midght that *Judas* and the Soldiers came and appreended him there. So that it being immediately bere his Apprehenſion, it ſhews us in what Frame and oſture Chriſt deſired to be found: and by it he left an excellent Pattern what we ought to do, when minent Dangers are near us, even at the door. It becomes a Soldier to die fighting, and a Miniſter to die preaching, and a Chriſtian to die praying. If they me, they find Chriſt upon his Knees, wreſtling ghtily with God by Prayer. He never ſpent one oment of the Time of this Life idly; but theſe were e laſt Moments he had to live in the World, and here u may ſee how they were filled up and imployed.

Thirdly, Next let us conſider the *Matter* of his Pray-, or the Things about which he poured out his Soul God in the Garden that Evening. And *Ver.* 42. forms us what that was: He prayed, ſaying, *Faer, if thou be willing, remove this Cup from me; nevereleſs, not my Will, but thine be done.* Theſe Words re involved in many Difficulties, as Chriſt himſelf as when he uttered them. By the *Cup* underſtand hat Portion of Sorrows then to be diſtributed to him y his Father. Great Afflictions and bitter Trials re frequently expreſſed in Scripture under the Metahor of a Cup. So that dreadful Storm of Wrath upn the Wicked in Pſal. 11. 6. *Upon the Wicked he ſhall ain Snares, Fire and Brimſtone, and a horrible Tempeſt; his ſhall be the Portion of their Cup, i. e.* the Puniſhment llotted to them by God for their Wickedneſs. And n exceeding great Miſery, by a large or deep Cup. o *Ezek.* 23. 32, 33. *Thou ſhalt drink of thy Siſter's Cup leep and large, thou ſhalt be laughed to ſcorn, and had in leriſion; it containeth much. Thou ſhalt be filled with Drunkenneſs and Sorrow, with the Cup of Aſtoniſhment nd Deſolation; with the Cup of thy Siſter* Samaria. And when an Affliction is compounded of many bitter Ingredients, ſtinging and aggravating Conſiderations nd Circumſtances, then it's ſaid to be mixed. *In he Hand of the Lord there is a Cup, and the Wine is red,* (noting a bloody Trial) *it is full of Mixture, and he poureth out the ſame, but the Dregs thereof all the Wicked of the Earth ſhall wring them out, and drink them: i. e.* they ſhall have the worſt Part of the Judgment for their Share. Thus Afflictions and Calamities are expreſs'd by the Metaphor of a Cup; great Calamities by a deep and large Cup; Afflictions compounded of many aggravating Circumſtances, by a mixed Cup. And from the Effect it hath on thoſe that muſt drink it, it's call'd a Cup of Trembling, *Iſa.* 57. 17. *Thou haſt drunken at the Hand of the Lord, the Cup of his Fury, the Dregs of the Cup of Trembling.* Such a Cup now was Chriſt's Cup; a Cup of Wrath, a large and deep Cup, that contained more Wrath than ever was drunk by any Creature, even the Wrath of an infinite God. A mixed Cup, mixed with God's Wrath and Man's in the Extremity. And all the bitter aggravating Circumſtances that ever could be imagined; great Conſternation and Amazement, this was the Portion of his Cup.

By the *paſſing of the Cup* from him, underſtand his Exemption from ſuffering that dreadful and horrid Wrath of God, which he foreſaw to be now at hand. For as the coming of the Cup to a Man, doth in Scripture-phraſe note his bearing and ſuffering of Evil, as you find it, *Lam.* 4. 21. *Rejoice and be glad, O Daughter of* Edom, *that dwelleſt in the Land of* Uz; *the Cup alſo ſhall paſs through unto thee; thou ſhalt be drunken, and make thy ſelf naked*; which is an ironical Reproof of the *Idumeans*, the Jews deadly Enemies, who wickedly inſulted over them, when the Cup was at their Mouths: As if the Lord had ſaid, You have laugh'd and jeer'd at my People, when my Hand was on them; you rejoiced to ſee their Calamities: Well, make your ſelves merry ſtill if you can, the Cup ſhall paſs through unto thee; thy Turn is coming, then laugh if thou canſt. So on the contrary, the paſſing away of the Cup notes Freedom from, or our eſcaping of thoſe Miſeries. And ſo Chriſt's Meaning in this conditional Requeſt is, Father, if it be thy Will, excuſe me from this dreadful Wrath, my Soul is amazed at it. Is there no way to ſhun it? Cannot I be excuſed? Or if it be poſſible, ſpare me. This is the meaning of it. But then here's the Difficulty, how Chriſt, who knew God had from everlaſting determined he ſhould drink it, who had compacted and agreed with him in the Covenant of Redemption ſo to do, who came (as himſelf acknowledges) for that End into the World, *John* 18. 37. who foreſaw this Hour all along, and profeſſed when he ſpake of this Blood-Baptiſm with which he was to be baptized, that he was *ſtraitned till it was accompliſh'd*, Luke 12. 50. How (I ſay) to reconcile all this with ſuch a Petition, that now when the Cup was delivered to him, it might paſs, or he be excuſed from ſuffering; this is the Knot, this is the Difficulty.

What! did he now repent of the Bargain? Was all he ſaid before but a Flouriſh, before he ſaw the Enemy? Doth he now begin to wiſh his Bargain dry, and that he had never undertaken ſuch a Work? Is that the Meaning of it? Nothing leſs: No, no, Chriſt never repented of his Engagement to the Father, never was willing to let the Burden lye on us, rather than on himſelf; there was not ſuch a Thought in his holy and faithful Heart: But the Reſolution of this Doubt depends upon another Diſtinction, which will clear his Meaning in it.

1*ſt*. You muſt diſtinguiſh of Prayers. Some are *abſolute* and peremptory; and ſo to have prayed that the Cup might paſs, would have been chargeable with ſuch Abſurdities, as were but now mentioned: Others are *conditional* and ſubmiſſive Prayers, *If it may be, if the Lord pleaſe.* And ſuch was this, if thou be willing; if not, I'll drink it. But you will ſay, Chriſt knew what was the Mind of God in that caſe; he knew what Tranſactions had of old been betwixt his Father and him; and therefore tho' he did not pray abſolutely, yet it's ſtrange he would pray conditionally it might paſs. Therefore in the

2*d* Place, you muſt diſtinguiſh of the *Natures* according to which Chriſt acted. He acted ſometimes as God, and ſometimes as Man. Here he acted according to his human Nature; ſimply expreſſing and mani-

(a) Tunc, nempe ingruente jam nocte, poſtquam peractâ cœnâ paſchali & euchariſticâ, gratiis actis, hymnum decantaſſent. *Par. Loc.*

Oportet theologum consonantem mori.

manifesting in this Request the Reluctancy it had at such Sufferings: Wherein he shewed himself a true Man, in shunning that which is destructive to his Nature.

As Christ had two distinct Natures, so two distinct Wills. And (as one well observes) in the Life of Christ there was an Intermixture of Power and Weakness, of the Divine Glory and human Frailty. At his Birth a Star shone, but he was laid in a Manger. The Devil tempted him in the Wilderness, but there Angels ministred to him. As Man he was deceived in the Fig-tree, but as God he blasted it. He was caught by the Soldiers in the Garden, but first made them fall back. So here, as Man he feared and shunned Death; but as God-Man he willingly submitted to it.

Deodati Annot. in Mat. 26. 39.

"It was (as *Deodati* well "expresses it) a purely na- "tural Desire, meer Man, "by which for a short Mo- "ment he apprehended and shunned Death and "Torments; but quickly recalled himself to Obe- "dience, by a deliberate Will, to submit himself to "God. And besides that, this Desire was but con- "ditional, under the Will of God, accepted by "Christ; but from the Contemplation of which he "was a while diverted by the Extremity of Horrors: "Therefore there was no Sin in it, but only a short "Conflict of Nature presently overcome by Reason, "and a firm Will; or a small Suspension, quickly "overcome by a most strong Resolution. Finally, "this sacred Deliberation in Jesus was not made "simply, or in an Instant, but with a short Time, "and with a Counterpoise, which is the natural "Property of the Soul in its Motions and voluntary "Actions."

In a word, as there was nothing of Sin in it, it being a pure and sinless Affection of Nature; so there was much Good in it, and that both as it was a Part of his Satisfaction for our Sin, to suffer inwardly such Fears, Tremblings, and Consternations: And as it was a clear Evidence, that he was in all things made like unto his Brethren, except Sin. And lastly, as it serves notably to express the Grievousness and Extremity of Christ's Sufferings, whose very Prospect and Appearance at some distance was so dreadful to him.

Parker de descensu, *lib.* 3. *p.* 192, *&c.*

If the Learned Reader desire to see what is farther said on this Point, let him read what the judicious and learned *Parker*, in his excellent Book *de descensu*, hath collected upon that Case.

Fourthly, Let us consider the *Manner* how he prayed, and that was,

1. *Solitarily*. He doth not here pray in the Audience of his Disciples, as he had done before, but went at a distance from them. He had now private Business to transact with God. He left some of them at the entring into the Garden; and for *Peter*, *James* and *John*, that went farther with him than the rest, he bids them remain there while he went and prayed. He did not desire them to pray with him, or for him; no, he must tread the Wine-press alone. Nor will he have them with him, possibly lest it should discourage them to see and hear how he groaned, sweat, trembled, and cried, as one in an Agony, to his Father.

Tristitiæ medelam quærit in precibus; quibus ut liberiùs vacare posset, modicum secedit.

Reader, there are Times and Cases, when a Christian would not be willing the dearest and most intimate Friend he hath in the World, should be privy to what passes betwixt him and his God.

2. It was an *humble* Prayer, that's evident by the Postures into which he cast himself: Sometimes kneeling, and sometimes prostrate upon his Face. He creeps in the very Dust, lower he cannot fall; and his Heart was as low as his Body. He is meek and lowly indeed.

3. It was a *reiterated* Prayer; he prays, and then returns to the Disciples, as a Man in Extremity turns every way for Comfort: So Christ prays, *Father, let this Cup pass*, but in that the Father hears him not, tho' as to Support he was heard. Being denied Deliverance by his Father, he goes and bemoans himself to his pensive Friends, and complains bitterly to them, *My Soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto Death.* He would ease himself a little, by opening his Condition to them; but alas, they rather encrease than ease his Burden. For he finds them asleep, which occasions that gentle Reprehension from him, *Mat.* 26. 40. *What could you not watch with me one Hour?* What, not *watch* with *me?* Who may expect it from you more than I? Could you not *watch?* I am going to die for you, and *cannot you watch* with me? What! can not you watch with me *one Hour?* Alas! what if I had required great Matters from you? What! not an *Hour*, and that the parting Hour too! Christ finds no Ease from them, and back again he goes to that same Place, which he had stained and purpled with his bloody Sweat, and prays to the same purpose again. O how he returns upon God over and over, as if he resolved to take no Denial! But however, considering it must be so, he sweetly falls in with his Father's Will, *Thy Will be done.*

4. And lastly, It was a Prayer accompanied with a strange and wonderful Agony: So saith Verse 44. *And being in an Agony, he prayed more earnestly; and his Sweat was as it were great Drops of Blood falling down to the Ground.* Now he was red indeed in his Apparel, as one that trod the Wine-press: It was not a faint thin Dew, but a clotted Sweat, θρόμβοι αἵματος, Clodders of Blood falling upon the Ground. It is disputed whether this Sweat were natural or preternatural. That some in Extremity have sweat a kind of bloody thin Dew, is affirmed. I remember *Thuanus* gives us two Instances that come neerest to this, of any thing I ever observed or heard of. The one was a *Captain*, who by a cowardly and unworthy Fear of Death was so overwhelmed with Anguish, that a kind of bloody Dew or Sweat stood on all his Body. The other is of a young Man, condemned for a small Matter to die by *Sixtus* the 5*th*, who poured out Tears of Blood from his Eyes, and sweat Blood from his whole Body.

Non fuit sudor diaphoreticus, sed crassus & grumosus.

Dux quidem indigno mortis metu adeò concussus in animo fuit, ut sanguineum sudorem toto corpore fudit. *Thuan. Lib.* 11.

Juvenis ob levem causam, a Sixto V. ad mortem damnatus, præ doloris vehementia, lacrimas cruentas fudisse, & sanguinem pro sudore è toto corpore mittere visus est. *Thuan. Lib.* 80.

These are strange and rare Instances, and the Truth of them depends upon the Credit of the Relator: But certainly for Christ, whose Body had the most excellent Crasis and Temperament, to sweat clotted Blood, or Globs of Blood, as some render it; and that in a cold Night, when others needed a Fire within doors to keep them warm, *John* 18. 18. I say, for him to sweat such Streams through his Garments, falling to the Ground on which he lay, must be concluded a preternatural Thing. And indeed, it was not wonderful that such a preternatural Sweat should stream from all Parts of his Body, if you do but consider what an extraordinary Load pressed his Soul at that time, even such as no meer Man ever felt, or was able to stand under, even the Wrath of a great and

and terrible God, in the Extremity of it. *Who* (ſaith the Prophet *Nahum*, ch. 1. 6.) *can ſtand before his Indignation? And who can abide in the Fierceneſs of his Anger? His Fury is poured out like Fire, and the Rocks are thrown down by him.*

The Effects of this Wrath, as it fell at this time upon the Soul of Chriſt in the Garden, are largely and very emphatically expreſt by the ſeveral *Evangeliſts* who wrote this Tragedy. *Matthew* tells us, his Soul was *exceeding ſorrowful, even unto Death*, Matth. 26. 38. The Word ſignifies beſet with Grief round about. And it's well expreſt by that Phraſe of the Pſalmiſt, *The Sorrows of Death compaſſed me about, the Pains of Hell got hold upon me.* *Mark* varies the Expreſſion, and gives it us in another Word no leſs ſignificant and full, *Mark* 14. 33. *He began to be ſore amazed, and very heavy.* Sore amazed, it imports ſo high a Degree of Conſternation and Amazement, as when the Hair of the Head ſtands up through Fear. *Luke* hath another Expreſſion for it in the Text; he was *in an Agony.* An Agony is the labouring and ſtriving of Nature in Extremity. And *John* gives it us in another Expreſſion, *John* 12. 27. *Now is my Soul troubled.* The original Word is a very full Word. And it is conceived the Latins derive that Word which ſignifies Hell, from this, by which Chriſt's Troubles are here expreſſed. This is the Load which oppreſſed his Soul, and ſo ſtraitned it with Fear and Grief, that his Eyes could not vent or eaſe it ſufficiently by Tears; but the innumerable Pores of his Body are ſet open, to give vent by ſweating out Streams of Blood. And yet all this while, the Hand of Man was upon him. This was but a Prelude, as it were, to the Conflict that was at hand. This bloody Sweat in which he prayed, was but as the giving or ſweating of the Stones before a great Rain. Now he ſtood, as it were, arraigned at God's Bar, and had to do immediately with him. And you know *it is a fearful thing to fall into the Hands of the living God.* The Uſes of this follow in this Order.

Πεεἰλυπ☉, undequaque triſtis. *Beza.*

ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι, medici vocant horripilationem: καὶ ἀδημονεῖν, graviſſimè angebatur. *Bas.*

ἐν ἀγωνία.

Τετάρακται, unde Tartarus, quia terret omnia.

Inference 1. Did Chriſt pour out his Soul to God ſo ardently in the Garden, when the Hour of his Trouble was at hand? Hence we infer, *That Prayer is a ſingular Preparative for, and Relief under the greateſt Troubles.*

'Tis ſweet, when Troubles find us in the way of our Duty. The beſt Poſture we can wreſtle with Afflictions in, is to engage them upon our Knees. The Naturaliſt tells us, if a Lion find a Man proſtrate, he will do him no harm. *Chriſt* haſtned to the Garden to pray, when *Judas* and the Soldiers were haſtning thither to apprehend him. O! when we are nigh to Danger, 'tis good for us to draw nigh to our God. Then ſhould we urging that ſeaſonable Requeſt to God, Pſal. 22. 11. *Be not far from me, for Trouble is near; for there is none to help.* Wo be to him, from whom Death or Trouble finds afar off from God. And as Prayer is the beſt Preparative for Troubles, ſo the choiceſt Relief under them. Griefs are eaſed by Groans. The Heart is cooled and disburdened by Spiritual Evaporations. You know it is ſome Relief to a Man can pour out his Complaint into the Boſom of a faithful Friend, tho' he can but pity him: how much more to pour out our Complaints into the Boſom of a faithful God, who can both pity and help us! *Luther* was wont to call Prayers the Leeches of his Cares and Sorrows; they ſuck out the bad Blood. It's the Title of Pſal. 102. *A Praye for the Afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his Complaint before the Lord.* It's no ſmall Eaſe to open our Hearts to God. When we are as full of Grief, as *Elihu* was of Matter, let us ſay as he did, Job 32. 19. *Behold, Lord, my Heart is as Wine which hath no Vent, it is ready to burſt as new Bottles. I will ſpeak that I may be refreſhed.*

To go to God when thou art full of Sorrow, when thy Heart is ready to burſt within thee, as it was with Chriſt in this Day of his Trouble; and ſay, Father, thus and thus the Caſe ſtands with thy poor Child; and ſo and ſo it's with me; I will not go up and down whining from one Creature to another, it's to no purpoſe to do ſo; nor yet will I leave my Complaint upon my ſelf: But I will tell thee, Father, how the Caſe ſtands with me; for to whom ſhould Children make their Moan, but to their Father? Lord, I am oppreſſed, undertake for me. What thinkeſt thou, Reader, of this? Is it relieving to a ſad Soul? Yes, yes; if thou be a Chriſtian that haſt had any Experience this way, thou wilt ſay, there is nothing like it. Thou wilt bleſs God for appointing ſuch an Ordinance as Prayer, and ſay, Bleſſed be God for Prayer: I know not what I ſhould have done, nor how in all the World I ſhould have waded through the Troubles I have paſt, if it had not been for the Help of Prayer.

Inference 2. Did Chriſt withdraw from the Diſciples to ſeek God by Prayer? Thence it follows, *That the Company of the beſt Men is not always ſeaſonable.* *Peter, James,* and *John,* were three excellent Men, and yet Chriſt ſaith to them, Tarry ye here, while I go and pray yonder. The Society of Men is beautiful in its Seaſon, and no better than a Burden out of ſeaſon. I have read of a good Man, that when his ſtated Time for Cloſet-prayer was come, he would ſay to the Company that were with him, whatever they were, *Friends, I muſt beg your Excuſe for a while, there is a Friend waits to ſpeak with me.* The Company of a good Man is good, but it ceaſes to be ſo, when it hinders the Enjoyment of better Company. One Hour with God is to be preferred to a thouſand Days Enjoyment of the beſt Man on Earth. If thy deareſt Friends in the World intrude unſeaſonably betwixt thee and thy God, it's neither rude nor unmannerly to bid them give place to better Company; I mean, to withdraw from them, as Chriſt did from the Diſciples, to enjoy an Hour with God alone. In publick and private Duties we may admit of the Company of others to join with us; and if they be ſuch as fear God, the more the better: But in ſecret Duties Chriſt and thee muſt whiſper it over betwixt your ſelves; and then the Company of the Wife of thy Boſom, or thy Friend, that is as thine own Soul, would not be welcome. *When thou prayeſt, enter into thy Cloſet; and when thou haſt ſhut thy Door, pray to thy Father which is in ſecret,* Mat. 6. 6. It is as much as if Chriſt had ſaid, See all clear; be ſure to retire in as great Privacy as may be; let no Ear but God's hear what thou haſt to ſay to him. This is at once a good Note of Sincerity, and a great Help to ſpiritual Liberty and Freedom with God.

Inference 3. Did Chriſt go to God thrice upon the ſame Account? Thence learn, *That Chriſtians ſhould not be diſcouraged, tho' they have ſought God once and again, and no Anſwer of Peace comes.* Chriſt was not heard the firſt Time, and he goes a ſecond; he was not anſwered the ſecond, he goes the third and laſt Time,

yet was not answered in the thing he desired, *viz.* that the Cup might pass from him; and yet he hath no hard Thoughts of God, but resolves his Will into his Father's. If God deny you in the Things you ask, he deals no otherwise with you than he did with Christ. *O my God,* (saith he) *I cry in the Day time, but thou heares not; and in the Night, and am not silent.* Yet he justifies God, *but thou art holy,* Psal. 22. 2. Christ was not heard in the thing he desired, and yet heard in that he feared, *Heb.* 5. 7. The Cup did not pass as he desired, but God upheld him, and enabled him to drink it. He was heard as to *Support,* he was not heard as to *Exemption* from Suffering: His Will was expresst conditionally; and therefore tho' he had not the thing he so desired, yet his Will was not crost by the Denial. But now, when we have a Suit depending before the Throne of Grace, and cry to God once and again, and no Answer comes; how do our Hands hang down, and our Spirits wax feeble!

Then we complain with the Church, *Lam.* 3. 8. *When I cry and shout, he shutteth out my Prayer; thou coverest thy self with a Cloud, that our Prayers cannot pass through.* Then with *Jonah* we conclude *we are cast out of his sight.* Alas! we judge by Sense according to what we see and feel; and cannot live by Faith on God, when he seems to hide himself, put us off, and refuse our Requests. It calls for an *Abraham*'s Faith, to *believe against Hope, giving Glory to God.* If we cry, and no Answer comes presently, our carnal Reason draws a headlong hasty Conclusion. Sure I must expect no Answer: God is angry with my Prayers: The Seed of Prayer hath lain so long under the Clods, and it appears not; surely it's lost, I shall hear no more of it.

Our Prayers may be heard, tho' their Answer be for the present suspended. As *David* acknowledged, when he coolly considered the Matter, *Psal.* 31. 22. *I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine Eyes; nevertheless thou heardest the Voice of my Supplication, when I cried unto thee.* No, no, Christian; a Prayer sent up in Faith, according to the Will of God, cannot be lost, tho' it be delay'd. We may say of it as *David* said of *Saul*'s Sword, and *Jonathan*'s Bow, that they never return empty.

Inference 4. Was Christ so earnest in Prayer, that he prayed himself into a very Agony? *Let the People of God blush to think how unlike their Spirits are to Christ, as to their Prayer-frames.*

O what lively, sensible, quick, deep, and tender Apprehensions and Sense of those things about which he prayed, had Christ? Tho' he saw his very Blood starting out from his Hands, and his Clothes dyed in it; yet being in an Agony, he prayed the more earnestly. I do not say Christ is imitable in this; no, but his Fervour in Prayer is a Pattern for us, and serves severely to rebuke the Laziness, Dulness, Torpor, Formality, and Stupidity, that is in our Prayers. How often do we bring the Sacrifice of the Dead before the Lord! How often do our Lips move, and our Hearts stand still! O how unlike Christ are we! his Prayers were pleading Prayers, full of mighty Arguments and fervent Affections. O that his People were in this more like him!

Inference 5. Was Christ in such an Agony before any Hand of Man was upon him, meerly from the Apprehensions of the Wrath of God, with which he now contested? *Then surely it's a dreadful thing to fall into the Hands of the living God; for our God is a consuming Fire.*

Ah what is Divine Wrath! that Christ so staggered when the Cup came to him. Could not he bear, and dost thou think to bear it. Did Christ sweat Clots of Blood at it, and dost thou make light of it? Poor Wretch, if it staggered him, it will confound thee. If it made him groan, it will make thee howl, and that eternally. Come, Sinner, come, dost thou make light of the Threatnings of the Wrath of God against Sin? Dost thou think there's no such Matter in it, as these zealous Preachers make of it? Come look here upon my Text, which shews thee the Face of the Son of God standing as full of purple Drops, under the Sense and Apprehension of it, as the Drops of Dew that hang upon the Grass. Hark how he cries, *Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass.* O any thing of Punishment rather than this. Hear what he tells the Disciples; *My Soul,* saith he, *is sorrowful, even to Death: Amazed,* very *heavy.* Fools make a Mock of Sin, and the Threatnings that lie against it.

Inference 6. Did Christ meet Death with such a heavy Heart? *Let the Hearts of Christians be the lighter for this, when they come to die.* The Bitterness of Death was all squeez'd into Christ's Cup. He was made to drink up the very Dregs of it, that so our Death might be the sweeter to us. Alas! there's nothing now left in Death that's frightful or troublesome, beside the Pain of Dissolution, that natural Evil of it. I remember it's storied of one of the Martyrs, that being observ'd to be exceeding jocund and merry when he came to the Stake, one asked him, what was the reason his Heart was so light, when Death, (and that in such a terrible Form too) was before him? O, said he, my Heart is so light at my Death, because Christ's was so heavy at his Death.

Inference 7. To conclude, what Cause have all the Saints to love their dear Lord Jesus with an abounding Love? Christian, open the Eyes of thy Faith, and fix them upon Christ, in the Posture he lay in the Garden, drencht in his own Blood; and see whether he be not lovely in these his dyed Garments. He that suffered for us more than any Creature could or did, may well challenge more Love than all the Creatures in the World. O what hath he suffered, and suffered upon thy account! it was thy Pride, Earthliness, Sensuality, Unbelief, Hardness of Heart that laid on more Weight in that Day that he sweat Blood.

SERMON XXIII.

Discovers the first Preparation for Christ's Death on his Enemies Part, by the Treason of *Judas*.

MAT. XXVI. 47, 48, 49.

And while he yet spake, lo Judas *one of the twelve came, and with him a great Multitude with Swords and Staves, from the Chief-Priests, and Elders of the People. Now he that betrayed him, gave them a Sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, the same is he, hold him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail Master, and kissed him.*

THE former Sermons give you an Account how Christ improved every Moment of his Time, with busy Diligence, to make himself ready for his Death. He hath commended his Charge to the Father, instituted the blessed Memorial of his Death, poured out his Soul to God in the Garden, with respect to the grievous Sufferings he should undergo. And now he is ready, and waits for the Coming of the Enemies, being first in the Field.

And think you that they were idle on their parts? No, no, their Malice made them restless. They had agreed with *Judas* to betray him. Under his Conduct a Band of Soldiers are sent to apprehend him. The Hour so long expected is come. For *while he yet spake*, saith the Text, *lo* Judas, *one of the twelve, came, and with him a great Multitude, with Swords and Staves.*

These Words contain the first preparative Act on their part for the Death of Christ, even to betray him, and that by one of his own Disciples. Now they execute what they had plotted, *Ver.* 14, 15. And in this Paragraph you have an account, 1. Of the Traitor, who he was. 2. Of the Treason, what he did. 3. Of the Manner of its Execution, how it was contrived and effected. *Lastly*, Of the *Time*, when they put this Hellish Plot in execution.

1. We have here a Description of the Traitor: And it is remarkable how carefully the several *Evangelists* have described him, both by his Name, Sirname, and Office, *Judas*, *Judas Iscariot*, *Judas Iscariot one of the Twelve*; that he might not be mistaken for *Jude* or *Judas* the *Apostle*. God is tender of the Names and Reputations of his upright-hearted Servants. His Office, *one of the twelve*, is added to aggravate the Fact, and shew how that Prophecy was accomplished in him, *Psal.* 41. 9. *Yea, mine own familiar Friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my Bread, hath lift up his Heel against me.* Lo, this was the Traitor, and this was his Name and Office.

2. You have a Description of the Treason, or an Account what this Man did. He led an armed Multitude to the Place where Christ was, gave them a Signal to discover him, and encouraged them to lay Hands on him, and hold him fast. This was that hellish Design, which the Devil put into his Heart, working upon that Principle or Lust of Covetousness, which was predominant there. What will not a carnal Heart attempt, if the Devil suit a Temptation to the predominant Lust, and God withhold restraining Grace!

3. You have here the Way and Manner in which this Hellish Plot was executed. It was managed both with *Force* and with *Fraud*. He comes with a Multitude, armed with Swords and Staves, in case he should meet with any Resistance. And he comes to him with a *Kiss*, which was their Signal, lest they should mistake the Man. For they aimed neither at small nor great, save only at the King of *Israel*, the King of Glory. Here was much ado, you see, to take a harmless Lamb, that did not once start from them, but freely offered himself to them.

> Quid opus est armis contra inermem? qui si virtutem suam exercere voluit, nullis armis erat superabilis. Quorsum signum, ne errarent in personâ, quia nox erat, &c. *D. Par. in loc.*

4. And Lastly, When this treasonable Design was executed upon Christ. And it was executed upon him while he stood among his Disciples, exhorting them to Prayer and Watchfulness, dropping heavenly and most seasonable Counsels upon them. *While he yet spake, lo* Judas, *and with him a Multitude, came with Swords and Staves.* Surely 'tis no better than a *Judas*'s Trick, to disturb and afflict the Servants of God in the Discharge of their Duties. This was the Traitor, and his Treason; thus it was executed, and at this Time. Hence we observe,

Doct. *That it was the Lot of our Lord Jesus Christ, to be betrayed into the Hands of his mortal Enemies, by the Assistance of a false and dissembling Friend.*

Look, as *Joseph* was betrayed and sold by his Brethren; *David* by *Achitophel*, his old Friend; *Sampson* by *Dalilah*, that lay in his Bosom; so *Christ* by *Judas*, one of the twelve; a Man, his Friend, his Familiar, that had been so long conversant with him: He that by *Profession* had lifted up his *Hand* to Christ, now by *Treason* lifts up his *Heel* against him; he bids the Soldiers bind those blessed Hands, that not long before had washt the Traitor's Feet.

In the Point before us, we will

First, Consider *Judas*, according to that eminent Station and Place he had under Christ.

Secondly, We will consider his Treason, according to the several Aggravations of it.

Thirdly, We will inquire into the *Cause* or Motives that put him upon such a dreadful Hellish Design as this was.

Fourthly,

Fourthly and laſtly, We will view the *Iſſue*, and ſee the Event of this Treaſon, both as to Chriſt, and as to himſelf. And then apply it.

First, As for the Perſon that did this, he was very eminent by Reaſon of that Dignity Chriſt had raiſed him to. For,

1. He was *one of the Twelve*, one retained not in a more general, and common, but the neareſt, and moſt intimate and honourable Relation and Service to Jeſus Chriſt. There were in Chriſt's Time ſeveral Sorts and Ranks of Perſons that had Relation to him. There were *ſecret Diſciples*; Men that believed, but kept their Stations, and abode with their Relations in their Callings. There were the Seventy alſo whom Chriſt ſent forth: But none of theſe were ſo much with Chriſt, or ſo eminent in Reſpect of their Place, as the Twelve; they were Chriſt's Family, Day and Night converſant with him: It was the higheſt Dignity that was conferred upon any: And of this Number was *Judas*. The Ancients have much extolled the Apoſtolical Dignity. Some ſtiled theſe Twelve, *Pedes Chriſti*, the Feet of Chriſt; becauſe they as it were carried Chriſt up and down the World. Others *Oculi Dei*, the very Eyes of God; they were his Watchmen, that took Care for the Concernments of his Name and Goſpel in the World. Others *Mammæ Eccleſiæ*, the Breaſts of the Church; they fed and nouriſht the Children of God by their Doctrine. Now to be one of this Number, one of the Twelve, what a Dignity was this?

2. Yea, he being one of the Twelve, was daily converſant with Chriſt; often joined with him in Prayer, often ſate at his Feet hearing the gracious Words that came forth of his Mouth. It was one of *Auſtin*'s Three Wiſhes, That he had ſeen Chriſt in the Fleſh: *Judas* not only ſaw him, but dwelt with him, travelled with him, eat and drank with him. And during the whole Time of his Abode with him, all Chriſt's Carriages towards him were very obliging and winning; yea, ſuch was the Condeſcenſion of Chriſt to this wretched Man, that he waſhed his Feet, and that but a little before he betrayed him.

3. He was a Man of unſuſpected Integrity among the Apoſtles. When Chriſt told them, one of you ſhall betray me; none thought on him, but every one rather ſuſpected himſelf; Lord, is it I? ſaith one, and ſo ſaid they all: But none pointed at *Judas*, ſaying, thou art he.

4. To conclude, in ſome reſpect he was preferred to the reſt. For he had not only a Joint-Commiſſion with them to preach the Goſpel to others, (tho', poor unhappy Wretch, himſelf became a Caſt-away) but he had a peculiar Office, he bare the Bag, *i. e.* he was *Almoner*, or the Steward of the Family, to take Care to provide for the neceſſary Accommodations of Chriſt and them. Now who could ever have ſuſpected, that ſuch a Man as this ſhould have ſold the Blood of Chriſt for a little Money? That ever he ſhould have proved a perfidious Traitor to his Lord, who had called him, honoured him, and carried himſelf ſo tenderly towards him? And yet ſo it was; *Lo* Judas *one of the Twelve came, and with him a Multitude*: O whither will not a buſie Devil, and a bad Heart, carry a Man!

Secondly, But what did this Man do? And what are the juſt Aggravations of his Fact? Why, he moſt baſely and unworthily ſold and delivered Chriſt into his Enemies Hands to be butchered and deſtroyed; and all this for Thirty Pieces of Silver.

Bluſh, O Heavens, and be aſtoniſhed, O Earth, at this! In this Fact, moſt black and horrid Aggravations appear.

1. *Judas* had ſeen the Majeſty of a God on him whom he betrayed. He had ſeen the Miracles that Chriſt wrought, which none but Chriſt could do. He knew that by the Finger of God he had raiſed the Dead, caſt out Devils, healed the Sick. He could not chuſe but obſerve and ſee the Rays and awful Beams of Divine Majeſty ſhining in his very Face, in his Doctrine, and in his Life; to betray a Man, to ſell the Blood of the pooreſt Innocent in the World, is horrid; but to ſell the Blood of God, O what's this! Here's a Wickedneſs that no Epithet can match! Yea,

2. This Wickedneſs he committed after perſonal Warnings and Premonitions given him by Chriſt. He had told them in general, that one of them ſhould betray him, *Mark* 14. 20. He had alſo denounced a dreadful Woe upon him that ſhould do it, *verſ.* 21. *The Son of Man goeth indeed, as it is written of him; but Wo to that Man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed; good had it been for that Man if he had never been born.* This was ſpoken in *Judas* his Preſence. And one would have thought ſo dreadful a Doom as Chriſt paſſed upon the Man that ſhould attempt this, ſhould have affrighted him far enough from the Thoughts of ſuch a Wickedneſs. Nay, Chriſt comes nearer to him than this, and told him he was the Man: For when *Judas* (who was the laſt that put the Queſtion to Chriſt) asked him, *Maſter, is it I?* Chriſt's Anſwer imports as much as a plain Affirmation, *Thou haſt ſaid*, Mat. 26. 25. Moreover,

3. He doth it not out of a blind Zeal againſt Chriſt, as many of his other Enemies did; of whom it's ſaid, 1 *Cor.* 2. 8. *That had they known him, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory:* But he did it for Money, to make his Market of Chriſt. He ſold Chriſt as a Man would ſell an Ox or a Sheep to the Butcher, for Profit. He was fully of the Mind of the Pope, whoſe Motto was; *The Smell or Savour of Gain is ſweet, let it riſe out of what it will.* If he can get any Thing by Chriſt's Blood, it ſhall be a vendible Commodity with him. *What will ye give me* (ſaith he) *and I will betray him?* Mat. 26. 15.

Suavis odor lucri ex re qualibet.

4. He ſells him, and he ſells him at a low Rate too; which ſhewed how vile an Eſteem he had of Chriſt. He is content to part with him for Thirty Pieces of Silver. If theſe Pieces or Shekels were the Shekels of the Sanctuary, they amounted but to Three Pounds Fifteen Shillings. But it's ſuppoſed they were the common Shekels, which were moſtly uſed in Buying and Selling; and then his Price that he put upon the Saviour of the World was but one Pound Seventeen Shillings and Six Pence. A goodly Price (as the Prophet calls it) that he was valued at! *Zech.* 11. 12, 13. I confeſs it's a Wonder he asked no more; knowing how much they longed for his Blood; and that they offered no more for him: But how then ſhould the Scriptures have been fulfilled? O what a Sale was this! To ſell that Blood, which all the Gold and Silver in the World is not worth one Drop of, for a Trifle! Still the Wickedneſs of this Fact riſes higher and higher.

Godw. Antiq. *lib.* 6. p. 295.

5. He

Haud dubiè è Bethania abiit ubi Dominus tunc morabatur; & vel claim ſe aliis ſubJuxit in urbem, vel ſub prætextu curandi neceſſaria. *Par.*

5. He left Chriſt in moſt Heavenly and Excellent Imployment, when he went to make this Soul-undoing Bargain. For if he went away from the Table, as ſome think, then he left Chriſt inſtituting and adminiſtring thoſe heavenly Signs of his Body and Blood: There he ſaw, or might have ſeen, the bloody Work he was going about, acted as in a Figure before him. If he ſate out that Ordinance, as others ſuppoſe he did, then he left Chriſt ſinging a Heavenly Hymn, and preparing to go where *Judas* was preparing to meet him. When the Lord Jeſus was in the moſt Serious and Heavenly Exerciſe, the Wretch ſlinked away from him into the City, or elſe went under Pretence to buy ſome Neceſſaries. But his Deſign was not to buy, but to ſell, whatever his Pretences were. Nay,

6. What he did was not done by the Perſwaſions of any. The High-Prieſt ſent not for him, and without doubt was ſurprized when he came to him on ſuch an Errand. For it could never enter into any of their Hearts, that any of his own Diſciples could ever be drawn into a Confederacy againſt him. No, he went as a Voluntier, offering himſelf to this Work: Which ſtill heightens the Sin, and makes it out of Meaſure ſinful.

7. The Manner in which he executes his treaſonable Deſign adds further Malignity to the Fact. He comes to Chriſt with fawning Words and Carriages, *Hail Maſter, and kiſt him.* Here's Honey in the Tongue, and Poiſon in the Heart. Here's Hatred hid under lying Lips. This was the Man, and this was his Fact. Let us inquire,

Thirdly, The Cauſe and Motives of this Wickedneſs, how he came to attempt and perpetrate ſuch a Villany. *Maldonate* the *Jeſuit* criminates the *Proteſtant* Divines, for affirming that God had a Hand in ordering and over-ruling this Fact. But we ſay, that Satan and his own Luſt was the impulſive Cauſe of it: That God, as it was a wicked Treaſon, permitted it; and as it was a delivering Chriſt to Death, was not only the Permitter, but the Wiſe and Holy Director or Orderer of it, and by the Wiſdom of his Providence over-ruled it, to the great Good and Advantage of the Church; in reſpect of which happy Iſſue, *Judas* his Treaſon is called *felix Scelus*, a happy Wickedneſs. Satan inſpired the Motion, *Luke* 22. 3, 4. *Then entred Satan into* Judas *ſirnamed* Iſcariot, *and he went his way*, &c. his own Luſts like dry Tinder kindled preſently: His Heart was covetous; there was prediſpoſed Matter enough for the Devil to work on, ſo that it was but touch and take. *Verſ.* 25. They covenanted to give him Money, and he promiſed, *&c.*

In quantum fuit προδοσις, proditio, fecit Judas, Satana impulſore. In quantum fuit παραδοσις, traditio, illa fuit occultum Dei judicium, ad redemptionem Eccleſiæ ſpectans. Utique totum illud opus Deum non otioſum permiſſorem, ſed & ſapientiſſimum authorem atque directorem habuit. *Par.*

The Holy God diſpoſed and ordered all this to the ſingular Benefit and Good of his People: *Acts* 4. 28. they did *whatſoever his Hand and Counſel had before determined to be done.* And by this determinate Counſel of God was he taken and ſlain, *Acts* 2: 23. Yet this no way excuſes the Wickedneſs of the Inſtruments: For what they did, was done from the Power of their own Luſts, moſt wickedly; what he did, was done in the unſearchable Depth of his own Wiſdom, moſt Holy. God knows how to ſerve his own Ends by the very Sins of Men, and yet have no Communion at all in the Sin he ſo over-rules. If a Man let go a Dog out of his Hand in purſuit of a Hare, the Dog hunts meerly for a Prey; but he that let him go, uſes the Sagacity and Nimbleneſs of the Dog to ſerve his own Ends by it. *Judas* minded nothing but his own Advantage to get Money: God permitted that Luſt to work, but over-ruled the Iſſue to his own Eternal Glory, and the Salvation of our Souls.

Fourthly, and laſtly, But what was the End and Iſſue of this Fact? As to Chriſt it was his Death; for the Hour being come, he doth not meditate an Eſcape, nor put forth the Power of his Godhead to deliver himſelf out of their Hands. Indeed he ſhewed what he could do, when he made them go back and ſtagger with a Word. He could obtain more than *Twelve Legions of Angels* to have been his Lifeguard; one of whom had been ſufficient to have coped with all the *Roman Legions*: But how then ſhould the Scriptures be fulfilled, or our Salvation accompliſhed? No, he reſiſts not, but *Judas* delivering him into their Hands at that Time, was his Death.

And what got he as a Reward of his Wickedneſs? It ended in the Ruin both of his Soul and Body. For immediately a Death-pang of Deſpair ſeized his Conſcience; which was ſo intolerable, that he ran to the Halter for a Remedy; and ſo falling Headlong he burſt aſunder, and all his Bowels guſhed out, *Acts* 1. 18. And now he that had no Bowels for Chriſt, hath none for himſelf: As for his Soul, it went to its *own Place*, verſ. 25. even the Place appointed for the Son of Perdition, as Chriſt calls him, *John* 17. 12. His Name retains an odious Stench to this Day, and ſhall to all Generations: It's a By-word, a Proverb of Reproach: This was his End. We will next improve it.

Corollary 1. Hence in the firſt Place we learn, *That the greateſt Profeſſors had need be jealous of their own Hearts, and look well to the Grounds and Principles of their Profeſſions.* One of the Ancients would have had this Epitaph engraven upon *Judas* his Tombſtone, ἐις ἐμε τὶς ὁρῶν ἐυσεβὴς ἔσω, *i. e.* Let every one that beholds me, learn to be Godly indeed, to be ſincere in his Profeſſion, and love Chriſt more unfeignedly than I did. O Profeſſors, look to your Foundation, and build not upon the Sand, as this poor Creature did. That's ſound Advice indeed which the Apoſtle gives, 1 *Cor.* 10. 12. *Let him that thinks he ſtandeth, take heed leſt he fall.* O beware of a looſe Foundation. If you begin your Profeſſion as *Judas* did, no wonder if it ſhall end as his did.

Debile fundamentum fallit opus.

1. Beware therefore you hold not the Truth in Unrighteouſneſs: *Judas* did ſo; he knew much, but lived not up to what he knew, for he was ſtill of a worldly Spirit in the height of his Profeſſion. His Knowledge never had any ſaving Influence upon his Heart. He preacht to others, but he himſelf was a Caſt-away. He had much Light, but ſtill walked in Darkneſs. He had no Knowledge to do himſelf Good.

2. Beware you live not in a Courſe of Secret Sin. *Judas* did ſo, and that was his Ruin. He made a Profeſſion indeed, and carried it ſmoothly, but he was a Thief, *John* 12. 6. He made no Conſcience of committing the Sin, ſo he could but cover and hide it from Men. This helped on his Ruin, and ſo it will thine, Reader, if thou be guilty herein. A ſecret Way of ſinning, under a Covert of Profeſſion, will either break out at laſt to the Obſervation of Men, or elſe ſlide thee down inſenſibly to Hell, and leave

leave thee only this Comfort, that no Body ſhall know thou art there.

3. Beware of hypocritical Pretences of Religion to accommodate Self-ends. *Judas* was a Man that had notable Skill this way. He had a Mind to fill his own Purſe, by the Sale of that coſtly Ointment which *Mary* beſtowed upon her Saviour's Feet. And what a neat Cover had he fitted for it, to do his Buſineſs clearly; Why, ſaith he, *this might have been ſold for Three Hundred Pence, and given to the Poor.* Here was Charity to the Poor, or rather poor Charity; for this was only a Blind to his baſe Self-ends. O Chriſtian, be plain-hearted, take heed of Craft and Cunning in Matters of Religion: This ſpoil'd *Judas.*

4. Beware of Self-confidence. *Judas* was a very confident Man of himſelf. *Laſt of all* Judas *ſaid, Maſter, is it I?* Matth. 26. 25. But he that was *laſt* in the *Suſpicion* was *firſt* in the *Tranſgreſſion. He that truſteth his own Heart is a Fool,* ſaith *Solomon,* Prov. 28. 26. Such a Fool was this great Profeſſor. It will be your Wiſdom to keep a jealous Eye upon your own Hearts, and ſtill ſuſpect their faireſt Pretences.

5. If you will not do as *Judas* did, nor come to ſuch an End as he did, take heed you live not unprofitably under the Means of Grace: *Judas* had the beſt Means of Grace that ever Man enjoyed. He heard Chriſt himſelf preach, he joined often with him in Prayer, but he was never the better for it all; it was but as the Watering of a dead Stick, which will never make it grow, but rot it the ſooner. Never was there a rotten Branch ſo richly watered as he was. O 'tis a ſad *Sin,* and a ſad *Sign* too, when Men and Women live under the Goſpel from Year to Year, and never the better. I warn you to beware of theſe Evils, all ye that profeſs Religion. Let theſe Footſteps by which *Judas* went down to his own Place, terrifie you from following him in them.

Maxima violatio Conſcientiæ eſt maximum peccatum. *Ames.*

Corollary 2. Learn hence alſo, *That eminent Knowledge and Profeſſion puts a ſpecial and eminent Aggravation upon Sin.* Judas Iſcariot, *one of the Twelve.* Poor Wretch! Better had it been for him if he had never been numbred with them, nor enlightned with ſo much Knowledge as he was endued with: For this rent his Conſcience to pieces, when he reflected on what he had done, and preſently ran him into the Gulf of Deſpair. To ſin againſt clear Light, is to ſin with a high Hand. It's that which makes a ſad Waſte of the Conſcience. That without doubt which now torments this poor Soul in Hell, is that he ſhould go againſt his Light, againſt his Profeſſion, to gratifie a baſe Luſt to his Eternal Ruin. Had he known no better, it had been more excuſable. Thoſe that had a Hand in the Death of Chriſt through Miſtake and Ignorance, were capable to receive the Pardon of their Sin by that Blood they ſo ſhed, *Acts* 3. 17, 19. compared. Take heed therefore of abuſing Knowledge, and putting a force upon Conſcience.

Corollary 3. Learn hence in the Third Place, *That unprincipled Profeſſors will ſooner or later become ſhameful Apoſtates. Judas* was an unprincipled Profeſſor, and ſee what he came to; Ambition invited *Simon Magus* to the Profeſſion of Chriſt, he would be εἴς μέγας, ſome great one, and how quickly did the Rottenneſs of his Principles diſcover themſelves in the Ruin of his Profeſſion? That which wants a Root, muſt needs wither, as Chriſt ſpeaks, *Matth.* 13. 20, 21. That which is the predominant Intereſt, will prevail, and ſway with us in the Day of our Trial. Hear me, all you that profeſs Religion, and have given your Names to Chriſt; if that Profeſſion be not built upon a ſolid and real Work of Grace upon your Hearts, you ſhall never honour Religion, nor ſave your Souls by it. O 'tis your Union with Chriſt, that like a Spring maintains your Profeſſion. So much as you are united to Chriſt, ſo much Conſtancy, Steadineſs and Evenneſs, you will manifeſt in the Duties of Religion, and no more.

Munimur quatenus unimur.

O Brethren, when he that profeſſes Chriſt for Company, ſhall be left alone as *Paul* was: When he that made Religion a Stirrup to help him into the Saddle of Preferment and Honour, ſhall ſee that he is ſo advanced to be drawn forth into Chriſt's Camp, and endure the Heat of the Day, and not to take his Pleaſure: In a Word, when he ſhall ſee all Things about him diſcouraging and threatning, his deareſt Intereſt on Earth expoſed for Religion ſake, and he hath no Faith to ballance his preſent Loſſes with his future Hopes: I ſay, when it comes to this, you ſhall then ſee the Rottenneſs of many Hearts diſcovered. And *Judas* may have many Fellows, who will part with Chriſt for the World as he did. O therefore look well to your Foundation.

Corollary 4. Moreover in this Example of *Judas* you may read this Truth; *That Men and Women are never in more eminent Danger, than when they meet with Temptations exactly ſuited to their Maſter-Luſts, to their own Iniquity.* O pray, pray, that ye may be kept from a violent ſuitable Temptation. Satan knows that when a Man is tried here, he falls by the Root. The love of this World was all along *Judas* his Maſter-ſin; and ſome conjecture he was a married Man, and had a great Charge; but that is conjectural, it was his predominant Luſt. The Devil found out this, and ſuited it with a Temptation which fully hit his Humour, and it carries him immediately. This is the dangerous *Criſis* of the Soul. Now you ſhall ſee what it is, and what it will do. Put Money before *Judas,* and preſently you ſhall ſee what the Man is.

Corollary 5. Hence in like manner we are inſtructed, *That no Man knows where he ſhall ſtop, when he firſt engages himſelf in a way of Sin.*

Nemo repentè fit turpiſſimus.

Wickedneſs, as well as Holineſs, is not born in its full Strength, but grows up to it by inſenſible Degrees. So did the Wickedneſs of *Judas.* I believe, he himſelf never thought he ſhould have done what he did: And if any ſhould have told him in the firſt Beginning of his Profeſſion, Thou ſhalt ſell the Blood of Chriſt for Money, thou ſhalt deliver him moſt perfidiouſly into their Hands that ſeek his Life; He would have anſwered as *Hazael* did to *Eliſha, But what is thy Servant a Dog that he ſhould do this great Thing?* 2 Kings 8. 13. His Wickedneſs firſt diſcovered it ſelf in Murmuring and Diſcontent, taking a Pique at ſome ſmall Matters againſt Chriſt, as you may find by comparing *John* 6. from *ver.* 60, to 70. with *John* 12. from *ver.* 3, to 9. but ſee to what it grows at laſt. That Luſt or Temptation that at firſt is but a little Cloud as big as a Man's Hand, may quickly over-ſpread the whole Heaven. It is in our engaging in Sin, as in the Motion of a Stone down the Hill. *Vires acquirit eundo,* it ſtrengthens it ſelf by going; and the longer it runs, the more violent. Beware of the ſmalleſt Beginnings of Temptations. No wiſe Man will neglect or ſlight the ſmalleſt Spark of Fire, eſpecially if he ſee it among many Barrels of Gun-powder. You carry Gun-powder about you, O take heed of Sparks.

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Corollary 6. Did *Judas* ſell Chriſt for Money? *hat a potent Conqueror is the Love of this World!* How any hath it caſt down wounded? What great Proſſors have been dragg'd at its Chariot-wheels as its ptives? *Hymenæus* and *Philetus*, *Ananias* and *Sapphi-* *Demas* and *Judas*, with Thouſands and Ten ouſands ſince their Days, led away in Triumph. *rowns Men in Perdition*, 1 Tim. 6. 9. In that Pit Perdition, this Son of Perdition fell, and never e more. O you that ſo court and proſecute it, t ſo love and admire it, make a Stand here; uſe a little upon this Example; conſider to what it ought this poor Wretch whom I have preſented to u dead, eternally dead, by the mortal Wound t the Love of this World gave him; it deſtroyed h Soul and Body. *Pliny* tells us, that the *Mer-ds* delight to be in green Meadows, into which y draw Men by their inchanting Voices; but, h he, there always lye Heaps of dead Mens Bones them. A lively Emblem of a bewitching World! od had it been for many Profeſſors of Religion, if y had never known what the Riches, and Honours, Pleaſures of this World meant.

Corollary 7. Did *Judas* fancy ſo much Happineſs in ittle Money, that he would ſell Chriſt to get it? arn then, *That which Men promiſe themſelves much aſure and Contentment in, in the way of Sin, may ve the greateſt Curſe and Miſery to them that ever befel m in the World.* *Judas* thought it was a brave ing to get Money! He fancied much Happineſs it: But how ſick was his Conſcience as ſoon as he d ſwallowed it! O take it again, ſaith he! It p'd him to the Heart. He knows not what to do rid himſelf of that Money. Give me Children, ith *Rachel*) or I die: She hath Children, and ey prove her Death. O mortifie your Fancies to e World; put no Neceſſity upon Riches. *They t will be rich, fall into Temptations, and many hurt- Luſts, which drown Men in Perdition*, 1 Tim. 6. 9. ou may have your Deſires with a Curſe. He that ings home a Pack of fine Cloaths infected with the ague, has no ſuch great Bargain of it, how cheap ever he bought them.

Corollary 8. Was there one, and but one of the welve, that proved a *Judas*, a Traitor to Chriſt? earn thence, *That it is a moſt unreaſonable Thing to be ejudiced at Religion, and the ſincere Profeſſors of it, be-uſe ſome that profeſs it prove naught and vile.*

Should the Eleven ſuffer for one *Judas*? Alas, ey abhorr'd both the Traitor and his Treaſon. s well might the High Prieſt and his Servants have ondemned *Peter*, *John*, and all the reſt, whoſe Souls bhorred the Wickedneſs. If *Judas* proved a vile retch, yet there was eleven to one that remained pright: If *Judas* proved naught, it was not his Pro-ſſion made him ſo, but his Hypocriſie; he never arnt it from Chriſt. If Religion muſt be charged ith all the Miſcarriages of its Profeſſors, then there no pure Religion in the World. Name that Re-gion among the Profeſſors whereof there is not one *udas*. Take heed, Reader, of Prejudices againſt odlineſs on this Account. The Deſign of the De-il, without doubt, is to undo Thee eternally by iem. *Wo to the World becauſe of Offences*, Mat. 18. 7. nd what if God do permit theſe Things to fall out, iat thou may'ſt be hardened in Iniquity, confirmed Sin by ſuch Occaſions, and ſo thy Deſtruction rought about this Way: Bleſſed is he that is not of-nded at Chriſt.

Corollary 9. Did *Judas*, one of the Twelve, do ſo? Learn thence, *That a Drop of Grace is better than a Sea of Gifts.* Gifts have ſome Excellency in them, but the Way of Grace is the more excellent Way. 1 *Cor.* 12, 31. Gifts (as one ſaith) are dead Graces, but Graces are living Gifts. There's many a learned Head in Hell. Theſe are not the Things that accompany Salvation. Gifts are the Gold that beautifies the Temple; but Grace is as the Temple which ſanctifies the Gold. One Tear, one Groan, one Breathing of an upright Heart, is more than the Tongues of Angels.

Poor Chriſtian, thou art troubled that thou canſt not ſpeak and pray ſo neatly, ſo handſomly, as ſome others can; but canſt thou go into a Corner, and there pour out thy Soul affectionately, tho' not rhetorically, to thy Father? Trouble not thy ſelf. It's better for thee to feel one Divine Impreſſion from God upon thy Heart, than to have Ten Thouſand fine Notions floating in thy Head: *Judas* was a Man of Parts; but what Good did they do him?

Corollary 10. Did the Devil win the Conſent of *Judas* to ſuch a Deſign as this? Could he get no other but the Hand of an Apoſtle to aſſiſt him? Learn hence, *That the Policy of Satan lyes much in the Choice of his Inſtruments he works by.* No Bird (ſaith one) like a living Bird to tempt others into the Net. *Pelagius*, *Socinus*, &c. were fit for that Work the Devil put them upon. *Auſtin* told an ingenious young Scholar, The Devil coveted him for an Ornament. He knows he hath a foul Cauſe to manage, and therefore will get the faireſt Hand he can to manage it with the leſs Suſpicion.

Cupit abs te ornari Diabolus.

Corollary 11. Did *Judas*, one of the Twelve, do this? Then certainly, *Chriſtians may approve and join with ſuch Men on Earth, whoſe Faces they ſhall never ſee in Heaven.* The Apoſtles held Communion a long Time with this Man, and did not ſuſpect him. O pleaſe not your ſelves therefore, that you have Communion with the Saints here, and that they think and ſpeak charitably of you. *All the Churches ſhall know* (ſaith the Lord) *that I am he that ſearcheth the Heart and Reins, and will give to every Man as his Work ſhall be.* In Heaven we ſhall meet many that we never thought to meet there, and miſs many we were confident we ſhould ſee there.

Rev. 2. 23.

Corollary 12. *Laſtly*, Did *Judas*, one of the Twelve, a Man ſo obliged, raiſed and honoured by Chriſt, do this? *Ceaſe then from Men*, be not too confident, but beware of Men. *Truſt ye not in a Friend, put no Confidence in a Guide, keep the Door of thy Lips from her that lyeth in thy Boſom:* Not that there is no Sincerity in any Man, but becauſe there is ſo much Hypocriſie in many Men, and ſo much Corruption in the beſt of Men, that we may not be too Confident, nor lay too great a Streſs upon any Man. *Peter*'s modeſt Expreſſion of *Sylvanus* is a Pattern for us; *Sylvanus, a faithful Brother unto you (as I ſuppoſe.)* The Time ſhall come ſaith Chriſt, that *Brother ſhall betray Brother to Death*, Mat. 10. 11. Your Charity for others may be your Duty, but your too great Confidence may be your Snare. Fear what others may do, but fear thy ſelf more.

Mic. 7. 5.

1 Pet. 5. 12.

SERMON XXIV.

Opens the Enemies second and third Preparatives for the Death of Christ, by their illegal Trial and Condemnation.

LUKE XXIII. 23, 24.

And they were instant with loud Voices, requiring that he might be crucified; and the Voices of them, and of the Chief-Priests, prevailed. And Pilate *gave Sentence that it should be as they required.*

JUdas has made good his Promise to the High-Priest, and delivered Jesus a Prisoner into their Hands. These Wolves of the Evening no sooner seize the Lamb of God, but they thirst and long to be sucking his precious innocent Blood; their Revenge and Malice admits no Delay, as fearing a Rescue by the People.

In tanta hominum colluvie facile erat concitari tumultum, si contra jus, & fas tantum Prophetam trucidari videret populus. *Par. in Matth.* 26. 5.

When *Herod* had taken *Peter*, he committed him to Prison, *intending after* Easter *to bring him forth to the People*, Acts 12. 4. But these Men cannot sleep till they have his Blood, and therefore the Preparation of the Passover being come, they resolve in all haste to destroy him; yet lest it should look like a downright Murder, it shall be formalized with a Trial. This his *Trial* and *Condemnation* are the two last Acts by which they prepared for his Death, and are both contained in this Context; in which we may observe, 1. The *Indictment*. 2. The *Sentence* to which the Judge proceeded.

1. The *Indictment* drawn up against Christ, wherein they accuse him of many Things, but can prove nothing. They charge him with Sedition and Blasphemy, but falter shamefully in the Proof. However, what is wanting in Evidence, shall be supplied with Clamour and Importunity. For, saith the Text, *They were instant with loud Voices, requiring that he might be crucified; and their Voices prevailed:* When they can neither prove the Sedition or Blasphemy they charged him with, then Crucifie him, Crucifie him, must serve the Turn, instead of all Witnesses and Proofs.

2. The *Sentence* pronounced upon him; *Pilate gave Sentence that it should be as they required*, i. e. he sentenced Christ to be nailed to the Cross, and there to hang till he was dead. From both these we observe these Two doctrinal Conclusions.

Doct. 1. *That the Trial of Christ for his Life, was managed most maliciously and illegally against him by his unrighteous Judges.*

Doct. 2. *Tho' nothing could be proved against our Lord Jesus Christ worthy of Death, or of Bonds; yet was he condemned to be nailed to the Cross, and there to hang till he died.*

I shall handle these Two Points distinctly in their Order, beginning with the First, namely,

Doct. 1. *That the Trial of Christ for his Life, was managed most maliciously and illegally against him by his unrighteous Judges.*

Reader, here thou may'st see the Judge of all the World standing himself to be judged; He that shall judge the World in Righteousness, judged most righteously; He that shall one Day come to the Throne of Judgment, attended with Thousands and Ten Thousands of Angels and Saints, standing as a Prisoner at Man's Bar, and there denied the common Right which a Thief or Murderer might claim, and is commonly given them.

To manifest the Illegality of Christ's Trial, let the following Particulars be heedfully weighed.

1. That he was inhumanely abused both in Words and Actions before the Court met, or any Examination was taken of the Fact: For as soon as they had taken him, they forthwith bound him, and led him away to the High-Priest's House, *Luke* 22. 54. And there they that held him, mocked him, smote him, blindfolded him, struck him on the Face, and bid him prophesie who smote him; and many other Things blasphemously spake they against him, ver. 63, 64, 65. How illegal and barbarous a Thing was this? When they were but binding *Paul* with Thongs, he thought himself abused contrary to Law, and asked the *Centurion* that stood by, *Is it lawful for you to scourge a Man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?* q. d. Is this legal? What, punish a Man first, and judge him afterwards! But Christ was not only bound, but horribly abused by them all that Night, dealing with him as the Lords of the *Philistines* did with *Samson*, to whom it was a Sport to abuse him. No Rest had Jesus that Night; no more Sleep for him now in this World: O it was a sad Night to him: And this under *Caiaphas*'s own Roof.

2. As he was inhumanely abused before he was tried, so he was examined and judged by a Court that had no Authority to try him. *Luke* 22. 66. *As soon as it was Day, the Elders of the People, and the Chief Priests, and the Scribes came together, and led him into their Council.* This was the *Ecclesiastical Court*, the great *Sanhedrim*, which, according to its first Constitution, should consist of Seventy Grave, Honourable and Learned Men; to whom were to be referred all doubtful Matters, too hard for inferiour Courts to decide. And these were to judge impartially and uprightly for God, as Men in whom was the Spirit of God, according to God's Counsel to *Moses*, *Numb.* 11. 16, &c. In this Court the Righteous and Innocent might expect Relief and Protection. And that is conceived to be the Meaning of Christ's Words, *Luke* 13. 33. *It cannot be that a Prophet perish out of* Jerusalem; that is, their Righteousness and Innocency may expect Protection.

ection. But now, contrary to the first Constitution, it consisted of a Pack of malicious Scribes and Pharisees, Men full of Revenge, Malice, and all Unrighteousness: And over these *Caiaphas* (a Head fit for such a Body) at this Time presided. And tho' there was still some Face of a Court among them, yet their Power was so abridg'd by the *Romans*, that they could not hear and determine, judge and condemn in capital Matters as formerly. For as *Josephus* their own Historian informs us, *Herod* in the Beginning of his Reign took away this Power from them; and that Scripture seems to confirm it, *Joh.* 18. 31. *It is not lawful for us to put any Man to Death*; and therefore they bring him to *Pilate*'s Bar. He also understood him to be a *Galilean*; and *Herod* being *Tetrarch* of *Galilee*, and at that Time in *Jerusalem*, he is sent to him, and by him remitted to *Pilate*.

Antiq. *lib.* 14. *cap.* 17.

3. As he was at first heard and judged by a Court that had no Authority to judge him; so when he stood at *Pilate*'s Bar, he was accused of perverting the Nation, and denying Tribute to *Cæsar*, than which nothing was more notoriously false. For as all his Doctrine was pure and heavenly, and Malice it self could not find a Flaw in it; so he was always observant of the Laws under which he lived, and scrupulous of giving the least just Offence to the Civil Powers. Yea, he not only paid the Tribute himself, tho' he might have pleaded Exemption, but charged it upon others as their Duty so to do, *Matth.* 22. 24. *Give unto* Cæsar *the things that are* Cæsar's. And yet with such palpable Untruths is Christ charged.

4. Yea, and what is more abominable and unparallel'd; to compass their malicious Designs, they industriously labour to suborn false Witnesses to take away his Life, not sticking at the grossest Perjury and manifest Injustice, so they might destroy him. So you read, *Mat.* 26. 59. *Now the Chief Priests and Elders, and all the Council, sought false Witnesses against Jesus, to put him to death.* Abominable Wickedness! for such Men, and so many, to complot to shed the Blood of the Innocent, by known and studied Perjury! What will not Malice against Christ transport Men to?

5. Moreover, the Carriage of the Court was most insolent and base towards him during the Trial: For whilst he stood before them as a Prisoner yet uncondemned, sometimes they are angry at him for his Silence; and when he speaks, and that pertinently to the Point, they smite him on the Mouth for speaking, and scoff at what he speaks. To some of their light, frivolous and ensnaring Questions he is silent, not for want of an Answer, but because he heard nothing worthy of one. And to fulfil what the Prophet *Isaiah* had long before predicted of him: *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his Mouth: he is brought as a Lamb to the Slaughter, and as a Sheep before the Shearers is dumb, so he opened not his Mouth,* Isa. 5. 3, 7. As also to leave us a Precedent when to speak, and when to be silent, when we for his Name sake shall be brought before Governours: For such Reasons as these he sometimes answers not a Word, and then they are ready to condemn him for a Mute. *Answerest thou nothing?* (saith the High-Priest) *what is it that these witness against thee?* Mat. 26. 62. *Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee?* saith *Pilate*, Mat. 27. 13.

Quia indignam responso judicat manifestam falsitatem; non defensione destitutus, sed ut impleretur prophetæ oraculum. *Par.*

And when he makes his Defence in Words of Truth and Soberness, they smite him for speaking, *John* 18. 22. *And when he had thus spoken, one of the Officers which stood by, struck Jesus with the Palm of his Hand, saying, Answerest thou the High-Priest so?* And what had he spoken to exasperate them? Had he spoken impertinently? Not at all: What he said was but this, when they would have had him insnare himself with his own Lips: *Jesus answered, I spake openly in the World, I ever taught in the Synagogue, and in the Temple, whither the Jews always resort, and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? Ask them that heard me, behold they know what I said: q. d.* I am not obliged to accuse and ensnare my self, but you ought to proceed *secundum allegata & probata*, according to what is alledged and proved. Did he deserve a Blow on his Mouth for this? O who but himself could have so patiently digested such Abuses! Under all this he stands in perfect Innocency and Patience, making no other Return to that Wretch that smote him, but this, *If I have spoken Evil, bear Witness of the Evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?*

6. Lastly, To instance in no more: He is condemned to die by that very Mouth which had once and again professed he found no Fault in him. He had heard all that could be alledged against him, and saw it was a perfect Piece of Malice and Envy. When they urge *Pilate* to proceed to sentence him; why, saith he, *What Evil hath he done?* Mat. 27. 23. Nay, in the Preface to the very Sentence it self, he acknowledges him to be a just Person, *Mat.* 27. 24. *When* Pilate *saw he could prevail nothing, but that rather a Tumult was made, he took Water, and washed his Hands before the Multitude, and said, I am innocent of the Blood of this just Person, see ye to it.* Here the Innocency of Christ brake out like the Sun wading out of a Cloud, convincing the Conscience of his Judge that he was just; and yet he must give Sentence on him for all that to please the People.

Inference 1. Was Christ thus used when he stood before the great Council, the Scribes and Elders of *Israel?* Then surely *great Men are not always wise, neither do the Aged understand Judgment,* Job 32. 9. Here were many great Men, many aged Men, many politick Men in Council; but not one wise or good Man among them. In this Council were Men of Parts and Learning, Men of great Abilities, and by so much the more pernicious, able to do Mischief. Wickedness in a great or learned Man, is like Poison given in Wine, the more operative and deadly. Christ's greatest Enemies were such as these. *Heathen Pilate* had more pity for him than *superstitious Caiaphas*. *Luther* tells us, that his greatest Adversaries did not rise out of the Ale-houses or Brothel-houses, but out of *Monasteries, Convents,* and *Religious Houses.*

Inference 2. Hence also we learn, *That tho' we are not obliged to answer every captious, idle, or ensnaring Question, yet we are bound faithfully to own and confess the Truth, when we are solemnly called thereunto.*

It's true, Christ was sometimes silent, and as a deaf Man that heard not; but when the Question was solemnly put, *Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? Jesus said, I am,* Mark 14. 61, 62. He knew that Answer would cost his Life, and yet he durst not deny it. On this account the Apostle saith, *he witnessed a good Confession before* Pontius Pilate, 1 *Tim.* 6. 13. Herein Christ hath ruled out the Way of our Duty, and by his own Example, as well as Precept, obliged us to a sincere Confession of him, and his Truth, when we are required lawfully so to do, *i. e.* when we are before a lawful Magistrate, and the Questions are not curious or captious; when we cannot hold our peace, but our Silence will be interpretatively a

Denying of the Truth; finally, when the Glory of God, Honour of his Truth, and Edification of others, is more attainable by our open Confeſſion, than it can be by our Silence: Then muſt we with Chriſt, give direct, plain, and ſincere Anſwers.

It was the old *Priſcilian* Error, to allow Men to deny or diſſemble their Profeſſion, when an open Confeſſion would infer Danger. But you know what Chriſt hath ſaid, *Mat.* 10. 33. *Whoſoever ſhall deny me before Men, him will I deny before my Father which is in Heaven.* Chriſt will repay him in his own Coin. It was a noble Saying of couragious *Zuinglius*, What Deaths would I not chuſe? What Puniſhment would I not undergo? Yea, into what Vault of Hell would I not rather chuſe to be thrown, than to witneſs againſt my Conſcience? Truth can never be bought dear, nor ſold cheap. The Lord Jeſus, you ſee, owns Truth with the eminent and inſtant Hazard of his Life. The whole Cloud of Witneſſes have followed him therein, *Rev.* 14. 1. We our ſelves once openly owned the Ways of Sin: And ſhall we not do as much for Chriſt, as we then did for the Devil? Did we then glory in our Shame, and ſhall we now be aſhamed of our Glory? Do not we hope Chriſt will own us at the great Day? Why, if we confeſs him, he alſo will confeſs us. O think on the Reaſonableneſs of this Duty.

Quas non oportet mortes præeligere? Quod non ſupplicium potius ferre? Imo in quam profundam inferni abyſſum non intrare, quam contra conſcientiam atteſtare? *Zuing.*

Inference 3. Once more, hence it follows, *That to bear the Revilings, Contradictions and Abuſes of Men, with a meek, compoſed, and even Spirit, is excellent and Chriſt-like.* He ſtood before them as a Lamb; he rendred not Railing for Railing; he endured the Contradictions of Sinners againſt himſelf: Imitate Chriſt in his Meekneſs. He calls you ſo to do, *Mat.* 11. 28. This will be convincing to your Enemies, comfortable for your ſelves, and honourable for Religion: And as for your Innocency, God will clear it up as Chriſt's was.

You have heard the illegal Trial of Chriſt, how inſolently it was managed againſt him; well, right or wrong, innocent or guilty, his Blood is reſolved upon: 'Tis bought and ſold beforehand; and if nothing elſe will do it, Menaces and Clamours ſhall conſtrain *Pilate* to condemn him. Whence our ſecond Note was,

Doct. 2. *That tho' nothing could be proved againſt our Lord Jeſus Chriſt worthy of Death or of Bonds; yet was he condemned to be nailed to the Croſs, and there to hang till he died.*

For the Explication of this, I ſhall open the following Particulars. *Firſt*, Who gave the Sentence. *Secondly*, Upon whom he gave it. *Thirdly*, What Sentence was it that was given. *Fourthly*, In what manner Chriſt received it.

Firſt, Who and what was he that durſt attempt ſuch a Thing as this? Why, this was *Pilate*, who ſucceeded *Valerius Gratus* in the Preſidentſhip of *Judea*, (as *Joſephus* tells us) in which Truſt he continued about ten Years. This cruel curſed Act of his againſt Chriſt, was in the eighth Year of his Government. Two Years after he was removed from his Place and Office by *Vitellius* Preſident of *Syria*, for his inhumane murdering of the innocent *Samaritans*. This neceſſitated him to go to *Rome* to clear himſelf before *Cæſar*: but before he came to *Rome*, *Tiberius* was dead, and *Caius* in his room. Under him, ſaith *Euſebius*, *Pilate* killed himſelf. He was a Man not very friendly or benevolent to the *Jewiſh* Nation, but ſtill ſuſpicious of their Rebellions and Inſurrections: This jealous Humour the Prieſts and Scribes obſerved, and wrought upon it to compaſs their Deſign againſt Chriſt. Therefore they tell him ſo often of Chriſt's Sedition, and ſtiring up the People; and that if he let him go, he is none of *Cæſar*'s Friend; which very Conſiderations prevailed with him to do what he did. But how durſt he attempt ſuch a Wickedneſs as this, tho' he had ſtood in the Opinion of *Cæſar*? What! give Judgment againſt the Son of God? for 'tis evident, by many Circumſtances in this Trial, that he had many inward Fears and Convictions upon him, that he was the Son of God: By theſe he was ſcared, and ſought to releaſe him, *John* 19. 8, 12. the Fear of a Deity fell upon him; his Mind was greatly perplext, and dubious about this Priſoner, whether he was a God or a Man. And yet the Fear of *Cæſar* prevailed more than the Fear of a Deity, he proceeds to give Sentence.

Joſephus, *lib.* 18. Ant. Judææ. quarto ad *cap.* 7.

Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. *lib.* 2. *cap.* 7.

Non admodum amicus Judæorum genti, propterea quòd eam ſuſpectam haberet animo erga Cæſarem; hunc putant ſacerdotes commodum fore ipſorum propoſito, &c. *Bucer. in Mat.* 27.

Audito Filii Dei nomine, mens ejus Religione tacta fuerat, metu numinis perculſus, inter ſacrum (ut aiunt) & ſaxum hæreba. *Marlor. in loc.*

O *Pilate!* thou waſt not afraid to judge and ſentence an Innocent, a known Innocent, and one whom thou thy ſelf ſuſpectedſt at leaſt to be more than Man! But ſee in this Predominancy of Self-intereſt, what Men will not attempt and perpetrate to ſecure and accommodate Self.

Secondly, Againſt whom doth *Pilate* give Sentence? againſt a Malefactor? No, his own Mouth once and again acknowledged him innocent. Againſt a common Priſoner? No, but one whoſe Fame no doubt had often reached *Pilate*'s Ears, even the wonderful Things wrought by him, which none but God could do: One that ſtood before him as the Picture, or rather as the Body, of Innocency and Meekneſs. Ye have condemned and killed the Juſt, and he reſiſteth you not, *James* 5. 6. Now was that Word made good, *Pſal.* 94. 21. *They gather themſelves together againſt the Soul of the Righteous, and condemn the innocent Blood.*

Thirdly, But what was the Sentence that *Pilate* gave? We have it not in the Form in which it was delivered; but the Sum of it was, that it ſhould be as they required. Now what did they require? why, crucify him, crucify him. So that in what Formalities ſoever it was delivered, this was the Subſtance and Effect of it; *I adjudge* Jeſus *of* Nazareth *to be nailed to the Croſs, and there to hang till he be dead.* Which Sentence againſt Chriſt was,

1. *A moſt unjuſt and unrighteous Sentence*: the greateſt Perverſion of Judgment and Equity that was ever known to the civilized World, ſince Seats of Judicature were firſt ſet up. What! to condemn him before one Accuſation was proved againſt him? And if what they accuſed him of (that he ſaid he was the Son of God) had been proved, it had been no Crime; for he really was ſo; and therefore no Blaſphemy in him to ſay he was. *Pilate* ſhould rather have come down from his Seat of Judgment, and adored him, than ſate there to judge him. O it was the higheſt Piece of Injuſtice, that ever our Ears heard of!

2. As it was an unrighteous, ſo it was a *cruel Sentence*, delivering up Chriſt to their Wills. This was that

that Misery which *David* so earnestly deprecated, *Psalm* 27. 12. *O deliver me not over to the Will of mine Enemies.* But *Pilate* delivers Christ over to the Will of his Enemies, Men full of Enmity, Rage, and Malice; whose greatest Pleasure it was to glut themselves with his Blood, and satiate their revengeful Hearts with such a Spectacle of Misery. For lo, as soon as these Wolves had grip'd their Prey, they were not satisfied with that cursed, cruel, and ignominious Death of the Cross, to which *Pilate* had adjudged him, but they are resolved he shall die over and over; they will contrive many Deaths in one: Now they say as a Tyrant did once, *Moriatur, ut sentiat se mori*; let him die, so as he may feel himself to die, *i.e.* let him die by inch-meal. To this end they presently strip him naked; scourge him cruelly; array him in Scarlet, and mock him; crown him with a Bush of platted Thorns; fasten that Crown upon his Head by a Blow with a Cane, which set them deep into his sacred Temples; sceptered him with a Reed; spat in his Face; stript off his Mock-Robes again; put the Cross upon his Back, and compel him to bear it. All this, and much more, they express their Cruelty by, as soon as they had him delivered over to their Will. So that this was a cruel Sentence.

3. As it was a cruel, so it was a *rash* and hasty Sentence. The *Jews* are all in haste; consulting all Night, and early up by the Break of Day in the Morning, to get him to his Trial. They spur on *Pilate*, with all the Arguments they can, to give Sentence. His Trial took up but one Morning, and a great Part of that was spent in sending him from *Caiaphas* to *Pilate*, and from *Pilate* to *Herod*, and then back again to *Pilate*; so that it was a hasty and headlong Sentence that *Pilate* gave. He did not sift and examine the Matter, but handles it very slightly. The Trial of many a mean Man hath taken up ten times more Debates and Time, than was spent about Christ.

Qui ad pauca respiciunt, facile pronunciant.

They that look but slightly into the Cause, easily pronounce and give Sentence. But that which was then done in haste, they have had Time enough to repent for since.

4. As it was a rash and hasty, so it was an *extorted forced Sentence.* They squeeze it out of *Pilate* by meer Clamour, Importunity, and Suggestions of Danger. In Courts of Judicature such Arguments should signify but little; not Importunity, but Proof should carry it: but timorous *Pilate* bends like a Willow at this Breath of the People; he had neither such a Sense of Justice, nor Spirit of Courage, as to withstand it.

Minaciter extorquent ab eo, ut Christum damnet. *Calv.*

5. As it was an extorted, so it was a *hypocritical* Sentence, masking horrid Murder under a Pretence and Formality of Law. It must look like a legal Procedure to palliate the Business. Loth he was to condemn him, lest innocent Blood should clamour in his Conscience; but since he must do it, he will transfer the Guilt upon them, and they take it; *His Blood be on us, and on our Children for ever*, say they. *Pilate* calls for Water, washes his Hands before them, and tells them, *I am free from the Blood of this just Person.* But stay; free from his Blood, and yet condemn a known innocent Person? Free from his Blood, because he washt his Hands in Water? No, no, he could never be free, except his Soul had been washed in that Blood he shed. O the Hypocrisy of *Pilate!* Such Juggling as this will not serve his Turn, when he shall stand as a Prisoner before him, who now stood arraigned at his Bar.

6. And lastly, As it was a hypocritical, so it was an *unrevoked* Sentence: It admitted not of a Reprieve, no, not for a Day; nor doth Christ appeal to any other Judicature, or once desire the least Delay of the Execution; but away he is hurried in haste to the Execution. Blush, O ye Heavens! and tremble, O Earth! at such a Sentence as this! Now Christ is dead in Law; now he knows whither he must be carried, and that presently. His Soul and Body must feel that, the very Sight of which put him into an Agony but the Night before.

Fourthly, and lastly, In what manner did Christ receive this cruel and unrighteous Sentence? He received it like himself, with admirable Meekness and Patience. He doth as it were wrap himself up in his own Innocency, and Obedience to his Father's Will, and stands at the Bar with invincible Patience, and meek Submission. He doth not once desire the Judge to defer the Sentence, much less fall down and beg for his Life, as other Prisoners use to do at such Times. No, but as a Sheep he goes to the Slaughter, not opening his Mouth. Some apply that Expression to Christ, *James* 5. 6. *Ye have condemned and killed the Just, and he resisteth you not.* From the Time that *Pilate* gave Sentence, till he was nailed to the Cross, we do not read that ever he said any thing, save only to the Woman that followed him out of the City to *Golgotha*: And what he said there, rather manifested his Pity to them, than any Discontent at what was now come upon him; *Daughters of* Jerusalem (saith he) *weep not for me, but weep for your selves, and for your Children*, Luke 23. 28, *&c.* O the perfect Patience and Meekness of Christ: The Inferences from hence are:

Inference 1. Do you see what was here done against Christ, under pretence of Law? *What Cause have we to pray for good Laws, and righteous Executioners of them?*

O 'tis a singular Mercy to live under good Laws, which protect the Innocent from Injury. Laws are Hedges about our Lives, Liberties, Estates, and all the Comforts we enjoy in this World. Times will be evil enough, when Iniquity is not *discountenanced* and punished by Law; but how evil are those Times like to prove, when Iniquity is *established by Law!* As the Psalmist complains, *Psal.* 94. 20. It was the Complaint of *Pliny* to *Trajan*, that whereas Crimes were wont to be the Burden of the Age, now Laws were so; and that he feared the Commonwealth which was establisht, would be subverted by Laws. 'Tis not like that Virtue will much flourish, when *Judgment springs up as Hemlock in the Furrows of the Field*, Hosea 10. 4. How much therefore is it our Concernment to pray, that *Judgment may run down as a mighty Stream?* Amos 5. 24. *That our Officers may be Peace, and our Exactors Righteousness?* Isa. 60. 17. It was not therefore without great Reason, that the Apostle exhorted, that *Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions, and giving of Thanks be made for all Men; for Kings, and all that are in Authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable Life in all Godliness and Honesty*, 1 Tim. 2. 1, 2. Great is the Interest of the Church of God in them; they are Instruments of much Good or much Evil.

Olim criminibus, jam legibus laboratur; & metuendum est, ne respublica legibus fundata, sit legibus eversa. *Plin. ad Trajan.*

Inference 2. Was Christ condemned in a Court of Judicature? *How evident then is it, that there is a Judgment to come after this Life?* Surely Things will not be always carried as they are in this World. When you see *Jesus* condemned, and *Barabbas* released, conclude, that a Time will come when Innocency shall be vindicated, and Wickedness shamed. On this very

Ground

Ground *Solomon* concludes, and very rationally, that God will call over things hereafter at a more righteous Tribunal: *And moreover, I saw under the Sun the Place of Judgment, that Wickedneſs was there; and the Place of Righteouſneſs, that Iniquity was there. I ſaid in my Heart, God ſhall judge the Righteous, and the Wicked: For there is a Time there for every Purpoſe, and for every Work*, Eccleſ. 3. 16, 17. Some indeed on this Ground have denied the Divine Providence; but *Solomon* draws a quite contrary Concluſion, *God ſhall judge*: Surely he will take the Matter into his own Hand, he will bring forth the Righteouſneſs of his People as the Light, and their juſt Dealing as the Noon-Day. It's a Mercy, if we be wronged in one Court, that we can appeal to another, where we ſhall be ſure to be relieved by a juſt impartial Judge. *Be patient therefore, my Brethren* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *until the Coming of the Lord*, James 5. 6, 7, 8.

Inference 3. Again, *here you ſee how Conſcience may be over-born and run down by a fleſhly Intereſt. Pilate*'s Conſcience bid him beware, and forbear; his Intereſt bid him act: His Fear of *Cæſar* was more than the Fear of God. But O! what a dreadful thing is it for Conſcience to be enſnared by the Fear of Man! *Prov.* 29. 25. To guard thy Soul, Reader, againſt this Miſchief, let ſuch Conſiderations as theſe be ever with thee.

1. Conſider how dear thoſe Profits or Pleaſures coſt, which are purchaſed with the Loſs of inward Peace! There is nothing in this World good enough to recompence ſuch a Loſs, or ballance the Miſery of a tormenting Conſcience. If you violate it, and proſtitute it for a fleſhly Luſt, it will *remember* the Injury you did in many Years after; *Gen.* 42. 21. *Joh.* 13. 26. It will not only retain the Memory of what you did, but it will *accuſe* you for it; *Mat.* 27. 4. It will not fear to tell you that plainly, which others dare not whiſper. It will not only accuſe, but it will alſo *condemn* you for what you have done. This condemning Voice of Conſcience is a very terrible Voice.

You may ſee the Horror of it in *Cain*, the Vigour of it in *Judas*, the doleful *Effects* of it in *Spira*. It will from all theſe its Offices produce *Shame*, *Fear*, and *Deſpair*, if God give not Repentance to Life. The *Shame* it works will ſo confound you, that you will not be able to look up; *Job* 31. 14. *Pſalm* 1. 5. The *Fear* it works will make you wiſh for a Hole in the Rock to hide you; *Iſa.* 2. 9, 10, 15, 19. And its *Deſpair* is a Death-pang. The cutting off of Hope is the greateſt Cut in the World. O who can ſtand under ſuch a Load as this! *Prov.* 18. 14.

2. Conſider the Nature of your preſent Actions; they are Seed ſown for Eternity, and will ſpring up again in ſuitable Effects, Rewards and Puniſhments, when you that did them are turned to Duſt. *Gal.* 6. 7. *What a Man ſows, that ſhall he reap*: And as ſure as the Harveſt follows the Seed-time, ſo ſure ſhall Shame, Fear, and Horror follow Sin, *Dan.* 12. 2. What *Zeuxis* the famous Limner ſaid of his Work, may much more truly be ſaid of ours; *Æternitati pingo*, I paint for Eternity, ſaid he, when one asked him why he was ſo curious in his Work. Ah, how bitter will thoſe Things be in the Account and Reckoning, which were pleaſant in the Acting and Committing! 'Tis true our Actions, phyſically conſidered, are tranſient; how ſoon is a Word or Action ſpoken or done, and there is an End of it? But *morally* conſidered, they are permanent, being put upon God's Book of Account. O therefore take heed what you do: So ſpeak, and ſo act, as they that muſt give an Account.

3. Conſider how by theſe Things Men do but prepare for their own Torment in a dying Hour. There's Bitterneſs enough in Death, you need not add more Gall and Wormwood to add to the Bitterneſs of it. What is the violencing and wounding of Conſcience now, but the ſticking ſo many Pins or Needles in your Death-bed, againſt you come to lie down on it? This makes Death bitter indeed. How many have wiſh'd in a dying Hour they had rather lived poor and low all their Days, than to have ſtrained their Conſciences for the World? Ah, how is the Face and Aſpect of Things altered in ſuch an Hour!

No ſuch Conſiderations as theſe had any Place in *Pilate*'s Heart; for if ſo, he would never have been courted or ſcared into ſuch an Act as this.

Inference 4. Did Chriſt ſtand arraigned and condemned at *Pilate*'s Bar? *Then the Believer ſhall never be arraigned and condemned at God's Bar.* This Sentence that *Pilate* pronounced on Chriſt, gives Evidence that God will never pronounce Sentence againſt ſuch: For had he intended to have arraigned them, he would never have ſuffered Chriſt their Surety to be arraigned and condemned for them. Chriſt ſtood at this Time before a higher Judge than *Pilate*; he ſtood at God's Bar as well as his. *Pilate* did but that which God's own Hand and Counſel had before determined to be done, and what God himſelf at the ſame Time did; tho' God did it juſtly and holily, dealing with Chriſt as a Creditor with a Surety; *Pilate* moſt wickedly and baſely dealing with Chriſt as a corrupt Judge, that ſhed the Blood of a known Innocent to pacify the People. But certain it is, that out of his Condemnation flows our Juſtification: And had not Sentence been given againſt him, it muſt have been given againſt us.

O what a melting Conſideration is this! that out of his Agony comes our Victory; out of his Condemnation our Juſtification; out of his Pain our Eaſe; out of his Stripes our Healing; out of his Gall and Vinegar our Honey; out of his Curſe our Bleſſing; out of his Crown of Thorns our Crown of Glory; out of his Death our Life: If he could not be releaſed, it was that you might. If *Pilate* gave Sentence againſt him, it was that the great God might never give Sentence againſt you. If he yielded that it ſhould be with Chriſt as they required, it was that it might be with our Souls as well as we can deſire. And therefore,

Thanks be to God for his unſpeakable Gift.

SER-

SERMON XXV.

Remarks a memorable Paſſage of Chriſt in his Way to the Place of his Execution.

LUKE XXIII. 27, 28, &c.

And there followed him a great Company of People, and of Women, which alſo bewailed and lamented him. But Jeſus *turning unto them, ſaid, Daughters of* Jeruſalem, *weep not for me, but weep for your ſelves, and for your Children.*

THE Sentence of Death once given againſt Chriſt, the Execution quickly follows. Away they lead him from *Gabbatha* to *Golgotha*, longing as much to be nailing him to the Croſs, and feeding their Eyes with his Torments, as the Eagle doth to be tearing the Fleſh, and drinking the Blood of that Lamb ſhe hath ſeized in her Talons, and is carrying away to the Top of ſome Rock to devour.

The *Evangeliſt* here obſerves a memorable Paſſage that fell out in their Way to the Place of Execution; and that is the Lamentations and Wailing of ſome that followed him out of the City, who expreſſed their Pity and Sorrow for him moſt tenderly and compaſſionately: All Hearts were not hard, all Eyes were not dry. *There followed him a great Company of People, and of Women, which alſo bewailed and lamented him.* &c.

In this Paragraph we have two Parts, *viz.* the Lamentation of the Daughters of *Jeruſalem* for Chriſt, and Chriſt's Reply to them.

1. The Lamentation of the Daughters of *Jeruſalem* for Chriſt. Concerning them, we briefly enquire who they were, and why they mourned.

(1.) Who they were? The Text calls them Daughters, *i.e.* Inhabitants of *Jeruſalem*; for it is a *Hebraiſm*; as *Daughters of* Zion, *Daughters of* Iſrael. And it's like the greateſt Part of them were Women; and they were many of them, a Troop of Mourners, that followed Chriſt out of the City towards the Place of his Execution, with Lamentations and Wailings.

Θυγατέρες Ἱερουσαλὴμ, *i.e.* mulieres Hieroſolymitanæ: *Hebraiſmus*; *ſic* filiæ Tſionis. Piſcat. in loc.

(2.) What the Principal and Ground of theſe their Lamentations was, is not agreed by thoſe that have pondered the Story. Some are of Opinion their Tears and Lamentations were but the Effects and Fruits of their more tender and ingenuous Natures, which were moved and melted with ſo tragical and ſad a Spectacle as was now before them. It's well obſerved by a judicious Author,

Mr. Anth. Burgeſs, *Spiritual refining*, p. 120.

Dr. Tho. Goodwin, *in his Triumph of Faith*, p. 38.

" That the tragical Story " of ſome great and noble " Perſonage, full of heroi- " cal Vertue and Ingenuity (yet inhumanly and " ungratefully uſed) will thus work upon ingenuous " Spirits who read or hear of it——which when it " reaches no higher, is ſo far from being Faith, that " it is but a carnal and fleſhly Devotion, ſpringing " from Fancy, which is pleaſed with ſuch a Story " and the Principles of Ingenuity ſtirred towards " one, who is of a noble Spirit, and yet abuſed. " Such Stories uſe to ſtir up a Principle of Humanity " in Men unto a compaſſionate Love; which Chriſt " himſelf at his Suffering found fault with, as being " not ſpiritual, nor raiſed enough in thoſe Women " that went weeping to ſee the Meſſiah ſo handled. " *Weep not for me* (ſaith he) that is, weep not ſo " much for this, to ſee me ſo unworthily handled " by thoſe for whom I die." This is the Principle from which ſome conceive theſe Tears to flow.

But *Calvin* attributes it to their Faith, looking upon theſe Mourners as a Remnant reſerved by the Lord in that miſerable Diſperſion; and tho' their Faith was but weak, yet he judges it credible that there was a ſecret Seed of Godlineſs in them, which afterwards grew to a Maturity, and brought forth Fruit. And to the ſame Senſe others give their Opinion alſo.

Videmus quoſdam non fuiſſe oblitos doctrinæ & miraculorum Chriſti. Sic in miſerâ illâ diſſipatione exiguas ſibi reliquias ſervavit Deus. Quamvis autem imbecilla fuit iſtarum mulierum fides, credibile tamen eſt, occultum fuiſſe pietatis ſemen, unde poſtea germen prodiit. *Calv.*

2. Let us conſider Chriſt's Reply to them; *Weep not for me, ye Daughters of Jeruſalem*, &c. Strange, that Chriſt ſhould forbid them to weep for him, yea for him under ſuch unparallel'd Sufferings and Miſeries. If ever there was a Heart-melting Object in the World, it was here. O who could hold, whoſe Heart was not petrified, and more obdure than the ſenſeleſs Rocks! This Reply therefore of Chriſt undergoes a double Senſe and Interpretation, ſuitable to the different Conſtruction of their Sorrows. Thoſe that look upon their Sorrows as meerly natural, take Chriſt's Reply in a negative Senſe, prohibiting ſuch Tears as thoſe. They that expound their Sorrows as the Fruit of Faith, tell us, tho' the Form of Chriſt's expreſſing be negative, yet the Senſe is comparative, as *Matth.* 9. 13. *I will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice, i.e.* Mercy rather than Sacrifice. So here, weep rather upon your own account, than mine; reſerve your Sorrows for the Calamities coming upon your ſelves and your Children. You are greatly affected, I ſee, with the Miſery that is upon me; but mine will be quickly over, yours will lie long. In which he ſhews his merciful and compaſſionate Diſpoſition, who was ſtill more mindful of others Troubles and Burdens than of his own.

And

And indeed the Days of Calamity coming upon them and their Children, were doleful Days. What direful and unprecedented Miſeries befel them at the Breaking up and Devaſtation of the City, who hath not read or heard? And who can refrain from Tears that hears or reads it?

Now, if we take the Words in the firſt Senſe, as a Prohibition of their meerly natural and carnal Affections, expreſſed in Tears and Lamentations for him, no otherwiſe than they would have been upon any other like tragical Story; then the Obſervation from it will be this,

Doct. 1. *That melting Affections and Sorrows, even from the Senſe and Conſideration of the Sufferings of Chriſt, are no infallible Signs of Grace.*

If you take it in the latter Senſe, as the Fruit of their Faith, as Tears flowing from a gracious Principle; then the Obſervation will be this,

Doct. 2. *That the believing Meditation of what Chriſt ſuffered for us, is of great Force and Efficacy to melt and break the Heart.*

I ſhall rather chuſe to proſecute both theſe Branches, than to decide the Controverſie; eſpecially ſince the Notes gathered from either are ſo uſeful to us. And therefore I ſhall begin with the firſt, *viz.*

Doct. 1. *That melting Affections and Sorrows, even from the Senſe of Chriſt's Sufferings, are no infallible Marks of Grace.*

In this Point I have Two Things to do, to prepare it for uſe.

Firſt, To ſhew, what the Melting of the Affections by way of Grief and Sorrow is.

Secondly, That they may be ſo melted, even upon the Account of Chriſt, and yet the Heart remain unrenewed.

Firſt, What the Melting of the Affections by way of Grief and Sorrow is.

Tears are nothing elſe but the Juice of a Mind oppreſſed, and ſqueezed with Grief. Grief compreſſes the Heart; the Heart ſo compreſſed and ſqueezed, vents it ſelf ſometimes in Tears, Sighs, Groans, *&c.* and this is twofold; *gracious*, and wholly ſupernatural; or *common*, and altogether natural. The gracious Melting or Sorrow of the Soul, is likewiſe Twofold; *habitual*, or *actual*. Habitual godly Sorrow is that gracious Diſpoſition, Inclination, or Tendency of the renewed Heart to mourn and melt, when any juſt Occaſion is preſented to the Soul that calls for ſuch Sorrow. It is expreſſed, *Ezek.* 36. 26. *By taking away the Heart of Stone, and giving a Heart of Fleſh*; that is, a Heart impreſſive, and yielding to ſuch Arguments and Conſiderations as move it to Mourning.

Actual Sorrow is the Expreſſion and Manifeſtation of that its Inclination upon juſt Occaſions; and it's expreſſed two Ways, either by the *internal* Effects of it, which are the Heavineſs, Shame, Loathing, Reſolution, and holy Revenge begotten in the Soul upon the account of Sin; or alſo by more *external* and viſible Effects, as Sighs, Groans, Tears, *&c.* the former is *eſſential* to godly Sorrow, the latter *contingent*, and accidental, much depending upon the natural Temperature and Conſtitution of the Body.

Natural and common Meltings are nothing elſe but the Effects of a better Temper, the Fruit of a more ingenuous Spirit, and eaſier Conſtitution, which ſhews it ſelf on any other, as well as upon ſpiritual Occaſions: As *Auſtin* ſaid, he could weep plentifully when he read the Story of *Dido*. The Hiſtory of Chriſt is a very tragical and pathetical Hiſtory, and may melt an ingenuous Nature, where there is no renewed Principle at all. So that,

Secondly, Our Affections may be melted, even upon the ſcore and account of Chriſt; and yet that is no infallible Evidence of a gracious Heart. And the Reaſons for it are,

1. Becauſe we find all Sorts of Affections acted and vented by ſuch as have been no better than temporary Believers. The ſtony-ground Hearers in *Matth.* 13. 20. *Received the Word with Joy*; and ſo did *John's* Hearers alſo, who for *a Seaſon rejoiced in his Light*, John 5. 35. Now if the Affections of Joy under the Word may be exerciſed, why not of Sorrow alſo? If the comfortable Things revealed in the Goſpel may ſtir up the one by a Parity of Reaſon, the ſad Things it reveals may anſwerably work upon the other. Even thoſe *Iſraelites* whom *Moſes* told they ſhould fall by the Sword, and not proſper, for the Lord would not be with them, becauſe they were turned away from him; yet when *Moſes* rehearſed the Meſſage of the Lord in their Ears, they mourned greatly, *Numb.* 14. 39. I know the Lord pardoned to many of them their Iniquities, tho' he took Vengeance on their Inventions; and yet it's as true, that with many of them God was not well pleaſed, 1 *Cor.* 10. 5. Many Inſtances of their Weeping and Mourning before the Lord we find in the ſacred Story; and yet their Hearts were not ſtedfaſt with God.

2. Becauſe tho' the Object about which our Affections and Paſſions are moved, may be ſpiritual; yet the Motives and Principles that ſet them on work, may be but carnal and natural ones. When I ſee a Perſon affected in the Hearing of the Word, or Prayer, even unto Tears, I cannot preſently conclude, ſurely this is the Effect of Grace: For it's poſſible, the pathetical Quality of the ſubject Matter, the Rhetorick of the Speaker, the very affecting Tone, and Modulation of the Voice, may draw Tears, as well as Faith working upon the Spirituality, and deep Concernment the Soul hath in thoſe Things.

Whilſt *Auſtin* was a *Manichee*, he ſometimes heard *Ambroſe*; and, ſaith he, I was greatly affected in hearing him, even unto Tears many times; howbeit, it was not the heavenly Nature of the Subject, but the Abilities and rare Parts of the Speaker that ſo affected him. And this was the Caſe of *Ezekiel's* Hearers, *Chap.* 33. 32.

Again, 3. Theſe Motions of the Affections may rather be a *Fit* and Mood, than the very *Frame* and Temper of the Soul. Now there is a vaſt Difference betwixt theſe: There are Times and Seaſons when the roughеſt and moſt obdure Hearts may be penſive and tender; but that is not its Temper and Frame, but only a Fit, a Pang, a tranſient Paſſion. So the Lord complains of them, *Hoſ.* 6. 4. O Ephraim, *what ſhall I do unto thee? O* Judah, *what ſhall I do unto thee? for your Goodneſs is as a morning Cloud, and as the early Dew, it goeth away.* And ſo he complains, *Pſalm* 78. 34, 35, 36. *When he ſlew them, then they ſought him; and they returned, and enquired early after God. And they remembred that God was their Rock, and the moſt high God their Redeemer; neverthelеſs they did flatter him with their Lips, and lied unto him with their Tongues.* For had this been the gracious Temper of their Souls, it would have continued with them; they would not have been up and down, off and on, hot and cold with God, as they were. Therefore we conclude, that we cannot infer a Work of Grace upon the Heart, ſimply and meerly from the Meltings and Thaws that are ſometimes

Illa tantum dicuntur ineſſe animæ quæ inſunt per modum quietis.

times upon it. And hence for your Uſe I ſhall infer, that,

Inference 1.

If ſuch us ſometimes feel their Hearts thawed and melted with the Conſideration of the Sufferings of Chriſt, may yet be deceived; *What cauſe have they to fear and tremble, whoſe Hearts are as unrelenting as the Rocks, yielding to nothing that is propoſed, or urged upon them?* How many ſuch are there, of whom we may ſay as Chriſt ſpeaks of the inflexible *Jews, We have piped unto you, but ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, but ye have not lamented?* Mat. 11. 17. They muſt inevitably come ſhort of Heaven, who come ſo ſhort of thoſe that do come ſhort of Heaven. If thoſe periſh that have rejoyced under the Promiſes, and mourned under the Threats of the Word; What ſhall become of them that are as unconcerned and untouched by what they hear, as the Seats they ſit on, or the Dead that lie under their Feet? Who are given up to ſuch Hardneſs of Heart, that nothing can touch or affect them? One would think the Conſideration of the *ſixth Chapter to the Hebrews* ſhould ſtartle ſuch Men and Women, and make them cry out, Lord, what will become of ſuch a ſenſeleſs, ſtupid, dead Creature as I am? If they that have been enlightned, and have taſted the heavenly Gift, and were made Partakers of the Holy Ghoſt, and have taſted the good Word of God, and the Powers of the World to come, may, notwithſtanding ſuch high raiſed Affections as theſe, ſo fall away, that it ſhall be impoſſible to renew them again by Repentance; what ſhall we then ſay or think of his Eſtate, to whom the moſt penetrating and awaking Truths are no more than a Tale that is told? The Fire and Hammer of the Goſpel can neither melt nor break them; they are Iron and Braſs, *Jer.* 6. 28, 29.

Inference 2.

If ſuch as theſe may eternally miſcarry; then *let all look carefully to their Foundation, and ſee that they do not bleſs themſelves in a Thing of nought.* It's manifeſt from 1 *Cor.* 10. 12. that many Souls ſtand exceeding dangerouſly, who are yet ſtrongly conceited of their own Safety. And if you pleaſe to conſult thoſe Scriptures in the Margin, you ſhall find vain Confidence to be a ruling Folly over the greateſt Part of Men; and that which is the utter Overthrow, and Undoing of Multitudes of Profeſſors.

Gal. 6. 3, 4. John 8. 54. Rom. 2. 18, 19, 21. Mat. 25. 11, 12. Mat. 7. 22.

Now there is nothing more apt to beget and breed this vain Soul-undoing Confidence, than the Stirrings and Meltings of our Affections about ſpiritual Things, whilſt the Heart remains unrenewed all the While. For (as a grave Divine hath well obſerved) ſuch a Man ſeems to have all that is required of a Chriſtian, and herein to have attained the very End of all Knowledge; which is Operation and Influence upon the Heart and Affections.

Mr. An. Burg.

Indeed (thinks ſuch a poor deluded Soul) if I did hear, read, or pray without any inward Affections, with a dead, cold, and unconcerned Heart; or if I did make Shew of Zeal and Affection in Duties, and had it not, well might I ſuſpect my ſelf to be a ſelf-cozening Hypocrite: But it's not ſo with me. I feel my Heart really melted many times, when I read the Sufferings of Chriſt; I feel my Heart raiſed, and raviſhed with ſtrange Joys and Comforts, when I hear the Glory of Heaven opened in the Goſpel: Indeed if it were not ſo with me, I might doubt the Root of the Matter is wanting; but if to my Knowledge Affections be added; a melting Heart match'd with a knowing Head, then I may be confident all is well. I have often heard Miniſters cautioning and warning their People not to reſt ſatisfied with idle and unpractical Notions in their Underſtandings, but to labour for Impreſſions upon their Hearts; this I have attained, and therefore what Danger of me? I have often heard it given as a Mark of a Hypocrite, that he hath Light in his Head, but it ſheds not down its Influence upon the Heart; whereas in thoſe that are ſincere, it works on their Heart and Affections: So I find it with me, therefore I am in a moſt ſafe Eſtate. O Soul! of all the falſe Signs of Grace, none more dangerous than thoſe that moſt reſemble true ones; and never doth the Devil more ſurely and incurably deſtroy, than when transformed into an Angel of Light. What if theſe Meltings of thy Heart be but a Flower of Nature? What if thou art more beholden to a good Temper of Body, than a gracious Change of Spirit for theſe Things? Well, ſo it may be. Therefore be not ſecure, but fear and watch. Poſſibly if thou wouldſt but ſearch thine own Heart in this matter, thou mayeſt find, that any other pathetical, moving Story will have the like Effects upon thee. Poſſibly too, thou mayſt find that notwithſtanding all thy Raptures and Joys at the Hearing of Heaven, and it's Glory, yet after that Pang is over, thy Heart is habitually earthly, and thy Converſation is not there. For all thou canſt mourn at the Relations of Chriſt's Sufferings, thou art not ſo affected with Sin, that was the meritorious Cauſe of the Sufferings of Chriſt, as to crucifie one Corruption, or deny the next Temptation, or part with any Way of Sin that is gainful, or pleaſurable to thee for his ſake.

Why now, Reader, if it be ſo with thee, what art thou the better for the Fluency of thy Affections? Doſt thou think in earneſt, that Chriſt hath the better Thoughts of thee, becauſe thou canſt ſhed Tears for him, when notwithſtanding thou every Day pierceſt and woundeſt him? O! be not deceived. Nay for ought I know, thou mayſt find upon a narrow Search that thou putteſt thy Tears in the Room of Chriſt's Blood, and giveſt the Confidence and Dependance of thy Soul to them; and if ſo, they ſhall never do thee any good.

O therefore ſearch thy Heart, Reader, be not too confident; take not up too eaſily upon ſuch poor weak Grounds as theſe, a Soul-undoing Confidence. Always remember, the Wheat and Tares reſemble each other in their firſt ſpringing up; that an Egg is not liker to an Egg, than Hypocriſie, in ſome Shapes and Forms into which it can caſt it ſelf, is like a genuine Work of Grace. O remember that among the ten Virgins, that is, the reformed Profeſſors of Religion, that have caſt off and ſeparated themſelves from the Worſhip and Defilements of Antichriſt, five of them were fooliſh.

There be firſt, that ſhall be laſt; and laſt, that ſhall be firſt, *Mat.* 19. 30. Great is the Deceitfulneſs of our Hearts, *Jer.* 17. 9. And many are the Subtleties and Devices of Satan, 2 *Cor.* 11. 3. Many alſo are the aſtoniſhing Examples of ſelf-deceiving Souls, recorded in the Word. Remember that you lately read of *Judas.* Great alſo will be the Exactneſs of the laſt Judgment. And how confident ſoever you be, that you ſhall ſpeed well in that Day, yet ſtill remember that Trial is not yet paſt. Your final Sentence is not yet come from the Mouth of your Judge. This I ſpeak, not to affright and trouble, but excite and warn you. The Loſs of a Soul is no ſmall Loſs, and upon ſuch Grounds as theſe they are every Day caſt away.

This may ſuffice to be ſpoken to the firſt Obſervation, built on this Suppoſition, that it was but a Pang of meer natural Affection in them. But if it were the Effect of a better Principle, the Fruit of their Faith as ſome judge; then I told you the Obſervation from it would be this,

Doct. 2. *That the believing Meditation of what Chriſt ſuffered for us, is of great Force and Efficacy to melt and break the Heart.*

It is the Promiſe, *Zech.* 12. 10. *They ſhall look upon me whom they have pierced, and mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only Son, and ſhall be in Bitterneſs for him, as one that is in Bitterneſs for his Firſt-born.* Ponder ſeriouſly here the *Spring* and *Motive*, *They ſhall look upon me*; it's the Eye of Faith that melts and breaks the Heart. The *Effect* of ſuch a Sight of Chriſt; they ſhall look and *mourn*; be in Bitterneſs and Sorrow. True Repentance is a Drop out of the Eye of Faith; and the *Meaſure* or Degree of that Sorrow cauſed by a believing View of Chriſt. To expreſs which, two of the fulleſt Inſtances of Grief we read of, are borrowed; that of a tender Father, mourning over a dear and only Son; that of the People of *Iſrael*, mourning over *Joſiah*, that peerleſs Prince, in the Valley of *Megiddo*.

Now to ſhew you how the believing Meditation of Chriſt, and his Sufferings, come kindly and ſavingly to break and melt down the gracious Heart, I ſhall propound theſe four Conſiderations of the Heart-breaking Efficacy of Faith, eying a crucified Jeſus.

Firſt, The very *realizing* of Chriſt and his Sufferings by Faith, is a moſt affecting and melting Thing. Faith is a true Glaſs that repreſents all thoſe his Sufferings and Agonies to the Life. It preſents them not as a Fiction, or idle Tale, but as a true and faithful Narrative. This (ſaith Faith) is a true and faithful Saying, that Chriſt was not only cloathed in our Fleſh: He that is over all, God bleſſed for ever, the only Lord, the Prince of the Kings of the Earth, become a Man; but it is alſo moſt certain, that in this Body of his Fleſh, he grappled with the infinite Wrath of God, which fill'd his Soul with Horror and Amazement; that the Lord of Life did hang dead upon the Tree; that he went as a Lamb to the Slaughter, and was as a Sheep dumb before the Shearer; that he endured all this, and more than any finite Underſtanding can comprehend, in my Room and Stead; for my ſake he there groaned and bled; for my Pride, Earthlineſs, Luſt, Unbelief, Hardneſs of Heart, he endured all this. I ſay, to *realize* the Sufferings of Chriſt thus, is of great Power to affect the coldeſt, dulleſt Heart. You cannot imagine the Difference there is in preſenting Things as Realities, with convincing and ſatisfying Evidences, and our looking on them as a Fiction or Uncertainty.

Secondly, But Faith can *apply* as well as realize; and if it do ſo, it muſt needs overcome the Heart.

Ah! Chriſtian, canſt thou look upon Jeſus as ſtanding in thy Room, to bear the Wrath of a Deity for thee? Canſt thou think on it, and not melt? That when thou, like *Iſaac*, waſt bound to the Altar, to be offered up to Juſtice, Chriſt, like the *Ram*, was caught in the Thicket, and offered in thy Room. When thy Sins had raiſed a fearful Tempeſt, that threatned every moment to entomb thee in a Sea of Wrath, *Jeſus Chriſt* was thrown over to appeaſe that Storm! Say, Reader, can thy Heart dwell one Hour upon ſuch a Subject as this? Canſt thou with Faith preſent Chriſt to thy ſelf, as he was taken down from the Croſs, drencht in his own Blood, and ſay, Theſe were the Wounds that he received for *me*; this is he that loved me, and gave himſelf for me; out of theſe Wounds comes that Balm that heals my Soul; out of theſe Stripes my Peace: When he hang'd upon the Croſs, he bore my Name upon his Breaſt, like the high Prieſt. It was Love, pure Love, ſtrong Love to my poor Soul; to the Soul of an Enemy that drew him down from Heaven, and all the Glory he had there, to endure theſe Sorrows in Soul and Body for me.

O you cannot hold up your Hearts long to the piercing Thoughts of this, but your Bowels will be pained, and like *Joſeph*, you will ſeek a Place to vent your Hearts in.

Thirdly, Faith cannot only realize and apply Chriſt and his Death, but it can *reaſon* and *conclude* ſuch Things from his Death, as will fill the Soul with Affection to him, and break the Heart in pieces in his Preſence. When it views Chriſt as dead, it infers, Is Chriſt dead for me? then was I dead in Law, ſentenced and condemned to die eternally: 2 *Cor.* 5. 14. *If one die for all, then were all dead.* How woful was my Caſe when the Law had paſt Sentence on me; I could not be ſure when I lay down, but that it might be executed before I roſe; nothing but a Puff of Breath betwixt my Soul and Hell.

Again, is Chriſt dead for me? than I ſhall never die. If he be condemned, I am acquitted. *Who ſhall lay any thing to the Charge of God's Elect? It's God that juſtifieth, it's Chriſt that died,* Rom. 8. 34. My Soul is eſcaped as a Bird out of the Snare of the Fowler: I was condemned, but am now cleared; I was dead, but am now alive; O the unſearchable Riches of Grace! O Love paſt finding out!

Again, did God give Chriſt up to ſuch Miſeries and Sufferings for me? How ſhall he withhold any Thing now from me? *He that ſpared not his own Son, will doubtleſs with him freely give me all Things,* Rom. 8. 32. Now I may reſt on him for Pardon, Peace, Acceptance, and Glory for my Soul. Now I may rely upon him ſafely for Proviſion, Protection, and all Supplies for my Body. Chriſt is the Root of all theſe Mercies; he is more than all theſe, he is nearer and dearer to God than any other Gift. O what a bleſſed, happy, comfortable State hath he now brought my Soul into!

Qui miſit filium, immiſit ſpiritum, promiſit vultum; quid tantum denegabit? *Proſp.*

To conclude, Did Chriſt endure all theſe Things for me? Then it's paſt doubt he will never leave, nor forſake me: It cannot be that after he has endured all this, he will caſt off the Souls for whom he endured it. Here the Soul is evangelically broken conſidering the Mercies that emerge and flow to it out of the Sea of Chriſt's Blood.

Fourthly, and laſtly, Faith cannot only realize, apply, and infer, but it can alſo *compare* the Love of Chriſt in all this, both with his Dealings with others, and with the Soul's Dealing with Chriſt, who ſo loved it. To compare Chriſt's Dealings with others, is moſt affecting: He hath not deale with every one, as with me; nay, few there are that can ſpeak of ſuch Mercies as I have from him: How many are there that have no Part nor Portion in his Blood? That muſt bear that Wrath in their own Perſons, that he bare himſelf for me! He that, kiſſed me over other Mens Shoulders, he hath reached a Pardon to me over other Mens Heads; he eſpied me out, and ſingled me forth to be the Object of his Love, leaving Thouſands and Millions ſtill unreconcil'd; not that I was better than they, for I was the greateſt of Sinners, far from Righteouſneſs, as unlikely as any to be the Object of ſuch Grace and Love: My Companions in Sin are left, and I taken. Now the Soul

Soul is full, the Heart grows big, too big to contain it self.

Yea, Faith helps the Soul to compare the Love of Christ to it, with the Returns it hath made to him for that Love. And what, my Soul! Hath thy Carriage to Christ been, since this Grace that wants a Name, appeared to thee? Hast thou returned Love for Love? Love suitable to such Love? Hast thou prized, valued and esteemed this Christ, according to his own Worth in himself, or his Kindness to thee? Ah no, I have grieved, pierced, wounded his Heart a Thousand Times since that, by my Ingratitude; I have suffered every Trifle to jostle him out of my Heart; I have neglected him a Thousand Times, and made him say, Is this thy Kindness to thy Friend? Is this the Reward I shall have for all that I have done, and suffered for thee? Wretch that I am, how have I requited the Lord! This shames, humbles, and breaks the Heart.

And when from such Sights of Faith, and Considerations as these the Heart is thus affected, it affords a good Argument indeed, that thou art gone beyond all the Attainments of temporary Believers; Flesh and Blood hath not revealed this.

Inference 1.

Have the believing Meditations of Christ and his Sufferings such heart-melting Influences? *Then sure there is but little Faith among Men.* Our dry Eyes and hard Hearts are Evidences against us, that we are Strangers to the Sights of Faith.

God be merciful to the Hardness of your Hearts. How is Christ and his Love slighted among Men! How shallow doth his Blood run to some Eyes! O that my Head were Waters, and mine Eyes Fountains of Tears for this! What Monsters are carnal Hearts? We are as if God had made us without Affections, as if all Ingenuity and Tenderness were dried up. Our Ears are so accustomed to the Sounds of Christ, and his Blood, that now they are become as common Things. If a Child die, we can mourn over our dead; but who mourns for Christ as for an only Son? We may say of Faith, when Men and Women sit so unaffected under the Gospel, as *Martha* said of Christ concerning her Brother *Lazarus*, If thou (precious Faith) hadst been here, so many Hearts had not been dead this Day, and in this Duty. Faith is that Burning glass which contracts the Beams of the Grace, and Love, and Wisdom, and Power of Jesus Christ together, reflects these on the Heart, and makes it burn; but without it we feel nothing savingly.

Inference 2.

Have the believing Meditations of Christ and his Sufferings such heart-melting Influences? *Then surely, the proper Order of raising the Affections, is to begin at the Exercise of Faith.* It grieves me to see how many poor Christians tug at their own dead Hearts, endeavouring to raise and affect them, but cannot: They complain and strive, strive and complain, pump and draw, but no Love to the Lord comes, no Brokenness of Heart comes; they go to this Ordinance and that, to one Duty and another, hoping that now the Lord will affect it, and fill the Sails; but come back disappointed, and ashamed, like the Troops of *Tema*. Poor Christian, hear me one Word; possibly it may do thy Business, and stand thee in more stead than all the Methods thou hast yet used. If thou wouldst indeed get a Heart evangelically melted for Sin, and broken with the kindly Sense of the Grace and Love of Christ, thy Way is not to force thy Affections, nor to vex thy self, and go about complaining of a hard Heart, but set thy self to believe, realize, apply, infer, and compare by Faith as you have been directed; and see what this will do: *They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and mourn.* This is the Way, and proper Method to raise the Heart, and break it.

Inference 3.

Is this the Way to get a truly broken Heart? *Then let those that have attained Brokenness of Heart this Way, bless the Lord whilst they live, for so choice a Mercy*; and that upon a double Account.

1. For as much as a Heart so affected and melted, is not attainable by any natural or unrenewed Person; if they would give all they have in the World, it cannot purchase one such Tear, or Groan over Christ; mark what Characters of special Grace it bears in the Description that's made of it, in that forementioned Place, *Zech.* 12. 10. Such a Frame as this is not born with us, or to be acquired by us; for it's there said to be poured out by the Lord upon us, *I will pour upon them*, &c. There's no Hypocrisie or Dissimulation in these Mournings, they being compared to the Mourning of a Man for his only Son; and sure Parents Hearts are not untouched when they behold such Sights.

Nature is not the Principle of it, but Faith; for it's there said, they shall look on me; *i. e.* believe and mourn. *Self* is not the End and Centre of these Sorrows; it is not so much for damning our selves, as for piercing Christ: *They shall look on me whom they have pierced, and shall mourn*; so that this is Sorrow after God, and not a Flash of Nature, as discoursed in the former Point. Therefore you have Cause to bless the Lord whilst you live for such a special Mercy as this is. And,

2. As it's the right, so it is the choicest and most precious Gift that can be given you; for it's ranked among the prime Mercies of the New Covenant, *Ezek.* 36. 26. This shall be the Covenant; *A new Heart also will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony Heart out of your Flesh, and I will give you a Heart of Flesh.* What wouldst thou have given sometimes for such a Heart as now thou hast, tho' it be not yet as thou wouldst have it? And however you value and esteem it, God himself sets no common Value on it: For mark what he saith of it, *Psalm* 15. 17. *The Sacrifices of God are a broken Heart: A broken and a contrite Spirit, O God, thou wilt not despise*; *i. e.* God is more delighted with such a Heart than with all the Sacrifices in the World; one Groan, one Tear, flowing from Faith, and the Spirit of Adoption is more to him, than the Cattle upon a Thousand Hills. And to the same Sense he speaks again, *Isa.* 66. 1, 2. *Thus saith the Lord, The Heaven is my Throne, and the Earth is my Footstool: Where is the House that ye build to me? And where is the Place of Rest? — But to this Man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite Spirit, and trembleth at my Word*; *q. d.* All the magnificent Temples, and glorious Structures in the World, give me no Pleasure in Comparison of such a broken Heart as this.

O then, for ever bless the Lord, that hath done that for you, which none else could do, and which he has done but for few besides you.

SERMON XXVI.

Opens the Nature and Quality of the Death Chriſt died upon the Croſs.

ACTS II. 23.

Him being delivered by the determinate Counſel, and Foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked Hands have crucified and ſlain.

Mors Chriſti ultimus humiliationis actus, ſubiit extremas, horribiles, & maximas pro hominum peccatis, pœnas. *Ames.*

HAving conſidered in Order the preparative Acts for the Death of Chriſt, both on his own part, and on his Enemies part; we now come to conſider the Death of Chriſt it ſelf, which was the principal Part of his Humiliation, and the chief Pillar of our Conſolation. Here we ſhall in Order conſider,

Firſt, The Kind and Nature of the Death he died.

Secondly, The Manner in which he bare it, *viz.* patiently, ſolitarily, and inſtructively; dropping divers Holy and inſtructive Leſſons upon all that were about him, in his Seven laſt Words upon the Croſs.

Thirdly, The funeral Solemnities at his Burial.

Fourthly, and laſtly, The weighty Ends, and great Deſigns of his Death. In all which Particulars, as we proceed to diſcuſs and open them, you will have an Account of the deep Abaſement and Humiliation of the Son of God.

In this Text, we have an Account of the Kind and Nature of that Death which Chriſt died: As alſo of the Cauſes of it, both Principal and Inſtrumental.

Firſt, The Kind and Nature of the Death Chriſt died, which is here deſcribed more generally, as a violent Death, *Ye have ſlain him:* And more particularly, as a moſt ignominious, curſed, diſhonourable Death; *ye have crucified him.*

Secondly, The Cauſes of it are here likewiſe expreſſed: And that both Principal and Inſtrumental. The principal Cauſe, permitting, ordering, and diſpoſing all Things about it, was the determinate Counſel and Foreknowledge of God. There was not an Action or Circumſtance, but came under this moſt wiſe and holy Counſel, and Determination of God.

Non excuſantur Judæi quia huic occulto juſſui non obtemperarunt, ſed odio & affectibus impulſi, Chriſtum percuſſerunt innocentem, contra leges. *Pareus.*

The Inſtruments effecting it, were their wicked Hands. This Foreknowledge and Counſel of God, as it did no way neceſſitate or enforce them to it; ſo neither doth it excuſe their Fact from the leaſt Aggravation of its Sinfulneſs. It did no more compel or force their wicked Hands to do what they did, than the Mariner's Hoiſing up his Sails, to take the Wind to ſerve his Deſign, compels the Wind. And it cannot excuſe their Action from one Circumſtance of Sin: Becauſe God's End and Manner of acting was one Thing; their End and Manner of acting another. His moſt pure and holy; theirs moſt malicious, and daringly wicked. *Idem quod duo faciunt, non eſt idem.* To this Purpoſe a grave Divine well expreſſes it.

In Reſpect of God, Chriſt's Death was Juſtice and Mercy. In Reſpect of Man, it was Murder and Cruelty. In Reſpect of himſelf, it was Obedience and Humility: Hence our Note is,

Morning Exerciſe at St. *Giles*'s, p. 289.

Doct. *That our Lord Jeſus Chriſt was not only put to Death, but to the worſt of Deaths, even the Death of the Croſs.*

To this the Apoſtle gives a plain Teſtimony, *Phil.* 2. 8. *He became obedient to Death, even the Death of the Croſs;* where his Humiliation is both ſpecified; he was humbled to Death; and aggravated by a moſt emphatical Reduplication, even the Death of the Croſs. So *Acts* 5. 30. *Jeſus whom ye ſlew, and hanged upon a Tree*; *q. d.* it did not ſuffice you to put him to a violent, but you alſo put him to the moſt baſe, vile, and ignominious Death: You *hanged him on a Tree.*

In this Point we will diſcuſs theſe Three Particulars, *viz.* The *Nature* or *Kind*, the *Manner*, and *Reaſons* of Chriſt's Death upon the Tree.

Firſt, 1. I ſhall open the *Kind* or *Nature* of his Death, by ſhewing you that it was a *violent*, *painful*, *ſhameful*, *curſed*, *ſlow*, and *ſuccourleſs* Death.

Firſt, It was a *violent* Death, that Chriſt died. *Violent* in it ſelf, though *voluntary* on his Part. *He was cut off out of the Land of the Living*, Iſa. 53. 8. And yet *he laid down his Life of himſelf*; *no Man took it from him*, John 10. 17. I call his Death violent, becauſe he died not a natural Death, (*i. e.*) he lived not till Nature was conſumed with Age, as it is in many who live till their *balſamum radicale*, radical Moiſture, like the Oil in the Lamp, be quite conſumed, and then go out like an expiring Lamp. It was not ſo with Chriſt. For he was but in the Flower and Prime of his Time when he died. And indeed he muſt either die a violent Death, or not die at all; partly becauſe there was no Sin in him, to open a Door to natural Death; as it doth in all others. Partly becauſe elſe his Death had not been a Sacrifice acceptable and ſatisfactory to God for us. That which died of it ſelf, was never offered up to God; but that which was ſlain when it was in its full Strength and Health.

The Temple was a Type of the Body of Chriſt. Now, when the Temple was deſtroyed, it did not drop down as an ancient Structure decayed by Time, but was

John 2. 19.

was pulled down by Violence, when it was ſtanding in its full Strength. Therefore he is ſaid to *ſuffer Death*, and to be *put to Death* for us in the Fleſh, 1 *Pet.* 3. 18. That's the firſt Thing. It was a violent, though a voluntary Death. For Violent is not oppoſed to Voluntary, but to Natural.

Secondly, The Death of the Croſs was a moſt painful Death. Indeed in this Death were many Deaths contrived in one. The Croſs was a Rack, as well as a Gibbet. The Pains Chriſt ſuffered upon the Croſs, are by the Apoſtle emphatically ſtil'd τὰς ὠδῖνας τοῦ θανάτου, *Acts* 2. 24. The Pains of Death: But properly they ſignifie the Pangs of Travail: Yea, the Birth-pangs, the moſt acute Sorrows of a travailing Woman. His Soul was in Travail, *Iſa.* 53. His Body in bitter Pangs; and being as *Aquinas* ſpeaks, *optime complectionatus*, of the moſt excellent Craſis, exact and juſt Temperament; his Senſes were more Acute and Delicate than ordinary; And all the Time of his Suffering ſo they continued; not in the leaſt blunted, dulled or rebated by the Pains he ſuffered.

Continebat pœnas maximas, quia miſeriam illam totam æquabat, quam hominum peccata merrebantur. *Ameſ.* med.

The Death of Chriſt doubtleſs contained the greateſt, and acuteſt Pains imaginable. Becauſe theſe Pains of Chriſt alone, were intended to equalize all that Miſery, which the Sin of Man deſerved, all that Pain which the Damned ſhall, and the Elect deſerved to feel. Now to have Pains meeting at once upon one Perſon, equivalent to all the Pains of the damned; Judge you what a plight Chriſt was in.

Thirdly, The Death of the Croſs, was a *ſhameful* Death. Not only becauſe the crucified were ſtripped quite naked, and ſo expoſed as Spectacles of Shame: But mainly, becauſe it was that Kind of Death which was appointed for the baſeſt, and vileſt of Men.

The Free-men when they committed capital Crimes, were not condemned to the Croſs. No, that was looked upon as the Death appointed for Slaves. *Tacitus* calls it *ſervile Supplicium*, the Puniſhment of a Slave: And to the ſame Senſe *Juvenal* ſpeaks, *pone crucem Servo*, put the Croſs upon the Back of a Slave. As they had a great Eſteem of a Free-man, ſo they manifeſted it, even when they had forfeited their Lives, in cutting them off by more honourable Kinds of Death. This by hanging on the Tree, was always accounted moſt ignominious. To this Day we ſay of him that's hanged, he dies the death of a Dog: And yet it's ſaid of our Lord Jeſus, *Heb.* 12. 2. He not only endured the Croſs, but alſo deſpiſed the Shame. Obedience to his Father's Will, and Zeal for your Salvation, made him digeſt the Shame of it, and deſpiſe the Baſeneſs that was in it.

Vide Lyſium de cruce. *Lib.* 1. *chap.* 11. Ingenui hominis nulla eſt æſtimatio. Mortem hanc Homerus Odyſ. χ vocat μὴ καθαρὸν impuram. Et Euſtathius μίαρὸν fœdam.

Fourthly, The Death of the Croſs, was a *curſed* Death. Upon that Account he is ſaid to be *made* κατάρα, *a Curſe for us*; *For it is written, curſed is every one that hangeth on a Tree*, Gal. 3. 13. This refers to *Deut.* 21. 23. *His Body ſhall not remain all Night upon the Tree, but thou ſhalt in any wiſe bury him that Day; for he that is hanged, is accurſed of God.* The very Symbol of lifting them up betwixt Heaven and Earth, carried much Shame in it. For it implieth this in it, that the Perſon ſo uſed, was ſo execrable, baſe and vile, that he deſerved not to tread upon the Earth, or touch the Surface of the Ground any more. And the Command for burying them that Day, doth not at all mitigate, but rather aggravates this Curſe: Speaking the Perſon to be ſo abominable, that as he is lifted up into the Air, and hanging between Heaven and Earth, as unworthy ever to ſet Foot more upon the Earth; ſo when dead, they were to haſten to bury him, that ſuch an abominable Sight might be removed aſſoon as might be, from before the Eyes of Men; and that the Earth might not be defiled, by his lying on the Surface of it, when taken down.

Non ſtatuitur hoc pro honore cadaveris ſepeliendi, ſed quod cadaver illud maledictum cito à ſuperficie terræ tollatur, & terra non inquinetur. Sic *Bonfrerius.*

However, as the learned *Junius* hath judiciouſly obſerved, this Curſe is only a ceremonial Curſe: For otherwiſe it's neither in it ſelf, nor by the Law of Nature, or by Civil Law, more execrable than any other Death. And the main Reaſon why the ceremonial Law affixed the Curſe to this rather than to any other Death, was principally with Reſpect to the Death Chriſt was to die. And therefore, Reader, ſee and admire the Providence of God, that Chriſt ſhould die by a *Roman* and not by a *Judaick* Law. For crucifying, or hanging on the Tree, was a *Roman* Puniſhment, and not in uſe among the *Jews*. But the Scriptures cannot be broken.

Fifthly, The Death of the Croſs was a very ſlow, and lingering Death. They died leiſurably. Which ſtill encreaſeth, and aggravateth the Miſery of it. If a Man muſt die a violent Death, it's a Favour to be diſpatcht: as they that are preſſed to Death, beg for more Weight. And it's a Favour to thoſe that are hanged, to be ſmitten on the Breaſt, or plucked by the Heels by their Friends. On the contrary, to hang long in the Midſt of Tortures, to have Death coming upon us with a ſlow Pace, that we may feel every Tread of it, as it comes on, is a Miſery.

The Tyrant that heard the poor Martyr was dead under his firſt Torments, ſaid as one diſappointed, *Evaſit*, He hath eſcaped me. For he intended to have kept him much longer under Torments. And it was the cruel Counſel of another to his Executioner; *Let him die ſo, as he may feel himſelf how he dies.* And ſurely in this Reſpect it was worſe for Chriſt, than any other that was ever nailed to the Tree. For all the while he hanged there, he remained full of Life and acute Senſe. His Life departed not gradually, but was whole in him to the laſt. Other Men die gradually, and towards their End their Senſe of Pain is much blunted. They faulter, fumble and expire by Degrees; but Chriſt ſtood under the Pains of Death in his full Strength. His Life was whole in him. This was evident by the mighty Out-cry he made, when he gave up the Ghoſt. Which argued him then to be full of Strength, contrary to the Experience of all other Men. Which made the Centurion when he heard it, to conclude; *Surely this was the Son of God*, Mark 15. 37, 39.

Moriatur, ut ſentiat ſe mori.

Vitam & vires quouſque voluit Chriſtus ſervavit, & quando voluit deponebat. *Ameſ.*

Sixthly, It was a *ſuccourleſs* and helpleſs Death to Chriſt. Sometimes they gave to Malefactors amidſt their Torments, Vinegar and Myrrh, to blunt, dull and ſtupifie their Senſes. And if they hanged long, would break their Bones, to diſpatch them out of their Pains. Chriſt had none of this Favour. Inſtead of Vinegar and Myrrh, they gave him Vinegar and

and Gall to drink, to aggravate his Torments. And for the Breaking of his Bones, he prevented it, by dying before they came to break his Legs. For the Scriptures must be fulfilled, which say, *Not a Bone of him shall be broken.*

This now was the Kind and Nature of that Death he died. Even the violent, painful, shameful, cursed, slow and succourless Death of the Cross. An ancient Punishment both among the *Romans* and *Carthaginians.* But in Honour of Christ, who died this Death, *Constantine* the Great, abrogated it by Law, ordaining that none should ever be crucified any more, because Christ died that Death.

Sozom. *lib.* 1. *chap.* 8.

Secondly, As to the Manner of the Execution. They that were condemned to the Death of the Cross, (saith a learned Antiquary of our own) bare their Cross upon their own Shoulders, to the Place of Execution. Then were stript of all their Cloaths, for they suffered naked. And then were fastned to the Cross with Nails.

Godwin's *Antiq. lib.* 3. *Sect.* 3. *p.* 192.

The Manner how that was done, one gives us in these Words, They stretch him out (meaning Christ) like another *Isaac* upon his own Burden, the Cross; that so they might take measure of the Holes. And though the Print of his Blood upon it, gave them the true Length of his Body; yet how strictly do they take it longer than the Truth. Thereby at once to crucifie, and rack him. Then being nailed, like as *Moses* lifted up the Serpent, so was the Son of Man lifted up. And when the Cross, with the Lord fastned on it, fell into its Socket, or Basis, it jerked the whole, and every Part of his sacred Body. And the whole Weight hanging on his nailed Hands, the Wounds by Degrees grew wider and wider: Till at last he expired in the midst of those Tortures.

Herles *Contempla. of Christ's Passion,*

And that the Equity of their Proceedings might the better appear, to the People; the Cause of the Punishment was written in Capital Letters, and fixed to the Tree over the Head of the Malefactor. Of this Appendant to this kind of Death, I shall speak distinctly in the next Sermon, before I come to handle the Manner of his Death: There being so much of Providence in that Circumstance, as invites us to spend more than a few transient Thoughts upon it. Mean while in the next Place,

Thirdly, We will enquire briefly into the Reasons why Christ died this, rather than any other Kind of Death. And amongst others, these Three are obvious.

First, Because Christ must bear the Curse in his Death, and a Curse by Law was affixed to no other Kind of Death, as it was to this. The Learned *Masius* upon *Joshua* 2. 29. Commenting upon the Death of the King of *Ai*, who was hanged on the Tree, until Evening, tells us, that the principal Reason of the Malediction and Execrableness of his Death was, because the Death of Christ was prefigured in that Mystery. Christ came to take away the Curse from us, by this Death; and so must be made a Curse. On him must all the Curses of the Moral Law lie, which were due to us. And that nothing might be wanting to make it a full Curse; the very Death he died, must also have a ceremonial Curse upon it.

Potissima causa maledictionis hujus est quia Christus in mysterio præsignabatur. *Masius.*

Secondly, Christ died this, rather than any other Kind of Death; to fulfil the Types, and Prefigurations that of old were made with Respect to it. All the Sacrifices were lifted up from the Earth, upon the Altar. But especially the brazen Serpent prefigured this Death, *Numb.* 21. 9. *Moses* made a Serpent of Brass, and put it upon a Pole. And, saith Christ, *John* 3. 14. *As* Moses *lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up*, that so he might correspond with that lively Type, made of him in the Wilderness.

Thirdly, Christ died, this rather than any other Death, because it was predicted of him, and in him must all the Predictions, as well as Types be fully accomplished. The Psalmist spake in the Person of Christ, of this Death, as plainly as if he had rather been writing the History of what was done, than a Prophecy of what was to be done, so many Years afterwards, *Psalm* 22. 16, 17. For Dogs have compassed me about, the Assembly of the Wicked have inclosed me; they pierced my Hands and my Feet, I may tell all my Bones, they look and stare upon me. Which hath a manifest Reference to the Distension of all his Members upon the Tree, which was as a Rack to him. So *Zech.* 12. 10. *They shall look upon me, whom they have pierced.* Yea, Christ himself had foretold the Death he should die, in the forecited, *John* 3. 14. saying he must be lifted up, *(i. e.)* hanged between Heaven and Earth. And the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

Thus you have a brief Account both of the Kind, Manner, and Reasons of this Death of Christ. The Improvement of it, you have in the following Inferences of Truth, deducible from it.

Inference 1. Is Christ dead? And did he die the violent, painful, shameful, cursed, slow, and succourless Death of the Cross? *Then surely there is Forgiveness with God, and plenteous Redemption for the greatest of Sinners, that by Faith apply the Blood of the Cross, to their poor guilty Souls.* So speaks the Apostle, *Col.* 1. 14. *In whom we have Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins.* And 1 *John* 1. 7. *The Blood of Christ cleanseth us from all Sin.* Two Things this will make demonstrable.

A Demonstration of Pardon for the greatest of Sinners.

First, That there is *sufficient Efficacy* in this Blood of the Cross, to expiate the greatest Sins.

Secondly, That the Efficacy of it *is designed* and intended by God for believing Sinners. How clearly do both these Propositions lie in the Word?

First, That there is sufficient Efficacy in the Blood of the Cross, to expiate and wash away the greatest Sins. This is manifest, for it is *precious Blood*, as it's called, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18. *Ye were not redeemed with corruptible Things, as Silver and Gold; but with the precious Blood of the Son of God.* This Preciousness of the Blood of Christ rises from the Union it hath with that Person, who is over all, God blessed for ever. And on that Account is stiled the Blood of God, *Acts* 20. 28. And so it becomes royal, princely Blood. Yea, such for the Dignity, and Efficacy of it, as never was created, or shall ever run in any other Veins, but his. The Blood of all the Creatures in the World, even a Sea of humane Blood, bears no more Proportion to the precious and excellent Blood of Christ, than a Dish of Common-water, to a River of liquid Gold. On the Account of it's invaluable Preciousness, it becomes satisfying and reconciling Blood to God. So the Apostle speaks, *Col.* 1. 20. *And (having made Peace through the Blood of his Cross) by him to reconcile all Things to himself; by him I say, whether*

whether they be Things in Earth, or Things in Heaven. The ſame Blood which is *Redemption* to them that dwell on Earth, is *Confirmation* to them that dwell in Heaven. Before the Efficacy of this Blood, Guilt vaniſhes, and ſhrinks away as the Shadows before the glorious Sun. Every Drop of it hath a Voice, and ſpeaks to the Soul that ſits trembling under its Guilt, better Things than the Blood of *Abel*, *Heb.* 12. 24. It ſprinkles us from an evil, (*i. e.*) an unquiet, and accuſing Conſcience, *Heb.* 10. 22. For having enough in it to ſatisfie God, it muſt needs have enough in it to ſatisfie Conſcience.

Conſcience can demand no more for its Satisfaction, nor will it take leſs than God demands for his Satisfaction. And in this Blood is enough to give both Satisfaction.

Secondly, As there is ſufficient Efficacy in this Blood to expiate the greateſt Guilt; ſo it's as manifeſt, that the Vertue and Efficacy of it, is intended and deſigned by *God* for the Uſe of believing Sinners. Such Blood as this was ſhed without doubt for ſome weighty End, that ſome might be the better for it. Who they are for whom it is intended, is plain enough from *Acts* 13. 32. *And by him all that believe, are juſtified from all Things, from which they could not be juſtified by the Law of* Moſes.

That the Remiſſion of the Sins of Believers was the great Thing deſigned in the pouring out of this precious Blood of Chriſt, appears from all the Sacrifices that figured it to the ancient Church. The Shedding of that typical Blood, ſpake a Deſign of Pardon. And the putting of their Hands upon the Head of the Sacrifice, ſpake the Way and Method of believing, by which that Blood was then applied to them in that Way; and is ſtill applied to us in a more excellent Way. Had no Pardon been intended, no Sacrifices had been appointed.

Moreover, let it be conſidered, this Blood of the Croſs is the Blood of a Surety; that came under the ſame Obligations with us, and in our Name or Stead ſhed it: And ſo of courſe frees and diſcharges the principal Offender, or Debtor, *Heb.* 7. 22. Can God exact Satisfaction from the Blood and Death of his own Son, the Surety of Believers, and yet ſtill demand it from Believers? It cannot be. *Who* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *ſhall lay any Thing to the Charge of God's elect? It is God that juſtifieth. Who ſhall condemn? It is Chriſt that died*, Rom. 8. 33, 34. And why are Faith and Repentance preſcribed as the *Means* of Pardon? Why doth God every where in his Word, call upon Sinners to repent, and believe in this Blood? Encouraging them ſo to do, by ſo many precious Promiſes of Remiſſion; and declaring the inevitable and eternal Ruin of all impenitent and unbelieving ones, who deſpiſe and reject this Blood? What, I ſay, doth all this ſpeak, but the Poſſibility of a Pardon for the greateſt of Sinners; and the Certainty of a free, full, and final Pardon for all believing Sinners? O what a joyful Sound is this! What raviſhing Voices of Peace, Pardon, Grace, and Acceptance come to our Ears from the Blood of the Croſs!

The greateſt Guilt that ever was contracted upon a trembling ſhaking Conſcience, can ſtand before the Efficacy of the Blood of Chriſt no more, than the Sinner himſelf can ſtand before the Juſtice of the Lord with all the Guilt upon him.

Reader, The Word aſſures thee, whatever thou haſt been, or art, that Sins of as deep a Die as thine, have been waſh'd away in this Blood. *I was a Blaſphemer, a Perſecutor, Injurious; but I obtained Mercy*, ſaith *Paul*, 1 Tim. 1. 13. But it may be thou wilt object; This was a rare and ſingular Inſtance, and it's a great Queſtion whether any other Sinner ſhall find the like Grace that he did. No Queſtion of it at all, if you believe in Chriſt, as he did: For he tells us, *Ver.* 16. *For this Cauſe I obtained Mercy, that in me firſt, Jeſus Chriſt might ſhew forth all Long-ſuffering, for a Pattern to them which ſhould hereafter believe on him to Life everlaſting.* So that upon the ſame Grounds he obtained Mercy, you may obtain it alſo.

Thoſe very Men who had a Hand in the ſhedding of Chriſt's Blood, had the Benefit of that Blood afterwards pardoning them, *Acts* 2. 36. There is nothing but Unbelief and Impenitency of Heart, bars thy Soul from the Bleſſings of this Blood.

Inference 2. Did Chriſt die the curſed Death of the Croſs for Believers, *then though there be much of Pain, there is nothing of Curſe in the Death of the Saints.* It ſtill wears its Dart, by which it ſtrikes; but hath loſt its Sting, by which it hurts and deſtroys. A Serpent that hath no Sting, may hiſs and affright, but we may take him in our Hand without danger. Death poured out all its Poiſon, and loſt its Sting in Chriſt's Side, when he became a Curſe for us.

But what ſpeak I of the Innocency and Harmleſneſs of Death to Believers? It is certainly their Friend, and great Benefactor. As there is no Curſe, ſo there are many Bleſſings in it. *Death is yours*, 1 Cor. 3. 22. Yours as a ſpecial Priviledge and Favour. Chriſt hath not only conquered it, but is more than a Conqueror; for he hath made it beneficial, and very ſerviceable to the Saints. When Chriſt was nailed to the Tree, then he ſaid as it were to Death which came to grapple with him there, *O Death, I will be thy Plague; O Grave, I will be thy Deſtruction:* And ſo he was; for he ſwallowed up Death in Victory, ſpoiled it of its Power. So that it drives but a poor Trade now among Believers, frighting ſome weak ones among them, though it cannot hurt them at all.

Inference 3. If Chriſt died the curſed Death of the Croſs for us, *how cheerfully ſhould we ſubmit to, and bear any Croſs for Jeſus Chriſt?* He had his Croſs, and we have ours; but what Feathers are ours, compared with his? His Croſs was a heavy Croſs indeed, yet how patiently and meekly did he ſupport it! *He endured his Croſs*, we cannot endure or bear ours, though they be not to be named with his. Three Things would marvellouſly ſtrengthen us to bear the Croſs of Chriſt, and bring up a good Report upon it in the World.

Omnis Chriſtianus eſt crucianus.

Firſt, That we ſhall carry it but a little Way. *Secondly*, Chriſt bears the heavieſt End of it. *Thirdly*, Innumerable Bleſſings and Mercies grow upon the Croſs of Chriſt.

Firſt, We ſhall bear it but a little Way. It ſhould be enough to me (ſaith a holy one) that Chriſt will have Joy and Sorrow Halfers of the Life of the Saints. And that each of them ſhould have a Share of our Days, as the Night and Day are kindly Partners of Time, and take it up betwixt them. But if Sorrow be the greedieſt Halfer of our Days here, I know Joy's Day ſhall dawn, and do more than recompence all our ſad Hours.

If twenty Croſſes be written for you in God's Book, they will come at laſt to nineteen, and after that to nothing. Put your Head betwixt Chriſt's Breaſts for evermore, and his own ſoft Hand ſhall dry your Face, and wipe away your Tears.

Let my Lord Jeſus (ſince he will do ſo) weave my bit-and-ſpan Length of Time White and Black; Well and Woe. —— Let the Roſe be Neighbour with the Thorn. —— 'When we are over the Water, Chriſt 'ſhall cry, down Croſſes and up Heaven for ever-'more; down Hell, and down Death, and down 'Sin, and down Sorrow; and up Glory, up Life, 'up

'up Joy for evermore. 'Tis true, Chriſt and his 'Croſs are not ſeparable in this Life; howbeit, Chriſt 'and his Croſs part at Heaven's Door: For there is 'no Houſe-room for Croſſes in Heaven. One Tear, 'one Sigh, one ſad Heart, one Fear, one Loſs, one 'Thought of Trouble cannot find lodging there —.' Sorrow and the Saints are not married together; or ſuppoſe it was ſo, Heaven ſhall make a Divorce. Life is but ſhort, and therefore Croſſes cannot be long. Our Sufferings are but for a While, 1 *Pet.* 5. 10. They are but the Sufferings of the preſent Time, *Rom.* 8. 18.

Secondly, As we ſhall carry the Croſs of Chriſt but a little Way, ſo Chriſt himſelf bears the heavieſt End of it. And as one happily expreſſes, he ſaith of their Croſſes, *half mine*. He divideth Sufferings with them, and takes the largeſt Share to himſelf. 'O how ſweet 'a Sight (ſaith one ſweetly) is it to ſee a Croſs be-'twixt Chriſt and us. To hear our Redeemer ſay, at 'every Sigh, at every Blow, and every Loſs of a Be-'liever, *half mine*. For they are called the Sufferings 'of Chriſt, and the Reproach of Chriſt, *Col.* 2. 24. '*Heb.* 11. 26. As when Two are Partners and Ow-'ners of a Ship, half of the Gain and half of the Loſs 'belongeth to either of the two. So Chriſt in our 'Sufferings, is half Gainer and half Loſer with us: 'Yea, the heavieſt End of the black Tree lyeth on 'your Lord. It falleth firſt upon him, and but re-'bounds from him upon you:' *The Reproaches of them that reproached thee, are fallen upon me*, Pſalm 69. 9. Nay, to ſpeak as the Thing is, Chriſt doth not only bear half, or the better Part, but the Whole of our Croſs and Burden. Yea, he bears all, and more than all; for he bears us and our Burden too, or elſe we ſhould quickly ſink, and faint under it.

Thirdly, As we have not far to carry it, and Chriſt carries the heavieſt Part; yea, all the Burden for us; yea, us and our Burden too: So in the laſt Place, it's reviving to think what an innumerable Multitude of Bleſſings and Mercies are the Fruit and Off-ſpring of a ſanctified Croſs. Since that Tree was ſo richly watered with the Blood of Chriſt; what Store of Choice, and rich Fruits doth it bear to Believers?

Our Sufferings (ſaith one) are waſhed in the Blood of Chriſt, as well as our Souls. 'For Chriſt's Me-'rits bought a Bleſſing to the Croſſes of the Sons of 'God. Our Troubles owe us a free Paſſage through 'him. Devils, and Men, and Croſſes are our Deb-'tors; and Death, and all Storms are our Debtors, 'to blow our poor toſſed Bark over the Water Fraight-'free: and to ſet the Travellers in their own known 'Ground. Therefore we ſhall die, and yet live —. 'I know no Man hath a velvet Croſs, but the Croſs 'is made of what God will have it; but verily, how-'beit, it be no warrantable Market to buy a Croſs, 'yet I dare not ſay, O that I had Liberty to ſell 'Chriſt's Croſs, leſt therewith alſo I ſhould ſell Joy, 'Comfort, Senſe of Love, Patience, and the kind 'Viſits of a Bridegroom. —— I have but ſmall 'Experience of Sufferings for Chriſt, but let my 'Judge and Witneſs in Heaven, lay my Soul in the 'Ballance of Juſtice; if I find not a young Heaven, 'and a little Paradiſe of glorious Comforts, and Soul 'delighting Love Kiſſes of Chriſt, in ſuffering for 'him and his Truth. —— My Priſon is my Pa-'lace, my Sorrow is with Child of Joy, My Loſſes 'are rich Loſſes, my Pain eaſie Pain, my heavy 'Days are holy Days, and happy Days. I may tell 'a new Tale of Chriſt to my Friends. —— O what 'owe I to the File, and to the Hammer, and to the 'Furnace of my Lord Jeſus! who hath now let me 'ſee how good the Wheat of Chriſt is, that goes 'through his Mill, and his Oven, to be made Bread 'for his own Table. Grace tried, is better than 'Grace, and more than Grace. It's Glory in the 'Infancy.

'Who knows the Truth of Grace without a Trial? '—— O how little getteth Chriſt of us but what he 'winneth (to ſpeak ſo) with much Toil and Pains? 'And how ſoon would Faith freeze without a Croſs? 'Bear your Croſs therefore with Joy.'

Inference 4. Did Chriſt die the Death, yea, the worſt of Deaths for us? Then it follows, That *our Mercies are brought forth with great Difficulty; and that which is ſweet to us in the Fruition, was coſtly and hard to Chriſt in the Acquiſition.* Surely upon every Mercy we have this Motto written, *The Price of Blood*, Col. 1. 14. *In whom we have Redemption thro' his Blood*: Upon which a late neat Writer delivers himſelf thus. 'The Way of Grace is here conſider-'able; Life comes through Death; God comes in 'Chriſt; and Chriſt comes in Blood: The choiceſt 'Mercies come through the greateſt Miſeries; prime 'Favours come ſwiming in Blood to us. Through a 'Red Sea, *Iſrael* came to *Canaan*. Many a Man loſt 'his Life, and much Blood ſhed; the very Land flow-'ing with Milk and Honey, was firſt made to flow 'with Blood, 'ere *Iſrael* could inherit the Promiſe. 'Seven Nations were deſtroyed 'ere the Land of Ca-'naan was divided to the *Iſraelites*, Acts 13. 19. — 'Sin makes Mercy ſo deadly hard to bring forth. To 'chriſten every precious Child, every *Benjamin*, *Be-'noni*, every Son of God's Right-hand, a Son of Sor-'row and Death to her that brings him forth. *Ad-'dam*'s Sweets had no Bitter till he tranſgreſſed God's 'Will: One Mercy did not die to bring forth ano-'ther, till he died. But oh! how ſhould this raiſe 'the Value of our Mercies! What, the Price of Blood, 'the Price of precious Blood, the Blood of the Croſs! 'O what an Eſteem ſhould this raiſe!

'Things (as the ſame ingenious Author adds) are 'prized rather as they come, than as they are. Far 'fetch'd and dear bought makes all the Price, and 'gives all the Worth with us weak Creatures. Up-'on this Ground the Scripture, when it ſpeaks of our 'great Fortune, tells the great Price it coſt, as eying 'our Weakneſs, who look more at what Things coſt, 'than at what they are. And as knowing if any 'Thing will take with us, this will, *To him that lo-'ved us, and waſhed us from our Sins in his own Blood*, 'Rev. 1. 5.

'Man is a legal Creature, and looks much at what 'is given for a Thing. What did this coſt? Why, 'it coſt Chriſt's own Blood. Colour is more than 'the Cloth with us, and ſcarlet Colour is a general 'taking Colour with us: And therefore is Chriſt's 'Garment dipt in Blood, and he admired in this Ha-'bit.' *Who is this that cometh from* Edom, *with Gar-ments dyed Red from* Bozra?

Beware then you abuſe not any of the Mercies that Chriſt brought forth with ſo many bitter Pangs and Throws. And let all this endear Chriſt more than ever to you, and make you in a deep Senſe of his Grace and Love, to ſay,

Thanks be to God for Jeſus Chriſt.

SER-

SERMON XXVII.

Opens and improves that signal Providence which directed and ordered the Title affixed to the Cross of Christ.

LUKE XXIII. 38.

And a Superscription also was written over him, in Letters of Greek, *and* Latin, *and* Hebrew ; *This is the King of the* Jews.

BEFORE I pass on to the Manner of Christ's Death, I shall consider the Title affixed to the Cross; in which very much of the Wisdom of Providence was discovered. It was the Manner of the *Romans*, that the Equity of their Proceedings might the more clearly appear to the People, when they crucified any Man, to publish the Cause of his Death in a Table written in Capital Letters, and placed over the Head of the crucified. And that there might be at least a Shew and Face of Justice in Christ's Death, he also shall have his Title or Superscription.

The worst and most unrighteous Actions labour to cover and shroud themselves under Pretensions of Equity. Sin is so shameful a Thing, that it cares not to own its Name. Christ shall have a Table written for him also. This Writing one Evangelist calls the *Accusation*, Matth. 27. 37. Another calls it the *Title*, John 19. 19. Another the *Inscription* or *Superscription*, in the Text. And another the *Superscription of his Accusation*, Mark 15. 26. In short, it was a fair legible Writing, intended to express the Fact or Crime, for which the Person died.

This was their usual Manner, though sometimes we find it was published by the Voice of the Common Cryer. As in the Case of *Attalus* the Martyr, who was led about the Amphitheater, one proclaiming before him, *This is* Attalus *the Christian.* But it was customary and usual to express the Crime in a written Table, as the Text expresses it. Wherein these three Things offer themselves to your Consideration.

Euseb. Eccles. Hist. *lib.* 5. *c.* 1.

First, The Character or Description of Christ contained in that Writing. And he is described by his kingly Dignity: *This is the King of the* Jews. That very Office which but a little before they had reproached and derided, bowing the Knee to him in mockery, saying, *Hail King of the Jews*; the Providence of God so orders it, that therein he shall be vindicated and honoured. *This is the King of the Jews:* Or, as the other Evangelists compleat it, *This is Jesus of* Nazareth *the King of the* Jews.

Integer titulus fuit, *Hic Jesus Nazarenus, Rex Judæorum.* Par.

Secondly, The Person that drew his Character or Title. It was *Pilate*; he that but now condemned him: He that was his *Judge*, shall be his *Herald*, to proclaim his Glory. For the Title is honourable. Surely this was not from himself, for he was Christ's Enemy; but rather than Christ should want a Tongue to clear him, the Tongue of an Enemy shall do it.

Thirdly, The Time when this Honour was done him: It was when he was at the lowest Ebb of his Glory; when Shame and Reproach were heaped on him by all Hands. When all the Disciples had forsaken him, and were fled. Not one left to proclaim his Innocency or speak a Word in his Vindication. Then doth the Providence of God as strangely, as powerfully over-rule the Heart and Pen of *Pilate*, to draw this Title for him, and affix it to his Cross. Surely we must look higher than *Pilate* in this Thing, and see how Providence serves it self by the Hands of Christ's Adversaries. *Pilate* writes in Honour of Christ, and stiffly defends it too. Hence our Observation is,

Titulus pro more forsan fuit impositus, sed altius assurgendum est; ad Dei concilium, qui testimonio hoc publico, Christum regem Ecclesiæ proclamari Pilati scripturâ voluit. *Par.*

Doct. 1. *That the Dignity of Christ was openly proclaimed, and defended by an Enemy; and that in the Time of his greatest Reproaches and Sufferings.*

To open this Mystery of Providence to you, that you may not stand idly gazing upon Christ's Title, as many then did; we must, *First*, Consider the Nature and Quality of this Title. *Secondly*, What Hand the Providence of God had in this Matter. *Thirdly*, And then draw forth the proper Uses and Improvements of it.

First, To open the Nature and Quality of Christ's Title or Inscription; let it be thoroughly considered, and we shall find,

First, That it was an *extraordinary* Title, varying from all Examples of that kind; and directly crossing the main Design and End of their own Custom. For, as I hinted before, the End of it was to clear the Equity of their Proceedings, and shew the People how justly they suffered those Punishments inflicted on them for such Crimes. But lo, here is a Title expressing no Crime at all, and so vindicating Christ's Innocency. This some of them perceived, and moved *Pilate* to change it, not this *is*, but this is he that said, *I am the King of the Jews.* In that, as they conceived, lay his Crime. O how strange and wonderful a Thing was this! But what shall we say! it was a Day of Wonders and extraordinary Things. As there was never such a Person crucified before, so there never was such a Title affixed to the Cross before.

Hoc extraordinarium est, quod sine ignominiæ titulus apponitur. *Cal.*

Secondly, As it was an extraordinary, so it was a publick Title, both written and published with the greatest Advantages of spreading it self far and near, among all People, that could be, for it was written in three Languages, and those most

Tribus linguis toto orbe tunc vulgatissimis; scribi voluit; ut ab omnibus legi, & intelligi potuit. *Pareus.*

known in the World at that time. The *Greek* Tongue was then known in moſt Parts of the World. The *Hebrew* was the *Jews* native Language. And the *Latin* the Language of the *Gentiles*. So that it being written both in *Hebrew*, *Greek*, and *Latin*, it was eaſie to be underſtood both by *Jews* and *Gentiles*.

And indeed unto this the Providence of God had a ſpecial Eye, to make it notorious and evident to all the World; for even ſo all Things deſign'd for publick View, and Knowledge were written. *Joſephus* tells us of certain Pillars, on which was engraven in Letters of *Greek*, and *Latin*, *It is a Wickedneſs for Strangers to enter into the holy Place*. So the Soldiers of *Gordian*, the Third Emperor, when he was ſlain upon the Borders of *Perſia*, they raiſed a Monument for him, and engraved his Memorial upon it, in *Greek*, *Latin*, *Perſick*, *Judaick*, and *Egyptick* Letters, that all People might read the ſame. And as it was written in Three learned Languages, ſo it was expoſed to view in a publick Place; and at that Time, when Multitudes of Strangers as well as *Jews* were at *Jeruſalem*; it was at the Time of the Paſſover; ſo that all things concurred to ſpread and divulge the Innocency of Chriſt vindicated in this Title.

In locum ſanctum ingredi alienigenis nefas eſt.

Thirdly, As it was a publick, ſo it was an honourable Title. Such was the Nature of it, ſaith *Bucer*; that in the midſt of Death Chriſt began to triumph by it. And by Reaſon thereof the Croſs began to change its own Nature, and inſtead of a Rack, or Engine of Torture, it became a Throne of Majeſty. Yea, it might be called now as the Church it ſelf is, *The Pillar and Ground of Truth*; for it held out much of the Goſpel, much of the Glory of Chriſt; as that Pillar doth, to which a royal Proclamation is affixed.

Bucer. *in Loc.*

Fourthly, It was a *vindicating* Title: It clear'd up the Honour, Dignity, and Innocency of Chriſt, againſt all the falſe Imputations, Calumnies, and Blaſphemies, which were caſt upon him before, by the wicked Tongues both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*.

They had called him a Deceiver, an Uſurper, a Blaſphemer, they rent their Cloaths in token of their Deteſtation of his Blaſphemy; becauſe he made himſelf the Son of God, and King of *Iſrael*. But know in this they acknowledged him to be both Lord and Saviour. Not a mock King, as they had made him before. So that herein the Honour of Chriſt was fully vindicated.

Fifthly, Moreover it was a *predicting* and *preſaging* Title. Evidently foreſhewing the Propagation of Chriſt's Kingdom, and the ſpreading of his Name and Glory among all Kindreds, Nations, Tongues, and Languages. As Chriſt hath Right to enter into all the Kingdoms of the Earth by his Goſpel, and ſet up his Throne in every Nation: So it was preſaged by this Title, that he ſhould do ſo. And that both *Hebrews*, *Greeks*, and *Latins*, ſhould be called to the Knowledge of him. Nor is it a Wonder that this ſhould be predicted by wicked *Pilate*, when *Caiaphas* himſelf, a Man every way as wicked as he, had propheſied to the ſame Purpoſe, *John* 11. 51. 52. For being High Prieſt that Year, he propheſied, That *Jeſus ſhould die for that Nation, and not for that Nation only, but that alſo he ſhould gather together in one, the Children of God that were ſcattered abroad.* Yea, many have propheſied in Chriſt's Name, who for all that ſhall never be owned by him, *Matth.* 7. 22.

Tribus linguis ſcribi voluit ut præſagium hoc eſſet, futuræ vocationis omnium non modo Hebræorum, ſed & Græcorum & Latinorum ad Chriſti regnum. *Par.*

Sixthly, And Laſtly, It was an immutable Title. The *Jews* endeavoured, but could not perſuade *Pilate* to alter it. To all their Importunities he returns this reſolute Anſwer, *What I have written I have written*; as if he ſhould ſay, urge me no more, I have written his Title, I cannot, I will not alter a Letter, a Point thereof. Surely the Conſtancy of *Pilate* at this Time, can be attributed to nothing but Divine ſpecial Providence. Moſt wonderful! that he, who before was as unconſtant as a Reed ſhaken by the Wind, is now as fixed as a Pillar of Braſs.

Hæc *Pilati* conſtantia divinæ providentiæ tribuenda eſt. *Calv.*

And yet more wonderful, that he ſhould write down that very Particular in the Title of Chriſt, *This is the King of the Jews*, which was the very Thing that ſo ſcared him but a little before, and was the very Conſideration that moved him to give Sentence. What was now become of the Fear of *Cæſar*? that *Pilate* dares to be Chriſt's Herald, and publickly to proclaim him, *The King of the Jews*. This was the Title.

Secondly, We ſhall next enquire what Hand the Divine Providence had in this Buſineſs.

And indeed, the Providence of God in this Hour, acted glorioufly, and wonderfully, theſe five Ways.

Firſt, In over-ruling the Heart and Hand of *Pilate* in the Draught and Stile of it, and that contrary to his own Inclination. I doubt not, but *Pilate* himſelf was ignorant of, and far enough from deſigning that which the Wiſdom of Providence aimed at in this Matter. He was a wicked Man, had no Love to Chriſt. He had given Sentence of Death againſt him; yet this is he that proclaimed him to be, *Jeſus, King of the Jews*. It ſo over-ruled his Pen, that he could not write what was in his own Heart and Intention, but the quite contrary; even a fair and publick Teſtimony to the Kingly Office of the Son of God, *This is the King of the Jews*.

Longe altius proſpexit Dei providentia, quam *Pilati* ſtylum gubernavit. *Calv.*

Secondly, Herein the Wiſdom of Providence was glorioufly diſplayed, in applying a preſent, proper, publick Remedy to the Reproaches and Blaſphemies which Chriſt had then newly received in his Name and Honour. The Superſtitious *Jews* wound him, and Heathen *Pilate* prepares a Plaiſter to heal him: They reproach, he vindicates; they throw the Dirt, he waſhes it off. O, the profound and inſcrutable Wiſdom of Providence!

Thirdly, Moreover Providence eminently appear'd at this Time, in keeping ſo timorous a Perſon, a Man of ſo baſe a Spirit, that would not ſtick at any Thing to pleaſe the People, from receding, or giving Ground in the leaſt to their Importunities. Is *Pilate* become a Man of ſuch Reſolutiou and Conſtancy? Whence is this? But from the God of the Spirits of all Fleſh, who now flowed in ſo powerfully upon his Spirit, that he could not chuſe but write; and when he had written, had no more Power to alter what he had written, than he had to refuſe to write it.

Fourthly, Herein alſo much of the Wiſdom of Providence appear'd, in caſting the Ignominy of the Death of Chriſt upon thoſe very Men who ought to bear it. *Pilate* was moved by Divine Inſtinct, at once to clear Chriſt, and accuſe them. For it is as if he had ſaid, you have moved me to crucifie your King, I have crucified him, and now let the Ignominy of his Death reſt upon you Heads who have extorted this from me. He is righteous, the Crime is not his but yours.

Fifthly, and laſtly, The Providence of God wonderfully diſcover'd it ſelf, (as before was noted) in fixing this Title to the Croſs of Chriſt, when there was ſo great a Confluence of all Sorts of People, to take notice of

of it. So that it could never have been more advantagiously publiſhed, than it was at this Time. So that we may ſay, how wonderful are the Works of God! His Ways are in the Sea, his Paths in the great Deeps; his Footſteps are not known: His Providence hath a Proſpect beyond the Underſtandings of all Creatures.

Inference 1. *Hence it follows, that the Providence of our God can, and often doth over-rule the Counſels and Actions of the worſt of Men to his own Glory.*

It can ſerve it ſelf by them that oppoſe it, and bring about the Glory and Honour of Chriſt, by thoſe very Men, and Means, which are deſign'd to lay it in the Duſt. *Surely the Wrath of Man ſhall praiſe thee*, Pſalm 76. 13. The *Jews* thought when they crowned Chriſt with Thorns, bowed the Knee, and mocked him, led him to *Golgotha* and crucified him; that now they had utterly deſpoiled him of all his Kingly Dignities: And yet even there, he is proclaimed a King. Thus the Diſperſion of the *Jews* upon the Death of *Stephen*, ſpread the Goſpel far and near, *For they went every where preaching the Word*, Acts 8. 4. Thus *Paul's* bonds for the Goſpel, fell out to the Furtherance of the Goſpel, *Phil.* 1. 12. O, the Depth of Divine Wiſdom to propagate, and eſtabliſh the Intereſt of Jeſus Chriſt, by thoſe very Means that ſeem to import its Deſtruction: That extracts a Medicine out of Poiſon! How great a Support ſhould this be to the Faith of God's People! When all Things ſeem to run croſs to their Hopes and Happineſs! *Let* Iſrael *therefore hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is Mercy, and with him is plenteous Redemption*, Pſalm 130. 7. (*i. e.*) He is never at a loſs for Means, to promote and ſerve his own Ends.

Inference 2. Hence likewiſe it follows, *That the greateſt Services to Chriſt performed to Chriſt accidentally, and undeſignedly; ſhall never be accepted nor rewarded of God. Pilate* did Chriſt an eminent piece of Service. He did that for Chriſt, that not one of his own Diſciples at that Time durſt do; and yet this Service was not accepted of God, becauſe he did it not deſignedly for his Glory, but from the meer over-rulings of Providence.

If there be firſt a willing Mind, it is accepted, according to what a Man hath, ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 8. 12. The Eye of God is firſt and mainly upon the Will; if that be ſincere and right for God, ſmall Things will be accepted; and if not, the greateſt ſhall be abhorred. So 1 *Cor.* 9. 17. If I do this Thing (*i. e.*) (preach the Goſpel) willingly, I have a Reward; but if againſt my Will, a Diſpenſation is committed to me, *q. d.* If I upon pure Principles of Faith and Love, from my Heart, deſigning the Glory of God, and delighting to promote it by my Miniſtry, do chearfully and willingly apply my ſelf to the Preaching of the Goſpel, I ſhall have Acceptance and Reward with God: But if my Work be a Burden to me, and the Service of God eſteemed as a Bondage, why then Providence may uſe me for the diſpenſing of the Goſpel to others, but I my ſelf ſhall loſe both Reward and Comfort. As it doth not excuſe my Sin, that God can bring Glory to himſelf out of it: So neither doth it juſtifie an Action that God hath Praiſe and Honour accidentally by it. *Paul* knew that even the Strife and Envy in which ſome preached Chriſt, ſhould turn to his Salvation; and yet he was not at all beholding to them for promoting his Salvation that way. So *Pilate* here promotes the Honour of Jeſus Chriſt to whom he had no Love, and whoſe Glory he did not at all deſign in this Thing; and therefore hath neither Acceptance nor Reward with God.

O, therefore whatever you do for Chriſt, do it heartily, deſignedly, for his Glory. Of a ready and willing Mind. With pure and ſincere Aims at his Glory. For this is that the Lord more reſpects, than the greateſt Services by accident.

Inference 3. Would not *Pilate* recede from what he had written on Chriſt's behalf, *How ſhameful a thing is it for Chriſtians to retract what they have ſaid or done on Chriſt's behalf!* When *Pilate* had aſſerted him to be King of the *Jews*, he maintains his Aſſertion and all the Importunity of Chriſt's Enemies ſhall not move him an Hair's breadth from it. *What I have written, I have written*, q. d. I have ſaid it, and I will not revoke it. Did *Pilate* ſay, *What I have written, I have written?* And ſhall not we ſay, What we have believed, we have believed? And what we have profeſſed, we have profeſſed. What we have engaged to Chriſt, we have engaged. We will ſtand to what we have done for him; we will never recant our former Ownings of, and Appearances for Chriſt.

As God's Election, ſo your Profeſſion muſt be irrevocable. O let him that is holy be holy ſtill. That Counſel given by a reverend Divine in this Caſe, is both ſafe and good. 'Be ſure (ſaith he) you 'ſtand on good Ground, and then reſolve to ſtand 'your Ground againſt all the World. Follow God, 'and fear not Men. Art thou Godly? Repent not 'whatſoever thy Religion coſt thee. Let Sinners 'repent, but let not Saints repent. Let Saints re'pent of their Faults, but not of their Faith: Of 'their Iniquities, but not of their Righteouſneſs. 'Repent not of your Righteouſneſs, leſt you after'ward repent of your Repentance. —— Repent 'not of your Zeal, or your Forwardneſs, or Activi'ty in the holy Ways of the Lord. —— Wiſh not 'your ſelves a Step farther back, or a Cubit lower 'in your Stature, in the Grace of God. Wiſh not 'any Thing undone, concerning which God will 'ſay, well done.'

In *Galen's* Time it was a proverbial Expreſſion, when any one would ſhew the Impoſſibility of a Thing; you may as ſoon turn a Chriſtian from Chriſt as do it.

A true Heart-choice of Chriſt is without Reſerves, and what is without Reſerves, will be without Repentance. There is a Stiffneſs and Stoutneſs of Spirit, which is our Sin. But this is our Glory, in the Matters of God, ſaid *Luther*, I aſſume this Title, *Cedo nulli*, I yield to none: If ye be hot and cold, off and on; profeſs, and retract your Profeſſion. He that condemned Chriſt with his Lips, will condemn you by his Example. Reſolute *Pilate* ſhall be your Judge.

Inference 4. Did *Pilate* affix ſuch an honourable vindicating Title to the Croſs? *Then the Croſs of Chriſt is a dignified Croſs.* Then the Croſs and Sufferings of Chriſt are attended with Glory and Honour. Remember when your Hearts begin to ſtartle at the Sufferings and Reproaches of Chriſt, there is an honourable Title upon the Croſs of Chriſt. And as it was upon his, ſo it will be upon your Croſs alſo, if ye ſuffer for Chriſt. *Moſes* ſaw it, which made him eſteem the very Reproaches of Chriſt, above all the Treaſures of *Egypt*, Heb. 11. 26. How did the Martyrs Glory in their Suffering for Chriſt! Calling their Chains of Iron, Chains of Gold, and their Manacles, Bracelets.

I remember it's ſtoried of *Ludovicus Marſacus* a Knight of *France*, that when he with divers other Chriſtians of an inferiour Rank and Degree in the World, being condemned to die for Religion, and the Jaylor had bound them with Chains, but

Cur me non quoque torque donas, & illuſtris illius ordinis militem non creas? *Thuan. Hiſt.*

but did not bind him, being a more honourable Person than the reſt: He was offended greatly by that Omiſſion, and ſaid, why do not you Honour me with a Chain for Chriſt alſo, and create me a Knight of that illuſtrious Order.

To you (ſaith the Apoſtle) *it's given in the behalf of Chriſt, not only to believe, but alſo to ſuffer for his ſake,* Phil. 1. 29. There is a twofold Honour attending the Croſs of Chriſt: One in the very Sufferings themſelves; another, as the Reward and Fruit of them. To be called out to ſuffer for Chriſt, is a great Honour. Yea, an Honour peculiar to the Saints. The Damned ſuffer from Chriſt, the Wicked ſuffer for their Sins. The Angels glorifie Chriſt by their active, but not by their paſſive Obedience. This is reſerved as a ſpecial Honour for Saints.

And as there is a greet deal of Honour in being called forth on Chriſt's Account; ſo Chriſt will confer ſpecial Honour upon his ſuffering Saints, in the Day of their Reward, *Matth.* 10. 32. *He that confeſſes me before Men, him will I confeſs alſo before my Father which is in Heaven.* O Sirs, one of theſe Days the Lord will break out of Heaven, with a Shout, accompanied with Myriads of Angels, and Ten Thouſands of his Saints, thoſe gliſtering Courtiers of Heaven. The Heavens and Earth ſhall flame and melt before him. And it ſhall be very tempeſtous round about him; the Graves ſhall open, the Sea and Earth yield up their dead. You ſhall ſee him aſcending the awful Throne of Judgment, and all Fleſh gathered before his Face; even Multitudes, Multitudes that no Man can number. And then to be brought forth by Chriſt before that great Aſſembly of Angels and Saints; and there to have an honourable Mention and Remembrance made of your Labours, and Sufferings, your Pains, Patience, and Self-denial, of all your Sufferings, and Loſſes for Chriſt; and to hear from his Mouth, *Well done good and faithful Servant:* O what Honour is this! Yet this ſhall be done to the Man, that now chuſes Sufferings for Chriſt, rather than Sin: *That eſteems his Reproaches greater Riches, than the Treaſures of* Ægypt.

I tell you, it's an Honour the Angels have not. I make no doubt but they would be glad, (had they Bodies of Fleſh as we have) to lay their Necks on the Block for Chriſt. But this is the Saints peculiar Priviledge. The Apoſtles *went away from the Council rejoycing, that they were honoured to be diſhonoured for Chriſt:* Or as we tranſlate, *counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame for him,* Acts 5. *verſe* 41. Surely, if there be any *ſtigmata Laudis,* Marks of Honour, they are ſuch as we receive for Chriſt's ſake. If there be any Shame that hath Glory in it, it is the Reproach of Chriſt, and the Shame you ſuffer for his Name.

Inference 5. Did *Pilate* ſo ſtiffly aſſert and defend the Honour of Chriſt, *What doubt can then be made of the Succeſs of Chriſt's Intereſt, and the Proſperity of his Cauſe; when the very Enemies thereof are made to ſerve it?*

Rather than Chriſt ſhall want Honour, *Pilate* the Man that condemned him, ſhall do him Honour. And as it fared with his *Perſon,* juſt ſo with his *Intereſt* alſo. How often have the People of God received choice Mercies, from the Hands of their Enemies? *Rev.* 12. 17. *The Earth helped the Woman, (i. e.)* wicked Men did the Church ſervice. So that this may ſingularly relieve us againſt all our Deſpondencies and Fears of the Miſcarriage of the Intereſt of Chriſt.

That People can never be ruined, who thrive by their Loſſes; Conquer by being conquered; Multiply by being diminiſhed. Whoſe worſt Enemies are made to do that for them, which Friends cannot or dare not do. See you a Heathen *Pilate* proclaiming the Honour and Innocency of Chriſt; God will not want Inſtruments to honour Chriſt by. If others cannot, his very Enemies ſhall.

Inference 6. Did *Pilate* vindicate Chriſt in drawing up ſuch a Title to be affixed to his Croſs, then hence it follows, *That God will ſooner or later, clear up the Innocency and Integrity of his People, who commit their Cauſe to him.* Chriſt's Name was clouded with many Reproaches. Wounded through and through by the blaſphemous Tongues of his malicious Enemies. He committed himſelf to him that judgeth righteouſly, 1 *Pet.* 2. 23. and ſee how ſoon God vindicates him. That's ſweet and ſeaſonable Counſel for us, when our Names are concluded with unjuſt Cenſures, *Pſalm* 37. 5, 6. *Commit thy way unto the Lord; truſt alſo in him, and he ſhall bring it to paſs. He ſhall bring forth thy Righteouſneſs as the Light, and thy Judgment as the noon Day. Joſeph* was accuſed of Incontinency; *David* of Treaſon; *Daniel* of Diſobedience; *Elijah* of Troubling *Iſrael*; *Jeremiah* of Revolting; *Amos* of Preaching againſt the King; the *Apoſtles* of Sedition, Rebellion and Alteration of Laws; Chriſt himſelf of Gluttony, Sorcery, Blaſphemy, Sedition: But how did all theſe honourable Names wade out of their Reproaches, as the Sun out of a Cloud! God clear'd up their Honour for them even in this World. Slanders, ſaith one, are but as Soap, which though it ſoils and daubs for the preſent, yet it helps to make the Garment more clean and ſhining. When Hair is ſhaven, it comes the thicker, and with a new Increaſe. So when the Razor of Cenſure hath (ſaith one) made your Heads bare, and brought on the Baldneſs of Reproach, be not diſcouraged, God hath a Time to bring forth your Righteouſneſs as the Light, by an apparent Conviction to dazle and diſcourage your Adverſaries.

Mant. in Jam. *p.* 227.

The World was well changed, when *Conſtantine* kiſſed the Hollow of *Paphnutius* Eye, which was ere while put out for Chriſt. Scorn and Reproach is but a little Cloud, that is ſoon blown over. But ſuppoſe ye ſhould not be vindicated in this World; but die under a Cloud upon your Names; Be ſure God will clear it up, and that to Purpoſe in that great Day. Then ſhall the Righteous (even in this Reſpect) ſhine forth as the Sun, in the Kingdom of their Father. Then every detracting Mouth ſhall be ſtopped, and no more cruel Arrows of Reproach ſhot at the White of your Reputation.

Be patient therefore, my Brethren, unto the Coming of the Lord. *The Lord comes with Ten Thouſands of his Saints, to execute Judgment upon all; and to convince all that are ungodly, of all their ungodly Deeds, which they have ungodlily committed. And of all their hard Speeches which ungodly Sinners have ſpoken againſt him,* Jude 15. Then they ſhall retract their Cenſures, and alter their Opinions of the Saints. If Chriſt will be our *Compurgator,* we need not fear who are our Accuſers. If your Names for his ſake be caſt out as evil, and ſpurned in the Dirt; Chriſt will deliver it you again in that Day whiter than the Snow in *Salmon.*

Inference 7. Did *Pilate* give this Title to caſt the Reproach of his Death upon the *Jews,* and clear himſelf of it? *How natural is it to Men to transfer the Fault of their own Actions from themſelves to others?* For when he writes this is the King of the *Jews,* he wholly charges them with the Crime of crucifying their King: And it is as if he had ſaid; hereafter let the Blame and Fault of this Action lie wholly upon your own Heads, who have brought the Guilt of his Blood upon your ſelves and Children.

Quod voluiſtis ut Regem veſtrum crucifigerem, crucifixi: veſtra poſthac erit ignominia qui hoc a me extorſeritis. *Calv. ad* Mat. 27. 37.

I am

I am clear, you have extorted it from me. O here ſhall we find a Spirit ſo ingenuous, to take me to it ſelf the ſhame of its own Actions, and arge it ſelf freely with its own guilt? Indeed it's e property of renewed gracious Hearts to remem-r, confeſs, and freely bewail their own evils, to e glory of God: And that's a gracious Heart in-ed, which in this caſe judgeth, that the Glory which by Confeſſion goeth to the name of his God, is not ſo much glory loſt to his own Name, but it's the power of Grace moulding our proud Natures into another thing, that muſt bring them to this.

Nec enim pudet ſanctos viros, poſtquam renovata corda fuerint, per reſipiſcentiam. Lapſus ſui & dedecoris ad Dei gloriam meminiſſe. Nihil nobis decedit, quod redit in illius honorem. *Brightmanus in Cant.*

SERMON XXVIII.

Opens the manner of Chriſt's Death, in reſpect of the ſolitarineſs thereof.

ZECH. XIII. 7.

wake, O ſword againſt my ſhepherd, and againſt the man that is my fellow, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts; ſmite the ſhepherd, and the ſheep ſhall be ſcattered; and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.

IN the former Sermons, we have opened the nature and kind of the Death Chriſt died; even the curſed death of the Croſs. Wherein, nevertheleſs his innocency was vindicated, that honourable Title providentially affixed to Croſs. Method now requires that we take into nſideration the manner in which he endured the oſs, and that was *ſolitarily*, *meekly*, and *inſtruvely*.

His ſolitude in ſuffering is plainly expreſſed in is Scripture now before us, it cannot be doubted, t the Prophet in this place ſpeaks of Chriſt, if u conſider *Matth.* 26. 31. where you ſhall find eſe words applied to Chriſt by his own accombdation of them. *Then ſaid Jeſus unto them, all ye ll be offended becauſe of me this night, for it is writn, I will ſmite the Shepherd, and the Sheep ſhall be ttered.* Beſides the Title here given [God's Felw] is too big for any Creature in Heaven or Earth ſides Chriſt.

In theſe words we have four things particularly conſider. *Firſt*, The Commiſſion given to the ord by the Lord of Hoſts. *Secondly*, The Perſon ainſt whom it is commiſſionated. *Thirdly*, The ſmal effect of that ſtroke. *Fourthly*, and laſtly, he gracious mitigation of it.

Firſt, The Commiſſion given to the Sword by the rd of Hoſts, *Awake, O Sword and ſmite, ſaith the rd of Hoſts.* The Lord of Hoſts, at whoſe beck and mmand all the Creatures are. Who with a word of Mouth can open all the Armories in the World, d command what weapons and inſtruments of ith he pleaſeth, calls here for the Sword; not Rod, gently to chaſten; But the Sword to deoy. The Rod breaks no Bones, but the Sword ens the door to Death and Deſtruction. The okes and thruſts of the Sword are mortal: And bids it awake. It ſignifies both to rouze up one that awakes out of ſleep, and to rouſe or ake with triumph and rejoycing. So the ſame word is rendred, *Job* 31. 29. Yea, he commands it to awake and *ſmite*. And it is as if the Lord had ſaid, come forth of thy Scabbard, oh Sword of Juſtice, thou haſt been hid there a long time, and haſt as it were, been aſleep in thy Scabbard, now awake and glitter, thou ſhalt drink Royal Blood, ſuch as thou never ſhed'ſt before.

Evigilavit, ſuſcitat. *Buxtorf.*

Secondly, the Perſon againſt whom it is commiſſionated, *My Shepherd, and the man that is my fellow.* This Shepherd can be no other than Chriſt, who is often in Scripture ſtiled a Shepherd, yea, the chief Shepherd, the Prince of Paſtors. Who redeemed, feeds, guides, and preſerves the flock of God's Elect, 1 *Pet.* 5. 4. *John* 10. 11. This is he whom he alſo ſtiles *the Man his fellow.* Or his Neighbour, as ſome render it. And ſo Chriſt is, in reſpect of his equality and unity with the Father, both in Eſſence and Will. His next Neighbour. His other ſelf. You have the ſenſe of it in *Phil.* 2. 6. He was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God.

Paſtorum vocat Chriſtum, ἀρχιποίμενα, animarum noſtrarum. *D. Pareus.*

עמי רעי נעל נבר. Et ſuper virum proximum meum. *Mont.*

Againſt Chriſt his Fellow, his next Neighbour, the delight of his Soul, the Sword here receives its Commiſſion.

Thirdly, You have here the diſmal conſequent of this deadly ſtroke upon the Shepherd. And that is the ſcattering of the Sheep. By the Sheep underſtand here that little flock the Diſciples which followed this Shepherd till he was ſmitten, (*i. e.*) apprehended by his Enemies, and then they were ſcattered, (*i. e.*) diſperſed, they all forſook him and fled. And ſo Chriſt was left amidſt his Enemies. Not one durſt make a ſtand for him, or own him in that hour of his danger.

Fourthly, And laſtly, here is a gracious mitigation of this ſad diſperſion, *I will turn my hand upon the little ones.* By little ones he means the ſame that before he called Sheep; but the expreſſion is deſignedly varied, to ſhew their feebleneſs and weakneſs, which appeard in their relapſe from Chriſt. And by turning his hand upon them, underſtand God's gracious reduction and gathering of them again af-

ter their ſad diſperſion, ſo that they ſhall not be loſt, though ſcattered for the preſent. For after the Lord was riſen, he went before them into *Galilee*, as he promiſed, *Math.* 26. 31. And gather'd them again by a gracious hand, ſo that not one of them was loſt, but the Son of Perdition.

The words thus opened, I ſhall obſerve ſuitably to the Method I have propoſed.

Doct. *That Chriſt's deareſt Friends forſook and left him alone, in the time of his greateſt Diſtreſs and Danger.*

This Doctrine containing only Matter of Fact, and that alſo ſo plainly deliver'd by the Pens of the ſeveral faithful Evangeliſts. I need ſpend no longer time in the Proof of it, than to refer you to the ſeveral Teſtimonies they have given to it. But I ſhall rather chuſe to fit and prepare it for Uſe, by explaining theſe four Queſtions.

Firſt, Who were the Sheep that were ſcattered from their Shepherd, and left him alone?

Secondly, What Evil was there in this their ſcattering?

Thirdly, What were the Grounds and Cauſes of it?

Fourthly, And laſtly, What was the Iſſue and Event of it?

Firſt, Who were theſe Sheep that were diſperſed and ſcattered from their Shepherd when he was ſmitten. It's evident they were thoſe precious elect Souls that he had gathered to himſelf, who had long followed him, and dearly loved him, and were dearly beloved of him. They were Perſons that had left all and followed him, and till that time faithfully continued with him in his Temptations, *Luke* 22. 28. And were all reſolved ſo to do, though they ſhould die with him, *Matt.* 26. 35. Theſe were the Perſons.

Secondly, But were they as good as their word? Did they indeed ſtick faithfully to him? No, they all forſook him and fled. Theſe Sheep were ſcattered. This was not indeed a total and final Apoſtacy, that's the fall proper to the Hypocrite, the temporary Believer, who like a Comet expires when that earthly Matter is ſpent that maintain'd the blaze for a time.

Theſe were Stars fixed in their Orb, though clouded and overcaſt for a time. This was but a Miſt or Fog, which overſpreads the Earth in the Morning till the Sun be riſen, and then it clears up and proves a fair day. But though it was not a total final Apoſtacy; yet it was a very ſinful and ſad relapſe from Jeſus Chriſt, as will appear by conſidering the following Aggravations and Circumſtances of it. For,

Firſt, This relapſe of theirs was againſt the very Articles of Agreement which they had ſealed to Chriſt at their firſt admiſſion into his Service, he had told them in the beginning what they muſt reſolve upon, *Luke* 14. 26, 27. *If any man come to me, and hate not his Father and Mother, and Wife, and Children, and Brethren, and Siſters, yea, and his own Life alſo, he cannot be my Diſciple. And whoſoever doth not bear his Croſs and come after me, cannot be my Diſciple.* Accordingly they ſubmitted to theſe terms, and told him, they had left all and followed him, *Mark* 10. 28. Againſt this Engagement made to Chriſt, they now ſin. Here was unfaithfulneſs.

Secondly, As it was againſt the very Terms of their Admiſſion, ſo it was againſt the very Principles of Grace implanted by Chriſt in their Hearts. They were holy ſanctified Perſons, in whom dwelt the love and fear of God. By theſe they were ſtrongly inclin'd to hadhere to Chriſt in the time of his Sufferings, as appears by theſe honeſt reſolves they had made in the caſe. Their Grace ſtrongly inclined them to their Duty, their Corruptions ſway'd them the contrary way. Grace bid them ſtand, Corruption bid them fly. Grace told them it was their Duty to ſhare in the Sufferings as well as in the Glory of Chriſt. Corruption repreſented theſe Sufferings as intolerable, and bid them ſhift for themſelves whilſt they might. So that here muſt needs be a force and violence offer'd to their Light, and the loving Conſtraints thereof; which is no ſmall Evil.

For though I grant it was a ſudden ſurprizing Temptation, yet it cannot be imagined that this Fact was wholly indeliberate, nor that for ſo long time as they were without any Debates or Reaſonings about their Duty.

Thirdly, As it was againſt their own Principles, ſo it was much againſt the Honour of their Lord and Maſter. By this their ſinful Flight they expoſed the Lord Jeſus to the contempt and ſcorn of his Enemies. This ſome conceive is imported in that Queſtion which the High-Prieſt asked him, *John* 18. 19. *The High-Prieſt then asked Jeſus of his Diſciples, and of his Doctrine.* He asked him of his Diſciples, how many he had, and what was become of them now? And what was the Reaſon they forſook their Maſter, and left him to ſhift for himſelf when Danger appear'd? But to thoſe Queſtions Chriſt made no Reply. He would not accuſe them to their Enemies, though they had deſerted him. But, doubtleſs, it did not a little reflect upon Chriſt, that there was not one of all his Friends that durſt own their Relation to him, in a time of Danger.

Fourthly, As it was againſt Chriſt's Honour, ſo it was againſt their own ſolemn Promiſe made to him before his Appehenſion, to live and die with him. They had paſt their Word, and given their Promiſe that they would not flinch from him, *Matth.* 26. 35. *Peter ſaid to him, though I ſhould die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewiſe alſo ſaid all the Diſciples.* This made it a perfidious Relapſe. Here they break Promiſe with Chriſt, who never did ſo with them. He might have told them when he met them afterwards in *Galilee*, as the *Roman* Soldier told his General when he refuſed his Petition after the War was ended, *I did not ſerve you ſo at the Battle of* Acteum.

Fifthly, As it was againſt their ſolemn Promiſe to Chriſt, ſo it was againſt Chriſt's heart-melting Expoſtulations with them; which ſhould have aboad upon their Hearts while they lived. For when others that followed him went back, and walked no more with him, Jeſus ſaid to theſe very Men that now forſook him at laſt, *Will ye alſo go away?* There is an Emphaſis in [Ye] *q. d.* What, Ye that from Eternity were given to me! Ye whom I have called, loved, and honoured above others, for whoſe ſakes I am ready and reſolved to die. *Will ye alſo forſake me? John* 6. 67. Whatever others do, I expect other things from you.

Sixthly, As it was againſt Chriſt's Heart-melting Expoſtulations with them, ſo it was againſt a lateful Example preſented to them in the fall of *Judas*. In him as in a Glaſs they might ſee how fearful a thing it is to apoſtatize from Chriſt. They had heard Chriſt's dreadful Threats againſt him. They were preſent when he call'd him the Son of Perdition, *John* 17. 11. They had heard Chriſt to ſay of him, *Good had it been if he had never been born.* An expreſſion able to ſcare the deadeſt Heart; They

ſaw he had left Chriſt the Evening before. And that very day in which they fled, he hang'd himſelf. And yet they fly. For all this they forſake Chriſt.

Seventhly, As it was againſt the dreadful warning given them in the Fall of *Judas*, ſo it was againſt the Law of Love, which ſhould have knit them cloſer to Chriſt and one another.

If to avoid the preſent ſhock of Peſecution they had fled, yet ſurely they ſhould have kept together praying, watching, encouraging, and ſtrengthning one another. This had made it a leſſer Evil: But as they all forſook Chriſt, ſo they forſook one another alſo; For it's ſaid, *John* 16. 32. *They ſhall go every man to his own, and leave Chriſt alone*, (i.e.) ſaith *Beza*, every Man to his own Houſe, and to his own Buſineſs. They forſook each other, as well as Chriſt. O what an hour of Temptation was this!

Cogitant vel eum non eſſe Chriſtum, quem hactenus eſſe crediderant; cum ſe defendere ab hoſtibus non poſſit, vel non eſſe conſultum ejus cauſa, mortis periculum adire. *Par.*

Eighthly, And laſtly, this their departure from Chriſt was accompanied with ſome offence at Chriſt. For ſo he tells them, *Matt.* 26.31. *All ye ſhall be offended becauſe of me this Night.* The word is, σκανδαλισθήσεθε, you ſhall be ſcandaliz'd at me, or in me. Some think the ſcandal they took at Chriſt was this, that when they ſaw he was fallen into his Enemies hands, and could no longer defend himſelf; they then began to queſtion whether he were the Chriſt or no, ſince he could not defend himſelf from his Enemies. Others more rightly underſtood it of their ſhameful flight from Chriſt, ſeeing it was not now ſafe to abide longer with him. That ſeeing he gave himſelf into their hands, they thought it adviſable to provide as well as they could for themſelves, and ſome where or other to take refuge from the preſent Storm, which had overtaken him. This was the nature and quality of the Fact. We enquire,

Thirdly, Into the Grounds and Reaſons of it. Which were three.

Firſt, God's ſuſpending wonted Influences and aids of Grace from them. They were not wont to do ſo. They never did ſo afterwards. They would not have done ſo now, had there been Influences of Power, Zeal, and Love from Heaven upon them. But how then ſhould Chriſt have born the Heat and Burden of the Day? How ſhould he tread the Wine-preſs alone? How ſhould his Sorrows have been extreme, unmixed, ſuccourleſs (as it behoved them to be) if they had ſtuck faithfully to him in his Troubles? No, no, it muſt not be; Chriſt muſt not have the leaſt Relief or Comfort from any Creature; and therefore, that he might be left alone, to grapple Hand to Hand with the Wrath of God, and of Men; the Lord for a time with-holds his encouraging, ſtrengthening Influences from them, and then, like *Sampſon*, when he had loſt his Locks, they were weak as other Men.

Be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Eph.* 6. 10. If that be with-held, our Reſolutions and Purpoſes melt away before a Temptation, as Snow before the Sun.

Secondly, As God permitted it, and with-held uſual Aid from them; ſo the Efficacy of that Temptation was great, yea, much greater than ordinary. As they were weaker than they were uſed to be, ſo the Temptation was ſtronger than any they had yet met withal. It's call'd *Luke* 22. 53. *Their hour, and the power of darkneſs.* A ſifting *winnowing hour*, verſe 46. O it was a black and cloudy day. Never had the Diſciples met with ſuch a Whirl-wind, ſuch a furious Storm before. The Devil deſired but to have the winnowing of them in that day, and ſo would have ſifted and winnowed them, that their Faith had utterly failed, had not Chriſt ſecured it by his Prayer for them. So it was an extraordinary Trial that was upon them.

Thirdly, and *Laſtly*, That which concurred to their ſhameful Relapſe, as a ſpecial Cauſe of it, was the remaining Corruptions that were in their Hearts yet unmortified. Their Knowledge was but little, and their Faith not much. Upon the account of their Weakneſs in Grace, they were called *little Ones* in the Text. And as their Graces were weak, ſo their Corruptions were ſtrong. Their Unbelief and carnal Fears grew powerfully upon them.

Do not cenſure them, Reader, in thy Thoughts, nor deſpiſe them for this their Weakneſs. Neither ſay in thy Heart, Had I been there as they were, I would never have done as they did. They thought as little of doing what they did, as you or any of the Saints do; and as much did their Souls deteſt and abhor it: But here thou may'ſt ſee whither a Soul that fears God may be carried, if his Corruptions be irritated by ſtrong Temptations, and God with-holds uſual Influences.

Fourthly, and *Laſtly*, Let us view the Iſſue of this ſad Apoſtacy of theirs. And you ſhall find it ended far better than it began. Though theſe Sheep were ſcattered for a time, yet the Lord made good his Promiſe, in turning his Hand upon theſe little Ones to gather them. The Morning was over-caſt, but the Evening was clear.

Peter repents of his perfidious denial of Chriſt, and never denied him more. All the reſt likewiſe returned to Chriſt, and never forſook him any more. He that was afraid at the Voice of a Damſel, afterwards feared not the Frowns of the Mighty. And they that durſt not own Chriſt now, afterward confeſſed him openly before Councils, and rejoyced that they were counted worthy to ſuffer for his ſake, *Acts* 5. 41. They that were now as timorous as Hares, and ſtarted at every Sound, afterwards became as bold as Lyons, and feared not any danger, but ſealed their Confeſſion of Chriſt with their Blood. For though at this time they forſook him, it was not voluntarily, but ſurprizal. Though they forſook him, they ſtill loved him; though they fled from him, there ſtill remain'd a gracious Principle in them; the Root of the Matter was ſtill in them, which recovered them again.

To conclude: Though they forſook Chriſt, yet Chriſt never forſook them; he loved them ſtill: *Go tell the Diſciples, and tell* Peter, *that he goeth before into* Galilee, *Mark* 16. 7. *q. d.* let them not think that I ſo remember their Unkindneſs, as to own them no more: No, I love them ſtill.

The uſe of this is contained in the following Inferences.

Inference 1. Did the Diſciples forſake Chriſt tho' they had ſuch ſtrong Perſuaſions and Reſolutions never to do it? Then we ſee, *That ſelf-confidence is a Sin too incident to the beſt of Men.* They little thought their Hearts would have proved ſo baſe and deceitful, as they found them to be when they were tried. *Tho' all Men forſake thee* (ſaith *Peter*) *yet will not I.* Good Man, he reſolved honeſtly, but he knew not what a Feather he ſhould be in the Wind of Temptation, if God once left him to his own Fears.

Little

Little reaſon have the beſt of Saints to depend upon their inherent Grace, let their ſtock be as large as it will. The Angels left to themſelves, quickly left their own Habitations, *Jude* 6. Upon which one well obſerves, That the beſt of created Perfections are of themſelves defectible. Every Excellency without the Prop of Divine Preſervation, is but a weight which tends to fall. The Angels in their Innocency were but frail, without God's Suſtentation; even Grace itſelf is but a Creature, and therefore purely dependent. 'Tis not from its Being and Nature, but from the aſſiſtance of ſomething without it, that it's kept from annihilation. What becomes of the Stream, if the Fountain ſupply it not? What continuance hath the reflection in the Glaſs, if the Man that looks into it turn away his Face? The conſtant Supplies of the Spirit of Jeſus Chriſt, are the Food, and Fewel of all our Graces. The beſt Men will ſhew themſelves but Men, if God leave them. He who hath ſet them up, muſt alſo keep them. It's ſafer to be humble with one Talent, than proud with ten. Yea, better to be a humble Worm, than a proud Angel. *Adam* had more advantage to maintain his Station than any of you. For tho' he were left to the liberty of his own mutable and ſelf-determining Will, yet he was created upright, and had no inherent Corruption to endanger him, yet fell.

Mr. Jenkin, *in Loc.*

And ſhall we be ſelf-confident after ſuch Inſtances of human Frailty! Alas, Chriſtian! What Match art thou for Principalities and Powers, and ſpiritual Wickedneſs! Be not high-minded, but fear. When you have conſider'd well the Example of *Noah*, *Lot*, *David*, and *Hezekiah*, Men famous and renowned in their Generations, who all fell by Temptations; yea, and that when one would think they had never been better provided to cope with them. *Lot* fell after, yea, preſently after the Lord had thruſt him out of *Sodom*, and his Eyes had ſeen the direful puniſhment of Sin. Hell as it were rained upon them out of Heaven. *Noah* in like manner, immediately after God's wonderful, and aſtoniſhing Preſervation of him in the Ark; when he ſaw a World of Men and Women periſhing in the Floods, for their Sins. *David*, after the Lord had ſettled the Kingdom on him, which for Sin he rent from *Saul*, and given him reſt in his Houſe. *Hezekiah* was but juſt up from a great Sickneſs, wherein the Lord wrought a wonderful Salvation for him. Did ſuch Men, and at ſuch times when one would think no Temptations ſhould have prevailed, fall; and that ſo foully? Then *let him that think he ſtandeth, take heed leſt he fall.* O be not high-minded but fear.

Gen. 9. 21. 22.
Gen. 19. 36.
Gen. 19. 36.
2 *Sam.* 11. 2.
2 *Kings*, 20. 12.

Inference 2. Did Chriſt ſtand his Ground and go through with his ſuffering-Work, when all that had follow'd him forſook him? *Then a reſolved adherence to God and Duty, though left alone, without Company or Encouragement, is Chriſt-like, and truly excellent.* You ſhall not want better Company than that which hath forſaken you in the way of God. *Elijah* complains, 1 *Kings*, 19. 10. *They have forſaken thy Covenant, thrown down thine Altars, and ſlain thy Prophets with the Sword; and I, even I only, am leſt, and they ſeek my Life, to take it away.* And yet all this did not damp, or diſcourage him in following the Lord; for ſtill he was very jealous for the Lord God of Hoſts.

Paul complains, 2 Tim. 4. 16. *At my firſt anſwer no Man ſtood by me, all Men forſook me: Notwithſtanding the Lord ſtood with me.* And as the Lord ſtood by him, ſo he ſtood by his God alone, without any Aids or Support from Men. How great an Argument of Integrity is this! He that profeſſes Chriſt for Company, will alſo leave him for Company. But to be faithful to God, when forſaken of Men; to be a *Lot* in *Sodom*, a *Noah* in a corrupted Generation; oh how excellent is it! 'Tis ſweet to travel over this Earth to Heaven, in the Company of the Saints that are bound thither with us, if we can; but if we can meet no Company, we muſt not be diſcouraged to go on. It's not unlike but before you have gone many Steps farther; you may have cauſe to ſay as one did once, *Never leſs alone, than when alone.*

Inference 3. Did the Diſciples thus forſake Chriſt, and yet were all recovered at laſt? *Then though Believers are not priviledged from backſlidings, yet they are ſecured from final Apoſtacy and Ruin.* The new Creature may be ſick, it cannot die. Saints may fall, but they ſhall riſe again, *Mic.* 7. 8. The higheſt Flood of natural Zeal and Reſolution may ebb, and be wholly dried up; but ſaving Grace is a Well of Water, ſtill ſpringing up into everlaſting Life, *John* 4. 14. God's unchangable Election, the Frame and Conſtitution of the New Covenant, the meritorious and prevalent Interceſſion of Jeſus Chriſt does give the Believer abundant Security againſt the danger of a total and final Apoſtacy. *My Father which gave them me,* (ſaith Chriſt) *is greater than all: And none is able to pluck them out of my Father's Hand,* John 10. 29.

And again, *The Foundation of God ſtandeth ſure, having this Seal; the Lord knoweth who are his,* 2 Tim. 2. 19. Every Perſon committed to Chriſt by the Father, ſhall be brought by him to the Father, and not one wanting.

God hath alſo ſo framed and ordered the New Covenant, that none of thoſe Souls who are within the bleſſed Claſp and Bond of it can poſſibly be loſt. It's ſettled upon immutable things: And we know all Things are as their Foundations be, *Heb.* 6. 18, 19. Among the many glorious Promiſes contained in the bundle of Promiſes, this is one, *I will make an everlaſting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good: But I will put my Fear in their Hearts, that they ſhall not depart from me.*

And as the fear of God in our Hearts pleads in us againſt Sin, ſo our potent interceſſor in the Heavens pleads for us with the Father; and by reaſon thereof we cannot finally miſcarry, *Rom.* 8. 34, 35. Upon theſe Grounds we may (as the Apoſtle in the Place laſt cited doth) triumph in that full ſecurity which God hath given us; and ſay, What ſhall ſeparate us from the Love of God? Underſtand it either of God's to us, as *Calvin*, *Beza*, and *Martyr* do; or of our Love to God, as *Ambroſe* and *Auguſtine* do: It's true in both Senſes, and a moſt comfortable Truth.

Inference 4. Did the Sheep fly when the Shepherd was ſmitten; ſuch Men, and ſo many forſake Chriſt in the Tryal? *Then learn how ſad a thing it is for the beſt of Men to be left to their own carnal Fears in a day of Temptation*: This was it that made thoſe good Men ſhrink away ſo ſhamefully from Chriſt in that Tryal: *The fear of Man brings a Snare,* Prov. 29. 25. In that Snare theſe good Souls were taken, and for a time held faſt.

Oh what work will this unruly Paſſion make, if the fear of God do not over-rule it! Is it not a ſhame to a Chriſtian, a Man of Faith, to ſee himſelf out-done by an Heathen? Shall natural Conſcience and Courage make them ſtand and keep their Places in

times of Danger; when we ſhamefully turn our
cks upon Duty, becauſe we ſee Duty and Dan-
r together?

When the Emperor *Veſpaſian* had commanded
idius Priſcus not to come to the Senate; or if he
, to ſpeak nothing but what he would have him?
e Senator return'd this brave and noble Anſwer,
'That as he was a Senator, it
'was fit he ſhould be at the
'Senate; and if being there,

ar. *of Wiſdom*, p. 358.

e were required to give his Advice, he would
peak freely, that which his Conſcience command-
d him." The Emperor threatning that then he
uld die, he returned thus, 'Did I ever tell you
hat I was Immortal? Do you what you will, and I
ill do what I ought. It is in your Power to put
e death unjuſtly, and in me to die conſtantly."
hink, what Miſchiefs your Fear may do your
es, and the diſcovery of them to others. O
rn to truſt God with your Lives, Liberties, and
mforts in the way of your Duty; and *at what
e you are afraid*, truſt in him: And do not mag-
y poor Duſt and Aſhes, as to be ſcared by their
reats from your God and Duty. The politick
ſign of Satan herein is to affright you out of your Coverts where you are ſafe, into the Net. I will enlarge this no farther; I have elſewhere laid down fourteen Rules for Cure of this, in what of mine is publick.

aint indeed, page &c.

Inference 5. *Learn hence how much a Man may dif- from himſelf, according as the Lord is with him, withdrawn from him.* Chriſtians do not only al-
ys differ from other Men, but ſometimes from
emſelves alſo. Yea, ſo great is the difference be-
ixt himſelf and himſelf, as if he were not the
ne Man. And where is he that doth not ſo ex
rience it? Sometimes bold and couragious, de-
ſing Dangers, bearing down all Diſcouragements
the ſtrengh of Zeal and Love to God: At ano-
er time faint, feeble, and diſcouraged at every
tty Thing. Whence is this but from the diffe-
nt Adminiſtrations of the Spirit, who ſometimes
ves forth more and ſometimes leſs of his gracious
fluence. Theſe very Men that flinch'd now, when
e Spirit was more abundantly ſhed forth upon
em, could boldly own Chriſt before the Council,
d deſpiſed all Dangers for his ſake.

A little Dog, if his Maſter be by, and encourage
m, will venture upon a greater Beaſt than himſelf. *Peter* ſtood at the Door without, when the other Diſciple, or one of the other Diſciples (as the *Syriack* turns it, and *Grotius* approves it as the beſt) that is, one of the private Diſciples that lived in *ruſalem*, went in ſo boldly, *John* 18. 16, 17. We
e ſtrong or weak, according to the degrees of aſ-
ting Grace. So that as you cannot take the juſt
eaſure of a Chriſtian by one act, ſo neither muſt
ey judge of themſelves, by what they ſometimes
el in themſelves.

us ex Diſcipulis aliis, n aliquem ex duode-n. Sed alium quen-m Hieroſolymitanum n aque manifeſtum uorem Jeſu. *Grotius.*

But when their Spirits are low, and their Hearts
ſcouraged, they ſhould rather ſay to their Souls,
pe in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him: It's low with
now, but it will be better.

Inference 6. Was the Sword drawn againſt the
epherd, and he left alone to receive the mortal
okes of it? *How ſhould all adore both the Juſtice, d Mercy of God, ſo illuſtriouſly diſplayed herein!* te is the Triumph of Divine Juſtice, and the higheſt Triumph that ever it had, to ſingle forth the chief Shepherd, the Man that is God's Fellow, and ſheath its Sword in its Breaſt for Satisfaction. No wonder it's drawn and brandiſh'd with ſuch a Triumph; awake rejoycing, O Sword, againſt my Shepherd, *&c.* For in this Blood ſhed by it, it hath more Glory than if the Blood of all the Men and Women in the World had been ſhed.

And no leſs is the Mercy and Goodneſs of God herein ſignaliz'd, in giving the Sword a Commiſſion againſt the Man his Fellow, rather than againſt us. Why had he not rather ſaid, Awake, O Sword, againſt the Men that are my Enemies; ſhed the Blood of them that have ſinned againſt me, than ſmite the Shepherd, and only ſcatter the Sheep: Bleſſed be God, the *dreadful* Sword was not drawn and brandiſh'd againſt our Souls; that God did not ſet it to our Breaſts; that he had not made it fat with our Fleſh, and bathed it in our Blood: That his Fellow was ſmitten, that his Enemies might be ſpared. O what manner of Love was this! Bleſſed be God therefore for Jeſus Chriſt, who received the fatal Stroke himſelf; and hath now ſo ſheathed that Sword in its Scabbard, that it ſhall never be drawn any more againſt any that believe in him.

Inference 7. Were the Sheep ſcattered, when the Shepherd was Smitten? Learn hence, *that the beſt of Men know not their own Strength, till they come to the trial.* Little did theſe holy Men imagine ſuch a cowardly Spirit had been in them, till Temptation put it to the Proof. Let this therefore be a Caution for ever to the People of God. You reſolve never to forſake Chriſt, you do well; but ſo did theſe, and yet were ſcattered from him. You can never take a juſt Meaſure of your own Strength, till Temptation have tried it. 'Tis ſaid, *Deut.* 18. 2, 3. that God led the People ſo many Years in the Wilderneſs, to prove them; and to know, (*i. e.*) (to make them know) what was in their Hearts. Little did they think ſuch Unbelief, Murmurings, Diſcontents, and a Spirit bent to Backſlidings, had been in them; 'till their Streights in the Wilderneſs gave them the ſad Experience of theſe Things.

Inference 8. Did the dreadful Sword of Divine Juſtice ſmite the Shepherd, God's own Fellow; and at the ſame time the Flock, from whom all its outward Comforts aroſe, were ſcattered from him? *Then learn, that the holieſt of Men have no reaſon, either to repine, or deſpond; though God at once ſhould ſtrip them of all their outward and inward Comforts together.* He that did this by the Man his Fellow, may much rather do it by the Man his Friend. *Smite my Shepherd*; there's all Comfort gone from the inward Man. *Scatter the Sheep*; there's all Comfort gone from the outward Man. What Refreſhments had Chriſt in this World, but ſuch as came immediately from his Father, or thoſe holy Ones now ſcattered from him? In one Day he loſeth both Heavenly and Earthly Comforts. Now, as God dealt by Chriſt, he may at one time or other deal with his People. You have your Comforts from Heaven; ſo had Chriſt, in a fuller meaſure than ever you had, or can have. He had Comforts from his little Flock; you have your Comforts from the Society of the Saints, the Ordinances of God, comfortable Relations, Yet none of theſe are ſo firmly ſettled upon you, but you may be left deſtitute of them all in one day. God did take all Comfort from Chriſt, both outward and inward; and are you greater than he? God ſometimes takes outward, and leaves inward Comfort; ſometimes he takes inward, and leaves out-

outward Comfort: But time may come when God may ſtrip you of both.

This was the caſe of *Job*, a Favourite of God, who was bleſſed with outward and inward Comforts. Yet a time came when God ſtrip'd him of all, and made him poor to a Proverb, as to all outward Comfort; and the Venom of his Arrows drank up his Spirit, and the inward Comforts thereof.

Should the Loyd deal thus with any of you, how ſeaſonable and relieving will the following Conſiderations be?

Firſt, Though the Lord deal thus with you, yet this is no new thing; he hath dealt ſo with others, yea, with Jeſus Chriſt that was his Fellow. If theſe things were were done in the green Tree; in him that never deſerved it for any Sin of his own; how little reaſon have we to complain? Nay,

Secondly, Therefore did this befal Jeſus Chriſt before you, that the like Condition might be ſanctified to you, when you ſhall be brouht into it. For therefore did Jeſus Chriſt paſs through ſuch Varieties of Conditions, on purpoſe that he might take away the Curſe, and leave a Bleſſing in thoſe Conditions, againſt the time that you ſhould come into them. Moreover,

Thirdly, Though inward Comforts and outward Comforts were both removed from Chriſt in one day, yet he wanted not ſupport in the abſence of both. How relieving a Conſideration is this! *John* 16. 32. *Behold* (ſaith he) *the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye ſhall be ſcattered every man to his own, and ſhall leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, becauſe the Father is with me.* With me by way of Support, when not by way of Comfort. Thy God (Chriſtian) can in like manner ſupport thee, when all ſenſible Comforts ſhrink away together from thy Soul and Body in one day.

Laſtly, It deſerves a Remark, that this comfortleſs forſaken Condition of Chriſt, immediately preceded the day of his greateſt Glory and Comfort. Naturaliſts obſerve, the greateſt Darkneſs is a little before the dawning of the Morning. 'Twas ſo with Chriſt, it may be ſo with thee. It was but a little while and he had better Company than theirs that forſook him. Act therefore your Faith upon this, that the moſt glorious Light uſually follows the thickeſt Darkneſs. The louder your Groans are now, the louder your Triumphs hereafter will be. The Horror of your preſent, will but add to the Luſtre of your future State,

SERMON XXIX.

Opens the manner of Chriſt's Death, in reſpect of the Patience thereof.

ISA. LIII. 7.

He was oppreſſed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth. He is brought as a Lamb to the ſlaughter, and as a Sheep before her Sheerers is dumb; ſo he opened not his mouth.

HOW our Lord Jeſus Chriſt carried on the Work of our Redemption in his humbled State, both in his Incarnation, Life and Death, hath in part been diſcovered in the former Sermons. I have ſhewed you the *Kind* or Nature of that Death he died; and am now ingaged by the Method propoſed, to open the *manner* of his Death. the Solitarineſs or Lonelineſs of Chriſt in his Sufferings, was the Subject of the laſt Sermon. The Patience and Meekneſs of Chriſt in his Sufferings comes in order to be opened in this.

This Chapter was wholly of the Sufferings of Chriſt, and the bleſſed Fruits thereof. *Hornbeck* tells us of a learned *Jew* that ingenuouſly confeſſed, this very Chapter converted him to the Chriſtian Faith. And ſuch delight he had in it, that he read it more than a thouſand times over. Such is the clearneſs of this Propheey, that he who Pen'd is, is deſervedly ſtiled the Evangelical Prophet. I cannot allow time to annalize that Chapter; but my Work lying in the ſeventh *Verſe*, I ſhall ſpeak to thoſe two Branches or parts of it, *viz.* The grievous Sufferings of Chriſt, and the glorious Ornament he put upon them.

Ingenuè profietor illud ipſum caput ad fidem Chriſtianam me adduxiſſe, nam plus millies illud caput perlegi. *Hornbeck contra Jud. lib. 6. cap. 1. p 408.*

Firſt, Chriſt's grievous Sufferings; he was afflicted, and he was oppreſſed, brought to the Slaughter, and ſhorn as a Sheep, (*i. e.*) he loſt both Fleece and Blood. Life, and the Comforts of Life. *He was oppreſſed*; the *word* ſignifies both to anſwer and oppreſs, humble or depreſs. The other word rendred *afflicted*, ſignifies to act and afflict, and ſo implies Chriſt to ſtand before God, as a Surety before the Creditor; who exacts the utmoſt Satisfaction from him, by cauſing him to ſuffer according to the utmoſt Rigor and Severity of the Law. It did not ſuffice that he was ſhorn as a Sheep, (*i. e.*) that he was ſtrip'd and deprived of his Riches, Ornaments, and Comforts; but his Blood and Life muſt go for it alſo. He is brough

ענה Reſpondit. Humavit. Demiſit. Depreſſit. עלל Exegit. Afflixit. *Buxt.*

brought to the Slaughter. These were his grievous Sufferings.

Secondly, Here is the glorious Ornament he put upon those grievous Sufferings, even the Ornament of a meek and patient Spirit. He opened not his Mouth. But went as a Sheep to be shorn, or a Lamb to the Slaughter. The Lamb goes as quiet to the Slaughter-house, as to the Fold. By this lively and lovely Similitude, the Patience of Christ is here expressed to us. Yet Christ's Dumbness and Silence is not to be understood *Simply*, and universally; as though he spake nothing at all when he suffer'd; for he utter'd many excellent and weighty Words upon the Cross, as you shall hear in the following Discourses; but it must be understood *respectively*, (i. e.) he never opened his Mouth repiningly, passionately, or revengefully under his greatest Tortures and highest Provocations. Whence the note is,

Ut patientiam & mansuetudinem Christi melius commendat tanquam insigne ipsius ornamentum comparat eum agno & ovi. *Marl. in loc.*

Doct. *That Jesus Christ supported the Burden of his Sufferings, with admirable Patience, and meekness of Spirit.*

It is a true Observation, that Meekness inviteth Injury, but always to its own cost. And it was evidently verified in the Sufferings of Christ. Christ's Meekness triumphed over the Affronts and Injuries of his Enemies, much more than they triumphed over him. Patience never had a more glorious triumph, than it had upon the Cross.

The Meekness and Patience of his Spirit amidst Injuries and Provocations, is excellently set forth in 1 *Pet.* 2. 22, 23. *Who did not sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered he threatned not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.*

In this Point we have these three things to open Doctrinally.

1. The Burden of Sufferings, and Provocations that Jesus Christ was oppressed with.
2. The Meekness and admirable Patience with which he supported that Burden.
3. The Causes and Grounds of that perfect Patience which he then exercised.

First, The Burden of Suffering and Provocations which Christ supported, was very great. For on him met all sorts and kinds of Trouble at once, and those in their highest Degrees and fullest Strength. Troubles in his Soul, and these were the Soul of his Troubles. His Soul was laden with spiritual Horrors and Troubles, as deep as it could swim, *Mark* 14. 33. *He began to be sore amazed and very heavy.* The Wrath of an infinite dreadful God beat him down to the Dust. His Body full of Pain and exquisite Tortures in every part. Not a Member or Sense but was the Seat and Subject of Torment.

His Name and Honour suffered the vilest Indignities, Blasphemies, and horrid Reproaches that the malignity of Satan, and wicked Men could belch out against it. He was call'd a Blasphemer, Seditious, one that had a Devil, a Glutton, a Wine-bibber, a Friend of Publicans and Harlots. The Carpenter's Son, this Fellow. He that was *God's Fellow*, as you heard lately, now *this Fellow*. Contempt was poured upon all his Offices. Upon his *Kingly* Office, when they crowned him with Thorns, arrayed him with Purple, bowed the Knee in Mockery to him, and cry'd *Hail King of the Jews*. His *Prophetical Office*, when they blinded him, and then bid him *Prophesie who smote him*. His *Priestly Office*, when they reviled him upon the Cross, saying, *He saved others, himself he cannot save*. They scourged him, spit in his Face. Smote him on the Head and Face. Besides the very kind of Death they put him to, was reproachful and ignominious; as you heard before.

Now all this, and much more than this, meeting at once upon an innocent and dignified Person. One that was greater than all. That lay in the Bosom of God. And from Eternity had his Smiles and Honours. Upon one that could have crushed all his Enemies as a Moth: I say, for him to bear all this without the least discomposure of Spirit, or breach of Patience, is the highest triumph of Patience that ever was in the World. It was one of the greatest Wonders of that wonderful Day.

Secondly, And that is the next thing we have to consider, even this Almighty Patience and unpatterned Meekness of Christ, supporting such a burden with such evenness and steadiness of Spirit. Christian Patience, or the Grace Patience, *is an ability of Power to suffer hard and heavy things, according to the Will of God.*

It is a Power, and a glorious Power that strengthens the suffering Soul to bear. It is our passive Fortitude, *Col.* 1. 11. *Strengthned with all might, according the glorious power, unto all patience, and long-suffering with joyfulness*; (i. e.) strengthned with a might or power of God himself. Or such as might appear to be the proper Impress and Image of that divine Power, which is both its *Principle* and *Pattern*. For the Patience which God exercises towards Sinners that daily wrong and load him, is call'd Power, and great Power, *Num.* 14. 17. *Let the power of my Lord be great, as thou hast spoken, saying, the Lord is long-suffering, forgiving*, &c. Hence it's observ'd, *Prov.* 24. 10. That the loss or breaking of our Patience under Adversity, argues a decay of strength in the Soul. *If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.*

Hæ du virtutes, scilicet ὑπομονὴ & μακροθυμία sunt illius roboris, & fortitudinis quam spiritus nobis largitur individuæ comites. *Dav.*

It's a power or ability in the Soul, *to bear hard, heavy, and difficult things.* Such only are the Objects of Patience. God hath several sorts of burdens to impose upon his People. Some heavier, others lighter. Some to be carried but a few Hours, others many Days. Others all our Days. Some more spiritual, bearing upon the Soul. Some more external, touching or punishing the Flesh immediately; and the Spirit by way of Sympathy. And sometimes both sorts are laid on together. So they were at this time on Christ. His Soul burdened as deep as it could swim. Full of the sense, the bitter sense and apprehension of the wrath of God. His Body fill'd with Tortures. In every Member and Sense, Grief took up his lodging. Here was the higher exercise of Patience.

It's a Power to bear hard and heavy things, *according to the Will of God.* The involving of that respect, differs Patience, the Christian Grace, from Patience the Moral Vertue. So the Apostle describes it, 1 *Pet.* 4. 19. *Let them that suffer according to the will of God*, &c. (i. e.) who exercise Patience graciously, as God would have them.

And then our Patience is (as Christ's most exactly was) according to the Will of God; when it is as *extensive* as *intensive*, and as *protensive* as God requires it to be.

First,

First, When it is as *extenſive* as God would have it. So was Chriſt's Patience. It was a Patience that ſtretched and extended itſelf to all and every Trouble and Affliction, that came upon him. Troubles came upon him in Troops, in Multitudes. It's ſaid, *Pſalm* 40. 12. *Innumerable evils have compaſſed me about.* Yet he found Patience enough to receive them all. It is not ſo with us. Our Patience is often worn out. And, like ſick People, we fancy, if we were in another Chamber, or Bed, it would be better. If it were any other Trouble than this, we could bear it. Chriſt had no exceptions at any Burden his Father would lay on. His Patience was as large as his Trouble, and that was large indeed.

Secondly, It's then according to the Will of God, when it is as *intenſive* as God requires it to be, (i.e.) in the Apoſtle's Phraſe, *Jam.* 1. 4. When it hath its *perfect Work*, or Exerciſe; when its not only extended to all kinds of Troubles; but when it works in the higheſt and moſt perfect degree. And then may Patience be ſaid to be perfect (as it was in Chriſt) when it is *plenum ſui, & prohibens alieni*, full of it ſelf, and excluſive of its Oppoſites. Chriſt's Patience was full of its ſelf, (*i. e.*) it included all that belonged to it. It was full of Submiſſion, Peace and Serenity; full of Obedience and Complacency in his Father's Will. He was in a perfect calm. As a Lamb or Sheep, (ſaith the Text) that howls not, oppoſes not, but is dumb and quiet. And as his external behaviour, ſo his internal frame and temper of Soul was moſt ſerene and calm. Not one repining Thought again God. Not one revengeful Thought againſt Man, once ruffled his Spirit. *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do*, was all the hurt he wiſh'd his worſt Enemies. And as it included all that belonged to it, ſo his perfect Patience excluded all its oppoſites. No diſcontents, murmurings, deſpondencies, had place in his Heart. So that his Patience was a moſt intenſive, perfect Patience. And as it was as extenſive, and as as intenſive, ſo it was

Thirdly, As *Frotenſive* as God required it to be, (*i.e.*) it held out to the end of his Trial. He did not faint at laſt. His Troubles did not out-live his Patience. He indeed was ſtrengthned with all might unto all Patience, and Long-ſuffering. This was the patience, of Chriſt our perfect Pattern. He had not only Patience, but Longanimity.

Thirdly, In the laſt place, let us inquire into the grounds and reaſons of this his moſt perfect Patience. And if you do ſo, you ſhall find perfect Holineſs, Wiſdom, Fore-knowledge, Faith, Heavenly-mindedneſs, and Obedience, at the Root of this his perfect Patience.

First, This admirable Patience and meekneſs of Chriſt, was the fruit and off-ſpring of his *perfect Holineſs*. His Nature was free from thoſe Corruptions, that ours groan and labour under; otherwiſe he could never have carried it at this rate. Take the meek *Moſes*, who excell'd all others in that Grace, and let him be tried in that very Grace, wherein he excells, and ſee how *unadviſedly he may ſpeak with his Lips*, Pſalm 106. 33. Take a *Job*, whoſe famous Patience is trumpeted and reſounded over all the World; *ye have heard of the Patience of Job.* And let him be tried by outward and inward Troubles, meeting upon him in one day; and even a *Job* may curſe the day when he was Born. Envy, Revenge, Diſcontent, Deſpondencies, are Weeds naturally ſpringing up in the corrupt Soil of our ſinful Natures. I ſaw a little Child grow pale with Envy, ſaid *Auſtin.* And the Spirit that is in us luſteth unto Envy, (ſaith the Apoſtle) *Jam.* 4. 5. The Principles of all theſe Evils being in our Natures, they will ſhew themſelves in time of Trial. The old Man is fretful and paſſionate. But it was otherwiſe with Chriſt. His Nature was like a pure Criſtial Glaſs full of pure Fountain Water; which tho' ſhaken and agitated never ſo much, cannot ſhew, becauſe it hath no dregs. *The Prince of this World cometh, and hath nought in me*, John 14. 30. No principle of Corruption for a handle of Temptation. Our High-Prieſt was holy, harmleſs, undefil'd, ſeparate from Sinners, *Heb.* 7. 26.

Vid. Zelantem parvulum. *Aug.*

Secondly, The Meekneſs and Patience of Chriſt, proceeded from the *infinite Wiſdom* with which he was filled. The wiſer any Man is, the more patient he is. Hence Meekneſs, the Fruit, is denominated from Patience, the Root that bears it, *James* 3. 13. *The meekneſs of Wiſdom.* And anger is lodged in folly, as its proper Cauſe, *Eccleſ.* 7. 9. *Anger reſteth in the boſom of Fools.* *Seneca* would allow no place for Paſſion in a wiſe Man's Breaſt. Wiſe Men uſe to ponder, conſider and weigh things deliberately in their Judgments, before they ſuffer their Affections and Paſſions to be ſtirred and engaged. Hence comes the conſtancy and ſerenity of their Spirits. As wiſe *Solomon* hath obſerved, *Prov.* 17. 27. *A man of underſtanding is of an excellent* (or as the Hebrew is) *a cool ſpirit.*

Si nec magnam iram nec frequentem in animo ſapientis locum habere credimus; quid eſt quare non ex toto hoc affectu illum liberemus. *Seneca de ira.*

Now Wiſdom filled the Soul of Chriſt. He is Wiſdom in the abſtract, *Prov.* 8. In him are hid all the Treaſures of Wiſdom, *Col.* 2. 3. Hence it was that he was no otherwiſe moved with the revilings and abuſes of his Enemies, than a wiſe Phyſician is whith the impertinencies of his diſtempered and craſie Patient.

Thirdly, And as his Patience flowed from that his perfect Wiſdom and Knowledge, ſo alſo from his *Fore-knowledge*. He had a perfect proſpect of all thoſe things from Eternity, which befel him afterwards. They came not upon him by way of ſurprizal. And therefore he wondered not at them when they came, as if ſome ſtrange thing had happened. He foreſaw all theſe things long before, *Mark* 8. 31. *And he began to teach them, that the Son of man muſt ſuffer many things, and be rejected of the Elders, and chief Prieſts, and Scribes, and be killed.* Yea, he had compacted and agreed with his Father to endure all this for our ſakes, before he aſſum'd our Fleſh. Hence, *Iſa.* 50. 6. *I gave my back to the ſmiters, and my cheeks to them that pulled off the hair. I hid not my face from ſhame and ſpitting.*

Now look as Chriſt in *Job.* 16. 4. obviates all future Offences his Diſciples might take at ſuffering for his ſake, by telling them beforehand, what they muſt expect. *Theſe things* (ſaith he) *I told you, that when the time ſhall come, ye may remember that I told you of them.* So he fore-knowing what himſelf muſt ſuffer, and had agreed ſo to do, he bare thoſe ſufferings with ſingular Patience. *Jeſus therefore knowing all things that ſhould come upon him, went forth and ſaid unto them, Whom ſeek ye?* John 18. 4.

Fourthly, As his Patience ſprang from his foreknowledge of his Sufferings; ſo from his *Faith* which he exerciſed under all that he ſuffer'd in this World. His Faith looked through all thoſe black and diſmal Clouds, to the Joy propoſed, *Heb.* 22. 2. He knew that

hat though *Pilate* condemned, God would justifie im, *Isa.* 50. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. And he set one over- gainst the other. He balanced the Glory into which he was to enter, with the Sufferings through which he was to enter into it. He acted Faith upon God for divine support and assistance under suffer- ng; as well as for Glory, the Fruit and reward of hem, *Psalm* 16. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. *I have set* (or as he Apostle varies it) *I foresaw the Lord always before me, because he is at my right-hand I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory re- joyceth.* There's Faith acted by Christ for strength o carry him through. And then it follows, *My flesh also shall rest in hope, for thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption. Thou wilt shew me the path of life. In thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right-hand there are pleasures for evermore.* There's his Faith acting upon the Glory into which he was to enter, after he had suffered these things. This fill'd him with peace.

Fifthly, As his Faith eying the Glory into which he was passing, made him endure all things; so *the heavenliness* of his Spirit also fill'd him with a heavenly tranquility, and calmness of Spirit under all his Abuses and Injuries. It's a certain Truth, that the more heavenly any Man's Spirit is, the more sedate, compos'd and peaceful. As the higher Heavens (saith *Seneca*) are more ordinate and tranquil. There are neither Clouds nor Winds, Storms, nor Tempests, they are the inferior Heavens that lighten and thunder. The nearer the Earth the more tempestuous and unquiet. Even so the Sublime and heavenly mind is placed in a calm and quiet Station.

Pars superior mundi est ordinatior, et propinqua syderibus, nec in nubem cogitur, nec in tempestatem impellitur, nec versatur in turbinem: omni tumultu caret, inferiora fulminant. Eodem modo sublimis animus quietus semper & in statione tranquilla collocatur. *Seneca.*

Certainly that Heart which is sweetned frequently with heavenly delightful communion with God, is not very apt to be imbittered with Wrath, or soured with Revenge against Men. The Peace of God doth βραβεύειν, appease and end all Strifes and Differences as an Umpire. So much that word *Col.* 3. 15. imports. The heavenly Spirit marvellously effects a sedat eand quiet Breast

Now, never was there such a heavenly Soul on Earth, since Man inhabited it, as Christ was. He had most sweet and wonderful communion with God. He had Meat to eat, which others, yea, and those his greatest intimates, knew not of. The Son of Man was in Heaven upon Earth, *John* 3. 13. Even in respect of that blessed heavenly communion he had with God, as well as in respect of his immense Deity. And that his Heart was in Heaven, when he so patiently endured and digested the Pain and shame of the Cross, is evident from *Heb.* 12. 2. *For the joy set before him, he endured the Cross, despised the shame.* See where his Eye and Heart was, when he went as a Lamb to the slaughter.

Sixthly, and lastly, As his Meekness and Patience sprang from the Heavenliness and sublimity of his Spirit: So, from the compleat and absolute *Obedience* of it to his Father's will and Pleasure. He could most quietly submit to all the Will of God, and never regret at any part of the Work assign'd him by his Father. For you must know, that Christ's death in him was an act of Obedience, he all along eying his Father's Command and Counsel in what he suffered, *Phil.* 2. 7, 8. *Joh.* 18. 11. *Psal.* 40. 6, 7, 8. Now look, as the eying and considering the hand of God in an Affliction, presently becalms and quiets a gracious Soul; as you see in *David*, 2 *Sam.* 16. 11. *Let him alone, it may be God hath bid him Curse David*: So much more it quieted Jesus Christ, who was privy to the Design and End of his Father, with whose Will he all along complied; looking on Jews and Gentiles but as the Instruments ignorantly fulfilling God's Pleasure, and serving that great Design of his Father. This was his Patience, and these the Grounds of it.

Use. I might variously improve this Point, but the direct and main use of it is to press us to a Christ-like Patience in all our Sufferings and Troubles. And seeing in nothing we are more generally defective; and that defects of Christians herein, are so prejudicial to Religion, and uncomfortable to themselves: I resolve to wave all other Uses, and spend the remaining time wholly upon this Branch. Even a *persuasive* to Christians unto all Patience, in Tribulations. To imitate their Lamb-like Saviour. Unto this (Christians) you are expresly call'd, 1 *Pet.* 2. 21, 22. *Because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps. Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who when he was reviled, reviled not again, when he suffered, he threatned not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.* Here's your Pattern. A perfect Pattern. A lovely and excellent Pattern. Will you be persuaded to the imitation of Christ herein? Methinks I should persuade you to it. Yea, every thing about you persuades to patience in your sufferings, as well as I. Look which way your will, upward or downward, inward or outward, backward or forward, to the right-hand, or to the left; you shall find all things persuading and urging the Doctrine of Patience upon you.

First, Look upward, when Tribulations come upon you. Look to that Sovereign Lord that, commissionates and finds them upon you. You know troubles do not rise out of the Dust, nor spring out of the Ground, but are framed in Heaven, *Jer.* 18. *v.* 11. *Behold I frame evil, and devise a device against you.* Troubles and Afflictions are of the Lord's framing and devising, to reduce his wandering People to himself. Much like that device of *Absalom*, in setting *Joab*'s Field of Corn on fire to bring *Joab* to him, 2 *Sam.* 14. 30. In the frame of your Afflictions you may observe much of divine Wisdom in the *choice*, *measure* and *season* of your Troubles. Sovereignty in electing the Instruments of your Affliction. In making them as afflictive as he pleaseth. And in making them obedient both to his call in coming and going, when he pleaseth. Now, could you in times of trouble, look up to his Sovereign Hand, in which your Souls, Bodies, and all their Comforts and Mercies are; how quiet would your Hearts be! *Psalm* 39. 9. *I was dumb, and open- not my mouth, because it is thy doing*, 1 Sam. 3. 18. *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.* O, when we have to do with Men, and look no higher, how do our Spirits swell and rise with revenge and impatiency! But if you once come to see, that Man as a Rod in your Father's Hand, you will be quiet, *Psalm* 46. 10. *Be still, and know that I am God*; *q. d.* consider with whom you have to do. Nor with your Fellow, but with your God, who can pull you to destruction, with one blast of his Mouth. In whose Hand you are, as the Clay in the Potter's hand. It is for want of looking up to God in our Troubles, that we fret, murmur, and despond at the rate we do.

Secondly, Look downward, and ſee what is below you, as well as up to that which is above you. You are afflicted, and you cannot bear it. O! no trouble like your trouble! never Man in ſuch a caſe as you hre. Well, well, caſt the eye of your Mind downward, and ſee who lie much lower than you. Can you ſee none on Earth in a more miſerable ſtate than your ſelves? Are you at the very bottom, and not a Man below you? Sure there be thouſands in a ſadder caſe than you on Earth. What is your affliction? Have you loſt a Relation? Others have loſt all. Have you loſt an Eſtate, and are become poor? Well, but there be ſome you read of, *Job*, 30. 4, 5, 6, 7. *Who cut up mallows by the buſhes, and Juniper roots for their meat. They are driven forth from among men, they cried after them as after a thief. They dwell in the cliffs of the Vallies, in caves of the Earth, and in the Rocks. Among the buſhes they brayed, under the nettles they were gathered together.* What difference as to manner of Life, do you find between the Perſons here deſcribed, and the wild Beaſts, that herd together in a deſolate Place? Are you perſecuted and afflicted for Chriſt's ſake? What think you of their Sufferings, *Heb.* 11. 36, 37. *Who had trial of cruel mockings; yea, moreover of Bonds and Impriſonments: they were ſtoned; they were ſawn aſunder, were tempted, were ſlain with the Sword, they wandred about in ſheep-skins and goat-skins, being deſtitute, afflicted, tormented.* And are you better than they? I know not what you are; but I am ſure theſe were ſuch of *whom the World was not worthy*, verſe 38.

Or are your Afflictions more ſpiritual and inward? Say not, the Lord never dealt more bitterly with the Soul of any, than he hath with yours. What think you of the caſe of *David*, *Heman*, *Job*, *Aſaph*, whoſe doleful Cries by reaſon of the Terrors of the Almighty, are able to melt the ſtonieſt Heart that reads their Stories? The Almighty was a Terror to them. The Arrows of God were *within* them. They roared by reaſon of the diſquietneſs of their Hearts.

Or are your Afflictions outward and inward together? An afflicted Soul, in an afflicted Body. Are you fallen like the ſhip in which *Paul* ſailed, into a place where two Seas meet? Well, ſo it was with *Paul*, *Job*, and many other of thoſe Worthies, gone before you. Sure you may ſee many on Earth, who have been, or are in far lower and ſadder States than your ſelves.

Or if not on Earth, doubtleſs you will yield there are many in Hell, who would be glad to exchange Conditions with you, as bad as you think yours to be. And were not all theſe moulded out of the ſame lump with you? Surely if you can ſee any Creature below you, eſpecially any reaſonable Being, you have no reaſon to return ſo ungratefully upon your God, and accuſe your Maker of Severity; or charge God fooliſhly. Look down and you ſhall ſee Grounds enough to be quiet.

Thirdly, Look inward, you diſcontented Spirits, and ſee if you can find nothing there to quiet you. Caſt your Eye into your own Hearts. Conſider either the *Corruptions*, or the *Graces* that are there. Cannot you find Weeds enough there, that need ſuch Winter-weather as this to rot them? Hath not that proud Heart need enough of all this to humble it? That carnal Heart need of ſuch things as theſe to mortifie it? that backſliding wandering Heart, need of all this, to reduce, and to recover it to its God? *If need be, ye are in heavineſs*, 1 *Pet.* 16. O Chriſtian, did'ſt thou not ſee need of this before thou cameſt into Trouble? Or hath not God ſhewn thee the need of it ſince thou waſt under the Rod? It's much thou ſhould'ſt not ſee it; but be aſſured, if thou do'ſt not, thy God doth. He knows thou would'ſt be ruined for ever, if he ſhould not take this courſe with thee.

Thy Corruptions require all this to kill them. Thy Luſts will take all this, it may be more than this; and all little enough. And as your Corruptions call for it, ſo do your *Graces* too. Wherefore think ye the Lord planted the Principles of Faith, Humility, Patience, *&c.* in your Souls? What, were they put there for nothing? Did the Lord intend they ſhould lie ſleeping in their drowſie Habits? Or were they not planted there in order to exerciſe? And how ſhall they be exerciſed without Tribulations? can you tell? Doth not *tribulations work patience, and patience experience, and experience hope?* Rom. 5. 3, 4. Is not *the trial of your faith much more precious, than of Gold that periſhes*, 1 Pet. 1. 7. O look inward, and you will be quiet.

Fourthly, Look outward, and ſee who ſtands by, and obſerves your Carriage under Trouble. Are there not many Eyes upon you? Yea, many envious Obſervers round about you. It was *David*'s requeſt, *Pſalm* 5. 8. *Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteouſneſs, becauſe of mine Enemies*; or, as the Hebrew word there might be rendred, becauſe of mine Obſervers or Watchers. There's many an envious Eye upon you. To the Wicked there can ſcarcely be an higher Gratification and Pleaſure, than to ſee your Carriage under Trouble, ſo like their own. For thereby they are confirm'd in their Prejudices againſt Religion; and in their good Opinion of themſelves. Theſe may talk and profeſs more than we, but when they are tried and put to it, it appears plainly enough, their Religion enables 'em to do no more than we do. They talk of Heaven's Glory, and their future Expectances; but it is but talk, for it's apparent enough their hopes cannot ballance a ſmall Affliction, with all the Happineſs they talk of. Oh, how do you diſhonour Chriſt before his Enemies! when you make them think all your Religion lies in talking of it. Conſider who looks on.

Fifthly, Look backward, and ſee if there be nothing behind you that may huſh and quiet your impatient Spirits. Conſult the multitude of Experiences paſt and gone. Both your own and others. Is this the firſt ſtrait that ever you were in? If ſo, you have reaſon to be quiet, yea, to bleſs God that hath ſpared you ſo long, when others have had their days fill'd up with Sorrow. But if you have been in troubles formerly, and the Lord hath helped you; if you have paſt through the Fire, and not been burnt; through the Waters and not drowned. If God hath ſtood by you, and hitherto helped you. O what cauſe have you to be quiet now, and patiently wait for the Salvation of God? Did he help you then, and cannot he do ſo now? Did he give Waters, and cannot he give Bread alſo? Is he the God of the Hills only, and not the God of the Vallies alſo? O call to mind the days of old, the years of the right-hand of the moſt High, *Theſe things I recal to mind, therefore have I hope*, Lam. 3. 21. Have you kept no Records of paſt Experiences? How ungrateful then have you been to your God, and how injurious to your ſelves, if you have not read them over in ſuch a day as this, for to that end they were given you?

O when you ſhall conſider what a God he hath been to you, at a pinch. How faithfully *Jehovah-jereth*

jereth hath ſtood by you. That this is not the firſt time your Hearts and Hopes have been low, as well as your Condition; and yet God hath raiſed you again; ſurely you will find your preſent Troubles made light, by a glance back upon your paſt Experiences.

Sixthly, *Look forward*, to the end of your Troubles; yea, look to a double end of them, the end of their *duration*, and the end of their *operation*. Look ye to the end of their duration, and that's faſt by you. They ſhall not be everlaſting Troubles, if you be ſuch as fear the Lord. *The God of all Grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Jeſus Chriſt, after that ye have* [*ſuffered a while*] *make you perfect*, 1 Pet. 5. 10. *Theſe light afflictions are but for a moment*, 2 Cor. 4. 18. It is no more comparatively with that vaſt Eternity that is before you. Alas, what are a few days and nights of Sorrows, when they are paſt? Are they not ſwallow'd up as a ſpoonful of Water in the vaſt Ocean? But more eſpecially look to *the end of their operation*. What do all theſe Afflictions tend to, and effect? Do they not work out an exceeding weight of Glory? Are you not by them made *partakers of his Holineſs*? Heb. 12. Is not this all the Fruit, to take away your Sins? What, and be impatient at this! Fret and Repine, becauſe God is this way perfecting your Happineſs? O ungrateful Soul! Is this a due requital of that Love that diſdains not to ſtoop to ſo low an Imployment, as to ſcour and cleanſe your Souls, that they might be ſhining Veſſels of honour to all Eternity!

O look forward to the end of your Troubles. The end of their duration and operation.

Seventhly, *Look to the right-hand*, and ſee how you are ſhamed, convinced and ſilenced by other Chriſtians; and it may be ſuch too as never made that profeſſion you have done; and yet cannot only patiently bear the afflicting hand of God; but are bleſſing, praiſing, and admiring God under their Troubles; whilſt you are ſinning againſt, and diſhonouring him under ſmaller ones. It may be you will find ſome poor Chriſtians that know not where to have their next Bread, and yet are ſpeaking of the Bounty of their God; while you are repining in the midſt of Plenty. Ah, if there be any Ingenuity in you, let this ſhame you. If this will not, then

Eighthly, *Look to your left-hand*, and there you will ſee a ſadſight, and what one would think ſhould quiet you. There you may ſee a company of wicked graceleſs Wretches, carrying themſelves under their Troubles, but too like your ſelves. What do they more, than fret and murmur, deſpond and ſink; mixt Sin with their Affiictions, when the Rod of God is upon them?

It's time for thee to leave off, when thou ſeeſt how near thou art come to them, whom thou hopeſt thou ſhalt never be ranked and numbred with. Reader, ſuch Conſiderations as theſe, I am perſuaded, would be of ſingular uſe to thy Soul at ſuch a time, but above all, thine eying the great Pattern of Patience, *Jeſus Chriſt*; whoſe Lamb-like Carriage, under a Trial, with which thine is not to be named the ſame day, is here recommended to thee. O how ſhould this transform thee into a Lamb, for Meekneſs alſo?

SERMON XXX.

Opens the inſtructiveneſs of the Death of Chriſt in his ſeven laſt Words; the firſt of which is here Opened.

LUKE XXIII. 34.

Then ſaid Jeſus, Father forgive them; for they know not what they do.

THE manner in which Chriſt died hath already been opened in the *Solitude* and *Patience* in which he died. The third, to wit the *Inſtructiveneſs* of his Death, now follows, in theſe ſeven excellent and weighty Sayings, which drop'd from his bleſſed Lips upon the Tree; whil'ſt his ſacred Blood dropt on the Earth from his wounded Hands and Feet; ſo that on the Croſs he exerciſed both his Prieſtly and Prophetical Office together, redeeming us by his Blood, and inſtructing us by his Words.

Theſe ſeven Words, of Chriſt upon the Croſs are his laſt Words, with which he breathed out his Soul. The laſt Words of a dying Man are remarkable, the Scripture puts a remark upon them, 2 *Sam.* 23. 1. *Now theſe be the laſt words of David.* How remarkable then are the laſt words of Chriſt?

Theſe words are ſeven in number; three directed to his Father, and four more to thoſe about him. Of the former ſort this is one, *Father forgive them*, &c. In which we have, *Firſt*, *The Mercy deſired by Chriſt*, and that is Forgiveneſs. *Secondly*, The Perſons for whom it is deſired, [*Them*] that is, thoſe cruel and wicked Perſons that were now imbrewing their Hands in his Blood. And *Thirdly*, The Motive or Argument urged to procure that Mercy from his Father, *for they know not what they do*.

Firſt, The Mercy prayed for, that is, Forgiveneſs, *Father forgive*. Forgiveneſs is not only a Mercy, a ſpiritual Mercy, but one of the greateſt Mercies a Soul can obtain from God. It is ſuch a Mercy that without it, whatever elſe we have from God, is no Mercy to us. So great a Mercy is

Felicitates hominis. *Mont.*

For-

Forgiveneſs, that *David* calls him bleſſed, or rather admires the bleſſedneſs of him whoſe Tranſgreſſion is forgiven, whoſe Sin is covered. This Mercy, this beſt of Mercies he requeſts for them, *Father forgive them.*

Secondly, The Perſons for whom he requeſts Forgiveneſs, are the ſame that with wicked Hands crucified him. Their Fact was the meſt horrid that ever was committed by Men. They not only ſhed innocent Blood, but the Blood of God; the beſt of Mercies is by him deſired for the worſt of Sinners.

Thirdly, The Motive or Argument urged to procure this Mercy for them, is this, *for they know not what they do.* As if he ſhould ſay, Lord, what theſe poor Creatures do, is not ſo much out of Malice to me, as the Son of God; but it is from their Ignorance. Did they know who, and what I am, they would rather be nailed to the Croſs themſelves, than do it. To the ſame purpoſe the Apoſtle ſaith, 1 *Cor.* 2. 8. *Whom none of the Princes of this World knew, for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.* Yet this is not to be extended to all that had an hand in the death of Chriſt, but to the ignorant Multitude; among whom, ſome of God's Elect were, who afterwards believed in him, whoſe Blood they ſpilt, *Acts* 3. 17. *And now Brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it.* For them this Prayer of Chriſt was heard. Hence the Notes are,

Doct. 1. *That ignorance is the uſual cauſe of Enmity to Chriſt.*

Doct. 2. *That there is Forgiveneſs with God, for ſuch as oppoſe Chriſt out of Ignorance.*

Doct, 3. *That to forgive Enemies, and beg Forgiveneſs for them, is the true Character and Property of the Chriſtian Spirit.*

Theſe Obſervations contain ſo much practical Truth, that it would be worth our time to open and apply them diſtinctly,

Doct. 1. *That Ignorance is the uſual cauſe of Enmity to Chriſt.*

Theſe things (ſaith the Lord) *will they do, becauſe they have not known the Father, nor me*, Joh. 16. 3. What thing doth he mean? Why, Kill and deſtroy the People of God, and therein ſuppoſe they do God good Service, (*i. e.*) think to oblige and gratifie the Father, by their butchering his Children. So *Jer.* 9. 3. *They proceed from evil to evil; and have not known me, ſaith the Lord*, q. d. Had they the knowledge of God, they would check und ſtop them in their ways of Wickedneſs, and ſo *Pſal.* 74. 20. *The dark places of the Earth, are full of the habitations of cruelty.*

Three things muſt be inquired into, *ſc.* what their Ignorance of Chriſt was. Whence it was. And how it diſpoſed them to ſuch Enmity againſt him.

Firſt, What was their Ignorance, who crucified Chriſt? Ignorance is two-fold, *ſimple*; or *reſpective.* Simple Ignorance is not ſuppoſable in theſe Perſons, for in many things they were a knowing People. But it was a reſpective particular Ignorance, *Rom.* 11. 25. *Blindneſs in part is happened to Iſrael.* They knew many other Truths, but did not know Jeſus Chriſt. In that their Eyes were held. Natural Light they had. Yea, and Scripture Light they had. But in this particular, that *this was the Son of God*, the Saviour of the World; therein they were blind and ignorant.

But how could that be? Had they not heard at leaſt of his miraculous Works. Did they not ſee how his Birth, Life and Death, ſquar'd with the Prophecies both in time, place, and manner? Whence ſhould this their Ignorance be, when they ſaw, or at leaſt might have ſeen the Scriptures fulfill'd in him, and that he came among them in a time when they were big with Expectations of the Meſſiah.

'Tis true indeed, they knew the Scriptures, and it cannot but be ſuppos'd the Fame of his mighty Works had reach'd their Ears, but yet,

Firſt, Though they had the Scriptures among them, they miſunderſtood them; and did not rightly meaſure Chriſt by that right Rule. You find, *John* 7. 52. how they reaſon with *Nicodemus* againſt Chriſt, *Art thou alſo of Galilee? Search, and ſee; for out of Galilee ariſeth no Prophet.* Here is a double miſtake. *Firſt*, They ſuppoſed Chriſt to ariſe out of *Galilee*, whereas he was of *Bethlehem*, though much converſant in the parts of *Galilee.* And, *Secondly*, They thought, becauſe they could find no Prophet had ariſen out of *Galilee*, therefore none ſhould.

Another miſtake that blinded them about Chriſt, was from their conceit that Chriſt ſhould not die, but live for ever, *John* 12. 34. *We have heard out of the Law, that Chriſt abideth for ever; and how ſayeſt thou the Son of Man muſt be lifted up? Who is the Son of Man?* That Scripture which probably they urge againſt the Mortality of Chriſt, is *Iſa.* 9. 7. *Of the Increaſe of his government and peace, there ſhall be no end, upon the Throne of* David, *&c.* In like manner, *John* 7. 17. we find them in another miſtake, *We know this man whence he is, but when Chriſt cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.* This likely proceeded from their miſunderſtanding of *Mica.* 5. 2. *His goings forth have been from of old, from everlaſting.* Thus were they blinded about the Perſon of Chriſt by miſinterpretations of Scripture Propheſies.

Secondly, Another thing occaſioning their miſtake of Chriſt, was the *outward meanneſs* and deſpicableneſs of his Condition. They expected a pompous Meſſiah, one that ſhould come with State and Glory, becoming the King of *Iſrael.* But when they ſaw him in the Form of a Servant, coming in Poverty, not to be miniſtred unto, but to Miniſter: They utterly rejected him, *We hid as it were, our faces from him, he was deſpiſed, and we eſteemed him not*, Iſa. 53. 3. Nor is it any great wonder theſe ſhould be ſcandalized at his Poverty; When the Diſciples themſelves had ſuch carnal Apprehenſions of his Kingdom, *Mark* 10. 37, 38.

Thirdly, Add to this, *their implicit Faith* in the learned Rabbies and Doctors, who utterly miſled them in this matter, and greatly prejudiced them againſt Chriſt. *Lo* (ſay they) *he ſpeaketh boldly, and they ſay nothing to him. Do the Rulers know indeed that this is the very Chriſt?* They pinn'd their Faith upon the Rulers Sleeves, and ſuffered them to carry it whither they would. This was their ignorance, and theſe its Cauſes.

Thirdly, Let us ſee in the next place, how this diſpoſed them to ſuch Enmity againſt Chriſt. And this it doth three ways;

Firſt, Ignorance diſpoſes Men to Enmity and Oppoſion to Chriſt, by removing thoſe Hindrances that would otherwiſe keep them from it: As Checks and rebukes of Conſcience, by which they are reſtrained from Evil; but Conſcience binding and reproving in the Authority and Vertue of the Law of God; where that Law is not known, there can be no Reproofs, and therefore we truly ſay, That Ignorance is virtually every Sin.

Secondly,

Secondly, Ignorance enſlaves and ſubjects the Soul to the Luſts of Satan; he is *the ruler of the darkneſs of this world*, Eph. 6. 13. There is no work ſo baſe and vile, but an ignorant Man will undertake it.

Thirdly, Nay, which is more, if a Man be ignonant of Chriſt, his Truths, or People; he will not only oppoſe and perſecute, but he will alſo do it conſcientiouſly, (*i. e.*) he will look upon it as his Duty ſo to do, *John* 16. 3. Before the Lord open'd *Paul*'s Eyes, *he verily thought that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Chriſt.* Thus you have a brief account what, and whence their Ignorance was, and how it diſpoſed and prepared them for this dreadful work. Hence we learn,

Inference 1. *How falſely is the Goſpel charged as the cauſe of Diſcord and Trouble in the World.* 'Tis not light, but darkneſs, that makes Men fierce and cruel. As Light encreaſes, ſo doth Peace, *Iſa.* 14. 6, 9. *The Woolf alſo ſhall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard lie down with the Kid; and the Calf and the young Lion, and the Fatling together; and a little Child ſhall lead them; they ſhall not hurt nor diſtroy in all my holy mountain; for the Earth ſhall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea.* What a ſad condition would the World be in without Goſpel-light! All places would be Dens of Rapine and Mountains of Prey. Certainly we owe much of our Civil Liberty, and outward Tranquility to Goſpel-light. If a Sword and Variance at any time follow the Goſpel, it's but an accidental, not a direct and proper effect of it.

Inference 2. *How dreadful is it to oppoſe Chriſt and his Truths knowingly, and with open Eyes?* Chriſt pleads their Ignorance as an Argument to procure their Pardon. *Paul himſelf* was once fill'd with Rage and Madneſs, againſt Chriſt and his Truths. It was well for him he did it ignorantly. Had he gone againſt his Light and Knowledge, there had been little hope of him, 1 *Tim.* 1. *v.* 13. *I was a blaſphemer, a perſecutor, and injurious; but. I obtained mercy, becauſe I did it ignorantly, and in unbelief.* I do not ſay it's ſimply impoſſible for one that knowingly, and maliciouſly oppoſes and perſecutes Chriſt and his People, to be forgiven, but it is not uſual, *Heb.* 6. 4, 5. There are few Inſtances of it.

Inference 3. *What an awful Majeſty ſits upon the brow of Holineſs, that few dare to oppoſe it that ſee it!* There are few or none ſo daringly wicked, to fight againſt it with open Eyes, 1 *Pet.* 3. 13. *Who will harm you whilſt ye are followers of that which is good*, q. d. who dare be ſo hardy to ſet upon known godlineſs, or afflict and wrong the known Friends of it? The true reaſon why many Chriſtians ſpeed ſo bad, is not becauſe they are godly, but becauſe they do not manifeſt the power of godlineſs more than they do. Their lives are ſo like the lives of others, that they are often miſtaken for others. *Cyprian* brings in the Wicked of his time thus ſcoffing at Profeſſors. Behold they that boaſt themſelves to be redeemed from the Tyranny of Satan, and to be dead to the World, how are they overcome by the Luſts of it, as well as other Men; Look as the Poverty and Meanneſs of Chriſt's outward Condition was a ground of their miſtake of him then, ſo the Poverty and means of our Love to God, Heavenly-mindedneſs, and Mortification to this World, is a diſguiſe to Profeſſors, and a cauſe why they are no more owned and honoured in the Conſciences of Men at this day. For Holineſs, manifeſted in its Power, is ſo awfully glorious, that the Conſciences of the Vileſt cannot but honour it, and do obeyſance to it, *Mark* 6. 20. Herod *feared* John, *for he was a juſt man.*

Ecce qui Jactant ſe redemptos à Tyrannide Satanæ, qui prædicant ſe mortuos mundo, nihilominous cupiditatibus vincuntur. *Cyp.*

Inference 4. *The Enemies of Chriſt are Objects of Pity. Alas they are blind, and know not what they do.* It's pity that any other affection than Pity, ſhould ſtir in our Hearts towards them. Were their Eyes but open, they would never do as they do. We ſhould look upon them as the Phyſician doth upon his ſick diſtemper'd Patient. Did they but ſee with the ſame Light you do, they would be as far from hating Chriſt or his Ways as you are, *Simul ac deſinunt ignorare, deſinunt odiſſe*; as ſoon as they ceaſe to be ignorant, they ceaſe to Hate, ſaith *Tertullian.*

Multi mihi occurrunt vino dediti, Libidinoſi, ingrati, multi furiis ambitionis agitati; omnia iſta tam propitionis aſpiciet ſapiens quam ægros ſuos medicus. *Seneca de ira.*

Inference 5. *How needful is it before we engage ourſelves againſt any Perſon or Way, to be well ſatisfied and reſolved that it is a wicked Perſon or Practice that we oppoſe?* You ſee the World generally runs upon a miſtake in this matter: O beware of doing you know not what! For though you do, you know not what, Satan knows what he is doing by you. He blinds your Eyes, and then ſets you to work, knowing that if you ſhould but ſee what you are doing, you would rather die than do it. You may now do you know not what; but you may afterward have time enough to reflect on and lament what you have done. You may now do you know not what, and hereafter you may not know what to do. O beware what you do.

Doct. 2. *That there is forgiveneſs with God, for ſuch as oppoſe Chriſt out of Ignorance.*

If all manner of Sin and Blaſphemy ſhall be forgiven to Men, then this as well as others, *Matt.* 12. 31. We are not with *Theophilact*, to underſtand that place of the *certainty* of Pardon: Much leſs with *Origen*, of the *deſert* of it: Nor yet with *Janſenius*, of the *facility* of it, but rather of the *poſſibility* of forgiveneſs. It ſhall be ſo to ſome; it may be ſo to you: Even thoſe whoſe wicked Hands had crucified Chriſt, receive remiſſion by that Blood they ſhed, *Acts* 2. 23. 38. compared.

I have two things here to do; *Firſt*, To open the nature of the forgiveneſs, and ſhew you what it is. *Secondly*, To evince the poſſibility of it, for ſuch as miſtakingly oppoſe Chriſt.

For the *Firſt*, *Fogiveneſs of God's gracious diſcharge of a believing penitent Sinner, from the guilt of all his ſin, for Chriſt's ſake.*

It's God's diſcharge: There is indeed *fraternal* forgiveneſs, by which one Man forgives another; ſo far as he is intereſſed in the wrong, *Luke* 6 37. There is alſo a *miniſterial* forgiveneſs, whereby the Miniſter of Chriſt, as his Mouth, and in his Name, declares the Pardon, or miniſterially applies the promiſes of Pardon to penitent Offenders, *John* 20 23. But none can abſolutely and properly forgive ſin, but God only, *Mark* 2. 7. The primary and principal wrong is done to them, *Pſalm* 51. 4. *Againſt thee, thee only* (*i. e.*) thee mainly or eſpecially, *have I ſinned.* Hence Sins are *metonymically* called debts, debts to God, *Matt.* 6. 12. Not that we owe them to God, or ought to ſin againſt him; but as a pecuniary debt obliges him that owes it, to the penalty, if he ſatisfie not for it; ſo do our ſins. And who can diſcharge the Debtor, but the Creditor?

It's a gracious act or discharge. I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgression for mine own name sake, Isa. 43. 25. And yet sin is not so forgiven, as that God expects no satisfaction at all; but as expecting none from us, because God hath provided a Surety for us, from whom he is satisfied, *Eph.* 1. 7. *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his Grace.*

It's a gracious discharge from the gilt of sin. Guilt is that which Pardon properly deals with. Guilt is an obligation to Punishment. Pardon is the dissolving that Obligation. Guilt is a Chain with which Sinners are bound and fettered by the Law. Pardon is that *Aquafortis* that eats it asunder, and makes the Prisoner a Free-man. The pardoned Soul is a discharged Soul, *Rom.* 8. 33. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who shall condemn? It's Christ that died.*

It's God's discharge of a believing penitent sinner. Infidelity and Impenitency, are not only Sins in themselves, but such sins as bind fast all other Sins upon the Soul. *By him all that believe, are justified from all things*, Acts 10. 43. So *Acts* 3. 19. *Repent therefore, that your sins may be blotted out.* This is the method in which God dispenseth pardon to sinners. Lastly,

It is for Christ's sake we are discharged; he is the meritorious cause of our remission. *As God for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you*, Eph. 4. 32. It's his Blood alone that meritoriously procures our discharge.

This is a brief and true accout of the nature of forgiveness.

Secondly, Now to evince the possibility of forgiveness, for such as ignorantly oppose Christ. Let these things be weigh'd.

First, Why should any poor Soul that is now humbled for its enmity to Christ in the days of Ignorance, question the possibility of forgiveness: When this Effect doth not exceed the power of the Cause; nay, when there is more efficacy in the Blood of Christ the meritorious Cause, than is in this Effect of it? There's power enough in that Blood not only to pardon thy sins, but the sins of the whole World, were it actually applied, 1 *John*, 2. 2. There is not only a sufficiency, but also a redundancy of merit, in that precious Blood. Surely then thy Enmity to Christ, especially before thou knewest him, may not look like an unpardonable Iniquity in thine Eyes.

Secondly, And as this Sin exceeds not the Power of the meritorious cause of Forgiveness; *so neither is it any where excluded from pardon, by any word of God.* Nay, such is the extensiveness of the Promise to believing Penitents, that this case is manifestly included, and Forgiveness tendred to thee in the Promises, *Isa.* 55. 7. *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* Many such extensive Promises there are in the Scriptures. And there is not one Parenthesis in all those blessed Pages, in which this case is excepted.

Thirdly, And it's yet more satisfactory that God hath already actually forgiven such Sinners; and that which he hath done, he may again do. Yea, therefore he hath done it to some, and those eminent for their enmity to Christ; that others may be encouraged to hope for the same Mercy when they also shall be in the same manner humbled for it. Take one famous Instance of many; it's that of *Paul* in 1 *Tim.* 1. 13. 16. *Who was before a blasphemer, a persecutor and injurious: But I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief*—— *howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to everlasting Life.* Its no small encouragement to a sick Man, to hear of some that have been recover'd out of the same Disease, and that prevailing in an higher degree, than in himself.

Fourthly, Moreover, it is encouraging to consider, *that when God hath cut off others in the way of their sin, he hath hitherto spared thee.* What speaks this but a purpose of Mercy to the Soul? Thou should'st account the *long-suffering* of God thy *Salvation*, 2 *Pet.* 3. 15. Had he smitten thee in the way of thy sin and enmity to Christ, what hope had remained? But in that he hath not only spared thee, but also given thee a Heart ingenuously ashamed, and humbled for thy evils; doth not this speak Mercy for thee; Surely it looks like a gracious design of love to thy Soul.

Inference 1. And is there forgiveness with God for such as have been Enemies to Christ, his Truths, and People? *Then certainly there is pardon and mercy for the friends of God, who involuntarily fall into sin, by the surprizals of temptation, and are broken for it as ingenuous Children for offending a good Father.* Can any doubt, if God have pardon for such Enemies, he hath none for Children? If he have forgiveness for such as shed the Blood of Christ with wicked Hands, hath he not much more mercy and forgiveness for such as love Christ, and are more afflicted for their sin against him, than all the other Troubles they have in the World? Doubt it not, but he that receives *Enemies* into his Bosom, will much more receive and embrace *Children* tho' offending ones.

How pensive do the dear Children of God sometimes sit, after their lapse, into Sin? Will God ever pardon this? Will he be reconciled again! May I hope his Face shall be to me as in former times? Pensive Soul, if thou didst but know the largeness, tenderness, freeness of that Grace which yearns over Enemies, and hath given forth thousands, and ten thousands of Pardons to the worst of Sinners; thou wouldst not sink at that rate.

Inference 2. Is there pardon with God for Enemies; *how inexcusable then are all they that persist and perish in their Enmity to Christ!* Sure their destruction is of themselves. Mercy is offered to them if they will receive it. Proclamation is made in the Gospel, That if there be any among the Enemies of Christ, who repent of what they have been, and done against him; and are now unfeignedly willing to be reconciled upon the word of a King, he shall find Mercy. But *God shall wound the Head of the Enemies, and the hairy scalp of of such a one as goeth on still in his trespasses*, Psal. 68. 21. *If he turn not, he will whet his sword, he hath bent his bow and made it ready; he hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors*, Psalm 7. 12. *Isa.* 55. 7.

This lays the Blood of every Man that perishes in his enmity to Christ, at his own door. And vindicates the righteousness of God in the severest strokes of wrath upon them. This also will be a cutting thought to their hearts eternally. I might once have had pardon, and I refused it. The Gospel Trumpet sounded a Parly. Fair and gracious Terms were offered, but I rejected them.

Inference

Inference 3. Is there Mercy with God, and Forgiveneſs, even for his worſt Enemies, upon their Submiſſion; *how unlike to God then are all implacable Spirits!* Some there are that cannot bring their Hearts to forgive an Enemy: to whom Revenge is ſweeter than Life, 1 *Sam.* 24. 16. *If a Man find his Enemy, will he let him go?* This is Hell Fire, a Fire that never goeth out; how little do ſuch poor Creatures conſider, if God ſhould deal by them, as they do by others; what Words could expreſs the Miſery of their Condition! It's a ſad *Sin*, and a ſad *Sign*, a Character of a wretched State, wherever it appears. Thoſe that have found Mercy, ſhould be ready to ſhew Mercy: and they that expect Mercy themſelves, ſhould not deny it others.

Eſt vindicta bonum vitâ jucundius ipſâ.

This brings us upon the third and laſt Obſervation, *viz.*

Doct. 3. *That to forgive Enemies, and beg Forgiveneſs for them, is the true Character and Property of the Chriſtian Spirit.*

Thus did Chriſt; *Father, forgive them.* And thus did *Stephen* in Imitation of Chriſt, *Acts* 7. 59, 60. *And they ſtoned* Stephen, *calling upon God, and ſaying, Lord Jeſus receive my Spirit: and he kneeled down, and cried with a loud Voice, Lord, lay not this Sin to their Charge.* This ſuits with the Rule of Chriſt, *Matth.* 5. 44, 45. *But I ſay unto you, love your Enemies, bleſs them that curſe you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which deſpitefully uſe you and perſecute you: that ye may be the Children of God your Father which is in Heaven.*

Here I ſhall firſt open the nature of this Duty, and ſhew you what a forgiving Spirit is; and then the Excellency of it: how well it becomes all that call themſelves Chriſtians.

First, Let us enquire what this Chriſtian Forgiveneſs is. And that the nature of it may the better appear, I ſhall ſhew you both what it is not, and what it is.

First, It conſiſts not in a *Stoical Inſenſibility of Wrongs and Injuries.* God hath not made Men as inſenſible ſtupid Blocks, that have no Senſe or Feeling of what is done to them. Nor hath he made a Law inconſiſtent with their very Natures that are to be governed by it. But allows us a tender Senſe of natural Evils, though he will not allow us to revenge them by Moral Evils. Nay, the more deep and tender our Reſentments of Wrongs and Injuries are, the more excellent is our Forgiveneſs of them: ſo that a forgiving Spirit doth not exclude Senſe of Injuries, but the Senſe of Injuries graces the Forgiveneſs of them.

Secondly, Chriſtian Forgiveneſs is not *a politick Concealment of our Wrath and Revenge, becauſe it will be a Reproach to diſcover it; or becauſe we want Opportunity to vent it.* This is Carnal Policy, not Chriſtian Meekneſs. So far from being the Mark of a gracious Spirit, that it's apparently the Sign of a vile Nature. It is not Chriſtianity to repoſe, but depoſe Injuries.

Manet alta mente repoſtum.

Thirdly, Nor is it that Moral Vertue, for which we are beholding to an eaſier and better Nature, and the help of Moral Rules and Documents. There are certain Vertues attainable without the Change of Nature, which they call *Homilitical Vertues*, becauſe they greatly adorn and beautify Nature; ſuch as Temperance, Patience, Juſtice, *&c.* theſe are of ſingular Uſe to conſerve Peace and Order in the World. And without them (as one aptly ſpeaks) the World would ſoon break up, and its Civil Societies disband. But yet tho' theſe are the Ornaments of Nature, they do not argue the Change of Nature. All Graces in the Exerciſes of them, involve a Reſpect to God. And for the Being of them, they are not by natural Acquiſition, but ſupernatural Infuſion.

Fourthly, and laſtly, Chriſtian Forgiveneſs is *not an injurious giving up of our Rights and Properties, to the Luſts of every one that hath a mind to invade them.* No; theſe we may lawfully defend and preſerve, and are bound ſo to do; though if we cannot defend them legally, we muſt not avenge our Wrongs unchriſtianly. This is not Chriſtian Forgiveneſs. But then poſitively;

It is a Chriſtian Lenity, or Gentleneſs of Mind; not retaining, but freely paſſing by the Injuries done to us; in Obedience to the Command of God.

It is a Lenity, or Gentleneſs of Mind. The Grace of God demulces the angry Stomach; calms the tumultuous Paſſions; new moulds our ſowre Spirits, and makes them benign, gentle and eaſy to be intreated, *Gal.* 5. 22. *The Fruit of the Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace, Long-ſuffering, Gentleneſs*, &c.

This gracious Lenity *inclines the Chriſtian to paſs by Injuries: So to paſs them by, as neither to retain them revengefully in the Mind, or requite them when we have Opportunity with the Hand.* Yea, and that *freely*, not by Conſtraint, becauſe we cannot avenge our ſelves, but willingly. We abhor to do it when we can. So that as a Carnal Heart thinks Revenge its Glory, the gracious Heart is content that Forgiveneſs ſhould be his Glory. I will be even with him, ſaith Nature. I will be above him, ſaith Grace. It is his Glory to paſs over Tranſgreſſion, *Prov.* 19. 11.

And *this it doth in Obedience to the Command of God:* Their own Nature inclines them another way. *The Spirit that is in us luſteth to Envy, but he giveth more Grace*, James 4. 5. It luſteth to Revenge, but the Fear of God repreſſes thoſe Motions. Such Conſiderations as theſe God hath forbidden me. Yea, and God hath forgiven me, as well as forbidden me; they prevail upon him, when Nature urges to revenge the Wrong. *Be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Chriſt's ſake hath forgiven you*, Eph. 4. 32. This is Forgiveneſs in a Chriſtian Senſe.

Secondly, And that this is excellent, and ſingularly becoming the Profeſſion of Chriſt, is evident. In as much as,

This ſpeaks your Religion excellent, that can mould your Hearts into that heavenly Frame to which they are ſo averſe, yea, contrarily diſpoſed by Nature. It is the Glory of Pagan Morality that it can *abſcondere vitia*, hide and cover Mens Luſts and Paſſions. But the Glory of Chriſtianity lies in this, that it can *abſcindere vitia*, not hide, but deſtroy, and really mortify the Luſts of Nature. Would Chriſtians but live up to the excellent Principles of their Religion, Chriſtianity ſhall be no more outvied by heatheniſh Morality. The greateſt Chriſtian ſhall be no more challenged to imitate *Socrates*, if he can. We ſhall utterly ſpoil that proud Boaſt, That the Faith of Chriſtians is out-done by the Infidelity of Heathens. O Chriſtians, yield not the Day to Heathens. Let all the World ſee the true Greatneſs, Heavenlineſs, and Excellency of your repreſented Pattern; and by true Mortification of your corrupt Natures, enforce an Acknow-

Non præſtat fides, quod præſtitit infidelitas. *Cecilius in Minucius.*

knowledgment from the World, that a greater than *Socrates* is here. He that is really a meek, humble, patient, heavenly Christian, wins this Glory to his Religion, that it can do more than all other Principles and Rules in the World. In nothing were the most accomplished Heathens more defective than this forgiving of Injuries. It was a thing they could not understand, or if they did, could never bring their Hearts to it; witness that Rule of their great *Tully*. *It's the first Office of Justice* (saith he) *to hurt no Man, except first provoked by an Injury*. The Addition of that Exception spoiled his excellent Rule.

Veritas Christianorum pulchrior est Helenâ Græcorum.

On which Rule Lactantius *thus speaks*. O quam simplicem veramque sententiam duorum verborum adjectione corrupit!

But now Christianity teaches, and some Christians have attained it, to receive Evil, and return Good, 1 *Cor.* 4. 12, 13. *Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we intreat.* This certainly is that Meekness wrought in us by the Wisdom that is from above, *James* 3. 17.

This makes a Man sit sure in the Consciences of others, who with *Saul* must acknowledge, when they see themselves so out-done, *thou art more righteous than I*, 1 Sam. 24. 16, 17. had we been so injured, and had such Opportunities to revenge them, we should never have passed them by, as these Men did.

This impresses and stamps the very Image of God upon the Creature, and makes us like our heavenly Father, who doth good to his Enemies, and sends down Showers of outward Blessings upon them, that pour out Floods of Wickedness daily to provoke him, *Matth.* 5. 44, 45. In a word, this Christian Temper of Spirit gives a Man the true Possession and Enjoyment of himself. So that our Breasts shall be as the pacifick Sea, smooth and pleasant, when others are as the raging Sea, foaming, and casting up Mire and Dirt.

Inference 1. Hence we clearly infer, *That Christian Religion exalted in its Power, is the greatest Friend to the Peace and Tranquility of States and Kingdoms.* Nothing is more opposite to the true Christian Spirit than implacable Fierceness, Strife, Revenge, Tumults and Uproars. It teaches Men to do Good, and receive Evil; to receive Evil, and return Good. *The Wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated: full of mercy, and good Fruits; without Partiality, and without Hypocrisy: and the Fruit of Righteousness is sown in Peace of them that make Peace*, James 3. 17, 18.

The Church is a Dove for Meekness, *Cant.* 6. 9. When the World grows full of Strife, Christians then grow weary of the World; and sigh out the *Psalmist*'s Request, *O that I had the Wings of a Dove, that I might fly away and be at rest.* *Strigelius* desired to die, that he might be freed *ab implacabilibas odiis Theologorum*, from the implacable Strifes of contending Divines.

The Rule by which they are to walk is, *if it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all Men. Dearly beloved, avenge not your selves, but rather give place unto Wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay it, saith the Lord*, Rom. 12. 18, 19. It is not Religion, but Lusts that make the World so unquiet, *James* 4. 1, 2. Not Godliness, but Wickedness, that makes Men bite and devour one another. One of the first Effects of the Gospel is to civilize those Places where it comes, and settle Order and Peace among Men. How great a Mistake and Evil then is it to cry out, when Atheism and Irreligion have broken the Civil Peace; this is the Fruit of Religion; this is the Effect of the Gospel. Happy would it be if Religion did more obtain in all Nations. It is the greatest Friend in the World to their Tranquility and Prosperity.

Inference 2. *How dangerous a thing is it to abuse and wrong meek and forgiving Christians?* Their Patience and Easiness to forgive often invites Injury, and encourages vile Spirits to insult and trample upon them; but if Men would seriously consider it, there's nothing in the World should more scare and affright them from such Practices than this. You may abuse and wrong them, they must not avenge themselves, nor repay Evil for Evil; true, but because they do not, the Lord will; even the Lord to whom they commit the Matter; and he will do it to purpose, except ye repent.

Be patient therefore, Brethren, unto the coming of the Lord, James 5. 7. Will ye stand to that Issue? Had you rather indeed have to do with God than with Men? When the Jews put Christ to Death, *he committed himself to him that judgeth righteously*, 1 Pet. 2. 22, 23. And did that People get any thing by that? Did not the Lord severely avenge the Blood of Christ on them and their Children? Yea, do not they and their Children groan under the doleful Effects of it to this Day? If God undertakes (as he always doth) the Cause of his abused, meek and peaceable People; he will be sure to avenge it seven fold more than they could. His little Finger will be heavier than their Loins. You will get nothing by that.

Inference 3. Lastly, *Let us all imitate our Pattern Christ, and labour for meek forgiving Spirits.* I shall only propose Two Inducements to it. The *Honour of Christ*, and *your own Peace*. Two dear Things indeed to a Christian. His Glory is more than your Life, and all that you enjoy in this World. O do not expose it to the Scorn and Derision of his Enemies. Let them not say, how is Christ a Lamb, when his Followers are Lions? How is the Church a Dove, that smites and scratches like a Bird of Prey? Consult also the Quiet of your own Spirits. What is Life worth, without the Comfort of Life? What Comfort can you have in all that you do possess in the World, as long as you have not the Possession of your own Souls? If your Spirits be full of Tumult and Revenge, the Spirit of Christ will grow a Stranger to you. That Dove delights in clean and quiet Breasts. O then imitate Christ in this Excellency also.

SER-

SERMON XXXI.

Opens the second excellent Word of Christ upon the Cross.

JOHN XIX. 27.

Then saith he to the Disciple, Behold thy Mother.

WE now pass to the Consideration of the Second memorable and instructive Word of our Lord JESUS CHRIST upon the Cross, con-in'd in this Scripture. Wherein he hath left us excellent Pattern for the Discharge of our rela-ve Duties. It may be well said, the Gospel makes e best Husbands and Wives, the best Parents and hildren, the best Masters and Servants in the Vorld; seeing it furnishes them with the most ex-ilent *Precepts*, and proposes the best *Patterns*. Here e have the Pattern of Jesus Christ presented to all racious Children for their Imitation, teaching them ow to acquit themselves towards their Parents, ac-ording to the Laws of Nature and Grace. Christ as not only subject and obedient to his Parents hilst he lived, but manifested his tender Care even hilst he hanged in the Torments of Death upon e Cross. *Then saith he to the Disciple, Behold thy Mother.*

The Words contain an affectionate Recommen-ation of his distressed Mother to the Care of a dear Disciple, a Bosom Friend; wherein let us consider he Design, Manner, and Season of this Recommen-ation.

First, The Design and End of it, which doubtless was to manifest his tender Respects and Care for his Mother, who was now in a most distressed comfort-less State. For now was *Simeon*'s Prophecy, *Luke* 2. 35. fulfilled, in the Trouble and Anguish that fill'd her Soul. Yea, a Sword also shall pierce thro' thine own Soul, that the Thoughts of many Hearts may be revealed. Her Soul was pierced for him, both as she was his Mother, and as she was a Mystical Member of him, her Head, her Lord. And therefore he commends her to the beloved Disciple that lay in his Bosom, saying, *Behold thy Mother*, (i. e.) let her be to thee as thine own Mother. Let thy Love to me be now manifested in thy tender Care for her.

Secondly, The Manner of his recommending her is both affectionate and mutual. It's very affection-ate and moving. *Behold thy Mother*, q. d. *John*, I am now dying; leaving all Human Society and Relations; and entring into a new State, where neither the Duties of natural Relations are exercised, nor the Pleasures and Comforts of them enjoyed. It's a State of Dominion over Angels and Men, not of Subjection and Obedience; this I now leave to thee. Upon thee do I devolve both the Honour and Duty of being in my Stead and Room to her, as to all dear and tender Care over her.

John, behold thy Mother; and as it's affectionate, so it's mutual, *verse* 26. And to his Mother he said, *Woman, behold thy Son*; not Mother, but Woman, intimating not only the Change of State and Conditions with him, but also the Bequest he was making of her to the Disciple with whom she was to live as a Mother with a Son.

And all this he designs as a Pattern to others.

Thirdly, The Season or Time when his Care for his Mother so eminently manifested it self; was when his Departure was at hand, and he could no longer be a Comfort to her by his bodily Presence; yea, his Love and Care then manifested themselves, when he was full of Anguish to the very Brim, both in his Soul and Body, yet all this makes him not in the least unmindful of so dear a Relation. Hence the Doctrinal Note is,

Doct. *That Christ's tender Care of his Mother, even in the Time of his greatest Distress; is an excellent Pattern for all gracious Children to the End of the World.*

There are Three great Foundations or Bonds of Relation on which all Family Government depends. Husbands and Wives, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants. The Lord hath planted in the Souls of Men Affections suitable to these Relations, and to his People he hath given Grace to regulate those Affections appointed, Duties to exercise those Graces, and Seasons to discharge those Duties. So that as in the Motion of a Wheel every Spoke takes its Turn, and bears a Stress; in like manner in the whole Round of a Christian's Conversation, every Affection, Grace and Duty at one Season or other comes to be exercised.

But yet Grace hath not so far prevailed in the sanctification of any Men's Affections, but that there will be excesses of defects in the exercise of them towards our Relations, yea, and in this the most eminent Saints have been eminently defective. But the Pattern I set before you this day, is a perfect Pattern. As the Church finds him the best of Husbands, so to his Parents he was the best of Sons; and being the best and most perfect, is therefore the Rule and Measure of all others. Christ knew how those Corruptions we draw from our Parents, are returned in their bitter Fruits upon them again to the wounding of their very Hearts; and there-

Optimus in unoquoque genere est regula & mensura cæterorum.

therefore it pleaſed him to commend Obedience and Love to Parents in his own Example to us.

It was anciently a Proverb among the Heathen, *in ſola Sparta, expedit ſeneſcere*, It's good to be an old Man or Woman only in *Sparta*. The ground of it was the ſtrict Laws that were among the *Spartans* to puniſh the rebellions and diſobedience of Children to their aged Parents. And ſhall it not be good to be an old Father or Mother in *England*, where the Goſpel of Chriſt is preached, and ſuch an Argument as this now ſet before you urged; an Argument which the Heathen World was never acquainted with? Shall Parents here be forced to complain with the Eagle in the Fable, that they are ſmitten to the Heart, by an Arrow winged with their own Feathers. Or as a Tree rived in pieces by the Wedges that were made of its own Body? God forbid.

To prevent ſuch ſad occaſions of Complaints as theſe, I deſire all that ſuſtain the relation of Children, into whoſe hands Providence ſhall caſt this Diſcourſe, ſeriouſly to ponder this Example of Chriſt, propoſed for their imitation in this Point. Wherein we ſhall firſt conſider what Duties belong to the Relation of Children: Secondly, how Chriſt's Example enforces thoſe Duties, and then ſuitably apply it.

Firſt, Let us examine what Duties pertain to the relation of Children. And they are as truly as commonly branched out into the following Particulars.

Firſt, *Fear and Reverence* are due from Children to their Parents, by the expreſs Command of God, *Lev.* 19. 3. Ye ſhall fear every Man his Mother and his Father. The Holy Ghoſt purpoſely inverts the Order, and puts the Mother firſt, becauſe ſhe by reaſon of her blandiſhments, and fond indulgence is moſt ſubject to the irreverence and contempt of Children. God hath cloathed Parents with his Authority. They are intruſted by God with them, and are accountable to him for the Souls and Bodies of their Children. And he expects that you reverence them, although in reſpect of outward Eſtate, or Honour, you be never ſo much above them. *Joſeph*, though Lord of *Egypt*, bowed down before his aged Father, with his Face to the Earth, *Gen.* 48. 12. *Solomon*, the moſt magnificent and glorious King that ever ſway'd a Scepter, when his Mother came to ſpeak with him for *Adonijah*, he roſe up to meet her, and bowed himſelf to her, and cauſed a Seat to be ſet for the King's Mother, and ſet her upon his right hand, 2 *Kings* 2. 19.

Secondly, *Dear and tender Love* is due from Children to their Parents. And to ſhew how ſtrong and dear that Love ought to be, it's joyned with the Love you have for your own Lives. As appears in that Injunction to deny both for Chriſt's ſake, *Matth.* 10. 37. The Bonds of Nature are ſtrong and direct betwixt Parents and Children. What is a Child but a Piece of the Parent wrapt up in another Skin? O the Care, the Coſt, the Pity, the Tenderneſs, the Pains, the Fears they have expreſt for you. It's worſe than Heatheniſh Ingratitude, not to return Love for Love. This filial Love is not only in it ſelf a Duty, but to be the Root or Spring of all your Duties to them.

Thirdly, *Obedience* to their Commands is due to them, by the Lord's ſtrict and ſpecial Command, Eph. 6. 1. *Children obey your Parents in the Lord, for this is right; Honour thy Father and thy Mother, which is the firſt Commandment with promiſe.* Filial Obedience is not only founded upon the poſitive Law of God, but alſo upon the Law of Nature. For though the Subjection of Servants to Maſters came in by Sin, yet the Subjection of Children to Parents is due to them by natural Right, therefore ſaith the Apoſtle, *This is right*, (i. e.) right both according to natural and poſitive Law. However this Subjection and Obedience is not abſolute and univerſal. God has not diveſted himſelf of his own Authority, to cloath a Parent with it. Your Obedience to them muſt be *in the Lord*, (i. e.) in ſuch things as they require you to do in the Lord's Authority. In things conſonant to that divine and holy Will, to which they, as well as you muſt be ſubject; and therein you muſt obey them. Yea, even the Wickedneſs of a Parent exempts not from Obedience, where his command is not ſo. Nor on the other ſide, muſt the Holineſs of a Parent ſway you, where his Commands and God's are oppoſite. In the former caſe, the *Canoniſts* have determined, that the Command muſt be diſtinguiſh'd from the Perſon. In the latter, it's a good Rule. My Parents muſt be loved, but my God muſt be preferred.

Officium à perſona diſcernendum. Amandus genitor, ſed præponendus Creator.

Yield your ſelves therefore chearfully to obey all that which they lawfully enjoin, and take heed that black Character, fixed on the Heathens, who know not God, be not found upon you, *diſobedience to Parents*, Rom. 1. 30. Remember, your Diſobedience to their juſt Commands riſes higher, much higher, than an Affront to their Perſons and Authority; it's Diſobedience to God himſelf whoſe Commands ſecond, and ſtrengthen theirs upon you.

Fourthly, *Submiſſion to their Diſcipline*, and rebukes, is alſo your Duty, *Heb.* 12. 9. *We had Fathers of our own fleſh that corrected us, and we gave them reverence.* Parents ought not to abuſe their Authority. Cruelty in them is a great Sin, but Wrath and Rebellion in a Child, againſt his Parents, is monſtrous. It's ſtoried of *Ælian*, that having been abroad, at his return, his Father asked him what he had learned ſince he went from him; he anſwer'd, you will know ſhortly. I have learned to bear your Anger quietly, and ſubmit to what you pleaſe to inflict. Two Conſiderations ſhould eſpecially mould others into the like Frame, eſpecially to their godly Parents. The *end* for which, and the manner in which they manifeſt their Anger to their Children. Their end is to ſave your Souls from Hell. They judge it better for you to hear the Voice of their Anger, than the terrible Voice of the Wrath of God. To feel their Hand than his. They know if you fall into the Hands of the living God, you will be handled in another manner.

Sævitia patris in filios grave peccatum, ſed ira filii in patrem, grave monſtrum.

And for the manner, in which they rebuke and chaſten, it is with Grief in their Hearts, and Tears in their Eyes. Alas, it's no delight to them to croſs, vex, or afflict you. Were is not meer Conſcience of their Duty to God, and tender Love to your Souls, they would neither chide nor ſmite. And when they do, how do they afflict themſelves, in afflicting you! When their Faces are full of Anger, their Bowels are full of Compaſſion for you; and you have no more reaſon to blame them for what they do, than if they cry out, and violently ſnatch at you, when they ſee you ready to fall from the top of a Rock.

Fifthly, *Faithfulneſs* to all their Intereſts due to them by the natural and poſitive Law of God. What in you lies, you are bound to promote, not to waſte and ſcatter their Subſtance. To *aſſiſt*, not to *defraud* them. Whoſo robbeth his Father or Mother, and ſaith, it is no Tranſgreſſion, the ſame is a Companion of a Deſtroyer, *Pro.* 28. 24. This, ſaith one, as far excels your wronging another as Parricide is a greater Crime than Man-ſlaughter, or as *Reuben*'s Inceſt, was beyond common Fornication. God never meant

meant you ſhould grow up about your Parents as Suckers about a Tree to impoveriſh the Root. But for a Child, out of a covetouſneſs after what his Parents have, ſecretly to wiſh their death, is a Sin ſo monſtrous, as ſhould not be once named, much leſs found, among Perſons profeſſing Chriſtianity. To deſire their Death, from whom you had your life, is unnatural Wickedneſs, to diſpoſe of their Goods, much more of your ſelves without their Conſent is (ordinarily) the greateſt injuſtice to them. Children are obliged to defend the Eſtate and Perſons of their Parents with the hazard of their own. As Arrows are in the hand of a mighty Man, ſo are Children of the youth. Happy is the Man that hath his Quiver full of them. They ſhall not be aſhamed, but they ſhall ſpake with the Enemy in the Gates. *Pſal.* 127. 5.

Filius ante diem patrios inquirit in annos.

Sixthly, And more eſpecially, *requital* of all that Love, Care, and Pains they have been at for you, is your Duty ſo far as God inables you, and thoſe things are requitable, 1 *Tim.* 5. 4. *Let them learn to ſhew piety at home, and requite their parents.* The word is ἀντιπελαγεῖν and ſignifies to play the Stork, to Imitate that Creature of whom it's ſaid, that the young do tenderly feed the old ones, when they are no longer able to fly abroad and provide for themſelves. Hence thoſe that want Bowels of natural Affection to their Relations, are ſaid to be ἄστοργοι, *Rom.* 1. 30. worſe than Storks. O 'tis a ſhame that Birds and Beaſts ſhould ſhew more Tenderneſs to their Dams, than Children to their Parents.

It's a ſaying frequent among the Jews, A Child ſhould rather labour at the Mill than ſuffer his Parents to want. And to the ſame ſenſe is that other ſaying, Your Parents muſt be ſupplied by you, if you have it; if not, you ought to beg for them, rather than ſee them periſh. It was both the comfort and honour of *Joſeph*, that God made him an Inſtrument of ſo much ſuccour and comfort to his aged Father, and diſtreſſed Family, *Gen.* 47. 13. And you are alſo to know, that what you do for them, is not in the way of an Alms; or common Charity. For the Apoſtle ſaith, it is but your requiting them, and that's Juſtice, not Charity. And it can never be a full requital. Indeed the Apoſtle tells us, 2 *Cor.* 12. 14. That Parents lay up for their Children, and not Children for the Parents, and ſo they ought, but ſure, if Providence blaſt them, and bleſs you, and honourable Maintenance is their due. Even Chriſt himſelf took care for his Mother.

Vel in priſtrino laborare filium debere, ut parentibus ſubveniat.
Honorandi parentes ſi habes, ſi non habes potiùs mendicandum.

Secondly, You have had a brief Account of the Duties of this Relation, next let us conſider how Chriſt's Example, who was ſo ſubject to them in his Life, *Luke* 2. 51. and ſo careful to provide at his death, enforces all thoſe Duties upon Children, eſpecially upon gracious Children. And this it doth two ways, both as it hath the obliging Power of a Law; and as he himſelf will one day ſit in Judgment to take an account how we have imitated him in theſe Things.

Firſt, Chriſt's Example in this hath the Force and Power of a Law, yea, a Law of Love, or a Law lovingly conſtraining you to an imitation of him. If Chriſt himſelf will be your Pattern. If God will be pleaſed to take Relations like yours, and go before you in the diſcharge of your relative Duties; oh how much are you obliged to imitate him and tread in all his Footſteeps! This was by him intended as a Preſident or Pattern to facilitate and direct your Duties.

Secondly, He will come to take an account how you have anſwered the Pattern of Obedience, and tender Care he ſet before you in the days of his Fleſh. What will the Diſobedient plead in that day? He that heard the Groans of an afflicted Father or Mother, will now come to reckon with the Diſobedient Child for them. And the glorious Example of Chriſt's own Obedience and Tenderneſs of his Relations, will in that day condemn and aggravate, ſilence and ſhame ſuch wretched Children, as ſhall ſtand guilty before his Bar.

Inference 1. Hath Jeſus Chriſt given ſuch a famous Pattern of Obedience and Tenderneſs to Parents. *Then there can be nothing of Chriſt in ſtubborn, rebellious, and careleſs Children, that regard not the good or comfort of their Parents.* The Children of Diſobedience cannot be the Children of God. If Providence direct this to the Hand of any that are ſo, my Heart's Deſire and Prayer for them is, that the Lord would ſearch their Souls by it, and diſcover their Evils to them; whileſt they ſhall read the following Queries.

Firſt Query, Have you not been guilty of ſlighting your Parents by irreverent Words or Carriages; the old Man or Woman. To ſuch I commend the Conſideration of that Scripture, *Prov.* 30. 17. which methinks ſhould be to them as the Hand-writing that appear'd upon the Plaiſter of the Wall, to *Belteſhazar*. *The eye that mocketh at his Father, and diſpiſeth to obey his Mother: The Ravens of the Valley ſhall pick it out, and the young Eagles ſhall eat it.* That is, they ſhall be brought to an untimely end, and the Birds of the Air ſhall eat that Eye, that had never ſeen but for that Parent that was deſpiſed by it.

It may be you are vigorous and young, they decayed, and wrinkled with Age. But ſaith the Holy Ghoſt, *Deſpiſe not thy Mother when ſhe is old*, Prov. 23. 22. Or when ſhe is wrinkled, as the Hebrew ſignifies. It may be you are rich, they poor; own and honour them in their Poverty, and deſpiſe them not. God will requite it with his hand if you do.

Second Query, Have you not been Diſobedient to the Commands of Parents? A Son of *Belial* is a Son of Wrath, if God give not Repentance to Life. Is not this the black Brand ſet upon the Heathens, *Rom.* 1. 30. Have not many repented this upon a Ladder, with an Halter about their Necks? Wo to him that makes a Father or Mother, complain as the Tree in the Fable, that they are cloven aſunder with the Wedges that are cut out of their own Bodies.

Third Query, Have you not riſen up rebelliouſly againſt, and hated your Parents for chaſtening your Bodies, to ſave your Souls from Hell? Some Children (ſaith one) will not take that from a Parent, which Beaſts, yea, and Salvage Beaſts too; Bears and Lyons will take from their Keepers. What is this but to reſiſt an Ordinance of God for your Good? And in rebelling againſt them to rebel againſt the Lord? Well if they do not, God will take the Rod into his own Hand; and him you ſhall not reſiſt.

Fourth Query, Have you not been unjuſt to your Parents, and defrauded them? Firſt help to make them poor, and then deſpiſe them becauſe they are poor. O horrid Wickedneſs! What a complicated Evil is this! Thou art in the Language of the Scripture a Companion with Deſtroyers, *Prov.* 28. 24. This is the worſt of Theft in God's Account. You think you may make bold with them, but how bold do you make with Conſcience, and the Command of God?

Fifth Query, Are you not, or have you not been ungrateful to Parents? Leaving them to ſhift for themſelves in thoſe Straights you have help'd to bring them

them into. O conſider it, Children, this is an Evil which God will ſurely avenge, except ye repent. What! to be hardned againſt thine own Fleſh! To be cruel to thine own Parents, that with ſo much Tenderneſs fed thee, when elſe thou had'ſt periſhed! I remember *Luther* gives us a Story of one (and oh that it might be a warning to all that hear it) who having made over all he had to his Son, reſerving only a maintenance for himſelf; at laſt his Son deſpiſed him, and grudg'd him the very Meat he eat; and one day the Father coming in when the Son and his Wife were at Dinner upon a Gooſe, they ſhuffled the Meat under the Table: But ſee the remarkable Vengeance of God, upon this ungracious, unnatural Son; the Gooſe was turn'd into a monſtrous Toad which ſeiz'd upon this vile Wretch and kill'd him. If any of you be guilty of theſe Evils, to humble you for them; and reclaim them for you, I deſire theſe ſix Conſiderations may be laid to heart.

Firſt, That the Effects of your Obedience, or Diſobedience will ſtick upon you and yours to many Generations. If you be obedient Children in the Lord, both you and yours may reap the Fruits of that your Obedience in multitudes of ſweet Mercies for many Generations. So runs the Promiſe, *Eph.* 6. 23. *Honour thy Father and Mother, which is the firſt commandment with promiſe, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayeſt live long on the earth.* You know what an Eye of Favour God caſt upon the *Recabites* for this, *Jer.* 35. 8. *from the 14th to the 20th Verſe*: And as his Bleſſings are by promiſe entailed on the Obedient, ſo his Curſe upon the Diſobedient, Prov. 20. 20. *Whoſo curſeth his Father or his Mother; his Lamp ſhall be put out in obſcure darkneſs*; (i. e.) the Lamp of his Life quench'd by Death, yea, ſay others, and his Soul alſo by the blackneſs of darkneſs in Hell.

Secondly, Though other Sins do, this Sin ſeldom eſcapes exemplary Puniſhment, even in this World. Our Engliſh Hiſtory tells us of a Yeoman of *Leiceſterſhire*, who had made over all he had to his Son, to prefer him in Marriage, reſerving only a bare maintenance at his Son's Table. Afterward upon ſome diſcontent, the Son bid his Father get out of his Houſe. The next day Mr. *Goodman* the Miniſter of the Pariſh, meeting the young Man, walking about his Ground, asked him how he did, he anſwered, very well; but before the Miniſter was gone far from him, his Bowels fell out, which he carried in his Hands, got to his Houſe, ſent for Mr. *Goodman*, bitterly bewailed his Sin againſt his Father, and ſo died. And Dr. *Taylor* in his great Exemplar tells us of another, that upon diſcontent with his Father, wiſh'd the Houſe might be on fire, if ever he came any more into his Father's Houſe. Afterwards coming in, it was fired indeed, and the wicked Son only conſumed. I could multiply Inſtances of this nature, (for indeed the righteous Judgment of God hath multiplied them) But this only for a taſte.

Thirdly, Heathens will riſe up in Judgment againſt you, and condemn you. They never had ſuch Precepts, nor Preſidents as you, and yet ſome of the better natured Heathens would have rather choſen death, than to do as you do. You remember the Story of *Cræſus* his dumb Son, whoſe dear Affections could make him ſpeak when he ſaw *Cræſus* in danger; though he never ſpake before, yet then he could cry out, *O do not kill my Father!* But what ſpeak I of Heathens, the Stork in the Heavens, yea, the Beaſts of the Earth will condemn the Diſobedience of Children.

Fourthly, Theſe are Sins inconſiſtent with the true fear of God, in whomſoever they are found. That a Man is indeed, which he is in his Family, and among his Relations. He that is a bad Child, can never be a good Chriſtian. Either bring Teſtimonials of your Godlineſs from your Relations, or it may be well ſuſpected to be no better than Counterfeit. Never talk of your Obedience to God, whil'ſt your Diſobedience to the juſt Commands of Parents gives you the lie.

Fifthly, A parting time is coming, when Death will break up the Family; and when that time comes, oh how bitter will the remembrance of theſe Things be! When you ſhall ſee a Father or a Mother lying by the Wall, what a cut will it be to remember your Miſcarriages and Evils? They are gone out of your reach, you cannot now if you would give them any Satisfaction for what you have done againſt them; but oh how bitter will the remembrance of theſe Things be, at ſuch a time! ſurely this will be more inſupportable to you than their death, if the Lord open your Eyes and give you Repentance; and if not, then,

Sixthly, What a terrible thing will it be to have a Father or Mother come in as Witneſſes againſt you at Chriſt's Bar? As well as they loved you, and as dear as you were to them in this World, they muſt give evidence againſt you then. Now what a fearful thing is it for you but to imagine your Parents to come before the Lord, and ſay, Lord I have given this Child many hundred Reproofs for Sin; I have counſelled, perſuaded, and uſed all means to reclaim him, but in vain; he was a Child of Diſobedience, nothing could work upon him! What think you of this?

Inference, 2. Have you ſuch a Pattern of Obedience and tender Love to Parents, *then Children imitate your pattern, as it becomes Chriſtians; and take Chriſt for your example.* Whatſoever your Parents be, ſee that you carry it towards them becoming ſuch as profeſs Chriſt.

Firſt, If your Parents be *godly*, O beware of grieving them by any unbecoming Carriage. Art thou a Chriſtian indeed, thou wilt then reckon thy ſelf obliged in a double Bond, both of Grace and Nature to them. O what a mercy would ſome Children eſteem it, if they had Parents that feared the Lord, as you have!

Secondly, If they be *carnal*, walk circumſpectly, in the moſt preciſe and punctual diſcharge of your Duties; for how know'ſt thou, O Child, but hereby thou may'ſt win thy Parents? would'ſt thou but humbly and ſeriouſly intreat, and perſuade them to mind the ways of Holineſs; ſpeaking to them at fit Seaſons, with all imaginable Humility and Reverence; inſinuating your Device to Duties, or Trouble for their Evils rather by relating ſome pertinent Hiſtory, or propoſing ſome excellent example; leaving their own Conſcience to draw the Concluſion, and make Application, than to do it your ſelves: It's poſſible they may ponder your words in their Hearts, as *Mary* did Chriſt, *Luke* 2. 49, 51. And would you but back all this with your earneſt Cries to Heaven for them, and your own daily example, that they may have nothing from your ſelves to retort upon you; and thus wait with patience for the deſired effect: O what bleſſed Inſtruments might you be of their everlaſting good!

Inference 3. *To conclude, Let thoſe that have ſuch Children as fear the Lord, and endeavour to imitate Chriſt in thoſe Duties, account them a ſingular Treaſure and Heritage from the Lord, and give them all due encouragement to their Duties.*

How many have no Children at all, but are as a dry Tree! And how many have ſuch as are worſe than

than none? The very reproaches, and break-hearts of their Parents; that bring down their hoary Heads with ſorrow to the Grave.

If God have given you the Bleſſing of godly Children, you can never be ſufficiently ſenſible of, or thankful for ſuch a favour. O that ever God ſhould honour you to bring forth Children for Heaven! What a comfort muſt this be to you, what ever other Troubles you meet with abroad; when you come home among godly Relations, that are careful to ſweeten your own Family to you by their Obedience? Eſpecially what a comfort is it when you come to die, that you leave them within the Covenant! Entitled to Chriſt, and ſo need not be anxious how it ſhall be with them when you are gone. Take heed of diſcouraging, or damping ſuch Children from whom ſo much glory is like to riſe to God, and ſo much comfort to your ſelves. Thus let Chriſt's Pattern be improved, who went before you in ſuch eminent Holineſs in all his Relations, and left you an example that you ſhould follow in his ſteps.

SERMON XXXII.

Opens the third of Chriſt's laſt words upon the Croſs.

LUKE XXIII. 43.

And Jeſus ſaid unto him, Verily I ſay unto thee, to day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe.

IN this Scripture you have the *third* excellent Saying of Chriſt upon the Croſs, expreſſing the riches of free Grace to the penitent Theif. A Man that had ſpent his Life in wickedneſs, and for his wickedneſs was now to loſe his Life. His practice had been vile and profane; but now his Heart was broken for it; he proves a Convert, yea, the firſt Fruits of the Blood of the Croſs. In the former Verſe he manifeſts his Faith, *Lord remember me when thou comeſt into thy Kingdom.* In this Chriſt manifeſts his Pardon and gracious Acceptance of him; *Verily I ſay unto thee, to day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe.* In which Promiſe are conſiderable, the Matter of it, the Perſon to whom it is made, the Time ſet for its performance, and the Confirmation of it for his full ſatisfaction.

Firſt, The Matter or Subſtance of the Promiſe made by Chriſt, *viz.* That *he ſhall be with him in Paradiſe.* By Paradiſe he means Heaven it ſelf, which is here ſhadowed to us by a place of Delight and Pleaſure. This is the Receptacle of gracious Souls when ſeparated from their Bodies. And that Paradiſe ſignifies Heaven it ſelf, and not a third place, as ſome of the Fathers fondly imagine, is evident from, 2 Cor. 12. 2, 4. where the Apoſtle calls the ſame place by the names of the third Heaven, and the Paradiſe. This is the place of Bleſſedneſs, deſigned for the People of God: So you find, *Rev.* 2. 7. *To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midſt of the paradiſe of God*; (i. e.) to have the fulleſt and moſt intimate Communion with Jeſus Chriſt in Heaven. And this is the Subſtance of Chriſt's Promiſe to the Thief. Thou (*i. e*) thou in Spirit, or thou in the nobleſt part, thy Soul; which here bears the name of the whole Perſon; *Thou ſhalt be with me in Paradiſe.*

Secondly, The Perſon to whom Chriſt makes this excellent and glorious Promiſe. It was to one that had lived lewdly and profanely; a very vile and wretched Man in all the former part of his Time, and for his Wickedneſs now juſtly under Condemnation. Yea, to one that had reviled Chriſt, after that Sentence was executed on him. However, now at laſt the Lord gave him a penitent believing Heart. Now, almoſt at laſt gaſp, he is ſoundly in an extraordinary way converted, and being converted, he owns and profeſſes Chriſt amidſt all the ſhame and reproach of his death. Vindicates his Innocency, and humbly ſupplicates for Mercy; *Lord, remember me when thou comeſt into thy Kingdom.*

Thirdly, The ſet Time for the performance of this gracious Promiſe to him. *To day*; this very day ſhalt thou be with me in Glory. Not after the Reſurrection, but immediately from the time of thy Diſſolution thou ſhalt enjoy Bleſſedneſs. And here I cannot but detect the Cheat of thoſe that deny an immediate ſtate of Glory to Believers after death. Who (to the end this Scripture might not ſtand in full oppoſition to their as uncomfortable, as unſound Opinion) looſe the whole frame of it, by drawing one Pin; yea, by tranſpoſing but a Comma, putting it at the word *day*, which ſhould be at the word *thee*, and ſo reading it thus, *Verily I ſay unto thee to day*, referring the word *day* to the time that Chriſt made the Promiſe, and not to the time of its performance. But if ſuch a liberty as this be yielded, what may not Men make the Scriptures ſpeak? There can be no doubt, but Chriſt in this Expreſſion, fixes the Time for his Happineſs: *To day ſhalt thou be with me.*

Thirdly, And laſtly, You have here the Confirmation and Seal of his moſt comfortable Promiſe to him, with Chriſt's ſolemn Aſſeveration: *Verily I ſay unto thee.* Higher Security cannot be given. I that am able to perform what I promiſe, and have not unpromiſed my ſelf; for Heaven and the Glory thereof are mine. I that am faithful and true to my Promiſes, and never crack'd or ſtrained my Credit with any; I ſay it, I ſolemnly confirm it; *Verily I ſay unto thee,*

thee, to day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe. Hence we have Three plain obvious Truths, for our Inſtruction and Conſolation.

Doct. 1. *That there is a future Eternal State, into which Souls paſs at Death.*

Doct. 2. *That all Believers are at their Death immediately received into a State of Glory, and Eternal Happineſs.*

Doct. 3. *That God may, tho' he ſeldom doth, prepare Men for this Glory, immediately before their Diſſolution by Death.*

These are the uſeful Truths reſulting from this remarkable Word of Chriſt, to the penitent Thief. We will conſider and improve them in the Order propoſed.

Doct. 1. *That there is a future Eternal State, into which Souls paſs at Death.*

This is a principal Foundation Stone to the Hopes and Happineſs of Souls. And ſeeing our Hopes muſt needs be as their Foundation and Ground-work is; I ſhall briefly eſtabliſh this Truth by theſe Five Arguments. The Being of a God evinces it; the Scriptures of Truth plainly reveal it; the Conſciences of all Men have Reſentments of it; the Incarnation and Death of Chriſt is but a Vanity without it; and the Immortality of Human Souls plainly diſcovers it.

Arg. 1. *The Being of a God undeniably evinces a future State for Human Souls after this Life.* For, if there be a God who rules the World which he hath made, he muſt rule it by Rewards and Puniſhments, equally and righteouſly diſtributed to Good and Bad. Putting a Difference betwixt the Obedient and Diſobedient; the Righteous and the Wicked. To make a Species of Creatures capable of Moral Government, and not to rule them at all; is to make them in vain, and inconſiſtent with his Glory who is the laſt End of all Things. To rule them, but not ſuitable to their Natures, conſiſts not with that infinite Wiſdom from which their Beings proceeded, and by which their Workings are ruled and ordered. To rule them, in a way ſuitably to their Natures, *viz.* by Rewards and Puniſhments, and not to perform, or execute them at all, is utterly incongruous with the Veracity and Truth of him that cannot lye. This were to impoſe the greateſt Cheat in the World upon Men; and can never proceed from the holy and true God. So then, as he hath made a rational ſort of Creatures, capable of Moral Government by Rewards and Puniſhments; ſo he rules them in that way which is ſuitable to their Natures, promiſing *it ſhall be well with the Righteous, and ill with the Wicked.* Theſe Promiſes and Threatnings can be no Cheat, merely intended to ſcare and fright, where there is no Danger; or encourage, where there is no real Benefit: but what he promiſes, or threatens, muſt be accompliſhed, and every Word of God take place, and be fulfilled. But it's evident that no ſuch Diſtinction is made by the Providence of God (at leaſt ordinarily and generally) in this Life: but *all things come alike to all: and as with the Righteous, ſo with the Wicked.* Yea, here it goes ill with them that fear God, they are oppreſſed. They receive their evil Things, and wicked Men their good. Therefore we conclude, the righteous Judge of the whole Earth, will in another World, recompence to every one according as his Work ſhall be.

Arg. 2. *Secondly*, And as the very Being of God evinces it, ſo *the Scriptures of Truth plainly reveal it.* Theſe Scriptures are the *Pandect*, or *Syſtem* of the Laws, for the Government of Men; which the wiſe and holy Ruler of the World hath enacted and ordained for that Purpoſe. And in them we find Promiſes made to the Righteous, of a full Reward for all their Obedience, Patience, and Sufferings in the next Life, or coming World. And Threatnings made againſt the Wicked, of eternal Wrath and Anguiſh, as the juſt Recompence of their Sin, in Hell for ever, *Rom.* 2. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. *Thou treaſurereſt up to thy ſelf Wrath, againſt the Day of Wrath, and Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God. Who ſhall render to every Man according to his Deeds. To them who by patient continuance in well-doing, ſeek for Glory, and Honour, and Immortality, Eternal Life: but unto them that are contentious, and obey not the Truth, but obey Unrighteouſneſs; Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguiſh upon every Soul of Man that doth Evil,* &c. So 2 Theſſ. 1. 4, 5, 6, 7. *So that we our ſelves glory in you, in the Churches of God, for your Patience, and Faith in all your Perſecutions and Tribulations, that ye endure. Which is* [a *manifeſt Token*] *of the righteous Judgment of God, That ye may be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God, for which ye alſo ſuffer. Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompence Tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled reſt with us, when the Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from Heaven in flaming Fire,* &c. To theſe plain Teſtimonies, multitudes more might be added, if it were needful: Heaven and Earth ſhall paſs away, but theſe Words ſhall never paſs away.

Arg. 3. *Thirdly*, As the Scriptures reveal it, ſo *the Conſciences of all Men, have ſome Reſentments of it.* Where is the Man whoſe Conſcience never felt any Impreſſions of Hope, or Fear from a future World? If it be ſaid, theſe may be but the Effects and Force of Diſcourſe, or Education; we have read ſuch things in the Scriptures, or have heard it by Preachers; and ſo raiſe up to our ſelves Hops and Fears about it. I demand, how the Conſciences of the Heathens, who have neither Scriptures nor Preachers, came to be impreſt with theſe Things. Doth not the Apoſtle tell us, *Rom.* 2. 15. *That their Conſciences in the mean while work upon theſe things!* Their Thoughts with reference to a future State *accuſe*, or *elſe excuſe*, (i. e.) their Hearts are cheared and encouraged by the Good they do, and terrified with Fears about the Evils they commit. Whereas, if there were no ſuch Things, Conſcience would neither accuſe nor excuſe for Good or Evil done in this World.

Arg. 4. *Fourthly, The Incarnation and Death of Chriſt, is but a Vanity without it.* What did he propoſe to himſelf, or what Benefit have we by his coming; if there be no ſuch future State? Did he take our Nature, and ſuffer ſuch terrible Things in it for nothing? If you ſay Chriſtians have much Comfort from it in this Life. I anſwer, the Comforts they have are raiſed by Faith and Expectation of the Happineſs to be enjoyed as the Purchaſe of his Blood in Heaven. And if there be no ſuch Heaven to which they are appointed; no Hell from which they are redeemed, they do but comfort themſelves with a Fable, and bleſs themſelves with a thing of nought. Their Comfort is no greater than the Comfort of a Beggar, that dreams he is a King, and when he awakes, finds himſelf a Beggar ſtill. Surely the Ends of Chriſt's Death were to deliver us from the Wrath to come, 1 *Theſſ.* 1. 10. not from an imaginary, but a real Hell, to bring us to God, 1 *Pet.* 3. 18. to be the Author of Eternal Salvation to them that obey him, *Heb.* 5. 9.

Arg. 5

Arg. 5. *Fifthly*, and laſtly, *The Immortality of Human Souls puts it beyond all Doubt.* The Soul of a Man, vaſtly differs from that of a Beaſt; which is but a material Form, and ſo wholly depending on, muſt needs periſh with the Matter. But it is not ſo with us. Ours are reaſonable Spirits, that can live and act in a ſeparated State from the Body; *Eccleſ.* 3. 21. *Who knoweth the Spirit of Man that goeth upward, and the Spirit of a Beaſt that goeth downward to the Earth.* So that look as if a Man diſpute whether Man be rational, that his very diſputing it, proves him to be ſo; ſo our Diſputes, Hopes, Fears, and Apprehenſions of Eternity, prove our Souls immortal, and capable of that State.

Inference 1. Is there an Eternal State into which Souls paſs after this Life. *How precious then is preſent Time, upon the Improvement whereof that State depends!* O what a huge Weight hath God hanged upon a ſmall Wier! God hath ſet us here in a State of Trial; according as we improve theſe few Hours, ſo will it fare with us to all Eternity. Every Day, every Hour, nay every Moment of your preſent Time hath an Influence into your Eternity. Do ye believe this? What, and yet ſquander away precious Time ſo careleſly, ſo vainly? How do theſe things conſiſt? When *Seneca* heard one promiſe to ſpend a Week with a Friend that invited him, to recreate himſelf with him; he told him, he admired he ſhould make ſuch a raſh Promiſe; what (ſaid he) caſt away ſo conſiderable a part of your Life? How can you do it! Surely our Prodigality in the Expence of Time, argues we have but little Senſe of great Eternity.

Ab hoc momento pendet æternitas.

Inference 2. *How rational are all the Difficulties and Severities of Religion, which ſerve to promote and ſecure a future Eternal Happineſs?* So vaſt is the Diſproportion betwixt Time and Eternity; Things ſeen, and not ſeen as yet, the preſent vaniſhing, and future permanent State, that he can never be juſtly reputed a wiſe Man, that will not let go the beſt Enjoyment he hath on Earth, if it ſtand in the Way of his Eternal Happineſs. Nor can that Man ever eſcape the juſt Cenſure of notorious Folly, who for the gratifying of his Appetite, and preſent Accommodation of his Fleſh, lets go an eternal Glory in Heaven. *Darius* repented heartily that he loſt a Kingdom for a Draught of Water. *O*, ſaid he, *for how ſhort a Pleaſure have I ſold a Kingdom!* It was *Moſes*'s Choice, and his Choice argued his Wiſdom; he choſe rather *to ſuffer Afflictions with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleaſures of Sin, which are but for a Seaſon*, Heb. 11. 25. Men do not account him a Fool, that will adventure a Penny, upon a probability to gain Ten Thouſand Pounds. But ſure the Diſproportion betwixt Time and Eternity is much greater.

Inference 3. If there certainly be ſuch an Eternal State, into which Souls paſs immediately after Death; *how great a Change then doth Death make upon every Man and Woman!* O what a ſerious thing is it to die! It's your Paſſage out of the ſwift River of Time, into the boundleſs and bottomleſs Ocean of Eternity. You that now converſe with ſenſible Objects, with Men and Women like your ſelves, enter then into the World of Spirits. You that now ſee the continual Revolutions of Days and Nights, paſſing away one after another, will then be fix'd in a perpetual *NOW*. O what a ſerious thing is Death! You throw a Caſt for Eternity, when you die. If you were to caſt a Dye for your natural Life, Oh how would your Hand ſhake with Fear, how it would fall? But what is that to this?

The Souls of Men are as it were aſleep now in their Bodies; at Death they awake, and find themſelves in the World of Realities. Let this teach you both how to carry your ſelves toward dying Perſons when you viſit them; and to make every Day ſome Proviſion for that Hour your ſelves. Be ſerious, be plain, be faithful with others that are ſtepping into Eternity; be ſo with your own Souls every Day. O remember what a long Word, what an amazing thing Eternity is. Eſpecially conſidering,

Doct. 2. *That all Believers are at their Death, immediately received into a State of Glory and Eternal Happineſs.*

This Day ſhalt thou be with me.

This the Atheiſt denies; he thinks he ſhall die, and therefore reſolves to live as the Beaſts that periſh. *Beryllus*, and ſome others after him, taught, that there was indeed a future State of Happineſs and Miſery for Souls, but that they paſs not into it immediately upon Death and Separation from the Body, but ſhall ſleep till the Reſurrection, and then awake and enter into it. But is not that Soul aſleep, or worſe, that dreams of a ſleeping Soul till the Reſurrection? Are Souls ſo wounded and prejudiced by their Separation from the Body, that they cannot ſubſiſt or act ſeparate from it? Or have they found any ſuch Conceit in the Scriptures? Not at all. The Scripture takes notice of no ſuch Interval; but plainly enough denies it, 2 *Cor.* 5. 8. *We are confident, I ſay, and willing rather to be abſent from the Body, and preſent with the Lord.* Mark it, no ſooner parted from the Body, but preſent with the Lord. So *Phil.* 1. 23. *I deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt, which is far better.* If his Soul was to ſleep till the Reſurrection, how was it far better to be diſſolved, than to live? Sure *Paul*'s State in the Body had been far better than his State after Death, if this were ſo; for here he enjoyed much ſweet Communion with God by Faith, but then he ſhould enjoy nothing.

To confirm this Dream, they urge, *John* 14. 3. *If I go away, I will come again and receive you to my ſelf.* As if the Time of Chriſt's receiving his People to himſelf ſhould not come, until his ſecond coming at the End of the World. But tho' he will then collect all Believers into one Body, and preſent them ſolemnly to his Father: Yet that hinders not, but he may, as indeed he doth receive every particular believing Soul to himſelf at Death, by the Miniſtry of Angels. And if not, how is it that when Chriſt comes to Judgment, he is attended with Ten Thouſands of his Saints, that ſhall follow him when he comes from Heaven? *Jude* 14. You ſee then the Scripture puts no Interval betwixt the Diſſolution of a Saint, and his Glorification. It ſpeaks of the Saints that are dead, as already with the Lord. And the Wicked that are dead, as already in Hell, calling them *Spirits in Priſon*, 1 *Pet.* 3. 19, 20. aſſuring us that *Judas* went preſently to his *own Place*, Acts 1. 25. And to that Senſe is the Parable of *Dives* and *Lazarus*, Luke 16, 22.

But let us weigh theſe four Things more particularly, for our full Satisfaction in this Point.

Arg. 1. *Firſt*, Why ſhould the Happineſs of Believers be deferred, ſince they are immediately capable of enjoying it, as ſoon as ſeparated from the Body? Alas, the Soul is ſo far from being aſſiſted by the Body (as it is now) for the Enjoyment of God; that it's either clog'd or hindred by it; ſo ſpeaks the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 5. 6, 8. *Whilſt we are at Home in the Body, we are abſent from the Lord*, (i. e.) our Bodies prejudice our Souls, obſtruct and hinder

der the Fulneſs and Freedom of their Communion. When we part from the Body, we go Home to the Lord. Then the Soul is eſcaped as a Bird out of a Cage or Snare. Here I am prevented by an excellent Pen, which hath judiciouſly opened this Point.

Mr. Shaw in his Farewel to Life.

To whoſe excellent Obſervations I only add this: That if the Intanglements, Snares, and Prejudices of the Soul are ſo great and many in its embodied Eſtate, that it cannot ſo freely dilate it ſelf and take in the Comforts of God, by Communion with him, then ſurely the laying aſide of that Clog, or the freeing of the Soul from that Burden, can be no Bar to its greater Happineſs, which it enjoys in its ſeparated State.

Arg. 2. *Secondly*, Why ſhould the Happineſs and Glory of the Soul be deferred, unleſs God had ſome farther preparative Work to do upon it; before it be fit to be admitted into Glory? But ſurely there is no ſuch Work wrought upon it after its Separation by Death. All that is done of that kind, is done here. When the *Compoſitum* is diſſolved, all Means, Duties, and Ordinances are ceaſed. The working Day is then ended, and Night come, when no Man can work, *John* 9. 3. To that purpoſe are thoſe Words of *Solomon*, Eccleſ. 9. 10. *Whatſoever thy Hand findeth to do, do it with all thy Might, for there is no Wiſdom, nor Knowledge, nor Device in the Grave whither thou goeſt.* So that our Glorification is not deferred, in order to our fuller Preparation for Glory. If we are not fit when we die, we can never be fit. All is done upon us that ever was intended to be done. For they are called, *Heb.* 12. 23. the Spirits of the Juſt made perfect.

Arg. 3 *Thirdly*, Again, why ſhould our Salvation ſlumber, when the Damnation of the Wicked doth not ſlumber? God defers not their Miſery, and ſurely he will not defer our Glory. If he be quick with his Enemies, he will not be ſlow and dilatory with his Friends. It cannot be imagined but he is as much inclined to Acts of Favour to his Children, as to Acts of Juſtice to his Enemies, theſe are preſently damned, *Jude* 7. *Acts* 1. 25. 1 *Pet.* 3. 19, 20. and what reaſon why Believers, all Believers as well as this in the Text, ſhould not be that very Day in which they die, with Chriſt in Glory.

Arg. 4. *Fourthly*, and laſtly, how do ſuch Delays conſiſt with Chriſt's ardent Deſires to have his People with him where he is? And with the vehement Longings of their Souls to be with Chriſt? You may ſee thoſe reflected Flames of Love and Deſire of mutual Enjoyment betwixt the Bridegroom and his Spouſe in *Rev.* 22. 17, 20. Delays make their Hearts ſick. The Expectation and Faith in which the Saints die, is to be ſatisfied then; and ſurely God will not deceive them. I deny not but their Glory will be more compleat when the Body, their abſent Friend is reunited, and made to ſhare with them in their Happineſs. Yet that hinders not, but mean while the Soul may enjoy its Glory, whilſt the Body takes its Reſt, and ſleeps in the Duſt.

Inference 1. Are Believers immediately with God after their Diſſolution, *then how ſurprizingly glorious will Heaven be to Believers!* Not that they are in it before they think of it, or are fitted for it, no, they have ſpent many Thoughts upon it before, and been long preparing for it; but the *Suddenneſs* and *Greatneſs* of the Change is amazing to our Thoughts. For a Soul to be now here in the Body, converſing with Men, living among ſenſible Objects, and within a few Moments to be with the Lord. This Hour on Earth, the next in the Third Heavens. Now viewing this World, and anon ſtanding among an innumerable Company of Angels, and the Spirits of the Juſt made perfect. O what a Change is this! What! but wink and ſee God! Commend thy Soul to Chriſt, and be transferred in the Arms of Angels into the inviſible World, the World of Spirits! To live as the Angels of God! To live without eating, drinking, ſleeping! To be lifted up from a Bed of Sickneſs to a Throne of Glory! To leave a ſinful troubleſome World, a ſick and pained Body, and be in a Moment perfectly cured, and feel thy ſelf perfectly well, and free from all Troubles and Diſtempers! You cannot think what this will be. Who can tell what Sights, what Apprehenſions, what Thoughts, what Frames believing Souls have before the Bodies they left, are removed from the Eyes of their dear ſurviving Friends.

Inference 2. Are Believers immediately with God after their Diſſolution? *Where then ſhall Unbelievers be, and in what State will they find themſelves immediately after Death hath cloſed their Eyes!* Ah, what will the caſe of them be that go the other way?

To be pluck'd out of Houſe and Body, from among Friends and Comforts, and thruſt into endleſs Miſeries, into the dark Vault of Hell; never to ſee the Light of this World any more. Never to ſee a comfortable Sight. Never to hear a joyful Sound. Never to know the meaning of Reſt, Peace, or Delight any more. O what a change is here! To exchange the Smiles and Honours of Men, for the Frowns and Fury of God. To be cloathed with Flames, and drink the pure unmixed Wrath of God, who was but a few days ſince cloathed in Silks, and fill'd with the Sweet of the Creature, how is the ſtate of things altered with thee! It was the lamentable Cry of poor *Adrian* when he felt Death approaching. O my poor wandring Soul, alas, whither art thou now going! Where muſt thou lodge this night! Thou ſhalt never jeſt more, never be merry more!

O animula vagula, blandula, heu quo vadis! nunquam jocos dabis, &c.

Your term in your Houſes and Bodies is out, and there is another Habitation provided for you; but 'tis a diſmal one! When a Saint dies, Heaven above is as it were moved to receive and entertain him; at his coming he is received into everlaſting Habitations. Into the Inheritance of the Saints in Light. When an Unbeliever dies, we may ſay of him, alluding to *Iſa.* 14. 9. *Hell from beneath is moved for him to meet him at his coming, it ſtirreth up the dead for him.* No more Sports nor Plays, no Cups of Wine, nor Beds of Pleaſure. The more of theſe you enjoy'd here, the more intolerable will this change be to you. If Saints are immediately with God, others muſt be immediately with Satan.

Inference 3. *How little cauſe have they to fear Death, who ſhall be with God ſo ſoon after their Death?* Some there are that tremble at the Thoughts of Death. That cannot endure to hear its Name mentioned. That would rather ſtoop to any Miſery here, yea, to any Sin, than die, becauſe they are afraid of the exchange: But you that are interreſted in Chriſt, need not do ſo. You can looſe nothing by the exchange. The Words *Death*, *Grave*, and *Eternity*, ſhould have another kind of Sound in your Ears. And make contrary Impreſſions upon your Hearts. If your earthly Tabernacles caſt you out, you ſhall not be found naked. You have *a building of God, an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.* And it is but a Step out of this into that. O what fair, ſweet, and lovely Thoughts ſhould

ſhould you have of that great and laſt Change! But what ſpeak I of your fearleſneſs of Death? Your Duty lies much higher than that far.

Inference 4. *If Believers are immediately with God, after their Diſſolution, then it's their Duty to long for their Diſſolution, and caſt many a longing look towards their Graves.* So did *Paul*, *I deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt, which is far better.* The advantages of this exchange are unſpeakable. You have Gold for Braſs; Wine for Water; Subſtance for Shadow; ſolid Glory for very Vanity. O if the Duſt of this Earth were but once blown out of your Eyes, that you might ſee the Divine Glory, how weary would you be to live? How willing to die? But then beſure your Title be ſound and good. Leave not ſo great a Concernment to the laſt. For though it is confeſſed God may do that in an hour that never was done all your days, yet it is not common. Which brings us to our third and laſt Obſervation.

Doct. 3. *That God may, though he ſeldome doth, prepare Men for Glory, immediately before their Diſſolution by Death.*

There is one *Parable*, and no more, that ſpeaks of ſome that were called at the laſt hour, *Matt.* 20. 9, 10. And therefore is this one Inſtance in the Text, and no more; that gives us an account of a Perſon ſo call'd. We acknowledge God may do it, his Grace is his own, He may diſpenſe it how, and where he pleaſeth. We muſt always ſalve Divine Prerogative. Who ſhall fix Bounds, or put limits to free Grace, but God himſelf, whoſe it is? If he do not ordinarily ſhew ſuch Mercies to dying Sinners (as indeed he doth not) yet it is not becauſe he cannot, but becauſe he will not. Not becauſe their Hearts are ſo hardned by long cuſtom to Sin, that his Grace cannot break them, but becauſe he moſt juſtly with holds that Grace from them. When bleſſed Mr. *Bilney* the Martyr, heard a Miniſter preaching thus. O thou old Sinner, that haſt lain theſe fifty Years rotting in thy Sin, do'ſt thou think now to be ſaved? That the Blood of Chriſt ſhall ſave thee? O, ſaid Mr. *Bilney*, what preaching of Chriſt is this! If I had heard no other preaching than this, what had become of me? No, no old Sinners, or young Sinners, great, or ſmall Sinners are not to be beaten off from Chriſt, but encouraged to Repentance, and Faith. For who knows but the Bowels of Mercy may yearn at laſt upon one that hath all along rejected it? This Thief was as unlikely ever to receive Mercy but a few hours before he died, as any Perſon in the World could be.

But ſurely this is no encouragement to neglect the preſent Seaſons of Mercy, becauſe God may ſhew Mercy hereafter. To neglect the ordinary, becauſe God ſometimes manifeſts his Grace in ways extraordinary. Many I know have hardned themſelves in ways of Sin, by this Example of Mercy. But what God did at this time, for this Man, cannot be expected to be done ordinarily for us. And the Reaſons thereof are,

Reaſon 1. *Firſt*, Becauſe God hath vouchſafed us the ordinary and ſtanding Means of Grace, which he had not; and therefore we cannot expect ſuch ſuch extraordinary add unuſual Converſions as he did. This poor Creature never heard in all likelihood, one Sermon preach'd by Chriſt, or any of the Apoſtles. He lived the Life of a High-way-Man, and concerned not himſelf about Religion; but we have Chriſt preached freely and conſtantly in our Aſſemblies. We have Line upon Line, Precept upon Precept. And when God affords the ordinary preaching of the Goſpel, he doth not uſe to work Wonders. When *Iſrael* was in the Wilderneſs, then God baked their Bread in Heaven, and clave the Rocks to give them Drink; but when they came to *Canaan*, where they had the ordinary means of Subſiſtence, the *Manna* ceaſed.

Reaſon 2. *Secondly*, Such a Converſion as this may not be ordinarily expected by any Man, becauſe ſuch a time as that will never come again. It's poſſible if Chriſt were to die again, and thou to be Crucified with him, thou mighteſt receive thy Converſion in ſuch a miraculous and extraordinary way: But Chriſt dies no more. Such a day as this will never come again.

Mr. *Fenner* in his excellent Diſcourſe upon this Point, tells us, That as this was an extraordinary Time, Chriſt being now *to be inſtalled* in his Kingdom, and crowned with Glory and Honours, ſo extraordinary Things were now done; as when Kings are crowned; the Streets are richly hanged; the Conduits run with Wine; great Malefactors are then pardoned; for then they ſhew their Munificence and Bounty; it is the day of the gladneſs of their Hearts. But let a Man come at another time to the Conduits, he ſhall find no Wine, but ordinary Water there. Let a Man be in the Goal at another time, and he may be hanged; yea, and hath no reaſon but to expect and prepare for it. What Chriſt did now for this Man, was at an extraordinary Time.

Reaſon 3. *Thirdly*, Such a Converſion as this may not ordinarily be expected, for as ſuch a Time will never come again, ſo there will never be the like Reaſon for ſuch a Converſion any more. Chriſt converted him upon the Croſs, to give an Inſtance of his Divine Power at that time, when it was almoſt wholly clouded. Look as in that Day the Divinity of Chriſt brake forth in ſeveral Miracles, as the preternatural Eclipſe of the Sun. The great Earthquake, the rending of the Rocks and Vail of the Temple. So in the Converſion of this Man in ſuch an extraordinary way; and all to give evidence of the Divinity of Chriſt, and prove him to be the Son of God whom they crucified. But that is now ſufficiently confirmed, and there will be no more occaſion for Miracles to evidence it.

Reaſon 4. *Fourthly*, None hath reaſon to expect the like Converſion, that enjoys the ordinary means; becauſe, tho' in this Convert, we have a Pattern of what free Grace can do, yet, as Divines pertinently obſerve, it is a Pattern without a Promiſe. God hath not added any promiſe to it, that ever he will do ſo for any other. And where we have not a Promiſe to encourage our Hope, our Hope can ſignifie but little to us.

Inference 1. *Let thoſe that have found Mercy in the Evening of their Life, admire the extraordinary Grace that therein hath appeared to them.* O that ever God ſhould accept the Bran, when Satan hath had the Flour of thy days! The fore-mentioned Reverend Author tells us of one *Marcus Caius Victorius*, a very aged Man in the Primitive Times, who was converted from Heatheniſm to Chriſtianity, in his old Age. This Man came to *Simplicianus* a Miniſter, and told him, he heartily owned and embraced the Chriſtian Faith. But neither he nor the Church would truſt him for a long time. And the Reaſon was the unuſualneſs of a Converſion at ſuch an Age. But after he had given them good Evidence of the reality thereof, there were Acclamations and ſinging of Pſalms, the People every where crying *Marcus Cajus Victorius* is become a Chriſtian. This was

written for a Wonder. Oh, if God have wrought such wondrous Salvations for any of you, what cause have you to do more for him than others! What to pluck you out of Hell when one Foot was in! To appear to you at last when so hardned by long custom in Sin, that one might say, *Can the Ethiopian change his hue, or the Leopard his spots?* O, what riches of Mercy have appeared to you!

Inference 2. *Let this convince and startle such as even to their gray Hairs remain in an unconverted State, who are where they were when they first came into the World, yea, rather farther off by much.*

Bethink your selves, ye that are full of Days and full of Sin; whose time is almost done, and your great Work not yet begun. Who have but a few Sands more in the upper part of the Glass to run down, and then your Conversion will be impossible. Your Sun is setting; your Night is coming; the Shadows of the Evening are stretched out upon you; you have one Foot in the Grave, and the other in Hell. O think if all Sense and Tenderness be not withered up, as well as natural Verdure; think with your selves, how sad a case you are in. God may do Wonders, but they are not seen every day; then they would cease to be wondred at. O strive, strive while you have a little Time, and a few Helps and Means more. Strive to get that work accomplished now that was never done yet. Defer it no longer, you have done so too much already.

It may be (to use *Seneca*'s Expression) you have been these sixty, seventy, or eighty Years, beginning to live, about to change your Practice; but hitherto you still continue the same. Do not you see how Satan hath gulled and cheated you with vain Purposes 'till he hath brought you to the very brinks of the Grave and Hell? O 'tis time now to make a stand, and pause a little where you are, and to what he hath brought you. The Lord at last give you an Eye to see, and an Heart to consider. Semper victuri.

Inference 3. Lastly, *Let this be a call and caution to all young one to begin with God betime, and take heed of delays till the last, so as many thousands have done before them to their eternal ruin.* Now is your time, if you desire to be in Christ; if you have any sense of the weight and worth of eternal Things upon your Hearts. I know your Age is voluptuous, and delights not in the serious thoughts of Death and Eternity. You are more inclined to mind your Pleasures, and leave these grave and serious matters to old Age. But let me persuade you against that, by these Considerations.

First, O set to the Business of Religion now, because *this is the moulding Age* Now your Hearts are tender, and your Affections flowing. Now is the Time when you are most likely to be wrought upon.

Secondly, Now, because this is *the freest part of your Time.* It is in the Morning of your Life, as in the Morning of the Day. If a Man have any Business to be done, let him take the Morning for it. For in the after part of the day a hurry of Business comes on, so that you either forget it, or want opportunity for it.

Thirdly, Now, because *your Life is immediately uncertain.* You are not certain that ever you shall attain the Years of your Fathers. There are Graves in the Church-yard just of your length. And Skulls of all sorts and sizes in *Golgotha*, as the Jews Proverb is.

Fourthly, Now, *because God will not spare you because you are but young Sinners, little Sinners, if you die Christless.* If you are not as you think old enough to mind Christ, surely if you die Christless, you are old enough to be damned. There's the small spray, as well as great logs in the fire of Hell.

Fifthly, Now, because *your Life will be the more eminently useful, and serviceable to God, when you know him betime, and begin with him early.* *Austin* repented, and so have many thousands since him, that he began so late, and knew God no sooner.

Sixthly, Now, *because your Life will be the sweeter to you, when the morning of it is dedicated to the Lord.* The first Fruits sanctifie the whole Harvest. This will have a sweet Influence into all your days. Whatever Changes, Straights, or Troubles you may afterwards meet with.

SERMON XXXIII.

Opens the fourth excellent Saying of Christ upon the Cross.

MATTH. XXVII. 46.

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachtani? *that is to say, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me.*

Non ignoro quidem verqa hæc ἀγωνίζοντος & summa animæ angustia versantis esse. *Heinsius in Loc.*

THIS Verse contains the *fourth* memorable Saying of Christ upon the Cross. Words able to rend the hardest Heart in the World. It is the Voice of the Son of God in an Agony. His Sufferings were great, very great before, but never in that Extremity as now; when this Heaven-rending and Heart-melting out-cry break from him upon the Cross, *Eli, Eli, lama sabachtani?* In which are considerable, the time, matter, and manner of this his sad Complaint.

First

First, The time when it was uttered; *about the ninth hour*, (i. e.) about three of the Clock after Noon. For as the Jews divided the Night into four Quarters, or Watches: So they divided the Day in like manner into four Quarters, or greater Hours. Which had their Names from that Hour of the Day that closed the Quarter. So that beginning their account of their lesser Hours from six in the Morning, which with them was the first, their Ninth Hour answer'd to our Third after Noon. And this is heedfully mark'd by the Evangelists on purpose to shew us how long Christ hanged in Distress upon the Cross, both in Soul and Body, which at least was full Three Hours. Towards the End whereof his Soul was so filled, distressed, and overwhelmed; that this doleful Cry brake from his Soul, in bitter Anguish, *My God, my God*, &c.

Secondly, The Matter of the Complaint. It is not of the cruel Tortures he felt in his Body, nor of the Scoffs and Reproaches of his Name; he mentions not a Word of these, they were all swallowed up in the Sufferings within, as the River is swallowed up in the Sea, or the lesser Flame in the greater. He seems to neglect all these, and only complains of what was more burdensome than Ten Thousand Crosses. Even his Father's deserting him, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* It is a more inward Trouble that burdens him, Darkness upon his Spirit, the Hidings of God's Face from him, an Affliction he was totally a Stranger to, till now. Here he lays his Hand in this Complaint. This was the pained Place, to which he points in this dolorous Outcry.

Thirdly, The Manner in which he utters his sad Complaint, and that was with a remarkable *Vehemency, he cried with a loud Voice*, not like a dying Man, in whom Nature was spent, but as one full of Vigour, Life, and Sense. He gathered all his Spirits together, stirred up the whole Power of Nature when he made this grievous Outcry. There is in it also an *emphatical Reduplication*, which shews with what Vehemency it was uttered. Not singly, my God, but he doubles it, *my God, my God*, as distressed Persons use to do. So *Elisha*, when *Elijah* was separated from him by the Chariots and Horses of Fire, cries out, *my Father, my Father.*

Nay, moreover, to increase the Force and Vehemency of this Complaint, here is an *affectionate Interrogation: Why hast thou forsaken me?* Questions, especially such as this, are full of Spirits. It is as if he were surprised by the Strangeness of this Affliction: And rouzing up himself with an unusual Vehemency, turns himself to the Father, and cries, why so, my Father; O what dost thou mean by this? What, hide that Face from me that was never hid before! What, and hide it from me now, in the Depth of my Torments and Troubles! O what new, what strange Things are these! Lastly, here is an *observable Variation* of the Language in which this astonishing Complaint was uttered. For he speaks both *Hebrew* and *Syriack* in one Breath, *Eli, Eli, lama*, are all Hebrew, *Sabacthani* is a *Syriack* Word, used here for Emphasis sake Hence we observe,

Doct. *That God in design to heighten the Sufferings of Christ to the uttermost, forsook him in the time of his greatest Distress; to the unspeakable Affliction and Anguish of his Soul.*

This Proposition shall be considered in Three Parts. The *Desertion* it self. The *Design* or End of it. The *Effect* and Influence it had on Christ.

First, The Desertion it self. Divine Desertion generally considered is God's withdrawing himself from any, not as to his Essence, that fills Heaven and Earth, and constantly remains the same. But it's the Withdrawment of his Favour, Grace, and Love. When these are gone, God is said to be gone. And this is done two ways, either *absolutely*, and wholly, or *respectively*, and only as to Manifestation. In the first Sense, Devils are forsaken of God. They once were in his Favour and Love, but they have utterly and finally lost it. God is so withdrawn from them, as that he will never take them into Favour any more. In the other Sense he sometimes forsakes his dearest Children (*i. e.*) he removes all sweet Manifestations of his Favour and Love for a time, and carries it to them as a Stranger, tho' his Love be still the same.

And this kind of Desertion which is respective, temporary, and only in regard of Manifestation, is justly distinguished from the various Ends and Designs of it, into *probational, cautional, castigatory*, and *penal*. *Probational* Desertions are only for the Proof and Trial of Grace. *Cautional* Desertions are designed to prevent Sin. *Castigatory* Desertions are God's Rods to chastize his People for Sin. *Penal* Desertions are such as are inflicted as the just Reward of Sin, for the Reparation of that Wrong Sinners have done by their Sins. Of this sort was Christ's Desertion. A part of the Curse, and a special part. And his bearing it was no small part of the Reparation or Satisfaction he made for our Sins.

More particularly, to open the nature of this Desertion of Christ by his Father, there being much of Intricacy and Difficulty in it. I shall proceed in the Explication of it *negatively* and *positively*.

First, Negatively, when Christ cries out of God's forsaking him, he doth mean that he had *dissolved the personal Union* of the Two Natures. Not as if the Marriage Knot which united our Nature to the Person of Christ was loosed, or a Divorce made betwixt them. No, for when he was forsaken of God, he was still true and real *God-man* in one Person.

Secondly, When Christ bewails the Father's forsaking him, he doth not mean that he *pulled away the Prop of Divine Support* from him, by which he had till then endured the Tortures and Sufferings that oppressed him. No, tho' the Father deserted, yet he still supported him. And so much is intimated in these Words of Christ, *Eli, Eli*, which signifies my strong One, my strong One. God was with him by way of Support, when withdrawn as to Manifestations of Love and Favour. In respect of God's supporting Presence which was with Christ at this time; it's said, *Isa.* 42. 1. *Behold my Servant whom I uphold*, and *John* 16. 32. *I am not alone, but my Father is with me.* So that this cannot be the meaning of it.

Thirdly, Much less is it his meaning *that God had left him, as to inherent Grace and Sanctification.* Recalling that Spirit of Holiness which had anointed him above his Fellows. No, no: When he was forsaken he remained as holy as ever. He had indeed less Comfort, but not less Holiness than before. Such a Desertion had irritated and made void the very End of his Death. And his Sacrifice could never have yielded such a fragrant Odor to God as it did, *Eph.* 5. 2.

Fourthly, The Love of God was not so withdrawn from Christ, as that *the Father had now no Love for him*, nor Delight in him. That's impossible; he can no more cease to love Christ, than to love himself. His Love was not turned into Wrath. Tho' his Wrath only was now manifested to him as our Surety; and hid his Love from him, as his beloved Son.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, Nor was Christ *forsaken by his Father finally*, upon what Account soever it was that he was forsaken. No, it was but for a few Hours that the dark Cloud dwelt over his Soul: It soon pass'd away. And the bright and glorious Face of God shone forth again, as bright as ever, *Psal.* 22. 1, 24. cómpared.

Sixthly, and lastly, it was *not a mutual Desertion*, or a Desertion on both Parts; the Father forsook him, but he forsook not his Father. When God withdrew, he followed him, crying, *My God, my God.*

Yet to speak positively of it; tho' it did not dissolve the Personal Union, nor cut off Divine Supports, nor remove his inherent Grace, nor turn his Father's Love into Hatred, nor continue for ever, nor yet was it on both Parts, Christ's forsaking God, as well as God forsaking Christ; yet I say it was,

First, *A very sad Desertion*, the like unto which in all respects never was experienced by any, nor can be to the End of the World. All his other Things were but small Things to this; they bare upon his Body, these upon his Soul. They came from the Hands of vile Men, this from the Hand of a dear Father. He suffered both in Body and Soul; but the Sufferings of his Soul, were the very Soul of his Sufferings. Under all his other Sufferings he opened not his Mouth, but this touch'd the Quick, that he could not but cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

Secondly, As it was sad, so *it was a Penal Desertion*, inflicted on him for Satisfaction for those Sins of ours, which deserved that God should forsake us for ever, as the Damned are forsaken by him. So that this Cry (as one observes) was like the *perpetual Shriek* of them that are cast away for ever. This was that Hell, and the Torments of it which Christ our Surety suffered for us. For look, as there lies a twofold Misery upon the Damned in Hell, *viz. Pain of Sense*, and *Pain of Loss*. So upon Christ answerably *there was not only an Impression of Wrath, but also a Substraction of Withdrawment of all sensible Favour and Love.* Hence it's said by himself, *John* 12. 27. And now my Soul τετάρακται is troubled. The Word signifies troubled as they that are in Hell are troubled. Tho' God did not leave his Soul in Hell, as others are, he having enough to pay the Debt which they have not, yet in the Torments thereof at this time he was. Yea, in Sufferings at this time in his Soul, equivalent to all that which our Souls should have suffered there to all Eternity.

Nec fictè nec theatricè conqueritur se à patre derelictum. Et quod nonnulli ex vulgi opinione sic locatum obtendunt, insipidum est Cavillum. *Cavil.*

Thirdly, *It was a Desertion that was real, and not fictitious.* He doth not personate a deserted Soul, and speak as if God had withdrawn the comfortable Sense and Influence of his Love from him; but the thing was so indeed. The Godhead restrained and kept back for this time, all its Joys, Comforts, and Sense of Love from the Manhood; yielding it nothing but Support. This bitter doleful Outcry of Christ gives Evidence enough of the Reality of it. He did not *feign* but *feel* the Burdensomness of it.

Fourthly, *This Desertion fell out in the time of Christ's greatest need of Comfort that ever he had in all the time of his Life on Earth.* His Father forsook him at that time, when all Earthly Comforts had forsaken him; and all outward Evils had broken in together upon him. When Men, yea, the best of Men, stood afar off, and none but barbarous Enemies were about him. When Pains and Shame, and all Miseries even weighed him down, then even then to compleat and fill up his Sufferings, God stands afar off too.

Fifthly, and lastly, *It was such a Desertion as left him only to the Supports of his Faith.* He had nothing else now but his Father's Covenant and Promise to hang upon. And indeed, as a judicious Author pertinently observes, the Faith of Christ did several ways act and manifest it self, in these very Words of Complaint in the Text. *Mr.* Case's *Correction Instruction*, P. 51, 52.

For tho' all comfortable Sights of God, and Sense of Love were obstructed, yet you see his Soul *cleaves fiducially to God for all that. My God*, &c. Tho' Sense and Feeling speak as well as Faith, yet *Faith speaks first*, *My God*, before Sense speaks a Word of his forsaking. His Faith prevented the Complaint and Sense, and tho' Sense comes in afterward with a Word of Complaint, yet *here are Two Words of Faith to one of Sense.* It is, *My God, my God*, and but one Word of forsaking. As his Faith spake first, so it spake twice when Sense and Feeling spake but once. Yea, and as Faith spake first, and twice as much as Sense, so it spake more confidently *than Sense did.* He lays a confident Claim to God as his God; *My God, my God*, and only queries about his forsaking of him; *Why hast thou forsaken me?* This is spoken more dubiously, the former most confidently.

To be short, *his Faith laid hold on God, under a most suitable Title, or Attribute, Eli, Eli*, my strong One, my strong One, *q. d.* O thou with whom is infinite and everlasting Strength, thou that hast hitherto supported my Manhood, and according to thy Promise upheld thy Servant; what, wilt thou now forsake me? My strong One, I lean upon thee. To these Supports and Refuges of Faith this Desertion shut up Christ. By these Things he stood when all other visible and sensible Comforts shrunk away both from his Soul and Body. This is the true, tho' brief Account of the Nature and Quality of Christ's Desertion.

Secondly, In the next place let us consider the *Designs* and *Ends* of it; which were principally *Satisfaction* and *Sanctification. Satisfaction for those Sins of ours which deserved that we should be totally and everlastingly forsaken of God.* This is the Desert of every Sin, and the Damned do feel it, and shall to all Eternity. God is gone from them for ever, not essentially; the just God is with them still, the God of Power is still with them, the avenging God is ever with them; but the merciful God is gone, and gone for ever. And thus would he have withdrawn himself from every Soul that sinned, had not Christ born that Punishment for us, in his own Soul; if he had not cried, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* We must have howled out this hideous Complaint in the lowest Hell for ever, O righteous God, O dreadful God, O terrible God, thou hast for ever forsaken me.

And as Satisfaction was design'd in this Desertion of Christ, so also was the *Sanctification of all the Desertions of the Saints designed in it.* For he having been forsaken *before* us, and *for* us; whenever God forsakes us, that very forsaking of his is sanctified, and thereby turn'd into a Mercy to Believers. Hence are all the precious Fruits and Effects of our Desertions. Such are the earnest Excitations of the Soul to Prayer, *Psal.* 77. 2. *Psal.* 88. 1, 9. the antidoting the tempted Soul against Sin. The reviving of ancient Experiences, *Psal.* 77. 5. enhaunsing the Value of the Divine Presence with the Soul, and teaching it to hold Christ faster than ever before, *Cant.* 3. 1, 2,

1, 2, 3, 4, 5. These and many more are the precious Effects of sanctified Desertion; but how many or how good soever these Effects are, they do all owe themselves to Jesus Christ, as to the Author of them. Who for our Sakes would pass thro' this sad and dark State, that we might find those Blessings in it. So then, the Godhead's suspending of all the Effects of Joy and Comfort from the Humanity of Christ at this Time, which had not ceased to flow into it an ineffable Measure and Manner till now must needs be both a special part of Christ's Satisfaction for us, and consequently that which makes all our Temporary Desertions rather Mercies and Blessings than Curses to us.

Thirdly, Let us in the next place consider the Effect and Influence this Desertion had upon the Spirit of Christ.

And tho' it did not drive him to Despair, as the Papists falsly charge Mr. *Calvin* to have affirmed; yet it even amazed him, and almost swallowed up his Soul in the Deeps of Trouble and Consternation. This Cry is a Cry from the Deeps; from a Soul oppressed even to Death. Never was the Lord Jesus so put to it before. It is a most astonishing Outcry.

Let but Five Particulars be weighed, and you will say, never was there any Darkness like this. No Sorrow like Christ's Sorrow in his deserted State. For,

First, Apprehend, Reader, this was a new thing to Christ, and that which he was never acquainted with before. From all Eternity until now, there had been constant and wonderful Outlets of Love, Delight, and Joy, from the Bosom of the Father, into his Bosom. He never missed his Father before. Never saw a Frown, or a Vail upon that blessed Face before. This made it an heavy Burden indeed, the Words are Words of Wonderment and Admiration; *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!* Thou that never didst so before, hast forsaken me now.

Secondly, As it was a new thing to Christ, and therefore the more amazing; *so it was a great thing to Christ*, so great that he scarce knew how to support it. Had it not been a great Trial indeed, so great a Spirit as Christ's was would never have so droop'd under it, and made so sad a Complaint of it. It was so sharp, so heavy an Affliction to his Soul; that it caused him, who was meek under all other Sufferings as a Lamb, to roar under this like a Lion. For so much those Words of Christ signify, *Psal.* 22. 1. *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from the Voice of my roaring?* It comes from a Root that signifies to howl or roar as a Lion. And rather signifies the Noise made by a wild Beast, than the Voice of a Man.

Id quod rugitum vocat, non humanam, sed leoninam vocem significat. *Bucer. in loc.*

And it is as much as if Christ had said, O my God, no Words can express my Anguish. I will not speak, but roar, howl out my Complaint. Pour it out in Vollies of Groans. I roar as a Lion. It's no small Matter will make that majestick Creature to roar. And sure so great a Spirit as Christ's, would not have roared under a slight Burden.

Thirdly, As it was a great Burden to Christ, so *it was a Burden laid on in time of his greatest Distress.* When his Body was in Tortures, and all about him was black, dismal, and full of Horror, and Darkness. He fell into this Desertion at a time when he never had the like need of Divine Supports and Comforts, and that aggravated it.

Fourthly, *It was a Burden that lay upon him long*, even from the time his Soul began to be sorrowful and sore amazed in the Garden, till his very Death. If you were but to hold your Finger in the Fire for Two Minutes, you would not be able to bear it. But what is the Finger of a Man, to the Soul of Christ? Or what is material Fire, to the Wrath of the great God!

Fifthly, *So heavy was this Pressure upon Christ's Soul, that in all Probability it hastened his Death*; for it was not usual for crucified Persons to expire so soon; and those that were crucified with him, were both alive after Christ was gone. Some have hanged more than a Day and Night, some Two full Days and Nights in those Torments alive; but never did any feel inwardly, what Christ felt. He bare it till the Ninth Hour, and then makes a fearful Outcry, and dies. The Uses follow.

Inference 1. Did God forsake Christ upon the Cross, as a Punishment to him for our Sins? *Then it follows, that as often as we have sinned, so oft have we deserved to be forsaken of God.* This is the just Recompence and Demerit of Sin. And indeed here lies the principal Evil of Sin, that it separates betwixt God and the Soul. This Separation is both the *Moral* Evil that is in it, and the *Penal* Evil inflicted by the righteous God for it. By Sin we depart from God, and as a due Punishment of it, God departs from us. This will be the dismal Sentence in the last Day, *Matthew* 25. *Depart from me, ye Cursed.* Thenceforth there will be a Gulph fixed betwixt God and them, *Luke* 19. 20. No more friendly Intercourses with the blessed God for ever. The eternal Shriek of the Damned is, *Wo, and alas, God hath forsaken us for evermore.* Ten Thousand Worlds can no ways recompence the Loss of one God. Beware Sinners how you say to God now, *Depart from us, we desire not the Knowledge of thy Ways*, lest he say, Depart from me, you shall never see my Face.

Inference 2. Did Christ never make such a sad Complaint and Outcry till God hid his Face from him? *Then the hiding of God's Face, is certainly the greatest Misery that can possibly befall a gracious Soul in this World.* When they scourged, buffeted, and smote Christ, yea, when they nailed him to the Tree, he opened not his Mouth; but when his Father hid his Face from him, then he cried out; yea, his Voice was the Voice of roaring; this was more to him than a Thousand Crucifyings. And surely as it was to Christ, so it is to all gracious Souls the saddest Stroke, the heaviest Burden that ever they felt. When *David* forbad *Absolom* to come to *Jerusalem* to see his Father, he complains in 2 *Sam.* 14. 32. *Wherefore* (said he) *am I come from* Geshur, *if I may not see the King's Face?* So doth the gracious Soul bemoan it self, wherefore am I redeemed, called, and reconciled; if I may not see the Face of my God?

It's said of *Tully*, when he was banished from *Italy*, and of *Demosthenes*, when he was banished from *Athens*, that they wept every time they look'd towards their own Country. And is it strange that a poor deserted Believer should mourn every time he looks Heaven-ward? Say, Christian, did the Tears never trickle down thy Cheeks when thou lookedst toward Heaven, and couldst not see the Face of thy God as at other times? If Two dear Friends cannot part, tho' it be but for a Season, but that Parting must be in a Shower: Blame not the Saints if they sigh and mourn bitterly when the Lord, who is the Life of their Life, departs; though but for a

Season from them; for if God depart, their sweetest Enjoyment on Earth, the very Crown of all their Comforts is gone, and what will a King take in Exchange for his Crown? What can recompence to a Saint, the Loss of his God! Indeed, if they had never seen the Lord, or tasted the incomparable Sweetness of his Presence, it were another Matter; but the Darkness which follows the sweetest Light of his Countenance is double Darkness.

And that which doth not a little increase the Horror of this Darkness is, that when their Souls are thus benighted, and the Sun of their Comfort is set; then doth Satan, like the wild Beasts of the Desart, creep out of his Den, and roars upon them with hideous Temptations. Surely this is a sad State, and deserves tender Pity. Pity is a due Debt to the Distressed, and the World shews not a greater Distress than this. If ever you have been in Troubles of this Kind your selves, you will never slight others in the same Case! Nay, one End of God's exercising you with Troubles of this nature, is to teach you Compassion towards others in the same Case. Do they not cry to you, as *Job* 19. 21. *Have Pity, have Pity upon me, O ye my Friends, for the Hand of God hath touched me.* Draw forth Bowels of Mercy and tender Compassion to them, for either you have been, or are, or may be in the same Case your selves; however, if Men do not, to be sure Christ that hath felt it before them, and for them, will pity them.

Inference 3. Did God really forsake Jesus Christ upon the Cross? *Then from the Desertion of Christ's, singular Consolation springs up to the People of God*; *yea, manifold Consolation.* Principally it's a Support in these Two Respects, as it is *preventive* of your final Desertion, and a comfortable *Pattern* to you in your present sad Desertions.

First, Christ's Desertion is *preventive* of your final Desertion. Because he was forsaken for a Time, you shall not be forsaken for Ever. For he was forsaken for you. And God's forsaking him, tho' but for a few Hours, is equivalent to his forsaking you for Ever. It is every way as much for the dear Son of God, the Darling Delight of his Soul, to be forsaken of God for a Time; as if such a poor inconsiderable Thing as thou art, shouldst be cast off to Eternity. Now this being equivalent, and born in thy room, must needs give thee the highest Security in the World, that God will never finally withdraw from thee. Had he intended to have done so, Christ had never made such a sad Outcry as you hear this Day, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

Secondly, Moreover, this sad Desertion of Christ becomes a comfortable *Pattern* to poor deserted Souls in divers Respects: And the proper Business of such Souls at such Times, is to eye it believingly, in these Six Respects.

First, Tho' God deserted Christ, yet at the same time he powerfully supported him. His omnipotent Arms were under him, tho' his pleased Face was hid from him. He had not indeed his Smiles, but he had his Supportations. So (Christian) just so shall it be with thee. Thy God may turn away his Face, he will not pluck away his Arm. When one asked of holy Mr. *Baines* how the Case stood with his Soul, he answered; *Supports* I have, tho' *Suavities I want.* Our Father in this deals with us, as we our selves sometimes do with a Child that is stubborn and rebellious. We turn him out of Doors, and bid him be gone out of our Sight; and there he sighs and weeps; but however, for the humbling of him we will not presently take him into House and Favour; yet we order, at least permit the Servants to carry him Meat and Drink. Here is Fatherly Care, and Support; tho' no former Smiles, or manifested Delights.

Secondly, Tho' God deserted Christ, yet he deserted not God. His Father forsook him, but he could not forsake his Father, but followed him with this Cry, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

And is it not even so with you? God goes off from your Souls, but you cannot go off from him. No, your Hearts are mourning after the Lord. Seeking him carefully with Tears. Complaining of his Absence as the greatest Evil in this World. This is Christ-like. So it was with the Spouse, *Cant.* 3. 1, 2. Her Beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone; but was she content to part with him so? No such thing. *By Night on my Bed I sought him whom my Soul loveth, I sought him, but I found him not; I will arise now, and go about the City*, &c.

Thirdly, Tho' God forsook Christ, yet he returned to him again. It was but for a Time, not for Ever. In this also doth his Desertion parallel yours. God may for several wise and holy Reasons hide his Face from you, but not so as it's hid from the Damned; who shall never see it again. This Cloud will pass away. This Night shall have a bright Morning. *For* (saith thy God) *I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wrath; for the Spirit shall fail before me, and the Souls which I have made.* As if he should say, I may contend with him for a Time, to humble him, but not for Ever, lest instead of a sad Child, I should have a dead Child. Oh the Tenderness even of a displeased Father!

Fourthly, Tho' God forsook Christ, yet at that Time he could justify God. So you read, *Psal.* 22. 2, 3. *O my God* (saith he) *I cry in the day-time, but thou hearest not; and in the Night Season, and am not silent; but thou art holy.* Is not thy Spirit according to thy Measure, framed like Christ's in this; canst thou not say even when he writes bitter Things against thee, he is a holy, faithful, and good God for all this? I am deserted, but not wronged. There is not one Drop of Injustice in all the Sea of my Sorrows. Tho' he condemn me, I must and will justify him, this also is Christ-like.

Fifthly, Tho' God took from Christ all visible and sensible Comforts, inward as well as outward; yet Christ subsisted by Faith in the Absence of them all. His Desertion put him upon the acting of his Faith. *My God, my God*, are Words of Faith. The Words of one that rolls upon his God. And is it not so with you too? Sense of Love is gone, sweet Sights of God shut up in a dark Cloud; well, what then? Must thy Hands presently hang down, and thy Soul give up all its Hopes? What! is there no Faith to relieve in this Case? Yes, Yes, and blessed be God for Faith. *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the Voice of his Servants, that walketh in Darkness, and hath no Light; let him trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay himself upon his God*, Isa. 50. 10. To conclude,

Sixthly, Christ was deserted, a little before the glorious Morning of Light and Joy dawned upon him. It was a little, a very little while, after this sad Cry, before he triumphed gloriously. And so it may be with you. Heaviness may endure for a Night, but Joy and Gladness will come in the Morning. You know how Mr. *Glover* was transported with Joy, and cried out, as a Man in a Rapture, O *Austin*, he is come, he is come, he is come, meaning

ing the Comforter, who for ſome Time had been abſent from his Soul.

But I fear I am abſolutely and finally forſaken.

Why ſo? Do you find the Characters of ſuch a Deſertion upon your Soul? Be righteous Judges, and tell me, whether you find an Heart willing to forſake God? Is it indifferent now to you whether God ever return again or no? Are there no Mournings, Meltings, Hankerings after the Lord? Indeed, if you forſake him, he will caſt you off for ever But can you do ſo? Oh no, let him do what he will, I am reſolved to wait for him, cleave to him, mourn after him, tho' I have no preſent Comfort from him, no Aſſurance of my Intereſt in him; yet will I not exchange my poor weak Hopes for all the Good in this World.

Again, You ſay God hath forſaken you, but hath he *let looſe the Bridle before you?* To allude to *Job* 30. 11. Hath he taken away from your Souls all conſcientious Tenderneſs of Sin, ſo that now you can ſin freely, and without any Regret? If ſo, it's a ſad Token indeed. Tell me, Soul, if thou judgeſt indeed God will never return in Loving kindneſs to thee any more; why doſt thou not then give thyſelf over to the Pleaſures of Sin, and fetch thy Comforts that way from the Creatures, ſince thou canſt have no Comfort from thy God? Oh no, I cannot do ſo. If I die in Darkneſs and Sorrow, I will never do ſo. My Soul is as full of Fear and Hatred of Sin as ever, tho' empty of Joy and Comfort. Surely theſe are no Tokens of a Soul finally abandoned by its God.

Inference 4. Did God forſake his own Son upon the Croſs? *Then the deareſt of God's People may for a Time be forſaken of their God.* Think it not ſtrange when you that are the Children of Light meet with Darkneſs, yea, and walk in it. Neither charge God fooliſhly. Say not he deals hardly with you. You ſee what befel Jeſus Chriſt, whom his Soul delighted in. It's doubtleſs your Concernment to expect and prepare for Days of Darkneſs. You have heard the doleful Cry of Chriſt, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* You know how it was with *Job*, *David*, *Heman*, *Aſaph*, and many others the dear Servants of God. What Heart-melting Lamentations they have made upon this Account. And are you better than they? Oh prepare for Spiritual Troubles. I am ſure you do enough every Day to involve you in Darkneſs. Now if at any time this Trial befall you, mind theſe Two ſeaſonable *Admonitions*, and lay them up for ſuch a Time.

Admonition 1. Firſt, *Exerciſe the Faith of Adherence, when you have loſt the Faith of Evidence.* When God takes away that, he leaves this. That is neceſſary to the Comfort, this to the Life of his People. It's ſweet to live in Views of your Intereſt, but if they be gone, believe and roll on God for an Interest. Stay your ſelves on your God when you have no Light, *Iſa.* 50. 10. Drop this Anchor in the Dark, and do not reckon all gone when Evidence is gone. Never reckon your ſelves undone whilſt you can adhere to your God. Direct Acts are noble Acts of Faith, as well as reflexive ones. Yea, and in ſome Reſpects to be preferred to them. For,

Firſt, As your Comfort depends on the evidencing Acts of Faith, ſo your Salvation upon the adhering Act of Faith. Evidence comforts, Affiance ſaves you. And ſure Salvation is more than Comfort.

Secondly, Your Faith of Evidence hath more ſenſible Sweetneſs, but your Faith of Adherence is of more Conſtancy and Continuance. The former is as a Flower in its Month, the latter flicks by you all the Year.

Thirdly, Faith of Evidence brings more Joy to you, but Faith of Adherence brings more Glory to God. For thereby you truſt him when you cannot ſee him. Yea, you believe not only without, but againſt Senſe and Feeling. And doubtleſs that which brings Glory to God, is better than that which brings Comfort to you. O then exerciſe this when you have loſt that.

Admonition 2. Secondly, *Take the right Method to recover the ſweet Light which you have ſinned away from your Souls.* Do not go about from one to another complaining; nor yet ſet down deſponding under your Burden. But,

Firſt, Search diligently after the Cauſe of God's Withdrawment. Urge him hard by Prayer to tell thee whereof he contends with thee, *Job* 10. 2. Say, Lord, what have I done that ſo offends thy Spirit? What Evil is it which thou ſo rebukeſt? I beſeech thee ſhew me the Cauſe of thine Anger; have I grieved thy Spirit in this thing, or in that? Was it my Neglect of Duty, or my Formality in Duties? Was I not thankful for the Senſe of thy Love, when it was ſhed abroad in my Heart? O Lord, why is it thus with me?

Secondly, Humble your Souls before the Lord for every Evil you ſhall be convinced of Tell him it pierces your Hearts that you have ſo diſpleaſed him. And that it ſhall be a Caution to you whilſt you live, never to return again to Folly. Invite him again to your Souls, and mourn after the Lord till you have found him. If you ſeek him, he will be found of you, 2 *Cor.* 15. 2. It may be you ſhall have a Thouſand Comforters come about your ſad Souls in ſuch a Time to comfort them. This will be to you inſtead of God, and that will repair your Loſs of Chriſt. Deſpiſe them all, and ſay, I am reſolved to ſit as a Widow till Chriſt return; he or none ſhall have my Love.

Thirdly, Wait on the Uſe of Means till Chriſt return. O be not diſcouraged. Tho' he tarry, wait you for him, for *bleſſed are all they that wait for him.*

SER-

SERMON XXXIV.

Opens the fifth excellent Saying of Chriſt up. on the Croſs.

JOHN XIX. 28.

After this, Jeſus knowing that all things were accompliſhed, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, ſaith, I Thirſt.

IT is as truly as commonly ſaid, *Death is dry*: Chriſt found it ſo, when he died. When his Spirits laboured in the Agonies of Death, then he ſaid, *I Thirſt.*

This is the fifth Word of Chriſt upon the Croſs, ſpoken a little before he bowed the Head and yielded up the Ghoſt. It is only recorded by this *Evangeliſt*, and there are four Things remarkable in this Complaint of Chriſt, *viz.* The Perſon complaining. The Complaint he made. The Time when. And the Reaſon why he ſo complained.

Firſt, The Perſon complaining. *Jeſus ſaid, I Thirſt.* This is a clear Evidence, that it was no common Suffering. Great and reſolute Spirits will not complain for ſmall Matters. The Spirit of a common Man will endure much, before it utters any Complaint. Let us therefore ſee,

Secondly, The Affliction or Suffering he complains of; and that is *Thirſt.* There are two ſorts of Thirſt. One natural and proper, another ſpiritual and figurative. Chriſt felt both at this time. His Soul thirſted in vehement deſires and longings to accompliſh and finiſh that great and difficult Work he was now about. And his Body thirſted by reaſon of thoſe unparallel'd Agonies it labour'd under, for the accompliſhing thereof. But it was the proper natural Thirſt he here intends, when he ſaid, *I Thirſt.* No, this natural Thirſt of which he complains, is the raging of the Appetite for humid nouriſhment, ariſing from ſcorching up of the parts of the Body for want of moiſture. And amongſt all the pains and afflictions of the Body, there can ſcarcely be named a greater, and more intolerable one than extream Thirſt. The moſt mighty and Valiant have ſtooped under it. Mighty *Samſon*, after all his Conqueſts and Victories, complains thus, *Jud.* 15. 18. *And he was ſore athirſt, and called on the Lord, and ſaid, Thou haſt given this great deliverance into the hand of thy ſervant, and now ſhall I die for Thirſt, and fall into the hands of the uncircumciſed?* Great *Darius* drank filthy Water, defiled with the Bodies of the Slain, to relieve his Thirſt; and proteſted, never any drink was more pleaſant to him. Hence *Iſa.* 41. 17. Thirſt is put to expreſs the moſt afflicted State. *When the poor and needy ſeek Water and there is none; and their Tongue faileth for thirſt: I the Lord will hear them*; (i. e.) when my People are in extream neceſſities under any extraordinary preſſures and diſtreſſes, I will be with them, to ſupply and relieve them. Thirſt cauſes a moſt painful compreſſion of the Heart, when the Body like a Spunge, ſucks and draws forth moiſture, and there is none. And this may be occaſion'd either by long abſtinence from drink, or by the labouring and expence of the Spirits under grievous Agonies, and extream Tortures; which like a fire within, ſoon ſcorch up the very radical moiſture.

Sitis eſt cupiditas nutrimenti, potiſſimum humidi orta exarefactione partium corporis animalis; quæ irrigatione egent. *Kerkerm. Phyſicks.* p. 404.

Now, tho' we find not, that Chriſt taſted a drop of Liquor ſince he ſate with the Diſciples at the Table, after that no more refreſhments for him in this World: Yet that was not the cauſe of this raging Thirſt; but it is to be aſcribed to the extream Sufferings which he ſo long had conflicted with, both in his Soul and Body. Theſe preyed upon him and drank up his very Spirits. Hence came this ſad complaint, *I Thirſt.*

Thirdly, Let us conſider the time when he thus complained. *When all things were now accompliſhed*, ſaith the Text; (*i. e.*) when all things were even ready to be accompliſhed in his Death. A little, a very little while before his expiration. When the travailing throws of death began to be ſtrong upon him. And ſo it was both a ſign of death at hand, and of his Love to us, which was ſtronger than Death, that would not complain ſooner, becauſe he would admit of no relief, nor take the leaſt refreſhment till he had done his Work.

Cujuſmodi voluptatis hactenus inexpertus fui? *Plut.*

Fourthly, and Laſtly, Take notice of the deſign and end of his complaint. *That the Scriptures might be fulfilled, he ſaith, I thirſt*; (*i. e.*) that it might appear for the ſatisfaction of our Faith, that whatſoever had been predicted by the Prophets, was exactly accompliſhed, even to a circumſtance in him. Now it was foretold of him, *Pſal.* 69. 21. *They gave me Gall for my meat, and in my thirſt, they gave me Vinegar to drink*; and herein it was verified. Hence the Note is,

Doct. *That ſuch were the Agonies and extreme Sufferings of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt upon the Croſs as drank up his very Spirits, and made him cry I thirſt.*

If I, (ſaid one) ſhould live a thouſand Years, and every Day die a thouſand times, the ſame death for Chriſt, that he once died for me, yet all this would be nothing to the ſorrows Chriſt endured in his death. At this time the Bridegroom Chriſt, might have borrowed the word of his Spouſe, the Church, *Lam.* 1. 12. *Is it nothing to you, all ye that paſs by? See and behold, if there be any ſorrow like unto my ſorrow which is done unto me; wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the days of his fierce anger.*

Si poſſem vivere mille annos, & qualibet die millies mori pro eo, eadam morte quâ ille pro me mortuus eſt ſemel: nihil eſſet ad dolorem quem habuit in ſc. *Edmund de ſpeculo. Eccleſ.* c. 23.

Here we are to enquire into and conſider the Extremities and Agonies Chriſt laboured under upon the Croſs, which occaſioned this ſad complaint of Thirſt. And then make Application of it in the ſeveral Inferences of Truth deducible from it.

Now the ſufferings of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt upon the Croſs were two-fold, *viz.* His Corporeal and Spiritual Sufferings. We ſhall open them diſtinctly, and then ſhew how both theſe meeting together upon him in their fulneſs and extremity muſt needs conſume his very radical Moiſture, and make him cry, *I Thirſt.* To begin with the firſt,

Firſt, His Corporeal and more external Sufferings were exceeding great, acute and extream Sufferings: For they were ſharp, univerſal, continual and unrelieved by any inward Comfort.

Corpus ejus fuit optime complexionatum, cum formatum fuit miraculoſe. *Aquin. pars tertia. Art.* 6.

Firſt, They were *ſharp Sufferings*. For his Body was racked or digged, in thoſe parts where Senſe more eminently dwells. In the Hands and Feet the Veins and Sinews meet, and their pain and anguiſh meet with them, *Pſal.* 22. 16. *They digged my hands and my feet.* Now Chriſt by reaſon of his exact and excellent temper of Body, had doubtleſs more quick, tender and delicate Senſes than other Men. His Body was ſo formed that it might be a capacious Veſſel to take in more Sufferings than any other Body can: Senſe is in ſome more delicate and tender, and in others dull and blunt, according to the temperament, and vivacity of the Body and Spirits. But in none as it was in Chriſt, whoſe Body was miraculouſly formed on purpoſe to ſuffer unparallelled Miſeries and Sorrows in. *A body haſt thou fitted me*, Heb. 10. 5. Neither Sin nor Sickneſs had any way enfeebled or dulled it.

Secondly, As his pains were ſharp, ſo they were *univerſal*, not affecting one, but every part. They ſeized every member. From Head to Foot, no member was free from torture. For as his Head was wounded with Thorns, his Back with bloody Laſhes, his Side with a Spear, his Hands and Feet with Nails; ſo every other part was ſtretched and diſtended beyond its natural length, by hanging upon that cruel Engine of torment, the Croſs. And as every member, ſo every particular Senſe was afflicted, his Sight with vile wretches, cruel Murderers that ſtood about him. His Hearing with horrid Blaſphemies belch'd out againſt him. His Taſte with Vinegar and Gall, which they gave to aggravate his Miſery: His Smell with that filthy *Golgotha* where he was crucified, and his Feeling with exquiſite Pains in every part. So that he was not only ſharply, but univerſally tormented.

Thirdly, Theſe univerſal Pains were *continual*, not by fits, but without any intermiſſion. He had not a moment's eaſe by the ceſſation of Pains. Wave came upon Wave, one grief driving on another, till all God's Waves and Billows had gone over him. To be in extremity of pain, and that without a moment's intermiſſion, will quickly pull down the ſtouteſt Nature in the World.

Fourthly, and Laſtly, As his Pains were ſharp, univerſal, and continual; ſo they were altogether unrelieved by his underſtanding part. If a Man have ſweet Comforts flowing into his Soul from God, they will ſweetly demulce and allay the pains of the Body. This made the Martyrs ſhout amidſt the Flames. Yes, even inferior Comforts and Delights of the Mind, will greatly relieve the oppreſſed Body.

Nihil agis dolor, quamvis ſis moleſtus, nunquam confitebor te eſſe malum.

It's ſaid of *Poſſidonius*, that in a great Fit of the Stone he ſolaced himſelf with Diſcourſes of Moral Vertue, and when the Pain twinged him, he would ſay, O Pain, thou do'ſt nothing, tho' thou art a little troubleſome, I will never confeſs thee to be Evil. And *Epicurus* in the Fits of the Cholick, refreſhed himſelf, *ob memoriam inventorum*, (i. e.) by his Invention in Philoſophy.

But now Chriſt had no relief this way in the leaſt. Not a drop of Comfort came from Heaven into his Soul to relieve it, and the Body by it. But on the contrary, his Soul was filled up with Grief, and had an heavier Burden of its own to bear than that of the Body. So that inſtead of relieving, it increaſed unſpeakably the burden of its outward Man. For,

Secondly, Let us conſider theſe inward Sufferings of his Soul, how great they were, and how quickly they ſpent his natural ſtrength, and turned his moiſture into the drought of Summer. And,

Firſt, His Soul felt *the Wrath of an angry God*, which was terribly impreſs'd upon it. The Wrath of a King is as the roaring of a Lyon; but what is that to the Wrath of a Deity? See what a Deſcription is given of it in *Nahum* 1 6. *Who can ſtand before his indignation? And who can abide in the fierceneſs of his anger? His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.* Had not the ſtrength that ſupported Chriſt been greater than that of Rocks, this Wrath had certainly overwhelmed, and ground him to Powder.

Secondly, As it was the Wrath of God that lay upon his Soul, ſo it was the *pure Wrath* of God, without any allay or mixture. Not one drop of Comfort came from Heaven or Earth. All the Ingredients in his Cup were bitter ones. There was Wrath without Mercy; yea, Wroth without the leaſt degree of ſparing Mercy; *for God ſpared not his own Son*, Rom. 8. 32. Had Chriſt been abated or ſpared, we had not. If our Mercies muſt be pure Mercies, and our Glory in Heaven, pure and unmixed Glory; then the Wrath which he ſuffered, muſt be pure unmixed Wrath. Yea,

Thirdly, As the Wrath, the pure unmixed Wrath of God lay upon his Soul, ſo *all the Wrath of God* was poured out upon him; even to the laſt drop. So that there is not one drop reſerved for the Elect to feel. Chriſt's Cup was deep and large, it contained all the Fury and Wrath of an infinite God in it. And yet he drank it up. He bare it all; ſo that to believing Souls, who come to make Peace with God through Chriſt, he ſaith, *Iſa.* 27. 4. *Fury is not in me.* In all the Chaſtiſements God afflicts upon his People, there is no vindictive Wrath. Chriſt bare it all in his own Soul and Body on the Tree.

Fourthly, As it was all the Wrath of God that lay upon Christ, so *it was Wrath aggravated in divers respects, beyond that which the Damned themselves do suffer.* That's strange you will say, can there be any Sufferings worse than those the Damned suffer, upon whom the Wrath of an infinite God is immediately transacted! Who holds them up with the Arm of his Power, while the Arm of his Justice lies on eternally. Can any Sorrows be greater than these? Yes, Christ's Sufferings were beyond theirs in divers Particulars.

First, None of the Damned were ever so near and dear to God, as Christ was. They were estranged from the Womb; but Christ lay in his Bosom. When he smote Christ, he smote *the man that was his fellow*, Zach. 13. 7. But in smiting them he smites his Enemies. When he had to do in a way of Satisfaction with Christ, he is said not to spare his own Son, *Rom.* 8. 32. Never was the fury of God poured out upon such a Person before.

Secondly, None of the Damned had ever so large a Capacity to take in the full sence of the Wrath of God, as Christ had. The larger any one's Capacity is, to understand and weigh his Troubles fully, the more grievous and heavy is his Burden. If a Man casts Vessels of greater and lesser Quantity into the Sea, tho' all will be full, yet the greater the Vessel is, the more Water it contains. Now Christ had a Capacity beyond all meer Creatures, to take in the Wrath of his Father. And what deep and large Apprehensions he had of it, may be judged by the bloody Sweat he had in the Garden, which was the effect of his meer Apprehensions of the Wrath of God. Christ was a large Vessel indeed. As he is capable of more Glory, so of more Sense and Misery than any other Person in the World.

Thirdly, The Damned suffer not so innocently as Christ suffered, they suffer the just Demerit and Recompence of their Sin. They have deserved all that Wrath of God which they feel, and must feel for ever. It is but that Recompence which was meet. But Christ was altogether innocent. He had done no Iniquity, neither was Guile found in his Mouth, yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him. When Christ suffered, he suffered not for what he had done; but his Sufferings were the Sufferings of a Surety, paying the Debts of others. *The Messiah was cut off, but not for himself*, Dan. 9. 26. Thus you see what his external Sufferings in the Body, and his internal Sufferings in his Soul were.

Thirdly, In the last place it is evident, that such extream Sufferings as these, meeting together upon him, must needs exhaust his very Spirits, and make him cry, *I Thirst.* For let us consider,

First, What meer external Pains, and outward Afflictions can do. These prey upon and consume our Spirits. So *David* complains, *Psal.* 39. 11. *When thou with rebukes, correct-est man for iniquity; thou makest his beauty to consume away as a moth*, (i.e.) look, as a Moth frets and consumes the most strong and well-wrought Garment, and makes it seary and rotten without any noise; so Afflictions waste and wear out the strongest Bodies. They make Bodies of the firmest Constitution, like an old rotten Garment. They shrivel and dry up the most vigorous and flourishing Body, and make it like a bottle in the smoke, *Psalm* 119. 83.

Sicut enim uter fumo maceratur, & torrefit; ita animus assiduis doloribus & continuo malorum æstu exhauritur & consumitur. *Moller in loc.*

Secondly, Consider what meer internal troubles of the Soul, can do upon the strongest Body. These quickly spend its strength, and devour the Spirits. So *Solomon* speaks, *Prov.* 17. 22. *A broken spirit drieth the bones*, (i.e.) it consumes the very marrow with which they are moistned. So *Psalm* 32. 3, 4 *My bones waxed old, and through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy on me; my moisture* (or chief sap) *is turned into the drought of Summer.* What a spectacle of Pity was *Francis Spira* become, meerly through the anguish of his Spirit? A Spirit sharpen'd with such Troubles, like a keen Knife, cuts through the Sheath. Certainly whoever hath had any acquaintance with troubles of Soul, knows by sad Experience, how like an internal flame, it feeds and preys upon the very Spirits; so that the strongest stoop and quail under it. But,

Thirdly, When outward Bodily pains shall meet with inward spiritual Troubles, and both in extremity shall come in one day; how soon must the firmest Body fail and waste away like a Candle lighted at both ends! Now strengh fails a-pace, and Nature must fall flat un der this load. When the Ship in which *Paul* sailed, fell into a place where two Seas met, it was quickly wrack'd, and so will the best constituted Body in the World, if it fall under both these troubles together. The Soul and Body sympathize with each other under trouble, and mutually relieve each other.

If the Body be sick and full of Pain, the Spirit supports, chears, and relieves it by Reason and Resolution all that it can. And if the Spirit be Afflicted, the Body sympathizes, and helps to bear up the Spirit. But now, if the one be over-laid with strong pains, more than it can bear, and calls for aid from the other, and the other be oppressed with intolerable anguish, and cries out under a burden greater than it can bear, so that it can contribute no help, but instead thereof adds to its burden, which before was above strength to bear. Now Nature must needs fail, and the friendly union betwixt Soul and Body suffer a dissolution by such an overwhelming pressure as this. So it was with Christ, when outward and inward Sorrows met in one day in their extremity upon him. Hence the bitter Cry, *I Thirst.*

Inference 1. *How horrid a thing is Sin! How great is that Evil of Evils! Which deserves that all these shall be inflicted and suffered for the expiation of it.*

The sufferings of Christ for sin, gives us the true account, and fullest representation of its Evil. "The "Law (saith one) is a bright "Glass wherein we may see "the evil of sin; but there is "the red Glass of the suffering "of Christ; and in that we may see more of the "evil of Sin; than if God should let us down to "Hell, and there we should see all the tortures and "torments of the Damned. If we should see them "how they lie sweltring under God's Wrath there, "it were not so much as the beholding of sin, thro' "the red Glass of the sufferings of Christ. *M. J. B. in his Evil of Evils*, p. 124.

Suppose the bars of the bottomless Pit were broken up, and damned Spirits should ascend from thence, and come up among us, with the Chains of Darkness rattling at their heels, and we should hear the Groans, and see the gastly paleness and tremblings of those poor Creatures, upon whom the righteous God hath impress'd his Fury and Indignation; if we could hear how their Consciences are lashed by the fearful scourge of Guilt, and how they shriek at every lash the arm of Justice gives them.

If

If we ſhould ſee and hear all this, it is not ſo much as what we may ſee in this Text; where the Son of God under his ſufferings for it, cries out, *I thirſt*. For, as I ſhewed you before, Chriſt's ſufferings in divers reſpects were beyond theirs. O then, let not thy vain Heart ſlight ſin; as if it were but a ſmall thing. If ever God ſhew thee the face of ſin in this Glaſs, thou wilt ſay, there is not ſuch another horrid repreſentation to be made to a Man in all the World. Fools make a mock at ſin, but wiſe Men tremble at it.

Inference 2. *How afflictive and intolerable are inward troubles.* Did Chriſt complain ſo ſadly under them, and cry, *I thirſt*? Surely then they are no ſuch light matters as many are apt to make of them. If they ſo ſcorch'd the very Heart of Chriſt, dried up the green Tree, preyed upon his very Spirits, and turned his moiſture into the drought of Summer; they deſerve not to be ſlighted, as they are by ſome. The Lord Jeſus was fitted to bear and ſuffer as ſtrong troubles as ever befel the Nature of Man, and he did bear all other troubles with admirable Patience; but when it came to this, when the flames of God's wrath ſcorched his Soul, then he cries, *I thirſt*.

David's Heart was for courage as the Heart of a Lion; but when God exerciſed him with inward troubles for ſin, then he roars out under the anguiſh of it. *I am feeble, and ſore broken; I have roared by reaſon of the diſquietneſs of my heart. My heart panteth, my ſtrength faileth me; as for the light of mine eyes, it is alſo gone from me*, Pſal. 38. 8, 10. *A wounded Spirit who can bear?* Many have profeſſed that all the torments in the World are but toys to it. The racking fits of the Gout, the grinding tortures of the Stone, are nothing to the wrath of God, ſet on upon the Conſcience. What is the Worm that never dies, but the efficacy of a guilty Conſcience? This Worm feeds and nibbles upon the very inwards, upon the tender and moſt ſenſible part of Man; and is the principal part of Hell's horror. In bodily pains, a Man may be relieved by proper Medicines; here nothing but the blood of ſprinkling relieves; in outward pains the Body may be ſupported by the reſolution and courage of the mind; here the mind itſelf is wounded. O let none deſpiſe theſe troubles, they are dreadful things.

Inference 3. *How dreadful a place is Hell! Where this cry is heard for ever, I thirſt.* There the Wrath of the great and terrible God flames upon the Damned for ever, in which they thirſt and none relieve them. If Chriſt complained, *I thirſt*, when he had conflicted but a few hours with the Wrath of God; what is their ſtate then, that are to grapple with it for ever! When millions of Years are paſt and gone, ten thouſand millions more are coming on. There's an everlaſting Thirſt in Hell, and it admits of no relief. There are no full Cups in Hell, but an eternal Thirſt. Think on this ye that now add Drunkenneſs to Thirſt, who tumble in all ſenſual Pleaſures, and drown Nature in an exceſs of Luxury. Remember what *Dives* ſaid in *Luke* 16. 24. *And he cried and ſaid, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and ſend Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water to cool my Tongue, for I am tormented in this flame.* No Cups of Water, no Bowls of wine in Hell. There that Throat will be parched with Thirſt, which is now drowned with exceſs. The Songs of the Drunkard turned into Howlings. If Thirſt in the extremity of it be now ſo unſufferable, what is that Thirſt which is infinitely beyond this in meaſure, and never ſhall be relieved? Say not it is hard that God ſhall deal thus with his poor Creatures. You will not think it ſo, if you conſider what he expoſed his own dear Son to, when Sin was but imputed to him. And what that Man deſerves to feel, that hath not only merited Hell, but by refuſing Chriſt the Remedy, the hotteſt place in Hell.

Tunc edax flamma comburet, quos nunc carnalis delectatio polluit. Tunc infinitum patens inferni barathrum, &c. *Greg.*

An Engliſh Merchant living at Dantzick, related this ſtory to a godly Miniſter, that a Friend of his (a Merchant alſo) went to a Convent, and dined with the Fryers there; their Entertainment was very noble: After he had dined and ſeen all, the Merchant fell to commending their pleaſant Lives; yea, ſaid one of the Fryers to him, we live gallantly indeed, had we any Body to go to Hell for us when we die. Mr. Firmin's Real Chriſtian.

In this thirſt of Chriſt we have the livelieſt emblem of the ſtate of the Damned, that ever was preſented to Men in this World. Here you ſee a Perſon labouring in extremity under the infinite Wrath of the great and terrible God lying upon his Soul and Body at once, and cauſing him to utter this doleful Cry, *I thirſt*. Only Chriſt endured this but a little while, the Damned muſt endure it for ever. In that they differ. As alſo in the innocency and ability of the Perſons ſuffering. And in the End for which they ſuffer. But ſurely ſuch as this will the cry of thoſe Souls be that are caſt away for ever. O terrible Thirſt!

Inference 4. *How much do nice and wanton Appetites deſerve to be reproved!* The Son of God wanted a draught of cold Water to relieve him, and could not have it. God hath given us variety of refreſhing Creatures to relieve us, and we deſpiſe them. We have better things than a cup of Water to refreſh and delight us when we are thirſty, and yet are not pleaſed. O that this complaint of Chriſt on the Croſs, *I thirſt*, were but believingly conſidered, it would make you bleſs God for what you now deſpiſe; and beget contentment in you for the meaneſt Mercies and moſt common Favours in this World. Did the Lord of all things cry, *I thirſt*, and had nothing in his extremity to comfort him? and doſt thou who haſt a thouſand times over forfeited all temporal as well as ſpiritual Mercies, contemn and ſlight the good Creatures of God! What deſpiſe a Cup of Water, who deſerveſt nothing but a Cup of Wrath from the hand of the Lord! O lay it to heart, and hence learn Contentment with any thing.

Inference 5. *Did Jeſus Chriſt upon the Croſs cry, I thirſt? Then Believers ſhall never thirſt eternally. Their thirſt ſhall be certainly ſatisfied.*

There is a threefold Thirſt, *gracious, natural, and penal.* The gracious thirſt is the vehement deſire of a ſpiritual Heart after God. Of this *David* ſpeaks, *Pſalm* 42. 1, 2. *As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, ſo panteth my ſoul after thee, O God. My ſoul thirſteth for God, for the living God; when ſhall I come and appear before God?* And this is indeed a vehement thirſt, it makes the Soul break with the longings it hath after God, *Pſalm* 119. It's a thirſt proper to Believers, who have taſted that the Lord is gracious.

Natural thirſt is (as before was noted) a deſire of refreſhment by humid nouriſhment, and it's common both to believers and unbelievers in this World. God's dear Saints have been driven to ſuch extremities in this Life, that their Tongues have even failed for thirſt. *When the poor and needy ſeek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirſt,*

thirſt, Iſa. 41. 17. And of the People of God in their Captivity it's ſaid, *Lam.* 4. 4. *The Tongue of the ſucking Child cleaveth to the Roof of his Mouth for Thirſt. The young Children ask Bread, and no Man breaketh it unto them. They that feed delicately are deſolate in the Streets, they that were brought up in Scarlet embrace Dunghils.* To this many that fear the Lord have been reduced.

A *Penal Thirſt* is God's juſt denying of all Refreſhment or Relief to Sinners in their Extremities, and that as a due Puniſhment for their Sin. This Believers ſhall never feel, becauſe when Chriſt thirſted upon the Croſs, he made full Satisfaction to God in their room. Theſe Sufferings of Chriſt, as they were ordained for them, ſo the Benefits of them are truly imputed to them. And for the natural Thirſt, that ſhall be ſatisfied. For in Heaven we ſhall live without theſe Neceſſities, and Dependencies upon the Creature. We ſhall be equal with the Angels in the way and manner of living and ſubſiſting, *Luke* 20. 36. And for the gracious thirſting of their Souls for God, it ſhall be fully ſatisfied. So it's promiſed, *Matth.* 5. 6. *Bleſſed are they which hunger and thirſt after Righteouſneſs, for they ſhall be filled.* They ſhall then depend no more upon the Stream, but drink from the ever-flowing Fountain it ſelf, *Pſalm* 36. 8. *They ſhall be abundantly ſatisfied with the Fatneſs of thy Houſe, and thou ſhalt make them drink of the River of thy Pleaſures. For with thee is the Fountain of Life, and in thy Light ſhall we ſee Light.* There they ſhall drink and praiſe, and praiſe and drink for evermore. All their thirſty Deſires ſhall be filled with compleat Satisfaction. O how deſirable a State is Heaven upon this Account! and how ſhould we be reſtleſs till we come thither; as the thirſty Traveller is until he meet that cool refreſhing Spring he wants and ſeeks for. This preſent State is a State of Thirſting, that to come of Refreſhment and Satisfaction. Some Drops indeed come from that Fountain by Faith, but they quench not the Believer's Thirſt. Rather like Water ſprinkled on Fire, they make it burn the more; but there the thirſty Soul hath enough.

O bleſs God that Jeſus Chriſt thirſted under the Heat of his Wrath once, that you might not be ſcorched with it for ever. If he had not cry'd, *I thirſt*, you muſt have cry'd out of Thirſt eternally, and never be ſatisfied.

Inference 6. Laſtly, Did Chriſt in the Extremity of his Sufferings cry, *I thirſt? Then how great beyond all Compare is the Love of God to Sinners; who for their Sakes expoſed the Son of his Love to ſuch extream Sufferings?*

Three Conſiderations marvellouſly heighten that Love of the Father.

Firſt, His putting the Lord Jeſus into ſuch a Condition. There is none of us would endure to ſee a Child of his own lye panting, and thirſting in the Extremity of Torments, for the faireſt Inheritance on Earth: Much leſs to have the Soul of a Child conflicting with the Wrath of God, and making ſuch Heart-rending Complaints as Chriſt made upon the Croſs, if we might have the largeſt Empire in the World for it: Yet ſuch was the Strength of the Love of God to us, that he willingly gave Jeſus Chriſt to all this Miſery and Torture for us. What ſhall we call this Love! O the Heighth, Length, Depth and Breadth of that Love which paſſeth Knowledge! The Love of God to Jeſus Chriſt was infinitely beyond all the Love we have to our Children, as the Sea is more than a Spoonful of Water; and yet, as dearly as he loved him, he was content to expoſe him to all this, rather than we ſhould periſh eternally.

Secondly, As God the Father was content to expoſe Chriſt to this Extremity; ſo in that Extremity to hear his bitter Cries, and dolorous Complaints; and yet not relieve him with the leaſt Refreſhment till he fainted, and died under it. He heard the Cries of his Son. That Voice, *I thirſt*, pierced Heaven, and reach'd the Father's Ear; but yet he will not refreſh him in his Agonies, nor abate him any thing of the Debt he was now paying, and all this for the Love he had to poor Sinners. Had Chriſt been relieved in his Sufferings and ſpared, then God could not have pitied or ſpared us. The Extremity of Chriſt's Sufferings was an Act of Juſtice to him; and the greateſt Mercy to us that ever could be manifeſted. Nor indeed (tho' Chriſt ſo bitterly complains of his Thirſt) was he willing to be relieved, till he had finiſhed his Work. O Love unſpeakable! He doth not complain, that he might be relieved, but to manifeſt how great that Sorrow was, which his Soul now felt upon our Account.

Thirdly, And it ſhould never be forgotten, that Jeſus Chriſt was expoſed to theſe Extremities of Sorrow for Sinners, the greateſt of Sinners, who deſerved not one Drop of Mercy from God. This commends the Love of God ſingularly to us, in that *whilſt we were yet Sinners, Chriſt died for us*, Rom. 5. 8. Thus the Love of God in Jeſus Chriſt ſtill riſes higher and higher in every Diſcovery of it. Admire, adore, and be raviſhed with the Thoughts of this Love.

Thanks be to God for his unſpeakable Gift.

SER-

SERMON XXXV.

Opens the sixth excellent Saying of Christ upon the Cross.

JOHN XIX. 30.

When Jesus therefore had received the Vinegar, he said, [It is finished] and he bowed his Head, and gave up the Ghost.

IT *is finished.* This is the Sixth remarkable Word of our Lord Jesus Christ upon the Cross, uttered as a triumphant Shout when he saw the glorious Issue of all his Sufferings now at hand.

It is but one Word in the Original, but in that one Word is contained the Sum of all Joy. The very Spirits of all Divine Consolation. The ancient *Greeks* reckoned it their Excellency to speak much in a little. To give a Sea of Matter in a Drop of Language. What they only sought is here found. I find some Variety (and indeed Variety rather than Contrariety) among Expositors about the relation of these Words. Some are of Opinion that the Antecedent is the legal Types and Ceremonies; and so make this to be the meaning. *It is finished:* That is, all the Types and Prefigurations that shadow'd forth the Redemption of Souls by the Blood of Christ, are now fulfilled and accomplished. And doubtless as this is in it self a Truth, so it's such a Truth as may not be excluded, as Alien to the true Scope and Sense of this Place. And tho' it be objected, that many Types and Prefigurations remained at this time unsatisfied, even all that looked to the actual Death of Christ, his Continuance in the State of the Dead, and his Resurrection; yet it's easily removed, by considering that they are said to be finished, because they were just finishing, or ready to be finished. And it is as if Christ had said, I am now putting the last Hand to it. A few Moments of Time more will compleat and finish it; I have the Sum now in my Hand, which will fully satisfy and pay God the whole Debt.

'Tis now but bow the Head, and the Work is done, and all the Types therein fulfilled. So that this cannot exclude the fulfilling of the Types in the Death of Christ from their just Claim to the Sense of this Place. But yet tho' we cannot here exclude this Sense, we cannot allow it to be the whole or principal Sense. For lo! a far greater Truth is contained herein, even the finishing or Compleatment of the whole Design and Project of our Redemption, and therein of all the Types that prefigured it. Both these judicious *Calvin* conjoins, making the compleating of Redemption the principal, and the fulfilling of all the Types, the collateral and less principal Sense of it.

Docet in ejus morte totum salutis nostræ complementum, & singulas partes contineri. Huic doctrinæ annexa est omnium legis rituum abrogatio. *Calv.*

Factum dicit, quod jam in eo fuit, & pœne factum esset. *Cam.*

Yet it must be observed, when we say Christ finished Redemption-work by his Death; the meaning is not that his Death alone did finish it: For his Abode in the Grave, Resurrection and Ascension, had all of them their joint Influence into it: But these being shortly to follow, are all included in the Scope of this Place. According then to the principal Scope of the Place we observe,

Doct. *That Jesus Christ hath perfected, and compleatly finished the great Work of Redemption committed to him by God the Father.*

To this great Truth the Apostle gives a full Testimony, *Heb.* 10. 14. *By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.* And to the same purpose speaks *John* 17. 4. *I have glorified thee on Earth; I have finished the Work thou gavest me to do.* Concerning this Work, and the finishing thereof by Jesus Christ upon the Cross, we shall enquire, what this Work was, how Christ finished it, and what Evidence can be produced for the finishing of it.

First, What was the Work which Christ finished by his Death?

It was the fulfilling the whole Law of God in our room, and for our Redemption as a Sponsor, or Surety for us. The Law is a glorious thing. The Holiness of God, that fiery Attribute, is engraven or stampt upon every part of it. *Deut.* 33. 2. *From his Right Hand went a fiery Law.* The Jealousy of the Lord watched over every Point and Tittle of it, for his dreadful and glorious Name was upon it. It cursed every one that continued not in all things contained therein, *Gal.* 3. 10. Two Things therefore were necessarily required in him that should perfectly fulfil it, and both found in our Surety, and in him only, *viz.* a subjective and effective Perfection.

First, A *subjective Perfection.* He that wanted this could never say, *It is finished.* Perfect *working* always follows a perfect *Being.* That he might therefore finish this great Work of Obedience, and therein the glorious Design of our Redemption; lo! in what shining and perfect Holiness was he produced? *Luke* 1. 35. *That holy thing that shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God:* And indeed, *such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from Sinners,* Heb. 7. 26. So that the Law could have no Exception against his Person: Nay, it was never so honoured since its first Promulgation, as it was by having such a perfect and excellent Person as Christ to stand at its Bar; and give it due Reparation.

Secondly, There must be also an *effective Perfection*, or a Perfection of working, and obeying, before it could be said, *it is finished;* This Christ had; for he continued in all things, written in the Law, to do them. *He fulfilled all Righteousness*, as it behoved him to do, *Matth.* 3. 15. He did all that was required to be done. And suffered all that was requisite to be suffered, all that was commanded or threatned; in such Perfection of Obedience, both active and passive, that the pure Eye of Divine Justice could not find a Flaw in it. And so finished the Work his Father gave him to do. And this Work finished by our Lord Jesus Christ, was both a *necessary*, *difficult*, and *precious* Work.

First, It was a *necessary Work*, which Christ finished upon the Cross. Necessary upon a threefold Account.

Opus necessarium ex parte Patris.

It was necessary on the Father's Account. I do not mean that God was under any Necessity from his Nature of redeeming us this or any other way. For our Redemption is *opus liberi consilii*, an Affect of the free Counsel of God; but when God had once decreed and determined to redeem and save poor Sinners by Jesus Christ; then it became necessary that the Counsel of God should be fulfilled. *Acts* 4. 28. *To do whatsoever thy Hand and Counsel had before determined to be done.*

Ex parte Filii.

Secondly, It was necessary with respect to Christ. Upon the Account of that previous Compact that was betwixt the Father and him about it. Therefore it's said by Christ himself, *Luke* 22. 22. *Truly the Son of Man goeth as it was determined* (*i. e.*) as it was foreagreed and covenanted under the Necessity of fulfilling his Engagement to the Father, he came into the World; and being come he still minds his Engagement, *John* 9. 3. *I must work the Works of him that sent me.*

Ex parte nostri.

Thirdly, Yea, and it was no less necessary upon our Account that this Work should be finished. For had not Christ finished this Work, Sin had quickly finished all our Lives, Comforts and Hopes. Without the finishing this Work, not a Son or Daughter of *Adam* could ever have seen the Face of God. Therefore it's said, *John* 3. 14, 15. *As Moses lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness, so* [*must*] *the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have Everlasting Life.* On all these Accounts the finishing of this Work was necessary.

Secondly, As it was *necessary* this Work should be finished, so the finishing of it *was exceeding difficult.* It cost many a Cry, many a Groan, many a Tear, many a hard Tug, before Christ could say, *it is finished.* All the Angels in Heaven were not able by their united Strength to lift that Burden one Inch from the Ground, which Christ bare upon his Shoulders, yea, and bare it away. But how heavy a Burden this was, may in part appear by his Pro-passion in the Garden, and the bitter Outcries he made upon the Cross, which in their proper Places have been opened.

Thirdly, and lastly, It was a most *precious* Work which Christ finished by his Death. That Work was dispatched and finished in few Hours, which will be the Matter of everlasting Songs and Triumphs to the Angels and Saints to all Eternity. O it was a precious Work. The Mercies that now flow out of this Fountain, *viz.* Justification, Sanctification, Adoption, *&c.* are not to be valued. Besides the endless Happiness and Glory of the coming World, which cannot enter into the Heart of Man to conceive. If the Angels sang when the Foundation Stone was laid, what Shouts, what Triumphs should there be among the Saints when this Voice is heard, *it is finished?*

Secondly, Let us next inform our selves how, and in what manner Jesus Christ finished this glorious Work. And if you search the Scriptures upon that Account, you will find that he finished it *obediently*, *freely*, *diligently* and *fully*.

First, This blessed Work was finished by Jesus Christ most *obediently*, Phil. 2. 8. *He became obedient to Death, even the Death of the Cross.* His Obedience was the Obedience of a Servant, tho' not servile Obedience. So it was foretold of him before he touch'd this Work, *Isa.* 50. 5. *The Lord God hath opened mine Ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away my Back*, (*i. e.*) my Father told me the very worst of it. He told me what hard and heavy things I must undergo if ever I finished this Design of Redemption; and I was not rebellious, (*i e.*) I heartily submitted to and accepted all those Difficulties. For there is a *Meiosis* in the Words. I was content to stoop to the hardest and most ignominious part of it rather than not finish it.

Obedientia servi, non servilis.

Secondly, As Christ finished it *obediently*, so he finished it *freely.* Freedom and Obedience in acting are not at all opposite to or exclusive of each other. *Moses* his Mother nursed him in Obedience to the Command of *Pharaoh*'s Daughter, yet most freely, with respect to her own Delight, and Contentment in that Work. So it's said of Christ, and that by his own Mouth, *John* 10. 17, 18. *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my Life, that I might take it again. No Man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of my self; I have Power to lay it down, and I have Power to take it again; this Commandment have I received of my Father.* He liked the Work for the Ends sake. When he had a Prospect of it from Eternity, then were his Delights with the Sons of Men. Then he rejoiced in the habitable Parts of the Earth, *Prov.* 8. 30, 31. And when he came into the World about it, with what a full and free Consent did his Heart eccho to the Voice of his Father calling him to it? just as you shall sometimes hear an Eccho answering your Voice two or three times over, *Psalm* 40. *Lo, I come; I delight to do thy Will; thy Law is within my Heart.* He finished the Work freely.

Thirdly, As he finished it freely, so *he finished it diligently*, He wrought hard from the morning of his Life to the end of it; he was never idle wherever he was, but *went about doing good*, Acts 10. 38. Sometimes he was so intent upon his Work, that *he forgot to eat bread*, Joh. 4. 30, 31. As the Life of some Men is but a diversion from one trifle to another, from one Pleasure to another; so the whole Life of Christ was spent and eaten up betwixt one Work or another. Never was a Life so filled up with labour. The very moments of his time, were all imployed for God, to finish this Work.

Fourthly, and Lastly, *he finished it* compleatly and *fully.* All that was to be done by way impetration and meritorious Redemption, is fully done. No hand can come after his. Angels can add nothing to it. That is perfected to which nothing is wanting and to which nothing can be added. Such is the work Christ finished

Perfectum est, cui nihil deest, & cui nihil adpotest.

ed. Whatever the Law demanded, is perfectly paid. Whatever a sinner needs, is perfectly obtained, and purchased. Nothing can be added to what Christ hath done. He put the last hand to it, when he said, *it is finished.* Thus you see what the work was, and how Christ finished it.

Thirdly, In the last place, let us consider what assurance, or evidence we have that Christ hath so finished Redemption-work. And if you pursue that inquiry, you will find these among other plain evidences of it.

First, When Christ died, Redemption-work must needs be finished, in as much as the obedience and blood of Christ, was of infinite value and efficacy, sufficiently able to accomplish all the end for which it was shed. And that not by divine acceptation, but upon the account of its proper value. This effect, *viz.* the finishing Redemption-work meritoriously by Christ, doth not exceed the power of the cause to which we assign it; *viz.* the death of Christ. And if there be a sole sufficient cause in act, what hinders but the effect should follow? There was certainly enough in Christ's Blood, to satisfie the utmost demand of Justice: when that therefore is actually shed Justice is fully paid, and consequently the Souls for whom, and in whose names its paid, fully redeemed from the Curse by the Merit thereof.

Non ex divina acceptatione, sed ex propio valore.

Secondly, Its apparent that Christ finished the Work, by the discharge or acquittance God the Father gave him, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand. If Christ the sinners Surety, be as such discharged by God the Creditor; then the debt is fully paid. Now Christ was justified, and cleared at his Resurrection, from all charges and demands of Justice. Therefore its said, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. that he was *justified in the spirit*, (i. e.) openly discharged, by that very act of the Godhead, his raising him from the dead. For when the Grave was opened and Christ rose, it was to him as the opening of the Prison doors, and setting a Surety at liberty, who was clapt up for another Man's debt. To the same sense Christ speaks of his Ascension, *John* 16. 10. *The spirit* (saith he) *shall convince the world of righteousness*, (i. e.) of a compleat and perfect righteousness in me, imputable to sinners for their perfect Justification. And whereby shall he convince and satisfie them that it is so? Why, by this, *because I go to the Father, and ye see me no more.* There's a great deal of force and weight in those Words, *because you see me no more.* For it amounts to this much, by this you shall be satisfied I have fully and compleatly performed all righteousness, and that by an active and passive obedience I have so fully satisfied God for you, as that you shall never be charged or condemned; because when I go to Heaven, I shall abide there in glory with my Father, and not be sent back again, as I should, if any thing had been omitted by me. And this the Apostle gives you also in so many plain words, *Heb.* 10. 12, 13, 14. *After he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God.* And what doth he infer from that but the very truth before us, *verse* 14. that *by one offering he hath perfected for ever, them that are sanctified.*

Thirdly, Its evident Christ hath finished the Work, by the blessed Effects of it, upon all that believe in him. For by vertue of the compleatness of Christ's Work finished by his Death; their Consciences are now rationally pacified, and their Souls at death actually received into Glory. Neither of which could be, if Christ had not in this World finished the Work. If Christ had done his Work imperfectly, he could not have given rest and tranquility to the labouring and burdened Souls that come to him, as now he doth, *Matth* 11. 28. Conscience would still be hesitating, trembling and unsatisfied. And had he not finished his Work, he could not have entrance through the vail of his Flesh, into Heaven; as all that believe in him have, *Heb.* 10. 19, 20. If he had but *almost* done that Work, we had been but *almost saved*, that is, certainly damned. And thus you see briefly the *evidences*, that the *work* is finished.

Inference 1. Hath Christ perfected and compleatly finished all his Work for us, *how sweet a relief is this to us that believe in him, against all the defects and imperfections of all the works of God, that are wrought by us?* There's nothing finished that we do. All our duties are imperfect duties, they come off lamely, and defectively from our hands. Its Christ's charge against the Church of *Sardis*, *Rev.* 3. 2. I have not found thy Works πεπληρωμένα perfect, or filled up before God. O there is much emptiness, and vanity in the best of our Duties: But here's the grand relief, and that which answers to all the grounds of our Doubts and Fears upon that account, Jesus Christ hath finished all his Work though we can finish none of ours. And so, though we be defective, poor imperfect Creatures in our selves; yet notwithstanding, we are *compleat in him*, Col. 2. 9, 10. though we cannot perfectly obey, or fulfil one command of the Law, yet is *the righteousness of the Law fulfilled in us that believe.* Rom. 8. 4. Christ's compleat obedience being imputed to us, makes us compleat, and without fault before God.

It is true, we ought to be humbled for our defects, and troubled for every failing in obedience; but we should not be discouraged, though multitudes of weaknesses be upon us; and many infirmities compass us about in every duty we put our hand to. Though we have no righteousness of our own, yet of God. Christ is made unto us righteousness; and that righteousness of his, is infinitely better than our own. Instead of our own we have his; (*i. e.*) we have Gold for Dung. O blessed be God, for Christ's perfect righteousness.

Inference 2. Did Christ finish his work with his own hand? *How dangerous and dishonourable a thing is it, to join any thing of our own, to the righteousness of Christ, in point of Justification before God!* Jesus Christ will never endure this. It reflects upon his work dishonourably. He doth not (in this case) affect *social Glory*. Not I, and my God; I, and my Christ did this: He will be all, or none in your Justification. If he have finished the Work, what need of our Additions? And if not, to what purpose are they? Can we finish that which Christ himself could not? But we would fain be sharing with him in this honour, which he will never endure. Did he finish the Work by himself, and will he ever divide the glory and praise of it with us? No, no, Christ is no half Saviour. O it's an hard thing to bring these proud Hearts to live upon Christ for Righteousness. We would fain add our Penny to make up Christ's Summ. But if you will have it so, or have nothing to do with Christ, you and your Penny must perish together, *Isai.* 50. *ult.* God gives us the Righteousness of Christ, as he gave *Manna* to the *Israelites* in the Wilderness. It's said, *Deut.* 8. 16. *That he fed them with Manna in the wilderness, that he might humble them.* The quality of the Food was not humbling, for it was Angels Food; but the manner of giving it was so. They must live by Faith upon God for it, from day to day. This was not like other Food,

produced

produced by their own labour. Certainly God takes the right way to humble proud Nature, in calling sinners wholly off from their own Righteousness, to Christ for their Justification.

Inference 3. Did Christ finish his Work for us? Then there can be no doubt, *but he will also finish his work in us.* As he begun the Work of our Redemption, and finished it; so he that hath begun the good Work in you will also finish it upon your souls. And of this the Apostle saith, *He is confident*, Phil. 1. 6. Jesus Christ is not only called the *Author*, but also the *Finisher* of our Faith, *Heb.* 12. 2. If he begin it, no doubt but he will finish it. And indeed the finishing of his own Work of Redemption without us, gives full evidence that he will finish his Work of Sanctification within us: And that because these two Works of Christ, have a respect and relation to each other: And such a Relation, that the Work he finished by his own Death, Resurrection and Ascension, would be in vain to us, if the Work of Sanctification in us should not in like manner be finished. Therefore as he presented a perfect sacrifice to God, and finished Redemption-work; so will he present every man perfect and compleat, for whom he here offered up himself. For he will not lose the end of all his sufferings at last. To what purpose would his meritorious Impetration be, without compleat and full Application? Be not therefore discouraged at the defects and imperfections of your inherent grace. Be humbled for them, but be not dejected by them: This is Christ's Work, as well as that. That work is finished, and so will this.

Inference 4. Is Christ's Work of Redemption a compleat and finished Work? *How excellent and comfortable beyond all compare, is the method and way of Faith!* Surely the way of believing is the most excellent way in which a poor sinner can approach God, for it brings before him a compleat, intire, perfect Righteousness, and this must needs be most honourable to God, most comfortable to the Soul that draws nigh to God. O what a compleat, finished perfect thing is the Righteousness of Christ! The sharp eye of the holy and jealous God cannot find the least flaw, or defect in it. Let God or Conscience look upon it. Turn it every way, view it on every side, throughly weigh and examine it; it will appear a pure, a perfect piece, containing in it, whatsoever is necessary for the reconciling of an angry God, or pacifying of a distressed and perplexed Soul. How pleasing therefore and exceptable to God must be that Faith, which presents so compleat and excellent an attonement to him! Hence the acting of our Faith upon Christ for Righteousness, the approaches of Faith to God with such an acceptable present, is called the work of God: That is, the most grateful, acceptable and well-pleasing work to God, that a Creature can perform, *John* 6. 29. *This is the work of God, that ye believe.* One act of faith pleases him more, than if you should toil and drudge all your lives at a task of obedience to the Law. As it's more for God's Honour, and thy comfort to pay all thou owest him at one round payment, in one full Summ, than to make a dribling payment by a Penny a day, and never be able to make full payment, or see the Bond cancelled. This perfect Work, only produces perfect Peace.

Inference 5. Did Christ work, and work out all that God gave him to do; will he had finished his Work? *How necessary then is a Laborious working Life, to all that call themselves Christians?* The Life of Christ you see was a laborious Life. Shall he work, and we play? Shall a zealous, active, working Christ, be reproached with idle negligent and lazy Followers? O work, and *work out your own salvation with fear and trembling*, Phil. 2. 12.

But if Christ wrought so hard, we may sit still. If he finished the Work, nothing remains for us to do.

Nothing of that Work which Christ did, remains for you to do. It's your commendation and duty to leave all that to Christ; but there's other work for you to do: Yea, store of Work lying upon your hands. You must work as well as Christ, though not for the same ends Christ did. He wrought hard to satisfie the Law, by fulfilling all Righteousness. He wrought all his life long, to work out a righteousness to justifie you before God. This Work falls to no hand but Christ's, but you must work to obey the commands of Christ, into whose right ye are come by Redemption. You must work to testifie your thanktulness to Christ, for the work finished for you. You must work to glorifie God by your Obedience. *Let your light so shine before men.* For these and divers other such ends and reasons, your life must be a working life. God preserve all his People from the gross and vile opinions of *Antinomian Libertines*, who cry up Grace; and decry Obedience. Who under specious pretences of exalting a naked Christ upon the Throne, do indeed strip him naked of a great part of his Glory and vilely dethrone him. My Pen shall not English, what mine eyes have red. Tell it not in *Gath.*

Da mihi Christum, non quæro dona gratiæ, sed Christum. Non quæro promissiones, sed Christum. Non quæro sanctificationem, sed Christum. Ne mihi nam fabulam de mediatore, & officio; narra mihi de Christo. *Commentarius de statu Eccles. Brit. p.* 45.

But for thee, Reader, be thou a follower of Christ: Imitate thy Pattern. Yea, let me persuade thee as ever thou hopest to clear up thine interest in him, imitate him in such particulars as these that follow.

First, Christ began early to work for God. He took the morning of his life, the very top of the morning to work for God. *How is it* (said he to his Parents when he was but a Child of about twelve years) *that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?* Reader, if the morning of thy Life be not gone, oh devote it to the work of God, as Christ did. If it be, ply thy Work the closer in the afternoon of thy Life. If a Man have any great and necessary business to do, its good doing it in the morning; afterwards a hurry of business and diversion comes on.

Secondly, As Christ began betime, so he followed his work close. He was early up, and he wrought hard; so hard, that *he forget to eat bread*, John 4. 31, 32. So zealous was he in his Father's Work, that his Friends *thought he had been besides himself*, Mark 3. 21. So zealous, that *the Zeal of God's House eat him up.* He flew like a *Seraphim*, in a Flame of Zeal, about the Work of God. O be not ye like Snales. What *Augustus* said of the young *Roman*, well becomes the true Christian; whatsoever he doth, he doth it to purpose.

Thirdly, Christ often thought upon the Shortness of his Time, and wrought hard because he knew his working Time would be but little. So you find it, *John* 9. 4. *I will work the Works of him that sent me whilst it is Day; the Night cometh, when no Man can work.* O in this be like Christ. Rouze your Hearts to Diligence with this Consideration. If a Man have much to write, and be almost come to the End of his Paper, he will write close, and pack up much Matter in a little room.

Fourthly, He did much Work for God, and made little Noise. He wrought hard, but did not spoil his

his Work, when he had wrought it, by vain oftentation. When he had expreſs'd his Charity in his acts of Mercy and Bounty to Men, he would humbly ſeal up the glory of it, with this Charge; *ſee ye tell no man of it*, Matt. 8. 4. He affected not popular air. All the Angels in Heaven, could not do what Chriſt did, and yet he called himſelf a *Worm*, for all that, *Pſal.* 22. 6. O imitate your Pattern. Work hard for God, and let not pride blow upon it when you have done. It's hard for a Man to do much, and not value himſelf for it too much.

Fiſtbly, Chriſt carried on his Work for God reſolvedly. No diſcouragements would beat him off, though never any work met with more from firſt to laſt. How did Scribes and Phariſees, Jews, Gentiles, yea, Devils ſet upon him, by Perſecutions, and Reproaches, violent Oppoſitions and ſubtil Temptations; but yet, on he goes with his Father's Work for all that. He is deaf to all diſcouragements. So it was foretold of him, *Iſa.* 42. 4. *He ſhall not fail, nor be diſcouraged.*

Sævior, ab obice ibit.

O that more of this Spirit of Chriſt were in his People. O that in the ſtrength of love to Chriſt, and zeal for the glory of God, you would pour out your Hearts in ſervice, and like a River ſweep down all diſcouragements before you.

Sixthly, He continued working, whilſt he continued living. His Life and Labour ended together. He fainted not in his Work. Nay, the greateſt Work he did in this World, was his laſt work. O be like Chriſt in this, be not weary of well-doing. Give not over the work of God, while you can move Hand or Tongue to promote it, and ſee that your laſt works be more than your firſt. O let the motions of your Soul after God, be as all natural motions are, ſwift when neareſt the Center. Say not it is enough, whilſt there is any capacity of doing more for God. In theſe things Chriſtians, be like your Saviour.

Si dixiſti ſufficit, periiſti.

Inference 6. Did Chriſt finiſh his Work? *Look to it Chriſtians, that ye alſo finiſh your Work, which God hath given you to do.* That you may with comfort ſay when death approaches, as Chriſt ſaid, *John* 17 4. *I have glorified thee on earth, I have finiſhed the work thou gaveſt me to do; and now O Father, glorifie thou me with thine own ſelf.* Chriſt had a work committed to him, and he finiſhed it; you have a work alſo committed to you. O ſee that you may be able to ſay, it's finiſhed, when your time is ſo. O work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling: And that I may perſwade you to it, I beſeech you lay theſe Conſiderations cloſe to Heart.

Firſt, If your Work be not done before you die, it can never be done when you are dead. *There's no work, nor knowledge, nor device in the grave, whither thou goeſt*, Eccleſ. 9. 5, 10. They that go down to the Pit, cannot celebrate the name of God, *Iſa.* 38. 18. Death binds up the hand from working any more; ſtrikes dumb the tongue, that it can ſpeak no more; for then the compoſition is diſſolved. The Body which is the Soul's tool to work by, is broken, and thrown aſide. The Soul itſelf preſented immediately before the Lord, to give an account of its Works. O therefore ſeeing the night cometh, when no Man can work, as Chriſt ſpeaks, *John* 9. 4. make haſte and finiſh your Work.

Secondly, If you finiſh not your Work, as the ſeaſon of working, ſo the ſeaſon of Mercy, will be over at death. Do not think, you that have neglected Chriſt all your Lives, you that could never be perſwaded to a laborious Holy Life, that ever your cries and entreaties ſhall prevail with God for Mercy, when your ſeaſon is paſt. No, no, it's too late. *Will God hear his cry when troubles come upon him?* Job. 27. 9. The Seaſon of Mercy is then over; *as the tree falls ſo it lies.* Then he that is holy ſhall be holy ſtill, and he that is filthy ſhall be filthy ſtill. Alas, poor Souls, you come too late. *The Maſter of the houſe is riſen up, and the doors are ſhut*, Luke 19. 42. the Seaſon is over. Happy had it been if ye had known the day of your Viſitation.

Laſtly, If your work be not finiſhed when you come to die, you can never finiſh your Lives with comfort. He that hath not finiſhed his *work* with care, can never finiſh his *courſe* with *joy*. Oh what a diſmal caſe is that Soul in, that finds itſelf ſurprized by death in an unready poſture! To lie ſhivering upon the brink of the Grave, ſaying, Lord, what will become of me! O I cannot, I dare not die! For the poor Soul to ſhrink back into the Body, and cry, *Oh it were better for me to do any thing than die.* Why what's the matter? Oh, I am in a Chriſtleſs ſtate, and dare not go before that awful Judgment-ſeat. If I had in ſeaſon made Chriſt ſure, I could then die with Peace. Lord, what ſhall I do? How doſt thou like this, Reader? Will this be a comfortable cloſe? When one asked a Chriſtian that conſtantly ſpent ſix hours every day in Prayer, why he did ſo? He anſwered, *O I muſt die, I muſt die.* Well then, look to it that you finiſh your Work as Chriſt alſo did his.

SERMON XXXVI.

Opens the seventh and last Word which Christ breathed out of his Soul.

LUKE XXIII. 46.

And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit; and having said thus, he gave up the Ghost.

THese are the last of the last Words of our Lord Jesus Christ upon the Cross, with which he breatheth out his Soul. They were *David*'s words before him, *Psalm* 31. 5. and for substance *Stephen*'s after him, *Acts* 7. 57. They are words full both of Faith and Comfort. Fit to be the last breathings of every gracious Soul in this World. They are resolvable into these five Particulars.

The *Person depositing*, or committing. The *Lord Jesus Christ*, who in this as well as in other things, acted as a common Person, as the Head of the Church. This must be remarked carefully, for therein lies no small part of a Believer's Consolation. When Christ commends his Soul to God, he doth as it were bind up all the Souls of the Elect in one bundle with it; and solemnly presents them all with his, to his Father's acceptance. To this purpose one aptly renders it.

Non privato sui respectu commendat patri animum, sed omnium fidelium suorum animas quasi uno fasciculo complexas, ut simul cum sua serventur. *D. Pareus.*

This commendation made by Christ, turns to the singular profit and advantage of our Souls; in as much as Christ, by this very Prayer, hath delivered them into his Father's hand, as a precious Treasure, when ever the time comes that they are to be loosed from the Bodies which they now inhabit. Jesus Christ neither lived nor died for himself, but for Believers. what he did in this very Act, refers to them as well as to his own Soul. You must look therefore upon Christ in this last and solemn act of his life, as gathering all the Souls of the Elect together, and making a solemn tender of them all, with his own Soul to God.

Hæc Christi commendatio, in animarum nostrarum commodum cedebat. Quippe quas ille a corpore quod inhabitâverant absolutas, quasi quoddam depositum, ventis manu, ex oratione tradebat. *Vith. Antioch in Mark* 9.

Secondly, *The depository*, or Person to whom he comits this precious Treasure, and that was his own Father. *Father, into thy hands I commit* Father is a sweet encouraging assuring Title. Well may a Son commit any concernment how dear soever, into the hands of a Father. Especially such a Son into the hands of such a Father. By the hands of the Father into which he commits his Soul, we are not to understand the naked or meer Power, but the Fatherly acceptation and protection of God.

Manus hæc patris alias Dei potentiam significat, hic vero paternum Dei præsidium, &c. *Pareus.*

Thirdly, *The depositum*, or thing committed into this Hand, [*my Spirit*] (*i. e.*) my Soul, now instantly departing, upon the very point of separation from my Body. The Soul is the most precious of all Treasures, it's call'd the Darling, *Psalm* 37. 17. Or the only one, *i. e.* that which is most excellent, and therefore most dear and precious. A whole World is but a trifle, if weighed, for the price of one Soul, *Matt.* 16. 26. this inestimable Treasure he now commits into his Father's Hands.

Fourthly, *The Act* by which he puts it into that faithful Hand of the Father, παραθήσομαι, I commend. We rightly render it in the present Tense, tho' the word be future. For with these words he breathed out his Soul. This word is of the same import with συνίστημι, I present or tender it into thy Hands. It was in Christ an Act of Faith, a most special and excellent Act, intended as a President for all his People.

παραθήσομαι, i. e. συνίστημι. *Erasmus* commendabo etiam, *Psal.* 111. 6. Unde petita sunt hæc verba Christi. Legitur futuro tempore. *Bez.*

Fifthly, and Lastly, The last thing observable is, *the manner* in which he uttered these words; And that was with a loud voice. He spake it that all might hear it, and that his Enemies who judged him now destitute and forsaken of God, might be convinced that he was not so. But that he was dear to his Father still; and could put his Soul confidently into his Hands; *Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit.* Taking then these words, not only as spoken by Christ, the Head of all Believers; and so commending their Souls to God with his own, but also as a Pattern, teaching them what they ought to do themselves, when they come to die. We observe,

Doct. *That dying Believers are both warranted, and encouraged by Christ's Example, believingly to commend their precious Souls into the hands of God.*

Thus the Apostle directs the Faith of Christians, to commit their Souls to God's tuition and Fatherly protection, when they are either going into Prisons, or to the Stake for Christ, 1 *Pet.* 4. 19. *Let them* (saith he) *that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their Souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.*

This Proposition we will consider in these two main Branches of it. *Sc.* what is implied and carried

ed in the Soul's commending itself to God by aith, when the time of separation is come. And hat warrant or encouragement gracious Souls have r their so doing.

First, What is implied in this Act of a Believer, s commending or committing his Soul into the ands of God at Death?

And if it be throughly weighed, you will find ese six things at least carried in it.

Quisquis in Christum edet, non efflabit in rem animam moriens, ad fidelem depositam confugiet, qui tuconservet quicquid bitraditum est *Calv.*

First, It implies this evidently in it, *That the Soul that outlives the Body*, and fails not as to its being, when its Body fails. It feels the House in which it dwelt dropping into ruins, and looks out for a new Habitation with God. *Father, to thy hands I commend my Spirit.* The Soul understands itself a more noble Being than that corruptible Body, to which it was united, and is now to ave in the Dust. It understands its relation to e Father of Spirits, and from him it expects proction and provision in its unbodied state; and erefore into his hands it puts itself. If it vanish or breathed into Air, and did not survive the dy; if it were annihilated at death, it were but mocking of God to say when we die, *Father, into hands I commend my Spirit.*

Secondly, It implies *the Soul's true Rest to be in God.* e which way its Motions and Tendencies are, not ly in Life, but in Death also. It bends to its God. rolls, it even puts itself upon its God and Father; *ther, into thy hands.* God is the center of all gracous Spirits. While they tabernacle here, they ve no rest but in the bosom of their God. When ey go hence, their expectation and earnest desires are to be with him. It had been working after God by gracious desires before, it had st many a longing look to Heaven-ward before; t when the gracious Soul comes near its God (as doth in a dying hour) then it even throws itself to his Arms. As a River that after many turnings and windings, at last is arrived to the Ocean; it pours itself with a central force into the bosom of the Ocean, and there finishes its weary Course. Nothing but God can please it in this World, and nothing but God can give it content when it goes hence. It is not e amœnity of the place, whither the gracious Soul going, but the bosom of the blessed God who wells there, that it so vehemently pants after. Not e Father's House, but the Father's Arms and Bom. *Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit. Whom have I in Heaven but thee? And on Earth is ne that I desire in comparison of thee*, Psalm 73. 4, 25.

ere in amplexus.

Locus ne quicquam let neq cœli amœnips, per se beatom spirituum beatitunem auget; nisi quâ i habitatio est. *Pard decensu, Lib* 2. *p.* 2.

Thirdly, It also implies *the great value Believers ve for their Souls.* That's the precious Treasure. nd their main solicitude and chief Care, is to see secured in a safe hand. *Father into thy hands I mmit my Spirit*; they are words speaking the Bever's care for his Soul; that it may be safe, whater becomes of the vile Body. A Believer when comes nigh to Death, spends but few thoughts out his Body; whether it shall be laid, or how it all be disposed of: He trusts that in the hands of iends; but as his great Care all along was for his ul, so he expresses it in these his very last breathings, in which he commends it into the Hands of God. It is not, Lord Jesus receive my Body, take care of my Dust, but *receive my Spirit.* Lord, secure the Jewel, when the Casket is broken.

Fourthly, These words imply *the deep sense that dying Believers have of the great change that is coming upon them by death; when all visible and sensible things are shrinking away from them, and failing.* They feel the World and the best comforts of it failing. Every Creature and creature-comfort failing. For at Death we are said to fall, *Luke* 16. 9. Hereupon the Soul clasps the closer about its God, clings more close than ever to him. *Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.* Not that a meer necessity puts the Soul upon God: or that it cleaves to God, because it hath then nothing else to take hold on. No, no, it chose God for its portion when it was in the midst of all its outward enjoyments, and had as good security as other Men have for the long enjoyment of them; but my meaning is, that although gracious Souls have chosen God for their portion, and do truly prefer him to the best of their Comforts; yet in this compounded State it lives not wholly upon its God, but partly by Faith, and partly by Sense. Partly upon things seen, and partly upon things not seen. The Creatures had some interest in their Hearts, alas, too much: But now all these are vanishing, and it sees they are so. I shall see Man no more, with the Inhabitants of the World, (said sick *Hezechiah*;) hereupon it turns its self from them all, and casts it self upon God for all its subsistence. Expecting now to live upon its God intirely, as the blessed Angels do. And so in Faith they throw themselves into his Arms. *Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit.*

Fifthly, It implies the attonement of God, and his full Reconciliation to Believers, by the Blood of the great Sacrifice Else they durst never commit their Souls into his Hands. *For it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*, Heb. 12. 29. (*i. e.*) of an absolute God, a God unattoned by the offering up of Christ. The Soul dare no more cast itself into the hand of God without such an attoning Sacrifice, than it dares approach to a consuming Fire. And indeed, the Reconciliation of God; for we are made accepted in the beloved. So its plainly carried in the order or manner of the reconciled Soul's committing itself to him; for it first casts itself into the Hands of Christ, then into the Hands of God by him. So *Stephen*, when dying, *Lord Jesus receive my Spirit.* And by that hand it would be put into the Father's Hands

Sixthly, and lastly, *It implies both the efficacy and excellency of Faith, in supporting and relieving the Soul at a time when nothing else is able to do it.* Faith is its conduct, when it is at the greatest loss and distress that ever it met with. It secures the Soul when it is turned out of the Body. When Heart and Flesh fail, this leads it to the Rock that fails not. It sticks by that Soul till it see it safe through all the territories of Satan, and safe landed upon the shoar of Glory; and then is swallowed up in Vision. Many a favour it hath shewn the Soul while it dwelt in its Body. The great service it did for the Soul was in the time of its espousals to Christ. This is the Marriage-knot. The blessed Bond of union betwixt the Soul and Christ. Many a relieving sight, secret and sweet support it hath received from its Faith since that; but surely its first and last works are its most glorious works. By Faith it first ventur'd itself upon Christ. Threw itself upon him in the deepest sense of its own vileness, and utter unworthiness,

when

when Senſe, Reaſon, and multitudes of Temptations ſtood by contradicting and diſcouraging the Soul. By Faith it now caſts itſelf into his Arms, when it's launching out into vaſt eternity.

They are both noble acts of Faith, but the firſt no doubt is the greateſt and moſt difficult. For when once the Soul is intereſſed in Chriſt, its no ſuch difficulty to commit itſelf into his hands, as when it had no intereſt at all in him. It's eaſier for a Child to caſt himſelf into the Arms of its own Father in diſtreſs, than for one that hath been both a ſtranger and an enemy to Chriſt, to caſt itſelf upon him, that he may be a Father and a Friend to it.

And this brings us upon the ſecond enquiry I promiſed to ſatisfie, *ſc.*

Secondly, What warrant or encouragement have gracious Souls to commit themſelves at Death, into the hands of God? I anſwer, much every way: All things encourage and warrant its ſo doing. For,

Firſt, This God upon whom the Believer rolls himſelf at Death, is *its Creator*. The Father of its Being. He created and inſpired it, and ſo it hath relation of Creature to a Creator, yea, of a Creature now in diſtreſs, to a faithful Creator, 1 *Pet.* 4. 19. *Let them that ſuffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their Souls to him in well-doing*; *as to a* [*faithful Creator.*] It's very true, this ſingle relation in itſelf, gives little ground of encouragement; unleſs the Creature had conſerved that integrity in which it was originally created. And they that have no more to plead with God for their acceptance, but their relation to him as Creatures, to a Creator, will doubtleſs find that word made good to their little Comfort, *Iſa* 27. 11. *It is a People of no underſtanding, therefore he that made them, will not have mercy on them; and he that formed them, will ſhew them no favour.* But now, Grace brings that relation into repute. Holineſs ingratiates us again, and revives the remembrance of this relation. So that believers only can plead this.

Haſtus ex divino Origine.

Secondly, As the gracious Soul is his Creature, ſo *it is his redeemed Creature.* One that he hath bought, and that with a great price. Even with the precious Blood of Jeſus Chriſt, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18. This greatly encourages the departing Soul, to commit itſelf into the hands of God; ſo you find, *Pſal.* 31. 5. *Into thy hand do I commend my Spirit, thou haſt redeemed it, O Lord God of truth.* Surely this is mighty encouragement, to put itſelf upon God in a dying hour. Lord, I am not only thy Creature, but thy redeemed Creature. One that thou haſt bought with a great price. O I have coſt thee dear. For my ſake Chriſt came from thy Boſom; and is it imaginable, that after that thou haſt in ſuch a coſtly way, even by the expence of the precious Blood of Chriſt, redeemed me, thou ſhouldeſt at laſt exclude me? Shall the Ends both of Creation and Redemption of this Soul be loſt together? Will God form ſuch an excellent Creature as my Soul is, in which are ſo many wonders of the Wiſdom and Power of its Creator? Will he be content when ſin has marr'd the Frame, and defaced the glory of it, to recover it to himſelf again, by the death of his own dear Son, and after all this Caſt it away, as if there were nothing in all this? *Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit.* I know thou wilt have a reſpect to the work of thy Hands. Eſpecially to a redeemed Creature, upon which thou haſt been out ſo great ſums of Love; which thou haſt bought at ſo dear a rate.

Thirdly, Nay, that's not all; the gracious Soul may confidently and ſecurely commit itſelf into the Hands of God when it parts with its Body at Death; not only becauſe it is his Creature, his redeemed Creature, but becauſe it is his *renewed Creature alſo.* And this lays a firm Ground for the Believer's Confidence of Acceptance, not that it is the proper cauſe or reaſon of its Acceptance, but as it is the Soul's beſt Evidence, that it is accepted with God, and ſhall not be refuſed by him, when it comes to him at Death. For in ſuch a Soul there is a double Workmanſhip of God, both glorious Pieces, tho' the laſt exceeds in Glory. A *natural Workmanſhip*, in the excellent Frame of that noble Creature the Soul. And a *gracious Workmanſhip* upon that again. A new Creation upon the old. Glory upon Glory. *We are his Workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus*, Eph. 2. 10. The Holy Ghoſt came down from Heaven on purpoſe to create this new Workmanſhip. To frame this new Creature. And indeed it is the Top and Glory of all God's Works of Wonder in this World. And muſt needs give the Believer Encouragement to commit itſelf to God, whether at ſuch a time, it ſhall reflect either upon the End of the Work, or upon the End of the Workman; both which meet in the Salvation of the Soul ſo wrought upon, the End of the Work is our Glory. By this *we are made meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light*, Col. 1. 12. It is alſo the Deſign and End of him that wrought it, 2 *Cor.* 5. 5. *Now he that hath wrought us for the ſelf ſame thing, is God.* Had he not deſigned thy Soul for Glory, the Spirit ſhould never have come upon ſuch a ſanctifying Deſign as this. Surely it ſhall not fail of a Reception into Glory, when it's caſt out of this Tabernacle. Such a Work was not wrought in vain, neither can it ever periſh. When once Sanctification comes upon a Soul, it ſo roots itſelf in the Soul, that where the Soul goes, it goes. Gifts indeed, they die. All natural Excellency and Beauty, that goes away at Death, *Job.* 4. *ult.* But Grace aſcends with the Soul. It is a ſanctified, when a ſeparate Soul. And can God ſhut the Door of Glory upon ſuch a Soul, that by Grace is made meet for the Inheritance? O it cannot be!

Fourthly, As the gracious Soul is a renewed Soul, ſo it is alſo a *ſealed Soul.* God hath ſealed it in this World for that Glory, into which it is now to enter at Death. All gracious Souls are ſealed *objectively*, i. e. they have thoſe Works of Grace wrought on their Souls, which do (as but how was ſaid) aſcertain and evidence their Title to Glory. And many are ſealed *formally.* That is, the Spirit helps them clearly to diſcern their Intereſt in Chriſt, and all the Promiſes. This both ſecures Heaven to the Soul in itſelf, and becomes alſo an Earneſt or Pledge of that Glory in the unſpeakable Joys and Comforts that it breeds in the Soul. So you find, 2 *Cor.* 1. 22. *Who hath ſealed us, and given us the Earneſt of the Spirit in our Hearts.* God's ſealing us gives high Security. His *objective* Seal makes it ſure in itſelf; his *formal* Seal makes it ſo to us. But if over and above all this, he will pleaſe, as a Fruit of that high ſealing, to give us thoſe heavenly unexpreſſible Joys and Comforts which are the Fruit of his formal Sealing-Work, to be an Earneſt, a Foretaſte and Hanſel of that Glory, how can the Soul that hath found all this, doubt in the leaſt of a Rejection by its God, when at Death it comes to him? Surely if God have ſealed, he will not refuſe you. If he have given his Earneſt, he will not ſhut you out. God's Earneſt is not given in Jeſt.

Fifthly

Fifthly, Moreover, every gracious Soul may confidently caſt itſelf into the Arms of its God when it goes hence, with *Father, into thy Hands I commit my Spirit.* For as much as every gracious Soul is a *Soul in Covenant with God*, and God ſtands obliged by his Covenant and Promiſe to ſuch not to caſt them out when they come unto him. As ſoon as ever thy Soul became his by Regeneration, that Promiſe became its own, *Heb.* 13. 5. *I will never leave you, nor forſake you.* And will he leave the Soul now at a Pinch, when it never had more need of a God to ſtand by it than it hath then? Every gracious Soul is entituled to that Promiſe, *John* 14. 3. *I will come again and receive you to my ſelf.* And will he fail to make it good, when the Time of the Promiſe is come, is at Death it is? It cannot be. Multitudes of Promiſes, the whole Covenant of Promiſes give Security to the Soul againſt the Fears of Rejection, or Neglect by God. And the Soul's Dependance upon *God*, and hanging upon a Promiſe, its very rolling its ſelf upon *God* from the Encouragement the Word gives it, adds to the Engagement upon *God.* When he ſees a poor Soul that he hath made, redeemed, ſanctified, ſealed, and by ſolemn Promiſe engaged himſelf to receive, coming to him at Death, rolling it ſelf upon his Faithfulneſs that promiſed, ſaying, as *David*, 2 *Sam.* 23. 5. *Tho'* Lord, *there* be many Defects in me, *yet thou haſt made a Covenant with me, well ordered in all things, and ſure; and this is all my Salvation, and all my Hope.* Lord, I am reſolved to ſend out my Soul in an Act of Faith. I will venture it upon the Credit of thy Promiſe. How can *God* refuſe ſuch a Soul? How can he put it off when it ſo puts itſelf upon him?

Sixthly, But this is not all, *the gracious Soul ſuſtains many intimate and dear Relations to that God into whoſe Hands it commends itſelf at Death.* It's his Spouſe, and the Conſideration of ſuch a Day of Eſpouſals, may well encourage it to caſt itſelf into the Boſom of Chriſt, its Head and Husband. It is a Member of his Body, Fleſh and Bones, *Eph.* 5. 30. is his Child, and he its everlaſting Father, *Iſa.* 9. It is his Friend. *Henceforth*, ſaith Chriſt, *I call you not Servants, but Friends*, John 15. 15. What Confidence may theſe and all other the dear Relations Chriſt owns to the renewed Soul beget in ſuch an Hour as this is! What Husband can throw off the dear Wife of his Boſom, who in Diſtreſſes caſts herſelf into his Arms! What Father can ſhut the Door upon a dear Child that comes to him for Refuge, ſaying, Father, into thy Hands I commit my Self.

Seventhly, and laſtly, The Unchangeableneſs of God's Love to his People gives Confidence they ſhall in no wiſe be caſt out. They know Chriſt is the ſame to them at laſt he was at firſt. The ſame in the Pangs of Death as he was in the Comforts of Life. Having loved his own which were in the World, he loved them to the End, *John* 13. 1. He doth not love as the World loves, only in Proſperity. But they are as dear to him when their Beauty and Strength is gone, as when it was in the greateſt Flouriſh. If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord; ſo then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's, *Rom.* 14. 8. Take all theſe Things, and weigh them both apart, and together, and ſee whether they amount not to a full Evidence of the Truth of this Point, that dying Believers are both warranted and encouraged to commend their Souls into the Hands of God. Whether they have not every one of them cauſe to ſay as the Apoſtle did, 2 *Tim.* 1. 12. *I know whom I have believed, and am perſuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him againſt that Day.* The Improvements of all this you have in the following practical Deductions.

Deduction 1. *Are dying Believers only warranted and encouraged thus to commend their Souls into the Hands of God? What a ſad Strait then muſt all dying Unbelievers be in about their Souls?* Such Souls will fall into the Hands of God, but that's their Miſery, not their Privilege. They are not put by Faith into the Hands of *Mercy*, but fall by Sin into the Hands of *Juſtice.* Not God, but the Devil is their Father, *John* 8. 4. Whither ſhould the Child go but to its own Father? They have not one of thoſe forementioned Encouragements to caſt themſelves into the Hands of God, except the naked Relation they have to God as their Creator, and that's as good as none, without the new Creation. If they have nothing but this to plead for their Salvation, the Devil hath as much to plead as they. It's the new Creature that brings the firſt Creation into Repute again with God.

O diſmal! O deplorable Caſe! A poor Soul is turning out of Houſe and Home, and knows not where to go. It departs, and immediately falls into the Hands of Juſtice. The Devil ſtands by waiting for ſuch a Soul whom God will throw to him, as a Dog for a Cruſt. Little, ah little do the Friends of ſuch a one think whilſt they are honouring his Duſt by a ſplendid and honourable Funeral, what a Caſe that poor Soul is in that lately dwelt there; and what fearful Straits and Extremities it is now expoſed to. They will cry indeed, Lord, Lord, open to us, *Matth.* 7. 22. But to how little purpoſe are their vain Cries? Will God hear him when he cries, *Job* 27 9. It's a lamentable Caſe.

Deduction 2. *Will God graciouſly accept, and faithfully keep what the Saints commit to him at Death? how careful then ſhould they be to keep what God commits to them, to be kept from him while they live.* You have a great Truſt to commit to God when you die, and God hath a great Truſt to commit to you whilſt you live; you expect that he ſhould faithfully keep what then you ſhall commit to his keeping; and he expects you ſhould faithfully keep what he now commits to your keeping. O keep what God commits to you, as you expect he ſhould keep your Souls when you commit them unto him. If you keep his Truths, he will keep your Souls. *Becauſe thou haſt kept the Word of my Patience, I alſo will keep thee*, &c. *Rev.* 3. 10. Be faithful to your God, and you ſhall find him faithful to you. None can pluck you out of his Hand, ſee that nothing wreſts his Truths out of your Hands. *Deny him, he alſo will deny us*, 2 Tim. 2. 12. Take heed leſt thoſe Eſtates you have gotten as a Bleſſing attending the Goſpel, prove a Temptation to you to betray the Goſpel. Religion (ſaith one) brings forth Riches, but the Daughter devours the Mother. How can you expect Acceptance with God, who have betrayed his Truth, and dealt perfidiouſly with him?

Religio peperit divitias, ſed filia devoravit matrem.

Deduction 3. If Believers may ſafely commit their Souls into the Hands of God, *how confidently may they commit all leſſer Intereſts, and lower Concernments into the ſame Hand.* Shall we truſt him with our Souls, and not with our Lives, Liberties, or Comforts? Can we commit the Treaſure to him, and not a Trifle? Whatever you enjoy in this World, is but a Trifle to your Souls. Sure if you can truſt him for Eternal Life for your Souls, you may much more truſt him for the daily Bread for your Bodies. I

know it is objected, that God hath made over Temporal Things to his People upon conditional Promiſes, and an abſolute Faith can never be grounded upon conditional Promiſes.

But what means this Objection? Let your Faith be but ſuitable to theſe conditional Promiſes, that is, believe they ſhall be made good to you, ſo far as God ſees them good for you. Do you but labour to come up to thoſe Conditions required in you, and thereby God will have more Glory, and you more Comfort. If your Prayers for theſe things proceed from *pure Ends*, the Glory of God, not the Satisfaction and Gratification of your Luſts. If your Deſires after them be *moderate* as to the Meaſure, content with that Proportion the infinite Wiſdom ſees fitteſt for you. If you take *God's way* to obtain them, and dare not ſtrain Conſcience, or commit a Sin, tho' you ſhould periſh for Want. If you can patiently wait God's Time for Enlargements from your Straits, and not make any ſinful Haſte; you ſhall be ſurely ſupplied. And he that remembers your Souls, will not forget your Bodies. But we live by Senſe, and not by Faith. Preſent Things ſtrike our Affections more powerfully than the inviſible Things that are to come. *The Lord humble his People for this.*

Deduction 4. *Is the Privilege of Believers, that they can commit their Souls to God in a dying Hour? then how precious, how uſeful a Grace is Faith to the People of God both living and dying?*

All the Graces have done excellently, but Faith excels them all. Faith is the *Phœnix Grace*, the Queen of Graces. Deſervedly it is ſtiled *precious Faith*, 2 Pet. 1. 1. The Benefits and Privileges of it in this Life are unſpeakable; and as there is no comfortable living, ſo no comfortable dying without it.

Firſt, While we live and converſe here in the World, all our Comfort and Safety is from it; for all our Union with Chriſt, the Fountain of Mercies and Bleſſings, is by Faith, *Eph.* 3. 17. *that Chriſt may dwell in your Hearts by Faith.* No Faith, no Chriſt. All our Communion with Chriſt is by it. He that cometh to God muſt believe, *Heb.* 11. 6. The Soul's Life is wrapt up in this Communion with God; and that Communion in Faith. *All Communications* from Chriſt depend upon Faith; for look as all Communion is founded in Union, ſo from our Union and Communion are all our Communications. All Communications of Quicknings, Comforts, Joy, Strength, and whatſoever ſerves to the Well-being of the Life of Grace, are all thro' that Faith which firſt knits us to Chriſt, and ſtill maintains our Communion with Chriſt, believing we rejoice, 1. *Pet.* 1. 8. The inner Man is renewed whilſt we look to the Things that are not ſeen, 2 *Cor.* 4. 18.

Secondly, And as our Life, and all the Supports and Comforts of it here are dependant on Faith; ſo you ſee our Death, as to the Safety and Comfort of our Souls, then depends upon our Faith. He that hath no Faith cannot commit his Soul to God, but rather ſhrinks from God. Faith can do many ſweet Offices for your Souls upon a Death-bed, when the Light of this World is gone, and all Joy ceaſes on Earth. It can give us Sights of things inviſible in the other World, and thoſe Sights will breathe Life into your Souls amidſt the very Pangs of Death.

Reader, do but think what a comfortable Foreſight of God, and the Joys of Salvation, will be to thee, when thine Eye-ſtrings are breaking. Faith cannot only ſee that beyond the Grave, which will comfort, but it can cling about its God, and claſp Chriſt in a Promiſe when it feels the Ground of all ſenſible Comforts trembling and ſinking under thy Feet. My Heart and my Fleſh faileth, but God is the Strength (or Rock) of my Heart, and my Portion for ever. Reeds fail, but the Rock is firm footing. Yea, and when the Soul can no longer Tabernacle here, it can carry the Soul to God, caſt it upon him, with *Father, into thy Hands I commend my Spirit.* O precious Faith!

Deduction 5. *Do the Souls of dying Believers commend themſelves into the Hands of God? Then let not the ſurviving Relations of ſuch ſorrow as Men that have no Hope.* A Husband, a Wife, a Child, is rent by Death out of your Arms, well, but conſider into what Arms, into what Boſom they are commended. Is it not better for them to be in the Boſom of God, than in yours? Could they be ſpared ſo long from Heaven, as to come back again to you but an Hour, how would they be diſpleaſed to ſee your Tears, and hear your Cries and Sighs for them! They would ſay to you as Chriſt ſaid to the Daughters of Jeruſalem, *Weep not for me, but weep for your ſelves, and for your Children.* I am in a ſafe Hand, I am out of the reach of all Storms and Troubles. O did you but know what their State is, who are with God, you would be more than ſatisfied about them.

Deduction 6. *Laſtly*, I will cloſe all with a Word of Counſel. Is this the Privilege of dying Believers, to commend their Souls into the Hands of God! *Then as ever you hope for Comfort or Peace in your laſt Hour, ſee that your Souls be ſuch as may be then fit to be commended into the Hands of an holy and juſt God. See that they be holy Souls.* God will never accept them if they be not holy. *Without Holineſs no Man ſhall ſee God*, Heb. 12. 24. *He that hath this Hope* (*viz.* to ſee God) *purifieth himſelf, even as he is pure*, 1 John 3. 3. Endeavours after Holineſs are inſeparably connected with rational Expectations of Bleſſedneſs. Will you put an unclean filthy defiled thing into the pure Hand of the moſt holy God? O ſee they be holy, and already accepted in the Beloved, or wo to them when they take their Leaves of thoſe Tabernacles they now dwell in. The gracious Soul may confidently ſay then, *Lord Jeſus, into thy Hands I commend my Spirit.* O let all that can ſay ſo then now ſay,

Thanks be to God for Jeſus Chriſt.

SER

SERMON XXXVII.

Treats of Christ's Funeral, opening the Manner, Reasons, and excellent Ends thereof.

JOHN XIX. 40, 41, 42.

Then took they the Body of Jesus, and wound it in Linnen Cloaths, with the Spices, as the Manner of the Jews is to Bury. Now in the Place where he was Crucified there was a Garden, and in the Garden a new Sepulchre, wherein was never Man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore, because of the Jews Preparation-day, for the Sepulchre was nigh at hand.

YOU have heard the last Words of dying Jesus, commending his Spirit into his Father's Hands: And now the Life of the World hangs dead upon a Tree. The Light of the World for a Time muffled up in a dismal Cloud: The Sun of Righteousness set in the Region and Shadow of Death. The Lord is dead, and he that wears the Keys of the Grave at his Girdle, is now himself to be lock'd up in the Grave.

All you that are the Friends and Lovers of Jesus, are this Day invited to his Funeral. Such a Funeral as never was since *Graves* were first digged. *Come, see the Place where the Lord lay.* There are Six remarkable Particulars about this Funeral in these Three Verses.

1. The Preparations that were made for it, and that was mainly in Two Particulars, *viz.* the *begging* and *perfuming* of the Body. His Body could not be buried, till by begging, his Friends had obtained it as a Favour from his Judge. The dead Body was by Law in the Power of *Pilate*, who adjudged it to Death, as the Bodies of those that are Hanged are in the Power of the Judge to dispose of them as he pleases. And when they had gotten it from *Pilate*, they wind it in fine Linnen Cloaths with Spices. But what need of Spices to perfume that blessed Body? his own Love was Perfume enough, to keep it sweet in the Remembrance of his People to all Generations: However, by this they will manifest, as they are able, the dear Affection they have for him.

2. The *Bearers* that carried his Body to its Grave, *Joseph* of *Arimathea* and *Nichodemus*, Two secret Disciples. They were both Men of Estate and Honour. None could imagine that these would have appeared at a Time of so much Danger, with such Boldness for Christ. That ever they would have gone openly and boldly to manifest their Love to Christ when dead, who were afraid to come to him (except by Night) when he was living. But now a Spirit of Zeal and Courage is come upon them, when those that made greater and more open Confessions of him are gone.

3. The *Attendants* who followed the Hearse, were the Women that followed him out of *Galilee*. Among whom the Two *Mary*'s, and the Mother of *Zebedees* Children (whom *Mark* calls *Salome*) are only named.

4. The Grave or Sepulchre where they laid him. It was in *Joseph*'s new Tomb, which he had prepared in the Garden near unto *Golgotha*, where our Lord died. Two things are remarkable about this Tomb. It was another's Tomb, and it was a new Tomb. It was another's. For he had not an House of his own to lay his Body in when dead. As he lived in other Mens Houses, so he lay in another Man's Tomb. And it was a new Tomb, wherein never Man was yet laid. Doubtless there was much of Providence in this, for had any other been laid there before him, it might have proved an Occasion both to shake the Credit, and slur the Glory of his Resurrection, by pretending it was some former Body, and not the Lord's, that rose out of it. In this also Divine Providence had a respect to that Prophecy, *Isa.* 53. 9. which was to be fulfilled at his Funeral: *He made his Grave with the Rich, because he had done no Violence*, &c.

5. The Disposition of the Body in that Tomb. 'Tis true, there is no mention made of the Groans and Tears with which they laid him in his Sepulchre, yet we may well presume they were not wanting in plentiful Expressions of their Sorrow that way. For as they wept, and smote their Breasts when he died, *Luke* 23. 48. so no doubt they laid him with melting Hearts, and flowing Eyes in his Tomb, when dead.

6. And lastly, The last remarkable Particular in the Text, is the Solemnity, with which his Funeral Rites were performed, and they were all suitable to his humbled State. It was indeed a Funeral as decently ordered as the Straits of Time and State of Things would then permit: But there was nothing of Pomp or outward State at all observed. Few Marks of Honour set by Men upon it. Only the Heavens adorned it with divers miraculous Works, which in their proper place will be spoken to. Thus was he laid in his Grave, *where he continued for three incompleat Days and Nights in the Territories of Death*, in the Land of Darkness and Forgetfulness. Partly to correspond with *Jonah* his Type, and partly to ascertain the World of the Reality of his Death. Whence our Observation is,

Doct. *That the dead Body of our Lord Jesus Christ was decently interr'd, by a small Number of his own Disciples; and continued in the State of the Dead for a Time.*

This

This Obſervation containing Matter of Fact, and that ſo plainly and faithfully delivered to us by the Pens of the ſeveral Evangeliſts; we need do no more to prepare it for our Uſe, than to ſatisfy theſe Two Enquiries; Why had Chriſt any Funeral at all, ſince his Reſurrection was ſo ſoon to follow his Death? And what manner of Funeral Chriſt had.

Firſt, Why had Chriſt any Funeral at all, ſince he was to riſe again from the Dead within that Space of Time that other Men commonly have to lye by the Wall before their Interment; and had it continued longer unburied, it could ſee no Corruption, having never been tainted by Sin? Why, tho there was no need of it at all upon that Account, that a Funeral is needful for other Bodies; yet there were theſe four weighty Ends and Reaſons of it.

Reaſon 1. *Firſt*, It was neceſſary Chriſt ſhould be buried, *to aſcertain his Death*, elſe it might have been look'd upon as a Cheat. For, as they were ready enough to impoſe ſo groſs a Cheat upon the World at his Reſurrection, *That the Diſciples came by Night and ſtole him away:* much more would they have denied at once the Reality both of his Death and Reſurrection, had he not been ſo perfumed and interred: But this cut off all Pretenſions. For in this Kind of Embalming, his Mouth, Ears Noſtrils, were all filled with their Spices and Odours. Bound up in Linnen, and laid long enough in the Tomb to give full Aſſurance to the World of the Certainty of his Death. So that there could be no latent Principle of Life in him. Now ſince our Eternal Life is wrapt up in Chriſt's Death, it can never be too firmly eſtabliſhed. To this therefore we may well ſuppoſe Providence had ſpecial reſpect in his Burial, and the Manner of it.

Reaſon 2. *Secondly*, He muſt be buried *to fulfil the Types and Prophecies that went before.* His Abode in the Grave was prefigured by *Jonah*'s Abode three Days and Nights in the Belly of the Whale, *Matth.* 12. 40. So muſt the Son of Man be three Days and three Nights in the Heart of the Earth. Yea, the Prophet had deſcribed the very Manner of his Funeral, and long before he was born foretold in what Kind of Tomb his Body ſhould be laid, *Iſa.* 53. 9. *He made his Grave with the Wicked, and with the Rich in his Death.* Pointing by that Expreſſion at this Tomb of *Joſeph*, who was a Rich Man, and the Scriptures cannot be broken.

Reaſon 3. *Thirdly*, He muſt be buried *to compleat his Humiliation*; this being the loweſt Step he could poſſibly deſcend in his abaſed State. *They have brought me to the Duſt of Death.* Lower he could not be laid, and ſo low he muſt lay his bleſſed Head, elſe he had not been humbled to the loweſt.

Reaſon 4. *Fourthly*, But the great End and Reaſon of his Interment was *the conquering of Death* in its own Dominion and Territories; which Victory over the Grave furniſheth the Saints with that triumphant ἐπινίκιον Song of Deliverance, 1 *Cor.* 15. 55. *O Death, where is thy Sting!* O Grave, where is thy Deſtruction! Our Graves would not be ſo ſweet and comfortable to us, when we come to lye down in them, if Jeſus had not lain there before us, and for us. Death is a Dragon, the Grave its Den; a Place of Dread and Terror: But Chriſt goes into its Den, there grapples with it, and for ever overcomes it. Diſarms it of all its Terror, and not only makes it ceaſe to be *inimical*, but to become exceeding *beneficial* to the Saints. A Bed of Reſt, and a perfumed Bed. They do but go into Chriſt's Bed, where he lay before them. For theſe Ends he muſt be buried.

Secondly, Next let us enquire what manner of Funeral Chriſt had.

And if we intently obſerve it, we ſhall find many remarkable Properties in it.

Firſt, We ſhall find it to be a very obſcure and private Funeral. Here was no external Pomp or Gallantry. Chriſt affected it not in his Life, and it was no way ſuitable to the Ends and Manner of his Death. Humiliation was deſigned in his Death. And State is inconſiſtent with ſuch an End. Beſides, he died upon the Tree, and Perſons ſo dying don't uſe to have much Ceremony and State at their Funerals. Three Things ſhew it to be a very humble and obſcure Funeral, as to what concerned outward Glory, with which the Great Ones of the Earth are uſually interred. For,

Firſt, The dead Body of the Lord was not brought from his own Houſe, as other Mens commonly are, but from the Tree. They begg'd it of his Judge. As who ſhould ſay, *Go, bring the Corps from Tyburn.* Had they not obtained this Favour from *Pilate*, it muſt have been buried in *Golgotha*. It had been tumbled into a Pit, digged under the Croſs.

Secondly, As it was firſt begg'd, then buried; ſo it was attended with a very poor Train. A few ſorrowful Women followed the *Bier*. Other Men are accompanied to their Graves by their Relations and Friends. The Diſciples were all ſcattered from him. Afraid to own him dying, and dead.

Thirdly, And theſe few that were reſolved to give him a Funeral, are forced, by reaſon of the Straits of Time, to do it in ſhuffling Haſte. Time was ſhort, they take the next Sepulchre they can get, and hurry him away that Evening into it. For the Preparation for the Paſſover was at hand. This was the obſcure Funeral which the Body of the Lord had. Thus was the Prince of the Kings of the Earth, who hath the Keys of Death and Hell, laid into his Grave.

Secondly, Yet tho' Men could beſtow little Honour upon it, the Heavens beſtowed ſeveral Marks of Honour upon it. Adorn'd it with divers Miracles, which wiped off the Reproach of his Death from him. Theſe Miracles were antecedent to his Interment, or Concomitants of it.

Firſt, There was that extraordinary and preternatural Eclipſe of the Sun. Such an Eclipſe as was never ſeen ſince it firſt ſhone in Heaven. The Sun fainted at the Sight of ſuch a rueful Spectacle, and cloathed the whole Heaven in Black. The Sight of this cauſed a great Philoſopher, who was then far from the Place where this unparallel'd Tragedy was acting, to cry out upon the Sight of it, *either the God of Nature now ſuffers, or the Frame of the World is now diſſolved.* The ſame *Dionyſius* writing to *Apollophanes* a Philoſopher, who would not embrace the Chriſtian Faith, thus goes about to convince him. What thinkeſt thou (ſaith he) of the Eclipſe when Chriſt was crucified? Were we not both of us then at *Heliopolis?* and ſtanding in the ſame Place, did we not ſee the Moon in a new manner following the Sun; and not in the Time of Conjunction, but from the Ninth Hour until the Evening, by a reaſon unknown in Nature, directly oppoſite to the Sun? Didſt thou not then, being greatly terrified, ſay unto me, O my *Dionyſius*, what ſtrange Commutations of the heavenly Bodies are theſe!

Aut Deus naturæ patitur, aut mundi machina diſſolvitur. *Dionyſius Areopag.*

Τὶ λέγεις περὶ τ ἐν σωτηρίῳ σαθῷ ἐκλείψεως ἀμφότεροι γὰρ τότε τε χρ ἡλιοπόλιν ἅμα παρήσθες, κὴ συνεσώτες τῇ δόξεως τὴν σελήνην ἐμπίπλυσαν ἐωφόκαμεν, ἣ ἦν σωιόδε καιρῷ, &c. Theodotochit. Hiſt. Rom. p. 39.

Such

Such a preternatural Eclipſe is remembred in no other Hiſtory. For it was not in time of conjunction, but oppoſition; the Moon being then at full. From the ſixth, to the ninth hour, the Sun and Moon were together in the midſt of Heaven; but in the Evening ſhe appeared in the Eaſt, her own place, oppoſite to the Sun. And then miraculouſly returning from *Eaſt* to *Weſt*, did not paſs by the Sun and ſet in the Weſt before it; but kept it company for the ſpace of three hours, and then returned to the Eaſt again. And whereas, in all other natural Eclipſes, the Eclipſe always begins on the Weſtern part of the body of the Sun, and that part is alſo firſt cleared; it was quite contrary in this; for tho' the Moon were oppoſite to the Sun, and diſtant from it the whole breadth of Heaven; yet with a miraculous ſwiftneſs it overtook the Sun, and darkned firſt the Eaſtern part of it; and ſoon prevailed over it's whole Body. Which cauſed darkneſs over all the Land, that is, ſay ſome, over the whole Earth; or as others, over the whole Land of *Jewry*. Or as others, over the whole *Horizon*, and all places of the ſame altitude and latitude, which is moſt probable.

Secondly, And as Chriſt's funeral was adorned with ſuch a miraculous Eclipſe, which put the Heavens and Earth into a mourning? ſo *the Rocks did rend*, the vail of the Temple rent in twain from top to bottom. The Graves opened, and the dead Bodies of many Saints aroſe and went into the holy City, and were ſeen of many. *The rending of the Rocks* was a ſign of God's fierce indignation, *Nahum* 1. 6. And a diſcovery of the greatneſs of his Power; ſhewing them what they deſerved, and what he could do to them that had committed this horrid fact; tho' he rather choſe at this time, to ſhew the dreadful effects of it upon inanimate Rocks, than rocky-hearted Sinners. But eſpecially it ſerved to convince the World that it was none other but the Son of God that died. Which was farther manifeſted by theſe concomitant Miracles.

As for the *rending in twain of the vail*. It was a notable Miracle, plainly ſhewing that all Ceremonies were now accompliſhed, and aboliſhed. No more vails now. As alſo that Believers have now moſt free acceſs into Heaven. At that very inſtant when the vail rent, the *High-Prieſt* was officiating in the moſt holy place, and the vail which hid him from the People, being rent, they might freely ſee him about his work in the Holy of Holies. A lively Emblem of our *High-Prieſt*, whom now we ſee by Faith in the Heavens, there performing his Interceſſion-work for us.

The *opening of the Graves*, plainly ſhew'd the deſign and end of Chriſt's going into it. That it might not have dominion over the Bodies of the Saints, but being vanquiſh'd and deſtroy'd by Chriſt, let's go all that are his, whom he ranſomed from the Grave as a prey out of its paws. A *Specimen* whereof was given in thoſe holy ones that roſe at that time, and appeared to many in the holy City. Thus was the Funeral of our Lord performed by Men: Thus was it adorned by Miracles from Heaven.

Uſe. And now we have ſeen Jeſus interred. He that wears at his Girdle the Keys of Hell and Death, himſelf locked up in the Grave. What ſhall I ſay of him whom they now laid in the Grave? Shall I undertake to tell you what he was, what he did, ſuffer'd, and deſerved? Alas! the Tongues of Angels muſt pauſe and ſtammer in ſuch a work. I may truly ſay as *Nazianzen* ſaid of *Bazil*, no Tongue but his own, can ſufficientlo commend and praiſe him. He is a Sun of Righteouſneſs, a Fountain of Life, a bundle of Love. Of him it might be ſaid in that day, Here lies lovely Jeſus, in whom is treaſured up whatſoever an angry God can require for his *Satisfaction*, or an empty Creature for his *Perfection*. Before him was none like him, and after ſhall none ariſe comparable to him. If every leaf, and ſpire of Glaſs, ſaith one) nay, all the Stars, Sands, and Atoms, were in ſo many Souls and Seraphims, whoſe love ſhould double in them every moment to all Eternity, yet would it fall infinitely ſhort of what his Worth and Excellency exacts. Suppoſe a Creature compos'd of all the choice Endowments that ever dwelt in the beſt of Men ſince the Creation of the World, in whom you find a meek *Moſes*, a ſtrong *Sampſon*, a faithful *Jonathan*, a beautiful *Abſalom*, a rich and wiſe *Solomon*; nay, and add to this, the underſtanding, ſtrength, agility, ſplendor, and holineſs of all the Angels: It would all amount but to a dark ſhadow of this incomparable Jeſus. Mr. *Jenkin*.

Who ever weighed Chriſt in a pair of Balances (ſaith another) who hath ſeen the foldings and plyes, the heights, and depths of that Glory which is in him? O for ſuch a Heaven, as but to ſtand afar off and ſee, and love, and long for him, while Time's thread be cut, and this great work of *Creation* diſſolved! —— O if I could yoke in among the thick of Angels and Seraphims, and now glorified Saints, and could raiſe a new Love-ſong of Chriſt, before all the World. I am pained with wondring at new-opened Treaſures in Chriſt. If every finger, member, bone and joynt, were a Torch burning in the hotteſt fire in Hell, I would they could all ſend out Love-praiſes, high ſongs of praiſe for evermore, to that Plant of Renown, to that Royal and high Prince, Jeſus my Lord. But alas, his Love ſwelled in me, and finds no vent. —— I mar his praiſes, nay, I know no compariſon of what Chriſt is, and what he is worth. All the Angels, and all the glorified, praiſe him not ſo much as in halves. Who can advance him, or utter all his praiſe? —— O if I could praiſe him, I would reſt content to die of Love for him. O would to God I could ſend in my Praiſes to my incomparable well-beloved, or caſt my Love-ſongs of that matchleſs Lord Jeſus, over the Walls, that they might light in his lap, before Men and Angels. —— But when I have ſpoken of him till my Head rive, I have ſaid juſt nothing. I may begin again. A God-head, a God-head, is a World's wonder. Set ten thouſand thouſand new-made Worlds of Angels and Elect Men, and double them in number ten thouſand thouſand thouſand times; Let their Hearts and Tongues be ten thouſand times more agile and large than the hearts and tongues of the Seraphims, that ſtand with ſix Wings before him; when they have ſaid all for the glorifying and praiſing of the Lord Jeſus; they have ſpoken little or nothing. O if I could wear this Tongue to ſtump in extolling his Highneſs! But it is my daily ſorrow that I am confounded with his incomparable Love.

Thus have his enamoured Friends faintly expreſſed his excellencies, and if they have therein done any thing, they have ſhewn the impoſſibility of his due Praiſes.

Come and ſee, believing Souls, look upon dead Jeſus in his winding-ſheet, by Faith; and ſay, Lo, this is he of whom the Church ſaid, *My beloved is white and ruddy*; his ruddineſs is now gone, and a death-pale hath prevailed over all his Body: But ſtill as lovely as ever, yea, altogether lovely.

If *David* lamenting the Death of *Saul* and *Jonathan*, said, *Daughters of Jeruſalem weep over* Saul, *who cloathed you in ſcarlet, with other delights; who put on ornaments of Gold upon your apparel*; much rather may I ſay, *Children of Zion, weep over* Jeſus; *who cloathed you with righteouſneſs, and garments of Salvation.*

This is he who quitted the Throne of Glory, left the Boſom of unſpeakable Delights, came in a Body of Fleſh, and produced in perfect holineſs, break through many and great impediments, (thy great Unworthineſs, the Wrath of God and Man) by the ſtrength of Love; to bring Salvation home to thy Soul. Can he that believingly conſiders this, do leſs than faint at the ſenſe of that Love that brought him to the duſt of death, and cry out with that Father, *My Lord was crucified?* But I will inſiſt no longer upon Generals, but draw down the Particulars of Chriſt's Funeral to your uſe in the following Corollaries

Corollary 1. Was Chriſt buried in this manner? *Then a decent and mournful Funeral (where it can be had) is very laudable among Chriſtians.*

I know the Souls of the Saints have no concernment for their Bodies; nor are they ſolicitous how the Body is treated here, yet there is a reſpect due to them, as they are the Temples wherein God hath been ſerved and honoured by thoſe Holy Souls that once dwelt in them. As alſo upon the account of their relation to Chriſt, even when they lie by the Walls. And the Glory that will be one day put upon them, when they ſhall be changed, and made like unto Chriſt's glorious Body. Upon ſuch ſpecial accounts as theſe, their Bodies deſerve an honourable treatment as well as upon the account of Humanity, which owes this honour to, on the Bodies of all Men.

To have no Funeral, is accounted a Judgment, *Eccleſ.* 7. 4. Or to be tumbled into a Pit without any to lament us, is as lamentable. We read of many ſolemn and * mournful Funerals in Scripture, wherein the People of God have affectionately paid their reſpects and honours to the Duſt of the *Saints*; as Men that were deeply ſenſible of their worth, and how great a loſs the World ſuſtains by their remove. Chriſt's Funeral had as much of decency and ſolemnity in it as the time would permit; though he was a ſtranger to all pomp, both in Life and death.

* *Gen.* 23. 2. *Gen.* 35 19. *Gen.* 50. 10. *Num.* 20. 29. 2 *Chr.* 35. 24. *Joh.* 11. 31. *Acts* 8. 2.

Corol. 2. Did *Joſeph* and *Nicodemus* ſo boldly appear, at a time of ſo much danger, to beg the Body, and give it a Funeral? *Let it be for ever a caution to ſtrong Chriſtians, not to deſpiſe, or glory over the weak.* You ſee here a couple of poor low-ſpirited and timorous Perſons, that were to be ſeen in Chriſt's company, when the other Diſciples profeſſed their readineſs to die with him: Yet thoſe flee, and theſe appear for him, when the trial comes indeed. If God deſert the ſtrong and aſſiſt the weak, the feeble ſhall be as *David*, and the ſtrong as Tow. I ſpeak not this to diſcourage any Man from ſtriving to improve inherent Grace to the utmoſt. For it's ordinarily found in Experience, that the degrees of aſſiſting Grace, are given out according to the meaſures of inherent Grace: But I ſpeak it to prevent a ſin incident to ſtrong Chriſtians, which is to deſpiſe the weak, which God corrects by ſuch Inſtances and Examples as this before us.

Corol. 3. *Hence we may be aſſiſted in diſcerning the depths of Chriſt's Humiliation for us.* And ſee from what, to what this Love brought him. It was not enough, that he who was in the form of God, became a Creature; which was an infinite ſtoop, nay, to be made a Man, an inferior Order of Creatures. Nay, to be a poor Man, to ſpend his days in Poverty and Contempt. But alſo to be a dead Corps for our ſake. *O what manner of love is this!*

Now the deeper the humiliation of the Son of God was, the more ſatisfactory to us it muſt needs be. For as it ſhews us the hainouſneſs of Sin that deſerves all this, ſo the fulneſs of Chriſt's Satisfaction whereby he makes up that breach. O it was deep humiliation indeed. How unlike himſelf is he now become! Doth he look like the Son of God? What, the Son of God whom all the Angels adore, to be ſhuffled by three or four Perſons into his Grave in an Evening. To be carried from *Golgotha* to the Grave in this manner! and there lie as a captive to Death for a time! Never was the like change of conditions, never ſuch an abaſement heard of in the World.

Corol. 4. *From this Funeral of Chriſt, reſults the pureſt and ſtrongeſt conſolation and encouragement to believers, againſt the fears of Death and the Grave.* If this be ſo, that Jeſus hath lain in the Grave before you; let me ſay then to you as the Lord ſpake to *Jacob*, Gen. 46. 2,3.) *Fear not to go down to Ægypt, for I will go down with thee, and will ſurely bring thee up thence.* So here, fear not Believer to go down to the Grave, for God will be with thee there, and will ſurely bring thee up thence. This conſideration that Jeſus Chriſt hath lain in the Grave himſelf, gives manifold encouragements to the People of God, againſt the terrors of the Grave.

Firſt, The Grave *received*, but could not *deſtroy* Jeſus Chriſt. Death ſwallowed him as the Whale did *Jonah* his Type; but could not digeſt him when it had ſwallow'd him; but quickly delivered him up again. Now Chriſt lying in the Grave, as the common Head and repreſentative of Believers, what comfort ſhould this inſpire into their Hearts? For as it fared with Chriſt's Perſonal, ſo it ſhall with Chriſt's Myſtical. It could not retain him, it ſhall not for ever retain them. This Reſurrection of Chriſt out of his, is the very ground of our hope for a Reſurrection out of our Graves. *Chriſt is riſen from the dead, and become the firſt-fruits of them that ſlept*, 1 Cor. 15. 20.

Secondly, As the Union betwixt the Body of Chriſt and the divine Nature was not diſſolved when that Body was laid in the Grave; ſo the union betwixt Chriſt and Believers is not, cannot be diſſolved; when their Bodies ſhall be laid in their Graves. It's true, the natural union betwixt his Soul and Body was diſſolved for a time, but the *Hypoſtatical* union was not diſſolved, no, not for a moment. That Body was the Body of the Son of God when it was in the Sepulchre. In like manner, the natural union betwixt our Souls and Bodies is diſſolved by death, but the myſtical union betwixt us and Chriſt, yea, betwixt our very duſt and Chriſt, can never be diſſolved.

Thirdly, As Chriſt's Body when it was in the Grave, did there reſt in hope, and was aſſuredly a partaker of that hope. So it ſhall fare with the dead Bodies of the Saints when they lay them alſo in the Duſt. *My fleſh alſo ſhall reſt in hope*, ſaith Chriſt, *Pſal.* 16. 9, 10, 11. In like manner, the Saints commit their Bodies to the duſt in hope. *The righteous hath hope in his Death*, Prov. 14. 32. And as Chriſt's hope was not a vain hope, ſo neither ſhall their hope be in vain.

Fourthly

Fourthly, and laſtly, Chriſt's lying in the Grave before us, hath quite changed and altered the nature of the Grave. So that it is not what it was. It was once a part of the Curſe, *Duſt thou art, and unto Duſt thou ſhalt return*, was a part of the threatning and curſe for Sin. The Grave had the nature and uſe of a Priſon, to keep the Bodies of Sinners againſt the great Aſſizes; and then deliver them up into the hands of a great and terrible God. But now it's no Priſon, but a Bed of reſt. Yea, and a perfumed Bed, where Chriſt lay before us. Which is a ſweet conſideration of the Grave indeed: *They ſhall enter into Peace, they ſhall reſt in their Beds*, Iſa. 57. 2. O then let not Believers ſtand in fear of the Grave. He that hath one foot in Heaven, need not fear to put the other into the Grave. *Though I go down to the valley of the ſhadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me*, Pſal. 23.

Indeed the Grave is a terrible place to them that are out of Chriſt. Death is the Lord's Serjeant to arreſt them. The Grave is the Lord's Priſon to ſecure them. When Death deaws them into the Grave, it draws them thither as a Lyon doth his prey into the Den to devour it. So you read, *Pſal.* 49. 14. *Death ſhall feed* (or prey) *upon them.* Death there reigns over them in its full power, *Rom.* 5. 14. And tho' at laſt it ſhall render them again to God, yet it were better for them to lie everlaſtingly where they were, than to riſe to ſuch an end. For they are brought out of their Graves, as a condemned Priſoner out of the Priſon, to go to Execution. But the caſe of the Saints is not ſo. The Grave (thanks be to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt) is a priviledged place to them while they ſleep there; and when they awake, it will be with ſinging. When they awake they ſhall be ſatisfied with his likeneſs.

Coroll. 5. Laſtly, *Since Chriſt was laid in his Grave, and his People reap ſuch priviledges by it, as ever you expect reſt or comfort in your Graves*, ſee that you get union with Chriſt now.

It was an ancient cuſtom of the Jews, to put rich treaſures into the Graves with their Friends, as well as to beſtow much upon their Sepulchres. It's ſaid, *Hicarnus* opened *David*'s Sepulchre, and took out of it three thouſand Talents of Gold and Silver. And to this ſenſe many interpret that act of the *Chaldeans*, Jer. 8. 1. *At that time, ſaith the Lord, they ſhall bring out the bones of the Kings of* Judah, *and the bones of his Princes*, &c. *And they ſhall ſpread them before the Sun and Moon*, &c. This is rather conceiv'd to be an act of Covetouſneſs than Cruelty. They ſhall ranſack their Graves for the Treaſure that is hid there among their Bones. Its poſſible the caſe ſo ſtands with many of you, that you have no great matter to beſtow upon your Funerals, nor are they like to be ſplendid; no ſtately Monuments, no hidden Treaſures; but if Chriſt be yours, you carry that with you to your Graves, which is better than all the Gold and Silver in the World. What would you be the better if your Coffin were made of beaten Gold, or your Grave-ſtone ſet thick with glittering Diamonds? But if you die in the Lord, *i. e.* intereſted in, and united to the Lord, you ſhall carry ſix grounds of Comfort with you to your Graves, the leaſt of which is not to be purchaſed with the wealth of both the *Indies*.

Firſt, The firſt ground of Comfort which a Believer carries with him to the Grave is, that the Covenant of God holds firmly with his very Duſt, all the days of its appointed time in the Grave. So much Chriſt tells us, *Matt.* 22. 31, 32. *I am the God of* Abraham, *and the God of* Iſaac, *and the God of* Jacob. *God is not the God of the Dead, but the God of the Living*; q. d. *Abraham, Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, are naturally dead, but in as much as God, long after their Deaths, proclaimed himſelf their God ſtill, therefore they are all alive, *fœderally* alive to God. They live; that is, their Covenant-relation lives ſtill. *Whether we live, or whether we die*, (ſaith the Apoſtle) *we are the Lord's*, Rom. 14. 7, 8, 9. Now, what an encouragement is here! I am as much the Lord's in the ſtate of the dead, as I was in the ſtate of the living. Death puts an end to all other Relations and Bonds, but the Bond of the Covenant rots not in the Grave. That duſt is ſtill the Lord's.

Secondly, As God's Covenant with our very Bodies is indiſſolvable; ſo God's Love to our very duſt, is inſeparable. *I am the God of Abraham*: God looks down from Heaven into the Graves of his Saints with delight, and looks on that pile of Duſt with complacency, which thoſe that once loved it cannot behold without loathing. The Apoſtle is expreſs, *Rom.* 8. 33. That Death ſeparates not the Believer from the love of God. As at firſt it was not our natural comlineſs or beauty that drew or engaged his Love to us; ſo neither will he ceaſe to love us when that beauty is gone, and we become objects of loathing to all Fleſh. When a Husband cannot endure to ſee a Wife, or a Wife her Husband; but ſaith of them that were once dear and pleaſant, as *Abraham* of his beloved *Sarah*, *Bury my Dead out of my ſight*. Yet then the Lord delights in it as much as ever. The Goldſmith doth not value the duſt of his Gold, as God values the duſt of his Saints, for all theſe precious particles are united to Chriſt.

Thirdly, As God's Love will be with you in the Grave, ſo God's Providence ſhall take order about your Graves, when it ſhall be digged for you. And before he will not dig your Graves, till you are fit to be put into them. He will bring you thither in the beſt time, *Job* 5. 26. *Thou ſhalt come to thy Grave as a ſhock of Corn in its ſeaſon.* You ſhall be ripe and ready before God houſe you there. It's ſaid of *David*, that *after he had ſerved his Generation by the will of God, he fell aſleep*, Acts 13. 36. O what a holy and wiſe Will is that Will of God, that ſo orders our death! And how equal is it that our Will ſhall be concluded by it?

Fourthly, If you be in Chriſt, as God's Covenant holds with you in the Grave, his Love is inſeparable from your Duſt, his Providence ſhall give order when it ſhall be digged for you; ſo in the next place, his pardons have looſed all the bonds of guilt from you, before you lie down in the Grave. So that you ſhall not die in your Sins. Ah Friends, what a Comfort is this? That you are the Lord's Free-men in the Grave. Sin is a bad Bed-fellow, and a worſe Grave-fellow. It's a grievous threatning, *John* 8. 24. *Ye ſhall die in your ſins.* Better be caſt alive into a Pit among Dragons and Serpents than dead in your Graves among your ſins. O what a terrible word is that, *Job* 20. 11. *His bones are full of the ſins of his youth, which ſhall lie down with him in the duſt.* But from the company of ſin in the Grave, all the Saints are delivered. God's full, free, and final Pardons have ſhut guilt out of your Graves.

Fifthly, When ever you come to your Graves, you ſhall find the enmity of the Grave ſlain by Chriſt. It is no enemy; nay, you will find it friendly, a priviledged place to you. It will be as ſweet to you that are in Chriſt, as a ſoft Bed in a ſtill quiet Chamber, is to one that's weary and ſleepy.

Therefore

Therefore it's ſaid, 1 *Cor.* 3. 21, 22. *Death is yours:* Yours as a Priviledge: Your Friend. There you ſhall find ſweet reſt in Jeſus. Be hurried, pained, troubled no more.

Sixthly, To conclude, if in Chriſt; know this for your comfort, that your own Lord Jeſus Chriſt keeps the Keys of all the Chambers of Death; and as he unlocks the door of Death, when he lets you in; ſo he will open it again for you, when you awake to let you out; and from the Time he opens to let you in, till he opens to let you out; he himſelf wakes and watches by you while you ſleep there. ——— *I* (ſaith he) *have the Keys of Death.* O it's comfortable to hear the Keys gingle in his Hand, *Rev.* 1. 18. O then, as you expect Peace or Reſt in the Chambers of Death, get Union with Chriſt. A Grave with Chriſt is a comfortable Place.

SERMON XXXVIII.

Wherein four weighty Ends of Chriſt's Humiliation are opened, and particularly applied.

ISAIAH LIII. ii.

He ſhall ſee the Travail of his Soul and be ſatisfied.

WE are now arrived at the laſt Particular which we deſign'd to ſpeak to in Chriſt's *State of Humiliation*, namely, the *Deſigns* and bleſſed *Ends* for which he was ſo deeply abaſed It's inconſiſtent with the Prudence of a common Agent to be at vaſt Expences of Time, Pains, and Coſt, and not to propound to himſelf a Deſign worthy of all thoſe Expences. And it is much leſs imaginable that Chriſt would ſo ſtupendiouſly abaſe himſelf, by ſtooping from the Boſom of his Father to the State of the Dead, where our laſt Diſcourſe left him, if there had not been ſome excellent and glorious thing in his Eye, the Attainment whereof might give him a Content and Satisfaction equivalent to all the Sorrows and Abaſures he endured for it.

And ſo much is plainly carried in this Scripture. *He ſhall ſee the Travail of his Soul and be ſatisfied.* In which Words three Things fall under our Conſideration.

First, The travailing Pangs of Chriſt. So the Agonies of his Soul and Torments of his Body are fitly called, not only becauſe of the Sharpneſs and Acuteneſs of them, being in that reſpect like the Birth Pangs of a travailing Woman, for ſo this Word ſignifies, but alſo becauſe they forerun and make way for the Birth, which abundantly recompences all thoſe Labours. I ſhall not here inſiſt upon the Pangs and Agonies endur'd by Chriſt in the Garden, or upon the Croſs, which the Prophet ſtiles *the Travail of his Soul*, having in the former Sermons opened it largely in its Particulars; but paſs to the

עמל, ωδίνω, Hæc vox & partum ſignificat, & dolorem parturientem. *Strigel.*

Second Thing conſiderable in theſe Words, and that is the *aſſured Fruits* and Effects of this his Travail. *He ſhall ſee the Travail of his Soul.* By ſeeing, underſtand the Fruition, Obtainment, or Enjoyment of the Ends of his Sufferings. He ſhall not ſhed his Blood upon an Hazard. His Deſign ſhall not miſcarry, but he ſhall certainly ſee the Ends he aimed at accompliſhed.

And, *Thirdly*, This ſhall yield him great Satisfaction, as a *Woman forgets her Sorrow, for Joy that a Man is born into the World*, John 16. 21. He ſhall ſee it, and be *ſatisfied*. As God when he had finiſhed the Work of Creation, viewed that his Work with Pleaſure and Satisfaction; ſo doth our exalted Redeemer with great Contentment behold the happy Iſſues of his hard Sufferings. It affords Pleaſure to a Man to ſee great Affairs, by orderly Conduct, brought to happy Iſſues. Much more doth it yield Delight to Jeſus Chriſt, to ſee the Reſults of that moſt profound Wiſdom and Love wherein he carried on Redemption Work. All runs into this;

Doct. *That all the bleſſed Deſigns and Ends for which the Lord Jeſus Chriſt humbled himſelf to the Death of the Croſs, ſhall certainly be attained, to his full Content and Satisfaction.*

My preſent Buſineſs is not to prove, that Chriſt ſhall certainly obtain what he died for, nor to open the great Satisfaction and Pleaſure which will riſe to him out of thoſe Iſſues of his Death; but to point at the principal Ends of his Death, making ſome brief Improvements as we paſs along.

First, Then let us enquire into the Deſigns and Ends of Chriſt's Humiliation, at leaſt the main and principal ones; and we ſhall find, that as the ſprinkling of the Typical Blood in the Old Teſtament was done for four weighty Ends or Uſes, anſwerably the precious and invaluable Blood of the Teſtator and Surety of the New Teſtament is ſhed for four weighty Ends alſo.

First, That Blood was ſhed and applied to *deliver* from Danger, *Exod.* 12. 13. *And the Blood ſhall be to you for a Token upon the Houſes where you are, and when I ſee the Blood, I will paſs over you. And the Plague ſhall not be upon you to deſtroy you when I ſmite the Land of* Egypt.

Per hunc ritum implicite profitentur Hebræi, ſe liberandos ab æterna morte per Meſſiæ ſanguinem. *Vatab.*

Secondly, That Blood was ſhed to make an *Atonement* betwixt God and the People, *Lev.* 4. 20. *And he ſhall do with the Bullock as he did with the Bullock for a Sin Offering; ſo ſhall he do with this; and the*

Pri-

Priest shall make an Atonement for them, and it shall be forgiven them.

Thirdly, That Blood was shed to *purify* Persons from their Ceremonial Pollutions, *Lev.* 14. 6, 7. *He shall dip the Cedar Wood, and Scarlet, and Hyssop, with the living Bird, in the Blood of the Bird that was kill'd over the running Water, and he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the Leprosy seven times; and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living Bird loose in the open Field.*

Septies significabat perfectam expiationem. Numerus hic perfectionis sacer. *Menoch.*

Fourthly, That Blood was shed to *ratify* and confirm the Testament or Covenant of God with the People, *Exod.* 24. 8. *And Moses took the Blood, and sprinkled it on the People, and said, Behold the Blood of the Covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these Words.*

Effusio & aspersio sanguinis significat fœdus stabile fore, & firmum etiam cum vitæ discrimine. *Riv.*

These were the four main Ends of shedding and sprinkling that Typical Blood. Suitably there are four principal Ends of shedding and applying Christ's Blood. As that typical Blood was shed to deliver from Danger, so this was shed to deliver from Wrath, even the *Wrath to come*. That was shed to make an Atonement, so was this. That was shed to purify Persons from Uncleanness, so was this. That was shed to confirm the Testament, so was this. As will appear in the Particulars more at large.

First, One principal Design and End of shedding the Blood of Christ was *to deliver his People from Danger, the Danger of that Wrath which burns down to the lowest Hell.* So you find, 1 *Thess.* 1. 10. *Even Jesus who delivered us from the Wrath to come.* Here our Misery is both *specified* and aggravated. Specified in calling it *Wrath*, a Word of deep and dreadful Signification. The Damned best understand the Importance of that Word. And *aggravated* in calling it *Wrath to come*, or coming Wrath. Wrath to come implies both the *Futurity* and *Perpetuity* of this Wrath. It's Wrath that shall certainly and inevitably come upon Sinners. As sure as the Night follows the Day. As sure as the Winter follows the Summer, so shall Wrath follow Sin, and the Pleasures thereof. Yea, it's not only certainly future, but when it comes it will be abiding Wrath, or Wrath still coming. When Millions of Years and Ages are past and gone, this will still be *Wrath to come*. Ever coming, as a River overflowing.

Now from this *Wrath to come* hath Jesus delivered his People by his Death. For that was the Price laid down for their Redemption from the Wrath of the great and terrible God, *Rom.* 5. 9. *Much more then being justified by his Blood, we shall be saved from Wrath thro' him.* The Blood of Jesus was the Price that ransomed Man from this Wrath. And it was shed not only to deliver them from *Wrath to come*, but to deliver them freely, fully, distinguishingly, and wonderfully from it.

First, *Freely*, by his own voluntary Interposition and Susception of the Mediatorial Office, moved thereunto by his own Bowels of Compassion; which yearned over his Elect in their Misery. The Saints were once a lost Generation, that had sold themselves, and their Inheritance also; and had not wherewithal to redeem either: But they had a near Kinsman (even their Elder Brother by the Mothers Side) to whom the Right of Redemption did belong; who being a mighty Man of Wealth, the Heir of all Things, undertook to be their *Goël*; and out of his own proper Substance to redeem both them and their Inheritance. Them to be his own Inheritance, *Eph.* 1. 10. And Heaven to be theirs, 1 *Pet.* 1. 4. All this he did most freely, when none made Supplication to him. No sighing of the Prisoners came before him. He designed it for us before we had a Being. And when the Purposes of his Grace were come to their parturient Fulness, then did he freely lay out the infinite Treasures of his Blood to purchase our Deliverance from Wrath.

Vide Mr *Case* his *Mount Pisgah*, p. 85.

Secondly, Christ by Death hath delivered his People *fully*. A full Deliverance it is, both in respect of *Time* and *Degrees*. A full Deliverance in respect of *Time*. It was not a *Reprieve*, but a *Deliverance*. He thought it not worth the shedding of his Blood to respite the Execution for a while. Nay, in the Procurement of their Eternal Deliverance from Wrath, and in the Purchase of their Eternal Inheritance, he hath but an even Bargain, not a Jot more than his Blood was worth. Therefore is he become *the Author of [Eternal Salvation] to them that obey him*, Heb. 5. 9. And as it is full in respect of *Time*; so likewise in respect of *Degrees*. He died not to procure a Mitigation or Abatement of the Rigour or Severity of the Sentence, but to rescue his People fully from all Degrees of Wrath. So that there is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ, *Rom.* 8. 1. All the Wrath of God to the last Drop, was squeezed out into that bitter Cup which Christ drank off, and wrung out the very Dregs thereof.

Thirdly, This Deliverance obtained for us by the Death of Christ, is a *special* and distinguishing Deliverance. Not common to all, but peculiar to some; and they by Nature no better than those that are left under Wrath. Yea, as to natural Disposition, moral Qualifications, and external Endowments, often-times far inferior to them that perish. How often do we find a moral Righteousness, an harmless Innocency, a pretty Ingenuity, a readiness to all Offices of Love; in them that are notwithstanding left under the Dominion of other Lusts, and under the damning Sentence of the Law; whilst on the other side, proud, peevish, sensual, morose, and unpolish'd Natures, are chosen to be the Subjects of this Salvation. *You see your Calling, Brethren*, 1 Cor. 1. 26.

Fourthly, and lastly, It is a *wonderful* Salvation. It would weary the Arm of an Angel to write down all the Wonders that are in this Salvation. That ever such a Design should be laid, such a Project of Grace contrived in the Heart of God; who might have suffered the whole Species to perish. That it should only concern Man, and not the Angels, by Nature more excellent than us; that Christ should be pitch'd upon to go forth upon this glorious Design. That he should effect it in such a way, by taking our Nature and suffering the Penalty of the Law therein. That our Deliverance should be wrought out and finish'd when the Redeemer and his Design seem'd both to be lost and perish'd. These with many more are such Wonders as will take up Eternity itself to search, admire, and adore them.

Before I part from this first End of the Death of Christ, give me leave to deduce Two useful Corollaries from it, and then proceed to a second.

Coroll. 1. Hath Christ by Death delivered his People from the Wrath to come? *How ingrate and disingenuous a thing must it be then for those that have obtained such a Deliverance as this, to repine and grudge at those light Afflictions they suffer for a Moment upon Christ's Account in this World!*

Alas! What are these Sufferings, that we should grudge at them? Are they like those which the *Re-*

determer ſuffered for our Deliverance? Did ever any of us endure for him what he endured for us? Or is there any thing you can ſuffer for Chriſt in this World, comparable to this *Wrath to come*, which you muſt have endured, had he not by the Price of his own Blood reſcued you from it?

Compare Reader, wilt thou but make the Compariſon in thine own Thoughts in the following Particulars, and then pronounce when thou haſt duly compared.

The Natures *Firſt*, What is the Wrath of Man to the Wrath of God? What is the Arm of a Creature to the Anger of a Deity? Can Man thunder with an Arm like God?

Subjects. *Secondly*, What are the Sufferings of the vile Body here to the Tortures of a Soul and Body in Hell? The Torments of the Soul are the very Soul of Torments.

Duration. *Thirdly*, What are the Troubles of a Moment to that Wrath which, after Millions of Years are gone, will ſtill be called *Wrath to come?* O what Compare betwixt a Point of haſty Time and the interminable Duration of vaſt Eternity?

Continuity. *Fourthly*, What Compare is there betwixt the intermitting Sorrows and Sufferings of this Life, and the continued uninterrupted *Wrath to come?* Our Troubles here are not conſtant, there are gracious Relaxations, lucid Intervals here; but the Wrath to come allows not a Moments Eaſe or Mitigation.

Deſigns. *Fifthly*, What light and eaſy Troubles are thoſe, which being put into the Rank and Order of adjuvant Cauſes, work under the Influence and Bleſſing of the firſt Cauſe to the everlaſting Good of them that love God, compared with that *Wrath to come*, out of which no good Effects or Iſſues are poſſible to proceed to the Souls on which it lyes?

And Companions. *Sixthly*, and laſtly, How much more comfortable is it, to ſuffer in Fellowſhip with Chriſt and his Saints for Righteouſneſs ſake, than to ſuffer with Devils and Reprobates for Wickedneſs ſake? Grudge not then, O ye that are delivered by Jeſus from Wrath to come, at any thing ye do ſuffer or ſhall ſuffer from or for Chriſt, Chriſt in this World.

Coroll. 2. If Jeſus Chriſt hath delivered his People from the Wrath to come, *how little Comfort can any Man take in his preſent Enjoyments and Accommodations in the World, whilſt it remains a Queſtion with him, whether he be delivered from the Wrath to come?* It's well for preſent, but will it be ſo ſtill? Man is a proſpecting Creature, and it will not ſatisfy him that his preſent Condition is comfortable, except he have ſome Hope it ſhall be ſo hereafter. It can afford a Man little Content that all is eaſy and pleaſant about him now, whilſt ſuch Paſſages and terrible Hints of *Wrath to come* are given him by his own Conſcience daily. Oh methinks ſuch a Thought as this, *what if I am reſerved from the Wrath to come?* ſhould be to him as the Fingers appearing upon the Plaiſter of the Wall were to *Belteſhazzar* in the height of a Frolick. It's a Cuſtom with ſome of the *Indians*, when they have taken a Priſoner (whom they intend not preſently to eat) to bring him with great Triumph into the Village, where he dwelleth that hath taken him; and placing him in the Houſe of one that was ſlain in the Wars, as it were to re-celebrate his Funerals, they give him his Wives or Siſters to attend on him, and uſe at his Pleaſure. They Apparel him gorgeouſly, and feed him with all the dainty Meats that may be had; affording him all the Pleaſure that can be deviſed; when he hath paſt certain Months in all theſe Pleaſures, and (like a Capon) is made fat with delicate Fare) they aſſemble themſelves upon ſome Feſtival Day, and in great Pomp bring him to the Place of Execution, where they kill and eat him.

Sir R. Barkley, *in the Felicity of Man*, p. 12, 13.

Such are all the Pleaſures and Enjoyments of the Wicked, which feed them for the Day of Slaughter. How little Stomach can a Man have to thoſe Dainties that underſtands the End and Meaning of them! Give not Sleep therefore to thine Eyes, Reader, till thou have got good Evidence that thou art of that Number whom *Jeſus hath delivered from Wrath to come.* Till thou canſt ſay, he is a Jeſus to thee. This may be made out to thy Satisfaction three ways.

Firſt, *If Jeſus have delivered thee from Sin*, the *Cauſe of Wrath*, *thou may conclude he hath delivered thee from Wrath*, the *Effect and Fruits of Sin.* Upon this Account the ſweet Name of *Jeſus* was impoſed upon him, *Matth.* 1. 21. *Thou ſhalt call his Name Jeſus, for he ſhall ſave his People from their Sins.* Whilſt a Man lyes under the Dominion and Guilt of Sin, he lyes expoſed to *Wrath to come*; and when he is delivered from the Guilt and Power of Sin, he is certainly delivered from the Danger of this coming Wrath. Where Sin is not imputed, Wrath is not threatned.

Secondly, *If thy Soul do ſet an ineſtimable Value on Jeſus Chriſt*, *and be endeared to him upon the Account of that inexpreſſible Grace manifeſted in this Deliverance*, *it's a good Sign thy Soul hath a Share in it.* Mark what an Epithite the Saints give Chriſt upon this Account, *Coloſſ.* 1. 12, 13. *Give Thanks to the Father, who hath delivered us from the Power of Darkneſs, and tranſlated us into the Kingdom of his* [*dear*] *Son.* Chriſt is therefore *dear*, and dear beyond all Compare to his ſaved Ones. I remember it's ſtoried of the poor enthralled *Grecians*, that when *Titus Flaminius* had reſtored their ancient Liberties, and Proclamation was to be made in the Market-place by an Herald; they ſo preſs'd to hear it, that the Herald was in great Danger of being ſtifled and preſs'd to Death among the People; but when the Proclamation was ended, there were heard ſuch Shouts and joyful Acclamations, that the very Birds of the Air fell down aſtoniſhed with the Noiſe, while they continued to cry, σωτῆρ σωτῆρ, a Saviour, a Saviour; and all the following Night they continu'd dancing and ſinging about his Pavilion.

Plutarch *in vita T. Flaminii.*

If ſuch a Deliverance ſo endeared them to *Titus*, how ſhould the great Deliverance from Wrath to come endear all the Redeemed to love their dear *Jeſus?* This is the native Effect of Mercy on the Soul that hath felt it.

Thirdly, To conclude, *A Diſpoſition and readineſs of Mind to do or endure any thing for Chriſt's ſake upon the Account of this Deliverance from the Wrath to come; is a good Evidence you are ſo delivered*, Col. 1. 10. 11. *That we may walk worthy of the Lord to all pleaſing, being fruitful in every good Work.* There's Readineſs to do for Chriſt. *Strengthened with all Might, according to his glorious Power, unto all Patience and Long-ſuffering with Joyfulneſs.* There's a chearful Readineſs to endure any thing for Chriſt.

And

And how both these flow from the Sense of this great Deliverance from Wrath, the 12th Verse will inform you, which was but now cited. Oh then be serious and assiduous in the Resolution of this grand Case. Till this be resolved, nothing can be pleasant to thy Soul.

End 2. As the typical Blood was shed and sprinkled to deliver from Danger, so it was shed to make *Atonement*, Levit. 4. 20. *He shall expiate* (we translate atone) *the Sin.* The Words import both. And the true meaning is, that by the Blood of the Bullock, all whose Efficacy stood in its relation to the Blood of Christ signified and shadowed by it, the People for whom it was shed should be reconciled to God by the Expiation and Remission of their Sins. And what was shadowed in this typical Blood, was really designed and accomplish'd by Jesus Christ in the shedding of his Blood.

Reconciliation of the Elect to God, is therefore another of those beautiful Births which Christ travailed for. So you find it expressly, *Rom.* 5. 10. *If when we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son.* This [if] is not a Word of doubting, but Argumentation. The Apostle supposes it as a known Truth, or Principle yielded by all Christians, that the Death of Christ was to reconcile the Elect to God. And again he affirms it with like Clearness, *Col.* 1. 20. *And having made Peace by the Blood of his Cross, by him to reconcile all things.* And that this was a main and principal End designed both by the Father and Son in the Humiliation of Christ, is plain from 2 *Cor.* 5. 18, 19. *God was in Christ reconciling the World to himself.* God filled the Humanity with Grace and Authority. The Spirit of God was in him to qualify him. The Authority of God was in him by Commission, to make all he did valid. The Grace and Love of GOD to Mankind was in him, and one of the principal Effects in which it was manifested, was this Design upon which he came, *viz.* to reconcile the World to God. Upon which Ground Christ is called the *Propitiation for our Sins*, 1 John 2. 2. Now *Reconciliation* or Atonement is nothing else but the making up of the ancient Friendship betwixt God and Men which Sin had dissolved, and so to reduce these Enemies into a State of Concord and sweet Agreement. And the Means by which this blessed Design was effectually compassed, was by the Death of Christ, which made compleat Satisfaction to God for the Wrong we had done him. There was a Breach made by Sin betwixt God and Angels, but that Breach is never to be repaired or made up. Since as Christ took not on him their Nature, so he never intended to be a Mediator of Reconciliation betwixt God and them. That will be an eternal Breach. But that which Christ designed as the End of his Death was to reconcile God and Man. Not the whole *Species*, but a certain *Number*, whose Names were given to Christ. Here I must briefly open, 1. How Christ's Death reconciles. 2. Why this Reconciliation is brought about by his Death, rather than any other way. 3. What are the Articles according to which it's made. And 4. What manner of Reconciliation this is.

Reconciliare nihil aliud est quam amicitiam offensione aliqua gravi diremptam refarcire, & sic inimicos in pristinam concordiam reducere. *B. Daven in Col.* 1. 20.

First, *How Christ reconciles God and Men by his Death.* And it must needs be by the Satisfaction his Death made to the Justice of God for our Sins. And so, Reparation being made, the Enmity ceases. Hence it's said, *Isa.* 53. 5. *The Chastisement of our Peace was upon him, and by his Stripes are we healed.* That is (as our *English* Annotators well sense it) he was chastized to procure our Peace, by removal of our Sins, that set God and us asunder, the Guilt thereof being discharg'd with the Price of his Blood.

Now this Reconciliation is made and continued betwixt God and us, three ways; namely, by the *Oblation* of Christ, which was the Price that procured it, and so we were *virtually* or meritoriously reconciled. By the *Application* of Christ and his Benefits to us thro' Faith, and so we are *actually* reconciled. And by the virtual *Continuation* of the Sacrifice of Christ in Heaven, by his potent and eternal *Intercession*, and so our State of Reconciliation is *confirmed*, and all future Breaches prevented. But all depends, as you see, upon the Death of Christ. For had not Christ died, his Death could never be applied to us, nor pleaded in Heaven for us. How the Death of Christ meritoriously procures our Reconciliation, is evident from that forecited Scripture, *Rom.* 5. 10. *When we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son (i. e.)* Christ's Death did meritoriously or virtually reconcile us to God, who as to our State were Enemies long after that Reconciliation was made. That the *Application* of Christ to us by Faith, makes that virtual Reconciliation to become actual, is plain enough from *Eph.* 2. 16, 17. *And that he might reconcile both unto God in one Body by the Cross, having slain the Enmity thereby. And came and preached Peace to you that were afar off, and to them that were nigh. Now therefore (as it is added,* v. 19.) *Ye are no more Strangers and Foreigners, but Fellow Citizens with the Saints,* &c. And that this State of Friendship is still *continued* by Christ's Intercession within the Vail, so that there can be no Breaches made upon the State of our Peace, notwithstanding all the daily Provocations we give God by our Sins, is the comfortable Truth which the Apostle plainly asserts, after he had given a necessary Caution to prevent the Abuse of it, in 1 *John* 2. 1, 2. *My little Children, these things I write unto you that you sin not; and if any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the Propitiation,* &c. Thus Christ reconciles us to God by his Death.

Secondly, And if you enquire why this Reconciliation was made by the Death of Christ, rather than any other way, Satisfaction is at hand in these Two Answers.

First, That we can imagine no other way by which it could be compassed. And,

Secondly, If God could have *reconciled* us as much by another way, yet he could not have *obliged* us so much by doing it in another way, as he hath by doing it this way. Surely none but he that was God manifest in our Flesh could offer a Sacrifice of sufficient Value to make God amends for the Wrong done him by one Sin, much less for all the Sins of the Elect. And how God should (especially after a peremptory threatning of Death for Sin) re-admit us into Favour without full Satisfaction, cannot be imagined. He is indeed inclin'd to Acts of Mercy, but none must suppose him to exercise one Attribute in Prejudice to another. That his *Justice* must be *eclipsed*, whilst his *Mercy shines.* But allow the infinite Wisdom could have found out another means of reconciling us as much, can you imagine that in any other way he could oblige us as much, as he hath done by reconciling us to himself by the Death of his own Son? It cannot be thought possible. This therefore was the most effectual, just, honourable, and obliging way to make up the Peace betwixt him and us.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, This Reconciliation purchaſed by the Blood of Chriſt, is offered unto Men by the Goſpel, upon certain Articles and Conditions; upon the performance whereof, it actually becomes theirs; and without which, notwithſtanding all that Chriſt hath done and ſuffered, the Breach ſtill continues betwixt them and God. And let no Man think this a derogation from the freeneſs and riches of Grace, for theſe things ſerve ſingularly to illuſtrate and commend the Grace of God to Sinners.

As he conſulted his own Glory, in the terms on which he offers us our Peace with him; ſo 'tis his Grace which brings up Souls to thoſe terms of Reconciliation. And ſurely he hath not ſuſpended the Mercy of our Reconciliation upon unreaſonable or impoſſible Conditions. He hath not ſaid, if you will do as much for me, *as you have done againſt me*, I will be at Peace with you: But the two grand Articles of Peace with God, are *Repentance* and *Faith*. In the firſt we lay down Arms againſt God, and 'tis meet it ſhould be ſo, before he re-admits us into a ſtate of Peace and Favour; in the other, we accept Chriſt and Pardon through him with a thankful Heart, yielding up our ſelves to his Government. Which is equally reaſonable.

Theſe are the terms on which we are actually reconciled to God. *Let the wicked forſake his way, and and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* So *Rom.* 5. 1. *Being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God.* And ſurely it would not become the Holy God to own as his Friend and Favourite, a Man that goes on perverſly and impenitently in the way of Sin; not ſo much as acknowledging, or once bewailing the wrong he hath done him, purpoſing to do ſo no more; or to receive into amity one that ſlights and rejects the Lord Jeſus, whoſe precious Blood was ſhed to procure, and purchaſe Peace and Pardon for Sinners.

But if there be any poor Soul, that ſaith in his Heart, it repents me for ſinning againſt God, and ſincerely willing to come to Chriſt upon Goſpel-terms, he ſhall have Peace. And that Peace,

Fourthly, Is no common Peace. The Reconciliation which the Lord Jeſus died to procure for broken-hearted Believers, it is,

Firſt, A firm well bottom'd Reconciliation, putting the reconciled Soul beyond all poſſibility of coming under God's wrath any more, *Iſa.* 54. 10. *Mountains may depart, and hills be removed, but the Covenant of this peace cannot be removed.* Chriſt is a Surety by way of *Caution*, to prevent new Breaches, 2 *John*, 1, 2.

Secondly, This Reconciliation with God, is the Fountain out of which all our other Comforts flow to us; this is plainly carried in thoſe words of *Eliphaz* to *Job*. Chap. 22. 21. *Acquaint now thy ſelf with him, and be at peace, thereby good ſhall come unto thee.* As Trade flouriſhes, and Riches come in when Peace is made betwixt States and Kingdoms: So all Spiritual and Temporal Mercies flow into our Boſoms, when once we are reconciled to God. What the Comfort of ſuch a Peace will be in a day of ſtraits and dangers, and what it will be valued at in a dying day, who but he that feels it can tell? And yet ſuch an one cannot fully declare it, for it paſſes all underſtanding, *Phil.* 4, 7. We ſhall now make ſome improvement of this, and paſs on to the third end of the death of Chriſt.

Infer. 1. *If Chriſt died to reconcile God and Man; how horrid an evil then is Sin! And how terrible was that breach made betwixt God and the Creature by it, which could no other way be made up but by the death of the Son of God!* I remember I have read, that when a great chaſm or breach was made in the Earth by an Earthquake, and the *Oracle* was conſulted how it might be cloſed; this anſwer was returned, *That Breach can never be cloſed, except ſomething of great worth be thrown into it.* Such a breach was that which Sin made, it could never be reconciled but by the death of Jeſus Chriſt, the moſt excellent thing in all the Creation.

Infer. 2. *How ſad is the ſtate of all ſuch as are not comprized in the Articles of Peace with God!* The impenitent Unbeliever is excepted. God is not Reconciled to him: And if God be his Enemy, how little avails it, who is his Friend? For, if God be a Man's Enemy, he hath an Almighty Enemy in him, whoſe very frown is Deſtruction, *Deut.* 32. 40, 41, 42. *I liſt up my hand to Heaven and ſay, I live for ever. If I whet my glittering Sword, and my hand take hold on Judgment, I will render vengeance to my enemies, and I will reward them that hate me. I will make mine Arrows drunk with Blood, (and my Sword ſhall devour fleſh) and that with the blood of the ſlain and the Captives, from the beginning of Revenge upon the Enemy.*

Yea, he is an *unavoidable* Enemy. Fly to the utmoſt parts of the Earth, there ſhall his Hand reach thee, as it is *Pſal.* 139. 10. The wings of the Morning cannot carry thee out of his reach. If God be your Enemy, you have an immortal Enemy, who lives for ever to avenge himſelf upon his Adverſaries. And what wilt thou do when thou art in *Saul*'s caſe, 1 *Sam.* 28. 15, 16. Alas, whither wilt thou turn? To whom wilt thou complain? But what wilt thou do, when thou ſhalt ſtand at the Bar, and ſee that God, who is thine Enemy, upon the Throne? Sad is their Caſe indeed, who are not comprehended in the Articles of Peace with God.

Infer. 3. If Chriſt died to Reconcile us to God, *give diligence to clear up to your own Souls, your Intereſt in Reconciliation.* If Chriſt thought it worth his Blood to purchaſe it, it's worth your care and pains to clear it. And what can better evidence it than your conſcientious tenderneſs of Sin, leſt you make new Breaches. Ah, if Reconciled, you will ſay, as *Ezra* 9. 14. *And now our God, ſeeing thou haſt given us ſuch a deliverance as this; ſhould we again break thy Commandments?* If Reconciled to God, his Friends will be your Friends, and his Enemies your Enemies. If God be your Friend, you will be diligent to pleaſe him, *Joh.* 15, 10, 14. He that makes not peace with God, is an Enemy to his own Soul. And he that is at Peace, but takes no pains to clear it, is an Enemy to his own Comfort. But I muſt paſs from this to the third End of Chriſt's Death.

End 3. You have ſeen two of thoſe beautiful Births of Chriſt's Travail, and lo, a third cometh, namely, *The Sanctification of his People.* Typical Blood was ſhed, as you heard, to purifie them that were unclean; and ſo was the Blood of Chriſt ſhed to purge away the Sins of his People; ſo ſpeaks the Apoſtle expreſly, *Eph.* 5. 25, 26. *Chriſt gave himſelf for the Church, that he might ſanctifie and cleanſe it.* And ſo he tells us himſelf, *Joh.* 17. 19. *And for their ſakes I ſanctifie my ſelf*, (i. e.) conſecrate or devote my ſelf to Death, *that they alſo might be ſanctified through the truth.* Upon the account of the benefit received by the Blood of Chriſt, is that *Doxology*, which in a lower ſtrain is now ſounded in the Churches, but will be matter of the Lamb's

Song

Song in Heaven, *Rev.* 1. 5, 6. To him that loved us, and washed us from our Sins, in his own Blood ——be Glory and Honour for ever. Now, there is a two-fold evil in Sin, the *guilt* of it, and the *pollution* of it. Justification properly cures the former, Sanctification the latter; but both Justification, and Sanctification flow unto Sinners out of the death of Christ. And tho' its proper to say the Spirit sanctifies, yet, it is certain, it was the Blood of Christ that procured for us the Spirit of Sanctification. Had not Christ died, the Spirit had never come down from Heaven upon any such Design.

The pouring forth of Christ's Blood for us, obtained the pouring forth of of the Spirit of Holiness upon us. Therefore the Spirit is said to *come in his name, and to take of his and shew it unto us.* Hence it's said, 1 *Joh.* 5. 6. *He came both by Blood and by Water*: By Blood washing away the Guilt; by Water purifying from the filth of Sin. Now this Fruit of Christ's death, even our Sanctification, is a most incomparable Mercy. For, do but consider a few particular Excellencies of Holiness.

First, Holiness is the Image and Glory of God. His Image, *Col.* 3. 10. and his Glory, *Exod.* 15. 11. *Who is like unto thee, O Lord, glorious in Holiness:* Now, when the guilt and filth of Sin is wash'd off, and the Beauty of God put upon the Soul in Sanctification, O what a beautiful Creature is the Soul now. So lovely in the Eyes of Christ, even in its imperfect Holiness, that he saith, *Cant.* 6. 5. Turn away thine Eyes from me, for they have overcome me. So we render it, but the Hebrew רהבני word signifies, they have made me proud, or puffed me up. It's a Beam of Divine Glory upon the Creature, enamouring the very Heart of Christ,

Secondly, As it's the Soul's highest Beauty, so it's the Soul's best evidence for Heaven. *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God*, Matt. 5. 8. *And without Holiness no man shall see God*, Heb. 12. 14. No Gifts, no Duties, no natural Endowments will evidence a Right in Heaven, but the least measure of true Holiness will secure Heaven to the Soul.

Thirdly, As Holiness is the Soul's best evidence for Heaven, so it's a continual spring of Comfort to it in the way thither. The purest and sweetest Pleasures in this World, are the results of Holiness. 'Till we come to live Holily, we never live comfortably. Heaven is Epitomized in Holiness.

Fourthly, And to say no more; It is the peculiar mark by which God hath visibly distinguished his own, from other Men, *Psal.* 4. 3. *The Lord hath set apart him that is Godly, for himself*, q. d. this is the Man, and that the Woman, to whom I intend to be good for ever. This is a Man for me. O Holiness, how surpassingly glorious art thou!

Infer. 1. Did Christ die to Sanctifie his People, how deep then is the pollution of Sin, that nothing but the Blood of Christ can cleanse it! All the Tears of a penitent Sinner, should he shed as many as there have fallen drops of Rain, since the Creation, to this Day, cannot wash away one Sin. The everlasting burnings in Hell, cannot purifie the flaming Conscience from the least sin. O guess at the Wound by the largeness and length of this Tent that follows the mortal Weapon, Sin,

Infer. 2, Did Christ die to sanctifie his People? Behold then the Love of a Saviour. *He loved us, and washed us from our Sin in his own Blood.* He did not shed the Blood of Beasts, as the Priests of old did, but his own Blood, *Heb.* 9. 12. And that no common, but precious Blood, 1 *Pet.* 1. 1. 19. The Blood of God; one drop of which out-values the Blood that runs in the Veins of all *Adam*'s Posterity. And not some of that Blood, but all; to the last drop. He bled every Vein dry for us; and what remain'd lodg'd about the Heart of dead Jesus, was let out by that bloody Spear which pierced the *Pericardium*: So that he bestow'd the whole Treasure of his Blood upon us. And thus liberal was he of his Blood to us when we were Enemies. This then is that Heavenly *Pelican* that feeds his young with his own Blood. O what manner of Love is this! But I must hasten.

End 4. *As Christ died to sanctifie his People: So he died also to to confirm the New Testament to all those sanctified ones.* So it was in the Type, *Exod.* 24. 8. And so it is in the Text. *This is the New Testament in my Blood.* Matt. 26. 28. (*i. e.*) ratified and confirmed by my Blood. For, where a Testiment is, there must also of necessity be the death of the Testator, *Heb.* 9. 16. So that now all the blessings and benefits bequeathed to Believers in the last Will and Testament of Christ, are abundantly confirmed and secured to them by his Death. Yea, he died on purpose to make that Testament in force to them. Men make their Wills and Testaments, and Christ makes his. What they bequeath, and give in their Wills, is a free and voluntary act, they cannot be compelled to do it. And what is bequeathed to us in this Testament of Christ, is altogether a free and voluntary donation. Other Testators use to bequeath their Estates to their Wives and Children, and near Relations; so doth this Testator, all is settled upon his Spouse the Church, Upon Believers, his Children. A stranger intermeddles not with these Mercies. They give all their goods and estates that can that way be conveyed to their Friends that survive them. Christ giveth to his Church in this New Testament three sorts of Goods.

Nullo præsentis metu periculi. *Cook's Instit.* l. 3. cap. 10.

First, All Tempotal good things, 1 *Tim.* 6. 1. *Mat.* 6. 33. (i. e.) the Comfort and Blessing of all, though not the possession of much. As having nothing, and yet possessing all things, 2 *Cor.* 6. 10.

Secondly, All Spiritual good things are bequeathed to them in this Testament, as *Remission* of Sin, and Acceptation with God, which are contained in their Justification, *Rom.* 3. 24, 25, 26. *Sanctification* of their Natures, both *initial* and progressive, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. Adoption into the family of God, *Gal.* 3. 26. The Ministry of Angels, *Heb.* 1. 14. Interest in all the Promises, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. Thus all spiritual good things are in Christ's Testament conveyed to them. And as all Temporal, and Spiritual, so

Thirdly, All eternal good things. Heaven, Glory, and eternal Life, *Rom.* 8. 10, 11. No such bequests as these were ever found in the Testaments of Princes. That which Kings and Nobles settle by Will upon their Heirs, are but trifles to what Christ hath conferred in the New-Testament upon his People. And all this is confirmed and ratified by the death of Christ, so that the Promise is sure, and the Estate indefeasible to all the Heirs of Promise.

How the death of Christ confirmed the New-Testament is worth our Enquiry. The *Socinians* as they allow no other End of Christ's Death, but the confirmation of the New-Testament, so they affirm he did it only by way of *Testimony*, or Witness-bearing in his death. But this is a vile derogation from the efficacy of Christ's Blood, to

bring it down into an Equality with the Blood of Martyrs. As if there were no more in it than was in their Blood.

But know, Reader, Christ died not only or principally to confirm the Testament by his Blood, as Witness to the Truth of those Things, but his Death ratified it as the Death of a Testator, which makes the New Testament irrevocable. And so Christ is called in this Text. Look as when a Man hath made his Will, and is dead, that Will is presently in force, and can never be recall'd. Besides, the Will of the Dead is sacred with Men. They dare not cross it. It's certain the last Will and Testament of Christ is most sacred, and God will never annul or make it void. Moreover, it is not with Christ as with other Testators, who die, and must trust the Performance of their Wills with their Executors, but as he died to put it in force, so he lives again to be the Executor of his own Testament. And all Power to fulfil his Will is now in his own Hands, *Rev.* 1. 18.

Inference 1. Did Christ die to confirm the New Testament, in which such Legacies are bequeathed to Believers. How are all Believers concerned then to prove the Will of dead Jesus! My meaning is, to clear their Title to the Mercies contained in this blessed Testament. And this may be done two ways. By clearing to our selves our Covenant Relations to Christ. And by discovering those special Covenant Impressions upon our Hearts to which the Promises therein contained do belong.

The Probat of Christ's Last Will and Testament.

First, Examine your Relations to Christ. Are you his *Spouse?* Have you forsaken all for him? *Psal* 45. 10. Are you ready to take your Lot with him as it falls in Prosperity or Adversity? *Jer.* 2. 2. And are you loyal to Christ? *Thou shalt be for me, and not for another*, Hos. 3. 3. Do you yield Obedience to him as your Head and Husband? *Eph.* 6. 24. then you may be confident you are interested in the Benefits and Blessings of Christ's last Will and Testament; for can you imagine Christ will make a Testament and forget his Spouse? It can't be. If he so loved the Church as to give himself for her, much more what he hath is settled on her. Again, are you his spiritual Seed, his Children by Regeneration? Are you born of the Spirit? *John* 3. Do you resemble Christ in Holiness? 1 *Pet.* 1. 14, 15. Do you find a reverential Fear of Christ carrying you to obey him in all Things? *Mal.* 1. 6. Are you led by the Spirit of Christ? *As many as are so led, they are the Sons of God*, Rom. 8. 14. To conclude, Have you the *Spirit of Adoption*, enabling you to cry, *Abba, Father?* Gal. 4. 6. That is, helping you in a gracious manner, with Reverence mix'd with filial Confidence, to open your Hearts spiritually to your Father on all Occasions? If so, you are Children; and if Children, doubt not but you have a rich Legacy in Christ's last Will and Testament. He would not seal up his Testament and forget his dear Children.

Secondly, You may discern your Interest in the New Testament or Covenant (for they are substantially the same thing) by the new Covenant Impressions that are made on your Hearts, which are so many clear Evidences of your Right to the Benefits it contains. Such are spiritual Illuminations, *Jer.* 31. 34. Gracious Softness and Tenderness of Heart, *Ezek.* 11. 19. The awful Dread and Fear of God, *Jer.* 32. 40. The Copy or Transcript of his Laws on your Hearts in gracious correspondent Principles, *Jer.* 31. 33. These Things speak you the Children of the Covenant, the Persons on whom all these great Things are settled.

Inference 2. To conclude, It is the indispensable Duty of all on whom Christ hath settled such Mercies, *to admire his Love*, and *walk answerably* to it.

First, Admire the Love of Christ. O how intense and ardent was the Love of Jesus! who design'd for you such an Inheritance, with such a Settlement of it upon you! These are the Mercies with which his Love had travailed big from Eternity, and now he sees the Travail of his Soul, and you also have seen somewhat of it this Day. Before this Love let all the Saints fall down astonished, humbly professing that they owe themselves, and all they are or shall be worth to Eternity, to this Love.

Secondly, And be sure you walk becoming Persons for whom Christ hath done such great Things. Comfort your selves under present Abasures with your spiritual Privileges, *James* 2. 5. and let all your rejoycing be in Christ, and what you have in him, whilst others are blessing themselves in Vanity. Thus we have finished the State of Christ's Humiliation, and thence proceed to the second State of his Exaltation.

An Introduction to the State of Exaltation.

HAving finished what I designed to speak to about the Work of Redemption, so far as it was carried on by Christ in his humble State, we shall now view that blessed Work as it is further *advanced* and *perfected* in *his State of Exaltation.*

The whole of that Work was not to be finished on Earth in a State of Suffering and Abasure, therefore the Apostle makes his *Exaltation* in order to the finishing of the Remainder of his Work, so necessary a Part of his Priesthood, that without it he could not have been a Priest, *Heb.* 8. 4. *If he were on Earth he should not be a Priest* (i. e.) if he should have continued always here, and had not been raised again from the Dead, and taken up into Glory, *he could not have been a compleat and perfect Peace.*

For look as it was not enough for the Sacrifice to be slain without, and his Blood left there; but after it was shed without, it must be carried within the Vail into the most holy Place before the Lord, *Heb.* 9. 7. So it was not sufficient that Christ shed his own Blood on Earth, except he carry it before the Lord into Heaven, and there perform his *Intercession Work* for us.

Moreover, God the Father stood engaged in a solemn Covenant, to reward him for his deep Humiliation, with a most glorious and illustrious Advancement, *Isa.* 49. 5, 6, 7. And how God (as it became him) made this good to Christ, the Apostle very clearly expresses it, *Phil.* 2. 9.

Yea, Justice required it should be so. For how could our Surety be detained in the Prison of the Grave, when the Debt for which he was imprisoned was by him fully discharged, so that the Law of God must acknowledge itself to be fully satisfied in all its Claims and Demands. His Resurrection from the Dead was therefore but his Discharge or Acquittance upon full Payment. Which could not in Justice be denied him.

And indeed God the Father lost nothing by it, for there never was a more glorious Manifestation made of the Name of God to the World than was made in that Work. Therefore it's said, *Phil.* 2. 11 speaking of one of the Designs of Christ's Exaltation it was (saith the Apostle) *that every Tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the*

the Father. O how is the Love of God to poor Sinners illuſtriouſly, yea, aſtoniſhingly diſplayed in Chriſt's Exaltation. When to ſhew the Complacency and Delight which he took in our Recovery, he hath openly declar'd to the World that his exalting Chriſt to all that Glory, ſuch as no meer Creature ever was or can be exalted to, was beſtowed upon him as a Reward for that Work, that moſt grateful Work of our Redemption, *Phil.* 2 9. Wherefore God alſo hath *highly exalted* him; there is an *emphatical Pleonaſmus* in that Word, our *Engliſh* is too flat to deliver out the Elegancy of the Original, it is *ſuper Exaltation.* The *Syriack* renders it, he hath multiplied his Sublimity. The *Arabick*, he hath heightened him with an Height. *Juſtin*, he hath famouſly exalted him. Higher he cannot raiſe him, a greater Argument of his high Satisfaction and Content in the Recovery of poor Sinners cannot be given. For this therefore God the Father ſhall have Glory and Honour aſcribed to him in Heaven to all Eternity.

ὑπερύψωσε, Pleonaſmus emphaticus, *Hieron.* Multiplicavit ſublimitatem ejus. *Arab.* Sublimitate ſublimavit eum, *Syr.* Inſigniter extulit, *Juſtin.* Secundum eandem naturam dicitur exaltatus, ſecundum quam humiliatus fuit, *Zanch.*

Now this ſingular Exaltation of Jeſus Chriſt, as it properly reſpects his Human Nature, which alone is capable of Advancement, for in reſpect of his Divine Nature he never ceaſed to be the moſt high. So it was done to him as a common Perſon, and as the Head of all Believers, their Repreſentative in this as well as in his other Works. God therein ſhewing what in due time he intends to do with the Perſons of his Elect, after they (in Conformity to Chriſt) have ſuffered a while. Whatever God the Father intendeth to do in us or for us, he hath firſt done it to the Perſon of our *Repreſentative, Jeſus Chriſt.* And this, if you obſerve, the Scriptures carry in very clear and plain Expreſſions thro' all the Degrees and Steps of Chriſt's *Exaltation, viz.* his *Reſurrection, Aſcenſion, Seſſion* at the Right Hand of God. And turning to *judge* the World. Of which I purpoſe to ſpeak diſtinctly in the following Sermons.

He aroſe from the Dead as a common Perſon, *Col.* 3. 1. *If ye then be riſen with Chriſt*, ſaith the Apoſtle; ſo that the Saints have Communion and Fellowſhip with him in his Reſurrection.

He aſcended into Heaven as a common Perſon, for ſo it's ſaid in *Eph.* 2. 6. *He hath raiſed us up*, or exalted us together with Chriſt. He ſits at God's Right Hand as a common Perſon, for ſo it follows in the next Clauſe, *and hath made us ſit together in heavenly Places in Chriſt Jeſus.* We ſit there in our Repreſentative. And when he ſhall come again to judge the World, the Saints ſhall come with him. So 'tis propheſied, *Zech.* 14. 6. *The Lord my God ſhall come, and all the Saints with thee.* And as they ſhall come with Chriſt from Heaven, ſo they ſhall ſit on Thrones with him, judging by way of Suffrage. They ſhall be Aſſeſſors with the Judge, 1 *Cor.* 6. 2. This deſerves a ſpecial Remark, that all this Honour is given to Chriſt, as our Head and Repreſentative, for thence reſults abundance of Comfort to the People of God. Carry it therefore along with you in your Thoughts throughout the whole of Chriſt's Advancement. Think when you ſhall hear that Chriſt is riſen from the Dead, and is in all that Glory and Authority in Heaven. How ſure the Salvation of his Redeemed is. *For if when we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God, by the Death of his Son, much more being reconciled; we ſhall be ſaved by his Life.* Surely it cannot be ſuppoſed but he is *able to ſave to the uttermoſt all them that come to God by him: ſeeing he ever lives to make Interceſſion*, Heb. 7. 25. Think how ſafe the People of God in this World are, whoſe Head is in Heaven. It was a comfortable Expreſſion of one of the Fathers, encouraging himſelf and others with this Truth in a dark Day. Come (ſaid he) why do we tremble thus, do we not ſee our Head above Water? If he live Believers cannot die, *John* 14. 19. *Becauſe I live, ye ſhall live alſo.*

And let no Man's Heart ſuggeſt a ſuſpicious Thought to him, that this wonderful Advancement of Chriſt may cauſe him to forget his poor People, groaning here below under Sin and Miſery. For the Temper and Diſpoſition of his faithful and tender Heart is not changed with his Condition. He bears the ſame Reſpect to us as when he dwelt among us. For indeed he there lives and acts upon our Account, *Heb* 7. 25. 1 *John* 2. 1, 2.

And how ſeaſonable and comfortable will the Meditations of Chriſt's Exaltation be to the Believer, when Sickneſs hath waſted thy Body, withered its Beauty, and God is bringing thee to the Duſt of Death. Ah think then, that that *vile Body ſhall be conformed to the glorious Body of Chriſt*, Phil. 3. 21. As God hath glorified and highly exalted his Son, *whoſe Form was marr'd more than any Man's*, ſo will he exalt thee alſo. I do not ſay to a Parity or Equality in Glory with Chriſt, for in Heaven he will be diſcerned and diſtinguiſhed by his peculiar Glory from all the Angels and Saints; as the Sun is known by its excellent Glory from the leſſer Stars. But we ſhall be conformed to this glorious Head, according to the Proportion of Members. O whither will Love mount the Believer in that Day!

Having ſpoken this much of Chriſt's exalted State, to caſt ſome general Light upon it, and engage your Attentions to it, I ſhall now, according to the Degrees of this his wonderful Exaltation, briefly open it under the forementioned Heads, *viz.* his Reſurrection, Aſcenſion, Seſſion at the Father's Right Hand, and his Return to judge the World.

SER.

SERMON XXXIX.

Wherein the Resurrection of Christ with its influences upon the Saints resurrection is clearly opened and comfortably applied, being the first step of his Exaltation.

MATTH. XXVIII. 6.

He is not here, for he is risen; as he said, come, see the place where the Lord lay.

WE have finished the Doctrine of Christ's Humiliation, wherein the Sun of Righteousness appeared to you as a setting Sun, gone out of sight; but as the Sun when it is gone down to us, begins a new day in another part of the World, so Christ having finished his course and work in this World, rises again, and that in order to the acting another glorious part of his work in the World above. In his death he was upon the matter totally eclipsed, but in his resurrection he begins to recover his Light and Glory again. God never intended that the darling of his Soul should be lost in an obscure Sepulchre. An Angel descends from Heaven to roll away the stone, and with it the reproach of his death: And to be the heavenly Herald to proclaim his Resurrection to the two *Marys*, whose love to Christ had at this time drawn them to visit the Sepulchre, where they lately left him.

At this time (the Lord being newly risen) the keepers were trembling, and become as dead Men. So great was the terrible Majesty and awful solemnity attending Christ's Resurrection: But to encourage these good Souls, the Angel prevents them with these good tidings: *He is not here, for he is risen, as he said; come, see the place where the lord lay*: q. d. Be not troubled, though you have not the end you came for, *one sight more of your dear, tho' dead Jesus*; yet you have not lost your labour; for, to your eternal comfort, I tell you, *he is risen, as he said*. And to put it out of doubt, come hither, and satisfie your selves, *See the place where the Lord lay.*

In which Word we have both a Declaration and Confirmation of the Resurrection of Christ from the dead.

First, A Declaration of it by the Angel, both *Negatively* and *Affirmatively*. Negatively, *He is not here.* Here indeed you laid him, here you left him, and here you thought to find him as you left him; but you are happily mistaken. *He is not here.* However, this giving them no satisfaction, for he might continue dead still, though removed to another Place, as indeed they suspected he was, *John* 20 13. Therefore his resurrection is declared Positively and Affirmatively; *He is risen*, ἠγέρθη, the word imports the active Power, or self-quickning Principle by which Christ raised himself from the state of the dead. Which *Luke* takes notice of also, *Acts* 1. 3. Where he saith. *He shewed*, or presented, *himself alive after his passion.* It was the divine Nature or God-head of Christ which revived and raised the Man-hood.

Secondly, Here is also a plain Confirmation of Christ's Resurrection, and that, *First*, From Christ's own Prediction; *He is risen, as he said.* He foretold that which I declare to be now fulfilled. Let it not therefore seem incredible to you. *Secondly*, By their own sight; *Come, see the place where the Lord lay.* The Grave hath lost its Guest; it's now empty; Death hath lost its Prey. It received, but could not retain him. *Come, see the place where the Lord lay.* Thus the Resurrection of Christ is declared, and confirmed. Hence our Observation is,

Doct. *That our Lord Jesus Christ, by the almighty Power of his own God-head, revived, and rose from the Dead; to the Terror and Consternation of his Enemies, and the unspeakable Consolation of Believers.*

That our Lord Jesus Christ, though Laid, was not Lost in the Grave; but the third Day revived and rose again, is a Truth confirmed to us by many infallible Proofs, as *Luke* witnesseth, *Acts* 1. 3. We have Testimonies of it both from Heaven and Earth and both infallible. From Heaven, we have the Testimony of Angels; and to the Testimony of an Angel all Credit is due; for Angels are holy Creatures and cannot deceive us. The Angel tells the two *Marys* in the Text, *He is risen.* We have Testimonies of it from Men, holy Men, who were Eye-witnesses of this Truth, to whom he shew'd himself alive by the space of forty days after his Resurrection, by no less than * nine solemn Apparitions to them. Sometime five hundred Brethren saw him at once, 1 *Cor.* 15. 6. These were holy Persons who durst not deceive, and who confirmed their Testimony with their Blood. So that no point of Religion is of more confessed truth, and infallible certainty than this before us.

* *Joh.* 20. 14
Mark 16. 12
Joh. 20. 19.
1 *Cor.* 15. 6.
1 *Cor.* 15. 7.
1 *Cor.* 15. 8.
John 7. 26.
Joh. 21. 1,
Luke 24. 36.

Argumentum quo probatum Christum seipsum suscitasse vi propria petitur ex ipsa Resurrectionis activitate Christus ἠγέρθη surrexit, *Matth.* 28. 6. παρέστησεν ἑαυτὸν ζῶντα, *Acts* 1. 3. Maccov. loc. Com. *p.* 874.

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And blessed be God it is so. For if it were not, then were *the Gospel in vain*, 1 Cor. 15. 14, Seeing it hangs the whole weight of our Faith, Hope and Salvation upon. Christ as risen from the dead. If this were not so, then would the holy and divinely inspired Apostles be found *false witnesses*, 1 Cor. 15. 15 For they all with one Mouth constantly and to the death affirmed it. If Christ be not risen, *then are believers yet in their sins*, 1 Cor. 15. 17. For our Justification is truly ascribed to the Resurrection of Christ, *Rom.* 4. 25. While Christ was dying, and continued in the state of the dead, the price of our Redemption was still that while but in paying, the payment was compleated when he revived and rose again. Therefore for Christ to have continued always in the state of the dead, had been never to have compleatly satisfied; hence the whole force and weight of our own Justification depends upon his Resurrection. Nay, had not Christ risen, *the dead had perished*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 17. Even the dead who died in the Faith of Christ, and of whose Salvation there now remains no ground to doubt. Moreover,

In morte erat solutio in motu, aut ut ajunt, in fieri; verum in Resurrectione completa fuit, unde nostri justificatio seu à debito absolutio, non morti, sed Resurrectioni Apostolo meritò tribuatur, &c. *Macov. loc. Com. p.* 869.

Had he not revived, and risen from the dead, how could all the *Types* that prefigured it have been satisfied? Surely they must have stood as insignificant things in the Scriptures, and so must all the predictions of his Resurrection, by which it was so plainly foretold. See *Matth.* 12. 40. *Luke* 24. 46. *Psalm* 16. 10. 1 *Cor.* 15. 4

To conclude. Had he not risen from the dead, how could he have been installd in that glory whereof he is now possessed in Heaven, and which was promised him before the World was, upon the account of his death and sufferings? *For to this end Christ both dyed and rose, and revived that he might be Lord both of the dead, and living*, Rom. 14. 9. And that in this state of dominion and glorious advancement, he might powerfully apply the vertues and benefits of his Blood to us which else had been as a precious Cordial spilt upon the ground.

So then, there remains no doubt at all of the certainty of Christ's Resurrection, it was so, and upon all accounts it must needs be so, for you see how great a weight the Scriptures hangs upon this nail. And blessed be God it's a nail fastned in a sure place. I need spend no more words to confirm it, but rather choose to explain and open the nature and manner of his Resurrection, which I shall do by shewing you four or five properties of it. And the first is this,

First, Christ rose from the dead with awful Majesty. So you find it in *Matth.* 28. 2, 3, 4. *And behold there was a great Earthquake, for the Angel of the Lord descended from Heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it; his countenance was like lightning, & his raiment as white as snow, and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.* Humane infirmity was not able to bear such Heavenly Majesty as intended the business of that morning. Nature sank under it. This Earthquake was, as one calls it, *Triumphale Signum:* A sign of Triumph or token of Victory given by Christ, not only to the Keepers and the neighbouring City, but to the whole World, that he had overcome Death in its own Dominions, and like a Conqueror lifted up his head above all his Enemies. So when the Lord fought from Heaven for his People, and gave them a glorious, though but temporal deliverance; see how the Prophetess drives on the triumph in that Rhetorical Song, *Judg.* 5. 4, 5 Alluding to the most awful appearance of God, at the giving of the Law. *Lord, when thou wentest out of* Seir, *when thou marchedst out of the field of* Edom, *the earth trembled, and the Heavens dropped, the clouds also dropped water. The Mountains melted before the Lord, even that* Sinoi, *from before the Lord God of* Israel. Our Lord Jesus went out of the Grave in like manner, and marched out of that bloody field with a Pomp and Majesty becoming so great a Conqueror.

Est incedere cum pompa & Majestate.

Secondly, And to increase the splendor of that day, and drive on the triumph, his Resurrection was attended with the Resurrection of many of the Saints; who had slept in their Graves till then, and then were awakned and raised to attend the Lord at his rising. So you read, *Matth.* 27. 52, 53. *And the Graves were opened, and many bodies of the Saints which slept arose, and came out of the Graves, after his Resurrection; and went into the holy City, and appeared unto many.* This wonder was designed both to adorn the Resurrection of Christ, and to give a specimen or handsel of our Resurrection; which also is to be in the vertue of his. This indeed was the Resurrection of Saints, and none but Saints, the Resurrection of many Saints, yet it was but a special Resurrection, intended only to shew what God will one day do for all his Saints. And for present to give Testimony of Christ's Resurrection, from the dead. They were seen and known of many in the City, who doubtless never thought to have seen them any more in this World. To enquire curiously as some do, who they were, what discourse they had with those to whom they appeared, and what became of them afterwards, is a vain thing. God hath cast a vail of silence and secresie upon these things, that we might content our selves with the written word, and he that *will not believe Moses and the Prophets, neither will he believe tho' one rise from the dead*, as these Saints did.

Thirdly, As Christ rose from the dead with those *Satellites*, or attendants, who accompanied him at his Resurrection; so it was by the Power of his own God-head that he quickned and raised himself; and by the vertue of his Resurrection were they raised also who accompained him. It was not the *Angel* who rolled back the stone that revived him in the Sepulchre but he resumed his own life, so he tells us, *John* 10. 18. *I lay down my life that I may take it again.* Hence 1 *Pet.* 3. 18. He is said to be put to death in the flesh, but quickned by the Spirit, (*i. e.*) by the power of his God-head or Divine Nature, which is opposed there to flesh or his humane nature. By the eternal Spirit he offered himself up to God when he died, *Heb.* 9. 14. (i. e.) by his own God-head, not the third Person in the Trinity, for then it could not have been ascribed to him as his own act, that he offered up himself. And by the same Spirit he was quickned again.

And therefore the Apostle well observes, *Rom.* 1. 4. *That he was declared to be the Son of God with power, by his Resurrection from the dead.* Now if he had been raised by the Power of the Father or Spirit only, and not by his own; how could he be declared by his Resurrection to be the Son of God? What more had appeared in him than in others? For others are raised by the power of God, if that were all. So that in this respect also it was a marvellous Resurrection. Never any did, or shall rise as Christ rose by a self-quickning Principle. For though many dead Saints rose at that

tive also; yet it was by the vertue of Christ's Resurrection that their Graves were opened, and their Bodies quickned. In which respect he saith, *John* 11. 25. when he raised dead *Lazarus*, *I am the Resurrection and the Life.* (i. e.) the principle of Life and quickning, by which the dead Saints are raised.

Fourthly, And therefore it may be truly affirmed, that tho' some dead Saints were raised to life before the Resurrection of Christ, yet that Christ is *the first-born from the dead*, as he is called, *Col.* 1. 18. For though *Lazarus* and others were raised, yet not by themselves, but by Christ. It was by his vertue and power, not their own. And though they were raised to life, yet they died again. Death recovered them again, but Christ died no more. *Death hath no Dominion over him.* He was the first that opened the womb of the Earth, the First-born from the dead, that in all things he might have the preheminence.

Fifthly, But lastly, Christ rose as a publick or common Person. *As the first fruits of them that sleep*, 1 Cor. 15. 20. I desire this may be well understood; for upon this account it is that our Resurrection is secured to us by the Resurrection of Christ; and not a Resurrection only, but a blessed and happy one, for the first-fruits, both assured and sanctified the whole Crop or Harvest.

Now that Christ did rise as a publick Person representing and comprehending all the Elect, who are called *the children of the Resurrection*, is plain from *Eph.* 2. 6. Where we are said to be risen with or in him. So that as we are said to die in *Adam*, (who also was a common Person) as the Branches die in the death of the Root; so we are said to be raised from death in Christ, who is the head, root and representative of all his Elect Seed. And why is he called the *first-born*, and *first-begotten from the dead*, but with respect to the whole number of the Elect, that are to be born from the Dead in their time and order also, and as sure as the whole harvest follows the first-fruits, so shall the general Resurrection of the Saints to life Eternal, follow this Birth, of the first-born from the dead.

Genus humanum in parente primo, velut in radice putruit, *Greg.*

It shall surely follow it, I say, and that not only as a *consequent* follows an *antecedent*, but as an *effect* follows its proper *cause*. Now there is a three-fold causality or influence that Christ's Resurrection hath upon the Saints Resurrection, of which it is both the *Meritorious*, *Efficient*, and *Exemplary* cause.

First, The Resurrection of Christ, is the *Meritorious* cause of the Saints Resurrection, as it compleated his Satisfaction, and finished his Payment, and so our Justification is properly assigned to it, as before was noted from *Rom.* 4. 25. This his Resurrection was the receiving of the Acquittance, the cancelling of the Bond. And had not this been done, we had still been in our Sins, as he speaks, 1 *Cor.* 15. 7. And so our guilt had been still a Bar to our happy Resurrection. But now, the price being paid in his Death, which payment was finished when he Revived; and the discharge then received for us, now there is nothing lies in Bar against our Resurrection to Eternal Life.

Secondly, As it is the Meritorious cause of our Resurrection, so it is the *Efficient cause* of it also. For when the time shall come, that the Saints shall rise out of the durst, they shall be raised by Christ, as their Head, in whom the *effective principle* of their Life is. *Your life is hid with Christ in God*, as it is *Col.* 3. 3. As when a Man awakes out of his sleep, the animal Spirits seated in the brain, being set at liberty by the digestion of those Vapours that bound them up, do play freely through every part and member of the Body, so Christ, the Believers mystical-head, being quickned; the Spirit of Life, which is in him, shall be diffused through all his Members to quicken them also in the morning of the Resurrection. Hence the warm animating dew of Christ's Resurrection is said to be to our Bodies, as the dew of the Morning is to the withered languishing Plants which revive by it, *Isa.* 26. 19. *Thy dew is as the dew of Herbs*; and then it follows, *the earth shall cast forth her dead.* So that by the same Faith we put Christ's Resurrection into the *Premises*, we may put the Believers Resurrection into the *Conclusion*. And therefore the Apostle makes them convertible, reasoning forward, from Christ's to ours; and back again from ours to his, 1 *Cor.* 15. 12, 13. Which is also the sense of that Scripture, *Rom.* 8. 10, 11, *And if Christ be in you, the body indeed is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness*, (i. e.) though you are really united to Christ by the Spirit, yet your Bodies must die as well as other Mens; but your Souls shall be presently upon your dissolution swallowed up in Life. And then it follows, *verse* 11. *But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you; he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken you mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.* (i. e.) though your Bodies must die, yet they shall live again in the Resurrection; and that by vertue of the Spirit of Christ which dwelleth in you; and is the Bond of your mystical union with him your head. You shall not be raised as others are, by a meer word of Power, but by the spirit of Life dwelling in Christ your head, which is a choice prerogative indeed.

Proximum instrumentum sive sedes somni est cerebrum, utpote in quo spiritus animales frigescunt & condensantur, aut etiam resolvuntur & dissipantur proxime, tanquam in propria spirituum animalium officina, & in quo etiam radices nervorum obstruuntur, per vapores, ne spiritus animales sensui Communi servire aut in partes reliquas inferiores corporis propagari libere possint, *Keckerm. Syst. Phys.* p. (mihi) 441.

Thirdly, Christ's Resurrection is not only the meritorious and efficient cause, but it is also the *exemplary* cause, or pattern of our Resurrection. He being the first and best, is therefore the pattern and measure of all the rest. So you read, *Phil.* 3. 21. *Who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body* Now the *Conformity* of our Resurrection to Christ's, stands in the following particulars. Christ's Body was raised substantially the same, so will ours. His Body was raised first; so will ours be raised before the rest of the dead —— His Body was wonderfully improved by the Resurrection; so will ours. His Body was raised to be glorified; and so will ours.

Optimum in unoquoque genere est regula et mensura cæterorum.

First, Christ's Body was raised substantially the same that it was before; and so will ours. Not another, but the same Body. Upon this very reason the Apostle uses that identical expression, 1 *Cor.* 15. 53. *This corruptible must put on incorruptible, and this mortal immortality.* Pointing as it were to his own Body when he spake it the same Body I say, and that not only *Specifically* the same, (for indeed no other Species of flesh is so priviledged) but the same *numerically*, that very Body, not a new or another Body in its stead. So that it shall be both the *what* it was, and the *who* it was. And indeed to deny this, is to deny the Resurrection it self. For should God pre-

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pare another Body to be raised instead of this, it would not be a Resurrection, but a Creation; for *non resurrectio dici poterit, ubi non resurgit quod cecidit.* That can't be called a Resurrection, where one thing falls and another rises, as *Gregory* long since pertinently observed.

Secondly, His Body was raised, not by a Word of Power from the Father, but by his own Spirit. So will ours. Indeed the Power of God shall go forth to unburrough Sinners, and fetch them forcibly out of their Graves; but the Resurrection of the Saints is to be effected another way; as I opened but now to you. Even by his Spirit which now dwelleth in them. That very Spirit of Christ which effected their spiritual Resurrection from Sin, shall effect their Corporal Resurrection also from the Grave.

Thirdly, His Body was raised first, he had in this as well as in other things the Preheminence in the Resurrection, 1 *Thess.* 4 16. *The Dead in Christ shall rise first.* They are to attend the Lord at his coming, and will be knock'd up sooner than the rest of the World to attend on that Service. As the *Sheriff* with his Men go forth to meet the Judge, before the Jaylor brings forth his Prisoners.

Fourthly, Christ's Body was marvellously improved by the Resurrection, and so will ours It fell in Weakness, but was raised in Power, no more capable of Sorrows, Pains, and Dishonours. In like manner our Bodies are *sown in Weakness, but raised in Strength, sown in Dishonour, raised in Glory. Sown natural Bodies, raised spiritual Bodies*, as the Apostle speaks, 1 *Cor.* 15. 43, 44. Spiritual Bodies not *properly*, but *analogically*. No Distempers hang about glorified Bodies, nor are they thenceforth subject to any of those natural Necessities to which they are now tied. There are no Flaws, Defects, or Deformities in the Children of the Resurrection. What Members are now defective or deformed, will then be restored to their perfect Being and Beauty, for if the universal Death of all Parts be rescinded by the Resurrection, how much more the partial Death of any single Member? As *Tertullian* speaks, and from thenceforth they are free from the Law of Mortality, *they can die no more*, Luke 20. 35, 36. Thus shall they be improved by their Resurrection.

Membri detruncatio vel obtusio nonne mors membri est? Si universalis mors Resurrectione rescinditur, quanto magis portionalis! *Tert. de Resur.*

Fifthly, To conclude, Christ's Body was raised from the Dead to be glorified, and crowned with Honour. Oh it was a joyful Day to him, and so will the Resurrection of the Saints be to them, the Day of the Gladness of their Hearts. It will be said to them in that Morning, *Awake, and sing, ye that dwell in the Dust*, as *Isa.* 26. 19. O how comfortable will be the Meeting betwixt the glorified Soul and its new raised Body. Much more comfortable than that of *Jacob*'s and *Joseph*'s after Twenty Years Absence, *Gen.* 46. 29. Or that of *David*'s with *Jonathan*, when he came out of the Cave to him, 1 *Sam.* 20. 41. Or that of the Father of the Prodigal with his Son, who *was dead, and is alive, was lost, and is found.* As he speaks, *Luke* 15. And there are three things will make it so.

First, The Gratifications of the Soul by the Satisfaction of its natural Appetite of Union with its own Body. For even glorified Souls in Heaven have such an Appetition and Desire of Re-union. Indeed the Angels, who are pure Spirits, as they never had Union with, so they have no Inclination to Matter; but Souls are otherwise tempered and disposed. We are all sensible of its Affection to the Body now in its compounded State, we feel the tender Care it hath for the Body, the Simpathy with it, and Loathness to be separated from it. It's said, 1 *Cor.* 5. 6. *To be at Home in the Body.* And had not God implanted such an Inclination to this its Tabernacle in it, it would not have paid that due Respect it owes the Body while it inhabited in it, nor have regarded what became of it when it left it. This Inclination remains still with it in Heaven, it reckons not itself compleatly happy till its old dear Companion and Partner be with it, and to that Sense some understand those Words, *Job* 14. 14. *All the Days of my appointed Time, i. e.* of the Time appointed for my Body to remain in the Grave, *will I wait till my Change* (viz. that which will be made by the Resurrection) *come*, for it's manifest enough he speaks there of the Resurrection. Now, when this its Inclination to its own Body, its Longings and Hankerings after it, are gratified with a Sight and Enjoyment of it again, oh what a comfortable Meeting will this make it! Especially if we consider,

Secondly, The excellent Temper and State in which they shall meet each other. For as the Body shall be raised with all the Improvements and Endowments imaginable which may render it amiable and every way desirable, so the Soul comes down immediately from God out of Heaven shining in its Holiness and Glory. It comes perfumed out of those Ivory Palaces, with a strong Scent of Heaven upon it. And thus it re-enters its Body and animates it again. But,

Thirdly, And principally, that wherein the chief Joy of this Meeting consists, is the End for which the glorified Soul comes down to quicken and repossess it, namely, *to meet the Lord*, and *ever to be with the Lord.* To receive a full Reward for all the Labours and Services it performed to God in this World. This must needs make that Day a Day of Triumph and Exaltation. It comes out of the Grave as *Joseph* out of his Prison, to be advanced to highest Honour. O do but imagine what an Extasy of Joy and ravishing Pleasure it will be for a Soul thus to resume its own Body, and say as it were unto it, come away my dear, my ancient Friend, who servedst and sufferedst with me in the World; come along with me to meet the Lord, in whose Presence I have been ever since I parted with thee. Now thy bountiful Lord hath remembred thee also, and the Day of thy Glorification is come. Surely it will be a joyful awaking. For do but imagine what a Joy it is for dear Friends to meet after long Separation, how do they use to give Demonstrations of their Love and Delight in each other, by Embraces, Kisses, Tears, *&c.* Or frame but to your selves a Notion of perfect Health, when a sprightly Vivacity runs thro' every part, and the Spirits do, as 'twere, dance before us, when we go about any Business, especially to such a Business as the Business of that Day will be, to receive a Crown and a Kingdom. Do but imagine then what a Sun-shine Morning this will be, and how the Pains and Agonies, cold Sweats and bitter Groans at Parting, will be recompenced by the Joy of such a Meeting?

And thus I have shewed you the Certainty of Christ's Resurrection, the Nature and Properties of it, the threefold Influence it hath on the Saints Resurrection, and the Conformity of ours into his in these five Respects. His Body rose substantially the same, so shall ours; his Body was raised by the Spirit, so shall ours. Not by the Godhead of Christ, as his was, but by the Spirit, who is the Bond

Bond of our Union with Christ. He was raised as the First-begotten from the Dead, so the Dead in Christ shall rise first. His Body was improved by the Resurrection, so shall ours. From the Consideration of all which,

Infer. 1. *We infer, That if Christ was thus raised from the Dead, then Death is fairly overcome, and swallowed up in Victory.* Were it not so, it had never let Christ escape out of the Grave. The Prey of the terrible had never been thus rescued out of its Paws. *Death* is a dreadful Enemy, it defies all the Sons and Daughters of *Adam*. None durst cope with this King of Terrors but Christ, and he by dying went into the very Den of this Dragon, fought with it, and foiled it in the Grave, its own Territories and Dominions, and came off a Conqueror. For as the Apostle speaks, *Acts* 2. 24. *It was impossible it should hold or detain him.* Never did Death meet with its Over-match before it met with Christ, and he conquering it for us, and in our Names, rising as our Representative, now every single Saint triumphs over it as a vanquish'd Enemy, 1 *Cor.* 15. 55. *O Death where is thy Sting? O Grave where is thy Victory? Thanks be to God, who hath given us the Victory thro' our Lord Jesus Christ.* Thus, like *Joshua*, they set the Foot of Faith upon the Neck of that King, and with an holy Scorn deride its Power. *O Death where is thy Sting?* If it be objected that its said, 1 *Cor.* 15. 26. *The last Enemy that is to be destroyed is Death.* And if so, then it should seem the Victory is not yet atchieved, and so we do but boast before the Victory. It is at hand to reply, that the Victory over Death, obtained by Christ's Resurrection, is twofold, either *personal* and *incompleat*, or *general* and *compleat*. He actually overcame it at his Resurrection in his own Person perfectly and vertually for us, as our Head; but at the general Resurrection of the Saints (which his Resurrection as the First-fruits assures them of) then it's utterly vanquish'd and destroy'd. Till then it will exercise some little Power over the Bodies of the Saints, in which respect it's called the *last Enemy*. For Sin, the chief Enemy that let it in, that was conquered utterly and eradicated when they died; but Death holds their Bodies in the Grave till the coming of Christ, and then it is utterly to be vanquished. For after that they can die no more, *Luke* 20. 35. *And then shall be brought to pass that Saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in Victory. Then*, and not till then, will that Conquest be fully compleated in our Persons, tho' it be already so in Christ's, incompleatly in ours, and then compleatly and fully for ever. For the same Word which signifies *Victory*, doth also signify *Perpetuity*, and in this place a final or perpetual Conquest. And indeed it drives but a poor Trade for present, smiting only with its Dart, not with its Sting, and that but the Believers Body also, and the Body but for a time remains under it neither. So that there is no reason why a Believer should stand in a slavish Fear of it.

Infer. 2. Is Christ, and hath his Resurrection such a potent and comfortable Influence into the Resurrection of the Saints? *Then it is the Duty, and will be the Wisdom of the People of God so to govern, dispose and employ their Bodies as becomes Men and Women that understand what Glory is prepared for them at the Resurrection of the Just.* Particularly,

First, Be not fondly tender of them, but employ and use them for God here. How many good Duties are lost and spoiled by sinful Indulgence to our Bodies? Alas! We are generally more sollicitous to live long, than to live usefully. How many Saints have active vigorous Bodies, yet God hath little Service from them. If your Bodies were animated by some other Souls that love God more than you do, and burn with holy Zeal to his Service, more Work would be done for God by your Bodies in a Day, than is now done in a Month. To have an able healthy Body, and not use it for God for fear of hurting it, is as if one should give you a strong and stately Horse, upon condition you must not work or ride him. Wherein is the Mercy of having a Body, except it be employed for God? Will not its Reward at the Resurrection be sufficient for all the Pains you now put it to in his Service?

Secondly, See that you preserve the due Honour of your Bodies. *Possess them in Sanctification and Honour*, 1 Thess. 4. 4. *O let not these Eyes be not defiled with Sin, by which you shall see God.* Those Ears be Inlets to Vanity, which shall hear the *Alleluiahs* of the Blessed. God hath designed Honour for your Bodies, O make them not either the *Instruments* or *Objects* of Sin. There are Sins against the Body, 1 *Cor.* 6. 18. Preserve your Bodies from those Defilements, for they are the Temples of God: *If any Man defile the Temple of God, him will God destroy*, 1 Cor. 3. 17.

Thirdly, Let not the Contentment and Accommodation of your Bodies draw your Souls into Snares, and bring them under the Power of Temptations to Sin. This is a very common Case. O how many Thousands of precious Souls perish eternally, for the Satisfaction of a vile Body for a Moment? Their Souls must, because their Bodies cannot suffer. It is recorded to the immortal Honour of those Worthies in *Heb.* 11. 35. *That they accepted not Deliverance, that they might obtain a better Resurrection.* They might have had a Temporal Resurrection from Death to Life, from Reproach to Honour, from Poverty to Riches, from Pains to Pleasure; but upon such Terms they judge it not worth Acceptance. They would not expose their Souls to secure their Bodies. They had the same natural Affections that other Men have. They were made of as tender Flesh as we are, but such was the Care they had of their Souls, and the Hope of a better Resurrection, that they listened not to the Complaints and Whinings of Bodies. O that we were all in the same Resolutions with them.

Fourthly, With-hold not upon the Pretence of the Wants your own Bodies may be in, that which God and Conscience bids you to communicate for the Refreshment of the Saints, whose present Necessities require your Assistance. O be not too indulgent to your own Flesh, and cruel to others. Certainly the Consideration of that Reward which shall be given you at the Resurrection, for every Act of Christian Charity, is the greatest Spur and Incentive in the World to it. And to that End it's urged as a Motive to Charity, *Luke* 14. 13, 14. *When thou makest a Feast*

How far short do we come of the Primitive Christians, whose Faith in the Resurrection, and Contempt of Death, Cyprian *thus expresses:* Mente integra fide firma, virtute robusta, parati ad omnem Dei voluntatem simus pavore mortis omni excluso; immortalitatem quæ sequitur cogitamus. Et cum accersitionis propria dies venerit, incunctanter & libenter ad dominum ipso vocante venimus. *Cypr. Sect.* 5. *de Lapsi.* Quod interim morimur, ad immortalitatem morte transgredimur non est exitus, sed transitus, &c. *Cypr.* ubi sup. absorpta est mors *eis vixo* in perpetuam ex Hebræo נצח quod & victoriam significat & perpetuitatem. *Claff. Rhet. Sac. p.* 408.

Nemo potest in hac vita & in futura gaudere; necesse est unam amittat, qui alteram vult possidere, *Aug.*

Feast, call the Poor, the Maimed, the Lame, the Blind, and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompence thee, for thou shalt be recompenced at the Resurrection of the Just. It was the Opinion of an Eminent modern Divine, that no Man living fully understands and believes that Scripture, *Matth.* 25. 40. *In as much as ye have done it to one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me.* How few Saints would be exposed to daily Wants and Necessities, if that Scripture were but fully understood and believed?

Mr. Marshal

Infer. 3. Is Christ risen from the Dead, and that as a publick Person and Representative of Believers? *How are we all concerned then to secure our selves an Interest in Christ, and consequently to this blessed Resurrection?* What Consolation would be left in this World, if the Hope of the Resurrection were taken away? 'Tis this blessed Hope that must support you under all the *Troubles* of Life, and in the *Agonies of Death.* The securing of a blessed Resurrection to your selves, is therefore the most deep Concernment you have in this World. And it may be secured to your selves, if upon serious Heart-Examination you can discover the following Evidences.

Evidence 1. *First, If you are regenerated Creatures,* brought forth in a new Nature to God, for we are *begotten again to a lively Hope by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead.* Christ's Resurrection is the Ground-work of our Hope. And the new Birth our Title or Evidence of our Interest in it. So that until our Souls are Partakers of the spiritual Resurrection from the Death of Sin, we can have no Assurance our Bodies shall be Partakers of that blessed Resurrection to Life.

Blessed and holy (saith the Spirit) *is he that hath part in the first Resurrection, on such the second Death hath no Power,* Rev. 20. 6. Never let unregenerate Souls expect a comfortable Meeting with their Bodies again. Rise they shall by God's terrible Citation, at the Sound of the last Trump, but not to the same End that the Saints arise, nor by the same Principle. They to whom the Spirit is now a Principle of *Sanctification*, to them he will be the Principle of a joyful *Resurrection.* See then that you get gracious Souls now, or never expect glorious Bodies then.

Evid. 2. *If you be dead with Christ, you shall live again by the Life of Christ. If we have been planted together in the Likeness of his Death, we shall be also in the Likeness of his Resurrection.* Rom. 6. 5. σύμφυτοι, *planted together.* Some refer it it to Believers themselves, *Jews* and *Gentiles* are planted together in Christ. So *Erasmus*, Believers grow together like Branches upon the same Root, which should powerfully enforce the great Gospel Duty of Unity among themselves. But I would rather understand it with reference to Christ and Believers, with whom Believers are in other Scriptures said to suffer together, and be glorified together, to die together, and live together, to be crucified together, and buried together, all noting the Communion they have with Christ, both in his Death and in his Life. Now if the Power of Christ's Death (*i. e.*) the mortifying Influence of it have been on our Hearts, killing their Lusts, deading their Affections, and flattering their Appetites to the Creature, then the Power of his Life, or Resurrection, shall come (like the animating Dew) upon our dead withered Bodies, to revive and raise them up to live with him in Glory.

In unum concrescere coalescere.

Evid. 3. *If your Hearts and Affections be now with Christ in Heaven, your Bodies in due Time shall be there also,* and conformed to his glorious Body. So you find it, *Phil.* 3. 20, 21. *For our Conversation is in Heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile Body, that it may be fashioned like unto his own glorious Body.* The Body is here called vile, or the Body of our Vileness. Not as God *made* it, but as Sin hath *marr'd* it. Not *absolutely*, and in itself, but *relatively*, and in Comparison of what it will be in its Second Edition, at the Resurrection. Then those scattered Bones, and dispersed Dust, like pieces of old broken batter'd Silver, will be new cast, and wrought in the best and newest Fashion, even like to Christ's glorious Body. Whereof we have this Evidence, that our Conversation is already heavenly. The Temper, Frame, and Disposition of our Souls is already so; therefore the Frame and Temper of our Bodies in due Time shall be so.

τὸ σῶμα, τῆς ταπεινωσεως.

Evid. 4. *If you strive now by any means to attain the Resurrection of the Dead, no doubt but you shall then attain what you now strive for.* This was *Paul*'s great Ambition, *that by any means he might attain the Resurrection of the Dead,* Phil. 3. 11. He means not simply a Resurrection from the Dead, for that all Men shall attain whether they strive for it or no. But by a *Metonymy* of the *Subject* for the *Adjunct*, he intends that compleat Holiness and Perfection which shall attend the State of the Resurrection, so it is expounded, *ver.* 12. So then, if God have raised in your Hearts a vehement Desire, and assiduous Endeavour after a perfect Freedom from Sin, and full Conformity to God in the Beauties of Holiness; that very Love of Holiness, your present Pantings, and Tendencies after Perfection, speaks you to be Persons designed for it.

Si bonus bona facit bene ad bonum.

Evid. 5. *If you are such as do good in your Generation.* If you be fruitful and useful Men and Women in the World, you shall have part in this blessed Resurrection, *John* 5. 29. *All that are in the Graves shall hear his Voice, and shall come forth; they that have done Good unto the Resurrection of Life.* Now it is not every Act *materially* good that entitles a Man to this Privilege; but the same Requisites that the School-men assign to make a good Prayer, are also necessary to every good Work. The Person, Matter, Manner, and End, must be good. Nor is it any single good Act, but a *Series* and *Course* of holy Actions, that is here meant. What a Spur should this be to us all, as (indeed the Apostle makes it, closing up the Doctrine of the Resurrection with this solemn Exhortation, 1 *Cor.* 15. *last*, with which I also close mine) *Therefore, my beloved Brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord; for as much as you know that your Labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

Thanks be to God for his unspeakable Gift.

SERMON XL.

Wherein the Aſcenſion of Chriſt is open'd and variouſly improv'd, being the ſecond Step of his Exaltation.

JOHN XX. xvii.

Jeſus ſaith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet aſcended to my Father: But go to my Brethren, and ſay unto them, I aſcend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

IN all the former Sermons we have been following Chriſt thro' his Humiliation, from the time that he left the bleſſed Boſom of his Father: And now having finiſhed the whole Courſe of his Obedience on Earth, and riſen again from the Dead, we muſt in this Diſcourſe follow him back again into Heaven; and lodge him in that Boſom of ineffable Delight and Love, which for our ſakes he ſo freely left. For it was not his End in riſing from the Dead, to live ſuch a low animal Life as this is, but to live a moſt glorious Life as an enthroned King in Heaven; upon which State he was now ready to enter, as he tells *Mary* in the Text, and bids her tell it to the Diſciples, *Go, tell my Brethren, that I aſcend to my Father*, &c.

In the former Verſes you find *Mary* waiting at Chriſt's Sepulchre in a very penſive Frame; exceedingly troubled becauſe ſhe knew not what was become of Chriſt, *v.* 15. In the next Verſe Chriſt calls her by her Name, *Mary*; ſhe knowing the Voice, turned herſelf, and anſwered, *Raboni*. And as a Soul tranſported with Joy, ruſhes into his Arms, as deſirous to claſp and embrace him. But Jeſus ſaid, *Touch me not*, &c.

Volebat Maria Chriſtum amplecti, præ nimio ſcilicet amore ejus, & gaudio quod ruſum in carne præſentem vidiſſet. *Bucer. in loc.*

In which Words we have Chriſt's Inhibition, *Touch me not*: Strange that Chriſt, who rendred himſelf ſo kind and tender to all, that not only admitted, but commanded *Thomas* to put his Finger into his Wounds, ſhould forbid *Mary* to touch him; but this was not for want of Love to *Mary*; for he gives another Reaſon for it preſently, *I am not yet aſcended*; *i. e.* ſay ſome, the Time for embracing will be when we are in Heaven. Then and there ſhall be the Place and Time, we ſhall embrace one another for evermore. So *Auguſtin*. Or thou doteſt too much upon my preſent State, as if I had now attained the very ἀκμὴ, culminating Point of my Exaltation. When as yet I am not aſcended; ſo *Camero* and *Calvin* expound it. Or laſtly, Chriſt would ſignify hereby, that it was not his Will and Pleaſure in ſo great a Juncture of Things as this, to ſpend Time now in expreſſing (this way) her Affections to him; but rather to ſhew it by haſting about his Service. Which is

The *ſecond* Thing obſervable, *viz.* his Injunction upon *Mary*, to carry the Tidings of his Reſurrection to the Diſciples. In which Injunction we have,

Firſt, The Perſons to whom this Meſſage was ſent, *my Brethren*, ſo he calls the Diſciples. A ſweet Compellation, and full of Love. Much like that of *Joſeph* to his Brethren, *Gen.* 45. 4. ſave only that there is much more Tenderneſs in this than that; for he twits them in the ſame Breath with what they had done againſt him; *I am* Joſeph *your Brother, whom ye ſold*; but in this it is, *Go, tell my Brethren*, without the leaſt mention of their Cowardice or Unkindneſs. And,

Secondly, The Meſſage itſelf. *Tell my Brethren, I aſcend to my Father, and your Father; to my God, and your God*; ἀναβαίνω, *I aſcend*. It's put in the preſent Tenſe, as if he had been aſcending; tho' he did not aſcend in ſome Weeks after this; but he ſo expreſſes it, to ſhew what was the next Part of his Work, which he was to act in Heaven for them, and how much his Heart was ſet upon it, and longed to be about it, *I aſcend to my Father, and your Father; to my God, and your God*. Not our Father, or God in common; but mine and yours in a different manner. Yours by Right of Dominion, mine (in reference to my Human Nature) not only by Right of Creation, tho' ſo too; but alſo by ſpecial Covenant and Confederation. By Predeſtination of my Manhood to the Grace of Perſonal Union, by Deſignation of me to the glorious Office of Mediator. *My Father*, as I am God, by Eternal Generation. As Man, by Collation of the Grace of Union. And your Father by ſpiritual Adoption and Regeneration. Thus he is my God, and your God; my Father, and your Father. This is the Subſtance of that comfortable Meſſage, ſent by *Mary* to the penſive Diſciples. Hence the Obſervation is,

Mr. Henry Jeanes *ſecond Part of the Mixt of Scholaſtical and Practical Divinity*, p. 273.

Doct. *That our Lord Jeſus did not only riſe from the Dead, but alſo aſcended into Heaven; that to diſpatch all that remained to be done for the compleating the Salvation of his People.*

So much the Apoſtle plainly witneſſeth, *Eph.* 10. *He that deſcended is the ſame alſo that aſcended up far above all Heavens* (i. e.) all the aſpectable Heavens. A full and faithful Account whereof the ſeveral

ſeveral Evangeliſts have given us, *Mark* 16. 19. *Luke* 24. 51. This is ſometimes called his *going away*, as *John* 16. 7. Sometimes his *being exalted*, Acts 2. 33. Sometimes his *being made higher than the Heavens*, Heb. 7. 26. And ſometimes his *entring within the Vail*, Heb. 6. 19, 20. All which are but ſo many *ſynonymous* Phraſes expreſſing his Aſcenſion in a very pleaſant Variety.

Now for the opening this Act of Chriſt, we will bind up the whole in the Satisfaction of theſe Six Queſtions. 1. Who aſcended? 2. Whence did he aſcend? 3. Whither? 4. When? 5. How? And laſtly, Why did he aſcend? And theſe will take in what is needful for you to be acquainted with in this Point.

Firſt, Who aſcended? This the Apoſtle anſwers, *Eph.* 4. 10. *the ſame that deſcended*, viz. Chriſt. And himſelf tells us in the Text, *I aſcend*. And tho' the Aſcenſion were of Chriſt's whole Perſon, yet it was but a figurative and improper Expreſſion with reſpect to his Divine Nature, but it agrees moſt properly to the Humanity of Chriſt, which really changed Places and Conditions by it. And hence it is that it's ſaid, *John* 16. 28. *I came forth from the Father, and am come into the World; again, I leave the World, and go to my Father.* He goes away, and we ſee him no more. As God, he is ſpiritually with us ſtill; even to the End of the World. But as a Man, *the Heavens muſt contain him till the Reſtitution of all things*, Acts 3. 21.

Aſcenſio totius fuit perſonæ, naturæ tamen divina non convenit niſi figurate Sed humanæ naturæ maxime proprie convenit, &c. *Ameſ. Med.* p. 114.

Secondly, Whence Chriſt aſcended?

I anſwer, more generally, he is ſaid to aſcend from this World, to leave the World. That is the *terminus a quo*, John 16. 28. But more particularly, it was from *Mount Olivet*, near unto *Jeruſalem*. The very Place where he began his laſt ſorrowful Tragedy. There where his Heart began to be ſadded, there is it now made glad. O what a difference was there betwixt the Frame Chriſt was in, in that Mount before his Paſſion, and this he is now in, at his Aſcenſion! But,

Thirdly, Whither did he aſcend?

It's manifeſt it was into the third Heavens. The Throne of God, and Place of the Bleſſed. Where all the Saints ſhall be with him for ever. It's ſaid to be far above all Heavens. That is, the Heavens which we ſee, for they are but the Pavement of that ſtately Palace of the great King. He is gone (ſaith the Apoſtle) *within the Vail* (*i. e.*) into the moſt holy Place. And into his Father's Houſe, *John* 14. 2. And he is alſo ſaid to go to the *Place where he was before*, John 6. 62. back again to that ſweet and glorious Boſom of Delight and Love from whence at his Incarnation he came.

Fourthly, When did Chriſt aſcend? Was it preſently as ſoon as he roſe from the Dead?

No, not ſo, for *after his Reſurrection* (ſaith *Luke*) *he was ſeen of them forty Days, ſpeaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.* And truly the Care and Love of Chriſt to his People was very manifeſt in this his Stay with them. He had ineffable Glory prepared for him in Heaven, and awaiting his coming; but he will not go to poſſeſs it, till he had ſettled all things for the Good of his Church here. For in this time he confirmed the Truth of his Reſurrection, gave Charge to the Apoſtles concerning the Diſcipline and Order of his Houſe or Kingdom; which was but needful, ſince he intended that their Acts ſhould be Rules to future Churches. So long it was neceſſary he ſhould ſtay. And when he had ſet all Things in Order, he would ſtay no longer, leſt he ſhould ſeem to affect a terrene Life. And beſides, he had Work of great Concernment to do for us in the other World. He deſired to be no longer here, than he had Work to do for God, and Souls. A good Pattern for the Saints.

Diſcipulorum infirmitas hujus interſtitu motam poſtulabat. *Ameſ.*

Ne terrenam vitam videretur meditare. *Ameſ.*

Fifthly, How did Chriſt aſcend into Heaven?

Conſolationem ſummam hoc ingreſſu nobis monſtrat; neque enim ſua, ſed noſtra cauſa, ut de cœlo deſcendit; ita cœlum occupavit; ut nobis ibi locum atque domicilium pararet. *Parcus in La.*

Here it's worthy our Obſervation, that Chriſt aſcended as a *publick Perſon*, or Forerunner in our Names, and upon our Accounts. So it's ſaid expreſly, *Heb.* 6. 20. ſpeaking of the moſt holy Place within the Vail; *whither* (ſaith he) *the Forerunner is for us entred.* His entring into Heaven as our Forerunner, implies both his *publick Capacity* and *Predecency*.

Firſt, His *publick Capacity*, as one that went upon our Buſineſs to God. So he himſelf ſpeaks, *John* 14. 2. *I go before to prepare a Place for you.* To take Poſſeſſion of Heaven in our Names. The *Forerunner* hath reſpect to others that were to come to Heaven after him in their ſeveral Generations; for whom he hath taken up Manſions, which are kept for them againſt their coming.

Secondly, It notes *Predecency*, he is our *Forerunner*, but he himſelf had no *Forerunner*. Never any entred into Heaven before him, but ſuch as entred in the Name, and thro' the Virtue of his Merits. He was the firſt that ever entred Heaven *directly immediately* in his own Name, and upon his own Account. But all the Fathers who died before him, entred in his Name. To the holieſt of them all God would have ſaid as *Eliſha* to *Jehoram*, 2 Kings 3. 14. Were it not that I had Reſpect to the Perſon of my Son, in whoſe Name and Right you come, I would not look upon you. You muſt back again, Heaven were no Place for you. No not for you *Abraham*, nor for you *Moſes*.

Secondly, He aſcended *triumphantly* into Heaven. To this good Expoſitors refer that which in the *Type* is ſpoken of *David*, when he lodged the *Ark* in its own place, with Muſical Inſtruments and Shoutings; but to Chriſt, in the *Antitype*, when he was received up *triumphantly* into Glory, *Pſal.* 47. 5. *God is gone up with a Shout, the Lord with the Sound of a Trumpet; ſing Praiſes to God, ſing Praiſes; ſing Praiſes unto our King, ſing Praiſes.*

Molerus in *loc.* Geirus. Aynſworth.

A Cloud is prepared, as a Royal Chariot, to carry up the King of Glory to his princely Pavilion. *A Cloud received him out of their Sight*, Luke 24. 51. And then a Royal Guard of mighty Angels ſurround the Chariot, if not for Support, yet for greater State and Solemnity of their Lord's Aſcenſion. And oh what Jubilations of the bleſſed Angels were heard in Heaven! How was the whole City of God moved at his coming! For look as when *he brought his firſt-begotten into the World, he ſaid, Let all the Angels of God worſhip him*, Heb. 1. 6. So at his Return thither again, when he had finiſhed Redemption Work, there were no

Mr. Caſe *in his* Piſgah.

leſs

less Demonstrations given by those blessed Creatures of their Delight and Joy in it. The very Heavens ecchoed and resounded on that Account. Yea, the Triumph is not ended at this Day, nor ever shall.

'Tis said, *Dan.* 7. 13, 14. *I saw* (saith the Prophet) *in the Night Visions, and behold one like the Son of Man came with the Clouds of Heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him Dominion, and Glory, and a Kingdom, that all People, Nations and Languages should serve him.* This Vision of *Daniel*'s was accomplish'd in Christ's Ascension, when they, *i. e.* the Angels, brought him to the *Ancient of Days*, *i.e.* to God the Father, who to express his Welcome to Christ, gave him Glory, and a Kingdom. And so 'tis and ought to be expounded. The Father received him with open Arms, rejoycing exceedingly to see him again in Heaven; therefore God is said *to receive him up into Glory*, 1 Tim. 3. 16. For that, which with respect to Christ, is called *Ascension*, is with respect to the Father, called *Assumption*. He went up, and the Father received him. Yea, received so as none ever was receiv'd before him, or shall be receiv'd after him.

Vide Deodate, *and* English *Annot. &c.*

Thirdly, Christ ascended *munificently*, shedding forth abundantly inestimable Gifts upon his Church at his Ascension. As in the *Roman* Triumphs they did *spargere missilia*, bestow their Largesses upon the People; so did our Lord when he ascended, *wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led Captivity captive; and gave Gifts unto Men.* The Place to which the Apostle refers is *Psal* 68. 17, 18. where you have both the Triumph and Munificence with which Christ went up excellently set forth together.

Solent principes post victoriam dum triumphant, magna munera & pecunias in populum sibi triumphanti gratulantem & jubilantem, spargere. *Zanch.*

The Chariots of God (saith the Psalmist) *are Twenty Thousand, even Thousands of Angels; the Lord is among them, as in* Sinai, *in the holy Place. Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led Captivity captive, thou hast received Gifts for Men; yea, for the rebellious also, that God might dwell among them.* Which Words in their literal Sense are a Celebration of that famous Victory and Triumph of *David* over the Enemies of God recorded 2 *Sam.* 8. These conquered Enemies bring him several sorts of Presents, all which he dedicated to the Lord. The spiritual Sense is, that just so our Lord Jesus Christ, when he had overcome by his Death on the Cross, and now triumphed in his Ascension, he takes the Parts and Gifts of his Enemies, and gives them by their Conversion to the Church, for its Use and Service. Thus he receiv'd Gifts even for the *Rebellious i. e.* sanctifies the natural Gifts and Faculties of such as hated his People before, dedicating, them to the Lord in his Peoples Service. Thus (as one observes) *Tertullian*, *Origen*, *Austin*, and *Jerome*, came into *Canaan* laden with Ægyptian Gold. Meaning they came into the Church richly laden with natural Learning and Abilities. *Austin* was a *Manichee*, *Cyprian* a Magician, learned *Bradwardine* a scornful proud Naturalist, who once said when he read *Paul*'s Epistles, *Dedignabar esse parvulus.* He scorned such childish Things, but afterwards became a very useful Man in the Church of God. And even *Paul* himself was as fierce an Enemy to the Church as breathed on Earth, till Christ gave him into its Bosom by Conversion, and then no meer Man ever did the Lord and his People greater Service than he. Men of all sorts, greater and smaller Lights, have been given to the Church. Officers of all sorts were given it by Christ, Extraordinary and Temporary, as Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists; ordinary and standing, as Pastors and Teachers, which remain to this Day, *Eph.* 4. 8, 9. And those Stars are fixed in the Church Heaven by a most firm Establishment, 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. Thousands now in Heaven, and Thousands on Earth also, are blessing Christ at this Day for these his Ascension Gifts.

Excitas doctores Ecclesia etiam inter eos qui populum tuum oderunt & persequuntur, & subinde multos ex hostibus tuis, ad hoc regnum adducis. *Mol. in loc.*

Fourthly, Our Lord Jesus Christ ascended most comfortably, for whilst he was blessing his People he was parted from them, *Luke* 24. 50, 51. Therein making good to them what is said of him, *John* 13. 1. *Having loved his own, he loved them to the End.* There was a great deal of Love manifested by Christ in this very last Act of his in this World. The last Sight they had of him in this World was a most sweet and encouraging one. They heard nothing from his Lips but Love, they saw nothing in his Face but Love, till he mounted his triumpant Chariot, and was taken out of their Sight.

Surely these Blessings at Parting were sweet and rich ones. For the Matter of them, they were the Mercies which his Blood had so lately purchased for them. And for their Extent, they were not only intended for them, who had the Happiness to be upon the Place with him from whence he ascended; but they reach us, as well as them; and will reach the last Saint that shall be upon the Earth, till he come again. For they were but Representatives of the future Churches, *Matth.* 28. 20. And in blessing them, he blessed us also. And by this we may be satisfied that Christ carried an Heart full of Love to his People away with him to Heaven; since his Love so abounded in the last Act that ever he did in this World. And left such a Demonstration of his Tenderness with them at Parting.

Fifthly, He ascended, as well as rose again, by his own Power. He was not meerly passive in that his Ascension, but it was his own Act. *He went to Heaven.* Therefore 'tis said, *Acts* 1. 10. *He went up, viz.* by his own Divine Power. And this plainly evinceth him to be God, for no meer Creature ever mounted itself from Earth, far above all Heavens, as Christ did.

Causa hujus ascensionis fuit virtus divina... sed accedebat insuper conditio corporis glorificati; quod æque sursum ferturatq; deorsum, *Ames.*

Sixthly, and lastly, Why did Christ ascend?

I answer: His Ascension was necessary upon many and great Accounts. For,

First, If Christ had not ascended, he could not have interceded, as now he doth in Heaven, for us. And do but take away Christ's Intercession, and you starve the Hope of the Saints. For what have we to succour our selves with, under the daily Surprizes of Sin, but this, *That if any Man sin, we have an Advocate* [with the Father] mark that, *with the Father.* A Friend upon the Place: One that abides there, on purpose to transact all our Affairs, and as a Surety for the Peace betwixt God and us.

Secondly, If Christ had not ascended, you could not have entred into Heaven when you die. For he went to *prepare a Place for you*, John 14. 2. He was (as I said before) the first that entred into Heaven directly and in his own Name; and had he not done so, we could not have entred (when we die) in his Name. The *Forerunner* made way for all that are

are coming on in their several Generations after him. Nor could your Bodies have ascended after their Resurrection, but in the virtue of Christ's Ascension. For he ascended (as was said before) in the Capacity of our Head and Representative. To his Father and our Father. For us and himself too.

Thirdly, If Christ had not ascended, he could not have been *inaugurated* and *installed* in the Glory he now enjoys in Heaven. This World is not the Place where perfect Felicity and Glory dwells. And then how had the Promise of the Father been made good to him? Or our Glory (which consists in being with and conformed to him) where had it been? *Ought not Christ to suffer, and to enter into his Glory?* Luke 24. 25.

Fourthly, If Christ had not ascended, how could we have been satisfied that his Payment on the Cross made full Satisfaction to God, and that now God hath no more Bills to bring in against us? How is it that the Spirit conviceth the World of Righteousness, *John* 16. 9, 10. but from Christ's going to the Father, and returning hither no more; which gives Evidence of God's full Content and Satisfaction both with his Person and Work.

Fifthly, How should we have enjoyed the great Blessings of the Spirit and Ordinances, if Christ had not ascended? And surely we could not have been without either. If Christ had not gone away, *the Comforter had not come*, John 16. 7. he begins where Christ finishes. For he takes of his, and shews it to us, *John* 16. 14. And therefore it's said, *John* 7 39. *The Holy Ghost was not given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.* He was then given as a sanctifying Spirit, but not given in that measure, as afterward he was, to furnish and qualify Men with Gifts, for Service. And indeed by Christ's Ascension both his sanctifying and his ministring Gifts were shed forth more commonly and more abundantly upon Men. These fell from him when he ascended, as *Elijah*'s Mantle did from him, so that whatsoever Good of Conversion, Edification, Support or Comfort, you receive from spiritual Ordinances, he hath shed forth that, which you now see and feel. *'Tis the Fruit of Christ's Ascension.*

Sixthly, and lastly, If Christ had not ascended, how had all the Types and Prophecies that figured and foretold it been fulfilled? *And the Scriptures cannot be broken*, John 10. 35. So that upon all these Accounts it was expedient that he should go away. It was for his Glory, and for our Advantage. Tho' we lost the Comfort of his bodily Presence by it, yet if *we loved him, we would rejoyce because he went to the Father*, John 14. 28. We ought to have rejoyced in his Advancement, tho' it had been to our Loss; but when it is so much for our Benefit as well as his Glory; it's Matter of Joy on both sides that he is ascended to his Father and our Father; to his God, and to our God. From the several Blessings flowing to us out of Christ's Ascension, it was that he charged his People not to be troubled at his leaving of them, *John* 14. And hence learn,

Infer. 1. *Did Christ ascend into Heaven? Is our Jesus, our Treasure indeed there? Where then should the Hearts of Believers be, but in Heaven, where their Lord, their Life, is?* Surely, Saints, it is not good that your Love and your Lord should be in Two several Countries, said one that is now with him. Up, up, after your Lover, that he and you may be together. Christians you ascended with him virtually when he ascended; you shall ascend to him personally hereafter; Oh that you would ascend to him spiritually in Acts of Faith, Love and Desires, daily. *Sursum Corda*, up with your Hearts, was the Form used by the ancient Church at the Sacrament. How good were it if we could say with the Apostle, *Phil.* 3. 21. *Our Conversation is in Heaven, from whence we look for a Saviour.* An Heart ascendant is the best Evidence of your Interest in Christ's Ascension.

Infer. 2. Did Christ go to Heaven as a Forerunner? *What Haste should we make to follow him?* He ran to Heaven? he ran thither before us. Did he run to Glory, and shall we linger? Did he flee as an Eagle towards Heaven, and we creep like Snails? Come, Christians, *lay aside every Weight, and the Sin that doth so easily beset you, and run with Patience the Race set before you, looking unto Jesus*, Heb. 12. 1, 2. The Captain of our Salvation is entred within the Gates of the new *Jerusalem*, and calls to us out of Heaven to hasten to him; proposing the greatest Encouragements to them that are following after him, saying, *He that overcomes shall sit with me in my Throne, as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne*, Rev. 3. 22. *How tedious should it seem to us to live so long at a Distance from our Lord Jesus!*

Infer. 3. Did Christ ascend so triumphantly, leading Captivity captive? *How little reason then have Believers to fear their conquered Enemies. Sin, Satan, and every Enemy, was in that Day led away in Triumph, dragged at Christ's Chariot Wheels, brought after him as it were in Chains.* 'Tis a lovely Sight to see the Necks of those Tyrants under the Foot of our *Joshua*. He made at that Day *an open Shew of them*, Col. 2. 15. Their Strength is broken for ever. In this he shewed himself more than a Conqueror; for he *conquered and triumphed too. Satan was then trod under his Feet.* And he hath promised to tread him under our Feet also, and that shortly, *Rom.* 16. 20. Some Power our Enemies yet retain, the Serpent may bruise our Heel, but Christ hath crush'd his Head.

Infer. 4. Did Christ ascend so munificently, shedding forth so many Mercies upon his People? Mercies of inestimable Value, reserved on purpose to adorn that Day? *O then see that you abuse not those precious Ascension Gifts of Christ, but value and improve them, as the choicest Mercies.* Now the Ascension Gifts, as I told you, are either the *Ordinances* and *Officers* of the Church (for he then gave them Pastors and Teachers) or the *Spirit* that furnish'd the Church with all its Gifts. *Beware you abuse not either of these.*

First, Abuse not the *Ordinances* and *Officers* of Christ. This is a Sin that no Nation is plunged deeper into the Guilt of than this Nation, and no Age more than this. —— Surely God hath *written to us the great things of his Law, and we have accounted them small things.* We have been loose, wanton, sceptical Professors for the most part, that have had nice and coy Stomachs, that could not relish plain wholsom Truths, except so and so modified to our Humours. For this the Lord hath a Controversy with the Nation, and by a sore Judgment he hath begun to rebuke this Sin already. And I doubt before he make an End, plain Truths will down with us, and we shall bless God for them.

Secondly, But in the next place, see that you abuse not the Spirit, whom Christ hath sent from Heaven at his Ascension, to supply his bodily Absence among us, and is the great Pledge of his Care for, and tender Love to his People. Now take heed that you don't vex him by your Disobedience. Nor grieve him by your Unkindnesses. Nor quench him by your sinful Neglects of Duty, or Abuse of Light. O deal kindly with the Spirit, and obey his Voice.

Comply with his Deſigns, and yield up your ſelves to his Guidance and Conduct. Methinks to be intreated by the Love of the Spirit, *Rom.* 15. 30. ſhould be as great an Argument as to be intreated *for Chriſt's Sake.* Now to perſuade all the Saints to be tender of grieving the Spirit by Sin, let me urge a few Conſiderations proper to the Point under hand.

Conſid. 1. *Firſt, He was the firſt and principal Mercy that Chriſt received for you at his firſt Entrance into Heaven.* It was the firſt thing he asked of God when he came to Heaven. So he ſpeaks, *John* 14. 16, 17. *I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you.* No ſooner had he ſet Foot upon the Place, but the firſt thing, the great thing that was upon his Heart to ask the Father for us was, that the Spirit might be forthwith diſpatch'd, and ſent down to his People. So that the Spirit is *the Firſt-born of Mercies.* And deſerves the firſt place in our Hearts and Eſteems.

Conſid. 2. *Secondly, The Spirit comes not in his own Name to us* (tho' if ſo, he deſerves a dear Welcome for his own Sake, and for the Benefits we receive by him, which are ineſtimable) *but he comes to us in the Name and in the Loves both of the Father and Son.* As one authorized and delegated by them. Bringing his *Credentials* under both their Hands and Seals, *John* 15. 26. *But when the Comforter is come, whom I will ſend to you from the Father.* Mark, I will ſend him from the Father; and in *John* 14. 26. the Father is ſaid to *ſend him in Chriſt's Name.* So that he is the Meſſenger that comes from both theſe great and holy Perſons. And if you have any Love for the God that made you, any Kindneſs for Chriſt that he died for you, ſhew it by your Obedience to the Spirit that comes from 'em both, and in both their Names to us, and who will be both offended and grieved if you grieve him. O therefore give him an Entertainment worthy of one that comes to you in the Name of the Lord. In the Father's Name, and in the Son's Name.

Conſid. 3. *Thirdly,* But that is not the only Conſideration that ſhould cauſe you to beware of grieving the Spirit, becauſe he is ſent in the Name of ſuch great and dear Perſons to you, but *he deſerves better Entertainment than any of the Saints give him, for his own Sake, and upon his own Account,* and that upon a double Score, *viz.* of his *Nature* and *Office.*

Firſt, On the Account of his Nature; for he is God, co-equal with the Father and Son in Nature and Dignity, 2 *Sam.* 23. 23. *The Spirit of the Lord ſpake by me, and his Word was in my Tongue; the God of Iſrael ſaid; the Rock of Iſrael ſpake to me.* So that you ſee he is God. The Rock of *Iſrael.* God *omnipotent,* for he created all things, *Gen.* 1. 2. God *omnipreſent,* filling all things, *Pſal.* 139. 7. God *omniſcient,* who knows your Hearts, *Rom* 9. 1. Beware of him therefore, and grieve him not, for in ſo doing you grieve God.

Secondly, Upon the Account of his *Office,* and the Benefits we receive by him. We are obliged even on the Score of Gratitude and Ingenuity to obey him. For he is ſent in the Quality of an *Advocate,* to help us to pray. To indite our Requeſts for us. To teach us what and how to ask of God, *Rom.* 8. 26. He comes to us as a Comforter, *John* 14. 16. And none like him. His Work is to take of Chriſt's, *and ſhew it to us* (*i. e.*) to take of his Death, Reſurrection, Aſcenſion, yea, of his very preſent Interceſſion in Heaven, and ſhew it to us. He can be with us in a Moment, he can (as one well obſerves) tell you what were the very laſt Thoughts Chriſt was thinking in Heaven about you. It was he that formed the Body of Chriſt in the Womb, and ſo prepared him to be a Sacrifice for us. He filled that Humanity with his unexampled Fulneſs. So fitting and anointing him for the Diſcharge of his Office.

John 16. 14. *Mr.* Tho. Goodwin.

Luke 1. 35. *Iſa.* 61. 1. *Col.* 1. 19.

'Tis he that puts Efficacy into the Ordinances, and without him they would be but a dead Letter. 'Twas he that bleſſed them to your Conviction and Converſion. For if Angels had been the Preachers, no Converſion had followed without the Spirit. 'Tis he that is the *vinculum unionis,* Bond of Union betwixt Chriſt and your Souls, without which you could never have had Intereſt in Chriſt, or Communion with Chriſt. 'Twas he that ſo often hath helped your Infirmities, when you knew not what to ſay. Comforted your Hearts when they were overwhelmed within you, and you knew not what to do. Preſerved you many thouſand times from Sin and Ruin when you have been upon the ſlippery Brink of it in Temptations. 'Tis he (in his ſanctifying Work) that is the beſt Evidence your Souls have for Heaven. 'Twere endleſs to enumerate the Mercies you have by him. And now, Reader, doſt thou not bluſh to think how unworthy thou haſt treated ſuch a Friend? For which of all theſe his Offices or Benefits doſt thou grieve and quench him? O grieve not the Holy Spirit, whom Chriſt ſent as ſoon as ever he came to Heaven, in his Father's Name, and in his own Name, to perform all theſe Offices for you.

2 *Cor.* 9. 6. *John* 16. 9. 1 *Pet* 1. 12. 1 *Joh.* 3. 24. *Rom.* 8. 9. *Rom* 5. 25. *Job* 14. 26. *Ezek.* 36. 27.

Infer. 5. Is Chriſt aſcended to the Father as our Forerunner? *Then the Door of Salvation ſtands open to all Believers, and by virtue of Chriſt's Aſcenſion; they alſo ſhall aſcend after him, far above all viſible Heavens.* O my Friends, what Place hath Chriſt prepared and taken up for you! What a ſplendid Habitation hath he provided for you! *God is not aſhamed to be called your God; for he hath prepared for you a City,* Heb. 11. 16. In that City Chriſt hath provided Manſions and reſting Places for your everlaſting Abode, *John* 14. 2. and keeps them for you till your coming. O how auguſt and glorious a Dwelling is that, where Sun, Moon and Stars ſhall ſhine as much below your Feet as they are now above your Heads? Yea, ſuch is the Love Chriſt hath to the Believer, that (as one ſaith) if thou only hadſt been the Choſen of God, Chriſt would have built that Houſe for himſelf and thee. Now 'tis for himſelf, for thee, and for many more who ſhall inherit with thee. God ſend us a joyful Meeting within the Vail with our Forerunner, and ſweeten our Paſſage into it with many a Foreſight and Foretaſte thereof. And mean time let the Love of a Saviour enflame our Hearts, ſo that whenever we caſt a Look towards that Place where our Forerunner is for us entred, our Souls may ſay with melting Affections, *Thanks be to God for Jeſus Chriſt*; and again, *Bleſſed be God for his unſpeakable Gift.*

Spes futuræ noſtræ hæreditatis in capite noſtro pleniſſime confirmatur & nos cum eo in cœlis collacati ſumus. *Synop. purioris Theol. Diſp.* 28. *p.* 342.

SER-

SERMON XLI.

Wherein Christ's sitting at Gods right hand is explain'd and apply'd, being the Third Step of his glorious Exaltation.

HEB. 3. Part of the Verse.

--- When he had by himself, purged our Sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

CHrist being return'd again to his Father, having finish'd his whole work on Earth, is there bid by the Father to sit down in the Seat of Honour and Rest. A Seat prepared for him at God's right hand, that makes it honourable, and all his enemies as a footstool under his feet, that makes it easie. How much is the state and condition of Jesus Christ changed in a few days! Here he groaned, wept, laboured, suffered, sweat, yea sweat blood, and found no rest in this World, but when he comes to Heaven, there he enters into rest. Sits down for ever in the highest, and easiest Throne prepared by the Father for him, when he had done his work. *When he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down*, &c.

The scope of this Epistle is to demonstrate Christ to be the fulness of all Legal Types and Ceremonies, and that whatever light glimmered to the world through them, yet it was but as the light of the day-star, to the light of this Sun.

In this Chapter Christ, the subject of the Epistle, is described, and particularly in this 3d Verse, he is described three ways.

First, By his essential, and primæval glory and dignity he is ἀπαύγασμα, the brightness of his Father's glory, the very splendor of glory, the very refulgency of that Son of Glory. The primary reason of that appellation is with respect to his eternal and ineffable generation, light of light, as the *Nicene* Creed expresses it. As a beam of light proceeding from the Sun. And the secondary reason of it is with respect to Men, for look as the Sun communicates its light and influence to us by its beams, which it projects; so doth God communicate his goodness, and manifest himself to us by Christ. Yea, he is the *express Image*, or Character of his Person. Not as the impressed Image of the Seal upon the Wax, but as the engraving in the Seal it self. Thus he is described by his essential Glory.

Ratio appellationis primaria est respectu patris cœlestis a quo ab eterno, per ineffabilem generationem instar luminis, de lumine resplenduit, secundaria respectu hominum &c. *Glas. Rhet.* p. 147. χαραττεῖν insculpere dicitur, non tam imaginem ex sigillo ceræ impressam quam ipsum sigillum denotare. *Glas. Rhet. sat.* p. 159.

Secondly, He is described by the work he wrought here on earth in his humbled state, and it was a glorious work, and that wrought out by his own single hand, *when he had by himself purged our Sins*. A work that all Angels in Heaven could not do, but Christ did it.

Thirdly, And lastly, He is described by his glory, the which (as a reward of that work) he now enjoys in Heaven. *When he had by himself purged our Sins, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high*, (i. e.) the Lord cloathed him with the greatest Power, and highest Honour, that Heaven it self could afford; for so much this phrase of *sitting down on the right hand of Majesty* imports, as will appear in the explication of this point, which is the result of this clause, *viz.*

Doct. *That when our Lord Jesus Christ had finished this work on Earth, he was placed in the seat of the highest Honour, and Authority; at the right hand of God in Heaven.*

This truth is transformingly glorious. *Stephen* had but a glimpse of Christ at his Father's right hand, and it caused *his face to shine, as it had been the face of an Angel*, Acts 7. 56. this his high advancement was foretold and promised before the work of redemption was taken in hand, *Psal.* 100. 1. *The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, untill I make thine enemies thy footstool.* And this promise was punctually performed to Christ after his Resurrection and Ascension, in his supream exaltation far above all created Beings in Heaven and Earth, *Ephes.* 1. 20, 21, 22. We shall here open two things in the doctrinal part, *viz.* what is meant by God's right hand, and what is implied in Christ's sitting there, with his enemies for a footstool.

First, What are we to understand here by God's right hand? It's obvious enough, that the expression is not proper, but figurative and borrowed. God hath no hand, right or left; but is a condescending expression, wherein God stoops to the Creatures understanding, and by it he would have us to understand *Honour*, *Power*, and *Nearness*.

Dextram Patris nominamus gloriam & honorem deitatis, in qua cum filius Dei ante secula extiteris, tanquam Deus in excelsis: Patri consubstantialis, postremis temporibus incarnatus, etiam cum corpore consedit: *Damasc. Lib.* 4. *c.* 2. *de orth fide*,

First, The right hand of Honour, the upper hand, where we place those whom we highly esteem and honour. So *Solomon* placed

placed his Mother in a seat, at his right hand, 1 *Kings* 2. 19. So in a token of Honour God sets Christ at his right hand; which on that account in the Text is called the right hand of *Majesty*. God hath therein expresst more favour, delight, and Honour to Jesus Christ, than ever he did to any Creature. *To which of the Angels said he at any time, sit thou on my right hand?* Heb. 1. 13.

Secondly, The right hand is the hand of Power: We call it the *weapon Hand*, and the *working hand*. And the setting of Christ there, imports his exaltation to the highest Authority, and most supream Dominion. Not that God the Father hath put himself out of his Authority, and advanced Christ above himself; no, *for in that he saith he hath put all things under him, it is manifest, that he is excepted which did put all things under him*, 1 Cor. 15. 27. But to sit as an enthroned King at God's right hand, imports Power. Yea, the most sovereign and supream Power; and so Christ himself calls the hand at which he sits, *Mat.* 26. 64. *Hereafter ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of Power.*

Thirdly, And it signifies Honour and Power, so Nearness in place, as we use to say *at ones Elbow*, and so it is applied to Christ, in *Psal.* 110. 5. *The Lord at thy right hand, shall strike through Kings in the day of his Wrath*; that is, the Lord who is very near thee, present with thee, he shall subdue thine enemies. This is that then we are to understand by God's right Hand, Honour, Power, and Nearness.

Secondly, In the next place let us see what is implied in Christ's sitting at God's right hand, with his Enemies for his footstool. And if we attentively consider, we shall find that it implies and imports divers great and weighty things in it. As,

First, It implies *the Compliment and Perfection of Christ's work, that he came into the World about.* After his work was ended, then he sat down and rested from those labours, *Heb.* 10. 11, 12. *Every Priest standeth daily ministring, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices; which can never take away sins; but this Man when he had once offered one sacrifice for sins; for ever sate down on the right hand of God.* Here he assigns a double difference betwixt *Christ*, and the *Levitical Priests*; they *stand*, which is the posture of Servants; he *sits*, which is the posture of a Lord. They stand daily, because their Sacrifices cannot take away Sin; he did his work fully, by one offering; and after that sits, or rests for ever in Heaven. And this (as accurate and judicious Dr. *Reynolds* observes) was excellently figured to us in the *Ark*, which was a lively *Type* of Jesus Christ, and particularly in this; it had rings by which it was carried up and down, till at last it rested in *Solomon*'s Temple, with glorious and triumphal solemnity, *Psal.* 132. 8, 9. 2 *Chron.* 5. 13. So Christ, while he was here on Earth, being anointed with the Holy Ghost and wisdom, went about doing good, *Acts* 10. 38. and having ceased from his works, did at last enter into his rest, *Heb.* 5. 10. which is the Heavenly Temple, *Rev.* 11. 19.

Dr. Edward Reynolds *in Psalm* 110. *p.* 35. 36.

Secondly, His sitting down at God's right hand, notes the high Content and Satisfaction of God the Father in him, and in his work. *The Lord said to my Lord, sit thou on my right hand*; the words are brought in as the Words of the Father, welcoming Christ to Heaven; and (as it were) congratulating the happy accomplishment of his most difficult work. And it is as if he had said, *O my Son, what shall be done for thee this day? Thou hast finished a great work, and in all the parts of it acquitted thy self as an able and faithful servant to me; what Honours shall I now bestow upon thee? The highest glory in Heaven, is not too high for thee; come, sit at my right hand.* O how well is he pleased with Christ, and what hath he done! He delighted greatly to behold him hereat his work on Earth, and by a Voice from the excellent glory he told him so, when he called out of Heaven to him, saying, *Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*, 2 Pet. 1. 17. And himself tells us, Joh. 10. 17. *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life*, &c. for it was a work that the heart of God had been upon from Eternity. He took infinite delight in it.

Sedent qui a labore quiescunt, & ab eo recreant se, *Gen.* 18. 1. quo sensu quidam accipiunt quod de Christo dicitur. Sedete ad dextram Dei, (*i. e.*) in Cœlis apud Deum in eterna illa beatitudine quiescere a laboribus ac miseris quibus sese ultro pro nobis subjecerat. *Rev. in verbum, sedère.*

Thirdly, Christ's sitting down at Gods right hand in Heaven, notes *the advancement of Christ's humane nature to the highest Honour; even to be the object of adoration to Angels and Men.* For it is properly his humane nature that is the subject of all this Honour and Advancement; and being advanced to the right hand of Majesty, its become an object of Worship and Adoration. Not simply as it is flesh and blood, but as it is Personally united to the second Person, and enthroned in the Supream glory of Heaven.

O here's the mystery, that flesh and blood should ever be advanced to the highest throne of Majesty, and being there installed in that glory, we may now direct our Worship to him as *God-man*; and to this end was his humanity so advanced, that it might be adored and worshipped by all. *The Father hath committed all Judgment to the Son, that all Men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.* And the Father will accept of no Honour divided from his honour. Therefore it's added in the next clause, *he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him*, Joh. 5. 22, 23. Hence the Apostles in the Salutations of their Epistles, beg for Grace, Mercy and Peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ; and in their *Valedictions*, they desire the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ to the Churches.

Fourthly, It imports the Sovereignty and Supremacy of Christ over all. The investiture of Christ with authority over the Empire of both Worlds: For this belongs to him that sits down upon this throne. When the Father said to him, sit at my right hand, he did therein deliver to him the *Dispensation* and *Oeconomy* of the Kingdom. Put the awful Scepter of Government into his hand, and so the Apostle interprets and understands it, 1 *Cor.* 15. 25. *He must reign, till he have put all his Enemies under his feet.* And to this purpose the same Apostle accommodates, (if not expounds) the words of the Psalmist, *Thou madest him a little lower than the Angels*, (i. e.) in respect of his humbled State on Earth, *thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over*

Significat ergo hec sessio Christi ad dextram patris, non proprie gloriam illamis & regnum naturale, quod filio Dei cum patre ab eterno fuit commune; hoc enim patet etiam spiritus sanctus ad dextram Dei sedet; sed regnum œconomicum & voluntarium, in. quo tanquam θεάνθρωπος & mediator noster, ad ecclesie sue collectionem ac defensionem a patre est constitutus. *Synop.*

pur. Theol. Disp. 28. *p.* 343. *Aurel Vict.* Qui Constantini toties perterurit urbem; sub Tamberlino sella Canisque fuit.

the work of thy hands, thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet, Heb. 2. 7, 8. He is over the Spiritual Kingdom, the Church, absolute Lord there, *Mat.* 28, 18, 19, 20. He also is Lord over the providential Kingdom, the whole World, *Psal.* 110. 2. and this providential Kingdom, being subordinate to his Spiritual Kingdom; he orders and rules this, for the advantage and benefit of that, *Eph.* 1. 22.

Fifthly, To sit at Gods right hand with his Enemies for a footstool, *implies Christ to be a Conqueror over all his enemies.* To have ones Enemies under his Feet, notes perfect conquest, and compleat victory. As when *Joshua* set his foot upon the necks of the Kings: So *Tamberlane* made proud *Bajazet* his footstool. They trampled his name, and his Saints under their Feet, and Christ will tread them under his Feet. 'Tis true indeed, this victory is yet incompleat, and inconsummate; for now *we see not yet all things put under him*, (saith the Apostle) *but we see Jesus Crowned with glory and honour*, and that's enough. Enough to shew the power of his Enemies is now broken; and though they make some opposition still, yet it is to no purpose at all; for he is so infinitely above them, that they must fall before him. It is not with Christ as it was with *Abijah*, against whom *Jeroboam* prevailed, because he was young and tender hearted, and could notwithstand them. His *incapacity* and *weakness* gave the watchful Enemy an advantage over him. I say, 'tis not so with Christ, he is at God's right hand. And all the power of God stands ready bent to strike through his Enemies, as it is, *Psal.* 110. 5.

Sixthly, Christ's sitting in Heaven notes to us the great and wonderful change that is made upon the state and condition of Christ, since his ascension into Heaven. Ah, 'tis far otherwise with him now, than it was in the days of his humiliation here on Earth. *Quantum mutatus ab illo!* Oh what a wonderful change hath Heaven made upon him! It were good (as a Worthy of ours speaks) to compare in our thoughts the Abasement of Christ, and his Exaltation together; as it were in Columes, one over against the other. He was born in a Stable, but now he reigns in his Royal Palace. Then he had a *Manger* for his Cradle, but now he sits on a Chair of State. Then Oxen and Asses were his companions, now thousands of Saints, and ten thousand of Angels minister round about his Throne. Then in contempt they call'd him the *Carpenter's Son*, now he obtains a more excellent name than *Angels*. Then he was led away into the Wilderness to be tempted of the Devil, now it is proclaimed before him. *Let all the Angels of God worship him.* Then he had not a place to lay his Head on, now he is exalted to be Heir of all things. In his state of humiliation, *he endured the contradiction of sinners*; in his state of Exaltation, *he is adored and admired of Saints and Angels.* Then *he had no form nor comliness*; *and when we saw him, there was no beauty, why we should desire him*: Now the beauty of his countenance shall send forth such glorious beams that shall dazle the Eyes of all the Cœlestial Inhabitants round about him, *&c.*

Mr. T. Case, *his Pisgah, part* 3. *p.* 21.

O what a change is here! Here he sweat, but here he sits. Here he groaned, but there he triumphs. Here he lay upon the ground, there he sits in the throne of glory. When he came to Heaven, his Father did as it were thus bespeak him.

My dear Son, *what an hard travail! hast thou had of it? What a World of woe hast thou past thro', in the strength of thy love to me, and mine Elect? Thou hast been hungry, thirsty, weary; scourged, crucified and reproached: Ah what bad usage hast thou had in the ungrateful World! Not a days rest and comfort since thou wentest out from me; but now thy suffering days are accomplished; now thy rest is come, rest for evermore. Henceforth sit at my right hand. Henceforth thou shalt groan, weep, or bleed no more. Sit thou at my right hand.*

Seventhly, Christ's sitting at God's right hand, *implies the advancement of Believers to the highest Honour*: For this Session of Christ's, respects them, and there he sits as our Representative, in which regard we are made to sit with him in heavenly places, as the Apostle speaks, *Eph.* 2. 6. How secure may we be (saith *Tertulian*) who do now already possess the Kingdom? meaning in our Head, Christ. This (saith another) is all my Hope, and all my Confidence, namely, that we have a Portion in that Flesh and Blood of Christ, which is so exalted, and therefore where he reigns, we shall reign; where our Flesh is glorified, we shall be glorified. Surely, it's matter of exceeding Joy, to believe that Christ our Head, our Flesh and Blood, is in all this Glory at his Father's right hand. *Thus we have open'd the sense and importance of Christ's sitting at his Father's right hand.* Hence we infer.

Infer. 1. Is this so great an Honour to Christ, to sit enthroned at God's right hand? *What honour then is reserved in Heaven for those that are faithful to Christ now on the Earth?* Christ prayed, and his Prayer was heard, *John* 7. 24. *That we may be with him, to behold the glory that God hath given him*; and what Heart can conceive the felicity of such a sight? It made *Stephen*'s Face shine as the Face of an *Angel*, when he had but a glimpse of Christ at his Father's Right-hand. *Thine Eyes shall see the King in his beauty*, Isa. 33. 7. which respected *Hezekiah* in the *Type*, *Christ* in the *Truth*. But, this is not all, though this be much, to be Spectators of Christ in his Throne of Glory; we shall not only see him in his throne, but also sit with him enthroned in glory. To behold him is much, but to sit with him is more. I remember it was the saying of a heavenly Christian, now with Christ, *I would far rather look but through the hole of Christ's Door, to see but one half of his fairest and most comely Face, [for he looks like Heaven] supose I should never win it, to see his Excellency and Glory to the full; than to enjoy the Flower, the Bloom and chiefest Excellency of the Glory and Riches of ten Worlds.* And you know how the *Queen* of the *South* fainted at the sight of *Solomon* in his Glory. But this Sight you shall have of Christ, will change you into his likeness. *We shall be like him* (saith the Apostle) *for we shall see him as he is*, 1 John 3. 2. He will place us as it were in his own Throne with him. So runs the Promise, Rev. 3. 21. *To him that overcometh, I will grant to sit with me in my throne; even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne*; and so 2 *Tim.* 2. 12. *If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him.* The Father set Christ on his right hand, and Christ will set the Saints on his right hand. So you know the Sheep are placed by the Angels, at the great day, *Matt.* 25. and so the Church under the Figure of the Daughter of *Egypt* whom, *Solomon* married, is placed *on the King's right hand, in Gold of Ophyr*, Psal. 45. This Honour have all the Saints. O amazing Love! What, we set on thrones, while as good as we by nature howl in Flames! O what manner of Love is this! These Expressions indeed

do not intend, that the Saints ſhall be ſet in higher Glory than Chriſt; or that they ſhall have a Parity of Glory with Chriſt; for in all things he muſt have the preheminence: But they note the great Honour that Chriſt will put upon the Saints; as alſo, that his Glory ſhall be their Glory in Heaven. As the Glory of the Husband redounds to the Wife; and again, their Glory will be his Glory, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 10. And ſo it will be a ſocial Glory. O it's admirable to think, whither free Grace hath already mounted up poor Duſt and Aſhes!

Uxor ſplendeſcit in radiis Mariti.

To think how nearly we are related now to this Royal Princely Jeſus! But how much higher are the deſigns of Grace that are not yet come to their parturient fulneſs, they look beyond all this that we now know! *Now are we the Sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be*, 1 John 3. 2. Ah what Reaſon have you to Honour Chriſt on Earth, who is preparing ſuch Honours for you in Heaven.

Infer. 2. *Is Chriſt Jeſus thus enthroned in Heaven, then how impoſſible is it, that ever his Intereſt ſhould miſcarry or ſink on Earth?* The Church hath many ſubtle and Potent Enemies. True, but a *Haman* could not prevail againſt the *Jews*, whilſt *Heſter* their Friend ſpake for them to the King, no more can they, whilſt *Jeſus* ſits at his and our Father's right hand. Will he ſuffer his Enemies that are under his Feet, to riſe up and pull out his Eyes think you? Surely they that touch his People, *touch the very apple of his eye.* Zech. 2. 8. *He muſt reign till all his Enemies are under his feet*, 1 Cor. 15. 25. The Enemy under his Feet, ſhall not deſtroy the Children in in his arms. He ſits in Heaven on purpoſe to manage all to the advantage of his Church, *Eph* 22. Are our Enemies powerful; lo our King *ſits on the right of Power.* Are they ſubtil and deep in their Contrivance; he that ſits on the Throne, over-looks all they do. Heaven overlooks Hell. *He that ſits in the Heavens beholds*, and derides their attempts, *Pſal.* 2. 4. He may permit his Enemies to ſtrengthen them in one place, but it ſhall be for their enlargement in another. For 'tis with the Church, as it is with the Sea; what it loſes in one place, it gets in another; and ſo really loſes nothing. He may ſuffer them alſo to diſtreſs us in outwards, but that ſhall be recompenced with inward and better Mercies; and ſo we ſhall loſe nothing by that. A Foot-ſtool you know is uſeful to him that treads on it, and ſerves to lift him up the higher; ſo ſhall Chriſt's Enemies be to him, and his; albeit they think not ſo. What ſingular Beneſits the Oppoſitions of his Enemies, occaſion to his People; I have * elſewhere diſcovered, to which I refer my Reader, and paſs to the

* *A Saint indeed* p. 64, 65, 66.

Infer. 3. Is Chriſt ſet down on the right hand of the Majeſty in Heaven? *O with what awful Reverence ſhould we approach him in the Duties of his Worſhip!* Away with light and low thoughts of Chriſt. Away with formal, irreverent, and careleſs Frames in praying, hearing, receiving, yea, in conferring and ſpeaking of Chriſt. Away with all deadneſs, and drowſineſs in Duties; for he is a *great King* with whom you have to do. A King to whom the Kings of the Earth are but as little bits of Clay. Lo the Angels cover their Faces in his Preſence. He is an adorable Majeſty.

When *John* had a Viſion of this enthroned King, about ſixty Years after his Aſcenſion; ſuch was the over-powering Glory of Chriſt, *as the Sun when it ſhineth in its ſtrength*; that when he ſaw him, he fell at his Feet as dead, and died it's like he had, if Chriſt had not laid his hand on him, and ſaid, *fear not, I am the firſt and the laſt; I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive for evenmore*, Rev, 1. 17, 18. When he appeared to *Saul* in the way to *Damaſcus*, it was in Glory above the Glory of the Sun, which over-powered him alſo, and laid him as one dead upon the Ground.

O that you did but know what a glorious Lord you Worſhip and Serve. Who makes the very *place of his feet glorious*, where-ever he comes. Surely *He is greatly to be feared in the Aſſembly of his Saints, and to be had in reverence of all that are round about him.* There is indeed a παῤῥησία boldneſs or free Liberty of Speech allowed to the Saints, *Eph.* 3. 12. But no rudeneſs or irreverence. We may indeed come as the Children of a King come to the Father, who is both their awful Sovereign, and tender Father; which double relation cauſes a due mixture of Love and Reverence in their Hearts, when they come before him. You may be *Free*, but not *Rude* in his Preſence. Though he be your Father, Brother, Friend; yet the diſtance betwixt him and you is *infinite.*

Infer. 4. *If Chriſt be ſo glorioufly advanced in the higheſt Throne, then none need to reckon themſelves diſhonoured, by ſuffering the vileſt for his Sake.* The very Chains and Sufferings of Chriſt have a Glory in them. Hence *Moſes eſteemed the very reproaches of Chriſt greater riches than the treaſures of Ægypt*, Heb. 11. 26. He ſaw an excellency in the very worſt things of Chriſt, his Reproaches and Sufferings, as made him leap out of his Honours and Riches into them. He did not (as one ſaith) only *endure the reproaches of Chriſt*, but counted them *Treaſures.* To be reckoned among his Honours and things of value. So *Thuanus* reports of *Ludovicus Marſacus*, a noble Knight of *France*, when he was led with other *Martyrs*, that were bound with Cords, to Execution; and he for his Dignity was not bound, he cried give me my Chain too, let me be a Knight of the ſame Order. Diſgrace it ſelf is honourable, when 'tis endured for the *Lord of Glory.* And ſurely there is (as one phraſeth it) a little Paradiſe, a young Heaven in Sufferings for Chriſt. If there were nothing elſe in it, but that they are endured on his Account, it would richly reward all we can endure for him; but if we conſider how exceeding kind Chriſt is to them that count it their Glory to be abaſed for him; that though he be always kind to his People, (yet if we may ſo ſpeak) he overcometh himſelf in kindneſs, when they ſuffer for him; it ſhould make men in Love with his Reproaches.

Non ignominioſum eſt nobis pati quod Chriſtus paſſus eſt; nec vobis glorioſum facere quod fecit Judas; *Heirony. Dr. Manton on Fam. p.* 228.

Cur et non me quoq; tor que donas? Et inſignis hujns ordinis militem creas? *Thuan Hiſt.*

Infer. 5. *If Chriſt ſat not down to reſt in Heaven, till he had finiſhed his Work on Earth; then 'tis in vain for us to think of reſt, till we have finiſhed our Work, as Chriſt alſo did his.*

How willing are we to find reſt here! To Dream of that which Chriſt never found in this World, nor any ever found before us. O think not of reſting till you have done working and done ſinning. Your life and your labours muſt end together. *Write* (ſaith the Spirit) *bleſſed are the dead that die in the Lord, for they reſt from their labours*, Rev. 14. 13. Here you muſt have the *Sweat*, and there the *Sweet*. 'Tis too much to have two Heavens. Here you muſt be content to dwell in the *Tents of Kedar*, hereafter you ſhall be *within the curtains of Solomon*. Heaven is the place of which it may be truly ſaid, That *there the weary be at reſt.* O think not of ſitting down on this ſide Heaven. There are four things will keep the Saints from ſitting down on Earth

Earth, to reſt, *viz.* Grace, Corruption, Devils, and wicked Men.

Firſt, *Grace* will not ſuffer you to reſt here. It's tendencies are beyond this World. It will be looking and longing for the bleſſed Hope. A gracious Perſon takes himſelf for a Pilgrim, ſeeking a better Country, and is always ſuſpicious of danger in every place and ſtate. It's ſtill beating up the ſluggiſh heart with ſuch language as that, *Mica.* 2. 10. *Ariſe, depart, this is not thy reſt, for it is polluted.* It's farther tendencies and continual Jealouſies will keep you from ſitting long ſtill in this World.

Secondly, Your *Corruptions* will keep you from reſt here. They will continually exerciſe your Spirits, and keep you upon your watch. Saints have their hands filled with work by their own hearts every day. Sometimes to prevent ſin; and ſometimes to lament it. And always to watch and fear, to mortifie and kill it. Sin will not long ſuffer you to be quiet, *Rom.* 7. 21, 22, 23, 24. And if a bad heart will not break your reſt here, then

Thirdly, There is a buſie Devil will do it. He will find you work enough with his Tenptations, and Suggeſtions, and except you can ſleep quietly in his arms, as the wicked do, there's no reſt to be expected. *Your adverſary, the Devil, goeth about as a roaring Lion, ſeeking whom he may devour; whom reſiſt,* 1 Pet. 5. 8.

Fourthly, Nor will his Servants and Inſtruments let you be quiet on this ſide Heaven. Their very Name ſpeaks their turbulent Diſpoſition. *My Soul* (ſaith the holy Man) *is among Lions, and I lie even among them that are ſet on fire, even the Sons of Men, whoſe Teeth are Spears and Arrows,* Pſalm. 57. 4. Well then, be content to enter into your reſt, as Chriſt did into his. He ſweat; then ſate, and ſo muſt you.

רשע
Inquietum eſſe Turbulentus.

SERMON XLII.

Wherein Chriſt coming to Judgment, being the 4th and laſt degree of his Exaltation, is open'd and improved.

ACTS X. xlii.

And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to teſtifie, that it is he which was ordained by God to be the Judge of quick and dead.

CHriſt enthroned in the higheſt glory in Heaven, is there to abide for the effectual and ſucceſsful Government both of the world and of the Church, until the number given him by the Father before the world was; and purchaſed by the blood of the Croſs be gathered in; and then cometh the Judgment of the great day, which will perfectly ſeparate the precious from the vile; put the redeemed in full poſſeſſion of the purchaſe of his blood in Heaven, and *then ſhall he deliver up the Kingdom to his Father, that God may be all in all.*

This laſt Act of Chriſt, namely, his Judging the world, is a ſpecial part of his Exaltation and Honour, beſtowed upon him, *becauſe he is the Son of Man*, John 5. 27. In that day ſhall his glory, as King and abſolute Lord, ſhine forth as the Sun when it ſhineth in its ſtrength. O what an honour will it be to the Man Chriſt Jeſus, who ſtood arraigned and condemned at *Pilate*'s Bar, to ſit upon the great white Throne ſurrounded with thouſands, and ten thouſands of Angels! Men and Devils waiting upon him to receive their final ſentence from his mouth. In this will the glory of Chriſt's Sovereignty and Power be eminently and illuſtrious diſplayed, before Angels and Men. And this is that great truth, which *he commanded to be preached and teſtified to the people; namely, that it is he which is ordained of God, to be the Judge of quick and dead.*

Ad regiam dignitatem pertinet illa poteſtas qua Chriſtus factus eſt judex omnium hominum et angelorum. *Ameſ. med.* p. 17.

Wherein we have four things to be diſtinctly conſidered, *viz.* The Subject, Object, Fountain, and Truth of the ſupream Judiciary Authority.

Firſt, The Subject of it, *Chriſt*; 'tis he that's ordained to be Judge. Judgment is the Act of the whole undivided Trinity. The Father and Spirit judge, as well as Chriſt, in reſpect of authority and conſent, but 'tis the Act of Chriſt in reſpect of viſible management and execution, and ſo it's his *per proprietatem*, by *propriety*, the Father having conferred it upon him, as the Son of Man; but not his *per appropriatationem*, ſo as to exclude either the Father or Spirit from their Authority, for they judge by him.

Secondly, The *Object* of Chriſt's Judiciary Authority. The *quick and dead*, (i. e.) all that at his coming do live, or ever had lived. This is the *Object perſonal.* All the Men and Women that ever ſprang from *Adam*, all the Apoſtate Spirits that fell from Heaven, and are reſerved in Chains to the Judgment of this great day. And in this perſonal object, is included the *Real Object*, viz. all the Actions, both ſecret, and open, that ever they did, 2 *Cor.* 5. 5. *Rom.* 2. 16.

Thirdly, the *Fountain* of this delegated Authority, which is God the Father; for he hath ordained Chriſt to be the Judge. He is appointed, *ſc.* as the Son of Man to this Honourable office and work. The word notes, a firm eſtabliſhment of Chriſt in that Office by his Father. He is now by

ὡρισμένος. Definitus ſeu conſtitutus.

tight

right of Redemption, Lord and King. He enacts Laws for Government, then he comes to judge of Mens obedience and disobedience to his Laws.

Fourthly, And lastly, here is the infallible *Truth*, or unquestionable certainty of all this. *He gave us commandment to preach and testifie it to the People.* We had it in charge from his own mouth; and dare not hide it. Hence the point of Doctrine is plainly this.

Doct. *That our Lord Jesus Christ is ordained by God the Father, to be the Judge of quick and dead.*

This truth stands upon the firm basis of Scripture-Authority. You have it from his own hand, *John* 5. 22. *The Father judgeth no Man, but hath committed all Judgment to the Son.* viz. in the Sense before given. And so the Apostle, *Acts* 17. 31. *He hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by the Man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance*, &c. And again, *Rom.* 2. 16. *in the day when God shall judge the secrets of Men by Jesus Christ.* Three things will be opened here. *First*, The certainty of a Judgment to come. *Secondly*, The quality and nature of it. *Thirdly*, That it's a special part of Christ's Exaltation to be appointed Judge in this day.

First, The certainty of a Judgment. This is a truth of firmer establishment than Heaven and Earth. It's no devised Fable, no cunning Artifice to keep the World in awe; but a thing as confessedly true, as it is awfully solemn. For,

The certainty of a Judgment.

First, As the Scriptures aforementioned (with these, 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. *Eccles.* 12. 14. *Mat.* 12. 36, and many other, the true and faithful sayings of God) do very plainly reveal it: So the Justice and righteousness of God require it should be so. For the Judge of all the Earth will do right, *Gen.* 18. 25. Now righteousness it self requires that a difference be made betwixt the Righteous and the Wicked; *Say ye to the righteous, it shall be well with him; woe to the wicked, it shall be ill with him*, Isa. 3. 10. But no such distinction is generally and fully made betwixt one another in this World. Yea, rather the wicked prosper, and the righteous perish, *There is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man, that prolongeth his life in his wickedness*, Eccles. 7. 15. Yea, not only in, but for his Righteousness, as it may be fairly rendred.

Here the *wicked devoureth the Man that is more righteous than himself*, *Hab.* 1. 14. As the fishes of the Sea, where the great and strong swallow up the small and weak. And even in Courts of Judicature, where the innocent might expect relief; there they often meet with the worst oppressions. How fairly and justly therefore doth a wise Man infer a Judgment to come from this consideration? *Eccles.* 3. 16, 17. *I saw under the Sun the place of Judgment, that wickedness was there, and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there; I said in my heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked; for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work*, q. d. the Judgment to come is the only relief and support left to poor innocents, to quiet and comfort themselves withal. To the same purpose also is that, *James* 5. 6, 7. *Ye have condemned, and killed the Just; and he doth not resist you; be patient therefore brethren, unto the coming of the Lord.* It is confest, that sometimes God vindicates his providence against the Atheism of the World, by particular strokes upon the wicked; but this is but rare. And as the Father well observes, if no sin were punished here, no providence would be believed; again, if every sin were openly punished here, no Judgment hereafter could be expected. Besides,

Secondly, Man is a reasonable Being, and every reasonable Being, is an accountable Being. He is a capable subject of moral Government. His Actions have a relation to a Law. He is swayed by rewards and punishments. He acts by counsel, and therefore of his actions he must expect to give an account, as it *is Rom.* 14. 12. *So then every one of us, shall give an account of himself to God.* Especially if we add, that all the gifts of Body, Mind, Estate, Time, &c. are so many Talents, concredited and bestrusted to him by God, and every one of us hath one Talent at least; therefore a time to tender an account for all these Talents will come, *Mat.* 25. 14, 15. We are but Stewards, and Stewards must give an account, in order whereto, there must be a great *Audit* Day.

Thirdly, and what need we seek evidence of this truth, further than our own Conscience? Lo, it is a truth engraven legibly upon every Man's own breast. Every one hath a kind of little Tribunal, or privy Sessions in his own Conscience, which both accuses, and excuses for good and evil, which it could never do, were there not a future Judgment, of which it is now conscious to it self. In this Court records are now kept of all we do, even of our secret Actions and Thoughts, which never yet took air; but if no Judgment, what need of Records? Nor let any imagine, that this may be but the fruit of Education and Discourse. We have heard of such things, and so are scared by them. For if so, how comes it to obtain so universally? Who could be the Author of such a common deception?

Reader, bethink thy self a little; if thou hadst a mind (as one saith) to impose a lie upon all the World, what course wouldst thou take? How wouldst thou lay the design? Or why dost thou in this case imagine, what thou knowest not how to imagine? 'Tis evident that the very Consciences of the Heathens, have these Offices of accusing and excusing, *Rom.* 2. 15. And 'tis as hard to imagine (as an ingenious Author † speaks) that a general Cheat should bow down the backs of all Mankind, and induce so many Doubts and Fears, and Troubles amongst them; and give an interruption to the whole course of their corrupt living, and that there should be no account of it? And therefore it's undoubted that such a day will come. But I shall rather chuse in the

Mr. Howes *blessedness of the right*, p. 343.

†*Sir* Charles Woolsely's *Unreasonableness of Atheism* p. 76.

Second place to open the nature and manner of this judgment, than to spend more time in proving a truth, that cannot be denied without violence offered to a Man's own light. If then the Question be, what manner of Judgment will this be? I answer.

The quality of the Judgment.

First, it will be a great and awful day. It's called the *Judgment of the great day*, Jude 6. Three things will make it so, the *manner* of Christ's coming. The work he comes about. And the *issues* or *events* of that work. The *manner* of Christ's coming will be awfully solemn, *For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the Trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught together with*

In tanta injuria confugi ad Dei judicium in quo pronunciabit qui sunt justi, qui fontes. *Drusius.* Hoc malo remedium opposui. *Merc.* Contra illam injustitiam consolabar me hac cogatione quod Deus omnes judicaret: *Geirus.* Si nullum peccatum manifesta plecteretur poena; nullum esse divinam providentiam crederetur. Rursum si omne peccatum aperte puniretur, nullum fore Judicium crederetur. *Aug.*

with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, &c. 1 Thes. 4. 16, 17. Here Christ breaks out of Heaven with the shouts of Angels ἐν κελεύσματι, it signifies such a shout (saith one) as is to be heard among Seamen, when after a long and dangerous Voyage they first descry Land, crying a loud with united voices, *A shore. A shore.* As the Poet describes the *Italians* when they saw their Native Country, lifted up their Voices, and making the Heavens ring again with *Italy, Italy*; or as Armies shout when the signal of Battle is given. Above all which (as some expound it) shall the voice of the *Archangel* be distinctly heard. And after this shout, *the Trump of God* shall sound. By this Tremendous blast, sinners will be affrighted out of their Graves, but to the Saints it will carry no more Terrour than the roaring of Cannons, when Armies of Friends approach a besieged City, for the relief of them that be within. The Dead being raised, they shall be gathered before the great Throne on which Christ shall sit in his Glory; and there be divided exactly to the right and left Hand of Christ, by the Angels. Here will be the greatest Assembly that ever met. Where *Adam* may see his numerous offspring, even as the sand upon the Sea-shore which no Man can number. And never was there such a perfect division made (how many divisions soever have been in the World) none was ever like it. The Saints is this great *Occumenical assize* (as the Author stiles it) shall meet the Lord in the Air, and there *the* Judge shall sit upon the Throne; and all the Saints shall be placed upon Bright Clouds, as on Seats or Scaffolds round about him; the wicked remaining below upon the Earth, there to receive their final Doom and Sentence,

Case *his Pisgah.*

Italiam, Italiam læto clamore salutant. *Virgil. Æneid.*

The Preparatives will make it awful. And much more will the *work it self* that Christ comes about make it so. For it is *to Judge the secrets of Men,* Rom. 2. 16. To sever the Tares from the Wheat. To make every Mans *whites* and *blacks* appear. And according as they are found in that Trial, to be sentenced to their everlasting and immutable state. O what a solemn thing is this!

And no less will the *Execution of the Sentence* on both parts, make it a Great and Solemn Day. The Heart of Man cannot conceive what impression the Voice of Christ from the Throne will make both upon Believers, and Unbelievers.

Imagine Christ upon his glorious Throne, Surrounded with Myriads and Legions of Angels, his Royal Guard; a poor Unbeliever trembling at the Bar. An exact scrutiny made into his Heart and Life. The dreadful Sentence given. And then a cry. And then his delivering them over to the Executioners of Eternal Vengeance, never, never to see a glimpse of Hope or Mercy any more.

Imagine Christ, like the General of an Army, mentioning with Honour in the head of all the Hosts of Heaven and Earth, all the services that the Saints have done for him in this World. Then sententially justifying them by open Proclamation. Then mounting with him to the third Heaven, and entring the gates of that City of God, in that Noble Train of Saints and Angels intermixed. And so for ever to be with the Lord. O what a great Day must this

Secondly, As it will be an Awful and Solemn Judgment, so it will be, a *Critical* and *Exact* Judgment every Man will be weighed to his ounces and drams. The name of the Judge is καρδιογνώστης the searcher of Hearts. The Judge hath Eyes as flames of Fire, which pierce to the dividing of the Heart and Reins. It's said, *Matt.* 12. 36. That Men shall then *give an account of every idle word that they shall speak* It's a Day that will perfectly fan the World. No Hypocrite can escape. Justice holds the Ballances in an even hand. Christ will go to work so exactly, that some Divines of good note, think the Day of Judgment will last as long as this Day of the Gospel's Administration hath or shall last.

Thirdly, It will be an *Universal Judgment,* 2 Cor. 5. 10. *We must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ.* And *Rom.* 14. 12. *Every one of us shall give an account of himself to God.* Those that were under the Law, and those that having no Law, were a Law to themselves, *Rom.* 2. 12. Those that had many Talents, and he that had but one Talent, must appear at this Bar; those that were carried from the Cradle to the Grave, with him that stooped for Age. The Rich, and Poor; the Father and the Child; the Master and the Servant; the Believer, and Unbeliever must stand forth in that Day. I saw the Dead both small and great stand before God, and the Books were opened, *Rev.* 20. 12.

Fourthly, It will be a Judgment full of *convictive clearness.* All things will be so fitted to bran (as we say) that the Sentence of Christ both on Saints and Sinners shall be applauded. *Righteous art thou O Lord, because thou hast judged thus.* His Judgments will be as the light that goeth forth. So that those poor Sinners whom he will condemn, shall be first αὐτοσύνειτοι self condemned. Their own Consciencies shall be forced to confess, that there is not one drop of injustice in all that Sea of Wrath, into which they are to be cast.

Fifthly, And lastly, *It will be a Supream and final Judgment,* from which lies no Appeal. For it is the Sentence of the Highest, *and only Lord.* For as the ultimate resolution of *Faith* is into the World, and truth of God, so the ultimate Resolution of *Justice* is into the Judgment of God. This Judgment is Supream and Imperial. For Christ is the *only potentate,* 1 Tim. 6. 5. And therefore the Sentence once past, its Execution is infallible. And so you find it in that judicious process, *Mat.* 25. *ult.* Just after the Sentence is pronounced by Christ, it is immediately added, *those shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.* This is the Judgment of the great Day.

Ad Dei verbum fit ultima resolutio fidei, ad Dei tribunalem anima resolutio judicii.

Thirdly, In the last place, I must inform you, that God in ordaining Christ to be the Judge, have very highly exalted him. This will be very much for his Honour. For in this Christ's Royal Dignity will be illustrated beyond whatever it was since he took our Nature, till that Day. Now he will appear in his Glory. For

That this Judgment makes for Christ's Honour.

First. This Act of Judging pertaining properly to the Kingly Office, Christ will be glorified as much in his Kingly Office, as he hath been in either of the other. We find but some few glimpses of the Kingly Office, breaking forth in this World; as his riding with *Hosannahs* into *Jerusalem.* His whipping the Buyers and and Sellers out of the Temple. His Title upon the Cross, *&c.* But these were but faint Beams: Now that Office will shine in its Glory, as the Sun in the midst of the Heavens. For what were the *Hosannahs* of little Children, in the Streets of *Jerusalem,* to the Shouts and Acclamations

mations of thouſands of Angels, and ten thouſands of Saints? What was his whipping the prophane out of the Temple, to his turning the Wicked into Hell; and ſending his Angels to gather out of his Kingdom every thing that offendeth? What was a Title written by his Judge, and fixed on the ignominious Tree, to the name that ſhall be now ſeen on his Veſture, and on his Thigh; *Lord of Lords, and King of Kings?*

Secondly, This will be a diſplay of his Glory in the higheſt, before the whole World. For there will be preſent at once and together all the Inhabitants of Heaven and Earth, and Hell. Angels muſt be there to attend and miniſter; thoſe gliſtering Courtiers of Heaven muſt attend his Perſon. So that Heaven will for a time, be left empty of all its Inhabitants. Men and Devils muſt be there to be judged. And before this great Aſſembly, will Chriſt appear in Royal Majeſty that Day. He will (*to allude to that Text*, Iſa. 24. 23.) Reign before his Ancients gloriouſly. *For he will come to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe*, 2 Theſ 1. 10. The Inhabitants of the three Regions, Heaven, Earth and Hell, ſhall rejoyce or tremble before him that Day. And acknowledge him to be Supream Lord and King.

Thirdly, This will roll away for ever the Reproach of his Death. For *Pilate* and the *High-Prieſt* that judged him at their Bars, ſhall now ſtand quivering at his Bar; with *Herod* that ſet him at nought, the Souldiers and Officers that traduced and abuſed him. There they that reviled him on the Croſs wagging their Heads, will ſtand with trembling Knees before his Throne. For *every Eye ſhall ſee him, and they alſo that pierced him*, Rev. 1. 7. O what a contemptible Perſon was Chriſt in their Eyes once? As a Worm, and no Man. Every vile Wretch could freely tread and trample on him; but now ſuch will be the Brightneſs of his Glory, ſuch the awful Beams of Majeſty, that the Wicked ſhall not ſtand in his Preſence, or be able to riſe up (as that Word imports, *Pſal.* 1. 5.) before him. So that this will be a full and univerſal Vindication of the Death of Chriſt, from all that contempt and ignominy that attend it. We next improve it.

לו יקבין

Infer. 1. Is Jeſus Chriſt ordained of God to be the Judge of Quick and Dead; *great then is the ſecurity believers have, that they ſhall not be condemned in that day.* Who ſhall condemn, when Chriſt is Judge? If Believers be condemned in Judgment, Chriſt muſt give Sentence againſt them. Yea, and they muſt condemn themſelves too. I ſay, Chriſt muſt give Sentence, for that is the proper and peculiar Office of Chriſt. And to be ſure, no Sentence of Condemnation ſhall in that Day be given by Chriſt againſt them. For

Firſt, He died to ſave them, and he will never croſs and overthrow the Deſigns and Ends of his own Death. That cannot be imagined, nay,

Secondly, They have been cleared, and abſolved already. And being once abſolved by Divine Sentence, they can never be condemned afterward. For one Divine Sentence, cannot croſs and reſcind another. He juſtified them here in this World by Faith. Declared in his Word (which ſhall then be the Rule of Judgment, *Rom* 2. 16.) That *there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt*, Rom. 8. 1. And ſurely he will not retract his own Word, and give a Sentence quite croſs to his own Statute-Book, out of which he hath told us they ſhall be Judged. Moreover,

Thirdly, The far greateſt part of them will have paſt their particular Judgment long before that Day, and being therein acquitted by God the Judge of all; and admitted into Heaven upon the ſcore and account of their Juſtification; it cannot be imagined that Chriſt ſhould now condemn them with the World. Nay,

Fourthly, He that judgeth them is their Head, Husband, Friend, and Brother; who loved them, and gave himſelf for them: O then, with what confidence may they go, even unto his Throne? And ſay with *Job*, *though he try us as fire, we know we ſhall come forth as Gold.* We know that we ſhall be juſtified. Eſpecially, if we add, that they themſelves ſhall be the Aſſeſſors with Chriſt in that Day. And (as the judicious Author pertinently obſerves) not a Sentence ſhall paſs without their Votes. "So as that they may by Faith not only "look upon themſelves as already in Heaven, ſitting "with Chriſt as a common Perſon in their Right; but "they may look upon themſelves as Judges already. "So that if any Sin ſhould ariſe to accuſe, or condemn, yet it muſt be with their Votes. And what "greater Security can they have than this, that "they muſt condemn themſelves, if they be condemned." No, no, it is not the Buſineſs of that Day to condemn, but to abſolve and pronounce them pardoned and juſtified, according to the Sentence of *Acts* 3. 19. and *Mat.* 12. 32. So that it muſt needs be a time of refreſhing (as all Scriptures call it) to the People of God. You that now Believe, ſhall not come into condemnation, *John* 5. 24. You that now judge your ſelves ſhall not be condemned with the World, 1 *Cor.* 11. 31. 32. Goodwin's *Triumph.* p. 146.

Infer. 2. If Chriſt be ordained of God to be the Judge of Quick and Dead, *how miſerable a Caſe will Chriſtleſs Souls be in at that Day!* They that are *Chriſtleſs* now, will be *Speechleſs*, *Helpleſs*, and *Hopeleſs* then. How will their Hands hang down, and their Knees knock together! O what pale Faces, quivering Lips, fainting Hearts, and roaring Conſciences will be among them in that Day! O dreadful Day! O aſtoniſhing Sight! to ſee the World in a dreadful Conflagration, the Elements melting, the Stars falling, the Earth trembling, the Judgment ſat, the Priſoners brought forth; O who ſhall endure in this Day, but thoſe that by Union with Chriſt, are ſecured againſt the Danger and Dread of it? Let me demand of poor Chriſtleſs Souls, whom this Day is like to overtake unawares,

Firſt, *Do ye think it poſſible to avoid appearing after that terrible citation is given to the World by the Trump of God?* Alas, how can you imagine it? Is not the ſame Power that revived your Duſt, able to bring you before the Bar? There is a neceſſity that you muſt come forth, 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. *We* [*muſt*] *all appear.* It is not at the Sinner's Choice, to obey the Summons or not.

Secondly, *If you muſt appear, are there no Accuſers nor Witneſſes that will appear againſt you, and confront you in the Court?* What think you, was Satan ſo often a Tempter to you here, and will not he be an Accuſer there? Yes, nothing ſurer; for that was the main Deſign of all his Temptations. What think you of your own Conſciences? Are they not privy to your ſecret Wickedneſs? Don't they now whiſper ſometimes in your Ears, what you care not to hear of? If they whiſper now, they will thunder then, *Rom.* 2. 15. 16. Will not the *Spirit* accuſe you, for reſiſting his Motions, and ſtifling thouſands of his Convictions? Will not your *Companions* in Sin accuſe you? who drew, or were drawn by you to Sin

Sin: Will not your Teachers be your Accusers? How many times have you made them complain, *Lord they are Iron and Brass, they have made their Faces harder than a Rock; they refuse to return.* Will not your very Relations be your Accusers; To whom you have failed in all your Rational Duties? Yea, and every one whom you have tempted to Sin, abused, defrauded, over-reacht; all these will be your Accusers. So that it is without dispute you will have Accusers enough to appear against you.

Thirdly, Being accused before Jesus Christ, what will you plead for your selves: Will you confess, or will you deny the Charge? If you confess, what need more? *Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, saith Christ*, Luke 19. 22. If you deny, and plead not guilty; thy Judge is the Seacher of Hearts, and knows all things. So that it will not at all help thee to make a Lie thy Last Refuge. This will add to the Guilt, but not cover it.

Fourthly, If no Defence or Plea be left thee, then what canst thou imagine should retard the Sentence? Why should not Christ go on to that dreadful Work? *Must not the Judge of all the Earth do right?* Gen. 18. 25. Must he not render to every Man according to his Deeds? 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. Yes, no question but he will proceed to that Sentence, how terrible soever, it be to you to think on it now, or hear it then.

Fifthly, To conclude, If Sentence be once given by Christ against thy Soul, what in all the World canst thou imagine should hinder the Execution? Will he alter the thing that is gone out of his Mouth? No, *Psal.* 89. 34. Dost thou hope he is more merciful and pitiful than so? Thou mistakest, if thou expectest Mercy out of that way in which he dispences it. There will be thousands and ten thousands that will rejoice in, and magnifie his Mercy then; but they are such as obey his Call, repented, believed, and obtained Union with his Person here; but for Unbelievers, it's against the settled Law of Christ, and Constitution of the Gospel to shew Mercy to the despisers of it. But it may be you think your Tears, your Cries, your Pleadings with him, may move him; these indeed might have done somewhat in time, but they come out of Season now. Alas, too late. What the Success of such Pleas and Cries will be, you may see if you will but consult two Scriptures, *Job* 27. 8, 9. *What is the hope of the Hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his Soul? Will God hear his Cry when trouble cometh upon him?* No, no; And *Matth.* 7. 22. *Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out Devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me ye that work Iniquity.*

And must it come to this dismal Issue with you indeed? God forbid it should. Oh then,

Infer. 3. If Christ be appointed of God to be the Judge of all, *how are all concerned to secure their Interest in him, and therein an eternity of happiness to their own Souls, by the work of Regeneration?* Of all the Business that Men and Women have in this World, there is none so solemn, so necessary, and important as this. O my Brethren, this is a Work, able to drink up your Spirits, while you do but think of the consequences of it

Summon in then thy self-reflecting, and considering Powers: Get alone Reader, and forgetting all other things, ponder with thy self this deep, dear Eternal concernment of thine. Examine the State of thy own Soul. Look into the Scriptures, then into thine own Heart, and then to Heaven, saying, *Lord let me not be deceived in so great a concernment to me as this.* O let not the trifles of Time wipe off the impressions of Death, Judgment, and Eternity from thy Heart. O that long Word [*Eternity.*] that it might be Night and Day with thee. That the awe of it may be still upon thy Spirit. A *Gentlewoman* of this Nation having spent the whole Afternoon, and a great part of the Evening at Cards, in much mirth and jollity, came home late at Night, and finding her waiting Gentlewoman reading, she look'd over her Shoulder upon the Book, and said, poor melancholly Soul, why dost thou sit here poring so long upon thy Book? That Night she could not Sleep, but lay Sighing and Weeping; her Servant asked her once and again what ailed her; at last she burst out into Tears, and said, O it was one Word that I cast my Eye upon in thy Book, that troubles me; there I saw that Word *Eternity.* How happy were I, if I were provided for Eternity! Sure it concerns us, seeing we look for such things, to be diligent that we may be found of him in peace. O let not that Day come by surprisal upon you. Remember that as Death leaves, so Judgment will find you.

Infer. 4. Is Jesus Christ appointed Judge of Quick and Dead, *then look to it*, all you that hope to be found of him in Peace, *that you avoid those sins, and live in the daily practice of those duties, which the consideration of that day powerfully perswade you to avoid or practice.* For it not only presses us to Holiness *in actu primo*, in the being of it; but *in actu secundo*, in the daily exercise and practice of it. Do you indeed expect such a Day? Oh then,

First, See you be meek and patient under all injuries and abuses for Christ's sake. Avenge not your selves, but leave it to the Lord, who will do it. Don't anticipate the Work of God. *Be patient my Brethren, to the coming of the Lord*, James 5. 7, 8, 9.

Secondly, Be communicative publick-hearted Christians, studying and devising liberal things for Christ's distressed Members. And you shall have both an honourable remembrance of it, and a full reward of it in that Day, *Mat.* 25. 34, 35.

Thirdly, Be watchful and sober, keep the golden Bridle of Moderation upon all your Affections; and see that you be not over-charged with the cares and love of this present Life, *Luke* 21. 34, 35. Will you that your Lord come, and find you in such a posture? *O let your Moderation be known unto all, the Lord is at hand*, Phil. 4. 5.

Fourthly, Improve all your Master's Talents, diligently and carefully. Take heed of the Napkin, *Mat.* 25. 14. 18. Then must you make up your account for them all.

Fifthly, But above all, be sincere in your Profession. Let your Hearts be found in God's Statutes, that you may never be ashamed; for this Day will be the Day of Manifestation of all hidden things. And nothing is so secret, but that Day will reveal it, *Luke* 12. 1, 2, 3. *Beware of hypocrisie, for there is nothing covered which shall not be revealed, neither hid, that shall not be made known.* —— Thus I have finished, thro' Divine Aids, the whole Doctrine of the Imputation of Redemption by Jesus Christ; we shall wind up the whole in a General Exhortation, and I have done.

The General USE

The general Use of the whole, pressing to Holiness, which is the main scope of the Doctrine of Redemption.

AND now, to close up all, let me perswade all those for whom the dear Son of God came from the blessed Bosom of the Father; assumed

Flesh,

Fleſh, brake by the ſtrength of his own Love, through all diſcouragements and impediments, laid down his own life a ranſom for their Souls; for whom he lived, died, roſe, aſcended, and lives for ever in Heaven to intercede; to live wholly to Chriſt, as Chriſt lived, and died wholly for them.

O Brethren, never was the Heathen World acquainted with ſuch arguments to deter them from Sin, never acquainted with ſuch Motives to urge them to *Holineſs*, as I ſhall this Day acquaint you with. My requeſt is, to give up both your Hearts and Lives to glorifie the Father, Son and Spirit, whoſe you are, by the Holineſs and Heavenlineſs of them. Other things are expected from you, than from other Men. See that you turn not all this Grace that hath ſounded in your Ears, into wantonneſs. Think not becauſe Chriſt hath done ſo much for you, you may ſit ſtill; much leſs indulge your ſelves in Sin, becauſe Chriſt hath offered up ſuch an excellent Sacrifice for the expiation of it. No, no, though Chriſt came to be a Curſe, he did not come to be a Cloak for your Sins. *If one died for all, then were all dead; that they that live, ſhould not henceforth live to themſelves; but to him that died for them*, 2 Cor. 5. 15. O keep your lives pure and clean. Don't make freſh work for the blood of Chriſt every day. *If you live in the Spirit, ye ſee that you walk in the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 25. That is (ſaith *Cornelius a Lapide* very ſolidly) Let us ſhape and order our lives and actions according to the dictates, inſtinct and impulſes of the Spirit, and of that grace of the Spirit put within us, and planted in our Hearts, which tendeth to practical Holineſs. O let the Grace which is in your Hearts, iſſue out into all your religious, civil and natural Actions. Let the Faith that is in your Hearts appear in your Prayers; the Obedience of your Hearts in hearing; the Meekneſs of your Hearts in ſuffering; the Mercifulneſs of your Hearts in diſtributing; the Truth and Righteouſneſs of your Hearts, in trading; the Sobriety and Temperance of your Hearts in Eating and Drinking. Theſe be the Fruits of Chriſt's Sufferings indeed, they are ſweet Fruits. Let Grace refine, enoble and elevate all your Actions; that you may ſay, *truly our Converſation is in Heaven.* Let Grace have the ordering of your Tongues, and of your Hands; the moulding of your whole Converſation. Let not Humility appear in ſome Actions, and Pride in others. Holy ſeriouſneſs in ſome companies, and vain frothineſs in others. Suffer not the fountain of Corruption to mingle with, or polute the ſtreams of Grace. Write as exactly as you can after your Copy Chriſt. O let there not be (as one ſays) here a Line, and there a Blank; here a Word and there a Blot. One Word of God, and two of the World. Now a ſpiritual Rapture, and then a fleſhly Frolick. This day a fair ſtride to Heaven, and to Morrow a ſlide back again towards Hell. But *be you in the fear of the Lord all the day long.* Let there be a due proportion betwixt all the parts of your converſation. Approve your ſelves the Servants of Chriſt in all things. *By pureneſs, by knowledge, long-ſuffering, by the Holy Ghoſt, by love unfeigned, by the Word of Truth, by the Power of God, by the armour of righteouſneſs, on the right hand, and on the left*, 2Cor. 6. 6. *See then how accurately you walk.* —— Cut off occaſion from them that deſire occaſion; and in well-doing commit your ſelves to God, and commend Religion to the World. That this is your great concernment and duty, I ſhall evidence to your Conſciences, by theſe following Conſiderations. That of all Perſons in the World the redeemed of the Lord, are moſt obliged to be Holy; moſt aſſiſted for a Life of holineſs; and that God intends to make great Uſe of their Lives, both for the Conviction and Converſion of others.

Secundum dictamen inſtinctum impulſum ſpiritus eo gratiæ immiſſæ, et in ditæ nobis a ſpiritu ſancto.

Conſider, *Firſt*, God hath more obliged them to live pure and ſtrict Lives. I know the Command obliges them to it, even thoſe that caſt away the Cords of the Commands, and break Chriſt's Bonds aſunder, are yet bound by them; and cannot plead a diſpenſation to live as they do. Yea, and it is not unuſual for them to feel the Obligations of the Command upon their Conſciences, even when their impetuous Luſts hurry them on to the Violation of them; but there are ſpecial Ties upon your Souls, that oblige you to Holineſs more than others. Many ſpecial and peculiar Engagements you are under. *Firſt*, from *God*. *Secondly*, from *your ſelves*. *Thirdly*, from your *Brethren*. *Fourthly*, from your *Enemies*.

Firſt, God hath peculiarly oblig'd you to purity and ſtrictneſs of Life. Yea, every Perſon in the bleſſed Trinity hath caſt his Cord over your Souls, to bind up your Hearts and Lives to the moſt ſtrict and preciſe Obedience of his Commands. *The Father* hath obliged you, and that not only by the common Tie of *Creation*, which is yet of great Efficacy in it ſelf; for is it reaſonable, that God ſhould create and form ſo excellent a piece, and that it ſhould be employed againſt him? That he ſhould plant the Tree, and another eat the Fruit of it? But beſides this common Engagement, he hath obliged you to Holineſs of Life.

Firſt, By his wiſe and merciful Deſigns and Counſels for your Recovery and Salvation by Jeſus Chriſt. It was he that laid the corner Stone of your Salvation with his own Hands. The firſt Motion ſprang out of his Breaſt. If God had not deſigned the Redeemer for you, the World had never ſeen him; he had never left that Sweet Boſom for you. It was the Act of the Father to give you to the Son to be redeemed, and then to give the Son to be a Redeemer to you. Both of them ſtupenduous and aſtoniſhing acts of Grace. And in both God acted as a moſt free Agent. When he gave you to Chriſt before the beginning of time, there was nothing out of himſelf that could in the leaſt move him to it. When the Father, Son, and Spirit (as I may ſay) at the Counſel Table, contriving and laying the deſign for the Salvation of a few out of many of *Adam*'s degenerate Off-ſpiring, there was none came before them to ſpeak one Word for thee; but ſuch was the divine pleaſure to inſert thy Name in that Catalogue of the ſaved. Oh how much oweſt thou to the Lord for this! And what an Engagement doth it leave upon thy Soul to obey, pleaſe, and glorifie him?

Secondly, By *his bountiful remunerations of your obedience, which have been wonderful.* What ſervice didſt thou ever perform for him, for which he hath not paid thee a thouſand times more than it was worth? Didſt thou ever ſeek him diligently, and not find him a bountiful rewarder; none ſeek him in vain, unleſs ſuch only as ſeek him vainly, *Heb.* 11. 6. Didſt thou ever give a cup of cold Water in the Name of a Diſciple, and not receive a Diſciples reward? *Matth.* 10. 42. Haſt thou not found inward Peace and Comfort flowing into thy Soul, upon every piece of ſincere Obedience? Oh what a good Maſter do Saints ſerve? You that are remiſs and unconſtant in your Obedience, you that are heartleſs and cold in Duties; hear how your God expoſtulates wit

R. A. Vindiciæ Pietatis.

with you, *Jer.* 2. 31. *Have I been a Wilderneſs to Iſrael, or a Land of Darkneſs?* q d. Have I been a hard Maſter to you? Have you any reaſon to complain of me? To whomſoever I have been ſtraight-handed, ſurely I have not been ſo to you. Are the Fruits of Sin like the Fruits of Obedience? Do you know where to find a better Maſter? Why then are you ſo ſhuffling and unconſtant, ſo ſluggiſh and remiſs in my Work? Surely God is not behind-hand with any of you. May you not ſay with *David*, Pſalm 119. 56. *This I had becauſe I kept thy precepts.* There are Fruits in Holineſs, even preſent Fruit. It is a high Favour to be imployed for God. Reward enough that he will accept any thing thou doſt. But to return every Duty thou preſenteſt to him with ſuch comforts, ſuch quicknings, ſuch inward and outward Bleſſings into thy Boſom, ſo that thou mayeſt open the Treaſury of thine own Experiences, view the Varieties of Encouragements and Love-tokens at ſeveral times received in Duties; and ſay, this I had, and that I had, by waiting on God, and ſerving him. Oh what an Engagement is this upon thee to be ever-abounding in the work of the Lord! Though thou muſt not work for *Wages*; yet God will not let thy work go on unrewarded. For *He is not unrighteous to forget your work and Labour of Love.*

Thirdly, Your *Father* hath further obliged you to this Holineſs and Purity of Life, *by ſignifying to you* (as he hath frequently done) *the great delight and pleaſure he hath therein.* He hath told you, that *ſuch as are upright in the way are his delight*, Prov. 11. 20. That he would not have you *forget to do good, and to communicate, for with ſuch ſacrifices he is well pleaſed*, Heb. 13. 16. You know you cannot *walk worthy of the Lord to all pleaſing*, except *ye be fruitful in every good word and work*, Col. 1. 10. And oh what a Bond is this upon you to live Holy Lives! Can you pleaſe your ſelves in diſpleaſing your Father? If you have the Hearts of Children in you, ſure you cannot. O you cannot grieve his Spirit by looſe and careleſs walking, but you muſt grieve your own Spirits too. How many times hath God pleaſed you, gratified and contented you, and will you not pleaſe and content him? This Mercy you have asked of him, and he gave it, that Mercy and you were not denied; in many things the Lord hath wonderfully condeſcended to pleaſe you, and now there is but one thing that he deſires of you, and that moſt reaſonable, yea, beneficial for you, as well as pleaſing to him, 1 *Phil.* 27. *Only let your converſation be as becometh the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt.* This is the one thing, the great and main thing he expects from you in this World, and will not you do it? Can you expect he ſhould gratifie your deſires, when you make no more of grieving and diſpleaſing him? Well, if you know what will pleaſe God, and yet reſolve not to do it, but will rather pleaſe your Fleſh, and gratifie the Devil, than him; pray pull off your Vizards, fall into your own rank among Hypocrites; and appear as indeed you are.

Fourthly, the Father hath much obliged you to ſtrictneſs and purity of converſation, by his gracious promiſes made to ſuch as ſo walk. He hath Promiſed to do great things for you, if you will but do this one thing for him. If you will *order your converſation aright*, Pſal. 50. *ult.* He will be *your Sun and Shield*, if you walk before him and be upright, *Gen.* 15. 1. *He will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he with-hold from him that walketh uprightly*, Pſal. 48. 11. And he promiſes no more to you than he hath made good to others, that have thus walked, and ſtands ready to perform to you alſo. If you look to enjoy the good of the promiſe, you are obliged by all your Expectations and Hopes to order your Lives purely and uprightly. This Hope will ſet you on to purge your lives as well as your Hearts from all pollutions, 2 Cor. 7 1. *Having theſe Promiſes, let us cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit, perfecting Holineſs in the fear of God.*

Fifthly, Yea, *He hath yet more obliged you to ſtrict and holy lives by his confidence in you, that you will thus walk, and pleaſe him.* He expreſſeth himſelf in Scripture as one that dare truſt you with his Glory, knowing that you will be tender of it, and dare do no otherwiſe. If but a man repoſe confidence in you and truſt you with his concerns, it greatly obliges you to be faithful. What an Engagement was that upon *Abraham* to walk uprightly, when God ſaid of him, *Gen.* 18. 19 *I know him, that he will command his Chidren, and his Houſhold after him, and they ſhall keep the way of the Lord*, q. d. as for this wicked Generation, whom I will ſpeedily conſume in my wrath, I know they regard not my Laws, they will trample my Commands under their feet, they care not how they provoke me, but I expect other things from *Abraham*, and I am confident he will not fail me. *I know him*, he is a man of another Spirit, and what I promiſe my ſelf from him, he will make good. And to the like purpoſe is that in *Iſa.* 36. 78. *I will mention the loving kindneſs of the Lord, and the praiſes of the Lord; according to all that the Lord hath beſtowed on us, and the great goodneſs towards the Houſe of Iſrael, which he hath beſtowed on them; according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving kindneſſes. For he ſaid, ſurely they are my people, Children that will not lie*, (or fail me) *ſo he was their Saviour.* Here you have an ample account of the endearing Mercies of God to that People, *ver.* 7. and the Lords confident Expectations of ſuitable returns from them, *ver.* 8. I ſaid (i. e.) (ſpeaking after the manner of Men in like caſes) I made full account that after all theſe endearments, and favours beſtowed upon them, they would not offer to be diſloyal and falſe to me. I have made them ſure enough to my ſelf, by ſo many bonds of Love. Like to which is that Expreſſion, *Zeph.* 3. 7: *I ſaid ſurely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive Inſtruction:* Oh how great are the Expectations of God from ſuch as you! I know *Abraham*, there's no doubt of him. And again, they are Children that will not lie, (*i. e.*) they will not *fallere fidem datam*, break their Covenant with me. Or they are my People that will not ſhrink, as Mr. *Cowerdale* well tranſlates, *filii non negantes*, ſuch as will keep touch with me, and will anſwer their Covenant-Engagements. And again, ſurely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive *inſtruction.* And ſhall not all this engage you to God? What! Neither the antient and bountiful love of God, in contriving your Redemption from Eternity, nor the bounty of God in rewarding all and every piece of Service you have done for him. Nor yet the pleaſure he takes in your obedience and upright walking. Nor the incouraging promiſes he hath made thereto, nor yet his confident Expectations of ſuch a life from you whom he hath ſo many ways obliged and endeared to himſelf? Will you forget your antient Friend, Contemn his rewards, take no delight or care to pleaſe him? Slight his Promiſes, and deceive and fail his Expectations? *Be aſtoniſhed, O ye Heavens, at this! and be horridly afraid.* Conſider how God the Father hath faſtned this five fold cord upon your Souls, and ſhew your ſelves Chriſtians; yea, to uſe the Prophet's words, *Iſa.* 46. 8. *Remember this, and ſhew your ſelves Men.*

Obligations from the Son.

Secondly, You are yet farther engaged to this precise and Holy Life by what the Son hath done for you, is not this Pure and Holy Life the very aim, and next end of his Death? Did he not shed his blood to *redeem you from your vain Conversations?* 1 Pet. 1. 18. Was not this the design of all his Sufferings? *That being delivered out of the hands of your enemies, you might serve him in righteousness and holiness, all the days of your life*, Luke 1. 74, 75. And is not the Apostle's inference, 2 *Cor.* 5. 14. highly reasonable? *If one died for all, then were all dead, and that he died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live to themselves, but to him that died for them.* Did Christ only buy your Persons, and not your Services also? No, no, whoever hath thy time, thy strength, or any part of either; I can assure thee, Christian, that Christ hath paid for it, and thou givest away what is none of *thine own* to give. Every moment of thy time, is his. Every Talent, whether of Grace or Nature, is his. And dost thou defraud him of his own? O how liberal are you of your precious Words and Hours, as if Christ had never made a purchase of them! O think of this when thy life runs muddy and foul. When the Fountain of Corruption flows out at thy Tongue, in idle frothy Discourses; or at thy hand, in Sinful unwarrantable actions; Doth this become the redeemed of the Lord? Did Christ come from the bosom of his Father for this? Did he groan, swet, bleed, endure the Cross and lay down his Life for this? Was he so pleased with all his Sorrows, and Sufferings, his Pangs and Agonies upon the account of that Satisfaction he should have in seeing the travail of his Soul? *Isa.* 53. 11. as if he had said, *Welcome Death, welcome Agonies, welcome the bitter cup, and heavy burthen; I chearfully submit to all this. These are travailing pangs indeed, but I shall see a beautiful birth at last. These throws and agonies, shall bring forth many lovely children to God, I shall have joy in them, and glory from them to all eternity. This blood of mine, these sufferings of mine, shall purchase to me, the Persons, Duties, Services and Obedience of many thousands that will love me, and Honour me, serve me, and obey me with their Souls and Bodies which are mine.* And doth not this engage you to look to your Lives, and keep them pure? Is not every one of Christ's wounds, a mouth open to plead for more Holiness, more Service, and more Fruit from you? Oh what will engage you if this will not? But,

Engagements from the Spirit.

Thirdly, This is not all; as a Man when he weigheth a thing, casteth in weight after weight, till the Scales are counterpoised: So doth God cast in Engagement after Engagement, and argument upon argument, till thy Heart (Christian be weighed up, and won to this Heavenly Life. And therefore as *Elihu* said to *Job*. Cap. 36. 22. *Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee what I have yet to speak on God's behalf.* Some Arguments have already been urged on the behalf of the Father and Son for purity, and cleanness of life; and next I have something to plead on the behalf of the *Spirit*. I plead now on his behalf, who hath so many times helped you to plead for your selves with God. He that hath so often refreshed, quickned and comforted you, he will be quenched, grieved, and displeased, by an impure, loose, and careless Conversation; and what will you do then? Who shall comfort you, when the comforter is departed from you? When he that should relieve your Souls, is far off? O grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, by which you are Sealed, to the day of Redemption, *Eph.* 4. 30. There is nothing grieves him more than impure practices; for he is a Holy Spirit. And look as Water damps and quenches the Fire, so doth Sin quench the Spirit, 1 *Thes.* 5. 19. Will you quench the warm Affections and burning desires which he hath kindled in your bosoms? If you do, 'tis a question whether ever you may recover them again to your dying day. The Spirit hath a delicate Sense. It is the most tender thing in the whole World. He feels the least touch of Sin, and is grieved when thy Corruptions within are stirred by Temptations, and break out to the defiling of thy life; then is the Holy Spirit of God, as it were, made sad, and heavy within thee. As that Word μὴ λυπεῖτε, *Eph.* 4. 30 may be rendred. For thereby thou resistest his motions, whereby in the way of a loving constraint, he would lead and guide thee in the way of thy duty; yea, thou not only resistest his Motions, but crossest his grand design, which is to purge and sanctifie thee wholly and build thee up more and more to the Perfection of Holiness. And when thou thus forsakest his conduct, and crossest his design in thy Soul, then doth he usually withdraw, as a Man that is grieved by the unkindness of his Friend. He draws in the beams of his evidencing and quickning Grace. Packs up all his divine Cordials and faith, as 'twere, to his unkind and disingenuous Soul.

The Spirits Expostulation with careless Christians.

'Hast thou thus requited me, for all the favours and kindnesses thou hast received from me? Have I quickned thee, when thou wast dead in Transgressions? Did I descend upon thee in the preaching of the Gospel, and communicate life, even the life of God, to thee; leaving others in the state of the dead? Have I shed forth such rich influences of Grace and Comfort upon thee? Comforting thee in all thy troubles, helping thee in all thy duties; satisfying thee in all thy doubts and perpexities of Soul; saving thee, and pulling thee back from so many destructive temptations and dangers? What had been thy condition, if I had not come unto thee? Could the world have converted thee without me? Could Ministers, could Angels have done that for thee which I did? And when I had quickned thee, and made thee a living soul, what couldst thou have done without my exciting and assisting grace? Couldst thou go on in the way of duty, if I had not led thee? How wouldst thou have waded thro' the deeps of spiritual troubles, if I had not born thee up? Whither had the temptations of Satan and thine own corruptions carried thee before this day, if I had not stood thy friend, and come in for thy rescue in the time of need? Did I ever fail thee in thy extremities? Did I ever leave thee in thy dangers? Have I not been tender over thee, and faithful to thee? And now for which of all these kindnesses dost thou thus wrong and abuse me? Why hast thou wounded me thus by thy kindness? Ah thou hast ill requited my Love! And now thou shalt eat the fruit of thy doings. Let the light be now darkness; thy Songs turn'd into howlings; the joy of thine heart, the light of thine eyes, the health of thy countenance, even the face of thy God, and the joy of Salvation be hid from thee.

This is ths fruit of careless and loose walking. To this sad Issue it will bring thee at last, and when it is come to this, thou shalt go to Ordinances, and Duties, and find no good in them; no Life quickning Comfort there. When thy Heart which was wont to be enlarged, and flowing; shall be clung up and dry; when thou shalt kneel down before the Lord, and cry as *Elisha* when with the mantle of *Elijah*, he smote the Water. *Where is the Lord God of Elijah?* So thou, where is the God of Prayer? where is the God of Duties? But there is no answer: When like *Sampson*, thou shalt go forth and shake thy self as at other times; but thy strength is gone; then tell me what thou hast done in resisting, quenching, and grieving the Holy Spirit of God by impure and offensive Practices? And thus you see, what engagements lie upon you from the Spirit also, to walk Uprightly and keep the Issues of Life Pure.

Mr. Polewheel's *Treatise of quenching the Spirit.*

I could willingly have enlarged my self upon this last branch, but that I find a judicious Hand

hath lately improved this Argument; to which I ſhall refer the Reader. Thus God hath obliged you to circumſpect and holy Lives.

Secondly, *You are under great engagements to keep your Lives pure, even from your ſelves, as well as from your God.* As God hath bound you to purity of Converſation, ſo you have bound your ſelves. And there are ſeveral things in you, and done by you, which wonderfully increaſe, and ſtrengthen your Obligations to practical Holineſs.

Firſt, Your *clearer illumination* is a ſtrong bond upon your Souls, *Eph.* 5. 8. *Ye were ſometimes darkneſs, but now ye are light in the Lord; walk as Children of the light.* You cannot pretend, or plead ignorance of your Duty. You ſtand convinced in your own Conſciences before God, that this is your unqueſtionable Duty. Chriſtians, will you not all yield to this? I know you readily yield it. We live indeed in a contentious diſputing Age. In other things our Opinions are different. One Chriſtian is of this Judgment, another of that; but doth he deſerve the name of a Chriſtian that dare once queſtion this Truth? In this we all meet and cloſe in oneneſs of Mind and Judgment, *that it is our indiſputable Duty, to live Pure, Strict, and clean Lives. The grace of God which hath appeared to you, hath taught you this truth clearly and convincingly*, Tit. 2. 11, 12. *You have received how you ought to walk, and to pleaſe God*, 1 Theſ. 4. 1. Well then, this being yielded, the inference is plain and undeniable; that you cannot walk as others, in the Vanity of their Mind; but you muſt offer violence to your own Light. You cannot ſuffer the Corruptions of your Hearts to break forth into Practice, but you muſt ſlight, and put by the notices and rebukes of your own Conſciences, *James* 4. 17. *He that knoweth to do good, and doth it not; to him it is ſin.* Yea Sin with a Witneſs. Aggravated Sin. Sin of a deeper Tincture than that of the ignorant Heathens. Sin that ſadly waſtes and violates Conſcience. Certainly whoever hath, you have no Cloak for your Sin. Light and Luſt ſtruggling together, great Light and ſtrong Luſts: Theſe make the Soul a troubled Sea that cannot reſt. O but when maſterleſs Luſts over-bear Conſcience, this impreſſes horror upon the Soul. This brake *David*'s Heart, *Pſal.* 51. 6. *Thou haſt put Knowledge in my inner Parts*, q. d. Ah, Lord! I went againſt the rebukes of Conſcience, to the Commiſſion of this Sin. I had a watchful Light ſet up with me. I knew it was Sin. My light endeavoured lovingly to reſtrain me, and I thruſt it aſide. Beſides, what Pleaſure in Sin can you have? Indeed ſuch as for want of Light know not what they do, or ſuch whoſe Conſciences are ſeared and paſt feeling; they may ſeek a little Pleaſure (ſuch as it is) out of Sin; but what Content or Pleaſure can you have, ſo long as your Light is ever breaking in upon you, and ſmiting you for what you do? This greatly encreaſes your Obligation to a preciſe holy Life. Again,

Secondly, *You are Profeſſors of Holineſs.* You have given in your Names to Chriſt, to be his Diſciples; and by this your Engagement to a Life of Holineſs are yet further ſtrengthened, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. *Let every one that nameth the name of Chriſt, depart from iniquity.* The name of Chriſt is called upon you, and it's a *worthy name*, James 2. 7. It's called upon you, as the name of the Husband, is called upon his Wife, *Iſa.* 4. 1. *Let thy name be called upon us.* Or as the name of a Father is called upon his Child, *Gen.* 48. 16. *Let thy name be called on them, and the name of my Fathers.* Well then, you bear the Name of Chriſt as his Spouſes or Children; and will you not Live ſuitably to your Name? Every Place and Relation, every Title of Honour and Dignity hath its *decorum*, and becomingneſs. O how will that worthy Name of Chriſt be blaſphemed through you, if you adorn it not with becoming deportments? Better you had never profeſt any thing, than to ſet your ſelves by your Profeſſion in the Eye and Obſervation of the World; and then to pour contempt on Jeſus Chriſt, by your ſcandalous Converſations, before the *Chams* of the World; who will laugh at it. I remember it was a *Memento* given to one of his Name by *Alexander*, *Recordare nominis Alexandri.* Remember (ſaid he) thy Name *Alexander*, and do nothing unworthy of that Name. O that's a heavy Charge, *Rom.* 2. 24. *Through you is the Name of God blaſphemed among the Heathens.* Unhappy Man, that ever thou ſhouldeſt be a reproach to Chriſt! The Herd of wicked Men, they are *ignota capita*; Men of no Note, or Obſervation. They may Sin, and Sin again; drink, ſwear, and tumble in all uncleanneſs; and it paſſes away ſilently; the World takes little notice of it. Their wicked Actions make but little noiſe in the World; but the Miſcarriages of Profeſſors are like a *Blazing Comet*, or an Eclipſed Sun, which all Men gaze at, and make their Obſervations upon; Oh then, what manner of Perſons ought you to be, who bear the worthy Name of Chriſt upon you!

Thirdly, But more than this, *You have obliged your ſelves to this Life of Holineſs by your own Prayers.* How many times have you lifted up your Hands to Heaven, and cried with *David*, *Pſal.* 119. 5. *O that my ways were directed to keep thy Statutes. Order my ſteps in thy Word, and let no iniquity have dominion over me*, ver. 133. Were you in earneſt with God, when you thus prayed? Did you mean as you ſaid? Or did you only complement with God? If your Hearts and Tongues agreed in this requeſt, doubtleſs it's as much your Duty to endeavour, as to deſire thoſe Mercies; and if not, yet do all thoſe Prayers ſtand on Record before the Lord, and will be produced againſt you as Witneſſes to condemn you, for your Hypocriſie and Vanity. How often alſo have you in your Prayers lamented and bewailed your careleſs and uneven walkings? You have ſaid with *Ezra*, chap. 9. 6. *O my God, I am aſhamed and even bluſh to look up unto thee.* And do not your Confeſſions oblige you to greater circumſpection and care for time to come? Will you confeſs, and ſin? And ſin, and confeſs? Go to God and bewail your Evils, and when you have bewailed them, return again to the commiſſion of them? God forbid, you ſhould thus diſſemble with God, play with Sin, and dye your Iniquities with a deeper Tincture.

Fourthly, And laſtly, to add no more; *you have often reproved or cenſured others for their miſcarriages and falls, which adds to your own obligation, to walk accurately and evenly.* Have you not often reproved your erring Brethren? or at leaſt privately cenſured them, if not duly reproved them, (for to theſe left-handed blows of ſecret cenſurings, we are more apt than to the fair and open ſtrokes of juſt and due reproofs) and will you practice the ſame things, you criminate and cenſure others for? *Thou that teacheſt another* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *teacheſt thou not thy ſelf?* Rom. 2. 21. So ſay I, thou that cenſureſt or rebukeſt another, condemneſt thou not thy ſelf? Will your rebukes ever do good to others, whilſt you allow in your ſelves what you condemn in them? And as theſe Reproofs and Cenſures can do them no good, ſo they do you much evil, by reaſon of them

you

you are αὐτοκατάκριτοι ſelf-condemned Perſons; and out of your own Mouths God will judge you. For you need no other Witneſs, than your ſelves in this Caſe. Your own Tongues will fall upon you. Your Cenſures and Reproofs of others, will leave you without Plea, or Apology, if you look not to your Lives with greater Care. And yet will you be careleſs ſtill? Fear you not the Diſpleaſure of God? Nor the wounding and diſquieting your own Conſciences? Surely theſe things are of no light Value with you, if you be Chriſtians indeed.

Thirdly, You are yet further engaged to practical Holineſs upon the account of your Brethren, who are not a little concerned, and intereſted therein. For if through the neglect of your Hearts, your Lives be defiled and polluted, this will be thrown in their Faces, and many Innocent and Upright ones, both reproached and grieved upon your Account. This miſchievous effect holy *David* earneſtly deprecated, *Pſal.* 69. 5, 6. *O God thou knoweſt my fooliſhneſs, and my ſins are not hid from thee; let not them that wait on thee, O Lord God of Hoſts, be aſhamed for my ſake. Let not them that ſeek thee, be confounded for my ſake, O God of Iſrael*, q. d. Lord, thou knoweſt what a weak and fooliſh Creature I am. And how apt to miſcarry, if left to my ſelf, and ſhould I through my fooliſhneſs, act unbecoming a Saint; how would this ſhame the Faces, and ſad the Hearts of thy People! They will be as Men confounded at the Report of my fall. The fall of one Chriſtian, is matter of trouble and ſhame to all the reſt, And when they ſhall hear the ſad and unwelcome News of your ſcandalous Miſcarriages, (which will certainly be the effect of a neglected Heart and Life) they will ſay as *David* concerning *Saul and Jonathan. Tell it not in* Gath, *publiſh it not in the ſtreets of* Askelon, *&c.* Or as *Tamar* concerning *Amnon*, *And we, whither ſhall we cauſe our ſhame to go*? And for them, they ſhall be as Fools in *Iſrael.* Thy looſe and careleſs Life will cauſe them to eſtrange themſelves from thee, and look ſhy upon thee, as being aſhamed to own thee, and canſt thou bear that? Will it not grieve and pierce your very Hearts to ſee a Cloud of Strangeneſs and Trouble over the Countenances of your Brethren? To ſee your ſelves diſowned and lightly eſteemed by them? This very conſideration ſtruck a great Favourite in the *Perſian* Court to the very Heart.* 'Twas *Uſtazanes*, who had been Governour to *Sapores* in his Minority. And this Man for fear, denied the Chriſtian Faith; and complied with the Idolatrous Worſhip of the King. And one Day (ſaith the Hiſtorian) ſitting at the Court-Gate, he ſaw *Simon* the aged Arch-Biſhop of *Silucia*, drawing along to Priſon, for his conſtancy in the Chriſtian Faith, and though he durſt not openly own the Chriſtian Faith he had baſely denied, and confeſs himſelf a Chriſtian; yet he could not chuſe but riſe, and expreſs his reverence to this holy Man, in a reſpective and honourable Salutation; but the zealous good Man frowned upon him, and turned away his Face from him; as thinking ſuch an *Apoſtate* unworthy of the leaſt reſpect from him; this preſently ſtruck *Uſtazanes* to the Heart, and drew from him many Tears, and Groans; and thus he reaſoned with himſelf, *Simon* will not own me, and can I think but that God will diſclaim me, when I appear before his Tribunal? *Simon* will not ſpeak unto me, will not ſo much as look upon me, and can I look for ſo much as a good word or look from Jeſus Chriſt, whom I have ſo ſhamefully Betrayed, and Denyed? Hereupon he threw off his rich courtly Robes, and put on mourning Apparel, and profeſſed himſelf a Chriſtian; and dyed a Martyr. O 'tis a piercing thing to an honeſt Heart, to be caſt out of the Favour of God's People. If you walk looſly, neither God nor his People will look kindly upon you.

* *Zozomen. lib.* 2, *cap.* 8.

Fourthly, And laſtly, *Your very Enemies engage you to this pure and holy life upon a double ground.* You are obliged by them two ways, *viz.* as they are your *bold Cenſurers*, and your *watchful Obſervers.* They cenſure you as Hypocrites, and will you give them ground and matter for ſuch a charge? They ſay only your Tongues are more holy than other Mens, and ſhall they prove it from your Practice? They alſo obſerve you diligently. Lie at catch, and are highly gratified by your miſcarriages. If your Lives be looſe and defiled, you will not only be a ſhame to your Friends, but the Song of your Enemies. You will make mirth in Hell; and gratifie all the Enemies of God. This is that they watch for. They are curious obſervers of your goings: And that which makes them Triumph at your Falls and Miſcarriages, is not only that deep rooted Enmity betwixt the two Seeds, but becauſe all your Miſcarriages and Evils are ſo many Abſolutions to their Conſciences, and Juſtifications (as they think) of their Ways and Practices. For look as your Strictneſs and Holineſs doth as it were Caſt, and Condemn them, as *Noah*, *Heb.* 11. 7. by his Practice, condemned the World, their Conſciences flie in their Faces, when they ſee your Holy and Pure Converſations. It lays a damp upon them. It works upon their Conſciences, and cauſes many ſmart Reflections. So when you Fall, you as it were, abſolve their Conſciences, looſe the Bonds of Conviction you had made faſt upon them, and now there's matter of joy put before them.

Oh, ſay they, whatever theſe Men talk; we ſee they are no better than we. They can do as we do. The can Cozen and Cheat for Advantage. They can comply with any thing for their own Ends; 'tis not Conſcience, as we once thought, but meer Stomach and Humour, that made them ſo preciſe. And oh, what a ſad thing is this! Hereby you ſhed Soul-blood. You faſten the Bonds of Death upon their Souls. You kill thoſe Convictions, which, for any thing you know, might have made way to their Converſion. When you fall, you may riſe again; but they may fall at your Example, and never riſe more. Never have a good Opinion of the Ways of God, or of his People any more. Upon this conſideration, *David* begs of God, *Pſal.* 5. 8. *Lead me O Lord, in thy Righteouſneſs, becauſe of my Enemies*; (or as the Hebrew) *my Obſervers, make thy way ſtraight before my Face.* And thus you ſee how your very Enemies oblige you to this Holy and Pure Converſation alſo.

Now put all this together, and ſee to what theſe particulars will amount. You have heard how *God the Father* hath engaged you to this Converſation, purity, by his *deſignment of your Salvation. Rewarding your Obedience. His Pleaſure in it. His Promiſes to it.* And his great Confidence in you, that you will thus walk before him. The *Lord Jeſus* hath alſo engaged you thereunto by his Death and Sufferings, whereby you were redeemed from your vain Converſations. The *Spirit* hath engaged you, by telling you plainly how much you will grieve and wrong him, reſiſt and quench him, if you do not keep your ſelves pure. Yea, you are obliged further by *your ſelves*, your clear *Illumination*, your high *Profeſſion*, your many *Prayers* and *Confeſſions*, your many

many Cenſures and Reprehenſions of others, do all ſtrengthen your obligation to Holineſs. Yea, you are obliged further to this Holy Life, by the Shame, Grief, and Trouble your looſe walking will bring upon your Friends. And the Mirth it will make for, and Miſchief it will do to your Enemies. Who will fall and break their Necks, where it may be you only ſtumbled and brake your Shins. Who are juſtified, and abſolved (as before you heard) by your Miſcarriages And now what think you of all this? Are you obliged or not, to this Purity of Life? Are all theſe Bonds tied with ſuch ſlip-Knots that you can get looſe, and free your ſelves at pleaſure from them? If all theſe things are of no force with you, if none of theſe Bonds can hold you; may it not be queſtioned (notwithſtanding your Profeſſion) whether any ſpiritual Principle, any fear of God, or love to Chriſt, be in your Souls or no? O you could not play faſt and looſe with God; if ſo, you could not as *Sampſon*, ſnap theſe Bonds aſunder at your Pleaſure.

Conſid. 2. *Secondly*, As you are more obliged to keep the Iſſues of Life pure than others are, ſo God hath given you greater *Aſſiſtances and Advantages* for it, than others have. God hath not been wanting to any in Helps and Means. Even the Heathen who are without the Goſpel, will yet be ſpeechleſs and inexcuſable before God: But how much more will you be ſo! Who beſides the Light of Nature, and the general Light of the Goſpel, have *Firſt*, ſuch a *Principle* put within you. *Secondly*, ſuch *Patterns* ſet before you. *Thirdly*, ſuch an *Aſſiſtant* ready to help you. *Fourthly*, ſo many *Rods* at your Backs to quicken you; and prevent your wandering. If notwithſtanding all theſe helps, your Life be ſtill Unholy.

Firſt, Shall Men of ſuch *Principles* walk as others do? Shall we lament for you, as *David* once did for *Saul*, ſaying, *there the ſhield of the mighty was vilely caſt away, the ſhield of* Saul; *as though he had not been anointed with Oil.* There the Honour of a Chriſtian was vilely caſt away, as though he had not been anointed with the Spirit? *You have received an unction from the holy one, which teacheth you all things*, 1 John 2. 20. Another Spirit, far above that which is in other Men, 1 *Cor.* 2. 12. And as this Spirit which is in you, is fitted for this Life of Holineſs, (*for ye are his workmanſhip created in Chriſt Jeſus to good works*, Epheſ. 2. 10.) So this holy Spirit, or principle infuſed into your Souls, hath ſuch a natural tendency to this holy Life; that if you Live not purely and ſtrictly, you muſt offer Violence to your own Principles, and new Nature. A twofold help this Principle affords you for a Life of Holineſs.

(1.) *Firſt*, It pulls you back from Sin, as in *Joſeph*; *How can I do this great wickedneſs and ſin againſt God!* And it alſo inclines you powerfully to Obedience. 'Tis a curb to Sin, and a Spur to Holineſs. It is unpoſſible for all others to Live Spiritually and Heavenly, becauſe they have no new Nature to incline them thereunto. And methinks it ſhould be hard for you to Live carnally, and ſenſually; and therein croſs the very bent and tendency of the new Creature, which is formed in you. How can you neglect Prayer as others do, whilſt the Spirit by Divine Pulſations is awaking and rouſing up your ſluggiſh Hearts with ſuch inward Motions, and Whiſpers as that, *Pſal.* 27. 8. *Seek my Face.* Yea, whilſt you feel (during your omiſſions of Duty) ſomething within that bemoans it ſelf, and as it were, cries for Food, Pains and Gripes you, like an empty Stomach, and will not let you be quiet till it be relieved. How can you let out your Hearts to the World as other Men do; when all that while your Spirit is reſtleſs, and akes like a Bone out of joint. And you can never be at eaſe till you come back to God, and ſay, as *Pſal.* 116. *Return to thy reſt, O my Soul.* Is it not hard, yea, naturally impoſſible to fix a Stone, and make it abide in the fluid Air? Doth not every Creature in a reſtleſs Motion tend to its proper Center, and deſire its own Perfection? So doth this new Creature alſo. You ſee how the Rivers in their courſe will not be checkt, but bear down all Obſtacles in their way, *& Savior ab obice ibit.* A ſtop doth but make them rage the more, and run the ſwifter afterwards.

There is a Central force in theſe natural Motions, which cannot be ſtopt. And the like may you obſerve in the Motions of a renewed Soul, *John* 4. 14. *It will be in him as a Well of Water ſpringing up.* And is it not hard for you to keep it down, or turn its courſe? How hard did *Jeremy* and *David* find that work? If you do not Live holy Lives, you muſt croſs your own new Nature, and violate the Law that's written in your own Hearts, and engraven upon your own Bowels. To this purpoſe a late Writer ſpeaks; Till you were converted (ſaith he) the Fleſh was predominant, and therefore it was impoſſible for you to live any other than a fleſhy Life; for every thing will Act according to its predominant Principle. Should you not therefore live a Spiritual Life? Should not the Law of God written in your Hearts, be legible in your Lives? O ſhould not your Lives be according to the tendency of your Hearts? Thus he: Doubtleſs this is no ſmall Advantage to practical Holineſs. But,

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Secondly, Beſides this Principle within, *you have no ſmall Aſſiſtance for the purity of Life by theſe excellent Patterns before you.* The Path of Holineſs is no untrodden Path to you. *Chriſt* and his Servants have beaten it before you. The Life of Chriſt is your Copy, and it is a fair Copy indeed, without a blot. Oh what an Advantage is this to draw all the Lines of your Actions according to his Example! This glorious grand Example is often preſt upon you for imitation, *Heb.* 12. 2. *Looking to Jeſus*, he hath left *you an Example that ye ſhould tread in his ſteps*, 1 Pet. 2. 21. His Life is a living Rule to his People, and beſides Chriſt's Example (for you may ſay, who can live as Chriſt did? His Example is quite above us) you have *a cloud of Witneſſes.* A Cloud for its directive Uſe, and theſe Men of like Paſſions, Temptations, and Conſtitutions with you; who have gone before you in exemplary Holineſs. The Holy Ghoſt (intending therein your ſpecial Help and Advantage) hath ſet many induſtrious Pens awork to write the Lives of the Saints, and preſerve for your uſe, their holy Sayings, and Heavenly Actions. He bids you *take them for an Example*, James 5. 10. Oh what excellent Men are paſt on before you! What renowned Worthies have led the way! Men whoſe Converſations were in Heaven, whilſt they Tabernacled on Earth. Whilſt this lower World had their Bodies, the World above had their Hearts, their Affections; their Actions, their Deſigns were all in Heaven. Men that improved Troubles, and Comforts; Loſſes, and Gains; Smiles, and Frowns; and all for Heaven. Men that did extract Heaven out of Spirituals, out of Temporals out of all things; their Hearts were full of heavenly Meditations, their

Mouths of heavenly Communications; and their Practices of heavenly Inclinations: O what ſingular help is this! Where they followed Chriſt, and kept the way, they are propounded for your imitation; and where any of them turned aſide, you have a mark ſet upon that Action, for your caution and prevention. Doth any ſtrange or unuſual Tryal befall you, in which you are ready to ſay with the Church, *Lam.* 1. 12. *Was there ever any ſorrow like unto my ſorrow?* Here you may ſee *the ſame affliction accompliſh'd in your Brethren*, 1 *Pet.* 5. 9. Here's ſtore of good Company to encourage you. Doth the World and Devil endeavour to turn you from your Duty, by loading it with ſhameful Scoffs, or Sufferings? In this caſe you may look to *Jeſus*, who deſpiſed the ſhame; and to your *Brethren*, who counted it their honour to be diſhonoured for the name of Chriſt, as the Original of the Text, *Acts* 5. 41. may be tranſlated. Is it a diſhonour to thee to be rankt with *Abraham*, *Moſes*, *David*, and ſuch as were the Glory of the Ages they lived in? Art thou at any time under a faint fit of diſcouragement; and ready to deſpond under any burden? Oh how maiſt thou be animated by ſuch examples when ſuch a qualm comes over thy Heart? Some ſparks of their holy courage cannot chooſe but ſteal into they Breaſt, whilſt thou conſidereſt them. In them God hath ſet before thee the poſſibility of overcoming all difficulties, thou ſeeſt Men of the ſame mould, who had the ſame tryals, diſcouragement, and fears that now thou haſt, and yet overcame all. How is thy unbelief checkt when thou ſaiſt, *Oh I ſhall never reach the end*, I ſhall one Day utterly periſh! Why doſt thou ſay ſo? Why may not ſuch a poor Creature as thou art, be carried through as well as they; Had not they the ſame temptations and corruptions with you? Were not they all troubled with a naughty Heart, an enſnaring World, a buſie Devil as well as you? Alas! when they put on the *divine*, they did not put off the *humane* Nature; but complained, and feared as you do; and yet were carried through all.

ὅτι ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ κατηξιώθησαν ἀτιμασθῆναι.

O what an advantage have you this way! They that firſt truſted in Chriſt, had not ſuch a help as you. You ſtand upon their Shoulders. You have the benefit of their Experiences. You that are fallen into the *laſt times*, have certainly the *beſt helps* to holineſs; and yet will not you live ſtrictly and purely? Will you put on the name and profeſſion of Chriſtians, and yet be lofty in your Spirits, early in the your deſigns; neglective of duty; frothy in your Communions? Pray, from which of all the Saints did you learn to be proud? Did you learn that from Chriſt, or any of his? From which of his Saints did you learn to be earthly and covetous, paſſionate or cenſorious, over-reaching and crafty? If you have read of any ſuch Evils committed by them, have you not alſo read of their ſhame and ſorrow, their repentance and reformations? If you have found any ſuch blots in their Lives, it was left there deſignedly to prevent the like in yours. O what an help to Holineſs is this!

Thirdly, And this is not all. You have not only a Principle within you, and a Pattern before you, but you have alſo an Omnipotent Aſſiſtant to help and encourage you throughout your way. Are you feeble and infirm? And is every Temptation, even the weakeſt, ſtrong enough to turn you out of the way of your Duty? Lo, God hath ſent his Spirit to help your infirmities, *Rom.* 8. 26. no matter then how weak you are, how many and mighty your difficulties and temptations are, as long as you have ſuch an Aſſiſtant to help you. Great is your advantage for a holy Life this way alſo. For.

(1.) *Firſt*, When a temptation to ſin preſſes ſore upon you, he pleads with your Conſciences within, whilſt *Satan* is tempting without. How often hath he brought ſuch Scriptures to your remembrance, in the very nick of Opportunity, as have ſaved you out of the temptation? If you attend his Voice, you may here ſuch a Voice within as that, *Jer.* 44. 4. *O do not this abominable thing which I hate*! What mighty ſtrivings were there in the Heart of *Spira*, as himſelf relates? He heard, as it were, a Voice within him, ſaying, *Do not write* Spira, *do not write*. To this purpoſe is that promiſe, *Iſa.* 30. 20, 21. *Thine eyes ſhall behold thy Teachers, and thine ears ſhall hear a word behind thee, ſaying, This is the way, walk ye in it; when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.* Here you have a twofold help to holineſs, the *outward* teaching of the word, *ver.* 20. and the *inward* teachings of the Spirit, *ver.* 21. He ſhall ſay *this is the way*, when ye are turning aſide to the right hand or to the left. Alludiug to a Shepherd (ſaith one) who driving his Sheep before him; whilſtles them in when he ſees them ready to ſtray.

(2) *Secondly*, When ye are walking holily and cloſely with God in your Duties, and Spirit encourages you to go on, by thoſe inward Comforts, Sealings, and joys you have from him at ſuch times. How often hath he entertained your Souls in publick Ordinances, in private Duties, with his hidden Manna, with Marrow and Fatneſs, with incomparable and unſpeakable Comforts, and all this to ſtrengthen you in your way, and encourage you to hold on?

(3.) *Thirdly*, When you are indiſpoſed for Duties, and find your Hearts empty and dry, he is ready to fill them, quicken and raiſe them; ſo that oftentimes the beginnings and end of your Prayers, Hearing, or Meditations are as vaſtly different, as if one Man had begun, and another ended the Duty. O then what aſſiſtances for a holy Life have you! Others indeed are bound to reſiſt Temptations as well as you; but alas! having no ſpecial aſſiſtance from the Spirit, what can they do? It may be they reaſon with temptation a little while, and in their own ſtrength reſolve againſt it; but how eaſie a conqueſt doth Satan make, where no greater oppoſition is made to him, than this? Others are bound to hear, meditate, and pray as well as you; elſe the neglect of theſe duties would not be their ſin: But alas, what pitiful work do they make of it! Being left to the hardneſs and vanity of their own Hearts; when you ſpread your Sails, you have a gale, but they lie wind bound, heart-bound, and can do nothing Spiritually in a way of duty.

Fourthly, And laſtly, to mention no more, *you have a further advantage to this holy life, by all the rods of God that are at any time upon you.* I might ſhew you in many particulars the advantages this way alſo, but I ſhall only preſent theſe *three* to your obſervation at this time.

Firſt, By theſe you are clogged, to prevent your ſtraying and wandering. Others may wander even as far as Hell, and God will not ſpend a ſanctified rod upon them to reduce or ſtop them; but ſaith, *let them alone*, Hoſ. 4. 17. But if you ſtraggle out of the way of holineſs, he will clog you with one trouble or other to keep you within bounds, 2 *Cor.* 12. 7. *Leſt I ſhould be lifted up, a thorn in the Fleſh; a meſſenger of Satan was ſent to buffet me.* So *David*, Pſal. 119. 67. *Before I was afflicted I went aſtray; but now I have kept thy Word.* Afflictions are uſed by God, as thorns by husbandmen to ſtop the gaps, and keep you from breaking out of God's way, *Hoſ.* 2. 6. *I will hedge up her way with thorns, and build a wall that ſhe ſhall not find her paths.* A double alluſion, 1. To Cattle that are apt to ſtray. *I will hedge up thy way with thorns.* 2. To the Sea which is apt to over flow the Country; *I will build a wall to prevent inundations.* Holy *Baſil* was a long time ſorely afflicted with an inveterate head-ach, he often prayed for the removal of it; at laſt God removed it: But in the room of it, he was ſorely exerciſed with the motions and temptations of Luſt; which, when he perceived, he heartily deſired his head-ach again, to prevent a worſe evil. You little know the ends and uſes of many of your afflictions. Are you exerciſed with bodily weakneſs? It's a mercy you are ſo; and if theſe pains and infirmities were removed, theſe clogs taken off; you may with *Baſil*, wiſh for them again to prevent worſe evils. Are you poor? Why, with that poverty God hath clogged your pride. Are you reproached; With thoſe reproaches God hath clogged your ambition. Corruptions are prevented by your afflictions. And is not this a marvellous help to holineſs of Life?

Secondly, By your afflictions, your Corruptions are not only clogged, but purged. By theſe God dries up and conſumes that ſpring of ſin, that defiles your Lives, *Iſa.* 27. 9. By *this therefore ſhall the iniquity of* Jacob *be purged; and this is all the fruit to take away ſin.* God orders your *wants* to kill your *wantonneſs*. And makes your *poverty* poiſon to your *pride*. They are God's *Phyſick*, to purge ill humours out of *your* Souls. *When they fall by the ſword and by famine, and by captivity, and by ſpoil, is it to try them and to purge them and to make them white.* They are both purges and lavatories to your Souls. Others have the ſame afflictions that you have, but they do not work on them as on you; they are to you as fire for purging, and water for cleanſing; and yet ſhall not your Lives be clean? It's true (as one well obſerves upon that place of *Daniel*) Chriſt is the only *Lavatory*, and his Blood the only Fountain to waſh away ſin. But in the virtue and efficacy of that Blood, ſanctified afflictions are cleanſers and purgers too. *Daniel* 11. 33, 34, 35.

A Croſs without a Chriſt never made any Man better, but with Chriſt, Saints are much the better for the Croſs. Hath God as it were, laid you out ſo many Days and Nights a whitening, and yet is not the hue of your converſation altered? Hath he put you ſo many times into the Furnace, and yet is not your droſs ſeparated? The more afflictions you have been under, the more aſſiſtances you have had for this life of Holineſs.

Thirdly, By all your troubles God hath been weaning you from the World, the Luſts, Loves, and Pleaſure of it; and drawing out your Souls to a more excellent life and ſtate than this. He makes your Sorrows in this Life, give a luſtre to the glory of the next. Whoever hath, before you ſhall have no reſt here; and all, that you may long more ardently for that to come. He often makes you groan *being burdened, to be cloathed with your houſe from Heaven*, 1 Cor. 5. 4. And yet will you be not weaned from the Luſts, Cuſtoms, and evils of it? O what manner of Perſons ſhould you be for *heavenly* and *holy* Converſations? You ſtand upon the higher ground. You have, as it were, the wind and tide with you. None are aſſiſted for this Life as you are. Put all this together, and ſee what this ſecond Argument contributes towards

towards your further conviction, and perſwaſion to holineſs of Life. Have you received a ſupernatural Principle fitting you for, and inclining you to holy Actions, reſiſting and holding you back from Sin? Hath God alſo ſet before you ſuch eminent Patterns to encourage and quicken you in your way? Doth the Spirit himſelf ſtand ready ſo many ways to aſſiſt and help you in all difficulties, and hath God hedged up the way of Sin with the thorns of Affliction to prevent your wandering, and yet will you turn aſide? Will you offer violence to your own Principles, and new Nature? Refuſe to follow ſuch Leaders as have beaten the way before you? Reſiſt or neglect the gracious Aſſiſtances of the bleſſed Spirit, which he offers you in every need, and venture upon Sin, though God hath hedg'd up your way with Afflictions? O how can you do ſuch great Wickedneſs, and ſin againſt ſuch Grace as this!

Methinks I need ſay no more to convince you how much you are concerned to keep the Iſſues of Life pure, none being ſo much obliged to it, or aſſiſted for it as you are. But when I remember that *Joaſh* loſt the compleat Victory over the *Syrians*, becauſe he ſmote not his Arrows often enough upon Ground, 2 *Kings* 13. 8. I ſhall level one Arrow more at this Mark: For indeed that can never be enough *preſt*, which can never be enough *practiſed*. And therefore,

Conſid. 3. It will yet further appear to be your high concernment to exalt holineſs in your Converſations, becauſe of the manifold and great uſes which God hath to make of the viſible holineſs and purity of your Lives, both in this World, and that to come. The uſes God puts the converſation-holineſs of his People to in this World, are theſe among others.

First, *To win over Souls to Chriſt, and bring them in love with Religion.* Practical Holineſs is a very lovely attractive and obliging thing. If the Heathen then could call Moral Vertue *verticordia*, *turn-heart*, from that obliging and winning Power it exerciſes upon the Hearts of Men. If they could ſay of it, that were it viſible to humane Eyes, all Men would adore it, and fall in Love with it; how much rather may we ſay ſo of true Holineſs made viſible in the Lives of Saints! This is the *turn-heart* indeed. It makes the Souls of Men to cling and cleave to the Perſons in whom it is; as it is propheſied, *Zach.* 8. 23. of the *Jews* when they ſhall be called (which ſhall be a time of great Holineſs) *in that Day, ten Men out of all Languages of the Nations ſhall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, ſaying we will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.* So much of God as appears in Men, ſo much drawing excellency there is in them. And this is the Apoſtle's Argument, 1 *John* 1. 3. *That ye may have fellowſhip with us.* Why, what is there in your fellowſhip to invite Men to you! *Truly our fellowſhip is with the Father, and with his Son Chriſt Jeſus.* Who can chooſe but covet their Company, that keep company every Day with God? Great is the efficacy of viſible Holineſs to work upon the Hearts of Men; either as a *concauſe*, working in fellowſhip with the Word, or as a ſingle inſtrument working ſolitarily without the Word.

Where God is pleaſed to afford the word unto Men, there the practical holineß of Saints is of ſingular uſe to aſſiſt and help it in its operation upon the Hearts of Men. When the lives of *Chriſtians* ſenſibly exhibit that to the Eyes of *Men*, which the Goſpel doth to their Ears; when ſo we Preach, and ſo ye Believe and Live; when we draw by our Doctrines, and you draw with us by our Examples when we hold forth the Word of Life doctrinally, and you hold it forth practically; as *Phil.* 2. 16. Where is the Heart that can ſtand before us? O when the plain and powerful *Goſpel* pierces the Ears of Men, and at the ſame time the viſible Holineſs of Profeſſors ſhines ſo full of in their Faces, that they muſt either put out their own Eyes, or elſe be forced to acknowledge that God is in you of a truth; then it will work to purpoſe upon Souls. Then will Chriſt ſee of the travail of his Soul daily.

Yea, if God deny the Word to Men, yet this practical Holineſs I am ſpeaking of may be to them an Ordinance for Converſion. This way Souls *may be won to Chriſt without the word*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Pet.* 3. 1. Though Pulpits ſhould be ſilent, and Viſion fail; yet if you would this way turn Preachers, if your Lives may but Preach the reality, excellency and ſweetneſs of Jeſus Chriſt and his ways; and if you would this way Preach down the love of the World, and let Men ſee what poor Vanities theſe are; and Preach up the neceſſity and beauty of Holineſs; ſurely you, even you might be honoured to bring many Souls to Chriſt, to turn many to righteouſneſs, and cauſe many to bleſs God on your behalf in the Day of Viſitation. This is the uſe God hath for the holineſs and purity of your Lives, and doth not this engage you ſtrongly to it? What, not when it may prove the means of eternal Life to others? Surely if you have any Bowels of Mercy in you, you cannot hide from others that whereby they may be ſaved. How can you inſtead of holding forth the *Word of Life* (which is your manifeſt Duty) viſibly hold forth the *works of death* before Men? Have you been beholding to others, and ſhall none be beholding to you for help towards Heaven? Dare you ſay, let others ſhift as well as they can, find the way to Heaven by themſelves if they can, they ſhall have no benefit by your light? If you be Chriſtians, you are Chriſtians of a different ſtamp and Spirit from all thoſe we find deſcribed in Scripture. Should not you rather ſay as the *Lepers* did, 2 *Kings* 7. 9. *Do we well to hold our peace*, whilſt others are periſhing? Shall the *lips* of *Miniſters*, and the *Lives* of *Chriſtians* be both ſilenced together? Shall poor Sinners neither hear any thing from us, nor ſee any thing from you, that may help them to Chriſt? The Lord have Mercy then upon the poor World, and pity it, for its caſe is deſperate. O put on as the Elect of God, Bowels of Mercy. Deſtroy not by the looſneſs of your Converſations ſo many Souls; for your ſcandalous miſcarriages are like a bag of poiſon put into the ſpring, which ſupplies the whole City with Water.

Secondly, *Another uſe God hath for it, is to recover and ſalve the Credit of Religion, which by the Apoſtacies of Hypocrites and ſcandalous falls of careleſs Chriſtians is wounded and expoſed to contempt.* Much reproach by this means is brought upon Religion, and how ſhall that reproach be rolled away, but by your ſtrictneſs and purity? By this the World muſt be convinced that all are not ſo. Though ſome be a blot to the Name of Chriſt, yet others are his Glory. The more others ſlur and diſgrace Religion, the more God expects you to honour and adorn it. I remember *Chryſoſtom* brings in the Perſecutors ſpeaking to two renouned Martyrs after this manner, *Nonne videtis alios veſtri ordinis hoc feciſſe?* (i. e.) why are you ſo nice and ſcrupulous? See you not that others of your Rank and Profeſſion have done theſe things? To which they returned this brave anſwer, *Nos hac potiſſimum ratione vitiliter ſtabimus*, (i. e.) have they done it? For that very reaſon we will ſtand it out like Men, and will never yield to it. There is an holy *Antiperiſtaſis* in the zeal of a Chriſtian, which makes it like fire burn moſt vehemently in the coldeſt Weather. If Men make void God's Law, therefore will *David* love his Commandments above Gold, *Pſal.* 119. 127. If there be many *Pendletons* among Profeſſors, who will betray Chriſt and his Truth to ſave their Fleſh; God will have ſome *Sanders* to repair that breach by their conſtancy and courage in appearing for them.

Thirdly, God makes uſe of it for the *encouragement of his Miniſters, who labour among you.* And indeed it is of no ſmall uſe to refreſh their Hearts, and ſtrengthen their Hands in their painful work. *Now we live* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *if ye ſtand faſt in the Lord*, 1 Theſ. 3. 8. He ſpeaks as if their very Life lay at the mercy of the People, becauſe ſo much of the Joy and Comfort of it is wrapt up in their Regularity and ſteadfaſtneſs. God knows what an hard Province his poor Miniſters have, and how many diſcouragements attend them in their work. Hear how one of them expreſſes it:

" Every drop that hath fallen from
" our Heart and Head, from our Eye-lids, and Eye-brows, ſhall be all gathered up, and put as
" Marginal Notes by all our Labours, and put into one
" Volume together, and this Volume put into your Hands
" at the great Day, and opened Leaf after Leaf, and read
" diſtinctly and exactly to you. Miniſters would not be
" gray-headed ſo ſoon, nor die ſo faſt, notwithſtanding their
" great Labours; if they were but ſucceſful: But this cuts
" the Heart, and make us bleed in Secret; that tho' we do
" much, yet it comes to nothing. Our work dies, the[illegible]e
" we die: Not ſo much that we labour, but that we l[illegible]r
" in vain. We can ſend none out of the Hoſpital [illegible]e

Lockier *upon the Coloſſ.* p. 551.

" we are Phyſicians, upon two Legs. When our Miniſtry " petrifies, turns Hearts into Stones, and theſe taken up and " thrown at us, theſe kill us. The recoyling of our Pains " kill us. When our Peace returns to us, when we ſpend " our ſtrength to make Men more nought than they were, " this wounds our Hearts, which ſhould be conſidered by " Sinners, to kill ones ſelf, and ones Miniſters too, who " would ſave them; what a bloody Condition is this?

Chriſtians, you hear our caſe, you ſee our work, now a little to cheer our Spirits in the midſt of our hard and killing Labours, God ſends us to you for a little refreſhment, that by beholding your holy and heavenly Converſation, your cheatful Obedience, and ſweet agreement in the ways of God; we may be comforted over all theſe troubles, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 3, 4. And will you wound and kill our Hearts too? Oh! what a cut will this be!

Fourthly, *God hath further uſe for the holineſs of your Lives, this ſerves to daunt the Hearts, and over-awe the conſciences of his and your enemies.* And ſometimes it hath had a ſtrange influence, and effect upon them. There is a great deal of awful Majeſty in Holineſs, and when it ſhines upon the Conſcience of a wicked Man, it makes him ſtoop, and do obeyſance to it. Which turns to a Teſtimony for Chriſt and his ways before the World. Thus *Herod* was over-awed by the ſtrict and holy Life of *John*, he feared him, knowing that he was a juſt Man and holy, and obſerved (or preſerved and ſaved) him.

That bloody Tyrant was convinced in his Conſcience of the worth and excellency of that Servant of God, and was forced to reverence him for his Holineſs. So *Darius*, Dan. 6. 14, 18, 19, 20. What conflicts had he himſelf about *Daniel* whom he had condemned; his Conſcience condemned him, for condemning ſo holy and righteous a Perſon. *Then the King went to his Palace, and paſſed the Night in faſtings; neither were inſtruments of Muſick brought before him, and his ſleep went from him. He goes early in the Morning to the Den, and cries with a lamentable Voice,* O Daniel *Servant of the living God.* How much is this for the honour of Holineſs, that it conquers the very Perſecutors of it; and makes them ſtoop to the meaneſt Servant of God! 'Tis ſaid of *Henry the ſecond of France*, that he was ſo daunted by the heavenly Majeſty of a poor *Taylor* that was burnt before him, that he went home ſad, and vowed that he would never be preſent at the Death of ſuch Men, any more. When *Valence* the Emperor came in Perſon to apprehend *Baſil*, he ſaw ſuch Majeſty in his very Countenance, that he reel'd at the very ſight of him; and had fallen backward to the Ground, had not his Servant ſtept in to ſupport him. O Holineſs, Holineſs, thou art a Conqueror. So much as you ſhew of it in your Lives, ſo much you preſerve your intereſt in the Conſciences of your Enemies. Let down this, and they deſpiſe you preſently.

Fifthly, And laſtly, *God will uſe the purity of your Converſations to Judge and convince the World in the great Day.* 'Tis, the World ſhall be judged by the Goſpel, but your Lives ſhall alſo be produced as a Commentary upon it, and God will not only ſhew them by the Word how they ought to have lived, but bring forth your Lives and Ways to ſtop their Mouths, by ſhewing how others did live. And this I ſuppoſe is intended in that Text, 1 *Cor.* 6. 2. *The Saints ſhall judge the World, yea, we ſhall judge Angels*, that is, our Examples are to condemn their Lives and Practices, as *Noah*, Heb. 11. 7, is ſaid to condemn the World by building the Ark, (*i. e.*) his Faith in the threatning, and obedience to the Command, condemned their ſupineneſs, infidelity, and diſobedience. They ſaw him every Day about that work, diligently preparing for a Deluge, and yet were not moved with the like Fear that he was; this left them inexcuſable: So when God ſhall ſay in that Day to the careleſs World, did you not ſee the care, and diligence, the holy zeal, watchfulneſs, and ſelf-denial of my People, who lived among you? How many times have they been watching and praying when you have been drinking, or ſleeping! Was it not eaſie to reflect when you ſaw their pains and diligence; have not I a Soul to look after as well as they, a Heaven to win or loſe, as well as they? O how ſpeachleſs and inexcuſable will this render wicked Men, yea, it ſhall not be only uſed to judge them, but *Angels* alſo. How many ſhocks of Temptations have poor Saints ſtood; when as they fell without a Tempter? They ſtood not in their integrity, though created in ſuch excellent Natures; how much then are you concerned on this very account alſo, to walk exactly! if not, inſtead of judging them, you ſhall be condemned with them.

And thus you ſee what uſe your Lives and Actions ſhall be put to, and are theſe inconſiderable Uſes? Is the winning over Souls to God a ſmall matter? Is the ſalving the honour and reputation of Godlineſs a ſmall matter? Is the encouraging the Hearts, and ſtrengthening the Hands of God's poor Miniſters amidſt their ſpending killing labours a ſmall matter? Is the awing of the Conſciences of your Enemies, and judgiug them in the laſt Day a light thing? Which of theſe can you call ſo?

O then, ſince you are thus *obliged* to holineſs of Life, Thus ſingularly *aſſiſted* for it; and ſince there are ſuch great dependencies upon it, and uſes for it both now and in the World to come; ſee that ye be Holy in all manner of Converſation. See that *as ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo ye walk in him.* Always remembring that for this very end Chriſt hath redeemed or *delivered you of the Hands of your Enemies, that you might ſerve him without fear in righteouſneſs and Holineſs all the Days of your Lives*, Luk. 1. 74, 75. And to how little purpoſe will be all that I have preacht, and you have heard of Chriſt, if it be not converted into practical Godlineſs? This is the Scope and Deſign of it all.

And now Reader, thou art come to the laſt leaf of this Treatiſe of Chriſt, it will be but a little while and thou ſhalt come to the laſt Page or Day of thy Life; and thy laſt moment in that Day. Wo, to thee, wo and alas for ever, if intereſt in this bleſſed Redeemer be then to get. The World affords not a ſadder ſight, than a poor Chriſtleſs Soul ſhivering upon the brink of Eternity. To ſee the poor Soul that now begins to awake out of its long Dream, at its entrance into the World of Realities, to ſhrink back into the Body, and cry, *O I cannot, I dare not die.* And then the Tears run down. Lord, what will become of me? O what ſhall be my eternal Lot? This I ſay, is as ſad a ſight as the World affords. That this may not be thy caſe, reflect upon what thou haſt read in theſe Sermons; Judge thy ſelf in the Light of them. Obey the calls of the Spirit in them. Let not thy ſlight and formal Spirit floar upon the ſurface of theſe Truths, like a feather upon the Water; but get them deeply infixed upon thy Spirit, by the Spirit of the Lord; turning them into Life and Power upon thee. And ſo animating the whole Courſe and Tenour of thy Converſation by them, that it may proclaim to all that know thee, that thou art one who eſteemeſt all to be but droſs, that thou mayſt win Chriſt.

Cum ergo fideles ſeſſuri dicuntur cum Chriſto, id intelligi debet non de autoritate vel poteſtate judicandi in ipſis; ſed (1.) de eo quod facturi ſunt in Chriſto capite ſuo (2.) De approbatione ſententiæ a Chriſto late. *Apoc.* 19. v. 1. (3.) De eorum teſtificatione ratione Miniſterii et converſationis Et comparatione vitæ eorum cum vita injuſtorum, qua judicis juſtitia manifeſtabitur, *Synopſ. purior Theol. p.* 798.

FINIS.

THE Method of Grace IN THE GOSPEL-REDEMPTION:

To the Worſhipful

JOHN UPTON, of *Lupton*, Eſq;

AND THE

Moſt accompliſhed and vertuous LADY his dear CONSORT,

The AUTHOR wiſhes Grace, Mercy, and Peace.

Honoured and worthy Friends,

IT was a comfortable Expreſſion which *Ambroſe* uſed in his Funeral Oration at the Death of *Theodoſius*; (*a*) that tho' he were gone, yet he was not wholly gone; for he had left *Honorius*, with others of his Children, behind him, in whom *Theodoſius* ſtill lived. Your renowned and worthy *Anceſtors* are gone, yet (bleſſed be God) they are not wholly gone; whilſt the Prudence, Piety, and Publickneſs of their Spirits, ſtill lives and flouriſhes in you, the Top Branch of a renowned and religious Family. 'Tis a great Truth which *Philo Judæus* recommends to the Obſervation of all Poſterity, (*b*) that it is not a natural Deſcent from the moſt honourable and illuſtrious Progenitors, nor the greateſt Affluence of Riches and Pleaſures that makes a Man either honourable or happy; but the Inhabitation of God in his Soul, as in his Temple, tho' (ſaith he) thoſe that never taſted Religion, nor have ſeen its Glory, will not credit this Aſſertion. The Soul which is fill'd with God (ſaith (*c*) *Plotinus*) and brings forth the beautiful Fruits of Righteouſneſs, this is the truly noble Soul: Our new Birth makes us more honourable than our natural Birth, let our Birthright Dignities be what they will. The Children of Nobles are by Nature the Children of Wrath, even as others: *Omnis Sanguis concolor*, all Blood is of one Colour; it is all tainted in *Adam*, and minded together in his Poſterity. There is no King, ſaith (*d*) *Seneca*, which roſe not from a Servant: There is no *Servant* which roſe not from a *King*: Theſe Things have been blended and toſſed to and fro by a long Variety.

But tho' the Privileges of natural Birth ſignify nothing as to Eternal Salvation, yet in Civil and Political Reſpects and Conſiderations, thoſe that by Birth, Education, or Eſtate, poſſeſs an higher Station in the World, differ from the Vulgar, as Stars of greater Magnitude and Luſtre: Their Intereſt and Influence is great in theſe Things, and the Welfare of Kingdoms (*e*) greatly depends upon them.

It is therefore a great Deſign of the Enemy of Mankind to corrupt Perſons of eminent Rank and Quality both in Religion and Morality; and by their Influence and Example to infect and poiſon the whole Body Politick: And his Succeſs herein deſerves to be greatly lamented and bewailed. Perſons of Eminency are more eſpecially (*f*) obliged to ſhun baſe and ſordid Actions. *Hierom* profeſſed (*g*) he ſaw nothing deſirable in *Nobility*, except this, that ſuch Perſons are bound by a certain kind of Neceſſity not to degenerate from the Probity, or ſtain the Glory of their *Anceſtors*. But alas! how many in our Times have not only expoſed Chriſtianity to Contempt, but obſcured (*h*) the Glory of their own Families, and the Kingdom in which they had their Birth and Breeding; ſo that if you will take right

(a) *Theodoſius tantus Imperator receſſit a nobis, ſed non totus receſſit; reliquit enim nobis liberos ſuos, in quibus debemus eum agnoſcere.* Ambroſ. in obit. Theodoſ. (*b*) Τοῖς ὑμνοῦσι τὴν εὐγένειαν ὡς μέγιστον ἀγαθὸν καὶ μεγάλων, ἀγαθῶν αἰτίαν, ἐκ μελέτης ἐπιμηθέσθων, εἰ πρῶτον μὲν οἷον τὸ τῶν ἐκ παλαιοπλούτων καὶ παλαιενδόξων εὐγενεῖς, μήτε τὰ προγόνων ἀφ' ὧν αὐχοῦσι γενέσθαι — Βουληθεὶς γὰρ ὁ θεὸς διὰ ἡμερότητα καὶ φιλανθρωπίαν καὶ πᾶς ἡμῖν τοῦθ' ἱδρύσασθαι, νεὼν ἀξιοπρεπέστερον ἐπὶ γῆς οὐκ εὖ λογισμοῦ κρείττων ὁ δὲ νοῦς ἀγαλμαφορεῖ τὸ ἀγαθὸ, καὶ ἀπιστῶσί τινες τὰ μὴ γευσαμένων σοφίαι, ἢ χείλεσιν ἄκρεσις· Philo Judæus περὶ εὐγενείας, Book fit for the Hands of all Gentlemen, tranſlated by *Laurentius Humphredus* in his excellent Tract *de nobilitate*. (*c*) Ψυχὴ πλησθεῖσα θεοῦ γενιᾷ τὸ κάλλος, γεννᾷ καὶ δικαιοσύνην· Plotinus. (d) *Neminem regem non ex ſervis eſſe oriundum; neminem ſervum non ex regibus. Omnia iſta longa varietas miſcuit, & ſurſum deorſum fortuna verſavit.* Senec. Epiſt. 44. (e) *Qui ſumma tractant gubernacula, qui privatis, qui publicis rebus intersunt ac præſunt, niſi viri ſummi ac nobiles? Quis in ſenatu præit, in foro præſidet, domi foris imperat? Principes ſane viri & nobiles: quis jubet, vetat, agit, ſatagit, quis verſat & volvit omnia, quis leges fingit, & refingit, quis in ordine rempublicam, contra hoſtes bella adminiſtrat, præterquam magni viri & nobiles? Nec mirum ei rerum ſumma committi, qui & virtute ſua, & commendatione majorum, ad hominum famam & exiſtimationem dimanavit.* Laurentius Humphredus de nobilitate, pag. (mihi) 4. (f) *In maxima fortuna, minima eſt licentia.* Saluſt. (g) *Nihil aliud video in nobilitate appetendum, niſi quod nobiles quadam necessitate conſtringuntur ne ab antiquorum probitate degenerent.* Hieron. (h) *Faxit Deus opt. max. ut eum finem conſequatur, quem mihi propoſui, quo tandem aliquando vetus & veneranda nobilitas redeat, quæ prudentiæ & doctrinæ gloria, & factorum ſplendore, majorum laudes ſequuret, inuſtamque augusto nomini ſuo maculam tollit & deleat.* Humph. de Nob. p. 58.

Marks of your Way to Heaven, you will have little Direction from those of your own Rank, but as (i) Mariners take their Direction at Sea, by looking up to the Heavens, so must you. In this general Corruption it is very hard to escape Infection; many (as *Salvian* complained) (k) are compelled to be *evil*, lest they should be accounted *vile*, and incur the Offence of God, to avoid the Slights and Censures of Men. Altho' there is no more Reason why they should be offended at the rational and religious Pleasures, you and other pious Gentlemen take in the Ways of Godliness, than there is that you should envy the sinful Pleasures they take in the Ways of Wickedness. It was an excellent Apology that *Tertullian* made for the Christians of his Time against the *Gentiles*: (l) Wherein (saith he) do we offend you, if we believe there are other Pleasures? If we will not partake with you in your Delights, it is only your own Injury: We reject your Pleasures, and you are not delighted with ours.

But by how much the Infection spreads and prevails among those of your Order, by so much the more we have reason to value you, and all those that remain sound and untainted both in Religion and Morality, as Persons worthy of singular Respect and Honour; and blessed be God, there is yet a Number of such left.

Sir, It was a special Happiness which *Chrysostom* earnestly recommended to Persons of Quality, that they would so order their Conversations, that their Parents might rather glory in them, than they in their Parents; (m) otherwise (saith he) it is better to rise to Honour from a contemptible Parent, than to be contemptible from an honourable Parent; but blessed be God, you and your worthy Ancestors mutually reflect Honour upon each other.

Had God suffered you to degenerate, as many do, it would have been but a poor Consolation to have said, my *Progenitors* were Men of Honour, the Love and Delight of their Country. This as (n) one excellently expresseth it, would be the same thing, as if one that is blind himself, should boast what a sharp and piercing Sight his Father had, or one that is lame himself, should glory in those Feats of Activity his Grandfather performed, but God (to whose Bounty therefore you are doubly oblig'd) hath made you the Inheritor of their Vertues as well as of their Lands, and therein fulfilled many thousand Prayers which have been poured out to God upon your Account. But I must forbear, lest I provoke others to Envy, and draw upon my self the Suspicion of Flattery. What hath been already said, may serve for a sufficient Reason of this Dedication. I know the (o) Agreeableness of such Discourses to the pious Dispositions of your Souls, is of itself sufficient to make it welcome to you. It is a Treatise of Christ, yea, of the Method of Grace in the Application of Christ; than which no Subject can be more necessary to study, or sweet to experience. (p) All Goodness is attractive, how powerfully attractive then must Jesus Christ be, who is the Ocean of all Goodness, from whom all Streams of Goodness are derived, and into whom they all empty themselves? (q) If *Pindarus* could say of the lovely *Theoxenus*, that whosoever saw that august and comely Face of his; and was not surprized with Amazement and inflamed with Love, must have an Heart of Adamant or Brass, what then shall we resemble that Man's Heart unto that hath no ferverous Affections kindled in it by the incomparable Beauty of Christ! A Beauty which excels in Luitre and Brightness that visible Light which so dazles our Eyes (r) as that Light doth Darkness itself, as *Plato* speaks of the Divine Light. Christ is ὑπερκαλλόντως καλὸς, an inexpressible Beauty, and all other Beauties are but εἰκὼ, ἢ σκιὰ, an Image, nay, a Shadow of his Beauty. How was holy *Ignatius* ravish'd with Desires after Christ when (s) he cried out, O how I long to be thrown into the Jaws of those Lions which I hear roaring for me! And if they will not dispatch me the sooner, ἢ πεισθήσομαι, I will enforce them to it by Violence, that I may enjoy the Sight of my blessed Jesus. (t) O my Heart (saith another) how is it thou art not drawn up by the very Root by thy Desires after Christ? The Necessity and the Trial of our Union with, and Interest in this lovely Lord Jesus, is the main Subject of this Discourse. Without the Personal Application of Christ by Faith, our Hopes of Heaven are but deluding Dreams, *Heb.* 3. 11. I sware in my Wrath, εἰ εἰσελεύσονται, if they shall enter into my Rest: What then? Nay, there is all: But it is a dreadful *Apostopesis* (as one calls it) such a Pause, as may justly shake every Vein of the Unbelievers Heart: *If they shall enter*; as if he had said, if ever they come into my Glory, then say, I am no God, for I have sworn the contrary.

I will not be tiresome, but conclude all in few Requests to you, and to God for you both. That which I request of you is,

(1.) That you will search and try your own Hearts by these Truths, especially now, when so great Trials are like to be made of every Man's Root and Foundation in Religion. Account that your first Work, which *Bellarmine* calls the first Error of *Protestants*, to make sure your Interest in Christ; (u) every thing is as its Foundation is: A true *Diamond* will endure the smartest Stroke of the Hammer, but a false one will fly.

(2.) That you be humble under all that Dignity and Honour which God hath put upon you; be ye cloathed with Humility. It was the Glory of the Primitive Christians, that they * did not speak but live great Things, Humility will be the Lustre of your other Excellencies: Estates and Honours are

(i) *Eadem ratione hanc vitæ viam quæri oportet, qua in alto iter navibus quæritur; nisi aliquid cœli lumen observem, incertis cursibus vagantur: quisquis rectum iter vitæ tenere nititur, non terram debet aspicere, sed cœlum, & ut apertius loquar, non hominem debet sequi sed Deum: itaque si oculos in cœlum semper intendas, & solem qua oritur, observes, eumque habes vitæ quasi navigii ducem; sua sponte pedes in viam dirigentur.* Lactant. lib. 6. c. 8. (k) *Mali esse coguntur ne viles habeantur.* Salv. de Gubernat. (l) *Quo vos offendimus si alias præsumimus voluptas? si oblectari nolumus, nostra injuria est: reprobamus quæ placent vobis. nec vos nostra delectant.* Tertul. Apolog. adv. Gent. (m) *Melius est de contemptibili fieri clarum, quam de claro genere contemptibilem esse,* Chrysostom in Mat. 4. *Nec fieri potest quin hunc comitetur ignobilitas etiamsi vel avis, vel proavis natus sit vita inculpatis, qui ab eorum studiis alienus est, seque longissime tum dictis, tum factis a nobilitate disjungit.* (n) *Quid oculis capto ad visum profuerit perspicax majorum acies, cum ea privatus est? Vel quid ad interpretandi facultatem, impeditæ linguæ hominem juverit, parentes vel avos fuisse vocales? Pari ratione, nec injustis justi parentes nec luxu perditis, temperantes: nec omnino boni malis quicquam utilitatis afferunt,* &c. Philo. περὶ εὐγενείας. (o) *Quando bonæ audientis & grata mens est, facilè assentitur sermonibus veritatis.* Chryso. Hom. 26. in Mat. (p) Οὐδὲν ἄλλο ὄντιν' ἔρωσιν ἀνθρώποις ἢ τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἀνέλκει πάντα καὶ ἀναστᾷ τὰ οἰκείας ἐπλαυθεσιν ὡς ἥλιος. *Plato.* (q) Ακτῖνας πεῤσώπω μαρμαιζούσας δεδοικὼς μὴ πόθῳ κυμαίνῃ, ὡς ἀδάμαντος. (r) Τὸ νοητὸν φῶς, τὸ ἀφελυπον πάντων τοσούτῳ τὸ ὁρατὸ λαμπρότερόν τε καὶ ἀυγοειδέστερον ὅσῳπερ ἥλιος σκότος *Plato.* (s) Ὁ ἐμὸς ἔρως ἐσταύρωται, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ἐμοὶ τὸ πῦρ τὸ φιλόϋλον, ἀλλ' ὕδωρ ἀλλομένον. &c. ὡραῖόν μοι τὸ θνείων, ἵνα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐπιτύχω. *Ignatius Epist.* (t) *O cor meum quomodo non te vellis post tantum decorem?* Nierembergius. *Vivere renuo, ut Christo vivam* (u) *Primus Hæreticorum error est, posse fideles eam notitiam habere de sua gratia, ut certa fide statuant sibi remissa esse peccata.* Bellarm. de justific. lib. 3. cap. 3. * *Non eloquimur, sed vivimus.* Tertul. Apolog

but Appendants and fine Trappings, which add not any real Worth, yet (*x*) how are some vain Minds puffed up with these things! But ye have not so learned Christ.

(x) *Narrant* Bucephalum *quoties nudus esset, equisonem admittere in tergum voluisse: sed regiis phaleris & bullis decoratum, neminem præter regem ipsum tulisse: ita sane fit in novis hisce optimatibus,* &c.

(3.) That you steadily persevere in those good Ways of God in which you have walked, and beware of Heart or Life Apostacy. You expect Happiness whilst God is in Heaven, and God expects Holiness from you whilst you are on Earth. It was an excellent Truth which *Tossanus* (*y*) recommended to his Posterity in his last Will and Testament from his own Experience. I beseech you (saith he) my dear Children and Kindred, that you never be ashamed of the Truths of the Gospel, either by Reasons of Scandals in the Church, or Persecutions upon it; Truth may labour for a Time, but cannot be conquered; and I have often found God to be wonderfully present with them that walk before him in Truth, tho' for a Time they may be oppress'd with Troubles and Calumnies.

(y) *Obtestor etiam vos liberos, & generos charissimos ne illius veritatis Evangelicæ unquam vos pudeat: potest enim laborare, sed non vinci veritas, & non semel expertus sum Dominum Deum mirabiliter adesse iis qui coram ipso ambulant, & in sua vocatione sedulo & integre versantur; licet ad tempus, odiis, aut simultatibus, aut calumniis agitentur.* Melch. Adamus in vita Tossani.

(4.) Lastly, That you keep a strict and constant Watch over your own Hearts, lest they be ensnared by the tempting, charming, and dangerous Snares attending a full and easy Condition in the World. There are Temptations suited to all Conditions. Those that are poor and low in Estate and Reputation, are tempted to cozen, cheat, lie and flatter, and all to get up to the Mount of Riches and Honours; but those that were born upon that Mount, tho' they be more free from those Temptations, yet lye exposed to others no less dangerous, and therefore we find, *Not many mighty, not many noble are called*, 1 Cor. 1. 26. Many great and stately Ships, which spread much Sail, and draw much Water, perish in the Storms, when small Barks creep along the Shore under the Wind, and get safe into their Port. Never aim at an higher Station in this World than that you are in: (*z*) Some have wish'd in their dying Hour they had been lower, but no wise Man ever wish'd himself at the Top of Honour at the Brink of Eternity.

(z) *Lugebat moribundus Hermannus plus temporis operæque se palatio quam Templo impendisse; luxum & vitia Aulæ, quæ corrigere debuisset, adjuvasse, atque ita multo peccati dolore, trepida spe divinæ clementiæ, plurimo astantium horrore, anceps sui, anima æternitatem ingressa est.* Hist. Bohem. lib. 11.

I will conclude all with this hearty Wish for you, that as God hath set you in a Capacity of much Service for him in your Generation, so your Hearts may be enlarged for God accordingly; that you may be very instrumental for his Glory on Earth, and may go safe, but late to Heaven. That the Blessings of Heaven may be multiplied upon you both, and your hopeful springing Branches; and that you may live to see your Childrens Children, and Peace upon *Israel*. In a word, that God will follow these Truths in your Hands with the Blessing of his Spirit; and that the manifold Infirmities of him that ministers them, may be no Prejudice or Bar to their Success with you, or any into whose Hands they shall come; which is the hearty Desire of

Your most faithful Friend

and Servant in CHRIST,

JOHN FLAVELL.

THE

THE EPISTLE.

Christian Reader,

EVery Creature, by the Instinct of Nature, or by the Light of Reason, strives to avoid Danger, and get out of Harms way. The Cattel *in the Fields presaging a Storm at hand, fly to the Hedges and Thickets for Shelter.* The Fowls *of Heaven, by the same natural Instinct, perceiving the Approach of Winter, take their timely Flight to a warmer* Climate. *This* * Naturalists *have observed of them, and their Observation is confirmed by Scripture Testimony: Of the* Cattel *it is said,* Job 37. 6, 7, 8. He saith to the Snow, be thou on the Earth, likewise the small Rain, and the great Rain of his Strength; then the Beasts go into Dens, and remain in their Places: *And of the Fowls of the Air it is said,* Jer. 8. 7. The Stork in the Heavens knoweth her appointed Times, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow, observe the Time of their coming.

* Plin. l. 18. c. 35. Virg. Georg. l. 1.

But Man being a prudent and prospecting Creature, hath the Advantage of all other Creatures in his foreseeing Faculty: For God hath taught him more than the Beasts of the Earth, and made him wiser than the Fowls of Heaven, *Job* 35 11. And a wise Man's Heart discerneth both Time and Judgment, *Eccles.* 8. 5. *For as there are* natural Signs *of the Change of Weather,* Mat. 16 3. *so there are* moral Signs *of the Changes of Time and Providences: Yet such is the Supineness and inexcusable Regardlessness of most Men, that they will not* fear *till they* feel, *nor think any Danger very* considerable, *till it become* inevitable.

We of this Nation *have long enjoyed the Light of the glorious Gospel among us; it hath shone in much Clearness upon this sinful* Island *for more than a whole* Century *of happy Years; but the longest Day hath an End, and we have cause to fear our bright Sun is going down upon us; for the Shadows in* England *are grown greater than the Substance, which is one Sign of approaching Night,* Jer. 6. 4. *The Beasts of Prey creep out of their Dens and Coverts, which is another Sign of Night at hand,* Psal. 104. 20. *And the Workmen come Home apace from their Labours, and go to Rest, which is as sad a Sign as any of the rest,* Job 7. 1, 2. Isa. 57. 1, 2. *Happy were it if (in such a Juncture as this) every Man would make it his Work and Business to secure himself in Christ from the Storm of God's Indignation, which is ready to fall upon these sinful Nations. It is said of the* Egyptians, *when the Storm of Hail was coming upon the Land,* Exod. 9. 20. He that feared the Word of the Lord made his Servants and Cattel flee into the Houses. *'Tis but an odd Sight to see the Prudence of an* Egyptian *out-vying the Wisdom and Circumspection of a* Christian.

God, who provides natural Shelter and Refuge for all Creatures, hath not left his People unprovided and destitute of Defence and Security in the most tempestuous Times of National Judgments. It is said, Mic. 5. 5. This Man *(meaning the Man Christ Jesus)* shall be the Peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our Land, and when he shall tread in our Palaces. *And Isa.* 26. 20. Come, my People, enter thou into thy Chambers, and shut thy Doors about thee; hide thy self as it were for a little Moment, until the Indignation be over-past.

My Friends, let me speak as freely *as I am sure I speak* seasonably. *A Sound of Judgment is in our Ears;* the Lord's Voice crieth unto the City, and the Man of Wisdom shall see thy Name: Hear ye the Rod, and who hath appointed it, *Micah* 6. 9. *All things round about us seem to posture themselves for Trouble and Distress. Where is the Man of Wisdom that doth not foresee a Shower of Wrath and Indignation coming?* We have heard of a Voice of Trembling, of Fear, and not of Peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a Man doth travail with Child? Wherefore do I see every Man with his Hand on his Loins, as a Woman in Travail, and all Faces are turned into Paleness? Alas, for that Day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the Day of *Jacob*'s Trouble, but he shall be delivered out of it, *Jer.* 30. 5, 6, 7.

Many Eyes are now opened to see the common Danger, but some foresaw it long ago; when they saw the general Decay of Godliness *every where, the* notorious Prophanity *and* Atheism *that overspread the* Nations; *the Spirit of Enmity and Bitterness against the Power of* Godliness *where-ever it appeared: And tho' there seemed to be a present Calm and general Quietness, yet those that were wise in Heart could not but discern Distress of Nations with great* Perplexity *in these Seeds of Judgment and Calamity: But as the* Epha *fills more and more, so the determined Wrath grows* more *and* more *visible to every Eye: And 'tis a fond thing to dream of* Tranquility *in the midst of so much* Iniquity. *Indeed if these* Nations *were once swept with the* Besom *of* Reformation, *we might hope God would not sweep them with the* Besom *of* Destruction: *But what Peace can be* expected *whilst the highest* Provocations *are* continued?

It is therefore the great and present Concernment of all to provide themselves of a Refuge before the Storm overtake them: For as Augustin *well observes,* Non facile inveniuntur præsidia in adversitate, quæ non fuerint in pace quæsita. *O take up your Lodgings in the Attributes and Promises of God before the Night overtake you; view them often by Faith, and clear up your Interest in them, that you may be able to go to them in the Dark, when the Ministers and Ordinances of Christ have taken their Leave of you, and bid you good Night.*

Whilst many are hasting on the Wrath of God by Prophaneness, *and many by smiting their Fellow Servants; and Multitudes resolve, if Trouble come, to fish in the troubled Waters for Safety and Preferment, not doubting (whensoever the overflowing Flood comes) but they shall stand dry. O that you would be mourning for their Sins, and providing better for your own Safety.*

Reader, it is thy one thing necessary *to get a cleared Interest in Jesus Christ; which being once obtain'd, thou mayst face the Storm with Boldness, and say, Come Troubles and Distresses, Losses and Trials, Prisons and Death, I am provided for you; do your worst, you can do me no Harm: Let the Winds roar, the Lightnings flash,*

flash, the Rains and Hail fall never so furiously, I have a good Roof over my Head, a comfortable Lodging provided for me: My Place of Defence is the Munition of Rocks, where Bread shall be given me, and my Waters shall be sure, *Isa.* 33. 16.

The Design of the ensuing Treatise is to assist thee in this great Work; and tho' it was promised to the World many Years past, yet Providence hath reserved it for the fittest Season, and brought it to thy Hand in a Time of Need.

It contains the Method of Grace in the Application of the great Redemption to the Souls of Men, *as the former Part contains the Method of Grace in the Impetration thereof by Jesus Christ. The Acceptation God hath given the former Part, signified by the Desires of many for the Publication of this, hath at last prevailed with me (notwithstanding the secret Consciousness of my Inequality to so great an Undertakement) to adventure this* Second Part *also upon the Ingenuity and Candour of the Reader.*

And I consent the more willingly to the Publication of this, because the Design I first aimed at could not be entire and compleat without it; but especially the Quality of the Subject Matter, which (thro' the Blessing and Concurrence of the Spirit) may be useful both to rouze the drowsy Consciences of this sleepy Generation, and to assist the Upright in clearing the Work of the Spirit upon their own Souls. These Considerations have prevailed with me against all Discouragements.

And now, Reader, *it is impossible for me to speak particularly and distinctly to the Case of thy Soul, which I am ignorant of, except the Lord shall direct my Discourse to it in some of the following* Suppositions.

If thou be one that hast sincerely applied *and received* Jesus Christ *by Faith, this Discourse (thro' the Blessing of the Spirit) may be useful to thee, to clear and confirm thy Evidences, to melt thy Heart in the Sense of thy Mercies, and to engage and quicken thee in the Way of thy Duties. Here thou wilt see what great things the Lord hath done for thy Soul, and how these Dignities, as thou art his Son or Daughter, by the double Title of* Regeneration *and* Adoption, *do oblige thee to yield up thy self to God entirely, and to say from thy Heart, Lord, whatever I am, I am for thee, whatever I can do, I will do for thee, and whatever I can suffer, I will suffer for thee; and all that I am or have, all that I can do or suffer, is nothing to what thou hast done for my Soul.*

If thou be a Stranger to Regeneration *and* Faith; *a Person that makest a* powerless Profession *of Christ; that hast a Name to live, but art dead; here it's* possible *thou mayst meet something that will convince thee how dangerous a thing it is to be an Old Creature in the new Creatures Dress and Habit; and what it is that blinds thy Judgment, and is likeliest to prove thy Ruin; a seasonable and full Conviction whereof will be the greatest Mercy that can befal thee in this World, if thereby at last God may help the to put on Christ as well as the Name of Christ.*

If thou be in Darkness about the State of thy own Soul, and willing to have it faithfully and impartially tried by the Rule of the Word, which will not warp to any Man's Humour or Interest, here thou wilt find some weak Assistance offered thee, to clear and disentangle thy doubting Thoughts, which (thro' thy Prayer and the Supply *of the Spirit of Jesus Christ) may lead thee to a comfortable Settlement and inward Peace.*

If thou be a proud, conceited, presumptuous Soul, who hast too little Knowledge, and too much Pride and Self-love, to admit any Doubts or Scruples of thy State towards God, there are many Things in this Treatise *proper for thy Conviction and better Information; for woe to thee if thou shouldest not* fear *till thou begin to* feel *thy Misery, if thy Troubles do not* come on *till all thy Hopes are* gone off.

I know all these Things are perform'd by me with much Infirmity; and that the whole Management is quite below the Dignity of the Subject. But when I consider the Success of Sermons and Books in the World hath but little relation to the Elegancy of Language or Accuracy of Method, and that many may be useful *who cannot be* excellent, *I am willing in all Humility and Sincerity to commit it to the Direction of Providence and the Blessing of the Spirit.*

One thing I shall earnestly request of all the People of God into whose Hands this shall fall, that now at last they will be perswaded to end all their unbrotherly Quarrels and Strifes among themselves, which have wasted so much precious Time, and decayed the vital Spirits of Religion, hindred the Conversion of Multitudes, and increased and confirmed the Atheism of the Times, and now at last opened a Breach, at which the common Enemy is ready to enter, and end the Quarrel to our Cost. O put on, as the Elect of God, *Bowels of Mercy, and a Spirit of Charity and Forbearance, if not for your own Sakes, yet for the Churches Sake:* Si non vis tibi parcere, parce Carthagini.

I remember it is noted in our English History *as a very remarkable thing, that when the* Severn *overflowed part of* Somersetshire, *it was observed that* Dogs *and* Hares, Cats *and* Rats, *to avoid the common Destruction, would swim to the next rising Ground, and abide quietly together in that common Danger, without the least Discovery of their natural Antipathy.*

The Story applies *itself, and O that Christians would every where depose their Animosities, that the Hearts of the Fathers might be turned to the Children, and the Children to the Fathers, lest God come and smite the Earth with a Curse.*

O that you would dwell more in your Closets, and be more frequently and fervently upon your Knees. O that you would search your Hearts more narrowly, and sift them more throughly than ever, before the Day pass as the Chaff, and the Lord's fierce Anger come upon you. Look into your Bibles, *then into your* Hearts, *and then to* Heaven, *for a true Discovery of your Conditions; and if this poor Mite may contribute any thing to that End, it will be a great Reward of the unworthy Labours of*

Thy Servant in CHRIST,

JOHN FLAVELL.

Ὑποτύπωσις TOTIUS OPERIS.

Redemption hath Two Parts, *viz.* meritorious *Impetration*, opened Part I. And effectual *Application*, opened in this IId Part: Wherein it is considered and improved,

1. Doctrinally both in its
   - 1. General nature opened, *Sermon* 1.
   - 2. Special nature consisting in our
     - 1. Union with Christ, *Sermon* 2. Including four Things in it, *viz.*
       - 1. The Gospel Offer. *Serm.* 3.
       - 2. The Spirits drawing. *Serm.* 4.
       - 3. Infusion of Life. *Serm.* 5.
       - 4. Actual Faith. *Serm.* 6, 7.
     - 2. Communion with Christ in Graces and Privileges. *Serm.* 8.
2. Practically in 4 Uses.
   - 1. Exhortation to come to Christ, *Serm.* IX. enforced by Motives drawn from his
     - 1. Encouraging Titles, which are Six.
       - 1. Title. *Serm.* 10.
       - 2. Title. *Serm.* 11.
       - 3. Title. *Serm.* 12.
       - 4. Title. *Serm.* 13.
       - 5. Title. *Serm.* 14.
       - 6. Title. *Serm.* 15.
     - 2. Excellent Privileges, which are Four.
       - 1. Privilege. *Serm.* 16.
       - 2. Privilege. *Serm.* 17.
       - 3. Privilege. *Serm.* 18.
       - 4. Privilege. *Serm.* 19.
   - 2. Conviction, proving that none can ordinarily come to Christ without
     - 1. The Application of the Law. *Serm.* 20, 21.
     - 2. The Teachings of the Father. *Serm.* 22, 23.
   - 3. Examination of our Interest in Christ by Four Trials, *viz.*
     - 1. The Donation of the Spirit. *Serm.* 24.
     - 2. The New Creation. *Serm.* 25, 26.
     - 3. The Mortification of Sin. *Serm.* 27, 28.
     - 4. The Imitation of Christ. *Serm.* 29, 30.
   - 4. Lamentation, representing the Misery of Christless Persons, as they lye under and are exposed to
     - 1. The Death of Sin. *Serm.* 31.
     - 2. The Curse of the Law. *Serm.* 32.
     - 3. Greater Guilt and Damnation. *Serm.* 33.

(4.) And in order thereunto they are blinded by the God of this World, which Forerunner of Damnation is opened and applied in *Serm.* 34, 35.

SER

SERMON I.

Opening the general nature of effectual Application.

1 COR. I. xxx.

But of him are ye in Christ, who of God is made unto us Wisdom and Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption.

HE that enquires what is the just Value and Worth of Christ, asks a Question which puts all the Men on Earth, and Angels in Heaven, to an everlasting Non-plus. The highest Attainment of our Knowledge in this Life, is to know that himself and his Love do pass Knowledge, *Eph* 3. 19.

But how excellent soever Christ is in himself, what Treasures of Righteousness soever lye in his Blood, and whatever Joy, Peace, and ravishing Comforts, spring up to Men out of his *Incarnation*, *Humiliation*, and *Exaltation*, they all give down their distinct Benefits and Comforts to them in the way of *effectual Application*.

For never was any Wound healed by a prepared, but unapplied Plaister. Never any Body warmed by the most costly Garment made, but not put on: Never any Heart refreshed and comforted by the richest Cordial compounded, but not received: Nor from the beginning of the World was it ever known that a poor *deceived*, *condemned*, *polluted*, miserable Sinner, was actually delivered out of that woful State, until of God, Christ was made unto him, Wisdom and Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption.

For look * as the Condemnation of the *first Adam* passeth not to us, except (as by Generation) we are his; so Grace and Remission pass not from the *second Adam* to us, except as (by Regeneration) we are his. *Adam*'s Sin hurts none but those that are in him: And Christ's Blood profits none but those that are in him: How great a Weight therefore doth there hang upon the effectual Application of Christ to the Souls of Men! And what is there in the whole World so awfully solemn, so greatly important as this is! Such is the strong Consolation resulting from it, that the Apostle in this Context offers it to the believing *Corinthians*, as a superabundant Recompense for the despicable Meanness and Baseness of their outward Condition in this World, of which he had just before spoken in *ver.* 27, 28. telling them, tho' the World contemned them as vile, foolish, and weak, yet *of God Christ is made unto them Wisdom and Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption.*

* Parisiensis de causis, cur Deus homo, cap. 9. *Quemadmodum non transit Adæ damnatio, nisi per generationem in carnaliter ex eo generatos: sic non transit Christi gratia, & peccatorum remissio, nisi per regenerationem ad spiritualiter per ipsum regeneratos. Sicut delictum Adæ non nocet, nisi suis, in eo quod sui sunt: sic nec gratia Christi prodest, nisi suis, in eo quod sui sunt.*

In which Words we have an *Enumeration* of the chief Privileges of Believers, and *an Account* of the Method whereby they come to be invested with them.

First, Their Privileges are enumerated, namely, *Wisdom*, *Righteousness*, *Sanctification* and *Redemption*, Mercies of inestimable Value in themselves, and such as respect a fourfold Misery lying upon sinful Man, *viz.* *Ignorance*, *Guilt*, *Pollution*, and the whole Train of miserable Consequences and Effects let in upon the Nature of Men, yea, the best and holiest of Men by Sin.

1. *Quatuor Christo ecclesiastica hic adscribit, quæ eorum ejus virtutem, & quicquid ab ipso bonorum accipimus complectuntur.* Calv. in loc.

Lapsed Man is not only in deep Misery, but grosly ignorant both that he is so, and how to recover himself from it: Sin hath left him at once sensless of his State, and at perfect Loss about the true Remedy.

To cure this, Christ is made to him *Wisdom*, not only by *Improvement* of those Treasures of Wisdom that are in himself for the Benefit of such Souls as are united to him, as an Head consulting the Good of his own Members; but also by *imparting* his Wisdom to them by the Spirit of Illumination, whereby they come to discern both their Sin and Danger; as also the true Way of their Recovery from both, thro' the Application of Christ to their Souls by Faith.

But alas! simple Illumination doth but increase our Burden, and exasperate our Misery, as long as Sin in the Guilt of it is either imputed to our Persons unto Condemnation, or reflected by our Consciences in a way of Accusation.

With Design therefore to remedy and heal this sore Evil, *Christ* is made of God unto us *Righteousness*, compleat and perfect Righteousness, whereby our Obligation to Punishment is dissolved, and thereby a solid Foundation for a well settled Peace of Conscience firmly established.

Yea, but altho' the removing of Guilt from our Persons and Consciences be an inestimable Mercy, yet alone it cannot make us compleatly happy: For tho' a Man should never be damn'd for Sin, yet what is it less than an Hell upon Earth to be under the Dominion and Pollution of every base Lust? It's Misery enough to be daily defiled by Sin, tho' a Man should never be damn'd for it.

To compleat therefore the Happiness of the Redeemed; Christ is not only made of God unto them *Wisdom* and *Righteousness*, the one curing our Ignorance, the other our Guilt; but he is made *Sanctification* also, to relieve us against the Dominion and Pollutions of our Corruptions: *He comes both by Water and by Blood, not by Blood only, but by Water also*, 1 John 5. 6. *purging* as well as *pardoning*: How compleat and perfect a Cure is Christ!

But yet something is required beyond all this to make our Happiness perfect and entire, wanting nothing; and that is the Removal of those doleful Effects and Consequences of Sin, which (notwithstanding all the forementioned Privileges and Mercies) still lye upon the Souls and Bodies of illuminated, justified and sanctified Persons. For even upon the best and holiest of Men, what Swarms of Vanity, Loads of Deadness, and Fits of Unbelief, do daily appear in and oppress their Souls! to the imbittering of all the Comforts of Life to them. And how many Diseases, Deformities, Pains, oppress their Bodies, which daily moulders away by them, till they fall into the Grave by Death, even as the Bodies of other Men do, who never received such Privileges from Christ as they do. For if *Christ be in us* (as the Apostle speaks, *Rom.* 8. 10.) *the Body is dead because*

of

of Sin: Sanctification exempts us not from Mortality.

But from all these, and whatsoever else the Fruits and Consequences of Sin, Christ is *Redemption* to his People also: This seals up the Sum of Mercies: This so compleats the Happiness of the Saints, that it leaves nothing to desire.

These Four, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption, take up amongst them all that is necessary or desirable to make a Soul truly and perfectly blessed.

Secondly, We have here the Method and Way by which the Elect come to be invested with these excellent Privileges: The Account whereof the Apostle gives us in these Words, [*Who of God is made unto us*] in which Expression four things are remarkable.

First, That Christ and his Benefits go inseparably and undividedly together: 'Tis Christ himself is made all this unto us: We have no saving Benefit separate and apart from the Person of Christ: Many would willingly receive his *Privileges*, who will not receive his Person; but it cannot be; if we will have one, we must take the other too: Yea, we must accept his Person first, and then his Benefits: As it is in the Marriage Covenant, so it's here.

Secondly, That Christ with his Benefits must be personally and particularly applied to us, before we can receive any actual saving Privilege by him; he must be [*made unto us*] *i. e.* particularly applied to us; as a Sum of Money becomes or is made the Ransom and Liberty of a Captive, when it is not only promised, but paid down in his Name, and legally applied for that Use and End. When Christ died, the Ransom was prepared, the Sum laid down; but yet the Elect continue still in Sin and Misery notwithstanding, till by *effectual Calling* it be actually *applied* to their Persons, and then they are made free, *Rom.* 5. 10, 11. reconciled by Christ's Death, by whom *we have now received the Atonement*.

Thirdly, That this Application of Christ is the Work of God, and not of Man: *Of God he is made unto us:* The same Hand that prepared it, must also apply it, or else we perish notwithstanding all that the Father hath done in contriving and appointing, and all that the Son hath done in executing and accomplishing the Design thus far. And this actual Application is the Work of the Spirit by a singular Appropriation.

Fourthly, and *lastly*, This Expression imports the Suitableness of Christ to the Necessities of Sinners; what they want, he is made to them; and indeed as Money answers all things, and is convertible into Meat, Drink, Raiment, Physick, or what else our Bodily Necessities do require; so *Christ* is virtually and eminently all that the Necessities of our Souls require; Bread to the hungry Soul, and Cloathing to the naked Soul. In a word, God prepared and furnished him on purpose to answer all our Wants, which fully hits the Apostle's Sense, when he saith, *Who of God is made unto us Wisdom and Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption.* The Sum of all is,

Doct. *That the Lord Jesus Christ, with all his precious Benefits, becomes ours by God's special and effectual Application.*

There is a twofold Application of our Redemption, one *primary*, the other *secondary:* The former is the Act of God the *Father*, applying it to Christ our Surety, and virtually to us in him; the latter is the Act of the Holy *Spirit*, personally and actually applying it to us in the Work of Conversion: The former hath the respect and relation of an Example, Model, or Pattern to this, and this is produced and wrought by the Vertue of that. What was done upon the Person of Christ, was not only virtually done upon us, considered in him as a common publick representative Person, in which Sense we are said to die with him and live with him, to be crucified with him and buried with him; but it was also intended for a Platform, or Idea of what is to be done by the Spirit actually upon our Souls and Bodies in our single Persons. As he died for Sin, so the Spirit applying his Death to us in the Work of *Mortification*, causes us to die to Sin, by the Vertue of his Death: And he was quickned by the Spirit and raised unto Life, so the Spirit applying unto us the Life of Christ, causeth us to live, by spiritual *Vivification*. Now this personal, secondary, and *actual Application of Redemption* to us by the Spirit in his sanctifying Work, is that which I am engaged here to discuss and open; which I shall do in these following Propositions.

Prop. 1. *The Application of Christ to us is not only comprehensive of our Justification, but of all those Works of the Spirit which are known to us in Scripture by the Names of Regeneration, Vocation, Sanctification and Conversion.*

Tho' all these Terms have some small respective Differences among themselves; yet they are all included in this general, the *applying*, and *putting* on of Christ, *Rom.* 13. 14. *Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Regeneration expresses those supernatural, divine, new Qualities, infused by the Spirit into the Soul, which are the Principles of all holy Actions.

Vocation expresses the Terms from which, and to which the Soul moves, when the Spirit works savingly upon it under the Gospel Call.

Sanctification notes that holy Dedication of Heart and Life to God: Our becoming the Temples of the living God, separate from all profane, sinful Practices, to the Lord's only Use and Service.

Conversion denotes the great Change itself which the Spirit causeth upon the Soul, turning it by a sweet irresistible Efficacy from the Power of Sin and Satan, to God in Christ.

Now all these are imported in, and done by the *Application of Christ to our Souls:* For when once the Efficacy of Christ's Death, and the Vertue of his Resurrection, come to take place upon the Heart of any Man, he cannot but turn from Sin to God, and become a new Creature, living and acting by new Principles and Rules So the Apostle observes, 1 *Thess.* 5. 6. speaking of the Effect of this Work of the Spirit upon that People, *Our Gospel* (saith he) *came not to you in Word only, but in Power; and in the Holy Ghost:* There was the effectual Application of Christ to them. *And you became Followers of us, and of the Lord*, ver. 6. there was their effectual Call. *And ye turned from dumb Idols to serve the living and true God*, ver. 9. there was their Conversion. *So that ye were Ensamples to all that believe*, ver. 7. there was their Life of Sanctification or Dedication to God. So that all these are comprehended in effectual Application.

Propos. 2. *The Application of Christ to the Souls of Men, is that great Project and Design of God in this World, for the Accomplishment whereof all the Ordinances, and all the Officers of the Gospel, are appointed and continued in the World.*

This the Gospel expressly declared to be its direct and great End, and the great Business of all its Officers, *Eph.* 4. 11, 12. *And he gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers; till we all come in the Unity of the Faith, and the Knowledge of the Son of God; to a perfect Man, unto the Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ,* (i. e.)

(i. e.) the great aim and ſcope of all Chriſt's Ordinances and Officers, is to bring Men into Union with Chriſt, and ſo build them up to Perfection in him: Or to Unite them to, and confirm them in Chriſt: And when it ſhall have finiſhed this Deſign, then ſhall the whoſe Frame of Goſpel Ordinances be taken down, and all its Officers disbanded. *The Kingdom* (i. e. this preſent œconomy, manner and form of Government) *ſhall be delivered up*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 24. What are Miniſters, but the Bridegrooms Friends, Ambaſſadors for God, to beſeech Men to be reconciled? When therefore all the Elect are brought home in a reconciled State to Chriſt, when the Marriage of the Lamb is come our Work and Office expire together.

Propoſ. 3. *Such is the Importance and great Concernment of the Perſonal Application of Chriſt to us by the Spirit, that whatſoever the Father hath done in the Contrivement, or the Son hath done in the Accompliſhment of our Redemption, is all inavailable and ineffectual to our Salvation without this.*

It is confeſſedly true, that God's good Pleaſure appointing us from Eternity to Salvation, is in its kind a moſt full and ſufficient *Impulſive* Cauſe of our Salvation, and every way able (for ſo much as it is concerned) to produce its Effect. And Chriſt's Humiliation and Sufferings are a moſt compleat and ſufficient *meritorious* Cauſe of our Salvation, to which nothing can be added to make it more apt and able to procure our Salvation than it already is: Yet neither the one or other can actually ſave any Soul without the *Spirit's Application* of Chriſt to it: For where there are divers *ſocial Cauſes* or *Con-cauſes*, neceſſary to produce one Effect, there the Effect cannot be produced until the laſt Cauſe have wrought. Thus it is here, The *Father* hath Elected, and the *Son* hath Redeemed; but until the *Spirit* (who is the laſt Cauſe) have wrought his part alſo, we cannot be ſaved. For he comes in the Father's and in the Son's Name and Authority, to put the laſt Hand to our Salvation-work, by bringing all the Fruits of Election and Redemption home to our Souls in this Work of Effectual Vocation. Hence the Apoſtle, 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. noting the Order of Cauſes in their Operations, for the bringing about of our Salvation, thus States it: *Elect according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father, through Sanctification of the Spirit to Obedience, and ſprinkling of the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt.* Here you find God's Election and Chriſt's Blood, the two great Cauſes of Salvation, and yet neither of theſe alone, nor both together can ſave us; there muſt be added the Sanctification of the Spirit, by which God's Decree is executed; and the Sprinkling (*i. e.*) the Perſonal *Application* of Chriſt's Blood) as well as the ſhedding of it, before we can have the ſaving Benefit of either of the former Cauſes.

Propoſ. 4. *The Application of Chriſt with his ſaving Benefits, is exactly of the ſame extent and latitude with the Father's Election, and the Son's intention in Dying, and cannot poſſibly be extended to one Soul farther.*

Whom he did predeſtinate, them he alſo called, Rom. 8. 30. *And* Acts 13. 48. *As many as were ordained to eternal Life, believed*; 2 Tim. 1. 9. *Who hath ſaved and called us with an holy Calling, not according to our works; but according to his own Purpoſe and Grace which was given us in Chriſt Jeſus before the Foundation of the World.*

The Father, Son and Spirit (betwixt whom was the Council of Peace) work out their Deſign in a perfect Harmony and Conſent: As there was no Jar in their Council, ſo there can be none in the execution of it: Thoſe whom the Father before all Time did chuſe; they, and they only are the Perſons whom the Son, when the fulneſs of Time for the execution of that Decree was come, Died for, *John* 17. 6. *I have manifeſted thy Name unto the Men which thou gaveſt me out of the World; thine they were, and thou gaveſt them me:* And ver. 19. *For their ſakes I ſanctifie my ſelf*; (*i. e.*) conſecrate, devote, or ſet my ſelf apart for a Sacrifice for them. And thoſe for whom Chriſt died, are the Perſons to whom the Spirit effectually applies the Benefits and Purchaſes of his Blood: He comes in the Name of the Father and Son; *but the World cannot receive him, for it neither ſees, nor knows him*, John 14. 17. *They that are not of Chriſt's Sheep, believe not*, John 10. 26.

Chriſt hath indeed a fulneſs of Saving Power, but the Diſpenſation thereof is limited by the Father's Will: Therefore he tells us, *Matt.* 20. 23. *It is not mine to give, but it ſhall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father*: In which Words he no ways denies his Authority, to give Glory as well as Grace; only ſhews, that in the Diſpenſation proper to him as Mediator, he was limited by his Father's Will and Counſel.

And thus alſo are the Diſpenſations of Grace by the Spirit in like manner limited, both by the Counſel and Will of the Father and Son. For as he proceeds from them, ſo he acts in the Adminiſtration proper to him, by Commiſſion from both. *John* 14. 26. *The Holy Ghoſt whom the Father will ſend in my Name:* And as he comes forth into the World by this joint Commiſſion, ſo his Diſpenſations are limited in his Commiſſion: For it's ſaid, *John* 16. 13. *He ſhall not ſpeak of himſelf, but whatſoever he ſhall hear, that ſhall he ſpeak*; (*i. e.*) He ſhall in all Things act according to his Commiſſion which the Father and I have given him.

The Son can do nothing of himſelf, but what he ſeeth the *Father* do, *Joh.* 5. 19. And the *Spirit* can do nothing of himſelf, but what he hears from the Father and Son: And it's impoſſible it ſhould be otherwiſe, conſidering not only the Unity of their Nature, but alſo of their Will and Deſign. So that you ſee the Applications of Chriſt, and Benefits by the Spirit, are commenſurable with the Father's ſecret Counſel, and the Son's deſign in Dying, which are the Rule, Model and Pattern of the Spirit's working.

Propoſ. 5. *The Application of Chriſt to Souls, by the regenerating work of the Spirit, is that which makes the firſt internal Difference and Diſtinction among Men.*

It is very true, that in reſpect of God's Foreknowledge and Purpoſe, there was a Diſtinction betwixt one Man and another, before any Man had a Being, one was taken, another left: And with reſpect to the Death of Chriſt, there is a great Difference betwixt one and another: He laid down his Life for the Sheep, he prayed for them, and not for the World; but all this while, as to any *relative Change* of State, or *real Change* of Temper, they are upon a level with the reſt of the miſerable World. The Elect themſelves are *by Nature the Children of Wrath even as others*, Eph. 2. 3. And to the ſame purpoſe the Apoſtle tells the *Corinthians*, 1 *Cor.* 6. 11. (when he had given in that black Bill, deſcribing the moſt lewd, profligate abominable Wretches in the World, Men whoſe Practices did ſtink in the very Noſtrils of Nature, and were able to make the more ſober *Heathens* bluſh; after this he tells the *Corinthians*) *And ſuch were ſome of you, but ye are waſhed*, &c. *q. d.* look, theſe were your Companions once: As they are, you lately were.

The Work of the Spirit doth not only evidence and manifeſt that difference which God's Election hath between Man and Man, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Theſſ.* 1. 4, 5. But it alſo makes a twofold Difference itſelf, namely in *State* and *Temper*; whereby they viſibly

ſibly differ not only from other Men, but alſo from themſelves: After this Work, though a Man be the *who*, yet not the *what* he was. This Work of the Spirit makes us new Creatures, namely for Quality and Temper, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. *If any Man be in Chriſt, he is a new Creature: Old things are paſt away, behold all things are become new.*

Propoſ. 6. *The Application of Chriſt by the work of Regeneration, is that which yields unto Men all the ſenſible ſweetneſs and refreſhing Comforts that they have in Chriſt, and in all that he hath done, ſuffered, or purchaſed for Sinners.*

An unſanctified Perſon may reliſh the natural ſweetneſs of the Creature, as well as he that is ſanctified; he may alſo ſeem to reliſh and taſte ſome ſweetneſs in the delicious Promiſes and diſcoveries of the Goſpel by a *Miſapplication* of them to himſelf. But this is like the Joy of a Beggar dreaming he is a King; but he awakes and finds himſelf a Beggar ſtill: But for the rational, ſolid, and genuine Delights and Comforts of Religion, no Man taſtes it, till this work of the Spirit have firſt paſt upon his Soul: It is an encloſed Pleaſure, a Stranger intermeddles not with it. *The white Stone and the new Name*, (denoting the pleaſant reſults and fruits of Juſtification and Adoption) *no Man knows but he that receives it*, Rev. 2. 7. There are all thoſe Things wanting in the unſanctified (tho' Elect) Soul, that ſhould capacitate and enable it to reliſh the ſweetneſs of Chriſt and Religion, namely, *Propriety Evidence*, and ſuitableneſs of Spirit.

Propriety is the ſweeteſt part of any Excellency, therefore *Luther* was wont to ſay, That the ſweetneſs of the Goſpel lay moſtly in *Pronouns*, as *me, my, thy*, &c. who loved [me] and gave himſelf for me, *Gal.* 2. 20. Chriſt Jeſus [my] Lord, *Phil.* 3. 18. So *Matt.* 9. 2. *Son be of good cheer* [thy] *Sins are forgiven.* Take away Propriety, and you deflour the very Goſpel of its Beauty and Deliciouſneſs: And as Propriety, ſo

Evidence is requiſite to Joy and Comfort, yea, ſo neceſſary, that even Intereſt and Propriety afford no ſenſible ſweetneſs without it. For as to Comfort, it's all one not to appear, and not to be. If I be before Regiſtred in the Book of Life, and know it not, what Comfort can my Name there afford me? Beſides, to capacitate a Soul for the Sweetneſs and Comfort of Chriſt, there is alſo *an agreeable Temper* of Spirit required; for how can Chriſt be ſweet to that Man's Soul, whoſe Thoughts reluctate, decline, or nauceate ſo Holy and pure an Object? Now all theſe Requiſites being the proper Effects and Fruits of the Spirit's ſanctifying Operations upon us, it is beyond Controverſie that the Conſolations of Chriſt cannot be taſted, until the Application of Chriſt be firſt made.

Propoſ. 7. *The Application of Chriſt to the Soul effectually, though it be ſo far wrought in the firſt ſaving work of the Spirit, as truly to entitle the Soul to Chriſt, and ſave it from the danger of Periſhing; yet it is a work gradually advancing in the Believer's Soul, whilſt it abides on this ſide Heaven and Glory.*

Nullos proprie dictos gradus admittit, ſed unico actu ſimul ac ſemel exiſtit perfecta, quamvis quoad manifeſtationem, ſenſum & effecta; varios habet gradus. Ames.

It's true indeed, that Chriſt is perfectly and compleatly applied to the Soul in the firſt Act for Righteous. Juſtification being a relative Change, properly admits no Degrees, but is perfected together, and at once, in one only Act; tho' as to its Manifeſtation and Senſe, it hath various Degrees: But the *Application* of Chriſt to us for Wiſdom and Sanctification, is not perfected in one ſingle Act, but riſes by many and ſlow Degrees to its juſt Perfection.

And tho' we are truly ſaid to be come to Chriſt when we firſt believe, *John* 6. 35. yet the Soul after that is ſtill coming to him by farther Acts of Faith, 1 *Pet.* 2. 4. *To whom* [coming] *as unto a living Stone:* The *Particle* notes a continued Motion, by which the Soul gains Ground, and ſtill gets nearer and nearer to Chriſt; growing ſtill more inwardly acquainted with him, the Knowledge of Chriſt grows upon the Soul as the Morning-light, from its firſt Spring, to the perfect Day, *Prov.* 4. 18. every Grace of the Spirit grows, if not ſenſibly, yet really; for it is in diſcerning the growth of Sanctification, as it is in diſcerning the growth of Plants, which we perceive rather *creviſſe, quam creſſere*; to have grown, than to grow. And as it thrives in the Soul by deeper Radications of the Habits, and more promptitude and ſpirituality in the Actings; ſo Chriſt and the Soul proportionably cloſe more and more inwardly and efficaciouſly, till at laſt it be wholly ſwallow'd up in Chriſt's full and perfect Enjoyment.

Propoſ. 8. *Laſtly, Although the ſeverol Privileges and Benefits forementioned by all truly and really beſtowed with Chriſt upon Believers, yet they are not communicated to them in one and the ſame way and manner; but differently and diverſly, as their reſpective Natures do require.*

Theſe four illuſtrious Benefits are convey'd from Chriſt to us in three different Ways and Methods: His Righteouſneſs is made ours by *Imputation*: His Wiſdom and Sanctification by *Renovation*: His Redemption by our *Glorification*.

I know the communication of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs to us by Imputation, is not only denied, but * ſcoffed at by *Papiſts*; who own no Righteouſneſs, but what is (at leaſt) confounded with that which is inherent in us: And for *imputative* (blaſphemouſly ſtiled by them *putative*) Righteouſneſs; they flatly deny it, and look upon it as a moſt abſurd Doctrine, every where endeavouring to load it with theſe and ſuch-like Abſurdities. That if God impute Chriſt's Righteouſneſs to the Believer, and accepts what Chriſt hath performed for him, as if he had performed it himſelf; Then we may be accounted as Righteous as Chriſt. Then we may be the Redeemers of the World. Falſe and groundleſs Conſequences: As if a Man ſhould ſay, my Debt is paid by my Surety, therefore I am as Rich as he. When we ſay the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt is made ours by *Imputation*, we think not it's made ours according to its univerſal Value, but according to our particular Neceſſity: Not to make others Righteous, but to make us ſo: Not that we have the formal intrinſecal Righteouſneſs of Chriſt in us, as it is in him, but a relative Righteouſneſs, which makes us Righteous even as he is Righteous, not as to the Quantity, but as to the Truth of of it: Nor is it imputed to us, as tho' Chriſt deſigned to make us the *Cauſes* of Salvation to others, but the *Subjects* of Salvation our ſelves; it is *inheſively* in him, *communicatively* it becomes ours: By Imputation the Sin of the firſt *Adam* became ours, and the ſame Way the Righteouſneſs of the ſecond *Adam* becomes ours, *Rom.* 5. 17. This way the *Redeemer* became Sin for us, and this way we are made the Righteouſneſs of God in him, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. This way *Abraham* the Father of Believers was juſtified, therefore this way all Be-

* *Spectrum cerebri Lutherani.* Stapleton.

1 John 3. 17.

Non formali & intrinſeca juſtitia, ſed relativa non quoad quantitatem ſed veritatem ſit enim finita applicatio infinitæ juſtitiæ ſi aliter, æque juſti eſſemus ut Chriſtus, at non juſtitia Chriſti ſit noſtra non quoad univerſalem valorem, ſed particularem neceſſitatem; & imputatus nobis, non ut cauſa ſalvationis, ſed ut ſubjectis ſalvandis. Bradwardine de juſtificat.

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lievers, the Children of *Abraham*, must be Justified also, *Rom.* 4. 22, 23. And thus is Christ's Righteousness made ours.

But in conveying and communicating his *Wisdom* and *Sanctification*, he takes another Method, for this is not *imputed*, but really *imparted* to us, by the illuminating and regenerating Work of the Spirit: These are Graces really inherent in us: Our Righteousness comes from Christ as a *Surety*, but our Holiness comes from him as a quickening *Head*, sending vital Influences into all his Members.

Now these gracious Habits being subjected and seated in the Souls of poor imperfect Creatures, whose Corruptions abide and work in the very same Faculties where Grace hath its residence, it cannot be, that our Sanctification should be so perfect and compleat, as our Justification is, which inheres only in Christ. See *Gal.* 5. 17. Thus are Righteousness and Sanctification communicated and made ours: But then,

For *Redemption*, that is to say, Absolute and Plenary Deliverance from all the sad remains, effects and consequents of Sin, both upon Soul and Body: This is made ours, (or to keep to the Terms) *Christ is made Redemption to us by Glorification*; then, and not before, are these miserable Effects removed; we put off these together with the Body. So that look, as *Justification* cures the *guilt* of Sin, and *Sanctification* the *Dominion* and Power of Sin, so *Glorification* removes together with its *Existence* and Being, all those *Miseries* which it let in (as at a Flood-gate) upon our whole Man, *Eph.* 5. 26, 27.

And thus of God, Christ is made unto us Wisdom and Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption; namely, by Imputation, Regeneration, and Glorification.

I shall next improve the Point in some useful Inferences.

Inference 1. *Learn from hence what a naked, destitute, and empty Thing a poor Sinner is, in his Natural and Unregenerate State.*

Quin dicitur eum factum esse nobis sapientiam, sanctitatem & redemptionem, rursus & nostra dignitas & merita excluduntur? ex hoc etiam consequitur, ante perceptionem ejus, nos fuisse stultos, injustos, profanos & diaboli mancipia. Muscul. in loc.

He is one that naturally and inherently hath neither Wisdom nor Righteousness, Sanctification, nor Redemption; all these must come from without himself, even from Christ; who is made all this to a Sinner, or else he must Eternally Perish.

As no Creature (in respect of external Abilities) comes under more natural Weakness into the World than Man, naked and empty, and more shiftless and helpless than any other Creature; so it is with his Soul, yea, much more than so: All our Excellencies are borrowed Excellencies, no reason therefore to be proud of any of them; 1 *Cor.* 4. 7. *What hast thou that thou hast not received? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou Glory, as if thou hadst not received it?* q. d. What intolerable insolence, and vanity, would it be for a Man that wears the rich and costly Robe of Christ's Righteousness, in which there is not one Thred of his own spinning; but all made by *free Grace*, and not by *free Will*; to jett proudly up and down the World in it, as if himself had made it; and he were beholding to none for it? O Man! thine Excellencies, whatever they are, are borrowed from Christ, they oblige thee to him, but he can be no more obliged to thee, who weares them, than the Sun is obliged to him that borrows its Light, or the Fountain to him that draws its Water for his Use and Benefit.

And it hath ever been the care of Holy Men, when they have viewed their own gracious *Principles*, or best *Performances*, still to disclaim themselves, and own Free Grace as the sole Author of all. Thus Holy *Paul* viewing the Principles of Divine Life in himself, (the richest Gift bestowed upon Man in this World by Jesus Christ) how doth he renounce himself, and deny the least part of the Praise and Glory as belonging to him, *Gal.* 2 20. *Now I live, yet not I; but Christ liveth in me*: And so for the best Duties that ever he performed for God (and what meer Man ever did more for God?) Yet when in a just and necessary Defence he was constrain'd to mention them, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. how carefully is the like [*Yet not I*] presently added? *I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I; but the Grace of God which was with me.*

Well then, let the sense of your own emptiness by Nature, humble and oblige you the more to Christ, from whom you receive all you have.

Inference 2. *Hence we are informed, that none can claim Benefit by imputed Righteousness, but those only that live in the Power of inherent Holiness: To whomsoever Christ is made Righteousness, to him he also is made Sanctification.*

The Gospel hath not the least Favour for Licentiousness. It is every way as careful to press Men to their Duties, as to instruct them in their Priviledges, *Titus* 3. 8. *This is a faithful saying; and these things I will that you affirm constantly; That they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good Works.* It is a loose Principle, divulged by *Libertines*, to the reproach of Christ and his Gospel, That Sanctification is not the Evidence of our Justification. And Christ is as much wronged by them who separate Holiness from Righteousness (as if a sensual vile Life were consistent with a justified State) as he is the contrary Extream by those who confound Christ's Righteousness with Man's Holiness, in the point of Justification; or that own no other Righteousness but what is inherent in themselves. The former Opinion makes him a *Cloak* for Sin, the latter a *needless Sacrifice* for Sin.

It's true, our Sanctification can't justifie us before God; but what then, can't it evidence our Justification before Men? Is there no necessity or use for Holiness, because it hath no Hand in our Justification? Is the preparation of the Soul for Heaven, by altering its Faame and Temper, nothing? Is the glorifying of our Redeemer, by the exercises of Grace in the World, nothing? Doth the Work of Christ render the Work of the Spirit needless? God forbid: *He came not by Blood only, but by Water also*, 1 Joh. 5. 6. And when the Apostle saith, in *Rom.* 4 5. *But unto him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his Faith is counted for Righteousness.* The scope of it is, neither to characterize and describe the justified Person, as one that is lazy and slothful, and hath no mind to Work, or rebellious and refractory, refusing Obedience to the Commands of God; but to represent him as a nimble Sinner, who is convinced of his inability to work out his own Righteousness by the Law, and sees all his endeavours to obey the Law fall short of Righteousness, and therefore is said in a Law sense *not to Work*, because he doth not Work so as to answer the purpose and end of the Law, which accepts of nothing beneath perfect Obedience.

And when (in the same Text) the ungodly are said to be justified, that Character describes not the Temper and Frame of their Hearts ane Lives after their justification, but what it was before, not as it leaves, but what it found them.

Deus justificat impium antecedenter, non consequenter. Pareus.

Infer. 3. *How unreasonable and worse than brutish is the Sin of Infidelity, by which the Sinner rejects Christ, and with him all those Mercies and Benefits which alone can relieve and cure his Misery!*

He

He is by Nature blind and ignorant, and yet refuſes Chriſt, who comes to him with Heavenly Light and Wiſdom: He is condemned by the terrible Sentence of the Law to eternal Wrath, and yet rejects Chriſt who tenders to him compleat and perfect Righteouſneſs: He is wholly polluted and plunged into Original and actual pollutions of Nature and Practice, yet will have none of Chriſt, who would become Sanctification to him. He is oppreſſed in Soul and Body with the deplorable Effects and Miſeries Sin hath brought upon him, and yet is ſo in love with his Bondage, that he will neither accept Chriſt, nor the Redemption he brings with him to Sinners.

Oh what Monſters, what Beaſts hath Sin turned its Subjects into! *You will not come unto me that you may have Life*, Joh. 5. 40. Sin hath ſtabb'd the Sinner to the Heart, the Wounds are all mortal, eternal Death is in his Face; Chriſt hath prepared the only Plaiſter that can cure his Wounds, but he will not ſuffer him to apply it. He acts like one in love with Death, and that judges it ſweet to Periſh. So Chriſt tells us, *Prov.* 8. 36. *All they that hate me love Death*: Not in it ſelf, but in its Cauſes; with which it is inſeparably connected. They are loth to burn, yet willing to Sin; tho' Sin kindle thoſe everlaſting Flames. So that in two things the Unbeliever ſhews himſelf worſe than brutiſh, he can't think of Damnation, the effect of Sin, without horror, and yet cannot think of Sin the cauſe of Damnation, without pleaſure; he is loath to periſh to all Eternity without remedy, and yet refuſes and declines Chriſt as if he were an Enemy, who only can and would deliver him from that eternal Perdition.

Non quod quiſque ita inſaniat, ut ſciens & volens diligat mortem; quam omnes naturâ exhoreſcimus: ſed quia iſta eſt fructus ſpretæ ſapientiæ Dei, ut mortem tandem afferat. Lavat in loc.

How do Men act therefore as if they were in love with their own Ruin? Many poor Wretches now in the way to Hell, what an hard ſhift do they make to caſt themſelves away! Chriſt meets them many times in the Ordinances; where they ſtudiouſly ſhun him: Many times checks them in their way by Convictions, which they make an hard ſhift to overcome and conquer. Oh how willing are they to accept a Cure, a Benefit, a Remedy, for any thing but their Souls! You ſee then that Sinners cannot (ſhould they ſtudy all their Days, to do themſelves a Miſchief) take a readier courſe to undo themſelves, than by rejecting Chriſt in his gracious Offers.

Surely the Sin of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha* is leſs than this Sin, Mercy itſelf is exaſperated by it, and the Damnation of ſuch as reject Chriſt (ſo prepared for them, with whatever they need, and ſo ſeriouſly and frequently offer'd to them upon the Knee of Goſpel intreaty) is juſt, *inevitable*, and more *intolerable* than any in the World beſide them. It is *juſt*, for the Sinner hath but his own option, or choice: He is but come to the End which he was often told his Way would bring him to. It is *inevitable*, for there is no other way to Salvation but that which is rejected. And it will be more intolerable than the Damnation of others, becauſe neither *Heathens* nor *Devil* ever aggravated their Sins by ſuch an horrid Circumſtance, as the wilful refuſing of ſuch an apt, offered, and only Remedy.

Infer. 4. *What a tremendous ſymptom of Wrath, and ſad character of Death, appears upon that Man's Soul to which no effectual application of Chriſt can be made by the Goſpel!*

Chriſt with his Benefits is frequently tendered to them in the Goſpel, they have been beſeeched once and again upon the Knee of Importunity to accept him, thoſe Entreaties and Perſwaſions have been urged by the greateſt Arguments, the Command of God, the love of Chriſt, the inconceivable Happineſs or Miſery which unavoidably follows the accepting or or rejecting of thoſe Offers, and yet nothing will ſtick: All their Pleas for Infidelity have been over and over confuted, their Reaſons and Conſciences have ſtood convinced, they have been *Speechleſs* as well as *Chriſtleſs*: Not one ſound Argument is found with them to defend their Infidelity: They confeſs in general, that ſuch courſes as theirs is lead to Deſtruction. They will yield them to be happy Souls that are in Chriſt; and yet when it comes to the Point, their own cloſing with him, nothing will ſtick; all Arguments, all Entreaties, return to us without ſucceſs.

Lord! What is the reaſon of this unaccountable Obſtinacy? In other things it is not ſo: If they be ſick, they are ſo far from rejecting a Phyſician that offers himſelf, that they will ſend and pray, and pay him too. If they be Arreſted for Debt, and any one will be a Surety, and pay their Debts for them, Words can hardly expreſs the ſenſe they have of ſuch a Kindneſs: But tho' Chriſt would be a Phyſician and Surety, and whatever elſe their needs require, they will rather periſh to Eternity than accept him. What may we fear to be the reaſon of this, but becauſe they are not of Chriſt's Sheep, *Joh.* 10. 26. The Lord open the Eyes of poor Sinners, to apprehend not only how great a Sin, but how dreadful a Sign this is.

Infer. 5. *If Chriſt with all his Benefits be made ours by God's ſpecial application, what a Day of Mercies then is the Day of Converſion! What multitudes of choice Bleſſings viſit the converted Soul in that Day.*

This day (ſaith Chriſt to *Zacheus*, *Luke* 19. 9.) *is Salvation come to this Houſe.* In this Day Chriſt cometh into the Soul, and he comes not empty, but brings with him all his Treaſures of Wiſdom and Righteouſneſs, Sanctification, and Redemption. Troops of Mercies, yea, of the beſt of Mercies, come with him. It is a Day of Singular gladneſs and joy to the Heart of Chriſt whom he is Eſpouſed to, and received by the believing Soul: It is as a Coronation-day to a King. So you read *Cant.* 3. 11. *Go forth O ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon with the Crown wherewith his Mother crowned him in the Day of his Eſpouſals, and in the Day of the gladneſs of his Heart.*

Where utder the Type of *Solomon* in his greateſt Magnificence and Glory, when the Royal Diadem was ſet upon his Head, and the People ſhouted for joy, ſo that the Earth did ring again, is ſhadowed out the joy of Chriſt's Heart, when poor Souls by their high Eſtimation of him, and conſent to his Government, do, as it were, Crown him with Glory and Honour, and make his Heart glad.

Now if the Day of our Eſpouſals to Chriſt, be the Day of the gladneſs of his Heart, and he reckons himſelf thus honoured and glorified by us, what a day of joy and gladneſs ſhould it be to our Hearts, and how ſhould we be tranſported with joy, to ſee a King from Heaven with all his Treaſures of Grace and Glory, beſtowing himſelf freely and everlaſtingly upon us, as our Portion! No wonder *Zacheus* came down joyfully, *Luke* 19. 6. That the *Eunuch* went home rejoycing, *Acts* 8. 39. That the Jaylor rejoyced, believing in God with all his Houſhold, *Acts* 16. 34. That they that were converted, did eat their Meat with gladneſs, praiſing God, *Acts* 2. 41, 46. That there was great joy among them of *Samaria*, when Chriſt came among them in the preaching of the Goſpel, *Acts* 8. 5. 8. I ſay it's no wonder, we read of Joy accomyanying Chriſt into the Soul, when we

we conſider that in one Day ſo many Bleſſings meet together in it, the leaſt of which is not to be exchanged for all the Kingdoms of this World, and the Glory of them. Eternity itſelf will but ſuffice to bleſs God for the Mercies of this one Day.

Infer. 6. *If Chriſt be made all this to every Soul unto whom he is effectually applied, what cauſe then have thoſe Souls that are under the preparatory Work of the Spirit, and are come nigh to Chriſt and all his Benefits, to ſtretch out their Hands with vehement deſire to Chriſt, and give him the moſt importunate invitation into their Souls!*

The whole World is diſtinguiſhable into three Claſſes, or ſorts of Perſons, ſuch as are *far from Chriſt*, ſuch as are *not far from Chriſt*, and ſuch as are *in Chriſt*. They that are in Chriſt have heartily received him. Such as are far from Chriſt will not open to him; their Hearts are faſt barred by Ignorance, Prejudice, and Unbelief againſt him; but thoſe that are come under the preparatory workings of the Spirit nigh to Chriſt, who ſee their own indiſpenſable neceſſity of him, and his ſuitableneſs to their neceſſities, in whom alſo encouraging hopes begin to dawn, and their Souls are waiting at the foot of God for power to receive him, for an Heart to cloſe ſincerely and univerſally with him; oh what vehement Deſires! What ſtrong Pleas! What moving Arguments ſhould ſuch Perſons urge and plead to win Chriſt, and get poſſeſſion of him! They are in ſight of their only Remedy; Chriſt and Salvation are come to their very Doors: There wants but a few things to make them bleſſed for ever. This is the Day in which their Souls are exerciſed greatly betwixt Hopes and Fears: Now they are much alone and deep in Thoughtfulneſs, they weep and make ſupplication for an Heart to believe, and that againſt the great diſcouragements with which they encounter.

Reader, if this be the caſe of thy Soul, it will not be the leaſt piece of Service I can do for thee, to ſuggeſt Pleas as in this caſe are proper to be urged for the attainment of thy deſires, and the cloſing of the Match betwixt Chriſt and thee.

Firſt, Plead the abſolute neceſſity which now drives thee to Chriſt: Tell him thy hope is utterly periſhed in all other Refuges. Thou art come like a ſtarving Beggar to the laſt Door of Hope. Tell him thou now beginneſt to ſee the abſolute neceſſity of Chriſt. Thy Body hath not ſo much need of Bread, Water, or Air, as thy Soul hath of Chriſt: and that Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification and Redemption that are in him.

Secondly, Plead the Father's gracious deſign in furniſhing and ſending him into the World, and his own deſign in accepting the Father's Call. Lord Jeſus, waſt thou not *anointed to Preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, and to proclaim liberty to the Captives, and the opening of the Priſon to them that are bound?* Iſa. 16, 1, 3. Behold an *Object* ſuitable to thine *Office*: Whilſt I was ignorant of my condition, I had a proud rebellious Heart, but conviction and ſelf-acquaintance have now meekned it: My Heart was harder than the neather Mill-ſtone, and it was as eaſie to diſſolve the obdurate Rocks into Syrup, as to thaw and melt my Heart for Sin; but now God hath made my Heart ſoft, I ſenſibly feel the Miſery of my Condition. I once thought my ſelf at perfect Liberty, but now I ſee what I conceited to be perfect Liberty, is perfect Bondage; and never did a poor Priſoner ſigh for deliverance more than I. Since then thou haſt given me a Soul thus qualified (though ſtill unworthy) for the exerciſe of thine Office, and Execution of thy Commiſſion. Lord *Jeſus*, be according to thy Name, a *Jeſus* unto me.

Thirdly, Plead the unlimited and general Invitations made to ſuch Souls as you are, to come to Chriſt freely. Lord, thou haſt made open Proclamation; *Ho every one that thirſteth come ye to the Waters*, Iſa. 55. 1. and *Revel.* 22. 17. *Him that is athirſt come.* In Obedience to thy call, lo I come; had I not been invited, my coming to the (dear Lord Jeſus) had been an Act of Preſumption, but this makes it an Act of Duty and Obedience.

Fourthly, Plead the unprofitableneſs of thy Blood to God. Lord there is no profit in my Blood, it will turn to no more Advantage to thee to Deſtroy, than it will to Save me; if thou ſend me to Hell (as the Merit of my Sin calls upon thy Juſtice to do) I ſhall be there diſhonouring thee to all Eternity, and the Debt I owe thee never paid. But if thou apply thy Chriſt to me for Righteouſneſs, Satisfaction for all that I have done will be laid down in one full round Sum; indeed, if the Honour of thy Juſtice lay as a Bar to my Pardon, it would ſtop my Mouth; but when thy Juſtice, as well as Mercy, ſhall both rejoyce together, and be glorified and pleaſed in the ſame Act, what hinders but that Chriſt be applied to my Soul; ſince in ſo doing, God can be no loſer by it?

Fifthly. Laſtly, plead thy compliance with the Terms of the Goſpel: Tell him, Lord, my will complies fully and heartily to all thy gracious Terms. I can now ſubſcribe a Blank: Let God offer his Chriſt on what Terms he will, my Heart is ready to comply; I have no exception againſt any Article of the Goſpel. And now Lord, I wholly refer my ſelf to thy Pleaſure; do with me what ſeemeth good in thine Eyes, only give me an Intereſt Jeſus Chriſt: As to all other concerns I lie at thy Feet, in full Reſignation of all to thy Pleaſure. Never yet did any Periſh in that poſture and frame; and I hope I ſhall not be made the firſt Inſtance and Example.

Infer. 7. *Laſtly, If Chriſt with all his Benefits, be made ours by ſpecial Application; how contented, thankful, comfortable and hopeful, ſhould Believers be in every Condition which God caſts them into in this World!*

After ſuch a Mercy as this, let them never open their Mouths any more to repine and grudge at the outward Inconveniencies of their Condition in this World. What are the Things you want, compared with the Things you enjoy? What is a little Money, Health or Liberty, to Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification and Redemption? All the Crowns and Scepters in the World ſold to their full Value, are no Price for the leaſt of theſe Mercies. But I will not inſiſt here, your Duty lies much higher than Contentment.

Be Thankful as well as Content in every State. *Bleſſed be God*, (ſaith the Apoſtle) *the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed us with all* [*ſpiritual Bleſſings*] *in Heavenly Places in Chriſt*: O think what are Men to Angels, that Chriſt ſhould paſs by them to become a Saviour to Men! And what art thou among Men, that thou ſhouldeſt be taken, and others left! And among all the Mercies of God, what Mercies are comparable to theſe conferr'd upon thee? O bleſs God in the loweſt Ebb of outward Comforts, for ſuch Privileges as theſe.

And yet you will not come up to your Duty in all this, except you be joyful in the Lord, and rejoyce ever more after the Receipt of ſuch Mercies as theſe, *Phil.* 4. 4. *Rejoice in the Lord ye Righteous, and again I ſay Rejoyce.* For hath not the poor Captive reaſon to Rejoyce, when he hath recovered his Liberty? The Debtor to rejoyce when all Scores are cleared, and he owes nothing? The weary Traveller to rejoyce, though he be not owner of a Shilling, when

he is come almoſt Home, where all his Wants ſhall be ſupplied? Why this is your Caſe, when Chriſt once becomes yours; you are the Lord's Freemen, your Debts to Juſtice are all ſatisfied by Chriſt; and you are within a little of compleat Redemption, from all the Troubles and Inconveniences of your preſent State.

Thanks be to God for Jeſus Chriſt.

SERMON II.

Wherein the Believer's Union with Chriſt is ſtated and opened, as a principal Part of Goſpel Application.

JOHN XVII. xxiii.

I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.

THE Deſign and End of the Application of Chriſt to Sinners, is the Communication of his Benefits to them; but ſeeing all Communications of Benefits neceſſarily imply Communion, and all Communion as neceſſarily preſuppoſes Union with his Perſon; I ſhall therefore in this Place, and from this Scripture, treat of the Myſtical Union betwixt Chriſt and Believers; this Union being the principal Act wherein the Spirit's Application of Chriſt conſiſts; of which I ſpake (as to its general nature) in the former Sermon.

In this Verſe (omitting the Contexture) we find a threefold Union, one betwixt the Father and Chriſt, a ſecond betwixt Chriſt and Believers, a third betwixt Believers themſelves.

Firſt, *Thou in me:* This is a glorious ineffable Union, and is fundamental to the other two. The Father is not only in Chriſt, in reſpect of dear Affection, as one Friend is in another, who is as his own Soul; nor only eſſentially, in reſpect of the Identity and Sameneſs of Nature and Attributes, in which reſpect Chriſt is the expreſs Image of his Perſon, *Heb.* 1. 3. But he is in Chriſt alſo as Mediator, by communicating the Fulneſs of the Godhead which dwells in him as God-Man, in a tranſcendent and ſingular manner, ſo as it never dwelt, nor can dwell in any other, *Col.* 2. 9.

Secondly, *I in them:* Here is the Myſtical Union betwixt Chriſt and the Saints, *q. d.* thou and I are one eſſentially, they and I are one myſtically; thou and I are one by the Communication of the Godhead, and ſingular Fulneſs of the Spirit to me as Mediator; and they and I are one, by my Communication of the Spirit to them in Meaſure.

Thirdly, From hence reſults a third Union betwixt Believers themſelves; *that they may be made perfect in one*; the ſame Spirit dwelling in them all, and equally uniting them all to me, as living Members to their Head of Influence, there muſt needs be a dear and intimate Union betwixt themſelves as Fellow Members of the ſame Body.

Now my Buſineſs at this time lying in the ſecond Branch, namely, the Union betwixt Chriſt and Believers, I ſhall gather up the Subſtance of it into this doctrinal Propoſition, to which I ſhall apply this Diſcourſe.

Doct. *That there is a ſtrict and dear Union betwixt Chriſt and all true Believers.*

The Scriptures have borrowed from the Book of Nature four elegant and lively Metaphors to help the Nature of this Myſtical Union with Chriſt into our Underſtandings; namely, that of two Pieces of *Timber*, united by Glew; that of a *Graff*, taking hold of its Stock, and making one Tree; that of the *Husband* and *Wife*, by the Marriage Covenant becoming one Fleſh; and that of the *Members* and Head animated by one Soul, and ſo becoming one natural Body. Every one of theſe is more lively and full than the other, and what is defective in one, is ſupplied in the other; but yet, neither any of theſe ſingly, or all of them jointly, can give us a full and compleat Account of this Myſtery.

Not that of two Pieces united by Glew, 1 *Cor.* 6. 17. *He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit*, κολλώμενος, glewed to the Lord. For tho' this cementeth, and ſtrongly joins them in one, yet this is but a faint and imperfect Shadow of our Union with Chriſt; for tho' this Union by Glew be intimate, yet it is not vital, but ſo is that of the Soul with Chriſt.

Nor that of the Graff and Stock mentioned *Rom.* 6. 5. for tho' it be there ſaid that Believers are σύμφυτοι, implanted, or ingraffed by way of Inciſion, and this Union betwixt it and the Stock be vital, for it partakes of the vital Sap and Juice of it; yet here alſo is a remarkable Defect, for the Graff is of a more excellent Kind and Nature than the Stock, and upon that Account the Tree receives its Denomination from it, as from the more noble and excellent Part; but Chriſt, into whom Believers are ingraffed, is infinitely more excellent than they, and they are denominated from him.

Nor yet that Conjugal Union by Marriage Covenant betwixt a Man and his Wife; for tho' this be exceeding dear and intimate, ſo that a Man leaves Father and Mother, and cleaves to his Wife, and they two become one Fleſh; yet this Union is not indiſſolvable, but may and muſt be broken by Death; and then the Relict lives alone without any Communion with, or Relation to the Perſon that was once ſo dear; but this betwixt Chriſt and the Soul can never be diſſolved by Death, it abides to Eternity.

Nor laſtly, that of the Head and Members united by one vital Spirit, and ſo making one Phyſical Body, mentioned *Eph.* 4. 15, 16. for tho' one Soul actuates every Member, yet it doth not knit every Member alike near to the Head, but ſome are nearer, and others removed farther from it; but here every Member is alike nearly united with Chriſt the Head, the Weak are as near to him as the Strong.

Two Things are neceſſary to be opened in the doctrinal part of this Point. 1. The Reality. 2. The Quality of this Union.

Firſt, For the Reality of it, I ſhall make it appear that there is ſuch a Union betwixt Chriſt and Believers; it is no *Ens rationis*, empty Notion, or cunningly deviſed Fable, but a moſt certain demonſtrable Truth, which appears,

Firſt, From the Communion which is betwixt Chriſt and Believers; in this the Apoſtle is expreſs 1 *John* 1. 3. *Truly our Fellowſhip is with the Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt*; κοινωνία. It ſignifies ſuch Fellowſhip or Copartnerſhip, as Perſons have by joint Intereſt in one and the ſame Enjoyment, which is in common betwixt them. So *Heb.* 3. 14. we are μέτοχοι, *Partakers of Chriſt*. And *Pſal.* 45. 7. חבריך *Fellows*

Ipſe venit in ſortem noſtræ mortalitatis, ut in ſortem nos adduceret ſuæ immortalitis: clarum autem eſt, hic agi de conſortibus unctionis: quales ſunt omnes fideles qui unctionis participes fiunt. Rivet.

here the Saints are called the Companions, Conſorts, or Fellows of Chriſt; and that not only in reſpect of his Aſſumption of our Mortality, and inveſting us with his Immortality, but it hath a ſpecial reference and reſpect to the Unction of the Holy Ghoſt, or Graces of the Spirit, of which Believers are Partakers with him and thro' him. Now this Communion of the Saints with Chriſt is entirely and neceſſarily dependent upon their Union with him, even as much as the Branches Participation of the Sap and Juice depends upon its Union and Coalition with the Stock; take away Union, and there can be no Communion, or Communications, which is clear from 1 *Cor* 3. 22, 23. *All is yours, and ye are Chriſt's, and Chriſt is God's.* Where you ſee how all our Participation of Chriſt's Benefits is built upon our Union with Chriſt's Perſon.

Secondly, The Reality of the Believers Union with *Chriſt*, is evident from the Imputation of *Chriſt*'s Righteouſneſs to him for his Juſtification. That a Believer is juſtified before God by a Righteouſneſs without himſelf, is undeniable from *Rom.* 3. 24. *Being juſtified freely by his Grace, thro' the Redemption that is in Chriſt Jeſus.* And that Chriſt's Righteouſneſs becomes ours by Imputation, is as clear from *Rom.* 4. 23, 24. but it can never be imputed to us, except we be united to him, and become one with him; which is alſo plainly aſſerted in 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. *But of him are ye (in Chriſt Jeſus) who of God is made unto us Wiſdom and Righteouſneſs, Sanctification and Redemption.* He communicates his Merits unto none but thoſe that are in him. Hence all thoſe vain Cavils of the Papiſts diſputing againſt our Juſtification by the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and aſſerting it to be by inherent Righteouſneſs, are ſolidly anſwered.

When they demand, how can we be juſtified by the *Righteouſneſs* of another? Can I be rich with another Man's Money, or preferr'd by another's Honours? Our Anſwer is, Yes, if that other be my Surety or Husband. Indeed *Peter* cannot be juſtified by the Righteouſneſs of *Paul*; but both may be juſtified by the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed to them; they being Members jointly knit to one common Head. Principal and Surety are one in Obligation and Conſtruction of Law. Head and Members are one Body; Branch and Stock are one Tree; and it's no ſtrange thing to ſee a Graff live by the Sap of another Stock, when once it is ingraffed into it.

Thirdly, The Sympathy that is betwixt Chriſt and Believers proves a Union betwixt them; Chriſt and the Saints ſmile and ſigh together. St. *Paul* in *Coloſſ.* 1. 2, 4. tells us, that he did fill up that which is behind, τὰ ὑστερήματα, —— the Remainders of the *Sufferings of Chriſt in his Fleſh*: Not as if Chriſt's Sufferings were imperfect, (*for by one Offering he hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified*, Heb. 10. 14.) but in theſe Two Scriptures Chriſt is conſidered in a twofold Capacity; he ſuffered once in *Corpore proprio*, in his own Perſon as Mediator; theſe Sufferings are compleat and full, and in that Senſe he ſuffers no more; he ſuffers alſo in *Corpore myſtico*, in his Church and Members; thus he ſtill ſuffers in the Sufferings of every Saint for his ſake; and tho' theſe ſufferings in his myſtical Body are not equal to the other, either *pondere & menſura*, in their Weight and Value, nor yet deſigned *ex Officio*, for the ſame Uſe and Purpoſe, to ſatisfy by their proper Merit offended Juſtice; nevertheleſs they are truly reckoned the Sufferings of Chriſt, becauſe the Head ſuffers when the Members do; and without this Suppoſition that place, *Acts* 9. 5. is never to be underſtood, when Chriſt the Head in Heaven cries out, *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me?* when the Toe was trod upon on Earth; how doth Chriſt ſenſibly feel our Sufferings, or we his, if there be not a myſtical Union betwixt him and us?

Fourthly, and laſtly, The Way and Manner in which the Saints ſhall be raiſed at the laſt Day, proves this myſtical Union betwixt Chriſt and them; for they are not to be raiſed as others, by the naked Power of God without them, but by the Vertue of Chriſt's Reſurrection as their Head, ſending forth vital quickening Influences into their dead Bodies, which are united to him as well as their Souls. For ſo we find it, *Rom.* 8. 11. *But if the Spirit of him that raiſed up Jeſus from the Dead dwell in you, he that raiſed up Chriſt from the Dead ſhall alſo quicken your mortal Bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you*; even as it is in our awakening out of natural Sleep, firſt the Animal Spirits in the Head begin to rouze and play there, and then the Senſes and Members are looſed throughout the whole Body.

Now it's impoſſible the Saints ſhould be raiſed in the laſt Reſurrection, by the Spirit of Chriſt dwelling in them, if that Spirit did not knit and unite them to him, as Members to their Head. So then by all this it is proved there is a real Union of the Saints with Chriſt.

Next I ſhall endeavour to open the Quality and Nature of this Union, and ſhew you what it is according to the weak Apprehenſions we have of ſo ſublime a Myſtery; and this I ſhall do in a general and particular Account of it.

Firſt, more generally, it is an intimate Conjunction of Believers to Chriſt, by the imparting of his Spirit to them, whereby they are enabled to believe and live in him.

All Divine Spiritual Life is originally in the Father, and cometh not to us but by and thro' the Son; *John* 5. 26. to him hath the Father given to have an ἀυτοζωὴν, —— a quickening enlivening Power in himſelf; but the Son communicates this Life which is in him to none but by and thro' the Spirit, *Rom.* 1. 2. *The Spirit of Life which is in Chriſt Jeſus hath made me free from the Law of Sin and Death.*

The Spirit muſt therefore firſt take hold of us, before we can live in Chriſt, and when he doth ſo, then we are enabled to exert that vital Act of Faith, whereby we receive Chriſt; all this lyes plain in that one Scripture, *John* 6. 57. *As the living Father hath ſent me, and I live by the Father, ſo he that eateth me* (that is by Faith applies me) *even he ſhall live by me.* So that theſe two, namely, the Spirit on Chriſt's Part, and Faith his Work on our Part, are the two Ligaments by which we are knit to Chriſt.

So that the Spirit's Work in uniting or engraffing a Soul into Chriſt, is like the cutting off the Graff from its native Stock (which he doth by his Illuminations and Convictions) and cloſing it with the living when it is thus prepared, and ſo enabling it (by the Infuſion of Faith) to ſuck and draw the vital Sap, and thus it becomes one with him. Or as the many Members in the natural Body, being all quickened and animated by the ſame vital Spirit, become one Body with the Head, which is the principal Member; *Epheſ.* 4. 4. *There is one Body, and one Spirit.*

More particularly we ſhall conſider the Properties of this Union, that ſo we may the better underſtand the nature of it. And here I ſhall open the nature of it both negatively and affirmatively.

First

First, Negatively, by removing all false Notions and Misapprehensions of it. And we say,

First, The Saints Union with Christ is not a meer mental Union, only in Conceit and Notion, but really exists *extra mentem*, whether we conceit it or not. I know the atheistical World censures all these things as Fancies and idle Imaginations, but Believers know the Reality of them. *John* 14. 20. *At that Day you shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.* This Doctrine is not fantastical, but scientifical.

Secondly, The Saints Union with Christ is not a physical Union, such as is betwixt the Members of a natural Body and the Head; our Nature indeed is assumed into Union with the Person of Christ, but it is the singular Honour of that blessed and holy Flesh of Christ to be so united as to make one Person with him; that Union is hypostatical, this only mystical.

Thirdly, Nor is it an essential Union, or Union with the Divine Nature, so as our Beings are thereby swallowed up and lost in the Divine Being.

Some there be indeed that talk at that wild rate, of being Godded into God, and Christed into Christ; and those unwary Expressions of *Greg Nez.* θεοποιεῖν, and χριστοποιεῖν, do but too much countenance those daring Spirits; but oh there is an infinite Distance betwixt us and Christ in respect of Nature and Excellency, notwithstanding this Union.

Fourthly, The Union I here speak of is not a fœderal Union, or an Union by Covenant only; such a Union indeed there is betwixt Christ and Believers, but that is consequential to and wholly dependent upon this.

Fifthly, and lastly, It is not a meer moral Union by Love and Affection; thus we say, one Soul is in two Bodies, a Friend is another self; the Lover is in the Person loved; such a Union of Hearts and Affections there is also betwixt Christ and the Saints, but this is of another nature; that we call a moral, this a mystical Union; that only knits our Affections, but this our Persons to Christ.

Secondly, Positively, And first, Tho' this Union neither makes us one Person or Essence with Christ, yet it knits our Persons most intimately and nearly to the Person of Christ. The Church is Christ's Body, *Coloss.* 1. 24. not his natural, but his mystical Body; that is to say, his Body is a Mystery, because it is to him as his natural Body. The Saints stand to Christ in the same Relation that the natural Members of the Body stand to the Head, and he stands in the same Relation to them that the Head stands in to the natural Members; and consequently they stand related to one another as the Members of a natural Body do to each other.

Christ and the Saints are not one as the Oak and the Ivy that clasps it are one, but as the Graff and Stock are one; it is not a Union by Adhesion, but Incorporation. Husband and Wife are not so near, Soul and Body are not so near as Christ and the believing Soul are near to each other.

Secondly, The mystical Union is wholly supernatural, wrought by the alone Power of God. So it's said, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. *But of him are ye in Christ Jesus.* We can no more unite our selves to Christ than a Branch can incorporate itself into another Stock; it is of him, *i. e.* of God, his proper and alone Work.

There are only two Ligaments or Bands of Union betwixt Christ and the Soul, *viz.* the Spirit on his Part, and Faith on ours. But when we say Faith is the Band of Union on our Part, the meaning is not, that it's so our own Act, as that it springs naturally from us, or is educed from the Power of our own Wills; no, for the Apostle expresly contradicts it, *Eph.* 2. 8. *It is not of your selves, it is the Gift of God.* But we are the Subjects of it, and tho' the Act on that Account be ours, yet the Power enabling us to believe is God's, *Eph.* 1. 19, 20.

Thirdly, The mystical Union is an immediate Union; immediate I say, not as excluding Means and Instruments, for several Means and many Instruments are employ'd for the effecting of it; but immediate as excluding Degrees of Nearness among the Members of Christ's mystical Body.

Every Member in the natural Body stands not as near to the Head as another, but so do all the mystical Members of Christ's Body to him; every Member, the smallest as well as the greatest, hath an immediate Coalition with Christ, 1 *Cor.* 1. 2. *To the Church of God which is at* Corinth, *to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be Saints, with all that in every Place call upon the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.*

Among the factious in this Church at *Corinth*, those that said *I am of Christ*, as arrogating Christ to themselves, were as much a Faction as those that said *I am of Paul*, 1 Cor. 1. 30. To cure this he tells them, he is *both theirs and ours.* Such Inclosures are against Law.

Fourthly, The Saints mystical Union with Christ is a fundamental Union; it's fundamental by way of Sustentation; all our Fruits of Obedience depend upon it, *John* 15. 4. *As the Branch cannot bear Fruit except it abide in the Vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me.* It's fundamental to all our Privileges and comfortable Claims, 1 *Cor.* 3. *ult. All is yours, for ye are Christ's.* And it is fundamental to all our Hopes and Expectations of Glory; for it is *Christ in you the Hope of Glory*, Col. 1. 27. So then destroy this Union, and with it you destroy all your Fruits, Privileges, and eternal Hopes, at one Stroke.

Fifthly, The mystical Union is a most efficacious Union, for thro' this Union the Divine Power flows into our Souls, both to quicken us with the Life of Christ, and to conserve and secure that Life in us, after it is so infused.

Without the Unition of the Soul to Christ, which is to be conceived efficiently as the Spirit's Act, there can be no Union formally considered; and without these no Communications of Life from Christ to us, *Eph.* 4. 16. And there is that ἐνέργεια, or effectual working of the Spirit of Life in every Part, which he there speaks of (as who should say, the first Buildings of a new Life, a spiritual Vitality diffused thro' the Soul, which ere while was dead in Sin) yet still this Union with Christ is as necessary to the maintaining as before it was to the producing of it.

For why is it that this Life is not again distinguished and wholly suffocated in us, by so many deadly Wounds as are given it by Temptations and Corruptions? Surely no Reason can be assigned more satisfying than that which Christ himself gives us in *John* 14. 19. *Because I live, ye shall live also*: q. d. whilst there is vital Sap in me the Root, you that are Branches in me cannot wither and die.

Sixthly, The mystical Union is an indissoluble Union; there is an everlasting Tie betwixt Christ and the Believer; and herein also it is beyond all other Unions in the World; Death dissolves the dear Union betwixt the Husband and Wife, Friend and Friend, yea betwixt Soul and Body, but not betwixt Christ and the Soul; the Bands of this Union rot not in the Grave. *What shall separate us from the Love of Christ?* saith the Apostle, *Rom.* 8. 35, 38, 39. For

bids Defiance to all his Enemies, and Triumphs in the firmness of this Union, over all Hazards that seem to threaten it. It is with Christ and us, in respect of the *Mystical Union*, as it was with Christ himself in respect of the *Hypostatical Union*: That was not dissolved by his Death when the *Natural Union* betwixt his Soul and Body was, nor can this Mystical Union of our Souls and Bodies with Christ be dissolved, when the Unions betwixt us and our dearest Relations, yea, betwixt the Soul and Body, are dissolved by Death. God calls himself the God of *Abraham*, long after his Body was turned into Dust.

Seventhly, It is an *honourable Union* * yea, the highest Honour that can be done unto Men: The greatest Honour that was ever done to our common Nature, was by its assumption into Union with the Second Person *Hypostatically*, and the highest Honour that was ever done to our single Persons, was their Union with Christ *Mystically*. To be a Servant of Christ, is a Dignity transcendent to the highest Advancement among Men; but to be a Member of Christ, how matchless and singular is the Glory thereof! And yet such Honour have all the Saints, *Eph* 5. 30 *We are Members of his Body, of his Flesh, and of his Bones.*

* *Apex, caput & vertex nobilitatis est Christus, sine quo nihil est in toto hoc sublunarie orbe terrarum nobile, cujus solium est cœlum, & cujus scabellum est terra; terra inquam, in qua horum omnis cognatio & nobilitas fixa est & collocata, divinis illius pedibus substernitur.* Laurent. Humphredus de nobilitate, lib. 2 p. 176.

Eighthly, It is a most *comfortable Union*: Yea, the ground of all solid Comfort both in Life and Death: Whatever Troubles, Wants, or Distresses befall such, in this is abundant Relief and Support. Christ is mine, and I am his; what may not a good Soul make out of that! If I am Christ's, then let him take care for me, and indeed in so doing he doth but care for his own: He is my Head, and to him it belongs to consult the Safety and Welfare of his own Members, *Eph.* 1. 22, 23. He is not only an Head to his own by way of *Influence*, but to all things else by way of *Dominion*, for their good. How comfortably may we repose our selves under that cheering Consideration upon him at all times, and in all difficult Cases!

Ninthly, It is a *fruitful Union*: The immediate end of it is Fruit, *Rom.* 7. 4. *We are married to Christ, that we should bring forth Fruit to God*: All the Fruit we bear before our ingrafture into Christ, is worse than none: Till the Person be in Christ, the Work cannot be Evangelically good and acceptable to God: *We are made accepted in the Beloved*, Eph. 1. 6. Christ is a fruitful Root, and makes all the Branches that live in him so too, *Joh.* 15. 8.

Tenthly and Lastly, It is an *enriching Union*: For by our Union with his Person, we are immediately interrested in all his Riches, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. How rich and great a Person do the little Arms of Faith clasp and embrace! *All is yours*, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22. All that Christ hath becomes ours, either by Communication to us, or Improvement for us; His Father, *Joh.* 20. 17. His Promises, 2 *Cor.* 1. 20. His Providences, *Rom.* 8. 28. His Glory, *Joh.* 17. 24. it's all ours by Vertue of our Union with him.

Thus you see briefly what the Mystical Union is. Next we shall improve it.

Infer. 1. *If there be such a Union betwixt Christ and Believers, Oh then what transcendent Dignity hath God put upon Believers!*

Well might *Constantine* prefer the Honour of being a Member of the Church, before that of being a Head of the Empire, for it is not only above all Earthly Dignities and Honours, but in some respect above that Honour which God hath put upon the Angels of Glory.

Si vis vir virtutis appellari, indue te Christum, qui est Dei virtus & sapientia; & in omnibus adjunge te domino, ita ut unus cum eo spiritus sias & tunc vir virtutis efficeris. Orig. Hom in Numb 31.

It is true, there is an *ἀνακεφαλαίωσις*, or gathering together of all in Heaven and Earth under Christ as a common Head, *Eph.* 1 10. He is the Head of *Angels* as well as Saints, but in different respects. To Angels he is an Head of *Dominion* and Government, but to Saints he is both an Head of Dominion and Vital *Influence* too: They are his chief and most honourable Subjects, but not his Mystical Members: They are as the *Barons* and *Nobles* in his Kingdom, but the Saints as the dear *Spouse* and Wife of his Bosom. This dignifies the Believer above the greatest Angel. And as the Nobles of the Kingdom think it a preferment and Honour to serve the *Queen*, so the glorious Angels think it no degradation or dishonour to them to serve the Saints; for to this honourable Office they are appointed, *Heb.* 1. 14. to ministring or serviceable Spirits for the good of them that shall be Heirs of Salvation. The chiefest Servant disdains not to honour and serve the Heir.

Some imperious Grandees would frown, should some of these Persons but presume to approach their Presence; but God sets them before his Face with delight, and Angels delight to serve them.

Infer. 2. *If there be such a strict and inseparable Union betwixt Christ and Believers, then the Graces of Belivers can never totally fail: Immortality is the Privilege of Grace, because sanctified Persons are inseparably united to Christ the Fountain of Life: Your Life is hid with Christ in God, Col.* 3. 3. Whilst the Sap of Life is in the Root, the Branches live by it. Thus it is betwixt Christ and Believers, *Joh.* 14. 19. *Because I live, ye shall live also.* See how Christ binds up their Life in one Bundle with his own, plainly intimating it is as impossible for them to die, as it is for himself, he cannot live without them.

True it is, the Spiritual Life of Believers is encountred by many strong and fierce Oppositions: It is also brought to a low Ebb in some, but we are always to remember there are some things which pertain to the Essence of that Life, in which the very Being of it lies, and some things that pertain only to its *well-being*. All those things which belong to the *well-being* of the New Creature, as Manifestations, Joys, spiritual Comforts, *&c.* Many for a time fail, yea, and Grace itself may suffer great losses and remissions in its Degrees, notwithstanding our Union with Christ; but still the Essence of it is immortal, which is no small relief to gracious Souls: When the means of Grace fail, as it is threatned, *Amos* 8. 11. When temporary formal Professors drop away from Christ like withered Leaves in a Windy-Day, 2 *Tim.* 2. 18. And when the natural Union of their Souls and Bodies are suffering a dissolution from each other by Death, when that *Silver Cord* is loosed, this *Golden Chain* holds firm, 1 *Cor.* 3. 23.

Infer. 3. *Is the Union so intimate betwixt Christ and Believers? How great and powerful a Motive then is this, to make us open-handed and liberal in relieving the necessities and wants of every gracious Person! For in relieving them ye relieve Christ himself.*

Christ *Personal* is not the Object of our Pity and Charity, he is at the Fountain Head of all the Riches in Glory, *Eph.* 4. *ver.* 10. But Christ *Mystical* is exposed to Necessities and Wants, he feels Hunger and

Qui respectu fratris in Ecclesia non movetur, vel Christi contemplatione moveatur; & qui non cogitat in labore & egestate conservum, vel dominum cogitet in ipso illo quam despicit, constitutum. Cyprian de opere & eleemosynis.

Thirst, Colds and Pains in his Body the Church; and he is refreshed, relieved and comforted in their Refreshments and Comforts. Christ the Lord of Heaven and Earth, in this consideration, is sometimes in need of a Penny; he tells us his Wants and Poverty, and how he is relieved, *Matt.* 25. 35, 40. A Tex believed and understood by very few, *I was an hungred, and ye gave me Meat. I was thirsty, and ye gave me Drink. I was a Stranger, and ye took me in. Then shall the Righteous answer, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred,* &c. *And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, in as much as ye have done unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it to me.*

It was the saying of a great Divine, That he thought scarce any Man on Earth did fully understand and believe this Truth, and he conceives so much hinted in the very Text, where the Righteous themselves reply, *Lord, when saw we thee Sick,* &c. intimating in the Question, that they did not throughly understand the nearness, yea, *oneness* of those Persons with Christ, for whom they did these things. And indeed, it is incredible that a Christian can be hard-hearted, and close-handed, to that necessitous Christian, in refreshing and relieving of whom, he verily believes that he ministers refreshment to Christ himself.

O think again and again upon this Scripture, consider what forcible and mighty Arguments are here laid together to engage relief to the Wants of Christians.

Here you see their near Relation to Christ; They are Mystically one Person; what you did to them you did to me. Here you see also how kindly Christ takes it at our Hands: Acknowledging all those Kindnesses that were bestowed upon him, even to a bit of Bread: He is you see, content to take it as a Courtesie, who might demand it by Authority, and bereave you of all immediately upon refusal.

Yea, here you see one single Branch or Act of Obedience, (our Charity to the Saints) is singled out from among all the Duties of Obedience, and made the Test and Evidence of our sincerity in that great Day, and Men Blessed or Cursed according to the Love they have manifested this way to the Saints.

O then henceforth let none that understand the Relation the Saints have to Christ, as the Members to the Head, or the Relation they have to each other thereby as fellow Members of the same Body, from henceforth suffer Christ to hunger, if they have Bread to relieve him, or Christ to be thirsty, if they have to refresh him; this Union betwixt Christ and the Saints, affords an Argument beyond all other Arguments in the World to prevail with us. Methinks a little *Rhetorick* might perswade a Christian to part with any thing he hath to Christ, who parted with the Glory of Heaven, yea, and his Heart's Blood to boot for his sake.

Infer. 4. *Do Christ and Believers make but one Mystical Person? How unnatural and absurd then are all those acts of unkindness, whereby Believers wound and grieve Jesus Christ! This is as if the Hand should wound his own Head, from which it receives Life, Sense, Motion and Strength.*

When Satan smites Christ by a wicked Man, he then wounds him with the Hand of an Enemy; but when his Temptations prevail upon the Saints to Sin, he wounds him as it were with his own Hand: As the *Eagle* and *Tree* in the *Fable* complain'd, the one he was wounded by an Arrow winged with his own Feathers; the other, that it rived asunder by a Wedge hewn out of his own Limbs.

Now the Evil and disingenuity of such Sins, is to be measured not only by the near Relation Christ sustains to Believers as their Head; but more particularly, from the several Benefits they receive from him as such: For in wounding Christ by their Sins.

First, They wound their *head of Influence*, through whom they live, and without whom they had still remain'd in the State of Sin and Death, *Eph.* 4, 16. Shall Christ send Life to us, and we return that which is as Death to him? O how absurd, how disingenious is this!

Secondly, They wound their *head of Government*. Christ is a *guiding* as well as a *quickening* Head, *Col.* 1. 18. He is your Wisdom, he guides you by his Counsels to Glory; but must he be thus requited for all his faithful Conduct! What do you when you Sin, but rebel against his Government, refusing to follow his Counsels, and obeying in the mean time a Deceiver than him.

Thirdly, They wound their *Censulting Head*, who cares, provides, end projects, for the Welfare and Safety of the Body. Christians, You know your Affairs below have not been steered and managed by your own Wisdom, but that Orders have been given from Heaven for your Security and Supply from Day to Day. *I know, O Lord,* (saith the Prophet) *that the way of Man is not in himself, neither is it in him that walks to direct his own steps,* Jer. 10. 23.

It's true, Christ is out of your sight, and you see him not; but he sees you, and orders every thing that concerns you. And is this a due requital of all that Care he hath taken for you? Do you thus requite the Lord for all his Benefits? What, recompence Evil for Good! O let Shame cover you.

Fourthly and *Lastly*, They wound *their Head of Honour*. Christ your Head, is the Fountain of Honour to you: This is your Glory that you relate to him as your Head: You are on this account (as before noted) exalted above Angels.

Now then consider, how vile a thing it is to reflect the least Dishonour upon him, from whom you derive all your Glory. O consider and bewail it.

Infer. 5. *Is there so strict and intimate a relation and union betwixt Christ and the Saints? Then surely they can never want what is good for their Souls or Bodies.*

Qui misit filium immisit spiritum promisit vobis quid tandem de negabit?

Every one naturally cares and provides for his own, especially for his own Body; yet we can more easily violate the Law of Nature, and be cruel to our own Flesh, than Christ can be so to his Mystical Body. I know it's hard to rest upon and rejoyce in a Promise, when Necessities pinch, and we see not from whence Relief should arise; but Oh! what sweet Satisfaction and Comfort, might a necessitous Believer find in these Considerations, would he but keep them upon his Heart in such a day of strait.

First, Whatever my Distresses are for Quality, Number, or Degree, they are all *known* even to the least Circumstance, by Christ my Head: He looks down from Heaven upon all my Afflictions, and understands them more fully than I that feel them, *Ps.* 38. 9. *Lord, all my desire is before thee, and my groaning is not hid from thee.*

Secondly, He not only knows them, but *feels* them as well as knows them; *We have not an High-Priest that*

that cannot be touched with the feeling of our Infirmities, Heb. 4. 15 In all your Afflictions he is afflicted; tender Sympathy cannot but flow from such intimate Union; therefore in *Matt.* 25. 35. he saith, I was an hungred, and I was athirst, and I was naked. For indeed his Sympathy and tender Compassion gave him as quick a Resentment, and as tender a Sense of their Wants, as if they had been his own.

Thirdly, He not only knows and feels my Wants, but hath enough in his Hand, and much more than enough to supply them all; for all Things are delivered to him by the Father, *Luke* 10 22. All the Store-houses in Heaven and Earth are his, *Phil.* 4.19

Fourthly, He bestows all Earthly good things, even to superfluity and redundance, upon his very Enemies, *They have more than Heart can wish*, Psal. 73. 7. He is bountiful to Strangers; he loads his very Enemies with these things, and can it be supposed he will in the mean while starve his own, and neglect those whom he loves as his own Flesh? It cannot be. Moreover,

Fifthly, Hitherto he hath not suffered me to perish in any former Straits; when and where was it that he forsook me? This is not the first plunge of Trouble I have been in; have *I* not found him a God at a pinch? How oft have I seen him in the Mount of Difficulties!

Sixthly and *Lastly*, I have his Promise and Engagement that he will never leave me nor forsake me, *Heb.* 13. 5. and John 14. 18. a Promise never crackt since the Hour it was first made. If then the Lord Jesus know and feels all my Wants, hath enough and more than enough to supply them, if he gives even to redundance unto his Enemies, hath not hitherto forsaken me, and hath promised he never will? Why then is my Soul thus disquieted in me? Surely there is no cause it should be so.

Infer. 6. *If the Saints are so nearly united to Christ, as the Members to the Head: O then how great a Sin, and full of danger is it for any to wrong and persecute the Saints! For in so doing, they must needs persecute Christ himself.*

Templum Dei in quo spiritus inhabitat patris & membra Christi non participare salutem, sed in perditionem redigi dicere; quomodo non maximæ est blasphemiæ? Iren. lib. 5.

Agesilaus *dicere solitus est, se vehementer admirari, eos, non haberi in sacrilegorum numero qui dixerunt eos qui deo supplicaret vel Deum venerantur; quo innuit, eos non tantum Sacrilegeos esse qui deos ipsos, aut templorum ornatum spoliarent; sed eos maxime qui eorum ministros, & præcones contumeliis afficiunt* Emyl. Prob.

Saul, Saul, (saith Christ) *why persecutest thou me?* Acts 9. 4. The righteous God holds himself obliged to vindicate oppressed innocency, tho it be in the Person of wicked Men, how much more when it is in a Member of Christ? *He that toucheth you, toucheth the Apple of mine Eye*, Zech 2. 8. And is it to be imagined, that Christ will sit still, and suffer his Enemies to thrust out the very Apples of his Eyes: No, no, *He hath ordained his Arrows against the Persecutors*, Psal. 7. 13.

O it were better thine Hand should wither and thine Arm fall from thy Shoulder, than ever it should be lifted up against Christ in the poorest of his Members. Believe it, Sirs, not only your violent Actions, but your hard Speeches, are all set down upon your Doom's-day Book; and you shall be brought to an Account for them in the Great Day, *Jude* 15. Beware what Arrows you shoot, and be sure of your Mark before you shoot them.

Infer. 7. *If there be such a Union betwixt Christ and the Saints as hath been described, upon what comfortable Terms then, may Believers part with their Bodies at Death?*

Christ your Head is above Water, therefore you cannot be lost: Nay, he is not only risen from the dead himself but is also *become the first fruits of them that slept*, 1 Cor 15. 20. Believers are his Members, his Fulness, he cannot therefore be compleat without you: A part of Christ cannot perish in the Grave, much less burn in Hell. Remember when you feel the Natural Union dissolving, that this Mystical Union can never be dissolved: The pangs of Death cannot break this Tie: and there is a peculiar Excellency in the Believer's Life, so there is a singular Support and peculiar Comfort in his Death; *To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain*, Phil. 1. 21.

Infer. 8. If there be such a Union betwixt Christ and Believers; *How doth it concern every Man to try and examine his Estate, whether he is really united with Christ or not, by the natural and proper Effects which always flow from this Union?* As,

First. The real Communication of Christ's Holiness to the Soul. We cannot be united with this Root, and not partake of the vital sap of Sanctification from him; all that are planted into him, are planted into the likeness of his Death, and of his Resurrection, *Rom.* 6. 5, 6. *viz.* By Mortification and Vivification.

Secondly, They that are so nearly united to him as Members to the Head, cannot but love him and value him above their own Lives; as we see in Nature, The Hand and Arm will interpose to save the Head; the nearer the union the stronger always is the Affection.

Thirdly, The Members are subject to the Head: Dominion in the Head must needs infer Subjection in the Members, *Eph.* 5. 24. In vain do we claim union with Christ as our Head, whilst we are governed by our own Wills, and our Lusts give us Law.

Fourthly, All that are united to Christ, do bear Fruit to God, *Rom.* 7. 4. Fruitfulness is the next End of our Union: There are no Barren Branches growing upon this fruitful Root.

Infer. 9. *Lastly, How much are Believers engaged to walk as the Members of Christ, in the visible exercises of all those Graces and Duties, which the consideration of their near relation to him exacts from them.* As,

First, How *contented* and well pleased should we be with our outward Lot, however Providence hath cast it for us in this World. O do not repine, God hath dealt bountifully with you; upon others he hath bestowed the good things of this World, upon you himself in Christ.

Secondly, How *humble* and lowly in Spirit should you be under your great Advancement! It's true, God hath magnified you greatly by this, but yet don't swell, *You bear not the root, but the root you*, Rom. 11. 18. You shine, but it is as the Stars, with a borrowed Light.

Thirdly, How *zealous* should you be to honour Christ, who hath put so much honour upon you! Be willing to give Glory to Christ, tho' his Glory should rise out of your Shame. Never reckon that Glory that goes to Christ to be lost to you; when you lie at his Feet in the most particular heart-breaking Confessions of sin, yet let this please you, that therein you have given him Glory.

Fourthly, How *exact* and circumspect should you be in all your Ways, remembring whose you are, and whom you represent! Shall it be said that a Member of Christ was convicted of unrighteousness and unholy Actions! God forbid: *If we say we have fellowship*

fellowship with him, and walk in darkneſs, we lye, 1 Joh. 1. 6. *And he that ſaith he abideth in him, ought alſo himſelf to walk even as he walked*, 1 Joh. 2. 6.

Fifthly, How *ſtudious* ſhould you be of Peace among your ſelves, who are all ſo nearly united to ſuch a Head, and thereby are made fellow Members in the ſame Body! The Heathen World was never acquainted with ſuch an Argument as the Apoſtle urges for Unity, in *Eph.* 4. 3, 4.

Sixthly and Laſtly, How *joyful* and comfortable ſhould you be, to whom Chriſt with all his Treaſures and Benefits is effectually applied in this bleſſed Union of your Souls with him! This brings him into your Poſſeſſions: O how great! how glorious a Perſon do the little weak Arms of your Faith Embrace!

Thanks be to God for Jeſus Chriſt.

SERMON III.

Opening the nature and uſe of the Goſpel Miniſtry, as an external means of applying Chriſt.

2 COR. V. xx.

Now then, we are Ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you, we pray you in Chriſt's ſtead; be ye reconciled to God.

THE Effectual Application of Chriſt principally conſiſts in our Union with him, but (ordinarily) there can be no Union without a Goſpel Tender and Overture of him to our Souls; for *How ſhall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? and how ſhall they hear without a Preacher; and how ſhall he Preach except he be ſent?* Rom. 10. 14.

If God be upon a Deſign of marrying poor Sinners to his Son, there muſt be a Treaty in order to it; that Treaty requires Interlocution betwixt both the Parties concerned in it; but ſuch is our frailty, that ſhould God ſpeak immediately to us himſelf, it would confound and overwhelm us: God therefore graciouſly condeſcends and accommodates himſelf to our Infirmity, in treating with us in order to our Union with Chriſt by his *Ambaſſadors*, and theſe not *Angels*, whoſe Converſes we cannot bear, but Men like our ſelves, commiſſionated for the effecting of this great Buſineſs betwixt Chriſt and us. *Now then we are Ambaſſadors for God*, &c. In which Words you have,

First, Chriſt's Ambaſſadors Commiſſionated.

Secondly, Their Commiſſion opened.

First, Chriſt's Ambaſſadors Commiſſionated. *Now then we are Ambaſſadors for Chriſt*, The Lord Jeſus thought it not ſufficient to print the Law of Grace and Bleſſed Terms of our Union with him in the Scriptures, where Men may read his willingneſs to receive them, and ſee the juſt and gracious Terms and Conditions upon which he offers to become theirs; but hath alſo ſet up and eſtabliſhed a ſtanding-Office in the Church to expound that Law, inculcate the Precepts, and urge the Promiſes thereof; to woo and eſpouſe Souls to Chriſt, *I have eſpouſed you to one Husband, that I may preſent you as a chaſte Virgin to Chriſt*, 2 Cor. 11. 20. and this not ſimply from their own affections and compaſſions to miſerable Sinners, but alſo by vertue of their Office and Commiſſion, whereby they are authorized and appointed to that Work. *We then are Ambaſſadors for Chriſt.*

Secondly, Their Commiſſion opened: Wherein we find,

1. Their *Work* appointed.
2. Their *Capacity* deſcribed.
3. And the *Manner* of their Acting in that Capacity deſcribed.

First, The Work whereunto the Miniſters of the Goſpel are appointed, is to *reconcile the World to God*; to work theſe ſinful, vain, rebellious Hearts which have a ſtrong Averſation from God naturally in them; to cloſe with him according to the Articles of Peace contained in the Goſpel, that thereby they may be capable to receive the Mercies and Benefits purchaſed by the Death of Chriſt, which they cannot receive in the ſtate of Enmity and Alienation.

Secondly, Their Capacity deſcribed, they Act in *Chriſt's ſtead* as his *Vicegerents*. He is no more in this World to treat perſonally with Sinners, as once he did in the Days of his Fleſh; but yet he ſtill continues the Treaty with this lower World by his Officers, requiring Men to look upon them, and obey them as he would himſelf if he were Corporally preſent, *Luke* 10. 16. *He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me.*

Thirdly, The manner of their acting in that Capacity preſcribed; and that is by humble, ſweet, and condeſcending Entreaties and Beſeechings: This beſt ſuits that Meek and Lamb-like Saviour whom they repreſent. Thus he dealt with poor Sinners himſelf, when he converſed among them; he would not break a bruiſed Reed, nor quench the ſmoaking Flax, *Iſa.* 42. 3. This is the way to allure and win the Souls of Sinners to Chriſt.

From hence the Note is:

Doct. *That the preaching of the Goſpel by Chriſt's Ambaſſadors, is the means appointed for the reconciling and bringing home of Sinners to Chriſt.*

This is clear from *Rom.* 10. 14. 1 *Cor.* 1. 21. and many other Scriptures.

Here we ſhall take into Conſideration theſe three Things.

First, What is implied in Chriſt's treating with Sinners by his Ambaſſadors or Miniſters.

Secondly, What the great Concernment they are to treat with Sinners about is.

Thirdly, What and when is the Efficacy of preaching to bring Sinners to Chriſt.

First, We will open what is implied and imported in Chriſt's Treaty with Sinners by his Ambaſſadors or Miniſters.

And here we find theſe ſix Things implied.

First, It neceſſarily implies the defection and fall of Man from his Eſtate of Favour and Friendſhip with God; if no War with Heaven, what need of *Ambaſſadors* of Peace? The very Office of the Miniſtry, is an Argument of the Fall. Goſpel Ordinances and Officers came in upon the Fall, and expire with the Mediators diſpenſatory Kingdom,

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Cor. 15. 24, 25. *Then ſhall he deliver up the Kingdom to God even the Father:* Thenceforth no more Ordinances, no more Miniſters; what uſe can there be of them, when the Treaty is ended? They have done and accompliſhed all they were ever intended and deſigned for, when they ſhall have reconciled to God all the number of his Elect, that lay diſperſed among the loſt and miſerable Poſterity of *Adam*, and have brought them home to Chriſt in a perfect State, *Eph.* 4. 12, &c.

Secondly, It implies the ſingular Grace and admirable Condeſcention of God to ſinful Man. That God will admit any Treaty with him at all is wonderful Mercy, it's more than he would do for the Angels that fell, *Jude* 6. They are *reſerved in everlaſting Chains under Darkneſs unto the judgment of the great Day.* Chriſt took not on him their Nature, but ſuffered Myriads of them to Periſh, and fills up their vacant Places in Glory, with a number of ſinful Men and Women, to whom the Law awarded the ſame puniſhment.

But that God will not only treat, but entreat and beſeech ſinful Men to be reconciled, is yet more wonderful. Barely to propound the Terms of Peace, had been an aſtoniſhing Mercy, but to wooe and beſeech ſtubborn Enemies to be at Peace, and accept their Pardon, Oh how unparallel'd was this Condeſcenſion!

Thirdly, It implies the great Dignity and Honour of the Goſpel Miniſtry. *We are Ambaſſadors for Chriſt*, Ambaſſadors repreſent and perſonate the Prince that ſends them; and the Honours or Contempts done to them reflect upon, and are reckon'd to the Perſon of their Maſter, *Luke* 10. 16. *He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me.*

Inter illos qui regi regum inſerviunt, Legati ſumus: Dei Chriſtique perſonam gerimus, nullus, unquam nos impune deſpicatui habuit, quin in Deum Chriſtum que idem injurius. Bowles præfat. ad paſt. Evang.

Neither their Perſons, nor Parts, are the proper ground and reaſon of our reſpects to them; but their Office and Commiſſion from *Jeſus Chriſt.*

We are fallen into the Dreggs of Time, wherein a vile Contempt is poured not only upon the *Perſons*, but the very *Office* of the Miniſtry; and I could heartily wiſh that Scripture, *Mal.* 2. 7, 8, 9. were throughly conſidered by us, poſſibly it might inform us of the true Cauſe and Reaſon of this ſore Judgment; but ſurely Chriſt's faithful Miniſters deſerve a better Entertainment than they ordinarily find in the World; and if we did but ſeriouſly bethink ourſelves, in whoſe Name they come, and in whoſe ſtead they ſtand, we ſhould receive them as the *Galatians* did *Paul*, *Gal.* 4. 14. as Angels of God, even as Jeſus Chriſt.

Fourthly, Chriſt's treating with Sinners by his Miniſters who are his Ambaſſadors, implies the ſtrict Obligation they are under to be faithful in their Miniſterial Imployment. Chriſt counts upon their faithfulneſs whom he puts into the Miniſtry, 1 *Tim.* 1. 12. They are accountable to him for all Acts of their Office, *Heb.* 13. 17. If they be ſilent, they cannot be innocent: *Neceſſity is laid upon them, and woe to them if they preach not the Goſpel*, 1 Cor. 9. 16.

Yea, Neceſſity is not only laid upon them to preach, but to keep cloſe to their Commiſſion in preaching the Goſpel, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 3, 4, 5, *Our Exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanneſs, nor in guile, but as we were allowed of God to be put in truſt with the Goſpel, even ſo we ſpeak, not as pleaſing Men, but God, which trieth our Hearts*: The Word is not to be corrupted to pleaſe Men, 2 *Cor.* 2. 17. their Buſineſs is not to make them their Diſciples, but Chriſt's, not to ſeek theirs but them, 2 *Cor* 12. 14. to keep cloſe to their Inſtructions, both in the matter, manner, and end of their Miniſtry. So did Chriſt himſelf the Treaſure of Wiſdom and Knowledge, yet being ſent by God, he ſaith, *John* 7. 16. *My Doctrine is not mine, but his that ſent me.* And ſo he expects and requires that his *Ambaſſadors* keep cloſe to the Commiſſion he hath given them, and be (according to their meaſure) faithful to their truſt, as he was to his. *Paul* is to deliver to the People, that which he alſo received from the Lord, 1 *Cor.* 11. And *Timothy* muſt keep that which was committed to him, 2 *Tim.* 1. 14.

Fifthly, It implies the removal of the Goſpel Miniſtry to be a very great Judgment to the People. The remanding of *Ambaſſadors*, preſages an enſuing War. If the reconciling of Souls to God be the greateſt Work, then the removal of the means and inſtruments thereof muſt be the foreſt Judgment. Some account *the falling of the Salt upon the Table ominous*, but ſurely the falling of them, whom Chriſt calls *the Salt of the Earth*, is ſo indeed.

What are thoſe once famous and renowned Places from whence Chriſt (as he threatned) hath removed the Candle-ſtick, but *magna latrocinia*, Dens of Robbers, and Mountains of Prey!

Sixthly and Laſtly, It implies both the Wiſdom and Condeſcenſion of God to ſinful Men, in carrying on a Treaty of Peace with them by ſuch *Ambaſſadors*, negotiating betwixt him and them: Without a Treaty there will be no Reconciliation; and no Method to carry on ſuch a Treaty like this: For had the Lord treated with Sinners perſonally and immediately, they had been overwhelmed with ſuch an awful Majeſty. The Appearances of God confound the Creature, *Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God* (ſaith Iſrael) *neither let me ſee this great fire any more; that I die not: Yea, ſo terrible was that ſight, that* Moſes *ſaid, I exceedingly fear and quake*, Deut. 18. 16. *Heb.* 12. 21.

Or had he commiſſionated *Angels* for this Imployment, though they ſtand at ſuch an infinite diſtance from us as God doth, yet ſuch is the excellence of their Glory (being the higheſt *ſpecies* and order of Creatures) that their appearances would be more apt to aſtoniſh than perſwade us: Beſides, they being Creatures of another rank and kind, and not partaking with us either in the Miſery of the Fall, or Benefit of the Recovery by Chriſt; 'tis not to be ſuppoſed they ſhould ſpeak to us ſo feelingly and experimentally, as theſe his Miniſters do; they can open to you the Myſteries of Sin, feeling the workings thereof daily in their own Hearts; they can diſcover to you the Conflicts of the Fleſh and Spirit, as being daily exerciſed in that Warfare; and then being Men of the ſame mould and temper, they can ſay to you as *Elihu* did to *Job*, Chap. 33. 6, 7. *Behold, I am according to thy wiſh, in God's ſtead, I alſo am formed out of the Clay; behold, my Terror ſhall not make thee afraid, neither ſhall my Hand be heavy upon thee.*

So that in this Appointment much of the Divine Wiſdom and Condeſcenſion to Sinners is manifeſted: *We have this Treaſure in earthen Veſſels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us*, 2 Cor. 4. 7. God's Glory and Man's Advantage are both promoted in this Diſpenſation.

Secondly, Next we are to conſider that great Concernment, about which theſe *Ambaſſadors* of Chriſt are to treat with Sinners; and that (as the Text informs us) is their Reconciliation to God.

Now Reconciliation with God, is the reſtoring of Men to that former Friendſhip they had with God,

Reconciliare nihil aliud eſt, quam amicitiam offenſione aliqua gravi diremptam reſarcire, & ſic inimicos in preſtinam concordiam reducere. Daven. in 1 Col. 20.

which was broken by the Fall, and is ſtill continued by our Enmity and Averſation, whilſt we continue in our Natural and Unregenerate Eſtate. Now this is the greateſt and moſt bleſſed Deſign that ever God had in the World; an aſtoniſhing and invaluable Mercy to Men, as will clearly appear by conſidering theſe Particulars following.

Firſt, That God ſhould be reconciled after ſuch a dreadful Breach as the Fall of Man made, is wonderful: No Sin, all things conſidered, was ever like to this Sin: other Sins, like a ſingle Bullet, kill particular Perſons, but this, like a Chain-ſhot, cuts off multitudes as the Sand upon the Sea-ſhore, which no Man can number.

If all the Poſterity of *Adam* in their ſeveral Generations, ſhould do nothing elſe but bewail and lament this Sin of his, whilſt this World continues, yet would it not be enough lamented; for a Man ſo newly created out of nothing, and admitted the firſt Moment into the higheſt Order, Crowned a King over the Works of God's Hands, *Pſal.* 8. 5. a Man perfect and upright, without the leaſt inordinate Motion, or ſinful inclination: A Man whoſe Mind was moſt clear, bright and apprehenſive of the Will of God, whoſe Will was free, and able to have eaſily put by the ſtrongeſt Temptation: A Man in a Paradiſe of Delights, where nothing was left to deſire for the advancing the happineſs of Soul or Body: A Man underſtanding himſelf to be a publick complexive Perſon, carrying not only his own, but the happineſs of the whole World in his Hand; ſo ſoon, upon ſo ſlight a Temptation, to violate the Law of his God, and involve himſelf and all his Poſterity with him, in ſuch a Gulph of Guilt and Miſery; all which he might ſo eaſily have prevented! O wonderful amazing Mercy, that ever God ſhould think of being reconciled, or have any Purpoſes of Peace towards ſo vile an Apoſtate Creature as Man.

Secondly, That God ſhould be reconciled to *Men*, and not to *Angels*, a more high and excellent Order of Creatures, is yet more aſtoniſhing: When the Angels fell they were loſt irrecoverably; no Hand of Mercy was ſtretceed out to ſave one of thoſe *Myriads* of excellent Beings, but Chains of Darkneſs were immediately clap'd on them, to reſerve them to the Judgment of the Great Day, *Jude. ver*, 6.

That the milder Attribute ſhould be exerciſed to the inferior, and the ſeverer Attribute to the more excellent Creature, is juſt Matter for Eternal Admiration. Who would caſt away Veſſels of Gold, and ſave earthen Potſherds! Some indeed undertake to ſhew us the Reaſons, why the Wiſdom of God made no proviſion for the Recovery of *Angels* by a *Mediator* of Reconciliation; partly from the high Degree of the malignity of their Sin, who ſinned in the Light of Heaven, partly becauſe it was decent that the firſt Breach of the Divine Law ſhould be puniſhed, to ſecure Obedience for the future. And beſides, the Angelical Nature was not entirely loſt, *Myriads* of *Angels* ſtill continuing in their Innocency and Glory; when as all Mankind was loſt in *Adam*.

But we muſt remember ſtill the Law made no diſtinction, but awarded the ſame Puniſhment, and therefore it was Mercy alone that made the difference, and Mercy for ever to be admired by Men; how aſtoniſhing is the Grace of God, that moves in a way of Reconciliation to us, out of deſign to fill up the vacant Places in Heaven from which Angels fell, with ſuch poor Worms as we are! Angels excluded, and Men received. O ſtupendious Mercy!

Thirdly, That God ſhould be *wholly* and *throughly* reconciled to Men, ſo that no Fury remains in him againſt us; according to that Scripture, *Iſa.* 27. 4. is ſtill matter of farther wonder.

The Deſign he ſends his *Ambaſſador* to you about is not the allaying and mittigating of his Wrath (which yet would be matter of great Joy to the Damned) but throughly to quence all his Wrath, ſo that no degree thereof ſhall ever be felt by you. O Bleſſed Embaſſy! *Beautiful upon the Mountains are the feet of them that bring ſuch Tidings.* God offers you a full Reconciliation, a plenary Remiſſion.

Fourthly, That God ſhould be *freely* reconciled to Sinners, and diſcharge them without any the leaſt ſatisfaction to his Juſtice from them, is, and for ever will be marvelous in their Eyes.

Oh what Mercy would the Damned account it, if after a thouſand Years Torments in Hell, God would at laſt be reconciled to them, and put an end to their Miſery! But believers are diſcharged without bearing any part of the Curſe, not one Farthing of that Debt is levied upon them.

If you ſay, How can this be, when God ſtands upon full Satisfaction to his Juſtice, before any Soul be diſcharged, and reſtored to Favour? freely reconciled, and yet fully ſatisfied, how can this be?

Very well, for this Mercy comes freely to your Hands, how coſtly ſoever it proved to Chriſt; and that free Remiſſion and full Satisfaction, are not contradictory and inconſiſtent things, is plain enough from that Scripture, *Rom.* 3. 24. *Being juſtified freely by his Grace, through the redemption that is in Jeſus Chriſt* freely, and yet in the way of Redemption.

For tho' Chriſt your Surety have made Satisfaction in your name and ſtead, yet it was his Life, his Blood, and not yours, that went for it, and this Surety was of God's own Appointment and providing without your Contrivement or Thoughts. O bleſſed Reconciliation, happy is the People that hear the joyful ſound of it.

Fifthly and Laſtly, That God ſhould be finally reconciled to Sinners, ſo that never any new Breach ſhall happen betwixt him and them any more, ſo as to diſſolve the League of Friendſhip, is a moſt raviſhing and tranſporting Meſſage.

Two things give Confirmation and full Security to reconciled Ones, *viz.* the Terms of the Covenant, and the Interceſſion of the Mediator.

The Covenant of Grace gives great Security to Believers againſt new Breaches betwixt God and them. It's ſaid, *Jer.* 32. 40. *And I will make an everlaſting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they ſhall not depart from me.* The Fear of the Lord is a choice Preſervative againſt ſecond Revolts, and therefore taken into the Covenant. It is no *hindrance*, but a ſpecial *guard* to Aſſurance

There is no doubt of God's Faithfulneſs, that part of the Promiſe is eaſily believed, that he will not turn away from us to do us good; all the doubt is of the inconſtancy of our Hearts with God, and againſt that danger this Promiſe makes Proviſion.

Moreover the *Interceſſion* of Chriſt in Heaven ſecures the Saints in their great reconciled State, 1 *Joh.* 2. 1, 2. *If any Man ſin we have an Advocate with the Father Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, and he is the propitiation.* He continually appears in Heaven before the Father, *As a Lamb that had been ſlain*, Rev. 5. 6. And as the *Bow* in the Clouds, *Rev.* 4. 3. So that as long as Chriſt thus appears in the preſence of God for us, it is not poſſible our State of Juſtification and Reconciliation can be again diſſolved.

And

And this is that bleſſed *Embaſſy* Goſpel Miniſters are employed about; he hath committed to them the Word of his Reconciliation.

In the laſt place, we are to enquire what and whence is this Efficacy of Preaching, to reconcile and bring home Sinners to Chriſt.

That it's Efficacy is great in Convincing, Humbling, and Changing the Hearts of Men, is paſt all Debate and Queſtion. *The Weapons of our Warfare* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of ſtrong holds, caſting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itſelf againſt the Knowledge of God, and bringing into Captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt*, 2 Cor. 10 4, 5. No Heart ſo hard, no Conſcience ſo ſtupid, but this Sword can pierce and wound; In an Inſtant it can caſt down all thoſe vain Reaſonings and fond Imaginations which the Carnal Heart hath been building all its Life long, and open a fair paſſage for Convictions of Sin, and the Fears and Terrors of Wrath to come into that Heart that never was afraid of theſe things before. So *Acts* 2. 37. *When they heard this they were pricked to the Heart, and ſaid unto Peter, and the reſt of the Apoſtles, Men and Brethren, what ſhall we do?*

What ſhall we do? Is the doleful Cry of Men at their Wits end; the Voice of one in deepeſt Diſtreſs: And ſuch Outcries have been no Rarities under the Preaching of the Word; its Power hath been felt by Perſons of all Orders and Conditions; the great and honourable of the Earth, as well as the poor and deſpicable. The Learned and the Ignorant, the Civil and Profane, the Young and the Old, all have felt the heart-piercing Efficacy of the Goſpel.

If you ask, whence hath the Word preached this mighty Power? The Anſwer muſt be neither from itſelf, nor him that preaches it, but from the Spirit of God, whoſe Inſtrument it is, by whoſe Bleſſing and Concurrence with it, it produceth its bleſſed Effects upon the Hearts of Men.

Firſt, This Efficacy and wonderful Power is not from the Word itſelf; take it in an abſtract Notion, ſeparated from the Spirit, it can do nothing: It is called *the fooliſhneſs of preaching*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 21. Fooliſhneſs, not only becauſe the World ſo accounts it, but becauſe in in itſelf it is a weak and unſuitable, and therefore a very improbable way to reconcile the World to God; that the ſtony Heart of one Man ſhould be broken by the Words of another Man; that one poor ſinful Creature ſhould be uſed to breath Spiritual Life into another; this could never be if this Sword were not managed by an Omnipotent Hand.

And beſides, we know what works Naturally, works neceſſarily; if this Efficacy were inherent in the Word, ſo that we ſhould ſuppoſe to work as other Natural Agents do, then it muſt needs convert all to whom it is at any time preached, except its Effect were miraculouſly hindred, as the Fire when it could not burn the three Children; but alas, thouſands hear it, that never feel the ſaving Power of it, *Iſa.* 53. 1. and 2 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4.

Secondly, It derives not this Efficacy from the *Inſtrument* by which it is miniſtred; let their Gifts and Abilities be what they will, it's impoſſible that ever ſuch Effects ſhould be produced from the ſtrength of their Natural or Gracious Abilities, 2 Cor. 4. 7. *We have this Treaſure*, (ſaith the Apoſtle) *in earthen Veſſels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.*

The Treaſure of the Goſpel Light is carried ἐν ὀστρακίνοις σκεύεσιν, *in earthen Veſſels*, as *Gideon* and his Men had their Lamps in earthen Pitchers or in *Oyſter-ſhells*, for ſo the Word alſo ſignifies; the *Oyſter-ſhell* is a baſe and worthleſs thing in itſelf; however there lies the rich and precious Pearl of ſo great Value And why is this precious Treaſure lodged in ſuch weak worthleſs Veſſels? Surely it is upon no other Deſign but to convince us of the Truth I am here to prove, that the excellency of the Power is of God, and not of us; as it follows in the next Words. To the ſame purpoſe ſpeaks the ſame Apoſtle, 1 Cor. 3. 7. *So then, neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increaſe.*

Not any thing! What can be more diminutively ſpoken of the Goſpel Preachers? But we muſt not underſtand theſe Words in a ſimple and *abſolute*, but in a *comparative* and relative Senſe: Not as if they were not neceſſary and uſeful in their place, but that how neceſſary ſoever they be, and what excellent Gifts ſoever God hath furniſhed them with; yet it is neither in their Power nor Choice, to make the Word they preach effectual to Men: If it were, then the Damnation of all that hear us muſt needs lie at our Door: Then alſo, many thouſands would have been reconciled to God, which are yet in the ſtate of Enmity, but the the Effect of the Goſpel is not in our Power.

Thirdly, But what Efficacy it hath to reconcile Men to God, it derives from the Spirit of God, whoſe Co-operation and Bleſſing (which is arbitralily diſpenſed) gives it all the Fruit it hath.

Miniſters, ſaith one*, are like Trumpets which make no Sound, if Breath be not breathed into them. Or like *Exekiel*'s Wheels, which move not unleſs the Spirit move them; or *Eliſha*'s Servant, whoſe Preſence doth no good except *Eliſha*'s Spirit be there alſo. For want of the Spirit of God, how many thouſands of Souls do find the Miniſtry to be nothing to them? If it be ſomething to the purpoſe to any Soul, it is the Lord that makes it ſo. This Spirit is not limited by Men's Gifts or Parts; he concurs not only with their Labours who have excellent Gifts, but often times bleſſes mean, deſpicable Gifts, with far greater Succeſs. Beautiful *Rachel* is barren, and blear-ey'd, *Leah* bears Children.

* *Mr.* Anthony Burges.

Suppoſe, ſaith *Auſtin*, there be two Conduits in a Town, one very plain and homely, the other built of poliſh'd Marble, and adorned with excellent Images, as Eagles, Lions, Angels; the Water refreſhes as it is Water, and not as it comes from ſuch or ſuch a Conduit. 'Tis the Spirit that gives the Word all that Virtue it hath: He is the Lord of all ſaving Influences: He hath Dominion over the *Word*, over our *Souls*, over the *Times* and *Seaſons* of Converſion; and if any poor Creature attend the Miniſtry without Benefit, if he go away as he came, without Fruit, ſurely we may ſay in this Caſe as *Martha* ſaid to *Chriſt*, in reference to her Brother *Lazarus*, Lord, if thou hadſt been here, my Brother had not dy'd; ſo, Lord, if thou hadſt been in this Prayer, in this Sermon, this poor Soul had not gone dead and carnal from under it. And now what remains, but that we apply this Truth in thoſe Uſes that it gives us.

Ex duobus ætate jam grandibus impiis; cur iſte ita vocetur, ut vocantem ſequatur ille autem non? nolito judicare, ſi non vis errare: inſcrutabila ſunt judicia Dei, cujus vult miſereatur, Aug de bono perſec. cap. 8.

Firſt

First Use of Information.

Is the preaching of the Gospel by Christ's *Ambassadors*, the way which God takes to reconcile Sinners to himself? *Then how inexcusable are all those that continue in their state of Enmity, tho' the Ambassadors of peace have been with them all their Lives long, wooing and beseeching them to be reconciled to God?*

O invincible, obstinate, incurable Disease, which is aggravated by the only proper Remedy! Hath God been wooing and beseeching you by his *Ambassadors* so many Years to be reconciled to him, and will you not yield to any Intrea- ties? Must he be made to speak in vain, to charm the deaf *Adder*? Well, when the milder Attribute hath done with you, the severer Attribute will take you in hand.

The Lord hath kept an Account of every Year and day of his Patience towards you, *Luke* 13. 7. *These three years I came seeking fruit on this Fig-tree, and find none*; And *Jer.* 25. 3. *These three and twenty years have I spoken unto you, rising early and speaking, but you have not hearkened.*

Well, be you assured, that God hath both the Glass of your Time, and the Vials of his Wrath by him; and so much of his abus'd Patience as runs out of one, so much of his incensed Wrath runs into the other. There is a Time when this Treaty of Peace will end, when the Master of the House will rise up, and the Doors be shut, *Luke* 13. 25. Then will you be left without Hope, and without Apology.

We read indeed of some poor and ineffectual Pleas that will be made by some at the last day; so *Matt.* 7. 22. *We have prophecied in thy name*, &c. These Pleas will not avail, but as for you what will you plead? Possibly many thousand *Ideots* or poor weak-headed Persons, may perish; many young ones that had little or no Time in the World to acquaint themselves with Matters of Religion, or understand the way of Salvation. Many Milions of Heathens that never heard the Name of Christ, nor came within the sound of Salvation, who will yet perish, and that justly.

Now whatsoever Apologies any of these will make for themselves in the last Day, to besure you can make none God hath given you a Capacity, and competent Understanding; many of you are wise and subtil in all your other Concernments, and only shew your Folly in the great Concernments of your Salvation. You cannot plead want of Time, some of you are grown Gray-headed under the Gospel; you cannot plead want of Means and Opportunities, the Ordinances and Ministers of Christ have been with you all your Life long to this Day; sure if you be *Christless* now, you must also be *Speechless* then.

Infer. 2. Hence it also follows, *That the World owes better Entertainment than it gives to the Ministers of Christ: Christ's Ambassadors deserve a better Welcome than they find among Men.*

Your respects to them is founded upon their Office and Imployment for you, *Heb.* 13. 17. and 1 *Thess.* 5. 12. They watch for your Souls, dare any of you watch for their Ruine? They bring glad Tidings, shall they return with sad Tidings to him that sent them? They publish Peace, shall they be rewarded with Trouble? O ungrateful World! We read in *Eph.* 6. 20. of an *Ambassador in Bonds*, and he no Ordinary one neither. We read also a strange Challenge made by another at his own Death, *Acts* 7. 52. *Which of all the Prophets have not your Fathers persecuted? And they have slain them which shewed before the coming of the Just One.* Some that break the Bread of Life to you, might want Bread to eat, for any regard you have to them. The Office of the Ministry speaks the obundant Love of God to you; your Contempt and Abuse of it, speaks the abundant Stupidity or Maliguity of your Hearts towards God. What a sad Protestation doth *Jeremy* make against his ungrateful People, *Jer.* 18. 20. *Shall evil*, saith he, *be recompensed for good? for they have digged a pit for my Soul; remember that I stood before thee to speak good for them, and to turn away thy Wrath from them.*

God's *Mercy* is eminently discovered in the *Institution*, and Satan's *Malice* is eminently discovered in the *Opposition* of the Ministerial Office. Satan is a great and jealous Prince, and it is no wonder he should raise all the Forces he can to oppose the *Ambassadors* of Christ: When, saith one, the Gospel comes into his Dominions, it doth, as it were by sound of Trumpet, and beat of Drum, proclaim Liberty to all his Slaves and Vassals, if they will quit that Tyrant that hath so long held their Souls in Bondage, and come under the sweet and easie Government of Christ. And can the Devil endure this think you? If Christ send forth *Ambassadors*, no wonder if Satan send forth *Opposers*; he certainly owes them a Spite, that undermine his Government in the World.

Mr. Gurnal's *Christian Armour.*

Infer. 3. Hence it follows, *That it nearly concerns all Christ's Ambassadors, to see that they be in a State of Reconciliation with God themselves.*

Shall we stand in Christ's stead by *Office*, and yet not be in Christ by Union? Shall we entreat Men to be reconciled to God, and yet be at Enmity with him our selves? O let us take heed, *Lest after we have preached to others, we our selves be as cast-aways*, 1 Cor 9. 27. Of all Men living we are the most miserable if we be Christless and Graceless: Our Consciences will make more terrible Applications of our Doctrine to us in Hell, than ever we made to the vilest of Sinners on Earth. O it's far easier to study and press a thousand Truths upon others, than to feel the Power of one Truth upon our own Hearts; to teach others *Faciendo quam faciendo*: Duties to be done, than Duties by doing them.

They are sad *Dilemma*'s with which a Learned Writer poses such graceless Ministers: If Sin be evil, why do you live in it? If it be not, why do you dissuade Men from it? If it be dangerous, how dare you venture on it? If it be not, why do you tell Men so? If God's Threatnings be true, why don't you fear them? If they be false, why do you trouble Men needlessly with them, and put them into such Frights without a Cause?

Gildas Salv. p. 15. 16.

Take heed to your selves, lest you should cry down Sin, and not overcome it; lest while you seek to bring it down in others, you bow to it, and become its Slaves your selves: It's easier to chide at Sin, than to overcome it. That is a smart Question *Rom.* 2. 21. *Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thy self?* A prophane Minister was converted by reading that Text once, but how many have read it as well as he, who never trembled at the Consideration of it as he did?

2 Use for Conviction.

Is this the Method God uses to reconcile Men to himself? O then Examine your selves, whether ye the Preaching of the Gospel hath reconciled you to God. It's too manifest that many among us are in the State of Enmity unto this day. We may say with the Prophet, *Isa.* 53. 1. *Who hath believed our Report and to whom is the Arm of the Lord revealed?* W

offer you Peace upon Gospel Terms and Articles, but our Peace returns to us again; Enemies you were to God, and Enemies you still continue. The Evidence is undeniable; for,

1. *Evidence.*

Many of you were *never convinced* to this Day of your State of Enmity against God, and without conviction of this, Reconciliation is impossible; without Repentance, there can be no Reconciliation, and without Conviction, there can be no Repentance. When we repent, we lay down our Weapons, *Isa.* 27. 4, 5. But how few have been brought to this? Alas! if a few poor, cold, heartless, ineffectual Confessions of Sin, may pass for a due Conviction, and serious Repentance, then have we been convinced, then have we repented; but you will find if ever the Lord intend to reconcile you to himself, your Convictions and Humiliations for Sin, will be other manner of Things. This will cost you more than a few cheap Words against Sin, 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. *In that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what Carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of your selves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge?*

2. *Evidence.*

Many of us *never treated* seriously with the Lord about Peace, and how then are we reconciled to him? What a Peace without a Treaty? Reconsiliation without Consideration about it? It can never be. When was the Time, and where was the Place, that you were found in secret upon your Knees, mourning over the Sin of your Nature, and the Evils of your Ways? Certainly you must be brought to this, you must with a broken Heart bewail your Sin and Misery.

Friend, That stony Heart of thine must feel Remorse and Anguish for Sin, it will cost thee some sad Days and sorrowful Nights, or ever thou canst have Peace with God: It will cost thee many a Groan, many a Tear, many a Hearty Cry to Heaven; if ever the Peace be made betwixt God and thee, thou must take to thee Words and turn to the Lord, saying, Take away all Iniquity, and receive me graciously. O for one Smile, one Token of Love, one Hint of Favour! The Child of Peace is not born without Pangs, and Agonies of Soul.

3. *Evidence.*

Many of us are *not reconciled* to the Duties of Religion, and Ways of Holiness, and how then is it possible we should be reconciled to God? What, reconciled to God, and unreconciled to the Ways of God? By Reconciliation we are *made nigh*: In Duties of Communion we *draw nigh*, and can we be made nigh to God, and have no Heart to draw nigh to God? It can never be.

Examine your Hearts and say, is not the Way of Strictness a Bondage to you? Had you not rather be at Liberty to fulfil the Desires of the Flesh and of the Mind? Could you not wish that the Scriptures had not made some things else your Sins, and other things your Duties: Do you delight in the Law of God after the inner Man, and *esteem his Judgments concerning all things to be right?* Do you love secret Prayer, and delight in Duties of Communion with God; or rather are they not an ungrateful Burden, and irksom Imposition? Give Conscience leave to speak plain.

4. *Evidence.*

Many of us are *not Enemies to Sin*, and how then are we reconciled to God? What, Friends with God, and our Lusts too? It cannot be. *Psal.* 97. 10. *Ye that love the Lord hate evil:* The same hour our Reconciliation is made with God, there is an Everlasting Breach made with Sin: This is one of the Articles or Conditions of our Peace with God, *Isa.* 55. 7. *Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous Man his thoughts, and let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him; and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon.*

But it's manifest in many of us, that we are no Enemies to Sin, we secretly indulge it, what bad Names soever we call it: We will commit ten Sins to cover one: We cannot endure the most serious, faithful, seasonable, private, tender, and necessary Reproofs of Sin, but our Hearts swell and rise at it: Sure we are not reconciled to God, whilest we embrace his Enemy in our Bosoms.

5. *Evidence.*

We *love not the Children of God*, nor are reconciled to them that bear his Image, and how then can we be reconciled to God? 1 *John* 5. 1. *He that loveth him that begat, loveth them also that are begotten:* What, at Peace with the Father, and at War with the Children! It cannot be: Do not some that hope they have made their Peace with God, hate, revile and persecute the Children of God? Surely in that Day we are reconciled to the Lord, we are reconciled to all his People: We shall then love a Christian as a Christian, and by this we know we are passed from Death to Life.

6. *Evidence.*

Lastly, How can any Man think himself to be reconciled to God, who *never closed heartily with Jesus Christ* by Faith, who is the only Days-man and Peacemaker: the alone Mediator of Reconciliation betwixt God and Man.

This is a sure Truth, that all whom God accepts into Favour, are *made accepted in the Beloved*, Eph. 1. 6. If any Man will make Peace with God, he must take hold of his strength, accept and close with Christ, who is the Power of God, or he can never make Peace, *Isa.* 27. He must be made nigh by the Blood of Christ, *Eph.* 2. 13. But alas, both Christ and Faith are Strangers to many Souls, who yet perswade themselves to be at Peace with God: O fatal Mistake!

3. *Use of Exhortation.*

Lastly, This Point deserves a close, vigorous Application in a Threefold Exhortation.

First, To Christ's Ambassadors who treat with Souls in order to their Reconciliation with God.

Secondly, To those that are yet in their Enmity and unreconciled State.

Thirdly, To those that have embraced the Terms of Peace, and submitted to the Gospel Overtures.

First, *To the Ambassadors of Reconciliation.* God hath put a great deal of Honour upon you in this High and Noble Imployment: Great is the Dignity of your Office, to some you are *The savour of Death unto Death, and to others a savour of Life unto Life; and who is sufficient for these things?* 2 Cor. 2. 16. But yet the *Duty* is no less than the Dignity. O what manner of Men should we be for Judgment, Seriousness, Affections, Patience and Exemplary Holiness, to whom the Management of so great a Concern betwixt God and Man is committed!

First, For *Judgment* and Prudence, how necessary is it in so weighty and difficult a Business as this! He had need be a Man of Wisdom, that is to inform the Ignorant of the Nature and Necessity of this Great Work, and win over their Hearts to consent to the Articles of Peace propounded in the Gospel; that hath so many subtil Temptations to answer, and so many intricate Cases of Conscience to resolve: There are many strong Holds of Satan to be batter-

ed, and many ſtout and obſtinate Reſiſtances made by the Hearts of Sinners which muſt be overcome; and he had need be no *Novice* in Religion, to whom ſo difficult a Province is committed.

Secondly, Let us be *ſerious* in our Work as well as judicious. Remember, O ye *Ambaſſadors* of Chriſt, you bring a Meſſage from the God of Heaven of Everlaſting Conſequence to the Souls of Men. The Eternal Decrees are executed upon them in your Miniſtry: To ſome you are the *ſavour of Life unto Life, and to ſome the ſavour of Death unto Death*, 2 Cor. 16. Heaven and Hell are Matters of moſt awful and ſolemn Conſideration. O what an Account have we alſo ſhortly to give unto him that ſent us!

Theſe are Matters of ſuch deep Concernment, as ſhould ſwallow up our very Spirits; the leaſt they can do, is to compoſe our Hearts unto ſerioufneſs in the Management of them.

Thirdly, Be filled with tender Affections toward the Souls of Men, with whom you treat for Reconciliation: You had need be Men of *Bowels* as well as Men of *Brains*: You ſee a Multitude of poor Souls upon the brink of Eternal Miſery, and they know it not, but Promiſe themſelves Peace, and fill themſelves with vain Hopes of Heaven: And is there a more moving, melting Spectacle in the World than this! O think with what Bowels of Commiſeration *Moſes* and *Paul* were filled, when the one deſired rather to be blotted out of God's Book, and the other to be accurſed from Chriſt, than that *Iſrael* ſhould not be ſaved, *Exod.* 32. 33. and *Rom.* 9. 3. Think how the Bowels of Chriſt yearned over *Jeruſalem*, Mat. 23. 37. And over the Multitude, *Mat.* 9. 36. Let the ſame Mind be in you, which alſo was in Chriſt Jeſus.

Vide *Bowles Paſtor Evang.* p. 136.

Fourthly, Be *patient* and long-ſuffering towards Sinners: Such is the value of one Soul, that it's worth waiting all our Days to ſave it at laſt: *The Servant of the Lord muſt not ſtrive, but be gentle unto all Men, apt to teach, patient, in meekneſs, inſtructing them that oppoſe themſelves, if God peradventure will give them Repentance*, 2 Tim. 2. 24, 25. The Lord waits with Patience upon Sinners, and well may you. Conſider your ſelves, how long was God treating with you, ere you were won to him? Be not diſcouraged, if ſucceſs preſently Anſwer not Expectation

Fifthly and Laſtly, Be ſure to back your Exhortations with drawing *Examples*, elſe you may Preach out your laſt Breath before you gain one Soul to God. The Devil and the Carnal Hearts of your Hearers, will put hinderances enough in the way of your Labours, don't you put the greateſt of all your ſelves. O ſtudy not only to Preach exactly, but to Live exactly; let the miſplacing of one Action in your Lives, trouble you more than the miſplacing of Words in your Diſcourſes: This is the way to ſucceed in your Embaſſy, and give up your Account with Joy.

Secondly, The Exhortation ſpeaks to all thoſe that are yet in a ſtate of Enmity, and unreconciled to God unto this Day. O that my Words might prevail, and that you would now be intreated to be reconciled to God! The *Ambaſſadors* of Peace are yet with you, the *Treaty* is not yet ended, the Maſter of the Houſe is not yet riſen up, nor the Door of Mercy and Hope finally ſhut: Hitherto God hath waited to be gracious, O that the long-ſuffering of God might be your Salvation: A Day is haſting when God will treat with you no more, when a *Gulph ſhall be fixed* betwixt him and you for ever, *Luke* 13. 25. O what will you do when the Seaſon of Mercy, and all Hopes of Mercy ſhall end together! When God ſhall become inacceſſible, inexorable, and unreconcileable to you for evermore.

O what wilt thou do, when thou ſhalt find thy ſelf ſhut up under Eternal Wrath! When thou ſhalt feel that Miſery thou art now warned of! Is this the Place where I muſt be! Are theſe the Torments I muſt endure! What, for ever! Yea, for ever: Will not God be ſatisfied with the Sufferings of a Thouſand Years? No, nor of Millions of Years! Ah Sinners, did you but clearly ſee the preſent and future Miſery of unreconciled ones, and what that Wrath of the great and terrible God is, which is coming as faſt as the Wings of Time can bring it upon you, it would certainly drive you to Chriſt, or drive you out of your Wits. O 'tis a dreadful thing to have God for your Eternal Enemy: To have the great and terrible God ſetting on Work his Infinite Power, to avenge the abuſe of his Grace and Mercy.

Believe it Friends, it's a fearful Thing to fall into the Hands of the living God: Knowing the Terrors of the Lord we perſwade Men: An Eternal Weight hangs upon an inch of Time. O that you did know the Time of your Viſitation! That you would not dare to Adventure, and run the hazard of one Day more in an unreconciled State.

Thirdly and Laſtly, This Point ſpeaks to thoſe who have believed our Report, who have taken hold of God's Strength, and made Peace with him: Who had not obtained Mercy, but now have obtained Mercy: Who once were afar off, but now are made nigh by the Blood of Chriſt: With you I would leave a few Words of Exhortation, and I have done.

Firſt, *Admire and ſtand amaz'd at this Mercy. I will praiſe thee O Lord* (ſaith the Church, *Iſa.* 12. 1.) *Though thou waſt angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comforteſt me.* O how over-whelming a Mercy is here before you! God is at Peace, at Peace with you that were *Enemies in your Minds by wicked Works*, Coloſ. 1. 21. At Peace with you, and at Enmity with Millions as good by Nature as you: At Peace with you that ſought it not: At Peace for ever, no diſſolving this Friendſhip for evermore. O let this Conſideration thaw your Hearts before the Lord, and make you cry, What am I Lord, that Mercy ſhould take in me, and ſhut out fallen Angels, and Millions of Men and Women as capable of Mercy as my ſelf! O the Riches! O the Depths of the Mercy and Goodneſs of God!

Secondly, *Beware of New Breaches with God*: God will ſpeak *Peace to his People and to his Saints, but let not them return any more to Folly*, Pſalm 85. 8. What if this State of Friendſhip can never be *diſſolved*, yet it is a dreadful Thing to have it *clouded*: You may loſe the Senſe of Peace, and with it all the Joy of your Hearts, and Comforts of your Lives, in this World.

Thirdly, *Labour to reconcile others to God*, eſpecially thoſe that are endeared to you by the Bonds of natural Relation: When *Paul* was reconciled to God himſelf, his Heart was full of heavineſs for others that were not reconciled, for his Brethren and Kinſmen according to the Fleſh, *Rom.* 9. 2, 3. When *Abraham* was become God's Friend himſelf, then, O *that Iſhmael might live before thee*! Gen. 17. 18.

Fourthly and Laſtly, *Let your Reconciliation with God relieve you under all Burdens of Affliction you ſhall meet with in your way to Heaven*: Let them that are at Enmity with God, droop under Croſſes and Afflictions, but dont you do ſo. *Tranquillus Deus tranquillat omnia*, Rom. 5. 1, 2, 3. Let the Peace of God keep your Hearts and Minds. As nothing can Comfort a Man that muſt to Hell at laſt, ſo nothing ſhould deject a Man that ſhall through many Troubles win Heaven at laſt.

SER-

SERMON IV.

Explaining the Work of the Spirit, as the internal and moſt effectual Means of the Aplication of Chriſt.

JOHN VI. xliv.

No Man can come unto me, except the Father which hath ſent me, draw him.

OUR laſt Diſcourſe informed you of the uſefulneſs and influence of the preaching of the Goſpel, in order to the *Application* of Chriſt to the Souls of Men. There muſt be (in God's ordinary way) the external Miniſterial offer of Chriſt, before Men can have union with him.

But yet all the preaching in the World can never effect this Union with Chirſt in it ſelf, and in its own Vertue, except a ſupernatural and mighty Power go forth with it for that End and Purpoſe. Let *Boanerges* and *Barnabas* try their Strength, let the *Angels* of Heaven be their Preachers; till God draw, the Soul cannot come to Chriſt.

No ſaving Benefit is to be had by Chriſt without Union with his Perſon, no Union with his Perſon without Faith, no Faith ordinarily wrought without Preaching of the Goſpel by Chriſt's *Ambaſſadors*, their Preaching hath no ſaving Efficacy without God's drawings, as will evidently appear by conſidering theſe Words, and the Occaſion of them.

The Occaſion of theſe Words is found (as Learned *Cameron* well obſerves) in the 42 verſe. *And they ſaid, Is not this Jeſus the Son of Joſeph, whoſe Father and Mother we know?* Chriſt had been preſſing upon them in his Miniſtry, the great and neceſſary Duty of Faith, but notwithſtanding the *Authority* of the Preacher, the *Holineſs* of his Life, the Miracles by which he confirmed his *Doctrine*, they ſtill objected againſt him, *is not this the Carpenter's Son*? From whence Chriſt takes the Occaſion of theſe Words; *No Man can come unto me, except my Father which hath ſent me draw him*, q. d. In vain is the Authority of my Perſon urged, in vain are all the Miracles wrought in your ſight, to confirm the Doctrine preached to you, till that ſecret Almighty Power of the Spirit be put forth upon your Hearts, you you will not, you cannot come unto me.

Cameronis Myrothec. p. 139.

The Words are a Negative Propoſition.

In which the Author, and powerful Manner of Divine Operation in working Faith are contained: There muſt be drawing before believing, and that drawing muſt be the drawing of God: Every Word hath its weight, we will conſider them in the Order they lie in the Text.

οὐδεὶς —— *No Man*] not one, let his natural Qualifications be what they will, let his external Advantages, in reſpect of Means and Helps, be never ſo great: It is not in the Power of any Man: All Perſons, in all Ages, need the ſame Power of God, one as well as another: Every Man is alike dead, impotent, and averſe to Faith in his Natural Capacity No Man, or —— not one, among all the Sons of Men.

δύναται —— *Can*] or is able: He ſpeaks of impotency to ſpecial and ſaving Actions, ſuch as believing in Chriſt is: No Act that is ſaving, can be done without the concurrence of ſpecial Grace. Other Acts that have a remote tendency to it, are performed by a more general concourſe and common Aſſiſtance, ſo Men may come to the Word, and attend what is ſpoken, remember, and conſider what the Word tells them; but as to believing, or coming to Chriſt, that no Man can do of himſelf, or by a general and common Aſſiſtance. No Man can.

ἐλθεῖν πρός με, —— *Come unto me*] (*i. e.*) believe in me unto Salvation. Coming to Chriſt, and believing in him, are Terms *æquipolent*, and are indifferently uſed to expreſs the Nature of Saving Faith, as is plain from *ver.* 35. *He that cometh to me ſhall never hunger, and he that believeth on me ſhall never thirſt*: It notes the Terms from which, and to which the Soul moves, and the voluntarineſs of the Motion, notwithſtanding that Divine Power by which the will is drawn to Chriſt.

ἐὰν μὴ ὁ πατὴρ —— *Except my Father*] not excluding the other Two Perſons, for every Work of God relating to the Creatures is common to all the Three Perſons, nor only to Note that the Father is the firſt in order of Working: But the Reaſon is hinted in the next Words.

ὁ πέμψας με —— *Who hath ſent me*] God having entred into Covenant with the Son and ſent him, ſtands obliged by that *Paction* to bring the promiſed Seed to him, and that he doth by drawing them to Chriſt by Faith: So the next Words tell us the Father doth.

ἑλκύσῃ αὐτὸν —— *Draw him*] that is powerfully and effectually incline his Will to come to Chriſt: Not by a violent Coaction, but by a benevolent bending of the Will which was averſe; and as it is not in the way of Force and Compulſion, ſo neither is it by a ſimple *Moral Suaſion*, by the bare propoſal of an Object to the Will, and ſo leaving the Sinner to his own Election, but it is ſuch a perſwaſion as hath a mighty overcoming Efficacy accompanying it: Of which more anon.

Non violenta coactio immediata, ſed voluntatis a deo averſæ benevola flectio. Glaſ. Rhet. Sacra. p. 236.

The Words thus opened, the Obſervation will be this:

Doct. *That it is utterly impoſſible for any Man to come to Jeſus Chriſt, unleſs he be drawn unto him by the ſpecial and mighty Power of God.*

No Man is compelled to come to Chriſt againſt his Will, he that cometh, comes willingly, but even that will and deſire to come is the Effect of Grace, *Phil.* 2. 13. *It is God that worketh in you both to will, and to do, of his good pleaſure.*

If we deſire the Help and Aſſiſtance of Grace (ſaith *Fulgentius*) even the Deſire is of Grace; Grace muſt firſt be ſhed forth upon us, before we can begin to deſire it: *By Grace are ye ſaved through Faith, and that not of your ſelves, it is the Gift of God*, Eph. 2. 8.

Ut ergo deſideremus adjutorium, hoc quoque eſt gratiæ; ipſa namque incipit effundi, ut incipiat poſci. Fulgen. Epiſt. 6. ad Theod.

Suppoſe

Suppose the utmost degree of natural Ability, let a Man be as much disposed and prepared as Nature can dispose or prepare him, and to all this add the Proposal of the greatest Arguments and Motives to induce him to come; let all these have the Advantage of the fittest Season to work upon his Heart; yet no Man can come till God draw him: We move as we are moved; as Christ's coming to us, so our coming to him are the pure Effects of Grace.

Three things require Explication in this Paint before us.

First, *What the drawing of the Father imports.*

Secondly, *In what manner he draws Men to Christ.*

Thirdly, *How it appears that none come till they be so drawn.*

First, What the drawing of the Father imports.

To open this, let it be considered, that drawing is usually distinguish'd in *Physical* and *Moral*. The former is by Co-action, Force, and Compulsion, this by a sweet congruous Efficacy upon the Will. As to Violence and Compulsion, it is none of God's Way and Method, it being both against the Nature of the Will of Man which cannot be forced, and against the Will of Jesus Christ, who loves to reign over a free and willing People, *Psalm* 110. 4. *The People shall be willing in the day of thy Power.* Or as that Word may be rendred, they shall be *Voluntarinesses*, as willing as willingness itself. It is not then by a forcible *Co-action*, but in a *Moral* way of Perswasion, that God the Father draws Men to Jesus Christ: He draws *with the Bands of a Man*, as they are called, *Hos.* 11. 14. (*i.e.*) in a way of rational Conviction of the Mind and Conscience, and effectual Perswasion of the Will.

But yet by *Moral Perswasion*, we must not understand a simple and bare Proposal, or Tender of Christ and Grace, leaving it still at the Sinner's choice, whether he will comply with it or no. * For tho' God do not force the Will contrary to its Nature, yet there is a real internal Efficacy implied in this *drawing*, or an immediate Operation of the Spirit upon the Heart and Will, which in a way congruous and suitable to its Nature, takes away the Rebellion and Reluctance of it, and of unwilling makes it willing to come to Christ. And in this respect we own a *Physical* as well as *Moral* Influence of the Spirit in this Work; And so the Scripture expresses it, *Eph.* 1. 19, 20. *That we may know what is the exceeding greatness of his Power towards us who believe, according to the working of his mighty Power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the Dead.* Here is much more than a naked Proposal made to the Will, there is a *Power* as well as a *Tender*, greatness of Power, and yet more, the exceeding greatness of his Pwer; and this Power hath an actual Efficacy ascribed to it, he works upon our Hearts and Wills *according to the working of his mighty Power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead.* Thus he fulfils in us all the good Pleasure of his Will, and the Work of Faith with Power, 2 *Thess.* 1, 11.

* *Non videmus Deum concionatem, docentem, tamen ac si videmus, credimus, habet enim omnis veritas vim inclinativam, & major, majorem; & maxima, maximam: sed cur ergo non omnes credunt evangelio? Respondeo quod non omnes trahuntur a Deo.* Baptist Mantuanus de patientia, lib. 3 cap. 2.

And this is that which the *Schools* call *gratia Efficax*, effectual Grace, and others *victrix Delectatio*, an overcoming conquering Delight: Thus the Work is carried on with a most efficacious sweetness. So that the Liberty of the Will is not infringed, whilst the Obstinacy of the Will is effectually subdued and overruled. For want of this there are so many *almost Christians* in the World, hence are all those vanishing and imperfect Works which come to nothing, called in Scripture a *Morning Cloud, an early Dew.* Had this mighty Power gone forth with the Word, they had never vanished or Perished like *Embryo*'s as they do. So then, God draws not only in a Moral way, by proposing a suitable Object to the Will, but also in a *Physical* way, or by immediate powerful Influence upon the Will; Not intringing the Liberty of it, but yet infallibly and effectually perswading it to come to Christ.

Cœlestis quædam & ineffabilis suavitas. Jansenius Aug. Lib. 4. cap. 1.

Secondly, Next let us consider the marvelous way and manner, in which the Lord draws the Souls of poor Sinners to Jesus Christ, and you will find he doth it,

1. Gradually,
2. Congruously,
3. Powerfully,
4. Effectually, and
5. Finally.

First, This blessed Work is carried on by the Spirit *gradually*, bringing the Soul step by step, in the due Method and Order of the Gospel to Christ; Illuminaeion, Conviction, Compunction, prepare the way to Christ; and then Faith unites the Soul to him; Without Humiliation there can be no Faith, *Matt.* 21. 32. *Ye repented not, that ye might believe.* 'Tis the burdensome Sense of Sin that brings the Soul to Christ for rest, *Matt.* 11. 28. *Come unto me ye that are weary and heavy laden.* But without Conviction there can be no Compunction, no humiliation; he that is not convinced of his Sin and Misery, never bewails it, nor mourns for it: Never was there one Tear of true Repentance seen to drop from the Eye of an unconvinced Sinner.

And without *Illumination* there can be no Conviction, for what is Conviction but the Application of the Light which is in the Understanding or Mind of a Man to his Heart and Conscience? *Acts* 2. 37. In this Order therefore the Spirit (ordinarily) draws Souls to Christ, he shines into their Minds by Illumination, applies that Light to their Consciences by effectual Conviction, breaks and wounds their Hearts for Sin in Compuction, and then moves the Will to embrace and close with Christ, in the way of Faith, for Life and Salvation.

These several Steps are more distinctly discerned in some Christians than in others; they are more clearly to be seen in the *Adult Convert*, than those that were drawn to Christ in their Youth; in such as were drawn to him out of a State of Prophaneness, than those that had the Advantage of a pious Education; but in this Order the Work is carried an ordinarily in all, however it differ in point of clearness in the one, and in the other.

Secondly, he draws Sinners to Christ *Congruously*, and very agreeably to the nature and Way of Man. So he speaks, *Hosea* 11. 4. *I draw them with the Cords of a Man, with Bonds of Love*: Not as Beasts are drawn, but as Men are inclined and wrought to Compliance by rational Conviction of their Judgments, and powerful perswasion of their Wills; the Minds of Sinners are naturally blinded by Ignorance, 2. *Cor.* 4. 3, 4. And their Affections bewitched to their Lusts, *Gal.* 3. 4. and whilst it is thus, no Arguments or Intreaties can possibly prevail to bring them off from the ways of Sin to Christ.

Funibus hominum (i.e.) *humanis: non quibus trahi ac deduci solent boves.*

The

The way therefore which the Lord takes to win and draw them to Chriſt, is by rectifying their falſe Apprehenſions, and ſhewing them infinitely more good in Chriſt than in the Creature, and in their Luſts; yea, by ſatisfying their Underſtandings, that there is Goodneſs enough in Jeſus Chriſt, to whom he is drawing them.

Firſt, to out-bid all Temporal Good, which is to be denied for his ſake.

Secondly, To preponderate all Temporal Evils, which are to be ſuffered for his ſake.

First, That there is more good in Chriſt than in all Temporal good Things, which we are to deny, or forſake, upon his Account. This being once clearly and convincingly diſcovered to the Underſtanding, the Will is thereby prepared to quit all that which entangles and with-holds it from coming to Chriſt: There is no Man that loves Money ſo much, but he will willingly part with it for that which is more worth to him than the Sum he parts with to purchaſe it: *Matt.* 12. 45, 46. *The Kingdom of Heaven is like a Merchant-Man ſeeking goodly Pearls, who when he hath found one Pearl of great Price, goeth and ſelleth all that he hath and buyeth it.* Such an invaluable *Pearl* is Jeſus Chriſt, infinitely more worth than all that a poor Sinner hath to part with for him, and is a more *real* Good than the Creature. Theſe are but vain Shadows, *Prov.* 23. 5. Chriſt is a ſolid ſubſtantial Good: Yea, he is, and by Conviction appears to be a more *ſuitable* Good than the Creature: The World cannot Juſtifie and Save, but Chriſt can. He is a more *durable* Good than any Creature Comfort is, or can be: *The faſhion of this World paſſeth away*, 1 Cor. 7. 13. But durable Riches and Righteouſneſs are in him, *Prov.* 8. 17. Thus Chriſt appears in the Day of Conviction, infinitely more excellent than the World, he out-bids all the offers that the World can make, and this gives the main ſtroke to this Work, of drawing a Soul to Jeſus Chriſt.

Secondly, And then (to remove every block out of the way to Chriſt) God diſcovers to the Soul enough in him to preponderate, and much more than recompence all the evils and ſufferings it can endure for his ſake.

'Tis true, they that cloſe with Chriſt, cloſe with his *Croſs* alſo: They muſt expect to ſave no more but their Souls by him. He tells us what we muſt truſt to, *Luke* 14. 26, 27. *If any Man come to me, and hate not his Father and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Brethren and Siſters; yea, and his own Life alſo, he cannot be my Diſciple: And whoſoever doth not bear his Croſs, and come after me, cannot be my Diſciple.*

To read ſuch a Text as this, with ſuch a Comment upon it as Satan and our Fleſh can make, is enough to ſcare a Man from Chriſt for ever: Nor is it poſſible, by all the Arguments in the World, to draw any Soul to Chriſt upon ſuch Terms as theſe, till the Lord convince it, that there is enough, and much more than enough in Jeſus Chriſt, to recompence all theſe Sufferings and Loſſes we endure for him. But when the Soul is ſatisfied, that theſe Sufferings are but *external* upon the vile *Body*, but the Benefit that comes by Chriſt is *internal* in a Man's own *Soul*; theſe Afflictions are but *Temporal*, *Rom.* 8. 18. But Chriſt and his Benefits are *Eternal*: This muſt needs prevail with the Will to come over to Chriſt, notwithſtanding all the evils of Suffering that accompany him, when the reality of all this is diſcovered by the Lord, and the Power of God goes along with theſe Diſcoveries. Thus the Lord draws in our own way, by rational Convictions of the Underſtanding, and allurements of the Will.

And it's poſſible this may be the Reaſon why ſome poor Souls miſ-judge the workings of the Spirit of God upon themſelves, thinking they never had that wonderful and mighty Power of God in Converſion acting upon their Hearts, becauſe they find all that is done upon their Hearts that way, are done in the ordinary Courſe and Method of Nature: They conſider, compare, are convinced, and then reſolve to chooſe Chriſt and his Ways; whereas they expect to feel ſome ſtrange Operations that ſhall have the viſible Characters of the immediate Power of God upon them, and ſuch a Power they might diſcern, if they would conſider it working in this Way and Method: But they cannot diſtinguiſh God's Acts from their own, and that puzzles them.

Thirdly, the drawings of the Father are very *powerful*. *The Arm of the Lord is revealed in this Work*, Iſa. 53. 1. It was a powerful Word indeed, that made the Light at firſt ſhine out of Darkneſs, and no leſs Power is required to make it ſhine into our Hearts, 2 *Cor.* 5. 14. That Day in which the Soul is made willing to come to Chriſt, is call'd *the Day of his Power*, Pſalm 110. 3. The Scripture expreſſeth the Work of Converſion by a Threefold *Metaphor*, *viz.*

That of a *Reſurrection* from the Dead, *Rom.* 6. 4.

That of *Creation*, Epheſ. 2. 10. And

That of *Victory* or *Conqueſt*, 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. All theſe ſet forth the infinite Power of God in this Work, for no leſs than Almighty Power is required to each of them; and if you ſtrictly examine the diſtinct Notions, you ſhall find the Power of God more illuſtriouy diſplay'd in each of them.

To raiſe the Dead is the Effect of Almighty Power, but then the Reſurrection ſuppoſeth pre-exiſtent Matter. In the Work of *Creation*, there is no pre-exiſtent Matter, but then there is no Oppoſition: That which is not, rebels not againſt the Power which gives it Being. But *Victory* and *Conqueſt* ſuppoſes *Oppoſition*, all the Power of corrupt Nature arming itſelf, and fighting againſt God, but yet not able to fruſtrate his Deſign.

Suavis motus in verbo, & fortis tractus in Deo. eſt enim quædam neceſſitas voluntaria Moulin. Amat. Armin.

Let the Soul whom the Father draws ſtruggle and reluctate asmuch as it can, it ſhall come, yea, and come willingly too, when the drawing Power of God is upon it. O the Self-conflicts, the contrary reſolves with which the Soul finds itſelf diſtracted and rent aſunder! The Hopes and Fears, the Encouragements and Diſcouragements, they will, and they will not: But victorious Grace conquers all oppoſition at laſt. We find an excellent Example of this in bleſſed *Auguſtine*, * who ſpeaks of this very Work, the drawing of his Soul to Chriſt, and how he felt in that Day two Wills in himſelf, one old, the other new; one Carnal, the other Spiritual; and how in theſe their contrary Motions and Conflicts he was torn aſunder in his own Thoughts and Reſolutions, ſuffering that unwillingly which he did willingly.

* *Ita duæ voluntates meæ, una vetus, alia nova, illa carnalis, illa ſpiritualis confligebant interſe atque diſcordando diſſipabant animam meam — ibi enim magis jam non ego, quia ex magna parte id patiebar invitus, quod faciebam volens.* Aug. confeſ. lib. 8. c. 5.

And certainly, if we conſider how deep the Soul is rooted by natural Inclination, and long continued Cuſtom in Sin, how extreamly averſe it is to the ways of Godlineſs, and Mortification, how Satan, that invidious Enemy, that ſtrong Man armed, fortifies the Souls to defend his poſſeſſion againſt, Chriſt and intrenches himſelf in the Underſtanding, Will, and Affections, by deep-rooted prejudices againſt Chriſt and Holineſs, it is the Wonder of Wonders to ſee a Soul quitting all its beloved Luſts, and fleſhly Intereſts and Endearments, and coming willingly under Chriſt's Yoak.

Fourthly, the drawings of God are very effectual: There is indeed a common and *ineffectual* Work upon Hypocrites and Apoſtates, call'd in Scripture a *morning Cloud*, an *early Dew*, Hoſ. 6. 4. Theſe may believe for a time, and fall away at laſt, *Luke* 8. 13. Their Will may be half Won, they may draw half way to Chriſt, and return again. So it was with *Agrippa*, *Acts* 26. 28. ἐν ὀλίγῳ πείθεις, within a very little thou perſwadeſt me to be a Chriſtian: But in God's elect ones it is effectual: Their Wills are not only *almoſt*, but *altogether* perſwaded to embrace Chriſt, and quit the Ways of Sin, how pleaſant gainful, and dear ſoever they have been to them. The Lord not only draws, but draws home thoſe Souls to Chriſt, *John* 6. 37. *All that the Father hath given me, ſhall come to me.*

Suadere eſt conantis, perſuadere efficientis: Suaret qui conſulit, perſuadet qui quo vult indicit hominem. Eraſm.

It is confeſſed that in drawing home of the very Elect to Chriſt, there may be, and frequently are many Pauſes, Stands and Demurs; they have Convictions, Affections, and Reſolutions ſtirring in them, which like early Bloſſoms ſeem to be nipt and die away again. There is frequently (in young ones eſpecially) an hopeful appearance of Grace, they make Conſcience of Sins and Duties: They have ſometimes notable rouzings and awakenings under the Word, they are obſerved to obſerve retirements for Meditation and Prayer, and delight to be in the Company of Chriſtians; and after all this, youthful Luſts and Vani-

ties are found to ſtifle and choak theſe hopeful beginnings, and the work ſeems to ſtand (it may be ſome Years) at a pauſe, however at laſt the Lord makes it victorious over all oppoſition, and ſets it home with Power upon their Hearts.

Fifthly, To conclude thoſe whom the Father draws to Chriſt, he draws to him *finally* and for ever. *The gifts and calling of God are without Repentance*, Rom. 11. 29. They are ſo as to God the giver, he never repents that he hath called his People into the Fellowſhip of his Son Chriſt Jeſus: And they are ſo on the Believers part, he is never ſorry, whatever he afterwards meets with, that he is come to Chriſt.

There is a time when Chriſtians are drawn to Chriſt, but there ſhall never be a time in which they ſhall be drawn away from Chriſt, *Jer.* 10. 29. There's no plucking them out of the Fathers Hand. It was common to a Proverb in the Primitive Times, when they would expreſs an Impoſſibility, *You may as ſoon draw a Chriſtian from Chriſt as do it*: When Chriſt asked that Queſtion of the Diſciples, *Will ye alſo go away? Lord* (ſaith *Peter* in the name of them all) *to whom ſhall we go? Thou haſt the Words of eternal Life.* John 6. 68. They that are thus drawn, do with full purpoſe of Heart, cleave unto the Lord. And thus of the manner and quality of effectual drawing.

Thirdly, In the laſt place, I am to evince the impoſſibility of coming to Chriſt without the Fathers drawings: And this will evidently appear upon the conſideration of theſe two particulars.

Firſt, The difficulty of this Work is above all the Power of Nature to overcome.

Secondly, That little Power and Ability that Nature hath, it will never Employ to ſuch a purpoſe as this, till the drawing Power of God be upon the Will of a Sinner.

Firſt, If all the Power of Nature were employ'd in this Deſign, yet ſuch are the difficulties of this Work, that it ſurmounts all the Abilities of Nature. This the Scripture roundly and plainly affirms, *Eph.* 2. 8. *By Grace are ye ſaved through Faith, and that not of your ſelves, it is the Gift of God.* To think of Chriſt is eaſie, but to come to Chriſt is (to Nature) impoſſible: To ſend forth lazy and ineffectual wiſhes to Chriſt we may, but to bring Chriſt and the Soul together requires the Almighty Power of God, *Eph.* 1. 19. The Grace of Faith by which we come to Chriſt, is as much the free Gift of God, as Chriſt himſelf who is the Object of Faith, *Phil.* 1. 29. *To you it is freely given to believe.* And this will eaſily let it ſelf into your Underſtandings, if you but conſider.

The { Subject, / Act, and / Enemies } of this Work of Faith, or coming to Chriſt.

Firſt, Conſider the *Subject* of Faith in which it is wrought, or what it is that is drawn to Chriſt: 'Tis *the Heart of a Sinner*; which is naturally as indiſpoſed to this Work, as the Wood which *Elijah* laid in order upon the Altar was to catch Fire, when he had poured ſo much Water upon it as did not only wet the Wood, but alſo fill'd up the Trench round about it, 1 *Kings* 18. 33. For it's naturally a dark, blind, and ignorant Heart, *Job* 11. 12. And ſuch an Heart can never believe, till he that commanded the Light to ſhine out of Darkneſs do ſhine into it, 2 *Cor.* 5. 15.

Nor will it avail any thing to ſay, though Man be born in darkneſs and ignorance, yet afterwards he may acquire knowledge in the uſe of means, as we ſee many natural Men do in a very high degree: For this is not that light that brings the Soul to Chriſt, yea, this natural unſanctified light blinds the Soul, and prejudices it more againſt *Chriſt* than ever it was before, 1 *Cor.* 1. 21, 26.

As it is a blind and ignorant Heart, ſo it's a *ſelfiſh Heart* by Nature: All its deſigns and aims terminate in Self: This is the centre and weight of the Soul, no Righteouſneſs but 'tis own is ſought after, that, or none, *Rom.* 10. 3. Now for a Soul to renounce and deny Self in all its Forms, Modes, and Intereſts, as every one doth that cometh to Chriſt; to diſclaim and deny Natural, Moral, and Religious Self, and come to Chriſt, as a poor, miſerable, wretched, empty Creature; to live upon his Righteouſneſs for ever, is as ſupernatural and wonderful, as to ſee the Hills and Mountains ſtart from their Baſes and Centres, and fly like wandering Atomes in the Air.

Nay, this Heart which is come to Chriſt, is not only dark and ſelfiſh, but full of Pride: O 'tis a deſperate proud Heart by Nature, it cannot ſubmit to come to Chriſt as *Benhadads* Servants came to the *King of Iſrael*, with Sackcloth on their Loyns, and Ropes upon their Heads. To take Guilt, ſhame and confuſion of Face to our ſelves, and acknowledge the Righteouſneſs of God in our eternal Damnation; to come to Chriſt naked and empty, as one that juſtifies the ungodly: I ſay, Nature left to it ſelf, would as ſoon be Damned as do this: The proud Heart can never come to this, till the Lord have humbled and broken it by his Power.

Secondly, Let us take the *Act* of Faith into conſideration alſo, as it is here deſcribed, by the Souls *coming to Jeſus Chriſt*, and you will find a neceſſity of the Fathers drawings, for this evidently implies that which is *againſt the ſtream* and current of corrupt Nature, and that which is *above the Sphere* and Capacity of the moſt refined and accompliſhed Nature.

Firſt, it's againſt the ſtream and current of our corrupt Nature to come to Chriſt. For let us but conſider the *Term from which* the Soul departs when it comes to Chriſt. In that Day it leaves all its Luſts and ways of Sin, how pleaſant, ſweet and profitable ſoever they have been unto it, *Iſa.* 55. 7. *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous Man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord*: *Way* and *Thoughts*, (*i. e.*) Both the Practice, and delight of Sin, muſt be forſaken, and outward and inward Man muſt be cleanſed from it. Now there are in the Boſoms of unregenerate Men ſuch darling Luſts, that have given ſo much *practical* and *ſpeculative* pleaſure, which have brought ſo much profit to them, which have been born and bred up with them, and which, upon all theſe accounts, are endeared to their Souls in that degree, that it's eaſier for them to die, than to forſake them: Yea, nothing is more common among ſuch Men, than to venture eternal Damnation, rather than ſuffer a ſeparation from their Sins.

And which is yet much more difficult in coming to Chriſt; the Soul forſakes not only its *ſinful ſelf*, but its *righteous ſelf*; (*i. e.*) not only its worſt Sins, but its beſt performances, accompliſhments, and excellencies. Now this is one of the greateſt ſtraits that Nature can be put to: *Righteouſneſs* by Works was the firſt Liquor that ever was put into a Veſſel, and it ſtill retains the tang and ſavour of it, and will to the end of the World, *Rom.* 10. 3. *For they being ignorant of Gods righteouſneſs, and going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, have not ſubmitted themſelves unto the Righteouſneſs of God.* οὐχ ὑπετάγησαν, they have not *ſubmitted*: To come naked and empty to Chriſt, and receive all from him as a free Gift, is to proud corrupt Nature the greateſt abaſement and ſubmiſſion in the World.

Let the Goſpel furniſh its Table with the richeſt and coſtlieſt Dainties that ever the Blood of Chriſt purchaſed, ſuch is the pride of Nature, that it diſdains to taſte them, except it may alſo pay the reckoning. If the old *Hive* be removed from the place where it was wont to ſtand, the *Bees* will come home to the old place, yea, and many of them you ſhall find will die there, rather than go to the *Hive*, though it ſtand in a far better place than it did before. Juſt ſo ſtands the caſe with Men. The *Hive* is removed, (*i. e.*) we are no more to expect Righteouſneſs as *Adam* did, by obeying and working, but by believing, and coming to Chriſt; but Nature had as lieve be damned as do this: It ſtill goes about to eſtabliſh its own Righteouſneſs.

Vertues, Duties, and Moral Excellencies, theſe are Ornaments of Nature, here is Nature ſet off in its ſumptuous Attire and rich Embelliſhments, and now to renounce it, diſclaim and contemn it as droſs and dung in compariſon of Chriſt as Believers do, *Phil.* 3. 8. This, I ſay, is againſt the grain of Nature. We reckon it the ſtrange effect of Self-denial in *Mahomet the Great*, who being ſo enamoured with his beautiful *Irene*, would be perſwaded, upon reaſons of State, with his own Hand to ſtrike off her Head, and that when ſhe appeared with all her rich Ornaments before him, rather like ſuch a *Goddeſs*, as the Poets in their ecſtaſies uſe to feign, than a Mortal Creature: And yet certainly this is nothing to that Self-denial which is exerciſed in our coming to Chriſt. *Knowles* Hiſtory of the Turks.

Secondly, And if we look to the other *Term* to which the Soul moves, we ſhall find it acting as much above the Sphere and Ability of improved Nature, as here it acts and moves againſt the ſtream and current of corrupted Nature: For how wonderful and ſupernatural an Adventure is that, which the Soul makes in the Day that it comes to Jeſus Chriſt!

Surely

Surely, for any poor Soul to venture it ſelf for ever upon Jeſus Chriſt whom it never ſaw, nay, upon Chriſt whose very exiſtence its own unbelief calls into Queſtion whether he be or no: And that when it's even weighed down to the Duſt, with the burdenſome Senſe of its own vileneſs and total unworthineſs, feeling nothing in it ſelf but Sin and Miſery, the workings of Death and fears of Wrath: To go to Chriſt, of whoſe pardoning Grace and Mercy it never had any the leaſt experience, nor can find any ground of hope in it ſelf that ſhall be excepted; this is as much above the Power of Nature, as it is for a Stone to riſe from the Earth, and fix it ſelf among the Stars: Well might the *Apoſtle* aſcribe it to that Almighty Power which raiſed up Chriſt from the Dead, *Eph.* 1. 19, 20. If the Lord draw not the Soul, and that with an omnipotent Pull, it can never come from it ſelf to Chriſt. And yet farther,

Thirdly, The Natural impoſſibility of coming to Chriſt will more clearly appear, if we conſider the *Enemies* to Faith, or what blocks are roll'd by Satan and his Inſtruments into the way to Chriſt: To mention (in this place) no more but our carnal Reaſon, as it's armed and managed by the ſubtilty of *Satan*, what a wonder is it that any Soul ſhould come to Chriſt?

Theſe are the ſtrong Holds (mentioned 2 *Cor.* 10. 4.) out of which thoſe objections, fears and diſcouragement ſally, by which the Soul is fiercely aſſaulted in the way to Chriſt?

Wilt thou forſake all thy Pleaſures, merry Company, and ſenſible Comforts, to live a ſad, retired, penſive Life? Wilt thou begger and undo thy ſelf, let go thy Comforts in hand, for an hope of that which thine Eyes never ſaw, nor haſt thou any certainty that it's any more than a fancy? Wilt thou that haſt lived in Reputation and Credit all thy Life, now become the ſcorn and contempt of the World? Thinkeſt thou thy ſelf able to live ſuch a ſtrict, ſevere, mortified and ſelf-denying a Life, as the Word of God requires? And what if Perſecution ſhould ariſe, (as thou muſt expect it will) canſt thou forſake Father and Mother, Wife and Children, yea, and give up thine own Life too, to a cruel and bloody Death? Be adviſed better, before thou reſolve in ſo important a matter: What thinkeſt thou of thy Fore-fathers, that lived and died in that way thou art now leaving? Art thou wiſer than they? Do not the generality of Men walk in the ſame Paths thou haſt hitherto walked in? If this way lead to Hell as thou feareſt it may, think then how many Millions of Men muſt periſh as well as thy ſelf; and is ſuch a ſuppoſition conſiſtent with the gracious and merciful Nature of God? Beſides, think what ſort of People thoſe are unto whom thou art about to joyn thy ſelf in this new way? Are there not to be found among them many things to diſcourage thee, and cool thy Zeal? They are generally of the lower and baſer ſort of Men, poor and deſpicable: Seeſt thou not tho' their Profeſſion be Holy, how earthly, carnal, proud, factious, and hypocritical, many of them are found to be! And doubtleſs the reſt are like them, though their Hypocriſie be not yet diſcovered.

O what ſtands and demurs! What heſitations and doubts is the Soul clogg'd with in its way to Chriſt! But yet none of theſe can withhold and detain the Soul, when the Father draws: Greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the World: And thus you ſee the Nature, Manner, and Efficacy of Divine drawings, and how impoſſible it is for any Soul to come to Chriſt without them.

The Inferences and Improvements of the Point follow.

Infer. 1. *How deeply and throughly is the Nature of Man corrupted, and what an Enemy is every Man to his own Happineſs, that he muſt be drawn to it?* Joh. 5. 40. *You will not come unto me, that ye might have life.*

Life is deſirable in every Mans Eyes, and Eternal is the moſt excellent Life; yet in this the World is agreed rather to die and periſh for ever, than come to Chriſt for Life. Had Chriſt told them of Fields and Vineyards, Sheep and Oxen, Gold and Silver, Honours and Senſual Pleaſures, who would not have come to him for theſe? But to tell him of Mortification, Self-denial, ſtrickneſs of Life, and Sufferings for his Sake, and all for an happineſs to be enjoyed in the World to come, Nature will never like ſuch a Propoſition as this.

You ſee where it ſticks, not in a ſimple inability to believe, but in an inability complicated with enmity, they neither can come, nor will come to Chriſt: 'Tis true, all that do come to Chriſt come willingly, but thanks to the Grace of God that hath freed and perſwaded the Will, elſe they had never been willing to come: Who ever found his own Heart firſt ſtir and move towards Chriſt? How long may we wait and expect, before we ſhall feel our Hearts naturally burn with deſires after, and love to Jeſus Chriſt?

This averſion of the Will and Affections from God, is one of the Maſter Roots of Original Sin. No Argument can prevail to bring the Soul to Chriſt, till this be maſter'd and over-powered by the Fathers drawings. In our motions to Sin we need *trigging*, but in all our motions to Chriſt we as much need *drawing*. He that comes to Heaven may ſay, Lord, if I had had my own way and will, I had never come here: If thou hadſt not drawn me, I ſhould never have come to thee. O the Riches of the Grace of God! Oh unparallel'd Mercy and Goodneſs! Nor only to prepare ſuch a Glory as this for an *unworthy* Soul, but to put forth the exceeding greatneſs of thy power, afterwards to draw an *unwilling* Soul to the enjoyment of it.

Infer. 2. *What enemies are they to God and the Souls of Men, that do all they can to diſcourage and hinder the Converſion of Men to Chriſt? God draws forward, and theſe do all that in them lies to draw backward,* (i. e.) *to prejudice and diſcourage them from coming to Jeſus Chriſt in the way of Faith: This is a direct oppoſition to God and a plain confederacy with the Devil.*

O how many have been thus diſcouraged in their way to Chriſt, by their carnal Relations, I cannot ſay Friends! Their greateſt Enemies have been the Men of their own Houſe. Theſe have pleaded (as if the Devil had hird and fee'd them) againſt the everlaſting welfare of their own Fleſh. O cruel Parents, Brethren, and Siſters, that jeer, frown, and threaten, where they ſhould encourage, aſſiſt and rejoice! Such *Parents* are the Devil's *Children*: *Satan* chuſes ſuch Inſtruments as you are above all others for this Work: He knows what Influence and Authority you have upon them, and over them: And what fear, love, and dependance they have for you, and upon you; So that none in all the World are like to manage the deſign of their Damnation ſo effectually as you are like to do it.

Will you neither come to Chriſt your ſelves, nor ſuffer your dear Relations that would? Had you rather find them in the *Alehouſe*, than in the Cloſet? Did you inſtrumentally give them their Being, and will you be the Inſtruments of ruining for ever thoſe Beings they had from you? Did you ſo earneſtly deſire Children, ſo tenderly Nurſe and provide for them, take ſuch delight in them, and after all this do what in you lies to Damn and Deſtroy them? If theſe lines ſhall fall into any ſuch Hands, O that God would ſet home the Conviction and Senſe of this horrid Evil upon their Hearts.

And no leſs guilty of this Sin are ſcandalous and looſe Profeſſors, who ſerve to furniſh the Devil with the greateſt Arguments he hath to diſſwade Men from coming to Chriſt: 'Tis your Looſeneſs and Hypocriſie by which he hopes to ſcare others from Chriſt. It's ſaid, *Cant.* 2. 7. *I charge you by the Roes and Hinds of the Field, that ye ſtir not up, nor awake my beloved till he pleaſe.*

Roes and Hinds (like young Converts, and comers towards Chriſt) are ſhy and timerous Creatures that ſtart at the leaſt ſound, or yelp of a Dog, and fly away: Take heed what you do in this caſe, leſt you go down to Hell under the guilt of damning more Souls than your own.

Infer. 3. *Learn hence the true ground and reaſon of thoſe ſtrange, amazing, and ſupernatural effects, that you behold and ſo admire in the World, as often as you ſee Sinners forſaking their pleaſant profitable Corruptions and Companions, and embracing the ways of Chriſt, Godlineſs, and Mortification.*

It is ſaid, 1 *Pet.* 4. 4. *They think it ſtrange that you run not with them into the ſame exceſs of Riot*; The Word is ξενίζονται, they ſtand at a gaze as the Hen that hath hatch'd *Partridge Eggs* doth, when ſhe ſees them take the Wing and fly away from her.

Beloved, it is the World's Wonder to ſee their Companions in Sin forſake them: Thoſe that were once as prophane and vain as themſelves, it may be more, to forſake their Society, retire into their Cloſets, mourn for Sin, ſpend their time in Meditation and prayer, embrace the ſevereſt Duties, and content to run the greateſt hazards in the World for Chriſt; but they ſee not that Almighty power that draws them, which is too ſtrong for all the ſinful ties and engagements in the World to withhold and detain them.

A Man would have wonder'd to ſee *Eliſha* leave the Oxen and run after *Elijah*, ſaying, *Let me go, I pray thee, and kiſs my Father and Mother, and then I will follow thee*; when *Elijah* had ſaid nothing to perſwade him to follow him, only as he paſs'd by him, he caſt his Mantle on him, 1 *Kings* 19. 19, 20. Surely that Soul whom God draws muſt needs leave all and follow Chriſt, for the power of God reſteth on it. All carnal ties and engagements to Sin, break and give way, when the Father draws the Soul to *Chriſt* in the Day of his Power.

Infer 4. *Is this the firſt ſpring of ſpiritual Motion after Chriſt? Learn then from hence, how it comes to paſs that ſo many excellent Sermons and Powerful Perſwaſions are ineffectual, and cannot draw and win the Soul to Chriſt. Surely it is becauſe Miniſters draw alone, and the ſpecial ſaving Power of God goes not forth at all times alike with their Endeavours.*

Paul was a choſen Veſſel, fill'd with greater meaſure of Gifts and Graces by the Spirit, than any that went before him, or followed after him; and as his Talents, ſo his Diligence in improving them, was beyond any recorded Example we read of amongſt Men: He rather * flew like a *Seraphim*, than travelled upon his Maſter's errand about the World. *Apollo was* an eloquent Preacher, and mighty in the Scriptures, yet *Paul* is *nothing*, *and* Apollo *nothing*; *but God that gives the Increaſe*, 1 *Cor.* 3. 7. We are too apt to admire Men, yea, and the beſt are but too apt to go forth in the ſtrength of their own Parts and Preparations; but God ſecures his own Glory, and magnifies his own Power frequently in giving ſucceſs to weaker endeavours, and Men of lower Abilities, when he withholds it from

* ὡς πτηνὸς ὁ ἀπόστολος καὶ ὡς ἀσώματος διεδραμε. *Chryſoſt.*

from Men of more raiſed, refined, and and excellent Gifts and Abilities.

It is our great Honour, who are the Miniſters of the Goſpel, that we are συνεργοι, *workers together with God*, 1 *Cor.* 3. 9. in his Strength we can prevail, *the Weapons of our Warfare are mighty through God*, 2 Cor. 10. 4. But if his Preſence, Bleſſing and Aſſiſtance, be not with us, we are nothing, we can do nothing.

If we prepare Diligently, pray Heartily, preach Zealouſly, and our Hearers go as they came, without any ſpiritual Effects and Fruits of our Labours, what ſhall we ſay, but as *Martha* ſaid to Chriſt, *Lord if thou hadſt been here, my Brother had not died*: Had the Spirit of God gone forth with his eſpecial Efficacy and Bleſſing, with this Prayer, or that Sermon, theſe Souls had not departed Dead and Senſeleſs from under it.

Infer 5. *Doth all Succeſs and Efficacy depend upon the Father's drawings? Let none then deſpair of their unregenerate and carnal Relations, over whoſe obſtinacy, they do and have cauſe to mourn.*

What if they have lain as many Years under the preaching of the Goſpel as that poor Man did at the Pool of *Bethesda*, and hitherto to no purpoſe? A time may come at laſt (as it did for him) when the Spirit of God may move upon the Waters; I mean, put a quickening hnd converting Power into the means, and then the deſire of your Souls for them ſhall be fulfill'd.

It may be you have poured out many Prayers and Tears to the Lord for them, you have cried for them as *Abraham* for his Son, *O that Iſhmael might live before thee*! O that this poor Huſband, Wife, Child, Brother, or Siſter, might live in thy ſight, and ſtill you ſee continue at one rate, Carnal, Dead and Senſeleſs: Well, but yet give not up your hopes, nor ceaſe your pious endeavours, the time may come when the Father may draw as you, and then you ſhall ſee them quit all, and come to Chriſt, and nothing ſhall hinder them. They are now drawn away of their own Luſts, they are eaſily drawn away by their ſinful Companions, but when God draws, none of theſe ſhall withdraw them from the Lord Jeſus. What is their Ignorance, Obſtinacy, and hardneſs of Heart, before that mighty power that ſubdues all things to itſelf? Go therefore to the Lord by Prayer for them, and ſay, Lord, I have laboured for my poor Relations in vain, I have ſpent my Exhortations to little purpoſe; the Work is too difficult for me, I can carry it no farther, But thou canſt; O let thy power go forth, they ſhall be willing in the Day of thy Power.

Infer 6. *If none can come to Chriſt except the Father draw them, then ſurely none can be drawn from Chriſt except the Father leave them: That Power which at firſt drew them to Chriſt, can ſecure and eſtabliſh them in Chriſt to the end*, John 10 29 *My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and no Man is able to pluck them out of my Father's Hand.*

When the power of God at firſt draws us out of our natural ſtate to Chriſt, it finds us not only *impotent*, but *obſtinate*, not only unable, but unwilling to come; and yet this power of God prevails againſt all oppoſition: How much more is it able to preſerve and ſecure us, when his fear is put into our inward parts, ſo that we dare not depart, we have no will do depart from him? Well then, if the World ſay I will enſnarre thee, if the Devil ſay I will deſtroy thee, if the Fleſh ſay I will betray thee, yet thou art ſecure and ſafe, as long as God hath ſaid, *I will never leave thee nor forſake thee*, Heb. 13, 5.

Infer. 7. *Let this engage you to a conſtant Attendance upon the Ordinances of God, in which this drawing Power of God is ſometimes put forth upon the Hearts of Men.*

Beloved, there are certain Seaſons in which the Lord comes nigh to Men in the Ordinances and Duties of his Worſhip, and we know not at what time the Lord cometh forth by his Spirit upon this Deſign: He many times comes in an hour when we look not for him: when we think not of him; *I am found of them that ſought me not*, Iſa 65. 1. It's good therefore to be found in the way of the Spirit: Had that poor Man that lay ſo long at the Pool of *Bethesda*, reaſoned thus with himſelf, ſo long have I lain here in vaid expecting a Cure, its to no purpoſe to wait longer, and ſo had been abſent at that very time when the Angel came down, he had in all likelihood carried his Diſeaſe to to the Grave with him.

How doſt thou know but this very *Sabbath*, this Sermon, this Prayer, which thou haſt no Heart to attend, and art tempted to neglect, may be the Seaſon, and Inſtrument wherein the Lord may do that for thy Soul, which was never yet done upon it?

Infer. 8. *To conclude, How are all the Saint engaged to put forth all the Power and Ability they have for God, who hath put forth his infinite Almighty Power to draw them to Chriſt!*

God hath done great things for your Souls, he hath drawn you out of the miſerable ſtate of Sin and Wrath, and that when he lets others go, by Nature as good as you, he hath drawn you into Union with Chriſt, and Communion with his glorious Privileges O that you would henceforth employ all the Power you have for God in the Duties of Obedience, and in drawing others to Chriſt as much as in you lies, and ſay continually with the Church, *Draw me, we will run after thee*, Cant. 1. 4.

Thanks be to God for Jeſus Chriſt.

SERMON V.

Opening that Work of the Spirit more particularly, by which the Soul is enabled to apply Chriſt.

EPHES. II. i.

And you hath he quickned, who were Dead in Treſpaſſes and Sins.

IN the former Sermons we have ſeen our Union with Chriſt in the general Nature of it, and the Means by which it is effected, both *External* by the preaching of the Goſpel, and *Internal* by the Drawings of the Father. We are now to bring our Thoughts Cloſer to the great Myſtery, and conſider the Bonds and Ligaments by which Chriſt and Believers are knit togeteer in a bleſſed Oneneſs.

And if we heedfully obſerve the Scripture Expreſſions, and ponder the Nature of this Union, we ſhall find there are two Bands which knit Chriſt and the Soul together, *viz.*

1. The Spirt on Chriſt's part.
2. Faith on our part.

The *Spirit* on Chriſt's part *quickening* us with ſpiritual Life, whereby Chriſt firſt takes hold of us, and *Faith* on our Part, when thus quickened, whereby we take hold of Chriſt: Accordingly this Union with the Lord Jeſus is expreſſed in Scripture ſometimes by one, and ſometimes by the other of theſe Means or Bonds by which it is effected. Chriſt is ſometimes ſaid to be in us; ſo *Col.* 2. 27. *Chriſt is in you the hope of Glory.* And *Rom.* 8. 10 *And if Chriſt be in you, the Body is Dead becauſe of Sin.* And other Times it is expreſſed by the other Bond on our Part, as 1 *John* 5. 20. *We are in him that is true, even in his Son Chriſt Jeſus.* And 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. *If any Man be in Chriſt, he is a new Creature.*

The Difference betwixt both theſe, is thus aptly expreſſed by a late Author, " Chriſt is in Be-
Mount *Piſgah*, p. 22, " lievers by his *Spirit*, 1 *Joh.* 4. 13.
23. " The Believer is in Chriſt by *Faith*,
" 1 *John* 12. Chriſt is in the Believer
" by *Inhabitation*, *Rom.* 3. 17. The Believer is in Chriſt by *Im-*
" *plantation*, *Rom.* 6. 35 Chriſt is in the Believer as the Head is
" in the Body, *Col* 1. 18. As the Root in the Branches, *John* 15. 5. Believers are in Chriſt as the Members are in the Head,
" *Eph.* 1. 23. Or as the branches are in the Root, *John* 15. 1.
" 7. Chriſt in the Believer implieth Life and *Influence* from
" Chriſt, *Col.* 3. 4 The Believer in Chriſt implieth *Communion*,
" and Fellowſhip with Chriſt, 1 *Cor.* 1 30. When *Chriſt* is ſaid
" to be in the Believer, we are to underſtand it in reference to
" *Sanctification*. When the Belidver is ſaid to be in *Chriſt*, it is
" in order to Juſtification.

Thus we apprehend, being ourſelves firſt apprehended by *Jeſus Chriſt*, *Phil.* 3. 12. We cannot take hold of *Chriſt*, till firſt he take hold of us; no Vital Act of Faith can be exerciſed, till a Vital Principle be firſt inſpired: Of both theſe bonds of Union we muſt ſpeak diſtinctly, acd firſt of the firſt, *Chriſt quickening us by his Spirit, in Order to our Union with him*, of which we have an Account in the Scripture before us, *You hath he quickended who were dead in Treſpaſſes and Sins*: In which Words we find theſe two Things noted, *viz.*

1. The Infuſion of a Vital Principle of Grace.
2. The Total diſpoſedneſs of the Subject by Nature.

First, the Infuſion of a Vital Principle of Grace, *You hath he quickened.* Theſe Words [*hath he quickened*] are a Supplement made to clear the Senſe of the *Apoſtle*, which elſe would have been more obſcure by reaſon of that long *Parembeſis* betwixt the firſt and the fifth Verſes, for as the * Learned obſerve, this Word ὑμᾶς, you, is governed of the Verb συνεζωοποίησε, *hath he quickened*, Verſe 5. So that here the Words are tranſpoſed from the plain Gramatical Or-

* *Illud ὑμᾶς regitur a συνεζωοποίησε, v. 5 ita igitur hoc loco & hyperbaton & ſynchyſis & ἀνακολουθον & πλεοσμὸς quæ eſt ſpecies τὸ ἀναντιστρόφου cujus quidem anomaliæ cauſſa eſt ἐπεμβολὴ interjectio ſententiæ prolixioris.* Piſcator. Poules *Synop.*

der, by Reason of the Interjection of a long Sentence, therefore with good warrant our Translators have put the Verb into the first Verse, which is repeated Verse the fifth, and so keeping faithfully to the Scope, have excellently cleared the *Syntax* and Order of the Words. Now this Verb συνεζωοποιησε, *hath he quickned*, imports the first Vital Act of the Spirit of God, or his first enlivening Work upon the Soul, in Order to its Union with Jesus Christ: For look, as the Blood of Christ is the Fountain of all Merit, so the Spirit of Christ is the Fountain of all Spiritual Life: And until he quicken us, (*i. e.*) infuse the Principle of the Divine Life into our Souls, we can put forth no Hand, or Vital Act of Faith, to lay hold upon Jesus Christ.

This his quickening Work, is therefore the first in Order of Nature to our Union with Christ, and fundamental to all other Acts of Grace done and performed by us from our first closing with Christ throughout the whole course of our Obedience: and this quickning Act is said, Verse the fifth, to be together with Christ: Either noting (as some expound it) that it is the Effect of the same Power by which Christ was raised from the Dead, according to *Eph.* 1. 19. or rather to be *quickened together with Christ*, notes that new spiritual Life which is infused into our Dead Souls in the Time of their Union with Christ: For it is Christ to whom we are conjoined and united in our Regeneration, out of whom, as a Fountain, all spiritual Benefits flow to us, among which this Vivification or quickening is one, and a most sweet and precious one.

Ex Christo conjuncto nobiscum ut capite cum membris profluunt in nos omnia beneficia in quorum numero est viv. ficatio. Rolloc. in Loco.

Zanchy, Bodius, and many others, will have this *quickening* to comprize both our Justification and Regeneration, and to stand opposed both to *Infernal* and *spiritual* Death, and it may well be allowed; but it most properly imports our Regeneration, wherein the Spirit, in an ineffable and mysterious Way, makes the Soul to live to God, yea, to live the Life of God which was before *Dead in Trespasses and Sins*: In which Words we have.

Secondly, In the next Place, the total indispossedness of the Subjects by Nature: For as it is well noted by a * Learned Man, the Apostle doth not say of these *Ephesians* that they were half Dead, or Sick and infirm, but Dead wholly, altogether Dead, destitute of any Faculty or Ability so much as to think one good Thought, or perform one good Act: You were Dead in respect of *Condemnation*, being under the damning Sentence of the Law, and you were Dead in respect of the Privation of Spiritual Life, Dead in Opposition to Justification, and Dead in Opposition to Regeneration and Sanctification: And the fatal Instrument by which their Souls died is here shewed them, you were Dead in, or by *Trespasses* and *Sins*; this was the Sword that kill'd your Souls, and cut them off from God. Some do curiously distinguish betwixt Trespasses and Sins, as if one pointed at *Original*, the other at *Actual* Sins; but I suppose they are promiscuously used here, and serve to express the Cause of their Ruin, or means of their Spiritual Death and Destruction: This was their Case when Christ came to quicken them, *dead in Sin*, and being so, they could not move themselves towards Union with Christ, but as they were moved by the quickning Spirit of God.

* *Non vocat hic semimortuos aut egrotos ac infirmos, sed prorsus mortuos, omni facultate bene cogitandi aut agendi destituti.* Rolloc. in Loc.

Hence the Observation will be this,

Doct. *That those Souls which have Union with Christ, are quickened with a Supernatural Principle of Life by the Spirit of God in order thereunto.*

The Spirit of God is not only a living Spirit, *formally* considered, but he is also the Spirit of Life *effectively* or *casually* considered: And without his breathing or infusing Life into our Souls, our Union with Christ is impossible.

It is the Observation of Learned *Camero*, that there must be an *Unition* before there can be a *Union* with Christ. *Unition* is to be conceived *efficiently* as the Work of God's Spirit, joyning the Believer to Christ, and Union is to be conceived *formally*, the joyning it self of the Persons together: We close with Christ by Faith, but that Faith being a Vital Act, presupposes a Principle of Life communicated to us by the Spirit; therefore it's said, *John* 11. 26. *Whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never Die*: The Vital Act and Operation of Faith springs from this quickening Spirit: So in *Rom.* 8. 1, 2. The Apostle having in the first Verse opened the Blessed Estate of them that are in Christ, shews us in the second Verse how we come to be in him: *The Spirit of Life* (saith he) *which is in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the Law of Sin and Death.*

Observandum est unionem & unitionem inter se differre: unio est rerum actus, qui formam rationem habet, nempe actus rerum unitarum quâ unitæ sunt: unitio autem actus significat causæ efficientis, &c. Camero de Eccles. p. 222.

There is indeed a quickening Work of the Spirit, which is *subsequent* to Regeneration, consisting in his exciting, recovering, and actuating of his own Graces in us: and from hence is the *liveliness* of a Christian; and there is a quickning Act of the Spirit *in our Regeneration*, and from hence is the first Spiritual *Life* of a Christian, of this I am here to speak, and that I may speak profitably to this Point, I will in the Doctrinal Part labour to open these five Particulars.

First, What this Spiritual Life is in its Nature and Properties.

Secondly, In what Manner it is wrought or inspired into the Soul.

Thirdly, For what end, or with what Design this Life is so inspired.

Fourthly, I shall shew this Work to be wholly Supernatural.

And then, Fifthly, Why this quickening must be antecedent to our actual closing with Christ by Faith.

First, We will enquire into the Nature and Properties of this Life, and discover (as we are able) what it is. And we find it to consist in that *wonderful change which the Spirit of God makes upon the Frame and Temper of the Soul, by his infusing or implanting the Principles of Grace in all the Powers and Faculties thereof.*

A change it makes upon the Soul, and that a marvellous one, no less than from Death to Life, for though a Man be *Physically* a living Man (*i. e.*) his natural Soul hath no Union with his Body, yet his Soul having no Union with Christ, he is *Theologically* a dead Man, *Luke* 15. and *Col.* 2. 13. Alas, it deserves not the Name of Life, to have a Soul serving only to season, and preserve the Body a little while from stinking: To carry it up and down the World, and only enable it to eat and drink, and talk and laugh, and then Die: Then do we begin to live, when we begin to have Union with Christ the Fountain of Life, by his Spirit communicated to us: From this Time we are to reckon our Life * as some have done: There be many changes made upon Men besides this, many are changed from Prophaneness

* *Hic jacet Similis cujus ætas multorum annorum fuit, ipse*

ſeptem duntaxat annos vixit.

to Civility, and from meer Civility to Formality, and a ſhadow of Religion, who ſtill remain in the State and Power of Spiritual Death notwithſtanding; but when the Spirit of the Lord is poured out upon us, to quicken us with the new ſpiritual Life, this is a wonderful change indeed: It gives us an *Eſſe ſupernaturale*, a new ſupernatural Being, which is therefore call'd a *new Creature, the new Man, the hidden Man of the Heart*: The natural Eſſence and Faculties of the Soul remain ſtill, but it is diveſted of the old Qualities, and endowed with new Ones, 2. *Cor.* 5. 17. *Old things are paſt away, behold all things are become new.*

And this Change is not made by altering and rectifying the Diſorders of the Life only, leaving the Temper and Frame of the Heart ſtill carnal; but by the Infuſion of a ſupernatural permanent Principle into the Soul, *John* 4. 14. *It ſhall be in him a Well of Water*: Principles are to a courſe of Actions, as Fountains or Springs are to the Streams and Rivers that flow from them, and are maintain'd by them: And hence is the evenneſs and conſtancy of renewed Souls in the courſe of Godlineſs.

Nor is this Principle or Habit *acquired* by accuſtoming our ſelves to Holy Actions, as natural Habits are acquired by frequent Acts, which beget a *Diſpoſition*, and thence grow up to an *Habit* or ſecond Nature, but it is infuſed or implanted into the Soul by the Spirit of God. So we read, *Ezek.* 36. 25, 26. *A new Heart alſo will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you*: It grows not up out of our Natures, but is put or infuſed into us: As it's ſaid of the two Witneſſes, *Rev.* 11. 11. who lay Dead in a *Civil Senſe*, three Days and a half, that *the Spirit of Life from God entred into them*; ſo it is here in a *Spiritual Senſe*, the Spirit of Life from God enters into the dead, carnal Heart: It's all by Way of ſupernatural Infuſion.

Nor is it limited to this or that Faculty of the Soul, but Grace of Life is poured into all the Faculties: *Behold all things are become new*, 3. Cor. 5, 17. The *Underſtanding*, *Will*, *Thoughts* and *Affections*, are all renewed by it: The whole inner *Man* is changed, yea, the *Tongue* and *Hand*, the *Diſcourſes* and *Actions*, even all the *Ways* and *Courſes* of the outward *Man* are renewed by it.

But more particularly, we ſhall diſcern the *Nature* of this *Spiritual Life*, by conſidering the *Properties* of it; among which theſe are very *remarkable*.

Firſt, The Soul that is joyned to Chriſt, is quickned with a *Divine Life*, ſo we read in 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. Where Believers are ſaid to be Partakers or Conſorts of the *Divine Nature*: A very high Expreſſion, and warily to be underſtood. *Partakers of the Divine Nature*, not *eſſentially*, ſo its wholly incommunicable to the Creature, nor yet *Hypoſtatically* and Perſonally, ſo Chriſt only was a Partaker of it, but our Participation of the Divine Nature muſt be underſtood in a way proper to Believers; that is to ſay, we partake of it by the Inhabitation of the Spirit of God in us, according to 1 *Cor.* 3. 16, 17. *Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* The Spirit, who is God by Nature, dwells and actuates the Soul whom he regenerates, and by ſanctifying cauſes it to live a *Divine Life*: From this Life of God the unſanctified are ſaid to be alienated, *Eph.* 4. 18. but Believers are Partakers of it.

Secondly, And being Divine, it muſt needs be the moſt *excellent* and tranſlated Life that any Creature doth or can live in this World: It ſurmounts the natural, rational, and moral Life of the unſanctified, as much as the Angelical Life excels the Life that Flies, and Worms of the Earth do live.

Some think it a rare Life to live in Senſual Pleaſures, but the Scripture will not allow ſo much as the Name of Life to them; but tells us, *they are dead whilſt they live*, 1. Tim. 5. 6. certainly it is a wonderful Elevation of the Nature of Man, to be quickened with ſuch a Life as this. There are two Ways wherein the bleſſed God hath honoured poor Man above the very Angels of Heaven. One was by the Hypoſtatical Union of our Nature in Chriſt, with the Divine Nature; the other is by uniting our Perſons Myſtically to Chriſt, and thereby communicating Spiritual Life to us: This latter is a moſt glorious Priviledge, and in one reſpect a more ſingular Mercy than the former; for that Honour which is done to our Nature by the Hypoſtatical Union, is common to all good and bad, even they that periſh have yet that Honour; but to be implanted into Chriſt by Regeneration, and live upon him as the Branch doth upon the Vine, this is a peculiar Priviledge, a Mercy hedg'd in from the World that is to periſh, and only communicated to God's Elect, who are to live Eternally with him in Heaven.

Thirdly, This Life infuſed by the regenerating Spirit, is a moſt *pleaſant Life*. All Delights, all Pleaſures, all Joys, which are not Phantaſtick and Deluſive, have their ſpring and origin here, *Rom.* 8. 6. *To be ſpiritually minded is Life and Peace*, (*i. e.*) a moſt ſerene placid Life, ſuch a Soul becomes, ſo far as it is influenced and ſanctified by the Spirit, the very Region of Life and Peace: When one thing is thus predicated of another, *in caſu recto*, (ſaith a Learned Man) it ſpeaks their intimate Connexion: Peace is ſo connatural to this Life, that you may either call it a Life that hath Peace in it, or a Peace that hath Life in it: Yea, it hath its enclo- enclоſed Pleaſures in it, *Such as a ſtranger intermeddles not with*, Prov. 14. 10. Regeneration is the Term from which all true Pleaſure commences, you never live a merry Day, till you begin to live to God: Therefore it's ſaid, *Luke* 15. 24. When the *Prodigal Son* was returned to his Father and reconciled, then *they began to be Merry*.

None can make another by any Words, to underſtand what that Pleaſure is which the renewed Soul feels diffuſed through all its Faculties and Affections in its Communion with the Lord, and in the ſealings and witneſſings of his Spirit. That is a very apt and well known ſimilitude which *Peter Martyr* uſed, and the Lord bleſſed to the Converſion of the Noble Marqueſs *Galeacius*: If, ſaid he, a Man ſhould ſee a Company of People dancing upon the Top of a remote Hill, he would be apt to conclude they were a Company of wild diſtracted People; but if he draw nearer and behold the excellent Order, and hear the raviſhing ſweet Muſick that is among them, he will quickly alter his Opinion, and fall a dancing himſelf with them.

All the *Delights* in the ſenſual *Life*, all the Pleaſure that ever your *Luſts* gave you, are but as the putrid ſtinking *Waters* of a corrupt *Pond*, where *Toads* lie croaking and ſpawning, to the *Chryſtal Streams* of the moſt pure and pleaſant *Fountain*.

Fourthly, This Life of God with which the regenerate are quickened in their Union with Chriſt, as it is a *pleaſant* ſo it is alſo *a growing increaſing Life*, John 4. 14. *It ſhall be in him a Well of Water ſpringing up into everlaſting Life*.

It is not in our Sanctification, as it is in our Juſtification, our Juſtification is compleat and perfect, no defect is found there, but the new Creature labours under many Defects: All Believers are equally

qually Justified, but not equally Sanctified: Therefore you read, 2 *Cor* 4. 16. that the inward Man is renewed Day by Day: And 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. Christians are exhorted to grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour: If this Work were perfect and finished at once, as Justification is, there could be no renewing Day by Day, nor growth in Grace *Perfectum est cui nihil deest, & cui nihil addi potest:* The *Apostle* indeed prays for the *Thessalonians, That God would sanctifie them,* ὁλοτελεῖς — wholly, perfectly, 1 *Thes.* 5. 23. And this is Matter of Prayer and Hope, for at last it will grow up to Perfection; but this perfect Holiness is reserved for the perfect State in the World to come, and none but * deluded proud Spirits boast of it here: But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away, 1 *Cor.* 13. 9, 10. And upon the Imperfection of the new Creature in every Faculty, that warfare and daily conflict spoken of, *Gal.* 5. 17. and experienced by every Christian, is grounded: Grace rises gradually in the Soul, as the Sun doth in the Heavens, *which shineth more and more unto a perfect Day,* Prov. 4. 18.

* *Perfectio Sanctificationis in hac vita non conferitur, nisi in omnibus quorundam Fanatico-rum,* Amesius.

Fifthly, To conclude, this Life with which the regenerate are quickened, is an *Everlasting Life. This is the Record, that God hath given us Eternal Life, and this Life is in his Son,* 1 John 5. 11. This Principle of Life, is the Seed of God, and that remains in the Soul for ever, 1 *John* 3. 9. It is no transient vanishing thing, but a fixed, permanent Principle, which abides in the Soul for ever; a Man may lose his *Gifts,* but Grace abides: The Soul may, and must be separated from the Body, but Grace cannot be separated from the Soul: When all forsake us, this sticks by us.

This infused Principle is therefore vastly different, both from the extraordinary Gifts of Prophecy, wherein the Spirit sometimes was said to come upon Men, under the *Old Testament,* 1 *Sam.* 10. 6, 10. and from the common vanishing Effects he sometimes produceth in the unregenerate, of which we have frequent Accounts in the *New Testament,* Heb. 6. 4. and *John* 5. 35. It's one thing for the Spirit to come upon a Man in the way of present Influence and Assistance, and another thing to dwell in a Man as his Temple.

And thus of the Nature and Quality of this blessed Work of the Spirit in quickening us.

Secondly, Having seen the Nature and Properties of the Spiritual Life, we are concerned in the next Place to enquire into the Way and Manner in which it is wrought, and infused by the Spirit: And here we must say,

First of all, That the Work is wrought in the Soul very *mysteriously;* so Christ tells *Nicodemus,* John 3. *The Wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit:* There be many Opinions among *Philosophers* about the Original of Wind, but we have no certain knowledge of it: We describe it by its Effects and Properties, but know little of its Original: And the Works of God in Nature be so abstruse and unsearchable, how much more are these sublime and supernatural Works of the Spirit so?

We are not able to solve the *Phænomena* of Nature, we can give no Account of our Formation in the Womb, *Eccles.* 11. 5. Who can exactly describe how the Parts of the Body are formed, and the Soul infused? *It's curiously wrought in the lowest Parts of the Earth,* as the Psalmist speaks, *Psalm* 139. 16. but how we know not. *Basil* saith, divers Questions may be moved about a *Fly,* which may pose the greatest *Philosopher:* We know little of the Forms and Essences of Natural Things, much less of these profound, and abstruse Spiritual Things.

Secondly, But tho' we cannot pry into these Secrets by the Eye of Reason, yet God hath revealed this to us in his Word, that it is wrought by his own Almighty Power, *Eph.* 1 19. The *Apostle* ascribes this Work to the exceeding greatness of the Power of God: And this must needs be, if we consider, how the Spirit of God expresses it in Scripture by a new Creation: *(i. e.)* a giving Being to something out of nothing, *Eph.* 2. 10. In this it differs from all the Effects of Humane Power, for Man always works upon some *pre-existent* Matter, but here is no such Matter: All that is in Man, the Subject of this Work, is only a Passive Capacity or Receptivity, but nothing is found in him to contribute towards this Work: This Supernatural Life is not, nor can it be educed out of natural Principles: This wholly transcends the Sphere of all natural Power: But of this more anon.

Thirdly, This also we may affirm of it, That this Divine Life is infused into all the natural Faculties and Powers of the Soul, not one exempted, 1 *Thes.* 5. 23. The whole Soul and Spirit is the recipient Subject of it: and with respect to this general Infusion into all the Faculties and Powers of the Soul, it's call'd a new Creature, a new Man, having an integral Perfection and fulness of all its Parts and Members: It becomes Light In the Mind, *John* 17. 3. Obedience in the Will, 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. In the Affections an heavenly Temper and Tenderness, *Col.* 3. 1, 2. And so is variously denominated, even as the Sea is from the several Shores it washes, tho' it be one and the same Sea. And here we must observe, lies one main Difference betwixt a Regenerate Soul, and an Hypocrite; * the one is all of a Piece, as I may say, the Principle of Spiritual Life runs into all and every Faculty and Affection, and sanctifies or renews the whole Man; whereas the change upon Hypocrites is but Partial and Particular, he may have new Light, but no new Love, a new Tongue, but not a new Heart: This or that Vice may be reformed, but the whole Course of his Life is not altered.

* *Ab uno desuper principio quod convenienter voluntati operatur dependent prima, secunda & tertia. Quemadmodum minima pars ferri lapidis magnetis spiritu movetur, per multos annulos ferreos extensa: ita etiam qui sunt virtute præditi, divino spiritu attracti, cum prima mansione conjungantur, deinceps autem alii usque ad postremam.* Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. 7.

Fourthly and Lastly, This Infusion of Spiritual Life is done *instantaneously,* as all *Creation*-Work is: Hence it is resembled to that *plastick Power,* which in a moment made the Light to shine out of darkness, just so God shines into our Hearts, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6.

'Tis true, a Soul may be a long time under the preparatory works of the Spirit, he may be under convictions and humiliations, purposes and resolutions a long time; be may he waiting at the Pool of *Bethesda,* attending the Means and Ordinances, but when the Spirit comes once to quicken the Soul, 'tis done in a Moment: Even as it is in the Infusion of the rational Soul, the Body is long e're it be prepared and moulded, but when once the *Embryo* or Matter is ready, it's quickned with the Spirit of Life in an Instant: So it is here: But O what a blessed Moment is this!

Upon which the whole weight of our eternal happiness depends; for it is Christ in us (*i.e.*) Christ formed in us, who is the hope of Glory, *Col.* 1. 27. And our Lord expresly tells us, *John* 3. 3. That except we be regenerate and born again, we cannot see the Kingdom of God. And thus of the way and manner of its infusion.

Thirdly, Let the design and end of God in his *quickening Work* be next considered: For that end, and with that design and aim this Work is wrought. And if we consult the Scriptures in this matter, we shall find this Principle of Life is infused in order to our glorifying God in this World by a *life of Obedience*, and our enjoying God in the World to come.

First, Spiritual life is infused in order to a course of Obedience in this World, whereby God is glorified: So we read in *Eph.* 2. 10. Created in Christ Jesus unto good Works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them: Habits are to Actions, as the Root is to the Fruit, it is for Fruit sake that we plant the Roots, and ingraff the Branches. So in *Ezek.* 36. 27. *A new Spirit will I also put within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes, and ye shall keep my Judgments and do them.* This is the next, or immediate design and end, not only of the first infusion of the Principle of Life into the Soul, but of all the exciting, actuating and assisting Works of the Spirit afterwards Now this principle of Spiritual life infused, hath a twofold influence into Obedience.

First, This makes it sincere and true *Obedience*, when it flows from an inward vital Principle of Grace. The Hypocrite is moved by some thing *ab extra*, from without as the applause of Men, the accommodation of fleshly Interests, the force of Education; or if there be any thing from within that moves him, it is but Self-interest, to quiet a grumbling Conscience, and support his vain hopes of Heaven: But he never acts from a new Principle, a new Nature inclining him to Holy Actions. Sincerity mainly lies in the harmony and correspondency of Actions to their Principles: From this infused Principle it is, that Men hunger and thirst for God, and go to their Duties, as Men do to their Meals, when they find an empty craving Stomach.

O Reader, pause a little upon this ere thou pass on, ask thy Heart whether it be so with thee: Are holy Duties connatural to thee? Doth thy Soul move and work after God by a kind of supernatural instinct? This then will be to thee a good evidence of thy Integrity.

Secondly, From this infused Principle of Life, results the *excellency of our Obedience*, as well as the sincerity of it: For by vertue and reason thereof, it becomes *free* and voluntary, not forced and constrained, it drops like Honey of its own accord out of the Comb, *Cant.* 4. 11. without squeezing: Or as Waters from the Fountain without forcing, *Job.* 4. 14. an unprincipled Professor must be squeez'd by some *weight of Affliction*, ere he will yield one Tear, or pour out a Prayer, *Psal.* 78. 34. *When he slew them, then they sought him.*

Now the freedom of Obedience is the Excellency of it, Gods Eye is much upon that, 1 *Cor.* 9. 17. Yea, and the *uniformity* of our Obedience, which is also a special part of the beauty of it, results from hence: He that acts from a Principle, acts fluently and uniformly, there is a proportion betwixt the Parts of his Conversation: This is it which makes us Holy, ἐν πασῃ ἀναστροφῃ, in all manner of Conversation, or in every creek and turning of our Conversations, as the Word imports, 1 *Pet.* 1. 15. whereas, he that is moved by this or that external accidental motive, must needs be up and down, off and on, very uneven, *like the Legs of a lame Man*, as the Expression is, *Prov.* 26. 7. *which are not equal*: Now a word of God, and then the Discourse runs muddy and prophane, or carnal again: All that evenness and uniformity that is in the several parts of a Christians Life, is the effect of this infused Principle of Spiritual Life.

Thirdly, Another aim and design of God in the infusion of this principle of Life, is thereby to prepare and qualifie the Soul for the enjoyment of himself in Heaven: *Except a Man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God*, John 3. 3. All that shall possess that *Inheritance* must be begotten again to it, as the Apostle speaks, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3, 4. This Principle of Grace is the very Seed of that Glory, it's Eternal Life in the Root and Principle, *Joh.* 17. 3. By this the Soul is attempered and qualified for that State and Employment. What is the Life of Glory, but the Vision of God, and the Souls assimilation to God by that Vision? From both which, results that unspeakable joy and delight which passeth Understanding: But what Vision of God, assimilation to God, or delight in God, can that Soul have, which was never quickned with the supernatural Principle of Grace? The Temper of such Souls is expressed in that sad Character, *Zech.* 11. 8. *My Soul loathed them, and their Soul also abhorred me.* For want of this vital Principle it is, that the very same Duties and Ordinances, which are the delights and highest pleasures of the Saints, are no better than a meer drudgery and bondage to others, *Mal.* 1. 13. Heaven would be no Heaven to a dead Soul; this principle of Life, in its daily growth and improvement, is our Meetness as well as our Evidence for Heaven: These are the main ends of its infusion.

Fourthly, In the next place, according to the Method proposed, I am obliged to shew you, *that this quickening Work is wholly supernatural*, it is the sole and proper Work of the Spirit of God. So Christ himself expresly asserts it, in *Joh.* 3. 6, 8. *That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit: The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit.*

Believers are the birth or off-spring of the Spirit, who produceth the new Creature in them in an unintelligible manner even to themselves. So far it is above their own Ability to produce, that it is above their Capacity to understand the way of its Production: As if you should ask, do you know from whence the Wind comes? No: Do you know whither it goes? No: But you hear and feel it when it blows? Yes: Why so is every one that is born of the Spirit: He feels the efficacy, and discerns the effects of the Spirit on his own Soul, but cannot understand or describe the manner of its Production: This is not only above the carnal, but above the renewed mind to comprehend; we can contribute nothing, I mean *actively*, to the production of this Principle of Life: We may indeed be said to concur *passively*, with the Spirit in it: That is, there is found in us a Capacity, aptness, or receptiveness of this Principle of Life: Our Nature is endowed with such Faculties and Powers as are meer Subjects to receive, and Instruments to act this Spiritual Life: God only quickens the rational Nature with Spiritual Life.

It is true also, that in the *progress of Sanctification* a Man doth actively concur with the Spirit, but in the first Production of this Spiritual Principle he can do nothing: He can indeed perform those external Duties that have a remote tendency to it, but he cannot by the power of Nature perform any saving

saving act, or contribute any thing more than a passive Capacity to the implantation of a new Principle: As will appear by the following Arguments.

Arg. 1. He that actively concurs to his own Regeneration, makes him to differ; but this is denied to all regenerate Men, 1 *Cor.* 4. 7. Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive?

Arg. 2. That to which the Scripture ascribes both *impotency* and *enmity*, with respect to Grace, cannot actively, and of it self, concur to the Production of it: But the Scripture ascribes both impotency and enmity to Nature with respect to Grace. It denies to it a power to do any thing of it self, *John* 15. 5. And which is less, it denies to it a power to speak a Word, *Mat.* 12. 34. And which is least of all, it denies it power to think a good Thought, 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. This impotency, if there were no more, cuts off all pretence of our active concurrence, but then if we consider that it ascribes *enmity* to our Natures as well as *impotency*, how clear is the case! See *Rom.* 8. 7. The carnal Mind is enmity against God. And *Col.* 1. 21. And you that were Enemies in your Minds by wicked Works. So then Nature is so far productive of this Principle, as impotency and enmity can enable it to be so.

Arg. 3. That which is of natural Production, must needs be subject to natural Dissolution; that which is born of the Flesh is Flesh, a perishing thing, for every thing is as its Principle is, and there can be no more in the effect, than there is in the cause: But this Principle of Spiritual Life is not subject to Dissolution, it is the Water that springs up into everlasting Life, *John* 4. 14. The Seed of God, which remaineth in the regenerate Soul, 1 *Joh.* 3. 9. And all this because it's born not of corruptible, but of incorruptible Seed, 1 *Pet.* 1. 23.

Arg. 4. If our new Birth be our *Resurrection*, a *new Creation*, yea, a *victory* over Nature, then we cannot actively contribute to its Production; but under all these Notions it is represented to us in the Scriptures. It's our Resurrection from the dead, *Eph.* 5. 14. And you know the Body is wholly passive in its *Resurrection*: But tho' it concurs not, yet it gives pre-existent Matter: Therefore the Metaphor is designedly varied, *Eph.* 4. 24. where it's call'd a *Creation*: In which there is neither active concurrence, nor pre-existent Matter: But tho' Creation excludes pre-existent Matter, yet in producing something out of nothing, there is no reluctancy nor opposition; therefore to shew how purely supernatural this Principle of Life is, it is loathed and presented to us in the Notion of a victory, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. And so leaves all to Grace.

Arg. 5. If Nature could produce, or but actively concur to the Production of this Spiritual Life, then the best Natures would be soonest quickened with it; and the worst Natures not at all, or at least and least of all: But contrarily, we find the worst Natures often regenerated, and the best left in the State of Spiritual death: With how many sweet *homiletical* Vertues was the young Man adorned? *Mark* 10. 21. yet graceless: And what a Sink of Sin was *Mary Magdalen*, *Luk.* 7. 37. yet sanctified: Thus beautiful *Rachel* is barren, whilst bleer-ey'd *Leah* bears Children. And there is scarce any thing that affects and melts the Hearts of Christians, more than this comparative consideration doth, when they consider Vessels of Gold cast away, and Leaden ones chosen for such noble uses. So that it's plain enough to all wise and humble Souls, that this new Life is wholly of supernatural Production.

Fifthly and lastly, I shall briefly represent the necessary antecedent of this quickening Work of the Spirit to our first closing with Christ by Faith: And this will easily let it self into our understandings, if you but consider the Nature of the vital act of Faith; which is the Souls receiving of Christ, and resting upon him for Pardon and Salvation: In which two things are necessarily included, *viz.*

1. The renouncing of all other hopes and dependencies.
2. The opening of the Heart fully to Jesus Christ.

First, The renouncing of all other hopes and dependencies whatsoever. Self in all its acceptations, natural, sinful, and moral, is now to be denied and renounced for ever, else Christ can never be received, *Rom.* 10. 3. not only Self in its vilest *pollutions*, but Self in its richest Ornaments, and *Endowments*: But this is as impossible to the unrenewed and natural Man, as it is for Rocks or Mountains to start from their *Centre*, and fly like wandering *Atomes* in the Air: Nature will rather chuse to run the hazard of everlasting Damnation, than escape it by a total renunciation of its beloved Lusts, or Self-righteousness: This supernatural Work necessarily requires a supernatural Principle. *Rom.* 8. 2.

Secondly, The opening the Heart fully to Jesus Christ, without which Christ can never be received, *Rev.* 3. 20. but this also is the effect of the quickening Spirit, the Spirit of Life which is in Christ Jesus: Sooner may we expect to see the *Flowers* and *Blossoms* open without the influence of the Sun, than the Heart and Will of a Sinner open to receive Christ without a Principle of spiritual Life first derived from him: And this will be past doubt to all that consider, not only the impotence of Nature, but the ignorance, prejudice, and aversations of Nature, by which the Door of the Heart is barr'd and chain'd against Christ, *Joh.* 5. 40. So that Nature hath neither ability nor will, power or desire to come to Christ: If any have an Heart opened to receive him, 'tis the Lord that opens it by his Almighty Power, and that in the way of an infused Principle of Life supernatural.

But here it may be doubted and objected, against this position If we cannot believe till we are quickened with spiritual Life, as you say, and cannot be justified till we believe, as all say, then it will follow that a regenerate Soul may be in the State of Condemnation for a time, and consequently perish if Death should befall him in that juncture. *Quest.*

To this I return, That when we speak of the priority of this quickening Work of the Spirit to our actual believing, we rather understand it of the priority of Nature, than of Time, the Nature and Order of the Work requiring it to be so: A vital Principle must, in order of Nature, be infused before a vital act can be exerted First, make the Tree good, and then the Fruit good: And admit we should grant some priority in time also to this quickening Principle, before actual Faith, yet the absurdity mentioned would be no way consequent upon that concession: For as the vital act of Faith quickly follows the regenerating Principle, so the Soul is abundantly secured against the danger objected; God never beginning any special Work of Grace upon the Soul, and then leaving it, and the Soul with it, in hazard, but preserves both to the

finiſhing and compleating of his gracious deſign, *Phil.* 1. 6.

First Use of Information.

Infer. 1. If ſuch be the nature and neceſſity of this Principle of Divine Life, as you heard it opened in the foregoing Diſcourſe, then hence it follows, *That unregenerate Men are no better than dead Men.* So the Text repreſents them. You hath he quickened who were *dead* in treſpaſſes and ſins: (*i. e.*) Spiritually dead, tho' Naturally alive; yea, and lively too as any other Perſons in the World. There is a threefold conſideration of Objects, *Viz.*

1. Naturally.
2. Politically
3. Theologically.

Firſt, Naturally, To all thoſe things that are natural, they are alive: They can underſtand, reaſon, diſcourſe, project and contrive as well as others; they can eat, drink, and build, plant, and ſuck out the natural Comfort of theſe things, as much as others. So their Life is deſcribed, *Job* 21. 12. *They take the Timbrel and Harp, and rejoice at the ſound of the Organ: They ſpend their Days in wealth*, &c. And *James* 5. 5. *Ye have lived in pleaſure upon Earth*, as the Fiſh lives in the Water its natural Element, and yet this natural ſenſual Life is not allow'd the name of Life, 1 *Tim.* 5, 6. ſuch Perſons are *dead whilſt they live*; 'Tis a baſe and ignoble Life, to have a Soul only to ſalt the Body, or to enable a Man for a few Years to eat, and drink, and talk, and laugh, and then die.

Secondly, Objects may be conſidered *Politically*, and with reſpect to ſuch things, they are alive alſo: They can buy and ſell, and manage all their worldly Affairs with as much dexterity, skill, and policy, as other Men; yea, *the Children of this World are wiſer in their generation than the Children of light*, *Luke* 16. 8. The intire * ſtream of their Thoughts, Projects and Studies, running into that one Channel: Having but one deſign to manage, they muſt needs excel in worldly Wiſdom: But then,

* *Liberet me deus, abhominæ unius tantum negotii.* Bern.

Thirdly, *Theologically*, conſidered, they are dead; without Life, Senſe or Motion, towards God, and the things that are above: Their underſtandings are dead, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. and cannot receive the things that are of God: Their wills are dead, and cannot move towards Jeſus Chriſt, *Joh.* 6. 65. Their Affections are dead, even to the moſt excellent and ſpiritual Objects: And all their Duties are dead Duties, without Life or Spirit. This is the ſad caſe of the unregenerate World.

Infer. 2. *This ſpeaks encouragements to Miniſters and Parents, to wait in hopes of ſucceſs at laſt, even upon thoſe that yet give them little hope of Converſion at the preſent.*

The Work you ſee is the Lord's, when the Spirit of Life comes upon their dead Souls, they ſhall believe, and be made willing; till then, we do but plough upon the Rocks: Yet let not our Hand ſlack in Duty, pray for them, and plead with them; you know not in which Prayer, or Exhortation, the Spirit of Life may breathe upon them: *Can theſe dry Bones live?* Yes, if the Spirit of Life from God breath upon them, they can, and ſhall live: What tho' their diſpoſitions be averſe to all things that are ſpiritual and ſerious, yet even ſuch have been regenerated, when more ſweet and promiſing natures have been paſſed by, and left under ſpiritual death.

It was the Obſervation of Mr. *Ward*, upon his Brother Mr. *Daniel Rogers*, (who was a Man of great gifts and eminent Graces, yet of a very bad Temper and Conſtitution) Tho' my Brother *Rogers* (ſaith he) have Grace enough for two Men, yet half enough for himſelf.

It may be you have pray'd, and ſtriven long with your Relations and to little purpoſe, yet be not diſcouraged. How often was Mr. *John Rogers*, that famous ſucceſsful Divine, a grief of Heart to his Relations in his younger Years, proving a wild and lewd Young Man, to the great diſcouragement of his Pious Friends; yet, at laſt, the Lord graciouſly changed him, ſo that Mr. *Richard Rogers* would ſay, when he would exerciſe the utmoſt degree of charity or hope, for any that at preſent were vile and naught, *I will never deſpair of any Man for* John Rogers's *ſake.*

Infer. 3. *How honourable are Chriſtians by their new birth! They are born not of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of Man, but of God*, Joh. 1. 13. (*i. e.*) not in an impure, or meer natural way, but in a moſt ſpiritual and ſupernatural manner: They are the Off-ſpring of God, the Children of the moſt High, as well by Regeneration as by Adoption; which is the greateſt advancement of the Humane nature next to its Hypoſtatical Union with the Second Perſon. Oh what honour is this for a poor ſinful Creature, to have the very life of God breathed into his Soul! All other Dignities of Nature are trifles compar'd with this: This makes a Chriſtian a ſacred hallowed Thing, the living Temple of God, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19. The ſpecial Object of his Delight.

Infer. 4. *How deplorable is the Condition of the unregenerate World, in no better Caſe than dead Men!* Now to affect our Hearts with the Miſery of ſuch a Condition, let us conſider and compare it in the following Particulars.

Firſt, There is no *Beauty* in the Dead, all their Lovelineſs goes away at Death; there is no ſpiritual Beauty or Lovelineſs in any that are unregenerate: 'Tis true, many of them have excellent Moral *Homolitical Vertues*, which adorn their Converſations in the Eyes of Men; but what are all theſe, but ſo many ſweet Flowers ſtrewed over a Dead Corps?

Secondly, The Dead have no *Pleaſure* nor Delight: Even ſo the Unregenerate are incapable of the Delights of the Chriſtian Life: *To be ſpiritually minded is Life and Peace*, Rom. 8. 6. (*i. e.*) this is the only ſerene, placid, and pleaſant Life: When the *Prodigal*, who was once Dead, was alive, then he began to be Merry, *Luke* 15. 24. They live in ſenſual Pleaſures, but this is to be dead while alive, in Scripture reckoning.

Thirdly, The dead have no *Heat*, they are as cold as Clay: ſo are all the Unregenerate towards God and Things above: Their *Luſts* are *hot*, but their *Affections* to God *cold* and *frozen*: That which makes a gracious Heart *melt*, will not make an unregenerate Heart move.

Fourthly, The Dead muſt be *buried*, Gen. 23. 4. *Bury my Dead out of my ſight*: So muſt the unregenerate be buried out of God's ſight for ever: Buried in the loweſt Hell, in the Place of Darkneſs for ever, *John* 3. 3. Woe to the unregenerate, good had it been for them they had never been Born.

Infer. 5. *How greatly are all Men concerned to examine their Condition, with reſpect to ſpiritual Life and Death!* It's very common for Men to preſume upon their Union with, and Intereſt in Chriſt: This Privilege is by common Miſtake, extended generally to all that profeſs Chriſtian Religion and

Præsumendo sperant, & sperando pereunt, Ames.

and practise the external Duties of it, when in Truth no more are, or can be united to Christ, than are quickened by the Spirit of Life which is in Christ Jesus, *Rom.* 8. 1, 2. O try your Interest in Christ by this Rule, if I am quickened by Christ, I have Union with Christ, And,

First, If there be spiritual Sense in your Souls, there is spiritual Life in them: There are αἰσθητήρια. Senses belonging to the spiritual, as well as to the animal Life, *Heb.* 5. 14. They can feel, and sensibly groan, under Soul pressures, and burdens of Sin, *Rom.* 7. 24. The Dead feel not, moan not under the burdens of Sin, but the Living do: They may be sensible indeed of the evil of Sin with respect to themselves, but not as against God; Damnation may scare them, but Pollution doth not; Hell may fright them, but not the offence of God.

Secondly, If there be Spiritual *hunger and thirst*, it's a sweet sign of Spiritual Life; this sign agrees to Christians of a Day old, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. Even *new born Babes desire the sincere Milk of the Word*: If Spiritual Life be in you, you know how to expound that Scripture, *Psalm* 42. 1. without any other Interpreter than your own experience: You will feel somewhat like the gnawing of an empty Stomach, making you restless during the Interruption of your daily Communion with the Lord.

Thirdly, If there be *spiritual Conflicts* with Sin, there is spiritual Life in your Soul, *Gal.* 5. 17. Not only a Combat betwixt *Light* in the higher, and *Lust* in the lower Faculties: Nor only opposition to more gross external Corruptions that carry more infamy and horror with them than other Sins do: But the same Faculty will be the Seat of War; and the more inward, secret and spiritual, any Lust is, by so much the more will it be opposed and mourned over.

In a Word, the weakest Christian may, upon impartial Observation, find such Signs of spiritual Life in himself (if he will allow himself time to reflect upon the bent and frame of his own Heart) as Desires after God, Conscience of Duties, Fears, Cares, and Sorrows about Sin: Delight in the Society of heavenly and spiritual Men, a loathing and burden in the company of vain and carnal Persons.

Obj. O! but I have a very dead Heart to Spiritual Things.

Sol. 'Tis a sign of Life that you feel, and are sensible of that deadness: And beside, there's a great deal of *Difference* betwixt *Spiritual Deadness* and *Death*: The one is the State of the unregenerate, the other is the *Disease* of regenerate Men.

Obj. Some signs of Spiritual Life are clear to me, but I cannot close with others.

Sol. If you can really close with any, it may satisfie you, tho' you be dark in others: If a Child can't go, yet if it can suck; if it can't suck, if it can't cry, yet if it breath it is alive.

SERMON VI.

JOHN I. xii.

But as many as received him, to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God; even to them that believe on his Name.

Sermon 6. Describing that Act on our Part, by which we do actually and effectually apply Christ to our own Souls.

NO sooner is the Soul quickned by the Spirit of God, but it answers in some measure the End of God in that Work, by its *active Reception of Jesus Christ, in the way of believing*: What this Vital Act of Faith is, upon which so great a weight depends, as our Interest in Christ, and Everlasting Blessedness, this Scripture before us will give you the best Account of it: Wherein (omitting the Coherence and Contexture of the Words) we have three Things to ponder.

First, The high and glorious Priviledge conferr'd, *viz. Power to become the Sons of God.*

Secondly, The subject of this Priviledge described, *As many as received him.*

Thirdly, The Description explain'd by way of Opposition, *even as many as believe on his Name.*

First, The Priviledge conferr'd is a very high and glorious one, than which no created Being is capable of greater: *Power to become the Sons of God*: This Word ἐξουσίαν is of large Extent and Signification, and is by some rendred *this Right*, by others *this Dignity*, by others *this Prerogative*, this *Priviledge* or *Honour*: It implies a Title or Right to *Adoption*, not only with Respect to the present Benefits of it in this Life, but also to that blessed Inheritance which is laid up in Heaven for the Sons of God. And so *Grotius* rightly expounds it of our *consummate* Sonship, consisting in the actual Enjoyment of blessedness, as well as that which is *inchoate*: Not only a right to Pardon, Favour, and Acceptance now, but to Heaven, and the full Enjoyment of God hereafter. O what an Honour, Dignity, and Priviledge is this!

ἐξουσίαν, *hoc jus*: Piscator, *ad dignitatem*. Lightfoot, *prærogativam*. Heinsius, *privilegium*: *nec multo aliter* ἐξουσίας. *Hellenistæ videntur cum Chaldæo* שלטן *expressérunt*.

Secondly, The Subjects of this Priviledge are described: *As many as received him.* This Text describes them by that very Grace, *Faith*, which gives them their Title and Right to Christ and his Benefits; and by that very *Act* of Faith, which primarily confers their Right to his Person, and *secondarily* to his Benefits, *viz. receiving him*: there be many Graces besides Faith, but Faith only is the Grace that gives us right to Christ: And there be many Acts of Faith besides receiving, but this receiving or embracing of Christ, is the justifying and saving Act: *As many as received him*, [ὅσοι δὲ ἔλαβον αὐτὸν] *as many*, be they of any Nation, Sex, Age, or Condition. For *there is neither Greek, nor Jew, Circumcision, nor Uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, Bond or Free: But Christ is all, and in all*, Col. 3. 11.

Nothing but unbelief bars Men from Christ and his Benefits: As many as *received him*] the Word signifies to accept,

λαμβάνειν & παραλαμβάνειν *idem est.* Grot.

cept, take, or (as we fitly render) to receive, assume or take to us, a Word most aptly expressing the Nature and Office of Faith, yea, the very justifying and saving Act: And we are also heedfully to note its special Object, ἔλαβον αὐτὸν: The Text saith not αὐτῷ, *his*, but αὐτὸν, *him*, (*i. e.*) his Person, as he is cloathed with his Offices, and not only his Benefits and Priviledges. These are secondary and consequential Things to our *receiving him.* * So that it is a receiving, assuming or accepting the Lord Jesus Christ, which must have Respect to the Tenders and Proposals of the Gospel, for *therein is the Righteousness of God revealed from Faith to Faith*, Rom. 1. 17. therein is Jesus Christ revealed, proposed, and offered unto Sinners, as the only way of Justification and Salvation, which Gospel-offer (as before was opened) is therefore ordinarily necessary to believing, *Rom.* 10. 11, 12, 13, *&c.*

* *Oblatio est actio Dei, plerumque mediata facta in verbo; receptio est actio hominis, ita tamen ut simul quoque sit beneficium Dei; nec enim homo posset recipere mediatorem, nisi fides, quæ receptionis hujus est organon, à Deo daretur.* Wendel.

Thirdly, This Description is yet further explained, by this Additional Exegetical Clause, [*even to them that believe in his Name*] here the Terms are varied, tho' the Thing expresst in both be the same: What he call'd *receiving* there, is call'd *believing* on his Name here, to shew us that the very Essence of saving Faith consists in our receiving of Christ. By *his Name*, we are to understand Christ himself: It is usual to take these two, believing in him, and believing in his Name, as Terms convertible, and of the same Importance. חוא חוא שמו ושמו *ipse est nomen suum, & nomen ejus ipse est:* His Name is himself, and himself is his Name. So that here we have the true Nature, and precious Benefits of saving Faith, excellently expresst in this Scripture: The Sum of which take in this Proposition. *Drusius.*

Doct. *That the receiving of the Lord Jesus Christ, is that saving and vital Act of Faith, which gives the Soul right both to his Person and Benefits.*

We cannot Act spiritually, till we begin to Live spiritually: Therefore the Spirit of Life must first joyn himself to us in his quickening Work, (as was shewn you in the last Sermon) which being done, we begin to Act spiritually, by taking hold upon, or receiving Jesus Christ, which is the Thing designed to be opened in this Sermon.

The Soul is the Life of the Body, Faith is the Life of the Soul, and Christ is the Life of Faith. There are several sorts of Faith besides saving Faith, and in saving Faith there are several Acts besides the justifying or saving Act; but *this receiving Act*, which is to be our Subject this Day, is that upon which both our Righteousness, and Eternal Happiness, do depend. This, as a *Form*, differences saving Faith from all other kinds or sorts of Faith: By this it is that we are justified and saved. *To as many as received him, to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God*: Yet it doth not justifie and save us by Reason of any *proper Dignity* that is found in this Act, but by Reason of the *Object* it receives and apprehends: The same Thing is often expresst in Scripture by other Terms, as *coming to Christ*, John 6. 35. *rolling* or staying upon Christ, *Isa.* 50. 10. But whatever is found in those Expressions, it is all comprehended in this, as will appear hereafter. Now, the Method into which I shall cast the Discourse of this Subject, that I may handle it with as much perspicuity and profit as I can, shall be,

Forma vel aliquid formæ aut ejus ponitur differentiæ loco.

First, To explain and open the Nature of this *receiving* of Christ, and shew you what it includes.

Secondly, To prove that this is the justifying and saving Act of Faith.

Thirdly, To shew you the Excellency of this Act of Faith.

Fourthly, To remove some Mistakes, and give you the true Account of the Dignity and Excellency of this Act.

Fifthly, And then bring home all in a proper and close Application.

First, In the first Place then, I will endeavour to explain and open the Nature of this *receiving of Christ*, and shew you what is implied in it.

And indeed it involves many deep Mysteries and Things of greatest weight: People are generally very ignorant and unacquainted with the Importance of this Expression, they have very slight Thoughts of Faith, who never past under the illuminating, convincing and humbling Work of the Spirit: But we shall find that *saving Faith* is quite another thing, and differs in its whole kind and nature from that traditional Faith, and common Assent, which is so fatally mistaken for it in the World.

There are divers other Expressions by which the Nature of saving Faith is expressed in Scripture, viz. eating Christ's flesh, and drinking his Blood, John 6. 40. *coming to Christ*, Mat. 11. 28. *Having the Son*, 1 John 5. 12. *Trusting or depending upon him*, for which the Hebrew use three Emphatical Words, חסה ו אמן בטח The first signifies a firm and stable Trust. The second to learn to depend with Security. The third to betake ones self to a Sanctuary for a Protection: All which is supposed or included in our receiving of the Lord Jesus Christ: In eating and drinking we must receive Meat and Drink; coming to Christ is necessarily supposed in receiving him, for there is no receiving at a Distance: Having the Son, and receiving him, are Notions of the same Importance; and for trusting, relying with Security, and betaking our selves to Christ for Refuge, they are involved in the receiving Act: For as God offers him to us as the only prop of our Hearts and Hopes, so we receive him to rely upon him: And as he is held forth in the Gospel as the only Asylum, or City of Refuge, so we take or receive him, and accordingly betake our Souls to him for Refuge.

For First, It is evident, that no Man can receive Jesus Christ in the Darkness of natural Ignorance: We must understand and discern who and what he is, whom we receive to be the Lord our Righteousness. If we know not his Person and his Offices, we do not *take*, but mistake Christ. It's a good Rule in the *Civil Law*, *non consentit qui non sentit*: A mistake of the Person invalidates the Match. He that takes Christ for a meer Man, or denies the Satisfaction of his Blood, divests him of his Humane Nature, or denies any of his most glorious and necessary Offices, let them cry up as high as they will his Spirituality, Glory, and Exemplary Life and Death, they can never receive Jesus Christ aright: This is such a crack, such a flaw in the very Foundation of Faith, as undoes and destroys all: *Ignorantia non est consensus*: All saving Faith is founded in Light and Knowledge, and therefore it's called Knowledge, *Isa.* 53. 11. and *seeing* is inseparably connected with *believing*, *John* 6. 40. Men must hear and learn of the Father before they can come to Christ, *John* 6. 45. the receiving Act of Faith is directed and guided by Knowledge. I will not presume to state the Degree of Knowledge, which is absolutely necessary to the Reception of Christ; I know the first actings of Faith are, in most Christians accompanied with much darkness and Confusion of Understanding: But yet we must say in the general, that where-ever Faith is, there is so much Light as is sufficient to discover to the Soul, its own Sins, Dangers, and Wants; and the All-sufficiency, Suitableness, and Necessity of Christ for the supply and remedy of all; and without this Christ

Christ cannot be received. *Come unto me ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,* Mat. 11. 28.

Secondly, The receiving Christ necessarily implies the *Assent* of the Understanding to the Truths of Christ revealed in the Gospel, *viz.* his Person, Natures, Offices, his Incarnation, Death and Satisfaction; which *Assent*, tho' it be not in it self saving Faith, yet is it the Foundation and groundwork of it, it being impossible the Soul should receive and fiducially embrace, what the Mind doth not *Assent* unto as true and infallibly certain. Now there are three Degrees of *Assent*, *Conjecture*, *Opinion* and *Belief*. *Conjecture* is but a slight and weak Inclination to Assent to the Thing propounded, by Reason of the weighty Objections that lie against it. *Opinion* is a more steady and fixed Assent, when a Man is almost certain, tho' yet some fear of the contrary remains with him. *Belief* is a more full and assured Assent to the Truth, to which the Mind may be brought four Ways.

Vide Doctor *Sclater* in *Rom.* 4. 3.

First, By the perfect Intelligence of Sense, not hindered or deceived. So I believe the Truth of these Propositions, Fire is hot, Water moist, Honey is sweet, Gall is bitter.

Secondly, By the native clearness of Self-evidencing Principles. So I believe the Truth of these Propositions, The whole is more than a Part: The Cause is before the Effect.

Thirdly, By Discourse, and rational Deduction. So I believe the Truth of this Proposition, Where all the Parts of a Thing are, there is the whole.

Fourthly, By infallible Testimony, when any thing is witnessed or asserted, by one whose Truth is unquestionable: And of this sort is the Assent of Faith: Which is therefore call'd our receiving the witness of God, 1 *John* 5. 9. our setting to our Seal that God is true, *John* 3. 33. This *prima veritas*, Divine Veracity, is the very *formal Object* of Faith: Into this we resolve our Faith. *Thus saith the Lord*, is that firm Foundation upon which our Assent is built: And thus we see good Reason to believe those profound Mysteries of the Incarnation of Christ, the Hypostatical Union of the two Natures in his wonderful Person, the *Mystical* Union of Christ and Believers, tho' we cannot understand these Things by Reason of the Darkness of our Minds. It satisfies the Soul to find these Mysteries in the written Word; upon that Foundation, it firmly builds its Assent: And without such an Assent of Faith, there can be no embracing of Christ: All Acts of Faith and Religion without Assent, are but as so many Arrows shot at random into the open Air, they signifie nothing for want of a fixed determinate Object.

Nec enim decebat ut cum Deus ad homines loqueretur, argumentis assereret suas voces, tanquam aliter fides ei non haberetur: sed ut oportuit est locutus, quasi rerum omnium maximus judex, cujus est non argumentari, sed pronunciare verum, &c. Lactantius falsa religione. p. (mihi) 179. *Titubat fides ubi nititur divinarum Scripturarum autoritas.* Aug.

It is therefore the Policy of *Satan*, by injecting or fomenting Atheistical Thoughts, (with which Young Converts use to find themselves greatly infested) to undermine and destroy the whole Work of Faith: But God makes his People victorious over them: Yea, and even at that Time they do Assent to the Truths of the Words, when they think they do not: As appears by their tenderness and fear of Sin, their Diligence and Care of Duty. If I discern these Things in a Christians Life, he must excuse me if I believe him not, when he saith he doth not Assent to the Truths of the Gospel.

Thirdly, Our receiving Christ necessarily implies our hearty *Approbation*, Liking, and Estimation, yea, the Acquiescence of our very Souls in Jesus Christ, as the most excellent, suitable, and compleat remedy for all our Wants, Sins and Dangers that ever could be prepared by the Wisdom and Love of God for them: We must receive him with such a Frame of Heart as rests upon him, trusts to and relies upon him, if ever we receive him aright: *To them that believe he is precious*, 1 Pet. 2. 7. This is the only Soveraign Plaister in all the World that is large enough, and efficacious enough, to cure our Wounds: And therefore as Christ is most highly esteemed, and heartily approved, as the only Remedy for our Souls, so the sovereign Grace and Wisdom of God are admired, and the Way and Method he hath taken to save poor Souls by Jesus Christ most heartily approved, as the most apt and excellent Method, both for his Glory and our Good, that ever could be taken: For 'tis a plain Case, that none will espouse themselves with conjugal Affections, to that Person whom they esteem not as the best for them that can be chosen: None will forsake and quit all for his sake, except they account him as the Spouse did, *The Chiefest of Ten Thousand*, Cant. 5. 10.

There are two things in Christ, which must gain the greatest Approbation in the Soul of a poor, convinced Sinner, and bring it to rest upon Jesus Christ.

First, That it can find nothing in Christ that is distasteful or unsuitable to it, as it doth experimentally find in the best Creatures. In him is no *weakness*, but a fullness of all saving Abilities; *Able to save to the uttermost*: No *Pride*, causing him to scorn and contemn the most wretched Soul that comes to him: No *Inconstancy* or Levity, to cause him to cast off the Soul, whom he hath once received: No *Passion*, but a *Lamb* for Meekness and Patience: There is not a Spot to be found in him, but *He is altogether Lovely*, Cant. 5. 16.

Secondly, As the Believer can find nothing in Christ that is distastful, so it finds nothing wanting in Christ that is necessary or desirable: Such is the fulness of Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption, that is in Christ, that nothing is left to desire, but the full Enjoyment of him. O saith the Soul, how compleatly happy shall I be, if I can but win Christ! I would not envy the *Nobles* of the Earth, were I but in Christ. I am an hungry and athirst, and Christ is Meat indeed, and drink indeed; this is the best thing in all the World for me, because so necessary, and so suitable, to the needs of a Soul ready to perish. I am a Law-condemned, and a Self-condemned Sinner, trembling for fear of the Execution of the Curse upon me every moment; in Christ is compleat Righteousness to justifie my Soul; O there is nothing better for me than Christ. I see my self plunged both in Nature and Practice, into the odious Pollutions of Sin, and in Christ is a Fountain opened for Sin and for Uncleanness: His Blood is a Fountain of *Merit*, his Spirit is a Fountain of Holiness and Purity: None but Christ, none but Christ. O the manifold Wisdom and unsearchable Love of God, to prepare, and furnish such a Christ, so fully answering all the Needs, all the Distresses, all the Fears and Burdens of a poor Sinner! Thus the believing Soul approves of Christ as best for it. And thus in believing, it gives Glory to God, *Rom.* 4. 21.

Fourthly, Receiving Christ consists in the *Consent and Choice of the Will*; and this is the opening

and ſtretching forth of the Soul to receive him: *Thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power*, Pſal. 110. 3. 'Tis the great Deſign, and main Scope of the Goſpel, to work over the Wills of poor Sinners to this: And this was the great Complaint of Chriſt againſt the incredulous Jews, *John* 5. 40. *Ye will not come unto me that ye might have Life.*

It is diſputed by ſome, whether Faith can be ſeated in two diſtinct Faculties, as we ſeem to place it, when we ſay it involves both the *Approbation* of the *Judgment*, and the *Conſent* of the *Will*. I will not here intangle my Diſcourſe with that fruitleſs Diſpute. I am of the ſame judgment with thoſe Divines, that think Faith cannot be expreſſed fully by any one ſingle Habit, or Act of the Mind or Will diſtinctly, for that (as* one well notes) there are ſuch Deſcriptions given of it in Scripture, ſuch things are propoſed as the Object of it, and ſuch is the Experience of all that ſincerely believe; as no one ſingle Act, either of the Mind or Will, can anſwer unto: Nor do I ſee any thing repugnant to *Scripture* or *Philoſophy*, if we place it in both Faculties. Conſent (ſaith †*Vaſquez*) ſeems to denote the Concourſe of the Will with the Underſtanding; but to leave that, it is moſt certain the ſaving, juſtifying Act of Faith lies principally in the Conſent of the Will, which Conſent is the Effect of the Almighty Power of God. *Eph.* 1. 19. He allures and draws the Will to Chriſt, and he *Draws with the Cords of a Man*, (*i. e.*) He prevails with it by Rational Arguments: For the Soul being prepared by Convictions of its low and miſerable Eſtate by Sin, and that there is but one Door of Hope open to it for an Eſcape from the Wrath to come, and that is Chriſt; being alſo ſatisfied of the Fulneſs and Compleatneſs of his ſaving Ability, and of his Willingneſs to make it over for our Salvation, upon ſuch juſt and equal Terms; this cannot but prevail with the Will of a poor diſtreſſed Sinner, to conſent and chooſe him.

*Dr. Owen in his Doctrine of Juſtification, p. 135. † *Conſenſus denotare videtur concurſum voluntatis cum intellectu, ad ſentiendum idem quod intellectus ſentit.* 12. Q. 15. a. 1. *Fides non eſt virtus ſimplex, ſed diverſis conſtat partibus, notitia, aſſenſu, & fiducia, quæ ad eandem potentiam non pertinent.* Wendelini Theol. p. 450.

Fifthly and Laſtly, The laſt and principal thing included in our receiving of Chriſt, is the *reſpect* that this Act of Acceptance hath, unto the Terms upon which Chriſt is tendred to us in the Goſpel, to which it is moſt agreeable, 1 *Cor.* 15. 11. *So we preach, and ſo ye believed*: Faith anſwers the Goſpel Offer, as the Impreſs upon the *Wax* doth the Engravings in the *Seal*; and this is of principal Conſideration, for there is no receiving Chriſt upon any other Terms but his own, propoſed in the Goſpel to us: He will never come lower, nor make them eaſier than they are, for any Man's ſake in the World; we muſt either receive him upon theſe, or part with him for ever as thouſands do, who could be content to agree to ſome Articles, but rather chooſe to be damned for ever, than ſubmit to all: This is the great Controverſie betwixt Chriſt and Sinners; upon this many thouſands break off the Treaty, and part with Chriſt, becauſe he will not come to their Terms; but every true Believer receives him upon his own, (*i. e.*) Their Acceptance of him by Faith, is in all things conſentaneous to the Overtures made of him in the written Word. So he tenders himſelf, and ſo they receive him; as will be evident in the following Particulars.

Rom. 6. 17. ὑπηκούσατε δὲ ἐκ καρδίας εἰς ὃν παρεδόθητε τύπον διδαχῆς. The Will like melted Metal, is delivered into the Goſpel mould, where it receives the ſame form and figure that the mould gains.

Firſt, The Goſpel offers Chriſt to us *ſincerely* and really, and ſo the true Believer receives and accepts him; even with a *Faith unfeigned*: 1 Tim. 1. 5. If ever the Soul be ſerious and in earneſt in any thing, it is ſo in this: Can we ſuppoſe the Heart of him that flies for his Life to the *Refuge-City*, to be ſerious and in earneſt, to eſcape by flight the *Avenger of Blood* who purſues him? Then is the Heart of a convinced Sinner ſerious in this Matter; for under that Notion is the Work of Faith preſented to us, *Heb.* 6. 18.

Secondly, Chriſt is offered to us in the Goſpel *intirely* and *undividedly*, as cloathed with all his Offices, Prieſtly, Prophetical, and Regal; as Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, *Acts* 16. 31. and ſo the true Believer receives him: The *Hypocrite* like the *Harlot*, is for dividing, but the ſincere Believer finds the need he hath of every Office of Chriſt, and knows not how to want any thing that is in him.

His Ignorance makes him neceſſary and deſirable to him, as a *Prophet*: His Guilt makes him neceſſary as a *Prieſt*: His ſtrong and powerful Luſts and Corruptions make him neceſſary as a *King*; and in Truth he ſees not any thing in Chriſt that he can ſpare; he needs all that is in Chriſt, and admires the infinite Wiſdom in nothing more, than the inveſting Chriſt with all theſe Offices, which are ſo ſuited to the poor Sinners Wants and Miſeries. Look, as the three Offices are undivided in Chriſt, ſo they are in the Believers Acceptance; and before this Trial no Hypocrite can ſtand, for all Hypocrites reject and quarrel with ſomething in Chriſt; they like his Pardon better than his Government. They call him Lord and Maſter, but it is but an empty Title they beſtow upon him; for let them ask their own Hearts, if Chriſt be Lord over their *Thoughts*, as well as *Words*; over their *ſecret* as well as *open* Actions; over their *darling* Luſts, as well as others; let them ask, who will appear to be Lord and Maſter over them, when Chriſt and the World come in Competition? When the Pleaſures of ſin ſhall ſtand upon one ſide, and Sufferings to Death, and deepeſt Points of Self-denial upon the other ſide? Surely 'tis the greateſt Affront, that can be offered to the Divine Wiſdom and Goodneſs, to ſeparate in our Acceptance, what is ſo united in Chriſt, for our Salvation and Happineſs. As without any one of theſe Offices, the Work of our Salvation could not be compleated, ſo without Acceptance of Chriſt in them all, our Union with them by Faith cannot be compleated.

The Goſpel Offer of Chriſt includes all his Offices, and Goſpel Faith juſt ſo receives him, to ſubmit to him, as well as to be redeemed by him; to imitate him in the Holineſs of his Life, as well as to reap the Purchaſes and Fruits of his *Death*. It muſt be an entire receiving of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

A Man may as lawfully join Saints or Angels in his Mediation with Chriſt, as Graces. It is groſs Idolatry to make the Works of God a God, and it is but a more ſubtil Idolatry to make the Works of Chriſt a Chriſt. *Burges de Lege.*

Thirdly, Chriſt is offered to us in the Goſpel *Excluſively*, as the alone and only Saviour of Sinners; with whoſe Blood and Interceſſion nothing is to be mixed; but the Soul of a Sinner is ſingly to rely and depend on him, and no other, *Acts* 4. 2. 1 *Cor.* 3. 11. and ſo Faith receives him, *Pſal.* 71. 16. *I will make mention of thy Righteouſneſs, even of thine only.* Phil. 3. 9. *And be found in him, not having my own Righteouſneſs, which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Chriſt*: To depend partly upon Chriſt's Righteouſneſs, and partly upon our own, is to ſet one foot upon a Rock, and the other in a Quick-ſand, either

her Christ will be to us all in all, or nothing at in Point of Righteousness and Salvation; he ects not Social Honour; as he did the whole ork, so he expects the sole *Praise*; if he be not le to save the uttermost, why do we depend up him at all? and if he be, why do we lean upon y beside him?

Fourthly, The Gospel offers Christ *freely* to Sinrs as the *Gift*, not the *Sale* of God, *Joh.* 4. 10. . 55. 1. *Rev.* 22. 17. and even so Faith receives m. The Believer comes to Christ with an emp Hand, not only as an undeserving, but as an ell deserving Sinner; he comes to Christ as to e that justifies the ungodly, *Rom.* 4. 5. *Unto him at worketh not, but believeth in him that justifieth the godly, his Faith is counted for Righteousness*: Where him that worketh not, he means a convinced, mbled Sinner, who finds himself utterly unable do the Task the Law sets him, (*i. e.*) perfectly obey it; and therefore in a Law sense is said not work; for it's all one as to the Intent and pur se of the Law, not to work, and not to work rfectly: This he is convinced of, and therefore mes to Christ as one that is in himself ungodly, knowledging the Righteousness, by which he ane can stand before God, is in Christ, and not himself, in whole, or in part; and by the way, this encourage poor Souls that are scattered and unted for want of due Qualifications, from closing ith and embracing Christ: There is nothing ualifies any Man for Christ more, than a sense of s unworthiness of him, and the want of all Exllencies or Ornaments, that may commend him Divine Acceptance.

Fifthly, The Gospel offers Christ *orderly* to Sinrs, first his *Person*, then his *Privileges*. God first ves his Son, and then with him, or as a consenent of that Gift, he gives us all things, *Rom.* 8. . In the same order must our Faith receive him. he Believer doth not marry the *Portion* first, and en the *Person*, but to be found in him is the first d great Care of a Believer.

I deny not but it's lawful for any to have an Eye the Benefits of Christ. Salvation from Wrath is, d lawfully may be intended and aimed at: *Look to me, and be saved all ye ends of the Earth*, Isa. 45. . Nor do I deny but there are many poor Souls, ho being in deep Distress and Fear, may and on do, look mostly to their own Safety at first; d that there is much Confusion, as well in the dings of their Faith, as in their Condition; but re I am, it is the proper Order in believing, first accept the Person of the Lord Jesus: Heaven is doubt very desirable, but Christ is more: *Whom ve I in Heaven but thee?* Psal. 73. 25. Union with rist, is in order of Nature antecedent to the ommunication of his Privileges, therefore so it ght to be in the Order and Method of believing.

Sixthly, Christ is *advisedly* offered in the Gospel Sinners, as the Result of God's Eternal Coun, a Project of Grace upon which his Heart and houghts have been much set, *Zech.* 6. 13. The ounsel of Peace was betwixt the Father and Son. nd so the Believer receives him, most deliberateweighing the matter in his most deep and serious houghts; for this is a time of much Solitude and houghtfulness. The Souls espoused are acts of dgment, *Hos.* 2. 19. on our part, as well as on ods: We are therefore bid to sit down and count e cost, *Luke* 14. 28. Faith, or the actual receiving Christ, is the result of many previous debates in e Soul: the matter hath been ponder'd over and over: the Objections and Discouragements, both from the Self-denying terms of the Gospel, and our own vileness and deep guilt, have been ruminated, and lain upon our hearts day and night, and after all things have been balanced in the most deep Consideration, the Soul is determin'd to this Conclusion, I must have Christ, be the terms never so hard, be my sins never so great and many I will yet go to him, and venture my Soul upon him; if I perish, I perish. I have thought out all my Thoughts, and this is the result, Union with Christ here, or Separation from God for ever must be my Lot.

And thus doth the Lord open the hearts of his Elect, and win the consent of their Wills to receive Jesus Christ upon the deepest Consideration, and debate of the matter in their own most solemn Thoughts: they understand and know, that they must deeply deny themselves, take up his Cross and follow him, *Mat.* 16. 24. renounce not only *sinful* but *religious* Self; these are hard and difficult things, but yet the necessity and excellency of Christ makes them appear eligible, and rational, by all which you see Faith is another thing than what the sound of that word (as it is generally understood) signifies to the Understandings of most Men. This is that fiducial receiving of Christ here to be opened.

Secondly, Our next Work will be to evince this receiving of Christ as hath been opened, to be that special saving Faith of God's Elect: This is that Faith of which such Great and Glorious things are spoken in the Gospel, which whosoever hath shall be saved, and he that hath it not shall be damned; and this I shall evidently prove by the following Arguments or Reasons.

Arg. 1. First, That Faith which gives the Soul Right and Title to Spiritual Adoption, with all the Privileges and Benefits thereof, is true, saving Faith.

But such a receiving of Christ as hath been describ'd, gives the Soul Right and Title to spiritual Adoption, with all the Privileges and Benefits thereof.

Therefore such a receiving of Christ as hath been described, is true and saving Faith.

The Major Proposition is undeniable, for our Right and Title to Spiritual Adoption, and the Privileges thereof, rises from our Union with Jesus Christ; we being united to the Son of God, are by Virtue of that Union reckon'd or accounted Sons, *Gal.* 3. 26. *You are all the Children of God by Faith in Jesus Christ*: The Effect of saving Faith is Union with Christ's Person, the Consequent of that Union is Adoption, or Right to the Inheritance.

The Minor is most plain in the Text: *To as many as received him, to them gave he power or right to become the Sons of God*: A false Faith hath no such Privilege annexed to it; no Unbeliever is thus dignified: No Stranger entitled to this Inheritance.

Arg. 2. Secondly, That only is saving and justifying Faith, which is in all true Believers, in none but true Believers; and in all true Believers at all times.

But such a receiving of Christ as hath been described, is in all true Believers, in none but true Believers, and in all true Believers at all times.

Therefore such a receiving of Christ as hath been described, is the only saving and justifying Faith.

The Major is undeniable, that must needs contain the Essence of saving Faith, which is proper to every true Believer, at all times, and to no other.

The minor will be as clear, for there is no other Act of Faith, but this of *fiducial receiving Christ* as he is offer'd, that doth agree to all true Believers, to none but true Believers, and to all true Believers at all times.

Actus fidei consistit in assensu, quo quis assentitur alicui propositioni à deo revelatæ, propter authoritatem revelantis. Becan. Theol. Schol. Tom. 3. cap. 8. Q. 4.

There be three Acts of Faith, *Assent Acceptance* and *Assurance*: The *Papists* generally give the Essence of saving Faith to the first, *viz. Assent*. The *Lutherans*, and some of our own give it to the last, *viz. Assurance*: But it can neither be so, nor so. *Assent* doth not agree only to true Believers, or justified Persons. *Assurance* agrees to justified Persons, and them only, but not to all justified Persons, and that at all times.

Assent is too low to contain the Essence of saving Faith, it is found in the unregenerate as well as the regenerate: Yea, in Devils as well as Men, *James* 2. 19. 'tis supposed and included in justifying Faith, but it is not the justifying or saving Act. *Assurance* is as much too high, being found only in some eminent Believers; and in them too but at some times: There's many a true Believer, to whom the Joy and Comfort of Assurance is denied: They may say of their Union with Christ, as *Paul* said of his Vision; whether in the Body or out of the Body, I cannot tell; so they whether in Christ or out of Christ, they cannot tell.

Many new-born Christians live like the new-born Babe, *Vivit & est vitæ nescius ipse suæ*: Whole stock of many a Believer consists in the bare direct acts of Faith.

A true Believer may *walk in darkness, and see no light*, Isa. 50. 10. Nay, a Man must be a Believer, before he know himself to be so; the *direct Act* of *Faith* is before the *reflex Act*; so that the justifying Act of Faith lies neither in *Assent*, nor in *Assurance*. *Assent* saith, I believe that Christ is, and that he is the Saviour of the Elect. *Assurance* saith, I believe, and am sure that Christ died for me, and that I shall be saved through him. So that *Assent widens* the Natures of Faith too much, and *Assurance* upon the other hand *straitens* it too much; but *Acceptance*, which saith, I take Christ in all his Offices to be mine, this fits it exactly, and belongs to all true Believers, and to none but true Believers; and to all true Believers at all times: This therefore must be the justifying and saving Act of Faith.

Arg. 3. Thirdly, and no other, is the justifying and saving Act of Faith, to which the Properties and Effects of saving Faith do belong, or in which they are only found.

This therefore must be the justifying and saving Act of Faith.

First, By saving Faith Christ is said to *dwell in our Hearts*, Eph. 3. 17. but it is neither by *Assent*, nor *Assurance*, but by *Acceptance*; and receiving him that he dwells in our Hearts; not by *Assent*, for then he would dwell in the unregenerate; nor by *Assurance*, for he must dwell in the unregenerate; nor by Assurance, for he must dwell in our Hearts before we can be assured of it: Therefore it is by Acceptance.

Secondly, By Faith we are justified, *Rom.* 5. 1. But neither Assent nor Assurance, for the Reasons above, do justifie; therefore it must be by the receiving Act, and no other.

Thirdly, the Scripture ascribes great Difficulties to that Faith by which we are saved, as being most cross and opposite to the corrupt Nature of Man; but of all the Acts of Faith, none is clogg'd with like Difficulties, or conflicts with greater Oppositions than the receiving Act doth: About this Act hang the greatest Difficulties, Fears, and deepest Self-denial. In Assent a Mans Reason is convinced, and yields to the Evidence of Truth, so that he can do no other but assent to the Truth. In Assurance there is nothing against a Mans Will or Comfort, but much for it; every one desires it: But it is not so in Acceptance of Christ, upon the Self-denying Terms of the Gospel, as will hereafter be evinced. We conclude therefore, that in this consists the Nature and Essence of saving Faith.

Thirdly, Having seen what the receiving of Jesus Christ is, and that it is the Faith by which we are justified and saved: I next come to open the *Dignity* and Excellency of this Faith, whose Praises and *Encomiums* are in all the Scriptures: There you find it renowned by the Title of *precious Faith*, 2 Pet. 1. 7. *enriching Faith*, James 2. 5. *The Work of God*, John 6. 29. The *great Mystery of Godliness*, 1 Tim. 3. 16. With many more rich *Epithets* throughout the Scriptures bestowed upon it.

Now Faith may be considered two Ways, *viz.* either Qualitatively, or Relatively.

Considered *Qualitatively*, as a saving Grace, it hath the same Excellency that all other precious saving Graces have: As it is the Fruit of the Spirit, it is more precious than Gold, *Prov.* 8. 11, 19. And so are all other Graces as well as Faith: In this Sense they all shine with equal Glory, and that a Glory transcending all the Glory of this World: But then consider Faith *Relatively*, as the Instrument by which the Righteousness of Christ is apprehended and made ours, and in that Consideration it excells all other Graces.

This is the Grace that is singled out from among all other Graces, to *receive Christ*, by which Office it is dignified above all its Fellows: As *Moses* was honoured above the many Thousands of *Israel*, when God took him up into the *Mount*, admitted him nearer to himself than any other of all the Tribes might come; for they stood without the *Rail*, while *Moses* was received into the special Presence of God, and was admitted to such views as others must not have: So Faith is honoured above all its fellow Graces in being singled out, and solemnly anointed to this high Office in our Justification: This is the precious Eye that looks unto Christ as the stung *Israelites* did to the *brazen Serpent*, and derives healing Vertue from him to the Soul. It is the Grace which instrumentally saves us, *Eph.* 2. 8. As it is Christs Glory to be the Door of Salvation, so it is Faiths Glory to be the golden Key that opens the Door.

What shall I say of Faith? 'Tis the *Bond* of Union, the *Instrument* of Justification, the *Spring* of spiritual Peace and Joy, the *Means* of Spiritual Livelihood and Subsistence: And therefore the great *scope* and *drift* of the Gospel, which aims at, and presseth nothing more, than to bring Men and Women to believe,

First, This is the *Bond of our Union* with Christ. That Union is begun in our Vivification, and completed in our actual receiving of Christ: The first is a bond of Union on the Spirits part, the second a bond of Union on our Part. *Christ dwelleth in our Hearts by Faith*, Eph. 3. 17. And herein it is a door opened to let in many rich Blessings to the Soul: For by uniting us to Christ, it brings us into special favour and Acceptation with God, *Eph.* 1. 6. Makes us the special Objects of Christs conjugal Love and Delight, *Eph.* 5. 29. Draws from his Heart sympathy and tender Sense of all our Miseries and Burdens, *Heb.* 14. 15.

Secondly, 'Tis the Inſtrument of our Juſtification, *Rom.* 5. 1. Till Chriſt be received (thus received by us) we are in our Sins, under Guilt and Condemnation; but when Faith comes, then comes Freedom: *By him all that believe are juſtified from all Things*, Acts 13. 38. Rom. 8. 1. For it apprehends or receives the pure and perfect Righteouſneſs of the Lord Jeſus, wherein the Soul, how guilty and ſinful ſoever it be in it ſelf, ſtands faultleſs and ſpotleſs before the Preſence of God: All Obligations to Puniſhment, are upon believing immediately diſſolved: A full and final Pardon ſealed. O precious Faith, can ſufficiently value it.

Inveniri in Chriſto tacitam habet relationem ad Dei judicium; in iis nullam invenit condemnationem, quia juſtitiâ, qualem eſſe requirit, (i. e.) perfectâ accumulatâ, exornatos nos invenit; nempe juſtitiâ Chriſti per fidem nobis imputatâ. Bern. in Loc.

What Reſpect, Reader, wouldſt thou have to that hand that ſhould bring thee a Pardon when on the Ladder or Block! Why, that Pardon, which thou canſt not read without Tears of Joy, is brought Thee by the Hand of Faith. O ineſtimable Grace! That Cloaths the pure Righteouſneſs of Jeſus upon our defiled Souls, and ſo cauſes us to become the *Righteouſneſs of God in him*; or as it is, 1 *John* 3. 7. *Righteous as he is Righteous*: *Non formali & intrinſecâ Juſtitiâ, ſed relativâ*: Not with a formal inherent Righteouſneſs of our own, but with a relative imputed Righteouſneſs from another.

I know this moſt excellent and moſt comfortable Doctrine of imputed Righteouſneſs, is not only *denied*, but *derided* by *Papiſts*. *Stapleton* calls it *ſpectrum Cerebri Lutherani*: The monſtrous Birth of *Luther*'s Brain! But bleſſed be God, this comfortable Truth is well ſecured againſt all Attempts of its Adverſaries. Let their blaſphemous Mouths call it in Deriſion as they do, *putative Righteouſneſs*, (i. e.) a meer fancied or conceited Righteouſneſs: Yet we know aſſuredly Chriſts Righteouſneſs is imputed to us, and that in the Way of Faith. If *Adam*'s Sin became ours by Imputation, then ſo doth Chriſt's Righteouſneſs alſo become ours by Imputation, *Rom.* 5. 17. If Chriſt were made a Sinner by the Imputation of our Sins to him, who had no Sin of his own, then we are made Righteous by the the Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs to us, who have no Righteouſneſs of our own, according to 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. This was the way in which *Abraham*, the Father of them that believe, was juſtified, and therefore this is the way in which all Believers, the Children of *Abraham*, muſt in like Manner be juſtified, *Rom.* 4. 22, 23, 24. Who can expreſs the worth of Faith in this one Reſpect, if this were all it did for our Soul?

But Thirdly, It is the *Spring* of our Spiritual Peace and Joy; and that as it is the Inſtrument of our *Juſtification*. If it be an Inſtrument of our *Juſtification*, it cannot but be the Spring of our *Conſolation*, Rom. 5. 1. *Being juſtified by Faith, we have Peace with God*: In uniting us with Chriſt, and apprehending and applying his Righteouſneſs to us, it becomes the Seed or Root of all the Peace and Joy of a Chriſtians Life. Joy, the Child of Faith, therefore bears its Name, *Phil.* 1. 25. *The Joy of Faith.* So 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. 9. *Believing we rejoice with Joy unſpeakable*: We cannot forbear laughing when we are tickled, nor can we forbear rejoicing while by Faith we are brought to the Sight and Knowledge of ſuch a priviledged State: When Faith hath firſt given, and then cleared our Title to Chriſt, Joy is no more under the Souls command: We cannot but rejoice, and that with Joy unſpeakable.

Fourthly, It is the *means* of our ſpiritual Livelihood and Subſiſtance: All other Graces, like Birds in the Neſt, depend upon what Faith brings in to them: Take away Faith, and all the Graces languiſh and die: Joy, Peace, Hope, Patience, and all the reſt, depend upon Faith, as the Members of the natural Body do upon the Veſſels by which Blood and Spirit are conveyed to them. *The Life which I now live* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *is by the Faith of the Son of God*, Gal. 2. 20. It provides our *ordinary Food*, and *extraordinary Cordials*, Pſalm 27. 13. *I had fainted unleſs I had believed.* And ſeeing it is all this to our Souls,

Fifthly, In the laſt Place, It is no wonder that it is the main Scope and Drift of the Goſpel, to preſs and bring Souls to believing: 'Tis the Goſpels grand Deſign to bring up the Hearts of Men and Women to Faith. The urgent *Commands of* the Goſpel aim at this, 1 *John* 3. 23. *Mark* 1. 14. 15. *John* 12. 36. hither alſo look the great *Promiſes* and Encouragements of the *Goſpel*, *John* 6. 35. and 37. ſo *Mark* 16. 16. And the oppoſite Sin of Unbelief is every where fearfully aggravated, and *threatned*, *John* 16. 8. 9. *John* 3. 18, 35. And this was the third Thing premiſed, namely, A diſcovery of the tranſcendant Worth and Excellency of ſaving Faith.

Fourthly, But leſt we commit a Miſtake here, to the Prejudice of Chriſt's Honour and Glory, which muſt not be given to another, no not to Faith it ſelf; I promiſed you in the fourth Place, to ſhew you upon what Account Faith is thus dignified and honoured: That ſo we may give unto *Faith*, the Things that are *Faiths*; and to *Chriſt*, the Things that are *Chriſts*.

And I find Four Opinions about the Intereſt of Faith in our Juſtification: Some will have it to juſtifie us *formally*, not relatively: (*i. e.*) upon the Account of its own intrinſical Value and Worth; and this is the *Popiſh* Senſe of Juſtification by Faith. Some affirm, that though Faith be not our perfect legal Righteouſneſs, conſidered as a Work of ours, yet the *Act* of believing is imputed to us for Righteouſneſs, (*i. e.*) God graciouſly accepts it inſtead of perfect legal Righteouſneſs, and ſo in his eſteem its our Evangelical Righteouſneſs. And this is the *Arminian* Senſe of Juſtification by Faith.

Some there are alſo, even among our Reformed Divines, that contend that Faith juſtifies and ſaves us, as it is the Condition of the New Covenant. And laſtly, Others will have it to juſtifie us as an *Inſtrument* apprehending or receiving the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt; with which Opinion I muſt cloſe: When I conſider my Text calls it a *receiving of Chriſt*: Moſt certain it is,

That Firſt, It doth not juſtifie in the *Popiſh Senſe*, upon the Account of its own proper Worth and Dignity: For then,

Firſt, Juſtification ſhould be of Debt, not of Grace; contrary to *Rom.* 3. 23, 24.

Secondly, This would fruſtrate the very Scope and End of the Death of Chriſt; for if Righteouſneſs come by the Law, (*i. e.*) by the way of Works and Deſert, then is Chriſt Dead in vain, *Gal.* 2. 21.

Thirdly, Then the way of our Juſtification by Faith would be ſo far from excluding, that it would eſtabliſh boaſting, expreſly contrary to the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 3. 26. 27.

Fourthly, Then there ſhould be no Defects or Imperfections in Faith, for a defective and imperfect Thing can never be the Matter of our Juſtification before God: If it juſtifie upon the Account of its own Worth and proper Dignity, it can have no

no Flaw nor Imperfection in it, contrary to the common Sense of all Believers. Nay,

Fifthly, Then it's the same Thing to be justified by Faith, and to be justified by Works, which the Apostle so carefully distinguisheth and opposeth, *Phil.* 3. 9. and *Rom.* 4. 6. So that we conclude it doth not justifie in the *Popish Sense*, for any worth or proper Excellency that is in itself.

Secondly, And it is evident, it doth not justifie us in the *Arminian Sense*, viz. as the τὸ *credere*, the Act of believing is imputed, or accepted by God, as our Evangelical Righteousness, instead of perfect legal Righteousness. In the former Opinion you have the dreggs of *Popery*, and here you have refined Popery. Let all *Arminians* know, we have as high Esteem for Faith as any Men in the World, but yet we will not rob Christ to cloath Faith: We cannot embrace their Opinion, because,

First, We must then dethrone Christ to exalt Faith: We are willing to give it all that is due to it, but we dare not despoil Christ of his Glory for Faiths sake: He is *the Lord our Righteousness*, Jer. 23. We dare not set the Servant above the Master: We acknowledge no Righteousness but what the Obedience and Satisfaction of Christ yields us: His Blood, not our Faith; his Satisfaction, not our Believing it, is the Matter of our Justification before God.

Secondly, We dare not yield this Point, lest we undermine all the Comfort of Christians, by bottoming their Pardon and Peace upon a weak, imperfect Work of their own. Oh how tottering and unstable must their Station be, that stand upon such a Bottom as this! What ups and downs are there in our Faith, what mixtures of unbelief at all Times, and prevalency of unbelief at some times; and is this a Foundation to build our Justification and Hope upon? *Debile fundamentum fallit opus*: If we lay the stress here, we build upon very loose ground, and must be at a continual loss, both as to Safety and Comfort.

Thirdly, We dare not wrong the Justice and Truth of God at that rate, as to affirm that he esteems and imputes our poor weak Faith for perfect legal Righteousness: We know that the Judgment of God is always according to Truth: if the Justice of God requires full Payment, sure it will not say it's fully satisfied by any Acts of ours, when all that we can do amounts not to one *Mite* of the vast sum we owe to God. So that we deservedly reject this Opinion also.

Ergo quia fides Christum justitiam nostram recipit & gratiæ dei in Christo omnia tribuit, ideo fidei tribuitur justificatio, maxime propter Christum, & non ideo quia nostrum opus est. Confes. Helv.

Thirdly, And for the Third *Opinion*, That it justifies as the *Condition of the new Covenant*, tho' some of great Name and Worth among our Protestant Divines seem to go that way, yet I cannot see, according to this Opinion, any Reason why *Repentance* may not as properly be said to justifie us as Faith, for it is a Condition of the New Covenant as much as Faith, and if Faith justifie as a Condition, then every other Grace that is a Condition, must justifie as well as Faith. I acknowledge Faith to be a Condition of the Covenant, but cannot allow that it justifies as a Condition. And therefore must profess my self best satisfied in the last Opinion, which speaks it an *Instrument* in our Justification: It is the Hand which receives the Righteousness of Christ that justifies us, and that gives it its value above all other Graces: As when we say a *Diamond Ring* is worth one Hundred Pounds, we mean not the Gold that receives, but the Stone that is set in it is worth so much: Faith consider'd as an Habit, is no more precious than other gracious Habits are, but consider'd as an *Instrument* to receive Christ, and his Righteousness; so it excels them all: And this instrumentality of Faith is noted in those Phrases, ἐκ πίστεως, *Rom.* 3. 28. and διὰ πίστεως, By Faith and through Faith. And thus much of the Nature and Excellency of saving Faith.

SERMON VII.

JOHN I. xii.

But as many as received him, to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God; even to them that believe on his Name.

THE Nature and Excellency of saving Faith, together with its Relation to Justification as an Instrument in receiving Christ and his Righteousness, having been discoursed Doctrinally already, I now come to make Application of it according the Nature of this weighty and fruitful Point.

And the Uses I shall make of it will be for our,

1. Information,
2. Examination,
3. Exhortation. And
4. Direction.

First Use of Information.

Use 1. And in the first, this Point yields us many and great, and useful Truths, for our Information: As

Infer. 1. Is the receiving of Christ the Vital and saving Act of Faith, which gives the Soul right to the Person and Priviledges of Christ. Then it follows, *That the rejecting of Christ by unbelief, must needs be the damning and Soul-destroying Sin, which cuts a Man off from Christ, and all the Benefits purchased by his Blood.* If there be *Life in receiving*, there must needs be *Death in rejecting Christ.*

There is no *Grace* more *excellent* than Faith, no *Sin* more *execrable* and abominable than Unbelief: Faith is the saving Grace, and Unbelief is the damning Sin, *Mark* 16. 16. *He that believeth not shall be damned.* See *John* 3. 18, 36. and *John* 8. 24.

And the Reason why this Sin of unbelief is the damning Sin is this, Because in the Justification of a Sinner, there must be a Co-operation of all the Concauses that have a joint Influence into that blessed Effect: As there must be free Grace for an *impulsive* Cause, the Blood of Christ as the *meritorious* Cause, so of Necessity there must be Faith, the *instrumental* Cause, to receive and apply what the free Grace of God designed, and the Blood of Christ purchased for us. For where there are many *Social Causes* or *Concauses* to produce one Effect, there the Effect is not produced till the last Cause be in Act.

To him give all the Prophets witneſs, that through his Name whoſoever believeth in him ſhall receive Remiſſion of Sins, Acts 10. 43. Faith in its Place, is as neceſſary as the Blood of Chriſt in its Place: *'Tis Chriſt in you the hope of Glory*, Col. 1. 27. Not Chriſt in the *Womb*, nor Chriſt in the *Grave*, nor Chriſt in *Heaven*, except he be alſo *Chriſt in you*.

Tho' Chriſt be come in the Fleſh, tho' he died and roſe again from the Dead, yet if you believe not, you muſt for all that *Die in your Sins*, John 8.24. And what a dreadful Thing is this! better die the Death of a Dog, better die in a Ditch, than die in your Sins. If you die in your Sins, you will alſo riſe in your Sins, and ſtand at the Bar of Chriſt in your Sins: You can never receive Remiſſion, till firſt you have received Chriſt. O curſed unbelief, which *damns* the Soul: *diſhonours* God, 1 *John* 5. 10. *ſlights* Jeſus Chriſt the Wiſdom of God, as if that glorious Deſign of Redemption by his Blood, the Triumph and Maſter-piece of Divine Wiſdom, were meer fooliſhneſs, 1 *Cor.* 1. 23, 24. *fruſtrates* the great Deſign of the Goſpel, *Gal.* 4. 11. and conſequently it muſt be the Sin of Sins: The worſt and moſt dangerous of all Sins: Leaving a Man under the Guilt of all his other Sins.

Infer. 2. If ſuch a receiving of Chriſt, as hath been deſcribed, be ſaving and juſtifying Faith, *then Faith is a work of greater difficulty than moſt Men underſtand it to be, and there are but few ſound Believers in the World.*

Before Chriſt can be received, the Heart muſt be emptied and opened: But moſt Mens Hearts are full of Self-righteouſneſs, and Vain Confidence: This was the Caſe of the *Jews*, Rom. 10. 3. *Being ignorant of Gods Righteouſneſs, and going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, have not ſubmitted themſelves to the Righteouſneſs of God.*

Mans Righteouſneſs was once in himſelf, and what Liquor is firſt put into the Veſſel, it ever afterwards ſavours of it: 'Tis with *Adams* Poſterity as with *Bees*, which have been accuſtomed to go to their own Hive, and carry all thither; if the *Hive* be removed to another Place, they will ſtill fly to the old Place, hover up and down about it, and rather die there, than go to a new Place. So it is with moſt Men. God hath removed their Righteouſneſs from *doing*, to *believing*; from *themſelves*, to *Chriſt*; but who ſhall prevail with them to forſake Self? Nature will venture to be damned rather than do it: There is much *Submiſſion* in believing, and great ſelf-denial: A proud ſelf-conceited Heart will never ſtoop to live upon the Stock of anothers Righteouſneſs.

Beſides, it is no eaſie Thing to perſwade Men to receive Chriſt as their Lord in all things, and ſubmit their Necks to his ſtrict and holy Precepts, tho' it be a great Truth that Chriſts Yoak doth not *gall*, but *grace* and adorn the Neck that bears it; that the trueſt and ſweeteſt Liberty is in our Freedom from our Luſts, not in our fulfilling them: Yet who can perſwade the carnal Heart to believe this? And much leſs will Men ever be prevailed withal, to forſake Father, Mother, Wife, Children, Inheritance, and Life it ſelf, to follow Chriſt: And all this upon the Account of ſpiritual and inviſible Things: And yet this muſt be done by all that receive the Lord Jeſus Chriſt upon Goſpel Terms; yea, and before the Soul hath any encouraging Experience of its own, to balance the manifold diſcouragements of Senſe and carnal Reaſon, improved by the utmoſt Craft of Satan to diſmay it: For Experience is the fruit and conſequent of believing. So that it may well be placed among the great *Myſteries* of Godlineſs, that Chriſt is believed on in the World, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16.

Quem Chriſti gratia deterit ſed non ſtat colla. Tertull.

Infer. 3. And then Thirdly, Hence it will follow, *that there may be more true and ſound Believers in the World, than know or conclude themſelves to be ſuch.*

For as many ruine their own Souls by placing the Eſſence of ſaving Faith in naked *Aſſent*, ſo ſome rob themſelves of their own Comfort, by placing it in full *Aſſurance*. Faith, and Senſe of Faith, are two diſtinct and ſeparable Mercies: You may have truly received Chriſt, and not receive the Knowledge or Aſſurance of it, *Iſa.* 50. 10. Some there be that ſay, *thou art our God*, of whom God never ſaid *you are my People*: Theſe have no *Authority* to be call'd the Sons of *God*: Others there are of whom God ſaith, Theſe are my People, yet dare not call God their God: Theſe have Authority to be call'd the Sons of God, but know it not. They have received of Chriſt, that's their *ſafety*; but they have not yet received the Knowledge and Aſſurance of it, that's their *Trouble*: The Father owns his Child in the Cradle, who yet knows him not to be his Father.

Now there are two Reaſons why many Believers, who might argue themſelves into Peace, do yet live without the comforts of their Faith: and this may come to paſs, either from,

Firſt, The Evidence of the *Premiſes*.

Secondly, Or the weighty Importance of the *Concluſion*.

Firſt, It may come to paſs from the inevidence of the Premiſes. Aſſurance is a Practical *Syllogiſm*, and it proceeds thus:

All that truly have received Chriſt Jeſus, they are the Children of God.

I have truly received Jeſus Chriſt,

Therefore I am the Child of God.

The Major Propoſition is found in the Scripture, and there can be no doubt of that: The *Aſſumption* depends upon Experience, or internal Senſe. *I have truly received Jeſus Chriſt*: Here uſually is the Stumble: many great *Objections* lie againſt it, which they cannot clearly Anſwer: As,

Obj. 1. Light and Knowledge are neceſſarily required to the right receiving of Chriſt, but I am dark and ignorant, many carnal unregenerate Perſons know more than I do, and are more able to Diſcourſe of the Myſteries of Religion than I am.

Sol. But you ought to diſtinguiſh of the *Kinds* and *Degrees* of Knowledge, and then you would ſee that your bewailed Ignorance is no Bar to your Intereſt in Chriſt. There are Two kinds of Knowledge:

1. Natural.
2. Spiritual.

There is a *natural Knowledge* even of Spiritual Objects, a ſpark of Nature blown up by an advantagious Education, and though the Objects of this Knowledge be Spiritual Things, yet the Light in which they are diſcerned is but a meer natural Light.

And there is a *Spiritual Knowledge* of Spiritual Things, the *Teaching of the anointing*, as it's call'd, 1 *John* 2. 27. (i. e.) the Effect and Fruit of the Spirits ſanctifying Work upon our Souls, when the Experience of a Mans own Heart informs and teacheth his Underſtanding, when by feeling the workings of Grace in our own Souls, we come to underſtand its Nature: This is Spiritual Knowledge. Now a little of this Knowledge is a better

better Evidence of a Mans Intereſt in Chriſt, than the moſt raiſed and excellent degree of natural Knowledge: As the *Philoſopher* truly obſerves: *Præſtat pauculà de meliori ſcientia deguſtaſſe, quam de ignobiliori multa*: One drachm of Knowledge of the beſt and moſt excellent Things, is better than much Knowledge of common Things. So it is here, a little ſpiritual Knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt, that hath Life and Savour in it, is more than all the natural ſapleſs Knowledge of the unregenerate, which leaves the Heart dead, carnal and barren: 'Tis not the *Quantity* but the *Kind*, not the *Meaſure* but the *Savour*: If you know ſo much of the Evil of Sin, as renders it the moſt bitter and burdenſome Thing in the World to you, and ſo much of the neceſſity and excellency of Chriſt, as renders him the moſt ſweet and deſirable Thing in the World to you, tho' you may be defective in many Degrees of Knowledge, yet this is enough to prove yours to be the Fruit of the Spirit: You may have a ſanctified Heart, tho' you have an irregular or weak Head: Many that knew more than you are in *Hell*, and ſome that once knew as little as you are now in *Heaven*: *In abſoluto & facili ſtat æternitas*: God hath not prepar'd Heaven only for clear and ſubtil Heads: A little ſanctified and effectual Knowledge of Chriſts Perſon, Offices, Suitableneſs, and Neceſſity, may bring thee thither, when others, with all their curious Speculations and Notions, may periſh for ever.

Obj. 2. But you tell me, that *Aſſent* to the Truths of the Goſpel is neceſſarily included in ſaving Faith, which tho' it be not the juſtifying and ſaving Act, yet it is pre-ſuppoſed and required to it: Now I have many ſtaggerings and Doubtings about the certainty and reality of theſe Things: Many horrid Atheiſtical Thoughts, which ſhake the aſſenting Act of Faith in the very Foundation, and hence I doubt I do not believe.

Sol. There may be and often is, a true and ſincere *Aſſent* found in the Soul, that is aſſaulted with violent atheiſtical Suggeſtions from Satan; and thereupon queſtions the Truth of it. And this is a very clear Evidence of the reality of our Aſſent, that whatever Doubts, or contrary Suggeſtions there be, yet we dare not in our Practice contradict or ſlight thoſe Truths or Duties which we are tempted to disbelieve. *Ex. gr.* We are aſſaulted with Atheiſtical Thoughts, and tempted to ſlight and caſt off all fears of Sin, and practice of religious Duties, yet when it comes to the Point of Practice, we dare not commit a known Sin, the awe of God is upon us: We dare not omit a known Duty, the tie of Conſcience is found ſtrong enough to hold us cloſe to it: In this Caſe, 'tis plain we do really Aſſent, when we think we do not. A Man thinks he doth not love his Child, yet carefully provides for him in Health, and is full of grief and fears about him in Sickneſs: Why now, ſo long as I ſee all Fatherly Duties performed, and Affections to his Childs welfare manifeſted, let him ſay what he will as to the want of Love to him, whilſt I ſee this, he muſt excuſe me if I do not believe him, when he ſaith he hath no Love for him. Juſt ſo is it in this Caſe, A Man ſaith I do not Aſſent to the Being, Neceſſity, or Excellency of Jeſus Chriſt: Yet, in the mean Time, his Soul is fill'd with Cares and Fears about ſecuring his Intereſt in him, he is found panting and thirſting for him with vehement Deſires, there's nothing in all the World would give him ſuch Joy, as to be well aſſured of an Intereſt in him; while it is thus with any Man, let him ſay or think what he will of his Aſſent, it's manifeſt by this he doth truly and heartily Aſſent, and there can be no better Proof of it than theſe real Effects produc'd by it.

Secondly, But if theſe, and other Objections were never ſo fully anſwer'd for the clearing of the *Aſſumption*, yet it often falls out, that Believers are afraid to draw the *Concluſion*, and that Fear partly ariſes from

Firſt, the weighty Importance of this Matter.

Secondly, the ſenſe of the Deceitfulneſs of their own Hearts.

Firſt, The Concluſion is of infinite Importance to them, it is the Everlaſting Happineſs of their Souls, than which nothing is, or can be, of greater weight upon their Spirits: Things in which we are moſt deeply concerned, are not lightly and haſtily received by us: It ſeems ſo great and ſo good, that we are ſtill apt (if there be any room for it) to ſuſpect the Truth and Certainty thereof, as never being ſure enough.

Thus when the Women that were the firſt Meſſengers and Witneſſes of Chriſts Reſurrection, *Luke* 20. 10. 11. came and told the Diſciples thoſe wonderful and comfortable Tidings, it's ſaid, *That their Words ſeemed to them as idle Tales, and they believed them not*: They thought it was too good to be true: Too great to be haſtily received; ſo is it in this Caſe.

Secondly, The Senſe they have of the Deceitfulneſs of their own Hearts, and the daily workings of Hypocriſie there, makes them afraid to conclude in ſo great a Point as this is.

They know that very many daily cozen and cheat themſelves in this Matter, they know alſo that their own Hearts are full of falſeneſs and deceit, they find them ſo in their daily Obſervations of them, and what if they ſhould prove ſo in this? Why then they are loſt for ever! They alſo know there is not the like danger in their Fears and Jealouſies, that would be in their vain Confidencies and Preſumptions: By the one they are only deprived of their preſent *Comfort*, but by the other they would be ruined for ever: And therefore chuſe rather to dwell with their own Fears (though they be uncomfortable Companions) than run the Danger of ſo great a Miſtake, which would be infinitely more fatal. And this being the common Caſe of moſt Chriſtians, it follows that there muſt be many more Believers in the World than do think, or dare conclude themſelves to be ſuch.

Infer. 4. If the right receiving of Jeſus Chriſt be true ſaving and juſtifying Faith, *then thoſe that have the leaſt and loweſt Degree and Meaſure of ſaving Faith, have Cauſe for ever to admire the Bounty and Riches of the Grace of God to them therein.*

If you have received never ſo little of his Bounty by the Hand of Providence, in the good Things of this Life, yet if he have given you any meaſure of true ſaving Faith, he hath dealt bountifully indeed with you: This Mercy alone is enough to balance all other Wants and Inconveniencies of this Life, *Poor in the World, rich in Faith*, James 2. O let your Hearts take in the full Senſe of this Bounty of God to you; ſay with the Apoſtle *Eph.* 1. 3. *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed us with ſpiritual Bleſſings in heavenly Places in Chriſt Jeſus*: And you will in this one Mercy, find Matter enough of Praiſe and Thanſgivings, Wonder and Admiration to your dying Day, yea, to all Eternity: For do but conſider,

Firſt,

First, The ſmalleſt Meaſure of ſaving Faith which is found in any of the People of God, receives Jeſus Chriſt; and in receiving him, what Mercy is there which the believing Soul doth not receive in him, and with him? *Rom.* 8. 32.

O Believer, tho' the Arms of thy Faith be ſmall and weak, yet they embrace a great Chriſt, and receive the richeſt Gift that ever God beſtowed upon the World: No ſooner art thou become a Believer, but Chriſt is in thee the Hope of Glory: And thou haſt Authority to become a Son or Daughter of God? Thou haſt the Broad Seal of Heaven to confirm thy Title and Claim to the Priviledges of Adoption, for *To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God. To as many*] be they ſtrong, or be they weak, provided they really receive Chriſt by Faith; there is Authority or Power given, ſo that it's no Act of Preſumption in them to ſay God is our Father, Heaven is our Inheritance. O precious Faith! the Treaſures of ten Thouſand Worlds cannot purchaſe ſuch Priviledges as theſe: All the Crowns and Scepters of the Earth, ſold at their full Value, are no Price for ſuch Mercies.

Secondly, The leaſt degree of ſaving Faith, brings the Soul into a ſtate of perfect and full Juſtification. For if it receive Jeſus Chriſt, it muſt therefore needs in him, and with him, receive a free, full, and final Pardon of Sin: The leaſt meaſure of Faith receives Remiſſion for the greateſt Sins. *By him all that believe are juſtified from all things*, Acts 13. 39. it unites thy Soul with Chriſt, and then as the neceſſary Conſequent of that Union, there is no Condemnation, *Rom.* 8. 1. οὐδὲν κατάκριμα, not one Condemnation, how many ſoever our Sins have been.

Thirdly, The leaſt meaſure or degree of ſaving Faith, is a greater Mercy than God hath beſtowed, or ever will beſtow upon many that are far above you in outward reſpects: *All Men have not Faith*: Nay, 'tis but a Remnant among Men that believe. Few of the *Nobles* and *Potentates* of the World, have ſuch a Gift as this: They have Houſes and Lands, yea, Crowns and Scepters, but no Faith, no Chriſt, no Pardon: They have Authority to rule over Men, but no Authority to become the Sons of God, 1 *Cor.* 1. 26. 27.

Say therefore in thy moſt debaſed, ſtraitned, afflicted Condition, *Return to thy Reſt, O my Soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.*

Fourthly, the leaſt degree of ſaving Faith is more than all the Power of Nature can produce: There muſt be a ſpecial Revelation of the Arm of the Lord in that Work, *Iſa.* 53. 1. Believers are not *born of the Fleſh, nor of Blood, nor of the Will of Man, but of God*, John 1. 12, 13. all believing Motions towards Chriſt, are the Effects of the Fathers drawing, *John* 6. 44. a glorious and irreſiſtable Power goes forth from God to produce it, whence it's called *the Faith of the operation of God*, Col. 2. 12.

So then, Let not Believers deſpiſe the day of ſmall things, or overlook that great and infinite Mercy which is wrapt up in the leaſt degree of ſaving Faith.

Infer. 5. *Learn hence the Impoſſibility of their Salvation, who neither know the nature, nor enjoy the means of ſaving Faith.*

My Soul pities and mourns over the Infidel World. Ah! what will become of the Millions of poor Unbelievers! there is but one Door of Salvation, *viz.* Chriſt; and but one Key of Faith to open that Door: And as that Key was never given to the Heathen World, ſo it's laid aſide, or taken away from the People by their cruel Guides, all over the Popiſh World; Were you among them, you ſhould hear nothing elſe preſt as neceſſary to your Salvation but a blind implicit Faith, to believe as the Church believes; that is, to believe they know not what.

To believe as the *Pope* believes; that is, as an Infidel believes, for ſo they confeſs he may be, * and tho' there be ſuch a thing, as an explicit Faith ſometimes ſpoken of among them, yet it is very ſparingly diſcourſed, very falſly deſcribed, and exceedingly ſlighted by them, as the verieſt trifle in the World.

* *Non enim fides interior Romani Pontificis eccleſiæ eſt neceſſaria.* Canus Loc. Theol. p. 344.

Firſt, It is but ſparingly diſcourſed of: They love not to accuſtom the Peoples Ears to ſuch Doctrine: One of themſelves confeſſes that there is ſo deep a ſilence of explicit particular Faith in the *Romiſh Church*, that you may find many every where, that believe no more of theſe things than Heathen *Philoſophers.*

Navarr. cap. 11. p. 141.

Secondly, When it is preach'd or written of, it is falſly deſcribed: For they place the whole Nature and Eſſence of juſtifying and ſaving Faith in a naked *Aſſent*: Which the Devils have as well as Men, *James* 2. 19. no more than this is preſt upon the People at any time, as neceſſary to their Salvation.

Thirdly, And even this particular explicit Faith, when is ſpoken or written of, is exceedingly ſlighted. I think if the *Devil* himſelf were in the *Pulpit*, he could hardly tell how to bring Men to a more low and ſlight eſteem of Faith; to repreſent it as a verier Trifle, and needleſs Thing than theſe his Agents have done. Some (*a*) ſay, if a Man believe with a particular explicit Faith, (*i. e.*) if he actually aſſent to Scripture Truths once in a Year, it is enough. Yea, and others (*b*) think it too much to oblige People to believe once in twelve Months; and for their eaſe tell them, if they believe once in twelve Years it is ſufficient: And leſt this ſhould be too great a Task, (*c*) others affirm, that if it be done but once in their whole Life, and that at the Point of Death too, it is enough, eſpecially for the rude and common People. Good God! what a Doctrine is here! it was a Saying long ago of *Gregory* (as I remember) *Malus Miniſter eſt niſus Diaboli*: A wicked Miniſter is the Devil's *Goſshawk*, that goes a Birding for Hell; And O what Game have theſe Hawks of Hell among ſuch numerous flocks of People! O bleſs God while you live, for your Deliverance from Popery; and ſee that you prize the Goſpel, and Means of Grace you enjoy at an higher rate, leſt God bring you once more under that yoak, which neither you nor your Fathers could bear.

(*a*) Petr. à S. Joſeph ſum. Art. 1. p. 6.
(*b*) Bonacina Tom. 2. in 1 precept.
(*c*) Jo. San. Diſp. 41. n. 32.

Second uſe for Examination.

Doth ſaving Faith conſiſt in a due and right receiving of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt? then let me perſwade you to examine your ſelves in this great Point of Faith. Reflect ſolemnly upon the Tranſactions that have been betwixt Chriſt and your Souls: Think cloſe on this Subject of Meditation.

If all you were worth in the World lay in one precious Stone, and that Stone were to be tried by

the skilful *Lapidary*, whether it were true or false, whether it would fly or endure under the smart Stroke of his Hammer, sure your Thoughts could not be unconcerned about the Issue: Why all that you are worth in both Worlds, depends upon the Truth of your Faith, which is now to be tried.

O therefore read not these Lines with a running careless Eye, but seriously ponder the Matter before you: You would be loth to put to Sea, tho' it were but to cross the *Channel*, in a rotten leaky Bottom: And will you dare to venture into the Ocean of Eternity in a false, rotten Faith? God forbid: You know the Lord is coming to try every Man's Faith as by Fire, and that we must stand or fall for ever with the Sincerity or Hypocrisy of our Faith. Surely you can never be too exact and careful about that, on which your whole Estate depends, and that for ever.

Now there are three things upon which we should have a very tender and watchful Eye for the discovery of the sincerity of our Faith, and they are,

The { Antecedents / Concomitants / Consequents } of Faith.

As these are, so we must judge and reckon our Faith to be. And accordingly they furnish us with three general Marks or Trials of Faith.

First, If you would discern the Sincerity of your Faith, examine whether those *Antecedents* and preparative Works of the Spirit, were ever found in your Souls, which use to introduce and usher it into the Souls of God's Elect: Such are Illumination, Conviction, Self-despair, and Earnest Cries to God.

First, *Illumination* is a necessary Antecedent to Faith: You cannot believe till God hath opened your Eyes to see your sin, your misery by sin, and your remedy in Jesus Christ alone: You find this Act of the Spirit to be the first, in order both of Nature and Time, and introductive to all the rest, *Acts* 26. 18. *To turn them from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan to God.* As Faith without *Works* (which must be a *Consequent* to it) is *dead*, so Faith without *Light*, which must be an *Antecedent* to it, is *blind*: Faith is the *Hand* by which Christ is received, but Knowledge is the Eye by which that Hand is directed.

Well then, hath God opened your Eyes to see sin and misery in another manner than ever you saw it before? For certainly, if God have opened your Eyes by saving Illumination, you will find as great a Difference betwixt your former and present Apprehensions of Sin and Danger, as betwixt the painted *Lion* upon the Wall or Sign-Post, and the real living *Lion* that meets you roaring in the Way.

Secondly, *Conviction* is an *Antecedent* to believing: Where this goes not before, no Faith can follow after: The Spirit first convinces of sin, then of Righteousness, *Joh.* 16. 8. So *Mark* 1. 15. *Repent ye, and believe the Gospel*: Believe it, O Man, that Breast of thine must be wounded, that vain and frothy Heart of thine must be pierced and stung with Conviction, Sense and Sorrow for Sin: Thou must have some sick days and restless nights for Sin, if ever thou rightly close with Christ by Faith. 'Tis true, there is much difference found in the Strength, Depth, and Continuance of Conviction, and spiritual Troubles in Converts, as there is in the Labours and Travailing Pains of Women; but sure it is, the Child of Faith is not ordinarily born without some Pangs. Conviction is the Application of that Light which God makes to shine in our Minds, to our particular Case and Condition, by the Conscience; and sure, when Men come to see their miserable and sad Estate by a true Light, it cannot but wound them, and that to the very Heart.

Thirdly, *Self-despair*, or a total and absolute Loss in our selves about Deliverance, and the way of Escape, either by our selves, or any other meer Creature, doth, and must go before Faith.

So it was with those Believers, *Acts* 2. 37. *Men and Brethren what shall we do?* They are the Words of Men Lost: It is the Voice of poor distressed at a total Souls that saw themselves in Misery, but knew not, saw not, nor could devise any way of escape from it, by any thing they could do for themselves, or any other Creature for them: And hence the Apostle uses that Emphatical Word, *Gal.* 3. 23. *συγκεκλεισμένοι, (i. e.) shut up to the Faith,* (i. e.) as Men besieged in a Garrison in time of a Storm, when the Enemy pours in upon them through the Breaches, and over-powers them: There is but one *Sally-Port* or Gate, at which they can escape, and to that they all throng, as despairing of Life if they take any other Course. Just so do Mens Convictions besiege them, distress them, beat them off from all their Holds and Intrenchments, and bring them to a pinching distress in themselves, shutting them up to *Christ* as the only way of Escape. Duties cannot save me, Reformation cannot save me, nor Angels nor Men can save me; there is no way but one, *Christ* or Condemnation for evermore.

I thought once, that a little Repentance, Reformation, Restitution, and a stricter Life, might be a way to escape Wrath to come, but I find the Bed is too short, and the Covering too narrow: All is but Loss, Dung, Dross, in Comparison with Jesus Christ: If I trust to those *Egyptian Reeds*, they will not only fail me, but pierce and wound me too, I see no Hope within the whole *Horizon* of Sense.

Fourthly, Hence come *vehement and earnest Cries to God* for Faith, for Christ, for Help from Heaven, to transport the Soul out of this dangerous Condition, to that strong Rock of Salvation; to bring it out of this furious stormy Sea of Trouble, where it's ready to wreck every Moment, into that safe and quiet Harbour, Christ.

O when a Man shall see his Misery and Danger, and no way of escape but Christ, and that he hath no Ability in himself to come to Christ, to open his Heart thus to receive him, but that this Work of Faith is wholly supernatural, the Operation of God; how will the Soul return again and again upon God, with such Cries as that, *Mark*, 9. 24. *Lord help my Unbelief?* "Lord enable me to come "to Christ: Give me Christ or I perish for ever! "What Profit is there in my Blood? Why should "I die in the sight and presence of a Saviour? O "Lord it is thine own Work, and a most glorious "Work: Reveal thine Arm in this Work upon "my Soul, I pray thee: Give me Christ, if thou "deny me Bread: Give me Faith, if thou deny "me Breath: It's more necessary that I believe, "than that I live.

O *Reader*, Reflect upon Days and Nights that are past, the Places where thou hast been conversant: Where are the Bed-sides, or the secret Corners where thou hast besieged Heaven with such Cries? If God have thus enlightned, convinced, distressed thy Soul, and thus set thee a mourning after Christ, it will be one good Sign that Faith is come

come into thy Soul; for here are certainly the *Harbingers* and Fore-runners of it, that ordinarily make way for Faith into the Souls of Men.

Secondly, If you would be satisfied of the sincerity and truth of your Faith, then examine what *Concomitants* it is attended with in your Souls. I mean, what Frames and Tempers your Souls were in, at that time when you think you received Christ. For certainly, in those that receive Christ, (excepting those into whose Hearts God hath in a more still and insensible way infused Faith betime, by his Blessing upon pious Education) such concomitant Frames of Spirit may be remark'd, as the following.

First, The Heart is deeply *serious*, and as much in earnest in this matter, as ever it was, or can be about any thing in the World. This you see in that example of the *Jaylor*, Acts 16. 29. *He came in trembling and astonish'd:* It is the most solemn and important Matter, that ever the Soul had before it in this World, or ever shall, or can have: How much are the Hearts of Men affected in their outward Straits and Distresses, about the Concernments of the Body? Their Hearts are not a little concern'd in such Questions as these, *What shall I eat? what shall I drink?* wherewithal shall I and mine be fed and cloathed? but certainly the Straits that Souls are in about Salvation, must be allowed to be greater than these; and such Questions as that of the *Jaylors, Sirs! What must I do to be saved?* make deeper Impressions upon the Heart, than what shall I eat, or drink? Some indeed, have their Thoughts sinking deeper into these things than others: These Thoughts lie with different Degrees of Weight on Men; but all are most solemnly and wofully concerned about their Condition: All Froliness and Frolicks are gone, and the Heart sets it self in deepest earnest about its Eternal State.

Secondly, The Heart that receives Jesus Christ, is in a frame of deep *Humiliation* and Self-abasement. For when a Man begins to apprehend the first Approaches of Grace, Pardon and Mercy by Jesus Christ to his Soul: A Soul convinced of its utter unworthiness and Desert of Hell; and can scarce expect any thing else from the just and holy God but Damnation, how do the first Dawnings of Mercy melt and humble it! "O Lord, what am I that thou shouldest feed me and preserve me! that thou shouldest but for a few years spare me, and forbear me! but that ever Jesus Christ should love me, and give himself for me, that such a wretched Sinner as I, should obtain Union with his Person, Peace and Salvation by his Blood! Lord, whence is this to such a Worm as I? and will Christ indeed bestow himself upon me? shall so great a blessing as Christ ever come within the Arms of such a Soul as mine? will God in very deed be reconciled to me in his Son? what to me! to such an Enemy as I have been! shall my Sins which are so many, so horrid, so much aggravated beyond the sins of most Men, be forgiven me? O what am I vile Dust! base Wretch, that ever God should do this for me! And how is that Scripture fulfill'd and made good, *Ezek.* 16. 63. *That thou maist remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified towards thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God.* Is that poor broken hearted Believer stood before Christ weeping, and washing his Feet with Tears, as one quite melted down, and overcome with the Sense of Mercy to such a Vile Sinner, Luk. 7. 38.

Thirdly, The Soul that receives Jesus Christ is in a *weary Condition*, restless and full of Disquietness, neither able to bear the Burden of Sin, nor knowing how to be discharged from it, except Christ will give it ease, *Mat.* 11. 28. *Come unto me*, that is, believe in me, *you that are weary and heavy laden*: If they do not look into their own Souls, they know there's no *Safety*, and if they do, there's no *Comfort*. O the burdensome Sense of sin overweighs them; they are ready to fall, to sink under it.

Fourthly, The Soul that rightly receives Christ is not only in a weary, but in a *longing Condition*: Never did the *Hart* pant more earnestly for the Water-brooks: Never did the *Hireling* desire the Shadow: Never did a *condemned Person* long for a Pardon, more than the Soul longs after Jesus Christ. O said *David*, that one would give me of the Waters of *Bethlehem* to drink. O saith the poor humbled Sinner, that one would give me of the open'd Fountain of the Blood of Christ to drink! O for one drop of that precious Blood! O for one encouraging Smile from Christ! O now were ten thousand Worlds at my Command, and Christ to be bought, how freely would I lay them all down to purchase him! but he is the *gift* of God. O that God would give me Christ, if I should go in Rags, and hunger and thirst all my days in this World!

Fifthly, The Soul in the time of its closing with, or receiving Christ, is in a *state of Conflict*: It hangs between Hopes and Fears, Encouragements and Discouragements, which occasions many a sad stand and pause in the way to Christ; sometimes the number and nature of its sins discourage it, then the Riches and Freeness of the Grace of Christ, erects his Hopes again: There's little hope, saith Unbelief, nay, it's utterly impossible, saith *Satan*, as ever such a Wretch as thou should find Mercy; now the Hands hang down. O but then there's a Necessity, an absolute Necessity; I have not the Choice of two, but am shut up to one way of Deliverance: Others have found Mercy, and the Invitation is to all that are weary, and to all that are a thirst: He saith, he that cometh to him, he will in no wise cast out; now new Hopes inspire the Soul, and the Hands that did hang down are again strengthened.

These are the *Concomitant Frames* that accompany Faith.

3. *Mark* Lastly, Examine the *Consequents* and Effects of Faith, if you would be satisfied of the truth and sincerity of it: And such are,

First, *Evangelical meltings*, and ingenuous thawings of the Heart under the Apprehensions of Grace and Mercy: *Zech.* 12. 10. *They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and shall mourn.*

Secondly, *Love to Christ, his ways and people*, Gal. 5. 6. *Faith worketh by love*, (i. e.) it represents the Love of God, and then makes use of the sweetness of it by way of Argument, to constrain the Soul to all Acts of Obedience, wherein it may testifie the reality of its Love to God and Christ.

Thirdly, Heart *Purity*, Acts 15. 9. *Purifying their hearts by faith*: it doth not only cleanse the *hands* but the *heart*: no Principle in Man besides Faith can do this: Morality may hide Corruption, but Faith only *purifies* the Heart from it.

Fourthly, *Obedience* to the commands of Christ, *Rom.* 16. 26. the very Name of Faith is call'd upon Obedience: for it accepts *Christ* as Lord, and urges upon the Soul the most powerful Arguments in the World, to draw it to Obedience.

In a Word, let the poor doubting Believer, that questions his Faith, reflect upon those things that are unquestionable in his own Experience, which being well considered, will greatly tend to his Satisfaction in this point.

Its very doubtful to you whether you believe, but yet in the mean while, it may be past Doubt, (being a matter of clear Experience) that you have been deeply convinced of Sin, struck off from all carnal Props and Refuges, made willing to accept Jesus Christ upon any Terms soever you might enjoy him: You doubt whether Christ be yours, but its past doubt that you have a most high and precious esteem of Christ, that you heartily long for him, that you prize and love all, whether persons or things, that bears his Image: that nothing in the World would please your Hearts-like a Transformation into his Likeness, that you had rather your Souls should be fill'd with his Spirit, than your Houses with Gold and Silver. 'Tis doubtful whether Christ be yours, but its past doubt that one Smile from Christ, one Token of his Love, would do you more good than all the Honours and Smiles of the World; and nothing so grieves you, as your grieving him by sin doth: You dare not say that you have received him, nor can you deny but that you have had many sick days and nights for him: that you have gone into many secret Places with yearning Bowels after him: whether he be yours or not, you cannot tell; but that you are resolved to be his, that you can tell: whether he will save you is a Doubt, but that you resolve to live at his Feet, and wait only on him, and never look to another for Salvation, is no Doubt.

Well, well; poor pensive Soul, if it be so, arise, lift up thy dejected Head, take thine own Christ into thy Arms. These are undoubted Signs of a real Closure with Christ: thou makest thy self poor, and yet hast great Riches: such things as these are not found in them that despise and reject Christ by Unbelief.

3. *Use of Exhortation.*

3. *Use.* This Point is likewise very improveable by way of Exhortation, and that both to

Unbelievers and

Believers.

First, to Unbelievers, who from hence must be prest, as ever they expect to see the Face of God in Peace, to receive Jesus Christ as he is now offered to them in the Gospel: this is the very Scope of the Gospel, I shall therefore press it by three great Considerations, *viz.*

First, What is in Christ whom you are to receive.

Secondly, What is in the offer of Christ by the Gospel.

Thirdly, What is in the rejecting of that offer.

First Motive.

First, Consider well what is in Christ whom I perswade you this day to receive: did you know what is in Christ, you would never neglect or reject him as you do: For,

First, God is in Christ, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. the Deity hath chosen to dwell in his flesh, he is God manifest in flesh, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. a Godhead dwelling in flesh is the Worlds wonder: so that in receiving Christ, you receive God himself.

Secondly, The *Authority* of God is in Christ, *Exod.* 23. 21. *My name is in him*: *him hath God the father sealed*, Joh. 6. 27. he hath the Commission, the great Seal of Heaven to redeem and save you: all Power in Heaven and Earth is given to him, *Mat.* 28. 18. he comes in his Fathers name to you, as well as in his own name.

Thirdly, The Wisdom of God is in Christ, 1 *Cor.* 1. 24. *Christ the wisdom of God*: yea, *in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, Col. 2. 3. Never did the Wisdom of God display it self before the Eyes of Angels and Men as it hath done in Christ. The *Angels desire to look into it*, 1 Pet. 1. 12. yet they are not so much concerned in the project and design of this Wisdom in Redemption as you are.

Fourthly, The *fulness of the Spirit* is in Christ; yea, it fills him so as it never did or will fill any Creature, *Joh.* 3. 34. *God giveth not the Spirit by measure to him*: all others have their limits, stints, and measures; some more, some less; but the Spirit is in Christ without measure. O how lovely and desirable are those Men that have a large measure of the Spirit in them! but he is anointed with the Spirit of Holiness *above all his fellows*, Psal. 45. 2, 7. Whatever Grace is found in all the Saints which makes them desirable and lovely, Wisdom in one, Faith in another, Patience in a third; they all centre in Christ as the Rivers doin the Sea: *quæ faciunt divisa beatum, in hoc mista fluunt.*

Fifthly, The *Righteousness of God* is in Christ, by which only a poor guilty Sinner can be justified before God, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. we are made the Righteousness of God in him: he is יהוה צדקנו the Lord our Righteousness, *Jer.* 23. 6. (*i. e.*) the Author of our Righteousness, or the Lord who justifies us: by that Name he shall be known and call'd by his People, than which none can be sweeter. (i. e.) *Auctor justitiæ nostræ.* Calv. in Loc.

Sixthly, *The love of God* is in Christ: yea, the very yearning bowels of Divine Love are in him: what is Christ but the Love of God wrapt up in flesh and blood? 1 *Joh.* 4. 9, 10. *In this was manifested the love of God towards us*, and herein is Love that God sent his Son: this is the highest flight that ever Divine Love made, and higher than this it cannot mount. O Love, unparallell'd and admirable!

Seventhly, *The Mercies and Compassions* of God are all in Christ, *Jude v.* 21. Mercy is the thing that poor Sinners want, its that they cry for at the last Gasp, its the only thing that can do them good. O what would they give to find Mercy in that great Day? Why, if you receive Christ, you shall with him receive Mercy: but out of him there is no Mercy to be expected from the hands of God, for God will never exercise Mercy to the prejudice of his Justice, and it is in Christ that Justice and Mercy meet and embrace each other.

Eighthly, To conclude, *The Salvations of God* are in Christ. *Acts* 4. 12. *Neither is there Salvation in any other.* Christ is the *Door* of Salvation, and Faith is the *Key* that opens that Door to Men. If you therefore believe not, (*i. e.*) if you so receive not Jesus Christ as God hath offer'd him, you exclude your selves from all hopes of Salvation. The Devils have as much ground to expect Salvation as you: You see what is in Christ to induce you to receive him.

Motive 2.

Next, I beseech you consider what there is in the *offer* of Christ to Sinners, to induce you to receive him. Consider well to *whom*, and *how* Christ is offered in the Gospel.

First, To *whom* he is offered: not to the fallen *Angels*, but to you: they lie in Chains of Darkness, *Jude v.* 6. as he took not their nature, so he delights

not their Recovery; and therefore will have no treaty at all with them: but he is offered to you, Creatures of an inferior rank and order by Nature: nor is he offered to the *damned*, the Treaty of Peace is ended with them. Christ will never make them another tender of Salvation: nor is he offered to Millions of Millions as good as you now living in the World: the sound of *Christ* and *Salvation* is not come to their Ears; but he is offered to you by the special favour and Bounty of Heaven, and will you not receive him? O then how will the Devils, the Damned, and the Heathens upbraid your Folly! and say, had we had one such tender of Mercy, of which you have had Thousands, we would never have been now in this place of Torments.

Secondly, Consider *how* Christ is offered to you, and you shall find that he is offered,

First, Freely *as the Gift of God* to your Souls: you are not to *purchase* him, but only to *receive* him, Isa. 55. 1. *Ho, every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters, and he that hath no Money let him come*, &c.

Secondly, Christ is offered importunately by repeated intreaties, 2 Cor. 5. 20. *As though God did beseech you, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.* O what amazing condescension is here in the God of Mercy! God now beseeches you, will you not yield to the intreaties of your God? O then what wilt thou say for thy self, when God will not hear thee, when thou shalt intreat and cry for Mercy? Which brings us to the

Motive 3.

Consider the sin and danger that there is in refusing or neglecting the present offers of Christ in the Gospel, and surely there is much sin in it: the very malignity of sin, and the sum of all Misery, lies here: for in refusing Christ,

First, You put the greatest contempt and slight upon all the Attributes of God that it is possible for a Creature to do: God hath made his Justice, his Mercy, his Wisdom, and all his Attributes, to shine in their brightest Glory in Christ: never was there such a display of the glory of God made to the World in any other way.

O then, what is it to reject and despise Jesus Christ, but to offer the greatest Affront to the glory of God that it is possible for Men to put upon him?

Secondly, You hereby frustrate and evacuate the very design and importance of the Gospel to your selves, you *receive the grace of God in vain*, 2 Cor. 6. 1. as good, yea, better had it been for you, that Christ had never come into the World, or if he had, that your Lot had fallen in the dark places of the Earth, where you had never heard his name: yea, good had it been for that Man if he had never been born.

Thirdly, Hereby a Man murthers his own Soul. *I said therefore unto you, that you shall die in your sins; for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins*, Joh. 8. 24. unbelief is Self-murther: You are guilty of the Blood of your own Souls: Life and Salvation was offered you, and you rejected it: yea,

Fourthly, The refusing of Christ by unbelief will aggravate your Damnation, above all others that perish in ignorance of Christ. O 'twill be more tolerable for Heathens than for you: the greatest measures of Wrath are reserved to punish the worst of Sinners, and among Sinners none will be found worse than Unbelievers.

Secondly, To Believers, this point is very useful to perswade them to divers excellent Duties: among which I shall single out two principal ones,

1. To bring up their Faith of Acceptance, to the Faith of Assurance.

2. To bring up their Conversations to the Principles and Rules of Faith.

First, You that have received Jesus Christ truly, give your selves no rest till you are fully satisfied that you have done so, Acceptance brings you to Heaven hereafter, but Assurance will bring Heaven into your Souls now. O what a Life of delight and pleasure doth the assured believer live! What Pleasure is it to him to look back and consider where once he was, and where he now is: to look forward and consider where he now is! and where shortly he shall be! I was in my sins, I am now in Christ, I am in Christ now, I shall be with Christ, and that for ever, after a few Days. I was upon the brink of Hell, I am now upon the very borders of Heaven; I shall be in a little while among the innumerable company of Angels and glorified Saints, bearing part with them in the Song of *Moses*, and of the Lamb, for evermore.

And why may not you, that have received Christ, receive the comfort of your Union with him? There be all the grounds and helps of Assurance furnish'd to your hand: there is a real Union betwixt Christ and your Souls, which is the very ground-work of Assurance: You have the Scriptures before you which contain the signs of Faith, and the very things within you that answer those signs in the Word. So you read, and so, just so you might feel it in your your own Hearts, would you attend to your own Experience. The Spirit of God is ready to seal you, 'tis his Office and his Delight so to do. O therefore give diligence to this Work, attend the study of the Scriptures, and of your own Hearts more, and grieve not the holy Spirit of God, and you may arrive to the very desire of your Hearts.

Viget apud nos spei immobilis virtus & firmitas Cypr. Sermone de patientia.

Secondly, Bring up your Conversations to the excellent Principles and Rules of Faith. *As you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him*, Col. 2. 6. live as you believe: you received Christ sincerely in your first Close with him, O maintain the like seriousness and sincerity in all your ways to the end of your lives: you received him intirely and *undividedly* at first, let there be no Exceptions against any of his commands afterward: You received him *exclusively* to all others; see that you watch against all Self righteousness and Self-conceitedness now, and mingle nothing of your own with his Blood, whatever gifts or enlargements in Duty God shall give you afterwards.

You received him *advisedly* at first, weighing and considering the Self-denying Terms upon which he was offered to you, O shew that it was real, and that you see no Cause to repent the Bargain, whatever you shall meet with in the ways of Christ and Duty afterwards. Convince the World of your Constancy and Chearfulness in all your Sufferings for Christ, that you are still of the same Mind you were, and that Christ with his Cross, Christ with a Prison, Christ with the greatest Afflictions, is worthy of all Acceptation: *As you have received him, so walk ye in him*; let him be as sweet, as lovely, as precious to you now, as he was the first Moment you received him: yea, let your Love to him, Delights in him, and Self-denial for him, increase with your Acquaintance with him Day by Day.

Use of Direction.

Use. Lastly, I will close all with a few Words of *Directions* to all that are made willing to receive the

Lord Jesus Christ: and sure it is but need that help were given to poor Christians in this Matter. it is a time of trouble, fear, and great Temptation: Mistakes are easily made, and of dangerous Consequence: attend heedfully therefore to a few Directions.

Direct. 1. First, In your receiving Christ, *beware you do not mistake the means, for the end*: many do so, but see you do not: Prayer, Sermons, Reformations, are means to bring you to Christ, but they are not Christ: To close with those Duties is one thing, and to close with Christ is another thing: If I go into a *Boat*, my Design is not to dwell there, but to be carried to the Place whereon I desire to be landed. So it must be in this Case, all your Duties must land you upon Christ; they are but means to bring you to Christ.

Direct 2. Secondly, *See that you receive not Christ for a present Shift, but for your everlasting Portion*: Many do so, they will enquire after Christ, pray for Christ, cast themselves (in their way) upon Christ, and the Satisfaction of his Blood; when the efficacy and terror of Conscience is upon them; and they feel the sting of guilt within them: but as soon as the Storm is over, and the Rod that Conscience shak'd over them laid by, there's no more talk of Christ then: Alas, it was not Christ, but Quietness that they sought: beware of mistaking peace for Christ.

Direct. 3. Thirdly, *In receiving Christ come empty handed unto him*: *believing in him that justifies the ungodly*, Rom. 4. 5. and know that the deepest Sense of your own Vileness, Emptiness and Unworthiness, is the best frame of Heart that can accompany you to Christ: Many Persons stand off from Christ for want of fit Qualifications, they are not prepared for Christ as they should be, (*i. e.*) they would not come naked and empty, but have something to commend them to the Lord Jesus for Acceptance. O this is the pride of Mens Hearts, and the snare of the Devil: let him that hath no Money come: You are not to come to Christ because you are qualified, but that you may be qualified with whatever you want, and the best Qualification you can bring with you, is a deep Sense that you have no worth nor excellency at all in you.

Direct. 4. Fourthly, *In receiving Christ, beware of dangerous Delays.* O follow on that Work till it be finished: You read of some that are almost perswaded, and others not far from the Kingdom of God. O take heed of Sickness in the Birth, *Hosea* 13. 13. Delays here are full of Danger, Life is uncertain, so are means of Grace too. The Manslayer needed no Motives to quicken his flight to the Refuge City.

Direct. 5 Fifthly, *See that you receive all Christ with all your Heart*: to receive all Christ, is to receive his Person cloathed with all his Offices; and to receive him with all your Heart, is to receive him into your Understanding, Will, and Affections, *Acts* 8. 37. As there is nothing in Christ that may be refused, so there is nothing in you from which he must be excluded.

Direct. 6. Lastly, Understand that the opening of your Hearts to receive the Lord Jesus Christ, is not a Work done by any Power of your own, but the Arm of the Lord is revealed therein, *Isa.* 53. 1. It is therefore your Duty and Interest to be daily at the Feet of God, pouring out your Souls to him in secret, for Abilities to believe. And so much as to our actual Reception of Christ.

Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ.

SERMON VIII.

PSALM XLV. vii.

——Therefore God thy God, hath anointed thee with the Oyl of Gladness above thy Fellows.

Sermon 8. Text. Setting forth the Believers Fellowship with Christ, the the next end of his Application to them.

THE Method of Grace in uniting Souls with Jesus Christ, hath been opened in the former Discourses; thus doth the Spirit (whose Office it is) make Application of Christ to God's Elect: The Result and next Fruit whereof is *Communion* with Christ in his Graces and Benefits. Our *Mystical Union* is the very Ground work and Foundation of our sweet Soul enriching *Communion*, and participation of spiritual Privileges; we are first ingrafted into Christ, and then suck the Sap and Fatness of the Root: First married to the Person of Christ, then endowed and enstated in the Privileges and Benefits of Christ. This is my proper Work to open at this time, and from this Scripture.

The Words read, are a part of that excellent *Song of Love*, that heavenly *Epithalamium*, wherein the spiritual Espousals of Christ and the Church are figuratively, and very elegantly celebrated and shadowed. The subject Matter of this Psalm is the very same with the whole Book of the *Canticles*: And in this Psalm, under the Figure of *King Solomon*, and the Daughter of *Egypt* whom he espoused, the spiritual Espousals of Christ and the Church are set forth and represented to us. Among many rapturous and elegant Expressions in Praise of this glorious Bridegroom Christ, this is one which you have before you: *God thy God hath anointed thee with the Oyl of Gladness above thy Fellows*: (i. e.) enriched and fill'd thee in a singular and peculiar manner with the fulness of the Spirit, whereby thou art consecrated to thy Office; and by reason whereof, thou out-shinest and excellest all the Saints, who are thy *Fellows* or Co-partners in these Graces. So that in these Words you have two Parts. *Viz.*

First, The Saints *Dignity*, and
Secondly, Christ's *Pre-eminency.*

First, The Saints *Dignity*, which consists in this, that they are Christ's *Fellows*, the *Hebrew* Word---- חבריך is very full and copious, and is translated Consorts, Companions, Co-partners, Partakers; or, as our sread it, *Fellows*: (*i.e.*) such as are Partakers with him in the anointing of the Spirit: Who do in their Measure receive the same Spirit, every Christian being anointed, *modo sibi proportionato*, with the same Grace, and dignified with the same Titles 1 *Joh.* 2. 27. *Rev.*

Hic Psalmus propheticus est, continetque Epithalamium quo Christi cum ecclesia nuptiæ celebrantur idemq; habet argumentum quod canticum canticorum ejusq; videtur esse Epitome. Coc. in Loc.

Consortes, participes, sodales, socios. Vox Hebræa quodcunq; societatis sive communionis genus significat. Muis

Rev. 1. 6. Christ and the Saints are in common one with another: Doth the Spirit of Holiness dwell in him? So it doth in them too: Is Christ *King* and *Priest*? Why, so are they too by the Grace of Union with him. He hath made us Kings and Priests to God, and his Father. This is the Saints Dignity to be Christ's Fellows, Consorts, or Co-partners: So that look whatever Grace or Excellency is in Christ, it is not impropriated to himself, but they do share with him; for indeed he was fill'd with the fulness of the Spirit for their Sakes and Use: As the Sun is fill'd with Light not to shine to it self, but to others, so is Christ with Grace: And therefore some translate the Text not *præ consortibus*, above thy Fellows, but *propter consortes*, for thy Fellows: Making Christ the first Receptacle of Grace, who first and immediately is fill'd from the Fountain the Godhead, but it is for his People who receive and derive from him according to their Proportion.

Rivet.

This is a great Truth, and the Dignity of the Saints lies chiefly in their Partnership with Christ, tho' our Translation *above thy Fellows* suits best both with the importance of the Word, and Scope of the Place.

Secondly, But then, whatever *Dignity* is ascribed herein to the Saints, there is, and still must be, a *Pre-eminency* acknowledged and ascribed to Christ: If they are anointed with the Spirit of Grace, much more abundantly is Christ: *God thy God, hath anointed thee with the Oil of Gladness above thy Fellows.*

By the *Oil of Gladness*, understand the Spirit of Holiness: Compared here with Oil, of which there was a double use under the Law, *viz.* a *civil*, and a *sacred* Use: It had a sacred and a solemn use in the Inauguration, and Consecration of the Jewish Kings, and High-Priests: It had also a civil and common Use, for the anointing their Bodies, to make their Limbs more agile, expedite and nimble: To make the Face shine, for it gave Lustre, Freshness, and Liveliness to the Countenance: It was also used in Lamps, to feed and maintain the Fire, and give them Light: These were the principal uses of Oil. Now, upon all these Accounts, it excellently expresseth, and figuratively represents to us the Spirit of Grace poured forth upon Christ and his People: For,

Oleum ipsum est limpidum & pellucidum & flammis fomentum & alimoniam suppeditat; unde sumpta metaphora unctore in scriptura sæpe significat spiritu sancto intus animum illustrare, & accendere in eo veram agnitionem dei & motus congruentes cum deo. Mollerus in Loc.

First, by the Spirit poured out upon him, he was prepared for, and consecrated to his Offices: He was anointed with the Holy Ghost, and with Power, *Acts* 10. 38.

Secondly, As this precious Oil runs down from Christ the Head to the Borders of his Garments: I mean, as it is shed upon Believers, so it exceedingly beautifies their Faces, and makes them shine with Glory.

Thirdly, It renders them apt, expedite and ready every good Work: *Non tardat uncta rota.*

Fourthly, It kindles and maintains the Flames of Divine Love in their Souls; and like a Lamp, enlightens their Minds in the Knowledge of Spiritual things the anointing teaches them.

Unum ἀγαλλίασιν· dicitur quod causam det summi gaudii. Grot. in Heb. 1. 9. τῆς ἡμῶν εἰς τὸν θεὸν καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος καὶ ἡμῶν κοινωνίας,

And this Oil is here call'd *the Oil of Gladness*, because it is the cause of all Joy and Gladness to them that are anointed with it: Oil was used (as you heard before) at the Installment of Soveraign Princes, which was the Day of the Gladness of their Hearts: And among the common People it was liberally used at all their *Festivals*, but never upon their Days of mourning: Whence it becomes excellently expressive of the nature and use of the Spirit of Grace, who is the cause and Author of all Joy in Believers, *Joh.* 17. 13.

And with this Oil of Gladness is Christ said to be anointed *above his Fellows* (i. e.) to have a far greater share of the Spirit of Grace than they: *For to every one of the Saints is given Grace according to the measure of the Gift of Christ*, Eph. 4. 7. But to him the Spirit is not given by Measure, *Joh.* 3. 24. *It hath pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell*, Col. 1. 19. OEcum. and *of his fulness we all receive Grace for Grace*, John 1. 16. The Saints partake with him, and through him, in the same Spirit of Grace, for which reason they are his Fellows; but all the Grace poured out upon Believers, comes exceeding short of that which God hath poured out upon Jesus Christ. The Words being thus opened, give us this Note.

Doct. *That all true Believers have a real Communion or Fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ.*

From the Saints Union with Christ, there doth naturally and immediately result a most sweet and blessed Communion or Fellowship with him in Graces and spiritual Privileges, *Eph.* 1. 3. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual Blessings in heavenly Places* (or things) *in Christ*: *In giving us his Son, he freely gives us all things*, Rom. 8. 32. So in 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. *Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption*: And once more, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22, 23. *all are yours, and ye are Christs*: What Christ is, and hath is theirs by communication to them, or improvement for them: And this is very evidently carried in all those excellent Scripture Metaphors, by which our Union with Christ is figured and shadowed out to us: As the *Marriage-Union* betwixt a Man and his Wife, *Eph.* 5. 31. 32. You know that this conjugal Union gives the Wife Interest in the Estate and Honour of the Husband, be she never so meanly descended in her self: The *natural Union* betwixt the Head and Members of the Body, by which also the Mystical Union of Christ and Believers is set forth, 1 *Cor.* 12. 12. excellently illustrates Fellowship or Communion betwixt them: For from Christ *the whole Body fitly joined together, and compact, by that which every Joint supplieth according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the Body*, as the Apostle speaks, *Eph.* 4. 6. The Union betwixt the Graff and the Stock, which is another Emblem of our Union with Christ, *Joh.* 15. 1. imports in like manner this Communion or Partnership betwixt Christ and the Saints. For no sooner doth the Graffe take hold of the Stock, but the vital Sap of the Stock is communicated to the Graff, and both live by one and the same Juice.

Ubi ego Cajus tu Caja. Uxor clarescit in radiis mariti.

Now that the Scope of this Discourse be not mistaken, let the Reader know that I am not here treating of the Saints Communion or Fellowship with God in Duties, as in Prayer, Hearing, Sacraments, &c. but of that Interest which Believers have in the good things of Christ, by Vertue of the Mystical Union betwixt them through Faith: There is a twofold Communion of the Saints with Christ.

The first is an *Act.*
The second is a *State.*

There is an actual Fellowship or Communion the Saints have with Christ in holy Duties: Wherein Christians let forth their Hearts to God by desires, and God lets forth his Comforts and Refreshments again into their Hearts: They open their Mouths wide, and he fills them: This Communion with God is the Joy and Comfort of a Believers Life: But I am not to speak of that here. It is not any *Act* of Communion, but the *State* of Communion, from which all Acts of Communion flow, and upon which they all depend, that I am now to treat of: Which is nothing else but the joynt Interest that Christ and the Saints have in the same things: As when a Ship, an House, or Estate, is among many Partners, or Joint-Heirs, every one of them hath a right to it, and interest in it, tho' some of them have a greater, and others a lesser part. So is it betwixt Christ and his People: There is a κοινωνία (*i. e.*) a Fellowship or Joint-interest betwixt them, upon which Ground they are call'd *Co-heirs with Christ*, Rom. 8. 17. This Communion or Participation in Christ's Benefits depends upon the *Hypostatical* Union of our Nature, and the *Mystical Union* of our Persons with the Son of God: In the first he partakes with us, in the second we partake with him; the former is the remote, the later the next cause thereof.

In the Explication of this Point, I shall speak to these four things.

1. What are those things in which Christ and Believers have Fellowship.
2. By what means they come to have such Fellowship with Christ.
3. How great a Dignity this is to have Fellowship with Jesus Christ.
4. And then apply the whole in divers practical Inferences.

First, What are those things in which Christ and Believers have Fellowship, to which I must speak both *negatively* and *positively*.

First, The Saints have no Fellowship with Jesus Christ in those things that belong to him as God: Such as his consubstantiality, coequality, and coeternity with the Father: 'Tis the Blasphemy of the wicked *Familists* to talk of being Godded into God, and Christed into Christ: Neither Men or Angels partake in these things, they are the proper and incommunicable Glory of the Lord Jesus.

Negatively.

Secondly, The Saints have no Communion or Fellowship in the Honour and Glory of his *mediatory Works*, viz. his Satisfaction to God, or Redemption of the Elect. 'Tis true we have the Benefit and Fruit of his Mediation and Satisfaction, his Righteousness also is imputed to us for our personal Justification, but we share not in the least with Christ in the glory of his Work: Nor have we an inherent Righteousness in us as Christ hath, to justifie us after as Christ hath; nor can we justifie and save others as Christ doth: We have nothing to do with his peculiar Honour and Praise in these things: Tho' we have the Benefit of being saved, we may not pretend to the Honour of being Saviours, as Christ is to our selves or others. Christ's Righteousness is not made ours as to its universal Value, but as to our particular Necessity: nor is it imputed to us as to so many Causes of Salvation to others, but as to so many Subjects to be saved by it our selves.

Justitia Christi sit nostra, non quoad universalem valorem sed particularem necessitatem, & imputatur nobis non ut causis salvationis, sed ut subjectis salvandis. Bradshaw de justificatione.

Secondly, But then, there are many glorious and excellent things which are in common betwixt Christ and Believers, tho' in them all he hath the pre-eminence, he shines in the fulness of them as the *Sun*, and we with a borrowed and lesser Light, but of the same kind and nature as the Stars. Some of these I shall particularly and briefly unfold in the following particulars.

First, Believers have communion with Christ in his *Names* and *Titles*: they are call'd Christians from Christ, *Eph.* 3. 15. from him the whole Family in Heaven and Earth is named: this is that worthy name the Apostle speaks of, *James* 2. 7. He is the Son of God, and they also, by their Union with him, have Power or Authority to become the Sons of God, *Joh.* 1. 12. He is the Heir of all things, and they are joynt Heirs with him, *Rom.* 8. 17. He is both King and Priest, and he hath made them Kings and Priests, *Rev.* 1. 6. but they do not only partake in the Names and Titles, but this communion consists in things as well as Titles: and therefore,

Secondly, They have communion with him in his *Righteousness*, (i. e.) the Righteousness of Christ is made theirs, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. and he is *the Lord our Righteousness*, Jer. 23. 6. 'Tis true, the Righteousness of Christ is not inherent in us, as it is in him; but it is ours by Imputation, *Rom.* 4. 5, 11. and our Union with him is the ground of the Imputation of his Righteousness to us, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. *We are made the righteousness of God in him*, Phil. 3. 9. for Christ and Believers are considered as one Person, in construction of Law; as a Man and his Wife, a *Debtor* and *Surety* are one: and so his Payment or Satisfaction is in our Name, or upon our Account.

Now this is a most inestimable Privilege, the very ground of all our other Blessings and Mercies. O what a Benefit is this to a poor Sinner, that owes to God infinitely more than he is ever able to pay by doing or suffering; to have such a rich treasure of *Merit* as lies in the Obedience of Christ, to discharge in one intire Payment all his Debts to the last Farthing? *Surely shall one say, In the Lord I have righteousness*, Isa. 45. 24. even as a poor Woman that owes more than she is worth, in one Moment is discharged of all her Obligations, by her Marriage to a wealthy Man.

Thirdly, Believers have communion with Christ in his *Holiness* or Sanctification, for of God he is made unto them not only Righteousness, but *Sanctification* also: and as in the former Privilege, they have a stock of Merit in the Blood of Christ to justifie them, so here they have the Spirit of Christ to sanctifie them, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. and therefore we are said of his fulness to receive *grace for grace*. Joh. 1. 16. (*i. e.*) say some, Grace upon Grace, manifold Graces, or abundance of Grace: or *Grace for Grace*; that is, Grace answerable to Grace: as in the Seal and Wax, there is Line for Line, and Cut for Cut exactly answerable to each other: or Grace for Grace, that is, say others, the free Grace of God in Christ, for the Sanctification or filling of our Souls with Grace: be it in which Sense it will it shews the Communion Believers have with Jesus Christ in Grace and Holiness. Now Holiness is the most precious thing in the World, its the Image of God, and chief Excellency of Man: it is our evidence for Glory, yea, and the First-fruits of Glory; in Christ dwells the fulness of Grace, and from him

our Head it is derived and communicated to us: thus he that ſanctifieth, and they that are ſanctified, are all of one, *Heb.* 2. 11. You would think it no ſmall Privilege to have Bags of Gold to go to, and enrich your ſelves with, and yet that were but a very trifle in compariſon to have Chriſt's Righteouſneſs and Holineſs to go to for your Juſtification and Sanctification. More particularly,

Fourthly, Believers have communion with Chriſt *in his Death*: they die with him, *Gal.* 2. 20. *I am crucified with Chriſt*, (i. e.) the death of Chriſt hath a real killing and mortifying influence upon the Luſts and Corruptions of my Heart and Nature: true it is he died for ſin one way, and we die to ſin another way: he died to *expiate* it, we die to it when we *mortifie* it: the death of Chriſt is the death of ſin in Believers: and this is a very glorious Privilege: for the death of ſin is the life of your Souls: if ſin do not die in you by Mortification, you muſt die for ſin by eternal Damnation: if Chriſt had not died, the Spirit of God, by which you now mortifie the Deeds of the Body, could not have been given unto you: then you muſt have lived Vaſſals to your ſins, and died at laſt in your ſins: but the Fruit, Efficacy and Benefit of Chriſt's death is yours, for the killing thoſe ſins in you which elſe had been your ruine.

Fifthly, Believers have communion with Chriſt *in his life and reſurrection* from the dead: as he roſe from the dead, ſo do they; and that by the power and influence of his *Vivification* and Reſurrection: 'tis the Spirit of Life which is in Chriſt Jeſus that makes us free from the Law of ſin and death, *Rom.* 8. 2. our ſpiritual Life is from Chriſt, *Eph.* 2. 1. *And you hath he quickened who were dead in Treſpaſſes and ſins*: and hence Chriſt is ſaid to live in the Believer, *Gal.* 2. 20. *Now I live, yet not I; but Chriſt liveth in me*: and it is no ſmall Privilege to partake of the very Life of Chriſt, which is the moſt excellent Life that ever any Creature can live: yet ſuch is the Happineſs of all the Saints, the Life of Chriſt is manifeſt in them, and ſuch a Life as ſhall never ſee Death.

Sixthly, To conclude, Believers have Fellowſhip with Jeſus Chriſt *in his Glory*, which they ſhall enjoy with him: they ſhall be *ever with the Lord*, 1 Theſ. 4. 17. and that's not all, (tho' as one ſaith, it were a kind of Heaven but to look through the Key-hole, and have but a glimpſe of Chriſt's bleſſed Face) but they ſhall partake of the Glory which the Father hath given him, for ſo he ſpeaks, *Joh.* 17. 22, 24. and more particularly, they ſhall ſit with him in his Throne, *Rev.* 3. 21. and when he comes to Judge the World, he will come to be glorified in the Saints, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 10. So that you ſee what glorious and ineſtimable things are and will be in common betwixt Chriſt and the Saints. His Titles, his Righteouſneſs, his Holineſs, his Death, his Life, his Glory. I do not ſay that Chriſt will make any Saint equal with him in Glory: That's impoſſible, he will be known from all the Saints in Heaven, as the Sun is diſtinguiſhed from the Stars; but they ſhall partake of his Glory, and be fill'd with Joy there; and thus you ſee what thoſe things are that the Saints have Fellowſhip with Chriſt in.

Secondly, Next I would open the Way and Means, by which we come to have Fellowſhip with Jeſus Chriſt in theſe excellent Privileges; and this I ſhall do briefly in the following Poſitions.

Poſition 1.

Firſt, *No Man hath Fellowſhip with Chriſt in any ſpecial ſaving Privilege by Nature, howſoever it be cultivated or improved; but only by Faith uniting him to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt: 'Tis not the Privilege of our firſt, but ſecond Birth.* This is plain from *Joh.* 1. 12, 13. *But to as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God, even to as many as believed on his Name, who are born not of fleſh, nor of blood, nor of the will of man, but of God.* We are by Nature Children of Wrath, *Eph.* 2. 3. we have Fellowſhip with *Satan* in ſin and miſery: the wild Branch hath no Communication of the ſweetneſs and fatneſs of a more noble and excellent Root, until it be ingrafted upon it, and have immediate Union and Coalition with it, *Joh.* 15. 1, 2.

Soli verè fideles ſunt membra Chriſti, idq; non quatenus homines, ſed quatenus Chriſtiani: nec ſecundum primam generationem, ſed ſecundum regenerationem. Polanus Syntag. lib 6. cap. 35.

Poſition 2.

Believers themſelves have not an equal ſhare one with another, in all the Benefits and Privileges of their Union with Chriſt, but in ſome there is an Equality, and in others an Inequality; according to the Meaſure and Gift of Chriſt, to every one.

In Juſtification they are all equal: The weak and the ſtrong Believer are alike juſtified, becauſe it is one and the ſame perfect Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, which is applied to the one and to the other, ſo that there are no different Degrees of Juſtification, but all that believe are juſtified from all things, *Acts* 13. 39. and there is no Condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus, *Rom.* 8. 1. be they never ſo weak in Faith, or defective in Degrees of Grace. But there is apparent difference in the meaſures of their Sanctification, ſome are ſtrong Men, and others are Babes in Chriſt, 1 *Cor.* 3. 1. The Faith of ſome flouriſhes and grows exceedingly, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 3. the things that are in others are ready to dye, *Rev.* 3. 2. It's a plain Caſe, that there is great Variety found in the Degrees of Grace and Comfort among them that are jointly intereſted in Chriſt, and equally juſtified by him.

Poſition 3.

The Saints have not Fellowſhip and Communion with Chriſt, in the fore-mentioned Benefits and Privileges by one and the ſame Medium, but by various Mediums and Ways according to the Nature of the Benefits in which they participate.

For inſtance, they have Partnerſhip and Communion with Chriſt (as hath been ſaid) in his Righteouſneſs, Holineſs and Glory, but they receive theſe diſtinct Bleſſings by divers *Mediums* of Communion: We have Communion with Chriſt in his Righteouſneſs by the way of Imputation, we partake of his Holineſs by the way of *Infuſion*; and of his Glory in Heaven by the *Beatifical Viſion*. Our Juſtification is a *relative* Change, our Sanctification a *real* Change, our Glorification a *perfect* Change by Redemption, from all the remains both of ſin and miſery.

Thus hath the Lord appointed ſeveral Bleſſings for Believers in Chriſt, and ſeveral Channels of conveying them from him to us; by imputed Righteouſneſs we are freed from the *guilt* of Sin, by imparted Holineſs we are freed from the *Dominion* of ſin, and by our Glorification with Chriſt we are freed from all the Reliques and Remains both of ſin and miſery let in by ſin upon our Natures.

Poſition 4.

That Jeſus Chriſt imparts to all Believers all the ſpiritual Bleſſings that he is filled with, and with-holds none from any that have Union with him; be theſe Bleſ-

ſings never ſo great, or they that received them never ſo weak, mean, and contemptible in outward Reſpects. Gal. 3. 27. *Ye are all the Children of God by Faith in Jeſus Chriſt.* The Salvation that comes by Chriſt is ſtiled the *common Salvation*, Jude 3. and Heaven the Inheritance of the Saints in Light, *Col.* 1. 12. *There is neither Greek nor Jew* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *Circumciſion nor Uncircumciſion, Barbarian, Scythian, Bond or Free, but Chriſt is all and in all*, Col. 3. 11. He means, there is no Privilege in the one to commend them to God, and no want of any thing in the other to debar them from God; let Men have or want outward Excellencies, as Beauty, Honour, Riches, Nobility, Gifts of the Mind, Sweetneſs of Nature, and all ſuch like Ornaments, what is that to God? He looks not at theſe things; but reſpects them, and communicates his Favour to them as they are in Chriſt: *He is all, and in all.* The Gifts and Bleſſings of the Spirit are given to Men as they are in Chriſt, and without reſpect to any external Differences made in this World among Men: Hence we find excellent Treaſures of Grace in mean and contemptible Perſons in the World: Poor in the World, rich in Faith, and Heirs of the Kingdom; and as all Believers, without Difference, receive from Chriſt, ſo they are not debarr'd from any Bleſſing that is in Chriſt: *All is yours, for ye are Chriſts*, 1 Cor. 3. *ult.* with Chriſt God freely gives us all things, *Rom.* 8. 32.

Poſition 5.

The Communion Believers have with Chriſt in ſpiritual Benefits is a very great Myſtery, far above the Underſtanding of natural Men. There are no Footſteps of this thing in all the Works of Creation, therefore the Apoſtle calls it the unſearchable Riches of Chriſt, 3. 8. ἀνεξιχνίαστον πλοῦτον τοῦ χριστοῦ: The Word ſignifies that which hath no Footſteps to trace it by: Yea, 'tis ſo deep a Myſtery, that the *Angels* themſelves ſtoop down to look into it, 1 *Pet.* 1. 12. *Eye hath not ſeen, nor Ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of Man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him: but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit*, 1 Cor. 2. 9, 10.

Thirdly and Laſtly, I ſhall in a few Particulars open the *Dignity* and Excellency of this Fruit of our Union with Chriſt, and ſhew you, that a greater Glory and Honour cannot be put upon Man, than to be thus in Fellowſhip with Jeſus Chriſt, *Joh.* 17. 22. *The Glory which thou gaveſt me, I have given them, that they may be one as we are one:* And therefore more particularly let this be conſidered.

Firſt, *With whom we are aſſociated*, even the Son of God; with him that is over all, God bleſſed for ever. Our Aſſociation with *Angels* is an high Advancement, for Angels and Saints are fellow Servants in the ſame Family, *Rev.* 19. 20. and thro' Chriſt we are come to an innumerable Company of Angels, *Heb.* 12. 22. but what is all this to our Fellowſhip with Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, and that in another manner than Angels have? For tho' Chriſt be to them an Head of Dominion, yet not an Head of vital Influence as he is to his Myſtical Body the Church: This therefore is to them a great Myſtery, which they greatly affect to ſtudy, and pry into.

Secondly, *What we are that are dignified with this Title*, the *Fellows* or Co-partners with Jeſus Chriſt: not only *Duſt* by Nature, *Duſt thou art*, but ſinful Duſt; ſuch wretched Sinners as by Nature, and the Sentence of the Law, ought to be aſſociated with Devils, and Partakers with them of the Wrath of the Almighty God to all Eternity.

Thirdly, *The Benefits we are Partakers of, in and with the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; and indeed they are wonderful and aſtoniſhing things, ſo far as they do already appear, but yet we ſee but little of them, comparatively to what we ſhall ſee, 1 *Joh.* 3. 1, 2. *Now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be, but we know that when he ſhall appear we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is.* O what will that be! to ſee him as he is, and to be transformed into his Likeneſs.

Fourthly, *The Way and Manner in which we are brought into this Fellowſhip with Chriſt*, which is yet more admirable. The Apoſtle gives us a ſtrange Account of it, in 2 *Cor.* 8. 9. *For you know the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that tho' he was rich, yet for your ſakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich*: He empties himſelf of his Glory, that we might be fill'd; he is made a Curſe, that we might enjoy the Bleſſing; he ſubmits to be crown'd with Thorns, that we might be crowned with Glory and Honour; he puts himſelf into the number of Worms, *Pſal.* 22. 6. that we might be equal to the Angels: O the unconceivable Grace of Chriſt!

Fifthly, *The reciprocal Nature of that Communion which is betwixt Chriſt and Believers*: We do not only partake of what is his, but he partakes of what is ours: He hath Fellowſhip with us in all our Wants, Sorrows, Miſeries, and Afflictions; and we have Communion with him in his Righteouſneſs, Grace, Sonſhip, and Glory: He takes part of our Miſery, and we take part of his Bleſſedneſs, Our Sufferings are his Sufferings, *Col.* 1. 24. O what an Honour is it to thee, poor Wretch, whom a great many would not turn aſide to ask how thou doeſt; to have a King, yea, the Prince of all the Kings of the Earth, to pity, relieve, ſympathize, groan and bleed with thee, to ſit by thee in all thy troubles, and give thee his Cordials, to ſay thy troubles are my troubles, and thy Afflictions are my Afflictions: Whatever toucheth thee, toucheth me alſo: O what Name ſhall we give unto ſuch Grace as this is?

Sixthly and Laſtly, *Conſider the perpetuity of the Privilege*; your Fellowſhip with Chriſt is *interminable*, and abides for ever. Chriſt and the Saints ſhall be glorified together, *Rom.* 8. 17. while he hath any Glory, they ſhall partake with him. 'Tis ſaid indeed, 1 *Cor.* 15. 24. that there ſhall be a time when Chriſt will deliver up the Kingdom to his Father; But the Meaning is not that ever he will ceaſe to be an Head to his Saints, or they from being his Members: No, no, the Relation never ceaſes: Juſtification, Sanctification and Adoption, are everlaſting Things, and we can never be deveſted of them.

Infer. 1. Are the Saints Chriſt's Fellows? *What honourable Perſons then are they! and how ſhould they be eſteemed and valued in the World!* If a King, who is the Fountain of Honour, do but raiſe a Man by his Favour, and dignifie him by beſtowing ſome honourable Title upon him, what Reſpect and Obſervance is preſently paid him by all Perſons? But what are all the vain and empty Titles of Honour, to the glorious and ſubſtantial Privileges with which Believers are dignified, and raiſed above all other Men by Jeſus Chriſt? He is the Son of God, and they are the Sons of God alſo: He is the Heir of all things, and they are Joint-heirs with Chriſt: He reigns in Glory, and they ſhall reign with him: He ſits upon the Throne, and they ſhall ſit with him in his Throne. O that this vile World did but know the Dignity of Believers, they would never ſlight,

slight, hate, abuse, and persecute them as they do! And O that Believers did but understand their own Happiness and Privileges by Christ, they would never droop and sink under every small trouble at that rate they do.

Infer. 2. *How abundantly hath God provided for all the Necessities and Wants of Believers!* Christ is a Storehouse fill'd with Blessings and Mercies, and it's all for them: From him they receive abundance of Grace, and of the Gift of Righteousness, *Rom.* 5. 17. of his Fulness they all receive Grace for Grace, *Joh.* 1. 16. all the Fulness of Christ is made over to them for the supply of their Wants: *My God shall supply all your need* (saith the Apostle) *according to his Riches in Glory by Jesus Christ*, Phil. 4. 19. If all the Riches of God can supply your Needs, then they shall be supplied. Say not, Christ is in the Possession of consummate Glory, and I am a poor Creature struggling with many Difficulties, and toyling in the midst of many Cares and Fears in the World; for Care is taken for all thy Needs, and Orders given from Heaven for their Supply: My God shall supply all your Need. O say, with a melting Heart, I have a full Christ, and he is fill'd for me. His pure and perfect Righteousness is to justifie me, his Holiness is to sanctifie me, his Wisdom is to guide me, his Comforts are to refresh me, his Power is to protect me, his All-sufficiency is to supply me. O be chearful, thankful, you have all your Hearts can wish; and yet be humble, it is all from free Grace to empty and unworthy Creatures.

Infer. 3. *How absurd, disingenuous and unworthy of a Christian, is it to deny or with-hold from Christ any thing he hath, or by which he may be served or honoured?* Doth Christ communicate all he hath to you, and can you with-hold any thing from Christ? On Christ's part it is not *mine*, and *thine*, but *ours*, or *mine* and *yours*, Joh. 20. 17. *I ascend to my Father, and your Father, to my God and your God.* But O this cursed Idol Self! which impropriates all to its own Designs and Uses. How liberal is Christ! and how penurious are we to him! Some will not part with their Credit for Christ, when yet Christ abased himself unspeakably for them. Some will not part with a drop of Blood for Christ, when Christ spent the whole Treasure of his Blood freely for us: Yea, how loth are we to part with a Shilling for Christ, to relieve him in his distressed Members, when as yet we know the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his Poverty might be Rich! O ungrateful return! O base and disingenuous Spirits! The Things Christ gives us are *great*, the Things we deny to him are *small*; He parts with the *greatest*, and yet is denied the *least*. The Things he communicates to us are *none of ours*, we have no Right nor Title by Nature, or any Desert of ours to them, the Things we deny or grudge to Christ are by all Titles *his own*, and he hath the fullest and most unquestionable Title to them all: What he gives to us, he gives to them that *never deserved* it; what we with-hold from him, we with-hold from one that hath *deserved that, and infinitely more from us*, than we have, or are.

He interested you freely in all his Riches when you were *Enemies*; you stand upon Trifles with him, and yet call him your best and *dearest Friend*: He gave himself and all he hath to you, when you could *claim nothing* from him; you deny to part with these Things to Christ, *who may not only claim them upon the highest Title, his own Soveraignty, and absolute Property, but by your own Act*, who profess to have given all in Covenant to him: What he gives you returns *no Profit to him*, but what you give, or part with for him, *is your greatest Advantage.* O that the consideration of these Things might shame and humble our Souls.

Infer. 4. *Then certainly no Man is, or can be supposed to be a loser by Conversion, seeing from that Day, whatever Christ is, or hath, becomes his.*

O what an Inheritance are Men possessed of by their new Birth! Some Men cry out, Religion will undo you, but with what Eyes do these Men see? Surely you could never so reckon, except your Souls were so Incarnated as to reckon Pardon, Peace, Adoption, Holiness and Heaven, for nothing: That Invisibles are *non-entites*, and Temporals the only Realities. 'Tis true, the converted Soul may lose his Estate, his Liberty, yea, his Life for Christ: But what then? Are they losers that exchange Brass for Gold? Or part with their present Comforts for an hundred-fold Advantage? *Mark* 10. 29. So that none need scare at Religion for the losses that attend it, whilst Christ and Heaven is gain'd by it: They that count Religion their loss, have their Portion in this Life.

Infer. 5. *How securely is the Saints Inheritance settled upon them, seeing they are in common with Jesus Christ?* Christ and his Saints are joint-heirs, and the Inheritance cannot be alienated but by his Consent, he must lose his Interest, if you lose yours: Indeed *Adams* Inheritance was by a single Title; and moreover, it was in his own Hand, and so he might (as indeed he soon did) divest himself and his Posterity of it: But it is not so betwixt Christ and Believers, we are secured in our Inheritance by Christ our *Co-heir*, who will never alienate it: And therefore it was truly observed by the Father, *Felicior Job in sterquilinio, quam Adamus in Paradiso*: *Job* was happier upon the Dunghil, than *Adam* was in Paradise. The Covenant of Grace is certainly the best Tenure: As it hath the best Mercies, so it gives the fullest Security to enjoy them.

Infer. 6. *How rich and full is Jesus Christ, who communicates abundantly to all Saints, and yet hath more still in himself than is communicated to them, although all they receive were brought into one heap.*

Take all the Faith of *Abraham*, all the Meekness of *Moses*, all the Patience of *Job*, all the Wisdom of *Solomon*, all the Zeal of *David*, all the Industry of *Paul*, and all the tender-heartedness of *Josiah*: Add to this all the Grace that is poured (though in lesser measure) into all the Elect Vessels in the World, yet still it is far short of that which remains in Christ, *He is anointed with the Oil of gladness above his Fellows*: And in all Things he hath, and must ever have the pre-eminence: There be many Thousand Stars glittering above your Heads, and one Star differs from another Star in Glory, yet there is more Light and Glory in one Sun, than in the many thousand Stars: Grace beautifies the Children of Men exceedingly, but still that is true of Christ, *Psal.* 45. 2. *Thou art fairer than the Children of Men, Grace is powred into thy Lips*: For all Grace is secondarily and derivatively in the Saints, but it is primitively and originally in Christ, *John* 5. 16. Grace is imperfect and defective in them, but in him it is in its most absolute Perfection and Fulness, *Col.* 1. 19. In the Saints it is mixed with abundance of Corruption, but in Christ it is altogether unmixed and exclusive of its opposite, *Heb.* 7. 26. So that as the *Heathen* said of Moral Vertue, I may much more say of Christ, That were he to be seen with mortal Eyes, he would compel Love and Admiration from

all Men, for he is altogether lovely, *Cant.* 5. 17.

Infer. 7. *What delight and singular Advantage must needs be in the Communion of Saints, who have Communion with Jesus Christ in all his Graces and Benefits!*

That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have Fellowship with us, and truly our Fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. 1 John 1. 3. O 'tis sweet to have fellowship with those that have fellowship with God in Jesus Christ. Christ hath communicated to the Saints varieties of Graces in different Measures and Degrees: And as they all receive from Christ the Fountain, so it's sweet and most delightful to be improving themselves by spiritual Communion one with another: Yea for that end one is furnish'd with one Grace more eminently than another, that the weak may be assisted by the strong: As a modern Divine well observes: *Athanasius* was prudent and active, *Basil* of an heavenly sweet Temper, *Chrysostome* laborious without Affectation, *Ambrose* resolv'd and grave, *Luther* couragious, and *Calvin* acute and judicious. Thus every one hath his proper Gift from Christ, the Fountain of Gifts and Graces, 1 *Cor.* 7. 7. One hath quickness of Parts, another solidity of Judgment, but not ready and presential, one is zealous, but ungrounded; another well principled, but timorous; one is wary, and prudent; another open, and plain; one is trembling, and melting; another chearful and joyous; one must impart his light, another his heat: The *Eye*, the knowing Man, cannot say to the *Hand*, the active Man, I have no need of thee. And O how sweet would it be, if Gifts, Graces, and Experiences were frequently, and humbly imparted: But idle Notions, earthly-mindedness, self-interests, and want of more Communion with Christ, have almost destroyed the Comfort of Christian fellowship every where in the World.

Mr. *Torshel.*

Infer. 8. *In a Word, those only have ground to claim Interest in Christ, who do really participate of his Graces, and in whom are found the Effects and fruits of their Union and Communion with him.*

If you have Interest in Christ, you have Communion in his Graces and Benefits; and if you have such Communion, it will appear in your maintaining daily *actual Communion with God* in Duties; whereby will be produced,

First, The increase of your Sanctification, by fresh Participations from the Fountain: As *Cloth* which is often dipt into the *Fat* receives the deeper Dye, and livelier Tincture, so will your Souls by assiduous Communion with God. It will also be discerned,

Secondly, In your deeper Humiliation and spiritual Sense of your own vileness: The more any Man partakes of God, and is acquainted with him, and assimilated to him, the more base and vile in his own sight he still grows, *Job* 42. 5. 6. *Isa.* 6. 5.

Thirdly, It will appear in your more vehement longings after the full Enjoyment of God in Heaven, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. and *Rom.* 8. 23. You that have the first Fruits, will groan within your selves after the full Harvest, and satisfying Fruition: You will not be so taken with Things below, as to be content with the best Lot on Earth for your everlasting Portion, O if these communicated drops be so sweet, what is there in Christ the Fountain?

And thus I have opened the Method of Grace, in bringing home Christ and his Benefits to Gods Elect by Union, in order to Communion with him.

Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ.

SERMON IX.

MATTH. XI. xxviii.

Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Text. Containing the first general use of Exhortation, inviting all Men to apply Jesus Christ.

THE *Impetration* of our Redemption by Jesus Christ, being finished in the first Part, and the Way and Means by which Christ is *applied* to Sinners in the foregoing Part of this *Treatise*, I am now orderly come to the general *Use* of the whole; which in the first Place shall be by way of *Exhortation*, to invite and perswade all Men to come unto Christ, who in all the former Sermons hath been represented in his *Garments of Salvation*, red in his Apparel, prepared and offered to Sinners as their All-sufficient and only Remedy: And in the following Sermons will be represented in his *perfumed Garments* coming out of his *Ivory Palaces*, Psalm. 45. 8 To allure and draw all Men unto him.

For a general Head to this Use which will be large, I have chosen this Scripture, *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

These Words are the Voice of our Lord Jesus Christ himself, in which there is a vital ravishing sound: 'Tis your Mercy to have such a joyful sound in your Ears this Day: And in them I will consider their *Dependance*, *Parts*, and *Scope*.

As to their Dependance, it is manifest they have an immediate Relation to the foregoing Verse, wherein Christ opens his Commission, and declares the fulness of his Authority and saving Power, and the impossibility of coming to God any other Way: *All things are delivered to me of my Father, and no Man knoweth the Son but the Father: Neither knoweth any Man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him*, ver. 27.

This 28*th* Verse is brought in proleptically to obviate the Discouragements of any poor convinced and humbled Soul, who might thus object; Lord, I am fully satisfied of the fulness of thy saving Power, but greatly doubt whether ever I shall have the Benefit thereof. For I see so much Sin and Guilt in my self, so great vileness, and utter unworthiness, that I am overweighed, and even sink under the Burden of it: My Soul is discouraged because of Sin. This Objection is prevented in the Words of my Text, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden*, q. d. Let not the Sense of your Sin and Misery, drive you from your only Remedy: Let your Sins never so many, and the sense and burden of them never so heavy, yet for all that, *Come unto me*: You are the Persons whom I invite and call, I came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance.

In the Words, Three Things are especially remarkable.

1. The Souls spiritual Distress and Burthen: *Weary and heavy laden.*

2. Its Invitation to Christ under that Burthen: *Come unto me.*

3. Its Incouragement to that great Duty: *I will give you rest.*

First, The Souls * spiritual Distress and Burthen, expresst in two very emphatical Words, οἱ κοπιῶντες καὶ πεφορτισμένοι. *Ye that labour and are heavy laden.* The Word which we translate *Labour*, signifies a labouring even to faintness and tiring, to the Consumption and waste of the Spirits; and the other Word signifies such a pressure by Burden that is too heavy to be born, that we do even sink down under it.

* Οἱ κοπιῶντες *qui laboratis, scil. ad defatigationem usque; hac enim Emphasi differt τὸ κοπιᾶν à verbo πονεῖν quod in genere significat laborare.* Piscator in Loc. (i. e.) *Qui sentitis onus peccatorum & sub illo tantum non succumbitis. Chrysostomus intelligit onera tum & sub illo tantum non succumbitis. Chrysostomus intelligit onera tum legalibus oneribus, nos verò in genere intelligimus universos eos qui peccatorum pondere, naturæque corruptæ malitiâ quam sentiunt pressi, ad ejiciendam pravitatem & assequendam justitiam luctantur,* Tuscu-lus in Loc.

There is some Difference among Expositors about the Quality of this Burthen. *Chrysostom* and some others after him, expound it of Burden of the legal *Rites* and *Ceremonies*, which was a heavy Burden indeed, such as neither they, nor their Fathers could bear. Under the task and burden of these legal Observances, they did sweat and toil to obtain a Righteousness to justifie them before God, and all in vain; and this is a pious Sense, but others expound it of the burthen of Sin in general; the Corruption of Nature, and Evils of Practice, which Souls are convinced have brought them under the Curse, and will bring them to Hell, and therefore labour and strive all that in them lies, by Repentance and Reformation, to clear themselves from it, but all in vain, whilest they strive in their own Strength. Such are they that are here called to come to Christ, which is the second Thing; namely,

Secondly, The Invitation of burthened Souls to Christ: *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden: Come unto me,* (i.e.) believe in me, lean and rest your burthened Souls upon me. I am able to ease all your Burthens, in me is that Righteousness and Peace which you seek in vain in all the legal Rites and Ceremonies: Or in your Repentance, Reformations and Duties, but it will give you no ease, 'twill be no Benefit to you except you come unto me. Faith is often expressed under this Notion, see *John* 6. 37. and *John* 7. 37. and it is to be further noted that [*all*] burthened Souls are invited to come. *All ye that labour*: Whatever your Sins or Guilt have been, whatever your Fears or Discouragements are, yet come, (*i. e.*) believe on me.

Thirdly, Here is the Encouragement Christ gives to this Duty, *And I will give you rest*: ἀναπαύσω ὑμᾶς --I will refresh you, I will give you rest from your labour, your Consciences shall be pacified, your Heart at rest and quiet in that Pardon, Peace and Favour of God which I will procure for you by my Death. But here it must be heedfully noted, that this Promise of rest in Christ is not made to Men simply as they are Sinners, nor yet as they are burthened, and heavy laden Sinners, but as they come to Christ; (*i. e.*) as they are Believers. For let a Man break his Heart with Sin, let him weep out his Eyes for Sin, let him mourn as a Dove, and shed as many Tears for Sin (if it were possible) as ever there fell drops of Rain upon the Ground, yet if he come not to Christ by Faith, his Repentance shall not save him, nor all his Sorrows bring him to true Rest. Hence Note,

Quid alibi quæritis, quod non licet invenire? Ego sum qui vobis vos juvare solus. Musc. in Loc.

Doct. 1. *That some Souls are heavy laden with the burthensome Sense of Sin.*

Doct. 2. *That all burthened Souls are solemnly invited to come to Christ.*

Doct. 3. *That there is rest in Christ for all that come to him under the heavy Burthen of Sin.*

Doct. 1.

Some Souls are heavy laden, with the burthensome Sense of Sin.

Doct. 1. I do not say all are so, for *Fools make a mock of Sin*, Prov. 14. 9. 'Tis so far from being burthensome to some, that it is a *sport* to them, *Prov.* 10. 23. But when a Mans Eyes are opened to see the Evil that is in Sin, and the Eternal Misery that follows it, (Sin and Hell being link'd together with such strong Chains as nothing but the Blood of Christ can loose) then no Burden is like that of Sin: *A wounded Conscience who can bear?* Prov. 18. 14. For let us but consider the Efficacy that the Law of God hath upon the Consciences of Men, when it comes in the spirituality and Power of it to convince and humble the Soul of a Sinner. For then,

What inward troubles for sin are.

First, *The Memory of Sin long since committed is refresh'd and revived, as if it had been but Yesterday*: There are fresh Recognitions of Sin long since acted, and forgotten, as if they had never been: What was done in our Youth is fetch'd back again, and by a new Impression of fear and horror set home upon the trembling Conscience. *Job* 13. 26. *Thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the Sins of my Youth.* Conscience can call back the Days that are past, and draw up a new Charge upon the score of old Sins, *Gen.* 42. 21. All that ever we did is recorded and entred into the Book of Conscience, and now is the Time to open that Book, when the Lord will convince and awaken Sinners. We read in *Job* 14. 17. of sealing up Iniquities in a Bag, which is an Allusion to the *Clerk of the Assizes*, that takes all the Indictments that are made against Persons at the *Assizes*, and seals them up in a Bag, in order to a Trial. This is the first Office and Work of Conscience, upon which

The second, namely its *Accusations*, do depend: These Accusations of Conscience are terrible Things, who can stand before them? They are full, they are clear, and all of them referring to the approaching Judgment of the great and terrible God.

Prima est hæc ultio, quod sibi judice, nemo nocens absolvitur.

Conscience dives into all Sins, secret as well as open, and into all the Circumstances and Aggravations of Sin, as being committed against Light, against Mercy, against the strivings, warnings, and regrets of Conscience. So that we may say of the Efficacy of Conscience, as it is said *Psalm.* 19. 6. of the Influence of the *Sun, nothing is hid from the heat and power thereof. Come* (saith the Woman of *Samaria*) *see a Man that hath told me all that ever I did*, John 4. 29. Christ convinced her but of one Sin by that Discourse, but Conscience by that one fetcht in and charged all the rest upon her. And as the Accusations of Conscience are full, so they are clear, and undeniable: A Man becomes self-convinced, and there remains no shift, excuse, or Plea, to defend himself: A Thousand Witnesses cannot prove any Point more clearly than one Te-

ὁ Ν ἐφιμώθη & ille capistratus erat.

stimony of Conscience doth, *Mat.* 22. 12. *The Man was speechless*, a mute; muzzled (as the Word signifies) by the clear Testimony of his own Conscience: These Accusations are the second Work or Office of Conscience, and they make way for the Third, namely,

Thirdly, The *Sentence* and *Condemnation* of Conscience: And truly this is an insupportable Burthen: The Condemnation of Conscience is nothing else but its Application of the condemning Sentence of the Law to a Mans Person: The Law curseth every one that transgresseth it, *Gal.* 3. 10. Conscience applies this Curse to the guilty Sinner. So that it sentences the Sinner in Gods Name and Authority, from which there is no Appeal: The Voice of Conscience is the Voice of God, and what it pronounces in Gods Name and Authority, he will confirm and ratifie, 1 *John* 3. 20. *If our Hearts*, (i.e.) our Consciences, *condemn us, God is greater than our Hearts, and knoweth all things*: This is that Torment which no Man can endure. See the Effects of is in *Cain*, in *Judas*, and in *Spira*, 'tis a real Foretaste of Hell Torments: This is that *Worm that never dies*, Mark 9. 44. For look, as a Worm in the Body is bred of the Corruption that is there, so the Accusations and Condemnations of Conscience are bred in the Soul by the Corruption and Guilt that is there: As the Worm in the Body preys and bites upon the tender sensible inward Parts, so doth Conscience touch the very quick. This is its third Effect or Work to sentence and condemn, and this also makes way for a fourth, namely,

Fourthly, *To upbraid and reproach the Sinner under his misery*; and this makes a Man a very *Terror to himself*: To be pitied in Misery is some Relief, but to be upbraided and reproached doubles our Affliction: You know it was one of the Aggravations of *Christ*'s Sufferings, to be reproached by the Tongues of his Enemies, whilst he hanged in Torments upon the cursed Tree; but all the Scoffs and Reproaches, the bitter Jeers and *Sarcasms* in the World, are nothing to these of a Man's own Conscience: this will cut to the very Bone.

O when a Man's Conscience shall say to him in a day of trouble, as *Reuben* to his afflicted Brethren, *Gen.* 42. 22. *Spake I not unto you, saying, do not sin against the Child; and ye would not hear, therefore behold also his Blood is required.* So Conscience, did I not warn you, threaten you, perswade you in time against these Evils? but you would not hearken to me, therefore behold now you must suffer to all Eternity for it: The Wrath of God is kindled against thy Soul for it: This is the Fruit of thy own wilful Madness and Obstinacy. Now thou shalt know the Price of sinning against God, against Light, and Conscience. O this is terrible! every bite of Conscience makes a poor Soul to startle, and in a terrible fright to cry, Oh the Worm! O the bitter foretaste of Hell! A wounded Spirit who can bear?

This is a fourth Wound of Conscience, and it makes way for a fifth, for here it is as the pouring out of the Vials, and the sounding of those Woe-trumpets in the Revelations; one Woe is past, and another cometh. After all these deadly Blows of Conscience upon the very Heart of a Sinner, comes another as dreadful as any that is yet named; and that is,

Fifthly, The fearful Expectations of Wrath to come, which it begets in the Soul of a guilty Sinner: Of this you read, *Heb.* 10. 27. *A fearful looking for of Judgment, and fiery Indignation*: And this makes the stoutest Sinner quail and faint under the Burden of sin. For the Tongue of Man cannot declare what it is to lye down and rise with those fearful Expectations: The Case of such sinners is somewhat like that which is described in *Deut.* 28. 65. 66, 67. *The Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of Eyes, and Sorrow of Mind, and thy Life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have no Assurance of thy Life: In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were evening, and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning, for the fear of thine heart, wherewith thou shalt fear*, &c. Only in this it differs, in this Scripture you have the Terror of those described, whose Temporal Life hangs in doubtful suspence, but in the Persons I am speaking of, it is a trembling under the Apprehensions and Expectations of the vengeance of eternal fire.

Believe it, Friends, words cannot express what those poor creatures feel, that lie down and rise under these fears and frights of Conscience. Lord, what will become of me! I am free among the dead, yea, among the damned. I hang by the frail thread of a momentary life, which will, and must break shortly, and may break the next moment, over the everlasting burnings: no pleasant bread is eaten in these days, but what is like the bread of condemned Men.

And thus you see what the burden of sin is, when God makes it to bear upon the Consciences of Men, no burden of affliction is like it: losses of deareſt relations: sorrows for an only Son are not so pungent, and penetrating as these: For,

First, No Creature enjoyment is pleasant under these inward troubles: in other troubles they may signifie something to a Mans relief, but here they are nothing, the wound is too deep to be healed by any thing but the blood of Jesus Christ: Conscience requires as much to satisfie it, as God requires to satisfie him. When God is at peace with thee, (saith Conscience) then will I be at peace with thee, too; but till then, expect no rest nor peace from me: all the pleasures and diversions in the World shall never stop my mouth: go where thou wilt, I will follow thee like thy shadow: be thy portion in the World as sweet as it will, I will drop in Gall and Wormwood into thy Cup, that thou shall taste no sweetness in any thing till thou hast got thy pardon.

These inward troubles for sin, alienate the mind from all former pleasures and delights; there's no more taste or savour in them, than in the white of an Egg. Musick is out of tune, all Instruments jarr and groan. Ornaments have no beauty, what heart hath a poor creature to deck that body, in which dwells such a miserable Soul! to feed and pamper that carcass that hath been the Souls inducement to, and instrument in sin, and must be its companion in everlasting misery.

Secondly, These inward troubles for sin, put a dread into death beyond whatever the Soul saw in it before. Now it looks like the *King of Terrors* indeed: you read in *Heb.* 2. 15. of some that through fear of death are all their life long subject to bondage. O what a lively comment is a Soul in this case able to make upon such a Text? they would not scare at the pale Horse, nor at him that sits on him, tho' his name be called Death, if it were not for what follows him, *Rev.* 6. 8. but when they consider that Hell follows, they tremble at the very name or thoughts of Death.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Such is the nature of these inward troubles of Spirit, that they swallow up the sense of all other outward troubles: alas! these are all lost in the deeps of Soul-sorrows, as the little Rivulets are in the vast Sea: he that is wounded at the heart, will not cry *oh* at the bite of a Flea: and surely no greater is the proportion betwixt outward and inward sorrows: A small matter formerly would discompose a Man, and put him into a Fret, now ten thousand outward troubles are lighter than a feather: for, saith he, *why doth the living Man complain?* Am I yet on this side eternal burnings? O let me not complain then, whatever my condition be: have I losses in the World, or pains upon my Body? Alas! these are not to be named with the Loss of God, and the feeling of his Wrath and Indignation for evermore. Thus you see what troubles, inward troubles for sin be.

2. How Souls are supported under such troubles.

Secondly, If you ask in the second place, how it comes to pass that any Soul is supported under such strong troubles of Spirit, that all that feel them do not sink under them; that all that go down into these deep waters of sorrow, are not drowned in them: The answer is,

First, Tho' this be a very sad time with the Soul (much like that of *Adam*, betwixt the breach of the first Covenant, and the first promise of Christ made to him) yet the Souls that are thus heavy laden do not sink, because God hath a most tender care over them, and regard to them: underneath them are the everlasting Arms, and thence it is they sink not: were they left to grapple with these troubles in their own strength, they could never stand: but God takes care of these Mourners, that their Spirits do not fail before him, and the Souls that he hath made; I mean those of his Elect, whom he is this way preparing for, and bringing unto Christ.

Secondly, The Lord is pleased to nourish still some hope in the Soul under the greatest fears and troubles of Spirit: tho' it be no Comfort or Joy, yet it hath some *hope* in the bottom, and that keeps up the Heart: the afflicted Soul doth in this Case, as the afflicted Church, *Lam.* 3. 29. *He putteth his mouth in the dust if yet there may be hope*: he saith, *its good for a man to hope, and quietly to wait for the salvation of God*: There are usually some glimmerings or dawnings of Mercy through Christ, in the midnight Darkness of inward Troubles: *non dantur puræ tenebræ*. In Hell indeed, there is no hope to enlighten the Darkness, but it is not so upon Earth.

Thirdly, The Experiences of others, who have been in the same deeps of trouble, are also of great use to keep up the Soul above Water. The Experience of another is of great use to prop up a desponding Mind, whilst as yet it hath none of its own: and indeed for the support of Souls in such Cases they were recorded, 1 *Tim.* 1. 16. *For this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth long suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting*: for an encouraging *Pattern*, an eminent precedent to all poor Sinners that were to come after him, that none might absolutely despair of finding Mercy through Christ. You know if a man be taken sick, and none can tell what the Disease is, none can say that ever they heard of such a Disease before, its exceeding frightful; but if one and another, it may be twenty, come to the sick Man's Bed-side, and tell him, Sir, be not afraid, I have been in the very same Case that you now are, and so have many more, and all did well at last, why this is half a cure to the sick Man. So it is here, a great support to hear the Experiences of other Saints.

ἐκτύπωσις ut & τύπος est primum picturæ lineamentum: sumitur hic pro exemplo, ut viderent quid sibi prorsum sit à domino: gratiam esse uberiorem ac potentiorem peccato, ne quis qui credit diffideret sibi paratam esse veniam. Poli Synopf. in loc.

Fourthly, As the Experiences of others support the Soul under these Burdens, so the Riches of free Grace through Christ Jesus uphold it: 'tis rich and abundant, *Psal.* 103. *ult.* plenteous Redemption, and 'tis free, and to the worst of Sinners, *Isa.* 1. 18. and under these troubles it finds it self in the way, and proper method of Mercy, for so my Text (a Text that hath upheld many thousand drooping Hearts) states it: All this gives Hope and Encouragement under trouble.

Fifthly and Lastly, Tho' the state of the Soul be sad and sinking, yet Jesus Christ usually makes haste in the extremity of the trouble to relieve it, by sweet and seasonable Discoveries of his Grace: *cum duplicantur lateres, venit Moses*: in the Mount of the Lord it shall be seen. It is with Christ as it was with *Joseph*, whose Bowels yearned towards his Brethren, and he was in pain till he had told them, *I am Joseph your Brother*. This is sweetly exhibited to us in that excellent Parable of the Prodigal, *Luke* 15. when his Father saw him, being yet a great way off, he ran and fell upon his Neck and kissed him: Mercy runs nimbly to help, when Souls are ready to fall under the pressure of Sin. And thus you see both how they are burthened, and how upheld under the Burthen.

3. Why doth God make the burden of Sin lie so heavy upon the Souls of some Sinners.

Thirdly, If it be enquired in the last Place, why God make sthe burden of Sin press so heavy upon the Hearts of poor Sinners, 'tis answered,

First, He doth it to divorce their Hearts from Sin, by giving them an experimental taste of the bitterness and evil that is in Sin: Mens Hearts are naturally glewed wirh Delight to their sinful Courses: all the Perswasions and Arguments in the World, are too weak to separate them and their beloved Lusts. The Morsels of sin go down smoothly and sweetly: they roll them with much Delectation under their Tongues: and it is but need that such bitter Potions as these should be administred to make their Stomachs rise against sin, as that Word used by the Apostle, in 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. signifies, *in that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what indignation it wrought?* it notes the rising of the Stomach with Rage, a being angry even unto Sickness, and this is the way, the best and most effectual way to separate the Soul of a Sinner from his Lusts: for in these troubles Conscience saith, as it is in *Jer.* 4. 18. *Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee; this is thy wickedness, because it is great, because it reacheth unto thy heart.*

Ἀγανάκτησις indignatio, stomachatio. Leigh's Critica, in verb.

Secondly, The Lord doth this, to make Jesus Christ most welcome and desirable to the Soul. Christ is not *sweet*, till sin be made *bitter* to us, *Mat.* 9. 12. *They that be whole need not a Physician, but they that be sick.* If once God wounds the heart of a Sinner, with the stinging Sense of Sin, then nothing in the World is so precious, so necessary, so vehemently desired, and panted for, as Jesus Christ: O

that I had Christ, if I did go in Raggs, if I did feed upon no other Food all my Days, but the bread and water of Affliction! This is the Language of a Soul filled with the sense of the evil of Sin.

Thirdly, The Lord doth this to advance the Riches of his free Grace in the eyes of Sinners. Grace never appears Grace, till Sin appear to be Sin. The deeper our Sense of the evil of sin is, the deeper our Apprehensions of the free Grace of God in Christ will be. The louder our *Groans* have been under the burden of Sin, the louder will our *Acclamations* and Praises be for our Salvation from it by Jesus Christ. *To me* (saith *Paul*) *the chiefest of sinners, was this grace given.* 1 Tim. 1. 15. Never doth the Grace of a Prince so melt the Heart of a Traytor, as when Trial, Sentence, and all Preparations for his Execution have past, before his unexpected Pardon comes.

Fourthly, The Lord doth this to prevent relapses into Sin: *In that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought!* 2 Cor. 2, 7. The burnt Child dreads the Fire; the Bird that is delivered out of the *Tallons* of the *Hawk*, trembles afterward at the noise of his *Bells*. *After such a Deliverance as this, should we again break thy Commandments?* Ezra 9. 13, 14. As a poor penitent Soul, that hath been in the deeps of Sorrow for Sin, Will you return to your former course of sin again? and it sounds in his Ears as if you should ask him, Will you run into the Fire, will you go to the Rack again? O no, it hath cost him dear already.

Fifthly, Lastly, This the Lord doth, to make them both skilful and compassionate in relieving others that are under like inward Troubles. None can speak so judiciously, so pertinently, so feelingly to anothers Case, as he that hath been in the same Case himself: this furnishes them with the Tongue of the learned. To speak a Word in Season to the weary Soul. By this means they are able to *comfort others with the same comforts wherewith they themselves have been comforted by God*, 2 Cor. 1. 4.

Thus you have had a brief account, what the burden of sin is, how Souls are supported under that Burden, and why the Lord causes sin to lie so heavy upon the Souls of some Sinners. The Improvement of all will be in a double Use, *viz.*

Of Information, and
Direction.

First Use for Information.

Infer. 1. Is there such a load and burden in sin? *What then was the burden that our Lord Jesus Christ felt and bare for us, upon whom the dead weight of all the sins of all Gods elect lay!* Isa. 53. 6. *He hath made the iniquities of us all to meet on him.* Our burden is heavy, but nothing to Christs. O there's a vast difference betwixt that which Christ bare, and that which we bear. We feel but the single weight of our own Sins. Christ felt the whole weight of all our Sins. You do not feel the whole weight that is in any one sin: Alas, it would sink you, if God should let it bear in all its Aggravations and Effects upon you, *Psal.* 130. 2, 3. *If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquity, O Lord who shall stand!* You would quail and sink presently: you can no more stand under it, than under the weight of a mighty Mountain. But Christ bare all the burden upon himself: his Understanding was deep and large: he knew the extent of its evil, which we do not: we have many reliefs and helps under our Burden, he had none: we have Friends to counsel, comfort and pity us; all his friends and familiars forsook him, and fled in the Day of his trouble: we haye Comforts from Heaven, he had Frowns from Heaven: *My God, my God,* (saith he in that doleful Day) *why hast thou forsaken me?* there's no compare betwixt our load and Christ's.

Infer. 2. If there be such a burden in sin, *then certainly sinners will pay dear for all the pleasure they find in sin in the days of their vanity.* What one saith of crafty Counsels, we may say of all sins; tho' they seem pleasant in their first Appearance, they will be found sad in the Event: they are honey in the Mouth, but the gall of Asps in the Belly: they tickle the Fancy, but rend the Conscience. O Sinner, thy mirth will certainly be turned into mourning, as sure as thou livest, that vain and frothy breast of thine shall be wounded: thou shalt feel the sting and pain, as well as relish the sweet pleasure of sin.

Concilia callida prima specie læta; tractatu dura; eventu tristia. Livy.

O that thou wouldst but give thy self the leisure seriously to ponder those Scriptures in the Margent: methinks they should have the same Effect that the hand-writing upon the Plaster of the Wall had upon that Jovial King in the height of a Frolick, *Dan.* 5. 5. Reason thus with thine own Heart, and thou wilt find the conclusion unavoidable: Either I shall repent for sin, or I shall not: if I shall not, then must I howl under the wrath of God for sin in the lowest Hell for evermore. If I shall, then by what I have now read, of the throbs and wounds of Conscience, I see what this Heart of mine, this vain Heart of mine, must feel in this World. O how much wiser was the Choice that *Moses* made, *Heb.* 11. 25. the worst of Sufferings, rather than the best of sin, the pleasures of sin which are but for a Season!

Prov 20. 7. Prov. 23. 31, 32. Job. 20. 12, 13, 14. James 1. 15. Rom. 6. 21.

Infer. 3. Is there such a burden in sin, *then the most tender compassion is a due debt to souls afflicted and heavy laden with sin.* Their condition cries for pity, whatever their Tongues do; they seem to call upon you, as *Job* upon his Friends, *Have pity, have pity upon me, O ye my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me*, Job 19. 21. and O let all that have felt the wounds and anguish of an afflicted Conscience themselves, learn from their own experience tenderly to pity and help others, *Gal.* 6. 1. *You that are spiritually minded, restore* (or set him in joint again) *in the Spirit of meekness, considering thy self.*

καταρτίζετε, *laxata membra in suum locum restituere.*

Israel was commanded to be kind to Strangers, for saith God, you know the heart of a Stranger: and surely if any Case in the World require help, pity, and all compassionate Tenderness, this doth: and yet how do some slight spiritual troubles upon others? Parents slight them in their own Children, Masters in their Servants; the more brutish and wicked they. O had you but felt your selves what they feel, you would never handle them as you do. But let this comfort such poor Creatures, Christ hath felt them, and will pity and help them: yea, he therefore would feel them himself, that he might have compassion upon you. If Men will not, God will pity you: if Men be so cruel to persecute him whom God hath smitten, God will be so kind to pour Balm into the wounds that sin hath made: if they pull away the shoulder from you, and will not be concern'd about your troubles, except it be to aggravate them, God will not serve you so: but certainly you that have past through the same Difficulties, you cannot be without compassion to them that are now grappling with them.

Infer. 4. *How unexpreſſibly dreadful is the ſtate of the damned, who muſt bear the burden of all their ſins upon themſelves without relief or hope of deliverance!* Mark 9. 44. *where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.*

O! if ſin upon the Soul, that's coming to Chriſt for deliverance, be ſo burdenſome, what is it upon the Soul that is ſhut from Chriſt, and all hopes of deliverance for ever! For do but ponder theſe differences betwixt theſe two burdens.

Firſt, No Soul is ſo capacious now, to take in the fulneſs of the evil and miſery of Sin, as they are, who are gone down to the Place of Torments. Even as the Joys of Gods Face above, are much unknown to them that have the foretaſts and firſt Fruits of them here by Faith, ſo the Miſery of the damned is much unknown, even to them that have in their Conſciences the bittereſt Taſte and Senſe of Sin in this World: As we have the Viſions of Heaven, ſo we have the Viſions of Hell alſo, but darkly through a Glaſs.

Secondly, No burden of Sin preſſeth ſo continually upon the Soul here, as it doth there: Afflicted Souls on Earth have intermiſſions and breathing times; but in Hell there are no lucid intervals: The Wrath of God there is ſtill flowing: It is in *fluxu continuo*, Iſa. 30. 33. A ſtream of Brimſtone.

Thirdly, no burden of Sin lies upon any of Gods Elect ſo long as the damned do, and muſt bear it: Our troubles about Sin are but ſhort, tho' they ſhould run parallel with the line of Life; but the Troubles of the damned are parallel with the endleſs line of Eternity.

Fourthly, Under theſe Troubles the Soul hath hope, but there all hope is cut off: All the Goſpel is full of hope, it breaths nothing but hope to Sinners that are moving Chriſt-ward under their Troubles: But in Hell the pangs of deſperation rend their Conſciences for ever. So that upon all accounts the State of the damned is inexpreſſibly dreadful.

Infer. *If the burden of Sin be ſo heavy, how ſweet then muſt the Pardon of Sin be to a Sin burdened Soul!* Is it a refreſhment to a Priſoner, to have his chains knock'd off? A comfort to a Debtor to have his debts paid, and obligations cancelled? What joy muſt it then be to a ſin-burthened Soul, to hear the Voice of Pardon and Peace in his trembling Conſcience? Is the light of the morning pleaſant to a *Man* after a *weary* tireſome night? the Spring of the Year pleaſant after a hard and tedious Winter? they are ſo indeed; but nothing ſo ſweet, as the Favour, Peace and Pardon of God, to a Soul that hath been long reſtleſs and anxious under the terrors and fears of Conſcience: for tho' after pardon and peace a Man remembers ſin ſtill, yet it is as one that remembers the dangerous Pits, and deep Waters, from which he hath been wonderfully delivered, and had a narrow eſcape. O the unconceivable ſweetneſs of a Pardon! Who can read it, and not wet it with tears of joy? Are we glad when the grinding pain of the Stone, or racking fits of the Cholick are over; And ſhall we not be tranſported, when the accuſations and condemnations of Conſcience are over? Tongue cannot expreſs what theſe things are; his joy is ſomething that no words can convey to the underſtanding of another, that never felt the anguiſh of ſin.

Infer. 6. Laſtly, *In how ſad a caſe are thoſe that never felt any burden in ſin, that never were kept waking and reſtleſs one night for ſin?*

There is a *burthened* Conſcience, and there is a *benummed* Conſcience. The firſt is more *painful* but the laſtmore *dangerous*. O 'tis a fearful blow of God upon a Mans Soul, to ſtrike it ſenſeleſs and ſtupid, ſo that tho' Mountains of guilt lie upon it, it feels no Pain or Preſſure: and this is ſo much the more ſad, becauſe it incapacitates the Soul for Chriſt, and is a preſage and fore-runner of Hell. It would grieve the heart of a Man, to ſee a *delirious perſon* in the rage and height of a *feaver*, to laugh at thoſe that are weeping for him, call them fools, and telling them, he is as well as any of them: much ſo is the caſe of many thouſand Souls, the God of mercy pity them.

Second Uſe for Counſel.

The only further Uſe I ſhall make of this point here, ſhall be to direct and counſel Souls that are weary and heavy laden with the burden of ſin, in order to their obtaining true reſt and peace. And firſt,

Firſt Counſel.

Satisfie not your ſelves in fruitleſs complaints to Men. Many do ſo, but its never the near. I grant its lawful in ſpiritual diſtreſſes to complain to Men; yea, and it is a great mercy if we have any near us in times of trouble, that are judicious, tender and faithful, into whoſe boſoms we may pour out our troubles: but to reſt in this ſhort of Chriſt, is no better than a ſnare of the *Devil* to deſtroy us Is there not a God to go to in trouble? The beſt of Men, in the neglect of *Chriſt*, are but *Phyſicians* of no value. Be wiſe and wary in your choice of Chriſtian friends, to whom you open your complaints: ſome are not clear themſelves in the Doctrine of Chriſt and Faith, others are of a dark and troubled ſpirit as you are, and will but entangle you more. *As for me* (ſaith *Job*) *is my complaint to man, and if it were ſo, why ſhould not my ſpirit be troubled?* Job 21. 4. One hour betwixt Chriſt and thy Soul in ſecret, will do more to thy true relief, than all other Counſellors and Comforters in the World can do.

Second Counſel.

Beware of a falſe peace, which is more dangerous than your trouble for ſin can be. Many Men are afraid of their troubles, but I think they have more cauſe to fear their peace a great deal. There is a twofold peace that ruines moſt Men. Peace in ſin, and peace with ſin. O how glad are ſome perſons when their troubles are gone, but I dare not rejoyce with them. Its like him that rejoyces his Ague is is gone, tho it hath left him in a deep Conſumption. You are got rid of your troubles, but God knows how you have left them: your wounds are skinn'd over, better they were kept open. There's no wiſe Woman would deſire to have her pains and throes ceaſe till the Child be born. And ſurely they have much to anſwer, that help on theſe deluſions, healing the hurt of Souls ſlightly, by crying Peace, Peace, when there is no Peace. The falſe Peace you beget in them, will be a real trouble to your ſelves in the Iſſue, *Jer.* 6. 14.

Third Counſel.

Let all that are under inward troubles for ſin, take heed of drawing deſperate concluſions againſt themſelves, and the final ſtate of their own Souls. Tho' your caſe be ſad, 'tis not deſperate: tho' the night be troubleſome and tedious, keep on in the way to Chriſt, and light will ſpring up. To mourn for ſin is your duty; to conclude there is no hope for you in Chriſt, is your ſin. You have wronged God enough already, don't add a farther and greater abuſe to all the reſt, by an abſolute Deſpair of mercy.

'Twas your sin formerly to *presume beyond any promise*, 'tis your Sin now to *despair against many commands*. I would say as the Apostle in another Case, I would not have you mourn as Men that have no Hope: Your Condition is sad as it is, but yet it's much better than once it was: You were once full of Sin, and void of Sense; now you have the Sense of Sin, which is no small Mercy; You were once quite out of the Way and Method of Mercy, now you are in that very Path wherein Mercy meets the Elect of God. Keep hope therefore at the Bottom of all your Troubles.

Fourth Counsel, Observe whether your Troubles for Sin produce such Fruits and Effects in your Souls, as theirs do which end at last in Christ and Everlasting Peace.

First, One that is truly burdened with Sin will not allow himself to live in the secret Practice of Sin: Either your Trouble will put an end to your course of sinning, or your sinning will put an end to your Troubles: consult 2 *Cor.* 7. 11.

Secondly, True Sorrow for Sin will give you very low and vile Thoughts of your selves: As you were covered with *Pride* before, so you will be covered with *Shame* after God hath convinced and humbled you, *Rom.* 6. 21.

Thirdly, A Soul really burdened with Sin, will never stand in his own Justification before God, nor extenuate and mince it in his Confessions to him, *Psal.* 51. 3, 4.

Fourthly, The Burdens of Sin will make a Man set Light by all other Burdens of Affliction, *Lam.* 3. 22. *Mic.* 7. 9. The more you feel Sin, the less you feel Affliction.

Fifthly, A Soul truly burdened for Sin, will take no hearty Joy or Comfort in any outward Enjoyment of this World, till Christ come and speak Peace to the Soul, *Lam.* 3. 28. Just so the Soul sits alone and keepeth silence; merry company is a burden, and Musick is but howling to him.

Fifth Counsel. Beware of those Things that make your Troubles longer than they ought to be. There be several Errors and Mistakes that hold poor Souls much longer in their Fears and Terrors, than else they might be: And such are,

First, Ignorance of the Nature of saving Faith, and the Necessity of it: Till you come to believe, you cannot have Peace; and while you mistake the Nature, or apprehend not the Necessity of Faith, you are not like to fall into that path of Peace.

Secondly, Labouring to heal the wounds that the Law hath made upon your Consciences, by a more strict Obedience to it for the Future, in the neglect of Christ and his Righteousness.

Thirdly, In observance of what God hath already done for you, in these Preparatory works of the Law, in order to your Salvation by Jesus Christ. O! if you would but compare w hat you now are, with what you lately were, it would give some relief: But the last and principal Thing is this:

Sixth Counsel, Hasten to Christ in the way of Faith, and you shall find rest; and till then, all the World cannot give you rest. The sooner you transact with Christ in the way of Faith, the sooner you shall be at Peace, and enter into his rest: For those that believe, do now enter into rest. You may tugg and strive, look this way and that, but all in vain; Christ and Peace come together. No sooner do you come to him, and roll your burden on him, receive him as he offers himself, but the Soul feels it self eased on a sudden; being justified by Faith, we have Peace with God, *Rom.* 5. 1. And thus in finishing the first, we are brought home to the second Observation.

Doct. 2.

That Sin-burdned Souls are solemnly invited to come to Christ.

This Point sounds sweetly in the Ear of a distressed Sinner, it is the most joyful Voice that ever the Soul heard; the Voice of blessing from Mount *Gerezim*, the ravishing Voice from Mount *Sion*, *Ye are come to Jesus the Mediator.* In opening of it I will shew.

1. *What is it to come to Christ.*
2. *How Christ invites Men to come to him.*
3. *Why his Invitation is directed to burdened Souls.*

First, We will enquire what it is to come to Christ, and how many Things are involved in it.

In general, To come to Christ, is a Phrase *aequipollent*, or of the same amount with the believing in Christ. It is an Expression that carries the Nature and Necessity of Faith in it, and is reciprocated with believing, *John* 6. 35. *He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst.* Coming to Christ, is believing in Christ; and believing in Christ, is coming to Christ: They are *Synonyma's*, and import the self same Thing: Only in this Notion of Faith there are many rich and excellent things hinted to us, which no other Word can so aptly convey to our Minds: As,

First, It hints to us, That the Souls of convinced and burdened Sinners, do not only discern the *reality* of Christ, or that he is, but also the Necessity of applying Christ, and that their eternal Life is in their Union with him: For this is most certain, that the Object of Faith must be determinate and fixed; the Soul must believe that Christ is, or else there can be no Emotions of the Soul after him: All coming presupposes a fixed Term to which we come, *Heb.* 11. 6. *He that cometh to God, must believe that God is.* Take away this, and all Motions after Christ presently stops. No wonder then that Souls, in their first Motions to Christ, find themselves clogg'd with so many Atheistical Temptations, shaking their Assent to the Truth of the Gospel at the very Root and Foundation of it; But they that come to Christ do see that *he is*, and that their Life and Happiness lies in their Union with him; else they would never come to him upon such Terms as they do.

Secondly, Coming to Christ implies the Souls despair of Salvation any other way: The way of Faith is a supernatural way, and the Souls will not attempt it, until they have tried all natural ways to help and save themselves, and find it all in vain: Therefore the *Text* describes these *Comers to Christ* as weary Persons, that have been tugging and striving all other ways for rest, but can find none; and so are forced to relinquish all their fond Expectations of Salvation in any other way, and come to Christ as their last and only Remedy.

Thirdly, Coming to Christ, notes a supernatural and Almighty Power acting the Soul quite above its own natural Abilities in this Motion, *John* 6. 44. *No Man can come to me, except my Father which hath sent me draw him.* It is as possible for the ponderous Mountains to start from their Bases and Centres, mount themselves aloft into the Air, and there fly like wandring Atoms hither and thither as it is for any Man of himself, (*i. e.*) by a pure natural Power of his own, to come to Christ: It was not a stranger thing for *Peter* to come to Christ walking upon the Waves of the Sea, than for him

or any Mans Soul, to come to Christ in the way of Faith.

Fourthly, Coming to Christ, notes the voluntariness of the Soul in its Motion to Christ. 'Tis true, there's no coming without the Father's drawing; but that drawing hath nothing of *Coaction* in it; it doth not destroy, but powerfully, and with an overcoming sweetness, perswade the Will. 'Tis not forced or driven, *but it comes*: Being made willing in the Day of God's Power, *Psalm* 110. 3. Ask a poor distressed Sinner in that Season, are you willing to come to Christ? O rather than live. Life is not so necessary as Christ is. O with all my *Heart*, ten thousand Worlds for Jesus Christ, if he could be purchased, were nothing answerable to his value in mine Eyes. The Souls motion to Christ is free and voluntary, *'tis coming*.

Fifthly, It implies this in it, That no Duties or Ordinances (which are but the Ways or Means by which we come to Christ) are, or ought to be *central* and *terminative* to the Soul: (*i. e.*) The Soul of a *Believer* is not to sit down and rest in them; but to come by them, or through them, to Jesus Christ, and take up his rest in him only. No Duties, no Reformations, no Ordinances of God, how excellent soever they are in themselves, and how necessary soever they are in their proper Place and Use, can give rest to the weary and heavy laden Soul: It cannot Centre in any of them; and you may see it cannot, because it still *gravitates*, and inclines to another thing, even Christ; and cannot terminate its Motion till it be come to him. Christ is the Term to which a *Believer* moves; and therefore cannot sit down by the way as well satisfied, as if he were at his Journies end. Ordinances and Duties have the Nature and Use of Means to bring us to Christ, but not to be to any Man instead of Christ.

Venite ad me, (i. e.) affectibus fidei, & spei religiosæ, & desiderii. Burgensis in Loc.

Sixthly, Coming to Christ, implies an Hope or Expectation from Christ in the coming Soul. If it hath no hope, why doth it move forward? As good sit still, and resolve to perish where it is, as to come to Christ, if there no ground to expect Salvation by him. Hope is the spring of Motion and Industry: If you cut off Hope, you hamstring Faith: It cannot move to Christ, except it be satisfied at least of the possibility of Mercy and Salvation by him. Hence it is, that when Comers to Christ are struggling with the Doubts and Fears of the Issue, the Lord is pleased to enliven their faint Hopes, by setting on such Scriptures as that, *John* 6. 37. *He that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out*: And *Heb.* 7. 25. *He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him.* This puts Life into Hope, and Hope puts Life into Industry and Motion.

Seventhly, Coming to Christ for Rest, implies that *Believers* have, and lawfully may have an Eye to their own Happiness in closing with the Lord Jesus Christ. The poor Soul comes for rest: It comes for Salvation: Its Eye and Aim is upon it: And this aim of the Soul, at its own good, is legitimated and allowed by that Expression of Christ, *John* 5. 40. *Ye will not come unto me that ye may have life.* If Christ blame them for not coming to him, they might have Life, sure he would not blame them, had they come to him for Life.

Eighthly, But Lastly, and which is the principal Thing carried in this Expression: Coming to Christ, notes the All-sufficiency of Christ, to answer all the Needs and Wants of distressed Souls, and their betaking themselves accordingly to him only for Relief, being content to come to Christ for whatever they need, and live upon that fulness that is in him. If there were not an All-sufficiency in Christ, no Soul would come to him; For this is the very ground upon which Men come, *Heb.* 7. 25. *He is able to save to the uttermost, all that come to God by him*: εἰς τὸ παντελὲς, to the uttermost: In the greatest plunges, difficulties and dangers: He hath a fulness of saving Power in him; and this encourages Souls to come unto him. One *Beggar* uses not to wait at the door of another, but all at the doors of them they conceive able to relieve them. And as this notes the fulness of Christ as a Saviour, so it must needs note the emptiness and humility of the Soul as a Comer to him. This is call'd Submission, in *Rom.* 10. 3. Proud Nature must be deeply distressed, humbled and moulded, into another Temper, before it will be perswaded to live upon those Terms, to come to Christ for every thing it wants, to live upon Christ's fulness in the way of Grace and Favour, and have no stock of its own to live upon. O this is hard, but it's the way of Faith.

Secondly, In the next Place, let us see how Christ invites Men to come unto him, and you shall find the Means employ'd in this Work, are are either *Internal* and *Principal*, namely the Spirit of God, who is Christ's Vicegerent, and comes to us in his Name and Room to perswade us to believe, *John* 15. 26. Or *External*, namely the preaching of the Gospel by Commissionated *Embassadors*, who in Christ's stead beseech Men to be reconciled to God: (*i. e.*) to come to Christ by Faith, in order to their Reconciliation and Peace with God. But all Means and Instruments employ'd in this Work of bringing Men to Christ, entirely depend upon the blessing and concurrence of the Spirit of God, without whom they signifie nothing. How long may Ministers preach, before one Soul come to Christ, except the Spirit co-operate in that Work? Now as to the manner in which Men are perswaded, and their Wills wrought upon to come to Christ, I will briefly note several Acts of the Spirit in order thereunto:

First, There is an *illustrating-work* of the Spirit upon the Minds of Sinners, opening their Eyes to see their Danger and Misery. Till this be discovered, no Man stirs from his Place: 'Tis Sense of Danger that rouzes the secure Sinner, that distresses him, and makes him look about for Deliverance, crying, *What shall I do to be saved?* And 'tis the discovery of Christ's Ability to save, which is the ground and reason, (as was observed above) of its Motion to Christ. Hence, *seeing the Son*, is joyned with believing or *coming to him*, in *John* 6.40.

Secondly, There is the *Authoritative Call*, or commanding Voice of the Spirit in the Word; a Voice that's full of awful Majesty and Power, 1 *John* 3. 23. *This is his Commandment, that we should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ.* This Call of the Spirit to come to Christ rolls one great block, namely the fear of Presumption, out of the Souls way to Christ, and instead of *Presumption* in coming, makes it *Rebellion*, and inexcusable Obstinacy, to refuse to come. This answers all Pleas against coming to Christ from our unworthiness and deep guilt, and mightily encourages the Soul to come to Christ, whatever it hath been or done.

Thirdly, There are Soul-encouraging *conditional Promises* to all that do come to Christ in Obedience to the Command. Such is that in my Text, *I will give you rest*: And in that *John* 6. 37. *Him that cometh*

meth to me, I will in no wise cast out. And these breath Life and Encouragement into poor Souls that hang back, and are daunted through their own unworthiness.

Fourthly, There are *dreadful threatnings* denounced by the Spirit in the Word, against all that refuse or neglect to come to Christ, which are of great use to engage and quicken Souls in their way to Christ. *Mark* 16. 16. *He that believes not shall be damned. Die in his Sins*, John 8. 24. *The Wrath of God shall remain on him*, John 3. *ult.* Which is as if the Lord had said, Sinners, don't dally with Christ: Don't be always treating, and never concluding or resolving: For if there be Justice in Heaven, or Fire in Hell, every *Soul* that comes not to *Christ*, must and shall perish to all Eternity: Upon your own Heads, let the Blood and Destruction of your own Souls be for ever, if you will not come unto him.

Fifthly, There are *moving and working Examples* set before Souls in the Word, to prevail with them to come, alluring and encouraging Examples of such as have come to Christ under deepest guilt and discouragement, and yet found Mercy, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15, 16. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the World to save Sinners, of whom I am chief: Howbeit (or nevertheless) for this Cause I obtained Mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long suffering, for a Pattern to them which should hereafter believe in him to Life everlasting.* Who would not come to Christ after such an *Example* as this? And if this will not prevail, there are dreadful Examples recorded in the Word, setting before us the miserable Condition of all such as refuse the Calls of the Word to come to Christ, 1 *Pet.* 3. 19, 20. *By which also he went and preached to the Spirits which are in Prison, which sometime were disobedient when once the long-suffering of God waited in the Days of Noah.* The meaning is, the Sinners that lived before the Flood, but now are in Hell, clapt up into that Prison, had the offers of Grace made them, but despised them, and now lie for their disobedience in Prison, under the Wrath of God for it, in the lowest Hell.

Sixthly, and Lastly, There is an effectual *perswading*, overcoming and victorious Work of the Spirit upon the Hearts and Wills of Sinners, under which they come to Jesus Christ. Of this I have spoken at large before in the *Fourth Sermon*, and therefore shall not add any thing more here. This is the Way and Manner, in which Souls are prevailed with to come to Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, in the last Place, if you *enquire* why *Christ* makes his Invitations to weary and heavy laden Souls, and to no other, the answer is briefly this:

First, Because in so doing, he follows the *Commission* which he received from his Father; for so you will find it runs in, *Isa.* 61. 1. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good Tidings to the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim Liberty to the Captives, and the opening of the Prison to them that are bound.* You see here now Christ's Commission binds him up: His Father sent him to poor broken hearted Sinners, and he will keep close to his Commission. *He came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners* (*i. e.* sensible burthened Sinners) *To Repentance*, Mat. 9. 13. *I am not sent* (saith he) *but unto the lost Sheep of the House of Israel.* Thus his Instructions and Commission from the Father, limit him only to sensible and burthened Souls, and he will be faithful to his Commission.

Secondly, The very Order of the Spirits work in bringing Men to Christ, shews us to whom the Invitations and offers of Grace in Christ are to be made. For none are convinced of Righteousness (*i. e.*) of the compleat and perfect Righteousness which is in Christ for their Justification, until first they be convinced of *Sin*; and consequently, no Man will or can come to Christ by Faith, till Convictions of *Sin* have awakened and distressed them, *John* 16. 8, 9. This being the due order of the *Spirits* Operation, the same order must be observed in Gospel Offers and Invitations.

Thirdly, It behoves, that Christ should provide for his own Glory, as well as for our Safety, and not expose that, to secure this, but save us in that way which will bring him most Honour and Praise. And certainly such a way as is this, by first convincing, humbling and burthening the Souls of Men, and then bringing them to rest in himself.

Alas! Let those that never saw or felt the evil of Sin, be told of Rest, Peace and Pardon in Christ, they will but despise it, as a Thing of no value; *Luke* 5. 31. *The whole need not a Physician, but those that are Sick.* Bid a Man that thinks himself sound and whole, go to the *Physicians*, and he will but laugh at the Motion. If you offer him the richest Composition, he will refuse it, slight it, and it may be spill it upon the Ground: Ay, but if the same Man did once feel an acute disease, and were made to sweat and groan under strong Pains, if ever he come to know what sick Days and restless Nights are, and to apprehend his Life to be in eminent Hazard, then Messengers are sent one after another in Post-haste to the Physician; then he begs him with Tears to do what in him lies for his Relief; he thankfully takes the bittrest Potions, and praises the care and skill of his Physician with Tears of Joy; and so the Patients safety, and the Physicians Honour, are both secured. So is it in this Method of Grace. The Uses follow.

Infer. 1. If Sin-burthened Souls are solemnly invited to come to Christ, *Then it follows, that whatever guilt lie upon the Conscience of a poor humbled Sinner, 'tis no Presumption, but his Duty to come to Christ, notwithstanding his own apprehended vileness and great unworthiness.*

Let it be carefully observed how happily that universal Particle *All* is inserted in Christ's Invitation for the Encouragement of Sinners. *Come unto me* [*All*] *ye that labour*: *q. d.* let no broken-hearted Sinner exclude himself, when as he is not by me excluded from Mercy: My Grace is my own, I may bestow it where I will, and upon whom I will. 'Tis not I, but *Satan* that impales and incloses my Mercy from humbled Souls that are made willing to come unto me: He calls that your *Presumption*, which my Invitation makes your *Duty*.

Object. 1. But I doubt my Case is excepted by Christ himself, in *Mat.* 12. 31. where Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is exempted from Pardon; And I have had many horrid blasphemous Thoughts injected into my Soul.

Sol. Art thou a burdened, and heavy laden Soul? If so, thy Case is not in that, or any other Scripture, exempted from Mercy: For the unpardonable Sin is always found in an impenitent Heart. As that Sin finds no Pardon with God, so neither is it followed with Contrition and Sorrow in the Soul that commits it.

Object. 2. But if I am not guilty of that Sin, I am certainly guilty of many great and heinous Abominations of another kind, too great for me to expect Mercy for, and therefore I dare not go to Christ.

Sol. The greater your Sins have been, the more need you have to go to Jesus Christ. Let not a *Motive* to Christ, be made an *Obstacle* in your way to him. Great Sinners are expresly called, *Isa.* 1. 18. great Sinners have come to Christ, and found Mercy, 1 *Cor.* 6. 7. And to conclude, it's an high reproach and dishonour to the Blood of Christ, and Mercy of God, which flows so freely through him, to object the greatness of Sin to either of them. Certainly you have not sinned beyond the *extent of Mercy*, or beyond the *efficacy of the Blood of Christ*: But Pardon and Peace may be had, if you will thus come to Christ for it.

Object. 3. Oh but it's now too late; I have had many thousand Calls by the Gospel, and refused them; many Purposes in my Heart to go to Christ, and quenched them; my time therefore is past, and now 'tis to no purpose.

Sol. If the time of Grace be past, and God intends no Mercy for thee, how comes it to pass thy Soul is now filled with trouble and distress for Sin? Is this the frame of a Man's Heart that is past hope? Do such Signs as these appear in Men that are hopeless? Beside, the time of Grace is a *Secret* hid in the breast of God; but coming to Christ is a *Duty* plainly revealed in the *Text*: And why will you object a thing that is secret and uncertain, against a Duty that is so plain and evident? Nor do you your selves believe what you object: For at the same time that you say your Seasons are over, it is too late; you are notwithstanding found repenting, mourning, praying and striving, to come to Christ. Certainly if you knew it were too late; you would not be found labouring in the use of Means. Go on therefore, and the Lord be with you. 'Tis not Presumption but Obedience, to come when Christ calls; as here he doth, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden.*

Infer. 2. Hence it follows, *That none have cause to be troubled, when God makes the Souls of their Friends or Relations sick with the Sense of Sin.* It was the saying (as I remember) of *Hierom* to *Sabinian*, Nothing (said he) makes my Heart sadder, than that nothing can make my Heart sad. 'Tis Matter of Joy to all that rightly understand the Matter, when God smites the Heart of any Man with the painful sense of Sin, of such sickness it may be said, *This sickness is unto Death, but for the Glory of God.* Yet how do many carnal Relations lament and bewail this as a Misery, as an undoing to their Friends and Acquaintance; as if then they must be reckon'd lost, and never till then that Christ is finding and saving them. O if your Hearts were spiritual and wise, their Groans for Sin would be as Musick in your Ears. When they go alone to bewail their sin, you would go alone also to bless God for such a Mercy; that ever you should live to such a happy Day: You would say, now is my Friend in the blessed Pangs of the new Birth: Now he in the very way of Mercy: Never in so hopeful a Condition as now. I had rather he should groan now at the feet of Christ, than groan hereafter under the Wrath of God for ever. O Parents, beware as you love the Souls of your Children, that you don't damp and discourage them, tempt or threaten them, divert or hinder them in such Cases as this, lest you bring the *Blood* of their *Souls* upon your own Heads.

Infer. 3. It also follows from hence, *That those to whom Sin was never any burden, are not yet come to Christ, nor have any Interest in him.* We may as well suppose a Child to be born without any pangs or throes, as a Soul to be born again, and united to Christ without any sense or sorrow for sin. I know many have great *frights of Conscience*, that never were made duly sensible of the evil of sin: Many are afraid of *burning*, that never were afraid of *sinning*: Slight and transient troubles some have had, but it vanish'd like an early Cloud, lick'd up like a Morning Dew. Few Men are without checks and throbs of Conscience at one time or other, but instead of going to the Closet, they run to the *Ale-house* or *Tavern* for a Cure: If their sorrow for sin had been right, nothing but the sprinkling of the Blood of Christ could have appeased their Consciences, *Heb.* 10. 22. How cold should the Consideration of this thing strike to the Hearts of such Persons! Methinks, *Reader*, if this be thy Case, it should send thee away with an aking Heart: Thou hast not yet tasted the bitterness of sin, and if thou do not, then shalt thou never taste the sweetness of Christ, his Pardons and Peace.

Infer. 4. *How great a Mercy is it for sin-burthened Souls, to be within the sound and call of Christ in the Gospel!*

There be many thousands in the *Pagan* and *Popish* parts of the World, that labour under distresses of Conscience as well as we, but have no such reliefs or means of Peace and Comfort as we have that live within the joyful sound of the Gospel. If the Conscience of a *Papist* be burdened with guilt, all the relief he hath, is to afflict his Body to quiet his Soul: A Penance or Pilgrimage is all the relief they have. If a *Pagan* be in trouble for sin, he hath no Knowledge of Christ, nor Notion of a Satisfaction made by him. The voice of *Nature* is, shall I give my *first-born* for my *Transgression*, the *fruit* of my *Body* for the sin of my Soul? The damned endure the terrible blows and wounds of Conscience for sin, they roar under that terrible lash, but no Voice of peace or pardon is heard among them. Lo is not, *Come unto me ye that labour and are heavy laden*, but *depart from me ye cursed.*

Blessed are your Ears, for you hear the voice of Peace, you are come to Jesus the Mediator, and to the Blood of sprinkling. O you can never set a due value upon this Privilege.

Infer. 5. *How sweet and unspeakably relieving is the closing of a burdened Soul with Jesus Christ by Faith! 'Tis rest to the weary Soul.*

Soul-troubles are spending and wasting troubles. The Pains of a distressed conscience are the most acute Pains. A poor Soul would fain be at rest, but knows not where; he tries this Duty and that, but finds none; at last he falls into the way of believing; he casts himself, with his Burden of Guilt and Fear, upon Christ, and there is the rest his Soul desired. Christ and Rest come together: till Faith bring you to the Bosom of Jesus, you can find no true rest; the Soul is rolling and tossing, sick and weary, upon the Billows of its own Guilt and Fears. Now the Soul is come like a Ship tossed with Storms and Tempests, out of a raging Ocean into the quiet Harbour; or like a *lost Sheep* that hath been wandring in Weariness, Hunger and Danger, into the Fold. Is a soft Bed in a quiet Chamber, sweet to one that is spent and tired with Travel? Is the sight of a Shoar sweet to the *Shipwreck'd Mariner*, that looks for nothing but Death? Much more sweet is Christ to a Soul that comes to him pressed in conscience, and broken in spirit, under the sinking weight of sin.

How did the *Italians* rejoyce, after a long and dangerous Voyage, to see *Italy* again! Crying with

a loud and united voice, which made the very Heavens ring again, *Italy*! *Italy*! But no Shoar is so sweet to the weather-beaten Passenger, as Christ is to a broken-hearted Sinner: this brings the Soul to a sweet Repose, *Heb.* 4. 3. *We which have believed, do enter into rest*: and this endears the way of Faith to their Souls ever after.

Italiam, Italiam, laeto clamore salutant. Virg.

Infer. 6. *Learn hence the usefulness of the Law, to bring Souls to Jesus Christ.* Its utterly useless as a *Covenant* to *justifie* us, but exceeding useful to convince and humble us. It cannot relieve or ease us, but it can, and doth awaken and rouze us: its a fair Glass to shew us the face of sin; and till we have seen that, we cannot see the face of Jesus Christ.

The Law, like the *fiery Serpent*, smites, stings and torments the conscience: This drives us to the Lord Jesus lifted up in the Gospel, like the *Brazen Serpent* in the Wilderness, to heal us. The use of the Law, is to make us feel our *sickness*; this makes us look out for a *Physician*. *I was alive once without the Law* (saith *Paul*) *but when the Commandment came, sin revived, and I died*, Rom. 7. 9. The hard, vain, proud hearts of Men, require such an Hammer to break them to pieces.

Infer. 7. *Its the immediate duty of weary and heavy laden sinners to come to Christ by Faith, and not stand off from Christ, or delay to accept him upon any pretence whatsoever.*

Christ invites and commands such to come unto him, 'tis therefore your sin to neglect, draw back, or defer, whatever seeming reasons and Pretences there may be to the contrary. When the *Jaylor* was brought (where I suppose thee now to be) to a pinching Distress that made him cry, *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* the very next counsel the Apostles gave him, was, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*, Acts 16. 30, 31. And for your Encouragement know, he that calleth you to come, knows your burden, what your sins have been, and troubles are, yet he calls you: if your sin hinder not Christ from *calling*, neither should it hinder you from *coming*. He that calls you, is able to ease you, *to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him*, Heb. 7. 25. Whatever fulness of sin be in you, there is a greater fulness of saving Power in Christ. Moreover, he that calls you to come, never yet rejected any poor burdened Soul that came to him: and hath said he never will, *Joh.* 6. 37. *He that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.* Fear not therefore, he will not begin with thee, or make thee the first Instance and Example of the feared Rejection.

And Lastly, Bethink thy self, what wilt thou do, and whither wilt thou go in this case, if not to Jesus Christ? Nothing shall ease or relieve thee, till thou dost come to him. Thou art under an happy necessity to go to him. With him only is found rest for the weary Soul. Which brings us to the third and last Observation.

Doct. 3.

That there is rest in Christ for all that come unto him under the heavy Burden of Sin.

Non dicit ingressi sumus, sed ingredimur, significans, initia quietis fideles nunc habere: plenam quietem sine tempore con-

REST, is a sweet Word to a weary Soul, all seek it, but none but Believers find it. *We which have believed*, (saith the Apostle) *do enter into rest*, Heb. 4. 3. He doth not say they *shall*, but they do enter into rest; noting their spiritual rest to be already begun by Faith on Earth in the Tranquillity of Conscience, and shall be *secuturos*. Par. in loc. consummated in Heaven in the full Enjoyment of God. There is a sweet calm upon the troubled Soul after believing, an ease or rest of the Mind, which is an unspeakable Mercy to a poor weary Soul. Christ is to it, as the *Ark* was to the *Dove*, when she wandred over the watery World, and found no Place to rest the Soal of her Foot. Faith centers the unquiet spirit of Man in Christ, brings it to repose it self and its burden on him. It is the Souls dropping *Anchor* in a Storm, which stays and settles it.

The great debate which cost so many anxious Thoughts, is now issued into this Resolution; I will venture my All upon Christ, let him do with me as seemeth him good. It was impossible for the Soul to find rest, whilest it knew not where to bestow it self, or how to be secured from the wrath to come; but when all is embarqued in Christ for Eternity, and the Soul fully resolved to lean upon him, and to trust him; now it feels the very *initials* of eternal rest in it self: it finds an heavy burden unloaded from its shoulders: it is come as it were into a new World: the case is strangely altered. The Word *rest* in this place notes, (and is so rendered by some) a *Recreation*: 'tis restored, renewed and recreated as it were, by that sweet repose it hath upon Christ. Believers know, that faith is the sweetest Recreation you can take. Others seek to divert and lose their Troubles by sinful Recreations, vain company, and the like; but they little know what the Recreation, and sweet restoring Rest, that Faith gives the Soul, is. You find in Christ what they seek in vain among the Creatures. Believing is the highest Recreation known in this World. But to prevent Mistakes, three *Cautions* need to be premised, lest we do *in ipso limine impingere*, stumble at the threshold, and so lose our way all along afterward.

Recreabo vos, nempe à lassitudine, à molestia, & onere. Vatab. & Erasm.

Caution 1.

You are not to conceive, that all the Souls fears, troubles and sorrows, are presently over and at an end, as soon as it is come to Christ by faith. They will have many troubles in the World after that, it many be more than ever they had in their lives: *Our flesh* (saith *Paul*) *had no rest*, 2 Cor. 7. 5. They will be infested with many Temptations after that, that it may be the Assaults of Satan may be more violent upon their Souls than ever: *horribilia de deo, terribilia de fide*: Injections that make the very Bones to quake, and the Belly to tremble: they will not be freed from sin, that rest remains for the People of God; nor from inward Trouble and Grief of Soul about sin. These things are not to be expected presently.

Luther upon his Conversion was so buffeted by *Satan*, *Ut nec calor, nec sanguis, nec sensus, nec vita supereſſet.*

Caution 2.

We may not think all Believers do immediately enter into the full actual sense of rest and comfort, but they presently enter into the state of rest. Being justified by Faith, we have peace with God, Rom. 5. 1. (*i. e.*) we enter into the state of peace immediately. *Peace is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart*, Psal. 97. 11. And he is a rich Man that hath a thousand *Acres* of Corn in the Ground, as well as he that hath so much in his Barn, or the Money in his Purse. They have Rest and Peace in the *seed* of it, when they have it not in the *fruit*: they have Rest in the *promise*, when they have it not in *pos-*

ſion: and he is a rich Man that hath good *Bonds* and *Bills* for a great ſum of Money, if he have not twelve Pence in his Pocket. All Believers have the Promiſe, have Reſt and Peace granted them under Gods own Hand in many Promiſes; which Faith brings them under: and we know that the Truth and Faithfulneſs of God ſtands engaged to make good every Line and Word of the Promiſe to them. So that tho' they have not a full and clear actual ſenſe and feeling of reſt, they are nevertheleſs by Faith come into the ſtate of reſt.

Caution 3.

We may not conceive, that Faith it ſelf is the Souls reſt, but the means and inſtrument of it only. We cannot find reſt in any work or duty of our own, but we may find it in Chriſt, whom Faith apprehends for Juſtification and Salvation.

Having thus guarded the Point againſt miſapprehenſions by theſe needful Cautions, I ſhall next ſhew you, how our coming to Chriſt by Faith brings us to reſt in him. And here let it be conſidered what thoſe things are that burden, grieve and diſquiet the Soul, before its coming to Chriſt, and how it is relieved and eaſed in all thoſe reſpects by its coming to the Lord Jeſus: and you ſhall find,

Firſt, That one principal Ground of trouble, *is the guilt of ſin upon the Conſcience*, of which I ſpake in the former point. The curſe of the Law lies heavy upon the Soul, ſo heavy that nothing is found in all the World able to relieve it under that Burden: as you ſee in a condemned Man, ſpread a Table in Priſon with the greateſt Dainties, and ſend for the rareſt Muſicians, all will not charm his ſorrow; but if you can produce an *authentick Pardon*, you eaſe him preſently: juſt ſo it is here, Faith plucks the Thorn out of the conſcience which ſo grieved it, unites the Soul with Chriſt, and then that Ground of Trouble is removed: for *there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt*, Rom. 8. 11. The ſame Moment the Soul comes to Chriſt, it is paſt from Death to Life; is no more under the Law, but Grace. If a Mans Debt be paid by this Surety, he need not fear to ſhew his Face boldly abroad: he may freely meet the *Sergeant* at the Priſon door.

Secondly, The Soul of a convinced Sinner is exceedingly burdened with the *uncleanneſs* and filthineſs wherewith ſin hath defiled and polluted it. Conviction diſcovers the univerſal Pollution of heart and life, ſo that a Man loaths and abhors himſelf by reaſon thereof: If he do not look into his own corruptions, he cannot be *ſafe*: and if he do, he cannot bear the ſight of it; he hath no *quiet*: Nothing can give reſt, but what gives Relief againſt this Evil. And this only is done by Faith uniting the Soul with Jeſus Chriſt. For tho' it be true, that the Pollution of ſin be not preſently and perfectly taken away, by coming to Chriſt, yet the burden thereof is exceedingly eaſed: for upon our believing, there is an heart-purifying Principle planted into the Soul, which doth by degrees cleanſe that Fountain of corruption, and will at laſt perfectly free the Soul from it, *Acts* 15. 9. *Purifying their hearts by faith*: and being once in Chriſt, he is conſumed for the Soul, as a Member now of his own myſtical Body, to purifie and cleanſe it, that at laſt he may preſent it perfect to the Father without ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing, *Eph.* 5. 26. The reigning Power of it is gone immediately upon believing, and the very Exiſtence and Being of it ſhall at laſt be deſtroyed. O what Reſt muſt this give under thoſe Troubles for ſin?

Thirdly, It was an intolerable Burden to the Soul to be under the continual Fears, Alarms and Frights of Death and Damnation. Its Life hath been a Life of Bondage upon this Account, ever ſince the Lord opened his Eyes to ſee his condition. Poor Souls lie down with Tremblings, for fear what a Night may bring forth. 'Tis a ſad Life indeed to live in continual Bondage to ſuch Fears. But Faith ſweetly relieves the trembling conſcience, by removing the *Guilt* which breeds its fears. The Sting of Death is Sin; when Guilt is removed, Fears vaniſh.

Smite Lord, ſmite, ſaid *Luther*, for my ſins are forgiven. Now if ſickneſs come, 'tis another thing than it was wont to be, *Iſa.* 33. 24. *The Inhabitant ſhall not ſay I am ſick, the people that dwell therein ſhall be forgiven their iniquities*: a Man ſcarce feels his ſickneſs in compariſon to what he did, whilſt he was without Chriſt, and hope of Pardon.

Feri Domine, feri, nam à peccatis meis abſolutus ſum, Luth.

Fourthly, A convinced ſinner out of Chriſt ſees every thing againſt him: nothing yields any comfort, yea, every thing increaſes and aggravates his Burthen, whether he look to things paſt, preſent, or to come. If he reflect upon *things paſt*, his Soul is filled with Anguiſh to remember the ſins committed, and the ſeaſons neglected; and the precious Mercies that have been abuſed: if he look upon *things preſent*, the caſe is doleful and miſerable: nothing but Trouble and Danger; chriſtleſs and comfortleſs: and if he look forward to *things to come*, that gives him a deeper cut to the Heart than any thing elſe; for tho' it be ſad and miſerable for the preſent, yet he fears it will be much worſe hereafter; all theſe are but the Beginning of ſorrows: and thus the poor awakened Sinner becomes a *Magor Miſſabib*; fear round about.

But upon his coming to Chriſt, all things are marvellouſly altered: a quite contrary Face of things appears to him: every thing gives him hope and comfort which way ſoever he looks: ſo ſpeaks the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22, 23. *All things are yours*, (ſaith he) *whether life, or death; or things preſent, or things to come, all is yours, and ye are Chriſts, and Chriſt is Gods*: they are ours, (*i. e.*) for our advantage, benefit and comfort; more particularly upon our coming to Chriſt.

Firſt, *Things paſt are ours*, they conduce to our advantage and comfort. Now the Soul can begin to read the gracious End and Deſign of God, in all its Preſervations and Deliverances; whereby it hath been reſerved for ſuch a Day as this. O! it melts his Heart to conſider, his companions in Sin and Vanity are cut off, and he ſpared; and that for a Day of ſuch Mercy as the Day of his Eſpouſals with Chriſt is. Now all his paſt Sorrows, and deep troubles of ſpirit, which God hath exerciſed him with, begin to appear the greateſt Mercies that ever he received: being all neceſſary, and introductive to this bleſſed Union with Chriſt.

Secondly, *Things preſent are ours*, tho' it be not yet with us as we would have it; Chriſt is not *ſure* enough, the heart is not *pure* enough; ſin is too ſtrong, and Grace is too weak; many things are yet out of order; yet can the Soul bleſs God for this with Tears of joy, and praiſe him for this, brimful of Admiration, and holy Aſtoniſhment; that it is, as it is; that he is where he is, tho' he be not yet where he would be. O 'tis a bleſſed Life to live as a poor *recumbent*, by Acts of Truſt and Affiance, tho' as yet it have but little Evidence: that it is reſolved to truſt all with Chriſt, tho' it be not yet certain of the Iſſue. O this is a comforta-

ble Station, a sweet condition to what it was, either when it *wallowed* in sin in the Days before conviction, or was *swallowed* up in Fears and Troubles for Sin after conviction: now it hath Hope tho' it want Assurance; and hope is sweet to a Soul coming out of such deep Distresses: now it sees the Remedy, and is applying it, whereas before the Wound seemed desperate: now all Hesitations and Debates are at an End in the Soul, 'tis no longer bivious and unresolved what to do; all things have been deeply considered, and after consideration, issued into this Resolve or Decree of the Will. I will go to Christ; I will venture all upon his Command and Call; I will imbarque my eternal Interests in that Bottom: here I fix; and upon this Ground I resolve to live and die. O how much better is this, than that floating Life it lived before, rolling upon the Billows of inward Fears and Troubles, not able to drop Anchor any where, nor knowing where to find an Harbour.

Thirdly, *Things to come are ours*: and this is the best and sweetest of all: Man is a prospecting Creature, his Eye is much upon things to come, and it will not satisfie him that it is well at present, except he have a Prospect that it shall be so hereafter: but now the Soul hath committed it self and all its concernments to Christ for Eternity, and this being done, its greatly relieved against evils to come.

I cannot (saith the Believer) think all my Troubles over, and that I shall never meet any more Afflictions, it were a fond Vanity to dream of that; bnt I leave all these things where I have left my Soul: he that hath supported me under inward, will carry me through outward Troubles also. I cannot think all my *temptations* to sin past, O, I may yet meet with sore Assaults from Satan: yet it is infinitely better to be watching, praying and striving against sin, than it was when I was obeying it in the Lusts of it. God that hath delivered me from the Love of Sin, will, I trust, preserve me from Ruin by Sin. I know also Death is to come, I must feel the Pangs and Agonies of it; but yet the Aspect of Death is much more pleasant than it was. I come, Lord Jesus, to thee, who art the Death of Death, whose Death hath disarmed Death of its sting. I fear not its Dart, if I feel not its strength. And thus you see briefly, how by Faith Believers enter into Rest. How Christ gives Rest even at present to them that come to him, and all this but as a Beginning of their everlasting Rest.

Infer. 1. Is there Rest in Christ for weary Souls that come unto him? *Then certainly its a Design of Satan against the Peace and Welfare of Mens Souls to discourage them from coming to Christ in the way of Faith.*

Ad Solamen calamitatis suæ, non desinunt perditi perdere, Minut. Fœlix.

He is a restless Spirit himself, and would make us so too: it is an excellent Note of *Minutius Fœlix*, Those desperate and restless Spirits (saith he) have no other pleasure, but in bringing us to the same Misery themselves are in: he goeth about as a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour. It frets and grates his proud and envious Mind to see others find rest, when he can find none: an effectual Plaister applied to heal our Wound, when his own must bleed to Eternity: and he obtains his end fully, if he can but keep off Souls from Christ: Look therefore upon all those Objections and Discouragements raised in your Hearts against coming to Christ, as so many Artifices and cunning Devices of the Devil to destroy and ruin your Souls. 'Tis true, they have a very specious and colourable Appearance, they are gilded over with Pretences of the Justice of God, the heinous Nature of sin; the want of due and befitting Qualifications for so holy and pure a God; the lapsing of the season of Mercy, and an hundred other of like nature: but I beseech you lay down this as a sure conclusion, and hold it fast; that whatever it be that discourages and hinders you from coming to Christ, is directly against the Intereest of your Souls, and the Hand of the Devil is certainly in it.

Infer. 2. Hence also it follows, *That unbelief is the true reason of all that Disquietness and Trouble, by which the minds of poor sinners are so rack'd and tortured.*

If you will not believe, you cannot be established: till you come to Christ, peace cannot come to you: Christ and peace are undivided. Good Souls consider this, you have tried all other ways, you have tried Duties, and no rest comes; you have tried Reformation, Restitution, and a stricter course of Life, yet your Wounds are still open and fresh bleeding: These things, I grant, are in their Places both good and necessary, but of themselves, without *Christ*, utterly insufficient to give what you expect from them: Why will you not try the way of Faith: Why will you not carry your burden to Christ? O that you would be perswaded to it, how soon would you find what so long you have been seeking in vain! How long will you thus oppose your own good! How long will you keep your selves upon the rack of Conscience! Is it easie to go under the Throbs and Wounds of an accusing and condemning Conscience? You know it is not: You look for peace, but no good comes, for a time of healing, and behold trouble: Alas, it must and will be so still, until you fall into the way of Faith, which is the true and only Method to obtain rest.

Infer. 3. *What cause have we all to admire the goodness of God, in providing for us a Christ, in whom we may find rest to our Souls!*

How hath the Lord filled and furnished Jesus Christ with all that is suitable to a Believers Wants! Doth the guilt of sin terrifie his Conscience? Lo, in him is perfect Righteousness to remove that guilt, so that it shall neither be imputed to his Person, nor reflected by his Conscience in the way of condemnation as it was before. In him also is a Fountain opened, for washing and for cleansing the filth of sin from our Souls: In him is the fulness both of *Merit*, and of *Spirit*, two sweet Springs of Peace to the Souls of Men: Well might the Apostle say, *Christ the Wisdom of God*, 1 Cor. 1. 30. and well might the Church say, *He is altogether lovely*, Cant. 5. 16. Had not God provided Jesus Christ for us, we had never known one Hours rest to all Eternity.

Infer. 4. *How unreasonable, and wholly inexcusable in Believers, is the sin of backsliding from Christ?* Have you found rest in him, when you could not find it in any other? Did he receive and ease your Souls, when all other Persons and things were *Physicians of no value*? And will you after this, backslide from him again? O what madness is this! *Will a Man leave the Snow of* Lebanon *which cometh from the Rock of the Field? Or shall the cold flowing Waters, that come from another place, be forsaken?* No Man that is in his Wits would leave the pure cold refreshing Stream of a Chrystal Fountain, to go to a filthy Puddle, Lake, or an empty Cistern, as the best Enjoyments of this World are in comparison with Jesus Christ.

It was Christ's melting Expostulation with the Disciples, *Joh.* 6. 67, 68. when some had forsaken him, *will ye also go?* And it was a very suitable return they made, Lord, whither away from thee should we go! *q. d.* from thee, Lord, no, no, where can we mend our selves? Be sure of it, when ever you go from Christ, ye go from rest to trouble. Had *Judas* rest? Had *Spira* rest? And do you think you shall have rest? No, no, *The backslider in Heart shall be filled with his own ways*, Prov. 14. 14. you shall have your Bellies full of it: *Cursed be the Man that departeth from him, he shall be as the Heath in the Desart, that seeth not when good cometh, and shall inhabit the parched Places of the Wilderness*, Jer. 17. 5. If fear of sufferings and worldly Temptations ever draw you off from Christ, you may come to those straights and terrors of Conscience, that will make you wish your selves back again with Christ in a Prison, with Christ at a Stake.

Infer. 5. *Let all that come to Christ, learn to improve him to the rest and peace of their own Souls, in the midst of all the troubles and outward distresses they meet with in the World.*

Surely rest may be found in Christ in any Condition: He is able to give you Peace in the midst of all your Troubles here. So he tells you in, *Joh.* 16. *ult. These things have I spoken to you, that in me you might have peace; in the World ye shall have tribulation*: By peace he means not a deliverance from troubles, by taking of Affliction from them, or taking them away by death from all Afflictions; but it is something they enjoy from Christ in the very thick of troubles, and amidst all their Afflictions, that quiets and gives them rest, so that troubles cannot hurt them: certainly Believers, you have peace in Christ, when there is little in your own Hearts: And your Hearts might be filled with peace too, if you would exercise Faith upon Christ for that end: 'Tis your own Fault, if you be without rest in any condition in this World. Set your selves to study the *fulness* of Christ, and to clear your *Interest* in him, believe what the Scriptures reveal of him, and live as you believe, and you will quickly find the peace of God filling your Hearts and Minds.

Blessed be God for Jesus Christ.

SERMON X.

MATTH. IX. xii.

But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a Physician, but they that be Sick.

Serm. 10. Text, Wherein the general Exhortation is enforced, by one Motive drawn from the first Title of Christ.

HAving opened in the former Discourses the *Nature* and *Method* of the *Application* of Christ to Sinners, it remains now that I press it upon every Soul, as ever it expects Peace and Pardon from God, to *apply*, and *put on Jesus Christ*, (*i. e.*) to get Union with him by Faith whilst he is yet held forth in the free and gracious tenders of the Gospel; to which purpose I shall now labour in this general *Use of Exhortation*, in which my last Subject engaged me; wherein divers Arguments will be further urged, both from

The { 1. Titles, and 2. Privileges } of Jesus Christ.

The Titles of Christ are so many *Motives* or Arguments fitted to perswade Men to come unto him. Amongst which, *Christ as the Physician of Souls* comes under our first Consideration in the Text before us.

The occasion of these Words of Christ, was the call of *Matthew the Publican*: Who having first opened his *Heart*, next opened his *House* to Christ, and entertains him there: This strange and unexpected change wrought upon *Matthew*, quickly brings in all the Neighbourhood, and many *Publicans* and Sinners resorted thither; at which the Stomachs of the proud *Pharisees* began to swell: From this occasion they took Offence at Christ, and in this *Verse* Christ takes off the Offence by such an Answer as was fitted both for their *Conviction* and his own *Vindication*. But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them; *The whole have no need of a Physician, but they that be sick.*

He gives it (saith one) as a Reason why he conversed so much with *Publicans* and Sinners, and so little among the *Pharisees*, because there was more Work for him: Men set up where they think Trade will be quickest: Christ came to be a *Physician* to sick Souls. *Pharisees* were so well in their own Conceit, that Christ saw he should have little to do among them; and so he applied himself to those who are more sensible of their Sickness.

In the Words we have an account of the *Temper* and *State* both of,

1. The secure and unconvinced Sinner.
2. The humbled and convinced Sinner.

And 3. Of the Carriage of Christ, and his different respect to either.

First, The secure Sinner is here described, both with respect to his own Apprehensions of himself, as one that is *whole*, and also by his low Value and Esteem for Christ, he sees no need of him; *the whole have no need of the Physician.*

Secondly, The convinced and humbled Sinner is here also described, and that both by his State and Condition, he is *sick*; and by his Valuation of Jesus Christ, he greatly needs him: They that be sick need the *Physician.*

Thirdly, We have here Christ's carriage and different respect to both: The former he rejects, and passeth by, as those with whom he hath no Concernment: The latter he converses with in order to their Cure.

The Words thus opened are fruitful in Observations. I shall neither note nor insist upon any beside this one, which suits the Scope of my Discourse, *viz.*

Doct. *That the Lord Jesus Christ is the only Physician for sick Souls.*

The World is a great *Hospital* full of sick and dying Souls, all wounded by one and the same mortal Weapon, Sin. Some are senseless of their Misery, feel not their Pains, value not a *Physician*: Others are full of Sense, as well as danger; mourn under the Apprehension of their Condition, and sadly bewail it. The merciful God hath, in his abundant Compassion to the perishing World, sent a *Physician* from Heaven, and given him his Orders under the great Seal of Heaven for his Office, *Isa.* 61. 1, 2. which he opened and read in the Audience of the People, *Luke* 4. 18. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to Preach good Tydings unto the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted,* &c. He is the Tree of Life, whose Leaves are for the healing of the Nations: He is *Jehova Rophe*, the Lord that healeth us; and that as he is *Jehovah Tzidkenu*, the Lord our Righteousness. The *Brazen Serpent* that healed the *Israelites* in the Wilderness, was an excellent *Type* of our great Physician Christ, and is expressly applied to him, *John* 3. 14. He rejects none that come, and heals all whom he undertakes: But more particularly I will,

First, Point at those *Diseases* which *Christ* heals in sick Souls, and by what means he heals them.

Secondly, The Excellency of this Physician above all others: There is none like Christ, he is the only Physician for wounded Souls.

First, We will enquire into the Diseases which Christ the *Physician* cures; and they are reducible to two Heads, *viz.*

1. Sin, and
2. Sorrow.

First, *The Disease of Sin*, in which three *things* are found exceeding burthensome to sick Souls.

1. The Guilt
2. The Dominion } of Sin; all cured by this *Physician*, and how.
3. The Inherence

First, The Guilt of Sin, this is a mortal Wound, a stab in the very Heart of a poor Sinner. 'Tis a fond and groundless Distinction that *Papists* make of Sins *Mortal* and *Venial*: All Sin in its own Nature is Mortal, *Rom.* 6. 23. *The Wages of Sin is Death*: Yet though it be so in its own Nature, Christ can, and doth cure it by the Soveraign Balsom of his own precious Blood, *Eph.* 1. 7. *In whom we have Redemption through his Blood, the forgiveness of Sins, according to the Riches of his Grace.* This is the deepest and deadliest wound the Soul of Man feels in this World: What is *Guilt*, but the Obligation of the Soul to everlasting Punishment and Misery? It puts the Soul under the Sentence of God to eternal Wrath; the condemning Sentence of the great and terrible God; than which, nothing is found more dreadful and insupportable; Put all Pains, all Poverty, all Afflictions, all Miseries in one Scale, and God's Condemnation in the other, and you weigh but so many Feathers against a *Talent* of Lead.

This Disease our great *Physician* Christ cures by *Remission*; which is the dissolving of the Obligation to Punishment; the loosing of the Soul that was bound over to the Wrath and Condemnation of God, *Col.* 1. 13, 14. *Heb.* 6. 12. *Micah.* 7. 17, 18, 19. This Remission being made, the Soul is immediately cleared from all its Obligations to Punishment, *Rom.* 8. 1. *There is no Condemnation*: All Bonds are cancelled; the *Guilt* of all sins is healed or removed; original, and actual; great and small. This cure is performed upon Souls *by the Blood of Christ*: Nothing is found in Heaven or Earth besides his Blood, that is able to heal this Disease; *Heb.* 9. 22. *Without shedding of Blood there is no Remission*; nor is it any Blood that will do it, but that only which dropt from the wounds of Christ, *Isa.* 54. 5. *By his stripes we are healed*: His Blood only is innocent and precious Blood, 1 *Pet.* 1. 19. Blood of infinite Worth and Value; Blood of God, *Acts* 20. 18. Blood prepared for this very purpose, *Heb.* 10. 5. This is the Blood that performs the cure; and how great a cure is it! For this cure the Souls of Believers shall be praising and magnifying their great *Physician* in Heaven to all Eternity, *Rev.* 1. 5, 6. *To him that loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood,* &c. *to him be Glory and Dominion for ever and ever.*

Secondly, The next *evil* in Sin, cured by Christ, is the *Dominion* of it over the Souls of poor Sinners. Where sin is in Dominion, the Soul is in a very sad Condition; for it darkens the *Understanding*, depraves the *Conscience*, stiffens the *Will*, hardens the *Heart*, misplaces and disorders all the *Affections*: And thus every Faculty is wounded by the Power and Dominion of Sin over the Soul. How difficult is the cure of this Disease! it passes the skill of Angels or Men to heal it: But Christ undertakes it, and makes a perfect cure of it at last; and this he doth by his *Spirit*. As he cures the guilt of sin by pouring out his *Blood* for us, so he cures the Dominion of sin, by pouring out his *Spirit upon us*. Justification is the cure of *Guilt*, Sanctification the cure of the *Dominion* of Sin. For,

First, As the Dominion of sin darkens the *Understanding*, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. So the Spirit of Holiness which Christ sheds upon his People, cures the Darkness and Blindness of that noble Faculty, and restores it again, *Eph.* 5. 8. They that were Darkness are hereby Light in the Lord: The anointing of this Spirit teacheth them all things, 1 *John* 2. 27.

Secondly, As the Dominion of sin depraved and defiled the *Conscience*, Tit. 1. 15. wounded it to that degree, as to disable it to the performances of all its Offices and Functions; so that it was neither able to apply, convince, or tremble at the Word: So when the Spirit of Holiness is shed forth, O what a tender Sense fills the renewed Conscience! For what small things will it check, smite and rebuke! How strongly will it bind to Duty, and bar against sin!

Thirdly, As the Dominion of sin stiffned the *Will*, and made it stubborn and rebellious; so Christ by sanctifying it, brings it to be pliant and obedient to the Will of God. *Lord*, saith the Sinner, *what wilt thou have me to do*! Acts 9. 6.

Fourthly, As the Power of sin hardneth the *Heart*, so that nothing could affect it, or make any Impression upon it; when Sanctification comes upon the Soul, it thaws and breaks it, as hard as it was, and makes it dissolve in the Breast of a Sinner in godly Sorrow, *Ezek.* 36. 26. *I will take away the Heart of Stone out of your Flesh, and I will give you an Heart of Flesh.* It will now melt ingenuously under the Threatnings of the Word, 2 *Kings* 22. 19. or the strokes of the Rod, *Jer.* 31. 18. Or the Manifestations of Grace and Mercy, *Luke* 7. 38.

Fifthly, As the Power of sin misplaced and disordered all the *Affections*, so Sanctification reduces them again, and sets them right, *Psalm* 4. 6, 7. And thus you see how Sanctification becomes the rectitude, health and due temper of the Soul, so far as it prevails, curing the Diseases that sin in its Dominion filled the Soul with. True it is, this cure is not perfected in this Life: There are still some grudgings of the old Diseases in the holiest Souls,

Souls; notwithstanding sin be dethroned from its Dominion over them: But the cure is begun, and daily advances towards Perfection, and at last will be compleat, as will appear in the cure of the next evil of sin; namely,

Thirdly, The *Inherence* of sin in the Soul; this is a sore Disease, the very core and root of all our other Complaints and Ailes. This made the Holy *Apostle* bemoan himself, and wail so bitterly, *Rom.* 7. 17. Because of *Sin that dwelt in him*: And the same Misery is bewailed by all sanctified Persons all the World over.

'Tis a wonderful Mercy to have the guilt and dominion of sin cured; but we shall never be perfectly sound and well till the Existence, or indwelling of sin in our Natures be cured too. When once that is done, then we shall feel no more Pain, nor Sorrows for sin: And this our great *Physician* will at last perform for us, and upon us: But as the cure of guilt was by our *Justification*, the cure of the Dominion of sin by our *Sanctification*; so the third and last which perfects the whole cure, will be by our *Glorification*; and till then it is not to be expected. For its a clear Case, that sin like Ivy in the old Walls, will never be gotten out, till the Wall be pulled down, and then its pulled up by the Roots. This cure Christ will perform in a Moment upon our Dissolution. For 'tis plain,

First, That none but perfected Souls, freed from all sin, are admitted into Heaven, *Eph.* 5. 27. *Heb.* 12. 13. *Rev* 21. 27.

Secondly, 'Tis as plain, that no such personal Perfection and Freedom is found in any Man on this side Death, and the Grave, 1 *John* 1. 8. 1 *Kings* 8. 46. *Phil.* 3. 12. A Truth sealed by the sad Experience of all the Saints on Earth.

Thirdly, If such Freedom and Perfection must be before we can be perfectly happy, and no such thing be done in this Life; it remains that it must be done immediately upon their *Dissolution*, and at the very time of their Glorification: As sin came in at the time of the Union of their Souls and Bodies in the Womb, so it will go out at the time of their Separation by Death: Then will Christ put the last Hand to this glorious Work, and perfect that Cure which hath been so long under his Hand in this World: And thenceforth sin shall have no Power upon them; it shall never tempt them more, it shall never defile them more; it shall never grieve and sadden their Hearts any more: Henceforth it shall never cloud their Evidences, darken their Understandings, or give the least Interruption of their Communion with God. When sin is gone, all these mischievous Effects are gone with it. So that I may speak it to the Comfort of all gracious Hearts, according to what the Lord told the *Israelites* in, *Deut.* 12. 8, 9. (to which I allude for Illustration of the most comfortable Truth) *Ye shall not do after all the things that ye do here this Day, every Man whatsoever is right in his own Eyes, for ye are not as yet come to the Rest, and to the Inheritance which the Lord your God giveth you.* Whilst you are under Christ's cure upon Earth, but not perfectly healed; your Understandings mistake, your Thoughts wander, your Affections are dead, your communion with God is very interrupted: But it shall not be so in Heaven, there the cure is perfect: You shall not know, love, or delight in God as you do this Day; for you are not as yet come to the Rest, and to the Inheritance which the Lord your God giveth you: So much as to the Diseases of sin, and Christ's Method of curing them.

Secondly, As sin is the Disease of the *Saints*, so also is *Sorrow*. The best of *Saints* must pass through the Valley of *Bacha* to Heaven. How many Tears fall from the Eyes of the *Saints* upon the account of outward, as well as inward troubles; even after their Reconciliation with God? *Through much Tribulation we must enter into the Kingdom of God*, Acts 14. 22. It would be too great a Digression in this Place, to note but the more general Heads, under which almost infinite particulars of Troubles and Afflictions are found. It shall suffice only to shew, that whatever distress or trouble any poor Soul is in upon any account whatsoever; if that Soul belongs to Jesus Christ, he will take care of it *for the present*, and deliver it at last by a compleat cure.

First, Christ cures troubles by *sanctifying* them to the Souls of his that are under Affliction, and makes their very troubles *Medicinal* and healing to them. Trouble is a *Scorpion*, and hath a deadly sting; but Christ is a wise *Physician*, and extracts a soveraign Oyl out of this *Scorpion*, that heals the wound it makes. By Afflictions our wise Physician purges our Corruptions, and so prevents or cures greater troubles by lesser; inward sorrows, by outward ones, *Isa.* 27. 9. *By this therefore shall the Iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the Fruit, to take away his sin.*

Secondly, Christ cures outward *Troubles* by inward *Consolations*, which are made to rise in the inner Man as high as the Waters of Affliction do upon the outward Man, 2 *Cor.* 1. 5. One drop of spiritual Comfort is sufficient to sweeten a whole Ocean of outward Trouble. It was an high Expression of an afflicted Father, whom God comforted just upon the Death of his dear and only Son, with some clearer Manifestations of his Love than was usual. O, said he, *might I but have such Consolations as these, I could be willing (were it possible) to lay an only Son into the Grave every Day I have to live in this World.* Thus all the troubles of the World are cured by Christ, *John* 16. 33. *In the World ye shall have trouble, but in me ye shall have Peace.*

Nihil Corpus sentit in nervo, cum Anima sit in Cœlo.

Thirdly, Christ cures all outward sorrows and troubles in his People *by Death*, which is their removal from the Place of Sorrows to Peace and rest for evermore. Now God wipes all Tears from their Eyes, and the Days of their Mourning are at an end: They then put off the Garments and Spirit of Mourning, and enter into Peace, *Isa.* 57. 2. They come to that place and state, where Tears and Sighs are things unknown to the Inhabitants: One step beyond the state of this Mortality, brings us quite out of the sight and hearing of all Troubles and Lamentations. These are the Diseases of *Souls*, *Sin* and *Sorrow*; and thus they are cured by Christ the *Physician*.

Secondly, Next, I shall shew you that Jesus Christ is the only *Physician* of Souls: None like him for a sick *Sinner*: And this will be evident in divers Respects.

First, None so *wise* and judicious as Jesus Christ to understand, and comprehend the nature, depth, and danger of *Soul* Diseases. O how ignorant and unacquainted are Men with the *State* and *Case* of afflicted *Souls*! But *Christ hath the Tongue of the learned, that he should know how to speak a Word in season to him that is weary*, Isa. 50. 4. He only understands the weight of *Sin*, and depth of inward troubles of *Sin*.

Secondly, None so able to cure and heal the wounds of afflicted *Souls* as Christ is: He only hath those Medicines that can cure a sick *Soul*. The Blood of Christ, and nothing else in Heaven or Earth, is able to cure the Mortal wounds which guilt inflicts upon a trembling Conscience: Let Men try all other Receipts, and costly experience shall convince them of their insufficiency. Conscience may be benummed by stupefactive Medicines, prepared by the Devil for that end, but pacified it can never be, but by the Blood of Christ, *Heb.* 10. 22.

Thirdly, None so *tender hearted*, and sympathizing with sick *Souls*, as Jesus Christ: He is full of Bowels and tender Compassions to afflicted Souls: He is one that can have Compassion, because he hath had Experience, *Heb.* 5. 2. If I must come into the *Chirurgeons* Hands with broken Bones, give me such a one to choose, whose own Bones have been broken, who hath felt the anguish in himself. Christ knows what it is by Experience, having felt the anguish of inward troubles, the weight of God's Wrath, and the terrors of a forsaking God, more than any, or all the Sons of Men: This makes him tender over distressed *Souls*, *Isa.* 42. 3. *A bruised Reed he will not break, and smoaking Flax he will not quench.*

Fourthly, None cures in so *wonderful a method* as Christ doth: He heals us by his stripes, *Isa.* 53. 5. The Physician dies that the Patient may live: His Wounds must bleed, that ours may be cured: He feels the smart and pain, that we might have ease and comfort. No Physician but Christ will cure others at this rate.

Fifthly, None so *ready* to relieve a sick *Soul* as Christ: He is within the call of a distressed Soul at all times. Art thou sick for *Sin*, weary of *Sin*, and made truly willing to part with *Sin*? Lift up but thy sincere cry to the Lord Jesus for help, and he will quickly be with thee: When the Prodigal, the Embleme of a convinced humbled *Sinner*, said in himself, I will return to my Father, the Father ran to meet him, *Luke* 15. 20. He can be with thee in a Moment.

Sixthly, None so *willing* to receive and undertake all distressed and afflicted Souls as Jesus Christ is: He refuses none that come to him, *John* 6. 37. *He that cometh unto me, I will in no ways cast out*: Whatever their Sins have been, or their Sorrows are; however they have wounded their own Souls with the deepest gashes of Guilt; how desperate and helpless soever their Case appears in their own or others Eyes: He never puts them off, or discourages them, if they be but willing to come, *Isa.* 1. 18, 19.

Seventhly, None so *happy* and *successful* as Christ: He never fails of performing a perfect cure upon those he undertakes: Never was it known that any Soul miscarried in his Hands, *John* 3. 15, 16. Other *Physicians* by mistakes, by ignorance, or carelessness, fill Church-Yards, and cast away the Lives of Men: But Christ suffers none to perish that commit themselves to him.

Eighthly, None so *free* and *generous* as Christ, he doth all gratis: He sells not his Medicines, though they be of infinite value, but freely gives them, *Isa.* 55. 1. *He that hath no Money let him come*: if any be sent away, 'tis the rich, *Luke* 1. 53. not the Poor and Needy: Those that will not accept their remedy as a free Gift, but will needs purchase it at a Price.

Ninthly and *Lastly*, *None rejoyces in the recovery* of Souls more than Christ doth. O it is unspeakably delightful to him to see the Efficacy of his Blood upon our Souls, *Isa.* 53. 11. *He shall see the travel of his Soul* (*i. e.* the success of his Death and Sufferings) *and shall be satisfied*; When he foresaw the success of the Gospel upon the World, it's said *Luke* 10. 21. *In that Hour Jesus rejoyced in Spirit*: And thus you see, there is no Physician like Christ for sick souls.

The Uses of this Point are,
For Information and
Direction.

First, From thence we are informed of many great and necessary Truths deducible from this: As,

Infer. 1. *How inexpressible is the Grace of God, in providing such a Physician as Christ, for the sick and dying Souls of Sinners*! O blessed be God, that there is Balm in *Gilead*, and a *Physician* there: That their case is not desperate, forlorn and remediless as that of the Devils and Damned is. There is but one case excepted from cure, and that such as is not incident to any sensible afflicted Soul, *Mat.* 12. 31. and this only excepted, all manner of Sins and Diseases are capable of a cure. Though there be such a Disease as is incurable, yet take this for thy comfort, never any Soul was sick (*i. e.*) sensibly burthened with it, and willing to come to Jesus Christ for healing: For under that Sin, the Will is so wounded that they have no desire to Christ. O inestimable Mercy, that the sickest Sinner is capable of a perfect Cure! There be thousands, and ten thousands now in Heaven and Earth, who said once, never was any Case like theirs; so dangerous, so hopeless. The greatest of Sinners have been perfectly recovered by Christ, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. 1 *Cor.* 6. 11. O Mercy never to be duly estimated!

Infer. 2. *What a powerful restraint from Sin, is the very Method ordained by God for the cure of it*! Isa. 53. 5. *By his stripes we are healed*. The Physician must dye, that the Patient might live: No other thing but the Blood, the precious Blood of Christ is found in Heaven or Earth able to heal us, *Heb.* 9. 22, 26. This Blood of Christ must be freshly applied to every new Wound sin makes upon our Souls, *John* 2. 1, 2. every new sin wounds him afresh, opens the Wounds of Christ anew. O think of this again and again, you that so easily yield to the solicitations of Satan: Is it so easie and so cheap to Sin as you seem to make it? Doth the cure of Souls cost nothing? True, it is free to us, but was it so to Christ? No, no, it was not; he knows the Price of it, though you do not: Hath Christ healed you by his stripes, and can you put him under fresh Sufferings for you so easily? Have you forgot also your own sick Days and Nights for sin, that you are careless in resisting, and preventing it? Sure 'tis not easie for Saints to wound Christ and their own Souls, at one stroke: If you renew your Sins, you must also renew your Sorrows and Repentance, *Psalm* 51. *Title.* 2 *Sam.* 12. 13. you must feel the Throes and Pains of a troubled Spirit again, things with which the Saints are not unacquainted. Of which they may say as the Church, *Remember my Affliction, the Worm-wood and the Gall, my Soul hath them still in remembrance*, Lam. 3. 19. Yea, and if you will yet be remiss in your watch, and so easily incur new Guilt; though a Pardon in the Blood of Christ may heal your Souls, yet the Rod or other in the Hand of a displeased Father shall afflict your Bodies, or smite you in your outward Comforts, *Psalm.* 89. 32.

Infer. 3. *If Christ be the only Physician of sick Souls, what Sin and Folly is it for Men to take Christs work out of his Hands, and attempt to be their own Physicians!*

Thus do those that superstitiously endeavour to heal their Souls by afflicting their Bodies: Not Christs Blood, but their own must be the Plaister: And as blind *Papists*, so many carnal and ignorant *Protestants* strive by Confession, Restitution, Reformation, and a stricter course of Life to heal those Wounds that Sin hath made upon their Souls, without any respect to the Blood of Christ: But this course shall not profit them at all. It may for a time *divert*, but can never heal them: The Wounds so skinned over, will open and bleed again; God grant be not when our Souls shall be out of the reach of the true and only Remedy:

Infer. 4. *How sad is the Case of those Souls, to whom Christ hath not yet been a Physician?* They are mortally wounded by Sin, and are like to die of their sickness; no saving healing Applications have hitherto been made unto their Souls: And this is the case of the greatest part of Mankind; yea, of them that live under the Discoveries of Christ in the Gospel: Which appears by these sad symptoms,

First, In that their Eyes have not yet been opened to see their Sin and Misery, in which Illumination the cure of Souls begins, *Acts* 26. 18. To this Day he hath not given them Eyes to see, *Deut.* 29. 4. But that terrible stroke of God, which blinds and hardens them, is too visibly upon them, mentioned in *Isa.* 6. 9, 10. No hope of healing till the Sinners Eyes be opened to see his Sin and Misery.

Secondly, In that nothing will divorce and separate them from their Lusts: A sure sign they are not under Christs cure, nor were ever made sick of Sin. O if ever Christ be a Physician to thy Soul, he will make thee *loath* what now thou *lovest*, and say to thy most pleasant and most profitable Lusts, *get ye hence*, Isa. 30. 22. Till then there is no Ground to think that Christ is a Physician to you.

Thirdly, In that they have no sensible and pressing need of Christ, nor make any earnest Enquiry after him, as most certainly you would do, if you were in the way of healing and recovery. These and many other sad *symptoms* do too plainly discover the Disease of Sin to be in its full Strength upon your Souls; and if it so continue, how dreadful will the Issue be? See *Isa.* 6. 9. 10.

Infer. 5. *What cause have they to be glad, that are under the hand and care of Christ in order to a cure; and who do find, or may upon due Examination find, their Souls are in a very hopeful way of recovery!* Can we rejoyce when the Strength of a natural Disease is broken, and Nature begins to recover ease, and vigour again, and shall we not much more rejoyce when our Souls begin to mend, and recover sensibly, and all comfortable signs of Life and Health appear upon them? Particularly when the *understanding* which was ignorant and dark, hath the Light of Life beginning to dawn into it, such is that in 1 *Joh.* 2. 27. *when* the *Will* which was rebellious and inflexible to the *Will of God*, is brought to comply with that Holy Will, saying, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* Acts 9. 6. When the *Heart* which was harder than an *Adamant*, is now brought to contrition for Sin, and can mourn as heartily over it, as ever a tender Father did for a dead Son, a beloved and only Son. When its *Aversations* from God are gone, at least have no such Power as once they had: But the Thoughts are now fixed much upon God, and spiritual Things begin to grow pleasant to the Soul: When times of Duty come to be longed for, and the Soul never better pleased than in such Seasons. When the *Hypocrisie* of the Heart is purged out, so that we begin to do all that we do heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto Men, *Col.* 3. 23. 1. *Thes.* 2. 4. When we begin to make Conscience of secret Sins, *Psalm* 119. 113. And of secret Duties, *Mat.* 6. 5, 6. When we have equal respect to all God's Commandments, *Psalm* 119. 6. And our Hearts are under the holy and awful Eye of God, which doth indeed over-awe our Souls, *Gen.* 17. 1. O what sweet Signs of a recovering Soul are these! Surely such are in the skilful Hand of the great Physician, who will perfect what yet remains to be done.

Second Use for Direction.

In the last place, this Point yields us Matter of Advice and Direction to poor Souls that are under the Disease of Sin, and they are of two sorts, which I will distinctly speak to, *viz. First*, Such as are under their first Sickness or spiritual sorrow for sin, and know not what *Course* to take: Or, *Secondly*, such as have been longer in the Hands of Christ the Physician, but are troubled to see the Cure advance so slowly upon them, and fear the Issue.

First, As to those that are in their first Troubles for Sin, and know not what Course to take for Ease and Safety: I would address to them these following Counsels.

First, Shut your Ears against the dangerous Counsels of carnal Persons or Relations; for as they themselves are unacquainted with these Troubles: So also are they with all proper Remedies; and it is very usual with the Devil to convey his Temptations to distressed Souls by such Hands; because by them he can do it with least Suspicion. It was *Augustine*'s Complaint, that his own Father took little care for his Soul; and many Parents act in this case, as if they were employed by Satan.

Secondly, Be not too eager to get out of Trouble, but be content to take God's way, and wait his Time: No Woman that is wise, would desire to have her Travel hastned one Day before the due Time: Nor will it be your Interest to hasten too soon out of Trouble. 'Tis true, Times of Trouble are apt to seem tedious; but a false Peace will endanger you more than a long Trouble: A Man may lengthen his own Troubles to the Loss of his own Peace, and may shorten them to the Hazard of his own Soul.

Thirdly, Open your Case to wise, judicious and experienced Christians, and especially the Ministers of Christ, whose Office it is to counsel and direct you in these Difficulties; and let not your Troubles lie like a secret smothering Fire, always in your own Breasts. I know Men are more ashamed to open their Sins under Convictions, than they were to commit them before Conviction: But this is your Interest, and the true way to your Rest and Peace. If there be with, or near you an Interpreter, one of a thousand, to shew you your Righteousness and Remedy, as it lies in Christ; neglect not your own Souls in a sinful Concealment of your Case, It will be the Joy of their Heart to be employed in such Work as this is.

Fourthly, Be much with God in secret: Open your Hearts to him, and pour out your Complaints into his Bosom. The 102*d Psalm* bears a Title very suitable to your Case and Duty: Yea, you will find your Troubles work kindly, and God intend a cure upon your Souls, that nothing will be able to keep God and your Souls asunder: Whatever your Incumbrances in the World be, some time will be daily redeemed to be so spent betwixt you and God.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, Plead hard with God in Prayer for Help and Healing: *Heal my Soul* (saith *David*) *for I have sinned against thee*, Psalm 41. 4. tell him, Christ hath his Commission sealed for such as you are: He was sent to *Bind up the broken Hearted*, Isa. 61. 1. tell him he came into the World to seek and save that which was lost, and so are you now in your own Account and Apprehensions. Lord, what Profit is there in my Blood? Wilt thou pursue a dried Leaf? And why is my Heart wounded with the sense of Sin, and mine Eyes open to see my Danger and Misery, are not these the first Dawnings of Mercy upon sinners? O let it appear, that the time of Mercy, even the set Time is now come.

Sixthly, Understand your Peace to be in Christ only, and Faith to be the only way to Christ and Rest: Let the great Enquiry of your Souls be after Christ and Faith, study the Nature and Necessity of these, and cry to God Day and Night for strength to carry you to Christ in the way of Faith.

Secondly, As to those that have been longer under the Hands of Christ, and yet are in Troubles still, and cannot attain Peace, but their Wounds bleed still, and all they hear in Sermons, or do in the way of Duty, will not bring them to Rest: To such I only add two or three Words for a close.

First, Consider whether you ever rightly closed with Christ since your first awakening, and whether there be not some way of Sin in which you still live: If so, no wonder your Wounds are kept open, and your Souls are Strangers to Peace.

Secondly, If you be conscious of no such flaw in the Foundation, consider how much of this Trouble may arise from your Constitution and natural Temper, which being Melancholy, will be doubtful and suspicious: You may find it so in other Cases of less Moment, and be sure Satan will not be wanting to improve it.

Thirdly, Acquaint your selves more with the Nature of true justifying Faith; a Mistake in that hath prolonged the Troubles of many: If you look for it in no other Act but Assurance, you may easily overlook it, as it lies in the mean time in your Affiance or Acceptance. A true and proper Conception of saving Faith would go far in the cure of many troubled Souls.

Fourthly, Be more careful to shun Sin, than to get your selves clear of Trouble. 'Tis sad to walk in Darkness, but worse to lie under Guilt. Say, Lord, I would rather be grieved my self, than be a Grief to thy Spirit. O keep me from sin, how long soever thou keep me under Sorrow. Wait on God in the way of Faith, and in a tender spirit towards sin, and thy Wounds shall be healed at last by thy great Physician.

Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ.

SERMON XI.

LUKE I. lxxii.

To perform the Mercies promised to our Fathers, and to remember his holy Covenant.

Ser. 11. Text. Containing the second Motive to enforce the general Exhortation from a second Title of Christ.

THis Scripture is part of *Zecha-riah*'s Prophecy at the rising of that bright Star, the *Harbinger* and Forerunner of Christ: They are some of the first Words he spake after God had loosed his Tongue, which, for a time, was struck dumb for his Unbelief. His Tongue is now unbound, and at Liberty to proclaim to all the World the Riches of Mercy through Jesus Christ, in a Song of Praise. Wherein Note,

The Mercy celebrated, *viz.* Redemption by Christ, *ver.* 68.

The Description of Christ by Place and Property, *ver.* 69.

The Faithfulness of God in our Redemption this Way, *ver.* 70.

The Benefit of being so Redeemed by Christ, *ver.* 17.

The exact Accomplishment of all the Promises made to the *Fathers*, in sending Christ, the Mercy promised, into the World, *ver.* 72. *To perform the Mercy promised to our Fathers*, &c. In these Words we find two Parts, *viz.*

1. A Mercy freely promised.
2. The promised Mercy faithfully performed.

First, You have a Mercy freely promised, *viz.* by God the Father from the Beginning of the World, and often repeated and confirmed in several succeeding Ages to the *Fathers*, in his Covenant Transactions.

This Mercy is *Jesus Christ*, of whom he speaks in this Prophecy; the same which he stiles *An Horn of Salvation in the House of David*, ver. 69.

The Mercy of God in Scripture is put either for,

1. His free Favour to the Creature. Or,
2. The Effects and Fruits of that Favour.

'Tis put for the free and undeserved Favour of God to the Creature, and this Favour of God may respect the Creature two Ways, either as *Undeserving*, or as *Ill deserving*.

It respected Innocent Man as *undeserving*, for *Adam* could put no Obligation upon his Benefactor: It respecteth fallen Man as *Ill deserving*. Innocent Man could not merit Favour, and fallen Man did merit Wrath: The Favour or Mercy of God to both is every way free, and that is the first Acceptation of the Word Mercy: But then it is also taken for the Effects and Fruits of God's Favour, and they are, Either,

1. Principal and primary. Or,
2. Subordinate and secondary.

Of secondary and subordinate Mercies, there are multitudes, both temporal, respecting the Body, and spiritual, respecting the Soul; but the principal and primary Mercy is but one, and that is Christ, the first-born of Mercy; the capital Mercy, the comprehensive-Root-Mercy, from whom are all other Mercies; and therefore called by a singular *Emphasis* in my Text *The Mercy*, (i. e.) the Mercy of Mercies; without whom no Drop of saving Mercy can flow to any of the Sons of Men; and in whom are all the tender Bowels of Divine Mercy yearning upon poor sinners. *The Mercy*, and *the Mercy promised*. The first Promise of Christ was made to *Adam*, Gen. 3. 15. and was frequently renewed afterwards to *Abraham*, to *David*; and as the Text speaks, unto the Fathers, in their respective Generations.

Secondly, We find here also, *The promised Mercy faithfully performed*. *To perform the Mercy promised*. What

What Mercy ſoever the Love of God engaged him to promiſe, the Faithfulneſs of God ſtands engaged for the Performance thereof. Chriſt the promiſed Mercy, is not only performed truly, but he is alſo performed according to the Promiſe in all the Circumſtances thereof exactly. So he was promiſed to the Fathers, and juſt ſo performed to us their Children: Hence the Note is,

Doct. *That Jeſus Chriſt the Mercy of Mercies was graciouſly promiſed, and faithfully performed by God to his People.*

Three Things are here to be opened.

Firſt, Why Chriſt is ſtiled *the Mercy*.

Secondly, What kind of Mercy Chriſt is to his People.

Thirdly, How this promiſed Mercy was performed.

Firſt, Chriſt is the Mercy, *Emphatically* ſo called, the peerleſs, invaluable, and matchleſs Mercy; becauſe he is the prime Fruit of the Mercy of God to Sinners. The Mercies of God are infinite: Mercy gave the World and us our Being; all our Protections, Proviſions and Comforts in this World are the Fruits of Mercy; the After-births of divine Favour: But Chriſt is the Firſt-born from the Womb of Mercy, all other Mercies compared with him, are but Fruits from that Root, and Streams from that Fountain of Mercy; the very Bowels of divine Mercy are in Chriſt, as in *Verſe* 78. according to the tender Mercies, or as the *Greek*, the yearning Bowels of the Mercy of God.

Secondly, Chriſt is *the Mercy*, becauſe all the Mercy of God to Sinners is diſpenſed and conveyed through Chriſt to them, *John* 1. 16. *Eph.* 4. 7. Chriſt is the *Medium* of all divine Communications: The *Channel* of Grace; through him is both the *decurſus & recurſus gratiarum*; the flows of Mercy from God to us, and the returns of Praiſe from us to God; fond and vain therefore are all the Expectations of Mercy out of Chriſt: No drop of ſaving Mercy runs beſide this Channel.

Thirdly, Chriſt is *the Mercy*, becauſe all inferiour Mercies derive both their *Nature*, *Value*, *Sweetneſs* and *Duration* from Chriſt, the Fountain Mercy of all other Mercies.

Firſt, They derive their *Nature* from Chriſt, for out of him thoſe things which Men call Mercies, are rather Traps and Snares, than Mercies to them, *Prov.* 1. 32. The time will come when the *rich* that are Chriſtleſs will wiſh, O that we had been poor! And *Nobles* that are not ennobled by the new Birth, O that we had been among the lower Rank of Men! All theſe things that paſs for valuable Mercies, like *Ciphers* ſignifie much when ſuch a ſpeaking Figure as Chriſt ſtands before them, elſe they ſignifie nothing to any Mans Comfort or Benefit.

Secondly, They derive their *Value* as well as Nature from Chriſt: For how little, I pray you, doth it ſignifie to any Man to be rich, honourable, politick, and ſucceſsful in all his Deſigns in the World; if after all he muſt lie down in Hell?

Thirdly, All other Mercies derive their *Sweetneſs* from Chriſt, and are but inſipid things without him. There is a twofold Sweetneſs in things; one *Natural*, another *Spiritual*; thoſe that are out of Chriſt can reliſh the firſt, Believers only reliſh both: They have the natural Sweetneſs that is in Mercy it ſelf, and a Sweetneſs ſupernatural from Chriſt and the Covenant, the way in which they receive them. Hence it is that ſome Men taſte more ſpiritual Sweetneſs in their *daily Bread*, than others do in the *Lord's-Supper*; one and the ſame Mercy by this means becomes a Feaſt to Soul and Body at once.

Fourthly, All Mercies have their *Duration* and Perpetuity from Chriſt; all Chriſtleſs Perſons hold their Mercies upon the greateſt Contingencies and Terms of Uncertainty; if they be continued during this Life, that's all: There is not a drop of Mercy after Death; but the Mercies of the Saints are continued to Eternity; the end of their Mercies on Earth, is the beginning of their Mercies in Heaven. There is a twofold end of Mercies, one *Perfective*, another *Deſtructive*; the Death of the Saints perfects and compleats their Mercies; the Death of of the wicked deſtroys and cuts off their Mercies: For theſe Reaſons Chriſt is called *the Mercy*.

Secondly, In the next Place, let us enquire what manner of Mercy Chriſt is; and we ſhall find many lovely, and tranſcendent Properties to commend him to our Souls.

Firſt, He is a *free* and undeſerved Mercy, called upon that Account, *The gift of God*, John 4. 10. And to ſhew how free this gift was, God gave him to us when we were Enemies, *Rom.* 5. 8. Needs muſt that Mercy be free, which is given not only to the undeſerving, but to the ill deſerving; the Benevolence of God was the ſole impulſive cauſe of this Gift, *John* 3. 16.

Secondly, Chriſt is a *full* Mercy repleniſhed with all that anſwers to the *Wiſhes* or *Wants* of Sinners; in him alone is found whatever the Juſtice of an angry God requires for Satisfaction, or the Neceſſities of Souls require for their Supply. Chriſt is full of Mercy, both *extenſively* and *intenſively*; in him are all kinds and ſorts of Mercies, and in him are the higheſt and moſt perfect Degrees of Mercy; *For it pleaſed the Father, that in him ſhould all Fulneſs dwell*, Col. 1. 19.

Thirdly, Chriſt is the *ſeaſonable* Mercy, given by the Father to us in due time, *Rom.* 5. 6. in the fulneſs of time, *Gal.* 4. 4. a ſeaſonable Mercy in his *Exhibition* to the World in *General*, and a ſeaſonable Mercy in his *Application* to the Soul in *particular*; the Wiſdom of God pitched upon the beſt time for his Incarnation, and it hits the very nick of time, for his Application. When a poor Soul is diſtreſſed, loſt, at its Wits end, ready to periſh; then comes Chriſt: All God's Works are done in Season, but none more ſeaſonable than this great Work of Salvation by Chriſt.

Fourthly, Chriſt is the *neceſſary Mercy*, there is an abſolute Neceſſity of Jeſus Chriſt; hence in Scripture he is called the *Bread of Life*, John 6. 48. he is Bread to the hungry; he is the *Water of Life*, John 7. 37. As cold Water to the thirſty Soul; he is a Ranſom for Captives, *Mat.* 20. 28. a Garment to the naked; *Rom.* 13. *ult.* only Bread is not ſo neceſſary to the hungry, nor Water to the thirſty, nor a Ranſom to the Captive, nor a Garment to the naked; as Chriſt is to the Soul of a Sinner, the breath of our Noſtrils, the Life of our Souls is in Jeſus Chriſt.

Fifthly, Chriſt is a *Fountain Mercy*, and all other Mercies flow from him; a Believer may ſay of Chriſt, *All my freſh Springs are in thee*; from his Merit, and from his Spirit flow our Redemption, Juſtification, Sanctification, Peace, Joy in the Holy Ghoſt, and Bleſſedneſs in the World to come: *In that day ſhall there be a Fountain opened*, Zech. 13. 1.

Sixthly, Chriſt is a *ſatisfying Mercy*, he that is full of Chriſt can feel the want of nothing. *I deſire to know nothing, but Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified*, 1 Cor. 2. 2. Chriſt bounds and terminates the vaſt Deſires

sires of the Soul: he is the very Sabbath of the Soul: How hungry, empty, straitned, and pinched in upon every side, is the Soul of Man in the abundance and fulness of all out-ward things, till it come to Christ? The weary Motions of a restless Soul, like those of a River, cannot be at Rest till they pour themselves into Christ the Ocean of Blessedness.

Seventhly, Christ is a *peculiar Mercy* intended for, and applied to a Remnant among Men; some would extend Redemption as large as the World, but the Gospel limits it to those only that believe; and those Believers are upon that Account called a *peculiar People*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. The Offers of Christ indeed are large, and general; but the Application of Christ is but to few, *Isa.* 53. 1. The greater Cause have they to whom Christ comes, to lie with their Mouths in the Dust, astonished and overwhelmed with the Sense of so peculiar and distinguishing Mercy.

Eighthly, Jesus Christ is a *suitable Mercy*, fitted in all respects to our Needs and Wants, 1 *Cor.* 1. 10. wherein the admirable Wisdom of God is illustriously displayed; *Ye are compleat in him* (saith the Apostle) *Col.* 2. 20. Are we Enemies? He is *Reconciliation*: Are we sold to Sin and Satan? He is *Redemption*: Are we condemned by Law? He is the *Lord our Righteousness*. Hath sin polluted us? He is a *Fountain opened* for sin and for uncleanness: Are we lost by departing from God? He is the *Way* to the Father. Rest is not so suitable to the weary, nor Bread to the hungry, as Christ is to the sensible Sinner.

Ninthly, Christ is an *astonishing and wonderful Mercy*: His Name is called *Wonderful*, Isa. 9. 6. And as his Name is, so is he; a wonderful Christ: His Person is a Wonder, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. *Great is the Mystery of Godliness, God manifested in the Flesh*: His Abasement wonderful, *Phil.* 2. 6. His Love is a wonderful Love: His Redemption full of wonders; Angels desire to look into it; he is and will be admired by *Angels* and *Saints* to all *Eternity*.

Tenthly, Jesus Christ is *an incomparable and matchless Mercy; as the Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood, so is my Beloved among the Sons* (saith the enamoured Spouse) *Cant.* 2. 3. Draw the Comparison how you will betwixt Christ and all other Enjoyments, you will find none in Heaven or Earth to match him; he is more than all *externals*, as the Light of the *Sun* is more than that of a *Candle*: Nay the worst of Christ is better than the best of the World; his reproaches are better than the Worlds Pleasures, *Heb.* 11. 25. He is more than all *Spirituals*, as the *Fountain* is more than the *Stream*: He is more than Justification, as the *Cause* is more than the *Effect*; more than Sanctification, as the *Person* himself is more than his Image or *Picture*: He is more than all Peace, all Comfort, all Joys, as the *Tree* is more than the *Fruit*. Nay, draw the Comparison betwixt Christ and things Eternal, and you will find him better than they; for what is Heaven without Christ? *Psalm* 73. 25. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee?* If Christ should say to the Saints, take Heaven among you, but as for me, I will draw my self from you; the Saints would fall a weeping, even in Heaven it self, and say, Lord, Heaven will be no more Heaven to us, except thou be there; thou art the better half of Heaven.

Eleventhly, Christ is an *unsearchable Mercy*: who can spell his wonderful Name, *Prov.* 30. 4. Who can tell over his *unsearchable Riches*, Eph. 3. 8. Hence it is that Souls never tire in the Study or Love of Christ, because new Wonders are Eternally rising out of him; He is a Deep which no Line of any created Understanding, angelical or humane can fathom.

Twelfthly, and Lastly, Christ is an *everlasting Mercy; the same Yesterday, to Day, and for ever*, Heb. 13. 8. All other Enjoyments are perishable, time-eaten things; Time like a Moth will fret them out: But the Riches of Christ are durable Riches, *Prov.* 18. 8. The Graces of Christ are durable Graces, *John* 4. 14. All the Creatures are Flowers that appear and fade in their Month; but this Rose of *Sharon*, this Lilly of the Valley, never withers. Thus you see the Mercy performed, with his desirable Properties.

Thirdly, The last thing to be opened in the manner of Gods performing his Mercy to his People: Which the Lord did,

1. Really and truly, as he hath promised him.
2. Exactly agreeable to the Promises and Predictions of him.

First, Really and truly; as he hath promised, so he made good the Promise, *Acts* 2, 36. *Let all the House of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ.* The Manifestation of Christ in the Flesh was no Phantasm or Delusion, but a most evident and palpable Truth, 1 *John* 1. 1. *That which we have heard, which we have seen with our Eyes, which we have looked upon, and our Hands have handled.* A Truth so certain, that the Assertors of it appealed to the very Enemies of Christ for the certainty thereof, *Acts* 2. 22. Yea, not only the sacred but prophane Writers witness to it; not only the *Evangelists* and *Apostles*, but even the *Heathen* Writers of those times, both *Roman* and *Jewish*, as *Suetonius*, *Tacitus*, *Plinius* the younger, and *Josephus* the Jewish *Antiquary* do all acknowledge it.

Secondly, As God did really and truly perform Christ the promised Mercy so he performed this promised Mercy exactly agreeable to the Promises, Types, and Predictions made of him to the Fathers, even to the most minute Circumstances thereof. This is a great Truth for our Faith to be established in: Let us therefore cast our Eyes both upon the *Promises* and *Performances* of God, with respect to Christ the Mercy of Mercies. See how he was represented to the Fathers long before his Manifestation in the Flesh; and what an one he appeared to be when he was really exhibited in the Flesh.

First, As to his Person and Qualifications, as it was *foretold*, so it was *fulfilled*. His Original was said to be unsearchable and Eternal, *Micah* 5. 2. and so he affirmed himself to be, *Rev.* 1. 11. *I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last*; John 6. 31, 32. *Before Abraham was, I am*; his two Natures united into one Person was plainly foretold, *Zech.* 13. 7. *The Man my Fellow*; and such a one God performed, *Rom.* 9. 5. His immaculate Purity and Holiness was foretold, *Dan.* 9. 24. *To anoint the most Holy*; some render it *the great Saint*: The Prince of Saints, and such one he was indeed, when he lived in this World; *John* 8. 24. *Which of you convinceth me of Sin?* His Offices were foretold, the prophetical Office predicted, *Deut.* 18. 15. and fulfilled in him, *John* 1. 18. His Priestly Office foretold, *Psalm.* 110. 4. fulfilled, *Heb.* 9. 14. His Kingly Office foretold, *Micah*, 5. 2. And in him fulfilled, his very Enemies being Judges, *Mat.* 27. 37.

Secondly, As to his Birth, the Time, Place, and Manner thereof was foretold to the Fathers, and exactly performed to a Tittle.

First, The time prefixed more generally in *Jacobs Prophecy*, *Gen.* 44. 10. When the Scepter should depart from *Judah*, as indeed it did in *Herod* the *Idumean*:

Idumean: More particularly in *Daniel* Seventy Weeks from the Decree of *Darius*, *Dan.* 9. 24. anſwering exactly to the time of his Birth; ſo cogent and full of Proof, that *Porphyry*, the great Enemy of Chriſtians had no other Evaſion, but that this Prophecy was deviſed after the Event; which yet the *Jews* (as bitter Enemies to Chriſt as himſelf) will by no means allow to be true; and Laſtly, The Time of his Birth was exactly pointed at in *Haggai*'s Prophecy, *Hag.* 2. 7, 9. compared with *Mal.* 3. 1. He muſt come whilſt the ſecond Temple ſtood; at that time was a general Expectation of him, *John* 1. 19. and at that very time he came, *Luke* 2. 38.

Secondly, The Place of his Birth was foretold to be *Bethlehem Ephrata*, Micah 5. 2. And ſo it was *Mat.* 2. 5, 6. to be brought up in *Nazareth*, Zech. 6. 12. *Behold the Man whoſe Name is the Branch*, the Word is *Netzer*, whence is the Word *Nazarite*: And there indeed was our Lord brought up, *Mat.* 2. 23.

Thirdly, His Parent was to be a *Virgin*, Iſa. 7. 14. punctually fulfilled, *Mat.* 1. 20, 21, 22, 23.

Fourthly, His Stock or Tribe was foretold to be *Judah*, *Gen.* 49. 10. And it is evident (ſaith the Apoſtle) *that our Lord ſprang out of Judah*, Heb. 7. 14.

Fifthly, His *Harbinger* or Forerunner was foretold, *Mal.* 4, 5. 6. fulfilled in *John the Baptiſt*, Luke 1. 16, 17.

Sixthly, The obſcurity and meanneſs of his Birth was predicted, *Iſa.* 53. 2. *Zech.* 9. 9. to which the Event anſwered, *Luke* 2. 12.

Thirdly, His Doctrine and Miracles were foretold, *Iſa.* 16. 1, 2. *Iſa.* 35. 4, 5. the accompliſhment whereof in Chriſt is evident in the Hiſtory of all the *Evangeliſts*.

Fourthly, His Death for us was foretold by the Prophets, *Dan.* 9. 26. *The Meſſiah ſhall be cut off, but not for himſelf*: Iſa. 53. 5. *He was wounded for our Tranſgreſſions.* And ſo he was, *John* 11. 51. The very kind and manner of his Death was prefigured by the brazen Serpent, his Type; and anſwered in his Death upon the Croſs, *John* 3. 14.

Fifthly, His Burial in the *Tomb* of a rich Man was foretold, *Iſa.* 53. 9. and accompliſhed moſt exactly, *Mat.* 17. 59. 60.

Sixthly, His Reſurrection from the Dead was typed out in *Jonah*, and fulfilled in Chriſts abode three Days and Nights in the Grave, *Mat.* 12. 39.

Seventhly, The wonderful ſpreading of the Goſpel in the World, even to the Iſles of the *Gentiles*, was fore-propheſied, *Iſa.* 49. 6. To the Truth whereof we are not only the Witneſſes, but the happy Inſtances and Examples of it. Thus the promiſed Mercy was performed.

Infer. 1. *If Chriſt be the Mercy of Mercies; the means of conveying all other Mercies from God to Men: then in vain do Men expect and hope for the Mercy of God out of Jeſus Chriſt.*

I know many poor Sinners comfort themſelves with this, when they come upon a Bed of ſickneſs, I am ſinful, but God is merciful: And it is very true, God is merciful; plenteous in Mercy; his Mercy is great above the Heavens; Mercy pleaſeth him: And all this they that are in Chriſt ſhall find experimentally to their Comfort and Salvation: But what is all this to thee, if thou beeſt Chriſtleſs? There is not one drop of ſaving Mercy that comes by any other Chanel than Chriſt to the Soul of any Man.

But muſt I then expect no Mercy out of Chriſt? This is a hard Caſe, very uncomfortable Doctrine. Yes, thou maiſt be a chriſtleſs and covenantleſs Soul, and yet have variety of temporal Mercies as *Iſhmael* had, *Gen.* 17. 20. 21. God may give thee the Fatneſs of the Earth, Riches, Honours, Pleaſures, a numerous and proſperous Poſterity; will that content thee? Yes, yes if I may have Heaven too: No, no, neither Heaven nor Pardon, nor any other ſpiritual or eternal Mercy may be expected out of Chriſt, *Jude verſe* 21. O deceive not your ſelves in this Point. There are two Bars betwixt you and all ſpiritual Mercies, *viz.* The Guilt of Sin, and the Filth of Sin: And nothing but your own Union with Chriſt can remove theſe, and ſo open the paſſage for ſpiritual Mercies to your Souls.

Why, but I will repent of Sin, ſtrive to obey the Commands of God, make Reſtitution for the Wrongs I have done, cry to God for mercy, bind my Soul with Vows and ſtrong Reſolutions againſt Sin for time to come: Will not all this lay a ground work for Hope of mercy to my Soul? No, no, this will not, this cannot do it.

Firſt, All your *ſorrows*, tears and mournings for Sin cannot obtain mercy: could you ſhed as many Tears for any one ſin that ever you committed, as all the children of *Adam* have ſhed upon any account whatſoever ſince the creation of the World; they will not purchaſe the Pardon of that one ſin: for the Law accepts no ſhort Payment, it requires plenary ſatisfaction, and will not diſcharge any Soul without it: nor can it acknowledge or own your ſorrows to be ſuch: the Repentance of a ſoul in Chriſt finds through him acceptance with God, but out of him its nothing.

Secondly, All your *ſtrivings* to obey the Commands of God, and live more ſtrictly for time to come, will not obtain mercy, *Matthew* 5. 20. *Except your righteouſneſs ſhall exceed the righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, ye ſhall in no caſe into the Kingdom of Heaven.*

Thirdly, Your *Reſtitution* and Reparation of wrongs you have done cannot obtain mercy: *Judas* reſtored, and yet was damned; man is repaired, but God is not: Remiſſion is the Act of God, 'tis he muſt looſe your Conſciences from the Bond of Guilt, or they can never be looſed.

Fourthly, All your *cries* to God for mercy will not prevail for mercy, if you be out of Chriſt, *Mat.* 7. 22. *Job* 27. 29. A Righteous Judge will not reverſe the juſt Sentence of the Law, though the Priſoner at the Bar fall upon his Knees, and cry, Mercy, Mercy.

Fifthly, Your *Vows* and Engagements to God for time to come cannot obtain mercy: For they being made in your own ſtrength, 'tis impoſſible you ſhould keep them; and if you could, yet it is impoſſible they ſhould obtain remiſſion and mercy: ſhould you never ſin more for time to come, yet how ſhall God be ſatisfied for ſins paſt? Juſtice muſt have ſatisfaction, or you can never have remiſſion, *Rom.* 3. 25. 26. and no work wrought by man can ſatisfie Divine Juſtice, nor is the ſatisfaction of Chriſt made over to any for their diſcharge, but to ſuch only as are in him: therefore never expect mercy out of Chriſt.

Infer. 2. *Is Chriſt the mercy of mercies, better and more neceſſary than all other mercies, then let no inferiour mercy ſatisfie you for your portion.*

God hath mercies of all ſorts to give; but Chriſt is the chief, the prime mercy of all mercies: O be not ſatisfied without that mercy.

When *Luther* had a rich Preſent ſent him, he proteſted God ſhould not put *Valde proteſtatus ſum, me*

nolle sic ab eo satiari, Luth.

him off so: And *David* was of the same mind, *Psalm.* 17. 14. If the Lord should give any of you the desires of your Hearts in the good things of this Life, let not that satisfie you whilst you are Christless. For,

First, What is there in these earthly Enjoyments, whereof the vilest of them have not a greater fulness than you? *Job.* 21. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. *Psal.* 17. 10. & 73. 3. 12.

Secondly, What comfort can all these things give to a soul already condemned as thou art? *John* 3 18.

Thirdly, What sweetness can be in them, whilst they are all unsanctified things to you? Enjoyments and their Sanctification are two distinct things; *Psal.* 37. 16. *Prov.* 10. 22. Thousands of unsanctified Enjoyments will not yield your Souls one drop of solid spiritual Comfort.

Fourthly, What pleasure can you take in these things out of which Death must shortly strip you naked? You must die, you must die; and whose then shall all those things be for which you have laboured? Be not so fond to think of leaving a great Name behind you: 'tis but a poor Felicity (as *Chrysostom* well observes) to be tormented where thou art, and praised where thou art not: The sweeter your Portion hath been on Earth, the more intolerable will your Condition be in Hell: Yea, these earthly Delights do not only encrease the Torments of the damned, but also prepare (as they are Instruments of Sin) the Souls of Men for Damnation, *Prov.* 1. 32. *Surely the Prosperity of Fools shall destroy them*: Be restless therefore, 'till Christ the Mercy of Mercies be the Root and Fountain, yielding and sanctifying all other Mercies to you.

Tunc edax flamma comburet, quos nunc carnalis delectatio polluit.

Infer. 3. *Is Christ the Mercy of Mercies, infinitely better than all other Mercies; then let all that be in Christ be content and well satisfied; whatever other inferiour Mercies the Wisdom of God sees fit to deny them*: You have a *Benjamin*'s Portion, a plentiful Inheritance in Christ, will you yet grumble? Others have Houses splendid and magnificent upon Earth, but you have *an House made without Hands, eternal in the Heavens*, 2 Cor. 5. 1. Others are cloathed with rich and costly Apparel, your Souls are cloathed with the white pure Robes of Christ's Righteousness, *Isa.* 61. 10. *I will greatly rejoyce in the Lord, my Soul shall be joyful in my God: for he hath cloathed me with the Garment of Salvation, he hath covered me with the Robe of Righteousness, as a Bridegroom decketh himself with Ornaments, and as a Bride adorneth her self with Jewels.* Let those that have full Tables, heavy Purses, rich Lands, but no Christ; be rather Objects of your Pity than Envy: 'Tis better like Store-cattel to be kept lean and hungry, than with the fatted Ox to tumble in flowry Meadows, thence to be led away to the *Shambles*. God hath not a better Mercy to give than Christ thy Portion, in him all necessary Mercies are secured to thee, and thy Wants and Straits sanctified to thy good. O therefore never open thy Mouth to complain against thy bountiful God.

Inference 4. Is Christ *the Mercy* (*i. e.*) he in whom all the tender Mercies of God towards poor Sinners are, *Then let none be discouraged in going to Christ, by Reason of the Sin and Unworthiness that is in them*: His very Name is *Mercy*, and as his Name is so is he. Poor drooping Sinner, encourage thy self in the way of Faith, the Christ to whom thou art going is Mercy it self to broken-hearted Sinners moving towards him in the way of Faith: Doubt not that Mercy will repulse thee, 'tis against both its Name and Nature so to do. Jesus Christ is so merciful to poor Souls that come to him, that he hath received and pardoned the chiefest of Sinners; Men that stood as remote from Mercy as any in the World, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. 1 *Cor.* 6. 11. Those that shed the Blood of Christ, have yet been washed in that Blood from their Sin, *Acts* 2. 36, 37. Mercy receives Sinners without Exception of great and heinous ones, *John* 7. 37. *If any Man thirst, let him come to me and drink.* Gospel Invitations run in general terms to all Sinners that are heavy laden, *Mat.* 11. 28. When Mr. *Billney* the *Martyr* heard a Minister preaching at this rate, O thou old Sinner, who hast been serving the Devil these fifty or sixty Years; dost thou think that Christ will receive thee now? O said he, what a Preaching of Christ is here? Had Christ been thus preached to me in the Day of my trouble for sin, what had become of me! But blessed be God, there is a sufficiency both of Merit and Mercy in Jesus Christ for all Sinners, for the vilest among Sinners, whose Hearts shall be made willing to come unto him. So merciful is the Lord Jesus Christ that he moves first, *Isa.* 62. 1, 2. So merciful that he upbraids none, *Ezek.* 18. 22. So merciful that he will not despise the weakest, if sincere, desires of Souls, *Isa.* 42. 3. So merciful, that nothing more grieves him, than our Unwillingness to come unto him for Mercy, *John* 5. 40. So merciful that he waiteth to the last upon Sinners to shew them Mercy, *Rom.* 10. *Mat.* 23. 37. in a Word, so merciful, that it is his greatest Joy when Sinners come unto him that he may shew them Mercy, *Luke* 15. 5, 22.

Object. But yet it cannot enter into my Thoughts that I should obtain Mercy.

Sol. First, You measure God by your selves; 1 *Sam.* 24. 19. If a Man find his Enemy, will he let him go well away? Man will not, but the merciful God will upon the Submission of the Enemies to him.

Secondly, You are discouraged because you have not tryed. Go to Jesus Christ, poor distressed Sinner, try him; and then report what a Christ thou findest him to be.

Object. But I have neglected the time of Mercy and now it is too late.

Sol. How know you that? Have you seen the Book of Life, or turned over the Records of Eternity? Or do you not unwarrantably intrude into the Secrets of God which belong not to you? Besides, if the Treaty were at an end, how is it that thy Heart is distressed for Sin, and solicitous after Deliverance from it?

Object. But I have waited long, and yet see no Mercy for me.

Sol. May not Mercy be coming, and you not see it? Or have you not waited at the wrong Door? If you wait for the Mercy of God, through Christ, in the way of Humiliation and Faith, you continue waiting; assuredly Mercy shall come at last.

Inference 5. *Hath God performed the Mercy promised to the Fathers, the great Mercy, the Capital Mercy of Christ, then let no Man distrust God for the performance of lesser Mercies, contained in any Promises of the Scripture*: The Performance of this Mercy secures the Performance of all other Mercies to us. For,

First, Christ is a greater Mercy than any other which yet remains to be performed, *Rom.* 8. 32.

Secondly, This Mercy virtually comprehends all other Mercies, 1 *Cor.* 3. 21, 22, 23.

Thirdly, The Promiſes that contain all other Mercies, are ratified and confirmed to Believers in Chriſt, 2 *Cor.* 1. 20.

Fourthly, It was much more improbable that God would beſtow his own Son upon the World, than that he ſhould beſtow any other Mercy upon it. Wait therefore in a comfortable Expectation of the fulfilling of all the reſt of the Promiſes in their Seaſons; hath he given thee Chriſt, he will give thee Bread to eat, Raiment to put on, ſupport in Troubles, and whatſoever elſe thy Soul or Body ſtands in need of: The Bleſſings contained in all other Promiſes are fully ſecured by the Performance of this great Promiſe; thy Pardon, Peace, Acceptance with God now, and Enjoyment of him for ever, ſhall be fulfilled: The great Mercy Chriſt, makes way for all other Mercies to the Souls of Believers.

Inference 6. *Laſtly, How mad are they that part with Chriſt, the beſt of Mercies, to ſecure and preſerve any temporal, leſſer Mercies to themſelves!* Thus *Demas* and *Judas* gave up Chriſt to gain a little of the World: O Soul-undoing Bargain! How dear do they pay for the World, that purchaſe it with the Loſs of Chriſt, and their own Peace for ever!

Bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt the Mercy of Mercies.

SERMON XII.

CANT. V. part of Verſe 16.

——Yea, He is altogether Lovely.

Sermon 12. Text. Containing a third Motive to enliven the general Exhortation from a third Title of Chriſt.

AT the ninth Verſe of this Chapter you have a Query propounded to the *Spouſe*, by the *Daughters* of *Jeruſalem*, *What is thy Beloved more than another Beloved?* To this Queſtion the Spouſe returns her Anſwer in the following Verſes, wherein ſhe aſſerts his Excellency in general, *Ver.* 10. *He is the chiefeſt among ten Thouſands*: Confirms that general Aſſertion by an Enumeration of his particular Excellencies to *Verſe* 16. where ſhe cloſes up her *Character* and *Encomium* of her beloved, with an elegant *Epiphonema*, in the Words that I have read, *Yea, He is altogether Lovely.*

The Words, you ſee, are an Affirmative Propoſition, ſetting forth the Tranſcendent Lovelineſs of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and naturally reſolve themſelves into three Parts, *viz.*

1. The Subject.
2. The Predicate.
3. The Manner of Predication.

Firſt, The *Subject*, *He*, *viz.* the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, after whom ſhe had been ſeeking; for whom ſhe was ſick of Love: Concerning whom theſe Daughters of *Jeruſalem* had enquired: Whom ſhe had endeavoured ſo *Graphically* to deſcribe in his particular Excellencies. This is the great and excellent *Subject* of whom ſhe here ſpeaks.

Secondly, The *Predicate*, or what ſhe affirmeth or ſaith of him, *viz.* That he is a *Lovely one*, *Machamaddim*, deſires according to the Import of the Original which ſignifies earneſtly to deſire, covet or long for that which is moſt pleaſant, grateful, delectable and admirable; the original Word is both in the *Abſtract*, and of the *Plural Number*, which ſpeaks Chriſt to be the very Eſſence of all Delights and Pleaſures, the very Soul and Subſtance of them. As all the Rivers be gathered into the Ocean, which is the Congregation or Meeting-place of all the Waters in the World: So Chriſt is that Ocean in which all true Delights and Pleaſures meet.

Significat appetere, experere quod jucundum, gratum, voluptuoſum, utile & amabile eſt. Pag.

Thirdly, *The Manner of Predication*: He is [*altogether*] Lovely, *Totus, totus deſiderabilis*, lovely in all and in every part, as if ſhe had ſaid, look on him in what reſpect or particular you will, caſt your Eye upon this lovely Object and view him any way, turn him in your ſerious Thoughts which way you will; conſider his Perſon, his Offices, his Works, or any thing belonging to him, you ſhall find him *altogether Lovely*: There is nothing ungrateful in him, there is nothing lovely without him. Hence Note,

Doct. *That Jeſus Chriſt is the loveliеſt Perſon Souls can ſet their Eyes upon*: Pſalm 45. 2. *Thou art fairer than the Children of Men.* That is ſaid of Jeſus Chriſt, which cannot be ſaid of any Creature, that he is *altogether lovely*. In opening this lovely Point, I ſhall,

1. Weigh the Importance of this Phraſe, *altogether lovely.*

2. Shew you in what reſpects Chriſt is ſo.

Firſt, Let us weigh this excellent Expreſſion, and particularly conſider, what is involved in it, and you ſhall find this Expreſſion, *altogether lovely*:

Firſt, That it excludes all Unlovelineſs, and Diſtaſtefulneſs from Jeſus Chriſt. So *Vatablus*, there is nothing in him which is not amiable: The Excellencies of Jeſus Chriſt are perfectly excluſive of all their Oppoſites; there is nothing of a contrary Nature or Quality found in him to allay or debaſe his Excellency: And in this reſpect Chriſt infinitely tranſcends the moſt excellent and loveliеſt Creatures: For whatſoever Lovelineſs is found in them, it is not without a diſtaſteful Tang; the faireſt Pictures muſt have their *Shadows*: The moſt Orient and Tranſplendent Stones muſt have their *Foiles* to ſet off their Beauty; the beſt Creature is but a bitter-ſweet at beſt: If there be ſomewhat pleaſing, there is alſo ſomewhat diſtating; if there be gracious and natural Excellencies in the ſame Perſon to delight us, yet there is alſo ſome natural Corruption intermixed with it to diſtaſte us. But it is not ſo in our altogether lovely Chriſt: His Excellencies are pure and unmixed, he is a Sea of Sweetneſs, without one drop of Gall.

Nihil in eo quod non eſt amabile.

Secondly, *Altogether lovely* (*i. e.*) as there is nothing unlovely found in him, ſo all that is in him is wholly lovely; as every Ray of God is precious, ſo every thing that is in Chriſt is precious; who can weigh Chriſt in a pair

Quantus quantus eſt, ſummis ſtudiis & votis eſt expetendus. Brightman.

of Ballances, and tell you what his worth is? His Price is above Rubies, and all that thou canſt deſire is not to be compared with him, *Prov.* 8. 11.

Thirdly, Altogether lovely, (i. e.) He is comprehenſive of all things that are lovely; he ſeals up the Sum of all Lovelineſs: *Quæ faciunt diviſa beatum, in hoc mixta fluunt;* things that ſhine as ſingle Stars with particular Glory, all meet in Chriſt, as a glorious Conſtellation, *Col.* 1. 19. *It pleaſed the Father, that in him ſhould all Fulneſs dwell.* Caſt your Eyes among all created Beings, ſurvey the Univerſe, obſerve ſtrength in one, Beauty in a ſecond, Faithfulneſs in a third, Wiſdom in a fourth; but you ſhall find none excelling in them all as Chriſt doth. Bread hath one Quality, Water another, Raiment another, Phyſick another, but none hath all in it ſelf as Chriſt hath; he is Bread to the hungry, Water to the thirſty, a Garment to the naked, healing to the wounded, and whatever a Soul can deſire is found in him. 1 *Cor.* 1. 30.

Fourthly, Altogether lovely, (i. e.) nothing is lovely in *Oppoſition* to him, or in Separation from him; if he be altogether lovely, then whatſoever is oppoſite to, or ſeparate from him, can have no Lovelineſs in it, take away Chriſt, and where is the Lovelineſs of any Enjoyment? The beſt creature comfort out of Chriſt is but a broken ciſtern, or a Veſſel whoſe bottom is fallen out, it cannot hold one drop of true comfort, *Pſalm* 73. 25. It is with the Creature, the ſweeteſt and lovelieſt Creature, as with a beautiful Image in the Glaſs; turn away the Face, and where is the Image? Riches, Honours, and comfortable Relations are ſweet when the Face of Chriſt ſmiles upon us through them, but without him what empty trifles are they all?

Fifthly, Altogether lovely, (i. e.) tranſcending all created Excellencies in Beauty and Lovelineſs, ſo much it ſpeaks: If you compare Chriſt and other things, be they never ſo lovely, never ſo excellent and deſireable; Chriſt carries away all Lovelineſs from them, *he is* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *before all things,* Col. 1. 17. Not only before all things in Time. Nature, and Order; but before all things in Dignity, Glory and true Excellency: In all things he muſt have the Preheminence; for let us but compare Chriſt's Excellency with the Creatures, in a few particulars, and how evidently will the tranſcendent Lovelineſs of Jeſus Chriſt appear! For,

Firſt, All other Lovelineſs is *derivative* and ſecondary, but the Lovelineſs of Chriſt is *originary* and *primary.* Angels and Men, the World and all the deſirables in it, receive what Excellency they have from him, they are Streams from the Fountain: But as the Waters in the Fountain it ſelf are more abundant, ſo more pure and pleaſant than in the Streams: And the farther any thing departs and is removed from its Fountain and Original, the leſs Excellency there is in it.

Dulcius ex ipſo fonte bibuntur aquæ.

Secondly, The Lovelineſs and excellency of all other things is but *Relative* and *Reſpective,* conſiſting in its reference to Chriſt, and ſubſerviency to his Glory; but Chriſt is lovely conſidered *abſolutely* in himſelf; he is deſirable for himſelf, other things are ſo for him.

Thirdly, The Beauty and Lovelineſs of all other things is *fading* and periſhing, but the Lovelineſs of Chriſt is *freſh* to all Eternity: The Sweetneſs of the beſt of Creatures is a fading Flower, if not before, yet certainly at Death it muſt fade away, *Job* 4. 21. *Doth not their excellency which is in them go away?* Yes, yes, whether natural Excellencies of the Body, or acquired Endowments of the Mind, lovely Features, amiable Qualities, attracting Excellencies: All theſe like pleaſant Flowers are withered, faded, and deſtroyed by Death: But Chriſt is ſtill the ſame, Yeſterday, to Day and for ever, *Heb.* 13. 8.

Fourthly, The Beauty and Lovelineſs of Creatures is *enſnaring* and dangerous: a Man may make an *Idol* of it, and dote beyond the Bounds of Moderation upon it: But there is no danger of exceſs in the Love of Chriſt; the Soul is then in the healthieſt Frame and Temper, when it is moſt ſick of Love to Chriſt, *Cant.* 5. 8.

Fifthly, The Lovelineſs of every Creature is of a *cloying* and glutting Nature: Our Eſtimation of it abates, and ſinks by our nearer approach to it, or longer Enjoyment of it: Creatures like Pictures are faireſt at a due diſtance; but it is not ſo with Chriſt, the nearer the Soul approacheth him, and the longer it lives in the Enjoyment of him, ſtill the more ſweet and deſirable he is.

Sixthly, Laſtly, All other Lovelineſs is *unſatisfying,* and ſtraitning to the Soul of Man: There is not room enough in any one, or in all the Creatures for the Soul of Man to dilate and expatiate it ſelf; but it ſtill feels it ſelf pinch't in, and narrowed within thoſe ſtrait Limits: And this comes to paſs from the inadequateneſs and unſuitableneſs of the Creature to the nobler and more excellent Soul of Man: Which like a Ship in a narrow River hath not room to turn, and beſides is ever and anon ſtriking Ground, and foundering in thoſe Shallows: But Jeſus Chriſt is every way adequate to the vaſt deſires of the Soul: In him it hath Sea-room enough; there it may ſpread all its Sails, no fear of touching the Bottom. And thus you ſee what is the Importance of this Phraſe, *altogether lovely.*

Æſtuat infelix angusto limite mundi.

Secondly Next I promiſed to ſhew you in what reſpects Jeſus Chriſt is altogether lovely. And,

Firſt, He is altogether lovely in his Perſon; a Deity dwelling in Fleſh, *John* 1. 14. The wonderful Union and Perfection of the divine and human nature in Chriſt renders him an Object of Admiration and Adoration to Angels and Men, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. God never preſented to the World ſuch a Viſion of Glory before: And then conſidering how the human Nature of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is repleniſhed with all the Graces of the Spirit, ſo as never any of all the Saints was filled: O how lovely doth this render him! *John* 3. 34. *God giveth not the Spirit by meaſure unto him:* This makes him fairer than the Children of Men, Grace being poured into his Lips, *Pſal.* 45. 2. If a ſmall meaſure of Grace in the Saints makes them ſuch ſweet and deſirable Companions, what muſt the Riches and Fulneſs of the Spirit of Grace, filling Jeſus Chriſt without meaſure, make him in the Eyes of Believers? O what a Glory and a Luſtre muſt it ſtamp upon him!

Secondly, He is altogether lovely in his Offices: For let us but conſider the ſuitableneſs, fulneſs, and comfortableneſs of them.

Firſt, The *ſuitableneſs* of the Offices of Chriſt to the miſeries and wants of Men, and we cannot but adore the infinite Wiſdom of God in his inveſtiture with them; we are by nature blind and ignorant, at beſt but groping in the dim Light of Nature after God: *Acts* 17. 27. Jeſus Chriſt is a light to lighten the *Gentiles, Iſa.* 49. 6. When this great Prophet came into the World, then did the Day-ſpring from on high viſit us, *Luke* 1. 78. The State of Nature is a ſtate of Alienation and Enmity

to God; Christ comes into the World an attoning Sacrifice, making Peace by the Blood of his Cross, *Col.* 1. 20. All the World, by Nature, are in bondage and captivity to Satan, a lamentable Thraldom: Christ comes with a Kingly Power to rescue Sinners, as a prey, from the Mouth of the terrible one.

Secondly, Let the *Fulness* of his Offices be also considered, by reason whereof he is able *to save to the uttermost, all that come to God by him*, Heb. 7. 25. The three Offices comprizing in them all that our Souls do need become an universal Relief to all our Wants; and therefore,

Thirdly, Unspeakably *comfortable* must the Offices of Christ be to the Souls of Sinners; if Light be pleasant to our Eyes, how pleasant is that Light of Life springing from the Sun of Righteousness! *Mal.* 4. 2. If a Pardon be sweet to a condemned Malefactor, how sweet must the sprinkling the Blood of Jesus be to the trembling Conscience of a Law-condemned Sinner? If a rescue from a cruel Tyrant be sweet to a poor Captive; how sweet must it be to the Ears of enslaved Sinners to hear the Voice of Liberty and Deliverance proclaimed by Jesus Christ? Out of the several Offices of Christ, as out of so many Fountains, all the Promises of the New Covenant flow; as so many Soul refreshing Streams of Peace and Joy: All the Promises of Illumination, Counsel and Direction flow out of the *Prophetical Office*: All the Promises of Reconciliation, Peace, Pardon, and Acceptation flow out of the *Priestly Office*, with the sweet Streams of Joy and Spiritual Comfort depending thereupon; all the Promises of converting, increasing, defending, directing, and supplying Grace, flow out of the *Kingly Office* of Christ; indeed all Promises may be reduced to the three Offices: So that Jesus Christ must needs be *altogether lovely in his Offices.*

Thirdly, Jesus Christ is *altogether lovely in his Relations.*

First, He is a lovely *Redeemer*, Isa. 61. 1, He came to open the Prison-doors to them that are bound. Needs must this Redeemer be a lovely one, if we consider the *Depth of Misery* from which he redeemed us, *even from the Wrath to come*, 1 Thes. 1. 10. How lovely was *Titus* in the Eyes of the poor enthralled *Greeks*, whom he delivered from their Bondage! This endeared him to them unto that Degree, that when their Liberty was proclaimed, they even trode one another to Death to see the *Herauld* that proclaimed it; and all the Night following with Instruments of Musick danced about his Tent, crying with united Voices, a *Saviour*, a *Saviour*. Or, whether we consider the *Numbers redeemed*, and the *Means* of their Redemption, *Rev.* 4. 9. *And they sang a new Song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the Book, and to open the Seals thereof: For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy Blood out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation.* He redeemed us not with Silver and Gold, but with his own precious Blood by way of *Price*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18, 19. with his out stretched and glorious Arm, by way of *Power*, Col. 1. 13. He redeemed us freely, *Eph.* 1. 7. fully, *Rom.* 8. 1, seasonably, *Gal.* 4. 4. and out of special and peculiar Love, *Joh.* 17. 9. In a Word, he hath redeemed us for ever, never more for us to come into Bondage, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. *John* 10. 28. O how lovely is Jesus Christ in the Relation of a Redeemer to God's Elect!

Secondly, He is a lovely *Bridegroom* to all that he espouses to himself; how doth the Church glory in him, in the Words following my Text, *This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O ye Daughters of Jerusalem*; (*q. d.*) Heaven and Earth cannot show such another; which needs no fuller Proof than the following Particulars.

First, That he espouseth to himself in Mercy, and in loving Kindness, such deformed, defiled, and altogether unworthy Souls as we are; who have no Beauty, no Excellency to make us desireable in his Eyes: All the Springs of his Love to us are in his own Breast, *Deut.* 7. 7. He chooseth us not because we were, but that he might make us lovely, *Eph.* 5. 27. He passed by us when we lay in our Blood, and said unto us live, and that was the time of Love, *Ezek.* 16. 5.

Secondly, He expects nothing with us, and yet bestows himself, and all that he hath upon us: Our Poverty cannot enrich him, but he made himself Poor to enrich us, 2 *Cor.* 8. 9. 1 *Cor.* 3. 22.

Thirdly, No Husband loves the Wife of his Bosom at the rate Christ loved his People, *Eph* 5. 25. He loved the Church, and gave himself for it.

Fourthly, None bears with Weaknesses and Provocations as Christ doth, the Church is stiled the *Lambs Wife*, Rev. 21. 9.

Fifthly, No Husband is so Immortal and Everlasting a Husband as Christ is. Death separates all other Relations, but the Soul's Union with Christ is not dissolved in the Grave: Yea, the Day of a Believers Death is his Marriage-day, the Day of his fullest Enjoyment of Christ: No Husband can say to his Wife what Christ saith to the Believer, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee*, Heb. 13. 5.

Sixthly, No Bridegroom advanceth his Bride to such Honours by Marriage as Christ doth: He relates them to God as their Father; and from that Day the mighty and glorious Angels think it no Dishonour to be their Servants, *Heb.* 1. 14. They are brought in admiring the Beauty and Glory of the Spouse of Christ, *Rev.* 21. 9.

Seventhly, and Lastly, No marriage was ever consummated with that triumphal Solemnity, as the marriage of Christ and Believers shall be in Heaven, *Psalm* 45. 14, 15. *She shall be brought to the King in Raiment of Needle work, the Virgins, her Companions, that follow her, shall be brought unto thee, with Gladness and Rejoycing shall they be brought, they shall enter into the Kings Palace.* Among the *Jews* the Marriage-House was called *Bethillula*, the House of Praise: There was Joy upon all Hands; but not like the Joy that will be in Heaven, when Believers, the Spouse of Christ, shall be brought thither; *God the Father* will rejoyce to behold the blessed Accomplishment and Consummation of that glorious Design and Project of his Love. *Jesus Christ the Bridegroom* will rejoyce to see the Travel of his Soul, the blessed Birth and Issue of all his bitter Pangs and Agonies, *Isa.* 53. 11. *The holy Spirit* will rejoyce to see the Complement and Perfection of that sanctifying Design which was committed to his Hand, 2 *Cor.* 5. 5. To see those Souls whom he once found as rough Stones, now to shine as the bright polished Stones of the spiritual Temple. *Angels* will rejoyce; great was the Joy when the Foundation of this Design was laid in the Incarnation of Christ: *Luke* 2. 14. Great therefore must their Joy be when the Top-stone is set up with shouting, crying, Grace, Grace. The *Saints* themselves shall rejoyce unspeakably when they shall enter into the Kings Palace, and be for ever with the Lord, 1 *Thes.* 4. 17. Indeed there will be Joy on all Hands, except among the Devils, and damned; who shall gnash

their Teeth with Envy at the everlasting Advancement and Glory of Believers.

Thus Christ is altogether lovely, in the Relation of a *Bridegroom*.

Thirdly, Christ is altogether lovely in the *Relation of an Advocate*, 1 John 2. 1. *If any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and he is the Propitiation*; 'tis He that pleads the Cause of Believers in Heaven: Appears for them in the Presence of God, to prevent all new Breaches, and continue the State of Friendship and Peace betwixt God and us. For in this Relation Christ is altogether lovely. For,

First, He makes our Cause his own, and acts for us in Heaven as for himself, *Heb.* 4. 15. He is touched with the tender Sense of our Troubles and Dangers, and is not only one with us by way of *Representation*, but also one with us in respect of Sympathy and Affection.

Secondly, Christ our Advocate follows our suit and Business in Heaven, as his great and main Design and Business, therefore in *Heb.* 7. 25. He is said to *Live for ever to make Intercession for us*: As if our Concernments were so minded by him there, as to give up himself wholly to that Work; as if all the Glory and Honour which is paid him in Heaven, would not satisfie him, or divert him one Moment from our Business.

Thirdly, He pleads the cause of Believers by his Blood; It satisfies him not as other *Advocates*, to be at the Expence of Words and Oratory, which is a cheaper way of Pleading; but he pleads for us by the Voice of his own Blood, *Heb.* 12. 24, where we are said to be come *To the Blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better than that of Abel*: Every Wound he received for us on Earth, is a Mouth opened to plead with God on our Behalf in Heaven, *Quot Vulnera, tot Ora*: And hence it is that in *Rev.* 5. 6. He is represented standing before God, *As a Lamb that had been slain*: As it were exhibiting and opening in Heaven those deadly Wounds received on Earth, from the Justice of God upon our Account: Other Advocates spend their *Breath*, Christ his *Blood*.

Fourthly, He pleads the cause of Believers freely: Other Advocates plead for Reward, and exhaust the Purses while they plead the Causes of their Clients.

Fifthly, In a Word, he obtaineth for us all the mercies for which he pleads; no cause miscarries in his Hand which he undertakes, *Rom.* 8. 33, 34. O what a lovely Advocate is Christ for Believers!

Fourthly, Christ is altogether lovely in the *Relation of a Friend*, for in this Relation he is pleased to own his People, *Luke* 12. 4, 5. There are certain things in which one Friend manifests his Affection and Friendship to another, but none like Christ, For,

First, No Friend is so *open-hearted* to his Friend as Christ is to his People: He reveals the very Counsels and Secrets of his Heart to them, *John* 15. 15. *Henceforth I call you not Servants, for the Servant knoweth not what his Lord doth; but I have called you Friends, for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.*

Secondly, No Friend in the World is so *expensive and bountiful* to his Friend, as Jesus Christ is to Believers, *John* 15. 13. He parts with his very Blood for them; *Greater Love* (saith he) *hath no Man than this, that a Man lay down his Life for his Friends*: He hath exhausted the precious Treasure of his invaluable Blood to pay our Debts. O what a lovely Friend is Jesus Christ to Believers.

Thirdly, No Friend *sympathizes* so tenderly with his Friend in Affliction, as Jesus Christ doth with his Friends: In all our Afflictions he is afflicted, *Heb.* 4. 15. He feels all our Sorrows, Wants and Burthens as his own. Whence it is that the Sufferings of Believers are called the Sufferings of Christ, *Col.* 1. 24.

Fourthly, No Friend in the World takes that *Complacency* in his Friend as Jesus Christ doth in Believers, *Cant.* 4. 9. *Thou hast ravished my Heart* (saith he to the Spouse) *thou hast ravished my Heart with one of thine Eyes, with one Chain of thy Neck*: The *Hebrew* here rendred *ravished*, signifies to puff up, or to make one proud; how is the Lord Jesus pleased to glory in his People! How is he taken and delighted with those gracious Ornaments which himself bestows upon them! No Friend so lovely as Christ.

Fifthly, No Friend in the World loves his Friend with so ferverous, *and strong Affection*, as Jesus Christ loves Believers. *Jacob* loved *Rachel*, and endured for her sake the parching Heat of Summer, and Cold of Winter: But Christ endured the Storms of the Wrath of God, the Heat of his Indignation for our sakes. *David* manifested his Love to *Absolom*, in wishing, *O that I had died for thee*! Christ manifested his Love to us, not in Wishes that he had died, but in Death it self, in our stead, and for our sakes.

Sixthly, No Friend in the World is so *constant and unchangeable* in Friendship, as Christ is, *John* 13. 1. *Having loved his own which were in the World, he loved them unto the end.* He bears with Millions of Provocations and Injuries, and yet will not break Friendship with his People. *Peter* denied him, yet he will not disown him; but after his Resurrection he saith, *Go, tell the Disciples, and tell Peter*; (*q. d.*) Let him not think he hath forfeited by that Sin of his, his Interest in me; tho' he have denied me, I will not disown him, *Mark* 16. 7. Oh how lovely is Christ in the Relation of a Friend! I might farther shew you the Loveliness of Christ in his *Ordinances*, and in his *Providences*, in his *Communion* with us, and *Communications* to us: But there is no End of the Account of Christ's Loveliness. I will rather choose to press Believers to their Duties towards this *altogether lovely Christ*, which I shall briefly dispatch in a few Words.

Use First, Is Jesus Christ altogether lovely, then I beseech you *set your Souls upon this Lovely Jesus*: Methinks such an Object as hath been here represented should compel Love from the coldest Breast, and hardest Heart. Away with those empty nothings, away with this vain Deceitful World, which deserves not the thousandth part of the Love you give it: Let all stand aside, and give way to Christ. O did you but know his Worth and Excellency, what he is in himself, what he hath done for, and deserved from you; you would need no Arguments of mine to perswade you to love him.

Secondly, *Esteem nothing Lovely, but as it is enjoyed in Christ, or improved for Christ*: Affect nothing for it self, love nothing separate from Jesus Christ. In two things we all sin in the Love of Creatures, *viz.* In the *Excess* of our Affections, loving them above the Rate and Value of creatures, and in the *Inordinancy* of our Affections, (*i. e.*) in loving them out of their proper Places.

Thirdly, Let us all be humbled for the baseness of our Hearts, that are so free of their Affections to Vanities, and Trifles; and so hard to be perswaded to the Love of Christ, who is altogether lovely. Oh how many pour out Streams of Love and Delight upon the vain and empty

empty Creature, whilſt no Arguments can ſqueeze out one Drop of Love from their obdurate and unbelieving Hearts to Jeſus Chriſt! I have read of one *Johannes Mollius*, who was obſerved to go often alone, and weep bitterly; and being preſt by a Friend to know the Cauſe of his Troubles; Oh, ſaid he, it grieves me that I cannot bring this Heart of mine to Love Jeſus Chriſt more fervently.

Fourthly, Repreſent Chriſt as he is to the World, by your Carriage, towards him: Is he altogether lovely? Let all the World ſee and know that he is ſo, by your delights in him, and Communion with him, Zeal for him, and readineſs to part with any other lovely Thing upon his Account; proclaim his Excellencies to the World, as the Spouſe here did: convince them how much your Beloved is better than any other Beloved. Diſplay his glorious Excellencies in your heavenly converſations: Hold him forth to others, as he is in himſelf, altogether lovely. See that you *Walk worthy of him unto all well-pleaſing*, Col. 1. 10. *Shew forth the Praiſes of Chriſt*, 1 Pet. 2. 19. Let not that *worthy Name be blaſphemed through you*, James 2. 7. He is glorious in himſelf, and will put Glory upon you; take heed ye put not ſhame and diſhonour upon him: He hath committed his Honout to you, do not betray that Truſt.

Fifthly, Never be aſhamed to own Chriſt: He is altogether lovely; he can never be a ſhame to you; 'twill be your great ſin, to be aſhamed of him. Some Men glory in their *Shame*, be not you aſhamed of your *Glory*; if you be aſhamed of Chriſt now, he will be aſhamed of you, when he ſhall appear in his own Glory, and the Glory of all his Holy Angels. Be aſhamed of nothing but Sin, and among other Sins, be aſhamed eſpecially for this Sin, that you have no more Love for him who is *altogether Lovely*.

Sixthly, Be willing to leave every thing that is lovely upon Earth, that you may be with the altogether lovely Lord Jeſus Chriſt in Heaven. Lift up your Voices with the Spouſe, *Rev.* 20. 20. *Come Lord Jeſus, come quickly.* 'Tis true, you muſt paſs through the Pangs of Death into his Boſom and Enjoyment; but ſure 'tis worth ſuffering much more than that, to be with this lovely Jeſus. *The Lord direct your Hearts into the Love of God, and the patient waiting for of Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 Theſ. 3. 4.

Seventhly, Strive to be Chriſt-like, as ever you would be lovely in the Eyes of God and Man. Certainly my Brethren, 'tis the Spirit of Chriſt within you, and the Beauty of Chriſt upon you, which only can make you lovely Perſons; the more you reſemble him in Holineſs, the more will you diſcover of true Excellency and Lovelineſs: And the more frequent and ſpiritual your converſe and communion with Chriſt is, the more of the Beauty and Lovelineſs of Chriſt will ſtill be ſtamped upon your Spirits, changing you into the ſame Image from Glory to Glory.

Eighthly, Let the Lovelineſs of Chriſt draw all Men to him. Is Lovelineſs in the Creature, embodied Beauty, ſo attractive? And can the tranſcendent Lovelineſs of Chriſt draw none? Oh the Blindneſs of Man! If you ſee no Beauty in Chriſt, why you ſhould deſire him, 'tis becauſe the God of this World hath blinded your Minds.

SERMON XIII.

HAGGAI II. vii.

——And the Deſire of all Nations, ſhall come.

Ser. 13. Text Alluring the Hearts of Men to come to Chriſt by a fourth Motive contained in another Title of Chriſt.

THE former Chapter is mainly ſpent in reproving the Negligence of the *Jews*, who being diſcouraged from time to time, had delayed the Rebuilding the *Temple*: And in the mean time employed their care, and coſt in building and adorning their own Houſes: but at laſt being perſwaded to ſet about the Work, they meet with this Diſcouragement, that ſuch was the Poverty of the preſent Time, that the ſecond Structure would no way anſwer the Magnificence and Splendor of the firſt. In *Solomon*'s Days the Nation was wealthy, now drained, ſo that there would be no Proportion betwixt the ſecond and the firſt. To this grand Diſcouragement, the Prophet applies this Relief, that whatſoever ſhould be wanting in external Pomp and Glory, ſhould be more than recompenſed by the Preſence of Jeſus Chriſt in this *ſecond Temple*. For *Chriſt the Deſire of all Nations* (ſaith he) ſhall come into it. Which by the way may give us this uſeful Note, That the preſence of Jeſus Chriſt gives a more real and excellent Glory to the Places of his Worſhip, than any external Beauty, or outward Ornaments whatſoever can beſtow upon them. Our Eyes like the *Diſciples* are apt to be dazled with the goodly Stones of the *Temple*, and in the mean time to neglect, and overlook that which gives it its greateſt Honour and Beauty.

But to return, in theſe Words we have both the Deſcription of Chriſt, and an *Index* pointing at the time of his Incarnation; he is called *The deſire* of all Nations: And the time of his coming in the Fleſh, 'tis plainly intimated to be while the ſecond *Temple* ſhould be ſtanding: Where by the way, we find juſt cauſe to admire and bemoan the Blindneſs that is hapned to the *Jews*; who owning the truth of this Prophecy, and not able to deny the Deſtruction of the ſecond Temple, many hundred Years paſt, will not yet be brought to acknowledge the Incarnation of the true Meſſiah, notwithſtanding.

But to the Point, the Character of Chriſt, ſtiled *the deſire of all Nations*, who was to come into the World in the time of the ſecond *Temple*, *Mal.* 3. 12. And that after grievous concuſſions and ſhakings of the World, which were to make way for his coming, for ſo our Prophet here ſpeaks, *I will ſhake all Nations, and the deſire of all Nations ſhall come*, to which the *Apoſtle* alludes in, *Heb.* 12. 26. applying this Prophecy to Jeſus Chriſt, here called the *deſire of all Nations*: Putting the *Act* for the *Object*, deſire for the thing deſired; as in, *Ezek.* 24. 16. *The deſire of thine Eyes*, that is the deſirable Wife of thy Boſom. So here the *deſire of all Nations*, that is *Chriſt* the *Object* of the deſires of God's Elect in all Nations of the World. A Saviour infinitely deſirable in himſelf, and actually deſired by all the People of God, diſperſed among Kindreds, Tongues and Nations

Nations in the World. From whence this Note is.

Doct. *That the desires of God's Elect in all Kingdoms, and among all People of the Earth, are and shall be drawn out after, and fixed upon the Lord Jesus Christ.*

The merciful God beholding the universal Ruines of the World by Sin, hath provided an universal Remedy for his own Elect, in every part of the Earth. Christ is not impropriated to any one Kingdom or Nation in the World; but intended to be God's Salvation to the ends of the Earth, and accordingly speaks the Apostle, *Col.* 2. 11. *There is neither Greek* nor *Jew, Barbarian, Scythian, Bond nor Free; but Christ is all, and in all.* In the Explication of this Point, two things must be enquired into.

1. Why Christ is called the desire of all Nations.

2. Upon what Account the People of God in all Nations desire him.

First, Why he is called the desire of all Nations: And what that may import: And there are divers things that are supposed or included in it.

First, That God the Father hath appointed him as a common Remedy, for the Sins and Miseries of his People in all Parts and Quarters of the World. So in the Covenant of Redemption betwixt the Father and the Son, the Lord expresseth himself, *Isa.* 49. 6. and he said, *It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my Servant, to raise up the Tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a Light to the Gentiles, that thou maist be my Salvation to the end of the Earth.* Suitable whereunto is that Prophecy, *Isa.* 52. 15. *He shall sprinkle many Nations.* If God had not appointed him for, he could not be desired by all Nations.

And indeed herein the Grace of God doth admirably shine forth in the freeness of it, that even the most barbarous Nations are not excluded from the Benefit of Redemption by Christ. This is that the *Apostle* admires, that Christ should be *Preached to the Gentiles*, 1 Tim. 3. 16. A People that seemed to be lost in the Darkness of Idolatry; yet even for them Christ was given by the Father. *Ask of me* (saith he) *and I will give thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the Earth for thy Possession.*

Secondly, Christ *the desire of all Nations*, plainly notes the *sufficiency* that is in him to supply the wants of the whole World: As the Sun in the Heavens suffices all Nations for Light and Influence, so doth the Son of Righteousness suffice for the Redemption, Justification, Sanctification and Salvation of the People of God, all the World over, *Isa.* 45. 22. *Look unto me, and be ye saved all ye ends of the Earth.*

Thirdly, It implies the *Reality that is in Godliness.* It shews you that Religion is no fancy, as the atheistical World would perswade us; and this evidently appears in the *uniform Effects* of it upon the Hearts of all Men in all Nations of the World, that are truly Religious; all their Desires, like so many Needles touched by one and the same Load-stone, move towards Jesus Christ, and all meet together in one and the same blessed Object, Christ. Were it possible for the People of God to come out of all Nations, Kindreds and Languages in the World, into one Place, and there confer, and compare the desires and workings of their Hearts; though they never saw each others Face, nor heard of each others Name; yet as Face answers to Face in a Glass, so would their desires after Christ answer to each other: All Hearts work after him in the same Manner, what one saith, all say; these are my Troubles and Burthens, these my Wants and Miseries; the same things my Desires and Fears: One and the same Spirit harmonically Works in all Believers through the World, which could never be, if Religion were but a Fancy as some call it, or a Combination or Confederacy, as others call it: Fancies are as various as Faces; and Confederacies presuppose mutual Acquaintance and Conference.

Fourthly, Christ the desire of all Nations implies the vast extent his Kingdom hath and shall have in the World: Out of every Nation under Heaven some shall be brought to Christ, and to Heaven by him. And though the number of God's Elect, compared with the Multitudes of the Ungodly in all Nations, is but a Remnant, a little Flock, and in that comparative Sense there are few that shall be saved; yet considered absolute, and in themselves, they are a vast number, which no Man can number, *Mat.* 8. 11. *Many shall come from the East, and from the West, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of Heaven.* In order whereunto the Gospel, like the Sun in the Heavens, circuits the World: It arose in the *East*, and takes its course towards the *Western World*; rising by Degrees upon the remote Idolatrous Nations of the Earth; out of all which a number is to be saved, even *Ethiopia shall stretch out her Hands to God*, Psalm 68. 31. And this Consideration should move us to pray earnestly for the poor *Heathens*, who yet sit in Darkness, and the shadow of Death; there is yet Hope for them.

Fifthly, It holds forth this, that when God opens the Eyes of Men to see their Sin, and danger by it; nothing but Christ can give them Satisfaction: 'Tis not the amenity, fertility, Riches and Pleasures the Inhabitants of any Kingdom of the World do enjoy, that can quench and satisfie the desires of their Souls: When once God touches their Hearts with the Sense of Sin and Misery: Christ and none but Christ is desirable and necessary in the Eyes of such Persons. Many Kingdoms of the World abound with Riches and Pleasures, the Providence of God hath carved liberal Portions of the good things of this Life to many of them, and scarce left any thing to their desires that the World can afford. Yet all this can give no Satisfaction without Jesus Christ, the desire of Nations, the one thing necessary, when once they come to see the Necessity and Excellency of him: Then take the World who will, so they may have Christ the desire of their Souls. Thus we see upon what Grounds and Reasons Christ is stiled the desire of all Nations.

Object. But there lies one great Objection against this truth, which must be satisfied, *viz.* If Christ be the desire of all Nations, how comes it to pass, that Jesus Christ finds no Entertainment in so many Nations of the World, among whom Christianity is hissed at, and Christians not tolerated to live among them? Who see no Beauty in him that they should desire him.

Sol. First, We must remember the Nations of the World have their times and seasons of Conversion. Those that once embraced Christ, have now lost him, and Idols are now set up in the Places where he once was sweetly Worshipped. The Sun of the Gospel is gone down upon them, and now shines in another *Hemisphere*: And so the Nations of the World are to have their distinct Days, and seasons of Illumination. The Gospel, like the Sea, gaineth in one place what it loseth in another: And in the times and seasons appointed by the Father they come successively to be enlightened in the Knowledge

ledge of Christ; and then shall that Promise be fulfilled, *Isa.* 49. 7. *Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to whom him the Nation abhorreth, to a Servant of Rulers; Kings shall see and arise, Princes also shall Worship, because of the Lord that is faithful.*

Secondly, Let it also be remembred, that although Christ be rejected by the Rulers and Body of many Nations; yet he is the desire of all the Elect of God, dispersed and scattered among those Nations.

Secondly, In the next Place we are to enquire, upon what Account Christ becomes the desire of all Nations, (*i. e.*) of all those in all the Nations of the World that belong to the Election of Grace. And the true Ground and Reason thereof is, because Christ only hath that in himself which relieves their Wants and answers to all their Needs. As,

First, They are all by Nature under Condemnation, *Rom.* 5. 16, 18. under the curse of the Law; against which nothing is found in Heaven or Earth able to relieve their Consciences but the Blood of sprinkling, the pure and perfect Righteousness of the Lord Jesus: and hence it is that Christ becomes so desirable in the Eyes of poor Sinners all the World over. If any thing in Nature could be found to pacifie and purge the Consciences of Men from guilt and fear; Christ would never be desirable in their Eyes; but finding no other Remedy but the Blood of Jesus, to him therefore shall all the ends of the Earth look for Righteousness and for Peace.

Secondly, All Nations of the World are polluted with the filth of Sin, both in Nature and Practice, which they shall see, and bitterly bewail when the Light of the Gospel shall shine amongst them; and the same Light by which this shall be discovered, will also discover the only Remedy of this evil to be in the Spirit of Christ, the only Fountain opened to all Nations for Sanctification and Cleansing: and this will make the Lord Jesus incomparably desirous in their Eyes. Oh how welcome will he be that cometh unto them, not by Blood only, but by Water also! *John* 1. 5, 6.

Thirdly, When the Light of the Gospel shall shine upon the Nations, they shall then see, that by Reason of the guilt and filth of Sin, they are all barr'd out of Heaven. Those doors are chained to against them, and that none but Christ can open an entrance for them into that Kingdom of God: That *no Man cometh to the Father but by him*, John 14. 6. *Neither is there any Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby they must be saved, but the Name of Christ*, Acts 4. 12. hence the Hearts of Sinners shall pant after him, as the Hart panteth after the Water-brooks. And thus we see upon what grounds Christ becomes the *desire of all Nations*. The Improvement of all followeth in several Uses of the Point, *viz.*

1. For Information.
2. For Examination.
3. For Consolation.
4. For Exhortation.
5. For Direction.

First Use for Information.

First, Is Christ the desire of all Nations, *How great a sin is it then in any Nation, upon whom the Light hath shined, to reject Jesus Christ*, and say as those in Luke 19. 14. *Depart from us, we desire not the Knowledge of thy Ways.* To thrust away his Worship, Government, and Servants from amongst them, and in effect to say as it is, *Luke* 19. 14. *We will not have this Man to Reign over us*: Thus did the *Jews*, *Acts* 3. 46. They put away Christ from among them, and thereby judged themselves unworthy of eternal Life. This is at once a fearful *Sin*, and a dreadful *Sign*: How soon did Vengeance overtake them, like the overthrow of *Sodom*! O let it be for a warning unto all Nations to the end of the World. He would have gathered the Children of *Israel* under his Wings, as a *Hen* doth her brood, even when the *Roman Eagle* was hovering over them, but they would not; therefore their Houses were left unto them desolate, their City and Temple made an heap.

Secondly, If Jesus Christ be the desire of all Nations, *how incomparably Happy then must that Nation be, that enjoys Christ in the Power and Purity of his Gospel-Ordinances!* If Christ under a Vail made *Canaan* a glorious Land (as it's called) *Dan.* 11. 41. What a glorious Place must that Nation be that beholds him with open Face in the bright Sunshine of the Gospel! O *England*, know thy Happiness, and the Day of thy Visitation: What others desire thou enjoyest: Provoke not the Lord Jesus to depart from thee, by corrupting his Worship, hankering after Idolatry, abusing his Messengers, oppressing his People, lest his Soul depart from thee.

Second Use for Examination. If Christ be the desire of all Nations, examine whether he be the desire of your Souls in particular, else you shall have no Benefit by him. Are your desires after Christ true spiritual desires? Reflect, I beseech you, upon the frames and tempers of your Hearts. Can you say of your desires after Christ, as *Peter* did of his Love to Christ, Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I desire thee: Try your desires as to their Sincerity, by the following Characters.

First, Are they vehement and ardent? Hath Christ the supream Place in your Desires? Do you esteem all things to be but Dross and Dung in comparison of the Excellencies of Jesus Christ your Lord? *Phil.* 3. 8. Is he to you as the refuge city to the Manslayer, *Heb.* 6. 18, 19. As a spring of Water in a dry Place, as the shadow of a great Rock in a weary Land, *Isa.* 32. 2. Such vehement Desires are true Desires.

Secondly, Are your Desires after Christ universal? (*i. e.*) Is every Thing in Christ desireable in your Eyes? The *Hypocrite* like the *Harlot* is for a divided Christ: They would be called by his Name, but live upon their own Stock, *Isa.* 4. 1. If his Holiness, and Government, his Cross, and Sufferings be desirable for his Sake, such universal Desires are right Desires.

Thirdly, Are your Desires after Christ industrious Desires, using all the means of accomplishing what you desire? You say you desire Christ, but what will you do to obtain your desires? If you seek him carefully and incessantly in all the ways of duty, if you will strive in Prayer, labour to believe, cut off right Hands, and pluck out right Eyes, (*i. e.*) be content to part with the most profitable and pleasant Ways of Sin, that you may enjoy Christ the desire of your Souls, then are your desires right desires.

Fourthly, Are your desires after Christ permanent Desires, or only a sudden Mood and Fit, which goes off again without Effect? If your desires after Christ abide upon your Hearts, if your longings be after him at all Times, though not in the same height and degree, then are your desires right desires? Christ always dwells in the desires of his People, they can feel him in their desires, when they cannot discern him in their loves or delights.

Fifthly, Will your desires after Christ admit no satisfaction, nor find rest any where but in the injoyment of Christ, then are your desires right desires: The Soul that desires Christ can never be at rest till it come home to Christ, 2 *Cor.* 5. 2, 6. *Phil.* 1. 23. The Devil can satisfie others with Riches and Pleasures of this World, as children are quieted with Rattles. If nothing but Christ can rest and terminate your desires, surely such restless desires are right desires.

Sixthly, Do your desires after Christ spring from a deep sense of your need and want of Christ: Hath conviction opened your Eyes to see your Misery, to feel your Burthens, and to make you sensible that your Remedy lies only in the Lord Jesus, then are your desires right desires: Bread and Water are made necessary and desirable by hunger and thirst. By these Things try the Truth of your desires after Christ.

3d. Use for Consolation. Do you indeed upon serious Trial find such desires after Christ, as were described above; Oh bless the Lord for that day wherein Christ the desire of Nations became the desire of your Souls, and for your comfort know that you are happy and blessed Souls at present.

First, Blessed in this, that your Eyes have been opened to see both the want and worth of Christ. Had not Christ applied his precious Eye-salve to the Eyes of your Mind, you could never have desired him, you would have said with them in *Isa.* 53. 2. *He hath no Form nor Comeliness, and when we shall see him, there is no Beauty that we should desire him*: Or as they to the Spouse *Cant.* 5. 9. *What is thy Beloved more than another Beloved?* O blessed Souls inlightned of the Lord; to see those things that are hid from them that perish!

Secondly, You are blessed in this, that your desires after Christ are a sure Evidence that the desire of Christ is towards you: Had he not first desired you, you could never have desired him. We may say of Desires as it is said of Love; we desire him because he first desired us: Your desires after Christ are inflamed from the desires of Christ after you.

Thirdly, Blessed in this, that your desires shall surely be satisfied. *Mat.* 5. 6. *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after Righteousness, for they shall be filled*: Prov. 10. 24. *The desires of the Righteous shall be granted.* God never raised such desires as these in the Souls of his People to be a torment to them for ever.

Fourthly, Blessed in this, that God hath guided your desires to make the best choice that ever was made in the World: Whilst the desires of others are hunting after Riches, Pleasure and Honours in the World, toiling themselves like children in pursuit of a painted Butterfly, which when they have caught, doth but daub their Fingers; God mean while hath directed your desires to Christ, the most excellent Object in Heaven or Earth. Any good will satisfie some Men, O happy Soul if none but Christ can satisfie thee, *Psalm* 4. 6.

Fifthly, Blessed in this, that there is a Work of Grace certainly wrought upon thy Soul, and these very desires after Christ are a part thereof.

Sixthly, Blessed in this, that these desires after Christ keep thy Soul active and working after him continually in the ways of Duty, *Psalm* 27. 4. *One thing have I desired, that will I seek after.* Desire will be a continual Spring to diligence and industry in the ways of Duty: The desire of the end quickens to the use of Means, *Prov.* 18. 1. Others may fall asleep and cast off Duty, but it will be hard for you to do so, whose Souls burn with desire after Christ.

Seventhly, Blessed in this, that your desires after Christ will make Death much the sweeter and easier to you, *Phil.* 1. 23. *I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is far better.* When a Christian was once asked, whether he were willing to die? He returned this Answer, let him be unwilling to die, who is unwilling to go to Christ: And much like it was that of another, *vivere renuo, ut Christo vivam*, I refuse this Life, to live with Christ.

Illius est nolle mori, qui nolit ire ad Christum.

4th Use for Exhortation. In the fourth Place, let me exhort and perswade all to make Jesus Christ the desire and choice of their Souls. And here I fall in with the main Scope and Design of the Gospel: And oh that I could effectually press home this Exhortation upon your Hearts. Let me offer some moving considerations to you, and the Lord accompany them to your Hearts.

First, Every creature naturally desires its own Preservation, do not you desire the Preservation of your precious and immortal Souls? If you do, then make Christ your desire and choice, without whom they can never be preserd, *Jude* ver. 1.

Secondly, Don't your Souls earnestly desire the Bodies they live in? How tender are they over them, how careful to provide for them? Though they pay a dear Rent for those Tenements they live in: And is not Union with Christ infinitely more desirable than the Union of Soul and Body? Oh covet Union with him, then shall your Souls be happy, when your Bodies drop off from them at Death, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1, 3. Yea, Soul and Body shall be happy in him, and with him for evermore.

Thirdly, How do the Men of this World desire the Enjoyments of it? They pant after the Dust of the Earth: They rise early, sit up late, eat the Bread of carefulness; and all this for very Vanity. Shall a worldling do more for Earth than you for Heaven? Shall the creature be so earnestly desired, and Christ neglected?

Fourthly, What do all your desires in this World benefit you, if you go christless? Suppose you had the desire of your Hearts in these Things, how long shall you have comfort in them if you miss Christ?

Fifthly, Doth Christ desire you, who have nothing lovely or desirable in you? And have you no desires after Christ, the most lovely, and desirable one in both Worlds? His desires are towards you, *Prov.* 8. 31. O make him the desire and choice of your Souls.

Sixthly, How absolutely necessary is Jesus Christ to your Souls? Bread and Water, Breath and Life is not so necessary as Christ is, *One thing is necessary*, Luke 10. 42. And that one thing is Christ: If you miss your desires in other things, you may yet be happy; but if you miss Christ, you are undone for ever.

Seventhly, How suitable a good is Christ to your Souls? comprizing whatsoever they want, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. Set your Hearts where you will, none will be found to match and suit them as Christ doth.

Eighthly, How great is the Benefit that will redound to you by Jesus Christ? In him you shall have a rich Inheritance setled upon you: All things shall be yours when you are Christs, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22. And is not such a Christ worth desiring?

Ninthly, All your well-grounded hopes of Glory are built upon your Union with Christ, 1 *Cor.* 1. 21. If you miss Christ, you must die without hope: will not this draw your Desires to him?

Tenthly

Tenthly, Suppoſe you were at the Judgment Seat of God, where you muſt ſhortly ſtand; and ſaw the Terrors of the Lord in that day; the *Sheep* divided from the *Goats*, the Sentences of abſolution and condemnation paſt by the great and awful Judge, upon the Righteous and Wicked; would not Chriſt be then deſirable in your Eyes? As ever you expect to ſtand with comfort at that Bar, let Chriſt be the deſire and choice of your Souls now.

5th Uſe for Direction. Do theſe, or any other Conſiderations put thee upon this enquiry, how ſhall I get my deſires kindled and inflamed towards Chriſt? Alas, my Heart is cold and dead, not a ſerious deſire ſtirring in it after Chriſt: To ſuch I ſhall offer the following Directions.

Direction 1. Redeem ſome time every Day for Meditation: Get out of the noiſe and clamour of the World, *Pſalm.* 4. 4. And ſeriouſly bethink your ſelves how the preſent State of your Soul ſtands, and how it is like to go with you for ever: Here all ſound converſion begins, *Pſalm.* 119. 19.

Direction 2. Conſider ſeriouſly of that lamentable State in which you came into the World: children of Wrath by Nature, under the curſe and condemnation of the Law. So that either your State muſt be changed, or you inevitably damned, *John* 3. 3.

Direction 3. Conſider the way and courſe you have taken, ſince you came into the World; proceeding from Iniquity to Iniquity. What command of God have you not violated a thouſand Times over? What Sin is committed in the World, that you are not one way or other guilty of before God? How many ſecret Sins upon your Score, unknown to the moſt intimate Friend you have in the World? Either this Guilt muſt be ſeparated from your Souls, or your Souls from God to all Eternity.

Direction 4. Think upon the ſevere Wrath of God due to every Sin, *The Wages of Sin is Death*, Rom. 6. *ult.* And how intolerable the fulneſs of that Wrath muſt be when a few drops ſprinkled upon the Conſcience in the World is ſo inſupportable, that it hath made ſome to chooſe ſtrangling rather than Life: And yet this Wrath muſt abide for ever upon you, if you get not Intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt, *John* 3. 63.

Direction 5. Ponder well the happy ſtate and condition they are in, who have obtained Pardon and Peace by Jeſus Chriſt, *Pſalm* 31. 12. And ſeeing the Grace of God is free, and you are yet under the means thereof, why may not you be as capable thereof as others?

Direction 6. Seriouſly conſider the great uncertainty of your time, and precioufneſs of the Opportunities of Salvation, never to be recovered when they are once paſt, *John* 9. 4. Let this provoke you to lay hold upon thoſe golden Seaſons, whilſt they are yet with you; that you may not bewail your Folly and Madneſs when they are out of your reach.

Direction 7. Aſſociate your ſelves with ſerious Chriſtians, get into their Acquaintance, and beg their Aſſiſtance; beſeech them to pray for you: And ſee that you reſt not here, but be frequently upon your Knees begging of the Lord a new Heart, and a new State.

In concluſion of the whole, let me beſeech and beg all the People of God, as upon my Knees, to take heed and beware leſt by the careleſneſs, and ſcandals of their Lives, they quench the weak deſires beginning to kindle in the Hearts of others. You know what the Law of God awards for ſtriking a Woman with child, ſo that her fruit go from her. *Exod.* 21, 22, 23. Oh ſhed not Soul-blood by ſtifling the hopeful deſires of any after Chriſt.

Bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt the deſire of all Nations.

SERMON XIV.

I. COR. II. viii.

Which none of the Princes of this World have known, for had they known him, they would not have Crucified the Lord of Glory.

ver. 14. Text. containing the fifth More to apply Chriſt, drawn from another excellent Title of Chriſt.

IN this Chapter the *Apoſtle* diſcourſes to the *Corinthians* the Excellency of his Miniſtry, both to obviate the contempt which ſome caſt upon it for want of human Ornaments; and to give the greater Authority unto it among all: And whereas the ſpiritual Simplicity of his Miniſtry did it under the contempt of ſome, he removes that ſeveral Ways, by ſhowing them

Firſt, That it was not ſuitable to the deſign, and end of his Miniſtry, his aim being to know nothing among them, ſave Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified, verſe 1, 2.

Secondly, Neither was it for the Advantage of their Souls: It might indeed tickle their *Fancies*, but could be no ſolid Foundation to their faith and comfort, verſe 4, 5.

Thirdly, Though his Diſcourſes ſeemed jejune, and dull to carnal hearers, yet it had a depth, and an excellency in it, which ſpiritual and judicious Chriſtians ſaw and acknowledged, verſe 6, 7.

Fourthly, Therefore this excellent Wiſdom which he preached, far tranſcended all the natural Wiſdom of this World: Yea, the moſt raiſed and improved Underſtandings of thoſe that were moſt renowned, and admired in that Age for Wiſdom, ver. 8. *Which none of the Princes of this World knew.*

In which Words we have,

1. A Negative Propoſition.
2. The Proof of the Propoſition.

Firſt, A Negative Propoſition, none of the Princes of this World knew that ſpiritual Wiſdom which he taught. By *Princes of this World*, or rather *Principes ſeculi*, the Princes of that Age, he means, as *Camero* well notes, the learned *Rabbies*, *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, renowned for Wiſdom and Learning among them, and honoured upon that account, as ſo many *Princes*: But he adds a diminutive Term, which darkens all their Glory. They are but *the Princes of this World*, utterly unacquainted with the Wiſdom of the other World. To which he adds,

Secondly, A clear and full Proof, *for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory.* In which Words we find one of Chriſt's glori-

ous and royal Titles, *the Lord of Glory*: Upon which Title my preſent Diſcourſe muſt fall. The Words being fitly rendred and nothing of ambiguity in them, they give us this Obſervation.

Doct. *That Chriſt crucified is the Lord of Glory.*

Great and excellent is the Glory of Jeſus Chriſt; the Scriptures every where proclaim his Glory. Yea, we may obſerve a notable *Climax*, or gradation in thoſe Scriptures that ſpeak of his Glory. The Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaking of him calls him *Glorious*, Iſa. 4. 2. *In that Day ſhall the Branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious.* *John* ſpeaking of his Glory riſes a ſtep higher, and aſcribeth to him *a Glory as of the only begotten Son of the Father*, John 1. 14. (*i. e.*) a Glory meet for, and becoming the Son of God: Proper to him, and incommunicable to any other. The Apoſtle *James* riſes yet higher, and doth not only call him Glorious, or Glorious as the only begotten of the Father: But *the Glory*, *Jam.* 2. 1. Glory in the abſtract; *my Brethren* (ſaith he) *have not the Faith of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Glory, with reſpect of Perſons*: For the Word, Lord, which is in our Tranſlation, is a ſupplement: Chriſt is Glory it ſelf; yea, the *Glory* emphatically ſo ſtiled; the Glory of Heaven, the *Glory* of *Sion*; the *Glory* of our Souls for ever. The Author to the *Hebrews* goes yet higher, and calls not him ſimply the *Glory*, but *the brightneſs of his Fathers Glory*, *Heb.* 1. 3. as who ſhould ſay, the radiancy, ſparkling, or beaming forth of his Father's *Glory*, the very ſplendour or refulgency of *Divine Glory*. Oh what a glorious Lord is our Lord Jeſus Chriſt! the bright ſparkling *Diamond* of Heaven; who ſhines in *Glory* there, above the *Glory* of Angels and Saints, as the *Glory* of the Sun excels the leſſer twinkling Stars. When he appeared to *Paul*, *Acts* 26. 13. *I ſaw*, ſaid he, *a light from Heaven, above the brightneſs of the Sun, ſhining round about me*: Needs muſt the *Glory* of Chriſt be unſpeakable, who reflects *Glory* upon all that be with him, *John* 17. 24. and ſtamps *Glory* upon all that belongs to him. His works on Earth were *glorious works*, *Luke* 13. 17. The purchaſed liberty of his People, a glorious liberty, *Rom.* 8. 21. The Church his myſtical Body, a glorious Church, *Eph.* 5. 27. The Goſpel which reveals him, is a glorious Goſpel, 1 *Tim.* 1. 11.

'Απαύγασμα τῆς δόξης.

But more particularly, let us conſider the Glory of Chriſt, as it is diſtinguiſhed into his, either,

1. *Eſſential*, or
2. Mediatorial Glory.

Firſt, The *Eſſential Glory* of Chriſt, which he hath as God from everlaſting; which is unſpeakable and unconceivable *Glory*: For (ſaith the Apoſtle) *Phil.* 2. 6. *He being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God*, (*i. e.*) he had a Peerage, or equality with his Father in *Glory*, John. 10. 30. *I and my Father are one*: And again, Joh. 16. 15. *All things that the Father hath are mine*: The ſame Name, the ſame Nature, the ſame eſſential Properties, the ſame Will, and the ſame Glory.

Secondly, The *Mediatorial Glory* of Chriſt is exceeding great: This is proper to him, as Head of the Church, which he hath purchaſed with his own Blood. Of this Glory the *Apoſtle* ſpeaks, *Phil.* 2, 9, 10. *Wherefore God alſo hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name, which is above every Name*, &c. ὑπερύψωσε exalted above all Exaltation. Now the mediatorial Glory of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt conſiſteth either,

1. In the fulneſs of Grace inherent in him.
2. Or in the Dignity and Authority put upon him.

Firſt, In the fulneſs of Grace inherent in him: The humanity of Chriſt is filled with Grace, as the Sun with Light, *Joh.* 1. 14. *Full of Grace and Truth*: Never any creature was ſo fill'd by the Spirit of Grace, as the Man Chriſt Jeſus is filled, for *God gives not the Spirit to him by meaſure*, *John* 3. 34. By reaſon of this fulneſs of Grace inherent in him, he is *fairer than the Children of Men*, Pſal. 45. 2. Excelling all the Saints in ſpiritual Luſtre, and gracious Excellencies.

Secondly, In the Dignity and Authority put upon him: He is crowned King in *Sion*: All Power in Heaven and Earth is given unto him, *Mat.* 28. 18. He is Lawgiver to the Church, *Jam.* 4. 12. All acts of Worſhip are to be performed in his Name; Prayer, Preaching, Cenſures, Sacraments, all to be adminiſtred in his Name. Church Officers are commiſſioned by him, *Eph.* 4. 11. The Judgment of the World in the great Day will be adminiſtred by him, *Matth.* 25. 31. *Then ſhall he ſit upon the Throne of his Glory.*

To conclude, Jeſus Chriſt ſhall have Glory and Honour aſcribed to him for evermore by Angels and Saints, upon the account of his mediatorial work. This ſome Divines call his Paſſive Glory; the Glory which he is to receive from his redeemed ones, *Rev.* 5. 8, 9, 10. *And when he had taken the book, the four Beaſts, and the four and twenty Elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them Harps, and golden Vials full of Odours, which are the Prayers of the Saints; and they ſung a new Song, ſaying, Thou art worthy to take the Book, and to open the Seals thereof: For thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed us to God by thy Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation*, &c. And thus you ſee, that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is upon all accounts the *Lord of Glory*. The Uſes follow.

Inference 1.

How wonderful was the Love of Chriſt the Lord of Glory, to be ſo abaſed and humbled as he was for us vile and ſinful Duſt? 'Tis aſtoniſhing to conceive that ever Jeſus Chriſt ſhould ſtrip himſelf out of his Robes of Glory, to cloath himſelf with the Threadbare Tatters of our Fleſh. Oh what a ſtoop did he make in his Incarnation for us! If the moſt magnificent *Monarch* upon Earth, had been degraded into a Toad: If the *Sun* in the Heavens had been turned into a wandring Atom: If the moſt glorious *Angel* in Heaven, had been transformed into a ſilly Fly; it had been nothing to the abaſement of the Lord of Glory. This Act is every where celebrated in Scripture, as the great Myſtery, the aſtoniſhing Wonder of the whole World, 2 *Tim.* 3. 16. *Phil.* 2. 8. *Rom.* 8. 3. The Lord of Glory looked not like himſelf, when he came in the Habit of a Man, *Iſa.* 53. 3. *We hid as it were our Faces from him*: He rather like a Worm, than a Man, *Pſal.* 22. 6. *reproach of Men, and deſpiſed of the People.* The Birds of the Air, and Beaſts of the Earth were here provided of better Accommodations than the Lord of Glory, *Matth.* 8. 20. Oh ſtupendious Abaſement! O Love unſpeakable! *Though he was Rich, yet for our ſakes he became Poor, that we through his Poverty might be Rich*, 2 Cor. 8. 9. He put off the Crown of Glory, to put on the Crown of *Thorns*: *Quanto pro me vilior, tanto mihi charior*, ſaid *Bernard*, the lower he tumbled himſelf for me, the dearer he ſhall be to me.

Inference 2.

How tranſcendently glorious is the Advancement of Believers by their Union with the Lord of Glory! This alſo is an admirable and aſtoniſhing Myſtery.

the higheſt Dignity of which our *Nature* is capable, to be *Hypoſtatically* united, and the greateſt Glory of which our *Perſons* are capable to be *Myſtically* united to this Lord of Glory; to be Bone of his Bone, and Fleſh of his Fleſh. O what is this! Chriſtian doſt thou know and believe all this, and thy Heart not burn within thee in Love to Chriſt? O then what a Heart haſt thou? What art thou by Nature, but ſinful duſt, a loathſome Sinner, viler than the vileſt Toad, caſt out to the loathing of thy Perſon in the Day of thy Nativity! O that ever the Lord of Glory ſhould unite himſelf to ſuch a Lump of Vileneſs! Take ſuch a Wretch into his very Boſom! Be aſtoniſhed O Heavens and Earth at this; this is the great Myſtery which the Angels ſtoopt down to look into. Such an Honour as this could never enter into the Heart of Man: It would have ſeemed a rude Blaſphemy in us once to have thought, or ſpoken of ſuch a thing, had not Chriſt made the firſt Motion thereof. Yet how long didſt thou make this Lord of Glory wait upon thy undetermined will, before he gained thy conſent? Might he not juſtly have ſpurned thee into Hell upon thy firſt refuſal, and never have made thee ſuch another offer? Wilt thou not ſay, Lord, what am I, and what is my Father's Houſe, that ſo great a King ſhould ſtoop ſo far beneath himſelf to ſuch a Worm as I am! That Strength ſhould unite it ſelf to Weakneſs, infinite Glory, to ſuch Baſeneſs! O Grace, Grace, for ever to be admired!

Inference 3.

Is Jeſus Chriſt the Lord of Glory? *Then let no Man count himſelf diſhonoured by ſuffering the vileſt Indignities for his Sake*: The Lord of Glory puts Glory upon the very Sufferings you undergo in this World for him. *Moſes eſteemed the Reproaches of Chriſt greater Riches than the Treaſures of Egypt*, Heb. 1. 26. He caſt a Kingdom at his Heels, to be crowned with Reproaches for the Name of Chriſt. The *Diadem* of *Egypt* was not half ſo glorious, as ſelf-denial for Chriſt. This Lord of Glory freely degraded himſelf for thee, wilt thou ſtand huckling with him upon Terms? 'Tis certainly your Honour to be diſhonoured for Chriſt, *Acts* 5. 41. To you it is given in behalf of Chriſt, not only to believe, but alſo to ſuffer for his ſake, *Phil.* 1. 29. The Gift of ſuffering is there matched with the Gift of Faith: 'Tis given as an *honorarium*, a badge of Honour to ſuffer for the Lord of Glory: As all have not the Honour to wear the crown of Glory in Heaven; ſo few have the Honour to wear the chain of Chriſt upon Earth. *Thuanus* report of *Lodovicus Marſacus*, a Knight of *France*, that being led to ſuffer with other Martyrs who were bound, and he unbound, becauſe a Perſon of Honour; he cryed out, Why don't you honour me with a Chain too, and create me a Knight of that Noble Order? My Brethren, count it all Joy when ye fall into divers Temptations, *Jam.* 1. 2. (*i. e.*) Tryals by ſufferings. *David* thought it an Honour to be vile for God, and that's a true Obſervation, that Diſgrace it ſelf is glorious, when endured for the Lord of Glory.

Cur me non quoque torque donas, & inſignis hujus ordinis militem creas? Thuanus.

Inference 4.

Is Chriſt the Lord of Glory? *How glorious then ſhall the Saints one Day be, when they ſhall be made like this glorious Lord, and partake of his Glory in Heaven*, John 17. 22. *the Glory which thou gaveſt me, I have given them*: Yea, the vile Bodies of Believers, ſhall be made like to the glorious Body of Chriſt, *Phil.* 3. 21. What Glory then will be communicated to their Souls? True, his eſſential Glory is incommunicable; but there is a Glory, which Chriſt will communicate to his People, *When he comes to judge the World, he will come to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe*, 2 Theſ. 1. 10. When he ſeemeth to account his ſocial Glory, which ſhall reſult from his Saints, a great part of his own Glory: As we have now Fellowſhip with him in his Sufferings, ſo we ſhall have a Fellowſhip or Communion with him in his Glory: When he ſhall appear, then ſhall we alſo appear with him in Glory: Then the pooreſt Believer ſhall be more glorious than *Solomon* in all his *Royalty*. It was a pious ſaying of *Luther*, that he had rather be *Chriſtianus Ruſticus, quam Ethnicus Alexander*, a Chriſtian *Clown*, than a Pagan *Emperour*; the Righteous is more excellent than his Neighbour, though he live next door to a graceleſs Nobleman: But it doth not yet appear what they ſhall be. The Day will come, it will certainly come, for the Lord hath ſpoken it, when they ſhall ſhine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father.

Inference 5.

How hath the Devil blindfolded, and deluded them, that are ſcared off from Chriſt by the fears of being diſhonoured by him? Many Perſons have half a mind to Religion, but when they conſider the generality of its Profeſſors to be Perſons of the loweſt and meaneſt rank in the World, and that Reproaches and Sufferings attend that way, they ſhrink back as Men aſhamed, and as *Salvian* ſaith, *Mali eſſe coguntur, ne viles habeantur*, they chuſe rather to remain Wicked, than to become Vile; But to them that believe, Chriſt is an Honour; As the Word which we tranſlate precious might be rendred, 1 *Pet.* 2. 7. till God opens Mens Eyes thus, they will put evil for good, and good for evil. But O dear bought Honours, for which Men ſtake their Souls, and everlaſting Happineſs! *Paul* was not of your Mind, yet for Birth he was an *Hebrew* of the *Hebrews*; for Dignity and Eſteem, a *Phariſee*; for Moral Accompliſhments, touching the Law blameleſs: Yet all this he trampled under his Feet, counting it all but droſs and dung in Compariſon of Jeſus Chriſt. *Moſes* had more Honour to lay down for Chriſt than you, yet it was no Temptation to him to conceal or deny the Faith of Chriſt. Noble *Galeacius* would not be with-held from Chriſt by the Splendour and Glory of *Italy*. But Oh how doth the Glory of this World dazle and blind the Eyes of many! *How can ye believe* (ſaith Chriſt) *who receive Honour one of another*, John 5. 44. Saints and Sinners upon this account are wonders one to the other. 'Tis the wonder of the World to ſee Chriſtians glorying in Reproaches, they wonder that the Saints run not with them into the ſame exceſs of Riot. And it is a wonder to Believers how ſuch poor Toys and empty Titles (rather than Titles of Honour) ſhould keep the World as it doth from Jeſus Chriſt, and their everlaſting Happineſs in him.

Inference 6.

If Chriſt be the Lord of Glory, *how careful ſhould all be who profeſs him, that they do not diſhonour Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe Name is called upon by them?* Chriſt is a Glory to you, be not you a ſhame and diſhonour to him. How careful had Chriſtians need be to draw every Line and Action of their Lives exactly. The more glorious Chriſt is, the more circumſpect and watchful ye had need to be. How lovely would Jeſus Chriſt appear to the World, if the Lives of Chriſtians did adorn the Doctrine of God their Saviour in all things! Remember you repreſent the

the Lord of Glory to the World: 'Tis not your honour only, but the Honour of Christ which is engaged and concerned in your Actions. O let not the careleſneſs or ſcandals of your Life make Jeſus Chriſt aſhamed to be called your LORD. When *Iſrael* had grievouſly revolted from GOD, he bids *Moſes* riſe, and get him down from thence, for (ſaith he) *thy People*, which thou haſt brought forth out of *Egypt*, have corrupted themſelves, *Deut.* 9. 12. as if the Lord were aſhamed to own them for his People any longer. It was a cutting Queſtion, *James* 2. 7. apt to ſtartle the Conſciences of thoſe looſe Profeſſors; *Do they not blaſpheme that worthy Name by which ye are called?* Your Duty is to adorn the Goſpel by your Converſations, *Titus* 2. 10. The words ſignifie to deck, trim, or adorn the Goſpel, to make it trim, neat and lovely to the Eyes of Beholders. When there is ſuch a beautiful harmony, and lovely proportion betwixt Chriſt's Doctrine and your Practices, as there is in the Works of Creation; wherein the comelineſs and elegancy of the World much conſiſts, (for to this the Apoſtles Word here alludes) then do we walk ſuitably to the Lord of Glory.

Inference 7.

What delight ſhould Chriſtians take in their daily Converſe with Jeſus Chriſt in the way of Duty? Your converſes in Prayer, hearing, and Meditation are with the Lord of Glory: The greateſt Peers in a Kingdom, account it more Honour to be in the preſence of a King bare-headed, or upon the Knee at *Court*, than to have thouſands ſtanding bare to them in the *Country*. When you are called to the Duties of Communion with Chriſt, you are call'd to the greateſt Honour, dignified with the nobleſt Privilege Creatures are capable of in this World: Had you but a ſenſe of that Honour God puts upon you by this means, you would not need ſo much tugging and ſtriving to bring a dead and backward Heart into the ſpecial preſence of Jeſus Chriſt. When he ſaith, ſeek ye my Face, your Hearts would echo to his Calls, thy Face, Lord, will we ſeek: But, alas, the Glory of Chriſt is much hid and veiled by ignorance and unbelief from the Eyes of his own People; 'tis but ſeldom the beſt of Saints, by the Eye of Faith, do ſee the King in his Glory.

Suppoſe (ſaith Mr. *Rutherford*) there were no Letter of a Command, yet there is a ſuitableneſs betwixt the Law engraven on the Heart, and the ſpiritual Matter commanded. There is an Heaven in the Boſom of Prayer, though there were not a granting of the ſuit. *Rutherford's* Treatiſe of the Covenant, *p.* 71.

Inference 8.

If Chriſt be ſo glorious, *how ſhould Believers long to be with him, and behold him in his Glory above?* Moſt Men need Patience to *Die*, a Believer ſhould need Patience to *Live*. *Paul* thought it well worth enduring the Pangs of Death, to get a ſight of Jeſus Chriſt in his Glory, *Phil.* 1. 23. *The Lord direct your Hearts into the Love of God, and patient waiting for of Chriſt*, (ſaith the Apoſtle) 2 *Theſ.* 3. 5. intimating that the Saints have great need of Patience to enable them to endure the ſtate of Diſtance and Separation from Chriſt, ſo long as they muſt endure it in this World. *The Spirit and the Bride ſay come, and let him that heareth ſay come, and let him that is athirſt come, even ſo come Lord Jeſus, and be thou as a ſwift Roe upon the Mountains of* Separation.

Bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt the Lord of Glory.

SERMON XV.

LUKE II. 25.

—*Waiting for the* [*Conſolation*] *of Iſrael.*

Serm. 15 Text. Opening the ſixth Motive to come to Chriſt, contained in the ſixth and laſt Title of Chriſt.

SEveral glorious Titles of Chriſt have been already ſpoken to, out of each of which, much Comfort flows to Believers; 'Tis comfortable to a wounded Soul to eye him as a *Phyſician*: Comfortable to a condemned and unworthy Soul, to look upon him under the Notion of the *Mercy*. The Lovelineſs, the Deſirableneſs, and the Glory of Chriſt are all ſo many Springs of Conſolation. But now I am to ſhew you from this Scripture, that the Saints have not only much Conſolation from Chriſt, but that Chriſt himſelf is the *very Conſolation* of Believers: He is pure Comfort wrapped up in Fleſh and Blood.

In this Context you have an account of *Simeon's* Prophecy concerning Chriſt, and in this Text, a Deſcription of the Perſon, and quality of *Simeon* himſelf, who is deſcribed two Ways.

1. By his *Practice*.
2. By his *Principle*.

His Practice was Heavenly and Holy, he was a *juſt and devout Man*: The Principle from which his Righteouſneſs and Holineſs did flow, was his Faith in Chriſt; *he waited for the Conſolation of Iſrael*. In which Words by way of *Periphraſis* we have,

1. A Deſcription of Chriſt, the Conſolation of *Iſrael*.
2. The Deſcription of a Believer, one that waiteth for Chriſt.

Firſt, That *the Conſolation of Iſrael* is a Phraſe deſcriptive of Jeſus Chriſt is beyond all doubt, if you conſult, *ver.* 26. where he, (*i. e.*) *Simeon* is ſatisfied by receiving Chriſt into his Arms, *the Conſolation* for which he had ſo long waited.

Secondly, And that waiting for Chriſt is a Phraſe deſcribing the Believers of thoſe times, that preceded the Incarnation of Chriſt, is paſt doubt; they all waited for that Bleſſed Day: But it was *Simeon's* Lot to fall juſt upon that happy nick of time, wherein the Prophecies and Promiſes of his Incarnation were fulfilled. *Simeon* and others that waited with him, were ſenſible that the time of the Promiſe was come, which could not but raiſe (as indeed it did) a general Expectation of him, *John* 9. 19. But *Simeon's* Faith was confirmed by a particular Revelation,

Phraſis eſt Judeis tum temporis familiaris & notiſſima, qua Meſſiæ adventum ſignificabatur. Lodov. Capell.

lation, *ver.* 26. That he ſhould ſee Chriſt before he ſaw Death, which could not but greatly encourage and raiſe his Expectation to look out for him, whoſe coming would be the greateſt conſolation to the whole *Iſrael* of God. *The Conſolation,* παράκλησις. The Spirit is frequently called in Scripture, παράκλητος, *the Comforter* : But Chriſt in this Place is called παράκλησις, *Comfort,* or *Conſolation it ſelf*; the Reaſon of both is given in, *John* 16. 14. *He ſhall take of mine and ſhew it unto you:* Where Chriſt is ſaid to be the matter, and the Spirit, the applier of true Comfort to the People of God. Now this Conſolation is here expreſſed both with a ſingular *Emphaſis* [*the Conſolation*] intimating that there is nothing of conſolation in any thing beſide him: All other comforts compared with this, are not worth a naming. And as it is emphatically expreſſed, ſo it is alſo limited and bounded within the compaſs of God's *Iſrael* (*i. e.*) true Believers ſtiled the *Iſrael of God,* whether *Jews* or *Gentiles, Gal.* 6. 16. From whence the Point of Doctrine is,

Doct. *That Jeſus Chriſt is the only Conſolation of Believers, and of none beſides them.*

So ſpeaks the Apoſtle, *Phil.* 3. 3. *For we are the Circumciſion, which Worſhip God in the Spirit, and rejoyce in Chriſt Jeſus, and have no Confidence in the Fleſh.* Thoſe that *Worſhip God in the Spirit* are ſincere Believers; to ſuch ſincere Believers Chriſt is Conſolation, *our Rejoycing is in Chriſt Jeſus* : And they have no Conſolation in any thing beſide him, nothing in the World can give them comfort without Chriſt, *We have no Confidence in the Fleſh.* The Goſpel is glad Tydings of great Joy, but that which makes it to be ſo, is Jeſus Chriſt, whom it imparts and reveals to us, *Luke* 2. 10, 11. In the opening of this comfortable Point, four things muſt be ſpoken to, for the right ſtating the Method of our Diſcourſe, *viz.*

1. What is meant by Conſolation.
2. That Chriſt, and he only is Conſolation to Believers.
3. That Believers only have Conſolation in Chriſt.
4. How it comes to paſs, that any Believer ſhould be dejected; ſince Chriſt is Conſolation to all Believers.

The firſt thing to be opened, is the Nature of Conſolation, which is nothing elſe but *the chearineſs of a Man's Spirit, whereby he is upheld, and fortified againſt all Evils felt, or feared.* Conſolation is to the Soul, what Health is to the Body after waſting Sickneſs, or the reviving Spring to the Earth after a long and hard Winter. And there are three ſorts of Conſolation, or Comfort, ſuitable to the Diſpoſition and Temper of the Mind, *viz.*

Natural,
Sinful, and
Spiritual.

Natural Comfort is the Refreſhment of our Natural Spirits by the good creatures of God, *Acts* 14. 17. *Filling their Hearts with Food and Gladneſs. Sinful Comfort* is the Satisfaction and Pleaſure Men take in the fulfilling of their Luſts, by the abuſe of the creatures of God, *James* 5. 5. *Ye have lived in Pleaſure upon Earth,* (*i. e.*) your Life hath been a Life of Senſuality and Sin.

Spiritual Comfort is the Refreſhment, Peace, and Joy, gracious Souls have in Chriſt, by the Exerciſe of Faith, Hope, and other Graces, *Rom.* 5. 2. And this only deſerves the Name of true ſolid Conſolation: To which four things are required.

Firſt, That the Matter thereof be ſome *Spiritual,* eminent, and durable Good: Elſe our Conſolation in it, will be but as the crackling of Thorns under a Pot; a ſudden blaze, quickly extinct with the failing Matter: Chriſt only gives the Matter of ſolid durable Conſolation: The Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, the Pardon of Sin, the Favour of God, the Hopes of Glory, are the ſubſtantial Materials of a Believers Conſolation, *Rom.* 5. 2. *Matt.* 9. 2. *Pſal.* 4. 6, 7. *Pet.* 1. 8. Things are as their Foundations be.

Secondly, Intereſt and Propriety in theſe comfortable things, is requiſite to our Conſolation by them, *Luke* 1. 47. *My Spirit rejoyceth in God my Saviour.* 'Tis no Conſolation to him that is hungry, to ſee a Feaſt; to him that is Poor, to ſee a Treaſure; if the one may not taſte, or the other partake thereof.

Thirdly, Knowledge, and Evidence of Intereſt in ſome degree is requiſite to actual Conſolation, though without it a Man may be in the ſtate of Conſolation: For that which appears not, is (in point of actual Comfort) as if it were not.

Fourthly, In order hereunto the Work of the Spirit upon our Hearts is requiſite, both to give, and clear our Intereſt in Chriſt, and the Promiſes; And both theſe ways he is the Comforter, *The Fruit of the Spirit is Joy,* Gal. 5. 22. And thus briefly of the Nature of Conſolation.

Secondly, Next I will ſhew you that Chriſt, and he only is Matter of Conſolation to Believers: Which will demonſtratively appear by this Argument.

Arg. He that brings to their Souls all that is comfortable, and removes from their Souls all that is uncomfortable, muſt needs be the only Conſolation of Believers.

But Jeſus Chriſt brings to their Souls all that is comfortable, and removes from their Souls all that is uncomfortable.

Therefore Chriſt only is the Conſolation of Believers.

Firſt, Jeſus Chriſt brings whatſoever is comfortable to the Souls of Believers. Is Pardon comfortable to a Perſon condemned? Nothing can be Matter of greater Comfort in this World. Why, this Chriſt brings to all Believers, *Jer.* 23. 6. *And this is the Name whereby he ſhall be called, The Lord our Righteouſneſs.* This cannot but give ſtrong Conſolation; Righteouſneſs is the Foundation of Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt, *Rom.* 14. 17. *The Work of Righteouſneſs ſhall be Peace, and the effect of Righteouſneſs, Quietneſs, and Aſſurance for ever.* Iſa. 32. 17. Come to a dejected Soul, labouring under the burden of guilt, and ſay, cheer up, I bring you good Tidings; there is ſuch an Eſtate befallen you, or ſuch a troubleſome Buſineſs comfortably ended for you; alas! this will not reach the Heart. If you can bring me (ſaith he) good News from Heaven, that my Sins are forgiven, and God reconciled; how ſoon ſhould I be comforted! And therefore (as one well obſerves) this was the uſual Receipt with which Chriſt cured the Souls of Men and Women, when he was here on Earth; Son or Daughter, *be of good cheer, thy Sins be forgiven thee*: And indeed it is as eaſie to ſeparate Light and Warmth from the Beams of the Sun, as Cheerineſs and Comfort from the Voice of Pardon.

Are the Hopes and Expectation of Heaven and Glory comfortable? Yes ſure, nothing is comfortable if this be not, *Rom.* 5. 2. *We rejoyce in hope of the Glory of God.* Now, Chriſt brings to the Souls of Men all the ſolid Grounds and Foundations upon which they build their Expectations of Glory, *Col.* 1. 27. *Which is Chriſt, in you, the Hope of Glory.*

Name

Name any thing elſe that is ſolid Matter of Comfort to the Souls of Men, and the grounds thereof will be found in Chriſt, and in none but Chriſt; as might eaſily be demonſtrated by the Enumeration of Multitudes of particular Inſtances, which I cannot inſiſt upon.

Secondly, Jeſus Chriſt removes from Believers whatever is uncomfortable; therein relieving them againſt all the Matters of their Affliction and Sorrow. As namely,

Firſt, Is Sin a burden, and matter of trouble to Believers? Chriſt, and none but Chriſt, removes that burden, *Rom.* 7. 24, 25, O *wretched Man that I am* (ſaith Sin-burdened *Paul*) *who ſhall deliver me from the Body of this Death? I thank God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* The Satisfaction of his Blood, *Eph.* 5. 2. The Sanctification of his Spirit, *John* 1. 5, 6. His perfect deliverance of his People from the very being of Sin at laſt, *Eph.* 5. 26, 27. This relieves at preſent, and removes at laſt the matter and ground of all their Troubles and Sorrows for Sin.

Secondly, Do the Temptations of Satan burden Believers? O yes, by Reaſon of Temptations, they go in trouble and heavineſs of Spirit. Temptation is an Enemy under the Walls, Temptation greatly endangers, and therefore cannot but greatly afflict the Souls of Believers; but Chriſt brings the only matter of relief againſt Temptations. The Interceſſion of Chriſt is a ſingular relief at preſent, Luke 22. 32. *But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.* And the Promiſes of Chriſt are a full relief for the future: *The God of Peace ſhall ſhortly tread Satan under your Feet*, Rom. 16. 20.

Thirdly, Is ſpiritual *Deſertion*, and the hiding of God's Face, matter of Affliction and caſting down to Believers? Yes, yes, it quails their Hearts, nothing can comfort them: *Thou hideſt thy Face, and I was troubled*, Pſal. 30. 7. Outward Afflictions do but break the *Skin*, this touches the *quick*; they like Rain fall only upon the Tiles, this ſoaks into the Houſe; but Chriſt brings to Believers ſubſtantial Matter of Conſolation againſt the troubles of Deſertion: He himſelf was deſerted of God for a time, that they might not be deſerted for ever: In him alſo the relieving Promiſes are made to Believers, that notwithſtanding God may deſert them for a time, yet the Union betwixt him and them ſhall never be diſſolved, *Heb.* 13. 5. *Jer.* 22. 40. Though he forſake them for a Moment, in reſpect of evidenced Favour, yet he will return again and comfort them, *Iſa.* 54. 7. Though Satan tug hard, yet he ſhall never be *able to pluck them out of his Fathers Hand*, John 10. 20. Oh what relief is this! What Conſolation is Chriſt to a deſerted Believer!

Fourthly, Are outward Afflictions Matter of Dejection and Trouble? Alas, who finds them not to be ſo? How do our Hearts fail, and our Spirits ſink under the many ſmarting Rods of God upon us! But our Relief and Conſolation under them all, is in Chriſt Jeſus: For the Rod that afflicts us is in the Hand of Chriſt that loveth us, *Rev.* 3. 19. *Whom I Love I Rebuke and Chaſten*: His Deſign in Affliction is our Profit, *Heb.* 12. 10. That Deſign of his for our Good ſhall certainly be accompliſhed, *Rom.* 8. 24. And after that no more Afflictions for ever, *Rev.* 21. 3, 4. *God ſhall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes.* So that upon the whole, two things are moſt evident.

Firſt, Nothing can comfort the Soul without Chriſt: He is the Soul that animates all Comforts, they would be dead things without him. Temporal Enjoyments, Riches, Honours, Health, Relations, yield not a drop of true comfort without Chriſt. Spiritual Enjoyments, Miniſter, Ordinances, Promiſes, are Fountains ſealed, and Springs ſhut up till Chriſt open upon them, a Man may go comfortleſs in the midſt of them all.

Secondly, No Troubles, Sorrows, or Afflictions can deject or ſink the Soul that Chriſt comforteth, 2 *Cor.* 6. 12. *As ſorrowful, yet always rejoycing.* A Believer may walk with a Heart brim full of comfort, amidſt all the troubles of this World. Chriſt makes the Darkneſs of trouble, to be Light round about his People. So that the concluſion ſtands firm, and never to be ſhaken; that Chriſt, and Chriſt only is the Conſolation of Believers: Which was the thing to be proved.

In the third place, I am to ſhew you, that Believers, and none but Believers can have Conſolation in Chriſt: Which will convincingly appear from the conſideration of thoſe things which we laid down before, as the requiſites to all true ſpiritual Conſolation. For,

Firſt, No Unbeliever hath the *materials* out of which ſpiritual comfort is made; which (as I there told you) muſt be ſome ſolid, ſpiritual and eternal Good, as Chriſt and the Covenant are. What do unregenerate Men rejoyce in, but trifles and meer Vanities, in a thing of nought? *Amos* 6. 13. See how their Mirth is deſcribed in, *Job* 21. 12. *They take their Timbrel and Harp, and rejoyce at the ſound of the Organ.* He doth not ſay, they take the *Bible*, turn to the Promiſes, and rejoyce in Chriſt and the Covenant; 'tis not the Melody of a good Conſcience, the Joy of the Holy Ghoſt: No, no, they have no acquaintance with ſuch Muſick as that: But the rejoicing of Believers is in thoſe things, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. and this is well-built Conſolation which reaches the Heart.

Secondly, I told you, that Propriety and Intereſt in Chriſt, and the Promiſes is required to all ſpiritual Conſolation: But no Unbeliever hath any Title or Intereſt in Chriſt, and the Promiſes, and ſo they can ſignifie nothing to him in Point of Comfort. 'Tis not another Man's Money, but my own, that muſt feed, cloath and comfort me; nor is it another Man's Chriſt, but my own Chriſt, that muſt juſtifie, ſave and comfort my Soul.

Thirdly, You were told that Evidence of a Man's Peace, and Reconciliation with God, is neceſſary to his actual Conſolation, which no Unbeliever can poſſibly have; he hath neither Grace within him, to make him a qualified Subject of any ſpecial Promiſe; nor any Witneſs, or Seal of the Spirit to confirm and clear his Propriety in Chriſt: For he never Seals, but where he firſt Sanctifies. So that it is beyond all Contradiction, that Believers, and none but Believers, are Partakers of the Conſolations that are in Chriſt Jeſus.

Fourthly, and *Laſtly*, There is one Inquiry remains to be ſatisfied, namely, ſeeing Jeſus Chriſt is Conſolation to Believers, how it comes to paſs that ſo many Believers in the World ſhould walk ſo dejectedly as they do without any ſpiritual Conſolation.

Firſt, This may not be wondred at, if we conſider that the Conſolations of Chriſt are of two ſorts. *Seminal* and in Preparation, or *actual* in preſent Poſſeſſion. Every *Believer* in the World hath the root and ſeed of Comfort, planted and ſown for him, *Pſal.* 97. 11. *Light is ſown for the righteous, and gladneſs for the upright in heart.* They have Chriſt and the Promiſes, which are the ſeeds of Conſolation, and will bring forth Joy at laſt, though

though at preſent they have no actual conſolation; the ſeed of all joy is ſown, and in due time they ſhall reap the full ripe fruit thereof.

Secondly, It muſt be remembred that *intereſt* and *evidence* are diſtinct Bleſſings, every *Believer* hath intereſt in Chriſt, but every *Believer* hath not the evidence thereof, *Iſai* 50. 10. *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his Servant, that walketh in darkneſs and hath no Light.* Every Child of God is not of ſufficient age to know his Father, or take comfort in that bleſſed inheritance whereunto he is begotten again, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3,4.

Thirdly, Every Believer doth not walk with like ſtrictneſs, and exact Holineſs, all do not exerciſe Faith in a like degree: among Chriſtians ſome are ſtrong in Grace, rich in Faith, ſtrict in Obedience, tender of Sin to an eminent degree, theſe uſually are owners of much conſolation: But others are weak in Grace, poor in Faith, comparatively careleſs of their Hearts and Ways; frequently grieving the good Spirit of God, and wounding their own conſciences (the Veſſel into which ſpiritual conſolation is poured) and theſe are uſually denied the joy and comfort which others abound withal.

Fourthly, The Conſolations of Chriſt are arbitrarily diſpenſed by the Spirit who is the Comforter, and giveth to every Man in ſuch proportions and ſeaſons as pleaſeth him; whence it comes to paſs, that he that is rich in comfort to day, may be poor to morrow, and contrarily the Heart that is brimful of ſorrow one Hour, is filled with Peace and Joy in believing the next. Things that are neceſſary to *the Being* of a Chriſtian are fixed and ſtable, but things belonging only to the *Well-being* of a Chriſtian come and go according to the good Pleaſure and Appointment of the Spirit. The uſe of all follows.

Infer. 1. *Hence it follows, that the ſtate of Unbelievers is the moſt ſad and uncomfortable ſtate in the World: Having no intereſt in Chriſt the Conſolation of* Iſrael. 'Tis true, they abound in creature-comforts, they live in Pleaſure upon Earth. Joy diſplays its colours in their Faces: But for all this, there is not the leaſt drop of true conſolation in any of their Hearts: They have ſome comfort in the creature, but none in Chriſt: That little they gather from the creature now, is all their Portion of Joy, *Luke* 6. 24. *Ye have received your Conſolation*: As this is all they have, ſo they ſhall enjoy it but a little while, *Job* 21. 13. 17. And while they do enjoy it, it's mix'd with many gripes of conſcience, *Job* 14. 13. *Even in Laughter the Heart is ſorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heavineſs*: Whatever conſolation any Unbeliever ſpeaks of beſides this, is but by rote; for when the Day of his Diſtreſs cometh, and the terrors of conſcience ſhall awake him out of his pleaſant Dreams, all his ſenſual Joys will vaniſh from him, and the doors of true conſolation will be ſhut againſt him. Let him go to Jeſus Chriſt, knock at that door, and ſay, *Lord Jeſus, thy Name is Conſolation, my Heart is ready to burſt within me, haſt thou no Conſolation for me?, O Lord, for one drop of ſpiritual Comfort now, but alas there is none, no not in Chriſt himſelf for any Unbeliever.* 'Tis Children's Bread; the Saints Privilege; comfort and grace are undivided: Let him return into himſelf, ſearch his own Conſcience for Comfort, and ſay, O Conſcience, thou art more than a thouſand Witneſſes, and thouſands have been comforted by thee: Where thou ſpeakeſt Comfort none can ſpeak Trouble: haſt thou no Conſolation for me in my deepeſt Diſtreſs? Alas, no, if God condemn thee, wherewithal ſhall I comfort thee? I can ſpeak neither more nor leſs than the Scriptures put into my Mouth, and I find not one Word in all the Book of God, warranting me to be thy Comforter: Believe it as an undoubted Truth (though the Senſe of the bewitched World over-rules it) that the ſtate of Unbelievers, even at the beſt, is a ſad and diſmal ſtate.

Infer. 2. *Let all Believers fetch all their comfort out of Chriſt, who is the Conſolation of his People: We rejoyce* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *in Chriſt Jeſus, and have no confidence in the Fleſh.* That's the true temper of a believing Soul: Take heed you live not partly upon Chriſt, and partly upon the creature for your comfort; much rather beware that you forſake not Chriſt, the Fountain of living Waters, and hew out Ciſterns for your ſelves which can hold no Water, *Jer.* 2, 13. If you make any creature the ſpring and fountain of your comfort, aſſuredly God will dry up that Spring: If your ſouls draw their comfort from any creature, you know they muſt outlive that creature, and what then will you do for comfort? Beſides, as your comforts are, ſo are you. The Food of every creature is ſuitable to its Nature. You ſee divers creatures feeding upon ſeveral parts of the ſame Herb; the Bee upon the Flower, the Bird upon the Seeds, the Sheep upon the Stalk, and the Swine upon the Root; according to their Nature, ſo is their Food: ſenſual Men feed upon ſenſual things; ſpiritual Men upon ſpiritual things; as your Food is, ſo are you. If carnal Comforts can content thy Heart, ſure thy Heart muſt then be a very carnal Heart: Yea, and let Chriſtians themſelves take heed, that they fetch not their Conſolations out of themſelves inſtead of Chriſt. Your Graces and Duties are excellent Means and Inſtruments, but not the Ground-work and Foundation of your comfort: They are uſeful Buckets to draw, but not the Well it ſelf in which the Springs of Conſolation riſe. If you put your Duties in the room of Chriſt, Chriſt will put your Comforts out of the reach of your Duties.

Infer. 3. *If Chriſt be the Conſolation of Believers, what a comfortable Life ſhould all Believers live in the World?* Certainly, if the fault be not your own, you might live the happieſt and comfortableſt Lives of all Men in the World. If you would not be a diſcomfort to Chriſt, he would be a comfort to you every Day, and in every condition, to the end of your Lives: Your Condition abounds with all the Helps and Advantages of Conſolation: You have the command of Chriſt to warrant your comforts, *Phil.* 4.4. You have the Spirit of Chriſt for a Spring of comfort, you have the Scriptures of Chriſt for the Rules of comfort; you have the Duties of Religion for the means of comfort: Why is it then that you go comfortleſs? If your Afflictions be many in the World, yet your Encouragements be more in Chriſt: Your Troubles in the World may be turned into Joy, but your Comforts in Chriſt can never be turned into Trouble. Why ſhould Troubles obſtruct your comfort, when the bleſſing of Chriſt upon your Troubles makes them ſubſervient to promote your Happineſs? *Rom.* 8. 28. Shake off deſpondency then, and live up to the Principles of Religion: Your dejected Life is uncomfortable to your ſelves, and of very ill uſe to others.

Infer. 4. *If Chriſt be the Conſolation of Believers, then let all that deſire Comfort in this World, or in that to come, embrace Jeſus Chriſt, and get real Union with him.* The ſame Hour you ſhall be in Chriſt, you ſhall alſo be at the Fountain-head of all Conſolations. Thy Soul ſhall be then a pardoned Soul, and a pardoned Soul hath all Reaſon in the World to be a joyful Soul: In that Day thy Conſcience ſhall be

ſprinkled with the Blood of Chriſt, and a ſprinkled Conſcience hath all the Reaſon in the World to be a Comforting Conſcience: In that Day you become the children of your Father in Heaven; and he that hath a Father in Heaven, hath all Reaſon to be the joyfulleſt Man upon Earth: In that Day you are delivered from the ſting and hurt of Death; and he that is delivered from the ſting of Death, hath the beſt reaſon to take in the comfort of Life. O come to Chriſt, come to Chriſt; till you come to Chriſt, no true Comfort can come to you.

SERMON XVI.

EPHES. I. 7.

In whom we have Redemption through his Blood, the Remiſſion of Sins, according to the Riches of his Grace.

Serm. 16. Text Enforcing the general Exhortation by a ſeventh Motive drawn from the firſt Benefit purchaſed by Chriſt.

SIX great *Motives* have been preſented already from the *Titles* of Chriſt, to draw the Hearts of Sinners to him: More are now to be offered from the *Benefits* redounding to Believers by Chriſt. Eſſaying by all means to win the Hearts of Men to Chriſt. To this end I ſhall in the firſt place open that glorious *Privilege of Goſpel Remiſſion*; freely and fully conferred upon all that come to Chriſt by Faith, *in whom we have Redemption by Faith*, &c.

In which Words we have, *Firſt*, a ſingular Benefit, or choice Mercy beſtowed, *viz. Redemption*; interpreted by way of *Appoſition, the Remiſſion of Sins*: This is a Privilege of the firſt rank, a Mercy by it ſelf: None ſweeter, none more deſirable among all the Benefits that come by Chriſt. And therefore,

Secondly, You have the Price of this Mercy, an account what it coſt, even the *Blood of Chriſt*; in whom we have Redemption [through his Blood] precious things are of great Price, the Blood of Chriſt is the *meritorious Cauſe* of Remiſſion.

Thirdly, You have here alſo the *impulſive Cauſe*, moving God to grant Pardons at this rate to Sinners, and that is ſaid to be the *Riches of his Grace*. Where by the way you ſee, that the *freeneſs* of the Grace of God, and the *fulneſs* of the ſatisfaction of Chriſt meet together without the leaſt Jar in the Remiſſion of Sin; contrary to the vain cavil of the *Socinian* Adverſaries, *In whom we have Redemption, even the Remiſſion of Sins, according to the Riches of his Grace.*

Fourthly, You have the *qualified Subjects* of this bleſſed Privilege, *viz.* Believers, in whoſe Name he here ſpeaks [*we*] *have Remiſſion*, (*i. e.*) we the Saints, and faithful in Chriſt Jeſus, *ver.* 1. We whom he hath choſen in Chriſt before the Foundation of the World, and predeſtinated unto the Adoption of Children, *ver.* 4. 5. We that are made accepted in the Beloved, *ver.* 6. 'Tis *we*, and *we* only who have Redemption through his Blood. Hence obſerve,

Doct. *That all Believers, and none but Believers, receive the Remiſſion of their Sins through the Riches of Grace, by the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt.*

In the Explication of this Point, three things muſt be ſpoken to,

1. That all that are in Chriſt are in a pardoned State.
2. That their Pardon is the Purchaſe of the Blood of Chriſt.
3. That the Riches of Grace are manifeſted in Remiſſion.

Firſt, That all that are in Chriſt are in a pardoned State: Where I will firſt ſhew you what Pardon or the Remiſſion of Sin is.

Secondly, That this is the Privilege of none but Believers.

Firſt, Now Remiſſion of Sin is the gracious Act of God, in and through Chriſt, diſcharging a believing Sinner from all the Guilt and Puniſhment of his Sin, both temporal and eternal.

'Tis the Act of God, he is the Author of Remiſſion, none can forgive Sins but God only, *Mark* 2.7. againſt him only (*i.e.*) principally and eſpecially the Offence is committed, *Pſal.* 51. 4. To his Judgment Guilt binds over the Soul, and who can remit the Debt, but the *Creditor*, *Matth.* 6. 12.

'Tis an Act of God *diſcharging* the Sinner: It is Gods looſing of one that ſtood bound, the canceling of his Bond or Obligation; called therefore Remiſſion, or Releaſing in the Text; the blotting out of our Iniquities, or the removing our Sins from us, as it's called in other Scriptures. See *Pſalm* 103. 11. *Micah* 7. 18, 19.

It is a gracious Act of God, the effect of pure Grace, done for his own Names ſake, *Iſa.* 43. 25. diſcharging us without any ſatisfaction at all by us; there is much Grace in that: And providing a ſurety for us every way able to pay our Debt, there is much Grace in that.

'Tis the gracious Act of God in and through Chriſt: The ſatisfaction of Chriſt is the procuring cauſe of our Remiſſion, and ſo God declares himſelf juſt in the Remiſſion of our Sin, *Rom.* 3. 25. *Gracious is the Lord and Righteous*, Pſal. 116. 5. Juſtice and Mercy meet here, and embrace each other: *In whom* (ſaith the Text) *we have Remiſſion*: No other price could purchaſe this Privilege, *Micah* 6. 6. 7. Not Rivers of Oyl, or humane Blood.

And this gracious Act of God diſcharges the pardoned Soul both from Guilt and Puniſhment: Guilt is nothing elſe but the Force and Power that is in Sin, to oblige the Sinner to undergo the Penalty due to Sin. Therefore Sinners are ſaid to be *Guilty of Hell-fire*, Matth. 5. 22. *Guilty of Eternal Judgment*, Mark 3. 29. To be under the Judgment of God, *Rom.* 3. 19. Remiſſion takes away both Guilt and Puniſhment together, it takes away all Guilt, *Acts* 13. 38, 39. And all Puniſhment. And ſo much of the firſt thing to be opened, namely what the Remiſſion of Sin is.

Secondly, Now that this Remiſſion of Sin is the Privilege of Believers is moſt apparent, for all the cauſes of Remiſſion are in conjunction to procure it for them. The Love of God which is the impulſive cauſe of Pardon; the Blood of Chriſt which is the meritorious cauſe of Pardon; and ſaving Faith which is the inſtrumental cauſe of Pardon, do all cooperate for their Remiſſion, as is plain in the Text.

Beſides, all the Promiſes of Pardon are made to them, *Jer.* 31. 34. *Micah* 7. 18. And, *laſtly*, all the figns

ſigns of Pardon are found in them, and in them on-
ly, that love God, *Luke* 747. mercifulneſs to others,
Matth. 6. 14. A bleſſed calmneſs and Peace in the
Conſcience, *Rom.* 5. 1. So that it is a truth beyond
controverſie, that all that are in Chriſt are in a par-
doned ſtate.

Secondly, Next I will ſhew you, that the Pardon
of Believers is the purchaſe of the Blood of Chriſt:
Nothing but the Blood of Chriſt is a price equiva-
lent to the Remiſſion of Sin, for this Blood was
innocent and untainted Blood, 1 *Pet.* 1. 19. The
Blood of a Lamb without ſpot. This Blood was
precious Blood, Blood of infinite worth and value,
the Blood of God, *Acts* 20. 28. It was prepared
Blood for this very purpoſe, *Heb.* 10. 5. Prepared by
God's eternal Appointment: Prepared by Chriſt's
miraculous and extraordinary Production, by the
Operation of the Spirit: Prepared by his voluntary
Sequeſtration, or Sanctification of himſelf to this
very uſe and purpoſe.

The Blood of Jeſus is not only innocent, pre-
cious, and prepared Blood, but it is alſo Blood
actually ſhed and ſacrificed to the Juſtice of God,
for the Expiation of guilt, and procurement of
our diſcharge, *Iſa.* 53. 5. To conclude, the ſevere
Juſtice of God could put in no Exception againſt
the Blood of Chriſt, 'tis unexceptionable Blood,
being (as before was noted) untainted by Sin, and
dignified above all Eſtimation by the Perſon whoſe
Blood it was. Juſtice required no leſs, and could
demand no more: And this is the price at which
our Pardons are purchaſed: And without which no
Sin could be pardoned, for *without ſhedding of Blood*
(ſuch Blood as this) *there is no Remiſſion*, Heb. 9. 22.

Thirdly, The laſt thing to be opened is, *That God
hath manifeſted the Riches of his Grace in the Remiſſion
of our Sins*: So ſpeaks the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 5. 20.
Where Sin abounded, Grace did much more abound: And,
1 *Tim.* 1. 14. *The Grace of our Lord* (*viz.* in the
Pardon of Sin) *was exceeding abundant*. Which will
appear (if we bring our Thoughts cloſe to the Mat-
ter) in ſeveral particulars:

Firſt, From the *Nature* of the Mercy, which is
the richeſt of all Mercies, except Chriſt, the Pur-
chaſer of it; No Mercy ſweeter than a Pardon to
a condemned Sinner. No Pardon like God's Par-
don, to a Man condemned at his Bar: All the
Goodneſs of God is made to paſs before our Eyes
in his pardoning Acts of Grace, *Exod.* 33. 19.

Secondly, The very riches of Grace muſt needs be
in the Pardon of Sin, if we conſider the *Method* in
which Pardons are diſpenſed, which is (as the
Text ſpeaks) *through his Blood*. Herein *God commends
his Love to us*, Rom. 5. 8. He commends it more,
than if he had pardoned Sin without ſuch a Sacri-
fice, for then he had only diſplayed his Mercy;
but not cauſed Mercy and Juſtice to meet and
triumph together.

Thirdly, The riches of his Grace ſhines forth in
the *Peculiarity* of the Mercy. Remiſſion is no com-
mon Favour, it was never extended to the fallen
Angels, nor to the far greater part of the Children
of Men, but only to a little Flock, a ſmall Rem-
nant of Mankind, *Luke* 12. 32. *John* 17. 9.

Fourthly, The riches of Grace are manifeſted in
Remiſſion, if we conſider the *Subjects* of this Pri-
vilege, who are not only equally plunged into Sin
and Miſery with others by Nature, *Eph.* 2. 3. But
many of the Lord's pardoned ones are actually guil-
ty of deeper-dyed Abomination, than many un-
pardoned ones in the civilized World are defiled
with. To me (ſaith *Paul*) the greateſt of Sinners,
one that was before a Blaſphemer, a Perſecutor, *&c.*
yet *to me is this Grace given, I obtained Mercy*, 1 Tim.
1. 15. *And ſuch were ſome of you, but ye are juſtified*,
1 Cor. 6. 11. Yea, God ſingles out the moſt baſe,
deſpiſed, poor, and contemptible ones among Men,
to be the Subjects of this glorious Privilege, 1 *Cor.*
1. 26. *You ſee your calling, Brethren*, &c.

Fifthly, More of the riches of Grace ſtill appears
if we view the *Latitude* and extent of this Act of
Grace. Oh how innumerable are our Tranſgreſ-
ſions! *Who can underſtand his Errors?* Pſalm 19. 12.
Yet the Blood of Chriſt cleanſeth us from all Sin, 1 John
1. 7. ſmall and great Sins, open and ſecret Sins,
old and new Sins; all pardoned without Exception.
Oh the riches of Grace! Oh the unſearchable
Goodneſs of God! *With the Lord there is Mercy, and
with him is plenteous Redemption; and he ſhall redeem
Iſrael from all his Iniquities*. Pſalm 130. 7, 8.

Sixthly, and *Laſtly*, The riches of Grace ſhine
forth in the *irrevocableneſs* and *perpetuity* of Remiſ-
ſion: As Grace pardons all Sins without *Exception*,
ſo the Pardons it beſtows are without *Revocation*.
The pardoned Soul ſhall *never come into Condemnati-
on*, John 5. 24. *As far as the Eaſt is from the Weſt, ſo
far hath he removed our Tranſgreſſions from us*, Pſal. 103.
10. The *Eaſt* and *Weſt* are the two oppoſite Points
of Heaven, which can never come together;
neither ſhall the pardoned Soul and its Sins ever
meet any more. *Thou haſt caſt* (ſaith *Hezekiah*) *all
my Sins behind thy back*. The penitent Believer ſets
his Sins before his *Face*, but the merciful God caſts
them all behind his *Back*, never to behold them
more, ſo as to charge them upon his pardoned Peo-
ple. And thus you ſee, what the pardon of Sin is,
what the price that purchaſeth Pardon is; and
what riches of Grace God manifeſteth in the Re-
miſſion of Believer's Sins: Which were the things
to be explained and opened in the doctrinal Part.
The Improvement of the whole you will have in
the following Uſes.

Inference 7.

If this be ſo, that all Believers, and none but
Believers receive the Remiſſion of their Sins through
the riches of Grace, by the Blood of Chriſt;
What a happy Condition then are Believers in! Thoſe
that never felt the load of Sin, may make light of
a Pardon, but ſo cannot you that have been in the
deeps of Trouble and Fear about it: Thoſe that
have been upon the rack of an accuſing and con-
demning Conſcience, as *David*, *Heman*, and many
of the Saints have been, can never ſufficiently va-
lue a Pardon. *Bleſſed is the Man whoſe Tranſgreſſion
is forgiven, whoſe Sin is covered; bleſſed is the Man un-
to whom the Lord imputeth not Iniquity*, Pſal. 32. 1, 2.
or, O the Bleſſedneſſes and Felicities of the par-
doned Man! As the *Hebrew* ſounds.
אשרי נשוי פשע
Remiſſion cannot but appear the won-
der of Mercies, if we conſider through
what Difficulties the Grace of God makes way for
it to our Souls; what ſtrong Bars the Love of God
breaks aſunder, to open our way to this Privilege:
For there can be no Pardon without a *Mediator*:
No other *Mediator* but the Son of God: The Son
of God cannot diſcharge our Debts, but by taking
them upon himſelf as our Surety, and making full
Payment, by bearing the Wrath of God for us;
and when all this is done, there can be no actual
Pardon, except the Spirit of Grace open our blind
Eyes, break our hard Hearts, and draw them to
Chriſt in the way of believing. And as the Mercy
of Remiſſion comes to us through wonderful Dif-
ficulties, ſo it is in it ſelf a compleat and perfect

Mercy. God would not be at such vast expence of the riches of his Grace, Christ would not lay out the invaluable Treasures of his precious Blood to procure a cheap and common Blessing for us. Rejoyce then ye pardoned Souls, God hath done great things for you, for which you have cause to be glad.

Inference 2.

Hence it follows, *That Interest in Christ by Faith brings the Conscience of a Believer into a state of Rest and Peace*, Rom. 5. 1. *being justified by Faith we have Peace with God.* I say not, that every Believer is presently brought into actual Peace and Tranquillity of Conscience, there may be many Fears, and much trouble even in a pardoned Soul: But this is an undoubted Truth, that Faith brings the pardoned Soul into that Condition and State where he may find perfect rest in his Conscience, with respect to the guilt and danger of Sin. The Blood of Christ sprinkles us from an evil (that is an accusing, condemning) Conscience. We are apt to fear, that this or that special Sin, which hath most terrified and affrighted our Consciences, is not forgiven: But if there be riches enough in the Grace of God, and Efficacy enough in the Blood of Christ; then the Sins of Believers, all their Sins, great as well as small, one as well as another, without Limitation or Exception, are pardoned.

For let us but consider, if God remits no Sin to any Man, but with respect to the Blood of Christ, then all Sins are pardoned as well as any one Sin; because the dignity and desert of that Blood is infinite, and as much deserves an universal pardon for all Sins, as the particular pardon of any, even the least Sin. Moreover, Remission is an Act of God's Fatherly Love in Christ, and if it be so, then certainly no Sin of any Believer can be retained or excluded from Pardon: For then the same Soul should be in the Favour of God, so far as it is pardoned, and out of the Favour of God, so far as it is unpardoned; and all this at one and the instant of Time, which is a thing both repugnant to it self, and to the whole stream of the Gospel.

To conclude, what is the design and end of Remission, but the saving of the pardoned Soul? But if any Sin be retained or excluded from Pardon, the retaining of that Sin must needs irritate and void the Pardon of all other Sins; and so the Acts of God must cross and contradict each other, and the design and end of God miscarry and be lost, which can never be. So then we conclude, Faith brings the believing Soul into a state of Rest and Peace.

Inference 3.

Hence it also follows, *That no Remission is to be expected by any Soul without Interest by Faith in Jesus Christ: No Christ no Pardon, no Faith no Christ.* Yet how apt are many poor deluded Souls to expect Pardon in that way where never any Soul yet did, or ever can meet it? Some look for Pardon from the absolute Mercy of God, without any regard to the Blood of Christ, or their Interest therein: We have sinned, but God is merciful. Some expect Remission of Sin by virtue of their own Duties, not Christ's Merits. I have sinned, but I will repent, restore, reform, and God will pardon: But little do such Men know how they therein diminish the evil of Sin, undervalue the Justice of God, slight the Blood of Christ, and put an undoing cheat upon their own Souls for ever: To expect Pardon from absolute Mercy, or our own Duties, is to knock at the wrong Door, which God hath shut up to all the World, *Rom.* 3. 20. whilst these two Principles abide firm, that the *Price* of Pardon is only in the *Blood* of Christ, and the *Benefit* of Pardon only by the *Application* of his Blood to us; this must remain a sure conclusion, that no Remission is to be expected by any Soul without Interest by Faith in Jesus Christ. Repentance, Restitution, and Reformation are excellent Duties in their kind, and in their proper Places; but they were never meant for Saviours or Satisfactions to God for Sin.

Inference 4.

If the riches of Grace be thus manifested in the Pardon of Sin, how vile an abuse is it of the Grace of God to take the more Liberty to Sin, because Grace abounds in the Pardon of it!

Shall we continue in Sin, that Grace may abound? God forbid, Rom. 6. 1, 2. Will no cheaper stuff than the Grace of God serve to make a Cloak for Sin? O vile abuse of the most excellent thing in the whole World! Did Christ shed his Blood to *expiate* our guilt, and dare we make that a Plea to *extenuate* our guilt? God forbid.

If it be intolerable ingratitude among Men to requite good with evil, sure that Sin must want a Name bad enough to express it, which puts the greatest dishonour upon God for the greatest Mercy that ever was given by God to the World: *There is Mercy with thee* (saith the Psalmist) *that thou mayst be feared*, not that thou may'st be the more abused, *Psal.* 130. 4. Nay, let me say the *Devils* never sinned at this rate: They cannot abuse the pardoning Grace of God, because such Grace was never offered unto them. And certainly if the abuse of the common Mercies of God, as Meat and Drink, by Gluttony and Drunkenness, be an hainous Sin, and highly provoking to God: Then the abuse of the riches of his Grace, and the precious Blood of his Son must be out of measure sinful; and the greatest affront we can put upon the God of Mercy.

Inference 5.

To conclude, *If this be so, as ever you expect Pardon and Mercy from God, come to Christ in the way of Faith; receive and embrace him now in the tenders of the Gospel.*

To drive home this great Exhortation, I beseech you, as in the Bowels of Christ Jesus, and by all the regard and value you have for your own Souls, let these following considerations sink down into your Hearts.

First, That all Christless Persons are actually under the condemnation of God, *Joh.* 3. 18. *He that believeth not is condemned already*: And it must needs be so, for every Soul is concluded under the curse of the Law, till Christ make him free, *Ga.* 3. 22. Till we are in Christ, we are dead by Law, Rom. 8. 36. and when we believe unto Justification, then we *pass from Death to Life.* A blind mistaken Conscience may possibly acquit you, but assure your self God condemns you.

Secondly, Consider what a terrible thing it is to lie under the Condemnation of God, the most terrible things in Nature cannot shadow forth the Misery of such a state. Put all Sicknesses, all Poverty, all Reproaches, the torments invented by all *Tyrants* into one Scale, and the Condemnation of God into the other; and they will be all found lighter than a Feather. Condemnation is the Sentence of God, the great and terrible God: 'Tis a Sentence never to be reversed, but by the Application of Christ in the season thereof. O Souls, you do not understand

ſtand it if you think it tolerable: One drop of it upon your Conſciences now, is enough to diſtract you in the midſt of all the Pleaſures and Comforts of this World: Yet all that are out of Chriſt are ſentenc'd to the fulneſs of God's Wrath for ever.

Thirdly, There is yet a poſſibility of eſcaping the Wrath to come; a Door of hope opened to the worſt of Sinners: A Day of Grace is afforded to the Children of Men, *Heb.* 3. 15. God declares himſelf unwilling that any ſhould periſh, 2 *Pet.* 3. 9. O what a Mercy is this! Who that is on this ſide Heaven or Hell fully underſtands the worth of it?

Fourthly, This door of Mercy will be ſhortly ſhut, *Luke* 12. 25. God hath many ways to ſhut it: He ſometimes ſhuts it by withdrawing the means of Grace, and removing the *Candleſticks*, a Judgment at this time to be greatly feared. Sometimes he ſhuts it by withdrawing his Spirit and Bleſſing from the means, whereby all Ordinances loſe their Efficacy, 1 *Cor.* 3. 7. But if he ſhut it not by removing the means of Grace from you, certain it is, it will be ſhortly ſhut by your removal from all the Means and Opportunities of Salvation by Death.

Fifthly, When once the door of Mercy is ſhut, you are gone beyond all the Poſſibilities of Pardon and Salvation for evermore: The Night is then come, in which no Man can work, *John* 9. 4. All the golden Seaſons you now enjoy will be irrecoverably gone out of your reach.

Sixthly, Pardons are now daily granted to others: Some (and they once as far from Mercy as you now are) are at this Day reading their Pardons with Tears of Joy dropping upon them. The World is full of Examples and Inſtances of the riches of pardoning Grace. And whatever is needful for you to do in the way of Repentance and Faith to obtain your Pardon; how eaſily ſhall it be done, if once the Day of God's Power come upon you? *Pſal.* 110. 3. Oh therefore lift up your Cries to Heaven, give the Lord no reſt, take no denial till he open the blind Eye, break the ſtony Heart, open and bow the ſtubborn Will, effectually draw thy Soul to Chriſt; and deliver thy Pardon ſigned in his Blood.

SERMON XVII.

EPHES. I. vi.

To the Praiſe of the Glory of his Grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.

Serm. 17. Text Opening the eighth Motive to come to Chriſt, drawn from the ſecond Benefit purchaſed by Chriſt for Believers.

IN our laſt Diſcourſe we opened to you the bleſſed Privilege of Remiſſion of Sin from the following Verſe; in this Verſe lies another glorious Privilege, *viz.* the *Acceptation* that Believers have with God through Jeſus Chriſt: Both which compriſe (as the two main Branches) our Juſtification before God. In the Words read (to omit many things that might be profitably obſerved from the Method and Dependance of the Apoſtle's Diſcourſe) three Particulars are obſervable, *viz.*

1. The Privilege it ſelf.
2. The meritorious Cauſe.
3. The ultimate end thereof.

Firſt, The Privilege it ſelf, which is exceeding rich and ſweet in its own Nature; *he hath made us accepted*; the word is ἐχαρίτωσεν ἡμᾶς, he hath ingratiated us, or brought us into the Grace, Favour, and Acceptance of God the Father; endeared us to him, ſo that we find Grace in his ſight.

Secondly, The meritorious Cauſe purchaſing and procuring this Benefit for us, noted in theſe Words, ἐν τῷ ἠγαπημένῳ, *in the beloved*; which Words are a *Periphraſis* of Chriſt, who is here *emphatically* called *the Beloved*, the great Favourite of Heaven, the delight of God's Soul, the prime Object of his Love: 'Tis he that obtaineth this Benefit for Believers: He is accepted for his own ſake, and we for his.

Thirdly, The ultimate end and aim of conferring this Benefit upon Believers: *To the Praiſe of the Glory of his Grace*: Or, to the end that his Grace might be made glorious in Praiſes: There are riches of Grace in this Act of God, and the work and buſineſs of Believers, both in this World and in that to come, is to ſearch and admire, acknowledge, and magnifie God for his abundant Grace herein. Hence the Note is,

Doct. *That Jeſus Chriſt hath purchaſed and procured ſpecial Favour and Acceptation with God for all that are in him.*

This Point lies plain in Scripture, *Epheſ.* 2. 13. *But now in Jeſus Chriſt, ye who ſometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the Blood of Chriſt,* ἐγγὺς ἐγενήθητε, made nigh, a term of endearedneſs: Nothing is taken into the very Boſom and Embraces, but what is very dear, precious and acceptable: And in, *Rev.* 1. 5. 6. Believers are ſaid to be made by Jeſus Chriſt, *Kings and Prieſts unto God, and his Father*, (*i. e.*) dignified Favourites, upon whom the ſpecial Marks of Honour are ſet by God.

In the opening of this Point, three things muſt be doctrinally diſcuſſed and opened, *viz.*

1. What the Acceptation of our Perſons with God is.
2. How it appears that Believers are ſo accepted with God.
3. How Chriſt the beloved procures this Benefit for Believers.

Firſt, What the Acceptation of our Perſons with God is? To open which, we muſt remember, that there is a twofold *Acceptance of Perſons* noted in Scripture.

1. One is the ſinful Act of a corrupt Man.
2. The other the gracious Act of a merciful God.

Firſt, Accepting of Perſons is noted in Scripture as the ſinful Act of a corrupt Man: A thing which God abhors: Being the Corruption and Abuſe of that Power and Authority which Men have in Judgment: Overlooking the Merit of the Cauſe through ſinful reſpect to the Quality of the Perſon, whoſe Cauſe it is. So that the Cauſe doth not commend the Perſon, but the Perſon the Cauſe: This God every where brands in Men, as a vile perverting of Judgment, and utterly diſclaims it himſelf, *Gal.* 2. 6. *God accepted no Mans*

Per-

Perſon, Rom. 2. 11. *There is no reſpect of Perſons with God.*

Secondly, There is alſo an accepting of Perſons, which is the gracious Act of a merciful God; whereby he receives both the Perſons and Duties of Believers into ſpecial Grace and Favour for Chriſt's ſake: And of this my Text ſpeaks. In which Act of Favour three things are ſuppoſed or included.

Firſt, It ſuppoſes an Eſtate of Alienation and Enmity: Thoſe only are accepted into Favour that were out of Favour; and indeed ſo ſtood the Caſe with us, *Epheſ.* 2, 12, 13. *Ye were Aliens and Strangers, but now in Chriſt Jeſus, ye who ſometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the Blood of Chriſt.* So the Apoſtle *Peter*, in 1 *Pet.* 2. 10. *Which in time paſt were not a People, but now are the People of God; which had not obtained Mercy, but now have obtained Mercy.* The Fall made a fearful breach betwixt God and Man. Sin like a thick Cloud intercepted all the Beams of divine Favour from us: The Satisfaction of Chriſt diſſolves that Cloud, *Iſa.* 44. 22. *I have blotted out as a thick Cloud thy Tranſgreſſions, and as a Cloud thy Sins*: This dark Cloud thus diſſolved, the Face of God ſhines forth again with chearful Beams of Favour and Love upon all, who by Faith are intereſted in Jeſus Chriſt.

Secondly, It includes the removing of guilt from the Perſons of Believers, by the Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs to them, *Rom.* 5. 1, 2. *Being juſtified by Faith, we have Peace with God through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*: *By whom alſo we have acceſs by Faith into this Grace wherein we ſtand*: For the Face of God cannot ſhine upon the Wicked: The Perſon muſt be firſt made *Righteous* before it can be made *accepted*.

Thirdly, It includes the offering up, or tendring of our Perſons and Duties to God by Jeſus Chriſt. Accepting implies preſenting or tendring: Believers indeed do preſent themſelves to God, *Rom.* 12. 1. But Chriſt's preſenting them makes their tender of themſelves acceptable to the Lord, *Col.* 1. 22. *In the Body of his Fleſh through Death to preſent you holy, and unblameable, and unreproveable in his ſight.* Chriſt leads every Believer as it were by the Hand, into the gracious preſence of God; after this manner beſpeaking acceptance for him. "Father, here is a poor Soul that was born in Sin, "hath lived in Rebellion againſt thee all his Days; "he hath broken all thy Laws, and deſerved all "thy Wrath; yet he is one of that Number which "thou gaveſt me before the World was. I have "made full Payment of my Blood for all his Sins. "I have opened his Eyes to ſee the Sinfulneſs, "and Miſery of his Condition: Broken his Heart "for his Rebellions againſt thee: Bowed his Will "in Obedience unto thy Will, united him to my "ſelf by Faith, as a living Member of my Body. "And now, Lord, ſince he is become mine by "Regeneration, let him be thine alſo by ſpecial "Acceptation: Let the ſame Love with which "thou loveſt me, embrace him alſo who is now "become mine." And ſo much for the firſt Particular, *viz.* What Acceptation with God is.

Secondly, In the next Place, I muſt ſhew you how it appears that Believers are thus ingratiated or brought into the ſpecial Favour of God by Jeſus Chriſt. And this will be evidenced divers Ways.

Firſt, By the *Titles* of Love and Endearedneſs, with which the Lord graceth and honoureth Believers, who are ſometimes called *the Houſhold of God*, Epheſ. 2. 19. the *Friends of God*, James 2. 23. the *dear Children of God*, Epheſ. 5. 1. the *peculiar People of God*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. *A Crown of Glory*, and a *Royal Diadem* in the Hand of their God, *Iſa.* 62. 3. The Object of his *Delight* and *Pleaſure*, Pſal. 147. 10, 11. Oh what terms of endearedneſs doth God uſe towards his People! Doth not all this ſpeak them to be in ſpecial Favour with him? Which of all theſe alone doth not ſignifie a Perſon highly in Favour with God?

Secondly, The gracious Manner in which he treats them upon the Throne of Grace, to which he allows them to come with Boldneſs, *Heb.* 4. 16. This alſo ſpeaks them in the ſpecial Favour of God: He allows them to come to him in Prayer, with the Liberty, Confidence and filial Boldneſs of Children to a Father, *Gal.* 4. 6. *Becauſe ye are Sons, God hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into your Hearts, crying, Abba, Father*: The familiar Voice of a dear Child: Yea, which is a wonderful Dignation and Condeſcenſion of the great God to poor Worms of the Earth, he ſaith, *Iſa.* 45. 11. *Thus ſaith the Lord, the Holy One of Iſrael, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my Sons, and concerning the work of my Hands command ye me*: An Expreſſion ſo full of Grace and ſpecial Favour to Believers, that it needs great Caution in reading and underſtanding ſuch an high and aſtoniſhing Expreſſion: The meaning is, that God hath as it were ſubjected the Works of his Hands to the Prayers of his Saints: And it is as if he had ſaid, If my Glory, and your Neceſſity ſhall require it, do but ask me in Prayer, and whatever my Almighty Power can do, I will do it for you: However, let no Favourite of Heaven forget the infinite diſtance betwixt himſelf and God. *Abraham* was a great Favourite of Heaven, and was called *the Friend of God*, yet ſee with what Humility of Spirit, and reverential awe he addreſſeth to God, *Gen.* 18. 27. *Behold now I have taken upon me to ſpeak unto the Lord, which am but Duſt and Aſhes.* So that you ſee the Titles of Favour above-mentioned are no empty Titles.

Thirdly, God's readineſs to grant, as well as their Liberty to ask, ſpeaks them the ſpecial Favourites of God. The Heart of God is ſo propenſe, and ready to grant the deſires of Believers, that it is but ask and have, *Matth.* 7. 7. The Door of Grace is opened at the knock of Prayer: That is a Favourite indeed, to whom the King gives a blank to inſert what requeſt he will: *If ye abide in me, and my Words abide in you; ye ſhall ask what ye will, and it ſhall be done unto you.* John 15. 7. Oh bleſſed Liberty of the Sons of God! *David* did but ſay, *Lord turn the Counſel of Ahitophel into fooliſhneſs*, and it was done as ſoon as asked, 2 *Sam.* 15. 31. *Joſhua* did but ſay, *Thou Sun ſtand ſtill in Gibeon*: and a miraculous ſtop was preſently put to its ſwift Motion in the Heavens: Nay, which is wonderful to conſider, a Prayer in the Womb, yet unborn, I mean conceived in the Heart and not yet uttered by the Lips of Believers, is often anticipated by the Propenſiveneſs of free Grace, *Iſa.* 65. 24. *And it ſhall come to paſs that before they call I will anſwer, and whilſt they are yet ſpeaking I will hear.* The Prayers of others are rejected as an Abomination, *Prov.* 15. 8. God caſts them back into their Faces, *Mal.* 2. 3. But free Grace ſigns the Petitions of the Saints more readily, than they are preſented: We have not that freedom to ask, that God hath to give: 'Tis true, the anſwer of a Believers Prayers may be a long time ſuſpended from his Senſe and Knowledge; but every Prayer according to the Will of God is preſently granted in Heaven, though

though for wiſe and holy ends they may be held in a doubtful ſuſpenſe about them upon Earth.

Fourthly, The free Diſcoveries of the Secrets of God's Heart to Believers ſpeaks them to be his ſpecial Favourites: Men open not the Counſels and Secrets of their own Hearts to Enemies or Strangers, but to their moſt inward and intimate Friends: *The Secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will ſhew them his Covenant*, Pſal. 25. 14. When God was about to deſtroy *Sodom*, he will do nothing in that Work of Judgment till he had acquainted *Abraham*, his Friend, with his Purpoſe therein, *Gen.* 18. 17. *And the Lord ſaid, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do? For I know him*, &c. So when a *King* was to be elected for *Iſrael*, and the Perſon whom God had choſen, was yet unknown to the People, God as it were whiſpered that Secret unto *Samuel* the Day before, 1 *Sam.* 9. 15. *Now the Lord had told Samuel in his Ear a Day before Saul came*: According to the manner of Princes with ſome ſpecial Favourite.

Fifthly, The Lord's receiving every ſmall thing that comes from them with Grace and Favour, when (mean while) he rejects the greateſt things offered by others, doth certainly beſpeak Believers the ſpecial Favourites of God. There was but one good Word in a whole Sentence from *Sarah*, and that very Word is noted and commended by God, 1 *Pet.* 3. 6. *She called him Lord.* There were but ſome ſmall beginnings or buddings of Grace in young *Abijah*, and the Lord took ſpecial notice of it, 1 *Kings* 14. 12. *Becauſe in him there is found ſome good thing toward the Lord God of Iſrael in the Houſe of Jeroboam.* Let this be an Encouragement to young ones, in whom there are found any breathing deſires after Chriſt: God will not reject them if any Sincerity be found in them; a ſecret Groan uttered to God in Sincerity ſhall not be deſpiſed, *Rom.* 8. 26. The very bent of a Believer's Will, when he hath no more to offer unto God, is an acceptable Preſent, 2 *Cor.* 8. 11. The very Intent and Purpoſe that lies ſecretly in the Heart of a Believer, not yet executed, is accepted with him, 1 *Kings* 8. 18. *Whereas it was in thine Heart to build an Houſe to my Name, thou didſt well that it was in thine Heart.* Thus ſmall things offered to God by Believers find acceptance with him, whilſt the greateſt Preſents, even ſolemn Aſſemblies, Sabbaths and Prayers from others are rejected: *They are a trouble unto me*, (ſaith God) *I am weary to bear them*, Iſa. 1. 14, 15. Incenſe from *Sheba*, the ſweet Cane from a far Country are not acceptable, nor Sacrifices ſweet unto God from other Hands, *Jer.* 6. 20. From all which it appears beyond Doubt, that the Perſons and Duties of Believers are accepted into the ſpecial Favour of God by Jeſus Chriſt: Which was the ſecond thing to be ſpoken to, and brings us to the third General, *viz.*

Thirdly, How Chriſt the Beloved procures this Benefit for Believers? And this he doth four Ways.

Firſt, By *the Satisfaction of his Blood*, Rom. 5. 10. *When we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son.* No Friendſhip without Reconciliation, no Reconciliation but by the Blood of Chriſt: Therefore the new and living way, by which Believers come unto God with Acceptance, is ſaid to be Conſecrated for us through the Veil of Chriſt's Fleſh; and hence Believers have Boldneſs to enter into the holieſt by the Blood of Jeſus, *Heb.* 10. 19, 20.

Secondly, The Favour of God is procured for Believers, *by their myſtical Union with Chriſt*, whereby they are made *Members of his Body, of his Fleſh, and of his Bones*, Eph. 5. 30. So that look as *Adam*'s Poſterity ſtood upon the ſame Terms that he their natural Head did; ſo Believers Chriſt's myſtical Members ſtand in the Favour of God, by the Favour which Chriſt their ſpiritual Head hath, *John* 17. 23. *I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the World may know that thou haſt ſent me, and haſt loved them, as thou haſt loved me.*

Thirdly, Believers are brought into Favour with God *by Chriſt's becoming their Altar*, upon which their Perſons and Duties are all offered up to God: The Altar ſanctifies the Gift, *Heb.* 13. 10. And this was typified by that legal Rite mentioned, *Luke* 1. 9, 10. Chriſt is that golden Altar from whence all the Prayers of the Saints aſcend to the Throne of God, perfumed with the Odours and Incenſe of his Merits, *Rev.* 8. 34. *And another Angel came and ſtood at the Altar, having a golden Cenſer, and there was given unto him much Incenſe that he ſhould offer it, with the Prayers of all Saints upon the golden Altar which was before the Throne; and the Smoke of the Incenſe which came with the Prayers of the Saints aſcended up before God, out of the Angels Hand.* And thus you ſee how the Perſons and Duties of Believers are brought into Favour and Acceptance with God by Jeſus Chriſt. The Uſes follow.

Infer. 1. *If all Believers be in Favour with God, how great a Mercy is it to have the Prayers of ſuch ingaged on our behalf?* Would we have our Buſineſs ſpeed in Heaven, let us get into Favour with God our ſelves, and engage the Prayers of his People, the Favourites of Heaven, for us: *Vis unita fortior*, one Believer can do much, many can do more: When *Daniel* deſigned to get the Knowledge of that Secret hinted in the obſcure Dream of the King, which none but the God of Heaven could make known, it's ſaid, *Dan.* 2. 17. *Then Daniel went to his Houſe, and made the thing known to Hanania, Miſhael, and Azaria, his Companions; that they would deſire Mercies of the God of Heaven concerning this Secret.* The Benefits of ſuch Aſſiſtance in Prayer by the help of other Favourites with God, is plainly intimated by Jeſus Chriſt to us, *Matth.* 18, 19. *If two of you ſhall agree on Earth as touching any thing that they ſhall ask, it ſhall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven.* God ſometimes ſtands upon a number of Voices, for the carrying of ſome publick Mercy, becauſe he delighteth in the harmony of many praying Souls; and alſo loves to oblige and gratifie many in the anſwer and return of the ſame Prayer. I know this uſage is grown too formal and complemental among Profeſſors: But certainly it is a great Advantage to be inward with them, who are ſo with God. St. *Bernard* preſcribing Rules for effectual Prayer, cloſes them up with this wiſh, *& cum talis fueris, memento mei*, when thy Heart is in this Frame, then remember me.

Infer. 2. *If Believers be ſuch Favourites in Heaven, in what a deſperate Condition is that Cauſe, and thoſe Perſons, againſt whom the generality of Believers are daily engaged in Prayers and Cries to Heaven?*

Certainly *Rome* ſhall feel the dint and force of the many Millions of Prayers that are gone up to Heaven from the Saints for many Generations: The Cries of the Blood of the Martyrs of Jeſus, joyned with the Cries of thouſands of Believers, will bring down Vengeance at laſt upon the Man of

of Sin. 'Tis ſaid, *Rev.* 8. 4, 5, 6. *That the Smoak of the Incenſe, which came with the Prayers of the Saints, aſcended up before God out of the Angels Hand*: And immediately it is added, ver. 5. *And the Angel took the Cenſer, and filled it with Fire of the Altar, and caſt it into the Earth, and there were Voices, and Thunderings, and Lightnings, and Earthquakes, and the ſeven Angels, who had the ſeven Trumpets, prepared themſelves to ſound.* The Prayer of a ſingle Saint is ſometimes followed with wonderful Effects, *Pſal.* 18. 6, 7. *In my diſtreſs I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God: He heard my Voice out of his Temple, and my cry came before him, even into his Ears: Then the Earth ſhook and trembled; the Foundations alſo of the Hills moved, and were ſhaken becauſe he was wroth*: What then can a thundring Legion of ſuch praying Souls do! It was ſaid of *Luther, iſte vir potuit cum Deo quicquid voluit*, that Man could have of God what he would; his Enemies felt the weight of his Prayers, and the Church of God reaped the Benefits thereof. The *Queen of Scots* profeſſed ſhe was more afraid of the Prayers of Mr. *Knox*, than of an Army of ten thouſand Men: Theſe were mighty Wreſtlers with God, howſoever contemned and vilified among their Enemies. There will a time come, when God will hear the Prayers of his People, who are continually crying in his Ears, *How long, Lord, how long.*

Jacobus Langius, the *Sorbone* Doctor, who wrote the Lives of *Luther*, *Knox*, and *Calvin*, ſpeaks as if the Devil had hired his Pen to abuſe thoſe precious Servants of Chriſt.

Infer. 3. *Let no Believer be dejected at the Contempts and Slightings of Men, ſo long as they ſtand in the Grace and Favour of God*: It is the Lot of the beſt of Men to have the worſt uſage in this World: *Thoſe of whom the World was not worthy*, are not thought worthy to live in the World, *Heb.* 11. 38. *Paul* and his Companions were Men of choice and excellent Spirits, yet ſaith he, 1 *Cor.* 4. 13. *Being defamed we intreat, we are made as the filth of the World, and are the off-ſcouring of all things unto this Day*: They are Words ſignifying the baſeſt, contemptibleſt and moſt abhorred things among Men. How is Heaven and Earth divided in their Judgments and Eſtimations of the Saints! Thoſe whom Men call filth and dirt, God calls a peculiar Treaſure, a Crown of Glory, a Royal Diadem. But trouble not thy ſelf Believer for the unjuſt Cenſures of the blind World, they ſpeak evil of the things they know not: *He that is ſpiritual judgeth all things, yet he himſelf is judged of no Man*, 1 Cor. 2. 14. You can diſcern the earthlineſs and baſeneſs of their Spirits, they want a faculty to diſcern the excellency and choiceneſs of your Spirits. He that carries a dark Lanthorn in the Night, can diſcern him that comes againſt him, and yet is not diſcerned by him: A *Courtier* regards not a ſlight in the Country, ſo long as he hath the Ear and Favour of his Prince.

Περίψημα πάντων (*i. e.*) the ſweepings of the Houſe: the filth wiped off any thing: *Eraſmus*, the dirt that ſticks to the Shoes: *Valla*, the dung of the Belly, as the *Syriack* tranſlates. The condemned Man that was tumbled from a ſteep Rock into the Sea, as a Sacrifice to *Neptune*, was called περίψημα, ſaith *Budeus*, *Sit pro nobis peripſema.*

Inference 4. *Never let Believers fear the want of any good thing neceſſary for them in this World*: The Favour of God is the Fountain of all Bleſſings, Proviſions, Protections, even of all that you need. He hath promiſed that he will withold no good thing from them that walk uprightly, *Pſal.* 84. 11. He that is bountiful to his Enemies will not withhold what is good from his Friends. The Favour of God will not only ſupply your needs, but protect your Perſons, Pſal. 5, 12. *Thou wilt bleſs the Righteous, with Favour wilt thou compaſs him as with a ſhield.*

Inference 5. *Hence alſo it follows, That the Sins of Believers are very piercing things to the Heart of God.* The unkindneſs of thoſe whom he hath received into his very Boſom, upon whom he hath ſet his ſpecial Favour and Delight, who are more obliged to him than all the People of the Earth beſide, O this wounds the very Heart of God. What a melting Expoſtulation was that which the Lord uſed with *David*, 2 Sam. 12, 7, 8. *I anointed thee King over all Iſrael, and I delivered thee out of the Hand of Saul, and I gave thee thy Maſters Houſe, and thy Maſters Wives into thy Boſom, and gave thee the Houſe of Iſrael and Juda, and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee ſuch and ſuch Things: Wherefore haſt thou deſpiſed the Commandment of the Lord?* But Reader, if thou be a reconciled Perſon, a Favourite with God, and haſt grieved him by any eminent Tranſgreſſion, how ſhould it melt thy Heart to hear the Lord thus expoſtulating with thee: I delivered thee out of the Hand of Satan: I gave thee into the Boſom of Chriſt: I have pardoned unto thee Millions of Sins: I have beſtowed upon thee the riches of Mercy; my Favour hath made thee great; and as if all this were too little, I have prepared Heaven for thee: For which of all theſe Favours doſt thou thus requite me?

Inference 6. *How precious ſhould Jeſus Chriſt be to Believers, by whoſe Blood they are ingratiated with God, and by whoſe Interceſſion they are and ſhall for ever be continued in his Favour?* When the Apoſtle mentions the Believers Tranſlation, from the ſad ſtate of Nature to the bleſſed privileged ſtate of Grace, ſee what Title he beſtows upon Jeſus Chriſt, the Purchaſer of that Privilege, calling him the *dear Son*, Col. 1. 13. Not only dear to God, but exceeding dear to Believers alſo. Chriſt is the Favourite in Heaven to him you owe your Preferment there: Take away Chriſt, and you have no ground to ſtand on a Minute in the Favour of God. O then let Jeſus Chriſt the Fountain of your Honour, be alſo the Object of your Love and Praiſe.

Inference 7. *Eſtimate by this the State and Condition of a deſerted Saint, upon whom the Favour of God is eclipſed.* If the Favour of God be better than Life, then hiding of it from a Gracious Soul muſt be more bitter than Death: Deſerted Saints have Reaſon to take the firſt Place among all the Mourners in the World: The Darkneſs before Converſion had indeed more of danger, but this hath more of trouble: Darkneſs after Light is diſmal Darkneſs. Since therefore the Caſe is ſo ſad, let your prevention Care be the more: Grieve not the Good Spirit of God, you prepare but for your own Grief in doing.

Inference 8. *Laſtly, Let this perſwade all Men to accept Jeſus Chriſt, as ever they expect to be accepted with the Lord themſelves.* It is a fearful Caſe, for a Man's Perſons and Duties to be rejected of God: To call and not be heard: And much more terrible to be denied Audience in the great and terrible Day. Yet as ſure as the Scriptures are the ſealed and faithful Sayings of God, this is no more than what every Chriſtleſs Perſon muſt expect in that Day, *Matth.* 7. 22. *Luke* 13. 26. trace the Hiſtory of all Times, even as high as *Abel*, and you ſhall find that none but Believers

Si voluntas Dei noſſe quam deſiderat fit amicus Auguſt.

did ever find Acceptance with God: All Experience confirms this great Truth, that *they that are in the Flesh cannot please God.* Reader, if this be thy condition, let me beg thee to ponder the Misery of it in a few sad Thoughts.

Consider how sad it is to be rejected of God, and forsaken by all Creatures at once: What a Day of Streights thy dying Day is like to be, when Heaven and Earth shall cast thee out together. Be assured whatever thy vain Hopes for the present quiet thee withal, this must be thy Case, the door of Mercy will be shut against thee, no Man cometh to the Father but by Christ. Sad was the Case of *Saul*, when he told *Samuel*, *the Philistines War against me, and God is departed from me*, 1 Sa. 28. 15. The Saints will have Boldness in the Day of Judgment, 1 *John* 4. 17. But thou wilt be a confounded Man; there is yet, blessed be the God of Mercy, a Capacity and Opportunity of Reconciliation, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. *Isa.* 27. 5. But this can be of no long Continuance. O therefore, by all the Regard and Love you have for the everlasting Welfare of your own Souls, come to Christ, embrace Christ in the offers of the Gospel, that you may be made accepted in the Beloved.

SERMON XVIII.

JOHN VIII. xxxvi.

If the Son therefore make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

Serm. 18 Text. The Liberty of Believers opened, and stated.

FRom the 30*th Verse* of this Chapter unto my Text, you have an account of the different Effects which the Words of Christ had upon the Hearts of his Hearers: Some believed, *verse* 30. these he encourageth to continue in his Word, *verse* 31. giving them this Encouragement, *verse* 32. *Ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free.* Hereat the unbelieving *Jews* take Offence, and commence a Quarrel with him, *verse* 33. *We be Abraham's seed, and were never in Bondage to any Man.* We are of no slavish Extraction, the Blood of *Abraham* runs in our Veins: This scornful boast of the proud *Jews*, Christ confutes, *verse* 34. where he distinguisheth of a twofold Bondage; one to Men, another to Sin; one civil, another spiritual: Whosoever committeth Sin is the Servant of Sin, then tells them, *verse* 36. *The Servant abideth not in the House for ever, but the Son abideth for ever.* Wherein he intimateth two great Truths, *viz.* That the Servants and Slaves of Sin may for a time enjoy external Privileges of the House or Church of God; but it would not be long before the Master of the House will turn them out of Door: But if they were once the adopted Children of God, then they should abide in the House for ever. And this Privilege is only to be had by their believing in, and Union with the natural Son of God, Jesus Christ: Which brings us fairly to the Text; *If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.* In which Words we have two Parts.

viz. { 1. A Supposition. 2. A Concession.

First, A *Supposition*, *If the Son therefore shall make you free*, *q. d.* The Womb of Nature cast you forth into the World in a state of Bondage, in that state you have lived all your Days, Servants to Sin, Slaves to your Lusts, yet Freedom is to be obtained: And this Freedom is the Prerogative belonging to the Son of God to bestow: *if the Son shall make you free.*

Secondly, Christ's Concession upon this Supposition, *Then shall ye be free indeed*, (*i. e.*) you shall have real Freedom, an excellent and everlasting Freedom: No Conceit only, as that which you now taste of is: If ever therefore you will be Free Men indeed, believe in me. Hence note,

Doct. *That Interest in Christ sets the Soul at Liberty from all that Bondage whereunto it was subjected in its natural state.*

Believers are the Children of the New Covenant, the Denizons of *Jerusalem* which are above, which is Free and the Mother of them all, *Gal.* 4. 26. The glorious Liberty, *viz.* that which is Spiritual and Eternal, is the Liberty of the Children of God, *Rom.* 8. 21. Christ, and none but Christ delivers his People out of the Hands of their Enemies, *Luke* 1. 74.

In the doctrinal part of this Point, I must shew you,

First, What Believers are not freed from by Jesus Christ in this World.

Secondly, What that Bondage is from which every Believer is freed by Christ.

Thirdly, What kind of Freedom that is which comes in upon believing.

Fourthly, Open the excellency of this state of spiritual Freedom.

First, *What those things are from which Believers are not made free in this World*: We must not think that our spiritual Liberty by Christ presently brings us into an absolute Liberty in all respects. For,

First, *Christ doth not free Believers from Obedience to the Moral Law*: 'Tis true we are no more under it as a *Covenant* for our *Justification*; but we are, and must still be under it is a *Rule* for our *Direction*. The Matter of the Moral Law is unchangeable as the Nature of Good and Evil is, and cannot be abolished except that Distinction could be destroyed, *Mat.* 5, 17, 18. The Precepts of the Law are still urged under the Gospel to enforce Duties upon us, *Eph.* 6. 12. 'Tis therefore a vain Distinction invented by *Libertines* to say it binds us as *Creatures* not as *Christians*: Or that it binds the unregenerate part, but not the regenerate: But this is a sure Truth, that they who are freed from its *Penalties*, are still under its *Precepts*. Though Believers are no more under its *Curse*, yet they are still under its *Conduct*: The Law sends us Christ to be *justified*, and Christ sends us to the Law to be *regulated*. Let the Heart of every Christian joyn therefore with *David's* in that holy Wish, *Psalm.* 119. 4, 5. *Thou hast commanded us to keep thy Precepts diligently, O that my Heart were directed to keep thy Statutes.* 'Tis excellent when Christians begin to obey the Law *from* Life, which others obey *for* Life: Because they *are* justified, not that they *may be* justified. When Duties are done in the strength and for the honour of Christ, which is Evangelical; not in our own strength, and for our own ends, which is

of Sin. 'Tis ſaid, *Rev.* 8. 4, 5, 6. *That the Smoak of the Incenſe, which came with the Prayers of the Saints, aſcended up before God out of the Angels Hand*: And immediately it is added, ver. 5. *And the Angel took the Cenſer, and filled it with Fire of the Altar, and caſt it into the Earth, and there were Voices, and Thunderings, and Lightnings, and Earthquakes, and the ſeven Angels, who had the ſeven Trumpets, prepared themſelves to ſound.* The Prayer of a ſingle Saint is ſometimes followed with wonderful Effects. *Pſal.* 18. 6, 7. *In my diſtreſs I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God: He heard my Voice out of his Temple, and my cry came before him, even into his Ears: Then the Earth ſhook and trembled; the Foundations alſo of the Hills moved, and were ſhaken becauſe he was wroth*: What then can a thundring Legion of ſuch praying Souls do! It was ſaid of *Luther, iſte vir potuit cum Deo quicquid voluit*, that Man could have of God what he would; his Enemies felt the weight of his Prayers, and the Church of God reaped the Benefits thereof. The *Queen of Scots* profeſſed ſhe was more afraid of the Prayers of Mr. *Knox*, than of an Army of ten thouſand Men: Theſe were mighty Wreſtlers with God, howſoever contemned and vilified among their Enemies. There will a time come, when God will hear the Prayers of his People, who are continually crying in his Ears, *How long, Lord, how long.*

Jacobus Langius, the *Sorbone* Doctor, who wrote the Lives of *Luther*, *Knox*, and *Calvin*, ſpeaks as if the Devil had hired his Pen to abuſe thoſe precious Servants of Chriſt.

Infer. 3. *Let no Believer be dejected at the Contempts and Slightings of Men, ſo long as they ſtand in the Grace and Favour of God*: It is the Lot of the beſt of Men to have the worſt uſage in this World: *Thoſe of whom the World was not worthy*, are not thought worthy to live in the World, *Heb.* 11. 38. *Paul* and his Companions were Men of choice and excellent Spirits, yet ſaith he, 1 *Cor.* 4. 13. *Being defamed we intreat, we are made as the filth of the World, and are the off-ſcouring of all things unto this Day*: They are Words ſignifying the baſeſt, contemptibleſt and moſt abhorred things among Men. How is Heaven and Earth divided in their Judgments and Eſtimations of the Saints! Thoſe whom Men call filth and dirt, God calls a peculiar Treaſure, a Crown of Glory, a Royal Diadem. But trouble not thy ſelf Believer for the unjuſt Cenſures of the blind World, they ſpeak evil of the things they know not: *He that is ſpiritual judgeth all things, yet he himſelf is judged of no Man*, 1 Cor. 2. 14. You can diſcern the earthlineſs and baſeneſs of their Spirits, they want a faculty to diſcern the excellency and choiceneſs of your Spirits. He that carries a dark Lanthorn in the Night, can diſcern him that comes againſt him, and yet is not diſcerned by him: A *Courtier* regards not a ſlight in the Country, ſo long as he hath the Ear and Favour of his Prince.

Περίψημα πάντων (*i. e.*) the ſweepings of the Houſe: the filth wiped off any thing: *Eraſmus*, the dirt that ſticks to the Shoes: *Valla*, the dung of the Belly, as the *Syriack* tranſlates. The condemned Man that was tumbled from a ſteep Rock into the Sea, as a Sacrifice to *Neptune*, was called περίψημα, ſaith *Budæus*, *Sit pro nobis peripſema.*

Inference 4. *Never let Believers fear the want of any good thing neceſſary for them in this World*: The Favour of God is the Fountain of all Bleſſings, Proviſions, Protections, even of all that you need. He hath promiſed that he will withold no good thing from them that walk uprightly, *Pſal.* 84. 11. He that is bountiful to his Enemies will not withhold what is good from his Friends. The Favour of God will not only ſupply your needs, but protect your Perſons, Pſal. 5, 12. *Thou wilt bleſs the Righteous, with Favour wilt thou compaſs him as with a ſhield.*

Inference 5. *Hence alſo it follows, That the Sins of Believers are very piercing things to the Heart of God.* The unkindneſs of thoſe whom he hath received into his very Boſom, upon whom he hath ſet his ſpecial Favour and Delight, who are more obliged to him than all the People of the Earth beſide, O this wounds the very Heart of God. What a melting Expoſtulation was that which the Lord uſed with *David*, 2 Sam. 12, 7, 8. *I anointed thee King over all Iſrael, and I delivered thee out of the Hand of Saul, and I gave thee thy Maſters Houſe, and thy Maſters Wives into thy Boſom, and gave thee the Houſe of Iſrael and Juda, and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee ſuch and ſuch Things: Wherefore haſt thou deſpiſed the Commandment of the Lord?* But Reader, if thou be a reconciled Perſon, a Favourite with God, and haſt grieved him by any eminent Tranſgreſſion, how ſhould it melt thy Heart to hear the Lord thus expoſtulating with thee: I delivered thee out of the Hand of Satan: I gave thee into the Boſom of Chriſt: I have pardoned unto thee Millions of Sins: I have beſtowed upon thee the riches of Mercy; my Favour hath made thee great; and as if all this were too little, I have prepared Heaven for thee: For which of all theſe Favours doſt thou thus requite me?

Inference 6. *How precious ſhould Jeſus Chriſt be to Believers, by whoſe Blood they are ingratiated with God, and by whoſe Interceſſion they are and ſhall for ever be continued in his Favour?* When the Apoſtle mentions the Believers Tranſlation, from the ſad ſtate of Nature to the bleſſed privileged ſtate of Grace, ſee what a Title he beſtows upon Jeſus Chriſt, the Purchaſer of that Privilege, calling him the *dear Son*, Col. 1. 13. Not only dear to God, but exceeding dear to Believers alſo. Chriſt is the Favourite in Heaven, to him you owe your Preferment there: Take away Chriſt, and you have no ground to ſtand one Minute in the Favour of God. O then let Jeſus Chriſt the Fountain of your Honour, be alſo the Object of your Love and Praiſe.

Inference 7. *Eſtimate by this the State and Condition of a deſerted Saint, upon whom the Favour of God is eclipſed.* If the Favour of God be better than Life, the hiding of it from a Gracious Soul muſt be more bitter than Death: Deſerted Saints have Reaſon to take the firſt Place among all the Mourners in the World: The Darkneſs before Converſion had indeed more of danger, but this hath more of trouble. Darkneſs after Light is diſmal Darkneſs. Since therefore the Caſe is ſo ſad, let your preventing Care be the more: Grieve not the Good Spirit of God, you prepare but for your own Grief in ſo doing.

Inference 8. *Laſtly, Let this perſwade all Men to accept Jeſus Chriſt, as ever they expect to be accepted with the Lord themſelves.* It is a fearful Caſe, for a Man's Perſons and Duties to be rejected of God: To cry and not be heard: And much more terrible to be denied Audience in the great and terrible Day! Yet as ſure as the Scriptures are the ſealed and faithful Sayings of God, this is no more than what every Chriſtleſs Perſon muſt expect in that Day, *Matth.* 7. 22. *Luke* 13. 26. trace the Hiſtory of all Times, even as high as *Abel*, and you ſhall find that none but Believers

Si voluntatem Dei noſſe quiſquam deſiderat, fit amicus Dei Auguſt.

did

did ever find Acceptance with God: All Experience confirms this great Truth, that *they that are in the Flesh cannot please God.* Reader, if this be thy condition, let me beg thee to ponder the Misery of it in a few sad Thoughts.

Consider how sad it is to be rejected of God, and forsaken by all Creatures at once: What a Day of Streights thy dying Day is like to be, when Heaven and Earth shall cast thee out together. Be assured whatever thy vain Hopes for the present quiet thee withal, this must be thy Case, the door of Mercy will be shut against thee, no Man cometh to the Father but by Christ. Sad was the Case of *Saul*, when he told *Samuel, the Philistines make War against me, and God is departed from me*, 1 Sam. 28. 15. The Saints will have Boldness in the Day of Judgment, 1 *John* 4. 17. But thou wilt be a confounded Man; there is yet, blessed be the God of Mercy, a Capacity and Opportunity of Reconciliation, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. *Isa.* 27. 5. But this can be of no long Continuance. O therefore, by all the Regard and Love you have for the everlasting Welfare of your own Souls, come to Christ, embrace Christ in the offers of the Gospel, that you may be made accepted in the Beloved.

SERMON XVIII.

JOHN VIII. xxxvi.

If the Son therefore make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

Serm. 18 Text. The Liberty of Believers opened, and stated.

FRom the 30*th Verse* of this Chapter unto my Text, you have an account of the different Effects which the Words of Christ had upon the Hearts of his Hearers: Some believed, *verse* 30. these he encourageth to continue in his Word, *verse* 31. giving them this Encouragement, *verse* 32. *Ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free.* Hereat the unbelieving *Jews* take Offence, and commence a Quarrel with him, *verse* 33. *We be* Abraham's *seed, and were never in Bondage to any Man.* We are of no slavish Extraction, the Blood of *Abraham* runs in our Veins: This scornful boast of the proud *Jews*, Christ confutes, *verse* 34. where he distinguisheth of a twofold Bondage; one to Men, another to Sin; one civil, another spiritual: Whosoever committeth Sin is the Servant of Sin, then tells them, *verse* 36. *The Servant abideth not in the House for ever, but the Son abideth for ever.* Wherein he intimateth two great Truths, *viz.* That the Servants and Slaves of Sin may for a time enjoy external Privileges of the House or Church of God; but it would not be long before the Master of the House will turn them out of Door: But if they were once the adopted Children of God, then they should abide in the House for ever. And this Privilege is only to be had by their believing in, and Union with the natural Son of God, Jesus Christ: Which brings us fairly to the Text; *If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.* In which Words we have two Parts.

viz. { 1. A Supposition. 2. A Concession.

First, A *Supposition, If the Son therefore shall make you free, q. d.* The Womb of Nature cast you forth into the World in a state of Bondage, in that state you have lived all your Days, Servants to Sin, Slaves to your Lusts, yet Freedom is to be obtained: And this Freedom is the Prerogative belonging to the Son of God to bestow: *If the Son shall make you free.*

Secondly, Christ's Concession upon this Supposition, *Then shall ye be free indeed*, (*i. e.*) you shall have a real Freedom, an excellent and everlasting Freedom: No Conceit only, as that which you now boast of is: If ever therefore you will be Free Men indeed, believe in me. Hence note,

Doct. *That Interest in Christ sets the Soul at Liberty from all that Bondage whereunto it was subjected in its natural state.*

Believers are the Children of the New Covenant, the Denizons of *Jerusalem* which are above, which is Free and the Mother of them all, *Gal.* 4. 26. The glorious Liberty, *viz.* that which is Spiritual and Eternal, is the Liberty of the Children of God, *Rom.* 8. 21. Christ, and none but Christ delivers his People out of the Hands of their Enemies, *Luke* 1. 74.

In the doctrinal part of this Point, I must shew you,

First, What Believers are not freed from by Jesus Christ in this World.

Secondly, What that Bondage is from which every Believer is freed by Christ.

Thirdly, What kind of Freedom that is which comes in upon believing.

Fourthly, Open the excellency of this state of spiritual Freedom.

First, What those things are from which Believers are not made free in this World: We must not think that our spiritual Liberty by Christ presently brings us into an absolute Liberty in all respects. For,

First, Christ doth not free Believers from Obedience to the Moral Law: 'Tis true we are no more under it as a *Covenant* for our *Justification*; but we are, and must still be under it is a *Rule* for our *Direction.* The Matter of the Moral Law is unchangeable as the Nature of Good and Evil is, and cannot be abolished except that Distinction could be destroyed, *Mat.* 5, 17, 18. The Precepts of the Law are still urged under the Gospel to enforce Duties upon us, *Eph.* 6. 12. 'Tis therefore a vain Distinction invented by *Libertines* to say it binds us as *Creatures* not as *Christians*: Or that it binds the unregenerate part, but not the regenerate: But this is a sure Truth, that they who are freed from its *Penalties*, are still under its *Precepts.* Though Believers are no more under its *Curse*, yet they are still under its *Conduct*: The Law sends us Christ to be *justified*, and Christ sends us to the Law to be *regulated.* Let the Heart of every Christian joyn therefore with *David*'s in that holy Wish, *Psalm.* 119. 4, 5. *Thou hast commanded us to keep thy Precepts diligently, O that my Heart were directed to keep thy Statutes.* 'Tis excellent when Christians begin to obey the Law *from* Life, which others obey *for* Life: Because they *are* justified, not that they *may be* justified. When Duties are done in the strength and for the honour of Christ, which is Evangelical; not in our own strength, and for our own ends, which is servile

ſervile and legal Obedience: Had Chriſt freed us from Obedience, ſuch a Liberty had been to our Loſs.

Secondly, Chriſt hath not freed Believers in this World from the Temptations and Aſſaults of Satan: Even thoſe that are freed from his *Dominion*, are not free from his *Moleſtation*. 'Tis ſaid indeed, *Rom.* 16. 20. *God ſhall ſhortly bruiſe Satan under your Feet*: But mean time he hath Power to bruiſe and buffet us by his Injections, 2 *Cor.* 12. 7. He now bruiſeth Chriſt's Heel, *Gen.* 3. 15. (*i. e.*) bruiſeth him in his tempted and afflicted Members: Tho' he cannot kill them, yet he can and doth afflict and fright them, by ſhooting his fiery Darts of Temptation among them, *Eph.* 6. 16. 'Tis true, when the Saints are got ſafe into Heaven, they are out of Gunſhot; there is perfect Freedom from all Temptation. A Believer may then ſay, O thou Enemy, Temptations are come to a perpetual End. I am now arrived there, where none of thy fiery Darts can reach me: But this Freedom is not yet.

Thirdly, Chriſt hath not yet freed Believers in this World from the Motions of indwelling Sin: Theſe are continually acting and infeſting the holieſt of Men, *Rom.* 7. 21, 23, 24. Corruptions like *Canaanites* are ſtill left in the Land to be Thorns in our Eyes, and Goads in our Sides. Thoſe that boaſt moſt of Freedom from the Motions of Sin, have moſt cauſe to ſuſpect themſelves ſtill under the Dominion of Sin. All Chriſt's Freemen are troubled with the ſame complaint: Who among them complains not as the Apoſtle did, *Rom.* 7. 24. *Oh wretched Man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the Body of this Death?*

Fourthly, Jeſus Chriſt doth not free Believers in this World from inward Troubles and Exerciſes of Soul upon the Account of Sin. God may let looſe Satan and Conſcience too, in the way of terrible Accuſations, which may greatly diſtreſs the Soul of a Believer, and wofully eclipſe the Light of God's Countenance, and break the Peace of their Souls. *Job*, *Heman* and *David* were all made free by Chriſt, yet each of them hath left upon Record his bitter complaint upon this account, *Job* 7. 19, 20. *Pſal.* 88. 14, 15, 16. *Pſal.* 38. unto *verſe* 11.

Fifthly, Chriſt hath not freed Believers in this World from the Rods of Affliction. God in giving us our Liberty, doth not abridge his own Liberty, *Pſal.* 89. 32. All the Children of God are made free, yet what Son is there whom the Father chaſtneth not? *Heb.* 12. 8. Exemption from Affliction is ſo far from being the Mark of a Freeman, that the Apoſtle there makes it the Mark of a Slave. Baſtards, not Sons want the Diſcipline and Bleſſing of the Rod: To be free from Affliction would be no Benefit to Believers, who receive ſo many Benefits by Affliction.

Sixthly, No Believer is freed by Chriſt from the *ſtroak* of Death, though they are all freed from the *ſting* of Death, *Rom.* 8. 10. The Bodies of Believers are under the ſame Law of Mortality with other Men, *Heb.* 9. 27. We muſt come to the Grave as well as others: Yea, we muſt come to it through the ſame Agonies, Pangs and Dolours that other Men do: The Foot of Death treads as heavy upon the Bodies of the redeemed as of other Men. Believers indeed are diſtinguiſhed by Mercy from others, but the diſtinguiſhing Mercy lies not here. Thus you ſee what Believers are not freed from in this World: If you ſhall now ſay, what Advantage then hath a Believer, or what Profit is there in Regeneration? I Anſwer.

Secondly, That Believers are freed from many great and ſad Miſeries and Evils by Jeſus Chriſt, notwithſtanding all that hath been ſaid. For,

Firſt, All Believers are freed from the *Rigour* and *Curſe* of the Law: The rigorous Yoak of the Law is broken off from their Necks, and the ſweet and eaſie Yoak of Jeſus Chriſt put on, *Mat.* 11. 28. The Law required perfect working under the pain of a Curſe, *Gal.* 3. 10. accepted of no ſhort Endeavours; admitted no Repentance; gave no ſtrength: It is not ſo now, proportionable ſtrength is given, *Phil.* 4. 13. Sincerity is reckoned Perfection, *Joh.* 1. 1. Tranſgreſſion brings not under Condemnation, *Rom.* 8. 1. O bleſſed Freedom! When Duty becomes delight, and failings hinder not Acceptance: This is one part of the bleſſed Freedom of Believers.

Secondly, All Believers are freed from the guilt of Sin, it may *trouble*, but it cannot *condemn* them, *Rom.* 8. 33. The Hand-writing which was againſt us is cancelled by Chriſt, nailed to his Croſs, *Coloſ.* 2. 14. When the Seal and Hand-writing is torn off from the Bond, the Debtor is made free thereby: Believers are totally freed, *Acts* 13. 39. *Juſtified from all things*: And finally freed, *John* 5. 24. *They ſhall never come into Condemnation.* O bleſſed Freedom! How ſweet is it to lie down in our Beds, yea in our Graves; when Guilt ſhall neither be our Bed-fellow, nor Grave-fellow!

Thirdly, Jeſus Chriſt frees all Believers from the *Dominion* as well as the guilt of Sin. *Sin ſhall not have Dominion over you, for ye are not under the Law but under Grace*, Rom. 6. 14. *The Law of the Spirit of Life which is in Chriſt Jeſus hath made me free from the Law of Sin and Death*, Rom. 8. 2. Now who can eſtimate ſuch a Liberty as this? What ſlavery, what an intolerable Drudgery is the ſervice of divers Luſts, from all which Believers are freed by Chriſt! Not from the *Reſidence* but from the *Reign* of Sin. 'Tis with Sin in Believers as it was with thoſe Beaſts mentioned, *Dan.* 7. 12. *They had their Dominion taken away, yet their Lives were prolonged for a Seaſon and Time.*

Fourthly, Jeſus Chriſt ſets all Believers free from the Power of Satan; in whoſe right they were by Nature, *Col.* 1. 13. they are tranſlated from the Power of Darkneſs into the Kingdom of Chriſt. Satan had the Poſſeſſion of them, as a Man of his own Goods; but Chriſt diſpoſſeſſeth that ſtrong Man armed, alters the Property, and recovers them out of his Hand, *Luke* 11. 21, 22. There are two ways by which Chriſt frees Believers out of Satan's Power and Poſſeſſion, namely,

1. By Price.
2. By Power.

Firſt, By *Price*, the Blood of Chriſt purchaſed Believers out of the hand of Juſtice by ſatisfying the Law for them, which being done, Satan's Authority over them falls of courſe, as the Power of a Goaler over the Priſoner doth, when he hath a legal Diſcharge, *Heb.* 2. 14. *For as much then as the Children are partakers of Fleſh and Blood: He alſo himſelf took part of the ſame, that through Death he might deſtroy him that had the power of Death, that is, the Devil.* The cruel Tyrant beats and burthens the poor Captive no more after the Ranſom is once paid, and he actually freed, and therefore Chriſt delivers his,

Secondly, By *Power*. Satan is exceeding unwilling to let go his prey: He is a ſtrong and a malicious Enemy: Every reſcue and deliverance out of his hand, is a glorious Effect of the Almighty Pow

power of Christ, *Act.* 26. 18. 2 *Cor.* 10. 5. How did our Lord Jesus Christ grapple with Satan at his Death, and triumphed over him, *Col.* 2. 15. O glorious Salvation, blessed Liberty of the Children of God.

Fifthly, Christ frees Believers from the poisonous sting and hurt of Dearh: Kill us it can, but hurt us it cannot, 1 *Cor.* 15. 55, 56. *O Death where is thy Sting? O Grave where is thy Victory? The Sting of Death is Sin, and the strength of Sin is the Law: But thanks be to God which giveth us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* If there be not hurt, there should be no horror in Death: 'Tis Guilt that arms Death both with its hurting and terrifying Power. To die in our Sins, *John* 8. 24. To have our Bones full of the Sins of our Youth, which shall lie down with us in the Dust, *Job* 20. 11. To have Death, like a Dragon, pulling a poor guilty Creature as a prey into its dreadful Den. *Psalm* 49. 14. In this lies the danger and horror of Death: But from Death as a Curse, and from the Grave as a Prison, Christ hath set Believers at Liberty, by submitting to Death in their room, by his victorious Resurrection from the Grave, as the first-born of the dead: Death is disarmed of its hurting Power: The death of Believers is but a sleep in Jesus.

Thirdly, The next thing to be briefly spoken to, is the kind and nature of that Freedom and Liberty purchased and procured by Christ for Believers. Now Liberty may be considered two ways; *viz.*

1. As Civil.
2. As Sacred.

As to civil Freedom or Liberty, it belongs not to our present Business: Believers as to their civil Capacity are not freed from the Duties they owe to their Superiors. Servants, though Believers, are still to be subject to their Masters according to the flesh with fear and trembling, *Ephes.* 6. 5. nor from Obedience to lawful Magistrates whom we are to obey in the Lord, *Rom.* 13. 1, 4. Religion dissolves not the Bonds of civil Relations: Nor is to be used as an occasion to the flesh, 1 *Pet.* 2. 16. 'Tis not a carnal but a spiritual Freedom Christ hath purchased for us: And this spiritual Freedom is again to be considered, either as,

1. Inchoate.
2. Consummate.

The Liberty Believers have at present is but a beginning Liberty, they are freed but in part from their spiritual Enemies: But it is a growing Liberty every day, and will be consummate, and compleat at last.

To conclude, Christian Liberty is either,

1. Privative, or,
2. Positive.

The Liberty Believers are invested with, is of both kinds: They are not only freed from many Miseries, Burdens and Dangers; but also invested by Jesus Christ with many royal Privileges and invaluable Immunities.

Fourthly, And this brings us to the fourth and last thing; namely the Properties of this blessed Freedom which the Saints enjoy by Jesus Christ: and if we consider it duly it will be found to be,

First, A wonderful Liberty, never enough to be admired: How could it be imagined that ever those who owed unto God more than ever they could pay by their own eternal Sufferings, those that were under that dreadful Curse and Condemnation of the Law, in the Power and Possession of Satan the strong Man armed; those that were bound with so many Chains in their spiritual Prison; their understanding bound with Ignorance, their Wills with Obstinacy, their Hearts with impenetrable Hardness, their Affections with a thousand bewitching Vanities; that slight their state of slavery so much as industriously to oppose all Instruments and Means of Deliverance: For such Persons to be set at Liberty, notwithstanding all this, is the Wonder of Wonders, and is deservedly marvellous in the Eyes of Believers for ever.

Secondly, The Freedom of Believers is a peculiar Freedom: a Liberty which few obtain, the generality abiding still in bondage to Satan, who from the Multitude of his Subjects is stiled *the God of this World*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. Believers in Scripture are often called a Remnant, which is but a small part of the whole piece: The more cause have the People of God to admire distinguishing Mercy: How many Nobles and great ones of the World are but royal Slaves to Satan and their own Lusts!

Thirdly, The Liberty of Believers is a Liberty dearly purchased by the Blood of Christ: What that Captain said, Acts 22. 28. *With a great sum obtained I this Freedom*, may be much more said of the Believers Freedom: 'Twas not Silver or Gold but the precious Blood of Christ that purchased it, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18.

Fourthly, The Freedom and Liberty of Believers is a growing and encreasing Liberty, they get more and more out of the Power of Sin, and nearer still to their compleat Salvation every day, *Rom.* 13. 11. the Body of Sin dieth daily in them: They are said to be crucified with Christ: The strength of Sin abates continually in them after the manner of crucified Persons, who die a slow but sure Death: And look in what Degree the Power of Sin abates, proportionably their spiritual Liberty encreases upon them.

Fifthly, The Freedom of Believers is a comfortable Freedom: The Apostle comforts Christians of the lowest Rank, poor Servants, with this Consideration, 1 Cor. 7. 22. *He that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's Freeman, q. d.* Let not the Meanness of your outward Condition, which is a state of Subjection and Dependance, a state of Poverty and Contempt, at all trouble you: You are the Lord's Freemen, of precious Account in his Eyes. O 'tis a comfortable Liberty!

Sixthly, and *Lastly*, 'Tis a perpetual and final Freedom, they that are once freed by Christ have their Manumissions and final Discharge from that state of Bondage they were in before. Sin shall never have Dominion over them any more: It may tempt them and trouble them, but shall never more rule and govern them, *Acts* 26. 18. And thus you see what a glorious Liberty the Liberty of Believers is.

The Improvement whereof will be in the following Inferences.

Inference 1. *How rational is the Joy of Christians, above the Joy of all others in the World?* Shall not the Captive rejoice in his recovered Liberty? The very Birds of the Air (as one observes) had rather be at Liberty in the Woods, though lean and hungry, than in a golden Cage with the richest Fare: Every Creature naturally prizes it, none more than Believers, who have felt the Burthen and Bondage of Corruption: Who in the days of their first Illumination and Conviction have poured out many Groans and Tears for this Mercy. What was said of the Captive People of God in *Babylon*, excellently shadows forth the state of God's Peo-

ple under ſpiritual Bondage, with the way and manner of their Deliverance from it, Zech. 9. 11. *By the Blood of thy Covenant I have ſent forth thy Priſoners out of the Pit, wherein is no Water.* Believers are delivered by the Blood of Chriſt out of a worſe Pit than that of *Babylon*: And look as the Tribes in their return from thence were overwhelmed with Joy and Aſtoniſhment, Pſalm 126. 1, 2. *When the Lord turned again the Captivity of* Sion; *we were like them that dream; then was our Mouth filled with laughter, and our Tongue with ſinging*: They were overwhelmed with the ſenſe of the Mercy: So ſhould it be with the People of God. 'Tis ſaid, *Luke* 15. 24. when the Prodigal Son (there made the Emblem of a returning converting Sinner) was returned again to his Father's Houſe; that there was heard Muſick and Dancing, Mirth and Feaſting in that Houſe. The Angels in Heaven rejoice when a Soul is recovered out of the Power of Satan; and ſhall not the recovered Soul, immediately concerned in the Mercy, greatly rejoice? Yea, let them rejoice in the Lord, and let no earthly Trouble or Affliction ever have Power to interrupt their Joy for a Moment after ſuch a Deliverance as this.

Inference 2. *How unreaſonable, and wholly inexcuſable is the Sin of Apoſtaſie from Jeſus Chriſt?* What is it but for a delivered Captive to put his Feet again into the Shackles, his Hands into the Manacles, his Neck into the Iron Yoke, from which he hath been delivered? 'Tis ſaid, Mat. 12. 44, 45. *When the unclean Spirit is gone out of a Man, he walketh through dry Places, ſeeking Reſt and findeth none: Then he ſaith, I will return into mine Houſe from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, ſwept and garniſhed; then goeth he, and taketh with him ſeven other Spirits more wicked than himſelf, and they enter in and dwell there, and the laſt ſtate of that Man is worſe than the firſt.* Even as a Priſoner that hath eſcaped, and is again recovered, is loaded with double Irons. Let the People of God be content to run any Hazard, endure any Difficulties in the way of Religion, rather than return again into their former Bondage, to Sin and Satan. O Chriſtian, if ever God gave thee a ſight, and a ſenſe of the Miſery and Danger of thy natural State, if ever thou haſt felt the Pangs and Throes of a labouring and diſtreſſed Conſcience, and after all this taſted the unſpeakable ſweetneſs of the Peace and Reſt that is in Chriſt, thou wilt rather chooſe to die ten thouſand Deaths than to forſake Chriſt, and go back again into that ſad Condition.

Inference 3. *How ſuitable and well becoming is a free Spirit in Believers to their State of Liberty and Freedom?* Chriſt hath made your Condition free, O let the temper and frame of your Hearts be free alſo, do all that you do for God with a Spirit of Freedom: Not by conſtraint but willingly. Methinks, Chriſtians, the new Nature that is in you ſhould ſtand for a Command, and be inſtead of all Arguments that uſe to work upon the Hopes and Fears of other Men: See how all Creatures work according to the Principle of their Natures: You need not command a Mother to draw forth her Breaſts to a ſucking Child: Nature it ſelf teaches and prompts to that: You need not bid the Sea ebb and flow at the ſtated Hours. O Chriſtian, why ſhould thy Heart need any other Argument than its own ſpiritual Inclination to keep its ſtated Times and Seaſons of Communion with God? Let none of God's Commandments be grievous to you: Let not thine Heart need dragging and forcing to its own Benefit and Advantage. Whatever you do for God, do it chearfully, and whatever you ſuffer for God, ſuffer it chearfully: It was a brave Spirit which acted Holy *Paul, I am ready*, ſaith he, *not only to be bound, but alſo to die at Jeruſalem for the Name of the Lord Jeſus*, Acts 21. 13.

Inference 4. *Let no Man wonder at the Enmity and Oppoſition of Satan to the preaching of the Goſpel*: For by the Goſpel it is that Souls are recovered out of his Power, *Acts* 26. 18. 'Tis the expreſs Work of Miniſters *to turn Men from Darkneſs to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God.* Satan (as one ſaith) is a great and jealous Prince: He will never endure to have Liberty proclaimed by the Miniſters of Chriſt within his Dominions: And indeed what is it leſs when the Goſpel is preached in Power, but as it were by beat of Drum and ſound of Trumpet to proclaim Liberty, ſpiritual, ſweet and everlaſting Liberty, to every Soul that is made ſenſible of the Bondage of Corruption and cruel ſervitude of Satan, and will now come over to Jeſus Chriſt? And oh what numbers and multitudes of Priſoners have broken looſe from Satan at one Proclamation of Chriſt, *Acts* 2. 41. But Satan owes the Servants of Chriſt a ſpite for this, and will be ſure to pay them if ever they come within his reach: Perſecution is the Genius of the Goſpel, and follows it as the Shadow doth the Body.

Inference 5. *How careful ſhould Chriſtians be to maintain their ſpiritual Liberty in all, and every Point thereof? Stand faſt* (ſaith *Paul*) *in the Liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made us free; and be not again entangled in the Yoke of Bondage*, Gal. 5. 1. And again, *Ye are bought with a Price, be not ye the Servants of Men.* It's Chriſt's Prerogative to preſcribe the Rules of his own Houſe; he hath given no Man Dominion over your Faith, 2 *Cor.* 1. 24. One Man is no Rule to another, but the Word of Chriſt a Rule to all. Follow not the holieſt of Men one ſtep farther than they follow Chriſt, 1 *Cor.* 11. 4. Man is an ambitious Creature, naturally affecting Dominion: And Dominion over the Mind rather than over the Body: To give Law to others feeds pride in himſelf: So far as any Man brings the Word of Chriſt to warrant his Injunctions, ſo far we are to obey, and no farther: Chriſt is your Lord and Lawgiver.

Inference 6. *Laſtly, Let this encourage and perſwade Sinners to come to Chriſt, for with him is ſweet Liberty for poor Captives.* Oh that you did but know what a bleſſed ſtate Jeſus Chriſt would bring you into: *Come unto me* (ſaith he) *ye that labour, and are heavy laden*; and what Encouragement doth he give to Comers but this, *my Yoke is eaſie, and my Burden is light?* The Devil perſwades you that the ways of Obedience and ſtrict Godlineſs are a perfect Bondage; but if ever God regenerate you you will find his ways, ways of Pleaſantneſs, and all his paths Peace: You will rejoice in the way of his Commandments as much as in all riches: You will find the worſt Work Chriſt puts you about even ſuffering Work, ſweeter than all the Pleaſure that ever you found in Sin. O therefore open your Hearts at the Call of the Goſpel: Come unto Chriſt, then ſhall you be free indeed.

SER-

SERMON XIX.

I. PET. III. xviii.

For Christ hath once suffered for Sins, the just for the unjust; that he might bring us to God.

Serm 19 Text. The Saints coming home to God by Reconciliation and Glorification, opened and applied.

THE scope of the Apostle in this Place is to prepare and fortifie Christians for a Day of Suffering. In order to their chearful sustaining whereof he prescribeth two excellent Rules of mighty use for all suffering Christians.

First, To get a good Conscience within them, *verse* 16, 17. *hic murus aheneus esto.*

Secondly, To set the Example of Christ's suffering before them, *vers.* 18. For Christ hath once suffered for Sinners: The Sufferings of Christ for us, is the great Motive engaging Christians to suffer chearfully for him.

In the Words before us we have,

First, The Sufficience and Fulness of Christ's Sufferings intimated in that Particle [once] Christ needs to suffer no more, having finished and compleated that whole Work at once.

Secondly, The meritorious Cause of the Sufferings of Christ, and that is Sin, *Christ once suffered for Sins*: Not his own Sins, but ours: As it follows in the next Clause, which is the third thing here observable, *viz.*

Thirdly, The admirable Grace and unexampled Love of Christ to us Sinners, *the Just for the Unjust*, in which Words the Substitution of Christ in the room and place of Sinners, the Vice-gerence of his Death is plainly expressed. Christ died not only *nostro bono*, for our good, but also *nostro loco* in our stead.

Fourthly, Here is also the final Cause or Design and Scope of the Sufferings of Christ, which was *to bring us to God.*

Fifthly, Here is also the Issue of the Sufferings of Christ, which was the Death of Christ in the Flesh, and the quickning of Christ after Death by the Spirit: Many excellent Observations are lodged in the Bosom of this Scripture: All which I must pass in Silence at this Time, and confine my Discourse to the final Cause of the Sufferings of Christ, namely *that he might bring us to God*: Where the Observation will be plainly and briefly this.

Doct. *That the end of Christ's cursed Death and bitter Sufferings was to bring all those for whom he died unto God.*

In the Explication and Preparation of this Point for Use, two Things must be spoken unto, *viz.*

1. What Christ's bringing us to God imports.
2. What Influence the Death of Christ hath upon this Design of bringing us to God.

First, What Christ's bringing us to God imports: And certainly there be many great and excellent Things carried in this Expression: More generally it notes our state of *Reconciliation*, and our state of *Glorification*: By Reconciliation we are brought nigh to God, *Ephes.* 2. 13. *Ye are made nigh*, (*i. e.*) reconciled, *by the Blood of Christ*, Heb. 12. 22, 23. we are said *to come to God the Judge of all.* By Reconciliation we are brought nigh unto God now; by Glorification we shall be brought home to God hereafter, 1 Thes. 4. 17. *We shall be ever with the Lord*: But more particularly this Phrase, *that he might bring us to God*, imports,

First, That the chief Happiness of Man consisteth in the Enjoyment of God: That the Creature hath as necessary dependance upon God for Happiness, as the Stream hath upon the Fountain, or the Image in the Glass upon the Face of him that looks into it. Look as the sum of the Creatures Misery lies in this, *depart from me*; Separation from God is the principal part of Damnation: So on the contrary, the chief Happiness of the Creature consisteth in the Enjoyment and blessed Vision of God, 1 *John* 3. 2. *Psalm* 17. 15. *I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.*

Secondly, It implies Man's Revolt and Apostasie from God. *Ephes.* 2. 12. *But now in Christ Jesus, ye who were sometime afar off, are made nigh by the Blood of Christ.* Those whom Christ bringeth unto God were before afar off from him, both in State and Condition; and in Temper and Disposition: We were lost Creatures, and had no desire to return to God: The Prodigal was said to go into a far Country, *Luke* 15. 30.

Licet facultates non fuerunt per lapsum abolitæ, determinatio tamen earum ad objecta spiritualia fuit protinus extincta. Zeæm. *de imagine Dei.*

Thirdly, Christ's bringing us to God implies our Inability to return to God of our selves: We must be brought back by Christ, or perish for ever in a state of Separation from God: The lost Sheep is made the *Emblem* of the lost Sinner, *Luke* 15. 5. The Sheep returns not to the Fold of it self, but the Shepherd seeks it, finds it, and carries it back upon his Shoulders: And the Apostle plainly tells us, *Rom.* 5. 6. That when *we were without Strength* (*i. e.*) any Ability to recover, help or save our selves; *in due time Christ died for the ungodly.*

Fourthly, Christ's bringing us to God evidently implies this, that God's unsatisfied Justice was once the great Bar betwixt him and Man: Man can have no access to God but by Christ: Christ brings us to God by no other way but the way of Satisfaction by his Blood: *He hath suffered for Sins, the Just for the Unjust, that he might bring us to God.* Better ten thousand Worlds should perish for ever, than God should lose the Honour of his Justice. This great *Obex*, or Bar to our Enjoyment of God is effectually removed by the Death of Christ: Whereby it is not only fully satisfied, but highly honoured and glorified, *Rom.* 3. 24. And so the way by which we are brought to God is again opened (to the Wonder and Joy of all Believers) by the Blood and Sufferings of Christ.

Fifthly, and *Lastly*, It shews us the peculiar Happiness and Privilege of Believers above all People in the World. These only are they which shall be brought to God by Jesus Christ in a reconciled state: Others indeed shall be brought to God as a *Judge*, to be condemned by him: Believers only are brought to God in the Mediators Hand, as a reconciled *Father* to be made blessed for ever in the Enjoyment of him: Every Believer is brought singly to God at his Death, *Luke* 16. 22. And all Be-

Believers shall be jointly and solemnly presented to God in the great Day, *Col.* 1. 22. *Jude v.* 24. They shall be all presented Faultless before the Presence of his Glory with exceeding Joy. Now the Privilege of Believers in that Day will lie in divers things.

First, That they shall be all brought to God together: This will be the general Assembly mentioned, *Heb.* 12. 22. There shall be a Collection of all Believers in all Ages of the World into one blessed Assembly: They shall come from the *East* and *West*, and *North* and *South*, and shall sit down in the Kingdom of God, *Luke* 13. 29. O what a glorious train will be seen following the Redeemer in that Day!

Secondly, As all the Saints shall be collected into one Body: So they shall be all brought or presented unto God, Faultless and without Blemish, *Jude v.* 24. *A glorious Church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing*, Eph. 5. 27. For this is the general Assembly of the Spirits of just Men that are made perfect, *Heb.* 12. 23. All Sin was perfectly separated from them, when Death had separated their Souls and Bodies.

Thirdly, In this lies the Privilege of Believers, that as they shall be all brought together, and that in a state of absolute Purity and Perfection, so they shall be all brought to God: They shall see his Face, in the Vision whereof is fulness of Joy, and at whose Right-hand are Pleasures for evermore, *Psalm* 16. 11. The objective Blessedness of the Saints consisteth in their Fruition of God, *Psalm* 73. 25. To see God in his Word and Works, is the Happiness of the Saints on Earth, but to see him Face to Face will be the fulness of their Blessedness in Heaven, 1 *John* 3. 2. This is that intuitive, transforming and satisfying Vision of which the Scripture frequently speaks, *Psalm* 17. 15. 2 *Cor.* 15. 28. *Rev.* 7. 17.

Fourthly, To be brought unto God, must needs imply a state of perfect Joy and highest Delight: So speaks the Apostle, *Jude v.* 14. Christ shall present or bring them to God with exceeding Joy: And more fully the Joy of this Day is expressed, Psal. 45. 15. *With Joy and rejoicing shall they be brought, they shall enter into the King's Palace:* It will be a day of universal Joy, when all the Saints are brought home to God in a perfected state. For,

1. God the Father will rejoice when Christ brings home that precious number of his Elect, whom he redeemed by his Blood: He rejoiceth in them now though imperfect, and under many distastful Corruptions and Weaknesses, *Zeph.* 3. 17. How much more will he rejoice in them when Christ presents them without Spot or Wrinkle to him, *Ephes.* 5. 27.

2. Jesus Christ will exceedingly rejoice, 'twill be the Day of Gladness and Satisfaction of his Heart: For now, and not till now he receives his mystical Fulness, *Col.* 1. 24. beholds all the blessed Issues of his Death, which cannot but give him unspeakable Contentment, Isa. 53. 11. *He shall see of the travail of his Soul, and shall be satisfied.*

3. The Day in which Believers are brought home to God, will be a Day of unspeakable Joy to the holy Spirit of God himself. For unto this all his sanctifying Designs in this World had respect: To this Day he sealed them: After this he stirred up Desires and Groanings that cannot be uttered in their Hearts, *Ephes.* 4. 30. *Rom.* 8. 26. Thus all the great and blessed Persons, Father, Son and Spirit, will rejoice in the bringing home of the Elect to God. For as it is the greatest Joy to a Man to see the Designs which his Heart hath been long projecting and intently set upon, by an orderly Conduct, at last brought to the happy Issue he first aimed at; much more will it be so here: The Counsel and Hand of each Person being deeply concerned in this blessed Design.

4. The Angels of God will rejoice at the bringing home of Believers to him: The Spirits of just Men made perfect will be united in one general Assembly with an innumerable Company of Angels, *Heb.* 2. 22. Great is the Affection and Love of Angels to redeemed ones: They greatly rejoiced at the Incarnation of Christ for them, *Luke* 2. 13. They greatly delighted to pry into the Mystery of their Redemption, 1 *Pet.* 1. 12. They were marvellously delighted at their Conversion, which was the Day of their Espousals to Christ, *Luke* 15. 10. They have been tender and careful over them, and very serviceable to them in this World, *Heb.* 1. 14. and therefore cannot but rejoice exceedingly to see them all brought home in safety to their Father's House.

5. To conclude Christ's bringing home of all Believers unto God, will be matter of unspeakable Joy to themselves. For whatever Knowledge and Acquaintance they had with God here, whatever Sights of Faith they had of Heaven and the Glory to come in this World; yet the sight of God and Christ the Redeemer will be an unspeakable surprise to them in that Day. This will be the Day of relieving all their Wants; the Day of Satisfaction to all their Desires: For now they are come where they would be; arrived at the very Desires of their Souls.

Secondly, In the last place, let it be considered what influence the Death of Christ hath upon this Design, and you will find it much every way. In two things especially the Death of Christ hath a blessed Causality and Influence in this matter, *viz.*

1. It effectually removes all Obstacles to it.
2. It purchaseth (as a price) their Title to it.

First, The Death of Christ removes all Obstacles out of the way of this Mercy: Such were the Bars hindring our access to God, as nothing but the Death of Christ could remove and open a way for Believers to come to God. The *Guilt* of Sin barred us from his gracious Presence, *Rom.* 5. 1, 2, 3. *Hosea* 14. 2. The *filth* of Sin excludes us from God, *Hab.* 1. 13. *Heb.* 12. 14. The *Enmity* of our Nature perfectly stopped up our way to God, *Col.* 1. 21. *Rom.* 8. 7. by reason hereof fallen Man hath no Desire to come unto God, *Job* 21. 14. The *Justice* of God like a flaming Sword turning every way; kept all Men from access to God: And lastly, *Satan* that malicious and armed Adversary lay as a Lyon in the way to God, 2 *Pet.* 5. 8. Oh with what strong Bars were the Gates of Heaven shut against our Souls! The way to God was chained up with such Difficulties as none but Christ was able to remove; and he by Death hath effectually removed them all: The way is now open, even the new and the living way, consecrated for us by his Blood. The Death of Christ effectually removes the guilt of Sin, 1 *Pet.* 2. 24. washes off the filth of Sin, 1 *John* 5. 6. takes away the Enmity of Sin, *Col.* 1. 20, 21. satisfies all the demands of Nature, *Rom.* 3. 25, 26. hath broken all the Power of Satan, *Col.* 2. 15. *Heb.* 2. 14. and consequently the way to God is effectually and fully opened to Believers by the Blood of Jesus, *Heb.* 10. 20.

Secondly, The Blood of Christ purchased for Believers their Right and Title to this Privilege, Gal.

Gal. 4. 4, 5. *But when the fulneſs of time was come, God ſent forth his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law: To redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons,* (*i. e.*) both the Relation and Inheritance of Sons. There was value and worth enough in the precious Blood of Chriſt, not only to pay all our Debts to Juſtice, but over and above the Payment of our Debts, to purchaſe for us this invaluable Privilege. We muſt put this unſpeakable Mercy of being brought to God, as my Text puts it, upon the account and ſcore of the Death of Chriſt. No Believer had ever taſted the Sweetneſs of ſuch a Mercy, if Chriſt had not taſted the Bitterneſs of Death for him. The uſe of all you will have in the following Deductions of Truth.

Deduction 1. *Great is the preciouſneſs and worth of Souls that the life of Chriſt ſhould be given to redeem and recover them to God*: As God laid out his Thoughts and Counſel from Eternity upon them to project the Way and Method of their Salvation: So the Lord Jeſus in purſuance of that bleſſed Deſign, came from the Boſom of the Father, and ſpilt his invaluable Blood to bring them to God. No wiſe Man expends vaſt Sums to bring home trifling Commodities. How cheap ſoever our Souls are in our Eſtimation, 'tis evident by this they are of precious eſteem in the Eyes of Chriſt.

Deduction 2. *Redeemed Souls muſt expect no reſt or ſatisfaction on this ſide Heaven, and the full Enjoyment of God*: The Life of a Believer in this World, is a Life of Motion and Expectation: They are now coming to God, 1 *Pet.* 2. 4. God, you ſee, is the centre and reſt of their Souls, *Heb.* 4. 9. As the Rivers cannot reſt till they pour themſelves into the Boſom of the Sea, ſo neither can renewed Souls find reſt till they come into the Boſom of God. There be four things which do and will break the reſt and diſturb the Souls of Believers in this World; Afflictions, Temptations, Corruptions, and abſence from God: if the three former Cauſes of Diſquietneſs were totally removed, ſo that a Believer were placed in ſuch a Condition upon Earth where no Affliction ſhould diſturb him, no Temptation trouble him, no Corruption defile or grieve him: Yet his very Abſence from God muſt ſtill keep him reſtleſs and unſatisfied, 2 *Cor.* 5. 6. *Whilſt we are at home in the Body, we are abſent from the Lord.*

Feciſti nos ad te, & inquietum eſt cor noſtrum donec requieſcat in te. Aug. confeſſ. lib. 1. Cap. 1.

Deduction 3. *What ſweet and pleaſant Thoughts ſhould all Believers have of Death!* When they die, and never till they die ſhall they be fully brought home to God. Death to the Saints is the Door by which they enter into the Enjoyment of God: The dying Chriſtian is almoſt at home, yet a few Pangs and Agonies more, and then he is come to God in whoſe Preſence is the fulneſs of Joy. *I deſire,* ſaith *Paul to depart and to be with Chriſt, which is far better,* Phil. 1. 23. It ſhould not ſcare us to be brought to Death, the King of Terrors, ſo long as it is the Office of Death to bring us to God. That dreaming Opinion of the Soul ſleeping after Death is ungrounded as it is uncomfortable: The ſame Day we looſe from this Shore, we ſhall be landed upon the bleſſed Shore, where we ſhall ſee and enjoy God for ever. O! if the Friends of dead Believers did but underſtand where, and with whom their Souls are, whilſt they are Mourning over their Bodies: Certainly a few believing Thoughts of this would quickly dry up their Tears, and fill the Houſe of Mourning with Voices of Praiſe and Thankſgiving.

Deduction 4. *How comfortable and ſweet ſhould the Converſes and Communication of Chriſtians be with one another in this World!* Chriſt is bringing them all to God through this Vale of Tears, they are now in the way to him, all bound for Heaven, going home to God to their everlaſting reſt in Glory: Every Day, every Hour, every Duty brings them nearer and nearer to their Journeys end, *Rom.* 13. 11. *Now,* ſaith the Apoſtle, *is our Salvation nearer than when we believed.* O what manner of heavenly Communications and raviſhing Diſcourſes ſhould Believers have with each other as they walk by the way! O what pleaſant and delightful Stories ſhould they tell one another about the Place and State whither Chriſt is bringing them, and where they ſhall ſhortly be! What raviſhing, tranſporting, transforming Viſions they ſhall have that Day they are brought home to God: How ſurprizingly glorious the ſight of Jeſus Chriſt will be to them, who died for them to bring them unto God. How ſhould ſuch Diſcourſes as theſe ſhorten and ſweeten their Paſſage through this World; ſtrengthen and encourage the dejected and feeble minded, and exceedingly honour and adorn their Profeſſion! Thus lived the Believers of old, Heb. 11. 9, 10. *By Faith he ſojourned in the Land of Promiſe, as in a ſtrange Country, dwelling in Tabernacles with* Iſaac *and* Jacob, *the Heirs with him of the ſame Promiſe, for he looked for a City which hath Foundations, whoſe Builder and Maker is God.* But alas! moſt Chriſtians are either entangled in the Cares and Troubles, or ſo enſnared by the Delights and Pleaſures, which almoſt continually divert and take up their Thoughts by the way, that there is but little room for any Diſcourſes of Chriſt and Heaven among many of them: But certainly this would be as much your Intereſt as your Duty. When the *Apoſtle* had entertained the *Theſſalonians* with a lovely Diſcourſe of their meeting the Lord in the Air, and being ever with the Lord, he charges it upon them as their great Duty to comfort one another with thoſe Words, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 17, 18.

Deduction 5. *How unreaſonable are the Dejections of Believers upon the account of thoſe Troubles which they meet with in this World!* 'Tis true, Afflictions of all kinds do attend Believers in their way to God; through many Tribulations we muſt enter into that Kingdom: But what then? Muſt we deſpond and droop under them as other Men? Surely no, if Afflictions be the way through which you muſt come to God, then never be diſcouraged at Affliction. Troubles and Afflictions are of excellent uſe under the Bleſſing of the Spirit to further Chriſt's great Deſign of bringing you to God. How often would you turn out of that way which leads to God, if God did not hedge up your way with Thorns, *Hoſea* 2. 6. Doubtleſs when you come home to God, you ſhall find you have been as much beholding (it may be a great deal more) to your Troubles than to your Comforts, for bringing you thither: However, the ſweetneſs of the end will infinitely more than recompence the Sorrows and Troubles of the Way: nor are they worthy to be compared with the Glory that ſhall be revealed in you, *Rom.* 8. 18.

Deduction 6. *How much are all Believers obliged in Point of Intereſt to follow Jeſus Chriſt whitherſoever he goes!* Thus are the Saints deſcribed, Rev. 14. 4. *Theſe are they which follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goeth: Theſe were redeemed from among Men, being the*

first-fruits unto God, and to the Lamb. If it be the design of Christ to bring us to God, then certainly it is our Duty to follow Christ in all the Paths of Active and Passive Obedience through which he now leads us, as ever we expect to be brought home to God at last: *We are made Partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our Confidence stedfast unto the end,* Heb. 3. 14. If we have followed him through many Sufferings and Troubles, and shall turn away from him at last, we lose all that we have wrought and suffered in Religion, and shall never reach home to God at last: The Crown of Life belongs only to them who are faithful to the Death.

Deduction 7. *Let all that desire or expect to come unto God hereafter, come to Christ by Faith now.* There is no other way to the Father but by Christ: No other way to Christ but Faith: How vain therefore are the Hopes and Expectations of all Unbelievers? Be assured of this great Truth, *Death* shall bring you to God as an avenging Judge, if *Christ* do not bring you now to God as a reconciled Father: Without Holiness no Man shall see God: The door of Hope is shut against all Christless Persons, John 14. 6. *No Man cometh unto the Father but by me.* Oh what a sweet Voice cometh down from Heaven to your Souls this day, saying, As ever you expect or hope to come to God and enjoy the Blessedness that is here, come unto Christ, obey his Calls, give up your selves to his Conduct and Government, and you must certainly be brought to God: As sure as you shall now be brought to Jesus Christ by spiritual Union, so sure shall you be brought to God in full Fruition.

Blessed be God for Jesus Christ, the new and living way to the Father.

And thus I have finished the Motives drawn from the Titles and Benefits of Christ, serving to enforce and quicken the great Gospel-Exhortation of coming to, and effectually applying the Lord Jesus Christ in the way of Faith. O that the Blessings of the Spirit might follow these Calls, and fix these Considerations as Nails in sure Places. But seeing the great Hindrance and Obstruction of Faith is the false Opinion and Perswasion of most unregenerate Men, that they are already in Christ; my next Work therefore shall be in a second *Use of Conviction* to undeceive Men in that Matter; and that by shewing them the undoubted certainty of these two things:

First, That there is no coming ordinarily to Christ without the Applications of the Law to our Consciences in a way of effectual *Conviction.*

Secondly, Nor by that neither without the Teachings of God, in the way of spiritual Illumination. The first of these will be fully confirmed and opened in

SERMON XX.

ROM. VII. ix.

For I was alive without the Law once, but when the Commandment came, Sin revived, and I died.

Serm. 20. Text. The great usefulness of the Law or Word of God, in order to the Application of Christ.

THE Scope of the Apostle in this Epistle, and more particularly in this Chapter, is to state the due Use and Excellency of the Law, which he doth accordingly,

First, By denying to it, Power to justifie us, which is the peculiar Honour of Christ.

Secondly, By ascribing to it a Power to convince us, and so prepare us for Christ.

Neither attributing to it more Honour than belongeth to it, nor yet detracting from it that Honour and Usefulness which God hath given it. It cannot make us righteous; but it can convince us that we are unrighteous; it cannot heal, but it can open and discover the Wounds that Sin hath given us; which he proves in this Place by an Argument drawn from his own Experience, confirmed also by the general Experience of Believers, in whose Persons and Names we must here understand him to speak; *For I was alive without the Law once, but when the Commandment came, Sin revived, and I died*: Wherein three Particulars are very observable.

First, The Opinion *Paul* had, and all unregenerate Men have of themselves before Conversion: *I was alive once:* By *Life* understand here liveliness, chearfulness, and confidence of his good Estate and Condition: He was full of vain Hope, false Joy, and presumptuous Confidence, a very brisk and jovial Man.

Secondly, The Sense and Opinion he had, and all others will have of themselves, if ever they come under the regenerating Work of the Spirit in his ordinary Method of working: *I died.* The Death here speaks of, stands opposed to that Life before mentioned; and signifies the Sorrows, Fears and Tremblings that seized upon his Soul, when his State and Temper were upon the Change: The Apprehensions he then had of his Condition struck him home to the Heart, and damped all his carnal Mirth: *I died.*

Thirdly, The Ground and Reason of this wonderful Alteration and Change of his Judgment, and Apprehension of his own Condition; *the Commandment came, and Sin revived;* the Commandment came, (*i. e.*) it came home to my Conscience, it was set on with a divine and mighty Efficacy upon my Heart: The Commandment was come before by way of Promulgation and the litteral Knowledge of it: But it never came till now in the spiritual Sense and convincing Power to his Soul: Though he had often read and heard the Law before, yet he never clearly understood the meaning and extent, he never felt the mighty Efficacy thereof upon his Heart before; it so came at this time, as it never came before. From hence the Observations are,

Doct. 1. *That unregenerate Persons are generally full of groundless Confidence and Chearfulness, though their Condition be sad and miserable.*

Doct. 2. *That there is a mighty Efficacy in the Word or Law of God to kill vain Confidence, and queneh carnal Mirth*

Mirth in the Hearts of Men, when God ſets it home upon their Conſciences.

We ſhall take both theſe Points under Conſideration, and improve them to the Deſign in Hand.

Doct. 1. *That unregenerate Perſons are generally full of groundleſs Confidence and Chearfulneſs, though their Condition be ſad and miſerable,* Rev. 3. 17. *Becauſe thou ſayſt 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*: This is the very Life that unregenerate Men do live. In the opening whereof I will ſhew you,

1. What is the Life of the unregenerate.
2. What maintains that Life.
3. How it appears that this is the Life the generality of the World do live.
4. The danger of living ſuch a Life as this: And then apply it.

Firſt, What is the Life of the unregenerate, and wherein it conſiſts? Now there being among others three things in which the Life of the unregenerate doth principally conſiſt, *viz.*

Carnal Security,
Preſumptuous Hope, and
Falſe Joy:
Of theſe briefly in their Order.

Firſt, There is in unregenerate Men a great deal of *carnal Security*, they dread no danger, *Luke* 11. 21. *When a ſtrong Man armed keepeth his Palace, his goods are in Peace*: There is generally a great ſtillneſs and ſilence in the Conſciences of ſuch Men: When others (in a better Condition) are watching and trembling, they ſleep ſecurely, ſo they live, and ſo oft-times they die, *Pſalm* 73. 4. *They have no Bonds in their Death*; Hebrew, no Knot, no Difficulties that puzzle them: 'Tis true, the Conſciences of few Men are ſo perfectly ſtupified, but that ſometime or other they twinge and gird them, but it ſeldom works at that height, or continues with them ſo long as to give any conſiderable interruption to their carnal Peace and Quietneſs.

Secondly, The Life of the unregenerate conſiſteth in preſumptuous Hope: This is the very Foundation of their carnal Security. So Chriſt tells the Jews, John 8. 54, 55. *Of whom ye ſay that he is your God, and yet ye have not known him.* The World is full of Hope without a Promiſe, which is but as a Spiders-web when a ſtreſs comes to be laid upon it, Job 27. 8. Unregenerate Men are ſaid indeed to be without Hope, *Epheſ.* 2. 12. But the meaning is, they are without any ſolid well-grounded Hope: For in Scripture account, vain Hope is no Hope, except it be a lively Hope, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. A Hope growing from Union with Chriſt, *Col.* 1. 27. A Hope nouriſhed by Experience, *Rom.* 5. 4. A Hope for which a Man can give a Reaſon, 1 *Pet.* 3. 15. An Hope that puts Men upon Heart purifying Endeavours, 1 *John* 3. 3. It is in the account of God a Cypher, a Vanity, not deſerving the Name of Hope: And yet ſuch a groundleſs, dead, Chriſtleſs, irrational, idle Hope is that which the unregenerate lives upon.

Thirdly, The Life of the unregenerate conſiſteth in falſe Joy, the immediate Off-ſpring of unfounded Hope, *Mat.* 13. 20. The ſtony ground received the Word with Joy.

There are two ſorts of Joy upon which the unregenerate live, *viz.*

1. A ſenſitive Joy in things *Carnal.*
2. A deluſive Joy in things *Spiritual.*

They rejoice in Corn, Wine and Oyl, in their Eſtates and Children, in the pleaſant Fruitions of the Creature: Yea, and they rejoice alſo in Chriſt and the Promiſes, in Heaven and in Glory: With all which they have juſt ſuch a kind of Communion as a Man hath in a Dream with a full Feaſt and curious Muſick, and juſt ſo their Joy will vaniſh when they awake. Now theſe three, *Security, Hope* and *Joy*, make up the Livelihood of the carnal World.

Secondly, Next it concerns us to enquire what are the things that maintain and ſupport this Security, Hope and Joy in the Hearts of unregenerate Men; and if we conſider duly, we ſhall find Church Privileges, natural Ignorance, falſe Evidences of the Love of God, ſlight Workings of the Goſpel, Self-love, comparing themſelves with the more prophane; and Satan's Policy managing all theſe in order to their eternal Ruin; are ſo many Springs to feed and maintain this Life of Deluſion in the unregenerate.

1. *Firſt*, Church Privileges lay the Foundation to this ſtrong Deluſion: Thus the Jews deceived themſelves, ſaying in their Hearts, *we have* Abraham *for our Father*, Mat. 3. 9. This propt up their vain Hopes that *Abraham's* Blood ran in their Veins, though *Abraham's* Faith and Obedience never wrought in their Hearts.

2. *Secondly*, Natural Ignorance, this keeps all in Peace; they that ſee not, fear not. There are but two ways to quiet the Hearts of Men about their ſpiritual and eternal Concernments, *viz. the way of Aſſurance* and Faith, or *the way of Ignorance* and Self-deceit: By the one we are put beyond danger, by the other beyond fear, though the danger be greater. Satan could never quiet Men if he did not firſt blind them.

3. *Thirdly*, Falſe evidence of the Love of God is another Spring feeding this Security, vain Hope, and falſe Joy in the Hearts of Men: See the Power of it to huſh and ſtill the Conſcience, Mat. 7. 22: *Many will ſay to me in that day; Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy Name*, &c. The things upon which they built their Evidence and Confidence were external things in Religion, yet they had a quieting Power upon them as if they had been the beſt Evidences in the World.

4. *Fourthly*, Slight workings of the Goſpel, ſuch are tranſient Motions of the Affections under the Word, *Heb.* 6. 8. the working of their deſires about ſpiritual Objects, *John* 6. 34. *Mat.* 15. 8. the eternal Change and Reformation of their Ways, *Mat.* 12. 43. all which ſerve to nouriſh the vain Hopes of the unregenerate.

5. *Fifthly*, Self-love is an apparent Reaſon and ground of Security and falſe Hope, *Mat.* 7. 3. It makes a Man to overlook great Evils in himſelf, whilſt he is ſharp ſighted to diſcover and cenſure leſſer Evils in others: Self-love takes away the ſight of Sin, by bringing it too near the Eye.

6. *Sixthly*, Mens comparing themſelves with thoſe that are more prophane and groſly wicked than themſelves, ſerves notably to quiet and huſh the Conſcience aſleep; *God, I thank thee*, ſaid the Phariſee, *I am not as other Men, or as this Publican.* O what a Saint did he ſeem to himſelf, when he ſtood by thoſe that were more externally wicked!

7. *Seventhly* and *Laſtly*, The Policy of Satan to manage all theſe things to the blinding and ruining of the Souls of Men, is another great Reaſon they live ſo ſecurely and pleaſantly as they do, in a ſtate of ſo much Danger and Miſery, 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.

The God of this World blinds the Eyes of them that believe not.

Thirdly, You have ſeen what the Life of the unregenerate is, and what maintains that Life: In the next Place I ſhall give you Evidence that this is the Life the generality of the World do live: A Life of carnal Security, vain Hope and falſe Joy: This will evidently appear, if we conſider,

Firſt, The activity and livelineſs of Mens Spirits in purſuit of the World. O how lively and vigorous are their Hearts in the Management of earthly Deſigns, *Pſal.* 6. 4. *Who will ſhew us any good?* The World eats up their Hearts, time and ſtrength. Now this could never be if their Eyes were but opened to ſee the Danger and Miſery their Souls be in: How few Deſigns for the World run in the Thoughts of a condemned Man? O if God had ever made the Light of Conviction to ſhine into their Conſciences, certainly the Temptations would lie the quite contrary Way; even in too great a neglect of things of this Life: But this Briskneſs and Livelineſs plainly ſhews the great Security which is upon moſt Men.

Secondly, The marvellous Quietneſs and Stillneſs that is in the Thoughts and Conſciences of Men, about their everlaſting Concernments plainly ſhews this to be the Life of the unregenerate: How few Scruples, Doubts or Fears ſhall you hear from them? How many Years may a Man live in carnal Families before he ſhall hear ſuch a Queſtion as this ſeriouſly propounded, *What ſhall I do to be ſaved?* There are no Queſtions in their Lips, becauſe no Fear or Senſe of Danger in their Hearts.

Thirdly, The general Contentedneſs and profeſt Willingneſs of carnal Men to die, gives clear Evidence that ſuch a Life of Security and vain Hope is the Life they live; *Like Sheep they are laid in the Grave*, Pſal. 49. 14. O how quiet and ſtill are their Conſciences, when there are but a few Breaths more between them and everlaſting Burnings! Had God opened their Eyes to apprehend the Conſequences of Death, and what follows the pale Horſe, *Rev.* 6. 8. It were impoſſible but that every unregenerate Man ſhould make that Bed on which he dies ſhake and tremble under him.

Fourthly, and *Laſtly*, The low Eſteem Men have for Chriſt, and the total Neglect of, at leaſt the meer trifling with, thoſe Duties in which he is to be found, plainly diſcovers this ſtupid ſecured Life to be the Life that the generality of the World do live: For were Men ſenſible of the Diſeaſe of Sin, there could be no quieting them without Chriſt the *Phyſician*, *Phil.* 3. 8. All the Buſineſs they have to do in this World could never keep them from their Knees, or make them Strangers to their Cloſets: All which, and much more that might be ſaid of like nature, gives too full and clear Proof to this ſad Aſſertion, that this is the Life the unregenerate World generally lives.

Fourthly, In the laſt Place I would ſpeak a few Words to diſcover the Danger of ſuch a Life as hath been deſcribed, to which purpoſe let the following brief Hints be minded ſeriouſly.

Firſt, By theſe things Souls are inevitably betrayed into Hell and eternal Ruin, this blinding is in order to damning, 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. *If our Goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt; whoſe Eyes the God of this World hath blinded*: Thoſe that are turned over into eternal Death are thus generally mop'd and hoodwinkt in order thereunto, *Iſa.* 6. 9, 10. *And he ſaid go and tell this People, hear ye indeed but underſtand not, and ſee ye indeed but perceive not: Make the Heart of this People fat, and make their Ears heavy, and ſhut their Eyes; leſt they ſee with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears and underſtand with their Hearts, and convert, and be healed.*

Secondly, As damning is the Event of blinding, ſo nothing makes Hell a more terrible ſurpriſe to the Soul than this doth: By this Means the Wrath of God is felt before its Danger be apprehended, a Man is paſt all Hope before he begins to have any Fear: His eternal Ruin like a Breach ready to fall, ſwelling out in a high Wall cometh ſuddenly at an Inſtant, *Iſa.* 30. 13. and as it damns ſurely and ſurprizingly, ſo,

Thirdly, Nothing more aggravates a Man's Damnation than to ſink ſuddenly into it, from amidſt ſo many Hopes and high Confidence of Safety: For a Man to find himſelf in Hell when he thought and concluded himſelf within a ſtep of Heaven, O what a Hell will it be to ſuch Men! The higher vain Hopes lifted them up, the more dreadful muſt their Fall be, *Mat.* 7. 22. And as it damns ſurely, ſurprizingly, and with higheſt Aggravations, So,

Fourthly, This Life of Security and vain Hope fruſtrates all the Means of Recovery and Salvation in the only Seaſon, wherein they can be uſeful and beneficial to us: By reaſon of theſe things the Word hath no Power to convince Mens Conſciences, nothing can bring them to a Sight and Senſe of their Condition: Therefore Chriſt told the Self-confident and blind Jews, Mat. 21. 21. *That the Publicans and Harlots go into the Kingdom of God before them*: And the reaſon is, becauſe their Hearts lie more open and fair to the ſtrokes of Conviction and Compunction for Sin than thoſe do, who are blinded by vain Hopes and Confidences.

Infer. 1. *Is this the Life that the unregenerate World lives? Then it is not to be wondered at, that the Preaching of the Goſpel hath ſo little Succeſs*: *Who hath believed our Report* (ſaith the Prophet) *and to whom is the Arm of the Lord revealed?* Iſa. 53. 1. Miniſters ſtudy for Truths apt to awaken and convince the Conſciences of them that hear them, but their Words return again to them: They turn to God and mourn over the Matter, we have laboured in vain, and ſpent our ſtrength for nought; and this is the cauſe of all Security, and vain Hopes bar faſt the Doors of Mens Hearts againſt all the Convictions and Perſwaſions of the Word: The greater cauſe have they to admire the grace of God, who have or ſhall find the Convictions of the Word ſharper than any twoedged Sword piercing to the dividing aſunder of the Soul and Spirit: To whoſe Hearts God brings home the Commandment by an effectual Application.

Infer. 2. *If this be the Life of the unregenerate World what deadly Enemies are they that nouriſh and ſtrengthen the groundleſs Confidences and vain Hopes of Salvation in Men!* This the Scripture calls the healing of the hurt of Souls ſlightly, by crying Peace, Peace when there is no Peace, *Jer.* 6. 14, The ſowing of Pillows under their Arm-holes, *Ezek.* 13. 18. That they may lie ſoft and eaſie under the Miniſtery: And this is the Doctrine which the People love, but O what will the end of theſe things be! And what an account have thoſe Men to give to God for the Blood of thoſe Souls by them betrayed to the everlaſting Burnings! Such Flattery is the greateſt Cruelty: Thoſe whom you bleſs upon Earth will curſe you in Hell, and the Day in which they truſted their Souls to your Conduct.

Infer.

Infer. 3. *How great a Mercy is it to be awakened out of that general Sleep and Security which is fallen upon the World?* You cannot eſtimate the value of that Mercy, for it is a peculiar Mercy. O that ever the Spirit of the Lord ſhould give thy Soul a jog under the Miniſtry of the Word, ſtartle, and rouſe thy Conſcience, whilſt others are left ſnoring in the dead Sleep of Security round about thee: When the Lord ſhall deal with thy Soul much after that rate he did with *Paul* in the way to *Damaſcus*, who not only ſaw a Light ſhining from Heaven, which thoſe that travelled with him ſaw as well as he, but heard that Voice from Heaven which did the Work upon his Heart, though his Companions heard it not. Beſides, it is not only a peculiar Mercy, but it is a leading introductive Mercy to all other ſpiritual Mercies that follow it to all Eternity: If God had not done this for thee, thou hadſt never been brought to Faith, to Chriſt or Heaven: From this Act of the Spirit all other ſaving Acts take their Riſe: So that you have Cauſe for ever to admire the Goodneſs of God in ſuch a Favour as this is.

Infer. 4. *Laſtly, Hence it follows, that the generality of the World are in the direct Way to eternal Ruin, and whatever their vain Confidences are, they cannot be ſaved: Narrow is the way, and ſtrait is the Gate that leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it.* Hear me all you that live this dangerous Life of carnal Security and vain Hope, whatever your Perſwaſions and Confidences are; except you give them up and get better grounds for your Hope, you cannot be ſaved. For,

Firſt, Such Hopes and Confidences as yours are directly contradictory to the eſtabliſhed Order of the Goſpel, which requires Repentance, *Acts* 5. 31. Faith, *Acts* 13. 39. And Regeneration, *Joh.* 3. 3. In all that ſhall be ſaved: And this Order ſhall never be altered for any Man's ſake.

Secondly, If ſuch as you be ſaved, all the Threatnings in Scripture muſt be reverſed, which lie in full Oppoſition to your vain Hopes, *Mark* 16. 16. *John* 3. 16. *Rom.* 3. 8, 9. either the Truth of God in theſe Threatnings muſt fail, or your vain Hopes muſt fail.

Thirdly, If ever ſuch as you be ſaved, new Conditions muſt be ſet to all the Promiſes: For there is no Condition of any ſpecial Promiſe found in any unregenerate Perſon. Compare your Hearts with theſe Scriptures, *Mat.* 5. 3, 4, 5, 6. *Pſalm* 24. 4. *Pſalm* 84. 11. *Gen.* 17. 1, 2.

Fourthly, If ever ſuch a Hope as yours bring you to Heaven, then the ſaving Hope of God's Elect is not rightly deſcribed to us in the Scriptures. Scripture Hope is the effect of Regeneration, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. And Purity of Heart is the Effect of that Hope, 1 *John* 3. 3. Nay,

Fifthly, The very Nature of Heaven is miſtaken in Scripture, if ſuch as you be Subjects qualified for its Enjoyment: For Aſſimilation, or the Conformity of the Soul to God in Holineſs, is in the Scripture account a principal ingredient of that Bleſſedneſs: By all which it manifeſtly appears that the Hopes of moſt Men are vain, and will never bring them to Heaven.

SERMON XXI.

DOCT. II.

That there is mighty Efficacy in the Word or Law of God, to kill vain Confidence, and quench carnal Mirth in the Hearts of Men, when God ſets it home upon their Conſciences.

rm. 21. Cor. 10. 4, 5. *THE Weapons of the Word are not carnal, but mighty through God; to the pulling down of ſtrong holds, caſting down Imaginations nd every high thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the Knowdge of God, and bringing into Captivity every thought the Obedience of Chriſt.*

In the opening of this Point I ſhall,

1. Demonſtrate the Efficacy of the Word or Law of God.
2. Shew wherein the Efficacy thereof lies.
3. From whence it hath all this mighty Power and Efficacy.

Firſt, I ſhall give you ſome Demonſtrations of e mighty Power and Efficacy that there is in the ord or Law of God: Which will appear with ful- t Evidence.

Firſt, From the various *Subjects* upon whom it orks: The Hearts and Conſciences of Men of Orders and Qualities, have been reached and ounded to the quick by the two-edged Sword of od's Law. Some among the *great and honourable* the Earth, (though indeed the feweſt of that nk) have been made to ſtoop and tremble under e Word, *Acts* 24. 16. *Mark* 6. 20. 1 *Sam.* 15. 24. he wiſe and learned of the World have felt its wer, and been brought over to embrace the mbling and ſelf-denying Ways of Chriſt, *Acts* 17. 34. Thus *Origen*, *Hierom*, *Tertullian*, *Bradwardine*, and many more, came into *Canaan* laden with *Ægyptian Gold*, as one ſpeaks, (*i. e.*) they came into the Church of God abundantly enriched and furniſhed with the Learned Arts and Sciences; devoting them all to the Service of Chriſt: Yea, and which is as ſtrange, *the moſt ſimple, weak and illiterate* have been wonderfully changed and wrought upon by the Power of the Word: *The Teſtimonies of the Lord make wiſe the ſimple.* Men of weak Underſtandings in all other Matters have been made wiſe to Salvation by the Power of the Word, *Matth.* 11. 25. 1 *Cor.* 1. 27. Nay, the moſt malicious and obſtinate Enemies of Chriſt have been wounded and converted by the Word, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13. *Acts* 16. 24. Thoſe that have been under the Prejudice of the worſt, and moſt *idolatrous Education*, have been the Subjects of its mighty Power, *Acts* 19. 26. To conclude, Men of the moſt profligate and debauched Lives have been wonderfully changed, and altered by the Power of the Word, 1. *Cor.* 6. 10, 11.

Secondly, The mighty Efficacy of the Law of God appears in the *manner of its Operation* which Works ſuddenly, ſtrikes like a Dart through the Hearts and Conſciences of Men, *Acts* 2. 37. A wonderful change is made in a ſhort time: And as it works quickly and ſuddenly, ſo it works irreſiſtibly, with an uncontrouled Power, upon the Spirits of

Men, 1 *Thes.* 1. 5. *Rom.* 1. 16. Let the Soul be armed againſt Conviction with the thickeſt Ignorance, ſtrongeſt Prejudice, or moſt obſtinate Reſolution, the Word of God will wound the Breaſt even of ſuch a Man; when God ſends it forth in his Authority and Power.

Thirdly, The wonderful Power of the Law or Word of God is evidently ſeen in the ſtrange Effects which are produced by it in the Hearts and Lives of Men. For,

Firſt, It changes and alters the Frame and Temper of the Mind: It moulds a Man into a quite contrary Temper, *Gal.* 1. 23. *He which perſecuted us in times paſt, now preacheth the Faith, which once he deſtroyed*: Thus a Tyger is transformed into a Lamb, by the Power of the Word of God.

Secondly, It makes the Soul, upon which it works to forgo and quit the deareſt Intereſt it hath in this World for Jeſus Chriſt, *Phil.* 3. 7, 8, 9. Riches, Honours, Self-righteouſneſs, deareſt Relations are denied and forſaken: Reproach, Poverty and Death it ſelf are willingly embraced for Chriſt's ſake; when once the Efficacy of the Word hath been upon the Hearts of Men, 1 *Theſ.* 1. 6. Thoſe that were their Companions in Sin are declined, renounced and caſt off with abhorrence, 1 *Pet.* 4. 3, 4. In ſuch things as theſe the mighty Power of the Word diſcovers it ſelf.

Secondly, Next let us ſee wherein the Efficacy of the Word upon the Souls of Men principally conſiſteth: And we find in Scripture it exerteth its Power in five diſtinct Acts upon the Soul; by all which it ſtrikes at the Life and kills the very Heart of vain Hopes. For,

Firſt, It hath an awakening Efficacy upon ſecure and ſleepy Sinners: It rouzes the Conſcience, and brings a Man to a ſenſe and feeling Apprehenſion, *Eph.* 5. 13, 14. The firſt effectual jog or touch of the Word ſtartles the drouſie Conſcience. A poor Sinner lies in his Sins, as *Peter* did in his Chains, faſt aſleep, though a Warrant were ſigned for his Execution the next Day: But the Spirit in the Word awakens him, as the Angel did *Peter*: And this awakening Power of the Word is in order both of Time and Nature antecedent to all its other Operations and Effects.

Secondly, The Law of God hath an enlightning Efficacy upon the Minds of Men: 'Tis Eye-ſalve to the blinded Eye, *Rev.* 3. 18. A light ſhining in a dark Place, 2 *Pet.* 1. 19. A Light ſhining into the very Heart of Man, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. When the Word comes in Power, all things appear with another Face: The Sins that were hid from our Eyes, and the danger which was concealed by the Policy of Satan from our Souls, now lie clear and open before us, *Eph.* 5. 8.

Thirdly, The Word of God hath a convincing Efficacy: It ſets Sin in order before the Soul, *Pſal* 50. 21. As an Army is drawn up in exact order, ſo are the ſins of Nature and Practice, the ſins of Youth and Age, even a great and terrible Army is drawn up before the Eye of the Conſcience; the Convictions of the Word are clear and full, 1 *Cor.* 14, 24, 25. The very ſecrets of a Sinner's Heart are made manifeſt; his Mouth is ſtopt; his Pleas are ſilenced; his Conſcience yields to the Charge of Guilt, and Equity of the Sentence of the Law. So that the Soul ſtands mute, and ſelf-condemned at the Bar of Conſcience: It hath got nothing to ſay why the Wrath of God ſhould not come upon it to the uttermoſt, *Rom.* 3. 19.

Fourthly, The Law of God hath a Soul-wounding, an Heart-cutting Efficacy: It pierces into the very Soul and Spirit of Man, *Acts* 2. 37. *When they heard this, they were pricked at their Hearts, and ſaid unto Peter, and to the reſt of the Apoſtles; Men and Brethren what ſhall we do?* A dreadful ſound is in the Sinner's Ears, his Soul is in deep Diſtreſs, he knows not which way to turn for eaſe; no Plaiſter but the Blood of Chriſt can heal theſe wounds which the Word makes: No outward Trouble, Affliction, diſgrace or loſs ever touched the quick as the Word of God doth.

Fifthly, The Word hath a Heart-turning, a Soul-converting Efficacy in it: 'Tis a regenerating as well as a convincing Word, 1 *Pet.* 1. 23. 1 *Theſ.* 1. 9. The Law wounds, the Goſpel cures, the Law diſcovers the evil that is in Sin, and the Miſery that follows Sin: And the Spirit of God working in fellowſhip with the Word effectually turns the Heart from Sin. And thus we ſee in what glorious Acts, the Efficacy of the Word diſcovers it ſelf upon the Hearts of Men, and all theſe Acts lie in order to each other: For until the Soul be awakened it cannot be enlightned, *Eph.* 5. 14. Till it be enlightned it cannot be convinced, *Eph.* 5. 13. Conviction being nothing elſe, but the Application of the Light that ſhines in the Mind to the Conſcience of a Sinner; till it be convinced, it cannot be wounded for ſin, *Acts* 2. 37. And until it be wounded for Sin, it will never be converted from ſin, and brought effectually to Jeſus Chriſt: And thus you ſee what the Power of the Word is.

Thirdly, In the laſt Place, it will concern us to enquire whence the Word of God hath all this Power; and it is moſt certain that it is not a Power inherent in it ſelf, nor derived from the Inſtrument by which it is managed; but from the Spirit of the Lord who communicates to it all that Power and Efficacy which it hath upon our Souls.

Firſt, Its Power is not in or from it ſelf: It Works not in a *Phyſical Way* as Natural Agents do; for then the effect would always follow, except it were miraculouſly hindred. But this ſpiritual Efficacy is in the Word, as the healing Vertue was in the Waters of *Bethesda*, Joh. 5. 4. *An Angel went down at a certain ſeaſon into the Pool, and troubled the Water: Whoſoever then firſt after the troubling of the Water ſtepped in, was made whole of whatſoever diſeaſe he had.* It is not a Power naturally inherent in it at all Times, but communicated to it at ſome ſpecial Seaſons: How often is the Word Preached, and no Man awaked or convinced by it!

Secondly, The Power of the Word is not communicated to it by the Inſtrument that manageth it, 1 *Cor.* 3. 7. *Neither is he that planteth any thing; neither he that watereth.* Miniſters are nothing to ſuch an Effect and Purpoſe as this is: He doth not mean that they are uſeleſs and altogether unneceſſary, but inſufficient of themſelves to produce ſuch mighty Effects: It Works not as it is the Word of Man, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 13. Miniſters may ſay of the ordinary, as *Peter* ſaid of the extraordinary Effects of the Spirit, *Acts* 3. 12. *Ye Men of Iſrael why marvel ye at this, or why look ye ſo earneſtly on us, as though by our own Power or Holineſs we had made this Man to walk?* If the Effects of the Word were in the Power, and at the Command of him that Preacheth it, then the Blood of all the Souls that periſh under our Miniſtry muſt lie at our door, as was formerly noted.

Thirdly, If you ſay, whence then hath the Word all this Power? Our Anſwer is, it derives it all from the Spirit of God, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 13. *For this cauſe*

Litera jubetur, spiritu donatur. Aug. Ep. 157.

cause thank we God without ceasing, because when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the Word of Men, but (as it is in Truth) the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. 'Tis a successful Instrument only when it is in the Hand of the Spirit, without whose influence it never did, nor can convince, convert, or save any Soul. Now, the Spirit of God hath a Sovereignty over three Things in order to the Conversion of the Sinner, *viz.*

1. Over the Word which Works.
2. Over the Soul wrought upon.
3. Over the Time and Season of working.

First, The Spirit has a glorious sovereignty over the Word itself, whose Instrument it is, to make it successful or not; as it pleaseth him, *Isa.* 55. 10, 11. *For as the Rain cometh down, and the Snow from Heaven*, &c. *So shall my Word be that goeth out of my Mouth*: As the Clouds, so the Word is carried and directed by Divine Pleasure? 'Tis the Lord that makes them both give down their Blessings, or to pass away Fruitless and Empty: Yea, 'tis from the Spirit that this Part of the Word works and not another: Those things upon which Ministers bestow greatest labour in their Preparation, and from which accordingly they have the greatest Expectation; these do nothing, when mean time something that dropt occasionally from them, like a chosen Shaft, strikes the Mark and doth the Work.

Secondly, The Spirit of the Lord hath a glorious sovereignty over the Souls wrought upon; 'tis his peculiar Work *to take away the stony Heart out of our Flesh, and to give us an Heart of Flesh*, Ezek. 36. 26. We may Reason, Exhort and Reprove, but nothing will stick till the Lord set it on. The Lord opened the Heart of *Lydia* under *Paul's* Ministry: He opens every Heart that is effectually opened to receive Christ in the Word: If the Word can get no entrance, if your Hearts remain dead under it still, we may say concerning such Souls, as *Martha* did concerning her Brother *Lazarus*; *Lord if thou hadst been here, my Brother had not died.* So, Lord, if thou hadst been in this Sermon; in this Prayer, or in that Counsel, these Souls had not remained dead under them.

Thirdly, The Spirit hath Dominion over the Times and Seasons of Conviction and Conversion: Therefore the Day in which Souls are wrought upon is called *the Day of his Power*, Psal. 110. 3. That shall work at one Time, which had no Efficacy at all at another Time: Because this, and not that was the Time appointed: And thus you see whence the Word derives that mighty Power it hath.

Now this Word of God when it is set home by the Spirit is mighty to convince, humble, and break the Hearts of Sinners, *John* 16. 9. *The Spirit when it cometh shall convince the World of Sin*: The Word signifies Conviction by such clear Demonstration as compelleth Assent: It not only convinces Men in general that they are Sinners, but it convinceth Men particularly of their own Sins, and the Aggravations of them. So in the Text, *Sin revived*, that is, the Lord revived his Sins, the very Circumstances and Aggravations with which they were committed: And so it will be with us when the Commandment comes: Sins that we had forgotten, committed so far back as our Youth or Childhood: Sins that lay slighted in our Consciences, shall now be rowz'd up as so many sleepy Lyons to affright and terrifie us: For now the Soul hears the Voice of God in the Word, as *Adam* heard it in the cool of the Day and was afraid, and hides it self; but all will not do: For the Lord is come in the Word: Sin is held up before the Eyes of the Conscience in its dreadful Aggravations and fearful Consequences as committed against the Holy Law, clear Light, warnings of Conscience, manifold Mercies, God's long-suffering, Christ's precious Blood, many warnings of Judgments, the Wages and Demerit whereof by the Verdict of a Man's own Conscience, is Death, Eternal Death, *Rom.* 6. 23. *Rom.* 1. 32. *Rom.* 2. 9. Thus the Commandment comes, Sin revives, and vain Hopes give up the Ghost.

Infer. 1. *Is there such a mighty Power in the Word, then certainly the Word is of Divine Authority*: There cannot be a more clear, and satisfying Proof that it is no human Invention, than the common sense that all Believers have of the Almighty Power in which it works upon their Hearts: So speaks the Apostle, 1 *Thes.* 2. 13. *When ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the Word of Man, but (as it is in Truth) the Word of God; which effectually worketh also in you that believe.* Can the Power of any Creature, the Word of a meer Man, so convince the Conscience, so terrifie the Heart, so discover the very secret Thoughts of the Soul, put a Man into such Tremblings? No, no, a greater than Man must needs be here: None but a God can so open the Eyes of the Blind, so open the Graves of the Dead, so quicken and enliven the Conscience that was seared, so bind over the Soul of a Sinner to the Judgment to come, so change and alter the frame and temper of a Man's Spirit, so powerfully raise, refresh and comfort a drooping dying Soul. Certainly the Power of God is in all this; and, if there were no more, yet this alone were sufficient to make full Proof of the Divine Authority of the Scriptures.

Infer. 2. *Judge from hence what an invaluable Mercy the Preaching of the Word is to the World*: 'Tis a Blessing far above our Estimation of it; little do we know what a Treasure God committeth to us in the Ordinances, *Acts* 13. 25. *To you is the Word of this Salvation sent*: 'Tis the very Power of God to Salvation, *Rom.* 1. 16. And Salvation is ordinarily denied to whom the Preaching of the Word is denied, *Rom.* 10. 14. It's called *the Word of Life*, Phil. 2. 16. And deserves to be valued by every one of us as our Life: The Eternal Decree of God's Election is executed by it upon our Souls: As many as be ordained to Eternal Life shall believe by the Preaching of it. Great is the ingratitude of this Generation which so slights and undervalues this invaluable Treasure: Which is a sad Presage of the most terrible Judgment, even in the removing our *Candlestick* out of its Place, except we Repent.

Infer. 3. *How sore and terrible a Judgment lies upon the Souls of those Men to whom no Word of God is made powerful enough to convince and awaken them!* Yet so stands the Case with Thousands who constantly sit under the Preaching of the Word: Many Arrows are shot at their Consciences, but none goes home to the mark, all fall short of the end: The Commandment hath come unto them many thousand times, by way of *Promulgation* and ministerial *Inculcation*, but yet never came home to their Souls by the Spirits effectual *Application*. O Friends, you have often heard the Voice of Man, but you never yet heard the Voice of God: Your understandings have been *instructed*, but your Consciences to this Day were never throughly *convinced*: *We have mourned*

unto

unto you, but ye have not lamented, Matth. 11. 17. *Who hath believed our Report, and unto whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* Alas, we have laboured in Vain, we have ſpent our ſtrength for Nought, our Word returns unto us empty; but O what a ſtupendious Judgment is here! Heb. 6. 7, 8. *The Earth which drinketh in the Rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth Herbs meet for them by whom it is dreſſed, receiveth Bleſſing from God; but that which beareth Thorns and Briars is rejected, and is nigh unto curſing, whoſe end is to be burned.* What a ſore Judgment and Sign of God's diſpleaſure would you account it, if your Fields were curſed; if you ſhould Manure, Dreſs, Plough and Sow them; but never reap the Fruit of your Labour, the Increaſe being ſtill blaſted? And yet this were nothing compared with the Blaſting of the Word to your Souls: That which is a ſavour of Life unto Life unto ſome, becomes the *ſavour of Death unto Death, to others*, 2 Cor. 2. 16. The Lord affect our Hearts with the terrible ſtroaks of God upon the Souls of Men.

2. *Uſe of Exhortation.* I ſhall conclude this Point with a few Words of Exhortation to three ſorts of Men, *viz.*

1. To thoſe that never felt the Power of the Word.
2. To thoſe that have only felt ſome ſlight and common Effects thereof.
3. To thoſe unto whoſe very Hearts the Commandment is come in its effectual and ſaving Power.

Firſt, You that never felt any Power in the Word at all, I beg you in the Name of him that made you, and by all the regard and value you have for thoſe precious Souls within you; that now at laſt ſuch Conſiderations as theſe may find place in your Souls; and that you will bethink yourſelves,

Conſideration 1. Whoſe Word that is that cannot gain entrance into your Hearts, is it not the Word of God which you deſpiſe and ſlight? *Thou caſteſt my Word behind thy back*, Pſal. 50. 17. O what an Affront and Provocation to God is this! You deſpiſe not Man but God; the great and terrible God, in whoſe Hand your Breath and Soul is: This Contempt runs higher than you imagine.

Conſid. 2. Conſider that however the Word hath no Power upon you, the Commandment cannot come home to your Hearts; yet it doth work, and comes home with Power to the Hearts of others: Whileſt you are hardned, others are melted under it: Whileſt you ſleep, others tremble; whilſt your Hearts are faſt locked up, others are opened: How can you chooſe but reflect with Fear and Trembling upon theſe contrary Effects of the Word? Eſpecially when you conſider that the Eternal Decrees both of Election and Reprobation are now executed upon the Souls of Men by the preaching of the Word. Some believe, and others are hardned.

Conſid. 3. That no Judgment of God on this ſide Hell is greater than a Hard Heart, and ſtupid Conſcience under the Word: It were much better that the Providence of God ſhould blaſt thy Eſtate, take away thy Children, or deſtroy thy Health, than harden thy Heart, and ſcare thy Conſcience under the Word: So much as thy Soul is better than thy Body, ſo much as Eternity is more valuable than Time, ſo much is this ſpiritual Judgment more dreadful than all temporal Ones: God doth not inflict a more terrible ſtroke than this upon any Man in this World.

O therefore as you love your own Souls, and are loth to Ruin them to all Eternity, attend upon every opportunity that God affords you, for you know not in which of them the Lord may work upon your Hearts: Lay aſide your prejudices againſt the Word, or the Weakneſſes and Infirmities of them that Preach it: For the Word works not as it is the Word of Man, as it is thus Neat, and Elegant, but as it is the Word of God: pray for the Bleſſing of God upon the Word, for except his word of Bleſſing go forth with it, it can never come home to thy Soul: Meditate upon what you hear; for without Meditation it is not like to have any effectual operation upon you. Search your Souls by it, and conſider whether that be not your very Caſe and State which it deſcribes, your very danger whereof it gives warning; take heed leſt after you have heard it, the cares of the World choke not what you have heard, and cauſe thoſe budding Convictions which begin to put forth, to blaſt and wither: Carefully attend to all thoſe *Items* and *Memorandums* your Conſciences give you under the Word, and conclude that the Lord is then come nigh unto you.

Secondly, Let this be matter of ſerious Conſideration and Caution to all ſuch as have only felt ſome ſlight, tranſient, and ineffectual Operations of the Goſpel upon their Souls: the Lord hath come nigh ſome of our Souls, we have felt a ſtrange Power in the Ordinances, ſometimes terrifying, and ſometimes tranſporting our Hearts; but alas, it proves but a Morning Dew, or an early Cloud, *Hoſ.* 6. 4. We rejoyce in the Word, but it is for a ſeaſon, *John* 3. 25. *Gal.* 4. 14, 15. They are vaniſhing Motions, and come to nothing. Look as in Nature there are many *Abortives* as well as perfect Children, ſo it is in Religion: Yea, where the new Creature is perfectly formed in one ſoul, there be many Abortives and Miſcarriages: And there may be three Reaſons aſſigned for it, *viz.*

Firſt, The Subtilty and deep Policy of Satan, who never more effectually deceives and deſtroys the Souls of Men, than in ſuch a Method, and by ſuch an Artifice as this: For when Men have once felt their Conſciences terrified under the Word, and their Hearts at other times raviſhed with the Joys and Comforts of it, they now ſeem to have attained all that is neceſſary to Converſion and conſtitutive of the new Creature: theſe things look ſo well like the regenerating Effects of the Spirit, that many are eaſily deceived by them. The Devil beguiles the Hearts of the unwary by ſuch falſe Appearances: for it is not every Man that can diſtinguiſh betwixt the natural and ſpiritual Motions of the Affections under the Word: It is very frequently ſeen that even carnal and unrenewed Hearts have their meltings and tranſports as well as ſpiritual Hearts. The ſubject matter upon which the Word treats are the weighty things of the World to come: Heaven and Hell are very awful and affecting things, and an unrenewed Heart is apt to thaw and melt at them; now here is the cheat of Satan, to perſwade a Man that theſe muſt needs be ſpiritual affections, becauſe the Objects about which they are converſant are ſpiritual. Whereas it is certain, the Object of the Affections may be very ſpiritual and heavenly, and yet the workings of a Man's Affections about them, may be in a meer natural way.

Secondly, The dampening Efficacy of the World is a true and proper cauſe of theſe Abortions and Miſcarriages under the Word, *Luke* 8. 12, 13, 14. There are hopeful and promiſing beginnings and buds

buddings of Affections in ſome Perſons, eſpecially in their Youth; but when once they come to be engaged in the World, how ſoon are they damp'd and quenched! as the Cares of a Family grow on, ſo does the Care of Salvation wear off: 'Tis not as it was wont to be, What ſhall I do to be ſaved? How ſhall I get intereſt in Chriſt? But what ſhall I eat and drink, and wherewithal ſhall I and mine be maintained? Thus Earth juſtles out Heaven and the preſent World drowns all thoughts of that to come. Good had it been for many Men, they had never been engaged ſo deep in the World as they are; their Life is but a conſtant hurry of buſineſs, and a perpetual diverſion from Chriſt, and things that are Eternal.

Thirdly, Laſtly, The deceitfulneſs and treachery of the Heart, which too eaſily gives way to the deſigns of Satan, and ſuffers it ſelf to be impoſed upon by him, is not the leaſt cauſe why ſo many hopeful beginnings come to nothing, and the effects of the Word vaniſh. Pride and Self-love are very apt to over-value every little good, and ſlight or undervalue every evil that is in us: And ſo quickly choaks thoſe convictions that begin to work in our Souls.

But oh that ſuch Men would conſider that the dying away of their convictions, is that which threatens the Life of their Souls for ever: Now is the Bud withered, the Bloſſom blaſted: And what expectation is there of Fruit after this, except the Lord revive them again? The Lord open Men's Eyes, to diſcern the danger of ſuch things as theſe are, *Jude ver.* 11. *Heb.* 10. 38. Yet I deny not, but there are many Stands and Pauſes in the work of Converſion; it ſeems to die away, and then revives again; and revive it muſt, or we are loſt: But how many are there who never recover it more! This is a ſore Judgment of a moſt terrible conſequence to the Souls of Men.

3. Thirdly, In the laſt place, Let it be a word of Counſel and Advice to them upon whom the Word works effectually and powerfully; to whoſe Hearts the Commandment is come home, to revive ſin, and kill their vain hopes; and theſe are of two ſorts.

1. *Embryos*, under the firſt Workings of the Spirit.
2. Compleat Births of the Spirit, Regenerated Souls.

Firſt, *Embryos*, that are under the firſt Workings of the Spirit in the Word. O let it not ſeem a misery or unhappineſs to you that the Commandment is come, and ſin revived, and your former hopes overthrown. It muſt be thus if ever God intend Mercy for you. Had you gone on in that dangerous ſecurity you were in before, you had certainly been loſt for ever: God hath ſtopt you in that path that leads down to Hell, and none that go in there do ever return again, or take hold of the paths of Life. O 'tis better to weep, tremble, and be diſtreſſed now, than to mourn without hope for ever: Let it not trouble you that Sin hath found you out; you could never have found out the Remedy in Chriſt, if you had not found out the Diſeaſe and Danger, by the coming of the Commandment. And I beſeech you carefully to obſerve whether the effects and operations of the Word upon your Hearts be deeper and more powerful than they are found to be in ſuch Souls as miſcarry under it: The Commandment comes to them, and ſhews them this or that more groſs and ſtartling Sin: doth it come to you, and ſhew you not only this or that particular Sin, but all the Evils of your Heart and Life? The corruption of your Natures, as well as the tranſgreſſions of your Lives? If ſo, it promiſes well, and looks hopefully and comfortably to you. The Commandment comes to others, and ſtartles them with the fears of Damnation for their ſin: It puts them into a grievous fright at Hell, and the Everlaſting Burnings; but doth it come to thee and diſcover the infinite evil that is in thy ſin, as it is committed againſt the great, holy, righteous, and good God; and ſo melts thy Heart into tears for the wrong that thou haſt done him, as well as the danger into which thou haſt brought thy ſelf? This is a hopeful work, and may encourage thee. It comes to others, and greatly ſhakes, but never deſtroys and razes the foundation of their vain hopes; if it ſo revive ſin, as to kill all vain hopes in thee, and ſhut thee up to Chriſt, as thy only door of hope, fear not; theſe Troubles will prove the greateſt Mercies that ever befell thee in this World, if thus they work, and continue to work upon thy Soul.

Secondly, Others there are upon whom the Word hath had its full effect as to Converſion. O bleſs God for ever for this Mercy; you cannot ſufficiently value it. God hath not only made it a convincing and wounding, but a converting and healing word to your Souls; he hath not only revived your ſins, and killed your vain hopes, but begotten you again to a lively hope; ſee that you be thankful for this Mercy. How many have ſate under the ſame Word, but never felt ſuch effects of it? As Chriſt ſaid in another caſe, There were many Widows in *Iſrael* in the time of *Elijah*, but unto none of them was the Prophet ſent ſave unto *Sarepta*, a City of *Sidon*, to a certain Widow there, *Luke* 4. 46. So I may ſay in this caſe, there were many Souls in the ſame Congregation, at the ſame time; but unto none of them was the Word ſent with a Commiſſion to convince and ſave; but ſuch a one as thy ſelf; one as improbable to be wrought upon as any Soul there. O let this beget thankfulneſs in your Souls: and let it make you love the Word as long as you live. *I will never forget thy Precepts, for by them thou haſt quickened me*, Pſal. 119. 93.

But above all, I beſeech you make it appear that the Commandment hath come home to your Hearts with power to convince you of the evil of Sin, by your tenderneſs and care to ſhun it as long as you live. If ever you have ſeen the Face of Sin in the Glaſs of the Law of God, if your Hearts have been humbled and broken for it in the days of your trouble and diſtreſs; certainly you will chooſe the worſt affliction rather than ſin; it would be the greateſt folly in the World to return again to iniquity, *Pſal.* 85. 8. You that have ſeen ſo much of the evil that is in it, and the danger that follows it; you that have had ſuch inward terrours and fears of Spirit about it, when that terrible repreſentation was made you; will be loth to feel thoſe gripes and diſtreſſes of Conſcience again, for the beſt enjoyment in this World.

Bleſſed be God if any word have been brought home to our Hearts, which hath been inſtrumental to bring us to Chriſt.

SER-

SERMON XXII.

JOHN VI. 45.

It is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught of God, every Man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me.

Serm. 22. Text. The teachings of God opened, in their Nature and Necessity.

HOW necessary to our Union with Jesus Christ the application of the Law, or coming home of the Commandment to the Heart of a Sinner is, we have heard in the last Discourse; and how impossible it is, either for the Commandment to come to us, or for us to come to Christ, without illumination and instruction from above, you shall hear in this.

This Scripture hath much of the mind of God in it, and he that is to open it had need himself to be taught of God: In the foregoing verses, Christ offers himself as the Bread of Life unto the Souls of Men; against this Doctrine they oppose their carnal Reason, *ver.* 41, 42. Christ strikes at the root of all their Cavils and Objections in his reply, *ver.* 43, 44. *Murmur not among your selves, no Man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him, q. d.* you slight me because you do not know me, you do not know me, because you are not taught of God; of these divine Teachings, the Prophets of old have spoken, and what they foretold is at this day fulfilled in our sight: So many as are taught of God, and no more, come unto me in the way of Faith: 'Tis impossible to come without the Teachings of God, *ver.* 44. 'Tis as impossible not to come, or to miscarry in their coming unto me, under the influence of these divine Teachings, *ver.* 45.

The Words read consist of two parts, *viz.*

1. An Allegation out of the Prophets.
2. The application thereof made by Christ.

First, An allegation out of the Prophets: *it is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught of God*: The places in the Prophets to which Christ seems here to refer, are, *Isa.* 54. 13. *and all thy Children shall be taught of the Lord*, and Jer. 31. 34. *and they shall teach no more every Man his Neighbour, and every Man his Brother, saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord*: The Promises contain the great Blessings of the New Covenant, *viz.* Divine Instruction, and Heavenly Illumination, without which no Man can be brought up to the Terms of the New Covenant.

Secondly, We have here the application of these Testimonies, out of the Prophets, made by Christ himself, *every Man therefore that hath heard, and learned of the Father, cometh unto me.*

In which Words we have both the necessity and the efficacy of these Divine Teachings: without them no Man can come, and under them no Man can miscarry. The words being fitly rendred, and the scene obvious,

The Notes are,

Doct. 1. *That the teachings of God are absolutely necessary to every Man that cometh unto Christ in the way of Faith.*

Doct. 2. *No Man can miss of Christ, or miscarry in the way of Faith, that is under the special instructions and teachings of the Father.*

Doct. 1. *That the teachings of God are absolutely necessary to every Man that cometh unto Christ in the way of Faith.*

Of the necessity of Divine teaching, in order to believing, the Apostle speaks in *Eph.* 4. 20, 21. *But ye have not so learned Christ, if so be that you have heard him, and been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus,* (*i. e.*) Your Faith must needs be effectual, both to the Reformation of your Lives, and your Perseverance in the ways of Holiness, if it be such a Faith as is begotten and introduced into your Hearts, by divine teachings. Now in the Explication of this point, I shall speak distinctly to the following Enquiries.

Qui credunt praedicatore foris secus insonante, intus a patre audiant, atque discunt: qui autem non credunt, foris audiunt, intus non audiunt. Aug. de Prædest. cap. 8.

1. How doth God teach Men, or what is imported in our being taught of God?
2. What those special Lessons are, which all Believers do hear, and are taught of God?
3. In what manner doth God teach these things to Men, in the day of their Conversion to Christ.
4. What Influence God's teaching hath upon our believing?
5. Why it is impossible for any Man to believe, or come to Christ, without the Father's teachings.

First, How doth God teach Men, or what is imported in our being taught of God? To this I will speak both *negatively* and *positively*, for your clearer apprehension of the sense and meaning of the Spirit of God in this phrase.

First, The teaching of God, and our hearing and learning of him, is not to be understood of any extraordinary visional Appearances, or *Oracu-lous* and immediate Voice of God to Men: God indeed hath so appeared unto some, *Numb.* 12. 8. Such Voices have been heard from Heaven; but now these extraordinary ways are ceased, *Heb.* 1. 1. 2. and we are no more to expect them; we may sooner meet with Satanical Delusions, than Divine Illumination, in this way. I remember the Learned *Gerson* tells us, that the Devil once appeared to an Holy Man in Prayer, personating Christ, and saying, I am come in Person to visit thee, for thou art worthy: But he with both hands shut his Eyes, saying,

saying, *Nolo hic Christum videre, satis est ipsum in gloria videre,* (*i. e.*) I will not see Christ here, it is enough for me to see him in Glory. We are now to attend only to the Voice of the Spirit in the Scriptures; this is a more sure Word than any Voice from Heaven. 2 *Pet.* 1. 19.

Secondly, The teachings of God are not to be understood as opposite unto, or exclusive of the teachings of Men. Divine teachings do not render Ministerial teachings vain or useless. *Paul* was taught of God, *Gal.* 1. 12. and his Conversion had something extraordinary in it, yet the Ministry of *Ananias* was used, and honoured in that work, *Acts* 9. 4. 17. compared. Divine teachings do indeed *excel*, but not *exclude* human teachings. I know that Scripture, *Jer.* 31. 34. to which Christ here refers, is objected against the necessity of a standing Ministry in the Church, *they shall teach no more every Man his Neighbour and every Man his Brother*, &c. But if those words should be understood absolutely, they would not only overthrow all publick Ordinances of God's own institution, 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. and deprive us of a principal Fruit of Christ's Ascension, *Eph.* 4. 11, 12. but for the same reason would destroy all private instructions, and fraternal admonitions also. Such a sense would make the *Prophet* to contradict the *Apostle*; and spoil the consent and harmony of the Scriptures: The sense therefore cannot be *negative* but *comparative*: It shews the excellency of Divine, but doth not destroy the usefulness of human, teachings, *Subordinata non pugnant*: The teachings of Men are made effectual by the teachings of the Spirit, and the Spirit in his teachings will use and honour the Ministry of Man.

Thirdly, But to speak positively, the teachings of God are nothing else, but that spiritual and heavenly Light, by which the Spirit of God shineth into the Hearts of Men to give the light of the knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ, as the Apostle speaks, 2 *Cor.* 4, 6. and though this be the proper work of the Spirit, yet it is called the teachings of the Father, because the Spirit who enlightens us is commissionated, and sent by the Father so to do, *Joh.* 14. 26. Now these teachings of the Spirit of God, consist in two things, *viz.* in his

1. Sanctifying Impressions.
2. Gracious Assistances.

First, In his Sanctifying Impressions, or regenerating works upon the Soul, by vertue whereof it receives marvellous light and insight in spiritual things; and that not only as illumination is the first act of the Spirit in our conversion, *Col.* 3. 10. but as his whole work of Sanctification is illuminative and instructive to the converted Soul, 1 *Joh.* 2. 27. *the anointing which you have received of him abideth in you, And ye need not that any Man teach you, but the same anointing teacheth you*: The meaning is, that Sanctification gives the Soul experience of those Mysterious things, which are contained in the Scriptures, and that experience is the most excellent Key to unlock and open those deep Scripture Mysteries; no knowledge is so distinct, so clear, so sweet, as that which the Heart communicates to the Head, *Joh.* 7. 17. *If any Man do his will, shall know the Doctrine*: A Man that never read the Nature of Love in Books of *Philosophy*, nor the transports and Ecstasies thereof in History, may best truly describe and express it by the sensible motions of that Passion in his own Soul; yea, he that hath felt, much better understands, than he that hath only read or heard. O what a light doth spiritual sense and experience cast upon a great part of the Scriptures! For indeed Sanctification is the very Copy or Transcript of the Word of God upon the Heart of Man; *Jer.* 31. 33. *I will write my Law in their Heart*; So that the Scriptures, and the experiences of Believers by this means answer to each other, as the Lines and Letters in the Press, answer to the impressions made upon the Paper; or the Figures in the *Wax* to the engravings in the *Seal*. When a sanctified Man reads *David's Psalms*; or *Paul's Epistles*, how is he surprised with wonder to find the very workings of his own Heart so exactly decyphered, and fully expressed there! Oh, saith he, this is my very case; these Holy Men speak what my very Heart hath felt.

Secondly, The Spirit of God teacheth us, as by his sanctifying impressions, so by his gracious assistances which he gives us *pro re nata*, as our need requires, *Matth.* 10. 19. *It shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.* Joh. 14. 26. *He shall bring all things to your remembrance*: He assisteth both the Understanding in due apprehensions of Truth, and the Heart in the spiritual improvements of Truth: And so much briefly of the first particular.

Secondly, In the next place, we are to enquire what those special Truths are which Believers hear and learn of the Father, when they come to Christ.

And there are divers great and necessary Truths, wherein the Spirit enlightens Men in that day. I cannot say they are all taught every Believer in the same degree and order: but it is certain they are taught of God such Lessons as these are, which they never so understood before.

Lesson 1. First, They are taught of God, *that there is abundantly more evil in their sinful natures and actions, than ever they discerned or understood before: the Spirit when he cometh shall convince the world of sin*, John 16. 8, 9. Men have a general notion of Sin before; so had *Paul* when a Pharisee: But how vastly different were his apprehensions of Sin, from all that ever he had in his Natural state, when God brought home the Commandment to his very Heart! There is a threefold knowledge of Sin, *viz. Traditional, Discussive*, and *Intuitive*. The First is in the more rude and illiterate Multitude. The Second in more rational and knowing Men. The Third is only found in those that are enlightened, and taught of God: And there is as great a difference betwixt this intuitive knowledge of sin, whereby God makes a Soul to discern the nature and evil of it in a spiritual light, and the two former; as there is betwixt the sight of *a painted Lyon* upon the wall, and the sight of *a living Lyon* that meets us roaring in the way. The intuitive sight of sin is another thing than Men imagine it to be; 'tis such a sight as wounds a Man to the very Heart, *Acts* 2. 37. for God doth not only shew a Man this or that particular sin, but in the day of Convictions he sets all his sins in order before him, *Psal.* 50. 21. yea, the Lord shews him the sinfulness of his Nature, as well as Practice. Conviction digs to the Root, shews and lays open that Original Corruption, from whence the innumerable evils of the Life do spring, *Jam.* 1. 14, 15. and which is yet more, the Lord shews the Man, whom he is bringing to Christ, the sinful and miserable Estate which he is in by reason of both, *Job.* 16. 9. And now all Excuses, Pleas and Defences of Sin are gone; he shews them *how their Iniquities have exceeded*, Job 36. 8. 9. exceeded in number, and in aggravation of sinfulness; exceeding many, and ex-

exceeding vile; no such Sinner in the World as I: Can such sins as mine be pardon'd? The Greatness of God greatens my Sin, the Holiness of God makes it beyond measure vile; the Goodness of God puts unconceivable weight into my Guilt. O can there be Mercy with God for such a Wretch as I, If there be, then there will not be a greater Example of the Riches of Free Grace in all the World than I am: Thus God teacheth the evil of Sin.

Lesson 2. Secondly, *God teacheth the Soul whom he is bringing to Christ, what that wrath and misery is which hangs over it in the threatnings because of sin.* Scripture-threatnings were formerly slighted, now the Soul trembles at them: they once apprehended themselves safe enough, *Isa.* 28. 15. *Psal.* 50. 21. they thought, because they heard no more of their sins, after the Commission of them, that therefore they should never hear more, that the effect had been as transient a thing as the act of Sin was, or if trouble must follow Sin, they should speed no worse than others; the generality of the World being in the same case; and besides, they hoped to find God more merciful, than sowre and precise Preachers represented him; but when a light from God enters into the Soul, to discover the Nature of God and of Sin; then it sees, that whatever Wrath is treasured up for Sinners, in the dreadful threatnings of the Law, is but the just demerit of Sin, the recompence that is meet: *The wages of sin is death,* Rom. 6. ult. The *Penal* evil of Damnation is but equal to the *Moral* evil of sin: So that in the whole Ocean of God's Eternal Wrath there is not one drop of Injustice: Yea, the Soul doth not only see the Justice of God in its Eternal Damnation, but the wonderful Mercy of God in the suspension thereof so long. O what is it that hath withheld God from Damning me all this while! How is it that I am not in Hell! Now do the fears and awful apprehensions of Eternity seize the Soul, and the worst of sensitive Creatures is supposed to be in a better condition than such a Soul: Never do Men tremble at the Threatnings of God, nor rightly apprehend the danger of their condition, until Sin and Wrath; and the Wages of Sin be discovered to them by a Light from Heaven.

Lesson 3. Thirdly, *God teaches the Soul whom he brings to Christ, that deliverance from sin and wrath to come, is the greatest and most important business it hath to do in this World,* Acts 16. 30. *What must I do to be saved? q. d.* O direct me to some effectual way (if there be any) to secure my poor wretched Soul from the Wrath of God. Sin, and the Wrath that follows it, are things that swallow up the Souls, and drink up the very Spirit of Men: Their thoughts never conversed with things of more confessed Truth, and awful Solemnity: These things float not upon their fancies as matters of meer speculation, but settle upon their Hearts day and night, as the deepest concernment in all the World: They now know much better than any meer Scholar, the deep sence of that Text, *Matth.* 16. 26. *What is a Man profited, if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? Or what shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul?*

Five things shew how weighty the thoughts and cares of Salvation are upon their Hearts.

First, Their continual thoughtfulness and sollicitude about these things; if earthly Affairs divert them for a while, yet they are still returning again to this solemn Business.

Secondly, Their careful redeeming of time, and saving the very moments thereof to employ about this Work: Those that were prodigal of Hours and Days before, look upon every Moment of Time as a precious and valuable thing now.

Thirdly, Their fears and tremblings lest they should miscarry, and come short at last, shew how much their Hearts are set upon this Work.

Fourthly, Their inquisitiveness, and readiness to embrace all the help and assistance, that they can get from others, evidently discovers this to be their great design.

Fifthly, and Lastly, The little notice they take of all other troubles and afflictions, tells you, their Hearts are taken up about greater things. This is the Third Lesson, they are taught of God.

Lesson 4. Fourthly, *The Lord teaches the Soul that is coming to Christ, that though it be their duty to strive to the uttermost for Salvation; yet all strivings in their own strength are insufficient to obtain it.* This work is quite above the power of Nature: *'Tis not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth Mercy:* The Soul is brought to a full Conviction of this, by the discovery of the heinous Nature of Sin, and of the rigour and severity of the Law of God: No Repentance, nor Reformation, can possibly amount unto a just Satisfaction, nor are they within the compass and power of our Will. It was a saying that Dr. *Hill* often used to his Friends, speaking about the Power of Man's Will, he would lay his Hand upon his Breast, and say, *Every Man hath something here to confute the Arminian Doctrine:* This fully takes off the Soul from all expectations of Deliverance that way; it can not but strive, that is its Duty; but to expect Deliverance, as the Purchase of its own Strivings, that would be its Sin.

Lesson 5. Fifthly, *The Soul that is coming to Christ Faith, is taught of God, that though the case it is in sad, yet it is not desperate and remediless:* There is Door of Hope, a way of escape for poor Sinners how black and fearful soever their own thoughts and apprehensions are. There is usually, at the time, a dawning Light of Hope in the Soul that is under the Father's Teachings, and this commonly arises from the general and indefinite Incouragements and Promises of the Gospel; which though they do not presently secure the Soul from danger, yet they prop and mightily support it against Despair; for though they be not certain that Deliverance shall be the event of their Trouble; yet the possibilities, and much more the Probabilities, of Deliverance are a great stay to the sinking Soul: The troubled Soul cannot but acknowledge it self to be in a far better case than the Damned are, whose hopes are perished from the Lord, and a Death-pang of Despair hath seized their Consciences: And herein the Merciful and Compassionate Nature of God is eminently discovered, in hasting to open the Door of Hope, almost as soon as the Evil of sin is opened: It is not long, after *Adam*'s Eyes were opened to see Misery, that God opened Christ his Remedy in the first Promise, *Gen.* 3. 15. and the same Method of Grace is still continued to his Elect Off-spring, Isa. 3. 21, 22. *Rom.* 3, 21, 22. These supporting hopes the Lord sees necessary to encourage Industry, the use of Means: 'Tis Hope that sets all the Wheels a-work; if all Hope were cut off, every Soul would sit down in a sullen despair, yielding it self to Hell.

Lesson 6. Sixthly, *The Lord teaches those that come to Christ, that there is a fulness of saving power in him, whereby any Soul, that duly receives him, may be perfectly delivered from all its sin and misery,* Heb. 7. 25. Col. 1. 19. Matth. 28. 18. This is a great and necessary point for every Believer to learn and hear from the Father; for unless the Soul be satisfied of the fulness of Christ's saving Power, it will never move forward towards him: And herein also the Goodness of God is most sweetly and seasonably manifested; for at this time 'tis the great design of Satan to fill the Soul with despairing thoughts of a Pardon; but all those black and heart-sinking thoughts vanish before the discovery of Christ's all-sufficiency. Now the Sin-sick Soul saith with that Woman; *Mat.* 9, 21. *If I may but touch the hem of his Garment, I shall be healed*: How deep soever the guilt and stain of Sin be, yet the Soul which acknowledges the infinite dignity of the Blood of Christ, the offering of it up to God in our room, and God's declared satisfaction in it; must needs be satisfied that Christ is *able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him,* which is the sixth Lesson Believers are taught of God.

Lesson 7. Seventhly, Every Man that cometh to Christ is taught of God, *that it can never reap any benefit by the Blood of Christ, except he have Union with the Person of Christ,* 1 Joh. 5. 12. Eph. 4. 16. Time was when Men fondly thought nothing was necessary to their Salvation but the Death of Christ; but now the Lord shews them that their Union with Christ by Faith is as necessary in the place of an *applying cause,* as the death of Christ is in the place of a *meritorious cause*: The *purchase* of Salvation is an Act of Christ *without us* whilst we are yet sinners: The *application* thereof is by a work wrought *within us,* when we are Believers, *Col.* 1. 27. In the Purchase, all the Elect are redeemed together by way of price. In the application they are actually redeemed Man by Man, by way of power. Look, as the Sin of the first *Adam* could never hurt us, unless he had been our Head by way of Generation; so the Righteousness of Christ can never benefit us, unless he be our Head by way of Regeneration. In teaching this Lesson the Lord in Mercy unteaches and blots out that dangerous principle, by which the greatest part of the Christianized World do perish, *viz.* that the Death of Christ is in it self effectual to Salvation, though a Man be never regenerated or united unto him by saving Faith.

Lesson 8. Eighthly, *God teaches the Soul whom he is bringing to Christ, that whatever is necessary to be wrought in us, or done by us in order to our Union with Christ, is to be obtained from him in the way of Prayer,* Ezek. 36. 37. And it is observable that the Soul no sooner comes under the effectual teachings of God, but the Spirit of Prayer begins to breath in it, *Acts,* 9. 8. *Behold he prayeth*: Those that were taught to pray by Men before, are now taught of the Lord to pray; to pray did I say? yea, and to pray fervently too, as Men concerned for their Eternal Happiness; to pray not only with others, but to pour out their souls before the Lord in secret; for their Hearts are as Bottles full of new Wine, which must vent or break. Now the Soul returns upon its God often in the same day; now it can express its burdens and wants in Groans which the Spirit teacheth; they pray and will not give over praying till Christ come with compleat Salvation.

Lesson 9. Ninthly, *All that come to Christ are taught of God to abandon their former ways and companions in sin as ever they expect to be received unto mercy,* Isa. 55. 7. 2. Cor. 5. 17. Sins that were profitable and pleasant, as the right Hand, and right Eye, must now be cut off. Companions in sin, who were once the delight of their Lives must now be cast off. Christ saith to the Soul concerning these, as he said in another case, *Joh.* 18. 8. *if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way*: and the Soul saith unto Christ, as it is, Psal. 119. 115. *depart from me ye evil doers, for I will keep the Commandments of my God*: And now pleasant sins, and Companions in sin, become the very burden and shame of a Man's Soul: Objects of delight are become Objects of Pity and compassion: No endearments, no union of Blood, no earthly interests whatsoever, are found strong enough to hold the Soul any longer from Christ: Nothing but the effectual teachings of God is found sufficient to dissolve such bonds of iniquity as these.

Lesson 10. Tenthly, *All that come unto Christ are taught of God, that there is such a beauty and excellency in the ways and people of God, as is not to be matched in the whole World,* Psal. 16. 3. When the Eyes of Strangers to Christ begin to be opened and enlightned in his knowledge, you may see what a change of judgment is wrought in them, with respect to the People of God, and towards them especially, whom God hath and way made instrumental for the good of their Souls, *Cant.* 5. 9. they then called the Spouse of Christ, *the fairest among women*: The convincing Holiness of the Bride then began to enamour and affect them with a desire of nearer conjunction and communion: *We will seek him with thee; with thee,* that hast *so charged us;* that hast taken so much pains for the good of our Souls: Now, and never before, the Righteous appeareth more excellent than his Neighbour. Change of Heart is always accompanied with Change of Judgment, with respect to the People of God: Thus the *Goaler, Acts* 16. 33. washed the *Apostles* Stripes, to whom he had been so cruel before. The Godly now seem to be the Glory of the Places where they live: And the Glory of any place seems to be darkned by their removal; as one said of holy Mr. *Barrington, Methinks the Town is not at home, when Mr.* Barrington *is out of Town*: They esteem it a choice Mercy to be in their company and acquaintance, Zech. 8. 23. *We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you*: No People like the People of God now: As one said, when he heard of two Faithful Friends, *Utinam tertius essem,* O that I might make the Third! Whatever vile or low thoughts they had of the People of God before, to be sure now they are the Excellent of the Earth, in whom is all their delight: The Holiness of the Saints might have some interest in their Consciences before, but they never had such an interest in their estimations and affections, till this Lesson was taught them by the Father.

Lesson 11. Eleventhly, *All that come to Christ are taught of God, that whatever difficulties they apprehend in Religion, yet they must not upon pain of damnation be discouraged thereby, or return again to sin.* Luke 9. 62. *No Man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God*: Plowing work is hard work; a strong and steady hand is required for it, he that plows, must keep on, and make no balks of the hardest and toughest ground he meets

with. Religion also is the running of a Race, 1 *Cor.* 9. 24. there is no standing still, much less turning back, if ever we hope to win the Prize.

The Devil indeed labours every way to discourage and daunt the Soul, by representing the insuperable difficulties of Religion to it; and young Beginners are but too apt to be discouraged, and fall under despondency; but the teachings of the Father, are encouraging teachings; they are carried on from strength to strength against all the oppositions they meet from without them, and the many discouragements they find within them: To this conclusion they are brought by the teaching of God, *We must have Christ, we must get a Pardon, we must strive for Salvation, let the difficulties, troubles, and sufferings in the way be never so great or many.* As he said, *Necesse est ut eam, non ut vivam*: 'Tis necessary that I go on, 'tis not necessary that I live; so saith the Soul that is taught of God; 'tis easier for me to dispense with Ease, Honour, Relations, yea, with Life it self, than to part with Christ and the Hopes of eternal Life.

Lesson 12. Twelfthly, *They that come to Christ are taught of God, that whatever guilt and unworthiness they discover in themselves, and whatever fears and doubts hang upon their Hearts, as to pardon and acceptance; yet, as the case stands, it is their wisdom and great interest to venture themselves, in the way of Faith, upon Jesus Christ, whatever the issue thereof be.*

Three great discouragements are usually found upon the Hearts of those that come to Christ in the way of Faith.

First, The sensible greatness of guilt and sin, How can I go to Christ that am in such a case, that have been so vile a Wretch? And here measuring the Grace and Mercy of Christ, by what it finds in it self, or in other Creatures, 1 *Sam.* 24. 19. the Soul is ready to sink under the weight of its own discouraging and mis-giving thoughts.

Secondly, The sense they have of their own weakness, and inability to do what God requires, and must of necessity be done, if ever they be saved: My Heart is harder than an Adamant, How can I break it? My Will is stubborn and exceeding obstinate, I am no way able to bow it; the frame and temper of my Spirit is altogether carnal and earthly; and it is not in the power of my hand to alter and change it: Alas, I cannot subdue any one corruption, nor perform one spiritual duty, nor bear one of those sufferings and burdens, which Religion lays upon all that follow Christ: This also proves a great discouragement in the way of Faith.

Thirdly, And, which is more than all, the Soul that is coming to Jesus Christ, hath no assurance of acceptance with him, if it should adventure it self upon him; 'tis a great hazard, a great adventure; 'tis much more probable (if I look to my self) that Christ will shut the door of Mercy against me.

But under all these discouragements, the Soul learns this Lesson from God, That, as ungodly as it is, as weak and impotent as it is, as full of fears and doubts as it is, nevertheless it is every way its great duty and concernment to go on in the way of Faith, and make that great adventure of it self upon Jesus Christ: And of this the Lord convinceth the Soul by two things, *viz.*

1. From the absolute necessity of coming.
2. From the incouraging probabilities of speeding.

First, The Soul seeth an absolute necessity of coming; necessity is laid upon it, there is no other way, *Acts* 4. 12. God hath shut it up, by a blessed necessity, to this only Door of escape, *Gal.* 3. 23. Damnation lies in the neglect of Christ, *Heb.* 2. 3. The Soul hath no choice in this case, Angels, Ministers, Duties, Repentance, Reformation cannot save me; Christ, and none but Christ, can deliver me from present Guilt, and the Wrath to come: Why do I dispute, demur, delay, when certain ruin must inevitably follow the neglect or refusal of Gospel-Offers?

Secondly, The Lord shewerh those that are under his teaching the probabilities of Mercy for their encouragement in the way of believing; and these probabilities the Soul is enabled to gather from the general and free invitations of the Gospel, *Isai.* 55. 1, 7. *Rev.* 22. 17. from the conditional Promises of the Gospel, *Joh.* 6. 37. *Matth.* 11. 28. *Isa* 1. 18. from the vast extent of Grace, beyond all the thoughts and hopes of Creatures, *Isai.* 55. 8, 9. *Heb.* 7. 25. from the incouraging Examples of other sinners, who have found Mercy in as bad condition as they, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13. 2 *Chron.* 33. 3. 2 *Cor.* 6. 10, 11. from the Command of God which warrants the action, and answers all the objections of unworthiness and presumption in them that come to Christ, 1 *Joh.* 3. 23. And lastly, from the sensible Changes already made upon the temper and frame of the Heart. Time was, when I had no sense of sin, nor sorrow for sin: no desires after Christ, nor heart to Duties; but it is not so with me now. I now see the evil of sin, so as I never saw it before; my heart is now broken in the sense of that evil; my desires begin to be enflamed after Jesus Christ. I am not at rest, nor where I would be, till I am in secret Mourning after the Lord Jesus. Surely these are the dawnings of the day of Mercy; let me go on in this way; it saith, as the Lepers at the Siege of *Samaria*, 2 *King.* 7. 3, 4. If I stay here, I perish; If I go to Christ, I can but perish. Hence Believers bear up against all objected discouragements, *Certum exitium commutemus incerto*, 'tis the dictate of Wisdom, the vote of Reason, to exchange a certain for an uncertain ruine. And thus you have heard what those excellent Lessons are, which all that come to Christ are taught by the Father.

SERMON XXIII.

JOHN VI. 45.

It is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. every Man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me.

IN the former Sermon, you have been taught this great Truth.

Doct. That the teachings of God are absolutely necessary to every Soul that cometh unto Christ in the way of Faith.

What the teachings of God import, hath been formerly opened; and what those special Lessons are, which all Believers hear and learn of the Father was the last thing discoursed; that which remains to be farther cleared about this subject, before we come to the application of the whole, will be to shew you,

1. Wh

1. What are the Properties of Divine Teachings.
2. What Influence they have in bringing Souls to Christ.
3. Why it is impossible for any Man to come to Christ, without these Teachings of the Father.

First, What are the Properties of Divine Teachings. Concerning the Teachings of God we affirm in general, that tho' they exclude not, yet they vastly differ from all Humane Teachings: as the *Power* of God in *effecting* transcends all Humane Power, so the Wisdom of God in *teaching* transcends all Humane *Wisdom*. For,

First. God teacheth *powerfully*: he speaketh to the Soul with a strong Hand; when the Word comes accompanied with the Spirit, 'tis mighty through God, to cast down all Imaginations, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. Now the Gospel *comes not in word only* (as it was wont to do) *but in power*, 1 *Thes.* 1. 4, 5. A Power that makes the Soul fall flat before it, and acknowledge, that God is in that Word, 1 *Cor.* 14. 25.

Secondly. The Teachings of God are *sweet Teachings*. Men never relish the Sweetness of a Truth, till they learn it from God, *Cant.* 1. 3. His name is as an Oyntment poured forth, *Cant.* 5. 16. His Mouth is most sweet. O how powerfully, and how sweetly doth the voice of God slide into the heart of a poor melting Sinner? how jejune, dry, and tasteless are all the Discourses of Men, compared with the Teachings of the Father!

Thirdly, God teacheth *plainly and clearly*, he not only opens Truths to the understanding, but he openeth the understanding also to perceive them, 2 *Cor.* 3. 16. In that day the Veil is taken away from the Heart; a Light shineth into the Soul; a clear Beam from Heaven is darted into the Mind, *Luke* 24. 45. Divine Teachings are fully satisfying; the Soul doubts no more, staggers and hesitates no more, but *acquiesces* in that which God teaches; 'tis so satisfied, that it can venture all upon the truth of what it hath learnt from God, as that *Martyr* said, *I cannot Dispute, but I can die for Christ.* See *Prov.* 8. 8, 9.

Fourthly, The Teachings of God are *infallible Teachings*, the wisest and holiest of Men may mistake, and lead others into the same mistakes with themselves; but it is not so in the teachings of God. If we can be sure that God teacheth us, we may be as sure of the Truth of what he teacheth; for his Spirit *guideth us into all Truth*, Joh. 16. 13. and into nothing but Truth.

Fifthly, The Teachings of God are *abiding teachings*, they make everlasting Impressions upon the Soul, *Psal.* 119. 98. *they are ever with it*; the Words of Men vanish from us; but the Words of God stick by us; what God teacheth he writeth upon the Heart, *Jer.* 31. 33. and that will abide; *litera scripta manet.* 'Tis usual with Souls, whose understandings have been opened by the Lord, many Years afterward to say, I shall never forget such a Scripture that once convinced, such a Promise that once encouraged me.

Sixthly, The Teachings of God are *saving Teachings*, they make the Soul wise unto Salvation, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15. There is a great deal of other Knowledge that goes to Hell with Men: The Pavement of Hell (as one speaks) is pitched with the Skulls of many great *Scholars*, but Eternal Life is in the Teachings of God, *Joh.* 17. 3. *This is Eternal Life, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* This is deservedly stiled the Light of Life, *Joh.* 8. 12. *In this light we shall see light*, Psal. 36. 9.

Seventhly, The Teachings of God make their own way into the dullest and weakest Capacities, *Isa.* 32. 4. *The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly*: Upon this account Christ said, *Matth.* 11. 25. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto Babes*: 'Tis admirable to see what clear Illuminations some poor illiterate Christians have in the Mysteries of Christ and Salvation, which others, of great Abilities, deep and searching Heads, can never discover with all their Learning and Study.

Eighthly, To conclude, The Teachings of God are *transforming Teachings*, 2 Cor. 3. 18. they change the Soul into the same Image: God casts them, whom he teacheth, into the very mould of those Truths which they learn from him, *Rom.* 6. 17. These are the Teachings of God, and thus he instructeth those that come to Christ.

Secondly, Next let us see what Influences Divine Teachings have upon Souls in bringing them to Christ; and we shall find a three-fold influence in them.

1. They have an Influence upon the external *Means* by which they come to Christ.
2. They have an influence upon the Mind, to remove what hindred it from Christ.
3. They have an influence upon the Will, to allure and draw it to Christ.

First, They have influence upon the *Means* by which we come to Christ: The best Ordinances are but a dead Letter, except the Spirit, the teaching and quickning Spirit of God, work in Fellowship with them, 2 *Cor.* 3. 6. The best Ministers, like the Disciples, cast forth the Net, but take nothing, win not one Soul to God, till God teach as well as they. *Paul* is nothing, and *Apollos* nothing, but God that giveth the increase, 1 *Cor.* 3. 7. Let the most learned, eloquent, and powerful Orator be in the Pulpit, yet no Man's Heart is perswaded, till it hears the Voice of God; *Cathedram in cœlis habet qui corda docet.*

Secondly, They have influence upon the *Mind*, to remove what hindred it from Christ; except the Minds of Men be first untaught those Errors, by which they are prejudiced against Christ, they will never be perswaded to come unto him: And nothing but the Fathers teachings can unteach those Errors, and cure those Evils of the Mind: The natural Mind of Man slights the Truths of God, until God teach them; and then they tremble with an awful reverence of them. Sin is but a trifle, till God shews us the Face of it in the glass of the Law, and then it appears *exceeding sinful*, *Rom.* 7. 12. We think God to be such a one as our selves, *Psal.* 50. 21. until he discover himself unto us in his infinite Greatness, awful Holiness, and severe Justice; and then we cry, who can stand before this great and dreadful God! We thought it was time enough hereafter to mind the Concernments of another World, until the Lord open our Eyes, to see in what danger we stand upon the brink of Eternity; and then nothing scares us more, than the fears that our time will be finished, before the great Work of Salvation be finished. We thought our selves in a converted State before, till God make us to see the necessity of another man-

manner of Converſation, upon pain of Eternal Damnation. We readily caught hold upon the Promiſes before, when we had no right to them; but the Teachings of God make the preſumptuous Sinner let go his hold, that he may take a better and ſurer hold of them in Chriſt. We once thought that the Death of Chriſt, in it ſelf, had been enough to ſecure our Salvation; but under the Teachings of God, we diſcern plainly the neceſſity of a change of Heart and State; or elſe the Blood of Chriſt can never profit us. Thus the Teachings of God remove the Errors of the Mind, by which Men are with-held from Chriſt.

Thirdly, The Teachings of God powerfully attract and allure the Will of a Sinner to Chriſt, *Hoſ.* 2. 14. But of theſe drawings of the Father I have largely ſpoken before, and therefore ſhall ſay no more of it in this place, but haſten to the laſt thing propounded, *viz.*

Thirdly, Why it is impoſſible for any Man to come to Chriſt, without the Father's Teachings; and the impoſſibilities hereof will appear three Ways.

1. From the Power of Sin.
2. From the Indiſpoſition of Man.
3. From the Nature of Faith.

By all which the laſt Point deſigned to be ſpoken to from this Scripture will be fully cleared, and the whole prepared for Application.

Firſt, the impoſſibility of coming to Chriſt, without the Teachings of the Father, will appear from the Power of Sin, which hath ſo ſtrong an holdfaſt upon the Hearts and Affections of all unregenerate Men, that no Humane Arguments or Perſwaſions whatſoever can divorce or ſeparate them; for,

Firſt, Sin is connatural with the Soul, 'tis born and bred with a Man; *Pſal.* 51. 4. *Iſa.* 48. 8. It is as natural for fallen Man to ſin as it is to breath.

Secondly, The Power of Sin hath been ſtrengthening it ſelf from the beginning, by a long continued Cuſtom, which gives it the force of a ſecond Nature; and makes Regeneration and Mortification naturally impoſſible, *Jer.* 15. 23. *Can the Æthiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his ſpots? Then may he alſo do good that is accuſtomed to do evil.*

Thirdly, Sin is the delight of the ſinner: *It is a ſport to a Fool to do miſchief*, Prov. 10. 23. Carnal Men have no other Pleaſure in this World, but what ariſes from their Luſts; to cut off their Corruptions by Mortification, were at once to deprive them of all the pleaſure of their lives.

Fourthly, Sin being connatural, cuſtomary, and delightful, doth therefore bewitch their Affections, and inchant their Hearts, to that degree of Madneſs and Faſcination; that they rather chuſe Damnation by God, than Separation from Sin: *Their hearts are fully ſet in them to do evil*, Eccleſ. 8. 11. they ruſh into ſin, as the *horſe ruſheth into the battle*, Jer. 8. 6. And now, what think you can ſeparate a Man from his beloved Luſt, except the powerful and effectual Teachings of God? Nothing but a Light from Heaven can rectifie and reduce the inchanted Mind; no Power but that of God can change and alter the ſinful bent and inclination of the Will; 'tis a task above all Creature-power.

Secondly, The Impoſſibility of coming to Chriſt, without the Father's Teachings, evidently appears from the *indiſpoſedneſs* of Man, the ſubject of this change; *the natural Man receives not the things which are of God*, 1 Cor. 2. 14. Three things muſt be wrought upon Man, before he can come to Chriſt; his blind Underſtanding muſt be enlightned; his hard and rocky Heart muſt be broken, and melted; his ſtiff, fixed, and obſtinate Will muſt be conquered and ſubdued: But all theſe are Effects of a ſupernatural Power. The Illumination of the Mind is the peculiar Work of God, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. *Rev.* 3. 17. *Eph.* 5. 8. The breaking and melting of the Heart is the Lord's own Work; 'tis he that giveth Repentance, *Acts* 5. 31. 'Tis the Lord that *takes away the heart of ſtone, and giveth an heart of fleſh*, Ezek. 36. 26. 'tis he that poureth out the Spirit of Contrition upon Man, *Zech.* 12. 10. The changing of the natural bent and inclination of the Will is the Lord's ſole Prerogative, *Phil.* 2. 13. all theſe things are effectually done in the Soul of Man, when God teacheth it, and never till then.

Thirdly, The Nature of Faith, by which we come to Chriſt, plainly ſhews the impoſſibility of coming without the Father's teaching. Every thing in Faith is ſupernatural; the Implantation of the *habit* of Faith is ſo, *Eph.* 2. 8. 'tis not of our ſelves, but the Gift of God; 'tis not an habit *acquired* by Induſtry, but *infuſed* by Grace, *Phil.* 1. 29. The *light* of Faith, by which ſpiritual things are diſcerned, is ſupernatural, *Heb.* 11. 1, 27. It ſeeth things that are inviſible. The *Adventures* of Faith are ſupernatural; for *againſt hope, a Man* believeth *in hope, giving Glory to God*, Rom. 4. 18. By Faith a Man goeth unto Chriſt, againſt all the Dictates and Diſcouragements of natural Senſe and Reaſon. The *Self-denial* of Faith is ſupernatural; the cutting off the Right-Hand, and plucking out of Right-Eye-Sins muſt needs be ſo, *Matth.* 5. 29. The *Victories* and Conqueſts of Faith do all ſpeak it to be ſupernatural; it overcomes the ſtrongeſt Oppoſitions from without, *Heb.* 11. 33, 34. it ſubdueth and purgeth the moſt obſtinate and deep rooted Corruptions within, *Acts* 15. 9. it overcometh all the Blandiſhments and charming Allurements of the bewitching World, 1 *Joh.* 5. 4. all which conſidered, how evident is the concluſion, that none can come to Chriſt without the Father's Teachings? The Uſes follow.

1. *Uſe for Information.*

Inference 1.

How notoriouſly falſe and abſurd is that Doctrine which aſſerteth the poſſibility of believing without the Efficacy of ſupernatural Grace? The deſire of ſelf-ſufficiency was the ruine of *Adam*, and the conceit of ſelf-ſufficiency is the ruine of Multitudes of his Poſterity. This Doctrine is not only contradictory to the current ſtream of Scriptures, *Phil.* 2. 13. 1 *John* 1. 13. with many other Scriptures; but it is alſo contradictory to the common ſenſe and experience of Believers; yet the pride of Nature will ſtrive to maintain, what Scripture and Experience plainly contradict and overthrow.

Inference 2.

Hence we may alſo inform our ſelves, how it cometh to paſs, that many rational, wiſe, and learned Men miſs Chriſt, whilſt mean time the ſimple and illiterate, even Babes in Natural Knowledge, obtain intereſt in him and Salvation by him. The reaſon hereof is plainly given us by Chriſt in *Matth.* 13. 11. *To you it is given to know the Myſteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given*: 'Tis the droppings and dews of Divine teaching upon one, and not upon another

another, that dryeth up the green Tree, and maketh the dry Tree to flouriſh. Many natural Men have very fine Brains, ſearching Wits, ſolid Judgments, nimble Fancies, tenacious Memories; they can ſearch out the Myſteries of Nature, ſolve the *phænomena*, ſatisfie the Enquiries of the moſt Curious; they can meaſure the Earth, diſcover the Motions of the Heavens; but after all take up their place in Hell: When, in the mean time, *the Statutes of the Lord* (by the help of his Teachings) *make wiſe the ſimple*, Pſal. 19. 17. 'Tis no matter how dull and incapable the Scholar be, if God undertake to be the Teacher. I remember *Auſtin* ſpeaks of one, who was commonly reputed a Fool, and yet he could not but judge him to be truly godly; and that by two Signs of Grace which appeared in him: one was his Seriouſneſs when he heard any Diſcourſes of Chriſt; the other was his Indignation manifeſted againſt Sin. It was truly ſaid by thoſe two *Cardinals*, (who riding to the Council of *Conſtance*, over-heard a poor Shepherd in the Fields, with Tears bewailing his ſin) *ſurgent indocti & rapient cælum*: The unlearned will riſe and take Heaven, whilſt we with all our Learning ſhall deſcend into Hell.

Infer. 3. *This alſo informs us of the true reaſon of the ſtrange and various ſucceſſes of the Goſpel upon the Souls of Men*: Here we ſee why the Miniſtry of one Man becomes fruitful, and anothers barren; yea, why the Labours of the ſame Man proſper excedingly at one time, and not at another: Theſe things are according as the Teachings of God do accompany our teachings: We often ſee a weaker and plainer Diſcourſe bleſſed with Succeſs, whilſt that which is artificial, neat, and laboured, comes to nothing. St. *Auſtin* hath a pretty Similitude to illuſtrate this: *Suppoſe* (ſaith he) *two* Conduits, *the one very plain, the other curiouſly carved and adorned with Images of Lyons, Eagles*, &c. *the Water doth not refreſh, and nouriſh, as it cometh from ſuch a curious* Conduit, *but as it is Water*. Where we find moſt of Man, we frequenly find leaſt of God. I ſpeak not this to encourage Careleſsneſs and Lazineſs, but to provoke the Diſpenſers of the Goſpel to more Earneſtneſs, and fervent Prayer for the aſſiſtance and bleſſing of the Spirit upon their Labours; and make Men leſs fond of their own Gifts and Abilities: Bleareyed *Leah* may bear Children, when beautiful *Rachel* proves barren.

Infer. 4. *Learn hence the tranſcendent excellency of ſaving ſpiritual Knowledge, above that which is meerly litteral and natural.* One drop of Knowledge taught by God, is more excellent, than the whole Ocean of Humane Knowledge and acquired Gifts, *Phil.* 3. 8. *Joh.* 17. 3. 1 *Cor.* 2. 2. Let no Man therefore be dejected at the want of thoſe Gifts, with which unſanctified Men are adorned. If God have taught thee the evil of Sin, the worth of Chriſt, the neceſſity of Regeneration, the Myſtery of Faith, the way of communion with God in Duties; trouble not thy ſelf becauſe of thine ignorance in natural or moral things; thou haſt that, Reader, which will bring thee to Heaven; and he is a truly wiſe Man that knows the way of Salvation, though he be ignorant and unskilful in other things: Thou knoweſt that, which all the learned *Doctors* and *Libraries* in the World could never teach thee, but God hath revealed them to thee: Others have more *Science*, thou haſt more *Savour* and Sweetneſs: Bleſs God and be not diſcouraged.

2. *Uſe for Examination.*

If there be no coming to Chriſt without the Teachings of the Father; then it greatly concerns us to examine our own Hearts, whether ever we have been under the ſaving Teachings of God, during the many Years we have ſate under the preaching of the Goſpel. Let not the queſtion be miſtaken, I do not ask what Books you have read, what Miniſters you have heard, what ſtock of natural or ſpeculative Knowledge you have acquired; but the queſtion is, whether ever God ſpake to your Hearts, and hath effectually taught you ſuch Leſſons, as were mentioned in our laſt Diſcourſe? O there is a vaſt difference betwixt that notional, ſpeculative, and traditional Knowledge which Men learneth from Man, and that ſpiritual, operative, and transforming Knowledge which a Man learneth from God. If you ask how the Teachings of God may be diſcerned from all other meer humane Teachings, I anſwer, it may be diſcern'd and diſtinguiſhed by theſe ſix Signs.

Sign 1.

The teachings of God are very humbling to the Soul that is taught. Humane Knowledge puffeth up, 1 *Cor.* 8. 1. but the Teachings of God do greatly abaſe the Soul, *Job* 42. 5. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear but now mine eye ſeeth thee; wherefore I abhor my ſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes*: The ſame Light which diſcovers to us the Holineſs, Juſtice, Greatneſs, and Goodneſs of God, diſcovereth alſo the vileneſs, baſeneſs, emptineſs, and total unworthineſs of Man; yea, of the beſt and holieſt of Men, *Iſa.* 6. 5.

Sign 2. *The teachings of God are deeply affecting, and impreſſive teachings*: they fully reach the Heart of Man, *Hoſ.* 2. 14. *I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderneſs, and ſpeak comfortably unto her*: or, as it is in the *Hebrew*, I will ſpeak to her Heart. When God ſheweth unto Man the evil of Sin, he ſo convinceth the Soul that no Creature-comforts have any pleaſure or ſweetneſs in them; and when he ſheweth unto Man his Righteouſneſs, Pardon, and Peace in Chriſt, he ſo comforteth and refreſheth the Heart, that no outward Afflictions have any weight or bitterneſs in them; one drop of Conſolation from Heaven, ſweetens a Sea of trouble upon Earth, *Pſal.* 94. 19. *In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my Soul.*

Sign 3. *The teachings of God are ſanctifying and renewing teachings*: they reform and change the Heart, *Eph.* 4. 21, 22, 23. *If ſo be that you have heard him, and been taught by him, as the truth is in Jeſus: that ye put off concerning the former converſation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful Luſts; and be renewed in the ſpirit of your mind*, &c. See here what Holineſs and Purity is the effect of divine teaching: Holineſs both external and internal, negative and poſitive: Holineſs of every kind follows the Father's Teachings: All the Diſcoveries God makes to us of himſelf in Chriſt have an aſſimilating quality, and change the Soul into their own Likeneſs, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18.

Sign 4. *All God's teachings are practical, running into obedience.* Idle Notions and uſeleſs Speculations are not learn'd from God. As God's creating Words, ſo his teaching Words are with effect: As when he ſaid *let there be light*, and there was light; ſo when he ſaith to the Soul, be comforted, be humbled; it is effectually comforted, *Iſa.* 66. 13. it is humbled, *Job* 40. 4, 5. As God hath in Nature made no Creature in vain, ſo he ſpeaks no Word in vain: Every thing which Men hear, or

learn from the Father, is for uſe, practice, and benefit to the Soul.

Sign 5. *All the teachings of God are agreeable with the written word*: The Spirit of God, and the Word of God do never jar, *Joh.* 14. 26. *He ſhall take of mine and ſhew it unto you*; When God ſpeaketh unto the Heart of Man, whether in a way of Conviction, Conſolation, or Inſtruction in Duty, he always either maketh uſe of the expreſs Words of God in Scripture, or ſpeaks to the Heart in Language every way conſentaneous and agreeable to Scripture: So that the written Word becomes the *Standard* to weigh, and try all divine Teachings, *Iſa.* 8. 20. *To the Law, and to the Teſtimony; if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light* (or morning) *in them*: Whatever is diſcrepant and jarring with the Scripture, muſt not paſs for an Inſpiration of God, but a deluding Sophiſm and Inſinuation of Satan.

Sign 6. *The teachings of God are very ſatisfying teachings to the Soul of Man*; the underſtanding Faculty, like a *Dial*, is enlightned with the Beams of divine Truth ſhining upon it; this no Man's Teachings can do; Men can only teach *objectively*, by propounding Truth to the Underſtanding; but they cannot enlighten the Faculty it ſelf, as God doth, 1 *Joh.* 5. 20. he giveth Man underſtanding, as well as Inſtructions to be underſtood; he opens the Eyes of the underſtanding, as well as propoundeth the Object, *Eph.* 1. 18. And thus we may diſcern and diſtinguiſh the Teachings of God, from all other Teachings.

3. *Uſe of Exhortation.*

The laſt uſe I ſhall make of this Point, ſhall be a word of *Exhortation*, both to them that never were yet effectually taught of God, and to them alſo that have heard his Voice, and are come to Chriſt.

Firſt, To thoſe that never yet heard the Voice of God ſpeaking to their Hearts; and truly this is the general Caſe of moſt Men and Women in the profeſſing World; they have heard the ſound of the Goſpel, but it hath been a confuſed, empty, and ineffectual ſound in their Ears: We have heard the Voice of Man, but have never yet heard the Voice of God: The Gifts and Abilities of Preachers have in a notional and meer humane way improved their Underſtandings, and ſometimes ſlightly touched their Affections: All this is but the effect of Man upon Man. O that you would look for ſomething which is beyond all this: Satisfie not your ſelves with what is meerly natural, and humane in Ordinances: Come to the Word with higher Ends and more ſpiritual Deſigns, than to get ſome Notions of Truth which you had not before, or to judge the Gifts and Abilities of the Speaker: If God ſpeak not to your Hearts, all the Ordinances in the World can do you no good, 1 *Cor.* 3. 7. O remember what a ſolemn and awful thing it is to come to thoſe Ordinances, and attend upon that Miniſtration, in and by which the eternal Decrees of Heaven are to be executed upon your Souls, which muſt be to you the *ſavour of Life unto Life, or of Death unto Death*: Wreſtle with God, by Prayer, for a Bleſſing upon the Ordinances. Say, Lord, ſpeak thy ſelf to my Heart, let me hear thy Voice, and feel thy Power in this Prayer, or in this Sermon: Others have heard thy Voice, cauſe me to hear it: It had been much better for me if I had never heard the Voice of Preachers, except I hear thy Voice in them.

Secondly, Let all thoſe that have heard the Voice of God, and are come to Chriſt in the vertue of his Teachings, admire the wonderful Condeſcenſion of God to them. O that God ſhould ſpeak to thy Soul, and be ſilent to others! there be many thouſands living at this day under Ordinances, to whom the Lord hath not given an Ear to hear, or an Heart to obey, *Deut.* 29. 4. *To you it is given to know the Myſteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given*, Matth. 13. 11. And I beſeech you walk as Men and Women that have been taught of God. When *Satan* and your Corruptions temper you to ſin, and to walk in the ways of the carnal and careleſs World: Remember then that Scripture, *Eph.* 4. 20, 21, *But ye have not ſo learned Chriſt, if ſo be that you have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jeſus.* To conclude, ſee that you be exceeding humble and lowly in Spirit; Humility qualifies you for divine Teachings, *Pſal.* 25. 9. *The humble he will teach: and the more ye are taught of God, the more humble you will ſtill be.*

And thus you ſee, that no Man can come to Chriſt without the *Application of the Law*, and *the teachings of the Father*; which being conſidered, may be very uſeful to convince us, (which indeed is the deſign of it) that among the Multitudes of Men and Women, living under the Ordinances of God, and the general profeſſion of Religion; there are but few, very few to be found, who have effectually recieved the Lord Jeſus Chriſt by ſaving Faith.

And now, Reader, I ſuppoſe by this time thou art deſirous to know by what Signs and Evidences thy Union with Chriſt by Faith may be cleared up, and made evident to thee: And how that great Queſtion, Whether thou haſt yet effectually applied Chriſt to thy Soul, or no, may be clearly decided; which brings me to the third general uſe of the whole, *viz.*

The Examination of our Intereſt in Chriſt, by

1. The Donation of the Spirit, from 1 *John* 3. 24.
2. The New Creation, from 2 *Cor.* 5. 17.
3. The Mortification of Sin, from *Gal.* 5. 24
4. The Imitation of Chriſt, from 1 *Joh.* 2. 6.

Of each of theſe Trials of our Intereſt in Chriſt I ſhall ſpeak in their Order: And, firſt, of the Donation of the Spirit.

SERMON XXIV.

1 JOHN III. 24.

——And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

Serm. 24 Of the Manner and Importance of the Spirits Indwelling.

THE Apoſtle in this Chapter is engaged in a very trying Diſcourſe; his Scope is to diſcriminate the Spirits and States of ſincere Believers, from meerly nominal and pretended Chriſtians; which he attempts not to do by any thing that is external, but by the internal Effects and Operations of the Spirit of God upon their Hearts. His enquiry is not into thoſe things which Men profeſs, or about the duties which they perform, but about the frames and tempers of their Hearts and

and the Principles by which they are acted in Religion. According to this Teſt he puts Believers upon the ſearch and ſtudy of their own Hearts: calls them to reflect upon the Effects and Operations of the Spirit of God wrought within their own Souls: aſſuring them that thoſe gracious effects and fruits of the Spirit in their Hearts will be a ſolid Evidence unto them of their Union with Jeſus Chriſt, amounting to much more than a general conjectural ground of Hope, under which it is impoſſible there may *ſubeſſe falſum*, lurk a dangerous and fatal Miſtake: but the gracious Effects of the Spirit of God within them, are a Foundation upon which they may build the certainty and aſſurance of their Union with Chriſt: *Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.* In which Words we have three things to conſider, *viz.*

1. The thing to be tried, our Union with Chriſt.
2. The trial of it, by the giving of his Spirit to us.
3. The certainty of trial this way: *hereby we know.*

Firſt, The thing to be tried, which is indeed the greateſt and weightieſt Matter that can be brought to tryal in this World, or in that to come, namely our Union with Chriſt, expreſſed here by *his abiding in us*, a Phraſe clearly expreſſing the difference betwixt thoſe that by Profeſſion and common Eſtimation paſs for Chriſtians among Men, though they have no other Union with Chriſt, but by an *external adheſion* to him in the outſide Duties of Religion: and thoſe whoſe Union with Chriſt is real, vital and permanent, by the indwelling of the Spirit of Chriſt in their Souls, *Joh.* 15. 6. opens the force and importance of this Phraſe, *I am the vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him; the ſame bringeth forth much fruit: if a Man abide not in me, he is caſt forth as a branch, and is withered*: the thing then to be tried, is, whether we ſtand in Chriſt as dead branches in a living Stock, which are only bound to it by external Ligatures, or Bonds, that hold them for a while together: or whether our Souls have a vital Union and Coalition with Chriſt, by the Participation of the living Sap of that bleſſed Root.

Secondly, The trial of this Union, which is by the *giving of the Spirit to us*: the Spirit of Chriſt is the very Bond of Union betwixt him and our Souls: I mean not that the very Perſon of the Spirit dwelleth in us, imparting his *eſſential Properties* to us: it were a horrid Blaſphemy ſo to ſpeak, but his ſaving Influences are communicated to us in the way of ſanctifying Operations: as the Sun is ſaid to come into the Houſe, when his Beams and comforting Influences ſhine there. Nor yet muſt we think that the Graces or Influences of the Spirit abide in us in the ſelf-ſame meaſure and manner as they do in Chriſt; *for God giveth not the Spirit to him by meaſure*; in him all Fulneſs dwells. He is anointed with the Spirit above his Fellows; but there are Meaſures and Proportions of Grace differently communicated to Believers by the ſame Spirit; and theſe communicated Graces and real Operations of the Spirit of Grace in our Hearts, do undoubtedly prove the Reality of our Union with Chriſt; as the communication of the ſelf ſame vital Juice, or Sap of the Stock to the Branch whereby it lives, and brings forth Fruit of the ſame kind, certainly proves it to be a real part or Member of the ſame Tree.

Thirdly, Which brings us to the third thing; namely, the certainty of the trial this way, ἐν τούτῳ γινώσκομεν in this, or *by this we know*: we ſo know, that we cannot be deceived. To clear this, let us conſider two things in Grace, *viz.*

1. Somewhat *Conſtitutive* } of its being.
2. Somewhat *Manifeſtative* }

There is ſomething in Grace which is eſſential and *conſtitutive* of its being; and ſomewhat that flows from Grace, and is *manifeſtative* of ſuch a Being: we cannot immediately and intuitively diſcern the Eſſence of Grace, as it is in its ſimple nature. So God only diſcerns it, who is the Author of it: but we may diſcern it *mediately* and *ſecondarily* by the Effects and Operations of it. Could we ſee the ſimple Eſſence of Grace, or intuitively diſcern our Union with Chriſt, our Knowledge would be *demonſtrative, à priori ad poſterius*, by ſeeing Effects, as they are lodged in their Cauſe; but we come to know the being of Grace, and the reality of our Union with Chriſt, *à poſteriori*, by aſcending in our Knowledge from the Effects and Operations, to their true cauſe and being.

And accordingly God hath furniſhed us with a Power of Self intuition and Reflection: whereby we are able to turn in upon our own Hearts, and make a Judgment upon our ſelves, and upon our own Acts. The Soul hath not only a Power to *project*, but a Power alſo to *reflect* upon its own Actions, not only to put forth a *direct Act* of Faith upon Jeſus Chriſt, but to judge and diſcern that Act alſo, 2 *Tim.* 1. 12. *I know whom I have believed*: and this is the way in which Believers attain their Certainty and Knowledge of their Union with Chriſt: from hence the Obſervation will be.

Doctr. *That intereſt in Chriſt may be certainly gathered, and concluded from the gift of the Spirit to us: no Man* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *hath ſeen God at any time; if we love one another, God dwelleth in us; and his love is perfected in us: hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, becauſe he hath given us of his Spirit*, 1 John 4. 12, 13. The Being of God is inviſible, but the Operations of his Spirit in Believers are ſenſible and diſcernable. The Souls Union with Chriſt is a ſupernatural Myſtery, yet is it diſcoverable by the Effects thereof, which are very perceptible in and by Believers. Two things require Explication, and Confirmation in the doctrinal part of this Point.

1. What the giving of the Spirit imports and ſignifies.
2. How it evidences the Soul's intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt.

Firſt, As to the importance of this Phraſe, we are to enquire what is meant by the Spirit, and what by the giving of the Spirit.

Now the Spirit is taken in Scripture two ways, *viz.*

Eſſentially: Or Perſonally.

In the firſt Sence it is put for the God-head, 1 Tim. 3. 16. *Juſtified in the Spirit*, (i. e.) by the Power of his divine Nature, which raiſed him from the Dead. In the ſecond Senſe it denotes the third Perſon, or ſubſiſtence in the glorious and bleſſed Trinity, and to him this Word *Spirit* is attributed, ſometimes *properly* in the Sence beforemention'd, as denoting his *perſonality*; at other times *metonymically*, and then it is put for the Effects, Fruits, Graces and Gifts of the Spirit, Communicated by him unto Men, Eph. 5. 11. *Be ye filled with the Spirit*. Now the Fruits or Gifts of the Spirit are either,

1. Common, and assisting Gifts: Or,
2. Special, and Sanctifying Gifts.

In the last Sence and Signification, it must be taken in this place: for as to the common, assisting and ministring Gifts of the Spirit, they are bestowed promiscuously upon one as well as another. Such Gifts in an excellent degree, and a large measure are found in the unregenerate, and therefore can never amount to a solid evidence of the Soul's Union with Christ: but his special sanctifying Gifts, being the proper effect and consequent of that Union, must needs strongly prove and confirm it. In this Sense therefore we are to understand the *Spirit* in this place: and by giving the Spirit to us, we are to understand more than the *coming of the Spirit upon us*: the Spirit of God is said to come upon Men in a transient way, for their present assistance in some particular Service, though in themselves they be unsanctified Persons: thus the *spirit of God came upon Balaam*, Numb. 24. 2. enabling him to Prophesie of things to come; and although those extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit be now ceased, yet the Spirit ceaseth not to give his ordinary assistances unto Men, both regenerate and unregenerate, 1 *Cor.* 12. 8, 9, 10, 31. Compared: but whatever Gifts he gives to others, he is said to *be given, to dwell* and to *abide* only in Believers, 1 Cor. 3. 16. *Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* An Expression denoting both his special propriety in them, and gracious familiarity with them: there is a great difference betwixt the *assisting* and the *indwelling* of the Spirit: the one is *transient*, the other *permanent*. That is a good rule the Schoolmen give us, *illa tantum dicuntur inesse, quæ insunt per modum quietis*: those things are only said to be in a Man, which are in him by way of rest, and permanency, and so the Spirit is in Believers: therefore they are said to *live in the spirit*, Gal. 5. 25. To be *led by the spirit*, ver. 18. To *be in the spirit*, and the spirit to dwell in them, *Rom.* 8. 9. And so much of the first thing to be opened, *viz.* what we are to understand by the giving of the Spirit.

Secondly, In the next place we are to enquire and satisfie our selves, how this giving of the Spirit evidently proves, and strongly concludes, that Souls interest in Christ unto whom he is given: and this will evidently appear by the consideration of these five particulars.

Fir. The Spirit of God in Believers is the very *bond* by which they are united unto Christ: if therefore we find in our selves the bond of union, we may warrantably conclude that we have union with Jesus Christ: this is evidently held forth in those words of Jesus Christ, John 17. 22, 23. *The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me*: 'Tis the glory of Christ's humane nature to be united to the God-head: this (said Christ) thou gavest me, and the glory thou gavest me I have given them (*i. e.*) by me they are united unto thee: and how this is done he sheweth us more particularly, *I in them*; there is Christ in us, viz. *mystically*; and *thou in me*, there is God in Christ, viz *Hypostatically*; so that in Christ God and Believers meet in a blessed union. 'Tis Christ's glory to be one with God; 'tis our glory to be one with Christ, and with God by him; But how is this done? certainly no other way but by the giving of his Spirit unto us; for so much that phrase *I in them* must needs import; Christ is in us by the sanctifying Spirit which is the *bond* of our union with him.

Secondly, The Scripture every where makes this giving or indwelling of the Spirit the great mark and tryal of our interest in Christ; concluding from the presence of it in us *positively*, as in the Text; and from the absence of it, *negatively*, as in Rom. 8. 9. *Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, the same is none of his*, Jude ver. 19. *sensual, not having the Spirit*; this mark therefore agreeing to all Believers, and to none but Believers; and that always, and at all times; it must needs clearly infer the Souls union with Christ in whomsoever it is found.

Thirdly, That which is a certain mark of our freedom, from the Covenant of Works, and our Title to the Privileges of the Covenant of Grace, must needs also infer our Union with Christ, and special interest in him; but the giving or indwelling of the sanctifying spirit in us, is a certain mark of our freedom from the *first Covenant*, under which all Christless persons still stand; and our Title to the special Privileges of the *second Covenant* in which none but the Members are interested: and consequently it fully proves our Union with the Lord Jesus. This is plain from the *Apostles* reasoning, Gal. 4. 6, 7. *And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your Hearts, crying Abba Father: wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.* The Spirit of the first Covenant was a servile Spirit, a Spirit of fear and bondage, and they that were under that Covenant were not *Sons* but *Servants*; but the Spirit of the New Covenant is a free, ingenuous Spirit, acting in the strength of God, and those that do so are the Children of God: and Children inherit the blessed privileges, and royal immunities contained in that great Charter, the Covenant of Grace; they are *heirs of God*, and the evidence of this their inheritance by vertue of the second Covenant, and of their freedom from the servitude and bondage of the first Covenant, is *the Spirit of Christ in their hearts crying Abba Father*: So Gal. 5. 18. *If ye be led by the Spirit ye are not under the Law.*

Fourthly, if the eternal decree of God's electing love be executed, and the vertues and benefits of the death of Christ applyed by the Spirit, unto every Soul in whom he dwelleth as a Spirit of Sanctification; then such a giving of the Spirit unto us must needs be a certain mark and proof of our special interest in Christ: but the decree of God's electing love is executed, and the benefits of the blood of Christ are applyed unto every Soul in whom he dwelleth as a Spirit of Sanctification. This is plain from, 1 Pet. 1. 2. *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through Sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus Christ*: where you see both God's election executed, and the Blood of Jesus sprinkled or applyed unto us by the Spirit, which is given to us as a Spirit of Sanctification. There is a blessed order of working observed as proper to each person in the God-head: the Father electeth, the Son redeemeth, the Spirit sanctifieth. The Spirit is the last efficient in the work of our Salvation: what the Father decreed and the Son purchased, that the Spirit applyeth; and so puts the last hand to the compleat Salvation of Believers. And this some *Divines* give as the reason why the sin against the Spirit is unpardonable, because he being the last age

agent in order of working, if the heart of a Man be filled with enmity againſt the Spirit, here can be no remedy for ſuch a ſin; there is no looking back to the death of Chriſt, or to the love of God for remedy; this ſin againſt the Spirit is that *obex infernalis*, the deadly ſtop and bar to the whole work of Salvation; oppoſitely, where the Spirit is received, obeyed, and dwelleth in the way of Sanctification; into that Soul the eternal love of God, the ineſtimable benefits of the Blood of Chriſt run freely without ſtop or interruption; and conſequently the intereſt of ſuch a Soul in Jeſus Chriſt is beyond all diſpute.

Fifthly, The giving of the Spirit to us, or his reſiding in us as a ſanctifying Spirit, is every where in Scripture made the pledge and earneſt of eternal Salvation, and conſequently muſt abundantly confirm and prove the Soul's intereſt in Chriſt; Eph. 1. 13, 14. *In whom alſo after that ye believed, ye were ſealed with that holy Spirit of promiſe; which is the earneſt of our Inheritance*, &c. So 2 Cor. 1. 22. *who hath alſo ſealed us, and given the earneſt of the Spirit in our hearts.* And thus you have the point opened and confirmed. The Uſe of all followeth.

Uſe. Now the only uſe I make of this point ſhall be that which lyeth directly both in the eye of the Text, and of the Deſign for which it was choſen; namely, by it to try and examine the truth of our intereſt, and the validity of our claim to Jeſus Chriſt. In purſuance of which deſign I ſhall firſt lay down ſome general rules, and then propoſe ſome particular tryals.

First, I ſhall lay down ſome general rules for the true information of our minds in this point upon which ſo great a weight hangs.

Rule 1. *Though the Spirit of God be given to us and worketh in us, yet he worketh not as a natural and neceſſary, but as a free and arbitrary agent*: he neither aſſiſts or ſanctifies as the fire burneth, *ad ultimum ſui poſſe*, as much as he can aſſiſt or ſanctifie, but as much as he pleaſeth: *Dividing to every man ſeverally as he will*, 1 Cor. 12. 11. Beſtowing greater meaſures of gifts and graces upon ſome, than upon others; and aſſiſting the ſame perſon, more at one Seaſon than another: and all this variety of operation floweth from his own good pleaſure: his grace is his own, and may give it as he pleaſeth.

Rule 2. *There is a great difference in the manner of the Spirits working before, and after the work of regeneration*: whileſt we are unregenerate, he works upon us as upon dead Creatures that work not at all with him; and what motion there is in our Souls, is a counter-motion to the Spirit: but after regeneration it is not ſo, he then works upon a complying and willing mind: we work and he aſſiſts, Phil. 2. 13. Our Conſcience witneſſeth, and he worketh witneſs with it, *Rom.* 8. 16. It is therefore an Error of dangerous conſequence to think that ſanctified perſons are not bound to ſtir or ſtrive in the way of duty without a ſenſible impulſe or preventing motion of the Spirit, *Iſa.* 64. 7.

Rule 3. *Though the Spirit of God be given to believers, and worketh in them, yet believers themſelves may do, and commit ſuch things as may obſtruct the working, and grieve the very being of the Spirit of God in them*; *ita tractat, ut à nobis tractatur*: he dealeth with us in his evidencing, and comforting work, as we deal with him in point of tenderneſs and obedience to his dictates: there is a grieving, yea, there is a quenching of the Spirit by the luſts and corruptions of thoſe hearts in which he dwelleth: though he will not forſake his habitation as a Spirit of Sanctification, yet he may for a time deſert it as a Spirit of Conſolation, *Pſal.* 51. 11.

Rule 4. *Thoſe things which diſcover the indwelling of the Spirit in believers are not ſo much the matter of their duties, or ſubſtance of their actions; as the more ſecret ſprings, holy aims, and Spiritual manner of their doing, or performing of them*; 'tis not ſo much the matter of a prayer, the neat and orderly Expreſſions in which it is uttered; as the inward Senſe, and Spiritual deſign of the Soul: 'tis not the choice of elegant words whereby our Conceptions are cloathed, or the copiouſneſs of the matter with which we are furniſhed; for even a poor ſtammering tongue, and broken language may have more of the Spirit of God in it. This made *Luther* ſay, he ſaw more excellency in the duty of a plain ruſtick Chriſtian, than in all the Triumphs of *Cæſar* and *Alexander*: the beauty and excellency of Spiritual duties is an inward hidden thing.

Rule 5. *All the motions and operations of the Spirit are always harmonical and ſuitable* to the written word: Iſa. 8. 20. *To the Law, and to the Teſtimony; if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light in them.* The Scriptures are by the inſpiration of the Spirit, therefore his inſpirations into the hearts of believers muſt either ſubſtantially agree with the Scriptures, or the inſpirations of the Spirit be ſelf-repugnant, and contradictory to one another. It is very obſervable that the works of grace wrought by the Spirit in the hearts of believers are repreſented to us in Scripture as a tranſcript or copy of the written word: Jer. 31. 33. *I will write my Law in their hearts.* Now as a true copy anſwers the original word for word, letter for letter, point for point; ſo do the works of the Spirit in our Souls harmonize with the dictates of the Spirit in the Scriptures: whatſoever motion therefore ſhall be found repugnant thereunto, muſt not be fathered upon the Spirit of God, but laid at the door of its proper parents, the Spirit of error, and corrupt nature.

Rule 6. *Although the works of the Spirit in all ſanctified perſons do ſubſtantially agree, both with the written word, and with one another (as ten thouſand copies penned from one original muſt needs agree within themſelves) yet as to the manner of infuſion, and operation, there are found many circumſtantial differences*: the Spirit of God doth not hold one and the ſame method of working upon all hearts: the work of grace is introduced into ſome Souls with more terrour and trouble for ſin than it is in others: He wrought upon *Paul* one way; upon *Lydia* in another way: he holds ſome much longer under terrours and troubles than he doth others: inveterate and more prophane ſinners find ſtronger troubles for ſin, and are held longer under them, than thoſe are into whoſe hearts grace is more early and inſenſibly infuſed by the Spirits bleſſing upon religious education: but as thoſe have leſs trouble than the others at firſt, ſo commonly they have leſs clearneſs, and more doubts and fears about the work of the Spirit afterwards.

Rule 7. *There is a great difference found betwixt the ſanctifying, and the comforting influences of the Spirit upon believers in reſpect of conſtancy, and permanency*: his ſanctifying influences abide for ever in the Soul: they never depart; but his comforting influences come and go, and abide not long upon the hearts of believers. Sanctification belongs to the *being* of a Chriſtian, Conſolation only to his *well-being*: the firſt therefore is fixed and abiding, the latter various and inconſtant. Sanctification brings us to

Heaven hereafter, Conſolation brings Heaven into us here: our *Safety* lies in the former, our *Cheerfulneſs* only in the latter. There are times and ſeaſons in the lives of Believers wherein the Spirit of God doth more ſignally and eminently ſeal their Spirits and raviſh their Hearts with Joy unſpeakable: but what *Bernard* ſpeaketh, is certainly true in the experience of Chriſtians: It is a ſweet hour, and it is but an hour: a thing of ſhort continuance: the reliſh of it is exceeding ſweet, but it is not often that Chriſtians taſte it. And ſo much may ſuffice for the general rules about the in-being and workings of the Spirit in Believers, for the better Information of our Underſtandings, and prevention of miſtakes in this matter, I ſhall next, according to promiſe, lay down the particular marks and tryals by which we may diſcern whether God hath given us his Spirit or no: by which grown Chriſtians when they are in a due compoſed frame, may, by the aſſiſtance of the Spirit of God, (for which therefore they are bound to pray) diſcern his indwelling, and working in themſelves.

Rara hora, brevis mora; ſapit quidem ſuaviſſime, ſed guſtatur rariſſime. Bern.

Evidence 1. *In whomſoever the Spirit of Chriſt is a Spirit of Sanctification, to that man or woman he hath been more or leſs a Spirit of Conviction and Humiliation*: this is the order which the Spirit conſtantly obſerves in adult, or grown Converts. John 16. 8, 9. *And when he is come he will reprove the world of Sin, and of Righteouſneſs, and of Judgment: of Sin becauſe they believed not on me.* This you ſee is the method he obſerves all the World over: he ſhall reprove or convince the World of ſin. Conviction of ſin hath the ſame reſpect unto Sanctification, as the Bloſſoms of Trees have to the Fruits that follow them: a bloſſom is but *fructus imperfectus, & ordinabilis*; an imperfect fruit in it ſelf, and in order to a more perfect and noble fruit; where there are no Bloſſoms, we can expect no fruit, and where we ſee no Convictions of ſin, we can expect no Converſion to Chriſt. Hath then the Spirit of God been a Spirit of Conviction to thee? hath he more particularly convinced thee of ſin *becauſe thou haſt not believed on him?* (i.e.) hath he ſhewn thee thy ſin and miſery, as an Unbeliever? not only terrified and affrighted thy Conſcience with this or that more notorious act of ſin, but fully convinced thee of the ſtate of ſin that thou art in by reaſon of thy unbelief; which holding thee from Chriſt, muſt needs alſo hold thee under the guilt of all thy other ſins. This gives at leaſt a ſtrong probability that God hath given thee his Spirit, eſpecially, when this Conviction remains day and night upon thy Soul, ſo that nothing but Chriſt can give it reſt, and conſequently the great Inquiſition of thy Soul is after Chriſt, and none but Chriſt.

Evidence 2. *As the Spirit of God hath been a convincing, ſo he is a quickening Spirit to all thoſe to whom he is given*; Rom. 8. 2. *The law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus hath made me free from the Law of ſin and death*; he is the Spirit of life, (*i. e.*) the principle of ſpiritual life in the Souls whom he inhabiteth; for uniting them to Chriſt, he unites them to the fountain of life; and this ſpiritual life in Believers manifeſts it ſelf as the natural life doth in vital Actions and Operations. When the Spirit of God comes into the Soul of a Man that was dead, and ſenſeleſs under ſin, O (ſaith he) now I begin to feel the weight and load of ſin, *Rom.* 7. 24. now I begin to hunger, and thirſt after Chriſt and his Ordinances, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. now I begin to breath after God in ſpiritual Prayer, *Acts* 9. 11. Spiritual life hath its ſpiritual Senſes, and ſuitable Operations. O think upon this, you that cannot feel any burthen in ſin, you that have no hungerings or thirſtings after Chriſt; how can the Spirit of God be in you? I do not deny but there may at ſome times be much deadneſs and ſenſeleſsneſs upon the hearts of Chriſtians, but this is their Diſeaſe, not their Nature; it is but at ſome times not always, and when it is ſo with them they are burthened with it, and complain of it as their greateſt Affliction in this World; their Spirits are not eaſie and at reſt in ſuch a condition as yours are, their Spirit is as a Bone out of joint, an Arm diſlocated which cannot move any way without pain.

Evidence 3. *Thoſe to whom God giveth his Spirit have a tender ſympathy with all the intereſt and concernments of Chriſt*; this muſt needs be ſo, if the ſame Spirit which is in Chriſt dwelleth alſo in thy heart: if thou be a Partaker of his Spirit, then what he loves, thou loveſt; and what he hateth, thou hateſt: this is a very plain caſe; even in nature it ſelf we find that the many members of the ſame natural body being animated by one and the ſame Spirit of life: *whether one member ſuffer, all the members ſuffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it: now ye are the body of Chriſt, and members in particular*, 1 Cor. 12. 26, 27. For look as Chriſt the head of that Body is touched with a tender Senſe and feeling of the miſeries and troubles of his People: he is perſecuted, when they are perſecuted, *Acts* 9. 4. ſo they that have the Spirit of Chriſt in them, cannot be without a deep and tender Senſe of the reproach and diſhonours that are done to Chriſt: this is *as it were a ſword in their bones*, Pſal. 42. 3. If his publick Worſhip ceaſe, the Aſſemblies of his People ſcattered, it cannot but go to the hearts of all in whom the Spirit of Chriſt is: *they will be ſorrowful for the ſolemn aſſemblies*: *the reproach of them will be a burden*, Zeph. 3. 18. Thoſe that have the Spirit of Chriſt do no more earneſtly long after any one thing in this World, than the advancement of Chriſt's Intereſt by Converſion and Reformation in the Kingdoms of the Earth, *Pſal.* 45. 3, 4. *Paul* could rejoice that Chriſt was preached, though his own Afflictions were increaſed, *Phil.* 1. 16, 18. and *John* could rejoice that Chriſt encreaſed, though he himſelf decreaſed; yet therein was his joy fulfilled, *Joh.* 3. 29. ſo certainly the Concernments of Chriſt muſt and will touch that heart which is the Habitation of his Spirit, & cannot deny but even a good *Barnabas* may be under a Temptation to ſeek great things for himſelf, and be too much ſwallowed up in his own Concernments, when God is plucking up and breaking down, *Jer.* 45. 4. 5. But this is only the influence of a Temptation: the true Temper and Spirit of a Believer inclines him to ſorrow and mourning, when things are in this poſture. *Ezek.* 9. 4. *Go through the midſt of the City, through the midſt of* Jeruſalem; *and ſet a mark upon the foreheads of the men that ſigh, and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midſt thereof.*

O Reader, lay thine hand upon thine heart: is it thus with thee? doſt thou ſympathize with the Affairs and Concernments of Chriſt in the World? or careſt thou not which way things go with the People of God, and Goſpel of Chriſt; ſo long as thine own Affairs proſper, and all things are well with thee?

Evidence

Evidence 4. *Where-ever the Spirit of God dwelleth, he doth in some degree mortifie and subdue the evils and corruptions of the soul in which he resides*: this Spirit lusteth against the flesh, Gal. 5. 7. and believers *through the Spirit, do mortifie the deeds of the body*, Rom. 8, 13. this is one special part of his sanctifying work. I do not say he so kills and subdues sin in believers, as that it shall never trouble or defile them any more: no, no, that freedom belongs to the perfect state in Heaven, but its dominion is taken away, though its life be prolonged for a season: it lives in believers still, but not upon the provision they willingly make to fulfil the Lust of it, *Rom. 13. ult.* The design of every true believer is co-incident with the design of the Spirit to destroy, and mortifie corruption: they long after the extirpation of it; and are daily in the use of all sanctified means and instruments, to subdue and destroy it; the workings of their corruption are the afflictions of their Souls; Rom. 7. 24. *O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* and there is no one thing that sweetens the thoughts of death to believers (except the sight and full enjoyment of God) more than their expected deliverance from sin doth.

Evidence 5. *Where-ever the Spirit of God dwelleth in the way of sanctification, in all such he is the Spirit of prayer and supplication*: Rom. 3. 26. *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit it self maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered*: Where-ever he is poured out as the spirit of *grace*, he is also poured out as the spirit of *supplication*: *Zech.* 12. 10. his praying, and his sanctifying influences are undivided. There is a threefold assistance that the Spirit gives unto sanctified persons in prayer: he helps them before they pray, by setting an edge upon their desires and affections: he helps them in prayer by supplying matters of request to them, teaching them what they should ask of God: he assisteth them in the manner of Prayer, supplying to them suitable affections, and helping them to be sincere in all their desires to God: 'tis he that humbles the Pride of their hearts, dissolves and breaks the hardness of their hearts: out of deadness makes them lively; out of weakness makes them strong: he assisteth the Spirits of Believers after Prayer, helping them to Faith and Patience, to believe and wait for the returns, and answers of their Prayers. O Reader, reflect upon thy Duties, consider what spirituality, sincerity, Humility, Brokenheartedness, and melting Affections after God are to be found in thy Duties: Is it so with thee? or dost thou shuffle over thy Duties as an interruption to thy business and pleasures? Are they an ungrateful task imposed upon thee by God, and thy own Conscience? Are there no Hungerings and Thirstings after God in thy Soul? or if there be any pleasure arising to thee out of Prayer, is it not from the ostentation of thy Gifts? if it be so, reflect sadly upon the carnal state of thy heart, these things do not speak the Spirit of Grace, and Supplication to be given thee.

Evidence 6. *Where ever the Spirit of Grace inhabits, there is an heavenly spiritual frame of Mind, accompanying and evidencing the Indwelling of the Spirit*, Rom. 8. 5. 6. *For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the Flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit: for to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace*: by the Mind, understand the musings, reasonings, yea and the cares, fears, delights and pleasures of the Soul, which follow the workings and meditations of the Mind; as these are, so are we; if these be ordinarily, and habitually taken up, and exercised about earthly things, then is the frame and state of the Man carnal and earthly: the workings of every creature follow the being, and nature of it: If God, Christ, Heaven and the World to come engage the thoughts, and affections of the Soul, the temper of such a Soul is spiritual; and the Spirit of God dwelleth there; this is the life of the regenerate, Phil. 3. 20. *Our conversation is in Heaven*; and such a frame of heart is *life* and *Peace*: a serene, placid, and most comfortable life: no pleasure upon earth; no gratifications of the senses do relish, and savour as spiritual things do. Consider therefore which way thy heart ordinarily works, especially in thy Solitudes and hours of retirement: these things will be a great evidence for, or against thy Soul. *David* could say, *How precious are thy thoughts unto me O God! How great is the summ of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand; when I awake I am still with thee*, *Psal.* 139. 17, 18. Yet it must be acknowledged for the relief of weaker Christians, that there is great odds, and variety found in this matter among the People of God: for the strength, steadiness, and constancy of a spiritual mind results from the depth and improvement of Sanctification: the more Grace, still the more evenness, spirituality, and constancy there is in the motions of the heart after God. The Minds of weak Christians are more easily entangled in earthly Vanities, and more frequently diverted by inward corruptions; yet still there is a spiritual *pondus*, inclination and bent of their Hearts towards God, and the vanity and corruption which hinders their communion with him, is their greatest grief and burthen under which they groan in this World.

Evidence 7. *Those to whom the Spirit of Grace is given, are led by the Spirit*, Rom. 8. 14. *As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God*: Sanctified Souls give themselves up to the government, and conduct of the Spirit; they obey his voice, beg his direction, follow his motions, deny the sollicitations of the flesh and blood, in obedience to him, *Gal.* 1. 16. And they that do so, they are the Sons of God. 'Tis the Office of the Spirit *to guide us in all truth*; and 'tis our great duty to follow his guidance. Hence it is that in all enterprizes, and undertakements, the People of God so earnestly beg direction and counsel from him; *Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness*, (saith *David*) *make thy way straight before my face*, Psal. 8. 5. They dare not, in doubtful cases, lean to their own understandings; yea, in points of duty and in points of sin, they dare not neglect the one, or commit the other, against the convictions and perswasions of their own Consciences; though troubles and sufferings be unavoidable in that path of duty; when they have balanced duties with sufferings in their most serious thoughts, the conclusion and result will still be, it is better to obey God than Man, the dictates of the Spirit rather than the Counsels of flesh and blood.

But before I leave this Point, I reckon my self a debtor unto weak Christians, and shall endeavour to give satisfaction to some special doubts and fears with which their Minds are ordinarily entangled

in this matter; for it is a very plain case, that many Souls have the presence and Sanctification of the spirit without the evidence and comfort thereof. Divers things are found in Believers, which are as so many Fountains of Fears, and doubts to them. And,

Obj 1. First, I greatly doubt the spirit of God is not in me (saith a poor Christian) because of the great darkness and ignorance which clouds my Soul; for I read, 1 *Joh* 2.27. that he enlightneth the Soul which he inhabiteth; *The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things,* &c. but alas, my understanding is weak and cloudy, I have need to learn of the meanest of God's People; this only I know, that I know nothing as I ought to know.

Sol. Two things are to be respected in spiritual knowledge; *viz.* the *quantity* and the *efficacy* thereof: your condition doth not so much depend upon the measures of knowledge, for haply, you are under many natural disadvantages, and want those helps and means of increasing knowledge, which others plentifully enjoy: it may be you have wanted the helps of education, or have been encumbred by the necessities and cares of the World; which have allowed you but little leasure for the improvement of your Minds: but if that which you do know be turned into practice and obedience, *Col.* 1. 9. 10. If it have influence upon your hearts, and transform your affections into a spiritual frame and temper, 2 *Cor.* 3. 17, 18. If your ignorance humble you, and drive you to God daily for the increase of Knowledge: one drop of such Knowledge of Christ and your selves as this, is more worth than a Sea of Humane, Moral, Unsanctified, and Speculative knowledge: though you know but little, yet that little being sanctified is of great value: though you know but little, time was when ye knew nothing of Jesus Christ, or the state of your own Souls. In a word, though you know but little, that little you do know will be still encreasing, *like the morning light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day,* Prov. 4. 18. If thou knowest so much as brings thee to Christ, thou shalt shortly be where thy knowledge shall be as the light at noon day.

Obj. 2. I sometime find my heart raised, and my affections melted in duties, but I doubt it is in a natural way, and not from the Spirit of God: could I be assured those motions of my heart were from the Spirit of grace, and not meerly a natural thing, it would be singular comfort and satisfaction to me.

Sol. First, Consider, whether this be not the ground of your fear and doubting, because you are fain to take pains in the way of meditation, prayer, and other duties to bring your hearts to sense and savour the things of God: whereas, it may be, you expect your Spiritual enlargements and comforts should flow in upon you spontaneously, and drop from heaven immediately of their own accord, without any pains or industry of yours: here may be, (and probably is) a great mistake in this matter; for the Spirit of God works in the natural method, wherein affections use to be raised, and makes use of such duties as Meditation and Prayer, as instruments to do that work by, *Ezek.* 36. 37. So *David* was forced to reason with, and chide his own heart, *Psal.* 42. 5. Thy comfort and enlargement may nevertheless be the fruit of the Spirit, because God makes it spring up, and grow upon thy Duties.

Secondly, Take this as a sure rule, whatsoever rises from self, always aim at, and terminates in self; this stream cannot be carryed higher than the fountain, if therefore thy aim and end in striving for affections and enlargements in duty, be only to win applause from Men, and appear to be what in reality thou art not, this indeed is the Fruit of nature, and a very corrupt and hypocritical nature; but if thy heart be melted, or desire to be melted in the sense of the evil of sin, in order to the farther mortification of it; and under the apprehensions of the Free Grace and Mercy of God in the pardon of Sin, in order to the engaging of thy Soul more firmly to him: If these or such like be thy ends and designs, or be promoted and furthered by thine enlargements and Spiritual comforts, never reject them as the meer fruits of nature; a carnal root cannot bring forth such fruits as these.

Obj. 3. Upon the contrary, Spiritual deadness, and indispositedness to duties, and to those especially which are more secret, Spiritual, and self-denying than others, is the ground upon which many thousand Souls who are yet truly gracious, do doubt the indwelling of the Spirit in them. O, saith such a Soul, if the Spirit of God be in me, Why is it thus? Could my heart be so dead, so backward, and averse to spiritual duties? no, no, these things would be my meat, and my drink; the delights and pleasures of my life.

Sol. First, These things indeed are very sad and argue thy heart to be out of frame, as the Body is when it cannot relish the most desireable Meats, or Drinks: but the question will be, *how* thy Soul behaves its self in such a condition as this is, whether this be easy or burthensome to be born by thee: and if thou complain under it as a burthen; then what pains thou takest to ease thy self, and get rid of it.

Qui bonum vult, & malum non vult, is stadium retinet placendi deo: quamvis illeEius concupiscentia mala, nonnunquam ex infirmitate illud committat quoddeo displicet. Davenant.

Secondly, Know also that there is a great difference betwixt Spiritual *death*, and Spiritual *deadness*: the former is the *state* of the Unregenerate: the latter is the *disease* and complaint of many thousand Regenerate Souls: if *David* had not felt it as well as thee, he would never have cryed out nine times in the compass of one *Psalm*, *Quicken me, quicken me.* Besides,

Thirdly, Though it be *often*, it is not so *always* with thee: there are seasons wherein the Lord breaks in upon thy heart, enlarges thy affections: and sets thy Soul at liberty: to which times thou wilt do well to have an eye, in these dark and cloudy days.

Obj. 4. But the Spirit of God is a *Comforter* as well as a *Sanctifier*: he doth not only enable Men to believe, but after they believe he also seals them, *Eph.* 1. 13. but I walk in darkness, and am a stranger to the sealing, and comforting work of the Spirit: How therefore can I imagine the Spirit of God should dwell in me, who go from day to day in the bitterness of my Soul, mourning as without the Sun?

Sol. There is a two-fold sealing, and two-fold comfort: the Spirit sealeth both *objectively* in the work of Sanctification, and *formally* in giving clear evidence of that work: thou mayest be sealed in the first, whilst thou art not yet sealed in the second sense: if so, thy condition is safe, al-

although it be at preſent uncomfortable: And as to comfort, that alſo is of two ſorts, *viz. ſeminal*, or *actual*: in the root, or in the fruit: *Light is ſown for the righteous*, Pſal. 97. 11. though the harveſt to reap and gather in that Joy and Comfort be not yet come; and there are many other ways beſides that of Joy and Comfort, whereby the indwelling of the Spirit may evidence it ſelf in thy Soul: if he do not enable thee to rejoyce, yet if he enable thee ſincerely to mourn for ſin; if he do not enlarge thy heart in Comfort, yet if he humble and purge thy heart by ſorrows, if he deny the *aſſurance of Faith*, and yet give thee *the dependance of Faith*, thou haſt no reaſon to call in queſtion, or deny the indwelling of the Spirit in thee for that cauſe.

Obj. But the *Apoſtle* ſaith, *They that walk in the Spirit do not fulfil the Luſts of the fleſh*, Gal. 5. 16. But I find my ſelf entangled, and frequently overcome by them, therefore I doubt the Spirit of God is not in me.

Sol. 'Tis poſſible the ground of your doubting may be your miſtake of the true ſenſe and meaning of that Scripture: it is not the Apoſtles meaning in that place, that Sin in Believers doth not work, tempt, and oftentimes overcome, and captivate them: for then he would contradict himſelf in *Rom.* 7. 23. where he thus complains, *but I ſee another Law in my members warring againſt the Law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the Law of ſin which is in my members*: but two things are meant by that expreſſion, *you ſhall not fulfil the luſts of the fleſh.*

Firſt, that the Principle of Grace will give cheque to ſin in its firſt motions, and cauſe it to miſcarry in the Womb like an untimely Birth, before it comes to its full Maturity: it ſhall never be able to gain the full conſent of the will as it doth in the Unregenerate.

Secondly, If notwithſtanding all the oppoſition Grace makes to hinder the Birth, or commiſſion of it, it do yet prevail, and break forth into act; yet ſuch acts of ſin as they are not committed without *regret*, ſo they are followed with *ſhame, ſorrow*, and true *repentance*: and thoſe very ſurprizals, and captivities of ſin at one time, are made cautions, and warnings to prevent it at another time; if it be ſo with thee, thou doſt not fulfill the Luſts of the fleſh.

And now, Reader, upon the whole; if upon examination of thy heart by theſe rules, the Lord ſhall help thee to diſcern the ſaving work of the Spirit upon thy Soul, and thereby thine Intereſt in Chriſt, What a happy Man or Woman art thou? What pleaſure will ariſe to thy Soul, from ſuch a Diſcovery! Look upon the frame of thine heart *abſolutely* as it is in it ſelf at preſent, or *comparatively* with what once it was, and others ſtill are, and thou wilt find enough to tranſport and melt thy heart within thee: certainly this is the moſt glorious piece of Workmanſhip that ever God wrought in the World upon any Man, *Ep.* 2. 10. The Spirit of God is come down from Heaven, and hath hallowed thy Soul to be a Temple for himſelf to dwell in; as he hath ſaid, *I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God and they ſhall be my People*, 2 Cor. 7. 16. Moreover this gift of the Spirit is a ſure pledge, and earneſt of thy future Glory: time was when there was no ſuch work upon thy Soul, and conſidering the frame and temper of it, the total averſation, ſtrong oppoſition, and rooted enmity that was in it; it is the wonder of wonders that ever ſuch a work as this ſhould be wrought upon ſuch an heart as thine; that ever the Spirit of God, whoſe nature is pure, and perfect holineſs, ſhould chuſe ſuch an unclean, polluted, abominable heart, to frame an habitation for himſelf there to dwell in; to ſay of thy Soul (now his ſpiritual *Temple*) as he once ſaid of the material *Temple* at *Jeruſalem*, Pſal. 132, 13. 14. *The Lord hath choſen it, he hath deſired it for his habitation; this is my reſt for ever, here will I dwell, for I have deſired it.* O what hath God done for thy Soul!

Think, Reader, and think again; Are there not many thouſands in the World of more ingenuous, ſweet, and amiable diſpoſitions than thy ſelf, whom yet the Spirit of God paſſeth by, and leaveth them as Tabernacles for *Satan* to dwell in? ſuch a one thou lately waſt, and hadſt ſtill remained, if God had not wrought for thee, beyond all the expectation, and deſires of thine own heart. O bleſs God that you have received not the Spirit of the World, but the Spirit which is of God; that ye might know the things which are freely given unto you of God.

SERMON XXV.

2 COR. V, 17.

Wherefore if any Man be in Chriſt, he is a New Creature: old things are paſſed away, behold all things are become new.

v. 25 Text. Of the nature and neceſſity of the new Creature.

YOU have ſeen one tryal of an intereſt in Chriſt in our laſt Diſcourſe, namely, by the Donation of the Spirit: we have here another Tryal of the ſame matter, from one of the greateſt, and moſt noble effects of the Spirit upon our Souls; namely, his work of renovation, or *new creation*: *If any man be in Chriſt, he is a new Creature.* The Apoſtles ſcope in the immediate context, is to diſſuade Chriſtians from a carnal, ſinful partiality, in their reſpects to Men: not to diſpenſe them after the manner of the World, according to the external differences, but the real internal worth and excellency that is in Men. This the Apoſtle preſſes by two Arguments; one drawn from the end of Chriſts death, *verſe* 15. which was to take off from thoſe ſelfiſh deſigns, and carnal ends by which the world is ſwayed. Secondly, from the *new Spirit* by which Believers are acted: they that are in Chriſt, are to judge and meaſure all things by a new rule: *if any man*

be in Christ, he is a new Creature: old things are passed away; q. d. we have done with that low selfish Spirit of the World which was wholly governed by Carnal interest; we are now to judge by a new rule, to be acted from a new principle, aim at a new, and more noble end; *behold all things are become new.* In these words we have three general parts to be distinctly considered, *viz.*

1. The great question to be determined, *if any man be in Christ.*
2. The Rule by which it may be determined, viz. *he is a new creature.*
3. This general rule more particularly explained, *old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.*

First, We have here the great question to be determined, Whether a Man be in Christ? a question upon the determination whereof we must stand or fall for ever; by [*being in Christ*] the *Apostle* doth not here mean the general profession of Christianity which gives a Man the *reputation* of an interest in him; but by being in Christ he means an interest in him by *vital union* with his person, and real participation of his benefits; now this is the question to be determined, the matter to be tryed; than which nothing can be more solemn, and important in the whole World.

Secondly, The rule by which this great question may be determined, viz. *The new creation; if any man be in Christ he is a new creature;* by this rule all the titles and claims made to Christ in the professing world are to be examined: [*if any man*] be he what he will, high or low; great or small; learned or illiterate; young or old; if he pretend interest in Christ; this is the standard by which he must be tryed; if he be in Christ, he is *a new Creature*; and if he be not a *new Creature*, he is not in *Christ*; let his endowments, gifts, confidence, and reputation be what it will be: [*a new Creature*] not new *Physically*, he is the same Person he was, but a new Creature, that is, a creature renewed by gracious principles newly infused into him from above, which sway him and guide him in another manner, and to another end than ever he acted before: and these gracious principles not being educed out of any thing which was pre-existent in Man, but infused *de novo*, from above, are therefore called in this place a *new creature*: this is the rule by which our claim to Christ must be determined.

Thirdly, This general rule is here more particularly explained, *old things are passed away, behold all things are become new*: he satisfies not himself to lay down this rule *concisely*, or express it in general terms by telling us the Man in Christ must be a new Creature, but more particularly, he shews us what this new Creature is, and what the parts thereof are, *viz.*

1. Privative part, *old things are passed away.*
2. Positive part thereof, *all things are become new.*

By old things he means all those carnal principles, self-ends, fleshly lusts belonging to the carnal state, or the old Man: all these are *passed away*; not simply, and perfectly, but only in parts at present, and wholly in hope, and expectation hereafter. So much briefly of the privative part of the new Creature: *old things are passed away.* A Word or two must be spoken of the *positive* part, *All things are become new.* He means not that the old faculties of the Soul are abolished, and new ones created in their Room: but as our bodies may be said to be new bodies by reason of their new endowments, and qualities super-induced and bestowed upon them in their resurrection; so our Souls are now renewed by the infusion of new gracious principles into them in the work of regeneration. These two parts, *viz.* the *privative* part, the passing away of old things; and the *positive* part, the renewing of all things; do betwixt them comprize the whole nature of sanctification, which in other Scriptures is expressed by equivalent phrases: sometimes by putting off the old, and putting on the new Man, *Eph.* 4. 24. Sometimes by dying unto sin, and living unto righteousness, *Rom.* 6. 11. which is the self-same thing the Apostle here intends by the passing away of old things, and making all things new; and because this is the most excellent, glorious, and admirable work of the Spirit which is or can be wrought upon Man in this World; therefore the Apostle asserts it with an *Ecce*, a note of special remarque and observation, *behold all things are become new, q. d.* behold and admire this surprizing, marvellous change which God hath made upon Men: they are come out of darkness into his marvellous light, 1 *Pet.* 2. 9. out of the old, as it were, into a new World, *behold all things are become new.*

Non simpliciter, & perfecte, sed partim re, partim spe. Estius in loc.

Hence Note,

Doct. *That God's creating of a new supernatural work of grace in the Soul of any Man, is that Man's sure and infallible evidence of a saving interest in Jesus Christ.*

Suitable hereunto are those words of the Apostle, Eph. 4. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24. *But ye have not so learned Christ, if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him as the truth is in Jesus: that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old Man which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts: and be renewed in the Spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new Man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness*: where we have in other words of the same importance, the very self-same description of the Man that is in Christ, which the Apostle gives us in this Text. Now for the opening and stating of this point, it will be necessary that I shew you,

1. Why the regenerating work of the Spirit is called a new Creation.
2. In what respects every Soul that is in Christ is renewed or made a new Creature.
3. What are the remarkable properties, and qualities of this new Creature.
4. The necessity of this new Creation to all that are in Christ.
5. How this new Creation evidences our interest in Christ.
6. And then Apply the whole in the proper uses of it.

First, Why the regenerating work of the Spirit is called a new Creation: this must be our first enquiry: and doubtless the reason of this appellation is the *Analogy*, proportion, and similitude which is found betwixt the work of regeneration, and God's work in the first Creation: and their agreement, and proportion will be found in the following particulars.

First, The same Almighty Author who created the World, createth also this work of grace in the Soul of Man, 2 Cor. 4. 6. *God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts*

to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ : the same powerful word which created the Natural, createth also the Spiritual light : it is equally absurd for any Man to say, I make my self to repent, or to believe, as it is to say, I made my self exist and be.

Minus est, & facisse hominem, quam sanctum.

Secondly, The first thing that God created in the natural World was Light, *Gen.* 1. 3. and the first thing which God createth in the new Creation is the light of Spiritual knowledge, Col. 3. 10. *And have put on the new man which is renewed in Knowledge after the image of him that created him.*

Thirdly, Creation is out of nothing ; it requires no pre-existent matter ; it doth not bring one thing out of another, but something out of nothing ; it gives a being to that which before had no being. So it is also in the new Creation; 1 Pet. 2. 9, 10. *Who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light ; which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy* ; the work of grace is not educed out of the power, and principles of nature; but is a pure work of creation. The heathen *Philosophers* could neither understand, nor acknowledge the creation of the World, because that notion was repugnant to this maxim of reason, *ex nihilo nihil fit*, out of nothing, nothing can be made ; thus did they *insanire cum ratione*, befool themselves with their own reasonings ; and after the same manner some great Pretenders to Reason among us, voting it an Absurdity to affirm, that the Work of Grace is not virtually and potentially contained in nature; the new Creation in the old.

Fourthly, It was the Vertue and Efficacy of the Spirit of God which gave the natural World its Being by Creation, *Gen.* 1. 2. the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the Waters ; it hovered over the *Chaos*, as the Wings of a Bird do over her Eggs, as the same Word is rendred, *Deut.* 32. 11. cherishing, as it were by incubation, that rude Mass by a secret quickening Influence, by which it drew all the Creatures into their several Forms, and particular Natures. So it is in the new Creation : a quickning Influence must come from the Spirit of God, or else the new Creation can never be formed in us, John 3. 8. *So is every one that is born of the Spirit* : and ver. 6. *That which is born of the Spirit is Spirit.*

Fifthly, The word of God was the instrument of the first Creation, Psal. 33. 6, 9. *By the word of the Lord were the Heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth ; for he spake, and it was done ; he commanded, and it stood fast* ; the word of God is also the instrument of the new Creation or work of Grace in Man, 1. Pet. 1. 23. *Being born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible ; by the word of God which liveth, and abideth for ever.* So James 1. 18. *Of his own will begat he us, with the word of truth* : *of his own will*, that was the *impulsive Cause* ; with the *word of truth*, that is the *instrumental cause* ; great respect and honour, love and delight is due to the word upon this account, that it is the instrument of our regeneration, or new Creation.

Sixthly, The same power which created the World, still under-props and supports it in its being : the World owes its conservation, as well as its existence to the power of God, without which it could not subsist one moment. Just so it is with the new Creation, which entirely depends upon the preserving power which first formed it, Jude ver. 1 *Preserved in Christ Jesus* ; and 1 Pet. 1. 5. *Who were kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation* : as in a natural way *we live, move, and have our being in God*, Acts 17. 28. so in a Spiritual way, we continue believing, repenting, loving, and delighting in God ; without whose continued influence upon our Souls we could do neither.

Seventhly, In a word, God surveyed the first Creation with complacence and great delight : he beheld the works of his hands and approved them as very good, *Gen.* 1. 31. so it is also in the second creation ; nothing pleaseth, and delights God more than the works of grace in the Souls of his People : it is not any outward privilege of Nature, or gift of Providence which commends any Man to God : *Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but a new creature*, Gal. 6. 15. And thus you see, upon what grounds the work of regeneration in Man is stiled a new Creature, which was the first thing to be opened.

Secondly, Next we must enquire in what respects every Soul that is in Christ is renewed ; or made a new Creature : and here we shall find a threefold renovation of every man that is in Christ, *viz.*

1. In his State and *Condition.*
2. In his Frame and *Constitution.*
3. In his Practice and *Conservation.*

First, He is renewed in his state and condition, for he passeth from *death to life, in his* Justification, 1 *Joh.* 3. 14. he was condemned by the Law, he is now justified freely by grace through the redemption which is in Christ : he was under the curse of the first Covenant ; he is under the blessing of the new Covenant : he was afar off, but is now made nigh unto God : an alien, a stranger once, now of the houshold of God, *Eph.* 2. 12, 13. O blessed change from a sad, to a sweet and comfortable condition ! *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus*, Rom. 8. 1.

Secondly, Every Man in Christ is renewed in his frame, and constitution ; all the faculties and affections of his Soul are renewed by regeneration ; his *understanding* was dark, but now is light in the Lord, *Eph.* 5. 8. his *conscience* was dead and secure, or full of guilt and horrour ; but is now become tender, watchful, and full of peace, *Heb.* 9. 14. his *will* was rebellious, stubborn and inflexible ; but is now made obedient, and complying with the will of God, *Psal.* 110. 2. his *desires* did once pant, and spend themselves in the pursuit of vanities, now they are set upon God, *Isa.* 26. 8. his *Love* did fondly dote upon ensnaring earthly objects, now it is swallowed up in the infinite excellencies of God and Christ, *Psal.* 119. 97. his *joy* was once in trifles, and things of nought ; now his rejoycing is in Christ Jesus, *Phil.* 3. 3. his *fears* once were versant about noxious creatures, now God is the object of the fear of *reverence*, *Act.* 9. 31. and sin the object of the fear

of *caution*, 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. his *hopes* and expectations were only from the World present, but now, from that to come, *Heb.* 6 19. Thus the Soul in its faculties, and affections is renewed; which being done, the members and senses of the body must needs be destinated, and imployed by it in new services; no more to be the weapons of unrighteousness, but instruments of service to Jesus Christ, *Rom.* 6. 19. and thus all that are in Christ are renewed in their frame and constitution.

Thirdly, The Man in Christ is renewed in his practice and *conversation*: the manner of operation always follows the nature of beings: now the regenerate not being what they were, cannot walk and act, as once they did: Eph. 2, 1, 2, 3. *And you hath he quickned, who were once dead in trespasses and sins; wherein ye walked according to the course of this World*, They were carried away like water by the strength of the tyde, by the influence of their own corrupt natures, and the customs and examples of the World: but the case is now altered. So in 2 *Cor.* 6. 11. the Apostle shews believers their old companions in sin, and tells them *such were some of you, but ye are sanctified*, &c. *q. d.* the World is now well altered with you, thanks be to the grace of God for it. This wonderful change of practice which is so universal, and remarkable in all the regenerate, and immediately consequent to their conversion, sets the World a wondering at them: 1 *Pet.* 4. 4. *Wherein they think it strange that you run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you*: they think it strange, the word signifies to stand at gaze, as the Hen doth which hath brooded, and hatched *Partridge Eggs*, when she seeth the *Chickens* which she hath brought forth, take the wing and fly away from her: thus do the Men of the World stand amazed to see their old companions in sin, whose language once was vain, and earthly; it may be prophane, and filthy; now to be praying, speaking of God, Heaven, and things Spiritual; having no more to do with them as to sin, except by way of reprehension and admonition: this amazes the World, and makes them look with a strange admiring eye upon the people of God.

Ἐνῷ ξενίζονται. Obstupescent ut ad rei inusitatæ spectaculum. Beza. *Ils se trouvent tous nouveaux, & comme en un autre monde.*

Thirdly, In the next place let us enquire into the Properties and Qualities of this new Creature, and shew you, as we are able, what they are: yet, Reader, expect not here an exact and accurate account of that which is so great a Mystery: for if questions may be moved about a silly Fly, which may puzzle the greatest *Philosopher* to resolve them; how much more may we conceive this great and marvellous work of God, the most mysterious, and admirable of all his Works, to surmount the understandings of the most illuminated Christians? O how little do we know of the nature, properties, and operations of this new Creature! so far as God hath revealed it to our weak understandings, we may speak of it. And

First. The Scripture speaks of it as a thing of great difficulty to be conceived by Man; Joh. 3. 8. *The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou heareſt the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.* The original of Winds is a question of great difficulty in *Philosophy*: we hear the voice of the wind, feel its mighty force, and behold its strange effects; but neither know whence it comes, or whither it goes: ask a Man, Do you hear the wind blow? yes: do you feel it blow? yes, very sensibly: do you see the effects of it rending and overturning the trees? yes, very plainly; but can you describe its nature, or declare its original? no; that is a mystery which I do not understand; who so, Just so it is with him that is born of the Spirit; the holy Spirit of God, whose nature and operations we understand but little of, comes from Heaven, quickens, and influences our Souls, beats down and mortifies our lusts by his almighty power; these effects of the Spirit in us we experimentally feel, and sensibly discern; but how the Spirit of God first entred into, and quickned our Souls, and produced this new creature in them, we understand little more of it, than how the bones do grow in the Womb of her that is with Child, *Eccles.* 11. 5. Therefore is the life of the new creature called a hidden life, *Col.* 3. 3. the nature of that life is not only hidden totally from all carnal Men, but in a very great measure it is an hidden and unknown Life unto Spiritual Men, though themselves be the Subjects of it.

Secondly. But though this life of the New Creature be a great Mystery and Secret in some respects, yet so far as it is known, and appears unto us, the New Creature is the most *beautiful*, and lovely Creature that ever God made: for the beauty of the Lord himself is upon it: *the new Man is created after God*, Eph. 4. 24. as the Picture is drawn after the Man: it is a draught of God himself, delineated by the Spirit, that admirable *Artist*, upon the Soul of Man: Holiness is the Beauty and Glory of God: and in Holiness the New Creature is created after God's own Image, *Col.* 3. 10. the Regenerate Soul hereby becomes holy, 1 *Joh.* 3. 3. not *essentially* holy as God is, nor yet *efficiently* holy: for the Regenerate Soul can neither make it self, nor others holy; but the Life of the New Creature may be said to resemble the Life of God in this, that as God lives to himself, so the New Creature wholly lives to God: as God loves Holiness, and hates the contrary, so doth the New Creature: 'tis in these things formed *after the image of God that created it*: when God creates this creature in the Soul of Man, we are said then to be *partakers of the Divine Nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. so that there can be nothing communicated unto Men, which beautifies and adorns their Souls as this new creation doth: Men do not resemble God as they are noble, and as they are rich, but as they are holy: no gift, no endowment of nature imbellishes the Soul, as this New Creature doth: an awful Majesty sits upon the Brow of the New Creature, commanding the greatest, and worst of Men to do homage to it, *Mark* 6. 20. yea, such is the Beauty of the New Creature, that Christ, its *Author*, is also its *Admirer*, Cant. 4. 9. *Thou hast ravished mine heart with one of thine eyes.*

Thirdly. This New Creature is created in Man upon the highest design that ever any work of God was wrought: the End of its creation

ation and infusion is high and noble: Salvation to the Soul in which it is wrought; this is both the *finis operis*, and the *finis operantis*: it is the design both of the work and of the workman that wrought it. When we receive the end of our Faith, we receive the salvation of our Souls. Salvation is the end of Faith, as death is the end of Sin, so Life eternal is the end of Grace. The New Creature doth, by the Instinct and steady Direction of its own Nature, take its course as directly to God, and to Heaven, the Place of his full Enjoyment, as the Rivers do to the Ocean; it declares it self to be made for God, by its restless workings after him. And as Salvation is the End of the new Creature, so it is the express Design and End of him that created it, 2 *Cor.* 5. 5. *Now he that hath wrought us for the self same thing is God*; by this workmanship of his upon our Souls he is now polishing, preparing, and *making them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light*, Col. 1. 12.

Fourthly, The New Creation is the most necessary work that ever God wrought upon the Soul of Man; the eternal well-being of his Soul depends upon it; and without it no Man shall see God, *Heb.* 12. 14. and *Joh.* 1. 3,5. *Except ye be regenerate, and born again, ye cannot see the Kingdom of God*; can ye be saved without Christ? you know you cannot: can you have interest in Christ without the New Creature? my Text expressly tells you it can never be; *for if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.* O Reader, whatever slight thoughts of this matter, and with what a careless and unconcerned Eye soever thou readest these lines; yet know, thou must either be a New Creature, or a miserable and damn'd creature for ever. If civility without the New Creature could save thee, Why are not the *moral Heathens* saved also? if strictness of Life, without the New Creature, could save thee, Why did it not save the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* also? if an high Profession of Religion, without the New Creature, can save thee, Why did it not save *Judas*, *Hymenæus*, and *Philetus* also? Nothing is more evident than this, that no Repentance, Obedience, Self-denyal, Prayers, Tears, Reformations, or Ordinances, without the New Creation, avail any thing to the Salvation of thy Soul; the very Blood of Christ himself without the New Creature, never did, and never will save any Man. Oh now necessary a work is the New Creation? Circumcision avails nothing, and Uncircumcision nothing, but a New Creature.

Fifthly, The new Creature is a marvellous and wonderful Creature: there are many wonders in the first Creation; the Works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein, *Psal.* 111. 2. but there are no wonders in nature, like those in grace. Is it not the greatest Wonder that ever was seen in the World (except the Incarnation of the Son of God) to see the Nature and Temper of Man, so altered and changed as it is by Grace: to see *Lascivious Corinthians*, and *Idolatrous Ephesians* become mortified and Heavenly Christians: to see a fierce, and cruel *Persecutor* become a glorious *Confessor*, and Sufferer for Christ, *Gal.* 1. 23. to see the carnal Mind of Man, which was lately fully set in a strong bent to the World, to be wholly taken off from its lusts, and set upon things that are Spiritual and Heavenly; certainly it was not a greater Miracle to see dead *Lazarus* come out of his *Sepulchre*, that it is to see the Dead and Carnal Mind coming out of its Lusts, to embrace Jesus Christ. It was not a greater Wonder to see the dead dry bones in the Valley to move, and come together, than it is to see a dead Soul moving after God, and moving to Christ in the way of Faith.

Sixthly, The new Creature is an *immortal Creature*, a creature that shall never see death, *John.* 4. 14. it is in the Soul of Man a Well of Water, springing up unto Eternal Life. I will not adventure to say, it is immortal in its own nature, for it is but a Creature, as my Text calls it; and we know that essential interminability is the incommunicable Property of God: The New Creature hath both a Beginning and Succession, and therefore might also have an End, as to any thing in it self, or its own nature: Experience also shews us, that it is capable both of increasing and decreasing; and may be brought nigh unto death, *Rev.* 3. 2. the Works of the Spirit in Believers *may be ready to die*; but though its Perpetuity flow not out of its own *nature*, it flows out of God's *Covenant*, and Promises, which make it an immortal Creature: When all other excellencies in Man go away, as at Death they will, *Job* 4. 21. this Excellency only remains: our Gifts may leave us: our Friends may leave us, our Estates leave us: but our Graces will never leave us: they ascend up with the Soul (in which they inhere) into Glory, when the stroke of Death separates it from the Body.

Seventhly, The New Creature is an *heavenly creature*: *'tis not born of flesh, nor of Blood, or of the will of Man, but of God*, Joh. 1. 13. its Descent and Original is heavenly, it is Spirit born of Spirit, *Joh.* 3 6. its Center is Heaven, and thither are all its Tendencies, *Psal.* 63. 8. its proper Food on which it lives are heavenly things, *Psal.* 4. 6, 7. It cannot feed as other Creatures do upon earthly Things: the Object of all its Delights and Loves is in Heaven, *Psal.* 73. 26. *Whom have I in heaven but thee?* The Hopes and Expectations of the New Creature are all from Heaven: it looks for little in this World, but waits for the coming of the Lord. The Life of the New Creature upon Earth is a Life of patient waiting for Christ: his Desires and Longings are after Heaven, *Phil.* 1. 23. The Flesh indeed lingers and would delay, but the New Creature hastens and would fain be gone, 2 *Cor.* 5. 2. It is not at home while it is here; it came from Heaven, and cannot be quiet, nor suffer the Soul in which it dwells to be so, until it comes thither again.

Eighthly, The New Creature is an *active* and laborious Creature: no sooner it is born, but it is acting in the Soul, Acts 9. 6. *behold he prayeth!* Activity is its very nature, Gal. 5. 25. *If we live in the Spirit, let us walk in the Spirit.* Nor is it to be admired, that it should be always active and stirring in the Soul, seeing Activity in Obedience, was the very End for which it was created, *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good Works*, Eph. 2. 10. and he that is acted in the duties of Religion, by this Principle of the New Creature, or Nature, will (so far as that Principle acts him) delight to do the Will of God;

God; rejoyce in the way of his Commandments; and find the sweetest Pleasure in the Paths of Duty.

Ninthly, The new Creature is a *thriving Creature*, growing from Strength to Strength, 1. *Pet.* 2. 2. and changing the Soul in which it is subjected from Glory unto Glory, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. The vigorous Tendencies and constant Strivings of this New Creature is to attain its just Perfection and Maturity, *Phil.* 3. 11. It can endure no Stints and Limits to its Desires short of Perfection: every Degree of Strength it attains, doth but whet and sharpen his Desires after higher Degrees: upon this account it greatly delights in the Ordinances of God, Duties of Religion and Society of the Saints; as they are Helps and Improvements to it, in order to its great Design.

Gratia nec totaliter intermittitur, nec finaliter amittitur: actus omittitur, habitus non amittitur, actio pervertitur, fides non subvertitur: concutitur, non excutitur; defluit fructus, latet succus; effectus justificationis suspenditur, at status justificati non dissolvitur. Suffrag. Brit.

Tenthly, The new Creature is *a creature of wonderful preservations*: there are many Wonders of Divine Providences in the preservation of our natural Lives, but none like those whereby the Life of the new Creature is preserved in our Souls: there are critical Times of Temptation and Desertion, in which it is ready to die, *Rev.* 3. 2. The Degrees of its Strength and Livelinesse are sometimes sadly abated, and its sweet and comfortable Workings intermitted, *Rev.* 2. 4. the Evidences by which its being in us was wont to be discovered, may be, and often are darkned, 2 *Pet.* 1. 9. And the Soul in which it is may draw very sad conclusions about the Issue and Event; concluding its Life not only to be hazarded, but quite extinguished, *Psal.* 51. 10, 11, 12. but though it be ready to die, God wonderfully preserves it from Death: it hath as well its reviving as its fainting Seasons. And thus you see what are the lovely and eximious Properties of the new Creature. In the next place,

Fourthly, We will demonstrate the *necessity* of this new creation to all that are in Christ, and by him expect to attain Salvation: and the necessity of the new Creature will appear divers ways.

First, From the positive and express will of God revealed in Scripture touching this matter; search the Scriptures and you shall find God hath laid the whole Stress and Weight of your eternal Happiness by Jesus Christ upon this work of the Spirit in your Souls. So our Saviour tells *Nicodemus*, John 3. 5. *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*: agreeable whereunto are those words of the Apostle, Heb. 12. 14. *Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.* And whereas some may think that their birth-right Privileges, injoyment of Ordinances and profession of Religion may commend them to God's Acceptance without this new Creation; he shews them how fond and ungrounded all such Hopes are, Gal. 6. 15. *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature*: Christ and Heaven are the Gifts of God, and he is at liberty to bestow them upon what Terms and Conditions he pleaseth; and this is the Way, the only Way and stated Method in which he will bring Men by Christ unto Glory: Men may raise out the Impressions of these things from their own Hearts, but they can never alter the setled course and Method of Salvation: either we must be new Creatures, as the Precepts of the Word command us, or lost and damned Creatures, as the Threatnings of the Word plainly tell us.

Secondly, This new Creation is the inchoative part of that great Salvation which we expect through Christ, and therefore without this, all Hopes and Expectations of Salvation must vanish: Salvation and Renovation are inseparably connected. Our Glory in Heaven, if we rightly understand its nature, consisteth in two things; namely, our assimilation to God, and our fruition of God: and both these take their Beginning and Rise from our Renovation in this World: here we begin to be changed into his Image in some degree, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. for the new Man is created *after God*, as was opened above. In the Work of Grace God is said *to begin that good work* which is to be *finished* or consummated in the Day of Christ, *Phil.* 1. 6. Now nothing can be more irrational than to imagine that ever that Design or Work should be finished or perfected which never had a Beginning.

Thirdly, So necessary is the new Creation to all that expect Salvation by Christ, that without this Heaven would be no Heaven, and the Glory thereof no Glory to us, by reason of the unsuitableness and aversion of our carnal Minds thereunto; *the carnal mind is enmity against God*, Rom. 8. 7. and Enmity is exclusive of all Complacency and Delight: There is a Necessity of a suitable and agreeable Frame of heart to God, in order to that complacential Rest of our Souls in him: and this agreeable Temper is wrought by our new Creation, 2 Cor. 5. 5. *He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God*: Renovation you see is the working or moulding of a Man's Spirit into an agreeable Temper; or as it is in *Col.* 1. 12. the making of us *meet* for the Inheritance of the Saints in light.

From all which it follows, that seeing there can be no complacence or delight in God without suitableness and conformity to him, as is plain from 1 *Joh.* 3. 2. as well as from the Reason and Nature of the thing it self; either God must become like us suitable to our sinful, corrupt and vain Hearts, which were but a rude Blasphemy once to imagine; or else we must be made agreeable and suitable to God, which is the very thing I am now proving the Necessity of.

Fourthly, There is an absolute Necessity of the new Creature to all that expect Interest in Christ and the glory to come; since all the Characters, Marks and Signs of such an Interest are constantly taken from the new Creature wrought in us. Look over all the Marks and Signs of Interest in Christ or Salvation by him which are dispersed through the Scriptures, and you shall still find Purity of Heart, *Matth.* 5. 8. Holiness both in Principle and Practice, *Heb.* 12, 14. Mortification of Sin, *Rom.* 8. 13. longing for Christ's Appearance, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. with Multitudes more of the same nature, to be constantly made the Marks and Signs of our Salvation by Christ. So that either we must have a *new Bible*, or a *new Heart*: for if these Scrip-

Scriptures be the true and faithful Words of God, no unrenewed Creature can see his Face; which was the Fourth thing to be open'd.

Fifthly. The last thing to be open'd is, how the new Creation is an infallible Proof and Evidence of the Souls interest in Christ; and this will appear diverse Ways.

First, Where all the saving Graces of the Spirit are, there Interest in Christ must needs be certain; and where the new Creature is, there all the saving Graces of the Spirit are: For what is the new Creature, but the Frame or *System* of all special saving Graces? It is not this or that particular Grace, as Faith, or Hope, or Love to God, which constitutes the new Creature, for these are but as so many particular Limbs or Branches of it: But the New Creature is comprehensive of all the Graces of the Spirit, Gal. 5. 22, 23. *The fruit of the Spirit is love, peace, joy, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance,* &c. any one of the saving special Graces of the Spirit gives proof of our Interest in Christ: How much more then the New Creature, which is the complex Frame or *System* of all the Graces together.

Secondly, To conclude; Where all the causes of an interest in Christ are found, and all the Effects and Fruits of an interest in Christ do appear; there undoubtedly a real interest in Christ is found: but where ever you find a new Creature, you find all the causes and all the effects of an interest in Christ; for there you shall find.

First, The *impulsive cause*, viz. The electing Love of God, from which the new Creature is inseperable, 1 *Pet.* 1, 2, with the new Creature also the *meritorious*, *efficient* and *final* causes of Interest in Christ, and Union with him are ever found, *Eph.* 2. 10. *Eph.* 1. 4, 5, 6.

Secondly, All the Effects and Fruits of Interest in Christ, are found in the new Creature; there are all the Fruits of Obedience, for we are created in Christ Jesus unto good Works, *Eph.* 2. 10. *Rom.* 7. 4, there is true spiritual Opposition to Sin, 1 Joh. 5. 18. *He that is begotten of God. keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not*: There is love to the People of God, 1 Joh. 4. 7. *Every one that loveth is born of God.* There is a conscientious respect to the Duties of both Tables; for the New Creature is created after God in Righteousness and true Holiness, *Eph.* 4. 24. there is Perseverance in the Ways of God to the very End, and Victory over all Temptations; for whosoever is born of God over-cometh the World, 1 *Joh.* 5. 4. It were easy to run over all other particular Fruits of our Union with Christ, and shew you every one of them in the New Creature. And thus much of the Doctrinal Part of this Point.

SERMON XXVI.

2 COR. V, 17.

Therefore if any Man be in Christ, he is a New Creature: old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.

After the Explication of the Sense of this Scripture we observed,

Doct. *That God's creating of a new supernatural Work of Grace in the Soul of any Man, is that Man's sure and infallible Evidence of a saving Interest in Jesus Christ.*

You have heard why the regenerating work of the Spirit is called a new Creation; in what respect every Soul in Christ is renewed; what the eximious Properties of this New Creature are; the indispensibleness and necessity thereof hath been also proved: And how it evidences our Interest in Christ, was cleared in the Doctrinal Part, which we now come to improve in the several Uses serving for our

1. Information.
2. Conviction.
3. Examination.
4. Exhortation.
5. Consolation.

1. Use for Information.

Is the new creature the sure and infallible Evidence of our saving Interest in Christ? From hence then we are informed,

Infer. 1. *How miserable and deplorable an estate all unrenewed Souls are in*: who can lay no claim to Christ, during that State, and therefore are under an impossibility of Salvation. O Reader, if this be the State of thy Soul, better had it been for thee not to have been God's natural Workmanship as a *Man*, except thou be his spiritual Workmanship also as a *new Man*. I know the *Schoolmen* determine otherwise, and say that Damnation is rather to be chosen than Annihilation: A miserable Being is better than no Being: And it is very true, with respect to the Glory of God, whose Justice shall triumph for ever in the damnation of the Unregenerate; but with respect to us, 'tis much better never to have been his Creatures in the way of *Generation*, than not to be his new Creatures in the way of *Regeneration*. So Christ speaks of *Judas*, that Son of Perdition, Mark 14. 21. *Good had it been for that Man if he had never been born*; For what is a Being without the comfort of it? What is Life without the Joy and Pleasure of Life? A damned Being is a Being without comfort, no glimpse of Light shines into that Darkness; they shall indeed see and understand the Felicity, Light, and Joy of the Saints in Glory; but not partake in the least measure of the comfort, Luke 13. 28. *They shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of God, but they themselves shut out*: Such a Sight is so far from giving any comfort, that it will be the Aggravation and Increase of Torment. O 'tis better to have no Being at all, than to have a Being only to capacitate a Man for Misery; to desire Death while Death flies from him, *Rev.* 4. 6. The Opinion of the *Schoolmen* will never pass for sound Doctrine among the damned: Think on it, Reader, and

God; rejoyce in the way of his Commandments; and find the ſweeteſt Pleaſure in the Paths of Duty.

Ninthly, The new Creature is a *thriving Creature*, growing from Strength to Strength, 1. *Pet.* 2. 2. and changing the Soul in which it is ſubjected from Glory unto Glory, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. The vigorous Tendencies and conſtant Strivings of this New Creature is to attain its juſt Perfection and Maturity, *Phil.* 3. 11. It can endure no Stints and Limits to its Deſires ſhort of Perfection: every Degree of Strength it attains, doth but whet and ſharpen his Deſires after higher Degrees: upon this account it greatly delights in the Ordinances of God, Duties of Religion and Society of the Saints; as they are Helps and Improvements to it, in order to its great Deſign.

Gratia nec totaliter intermittitur, nec finaliter amittitur: actus omittitur, habitus non amittitur, actio pervertitur, fides non ſubvertitur: concutitur, non excutitur; defluit fructus, latet ſuccus; effectus juſtificationis ſuſpenditur, at ſtatus juſtificati non diſſolvitur. Suffrag. Brit.

Tenthly, The new Creature is *a creature of wonderful preſervations*: there are many Wonders of Divine Providences in the preſervation of our natural Lives, but none like thoſe whereby the Life of the new Creature is preſerved in our Souls: there are critical Times of Temptation and Deſertion, in which it is ready to die, *Rev.* 3. 2. The Degrees of its Strength and Livelineſs are ſometimes ſadly abated, and its ſweet and comfortable Workings intermitted, *Rev.* 2. 4. the Evidences by which its being in us was wont to be diſcovered, may be, and often are darkned, 2 *Pet.* 1. 9. And the Soul in which it is may draw very ſad concluſions about the Iſſue and Event; concluding its Life not only to be hazarded, but quite extinguiſhed, *Pſal.* 51. 10, 11, 12. but though it be ready to die, God wonderfully preſerves it from Death: it hath as well its reviving as its fainting Seaſons. And thus you ſee what are the lovely and eximious Properties of the new Creature. In the next place,

Fourthly, We will demonſtrate the *neceſſity* of this new creation to all that are in Chriſt, and by him expect to attain Salvation: and the neceſſity of the new Creature will appear divers ways.

Firſt, From the poſitive and expreſs will of God revealed in Scripture touching this matter; ſearch the Scriptures and you ſhall find God hath laid the whole Streſs and Weight of your eternal Happineſs by Jeſus Chriſt upon this work of the Spirit in your Souls. So our Saviour tells *Nicodemus*, John 3. 5. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto thee, except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*: agreeable whereunto are thoſe words of the Apoſtle, Heb. 12. 14. *Without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord.* And whereas ſome may think that their birth-right Privileges, injoyment of Ordinances and profeſſion of Religion may commend them to God's Acceptance without this new Creation; he ſhews them how fond and ungrounded all ſuch Hopes are, Gal. 6. 15. *For in Chriſt Jeſus neither circumciſion availeth any thing, nor uncircumciſion, but a new creature*: Chriſt and Heaven are the Gifts of God, and he is at liberty to beſtow them upon what Terms and Conditions he pleaſeth; and this is the Way, the only Way and ſtated Method in which he will bring Men by Chriſt unto Glory: Men may raſe out the Impreſſions of theſe things from their own Hearts, but they can never alter the ſetled courſe and Method of Salvation: either we muſt be new Creatures, as the Precepts of the Word command us, or loſt and damned Creatures, as the Threatnings of the Word plainly tell us.

Secondly, This new Creation is the inchoative part of that great Salvation which we expect through Chriſt, and therefore without this, all Hopes and Expectations of Salvation muſt vaniſh: Salvation and Renovation are inſeparably connected. Our Glory in Heaven, if we rightly underſtand its nature, conſiſteth in two things; namely, our aſſimilation to God, and our fruition of God: and both theſe take their Beginning and Riſe from our Renovation in this World: here we begin to be changed into his Image in ſome degree, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. for the new Man is created *after God*, as was opened above. In the Work of Grace God is ſaid *to begin that good work* which is to be *finiſhed* or conſummated in the Day of Chriſt, *Phil.* 1. 6. Now nothing can be more irrational than to imagine that ever that Deſign or Work ſhould be finiſhed or perfected which never had a Beginning.

Thirdly, So neceſſary is the new Creation to all that expect Salvation by Chriſt, that without this Heaven would be no Heaven, and the Glory thereof no Glory to us, by reaſon of the unſuitableneſs and averſion of our carnal Minds thereunto; *the carnal mind is enmity againſt God*, Rom. 8. 7. and Enmity is excluſive of all Complacency and Delight: There is a Neceſſity of a ſuitable and agreeable Frame of heart to God, in order to that complacential Reſt of our Souls in him: and this agreeable Temper is wrought by our new Creation, 2 Cor. 5. 5. *He that hath wrought us for the ſelf-ſame thing is God*: Renovation you ſee is the working or moulding of a Man's Spirit into an agreeable Temper; or as it is in *Col.* 1. 12. the making of us *meet* for the Inheritance of the Saints in light.

From all which it follows, that ſeeing there can be no complacence or delight in God without ſuitableneſs and conformity to him, as is plain from 1 *Joh.* 3. 2. as well as from the Reaſon and Nature of the thing it ſelf; either God muſt become like us ſuitable to our ſinful, corrupt and vain Hearts, which were but a rude Blaſphemy once to imagine; or elſe we muſt be made agreeable and ſuitable to God, which is the very thing I am now proving the Neceſſity of.

Fourthly, There is an abſolute Neceſſity of the new Creature to all that expect Intereſt in Chriſt and the glory to come; ſince all the Characters, Marks and Signs of ſuch an Intereſt are conſtantly taken from the new Creature wrought in us. Look over all the Marks and Signs of Intereſt in Chriſt or Salvation by him which are diſperſed through the Scriptures, and you ſhall ſtill find Purity of Heart, *Matth.* 5. 8. Holineſs both in Principle and Practice, *Heb.* 12, 14. Mortification of Sin, *Rom.* 8. 13. longing for Chriſt's Appearance, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. with Multitudes more of the ſame nature, to be conſtantly made the Marks and Signs of our Salvation by Chriſt. So that either we muſt have a *new Bible*, or a *new Heart*: for if theſe Scrip-

Scriptures be the true and faithful Words of God, no unrenewed Creature can see his Face; which was the Fourth thing to be open'd.

Fifthly. The last thing to be open'd is, how the new Creation is an infallible Proof and Evidence of the Souls interest in Christ; and this will appear diverse Ways.

First, Where all the saving Graces of the Spirit are, there Interest in Christ must needs be certain; and where the new Creature is, there all the saving Graces of the Spirit are: For what is the new Creature, but the Frame or *System* of all special saving Graces? It is not this or that particular Grace, as Faith, or Hope, or Love to God, which constitutes the new Creature, for these are but as so many particular Limbs or Branches of it: But the New Creature is comprehensive of all the Graces of the Spirit, Gal. 5. 22, 23. *The fruit of the Spirit is love, peace, joy, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance,* &c. any one of the saving special Graces of the Spirit gives proof of our Interest in Christ: How much more then the New Creature, which is the complex Frame or *System* of all the Graces together.

Secondly, To conclude; Where all the causes of an interest in Christ are found, and all the Effects and Fruits of an interest in Christ do appear; there undoubtedly a real interest in Christ is found: but where ever you find a new Creature, you find all the causes and all the effects of an interest in Christ; for there you shall find.

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1. *Use for Information.*

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Infer. 1. *How miserable and deplorable an estate all unrenewed Souls are in*: who can lay no claim to Christ, during that State, and therefore are under an impossibility of Salvation. O Reader, if this be the State of thy Soul, better had it been for thee not to have been God's natural Workmanship as a *Man*, except thou be his spiritual Workmanship also as a *new Man*. I know the *Schoolmen* determine otherwise, and say that Damnation is rather to be chosen than Annihilation: A miserable Being is better than no Being: And it is very true, with respect to the Glory of God, whose Justice shall triumph for ever in the damnation of the Unregenerate; but with respect to us, 'tis much better never to have been his Creatures in the way of *Generation*, than not to be his new Creatures in the way of *Regeneration*. So Christ speaks of *Judas*, that Son of Perdition, Mark 14. 21. *Good had it been for that Man if he had never been born*; For what is a Being without the comfort of it? What is Life without the Joy and Pleasure of Life? A damned Being is a Being without comfort, no glimpse of Light shines into that Darkness; they shall indeed see and understand the Felicity, Light, and Joy of the Saints in Glory; but not partake in the least measure of the comfort, Luke 13. 28. *They shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of God, but they themselves shut out*: Such a Sight is so far from giving any comfort, that it will be the Aggravation and Increase of Torment. O 'tis better to have no Being at all, than to have a Being only to capacitate a Man for Misery; to desire Death while Death flies from him, *Rev.* 4. 6. The Opinion of the *Schoolmen* will never pass for sound Doctrine among the damned: Think on it, Reader, and

and lay it to thine Heart, better thou hadſt died from the Womb, better the Knees had prevented thee, and the Breaſts which thou haſt ſucked, than that thou ſhouldſt live and die a Stranger to the New Birth, or that thy Mother ſhould bring thee forth only to encreaſe and fill up the Number of the damned.

Infer. 2. *And on the contrary we may hence learn, what cauſe regenerate Souls have to bleſs God for the day wherein they were born.* O what a privileged State doth the New Birth bring Men into! 'Tis poſſible, for the preſent, they underſtand it not; for many Believers are like a great *Heir* lying in the *Cradle*, that knows not to what an Eſtate and Honour he is born: Nevertheleſs on the ſame Day, wherein we become new Creatures by regeneration, we have a firm Title, and ſolid claim to all the Priviledges of the Sons of God, *Joh.* 1. 12. 13. God becomes our Father by a treble Title, not only the Father of our *Beings* by Nature, which was all the Relation we had to him before, but our Father by *Adoption* and by *Regeneration*: Which is a much ſweeter and more comfortable Relation. In that day the Image of God is reſtored, *Eph.* 3. 27. this is both the Health and Beauty of the Soul. In that day we are begotten again to a lively hope, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. A Hope more worth than ten thouſand Worlds, in the *troubles of Life*, and in the *ſtraits of Death*: this is a Creature which lives for ever, and will make thy Life happy for ever. Some have kept their Birth-day as a *Feſtival*, a day of rejoycing, but none have more cauſe to rejoice that ever they were born, than thoſe that are new born.

Infer. 3. *Learn from hence that the work of Grace is wholly ſupernatural; 'tis a Creation, and a Creation-work is above the power of the Creature*: No Power, but that which gave Being to the World, can give a Being to the New Creature: Almighty Power goes forth to give Being to the New Creature: This Creature is not born of Fleſh or of Blood, nor of the Will of Man, but of God, *Joh.* 1. 13. The Nature of this New Creature ſpeaks its Original to be above the Power of Nature; the very Notion of a new New Creation ſpoils the proud Boaſts of the great Aſſerters of the Power and Ability of the Will of Man. When God therefore puts the Queſtion, who maketh thee to differ? And what haſt thou that thou haſt not received? Let thy Soul, Reader, anſwer it with all Humility and Thankfulneſs; 'tis thou, Lord, thou only, that madeſt me to differ from another, and what I have received, I have received from thy Free Grace.

Infer. 4. *If the work of Grace be a New Creation, let not the Parents and Friends of the unregenerate utterly deſpair of the converſion of their Relations, how great ſoever their preſent diſcouragements are*; if it had been poſſible for a Man to have ſeen the rude and indigeſted *Chaos* before the Spirit of God moved upon it, would he not have ſaid, Can ſuch a beautiful Order of Beings, ſuch a pleaſant Variety of Creatures ſpring out of this dark Lump? Surely it would have been very hard for a Man to have imagined it. It may be you ſee no Diſpoſitions or hopeful Inclinations in your Friends towards God and ſpiritual things; nay, poſſibly they are totally oppoſite and filled with Enmity againſt them; they deride and jeer all ſerious Piety, whereever they behold it; this indeed is very ſad; but yet remember the Work of Grace is Creation-work; though there be no Diſpoſition at all in their Wills, no Tenderneſs in their Conſciences, no Light or Knowledge in their Minds; yet God that commanded the Light to ſhine out of Darkneſs, can ſhine into their Hearts; to give them the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Jeſus Chriſt; he can ſay to the dry Bones, live; to the proud and ſtubborn Heart, come down and yield thy ſelf to the Will of God; and if he command, the Work is done. God can make thee yet to rejoyce over thy moſt uncomfortable Relations, to ſay with the Father of the Prodigal, *Luke* 15. 24. *This my Son was dead, and is alive again; he was loſt and is found; and they began to be merry*; Difficulties are for Men, but not for God; he works in converſion by a Power which is able to ſubdue all things unto it ſelf.

Infer. 5. *If none but New Creatures be in Chriſt, how ſmall a remnant among Men belong to Chriſt in this World!* Among the Multitude of rational Creatures inhabiting this World, how few, how very few are New Creatures? 'Tis the Obſervation of the learned Mr. *Brierwood*, that if the World be divided into thirty parts, nineteen parts are heatheniſh Idolaters; ſix parts *Mahumetans*, and only five out of thirty, which may be in a large ſenſe called *Chriſtians*; of which the far greater part is overſpread with Popiſh Darkneſs; ſeparate from the remainder, the Multitudes of prophane, meerly civil and hypocritical Profeſſors of Religion; and how few will remain for Jeſus Chriſt in this World? Look over the *Cities*, *Towns*, and *Pariſhes* in this populous *Kingdom*; and how few ſhall you find that ſpeak the Language, or do the works of New Creatures? How few have ever had any awakening convictions on them? And how many of thoſe that have been convinced have miſcarried and never come to the New Birth? The more cauſe have they whom God hath indeed regenerated, to admire the Riches of God's diſtinguiſhing Mercy to them.

Infer. 6. *If the change by Grace be a new creation, how univerſal and marvellous a change doth regeneration make upon men!* The new Creation ſpeaks a marvellous and univerſal Alteration both upon the State and Tempers of Men; they come out of Darkneſs, groſs, helliſh Darkneſs into Light, a marvellous and heavenly Light, 1 *Pet.* 2. 9. *Eph.* 5. 8. their condition, diſpoſition and converſation (as you have heard) is all new; and yet this marvellous Change, as great and univerſal as it is, is not alike evident and clearly diſcernible in all New Creatures: And the Reaſons are,

Firſt, Becauſe the work of Grace is wrought in diverſe Methods and Manners in the People of God. Some are changed from a State of notorious prophaneneſs unto ſerious Godlineſs; there the Change is conſpicuous and very evident; all the Neighbourhood rings of it: But in others it is more inſenſibly diſtilled in their tender Years, by the Bleſſing of God upon religious Education, and there it is more indiſcernible.

Secondly, Though a great Change be wrought, yet much natural Corruption ſtill re-

remains for their Humiliation and daily Exercise; and this is a Ground of Fear and Doubtings: They see not how such Corruptions are consistent with the New Creature.

Thirdly, In some the new Creature shews it self mostly in the affectionate part, in Desires and Breathings after God; and but little in the clearness of their Understandings, and strength of their Judgments; for want of which they are entangled, and kept in Darkness most of their Days.

Fourthly, Some Christians are more tryed and exercised by Temptations from *Satan* than others are, and these Clouds darken the Work of Grace in them.

Fifthly, There is great difference and variety found in the natural Tempers and Constitutions of the regenerate. Some are of a more *melancholy*, fearful, and suspicious Temper, than others are, and therefore much longer held under doubtings, and trouble of Spirit. Nevertheless, what differences soever these things make, the change made by Grace is a marvellous change.

Infer. 7. Lastly, *How incongruous are carnal ways and courses to the Spirit of Christians? who being New Creatures can never delight or find pleasure in their former sinful Companions and Practices?* Alas, those things are now most unsuitable, loathsome, and detestable, how pleasant soever they once were; that which they counted their *Liberty*, would now be reckoned their greatest *Bondage*; that which was their *Glory* is now their *Shame*, Rom. 6. 21. *What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed, for the end of those things is death*; they need not be pressed by others, but will freely confess of themselves what Fools and Madmen they once were; none can censure their former conversation more severely than themselves do, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13, 14.

2. *Use for Conviction.*

If none be in Christ but new Creatures, and the new Creation make such a change as hath been described, This may convince us, how many of us deceive our selves, and run into dangerous and fatal mistakes in the greatest concernment we have in this World. But before I fall into this use, I desire none may make a perverse and ill use of it; let not the wicked conclude from hence, that there is no such thing as true Religion in the World, or that all who do profess it are but a pack of Hypocrites; neither let the godly injure themselves by that which is designed for their Benefit; let none conclude, that seeing there are so many Mistakes committed about this new Creature, that therefore assurance must needs be impossible, as the *Papists* affirm it to be. The proper use that should be made of this Doctrine is, to undeceive false Pretenders, and to awake all to a more deep and thorough search of their own conditions; which being precautioned, let all Men be convinced of the following Truths.

1. First, That the change made by civility upon such as were lewd and prophane, is in its whole kind and nature a different thing from the new Creature; the power and efficacy of moral Vertue is one thing, the influence of the regenerating Spirit is quite another thing; however some have studied to confound them. The Heathens excelled in moral and *homilitical* Virtues, *Plato*, *Aristides*, *Seneca*, and multitudes more have outvied many professed Christians in Justice, Temperance, Patience, *&c.* yet were perfect Strangers to the new Creation. A Man may be very strict and temperate, free from the gross pollutions of the World; and yet a perfect Stranger to Regeneration all the while, *Joh.* 3. 10.

Secondly, That many strong convictions and troubles for Sin may be found where the new Creature is never formed. Conviction indeed is an antecedent unto, and preparative for the new Creature, as the Blossoms of the Tree are to the Fruit that follows them; but as Fruit doth not always follow, where those Blossoms and Flowers appear; so neither doth the new Creature follow all convictions and troubles for Sin. Conviction is a common work of the Spirit, both upon the Elect and Reprobates; but the new Creature is formed only in God's Elect. Convictions may be blasted, and vanish away, and the Man that was under troubles for Sin, may return again with the Dog to his Vomit, and the Sow that was washed to her wallowing in the Mire, 2 *Pet.* 2. 22. but the new Creature never perishes, nor can consist with such a return unto Sin.

Thirdly, That excellent Gifts and Abilities fitting Men for Service in the Church of God, may be where the new Creature is not, for these are promiscuously dispensed by the Spirit, both to the regenerate and unregenerate, Matth. 7. 22. *Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy Name?* Gifts are attainable by Study, Prayer and Preaching are reduced to an art; but Regeneration is wholly supernatural. Sin in dominion is consistent with excellent Gifts, but wholly incompatible with the new Creature. In a Word, these things are so different in Nature from the new Creature, that they oft-times prove the greatest Bars and Obstacles in the World to the Regenerating-work of the Spirit. Let no Man therefore trust to things, whereby multitudes deceive and destroy their own Souls. Reader, it may cost thee many *an aking head* to obtain Gifts, but thou wilt find *an aking heart* for Sin, if ever God make thee a new Creature.

Fourthly, Be convinced that multitudes of religious Duties may be performed by Men, in whom the new Creature was never formed. Though all new Creatures perform the Duties of Religion, yet all that perform the Duties of Religion are not new Creatures: Regeneration is not the only root from which the Duties of Religion spring, *Isa.* 58. 2. *Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a Nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinances of their God, they ask of me the ordinances of Justice, they take delight in approaching to God.* These are but weak and slippery Foundations for Men to build their Confidence and Hopes upon.

3. *Use for Examination.*

Next therefore, let me perswade every Man to try the state of his own Heart in this matter, and closely consider and weigh this great Question, Am I really and indeed a new Creature, or am I an old Creature still, in the new Creature's dress and habit? Some light may be given for the discovery thereof from the considerations of the

1. Antecedents
2. Concomitants } of the New Creation.
3. Consequents

First, Weigh and consider well the *Antecedents* of the new Creature; have those things past upon your Souls which ordinarily make way for the new Creature in whomsoever the Lord forms it?

First, Hath the Lord opened the Eyes of your understanding in the knowledge of Sin, and of Christ? Hath he shewed you both your Disease and Remedy, by a new Light shining from Heaven into your Souls? Thus the Lord doth where-ever he forms the new Creature, *Acts* 26. 18.

Secondly, Hath he brought home the word with mighty power and efficacy upon your Hearts, to convince and humble them? This is the method in which the new Creature is produced, *Rom.* 7, 9. 1 *Thes.* 1. 5.

Thirdly, Have these convictions overturned your vain confidences, and brought you to a great pinch, and inward distress of Soul, making you to cry *what shall we do to be saved?* These are the ways of the Spirit in the formation of the new Creature, *Acts* 16. 29. *Acts* 2. 27 If no such antecedent works of the Spirit have passed upon your Hearts, you have no ground for your confidence that the new Creature is formed in you.

Secondly, Consider the *concomitant* frames and workings of Spirit, which ordinarily attend the production of the new Creature, and judge impartially betwixt God and your own Souls, whether they have been the very frames and workings of your Hearts.

First, Have your vain Spirits been composed to the greatest seriousness, and most solemn consideration of things Eternal, as the Hearts of all those are whom God regenerates? When the Lord is about this great Work upon the Soul of Man, whatever vanity, levity, and sinful jollity was there before, it is banished from the Heart at this time; for now Heaven and Hell, Life and Death, are before a Man's Eyes, and these are the most awful and solemn things that ever our thoughts conversed with in this World: Now a Man of the most airy and pleasant constitution, when brought to the sight and sense of those things, saith of *Laughter, it is Mad, and of Mirth, What doth it?* Eccles. 2. 2.

Secondly, A lowly, meek, and humble frame of Heart accompanies the new Creation; the Soul is weary and heavy laden, *Matth.* 11. 28. Convictions of Sin hath plucked down the Pride and Loftiness of the Spirit of Man, emptied him of his vain Conceits; those that were of lofty, proud, and blustering Humours before, are meekened, and brought down to the very dust now: It is with them (to speak allusively) as it was with *Jerusalem*, that lofty City, Isa. 29. 1, 4. *Wo to Ariel, to Ariel, the City where David dwelt; thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust.* *Ariel* signifies the *Lyon of God*, so *Jerusalem* in her Prosperity was, other Cities trembled at her Voice; but when God brought her down by humbling Judgments, then she whispered out of the dust: So it is in this case.

Thirdly, A longing thirsting frame of Spirit accompanies the new Creation; the desires of the Soul are ardent after Christ; never did the *hireling* long for the shadow, as the weary Soul doth for Christ, and Rest in him; if no such frames have accompanied that which you take for your new Birth, you have the greatest reason in the World to suspect your selves under a cheat.

Thirdly, Weigh well the effects and *consequents* of the new Creature, and consider, whether such Fruits as these are found in your Hearts and Lives.

First, Wherever the new Creature is formed, there a Man's course and conversation is changed, Eph. 4. 22. *That ye put off concerning the former conversation, the old Man which is corrupt, according to the deceitful Lusts, and be renewed in the Spirit of your Mind:* The new Creature cannot but blush and be ashamed of the old Creatures conversation, *Rom.* 6. 21.

Secondly, The new Creature continually opposes, and conflicts with the motions of Sin in the Heart, Gal. 5. 17. *The Spirit lusteth against the Flesh*: Grace can no more incorporate with Sin, than Oyl with Water; contraries cannot consist in the same subject longer than they are fighting with each other; if there be no conflict with Sin in thy Soul; or if that conflict be only betwixt the Conscience and Affections, *Light* in the one strugling with *Lust* in the other; thou wantest that Fruit which should evidence thee to be a new Creature.

Thirdly, The Mind and Affections of the new Creature are set upon heavenly and spiritual things, *Col.* 3. 1, 2. *Ephes.* 4. 23. *Rom.* 8. 5. If therefore thy Heart and Affections be habitually earthly, and wholly intent upon things below, driving eagerly after the World, as the great business and end of thy Life: Deceive not thy self, this is not the Fruit of the new Creature, nor consistent with it.

Fourthly, The New Creature is a Praying Creature, living by its daily Communion with God, which is its livelihood and subsistence, *Zech.* 12. 10. *Acts* 9. 11. If therefore thou be a Prayerless Soul, or if in all thy Prayers, thou art a Stranger to Communion with God; if there be no brokenness of Heart for Sin in thy Confessions, no melting affections for Christ and holiness in thy supplications; surely *Satan* doth but baffle and delude thy overcredulous Soul, in perswading thee that thou art a new Creature.

Fifthly, The new Creature is restless after Falls into Sin, until it have recovered Peace and Pardon, it cannot endure itself in a state of defilement and pollution, *Psal.* 51. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. It is with the Conscience of a new Creature under Sin, as it is with the *Eye* when any thing offends it, it cannot leave twinkling and watering, till it have wept it out; and in the very same restless state it is under the hiding of God's Face, and Divine withdrawments, *Cant.* 5. 2, 3, 4, 4, 6, 7, 8. If therefore thou canst sin, and sin again, without such a burthensome sense of Sin, or restlesness, or solicitude how to recover Purity, and Peace, with the light of God's Countenance shining as in days past upon thy Soul; delude not thy self, thou hast not the signs of a new Creature in thee.

4. *Use of Exhortation.*

If the new Creation be a sound evidence of our

of our intereſt in Chriſt, then thence let me perſwade all that are in Chriſt to evidence themſelves to be ſo, by walking as it becomes new Creatures.

The new Creature is *born from above*, all its tendencies are Heaven-ward; accordingly, ſet your affections on things that are above, and let your converſation be in Heaven: If you live earthly and ſenſual Lives, as others do; you muſt croſs your new Nature therein; And can thoſe Acts be pleaſant unto you which are done with ſo much regret? Wherein you muſt put a force upon your own Spirits, and offer a kind of violence to your own Hearts: Earthly delights and ſorrows are ſuitable enough to the unregenerate and ſenſual Men of the World; but exceedingly contrary unto that Spirit by which you are renovated. If ever you will act becoming the Principles and Nature of new Creatures, then ſeek earthly things with ſubmiſſion, enjoy them with fear and caution, reſign them with cheerfulneſs and readineſs; and thus *let your moderation be known unto all Men*, Phil. 4. 5. Let your Hearts meditate, and your Tongues diſcourſe about heavenly things, be exceeding tender of ſin, ſtrict and punctual in every duty; and hereby convince the World that you are Men and Women of another Spirit.

5. *Uſe for Conſolation.*

Let every new Creature be chearful and thankful: If God have renewed your Natures, and thus altered the frame and temper of your Hearts; he hath beſtowed the richeſt Mercy upon you that Heaven or Earth affords: This is a work of greateſt rarity, a new Creature may be called, One among a Thouſand: 'Tis alſo an everlaſting work, never to be deſtroyed, as all other natural works of God (how excellent ſoever) muſt be, 'tis a work carried on by Almighty Power, through unſpeakable difficulties, and mighty oppoſitions, *Epheſ.* 1. 12. The exceeding greatneſs of God's Power goes forth to produce it; and indeed no leſs is required to enlighten the blind Mind, break the rocky Heart, and bow the ſtubborn Will of Man; and the ſame Almighty Power which at firſt created it, is neceſſary to be continued every moment to preſerve and continue it, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. the new Creature is a Mercy which draws a train of innumerable and invaluable Mercies after it, *Eph.* 2, 13, 14. 1 *Cor.* 3. 22. when God hath given us a new Nature, then he dignifies us with a *new Name*, *Rev.* 2. 17. brings us into a *new Covenant*, *Jer.* 31. 33. begets us again to a *new hope*, 1. *Pet.* 1. 3. intitles us to a *new Inheritance*, *Joh.* 1. 12, 13. 'tis the new Creature, which through Chriſt makes our Perſons and Duties acceptable with God, *Gal.* 6. 15. In a word, it is the wonderful work of God, of which we may ſay, *This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our Eyes*; there are unſearchable wonders in its *Generation*, in its *Operation*, and in its *Preſervation*. Let all therefore whom the Lord hath thus renewed, fall down at the Feet of God, in an humble admiration of the unſearchable Riches of Free Grace, and never open their Mouths to complain under any adverſe or bitter Providences of God.

SERMON XXVII.

GAL. V, 24.

And they that are Chriſt's have crucified the Fleſh, with the Affections and Luſts.

Serm. 27. Text. Of the Nature Principle, and Neceſſity of Mortification.

TWO great Tryals of our intereſt in Chriſt are finiſhed, we now proceed to a third, namely, *the mortification of ſin*: *they that are Chriſt's have crucified the Fleſh.* The ſcope of the *Apoſtle* in this context, is to heal the unchriſtian Breaches among the *Galatians*, prevailing by the inſtigation of *Satan*, to the breach of brotherly love: To cure this he urges four weighty Arguments.

Firſt, From the great Commandment, to *love one another*, upon which the whole Law, (*i. e.*) all the Duties of the ſecond Table do depend, *ver.* 14.

Secondly, He powerfully diſſwades them from the conſideration of the ſad events of their bitter Conteſts, Calumnies, and Detractions, *viz.* mutual ruine and deſtruction, *ver.* 15.

Thirdly, He diſſwades them from the conſideration of the contrariety of theſe practices unto the Spirit of God, by whom they all profeſs themſelves to be governed, from *ver.* 17, to the 23.

Fourthly, He powerfully diſſuades them from theſe Animoſities, from the inconſiſtency of theſe or any other Luſts of the Fleſh with an intereſt in Chriſt: *They that be Chriſts have crucified the Fleſh*, &c *q. d.* you all profeſs your ſelves to be Members of Chriſt, to be Followers of him; but how incongruous are theſe practices to ſuch a profeſſion? Is this the Fruit of the Dove-like Spirit of Chriſt? Are theſe the Fruits of your Faith, and profeſſed Mortification? Shall the Sheep of Chriſt ſnarl and fight, like rabid and furious Beaſts of Prey? *Tantæne animis cœleſtibus iræ?* O how repugnant are theſe practices the Study of Mortification, which is the great ſtudy and endeavour of all that be in Chriſt! *They that are Chriſts have crucified the Fleſh, with the Affections and Luſts.*

——non ſecus ac cum duo converſis inimica in prælia tauri, Frontibus incurrunt.

So much for the order of the words; the words themſelves are a *Propoſition*, wherein we have to conſider both the

1. Subject. 2. Predicate.

Vere Chriſtiani qui ad Chriſtum pertinent, qui ſe ei d dere regendos. Pol. Synopſis.

Firſt, The *Subject* of the Propoſition, they that are Chriſt's, *viz.* true Chriſtians, real Members of Chriſt; ſuch as truly belong to Chriſt, ſuch as have given themſelves up to be governed by him, and are indeed acted by his Spirit; ſuch, all ſuch Perſons (for the indefinite is equipollent to an univerſal) all ſuch, and none but ſuch.

Secondly, The Predicate, *they have crucified the Flesh, with the Affections and Lusts*: By Flesh we are here to understand carnal Concupiscence, the workings and motions of corrupt Nature; and by the Affections we are to understand, not the natural, but the inordinate Affections; for Christ doth not abolish and destroy, but correct and regulate the Affections of those that are in him: And by crucifying the Flesh, we are not to understand the total extinction, or perfect subduing of corrupt Nature, but only the deposing of corruption from its regency and dominion in the Soul; its dominion is taken away, though its Life be prolonged for a Season; but yet, as Death surely, though slowly, follows crucifixion, (the Life of crucified Persons gradually departing from them with their Blood,) so it is just so in the Mortification of Sin; and therefore what the Apostle in this place calls crucifying, he calls in *Rom.* 8, 13. mortifying. *If ye through the Spirit do mortifie,* θανατοῦτε, if ye put to death the Deeds of the Body: But he chooses in this place to call it crucifying, to shew not only the conformity there is betwixt the Death of Christ, and the Death of Sin, in respect of shame, pain, and lingring slowness; but to denote also the principle, means and instrument of Mortification, *viz.* the Death or Cross of Jesus Christ, in the vertue whereof Believers do mortifie the corruptions of their Flesh; the great Arguments and Perswasives to Mortification being drawn from the sufferings of Christ for Sin. In a word, he doth not say, they that believe Christ was crucified for Sin, are Christ's; but they, and they only are his, who *feel* as well as *profess* the power and efficacy of the sufferings of Christ in the mortification, and subduing of their Lusts and sinful Affections. And so much briefly of the Parts and Sense of the Words.

The Observation followeth.

Doct. *That a saving interest in Christ may be regularly and strongly inferred and concluded from the mortification of the Flesh, with the Affections and Lusts.*

This point is fully confirmed by those words of the Apostle, *Rom*, 6. 5, 6, 7, 8. *For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his Death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection; knowing this, that our old Man is crucified with him, that the Body of Sin might be destroyed; that henceforth we should not serve Sin; for he that is dead is free from Sin: Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.*

Mark the force of the Apostle's reasoning; if we have been planted into the likeness of his Death, *viz.* by the mortification of Sin, which resembles, or hath a likeness to the kind and manner of Christ's Death (as was noted above) then we shall be also in the likeness of his Resurrection; and why so, but because this mortification of Sin is an undoubted evidence of the Union of such a Soul with Christ, which is the very ground work and principle of that blessed and glorious Resurrection: And therefore he saith, *verse* 11. *Reckon ye also your selves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord, q. d.* reason thus with your selves, these mortifying influences of the death of Christ are unquestionable presages of your future Blessedness: God never taking this course with any but those who are in Christ, and are designed to be glorified with him; the Death of your Sin is as evidential as any thing in the World can be, of your spiritual Life for the present, and of your eternal Life with God hereafter. Mortification is the Fruit and Evidence of your Union, and that Union is the firm groundwork, and certain pledge of your Glorification; and so you ought to reckon or reason the case with your selves, as the Word λογίζεσθε there signifies. Now for the stating and explicating of this part, I shall in the doctrinal Point labour to open and confirm these five things.

1. What the Mortification or Crucifixion of Sin imports.
2. Why this Work of the Spirit is expressed by crucifying.
3. Why all that are in Christ must be so Crucified, or Mortified unto Sin.
4. What is the true Evangelical Principle of Mortification.
5. How the Mortification of Sin evinces our interest in Christ.

And then apply the whole.

First, What the Mortification or Crucifixion of Sin imports.

And for the clearness sake, I shall speak to it both *negatively* and *positively*; shewing you what is not intended; and what is principally aimed at by the Spirit of God in this expression.

First, The Crucifying of the Flesh doth not imply the total abolition of Sin in Believers, or the destruction of its very Being and Existence in them for the present: Sanctified Souls so put off their Corruptions with their Bodies at Death: This will be the effect of our future Glorification, not of our present Sanctification; it doth exist in the most mortified Believer in the World, *Rom.* 7. 17. it still actethand lusteth in the regenerate Soul, *Gal.* 5. 17. yea, notwithstanding its crucifixion in Believers, it still may, in respect of single acts, surprize and captivate them, *Psal.* 65. 3. *Rom.* 7. 23. This therefore is not the intention of the Spirit of God in this expression.

Mortificari carnem non est eam ita perimi, ut aut prorsus non sit, aut nulla prava in homine desideria commoveat, quod in corpore mortis hujus non contingit, &c. Estius in loc.

Secondly, nor doth the Crucifixion of Sin consist in the suppression of the external acts of Sin only; for Sin may reign over the Souls of Men, whilst it doth not break forth into their lives in gross and open actions, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20. *Matth.* 12. 43. *Morality* in the Heathens (as *Tertullian* well observes) did *abscondere, sed non abscindere vitia, hide* them, when it could not *kill* them: Many a Man shews a white and fair hand, who yet hath a very foul and black heart.

Thirdly, The Crucifixion of the Flesh doth not consist in the cessation of the external act of Sin; for in that respect the lusts of Men may die of their own accord, even a kind of natural Death. The Members of the Body are the Weapons of Unrighteousness as the *Apostle* calls them; Age or Sickness may so blunt or break those Weapons, that the Soul cannot use them to such sinful purposes and services, as it was wont to do in the vigorous and healthful season of Life; not that there is less Sin in the Heart, but because there is less strength

ſtrength and activity in the Body. Juſt as it is with an old Soldier, who hath as much skill, policy, and delight as ever in military Actions; but Age and hard Services have ſo infeebled him, that he can no longer follow the Camp.

Fourthly, The Crucifixion of Sin doth not conſiſt in the ſevere caſtigations of the Body, and penancing it by ſtripes, faſting and tireſome Pilgrimages. This may paſs for Mortification among *Papiſts*, but never was any luſt of the Fleſh deſtroyed by this rigour. Chriſtians indeed are bound not to indulge and pamper the Body, which is the Inſtrument of Sin, nor yet muſt we think that the ſpiritual corruptions of the Soul feel thoſe ſtripes which are inflicted upon the Body: See *Col.* 2. 23. 'tis not the vanity of ſuperſtition, but the power of true Religion which crucifies and deſtroys corruption; 'tis Faith in Chriſt's Blood, not the ſpilling of our own Blood, which gives ſin the Mortal wound.

Secondly, But if you enquire, what then is implied in the mortification or crucifixion of Sin, and wherein it doth conſiſt? I anſwer,

Firſt, It neceſſarily implies the Soul's implantation into Chriſt, and union with him; without which it is impoſſible that any one corruption ſhould be mortified, *they that are* [*Chriſt's*] *have crucified the Fleſh*: The attempts and endeavours of all others are vain and ineffectual: *When we were in the Fleſh* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *the motions of ſin which were by the Law did work in our Members to bring forth fruit unto death*, Rom. 5. 7. Sin was then in its full dominion, no abſtinence, rigour, or outward ſeverity; no purpoſes, promiſes or ſolemn vows could mortifie or deſtroy it; there muſt be an implantation into Chriſt, before there can be any effectual crucifixion of Sin: What Believer almoſt hath not in the days of his firſt convictions, tryed all external methods and means of mortifying Sin, and found it in experience to be to as little purpoſe as the binding of *Sampſon* with green Withs or Cords? But when he hath once come to act Faith upon the Death of Chriſt, then the deſign of Mortification hath proſpered and ſucceeded to good purpoſe.

Errant in ipſa natura mortificationis Chriſtiane, nam corporis afflictionem & injuriam reputant pro vera mortificatione, cum illa non ad carnem præſtipue aut inferiorem animæ partem, ſed ad mentem & voluntatem, maxime pertineat. Davenant in Coloſſ. 256.

Secondly, Mortification of Sin implies the *agency of the ſpirit of God* in that work, without whoſe aſſiſtances and aids all our endeavours muſt needs be fruitleſs: Of this work we may ſay as it was ſaid in another caſe, Zech. 4. 6. *Not by might, nor by power, but by my ſpirit, ſaith the Lord.* When the *Apoſtle* therefore would ſhew by what hand this work of Mortification is performed, he thus expreſſeth it, Rom. 8. 13. *If ye through the Spirit do mortifie the deeds of the Body, ye ſhall live*: The *Duty* is ours, but the *power* whereby we perform it, is God's: The Spirit is the only ſucceſsful Combatant againſt the Luſts that war in our Members, *Gal.* 5. 17. 'tis true, this excludes not, but implies our endeavours; for it is we through the Spirit that mortifie the deeds of the Body; but yet all our endeavours without the Spirit's aid and influence avail nothing.

Thirdly, The Crucifixion of Sin neceſſarily implies *the ſubverſion of its dominion* in the Soul: A mortified Sin cannot be a reigning Sin, *Rom.* 6. 12, 13, 14. Two things conſtitute the dominion of Sin, *viz.* the fulneſs of its power, and the Souls ſubjection to it. As to the fulneſs of its power, that riſes from the ſuitableneſs it hath, and pleaſure it gives to the corrupt Heart of Man: It ſeems to be as neceſſary as the Right Hand, as uſeful and pleaſant as the Right Eye, *Matth.* 5. 29. but the mortified Heart is dead to all pleaſures and profits of Sin, it hath no delight or pleaſure in it; it becomes its burden and daily complaint. Mortification preſuppoſes the illumination of the mind and conviction of the Conſcience; by reaſon whereof Sin cannot deceive and blind the Mind, or bewitch and enſnare the Will and Affections, as it was wont to do, and conſequently its dominion over the Soul is deſtroyed and loſt.

Fourthly, The crucifying of the Fleſh implies a *gradual weakning of the power of Sin* in the Soul. The Death of the Croſs was a ſlow and lingering Death, and the crucified Perſon grew weaker and weaker every hour; ſo it is in the mortification of Sin: The Soul is ſtill *cleanſing itſelf from all filthineſs of the Fleſh and Spirit, and perfecting holineſs in the fear of God*, 2 Cor. 7. 1. And as the Body of Sin is weakned more and more; ſo the inward Man, or the new Creature is *renewed day by day*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 16. For Sanctification is a progreſſive work of the Spirit: And as Holineſs increaſes, and roots it ſelf deeper and deeper in the Soul; ſo the power and intereſt of Sin proportionably abates, and ſinks lower and lower, until at length it be ſwallowed up in Victory.

Fifthly, The crucifying of the Fleſh notes to us the Believers *deſigned application of all ſpiritual means*, and ſanctified inſtruments for the deſtruction of it: There is nothing in this World which a gracious Heart more vehemently deſires and longs for, than the death of Sin, and perfect deliverance from it, *Rom.* 7. 24. the ſincerity of which deſires doth accordingly manifeſt it ſelf in the daily application of all God's Remedies, ſuch are daily watching againſt the occaſions of Sin, Job 31. 1. *I have made a Covenant with mine eyes*; more than ordinary vigilancy over their ſpecial or proper Sin, Pſal. 18. 23. *I kept my ſelf from mine iniquity*: Earneſt cries to Heaven for preventing Grace, Pſal. 19. 13. *Keep back thy Servant alſo from preſumptuous ſins, let them not have dominion over me*: Deep humblings of Soul for Sins paſt, which is an excellent preventive unto future Sins, 2 Cor. 2. 11. *in that he ſorrowed after a Godly ſort, what carefulneſs wrought it?* Care to give no furtherance or advantage to the deſign of Sin, by making proviſion for the Fleſh, to fulfil the Luſts thereof, as others do, *Rom.* 13. 13, 14. Willingneſs to bear the due reproofs of Sin, Pſal. 141. 5. *Let the righteous ſmite me, it ſhall be a kindneſs*: Theſe and ſuch like means of mortification, regenerate Souls are daily uſing, and applying, in order to the death of Sin. And ſo much of the firſt particular, what the mortification of Sin, or crucifying of the Fleſh implies.

Secondly, In the next place, we ſhall examine the reaſons, why this work of the Spirit

is expreſſed under that *Trope*, or figurative expreſſion, of *crucifying the Fleſh*. Now the ground and reaſon of the uſe of this expreſſion, is the reſemblance which the mortification of Sin bears unto the Death of the Croſs: And this appears in five particulars.

Firſt, The Death of the Croſs was a *painful Death*, and the mortification of Sin is very painful work, *Matth.* 25. 29. 'tis the cutting off our Right Hands, and plucking out our Right Eyes; it will coſt many thouſand Tears, and Groans, Prayers and ſtrong Cries to Heaven, before one Sin will be mortified. Upon the account of the difficulty of this work, and mainly upon this account, the Scripture ſaith, *narrow is the way, and ſtrait is the gate that leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it*, Matth. 7. 14. and that the righteous themſelves are *ſcarcely ſaved*.

Secondly, The Death of the Croſs was *univerſally painful*, every Member, every Senſe, every Sinew, every *Nerve* was the Seat and Subject of tormenting pain. So is it in the mortification of Sin; 'tis not this or that particular Member, or Act; but the whole Body of Sin that is to be deſtroyed, *Rom.* 6. 6. and accordingly the conflict is in every Faculty of the Soul; for the Spirit of God, by whoſe hand Sin is mortified, doth not combat with this or that particular Luſt only, but with Sin as Sin; and for that reaſon with every Sin, in every Faculty of the Soul. So that there are conflicts, and and anguiſh in every part.

Thirdly, The Death of the Croſs was a *ſlow and lingring Death*; denying unto them that ſuffered it the favour of a quick diſpatch. Juſt ſo it is in the Death of Sin; though the Spirit of God be mortifying it day by day, yet this is a Truth ſealed by the ſad experience of all Believers in the World, *that Sin is long a dying*: And if we ask a reaſon of this diſpenſation of God, among others, this ſeems to be one; corruptions in Believers, like the *Canaanites* in the Land of *Iſrael*, are left to prove, and to exerciſe the People of God, to keep us watching and praying, mourning and believing; yea, wondering and admiring at the riches of pardoning and preſerving Mercy all our days.

Mortificatio peccato non fit uno momento, ſed opus eſt lucta aſſidua: peccatum langueſcit ab initio mortificationis noſtræ, in progreſſu tabeſcit: ad extremum (i. e.) *in ipſa morte noſtra, abolebitur*. Origen in Epiſt. ad Rom.

Fourthly, The Death of the Croſs was a very *opprobrious and ſhameful* Death; they that died upon the Croſs were loaded with ignominy; the Crimes for which they died were expoſed to the publick view; after this manner dieth Sin, a very ſhameful and ignominious Death. Every true Believer draws up a charge againſt it in every Prayer, aggravates and condemns it in every Confeſſion, bewails the evil of it with multitudes of Tears and Groans, making Sin as vile and odious as they can find words to expreſs it, though not ſo vile as it is in its own Nature. O *my God* (ſaith *Ezra*) *I am aſhamed, and even bluſh to look up unto thee*, Ezra 9. 6. So *Daniel* in his Confeſſion, *Dan.* 9. 7. *O Lord, righteouſneſs belongeth unto thee, but unto us confuſion of Faces, as at this day*. Nor can it grieve any Believer in the World, to accuſe, condemn, and ſhame himſelf for Sin, whilſt he remembers and conſiders, that all that ſhame and confuſion of Face which he takes to himſelf, goes to the Vindication, Glory and Honour of his God: As *David* was content to be more vile ſtill for God, ſo it pleaſeth the Heart of a Chriſtian to magnifie and advance the Name and Glory of God, by expoſing his own ſhame, in humble and broken-hearted confeſſions of Sin.

Fifthly, In a Word, the Death of the Croſs *was not a natural, but a violent Death*: Such alſo is the Death of Sin: Sin dies not of its own accord, as Nature dieth in old Men, in whom the *Balſamum radicale*, or radical moiſture is conſumed; for if the Spirit of God did not kill it, it would live to eternity in the Souls of Men; 'tis not the everlaſting burnings, and all the wrath of God which lies upon the damned for ever, that can deſtroy Sin. Sin, like a *Salamander*, can live to eternity in the Fire of God's wrath; ſo that either it muſt die a violent death by the hand of the Spirit, or never dieth at all. And thus you ſee, why the mortification of Sin is *Tropically* expreſſed by the crucifying of the Fleſh.

3. Thirdly, Why all that are in Chriſt muſt be ſo crucified, or mortified unto Sin: And the neceſſity of this will appear divers ways.

Firſt, From the inconſiſtency and contrariety that there is betwixt Chriſt and unmortified Luſt, Gal. 5. 17. *Theſe are contrary the one to the other*. There is a threefold inconſiſtency betwixt Chriſt and ſuch Corruptions; they are not only contrary to the *holineſs of Chriſt*, 1 Joh. 3. 6. *Whoſoever abideth in him ſinneth not; whoſoever ſinneth hath not ſeen him, neither known him*, (*i. e.*) whoſoever is thus ingulphed and plunged into the luſt of the Fleſh, can have no communion with the pure and holy Chriſt; but there is alſo an inconſiſtency betwixt ſuch Sin and the *Honour* of *Chriſt*, 2 Tim. 2. 19. *Let every one that nameth the Name of Chriſt, depart from iniquity*: As *Alexander* ſaid to a Soldier of his Name, *recordare nominis Alexandri*, remember thy Name is *Alexander*, and do nothing unworthy of that Name. And unmortified Luſts are alſo contrary to the *Dominion* and Government of *Chriſt*, Luke 9. 23. *If any Man will come after me, let him deny himſelf and take up his Croſs daily, and follow me*: Theſe are the ſelf-denying terms, upon which all Men are admitted into Chriſt's ſervice: And without Mortification and Self-denial he allows no Man to call him Lord and Maſter.

Secondly, The neceſſity of Mortification appears from the neceſſity of conformity betwixt Chriſt the Head, and all the Members of his myſtical Body; for how incongruous and uncomely would it be to ſee a holy heavenly Chriſt, leading a Company of unclean carnal, and ſenſual Members? Matth. 11. 29. *Take my yoak upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly, q. d.* it would be monſtrous to the World, to behold a company of *Lions* and *Wolves* following a meek and harmleſs *Lamb*. Men of raging and unmortified Luſts, profeſſing and owning me for their Head of Government: And again, 1 Joh. 2. 6. *He that ſaith he abideth in him, ought himſelf alſo ſo to walk even as he walked, q. d.* either imitate Chriſt in your *Practice*, or never make pretenſions to Chriſt in your *Profeſſion*: This was what the *Apoſtle* complained of, Phil. 3. 18. for *many walk*

walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the Enemies of the Croſs of Chriſt: Men cannot ſtudy to put a greater diſhonour and reproach upon Chriſt, than by making his Name and Profeſſion a cloak and cover to their filthy Luſts.

Thirdly, The neceſſity of crucifying the Fleſh, appears from the method of Salvation as it is ſtated in the Goſpel. God every where requires the practice of Mortification under pain of Damnation, Matth. 18. 8. *Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee; cut them off, and caſt them from thee; it is better for thee to enter into Life halt or maimed; rather than having two hands, or two feet, to be caſt into everlaſting fire*: The Goſpel legitimates no hopes of Salvation, but ſuch as are accompanied with ſerious endeavours of Mortification, 1 Joh. 3. 3. *Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himſelf, even as he is pure*: 'Twas one ſpecial end of Chriſt's coming into the World, *to ſave his People from their Sins*, Matth. 1. 21. not will he be a Saviour unto any who remain under the dominion of their own Luſts.

Fourthly, The whole ſtream and current of the Goſpel puts us under the neceſſity of Mortification. Goſpel-*Precepts* have reſpect unto this, Col. 3. 5. *Mortifie your Members therefore, which are upon the Earth*, 1. Pet. 1. 15. *Be ye holy for I am holy.* Goſpel-*Preſidents* have reſpect unto this, Heb. 12. 1. *Wherefore ſeeing we alſo are compaſſed about with ſo great a cloud of witneſſes, let us lay aſide every weight, and the ſin which doth ſo eaſily beſet us*, &c. Goſpel-*threatnings* are written for this end, and do all preſs Mortification in a thundring *dialect*, Rom. 8. 13. *If ye live after the Fleſh ye ſhall die*, Rom. 1. 18. *The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven againſt all ungodlineſs, and unrighteouſneſs of Men*: The *Promiſes* of the Goſpel are written deſignedly to promote it, 2 Cor. 7. 1. *Having therefore theſe Promiſes, dearly beloved, let us cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of God*: But in vain are all theſe Precepts, Preſidents, Threatnings and Promiſes written in the Scripture, except Mortification be the daily ſtudy and practice of Profeſſors.

Fifthly, Mortification is the very ſcope and aim of our Regeneration, and the infuſion of the principles of Grace: *If we live in the Spirit, let us walk in the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 25. In vain were the habits of Grace planted, if the Fruits of Holineſs and Mortification be not produced; yea, Mortification is not only the deſign and aim, but it is a ſpecial part, even the one half of our Sanctification.

Sixthly, If Mortification be not the daily practice and endeavour of Believers, then the way to Heaven no way anſwers to Chriſt's deſcription of it in the Goſpel: He tells us, Matth. 7. 13, 14. *Wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to deſtruction, and many there be that go in thereat; becauſe ſtrait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it*: Well then, either Chriſt muſt be miſtaken in the account he gave of the way to Glory, or elſe all unmortified Perſons are out of the way; for what makes the way of Salvation narrow, but the difficulties and ſeverities of Mortification?

Seventhly, In a word, he that denies the neceſſity of Mortification, confounds all diſcriminating marks betwixt Saints and Sinners; pulls down the Pale of diſtinction, and lets the World into the Church, and the Church into the World; 'tis a great deſign of the Goſpel to preſerve the boundaries betwixt the one and the other, *Rom.* 2, 7, 8. *Rom.* 8. 1, 4, 5, 6, 13. But if Men may be Chriſtians without Mortification, we may as well go into the *Taverns*, *Ale-houſes*, or *Brothel-houſes*, among the roaring or ſottiſh crew of Sinners, and ſay, here be thoſe that are redeemed by the Blood of Chriſt; here be his Diſciples and Followers; as go to ſeek them in the pureſt Churches, or moſt ſtrictly religious Families; by all which the neceſſity of Mortification, unto all that are in Chriſt, is abundantly evidenced.

Fourthly, In the next place we are to enquire into the true *principle* of Mortification: 'Tis true there are many ways attempted by Men for the Mortification of Sin, and many rules laid down to guide Men in that great work; ſome of which are very trifling and impertinent things; ſuch are thoſe preſcribed by *Popiſh Votaries*; but I ſhall lay down this as a ſure concluſion, that *the ſanctifying Spirit is the only effectual principle of Mortification*; and without him no Reſolutions, Vows, Abſtinences, Caſtigations of the Body, or any other external endeavours can ever avail to the Mortification of one Sin: The *moral Heathens* have preſcribed many pretty rules and helps for the ſuppreſſion of Vice: *Ariſtides*, *Seneca*, and *Cato* were renowned among them upon this account: But yet as *Lactantius* well obſerves, *moral Philoſophy* did rather *abſcondere vitia, quam abſcindere*, hide it, rather than kill it; formal Chriſtians have alſo gone far in the reformation of their Lives, but could never attain true Mortification; formality pares off the excreſcencies of Vice, but never kills the root of it; it uſually recovers it ſelf again, and their Souls like a Body not well purged, relapſe into a worſe condition than before, *Matth.* 12. 43, 44. 2 *Pet.* 2. 20.

This work of Mortification is peculiar to the Spirit of God, *Rom.* 8. 13. *Gal.* 5. 17. and the Spirit becomes a principle of Mortification in Believers two ways, namely,

1. By the implantation of contrary Habits.
2. By aſſiſting thoſe implanted Habits in all the times of need.

Firſt, The Spirit of God implants Habits of a contrary Nature, which are deſtructive to Sin, and are purgative of Corruption, 1 *Joh.* 5. 4. *Acts* 15. 9. Grace is to Corruption what Water is to Fire; betwixt which there is both a *formal* and *effective oppoſition*; a contrariety both in Nature and Operation, *Gal.* 5. 17. There is a threefold remarkable advantage given us by Grace for the deſtruction and mortification of Sin. For,

Firſt, Grace gives the Mind and Heart of Man a contrary bent and inclination; by reaſon whereof ſpiritual and heavenly things become connatural to the regenerate Soul, *Rom.* 7. 22. *For I delight in the Law of God after the inner Man*: Sanctification is in the Soul as a living ſpring running with a kind of *central force* Heaven-ward, *Joh.* 4. 14.

Secondly, Holy Principles deſtroy the intereſt that Sin once had in the love and delight of

of the Soul; the ſanctified Soul cannot take pleaſure in Sin, or find delight in that which grieves God, as it was wont to do; but that which was the object of delight, hereby becomes the object of grief and hatred, *Rom.* 7. 15. *What I hate, that I do.*

Thirdly, From both theſe follow a third advantage for the mortification of Sin, in as much as Sin being contrary to the new Nature, and the object of grief and hatred, cannot poſſibly be committed without reluctancy, and very ſenſible regret of Mind; and actions done with regret, are neither done frequently nor eaſily. The caſe of a regenerate Soul under the Surprizals, and particular Victories of Temptation, being like that of a Captive in War, who marches not with delight, but by conſtraint among his Enemies. So the *Apoſtle* expreſſeth himſelf, Rom. 7. 23. *But I ſee another Law in my Members, warring againſt the Law of my Mind; and bringing me into captivity unto the Law of ſin, which is in my Members*: Thus the Spirit of God promotes the deſign of Mortification by the implantation of contrary Habits.

Αιχμαλωτίζω, cum ita quis capitur, ut nequeat luctari, nec ſe capienti obſiſtere. Sclat.

Secondly, By aſſiſting thoſe Gracious Habits in all the times of need, which he doth many ways; ſometimes notably awakening and rowzing Grace out of the dull and ſleepy Habit, and drawing forth the activity and power of it into actual and ſucceſsful reſiſtances of Temptations, as *Gen.* 39. 9. *How can I do this great wickedneſs, and ſin againſt God?* Holy fear awakens firſt, and raiſes all the powers of Grace in the Soul, to make a vigorous reſiſtance of temptation: The Spirit alſo ſtrengthens weak Grace in the Soul, 2 *Cor.* 12. 9. *My Grace is ſufficient for thee, for my ſtrength is made perfect in weakneſs*: And by reaſon of Grace thus implanted, and thus aſſiſted, *he that is born of God keepeth himſelf, and the wicked one toucheth him not.*

Fifthly, The laſt Query to be ſatisfied, is, how Mortification of Sin ſolidly evinceth the Soul's intereſt in Chriſt; and this it doth divers ways, affording the mortified Soul many ſound evidences thereof, As,

Evidence 1.

Whatſoever evidences the indwelling of the Holy Spirit of God in us, muſt needs be evidential of a ſaving intereſt in Chriſt, as hath been fully proved before; but the mortification of Sin doth plainly evidence the indwelling of the Spirit of God; for as we proved but now, it can proceed from no other Principle; there is a ſtrong and inſeparable connexion betwixt Mortification and the Spirit, as betwixt the Effect and its proper Cauſe, and the ſelf-ſame connexion betwixt the in-being of the Spirit, and union with Chriſt. So that to reaſon from mortification to the inhabitation of the Spirit, and from the inhabitation of the Spirit to our union with Chriſt, is a ſtrong Scriptural way of reaſoning.

Evidence 2.

That which proves a Soul to be under the *Covenant of Grace*, evidently proves its intereſt in Chriſt; for Chriſt is the Head of that *Covenant*, and none but ſound Believers are under the Bleſſings and Promiſes of it; but mortification of Sin is a ſound evidence of the Soul's being under the Covenant of Grace, as is plain from thoſe Words of the *Apoſtle*, Rom. 6. 12, 13, 14, *Let not ſin therefore reign in your mortal Body, that ye ſhould obey it in the luſt thereof, neither yield ye your Members, as inſtruments of unrighteouſneſs unto ſin; but yield your ſelves unto God, as thoſe, that are alive from the dead, and your Members as inſtruments of righteouſneſs unto God; for ſin ſhall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the Law, but under Grace*: Where the *Apoſtle* preſſeth Believers unto Mortification by this encouragement, that it will be a good evidence unto them of a new Covenant-intereſt; for all legal duties and endeavours can never mortifie Sin: 'Tis the Spirit in the New Covenant which produces this; whoever therefore hath his corruptions mortified, hath his intereſt in the Covenant, and conſequently in Chriſt, ſo far cleared unto him.

Evidence 3.

That which is the Fruit and Evidence of ſaving Faith, muſt needs be a good evidence of our intereſt in Chriſt; but Mortification of Sin is the Fruit and Evidence of ſaving Faith, Acts 15. 9. *Purifying their Hearts by Faith*, 1 Joh. 5. 4. *This is the Victory whereby we overcome the World, even our Faith*: Faith overcomes both the allurements of the World upon the other hand; by mortifying the Heart and Affections to all earthly things: A mortified Heart is not eaſily taken with the enſnaring pleaſures of the World; or much moved with the diſgraces, loſſes, and ſufferings it meets with from the World; and ſo the ſtrength and force of its temptations is broken, and the mortified Soul becomes victorious over it, and all this by the inſtrumentality of Faith.

Evidence 4.

In a Word, there is an intimate and indiſſoluble connexion betwixt the mortification of Sin, and the Life of Grace, *Rom.* 6. 11. *Reckon your ſelves to be dead indeed unto Sin, but alive unto God through Jeſus Chriſt*: And the Life of Chriſt muſt needs involve a ſaving intereſt in Chriſt; by all which is fully proved what was aſſerted in the Obſervation from this Text. The Application follows in the next Sermon.

SER-

SERMON XXVIII.

GAL. V. 24.

And they that are Christ's have crucified the Flesh, with the Affections and Lusts.

From hence our Observation was,

Serm. 28. THAT *a saving interest in Christ may be regularly and strongly inferred, and concluded from the Mortification of the Flesh, with its Affections and Lusts.*

Having opened the Nature, and necessity of Mortification in the former Sermon and shewn how regularly a saving interest in Christ may be concluded from it; we now proceed to apply the whole, by way of

1. Information.
2. Exhortation.
3. Direction.
4. Examination.
5. Consolation.

1. *Use for Information.*

Inference 1.

If they that be Christ's have crucified the Flesh, *Then the Life of Christians is no idle or easie Life*: The corruptions of his Heart continually fill his Hands with work, with work of the most difficult nature, sin-crucifying work, which the Scripture calls the cutting off the Right Hand, and plucking out of the Right Eye: Sin-crucifying work is hard work, and it is constant work, throughout the Life of a Christian; there is no time or place freed from this conflict; every occasion stirs corruption, and every stirring of corruption calls for mortification: Corruptions work in our very best Duties, *Rom.* 7. 23. and put the Christian upon mortifying Labours. The World and the Devil are great Enemies and Fountains of many Temptations to Believers, but not like the corruptions of our own Hearts; they only tempt *objectively* and *externally*; but this tempts *internally*, and therefore much more dangerous; they only tempt at Times and Seasons: this continually at all Times and Seasons: Besides, whatever *Satan* or the *World* attempts upon us, would be altogether ineffectual, were it not for our own corruptions, *Job.* 14. 30. so that the corruptions of our own Hearts, as they give us most danger, so they must give us more labour; our Life and this labour must end together; for Sin is long a dying in the best Heart: Those that have been many years exercised in the study of Mortification, may haply feel the same corruption tempting and troubling them now, which put them into tears, and many times to their Knees twenty or forty years ago. It may be said of Sin as it was of *Hannibal*, that active Enemy; that will never be quiet, whether conquering or conquered; and until Sin cease working, the Christian must not cease mortifying.

Inference 2.

If mortification be the great work of a Christian, *then certainly those that give the corruptions of Christians an occasion to revive, must needs do them a very ill Office*: They are not our best Friends that stir the Pride of our *Hearts* by the flattery of their *Lips*. The Graces of God in others, I confess, are thankfully to be owned, and under discouragements, and contrary temptations, to be wisely and modestly spoken of; but the strongest Christians do scarcely shew their own weakness in any one thing more than they do in bearing their own Praises. Christian, thou knowest thou carriest Gunpowder about thee, desire those that carry Fire to keep at a distance from thee; 'tis a dangerous *Crisis* when a proud Heart meets with the flattering Lips, *auferte ignem*, &c. take away the Fire (said a Holy Divine of *Germany*, when his Friend commended him upon his Death-bed) for I have yet combustible matter about me: Faithful, seasonable, discreet reproofs are much more safe to us, and advantagious to our mortifying work; but alas, How few have the boldness or wisdom duly to administer them? 'Tis said of *Alexander*, that he bid a *Philosopher* (who had been long with him) to be gone; for, said he, so long thou hast been with me, and never Reproved me; which must needs be thy fault; for either thou sawest nothing in me worthy of Reproof, which argues thy Ignorance; or else thou durst not reprove me, which argues thy Unfaithfulness. A wise and faithful Reprover is of singular use to him that is heartily engaged in the design of mortification; such a faithful Friend, or some malicious Enemy, must be helpful to us in that work.

Inference 3.

Hence it follows, *that manifold and successive afflictions are no more than is necessary for the best of Christians*; the mortification of our Lusts require them all, be they never so many, 1 Pet. 1. 5. *if need be, ye are in heavinesse*; 'tis no more than need, that one loss should follow another, to mortify an earthly Heart; for so intensely are our Affections set upon the World, that it is not one, or two, or many checks of Providence, that will suffice to wean and alienate them. Alas, the earthliness of our Hearts will take all this, it may be much more than this to purge them: The wise God sees it but necessary to permit frequent discoveries of our own weakness, and to let loose the Tongues of many Enemies upon us, and all little enough to pull down the Pride and Vanity that is in our Hearts. Christian, how difficult soever it be for thee to bear it; yet the pride of thy Heart requires all the Scoffs and Jeers, all the Calumnies and Reproaches, that ever the Tongues or Pens of thy bittereſt Enemies, or mistaking Friends, have at any time thrown upon thee. Such rank Weeds, as grow in our Hearts, will require hard Frosts, and very sharp Weather to rot them; the straying *Bullock* needs a heavy clog, and so doth a Christian, whom God will keep within the bounds and limits of his Commandments, *Psal.* 119. 67. *Dan.* 11. 35.

Non eſt ſalvus extra crucem Chriſti, qui non eſt crucifixus in Chriſto qui non eſt membrum Chriſti Proſper.

Inference 4.

If they that be Chriſts have crucified the fleſh, *then the number of real Chriſtians is very ſmall* : 'tis true, if all that ſeem to be meek, humble and heavenly, might paſs for Chriſtians, the number would be great : but if no more muſt be accounted Chriſtians, than thoſe who crucify the fleſh, with its affections and luſts, O how ſmall is the number ! For O how many be there under the Chriſtian name, that pamper and indulge their luſts, that ſecretly hate all that faithfully reprove them, and really affect none but ſuch as feed their luſts, by praiſing and admiring them ? How many that make proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil its luſts ? who cannot endure to have their corruptions croſt : How many are there that ſeem very meek and humble, until an occaſion be given to ſtir their paſſion, and then you ſhall ſee in what degree they are mortified : the Flint is a cold ſtone, till it be ſtruck, and then 'tis all Fiery. I know the beſt of Chriſtians are mortified but in part : and ſtrong corruptions are ofttimes found in very eminent Chriſtians ; but they love them not ſo well as to purvey for them ; to protect, defend and countenance them : nor dare they ſecretly hate ſuch as faithfully reprove them ; as many thouſands that go under the name of Chriſtians do. Upon the account of mortification it is ſaid, Matth. 7. 13. *Narrow is the way, and ſtrait is the gate that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*

Inference 5.

If they that be Chriſt's have crucified the Fleſh ; (*i. e.*) mortification is their daily work and ſtudy ; *then how falſely are Chriſtians charged as troublers of the World, and diſturbers of the civil peace and tranquillity of the times and places they live in?* Juſtly may they retort the charge, as *Elijah* did to *Ahab*, *It is not I that trouble Iſrael, but thou and thy Father's houſe* : It is not the holy, meek and humble Chriſtians that put the World into confuſion : this is done by the Prophane, and Atheiſtical ; or by the deſigning and hypocritical World, and laid at the innocent Chriſtians door : as all the publick Calamities which from the immediate hand of God, or by Foreign, or domeſtick enemies befel *Rome*, were conſtantly charged upon Chriſtians ; and they condemned and puniſhed, for what the righteous hand of God inflicted, or the working heads of the enemies of that State without their privity contrived. The Apoſtle *James* propounds and anſwers a very pertinent queſtion unto this diſcourſe, James 4. 1. *From whence come wars and fightings among you ; come they not hence, even of your luſts that war in your members ?* O if all Men did but ſtudy mortification and ſelf-denial, and live as much at home in the conſtant work of their own hearts, as ſome Men do ; What tranquillity and peace, what bleſſed halcyon days ſhould we quickly ſee ! 'Tis true, Chriſtians are always fighting and quarrelling, but it is with themſelves and their own corrupt hearts and affections : they hate no enemy but ſin, they thirſt for the Blood and Ruine of none but of that Enemy : they are ambitious of no victory but what is over the corruptions of their own hearts ; they carry no grudge except it be againſt this enemy ſin, and yet theſe are the Men who are the moſt ſuſpected, and charged of diſturbing the times they live in. Juſt as the *Wolf* accuſed the *Lamb*, which was below him, for puddling and defiling the ſtream. But there will be a day, when God will clear up the innocency and integrity of his miſtaken and abuſed ſervants ; and the World ſhall ſee it was not Preaching and Praying, but Drinking, Swearing, Prophaneneſs and Enmity unto true Godlineſs, which diſturbs and breaks the tranquillity, and quietneſs of the times ; mean time let innocency commit it ſelf unto God who will protect, and in due time vindicate the ſame.

Inference 6.

If they that be Chriſt's have crucified the fleſh, *then whatſoever Religion, Opinion or Doctrine, doth, in its own nature countenance and encourage ſin, is not of Chriſt* ; the Doctrine of Chriſt every where teacheth mortification ; the whole ſtream of the Goſpel runs againſt ſin ; the Doctrine it teacheth, is holy, pure and Heavenly ; it hath no tendency to extol corrupt nature, and feed its pride by magnifying its freedom and power ; or by ſtamping the merit and dignity of the Blood of Chriſt upon its works and performances ; it never makes the death of Chriſt a *Cloak* to cover ſin, but an *inſtrument* to deſtroy it ; and whatſoever Doctrine it is, which nouriſhes the pride of nature, to the diſparagement of Grace ; or incourages licentiouſneſs and fleſhly luſt, is not the Doctrine of Chriſt ; but a ſpurious off-ſpring begotten by Satan upon the corrupt nature of man.

Inference 7.

7. If mortification be the great Buſineſs, and Character of a Chriſtian, *then that condition is moſt eligible and deſirable by Chriſtians, which is leaſt of all expoſed to Temptation*, Prov. 30. 8. *Give me neither poverty nor riches, but feed me with food convenient* ; that holy judicious man was well aware of the danger lurking in both extreams ; and how near they border upon deadly temptations, and approach the very precipice of ruine, that ſtand upon either ground : few Chriſtians have an Head ſtrong and ſteady enough to ſtand upon the pinacle of wealth and honour, nor is it every one that can grapple with poverty and contempt. A mediocrity is the Chriſtians beſt external ſecurity, and therefore moſt deſirable, and yet how do the corruption, the pride and ignorance of our hearts graſp, and covet that condition which only ſerves to warm and nouriſh our luſts, and make the work of Mortification much more difficult ? 'Tis well for us, that our wiſe Father leaves us not to our own choice that he frequently daſhes our earthly projects and diſappoints our fond expectations. Children were left to carve for themſelves how often would they cut their own fingers

Inference 8.

If Mortification be the great buſineſs of Chriſtian, *then Chriſtian fellowſhip, and ſocie duly managed, and improved, muſt needs be ſingular Uſe, and ſpecial Advantage to the People God.* For thereby we have the friendly he and aſſiſtance of many other hands, to carry our great deſign, and help us in our moſt di cult buſineſs ; if corruptions be too hard for others this way come in to our aſſiſtance, G 6. 1. *Brethren if a man be overtaken in a fa*

ye which are Spiritual reſtore ſuch an one in the Spirit of meekneſs. If temptations prevail, and over-bear us that we fall under ſin, 'tis a ſpecial mercy to have the reproofs and counſels of our Brethren, who will not ſuffer Sin to reſt upon us, *Levit.* 19. 17. Whilſt we are ſluggiſh and ſleepy, others are vigilant, and careful for our ſafety: The humility of another, reproves and mortifies my Pride: The Activity and Livelineſs of another, awakens and quickens my deadneſs: The Prudence and Gravity of another, detects and cures my Levity and Vanity: The Heavenlineſs and Spirituality of another, may be exceeding uſeful both to reprove, and heal the earthlineſs, and ſenſuality of my heart. Two are better than one, but wo unto him that is alone. The Devil is well aware of this great Advantage, and therefore ſtrikes with ſpecial Malice againſt embodied Chriſtians, who are as a well diſciplined army, whom he therefore more eſpecially endeavours to rout and ſcatter by Perſecutions, that thereby particular Chriſtians may be deprived of the ſweet Advantages of mutual ſociety.

Inf. 9. *How deeply hath ſin fixed its roots in our corrupt nature, that it ſhould be the conſtant work of a Chriſtians whole life, to mortifie and deſtroy it?* God hath given us many excellent Helps, his Spirit within us, variety of ordinances and duties are alſo appointed as inſtruments of Mortification: And from the very day of Regeneration unto the laſt Moment of Diſſolution the Chriſtian is daily at work in the uſe of all ſanctified means external and internal, yet can never dig up, and deſtroy corruption at the root all his life long. The moſt eminent Chriſtians of longeſt ſtanding in Religion, who have ſhed Millions of Tears for Sin, and poured out many thouſand Prayers for the Mortification of it do after all find the grudgings of their old Diſeaſe, that there is ſtill Life and Strength in thoſe Corruptions which they have given ſo many Wounds unto in Duty. O the Depth and Strength of Sin! which nothing can ſeparate from us, but that which ſeparates our Souls and Bodies. And upon that account the Day of a Believers Death, is better than the Day of his Birth. Never till then, do we put off our Armour, ſheath our Sword, and cry Victory, Victory.

2. *Uſe for Exhortation.*

If they that are Chriſt's have crucified the Fleſh, *&c.* Then as ever we hope to make good our Claim to Chriſt, let us give all Diligence to mortify Sin, in vain elſe are all our Pretences unto Union with him. This is the great Work, and diſcriminating Character of a Believer. And ſeeing it is the main Buſineſs of Life, and great Evidence for Heaven, I ſhall therefore preſs you to it by the following Motives and Conſiderations.

1. *Motive.* And firſt, methinks the Comfort and Sweetneſs reſulting from Mortification ſhould effectually perſwade every Believer to more Diligence about it. There is a double Sweetneſs in Mortification, one in the nature of the work, as it is a Duty, a ſweet Chriſtian Duty; another as it hath reſpect to Chriſt, and is Evidential of our Union with him. In the firſt Conſideration there is a wonderful Sweetneſs in Mortification, for doſt thou not feel a bleſſed Calmneſs, Chearineſs and Tranquillity in thy Conſcience, when thou haſt faithfully repelled temptations, ſucceſsfully reſiſted and overcome thy Corruptions? Doth not God ſmile upon thee; Conſcience incourage, and approve thee? Haſt thou not an Heaven within thee? whilſt others feel a kind of Hell in the deadly Gripes and bitter accuſations of their own Conſciences, are covered with Shame, and filled with Horrours. But then, conſider it alſo as an Evidence of the Soul's intereſt in Chriſt, as my Text conſiders it; and what an Heaven upon Earth muſt then be found in Mortification! Theſe Indeavours of mine to ſubdue and mortify my Corruptions, plainly ſpeak the Spirit of God in me, and my being in Chriſt; and O what is this! What Heart hath largeneſs and ſtrength enough to receive and contain the Joy and Comfort which flows from a cleared Intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt! Certainly, Chriſtians, the Tranquillity and Comfort of your whole Life depends upon it; and what is Life without the Comfort of Life, *Rom.* 8. 13. *If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live,* (*i. e.*) you ſhall live a ſerene, placid, comfortable Life, for it is Corruption unmortified which clouds the Face of God, and breaks the Peace of his People, and conſequently imbitters the Life of a Chriſtian.

2. *Motive.* As the Comfort of your own Lives which is much, ſo your inſtrumental Fineſs for the ſervice of God which is much more, depends upon the Mortification of your Sins, 2 *Tim.* 2. 21. *If a man therefore purge himſelf from theſe, he ſhall be a veſſel unto honour; ſanctified and meet for the maſters uſe, and prepared unto every good work.* Where is the Mercy of Life, but in the uſefulneſs and ſerviceableneſs of it unto God? It is not worth while to live ſixty, or ſeventy Years in the World, to eat, and drink, to buy and ſell, to laugh and cry, and then go down to the Place of ſilence. So far as any Man lives to God, an uſeful ſerviceable Life to his praiſe and honour; ſo far only, and no farther doth he anſwer the End of his Being. But it is the purged mortified Soul which is the Veſſel of Honour, prepared, and meet for the Maſter's uſe. Let a proud or an earthly Heart be imployed in any ſervice for God, and you ſhall find that ſuch an Heart will both ſpoil the Work, by managing it for a ſelf-end as *Jehu* did; and then devour the Praiſe of it by a proud Boaſt: *Come, ſee my zeal.* When the Lord would employ the Prophet *Iſaiah* in his Work and Service, his Iniquity was firſt purged; and after that he was employed, *Iſai.* 6,6,7,8. Sin is the Soul's Sickneſs, a Conſumption upon the inner Man; and we know that languiſhing conſumptive perſons are very unfit to be imployed in difficult and ſtrenuous Labours: Mortification, ſo far as it prevails, cures the Diſeaſe, recovers our Strength, and enables us for Service to God in our Generations.

3. *Motive.* Your Stability, and Safety in the Hour of Temptation depends upon the Succeſs of your mortifying Endeavours. Is it then a valuable Mercy in your Eyes to be kept upright and ſtedfaſt in the critical Seaſon of Temptation, when Satan ſhall be wreſtling with you for the Crown, and Prize of eternal Life? Then give Diligence to mortify your Corruptions. Temptation is a Siege, Satan is the Enemy without the Walls, labouring to force an Entrance, natural Corruptions are the

Traytors within, that hold Correſpondency with the Enemy without, and open the Gate of the Soul to receive him. It was the covetouſneſs of *Judas* his Heart which overthrew him in the Hour of Temptation. They are our fleſhly Luſts which go over unto Satan in the day of Battel, and *fight againſt our ſouls*, 1. *Pet.* 2. 11. the Corruptions (or infectious Atoms which fly up and down the World in times of Temptation, as that Word μιάσματα imports) are through Luſts, 2 *Pet.* 1, 4. 2 *Pet.* 2. 20. 'Tis the Luſt within which gives a Luſtre to the Vanities of the World without, and thereby makes them ſtrong Temptations to us, 1 *Joh.* 2. 16. Mortify therefore your Corruptions as ever you expect to maintain your Station in the day of trial: cut off thoſe Advantages of your Enemy, leſt by them he cut off your Souls, and all your Hopes from God.

4. *Motive.* As Temptations will be irreſiſtable, ſo Afflictions will be unſupportable to you without Mortification. My Friends, you live in a mutable World, Providence daily rings the Changes in all the Kingdoms, Cities, and Towns all the World over. You that have Husbands or Wives to day, may be left deſolate to morrow: You that have Eſtates, and Children now, may be bereaved of both before you are aware. Sickneſs will tread upon the Heel of Health, and Death will aſſuredly follow Life, as the Night doth the Day. Conſider with your ſelves, are you able to bear the Loſs of your ſweet Enjoyments with Patience? Can you think upon the parting Hour without ſome Tremblings? O get a heart mortified to all theſe things, and you will bleſs a taking as well as a giving God. 'Tis the living World, not the crucified World, that raiſes ſuch Tumults in our Souls in the Day of Affliction. How cheerful was holy *Paul* under all his Sufferings! and what think you gave him that Peace, and Cheerfulneſs, but his Mortification to the World? *Phil.* 4. 12. *I know both how to be abaſed, and I know how to abound; every where, and in all things I am inſtructed, both to be full, and to be hungry, both to abound, and ſuffer need.* *Job* was the mirror of Patience in the greateſt Shock of Calamity, and what made him ſo, but the mortifiedneſs of his Heart in the fulleſt Enjoyment of earthly things? *Job* 31. 25.

5. *Motive.* The Reputation and Honour of Religion is deeply concerned in the Mortification of the Profeſſors of it: For unmortified Profeſſors will firſt or laſt be the Scandals, and Reproaches of it. The profeſſion of Religion may give credit to you, but to be ſure you will never bring credit to it. All the Scandals and Reproaches that fall upon the name of Chriſt in this World, flow from the Fountain of unmortified Corruption. *Judas* and *Demas*, *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, *Ananias* and *Saphira* ruined themſelves, and became Rocks of offence to others by this means. If ever you will keep Religion ſweet, labour to keep your Hearts mortified and pure.

6. *Motive.* To conclude, what an hard tug will you have in your dying Hour, except you get a Heart mortified to this World, and all that is in it? Your parting Hour is like to be a dreadful hour without the help of mortification. Your Corruptions like Glew faſten your Affections to the World, and how hard will it be for ſuch a Man to be ſeparated by Death? O what a bitter and doleful parting have carnal Hearts from carnal things! whereas the mortified Soul can receive the Meſſengers of death without trouble, and as cheerfully put off the Body at Death, as a Man doth his Clothes at night: Death need not pull and hale; ſuch a Man goes half Way to meet it, *Phil.* 1. 23. *I deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt, which is far better.* Chriſtian, wouldſt thou have thy Death-bed ſoft and eaſy? wouldſt thou have an εὐθανασία, as the *Philoſopher* deſired for himſelf, an eaſy Death without Pain or Terrour; then get a mortified Heart: the *Chirurgeons* Knife is ſcarce felt, when it cuts off a mortified Member.

2. *Uſe for Direction.*

Are you convinced and fully ſatisfied of the Excellency and Neceſſity of Mortification, and inquiſitive after the Means, in the uſe whereof it may be attained? then for your Help and Encouragement I will in the next place offer my beſt aſſiſtance, in laying down the Rules for this work.

1. *Rule.* If ever you will ſucceed and proſper in the Work of Mortification, then get and daily exerciſe more Faith. Faith is the great inſtrument of Mortification. *This is the Victory* (or ſword by which the Victory is won, the inſtrument) *by which you overcome the World, even your faith*, 1 *John* 5. 4. By Faith alone eternal things are diſcovered to our Souls in their reality and excelling Glory, and theſe are the preponderating things for the ſake whereof Self-denial and Mortification becomes eaſy to Believers, by oppoſing things eternal to things temporal we reſiſt Satan, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. This is the ſhield by which we quench the fiery Darts of the wicked one, *Eph.* 6. 16.

2. *Rule.* Walk in daily Communion with God, if ever you will mortify the Corruptions of Nature, that is the Apoſtles own preſcription, *Gal.* 1. 16. *This I ſay then, walk in the Spirit, and ye ſhall not fulfil the Luſts of the fleſh.* Spiritual and frequent Communion with God, gives manifold Advantages for the Mortification of ſin: as it is a bright Glaſs wherein the Holineſs of God and the exceeding ſinfulneſs of Sin, as it is oppoſite thereunto, are moſt clearly and ſenſibly diſcovered, than which ſcarce any thing can ſet a keener Edge of Indignation upon the Spirit of a Man againſt Sin. Beſides, all Communion with God is aſſimilating, and tranſformative of the Soul into his Image, it leaves alſo a heavenly Reliſh and ſavour upon the Soul: it darkens the Luſtre and Glory of all earthly things, by preſenting to the Soul a Glory which excelleth. It marvelouſly improves, and more deeply radicates Sanctification in the Soul, by all which means it becomes ſingularly uſeful, and ſucceſsful in the Work of Mortification.

3. *Rule.* Keep your Conſciences under the awe, and in the fear of God continually, as ever you hope to be ſucceſsful in the Mortification of Sin. The Fear of God is the great Preſervative from Sin, without which all the external Rules and Helps in the World ſignify nothing. *By the Fear of the Lord, Men depart from Evil. Prov.* 16. 6. Not only from external and more open Evils, which the Fear of Men as well as the Fear of God may prevent, but from the moſt ſecret, and inward Evils, which is a ſpecial part of Mortification, *Levit.* 19. 14. it

It keeps Men from thoſe Evils which no Eye, nor Ear of Man can poſſibly diſcover. The Fear of the Lord breaks Temptations baited with Pleaſure, with Profit and with Secreſy. In a word, if ever you be cleanſed from all Filthineſs of Fleſh, and Spirit, it muſt be by the Fear of God, 2 *Cor.* 7. 1.

Readers, if ever you would have a true ſight of the emptineſs and vanity of the Creature, and get a mortified Heart to the world; now is the time, for at this day the providence of God hath withered all the fading flowers of earthly delights, and ſhewed you the worlds back parts, as it is departing from you.

4. *Rule.* Study the vanity of the Creature, and labour to get true notions of the emptineſs and tranſitorineſs thereof, if ever you will attain to the Mortification of your affections towards it. 'Tis the falſe picture and image of the World in our Fancy, that crucifies us with ſo many Cares, Fears, and Sollicitudes about it: and it is the true Picture and Image of the World, repreſented to us in the glaſs of the Word, which greatly helps to crucify our Affections to the World. O if we did but know and believe three things about the World, we would never be ſo fond of it as we are, *viz.* the fading, defiling, and deſtroying nature of it: the beſt and ſweeteſt enjoyments of the world are but fading flowers, and withering graſs, *Iſa.* 14. 6. *James* 1. 10, 11. Yea, it is of a defiling as well as a fading nature, 1 *John* 5. 19. It lies in wickedneſs. it ſpreads univerſal infection among all Mankind, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. Yea, it deſtroys, as well as defiles multitudes of Souls, *drowning Men in perdition*, 1 *Tim.* 6. 9. Millions of Souls will wiſh to eternity they had never known the riches, pleaſures or honours of it: were this believed, how would Men ſlack their pace, and cool themſelves in the violent and eager purſuit of the World! This greatly tends to promote Mortification.

5. *Rule.* Be careful to cut off all the occaſions of Sin, and keep at the greateſt Diſtance from Temptations, if ever you will mortify the Deeds of the Body. The Succeſs and Prevalency of Sin mainly depends upon the Wiles and Stratagems it makes uſe of to enſnare the incautelous Soul, therefore the Apoſtle bids us keep off at the greateſt Diſtance, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 22. *Abſtain from all appearances of evil.* Prov. 8. 8. *Come not nigh unto the door of her houſe.* He that dares venture to the very Brink of Sin, diſcovers but little Light in his Underſtanding, and leſs Tenderneſs in his Conſcience, he neither knows Sin, nor fears it as he ought to do: and 'tis uſual with God to chaſtiſe ſelf-confidence by ſhameful Lapſes into Sin.

6. *Rule.* If you will ſucceſsfully mortify the Corruptions of your Nature, never engage againſt them in your own ſingle Strength, *Eph.* 6. 10. When the Apoſtle draws forth Chriſtians into the Field againſt Sin, he bids them *be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.* O remember what a meer Feather thou art in the Guſts of Temptation. Call to mind the height of *Peter*'s Confidence, *though all Men forſake thee, yet will not I,* and the depth of his Fall, Shame and Sorrow. A weak Chriſtian trembling in himſelf, depending by Faith upon God, and graciouſly aſſiſted by him, ſhall be able to ſtand againſt the Shock of Temptation, when the bold and confident Reſolutions of others (like *Pendleton* in our Engliſh Story) ſhall melt away as Wax before the Flames.

7. *Rule.* Set in with the mortifying Deſign of God in the Day of thine Affliction. Sanctified Afflictions are ordered and preſcribed in Heaven for the purging of our corruptions, *Iſa.* 27. 9. *By this therefore ſhall the iniquity of* Jacob *be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his ſin.* 'Tis a fair Glaſs to repreſent the evil of ſin, and the vanity of the creature, to imbitter the World, and diſguſt thy affections towards it: fall in therefore with the gracious deſign of God, follow home every affliction with prayer, that God would follow it with his Bleſſing. God kills thy comforts out of no other deſign but to kill thy corruptions with them. Wants are ordained to kill wantonneſs: Poverty is appointed to kill Pride, Reproaches are permitted to pull down Ambition: Happy is the Man who underſtands, approves, and heartily ſets in with the deſign of God in ſuch afflicting providences.

8. *Rule.* Bend the ſtrength of your duties and endeavours againſt your proper and ſpecial Sin. 'Tis in vain to lop off branches, whilſt this Root of Bitterneſs remains untouched: This was *David*'s practice, *Pſal.* 18. 23. *I was alſo upright before him, and I kept my ſelf from iniquity.* We obſerve in Natural Men, that one faculty is more vigorous than another: We find in nature that one Soil ſuits with this Seed, rather than another: and every believer may find his nature and conſtitution inclining him to one ſin rather than another. As graces, ſo corruptions excel one another even in the regenerate. The power of ſpecial corruptions ariſes from our conſtitutions, education, company, cuſtom, callings, and ſuch like occaſions. But from whenceſoever it comes, this is the Sin that moſt endangers us, moſt eaſily beſets us, and accordingly to the progreſs of mortification in that ſin, we may ſafely eſtimate the degrees of mortification in other ſins: ſtrike therefore at the life and root of your own iniquity.

9. *Rule.* Study the nature and great importance of thoſe things which are to be won or loſt, according to the Succeſs and Iſſue of this conflict: your life is as a race, eternal Glory is the prize, grace and corruption are the antagoniſts, and accordingly as either finally prevails, eternal life is won or loſt, 1 Cor. 9. 24. *Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all, but one receiveth the prize: So run that ye may obtain.* This condition will make mortification appear the moſt rational and neceſſary thing to you in the whole World. Shall I loſe Heaven for indulging the Fleſh, and humouring a wanton appetite? God forbid. *I keep under my body* (ſaith *Paul*) *and bring it into ſubjection; leaſt that by any means, when I have preached to others, I my ſelf ſhould be a caſt-away,* 1 Cor. 9. 28.

10 *Rule.* Accuſtom your thoughts to ſuch Meditations as are proper to mortify Sin in your Affections, elſe all endeavours to mortify it will be but faint and languid. To this purpoſe I ſhall recommend the following Meditations, as proper means to deſtroy the intereſt of Sin.

1. *Meditation.* Conſider the evil that is in Sin, and how terrible the appearances of God will one day be againſt thoſe that obey it, in the luſt thereof, Rom. 1. 18. *The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men,* 1 Theſ. 1. 7, 8, 9. *The Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Goſpel of our*

Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. Let your thoughts dwell much upon the consideration of the fruits and consequences of Sin: it shows its fairest side to you in the hour of temptation. O but consider how it will look upon you in the day of affliction, *Numb.* 22. 23. In that day your Sin will find you out: think what its aspect will be in a dying hour, 1 Cor. 15. 56. *The sting of death is sin.* Think what the frightful remembrances of it will be at the bar of Judgment when Satan shall accuse, Conscience shall upbraid, God shall condemn, and everlasting burnings shall avenge the evil of it: such thoughts as these are mortifying thoughts.

2. *Meditat.* Think what it cost the Lord Jesus Christ to expiate the guilt of sin, by the suffering the wrath of the great and terrible God for it in our room: the meditations of a crucified Christ, are very crucifying meditations unto sin, *Gal.* 6. 14. He suffered unspeakable things for sin: it was a divine wrath which lay upon his Soul for it: that wrath of which the Prophet saith, Nah. 1. 5, 6. *The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, Who can stand before his indignation? And who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.* It was the unmixed, and unallayed wrath, poured out in the fulness of it, even to the last drop; and shall we be so easily drawn to the Commission of those sins which put Christ under such sufferings? O do but read such Scriptures as these, *Luke* 22.44. *Mat.* 26.36, 37. *Mark* 14.33. And see what a plight sin put the Lord of glory into: how the wrath of God put him into a sore amazement, a bloody sweat, and made his Soul heavy even unto Death.

3. *Med.* Consider what a grief and wound the sins of believers are to the Spirit of God, *Eph.* 4. 30. *Ezek.* 16. 43. *Isa* 63. 10. O how it vexes, frets and grieves the holy Spirit of God! Nothing is more contrary to his nature. *O do not that abominable thing which I hate,* saith the Lord, *Jer.* 44. 4. Nothing obstructs and crosses the sanctifying design of the Spirit as Sin doth, defacing and spoiling the most rare, and admirable workmanship that ever God wrought in this World, violating all the engagements laid upon us by the love of the Father, by the death of his Son, by the operations of his Spirit, in all his illuminations, convictions, compunctions, renovation, preservation, obsignation, and manifold consolations. Lay this Meditation upon thy heart Believer, and say, *Sicne reprendis?* Dost thou thus requite the Lord, O my ungrateful heart, for all his goodness? Is this the fruit of his temporal, spiritual, common, and peculiar Mercies, which are without number?

4. *Med.* Consider with your selves, that no real good, either of profit or pleasure can result from sin, you can have no pleasure in it, whatever others may have, it being against your new nature; and as for that brutish pleasure, and evanid joy which others have in sin, it can be but for a moment, for either they must repent or not repent: if they do repent, the pleasure of sin will be turned into the gall of *Aspes* here, if they do not repent, it will terminate in everlasting howlings hereafter: that's a smart question, Rom. 6. 21. *What fruit had ye in those things whereof ye are now ashamed, for the end of those things is death.* You that are believers must never expect any pleasure in sin, for you can neither quit it without regret, nor reflect upon it without shame and confusion: Expect no better consequents of sin, than the woundings of Conscience, and dismal cloudings of the face of God; that is all the profit of Sin. O let these things sink into your heart.

5. *Med.* Consider what the damned suffer for those sins which the Devil now temptech you to commit: it hath deprived them of all good, all outward good, *Luke* 16.25. all spiritual good *Mat.* 25.41. and of all hope of enjoying any good for ever. And as it hath deprived them of all good, so it hath remedilesly plunged them into all positive misery. Misery from without, the wrath of God being come upon them to the uttermost, and misery from within, for *their worm dieth not,* Mark 9. 44. The memory of things past, the sense of things present, and the fearful expectations of things to come, are the niblings and bitings of the worm of Conscience, at every bite whereof damned Souls give a dreadful shriek, crying out, O the worm! the worm! Would any man that is not forsaken by reason, run the hazard of those eternal miseries for the brutish Pleasures of a moment?

6. *Med.* Bethink your selves what inexcusable hypocrisy it will be in you to indulge your selves in the private satisfaction of your lusts, under a contrary profession of Religion: you are a people that profess holiness, and professedly own your selves to be under the Government and Dominion of Christ: And must the worthy Name of Christ be only used to cloak and cover your lusts and corruptions, which are so hateful to him? God forbid. You daily pray against sin, you confess it to God, you bewail it, you pour out supplications for pardoning and preventing Grace, Are you in jest or earnest in these solemn duties of Religion? Certainly, if all those duties produce no mortification, you do but flatter God with your lips, and put a dreadful cheat upon your own Souls. Nay, Do you not frequently censure, and condemn those things in others, and dare you allow them in your selves; What horrid hypocrisy is this? Christians are dead to Sin, *Rom.* 6. 2. Dead to it by profession, dead to it by obligation, dead to it by relation to Christ who died for it; And how shall they that are so many ways dead to sin live any longer therein? O think not that God hates sin the less in you because you are his People: nay, the very consideration aggravates it the more, *Amos* 3. 2.

Ipsa delicta & peccata fidelium odio sunt, & displicent Deo, sed odio simplici, non redundanti in personam, Davenant. *in* Col. 1. 10.

Med. 7. Consider with your selves what hard things some Christians have chosen to endure and suffer, rather than they would defile themselves with guilt; and shall every small temptation insnare and take your Souls? Read over the *Eleventh Chapter to the Hebrews,* and see what the Saints have endured to escape sin: no torments were so terrible to them, as the displeasure of God, and woundings of conscience; and did God oblige them more by his grace and favour than he hath obliged you? O Christians, how can you that have found such

such Mercies, Mercies as free, Pardons as full as ever any Souls found, show less Care, less Fear, less tenderness of grieving God than others have done; Certainly, if you did see Sin with the same Eyes they saw it, you would hate it as deeply, watch against it as carefully, and resist it as vigorously as any of the Saints have done before you.

8. *Meditation.* Consider with your selves *Med.* 8. what sweet Pleasure, rational and solid Comfort is to be found in the Mortification of Sin: 'Tis not the fulfilling of your Lusts can give you the thousandth part of that Comfort and Contentment that the resistance of them, and victory over them will give you. Who can express the Comfort that is to be found in the chearing testimony of an acquitting and absolving Conscience? 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. Remember what satisfaction and peace it was to *Hezekiah* upon his supposed Death-bed, when he turned to the Wall and said *Remember now O Lord, I beseech thee how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart; and have done that which is good in thy sight*, Isa. 38. 3.

4th Use for Examination.

Use. 4. In the next place this point naturally puts us upon the Examination and Trial of our own Hearts, whether we who so confidently claim a special Interest in Christ have crucify'd the Flesh with its Affections and Lusts; and because two sorts of Persons will be concerned in this Trial, *viz.* the weaker and the stronger Christians; I shall therefore lay down two sorts of Evidences of Mortification, one respecting the Sincerity, and Truth, the other respecting the Strength, and Progress of that Work in confirmed and grown Christians, and both excluding false Pretenders.

First, There are some things that are Evidential of the truth and sincerity of Mortification, even in the weakest Christians: as,

First, True tenderness of Conscience in all known Sins, one as well as another, is a good sign Sin hath lost its Dominion in the Soul? O 'tis a special Mercy to have a Heart that shall smite and reprove us for those things that others make nothing of: To check and admonish us for our secret Sins which can never turn to our Reproach among Men; this is a good Sign that we hate Sin as Sin: However, through the weakness of the Flesh we may be ensnared by it, *Rom.* 7. 15. *What I hate, that I do.*

Secondly, The sincere and earnest Desires of our Souls to God in Prayer for Heart-purging and Sin-mortifying Grace, is a good sign our Souls have no love for Sin. Canst thou say, poor Believer, in the truth of thy Heart; that if God would give thee thy choice, it would please thee better to have Sin cast out, than to have the World cast in; that thy Heart is not so earnest with God for daily Bread, as it is for Heart-purging Grace? This is a comfortable Evidence that Sin is nailed to the Cross of Christ.

Thirdly, Do you make Conscience of guarding against the Occasions of Sin? Do you keep a daily watch over your Hearts and Senses, according to 1 *John* 5. 18. *Job* 31. 1. This speaks a true design and purpose of Mortification also.

Fourthly, Do you rejoice and bless God from your Hearts when the Providence of God orders any means for the prevention of Sin? Thus did *David*, 1 Sam. 25. 33. *And* David *said to* Abigail, *Blessed be the Lord God of* Israel *which sent thee this Day to meet me, and blessed be thy Advice, and blessed be thou which hast kept me this day from coming to shed Blood, and from avenging my self with my own Hand.*

Fifthly, In a word, though the Thoughts of Death may be terrible in themselves, yet if the expectation and hope of your Deliverance from Sin thereby, do sweeten the Thoughts of it to your Souls, it will turn unto you for a Testimony, that you are not the Servants and Friends of Sin. And so much briefly of the first sort of Evidences.

Secondly, There are other signs of a more deep and thorough Mortification of Sin in more grown and confirmed Believers, and such are these.

First, The more submissive and quiet any Man is under the Will of God in smart and afflicting Providences, the more that Man's Heart is mortified unto Sin, *Psal.* 119. 67, 71. *Col.* 1. 11.

Secondly, The more able any one is to bear the Reproaches and Rebukes of his Sin, the more Mortification there is in that Man, *Psal.* 141. 5.

Thirdly, The more easily any Man can resign and give up his dearest Earthly Comforts at the call and command of God, the more progress that Man hath made in the Work of Mortification, *Heb.* 11. 17. 2 *Sam.* 15. 25.

Fourthly, The more Power any Man hath to resist Sin in the first Motions of it, and stifle it in the Birth; the greater degree of Mortification that Man hath attained, *Rom.* 7. 23. 24.

Fifthly, If great Changes upon our outward Condition make no Change for the worse upon our Spirits, but we can bear prosperous and adverse Providences with an equal Mind; then Mortification is advanced far in our Souls, *Phil.* 4. 11. 12.

Sixthly, The more fixed and steady our Hearts are with God in Duty, and the less they are infested with wandring Thoughts and earthly Interpositions; the more Mortification there is in that Soul. And so much briefly of the Evidences of Mortification.

5th Use for Consolation.

Use. 5. It only remains, that I shut up all with a few Words of Consolation unto all that are under the mortifying Influence of the Spirit. Much might be said for the Comfort of such. In brief.

First, Mortified Sin shall never be your Ruin: 'tis only *reigning* Sin that is *ruining* Sin, *Rom.* 8. 13. Mortified Sins, and pardoned Sins shall never lie down with us in the dust.

Secondly, If Sin be *dying*, your Souls are *living*; for dying unto Sin, and living unto God, are inseparably connected, *Rom.* 6. 11.

Thirdly, If Sin be dying in you, it is certain that Christ died for you, and you cannot desire a better Evidence of it, *Rom.* 6. 5. 6.

Fourthly, If Sin be dying under the Mortifying Influences of the Spirit, and it be your daily labour to resist and overcome it, you are then in the direct Way to Heaven, and eternal Salvation; which few, very few in the World shall find, *Luke* 13. 24.

Fifthly, To shut up all, if you, through the Spirit, be daily mortifying the Deeds of the Body, then the Death of Christ is effectually applied by the Spirit unto your Souls, and your Interest in him is unquestionable: For they that are Christs have crucified the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts, and they that have so crucified the Flesh with its Affections and Lusts, are Christs.

Blessed be God for a Crucified Christ.

SERMON XXIX.

1 JOHN II. 6.

He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

Serm. 29. Text. Of the Imitation of Christ in Holiness of his Life, and the necessity of it in all Believers.

THE express and principal Design of the Apostle in this Chapter, is to propound Marks and Signs both *Negative* and *Positive*, for the Trial and Examination of Men's Claims to Christ; amongst which (not to spend time about the Coherence) my Text is a principal one; a trial of Men's Interest in Christ by their imitation of Christ. It is supposed by some Expositors, that the Apostle, in laying down this Mark, had a special Design to overthrow the wicked Doctrine of the *Carpocratians*, who taught (as *Epiphanius* relates it) that Men might have as much Communion with God in Sin, as in Duty. In full opposition to which, the Apostle lays down this Proposition, wherein he asserts the necessity of a Christ-like Conversation, in all that claim Union with him, or Interest in him. The Words resolve themselves into two parts, *viz.*

1. A Claim to Christ supposed.
2. The only way to have our Claim warranted.

First, We have here a Claim to Christ supposed; *if any Man say he abideth in him:* Abiding in Christ is an Expression denoting proper and real Interest in Christ, and Communion with him; for it is put in opposition to those temporary, light, and transient Effects of the Gospel, which are called a Morning Dew, or an early Cloud; such a receiving of Christ as that, *Matth.* 13. 21. which is but a present flash, a sudden vanishing pang; abiding in Christ notes a solid, durable, and effectual Work of the Spirit, throughly and everlastingly joining the Soul to Christ. Now, if any Man whosoever he be (for this indefinite is equivalent to an universal term) let him never think his Claim to be good and valid, except he take this course to adjust it.

(2.) *Secondly*, The only way to have this Claim warranted, and that must be by *so walking even as he walked*; which Words carry in them the necessity of our imitation of Christ. But it is not to be understood indifferently and universally of all the Works or Actions of Christ, some of which were extraordinary and miraculous; some purely mediatory and not imitable by us: In these Paths no Christian can follow Christ; nor may so much as attempt to walk as he walked. But the Words point at the ordinary and imitable Ways and Works of Christ; therein it must be the Care of all to follow him, that profess and claim Interest in him; they must so walk as he walked, this [so] is a very bearing Word in this Place; the Emphasis of the Text seems to lie in it; however, certain it is that this *so walking* doth not imply an equality with Christ in Holiness and Obedience; for as he was filled with the Spirit without Measure, and anointed with that Oil of Gladness above his Fellows, so the Purity, Holiness, and Obedience of his Life is never to be matched and equalized by any of the Saints. But this *so walking* only notes a sincere Intention, Design, and Endeavour to imitate and follow him in all the Paths of Holiness and Obedience according to the different Measures of Grace receiv'd. The Life of Christ is the Believer's Copy, and though the Believer cannot draw one Line or Letter exact as his Copy is, yet his Eye is still upon it, he is looking unto Jesus, *Heb.* 12. 2. and labouring to draw all the Lines of his Life, as agreeably as he is able unto Christ his Pattern.

Hence the Observation is,

Doct. *That every Man is bound to the imitation of Christ, under penalty of forfeiting his Claim to Christ.*

Doct.

The Saints Imitation of Christ is solemnly enjoined by many great and express Commands of the Gospel; so you find it, 1 Pet. 1. 15. *But as he that hath called you is Holy, so be ye Holy in all manner of Conversation:* So Eph. 5. 1, 2. *Be ye therefore followers of God as dear Children, and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us.* Christians (saith *Bernard*) receive this Name from Christ; and it is very meet that as they inherit his Name, so they should also imitate his Holiness. Now to state the Method of this Discourse, it will be needful to discuss and open three things in the Doctrinal part.

Christiani a Christo nomen acceperunt, & operæ pretium est, ut sint quæ sunt hæredes nominis, ita sint imitatores sanctitatis. *Bern. serm. 2. p. 436.*

1. What the Saints Imitation of Christ supposes and comprizes.
2. In what particulars they are especially bound to imitate Christ.
3. Why no Claim to Christ is valid without this imitation of him.

And then apply the whole in divers Uses.

(1.) *First*, What the Saints Imitation of Christ supposeth and compriseth. Now there are divers great and weighty Truths supposed and implied in this Imitation of Christ; or walking as he walked, *viz.*

First, It supposes, that no Christian is or may pretend to be a Rule to himself, to act according to the Dictates of his own Will and Pleasure; for as no Man hath Wisdom enough to direct and govern himself; so if his own Will were made the Rule of his own Actions, it would be the highest Invasion of the Divine Prerogative that could be imagined: *I know, O Lord,* (saith *Jeremy*) *that the Way of Man is not in himself, it is not in him that walketh to direct his own Steps,* Jer. 10. 23. We may as well pretend to be our own Makers as our own Guides. It is a pretty Observation of *Aquinas*, that if the Workman's Hand were the Rule of his Work, it were impossible he should ever err in Working: And if the Will of Man were the only Law and Guide of his Way, we might then say no Man would sin in his Walking. The Apostle indeed saith of the Heathens, Rom. 2. 14. *that they are a Law to themselves*; but it is not his meaning that their Will is their Law, but the Law of God engraven upon their Hearts; the Light and Dictates of their own Consciences, did oblige and bind them as a Law.

Second

Secondly, This Imitation of Christ implies, that as no Man is or may pretend to be his own Guide, so no meer Man, how wise or holy soever he be, may pretend to be a Rule to other Men; but Christ is the Rule of every Man's Way and Walking. 'Tis true indeed, the Apostle saith, *We should be followers of them, who through Faith and Patience inherit the Promises*, Heb. 6. 12. And again, James 5. 10. *Take my Brethren the Prophets who have spoken in the Name of the Lord for an Example of suffering Affliction and of Patience*; but you must always remember that there is a two-fold Rule.

1. *Regula regulans*, the Rule ruling.
2. *Regula regulata*, the Rule ruled.

The wisest and holiest among Men may pretend no higher than *a ruled Rule*. The great Apostle, though filled with as great a Measure of the Spirit of Wisdom and Holiness as ever was possessed by any meer Man; yet goes no higher than this, 1 Cor. 11. 1. *Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ*. The best of Men are but Men at best; they have their Errors and Defects which they freely acknowledge; and where they differ from Christ, 'tis our Duty to differ from them; we may not pin our Faith upon any Man's Sleeve, for we know not where he will carry it. It was the Commendation which *Paul* gave of the *Thessalonians*, 1 Thes. 1. 6. *And ye became Followers of us, and of the Lord*. The Noble *Bereans* were also commended for searching the Scriptures, and examining the *Apostles* Doctrine by it; and it was a good Reply of the *Father*, to a clamorous Disputant, crying, hear me, hear me, I will neither hear thee, nor do thou hear me; but let us both hear Christ.

Nec ego te, nec tu me, sed ambo audiemus Christum. Aug.

Thirdly, The Imitation of Christ implies the necessity of Sanctification in all his Followers; forasmuch as it is impossible there should be a practical Conformity in point of Obedience, where there is not a Conformity in Spirit and Principle; all external Conformity to Christ's Practice, depends upon an internal Conformity to Christ in the Principle and Spirit of Holiness. 'Tis very plain from Ezek. 11. 19. 20. that a new Heart must be given us, and a new Spirit put into us, before we can walk in God's Statutes; we must first live in the Spirit, before we can walk in the Spirit, *Gal.* 5. 25.

Fourthly, The Imitation of Christ plainly holds forth this, that Christian Religion is a very precise and strict Religion; no way countenancing Licentiousness, or indulging Men in their Lusts, it allows no Man to walk loosely and inordinately; but rejects every Man's Claim to Christ, who studies and labours not to tread exactly in the Footsteps of his holy and heavenly Example. Profaneness and Licentiousness therefore can find no shelter or protection under the Wing of the Gospel; this is the universal Rule, laid upon all the Professors of the Christian Religion: *Let every one that nameth the Name of Christ, depart from Iniquity*, 2 Tim. 2. 19. (*i. e.*) let him either put on the Life of Christ, or put off the Name of Christ; let him shew the Hand of a Christian in Works of Holiness and Obedience, or else the Tongue and Language of a Christian must gain no Belief or Credit.

Fifthly, The Imitation of Christ necessarily implies the defectiveness and imperfection of the best men in this Life; for if the Life of Christ be our Pattern, the best and holiest of Men must confess they come short in every thing of the Rule of their Duty. Our Pattern is still above us; the best of Men are ashamed when they compare their Lives with the Life of Christ. 'Tis true, a vain Heart may swell with Pride, when a Man compares himself with other Men; thus measuring our selves by our selves, and comparing our selves among our selves, we shew our Folly, and nourish our Pride; but if any Man will compare his own Life with Christ's, he will find abundant cause at every time, in every thing to be humbled. *Paul* was a great proficient in Holiness and Obedience; he had been long striving to come up to the top of Holiness; yet when he looks up and sees the Life of Christ and Rule of Duty so far above him, he reckons himself still but at the Foot of the Hill, *Phil.* 3. 12. *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend; that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus*, *q. d.* Alas I am not come up to my Duty; I am a great way behind, but I am following after, if at last I may attain it; Perfection is in my Expectation and Hope at last, not in my Attainment here.

Primum & optimum in unoquoque genere est regula & mensura cæterorum.

Sixthly, The Imitation of Christ, as our general Rule and Pattern, necessarily implies the transcending Holiness of the Lord Jesus. His Holiness is greater than the Holiness of all Creatures; for only that which is first and best in every kind, is the Rule and Measure of all the rest. 'Tis the heighth of Saints Ambition to be made conformable to Christ, *Phil.* 3. 10. Christ hath a double perfection, a perfection of *Being*, and a perfection of *Working*: His Life was a perfect Rule, no blot or error could be found therein; for he was *holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from Sinners*: And such an High-Priest became us, as the Apostle speaks, *Heb.* 7. 26. The Conformity of Professors to Christ's Example, is the test and measure of all their Graces: The nearer any Man comes to this Pattern, the nearer he approaches towards Perfection.

Seventhly, The Christians Imitation of Christ, under penalty of losing his Claim to Christ, necessarily implies Sanctification and Obedience to be the Evidences of our Justification and Interest in Christ; Assurance is unattainable without Obedience, we can never be comfortable Christians, except we be strict and regular Christians, Gal. 6. 16. *As many as walk according to this Rule, Peace be on them, and Mercy; and upon the Israel of God.* A loose and careless Conversation can never be productive of true Peace and Consolation, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. *This is our rejoicing, the Testimony of our Conscience; that in simplicity and godly Sincerity; not with fleshly Wisdom, but by the Grace of God; we have had our Conversation in the World.* Let Men talk what they will of the immediate Sealings, and Comforts of the Spirit, without any regard to Holiness, or respect to Obedience: Sure I am, whatever Delusion they meet with in that way; true Peace and Consolation is only to be expected and found here: *The Fruit of Righteousness shall be Peace, and the Effect of Righteousness Quietness, and Assurance for ever*: We have it not for our Holiness, but we always have it in the Way of Holiness. And so much of the first Particular, namely, what the Imitation of Christ implies and comprizes in it.

Secondly, In the next place, we are to enquire, in what Things all that profess Christ are obliged to the Imitation of him; or what those excellent Graces in the Life of Christ were, which are propounded as Patterns to the Saints.

Quid vobis cum virtutibus qui virtutem Christi ignoratis? Ubinam, quæso, vera prudentia, nisi in Christi doctrina? Ubi vera temperantia, nisi in Christi vita? Ubi vera fortitudo, nisi in Christi passione? *Bernard.*

The Life of Christ was a Living Law; all the Graces and Vertues of the Spirit were represented in their Glory, and brightest Lustre, in his Conversation upon Earth: Never Man spake as he spake; never any lived as he lived: *We beheld his Glory* (saith the Evangelist) *as the Glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth*, Joh. 1. 14. But to descend to the particular imitable Excellencies in the Life of Christ, which are high Patterns, and excellent Rules, for the Conversations of his People, we shall, from among many others, single out the ten following Particulars, which we are obliged to imitate.

Pattern 1. And first of all, the Purity and Holiness of the Life of Christ, is proposed as a Glorious Pattern for the Saints Imitation, 1 Pet. 1. 15. *As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of Conversation:* ἐν πάσῃ τῇ ἀναστροφῇ, in every Creek and turning of your Lives. There is a two-fold Holiness in Christ; the Holiness of his *Nature*, and the Holiness of his *Practice*; his holy Being, and his holy Working; this obligeth all that profess Interest in him, to a two-fold Holiness, *viz.* Holiness *in actu primo*, in the Pinciples of it in their Hearts; and Holiness *in actu secundo*, in the Practice and Exercise of it in their Conversations: 'Tis very true, we cannot in all respects imitate the Holiness of Christ; for he is *essentially* Holy; proceeding by Nature, as a pure Beam of Holiness from the Father; and when he was Incarnate he came into the World immaculate, and pure from the least stain of Pollution; therefore it was said, *Luke* 1. 25. *That Holy Thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God:* In this we can never be like Christ in the Way of our Production; for *who can bring a clean Thing out of that which is unclean? not one.* The Lord Jesus was also *efficiently* holy, (*i. e.*) he makes others holy; therefore his Sufferings and Blood are called a Fountain opened *for Sin, and for uncleanness*, (*i. e.*) to cleanse other Men's Souls, *Zech.* 13. 1. In this Christ also is inimitable: No Man can make himself or others holy. That's a great Truth though it will hardly go down with proud Nature, *minus est te fecisse hominem, quam sanctum*, we may sooner make our selves to be Men than to be Saints. Beside, Christ is infinitely holy as he is *God*, and there are no stints or measures set to his Holiness as *Mediator*, Joh. 3. 34. *for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.* But notwithstanding these excepted Respects, the Holiness of Christ is propounded as a Pattern for our Imitation six Ways.

First, He was *truly* and *sincerely* holy, without fiction or simulation; and this appeared in the greatest trial of the Truth of Holiness that ever was made in this World, John 14. 30. *The Prince of this World cometh, and hath nothing in me:* When he was agitated and shaken with the greatest temptations, no dregs appeared; he was like pure Fountain-water in a Crystal Glass. The Hypocrite makes shew of more Holiness than he hath; but there was more Holiness in Christ, than ever appeared to the view of Men. We may say of the way of Christ, what the *Philosopher* saith of the *Milky Way* in the Heavens; that those faint Streams of Light which we see there, are nothing else but the reflection of innumerable Stars which shine there, though they be invisible to us: There was much inward Beauty in him, and so there ought to be in all his Followers; our Holiness, like Christs, must be sincere and real, *Eph.* 4. 24. shining with inward Beauty towards God, rather than towards Men.

Secondly, Christ was *uniformly* holy, at one time as well as another; in one place and company as well as another; he was still like himself, an Holy Christ; one and the same tenour of Holiness ran throughout his whole Life, from first to last; so must it be with all his People, Holy in all manner of Conversation. Christians, look to your Copy, and be sure to imitate Christ in this; write fair after your Copy; let there not be here a Word and there a Blot; one part of your Life heavenly and pure, and another earthly and dreggy; or (as one expresses it) now an Heavenly Rapture, and by and by a Fleshly Frolick.

Thirdly, Christ was *exemplarily* holy; a Pattern of Holiness to all that come nigh him, and conversed with him. O imitate Christ in this. It was the commendation of the *Thessalonians*, that they were *Ensamples to all that believed in* Macedonia *and* Achaia, *and that in every Place their Faith to God-ward was spread abroad*, 1 Thes. 1. 7, 8. Let no Man go out of your Company without Conviction or Edification; so exemplary were the primitive Christians, *Phil.* 3. 17.

Fourthly, Christ was *strictly* and *precisely* Holy: *Which of you convinceth me of Sin?* The most envious and observing Eyes of his greatest Enemies could not pick a Hole, or find a Flaw in any of his Words or Actions: 'Tis our Duty to imitate Christ in this, Phil. 2. 15. *That ye may be blameless and harmless, the Sons of God without Rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse Nation, among whom ye shine* (or as the word may be rendred imperatively, *among whom shine ye) as Lights in the World.* Thus it becomes the Followers of Christ to walk circumspectly or precisely, *for so is the Will of God, that with Well-doing ye may put to silence the Ignorance of foolish men*, 1 Pet. 2. 15.

Fifthly, Christ was preservingly Holy, Holy to the last Breath; as he began, so he finished his whole Life in a constant course of Holiness; in this also he is our great Pattern; it becomes not any of his People to begin in the Spirit, and end in the Flesh; but on the contrary, their last Works should be more than their first; *let him that is holy be holy still*, Rev. 22. 11.

Sixthly, In a word, the Delight of Christ was only in holy Things and holy Persons; they were his chosen Companions; even so it becometh his People to have all their Delights in the Saints, and in the Excellent of the Earth, *Psal.* 16. 3. Thus Christians, be ye followers of Christ in his Holiness. God hath decreed this Conformity to Christ in all that shall be saved, *Rom.* 8. 29. he banisheth all unholy Ones from his gracious presence for ever, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9. *Heb.* 12. 14. The Design of Christ in dying for you, was to make you pure and holy, *Eph.* 5. 25, 26. O then study Holiness; eye your Pattern; and, as dear Children, be ye Followers of your most holy Lord Jesus Christ.

Pattern 2. The *Obedience* of Christ to his Father's Will is a Pattern for the Imitation of all Christians; 'tis said of Christ, *Heb.* 5. 8. *That he learned Obedience by the Things which he suffered:* A Text which labours under some difficulties: Christ learned

Galaxia est maxima frequentia minimarum stellarum, quæ præ exiguitate ad nostrum aspectum distincte pervenire nequeunt, ut cæteræ stellæ, atque ita inter se lumen commiscent, & confundunt, *Conimb. de Meteor. cap.* 2.

Obedience, and yet was not ignorant before of what he learned afterward: He was perfect in Knowledge; and yet the Apostle speaks of him as a Proficient in the School of Wisdom. But we must consider there are two Ways of Learning, *viz.* by.

1. The Comprehension of the Mind.
2. By the Experience of the Sense.

Christ, as God, was perfect in Knowledge; nothing could be added to him: But when he became Man, then he came to understand, or learn by Sufferings, as the Apostle here speaks; which though it added nothing to his Knowledge, yet it was a new Method and Way of knowing. Now the Obedience of Christ is our Pattern, whereunto we are obliged (as ever we will warrant our claim of Interest in him) to conform our selves in the following Properties of it.

First, Christ's Obedience was free and voluntary, not forced or compulsory; it was so from the very first Undertakement of the Work of our Redemption, Prov. 8. 30, 31. *Then was I by him as one brought up with him, and I was daily his Delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable Part of his Earth; and my Delights were with the Sons of Men.* And when the fulness of time was come for executing that blessed Design, which had been in prospect from all Eternity, how cheerfully did the Will of Christ echo to his Father's call, *Psal.* 40. 7. *Then said I, lo I come, in the Volume of the Book it is written of me, I delight to do thy Will, O my God, yea, thy Law is within my Heart.* Nor was this Flourish before he came into the Field, and saw the Enemy; for he laid down his Life with the greatest chearfulness and spontaneity that could be, John 10. 17, 18. *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my Life, that I might take it again; no Man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of my self:* And indeed the voluntariness of Christ, in his Obedience unto Death, gave his Death the Nature and Formality of a Sacrifice; for so all Sacrifices ought to be offered, *Lev.* 1. 3. and so Christ's Sacrifice was offered unto God, *Eph.* 5. 2. It was as grateful a work to Christ to die for us, as it was to *Moses* his Mother to take him to Nurse from the hand of *Pharoah's* Daughter; O Christians tread in the steps of Christ's Example; do nothing grudgingly for God, let not his Commands be grievous, 1 *John* 5. 3. If you do any thing for God willingly, you have a Reward; if otherwise, a dispensation only is committed to you, 1 *Cor.* 9. 7. Obedience in Christ was an abasement to him, but in you very great Honour and Advancement, you have reason therefore to obey with chearfulness.

Secondly, The Obedience of Christ was universal and compleat, he was obedient to all the Will of God, making no demur to the hardest Service imposed by the Will of God upon him, *Phil.* 2. 8. *He became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross:* And though its true the humanity of Christ recoiled and staggered, when that bitter Cup of the Wrath of God was given him to drink; yet how soon was that innocent Aversion overcome in him, by a perfect Submission? *Nevertheless not my Will, but thine be done, Matth.* 26. 39. Christians here is your Pattern: Happy art thou, Reader, if thou canst say, when God calls thee to suffering and self-denying work, I am filled with the Will of God. Such was *Paul's* obedience, *Acts* 21. 13. *I am ready not only to be bound, but to die at Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus.*

Thirdly, The obedience of Christ was sincere and pure, without any base or by end, purely aiming at the Glory of God, *Joh.* 17. 4. *I have glorified thee on Earth, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do.* He sought not Honour of Men. This was the great desire of his Soul, *Joh.* 12. 28. *Father glorifie thy Name:* And truly the choicest part of your obedience consists in the purity of your ends, and in this Christ is propounded as your Pattern, *Phil.* 2. 3, 4. 5.

Fourthly, The Streams of Christ's Obedience flowed from the Spring and Fountain of ardent love to God, *Joh.* 14. 31. *But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do:* Thus let all your obedience to God turn upon the hinge of Love; for *Love is the fulfilling of the Law*, Rom. 13. 10. Not as if no other Duty but Love were required in the Law; but because no act of Obedience is acceptable to God, but that which is performed in Love.

Fifthly, In a word, The obedience of Christ was constant, he was obedient unto the Death, he was not weary of his work to the last. Such a patient continuance in well-doing is one part of your Conformity to Christ, *Rom.* 2. 7. 'tis laid upon you by his own express command, and a command back'd with the most incouraging promise, *Rev.* 2. 10. *Be thou faithful unto the Death, and I will give thee the Crown of Life.*

Pattern 3. The *Self-denial* of Christ is the Pattern of Believers, and their Conformity unto it is their indispensable Duty, *Phil.* 2. 4, 5, 6. 2 *Cor.* 8. 9. *For ye know the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye, through his Poverty, might be rich.* Jesus Christ, for the Glory of God, and the love he bare to the Elect, denied himself all the Delights and Pleasures of this World, *Matth.* 20. 28. *The Son of Man came not to be ministred unto, but to minister, and to give his Life a Ransom for many*; he was all his Life long in the World *a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with Grief*, Isa. 53. 3. more unprovided of comfortable Accommodations, than the Birds of the Air, or Beasts of the Earth, *Luke* 9. 58. *The Foxes have holes, and the Birds of the Air have Nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his Head.* Yet this was the least part of Christ's self-denial: What did he not deny when he left the Bosom of his Father, with the ineffable Delights and Pleasures he there enjoyed from Eternity, and instead thereof to drink the Cup, the bitter Cup of his Father's Wrath for our Sakes? O Christians, look to your Pattern; and imitate your self-denying Saviour. There is a three-fold Self you are to deny for Christ.

Volpibus in saitu rupes excisa latebras. Præbet & aereis avibus dat sylva quietem: Ast hominis nato nullis succedere tectis: Est licitum. *Heinsius.*

First, Deny your *Natural Self* for him, *Luke* 14. 26. Hate your own Life in competition with his Glory, as well as your Natural Lusts, *Titus* 2. 12.

Secondly, Deny your *Civil Self* for Christ; whether they be Gifts of the Mind, *Phil.* 3. 8. or your dearest Relations in the World, *Luke* 14. 26.

Thirdly, Deny your *Moral and Religious Self* for Christ, your own Righteousness, *Phil.* 3. 10. Deny sinful Self *absolutely*, Col. 3. 4, 5. Deny Natural Self *conditionally* (i. e.) be ready to forsake its Interests at the call of God. Deny your Religious Self, even your own Graces *comparatively*, not in the Notion of *Duties* but in the notion of *Righteousness*: And to encourage you in this difficult Work, consider,

First, What great things Christ denied for you, and what small matters you have to deny for him.

Secondly, How readily he denied all for your sakes, making no Objections against the difficultest Commands.

Thirdly, How uncapable you are apt to put any obligation upon Christ to deny himself in the least for you, and what strong Obligations Christ hath put you under to deny your selves in your greatest Interests upon Earth for him.

Fourthly, Remember, that your self-denial is a Condition consented to, and subscribed by your selves, if ever you received Christ aright.

Fifthly, In a word, consider how much your self-denial for Christ makes for your advantage in both Worlds, *Luke* 18. 29. O therefore look not every Man upon his own things, but upon the things that are of Christ, let not that be justly charged upon you, which was charged upon them, *Phil.* 2. 21. *All seek their own, not the things which are Christs.*

Pattern 4. The *activity* and *diligence* of Christ in finishing the work of God, which was committed to him, was a Pattern for all Believers to imitate. 'Tis said of him, *Acts* 10. 38. *He went about doing Good.* O what a great and glorious work did Christ finish in a little time! A work to be celebrated to all Eternity by the Praises of the Redeemed. Six things were very remarkable in the diligence of Christ about his Father's Work.

First, That his Heart was intently set upon it, *Psal.* 4. 8. *Thy Law is in the midst of my Heart*, or Bowels.

Secondly, That he never fainted under the many great discouragements he frequently met withal in that work, *Isa.* 42. 4. *He shall not fail, nor be discouraged.*

Thirdly, That the shortness of his time provoked him to the greatest diligence, *Joh.* 9.4. *I must work the Work of him that sent me, while it is Day, for the Night cometh when no Man can work.*

Fourthly, That he improved all Opportunities, Companies, and Occurrences to further the great Work which was under his Hand, *Joh.* 4. 6, 10.

Fifthly, Nothing more displeased him than when he met with diswasions and discouragements in his Work; upon that account it was that he gave *Peter* so sharp a check, *Matth.* 8. 33. *Get thee behind me Satan.*

Sixthly, Nothing rejoiced his Soul more than the prosperity and success of his Work, *Luke* 10. 20,21. When the Disciples made the report of the success of their Ministry, it is said, *In that hour Jesus rejoiced in Spirit.* And O what a triumphant shout was that upon the Cross, at the Accomplishment of his Work, *Joh.* 19. 30. *It is finished.*

Now, Christians, eye your Pattern, look unto Jesus, trifle not away your Lives in Vanity. Christ was diligent, be not you slothful. And to encourage you in your imitation of Christ in labour, and diligence, consider,

First, How great an Honour God puts upon you in employing you for his Service: Every Vessel of Service is a Vessel of Honour, 2 *Tim.* 2. 21. The *Apostle* was very ambitions of that Honour, *Rom.* 15. 20. It was the Glory of *Eliakim* to be fasten'd as a Nail in a sure place, and to have many People hang upon him, *Isa.* 22. 33.

φιλοτιμούμαι, ambio dictum verbum ab amore honoris. *Zanch.*

Secondly, Your diligence in the Work of God will be your great security in the hour of temptation, for *the Lord is with you, while you are with him*, 2 *Chron.* 15. 2. The *School-men* put the question: How the Saints in Heaven become impeccable? And resolve it thus, that they are therefore freed from Sin, because they are continually employed and swallowed up in the blessed Visions of God.

Thirdly, Diligence in the Work of God is an excellent help to the improvement of Grace. For though gracious Habits are not *acquired*, yet they are greatly *improved* by frequent Acts. *To him that hath shall be given*, Matth. 25. 29. It is a good Note of *Luther*, *Fides pingueſcit operibus*, Faith is made fat by Obedience.

Fourthly, Diligence in the Work of God is the direct way to the assurance of the Love of God, 2 *Pet.* 15. 10. This Path leads you into Heaven upon Earth.

Fifthly, Diligence in Obedience is a great security against back-sliding: Small Remissions in Duty, and little Neglects, increase by degrees unto great Apostasies, you may see how that Disease is bred, by the method prescribed for its cure, *Rev.* 2. 5. *Do thy first Works.*

Sixthly, In a word, Laborious Diligence in the day of Life will be your singular Comfort when the Night of Death overtakes you, 2 *Pet.* 1. 11. 2 *Kings* 20. 3.

Pattern 5. *Delight in God*, and in his Service, was eminently conspicuous in the Life of Christ, and is a rare Pattern for Believers Imitation, *Joh.* 4. 32.34. *But he said unto them I have Meat to eat that ye know not of, my Meat is to do the Will of him that sent me, and to finish his Work.* The Delights of Christ were all in Heaven. The Son of Man was in Heaven in respect of Delight in God, while he conversed here among Men. And if you be Christ's, Heavenly Things will be the Delight of your Souls also. Now spiritual Delight is nothing else but *the complacency and well-pleasedness of a renewed Heart in conversing with God, and the Things of God; resulting from the agreeableness of them to the spiritual Temper of his Mind.* Four things are considerable about spiritual Delights.

First, The *Nature* of it, which consisteth in the complacency, rest, and satisfaction of the Mind in God, and spiritual Things. The Heart of a Christian is centred, it is where it would be; it is gratified in the highest in the actings forth of Faith and Love upon God; as the taste is gratified with a suitable delicious Relish, *Psal.* 63. 5, 6. *Psal.* 119. 14, 24. *Psal.* 17. 18.

Secondly, The *Object* of spiritual Delight, which is God himself, and the things which relate to him. He is the blessed Ocean into which all the streams of spiritual Delight do pour themselves, *Psal.* 73. 25. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and on Earth there is none that I desire in comparison of thee.*

Thirdly, The *Subject* of spiritual Delight, which is a renewed Heart, and that only so far as it is renewed, *Rom.* 7. 22. *I delight in the Law of God after the inward Man.*

Fourthly, The *Principle* and Spring of this Delight, which is the agreeableness of spiritual things to the temper and frame of a renewed Mind. A sensative pleasure arises from the suitableness of the Faculty and Object. So it is here, no delicious Sweetness can be so pleasant to the Taste, or beautiful Colours to the Eye, or melodious Sounds to the Ear, as Spiritual Things to the renewed Souls, because spiritual Senses are delicate, and the Objects more excellent.

But my Business here is not so much to open its Nature, as press you to the practice thereof in conformity

formity to your great Pattern, whose Life was a Life of Delight in God, and whose Work was performed with the greatest Delight for God. *I delight to do thy Will, O my God.* O Christians strive to imitate your Pattern in this; and to encourage you, I will briefly hint a few things.

First, Scarce any thing can be more evidential of Sincerity than a Heart delighting in God, and the Will of God. Hypocrites go as far as others in the material part of Duties, but here they are defective, they have no delight in God and things spiritual; but do whatsoever they do in Religion from the compulsions of Conscience, or Accommodations of Self-ends.

Secondly, An Heart delighting in God will be a choice help and means to Perseverance. The reason why many so easily part with Religion is, because their Souls never tasted the sweetness of it; they never delighted in it, but the Christian who delights in the Law of God, will be meditating Day and Night, and shall be like a Tree planted by a River of Water, whose Leaf fadeth not, *Psal.* 1. 2, 3.

Thirdly, This will represent Religion very beautifully, and takingly to such as are yet Strangers to it; you will then be able to invite them to Christ by by your Example, the Language whereof will be like that, *Psal.* 34. 8. *O taste and see that God is good.*

Fourthly, This will make all your Services to God very pleasing and acceptable through Christ, you will now begin to do the Will of God on Earth, as it is done in Heaven, your Duties are so far *Angelical* as they are performed in the strength of Delight in God.

But may not a sincere Christian act in duty without delight? Yea, may he not feel some kind of weariness in Duties.

Yes, doubtless he may, but then we must distinguish betwixt the *Temper* and *Distemper* of a renewed Heart, the best Hearts are not always in their right Frame.

Pattern 6. The *inoffensiveness* of the Life of Christ upon Earth, is an excellent Pattern to all his People; he injured none, offended none, but was holy and harmless, as the Apostle speaks, *Heb.* 7. 26. He denied his own Liberty to avoid occasion of Offence; as in the Case of the Tribute Money, *Matth.* 17. 27. *The Children are free, notwithstanding lest we should offend them go*, &c. So circumspect was Christ, and inoffensive among all Men, that though his Enemies sought Occasion against him, yet could they find none, *Luke* 6. 7. Look unto Jesus, O ye Professors of Religion, imitate him in this gracious Excellency of his Life, according to his Command, *Phil.* 2. 15. *That ye may be harmless and blameless, the Sons of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse Nation.* You are indeed allowed the Exercise of your *Prudence*, but not a jot farther than will consist with your *Innocence*. *Be ye wise as Serpents, and harmless as Doves.* 'Tis the Rule of Christ, that you offend none, 1 *Cor.* 10. 32. 2 *Cor.* 6. 3. And to engage you to the imitation of Christ in this, I will briefly press it with a few Encouragements, which methinks should prevail with any Heart that's truly gracious.

First, For the Honour of Jesus Christ, be you inoffensive, his Name is called upon you, his Honour is concerned in your Deportment; if your Carriage in the World give just matter of Offence, Christ's worthy Name will be blasphemed thereby, *James* 2. 7. Your inoffensive Carriage is the only means to stop the Mouths of Detractors, 1 *Pet.* 2. 15.

Secondly, For the sake of Souls, the precious and immortal Souls of others, be wary that you give no offence: *Wo to the World*, saith Christ, *because of Offences*, Matth. 13. 7. Nothing was more commonly objected against Christ and Religion, by the Heathen in *Cyprian's* time, than the loose and scandalous Lives of Professors: Behold, say they, these are the Men, who boast themselves to be redeemed from the tyranny of Satan, to be dead to the World: nevertheless see how they are overcome by their own Lusts. And much after the same rate *Salvian* brings in the wicked of his time, stumbling at the looseness of Professors, and saying, where is that Catholick Law which they believe? Where are the Examples of Piety and Chastity which they have learned, *&c.* O Christians, draw not the guilt of other Men's eternal Ruin upon your Souls.

Ecce qui jactant se redemptos a tyrannide Satanæ, qui prædicant se mortuos esse mundo, nihilominus vincuntur cupiditatibus suis. *Cyprian.*

Thirdly, In a word, answer the ends of God in your Sanctification, and providential dispose in the World this Way; by the holiness and harmlessness of your Lives, many may be won to Christ, 1 *Pet.* 3. 1. What the Heathens said of Moral Vertue (which they called *verticordia*, turn-heart) that if it were but visible to mortal Eyes, all Men would be enemoured upon it, will be much more true of Religion, when you shall represent the Beauty of it in your Conversations.

Pattern 7. The *Humility* and Lowliness of Christ is propounded by himself, as a Pattern for his People's Imitation. *Matth.* 11. 29. *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly.* He could abase and empty himself of all his Glory, *Phil.* 2. 5, 6, 7. He could stoop to the meanest Office, even to wash the Disciples Feet. We read but of one Triumph in all the Life of Christ upon Earth, when he rode to *Jerusalem*, the People strewing Branches in the Way, and the very Children in the Streets of *Jerusalem*, crying, *Hosanna to the Son of David, Hosanna in the highest*; and yet with what lowliness and humility was it performed by Christ, Matth. 21. 5. *Behold thy King cometh unto thee meek and lowly.* The humility of Christ appeared in every thing he spake, or did. Humility discovered it self in his Language, *Psal.* 22. 6. *I am a Worm, and no Man.* In his Actions, not refusing the meanest Office, *Joh.* 13. 14. In his Condescensions to the worst of Men, upon which ground they called him *a Friend of Publicans and Sinners*, Matth. 11. 19. But especially, and above all, in stooping down from all his Glory to a state of deepest Contempt for the Glory of God, and our Salvation. Christians here is your Pattern, look to your meek and humble Saviour, and tread in his Steps, be you *cloathed with Humility*, 1 *Pet.* 5. 5. Whoever are ambitious to be the World's *great ones*, let it be enough for you to be Christ's *little ones*. Convince the World, that since you knew God, and your selves, your Pride hath been dying from that Day. Shew your Humility in your *Habits*, 1 *Pet.* 3. 3. 1 *Tim.* 2. 9, 10. In your *Company*, not contemning the meanest and poorest that fear the Lord, *Psal.* 15. 4. *Rom.* 12. 16. In your *Language*, that *Dialect* befits your Lips, *Eph.* 3. 8. *less than the least of all Saints*; but especially in the low value, and humble thoughts you have of your selves, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. And to press this I beseech you to consider.

First,

First, From how vile a Root Pride ſprings. Ignorance of God, and of your ſelves, gives Riſe and Being to this Sin: They that know God will be humble, *Iſa.* 6. 5. And they that know themſelves cannot be proud, *Rom.* 7. 9.

Secondly, Conſider the miſchievous Effects it produces; it eſtrangeth the Soul from God, *Pſal.* 138. 6. It provokes God to lay you low, *Job.* 40. 11.12, It goes before deſtruction, and a dreadful fall, *Prov.* 10. 18.

Thirdly, As it is a great *Sin*, ſo it is a bad *Sign*, Hab. 2. 4. *Behold his Heart which is lifted up, is not upright in him.*

Fourthly, How unſuitable it is to the Senſe you have, and the Complaints you make of your own Corruptions, and Spiritual Wants, and, above all, how contrary it is to your *Pattern* and Example: Did Chriſt, ſpeak, act, or think as you do? O learn Humility from Jeſus Chriſt; it will make you precious in the Eyes of God, *Iſa.* 57. 15.

Pattern 8. The Contentation of Chriſt, in a low and mean Condition in the World, is an excellent Pattern for his People's Imitation. His Lot, in this World, fell upon a condition of deepeſt Poverty and Contempt: Yet how well was he ſatisfied and contented with it! Hear him expreſſing himſelf about it, Pſal. 16. 6. *The Lines are fallen unto me in pleaſant Places; yea, I have a goodly Heritage.* The Contentation of his Heart, with a ſuffering Condition, evidenced it ſelf in his ſilence, under the greateſt Sufferings, Iſa. 53. 7. *He was oppreſſed, and he was afflicted: yet he opened not his Mouth: He is brought as a Lamb to the Slaughter, and as a Sheep before the Sheerers is dumb, ſo he openeth not his Mouth.* O that in this alſo the pooreſt Chriſtians would imitate their Saviour, and learn to manage an afflicted Condition with a contented Spirit: Let there be no Murmurs, Complaints, or fooliſh Charges of God heard from you, whatever ſtrait or troubles he bring you into: For,

First, The meaneſt and moſt afflicted Chriſtian is owner of many rich invaluable Mercies, *Eph.* 1. 3. 1 *Cor.* 3. *ult.* Is Sin pardoned, and God reconciled? then never open your Mouths any more, *Ezek.* 16. 63.

Secondly, You have many precious Promiſes, that God will not forſake you in your Straits, *Heb.* 13. 5. *Iſa.* 41. 17. And your whole Life hath been a Life of Experiences of the Faithfulneſs of God in his Promiſes. Which of you cannot ſay with the Church, *Lam.* 3. 23. *His Mercies are new every Morning, and great is his Faithfulneſs.*

Thirdly, How uſeful and beneficial are all your Afflictions to you? They purge your Sins, prevent your Temptations, wean you from the World, and turn to your Salvation; And how unreaſonable then muſt your diſcontentedneſs at them be?

Fourthly, The time of your Relief, and full deliverence from all your Troubles is at hand; the time is but ſhort that you ſhall have any concernment about theſe things, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29. If the Candle of your earthly Comfort be blown out, yet remember it is but a little while to the break of Day, and then there will be no need of Candles. Beſides,

Fifthly, Your Lot falls, by Divine direction, upon you, and as bad as it is, it is much eaſier and ſweeter than the Condition of Chriſt in this World was: Yet he was contented, and why cannot you? O that we could learn contentment from Chriſt in every Condition. And thus I have laid before you ſome excellent Patterns in the Life of Chriſt, for your Imitation.

SERMON XXX.

1 JOHN II. 6.

He that ſaith he abideth in him, ought himſelf alſo ſo to walk, even as he walked.

THESE Words having been reſolved into their Parts, and their Senſe opened in the former Sermon: The Obſervation was this:

Doct. Doct. *That every Man is bound to the imitation of Chriſt, under penalty of forfeiting his Claim to Chriſt.*

In proſecution of this Point, we have already ſhewn what the Imitation of Chriſt imports, and what the imitable Excellencies in the Life of Chriſt are: It now remains that I ſhew you, in the next place, why all that profeſs Chriſt, are bound to imitate his Example, and then apply the whole. Now the neceſſity of this Imitation of Chriſt will convincingly appear divers ways.

First, From the eſtabliſhed Order of Salvation, which is fixed and unalterable: God that hath appointed the End, hath alſo eſtabliſhed the Means and order by which Men ſhall attain the ultimate-end. Now Conformity to Chriſt is the eſtabliſh'd Method in which God will bring Souls to Glory, Rom. 8. 29. *For whom he did foreknow, he alſo did predeſtinate, to be conformed to the image of his Son; that he might be the firſt-born among many Brethren.* The ſame God who hath predeſtinated Men to Salvation, hath, in order thereunto, predeſtinated them unto Conformity to Chriſt, and this Order of Heaven is never to be reverſed, we may as well hope to be ſaved without Chriſt, as to be ſaved without Conformity to Chriſt.

Secondly, The Nature of Chriſt myſtical requires this Conformity, and renders it indiſpenſably neceſſary. Otherwiſe, the Body of Chriſt muſt be *heterogeneous*; of a Nature different from the Head. And how monſtrous, and uncomely would this be? This would repreſent Chriſt to the World in an Image, or *Idea*, much like that, Dan. 2. 32. 33. *The Head of fine Gold, the Breaſt and Arms of Silver, the Thighs of Braſs, the Legs of Iron, the Feet part Iron, part of Clay.* Chriſt the Head is pure and holy, and therefore very unſuitable to ſenſual and earthly Members. And therefore the Apoſtle in his Deſcription of Myſtical Chriſt deſcribes the Members of Chriſt (as they ought to be) of the ſame Nature and Quality with the Head, 1 Cor. 15. 48. *As is the Heavenly, ſuch are they alſo that are Heavenly, and as we have born the Image of the Earthly, ſo we ſhall alſo bear the Image of the Heavenly.* The Image

Image or Reſemblance of Chriſt which ſhall be compleat and perfect after the Reſurrection, muſt be begun in its firſt draught here, by the work of Regeneration.

Thirdly, This Reſemblance and Conformity to Chriſt appears neceſſary from the Communion, which all Believers have with Chriſt in the ſame Spirit of Grace and Holineſs. Believers are called Chriſt's *Fellows* or Co-partners, *Pſal* 45. 7. from their Participation with him of the ſame Spirit, as it is, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 8. God giveth the ſame Spirit unto us, which he more plentifully poured out upon Chriſt. Now where the ſame Spirit and Principle is, there the ſame Fruits and Operations muſt be produced, according to the Proportions and Meaſures of the Spirit of Grace communicated; and this Reaſon is farther enforced, by the very deſign and end of God in the infuſion of the Spirit of Grace; for it is plain from *Ezek.* 36. 27. that practical Holineſs and Obedience is the ſcope and deſign of that infuſion of the Spirit. The very innate Property of the Spirit of God in Men, is to elevate their Minds, and ſet their Affections upon heavenly things, to purge their Hearts from earthly droſs, and fit them for a Life of Holineſs and Obedience: Its Nature alſo is aſſimilating, and changeth them in whom it is, into the ſame Image with Jeſus Chriſt their Heavenly Head, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18.

Fourthly, The neceſſity of this Imitation of Chriſt may be argued from the deſign and end of Chriſt's Exhibition to the World in a Body of Fleſh. For though we deteſt that Doctrine of the *Socinians*, which makes the exemplary Life of Chriſt to be upon the matter, the whole End of his Incarnation; yet we muſt not run ſo far from an Error as to loſe a precious Truth. We ſay the ſatisfaction of his Blood was a main and principal End of his Incarnation, according to *Matth.* 20. 28. We affirm alſo that it was a great deſign and end of the Incarnation of Chriſt, to ſet before us a Pattern of Holineſs for our Imitation: For ſo ſpeaks the Apoſtle, 1 *Pet.* 2. 21. *He hath left us an Example, that we ſhould follow his ſteps.* And this Example of Chriſt greatly obliges Believers to his Imitation, *Phil.* 2. 5. *Let this Mind be in you which alſo was in Chriſt Jeſus.*

Fifthly, Our Imitation of Chriſt is one of thoſe great Articles which every Man is to ſubſcribe, whom Chriſt will admit into the number of his Diſciples, *Luke* 14. 27. *Whoſoever doth not come after me, cannot be my Diſciple.* And again, *Joh.* 12. 26. *If any Man ſerve me, let him follow me.* To this Condition we have ſubmitted, if we be ſincere Believers, and therefore are ſtrictly bound to the imitation of Chriſt, not only by God's *Command*, but by our own *Conſent*. But if we profeſs Intereſt in Chriſt, when our Hearts never conſented to follow and imitate his Example; then are we ſelf-deceiving Hypocrites, wholly diſagreeing from the Scripture-character of Believers, *Rom.* 8. 1. They are Chriſt's being there deſcribed to be ſuch as walk not after the Fleſh, but after the Spirit: and *Gal.* 5. 25. *If we live in the Spirit, let us walk in the Spirit.*

Sixthly, The Honour of Chriſt neceſſitates the Conformity of Chriſtians to his Example, elſe what plea is there left to ſtop detracting Mouths, and vindicate the Name of Chriſt from the Reproaches of the World? How can Wiſdom be juſtified of her Children, except it be this Way; By what means ſhall we cut off Occaſion from ſuch as deſire Occaſion, but by regulating our Lives by Chriſt's Example? The World hath Eyes to ſee what we *practiſe*, as well as Ears to hear what we *profeſs*. Therefore either ſhew the Conſiſtency betwixt your Profeſſion and Practice, or you can never hope to vindicate the Name and Honour of the Lord Jeſus. The Uſes follow, for,

1. Information.
2. Exhortation.
3. Conſolation.

1. *Uſe for Information.*

Inferenece 1. *Uſe* 1. *Infer.* 1.

If all that profeſs Intereſt in Chriſt be ſtrictly bound to imitate his Holy Example, then it follows, that Religion is very unjuſtly charged by the World with the Scandals and Evils of them that profeſs it. Nothing can be more unjuſt, and irrational, if we conſider,

Firſt, That Chriſtian Religion ſeverely cenſures looſe and ſcandalous Actions in all Profeſſors; and therefore is not to be cenſured for them. 'Tis abſurd to condemn Religion, for what it ſelf condemns: Looſeneſs no way flows from the Principles of Chriſtianity, but is moſt oppoſite, and contrary to it, Tit. 2. 11, 12. *For the Grace of God that bringeth Salvation hath appeared to all Men: teaching us, that denying Ungodlineſs, and Worldly Luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly, in this preſent World.*

Secondly, It is an argument of the Excellency of Chriſtian Religion, that even wicked Men themſelves covet the Name, and Profeſſion of it, though they only cloak and cover their Evils under it. I confeſs it is a great abuſe of ſuch an excellent thing as Religion is, but yet if it had not an awful Reverence paid it, by the Conſciences of all Men, it would never be abuſed to this purpoſe by Hypocrites, as it is.

Thirdly, According to this reaſoning there can be no Religion in the World, for name me that Religion which is not ſcandalized by the Practices of ſome that profeſs it. So that this Practice hath a natural tendency to *Atheiſm*, and is no doubt incouraged by the Devil for that end.

Inference 2. *Infer* 2.

If all Men forfeit their Claim to Chriſt who endeavour not to imitate him in the holineſs of his Life, then how ſmall a number of real Chriſtians are there in the World? Indeed if liberal talking without accurate walking, if common Profeſſion without holy Practices were enough to conſtitute a Chriſtian, then this Quarter of the World would abound with Chriſtians. But if Chriſt owns none for ſuch, but thoſe that tread in the ſteps of his Example, then the number of real Chriſtians is very ſmall. The generality of Men that live under the Chriſtian Name, are ſuch as walk after the Fleſh, *Rom.* 8. 2. According to the courſe of this World, they yield their Members as Inſtruments of Unrighteouſneſs unto Sin, *Rom.* 6. 13. ſtrict Godlineſs is a meer Bondage to them; narrow is the Way, and few there be that walk therein.

Inference 3. *Infer.* 3.

What Bleſſed Times ſhould we all ſee if true Religion did once generally obtain and prevail in the World! How would it humble the Proud, meeken the Paſſionate, and ſpiritualize thoſe that are carnal! The perverſe World charges Religion with all the Tumults and Diſturbances that are in it, when as nothing in the World, but Religion, advanced in the Power of it, can heal and cure theſe *Epidemical* Evils. O if Men were once brought under the Power of Religion indeed, to walk after

ter Christ in Holiness, Obedience, Meekness, and Self-denial; no such Miseries as these would be heard of among us, *Isa.* 11. 8. 9. *The sucking Child shall play upon the hole of the Asp, and a weaned Child shall put his hand on the Cockatrice Den, they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy Mountain: for the Earth shall be full of the Knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea.*

Inference 4.

Infer. 4. *Hence it also follows, That real Christians are the sweetest Companions.* 'Tis a comfortable thing to walk with them that walk after the Example of Christ. The Holiness, Heavenliness, Humility, Self-denial, and Diligence in Obedience which was in Christ, is in some measure to be found in all sincere Christians. They shew forth the Vertues of him that calleth them. The Graces of the Spirit do more or less shine forth in them. And oh how endearing, sweet, and engaging are these things? Upon this very Account the *Apostle* invited others into the Fellowship of the Saints, 1 *Joh.* 1. 3. *That ye may have Fellowship with us, and truly our Fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Christ Jesus:* And is it not sweet to have Fellowship with them who have Fellowship with Christ? O let all your Delights be in the Saints, and in the Excellent of the Earth, who excel in Vertue, *Psal.* 16. 3. Yet mistake not, there is a great deal of difference betwixt one Christian and another, and even the best of Christians are sanctified but in part. If there be something sweet and engaging, there is also something bitter and distasteful in the best of Men. If there be something to draw forth your Delight and Love, there is also something to exercise your Pity and Patience. Yet this is most certain, that notwithstanding all their Infirmities and Corruptions, they are the best and sweetest Company this World affords.

Inference 5.

Infer. 5. *In a word, if no Man's Claim to Christ be warranted, but theirs that walk as he walked, How vain and groundless then are the Hopes and Expectations of all unsanctified Men who walk after their own Lusts?* None are more forward to claim the Priviledges of Religion, than those that reject the Duties of it; Multitudes hope to be saved by Christ, who yet refuse to be govern'd by him. But such Hopes have no Scripture Warrant to support them. Yea, they have many Scripture Testimonies against them, 1 Cor. 6. 9. *Know ye not that the Unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, nor Abusers of themselves with Mankind. Nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God.* O how many thousand vain Hopes are laid in the Dust; and how many thousand Souls are sentenced to Hell by this one Scripture.

2. *Use for Exhortation.*

Use 2. If this be so, it naturally presses all the Professors of Christianity to strict Godliness in their Conversations, as ever they expect Benefit by Christ. O Professors be ye not conformed unto this World, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your Minds. Set the Example of Christ before you, and labour to tread in his Steps. This is the great Business of Religion; the main scope of the Gospel. Give me leave therefore closely to press it upon your Hearts by the following Motives.

1. *Motive.* Christ has conformed himself to you by his abasing Incarnation: How reasonable therefore is it that you conform your selves to him in the way of Obedience and Sanctification? He came as near to you as is possible for him to do, strive you therefore to come as near to Christ as it is possible for you to do. He hath taken your Nature upon him, *Heb.* 2. 14. Yea, and with your Nature he hath taken your Weaknesses and Infirmities, *Rom.* 8. 3. and not only your Natures, and your Infirmities, but your Condition also; for he came under the Law for your sakes, *Gal.* 4. 4. He conformed himself to you, though he was infinitely above you, that was his abasement; do you conform your selves to him, who are infinitely beneath him, that will be your Advancement; his Conformity to you emptied him of his Glory; your Conformity to him will fill you with Glory: He conformed himself to you, though you had no Obligation upon him: Will not you conform your selves to him, who lie under infinite Obligations so to do.

Motive 1.

2. *Motive.* You shall be conformed to Christ in Glory: How reasonable therefore is it you should now conform your selves to him in Holiness? The Apostle saith, 1 Joh. 3. 2. *We shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.* Yea not only your Souls shall be like him, but your very Bodies, even those vile Bodies of yours *shall be changed, that they may be fashioned like unto his Glorious Body.* How forcible a Motive is this to bring Men into Conformity with Christ here! especially seeing our Conformity to him in Holiness, is the Evidence of our Conformity to him in Glory, *Rom.* 6. 5. 2 *Pet.* 3. 11. O Professors, as ever you look to be with Christ in Glory hereafter, see that ye walk after Christ's Example, in Holiness and Obedience here.

Motive 2.

Motive 3.

3 *Motive.* The Conformity of your Lives to Christ your Pattern, is you highest Excellency in this World; the measure of your Grace is to be estimated by this Rule. The Excellency of every Creature rises higher and higher, according as it approaches still nearer and nearer to its Original; the more you resemble Christ in Grace, the more illustrious and respendent will your Conversations be in true spiritual Glory.

Motive 4.

4. *Motive.* So far as you imitate Christ in your Lives, and no farther, you will be beneficial to the World in which you live. So far as God helps you to follow Christ, you will be helpful to bring others to Christ, or build them up in Christ; for all Men are forbidden by the Gospel to follow you one step farther than you follow Christ, 1 *Cor.* 11. 1. and when you have finished your Course in this World, the remembrance of your ways will be no farther sweet to others, than they are Ways of Holiness and Obedience to Christ, 1 *Cor.* 4. 17. If you walk according to the course of this World, the World will not be the better for your walking.

Motive 5.

5. *Motive.* To walk as Christ walked is a Walk only worthy of a Christian; this is to walk worthy of the Lord, 1 *Thess.* 2. 12. *Col.* 1. 10. by worthiness the Apostle doth not mean *meritoriousness*, but *comeliness*, or that *decorum* which befits a Christian, as when a Man walks suitably to his Place and Calling in the World, we say he acts like himself. So when you walk after Christ's Pattern, you then act like your selves, like Men of your Character and Profession. This is consonant to your *Vocation*, Eph. 4. 1. *I beseech you that you walk*

Dignitatis vocabulum in scripturis, non semper denotat exactam proportionem æqualitatis rei rem, sed quandam convenientiam & decentiam quæ tollit repugnantiam. *Davenant. in Col. p.* 5.

worthy of the Vocation wherewith you are called. This walking ſuits with your *obligation*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 15. For it is to live unto him who died for us. This walking only ſuits with your *deſignation*, Eph. 2. 10. *For you are created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good Works, which God hath before ordained we ſhould walk in them.* In a word, ſuch walking as this, and ſuch only, becomes your *expectation*, 2 *Pet.* 3. 14. *Wherefore* [*beloved*] *ſeeing that you look for ſuch things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in Peace without ſpot and blame-leſs.*

Motive. 6. 6. *Motive.* How comfortable will the cloſe of your Life be at Death, if you have walked after Chriſt's Pattern and Example in this World! A comfortable Death is ordinarily the cloſe of a Holy Life, *Pſal.* 37. 37. *Mark the perfect Man, and behold the upright; for the end of that Man is Peace.* A looſe careleſs Life puts many terrible Stings into Death. As Worms in the Body are bred of the putrefaction there, ſo the Worm of Conſcience is bred of the Moral Putrefaction, or Corruption that is in our Natures and Converſations. O then be prevailed with by all theſe Conſiderations to imitate Chriſt in the whole courſe and compaſs of your Converſations.

3. *Uſe for Conſolation.*

Uſe 3. *Laſtly*, I would leave a few Words of Support and Comfort to ſuch as ſincerely ſtudy and endeavour according to the tendency of their new Nature, to follow Chriſt's Example, but being weak in Grace, and meeting with ſtrong Temptations, are frequently carried beſide the holy purpoſes and deſigns of their honeſt meaning Hearts, to the great grief and diſcouragement of their Souls. They heartily wiſh and aim at Holineſs, and ſay with *David*, Pſal. 119. 5. *O that my Ways were directed to keep thy Statutes.* They follow after exactneſs in Holineſs as *Paul* did, *Phil.* 3. 12. *If by any means they might attain it.* But finding how ſhort they come in all things of the Rule and Pattern, they mourn as he did, *Rom.* 7. 24. *O wretched Man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the Body of this Death?* Well, well, if this be thy Caſe, be not diſcouraged, but hearken to a few words of Support and Comfort, with which I ſhall cloſe this point.

1. *Support.* 1. *Support.* Such Defects in Obedience make no flaw in your Juſtification. For your Juſtification is not built upon your Obedience, but upon Chriſt's, *Rom.* 3. 24. and how incompleat and defective ſoever you be in your ſelves, yet at the ſame inſtant, *you are compleat in him which is the head of all Principality and Power*, Col. 2. 10. Wo to *Abraham*, *Moſes*, *David*, *Paul*, and the moſt eminent Saints that ever lived, if their Juſtification and Acceptation with God had depended upon the perfection and compleatneſs of their own Obedience.

2. *Support.* 2. *Support.* Your deep Troubles for the defectiveneſs of your Obedience, doth not argue you to be leſs, but more ſanctified, than thoſe who make no ſuch Complaints; for this proves you to be better acquainted with your own Hearts, than others are, to have a deeper hatred of Sin than others have, and to love God with a more fervent Love than others do; the moſt eminent Saints have made the bittereſt Complaints upon this Account, *Pſal.* 65. 3. *Rom.* 7. 23. 24.

3. *Support.* 3. *Support.* The Lord makes excellent uſes even of your Infirmities and Failings to do you good, and makes them turn to your unexpected advantage: For by theſe defects he hides Pride from your Eyes; he beats you off from Self-dependance; he makes you to admire the Riches of Free Grace; he makes you to long more ardently for Heaven, and entertain the ſweeter thoughts of Death; And doth not the Lord then make bleſſed Fruits to ſpring up to you from ſuch a bitter Root? O the bleſſed Chymiſtry of Heaven, to extract ſuch Mercies out of ſuch Miſeries!

4. *Support.* 4. *Support.* Your bewailed Inrfimities do not break the Bond of the everlaſting Covenant. The Bond of the Covenant holds firm, notwithſtanding your Defects and Weakneſſes, *Jer.* 32. 40. *Iniquities prevail againſt me*, ſaith *David*, yet in the ſame Breath he adds, *as for our Tranſgreſſions thou ſhalt purge them away*, *Pſal.* 65. 3. He's ſtill thy God, thy father for all this.

5. *Support.* 5. *Support.* Though the Defects of your Obedience are grievous to God, yet your deep Sorrows for them are well-pleaſing in his Eyes, *Pſal.* 51. 17. *The Sacrifices of God are a broken Spirit, a broken and a contrite Heart, O God, thou wilt not deſpiſe.* *Ephraim* was never a more pleaſant Child to his Father, that when he moaned himſelf, and ſmote upon his Thigh as thou doſt, *Jer.* 31. 20. Your Sins grieve him, but your Sorrows pleaſe him.

6. *Support.* 6. *Support.* Though God have left many defects to humble you, yet he hath given many things to comfort you. This is a comfort, that the deſire of thy Soul is to God, and to the remembrance of his Name. This is a comfort, that thy Sins are not thy delight as once they were; but thy Shame and Sorrow. This is a comfort, that thy Caſe is not ſingular; but more or leſs the ſame Complaints and Sorrows are found in all gracious Souls through the World; and, to ſay all in one word, this is the Comfort above all Comforts, that the time is at hand, in which all theſe Defects, Infirmities and Failings ſhall be done away, 1 *Cor.* 13. 10. *When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part ſhall be done away.*

For ever bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt.

And thus I have finiſhed the third General Uſe of Examination, whereby every Man is to try his Intereſt in Chriſt, and diſcern whether ever Chriſt hath been effectually applied to his Soul. That which remains is

An Uſe of Lamentation.

Wherein the miſerable and moſt wretched ſtate of all thoſe to whom Jeſus Chriſt is not effectually applied, will be yet more particularly diſcovered and bewailed.

SERMON XXXI.

EPHES. V. 14.

Wherefore he ſaith, Awake thou that ſleepeſt, and riſe from the Dead, and Chriſt ſhall give thee Light.

Of the State of Spiritual Death and the Miſery thereof.

THIS Scripture repreſents unto us the miſerable and lamentable ſtate of the unregenerate, as being under the Power of ſpiritual Death, which is the cauſe and in-let of all other Miſeries. From hence therefore I ſhall make the firſt Diſcovery of the woful and wretched State of them that apply not Jeſus Chriſt to their own Souls.

The Scope of the *Apoſtle* in this *Context*, is to preſs Believers to a circumſpect and holy Life; to *walk as Children of Light.* This Exhortation is laid down in *ver.* 8. and preſſed by divers Arguments in the following Verſes.

Firſt, From the tendency of holy Principles unto holy Fruits and Practices, *ver.* 9. 10.

Secondly, From the convincing Efficacy of Practical Godlineſs upon the Conſciences of the Wicked, *ver.* 11. 12, 13. It awes and convinces their Conſciences.

Thirdly, From the co-incidence of ſuch a Converſation with the great deſign and drift of the Scriptures; which is to awaken Men by regeneration out of that ſpiritual Sleep, or rather Death, which Sin hath caſt them into: And this is the Argument of the Text, *Wherefore he ſaith, Awake thou that ſleepeſt*, &c. There is ſome difficulty in the reference of theſe Words. Some think it refers to *Iſa.* 26. 19. *Awake and ſing ye that dwell in the Duſt.* Others to *Iſa.* 60. 1. *Ariſe, ſhine, for thy Light is come*, &c. But moſt probably the Words neither refer to this or that particularly, but to the Drift and Scope of the whole Scriptures, which were inſpired and written upon this great Deſign to awaken and quicken Souls out of the ſtate of ſpiritual Death. And in them we are to conſider theſe three things more diſtinctly and particularly.

1. The miſerable State of the Unregenerate; they are *aſleep and dead.*
2. Their Duty; which is to *awake, and ſtand up from the Dead.*
3. The Power enabling them thereunto; *Chriſt ſhall give thee Light.*

Firſt, The miſerable State of the Unregenerate, repreſented under the Notions of *Sleep* and *Death*; both Expreſſions intending one and the ſame thing, though with ſome variety of Notion. The Chriſtleſs and Unregenerate World is in a deep ſleep; a Spirit of ſlumber, ſenſeleſneſs and ſecurity is fallen upon them, though they lie expoſed immediately to eternal Wrath and Miſery, ready to drop into Hell every moment. Juſt as a Man that is faſt aſleep in a Houſe on Fire, and whilſt the conſuming Flames are round about him, his Fancy is ſporting it ſelf in ſome pleaſant Dream; this is a very lively Reſemblance of the Unregenerate Soul. But yet he that ſleeps hath the Principle of Life entire in him, though his Senſes be bound, and the Actions of Life ſuſpended by ſleep. Leſt therefore we ſhould think it is only ſo with the Unregenerate, the Expreſſion is deſignedly varied, and thoſe that were ſaid to be *aſleep*, are poſitively affirmed to be *dead*; on purpoſe to inform us that it is not a ſimple *ſuſpenſion* of the Acts and Exerciſe, but a total *privation* of the Principle of ſpiritual Life, which is the miſery of the Unregenerate.

Secondly, We have here the Duty of the Unregenerate, which is to *awake out of Sleep, and ariſe from the Dead.* This is their great Concernment: No Duty in the World is of greater Neceſſity and Importance to them. *Strive* (ſaith Chriſt) *to enter in at the ſtrait Gate*, Luke 13. 24. And the order of theſe Duties is very natural. Firſt awake, then ariſe. Startling and rouſing Convictions make way for ſpiritual Life; till God awake us by Convictions of our Miſery, we will never be perſwaded to ariſe, and move towards Chriſt for Remedy and Safety.

Thirdly, But you will ſay, if unregenerate Men be dead Men, to what purpoſe is it to perſwade them to ariſe and ſtand up? The very Exhortation ſuppoſes ſome Power or Ability in the Unregenerate; elſe in vain are they commanded to ariſe. This Difficulty is ſolved in this very Text, though the Duty be ours, yet the Power is God's. God commands that in his Word, which only his Grace can perform. *Chriſt ſhall give thee Light.* Popiſh Commentators would build the Power of Free-will upon this Scripture, by a very weak Argument drawn from the order wherein theſe things are here expreſſed; which is but a weak Foundation to build upon, for it is very uſual in Scripture to put the Effect before, and the Cauſe after, as it is here, ſo in *Iſa.* 26. 19. *Awake and ſing, ye that dwell in the Duſt.* But I will not here intangle my Diſcourſe with that Controverſie, that which I aim at is plain in the Words, *viz.*

Quamvis verba videntur velle, primum excitari, & ſurgere, deinde illuminari; tamen intelligendum eſt, vi lucis Chriſti excitari eum, & ſurgere, *Rol. in Loc.*

Doct. *That all Chriſtleſs Souls are under the Power of Spiritual Death, they are in the State of the Dead.* Doct.

Multitudes of Teſtimonies are given in Scripture to this Truth, *Eph.* 2. 1, 5. *You hath he quickened who were dead in Treſpaſſes and Sins.* Col. 2. 13. *And you being dead in your Sins, and the uncircumciſion of your Fleſh, hath he quickened together with him*; with many other places of the ſame importance. But the Method in which I ſhall diſcourſe this Point will be this:

Firſt, I will ſhew you in what ſenſe Chriſtleſs and Unregenerate Men are ſaid to be dead.

Secondly, What the State of Spitiual Death is.

Thirdly, How it appears that all unregenerate Men are in this ſad State. And then apply it.

Firſt, In what ſenſe are Chriſtleſs and Unregenerate Men ſaid to be dead Men.

To open this, we muſt know there is a threefold Death, *viz.*

1. Natural

1. Natural.
2. Spiritual.
3. Eternal.

Natural Death is nothing elſe but the privation of the Principle of Natural Life, or the ſeparation of the Soul from the Body, *James* 2. 26. *The Body without the Spirit is dead.* Spiritual Death is the privation of the Principle of Spiritual Life, or the want and abſence of the quickening Spirit of God in the Soul; the Soul is the Life of the Body, and Chriſt is the Life of the Soul; the abſence of the Soul is death to the Body, and the abſence or want of Chriſt is Death to the Soul. Eternal Death is the ſeparation both of Body and Soul from God, which is the miſery of the Damned. Now Chriſtleſs and Unregenerate Men are not dead in the firſt ſenſe; they are naturally alive, though they are dead while they live: Nor are they yet dead in the laſt ſenſe, eternally ſeparated from God, by an irrevocable Sentence as the damned are; but they are dead in the ſecond ſenſe, they are ſpiritually dead, whilſt they are naturally alive, and this ſpiritual Death is the Fore-runner of eternal Death. Now ſpiritual Death is put in Scripture in oppoſition to a two-fold ſpiritual Life. *viz.*

1. The Life of Juſtification.
2. The Life of Sanctification.

Spiritual Death in oppoſition to the Life of Juſtification is nothing elſe but the guilt of Sin, bringing us under the Sentence of Death. Spiritual Death in oppoſition to the Life of Sanctification is the Pollution or Dominion of Sin. In both theſe ſenſes Unregenerate Men are dead Men; but it is the laſt which I am properly concerned to ſpeak to in this place: And therefore,

Secondly, Let us briefly conſider what this Spiritual Death is, which as before was hinted, is the abſence of the quickening Spirit of Chriſt from the Soul of any Man. That Soul is a dead Soul into which the Spirit of Chriſt is not infuſed in the Work of Regeneration, and all its Works are dead Works; as they are called, *Heb.* 9. 14. For, look how it is with the Damned, they live, they have Senſe and Motion, and an Immortality in all theſe; but becauſe they are eternally ſeparated from God, the Life which they live, deſerves not the name of Life, but is every where in Scripture ſtiled Death: So the Unregenerate, they are naturally alive: They eat, and drink, they buy and ſell, they talk, and laugh, they rejoice in the Creatures; and many of them ſpend their Days in Pleaſures, and then go down to the Grave. This is the Life they live, but yet the Scripture rather calls it Death than Life; becauſe though they live, yet it is without God in the World, *Eph.* 2. 12. Though they live, yet it is a Life alienated from the Life of God, *Eph.* 4. 18. And therefore while they remain naturally alive, they are in Scripture ſaid *to remain in Death*, 1 *John* 3. 14. and to be *dead while they live*, 1 *Tim.* 5. 6. And there is great reaſon why a Chriſtleſs an unregenerate ſtate ſhould be repreſented in Scripture under the notion of Death; for there is nothing in nature which more aptly repreſents that miſerable ſtate of the Soul than natural Death doth. The Dead ſee and diſcern nothing, and the natural man perceiveth not the things that are of God. The Dead have no beauty or deſirableneſs in them; *Bury my Dead*, ſaid *Abraham*, *out of my ſight*: Neither is there any ſpiritual Loveline ſs in the Unregenerate. True it is, ſome of them have ſweet natural Qualities, and Moral Excellencies, which are amiable things; but theſe are as ſo many Flowers decking and adorning a dead Corpſe. The Dead are Objects of Pity, and great Lamentation; Men uſe to mourn for the Dead, *Eccleſ.* 12. 5. *Man goeth to his long home, and the Mourners go about the Streets.* But unregenerate, and Chriſtleſs Souls are much more the Objects of Pity and Lamentation: How are all the People of God (eſpecially thoſe that are naturally related to them) concerned to mourn over them, and for them, as *Abraham* did for *Ishmael*, Gen. 17. 18. *O that Ismael might live before thee.* Upon theſe, and many other Accounts, the ſtate of Unregeneracy is repreſented to us in the notion of Death.

Thirdly, And that this is the ſtate of all Chriſtleſs and unſanctified Perſons, will undeniably appear two Ways.

1. The Cauſes of Spiritual Life have not wrought upon them.
2. The Effects and Signs of Spiritual Life do not appear in them; and therefore they are in the State, and under the Power of Spiritual Death.

Firſt, The Cauſes of Spiritual Life have not wrought upon them. There are two Cauſes of Spiritual Life.

1. Principal and Internal.
2. Subordinate and External.

The Principal Internal Cauſe of Spiritual Life, is the regenerating Spirit of Chriſt, *Rom.* 8. 2. *The Law of the Spirit of Life in Chriſt Jeſus, hath made me free from the Law of Sin and Death.* 'Tis the Spirit as a regenerating Spirit that unites us with Chriſt in whom all Spiritual Life originally is, *John* 5. 25, 26. *Verily, I ſay unto you, that 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: For as the Father hath Life in himſelf, ſo hath he given to the Son to have Life in himſelf.* As all the Members of the natural Body receive Animation, Senſe, and Motion by their Union with their natural Head; ſo all Believers, the Members of Chriſt, receive Spiritual Life and Animation by their Union with Chriſt their myſtical Head, *Eph.* 4. 15. 16. Except we come to him and be united with him in the way of Faith, we can have no Life in us, *John* 5. 40. *Ye will not come unto me that ye may have Life.* Now the Spirit of God hath yet exerted no regenerating, quickning Influences, nor begotten any ſpecial ſaving Faith in natural unſanctified Men; what ever he hath done for them in the way of natural, or ſpiritual common Gifts, yet he hath not quickened them with the Life of Chriſt. And as the ſubordinate external means of Life, *viz.* the preaching of the Goſpel, which is the Inſtrument of the Spirit in this Glorious Work, and is therefore called *The Word of Life*, *Phil.* 2. 16. this Word hath not yet been made a regenerating quickning Word to their Souls. Poſſibly it hath enlightened them, and convinced them: It hath wrought upon their Minds in the Way of common Illumination, and upon their Conſciences in the way of Conviction, but not upon their Hearts and Wills by way of effectual Converſion: To this day the Lord hath not given them an heart opening it ſelf in the way of Faith to receive Jeſus Chriſt.

Secondly, The Effects and Signs of Spiritual Life do not appear in them: for.

Firſt, They have no *feeling* or ſenſe of Miſery and Danger. I mean, no ſuch Senſe as throughly awakens them to apply Chriſt their Remedy. That ſpiritual Judgment lies upon them, *Iſa.* 6. 9, 10. *And he ſaid, go and tell this People, Hear ye indeed, but underſtand not; and ſee ye indeed, but perceive not; make the Heart of this People fat, and their Ears heavy, and ſhut their Eyes.*

Secondly, They have no spiritual *Motions* towards Christ, or after things that are spiritual; all the Arguments in the World cannot perswade their Wills to move one step towards Christ in the way of Faith, *John* 5. 40. *Ye will not come unto me*: Were there a Principle of spiritual Life in their Souls, they would move Christ-ward, and Heaven-ward, *John* 4. 14. it would be in them a Well of Water springing up into Eternal Life. The natural tendency of the Spiritual Life is upward.

Thirdly, The Unregenerate have no *Appetite* unto spiritual Food, they savour not things that are spiritual; they can go from Week to Week, and from Year to Year, all their Life time without any Communion betwixt God and their Souls, and feel no need of it, nor any hungerings, nor thirstings after it, which could never be if a Principle of spiritual Life were in them; for then they would *esteem the Words of Gods Mouth more than their necessary Food*, Job 30. 12.

Fourthly, They have no *heat* or spiritual *warmth* in their Affections to God, and things above; their Hearts are as cold as a Stone to spiritual Objects. They are heated indeed by their Lusts and Affections to the World, and the things of the World; but O how cold and dead are they towards Jesus Christ and spiritual Excellencies.

Fifthly, They *breath* not spiritually, therefore they live not spiritually: Were there a spiritual Principle of Life in them, their Souls would breath after God in spiritual Prayer, *Acts* 9. 11. *Behold, he prayeth.* The Lips of the Unregenerate may move in Prayer, but their Hearts and Desires do not breath and pant after God.

Sixthly, They have no Cares or Fears for *Self-preservation*, which is always the Effect of Life; the poorest Fly or sillyest Worm will shun danger: The Wrath of God hangs over them in the Threatnings, but they tremble not at it: Hell is but a little before them, they are upon the very Precipice of eternal Ruin; yet will use no means to avoid it. How plain therefore is this sad Case which I have undertaken here to demonstrate, *viz.* that Christless and Unregenerate Souls are dead Souls? The Uses follow.

Inference 1.

Infer. 1. *If all Christless and Unregenerate Souls be dead Souls, then how little Pleasure can Christians take in the Society of the Unregenerate?*

Certainly 'tis no Pleasure for the living to converse among the dead. It was a cruel Torment invented by *Mezentius* the Tyrant, to tie a dead and living Man together: The pleasure of Society arises from the harmony of Spirits, and the hopes of mutual Enjoyment in the World to come; neither of which can sweeten the Society of the Godly with the Wicked in this World. 'Tis true, there is a necessary Civil Converse which we must have with the ungodly here; or else (as the Apostle speaks) we must go out of the World. There are also duties of Relation which must be faithfully and tenderly paid even to the Unregenerate: But certainly, where we have our free Election, we shall be much wanting both to our Duty and Comfort, if we make not the People of God our chosen Companions. Excellently to this Purpose speaks a Modern *Author*, 'Art thou a godly Master? When thou takest a Servant into thine 'House, choose for God, as well as thy self. A 'godly Servant is a greater Blessing than we think 'on: He can work, and set God on Work also for 'his Masters good, *Gen.* 24. 12. *O Lord God of my 'Master Abraham, I pray thee send me good Speed this 'day, and shew kindness unto my Master*: And sure 'he did his Master as much service by his Prayer, 'as by his Prudence, in that Journey. Holy *David* observed while he was at *Saul*'s Court, the 'Mischief of having wicked and ungodly Servants, '(for with such was that unhappy King so compassed, that *David* compares his Court to the 'prophane and barbarous Heathens, among whom 'there was scarce more Wickedness to be found, '*Psal.* 120. 6. *Wo is me, that I sojourn in Mesheck, 'that I dwell in the Tents of Kedar*, (*i. e.*) among 'those who were as prodigiously wicked as any 'there) and no doubt but this made this gracious 'Man in his Banishment before he came to the 'Crown (having seen the evil of a disordered 'House) to resolve what he would do when 'God should make him the Head of such a Royal 'Family, *Psal.* 101. 7. *He that worketh Deceit shall 'not dwell within my House; he that telleth Lies, shall 'not tarry in my Sight.*

'Art thou godly? shew thy self so in the choice 'of Husband or Wife. I am sure, if some (and 'those godly also) could bring no other Testimonial for their godliness than the care they have 'taken in this particular, it might justly be called 'into question both by themselves and others. 'There is no one thing that gracious Persons (even 'those recorded in Scripture as well as others) 'have shewn their weakness, yea, given Offence 'and Scandal more in, than in this particular. '*The Sons of God saw that the Daughters of Men were 'fair, Gen.* 6. 2. One would have thought, the Sons 'of God should have looked for Grace in the 'Heart, rather than Beauty in the Face; but we 'see, even they sometimes turn in at the fairest 'Sign, without much enquiring what Grace is to 'be found dwelling within. Look to the Rule, 'O Christian, if thou wilt keep the Power of Holiness! That is clear as a Sun-beam written in the Scripture; *be not unequally yoked together with Unbelievers*, 2 Cor. 6. 14.

Inference 2.

Infer. 2. *How great and wholly supernatural, marvellous and wonderful is that change which Regeneration makes upon the Souls of Men!* It is a change from Death to Life, *Luke* 15. 24. *This my Son was dead, and is alive again.* Regeneration is Life from the Dead, The most excellent Life from the most terrible Death. 'Tis the Life of God re-inspired into a Soul alienated from it by the Power of Sin, *Eph.* 4. 18. There are two stupendious Changes made upon the Souls of Men, which justly challenge highest Admiration, *viz.* That,

1. From Sin to Grace.
2. From Grace to Glory.

The Change from Grace to Glory is acknowledged by all, and that justly, to be a wonderful Change; for God to take a poor Creature out of the Society of sinful Men, yea from under the Burden of many sinful Infirmities which made him groan from day to day in this World; and in a Moment to make him a compleat and perfect Soul, shining in the Beauties of Holiness, and filling him as a Vessel of Glory with the unspeakable and unconceivable Joys of his presence, to turn his Groanings into Triumphs, his Sighing

Ut solent vitia alibi connata in propinqua membra perniciem suam effluere; sic improborum vitia in eos derivantur qui cum illis vitæ habent consuetudinem. Tertul. adverse. Valentin. Gurnals Christian armour, *part* 2. *p.* 257.

Songs of Praiſe: This I ſay is marvellous, and yet the former Change from Sin to Grace is no way inferiour to it. Nay, in ſome reſpect beyond it; for the Change which Glory makes upon the Regenerate, is but a *gradual* Change, but the Change which Regeneration makes upon the Ungodly, is a *ſpecifical* Change. Great and admirable is this Work of God, and let it for ever be marvellous in our Eyes.

Inference 3.

Infer. 3. *If Unregenerate Souls be dead Souls, what a fatal ſtroke doth Death give to the Bodies of all Unregenerate Men?* A Soul dead in Sin, and a Body dead by vertue of the Curſe for Sin, and both Soul and Body remaining for ever under the Power of eternal Death, is ſo full and perfect a Miſery, as that nothing can be added to make it more miſerable: 'Tis the Comfort of a Chriſtian, that he can ſay when Death comes *non omnis moriar*, I ſhall not wholly die; there is a Life I live which Death cannot touch, *Rom.* 8. 13. *The Body is dead becauſe of Sin, but the Spirit is Life becauſe of Righteouſneſs.* Bleſſed and holy is he, that hath part in the firſt Reſurrection, on ſuch the ſecond Death hath no Power. As Death takes a Believer from amidſt many Sorrows and Troubles, and brings him to the Viſion of God, to the general Aſſembly of all the perfected Saints, to a State of compleat Freedom, and full Satisfaction; ſo it drags the Unregenerate from all his ſenſative Delights and Comforts, to the place of Torments. It buries the dead Soul out of the Preſence of God for ever. 'Tis the King of Terrors, 'tis a Serpent with a deadly Sting to every Man that is out of Chriſt.

Inference 4.

Infer. 4. *If every Unregenerate Soul be a dead Soul, how ſad is the Caſe of Hypocrites, and temporary Believers who are twice dead?* Theſe are thoſe curſed Trees of which the Apoſtle *Jude* ſpeaks, *Jude ver.* 12. *Trees whoſe Fruit withereth, without Fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the Roots.* The Apoſtle alludes unto dying Trees. Trees that are dying the firſt time in the Spring, then they fade, decay, and caſt their Leaves, when other Trees are fragrant and flouriſhing. But from this firſt Death they are ſometimes recovered by pruning and dreſſing, or watering the Roots: But if in *Autumn* they decay again, which is the Critical and *Climacterical* time of Trees to diſcover whether their Diſeaſe be Mortal or not; if then, they wither and decay the ſecond time, the Fault is *ab intra*, the Root is rotten, there is no hope of it. The Husbandman beſtows no more Labour about it, except it be to root it up for Fewel to the Fire. Juſt thus ſtands the Caſe with falſe and hypocritical Profeſſors, who though they were ſtill under the power of Spiritual Death, yet in the beginning of their Profeſſion they ſeemed to be alive: They ſhewed the World the fragrant Leaves of a fair Profeſſion, many hopeful Buddings of Affection towards ſpiritual things were ſeen in them, but wanting a Root of Regeneration, they quickly began to wither, and caſt their untimely Fruit. However, by the help of Ordinances, or ſome rouzing and awakening Providences they ſeem to recover themſelves again; but all will not do, the Fault is *ab intra* from the want of a good Root, and therefore at laſt they who were always *once dead*, for want of a Principle of Regeneration; are now become *twice dead*, by the withering and decay of their vain Profeſſion. Such Trees are prepared for the ſevereſt Flames in Hell. *Matth.* 24. 51. Their Portion is the ſaddeſt Portion allotted for any of the Sons of Death. Therefore the *Apoſtle Peter* tells us, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20, 21. *For if after they have eſcaped the Pollutions of the World through the Knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, they are again intangled therein, and overcome; the latter end is worſe with them than the Beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the Way of Righteouſneſs, than after they have known it, to run from the holy Commandment delivered unto them.* Double Meaſures of Wrath ſeem to be prepared for them that die this double Death.

Inference 5.

Infer. 5. *If this be ſo, then Unregenerate Perſons deſerve the greateſt Lamentations.* And were this Truth heartily believed, we could not but mourn over them with the moſt tender Compaſſion, and hearty Sorrow. If our Husbands, Wives, or Children be dying a natural Death, how are our Hearts rent in pieces with Pity and Sorrow for them? What Cries, Tears and wringing of Hands diſcover the deep Senſe we have of their Miſery! O Chriſtians, is all the Love you have for your Relations ſpent upon their Bodies? Are their Souls of no value in your Eyes? Is ſpiritual Death no miſery? Doth it not deſerve a Tear? The Lord open our Eyes, and duly affect our Hearts with Spiritual Death and Soul Miſeries.

Conſider my Friends, and let it move your Bowels, (if there be Bowels of Affection in you) whilſt they remain ſpiritually dead, they are uſeleſs and wholly unſerviceable unto God: in the World as to any ſpecial and acceptable Service unto him, 2 *Tim.* 2. 21. They are uncapable of all Spiritual Comforts from God: They cannot taſte the leaſt ſweetneſs in Chriſt, in Duties or in Promiſes, *Rom.* 8. 6. They have no Beauty in their Souls; how comely ſoever their Bodies be, 'tis Grace and nothing but Grace that beautifies the inner Man, *Ezek.* 16. 6, 7. The Dead have neither Comfort nor Beauty in them; they have no hope to be with God in Glory, for the Life of Glory is begun in Grace, *Phil.* 1. 6. Their Graves muſt ſhortly be made, to be buried out of the ſight of God for ever in the loweſt Hell, the Pit digged by Juſtice for all that are ſpiritually dead; the Dead muſt be buried. Can ſuch Conſiderations as theſe draw no Pity from your Souls, nor excite your Endeavours for their Regeneration? Then 'tis to be feared your Souls are dead as well as theirs. O pity them, pity them, and pray for them; in this Caſe only, Prayers for the Dead are our Duty; who knows but at the laſt God may hear your Cries, and you may ſay with Comfort as he did, *This my Son was dead, but is alive; was loſt, but is found; and they began to be merry*, Luke 15. 24.

SER.

SERMON XXXII.

JOHN III. 18.

The Condemnation of Unbelievers opened and applied.

But he that Believeth not is Condemned already, because he hath not Believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God.

CHRIST having discourſed *Nicodemus* in the beginning of this Chapter about the neceſſity of Regeneration, proceeds to ſhew in this following Diſcourſe the Reaſon and Ground why Regeneration and Faith are ſo indiſpenſably neceſſary, *viz.* Becauſe there is no other way to ſet Men free from the Curſe and Condemnation of the Law. The Curſe of the Law, like the fiery Serpents in the Wilderneſs, hath ſmitten every Sinner with a deadly Stroke and Sting, for which there is no Cure, but Chriſt lifted up in the Goſpel, *as* Moſes *lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderneſs*, *ver.* 14. Neither doth Chriſt cure any but thoſe that believingly apply him to their own Souls. The reſult and concluſion of all you have in my Text, *He that believeth in him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already*, &c. In this Clauſe which I have pitched upon, we find theſe three Parts.

1. The Sin threat'ned, *viz.* Unbelief.
2. The Puniſhment inflicted, *viz.* Condemnation.
3. The immediate Relation of the one to the other; he is condemned already.

Firſt, Let us take into Conſideration the Sin which is here threat'ned, *viz. Unbelief.* The neglecting or refuſing of an exalted and offered Jeſus. Unbelief is twofold, *viz.* Negative or Poſitive. *Negative* Unbelief is the Sin of the Heathens, who never had the Goſpel among them, nor the Offers of Chriſt made to them; theſe cannot believe on him, of whom they have not heard. *Poſitive* Unbelief is the Sin of Men and Women under the Goſpel, to whom Chriſt is actually opened and offered by the preaching of the Goſpel, but they make light of it, neglect the great Salvation; receive not Chriſt into their Hearts, nor conſent to the ſevere, and ſelf-denying terms upon which he is offered. This is the Sin threat'ned.

Secondly, The Puniſhment inflicted, and that is *Condemnation:* A Word of deep and dreadful Signification, appearing in this Text as the Hand-writing upon the Plaiſter of the Wall unto *Belſhazzar*, *Dan.* 5. 5. A Word whoſe deep Senſe and Emphaſis is fully underſtood in Hell. *Condemnation* is the Judgment or Sentence of God condemning a Man to bear the Puniſhment of his eternal Wrath for Sin, the moſt terrible of all Sentences.

Thirdly, The immediate Relation, or Reſpect this Puniſhment hath to that Sin of Unbelief. The Unbeliever is condemned already *(i. e.)* he is virtually condemned by the Law of God: His *Mittimus* is already made for Hell, he is condemned as *a Sinner*, by the Breach of the firſt Covenant; but that Condemnation had never been his Ruin, except it had been ratified by the Sentence of God, condemning him as an *Unbeliever*, for ſlighting and rejecting the Grace offered in the ſecond Covenant. So that the Unbeliever is already virtually condemned by both, as he is a Sinner, and as he is an Unbeliever, as he hath tranſgreſſed the Law, and as he hath refuſed the Goſpel, as he hath contracted Sin, the Mortal *Diſeaſe*, and refuſed Chriſt, the only effectual *Remedy*. He is virtually condemned now, and will be ſententially condemned in the Judgment of the great Day. Unbelief is his great Sin, and Condemnation is his great Miſery. Hence the Obſervation will be this:

Doct. *That all Unbelievers are preſently and immediately under the juſt and dreadful Sentence of God's Condemnation.* John 12. 48. *He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my Words, hath one that judgeth him: The Word that I have ſpoken, the ſame ſhall judge him in the laſt Day.* John 3. 36. *He that believeth not the Son, ſhall not ſee Life, but the Wrath of God abideth on him.*

Three Things are to be opened in the Doctrinal Part of this Point.

1. What Unbelief, or the not receiving of Jeſus Chriſt is.
2. What Condemnation the Puniſhment of this Sin is.
3. Why this Puniſhment unavoidably follows that Sin.

Firſt, What the Sin of Unbelief, or not receiving Chriſt is. By Unbelief we are not here to underſtand the Relicks or Remains of that Sin in the People of God which is mixed with their imperfect Faith, for there is ſome Unbelief ſtill mingled with Faith in the beſt Hearts. He that can ſay, *Lord I believe*, hath Cauſe enough to cry out with Tears, *help thou my Unbelief.* However, this doth not bring the Soul under Condemnation, or into the ſtate of Wrath. The Word condemns this Unbelief in them, but doth not condemn their Perſons for this Unbelief. But the Unbelief here ſpoken of, is the neglecting or refuſing to take Chriſt upon the terms of the Goſpel, and ſo is excluſive of the ſaving Act and Effects of Faith.

Firſt, It is excluſive of the ſaving Act of Faith, which (as hath been already declared) is the due receiving of Chriſt offered in the Goſpel, conſenting to take him upon his own Terms. This the Unbeliever will by no means be perſwaded to do. He will be perſwaded to accept the Promiſes of Chriſt, but not to accept the Perſon of Chriſt: He is willing to accept Chriſt in part, a divided Chriſt, but not to accept Chriſt entirely in all his Offices. He will accept the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, in Conjunction with his own Righteouſneſs; but he will not accept the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, as the ſole matter of his Juſtification excluſive of his own Righteouſneſs; he is willing to wear the Crown of Chriſt, but cannot be perſwaded to bear the Croſs of Chriſt. Thus Chriſt and Unbelievers part upon Terms; God will come down no lower, and the Unbeliever will come up no higher. God will not alter his Terms, and the Unbeliever will not alter his Reſolution, and ſo Chriſt is refuſed, Salvation neglected, and in the Effect the Unbeliever chuſeth rather to be damned, than

than to comply with the ſevere Terms of Self-denial, Mortification and bearing the Croſs of Chriſt. Thus it excludes the ſaving Act of Faith.

Secondly, It is excluſive of the ſaving Fruits and Effects of Faith. Faith produces Love to God, but the Unbeliever doth not truly love him. *But I know you* (ſaith Chriſt to Unbelievers) *that the love of God is not in you*, Joh. 5.42. Faith purifies the Heart of a Believer, but the Hearts of Unbelievers are full of all Impurity. The Believer overcomes the World, the World overcomes the Unbeliever: Faith makes the Croſs of Chriſt ſweet and eaſie to the Believer; Unbelief makes Chriſt, becauſe of the Croſs, bitter and diſtaſteful to the Unbeliever. Thus Unbelief excludes both the ſaving Act and Fruits of Faith; and conſequently bars the Soul from the ſaving Benefits and Privileges of Faith, *viz.* Juſtification and Peace with God.

Secondly, Next let us conſider the Puniſhment of this Sin, which is Condemnation. Condemnation in the general, is the Sentence of a Judge awarding a Mulct, or Penalty to be inflicted upon the guilty Perſon. There is a twofold Condemnation.

1. *Reſpectu Culpæ*, in reſpect of the Fault.
2. *Reſpectu pœnæ*, in reſpect of the Puniſhment.

Firſt, Condemnation with reſpect to the Fault, is the caſting of the Perſon as guilty of the Crime charged upon him. Condemnation with reſpect to the Puniſhment, is the ſentencing the convicted Offender to undergo ſuch a Puniſhment for ſuch a Fault, to bear a penal for a moral Evil. This *Forenſick* Word Condemnation, is here applied unto the Caſe of a guilty Sinner caſt at the Bar of God, where the Fact is clearly proved, and the Puniſhment righteouſly awarded. Thou art an Unbeliever; for this Sin thou ſhalt die eternally. Condemnation with reſpect to the Puniſhment, ſtands oppoſed to Salvation, *Mar.* 16. 16. More particularly,

Firſt, Condemnation is the Sentence of God, the great and terrible God, the omniſcient, omnipotent, ſupreme and impartial Judge; at whoſe Bar the guilty Sinner ſtands. 'Tis the Law of God that condemns him now: he hath one that judgeth him, a great and terrible one too. 'Tis a dreadful thing to be condemned at Man's Bar; but the Courts of humane Judicature, how awful and ſolemn ſoever they are, are but Trifles, and Childrens Play to this Court of Heaven and Conſcience, wherein the Unbeliever is arraigned and condemned.

Secondly, 'Tis the Sentence of God adjudging the Unbeliever to eternal Death, than which nothing more terrible. What is a Priſon to Hell? What a Scaffold, an Ax, to *Go ye curſed into everlaſting fire*? What is a Gallows and a Halter to everlaſting Burnings?

Thirdly, Condemnation is the final Sentence of God, the ſupreme Judge, from whoſe Bar and Judgment there lies no Appeal for the Unbeliever, no Execution certainly follows Condemnation, Luke 19. 27. If a Man condemn, God may juſtify and ſave: But if God condemn, no Man can acquit or deliver. If the Law caſt a Man as a Sinner, the Goſpel may ſave him as a Believer: But if the Goſpel caſt him as an Unbeliever, a Man that finally rejects Jeſus Chriſt whom it offers to him, all the World cannot ſave that Man. O how what a dreadful Word is Condemnation! All the Evils and Miſeries of this Life are nothing to it. Put all Afflictions, Calamities, Sufferings, and Miſeries of this World into one Scale, and this Sentence of God into the other, and they will be all lighter than a Feather.

Thirdly, In the next place, I ſhall ſhew you that this Puniſhment, *viz.* Condemnation, muſt unavoidably follow that Sin of Unbelief. So many unbelieving Perſons as be in the World, ſo many condemned Perſons there are in the World; and this will appear two ways.

1. By conſidering what Unbelief excludes a Man from.
2. By conſidering what Unbelief includes a Man under.

Firſt, Let us conſider what Unbelief excludes a Man from; and it will be found, that it excludes him from all that may help and ſave him. For,

Firſt, It excludes him from the Pardon of Sin; *Joh.* 8. 24. *If ye believe not that I am he, ye ſhall die in your Sins.* Now he that dies under the guilt of all his Sins, muſt needs die in a ſtate of Wrath and Condemnation for ever. *For the wages of ſin is death, Rom.* 6. *ult.* If a Man may be ſaved without a Pardon, then may the Unbeliever hope to be ſaved.

Secondly, Unbelief excludes a Man from all the ſaving Benefits that come by the Sacrifice or Death of Chriſt. For if Faith be the only Inſtrument that applies and brings home to the Soul the Benefits of the Blood of Chriſt, as unqueſtionably it is; then Unbelief muſt of neceſſity exclude a Man from all thoſe Benefits, and conſequently leave him in the ſtate of Death and Condemnation. Faith is the applying Cauſe, the Inſtrument by which we receive the ſpecial ſaving Benefit of the Blood of Chriſt, *Rom.* 5. 25. *Whom God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood*, Eph. 2. 8. *By grace are ye ſaved through faith.* So then, if the Unbeliever be acquitted and ſaved, it muſt be without the Benefit of Chriſt's Death and Sacrifice, which is utterly impoſſible.

Thirdly, Unbelief excludes a Man from the ſaving Efficacy and Operation of the Goſpel, by ſhutting up the Heart againſt it, and croſſing the main drift and ſcope of it; which is to bring up Men to the terms of Salvation. To perſuade them to believe, this is its great Deſign, the ſcope of all its Commands, 1 *Joh.* 3. 23. *Mar.* 1. 14, 15. *Joh.* 12. 36. So then, if the Unbeliever eſcape Condemnation, it muſt be in a way unknown to us by the Goſpel; yea, contrary to the eſtabliſh'd Order therein. For the Unbeliever obeyeth not the great Command of the Goſpel, 1 *Joh.* 3. 17. Nor is he under any one ſaving Promiſe of it, *Gal.* 3. 14, 22.

Fourthly, Unbelief excludes a Man from Union with Chriſt, Faith being the Bond of that Union *Eph.* 3. 17. The Unbeliever therefore may as reaſonably expect to be ſaved without *Chriſt*, as to be ſav'd without Faith. Thus you ſee what Unbelief excludes a Man from.

Secondly, Let us next ſee what Guilt and Miſery Unbelief includes Men under; and certainly it will be found to be the greateſt Guilt and Miſery in the World: For,

Firſt, It is a Sin which reflects the greateſt Diſhonour upon God, 1 *Joh.* 5. 10. *He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witneſs in himſelf. He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar; becauſe he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.*

Secondly, Unbelief makes a Man guilty of the vileſt Contempt of Chriſt, and the whole Deſign of Redemption manag'd by him. All the glorious Attributes of God were ſignally manifeſted in the Work of Redemption by Chriſt; therefore the

Apoſtle calls him *the Wiſdom of God, and the Power of God*, 1 Cor. 1. 23,24. But what doth the careleſs Neglect and wilful Rejection of Chriſt ſpeak, but the Weakneſs and Folly of that Deſign of Redemption by him?

Thirdly, Unbelief includes in it the ſoreſt ſpiritual Judgment that is, or can be inflicted in this World upon the Soul of Man: even ſpiritual Blindneſs, and the fatal darkening of the Underſtanding by Satan, 2 *Cor.* 4.4. of which more hereafter.

Fourthly, Unbelief includes a Man under the Curſe, and ſhuts him up under all the Threatenings that are written in the Book of God; amongſt which, that is an expreſs and terrible one, *Mar.* 16. 10. *He that believes not ſhall be damned.* So that nothing can be more evident than this, that Condemnation neceſſarily follows Unbelief. This Sin and that Puniſhment, are faſtned together with Chains of Adamant.

The Uſes follow. *Inference* 1.

If this be ſo, then how great a Number of Perſons are viſibly in the State of Condemnation! So many Unbelievers, ſo many condemned Men and Women That's a ſad Complaint of the Prophet, *Iſa.* 53. 1. *Who hath believed our Report, and to whom is the Arm of the Lord revealed?* Many there be that talk of Faith, and many that profeſs Faith; but they only talk of and profeſs it: There are but few in the World unto whom the Arm of the Lord hath been revealed in the Work of Faith with Power. 'Tis put among the great Myſteries and Wonders of the World, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. That Chriſt is believ'd on in the World. O what a great and terrible Day will the Day of Chriſt's coming to Judgment be, when ſo many Millions of Unbelievers ſhall be brought to his Tribunal to be ſolemnly ſentenc'd! They are (as my Text ſpeaks) *condemned already*; but then that dreadful Sentence will be ſolemnly pronounc'd by Jeſus Chriſt, whom they have deſpis'd and rejected: Then ſhall that Scripture be fulfill'd, *Luk.* 19. 27. *Theſe mine enemies that would not that I ſhould reign over them, bring them hither, and ſlay them before me.*

Inference 2.

Hence be inform'd how great a Mercy the leaſt Meaſure of ſaving Faith is; for the leaſt Meaſure of true Faith unites the Soul to Jeſus Chriſt; and then *there is no Condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus*, Rom. 8. 1. Not one Sentence of God againſt them. So *Acts* 13. 29. *By him all that believe are juſtify'd from all things.* The weakeſt Believer is as free from Condemnation as the ſtrongeſt; the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt comes upon all Believers without any Difference, *Rom.* 3. 22. *Even the Righteouſneſs of God; which is by Faith of Chriſt Jeſus unto all, and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference.* 'Tis not imputed, as it is in inherent Righteouſneſs: One Man hath more Holineſs than another. The Faith that receives the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, may be very different in degrees of Strength; but the receiv'd Righteouſneſs is equal upon all Believers: A piece of Gold is as much worth in the hand of a Child, as it is in the hand of a Man. O the exceeding Preciouſneſs of ſaving Faith!

Inference 3.

How dreadful a Sin is the Sin of Unbelief, which brings Men under the Condemnation of the great God! No Sin ſtartles leſs, or damns ſurer: 'Tis a Sin that doth not affright the Conſcience, as ſome other Sins do, but it kills the Soul more certainly than any of thoſe ſins could do: For indeed other ſins could not damn us, were it not for Unbelief, which fixes the guilt of them all upon our Perſons. This is the Condemnation. Unbelief is the ſin of ſins; and when the Spirit comes to convince Men of ſin, he begins with this as the capital ſin, *John* 16. 9. But more particularly,

Firſt, Eſtimate the evil of Unbelief from its Object. It is the ſlighting and refuſing of the moſt excellent and wonderful Perſon in Heaven or Earth. The *fiducial* Viſion of Chriſt is the Joy of Saints on Earth; the *facial* Viſion of Chriſt, is the Happineſs of Saints in Heaven. 'Tis a deſpiſing of him who is altogether lovely in himſelf, who hath loved us, and given himſelf for us.

'Tis a rejecting of the only *Mediator* betwixt God and Man; after the rejecting of whom there remains no Sacrifice for Sin.

Secondly, Let the Evil of Unbelief be valued by the Offer of Chriſt to our Souls in the Goſpel: 'Tis one part of the great Myſtery of Godlineſs, that Chriſt ſhould be preached to the Gentiles, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. That the Word of this Salvation ſhould be ſent to us, *Acts* 13. 26. A Mercy denied to the fallen Angels, and the greateſt Part of Mankind, which aggravates the Evil of this Sin beyond all imagination. So that in refuſing or neglecting Jeſus Chriſt, is found vile ingratitude, higheſt Contempt of the Grace and Wiſdom of God; and in the event, the loſs of the only ſeaſon and opportunity of Salvation, which is never more to be recovered to all Eternity.

Inference 4.

If this be the Cauſe of all Unbelievers, it is not to be admired, that Souls under the firſt Convictions of their miſerable Condition, are plunged into ſuch deep Diſtreſſes of Spirit. It's ſaid of them, *Acts* 2. 37. *That they were pricked at the heart, and cried out, Men and Brethren, what ſhall we do?* And ſo the Jailor, *He came in trembling and aſtoniſhed, and ſaid, Sirs, what muſt I do to be ſaved?* Certainly, if Souls apprehend themſelves under the Condemnation and Sentence of the great God, all their Tears and Tremblings, their weary Days and reſtleſs Nights, are not without juſt Cauſe and Reaſon. Thoſe that never ſaw their own miſerable Condition by the light of a clear and full Conviction, may wonder to ſee others ſo deeply diſtreſs'd in Spirit. They may miſjudge the Caſe, and call it Melancholy or Madneſs; but ſpiritual Troubles do not exceed the Cauſe and Ground of them, let them be as deep and great as they will: And indeed, it is one of the great Myſteries of Grace and Providence; a thing much unknown to Men, how ſuch poor Souls are ſupported from day to day under ſuch Fears and Sorrows as are able in a few Hours to break the ſtouteſt Spirit in the World. *Luther* was a Man of great natural Courage; and yet, when God let in ſpiritual Troubles upon his Soul, it is noted of him, *ut nec vox, nec ſanguis ſupereſſet*; he had neither Voice, nor Heat, nor Blood appearing in him.

Inference 5.

How groundleſs and irrational is the Mirth and Jollity of all carnal and unregenerate Men? They feaſt in their Priſon, and dance in their Fetters. O the Madneſs that is in the Hearts of Men! If Men did but ſee their *Mittimus* made for Hell, or believe they are condemned already, it were impoſſible for them to live at that rate of Vanity they do: And is their Condition leſs dangerous, becauſe it is not underſtood? Surely no; but much more dangerous for that. O poor Sinners, you have found out an effectual way to prevent your pre-

resent Troubles; it were well if you could find ut a way to prevent your Eternal Misery: But is easier for a Man to stifle Conviction, than pre- ent Damnation. Your Mirth hath a twofold ischief in it; it prevents Repentance, and in- reaseth your future Torment. O what an Hell ill your Hell be, who drop into it out of all the nsitive and sinful Pleasures of this World! If ever an may say of Mirth, that it is mad; and of aughter, what doth it? He may say so in this case.

Inference 6.

Lastly, what cause have they to rejoice, admire d praise the Lord to Eternity, who have a well- ounded confidence that they are freed from God's ondemnation? *O give thanks to the Father who h deliver'd you from the power of darkness, and trans- ed you into the kingdom of his dear Son*, Col. 1. 13. joice and be exceeding glad; for if you be freed m Condemnation, you are out of Satan's Pow- he hath no more any dominion over you. The wer of Satan over Men comes in by vertue of ir Condemnation, as the Power of the *Jaylor Executioner* over the Bodies of condemned Priso- s doth, *Heb.* 2. 14. If you he freed from Con- mnation, the Sting of Death smites the Souls of en with a deadly stroke only by virtue of God's ndemnating Sentence. 1 *Cor.* 15. 55, 56. *The sting death is sin, and the strength of sin is the Law.* If u be freed from Condemnation now, you shall nd with Comfort and Boldness at the Judgment- of Christ in the great Day; and verily in this thing is the Love of God perfected, 1 *Joh.* 4. 17. O 'tis a Privilege in which the Grace, Mer- cy and Love of God doth shine forth as clearly as the Sun when it shineth in its full strentgth. And certainly you will find cause to lie at the Feet of God astonished, and overwhelmed with the sense of this Mercy, when you shall find your selves free from the Condemnation of God, whilst many o- thers as good as you were, are still under Condem- nation. Yea, your selves freed, and many of your Superiors in the world still under the curse; 1 *Cor.* 1. 26. Yea, your selves freed, and others that sat under the same means of Grace, and had the same external advantages you had, still in Chains, 2 *Cor.* 2. 16. O Brethren! This is a marvelous Deliverance; look on it which way you will, your ransom is paid, and not a penny of it by you; it cost you nothing to procure your Discharge; your Pardon is sealed in his Blood, and is irrecoverable for ever, so that you shall ne- ver any more come into condemnation. *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*, Joh. 5. 24.

Let them that are so delivered, spend their days on Earth in Praise and chearful Obedience; and when they die, let them not shrink away from death, nor be afraid to take it by the cold hand, it can do them no harm. Yea, let them close their dying Lips with, *Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ.*

SERMON XXXIII.

JOHN III. 19.

And this is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World, and Men loved Darkness rather than Light, because their Deeds were evil.

The Aggravation of Sin and Pu- ishment of Unbe- lief under the Light of the Gospel.

OUT of the foregoing Verse it was fully prov- ed in our last Sermon, that all Christless and ngenerate Men are no better than dead Men, g *condemned already.* Our Saviour proceeds in Verse to aggravate the Misery of those that re- and despise him; yet farther, and to let them w, that those who remain in Unbelief, and the of Unregeneracy, must expect some greater orer Wrath than other Men; not only a simple demnation, but an aggravated and peculiar Con- ation. *This is the Condemnation, that Light is* &c.

the Words we find these three Parts.

The Aggravation of Sin, by the Abuse of Gospel-Light. *Light is come*, &c.

The Aggravation of Misery in proportion to hat Abuse of Light, *This is the Condemnation.*

The Cause and Occasion drawing Men into his Sin and Misery, *Because their deeds were evil.*

st, We have here the Aggravation of Sin by buse of Gospel-Light, *Light is come.* By Light e to understand the Knowledge, Discovery, Manifestation of Christ, and Redemption by n the Gospel. He is the Son of Righteous- hat arises in the Gospel upon the Nations, 1. When he came in the Flesh, then did *the Day-spring from on high visit us*, Luke 1. 78. And the Light may be said to come two ways, ei- ther,

First, In the means by which it is conveyed to us; or, *Secondly*, in the Efficacy of it upon our Minds, when it actually shines in our Souls. Light may come among a People in the means, and yet they actually remain in Darkness all the while. As it is in nature; the Sun may be up, and a ve- ry glorious Morning far advanc'd, whilst many Thousands are drouzing upon their Beds with their Curtains drawn about them: Light in the *Means*, we may call *potential Light.* Light in the *Mind*, we may call *actual Light.* It is but seldom that Light comes in the Means, and continues long among Men; but some Light must needs actually shine into their Souls also; but this actual Light is twofold.

1. Common and intellectual only to *Conviction*, or,
2. Special and efficacious Light, bringing the Soul to Christ, by real *Conversion*,

Call'd in 1 *Cor.* 4. 6. —— God *shining into the heart.* Wherever Light comes in this last sense, it is im- possible that such Men should prefer Darkness be- fore it: But it may come in the Means, yea, it may actually shine into the Consciences of Men, by those means, and convince them of their Sins,

and yet Men may hate it, and chuſe Darkneſs rather than Light. And this is the Senſe of this Place, Light was come in the Goſpel-Diſpenſation among them; yea, it hath ſhined into many of their Conſciences, galled and reproved them for Sin; but they hated it, and had rather be without ſuch a troubleſome Inmate. In a word, by the coming of Light, we are here to underſtand a more clear and open Manifeſtation of Chriſt by the Goſpel than ever was made to the World before: For we are not to think that there was no Light in the World till Chriſt came, and the Goſpel was publiſh'd in the World by the Apoſtles Miniſtry. For *Abraham* ſaw Chriſt's Day, *Joh.* 8. 56. and all the Faithful before Chriſt ſaw the Promiſes (*i. e.*) their Accompliſhment in Chriſt afar off, *Heb.* 11. 13. For it was with Chriſt the Son of Righteouſneſs, as it is with the Natural Sun, that illuminates the Hemiſphere before it actually riſes, or ſhews its Body above the Horizon; but when it riſes and ſhews it ſelf, the Light is much clearer; ſo it was in this caſe. The greater therefore was their Sin, that rebelled againſt it, and preferred Darkneſs to Light; this was their Sin, with its fearful Aggravation.

Sol nondum conſpectus illuminat orbem.

Secondly, In a moſt juſt Proportion to this Sin we have here the aggravated Condemnation of them who ſinned againſt ſuch clear Goſpel-light: *This is the Condemnation*, this is the Judgment of all Judgments, the greateſt and moſt intolerable Judgment; a ſeverer Judgment than ever did paſs againſt any others that ſinned in the times of Ignorance and Darkneſs; they that live and die impenitent and unregenerate, how few ſoever the Means of Salvation have been which they have enjoyed, muſt be condemned; yea, the *Pagan* World who have no more but natural Light to help them, will be condemned by that Light; but *this is the Condemnation*, (*i. e.*) ſuch ſinning as this, is the Cauſe of the greateſt Condemnation, and ſoreſt Puniſhment, as it's called *Heb.* 10. 19.

Thirdly, The Cauſe and Occaſion drawing Men into this Sin and Miſery, *becauſe their deeds were evil*, (*i. e.*) the convincing Light of Truth put a great deal of Vigour and Activity into their Conſciences which they could not endure. The Accuſations and Condemnations of Conſcience are very irkſome and troubleſome things to Men: To avoid this they are willing to be ignorant. An enlighten'd Conſcience gives an Interruption alſo unto Men in their ſinful Courſes and Pleaſures; they cannot ſin at ſo eaſie a rate in the Light, as they did in Darkneſs; and this made them hate the Light as a very troubleſome thing to them. Thus you ſee what was the Sin, and what the Cauſe of both.

Hence the Obſervation is,

Doct. *That the greater and clearer the Light is, under which the impenitent and unregenerate do live in this World; by ſo much greater and heavier will their Condemnation and Miſery be in the World to come.*

Mat. 11. 21, 22. *Wo unto thee Chorazin, wo unto thee Bethſaida; for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in ſackcloth and aſhes: but I ſay unto you, it ſhall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.* Two things require Explication in the doctrinal Part of this Point, *viz.*

1. How Light puts a deeper Guilt and Aggravation into Sin.

2. Why Sin ſo aggravated, makes Men liable to greater Condemnation.

Firſt, We will enquire into the Grounds and Reaſons why greater and clearer Light greatens and aggravates proportionably the Sins that are committed under it; and it will appear, that it doth ſo upon divers accounts.

Firſt, All Light (eſpecially Evangelical Light) is a great Preſervative from Sin, and an excellent Means to prevent it: 'Tis the Property of Light to inform the Judgment, and rectifie the Miſtakes and Errors of it; and thereby to give check to the Affections in the purſuit of ſinful Deſigns and Courſes: 'Tis a plain caſe, that many Men would never do as they do, if their Underſtandings were better informed. 1 *Cor.* 2. 8. *Which none of the Princes of this World knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory*: It was want of Light and better Information which drew them under that horrid and unparallell'd Guilt. Our Saviour alſo ſuppoſes in the Place before cited, That if *Tyre* and *Sidon* had enjoyed the ſame Light, and Means of Grace that *Chorazin* and *Bethſaida* did, they would never have been ſo ſinful as they were: Light diſcovers Danger, and thereby overaws and ſtops Men from proceeding farther in thoſe Paths and Courſes that will run them into it.

Secondly, Sinning under and againſt the Light ſuppoſes and involves it in a greater Contempt and Deſpite of God's Authority, than ſinning in Ignorance and Darkneſs doth: Every Man that breaks the Law of God, doth not in the ſame degree deſpiſe and ſlight the Authority of the Law-maker. But when a Man hath Light to diſcover the Evil and the Danger of what he doth, and yet will dare to do it, what is this but the treading of God's Authority under foot? The caſting of his Word behind our Backs? Wilful ſinning is a deſpiteful ſinning againſt God, *Heb.* 26. it argues a low and vile Eſteem of the Law of God, which is reverend and holy: and by ſo much the more it makes Sin to be exceeding ſinful.

Thirdly, Sinning under, and againſt the Light admits not of thoſe Excuſes and Pleas to extenuate the Offence, which Sins of pure Ignorance do. Thoſe that live without the Sound of the Goſpel may ſay, Lord, we never heard of Chriſt and the great Redemption wrought by him; if we had, we would never have lived and acted as we did. And therefore Chriſt ſaith, *Joh.* 15. 22. *If I had not come and ſpoken unto them, they had not had ſin, but now they have no cloak for their ſin.*

The meaning is, that if the Goſpel-Light had not ſhined among them, their Sin had not been of that deep guilt that now it is: For now it is foul and heinous by reaſon of the Light under, againſt which it is committed, that they have no Pretence or Excuſe to extenuate or mitigate it.

Fourthly, Evangelical Light is a very rich Fruit and Mercy of God to Men; one of the choiceſt Gifts beſtowed upon the Nations of the World; and therefore it's ſaid, *Pſal.* 147. 19, 20. *He ſhewed his word unto Jacob, and his ſtatutes and his judgments unto Iſrael: He hath not dealt ſo with any nation; and as for his judgments they have not known them.* Other Nations have Corn and Wine, Gold and Silver, abundance of earthly Delights and Pleaſures: but they have not a Beam of heavenly Light ſhining upon them. We may account this Mercy ſmall, but God, who is beſt able to value the worth of things, accounts it great. *Hoſ.* 8. 12. *I have written*

them the great things of my Law. Christ reckoned *Capernaum* to be exalted unto Heaven by the Ministry of the Gospel in that place. Now the greater the Mercy is which the Light of Truth brings with it; by so much the more horrid and heinous must the abusing and despising of it be.

Fifthly, Sinning against the Light, argues a Love to Sin, as Sin; to naked Sin without any Disguise or Covert. It is nothing so bad for a Man to sin through a Mistake of Judgment, when he thinks that to be lawful which is indeed sinful: He doth not now close with Sin, as Sin; but he either closes with it as his Duty, or at least, his Liberty. 'Tis hard for Satan to persuade many Men to embrace a naked Sin; and therefore he cloaths it in the Habit of a Duty or Liberty, and thereby deceives and draws Men to the Commission of it. But if a Man have Light shining into his Conscience, and convincing him that the way he is in, is the way of Sin, quite contrary to the revealed Will of God; stripping the Sin naked before the Eye of his Conscience, so that he hath no covert or excuse, and yet will persist in it: This, I say, argues a Soul to be in love with sin, as sin. Now as for a Man to love Grace, as Grace, is a solid Argument to prove the Truth of his Grace; so on the contrary, for a Man to love sin as sin, doth not only argue him to be in the state of sin, but to be in the fore-front, and amongst the highest rank of sinners.

Sixthly, The greater and clearer the Light is, under and against which Men continue in sin, the more must the Consciences of such Sinners be supposed to be wasted and violated by such a way of sinning: For this is a sure Rule, that the greatest Violation of Conscience is the greatest Sin. Conscience is a noble and tender Part of the Soul of Man; it is in the Soul as the Eye in the Body, very sensible of the least Injury; and a Wound in the Conscience is like a Blow in the Eye: But nothing gives a greater Blow to Conscience, nothing so much wastes it and destroys it, as sins against the Light do. This puts a plain force upon the Conscience, and gives a dreadful stab to that noble Power, God's Vicegerent in the Soul. And thus you see the first thing made good that Light puts deep Guilt and Aggravation into sin.

Maxima violatio conscientiæ est maximum peccatum.

Secondly, In the next place, let us examine why sin so aggravated by the Light, makes Men liable to the greater Condemnation: For that it doth so, is beyond all debate or question; else the Apostle *Peter* would not have said of those Sinners against Light as he doth, 2 *Pet.* 2. 21. *That it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness.* Nor would Christ have told the Inhabitants of *Chorazin* or *Bethsaida*, that it should be more tolerable for *Tyre* and *Sidon* at the Day of Judgment, than for them. There is a twofold Reason of this.

1. *Ex parte Dei*, on God's part.
2. *Ex parte peccatoris*, on the Sinner's part.

First, *Ex parte Dei*, on God's part, who is the righteous Judge of the whole Earth; and will therefore render unto every Man according to the different Degrees of their sins. Now that there are different degrees of sin, is abundantly clear from what we have lately discoursed under the former Head; where we have shewed, that the Light under which Men sin, puts extraordinary Aggravations upon their sins; answerable whereunto will the degrees of Punishment be awarded by the righteous Judge of Heaven and Earth. The *Gentiles* who had no other Light of Nature, will be condemned for disobeying the Law of God written upon their Hearts: But yet the greater wrath is reserved for them who sin both against the Light of Nature, and the Light of the Gospel also; and therefore it is said, *Rom* 2. 9. *Tribulation and Anguish upon every soul of Man that doeth evil; of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile.* Impenitent Jews and Gentiles will all be condemned at the Bar of God: but with this difference, to the Jew first, (*i. e.*) principally and especially, because the Light and Mercy which he abused and violated, were far greater than those bestow'd upon the Gentiles, *because unto them were committed the Oracles of God:* and God had not dealt with any Nation as with that Nation. Indeed in the Rewards of Obedience the same Reason doth not hold: He that came into the Vineyard the last Hour of the day, may be equal in Reward with him that bare the Heat and Burthen of the whole day; because the Reward is of Grace and Bounty, not of Debt and Merit: but it is not so here, Justice observes an exact proportion in distributing Punishments according to the Degrees, Deserts and Measures of Sin; and therefore it is said concerning *Babylon*, Rev. 18. 7. *How much she hath gloried her self, and lived deliciously; so much torment and sorrow give her.*

Secondly, Ex parte Peccatoris, upon the account of Sinners, it must needs be, that the heaviest Wrath and most intolerable Torments should be the portion of them who have sinned against the clearest Light and Means of Grace; for we find in the Scripture-Account, that a principal and special part of the Torment of the damned will arise from their own Consciences, *Mar.* 9. 44. *Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.* And nothing is more manifest than this, that if Conscience be the Tormenter of the damned, then Sinners against Light must needs have the greatest Torments. For,

First, The more Knowledge any Man had in this world, the more was his Conscience violated and abused here, by sinning against it: And O what work will these Violations and Abuses make for a *tormenting Conscience* in Hell! With what rage and fury will it then avenge it self upon the most stout, daring and impudent Sinner! The more Guilt now, the more rage and fury then.

Secondly, The more Knowledge or means of Knowledge any Man hath enjoyed in this World, so much the more matter is prepared and laid up for Conscience to upbraid him with in the place of Torments; and the upbraidings of Conscience are a special part of the Torments of the damned. O what a Peal will Conscience ring in the Ears of such Sinners! Did not I warn thee of the Issue of such sins, undone Wretch? How often did I strive with thee, if it had been possible to take thee off from thy course of sinning, and to escape this Wrath? Did not I often cry out in thy Bosom, stop thy course, sinner? Hearken to my counsel, turn and live; but thou wouldest not hearken to my Voice? I forewarned thee of this Danger, but thou slightedst all my Warnings; thy Lusts were too strong for my Light, and now thou seest whither thy way tended, but alas too late!

Thirdly, The more Knowledge or Means of Knowledge any Man hath abused and neglected in

in this World, ſo many fair Opportunities and great Advantages he hath loſt for Heaven, and the more Opportunities and Advantages he hath had for Heaven, the more intolerable will Hell be to that Man; as the Mercy was great which was offer'd by them, ſo the Torment will be unſpeakable that will ariſe from the Loſs of them. Sinners, you have now a wide and open door, many bleſſed Opportunities of ſalvation under the Goſpel, it hath put you in a fair way for everlaſting Happineſs. Many of you are not far from the Kingdom of God; there will be time enough in Hell to reflect upon this Loſs. What think you, will it not be ſad to think there? O how fair was I once for Heaven, to have been with God, and among yonder Saints! My Conſcience was once convinc'd, and my Affections melted under the Goſpel. I was almoſt perſuaded to be a Chriſtian indeed, the Bargain was almoſt made betwixt Chriſt and my Soul; there were but a few points in difference betwixt us; but Wretch that I was, at thoſe points the bargain ſtruck, and there the Treaty ended, to my eternal Ruin. I could not deny my Luſts, I could not live under the ſtrict Yoak of Chriſt's Government; but now I muſt live under the inſupportable Wrath of the righteous and terrible God for ever; and this Torment will be peculiar to ſuch as periſh under the Goſpel. The Heathen who enjoyed no ſuch means, can therefore have no ſuch Reflections; nay, the very Devils themſelves, who never had ſuch a Plank after their ſhipwreck, I mean, a Mediator in their nature, or ſuch Terms of reconciliation offer'd them, will not reflect upon their loſt opportunities of recovering, as ſuch ſinners muſt, and will; this therefore *is the condemnation, that light is come into the world; but men loved darkneſs rather than light.*

Infer. 1. *Hence it follows, that neither Knowledge, nor the beſt means of Knowledge, are in themſelves ſufficient to ſecure Men from Wrath to come.* Light in it ſelf is a choice Mercy, and therefore the Means that begat and encreaſed it, muſt be ſo too; but yet it is a Mercy liable to the greateſt Abuſe, and the Abuſe of the beſt Mercies brings forth the greateſt Miſeries. Alas, Chriſtians, your Duty is but half learnt when you know it; Obedience to Light makes Light a Bleſſing indeed, *Joh.* 13. 17. *If ye know theſe things, happy are ye if ye do them.* Happineſs is not entailed upon ſimple knowing, but upon doing; upon obedience to our Knowledge; otherwiſe, he that encreaſeth Knowledge, doth but encreaſe Sorrow: *for that ſervant which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himſelf, nor did according to his will, ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes,* Luk. 12. 47. *And to him that knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him it is ſin,* Jam. 4. 17. We are bound with all thankfulneſs to acknowledge the Bounty of Heaven to this ſinful generation, in furniſhing us with ſo many excellent means of Light beyond many other Nations and Generations that are paſt; but yet we ought to rejoice with trembling when we conſider the Abuſes of Light in this wanton Age, and what a diſmal Event is like to happen unto many thouſands among us. I fear, the time is coming when many among us will wiſh they had never ſet Foot on Engliſh ground. God hath bleſſed this Nation with many famous burning and ſhining Lights; it was once ſaid to the Honour of this Nation, *that the Engliſh Miniſtry was the World's Wonder;* and when a Man of another Nation began to preach methodically and convincingly, they were wont to ſay, *We perceive this Man hath been in* England; the greater will our account be for abuſing ſuch Light, and rebelling againſt it; the clearer our Light is now, the thicker will the Miſts of Darkneſs be hereafter, if we thus wantonize under it. The Devils have more Light than we, and therefore the more Torment; of them it is ſaid, *Jam.* 2. 19. *The Devils alſo believe and tremble;* the Horror of their Conſciences is anſwerable to their Illumination, *they tremble;* the Word ſignifies the Rote of the Sea, or ſuch a Murmuring dreadful Noiſe as the tempeſtuous Seas uſe to make when they break themſelves againſt the Rocks.

Clerus Anglicanus ſtupor mundi.

Percipimus hunc hominem fuiſſe in Anglia.

eſt mentis agitatio. Enn.

Infer. 2. *If the Abuſe of Light thus aggravates Sin and Miſery, then times of great Temptation are like to be times of deep Guilt.* Wo to an enlighten'd knowing Generation when ſtrong Temptations befal them. How do many in ſuch times impriſon the known Truth, to keep themſelves out of Priſon? offer Violence to their own Conſciences, to avoid Violence from other hands? * *Plato* was convinced of the Unity of God, but durſt not own his own Convictions; but ſaid, it was a Truth neither eaſie to find, nor ſafe to own. And even † *Seneca*, the renowned Moraliſt, was forced by Temptation to diſſemble his Conviction; of whom ‡ *Auguſtin* ſaith, he worſhipped what himſelf reprehended; and did what himſelf reproved; and even a great *Papiſt* of latter times, was heard to ſay as he was going to Maſs, *Eamus ad communem errorem*, Let us go to the common Error. O how hard is it to keep Conſcience pure and peaceable in Days of Temptation! Doubtleſs it is a Mercy to many weak and timorous Chriſtians to be remov'd by a ſeaſonable death out of harms way, to be diſbanded by a merciful Providence before the heat of the Battel. *Chriſt* and *Antichriſt* ſeem at this day to be drawing into the Field, a fiery Trial threatens the Profeſſors of this Age; but when it comes to a cloſe grapple indeed, we may juſtly tremble to think how many thouſands will break their way through the Convictions of their own Conſciences to ſave their Fleſh. Believe it, Sirs, if Chriſt hold you to himſelf by no other Tye than the ſlender Thread of a ſingle conviction, if he have not Intereſt in your Hearts and Affections, as well as in your Underſtandings and Conſciences; if you be Men of great Light and ſtrong unmortified Luſts; if you profeſs Chriſt with your Tongues, and worſhip the World with your Hearts; a Man may ſay of you without the gift of Prophecy, what the Prophet ſaid of *Hazael*, I know what ye will do in the day of temptation.

* *Opificem univerſorum neque invenire facile, neque inventum in vulgus promulgare tutum.*

† *In animi religione non habent, ſed in actibus fingat.*

‡ *Colebat quod reprehendebat, agebat quod arguebat, quod culpabat adorabat.*

Infer. 3. *If this be ſo, what a ſtrange Engagement lieth upon all enlighten'd Perſons to turn heartily to God, and reduce their Knowledge into Practice and Obedience?* The more Men know, the more violence they do to their own Conſciences in rebelling againſt the Light: This is to ſin with an high hand, *Num.* 15. 30. Believe it, Sirs, you cannot ſin at ſo cheap a rate as others do: Knowledge in a wicked Man, like

like high mettle in a blind horſe, doth but the ſooner precipitate him into Ruin. You may know much more than others; but if ever you come to Heaven, it muſt be in the ſame way of Faith and Obedience, Mortification and Self-denial in which the weakeſt Chriſtian comes thither; whatever Knowledge you have, to be ſure you have no Wiſdom, if you expect Salvation upon any other or eaſier Terms, than the moſt illiterate Chriſtian finds it. It was a ſad Obſervation of the Father, *Surgunt indocti, & rapiunt cælum*, the Unlearned riſe, and take Heaven. What a pity 'tis that Men of ſuch excellent Parts ſhould be enſlaved to their Luſts! that ever it ſhould be ſaid, *Sapientes ſapienter deſcendunt in Gehennam*, their Learning doth but hang in their Light, it doth but blind them in ſpiritual things, and prepareth them for greater Miſery.

Infer. 4. *Hence it alſo follows, that the Work of Converſion is a very difficult Work; the Soul is ſcarcely half won to Chriſt, when Satan is caſt out of the Underſtanding by Illuminations.* The Devil hath deeply intrenched himſelf, and ſtrongly fortified every Faculty of the Soul againſt Chriſt. The Underſtanding indeed is the firſt Entrance into the Soul, and out of that Faculty he is oftentimes expulſed by Light and Conviction, which ſeems to make a great Change upon a Man. Now he becomes a Profeſſor, now he takes up the Duties of Religion and paſſes up and down the World for a Convert; but alas, alas! all the while Satan keeps the Fort Royal, the Heart, and Will are in his own poſſeſſion; and this is a Work of more difficulty. The Weapons of that Warfare muſt indeed be mighty thro' God, which do not only caſt down Imaginations, but bring every Thought of the Heart into captivity to the obedience of Chriſt, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5. While the Heart ſtands out, tho' the Underſtanding be taken in, the Soul remains in Satan's poſſeſſion; 'tis a greater Work (and we daily find it) to win one Heart, than to convince twenty Underſtandings.

Infer. 5. *Hence alſo we may learn what Strength and Power there is in the Luſts of Mens Hearts, which are able to bear down ſo ſtrong Convictions of the Conſcience before them.* That is a great Truth, tho' a very ſad one, Eccleſ. 8. 11. *The heart of the ſons of men is fully ſet in them to do evil.* O how common it is every day, and in every place to ſee Men hazarding their Souls to ſatisfie their Luſts! Every Man, ſaith the Prophet, *turneth to his courſe, as the horſe ruſheth into the battel.* The Horſe is a very fierce and warlike Creature; and when his courage is rouzed by the ſound of Trumpets and ſhouts of Armies, he breaks headlong into the Ranks of armed Men, though Death be before him. Such boiſterous and headlong Luſts are found in many enlighten'd Perſons, though their Conſciences repreſent Damnation before them, onward they will ruſh, though God be loſt, and a precious Soul undone for ever

Infer. 6. To conclude, *As ever you will avoid the deepeſt Guilt, and eſcape the heavieſt Condemnation, open your hearts to obey and practiſe whatſoever God hath opened your Underſtandings and Conſciences to receive on his revealed Will*; Obey the Light of the Goſpel while you have Opportunity to enjoy it; this was the great Counſel given by Chriſt, Joh. 12. 35, 36. *Yet a little while the Light is with you, walk whilſt you have the Light, leſt Darkneſs come upon you.* The Manifeſtation of Chriſt in the Goſpel is the Light of the World; all the Nations of the Earth, that want this Light, are benighted; and thoſe upon whom this Light is riſen, have but ſhort time under it; *yet a little while the Light is with you*, and whatever Patience God may exerciſe towards poor ignorant Souls, yet commonly he makes ſhort Work with the Deſpiſers of this Light; the Light of the Goſpel is a ſhining Lamp, fed with golden Oil. God will not be at the Expence of ſuch a Light for them that do but trifle with it. The Night is coming when no Man can work: There are many ſad ſigns upon us of a ſetting Sun; a Night of Darkneſs approaching; many burning and ſhining Lights are extinguiſhed and many put under a Buſhel; your work is great, your time ſhort, this is the only ſpace you have for Repentance, *Rev.* 2. 21. If this Opportunity of Salvation be loſt, it will never come again, *Ezek.* 24. 13. How pathetical was that Lamentation which Chriſt made over *Jeruſalem*, Luke 19. 41, 42. *And when he was come near he beheld the City, and wept over it, ſaying, 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.* Chriſt is threatening theſe Nations with the Removal of his Goſpel Preſence; he hath found but cold Entertainment among us. *England* hath been unkind to Chriſt; many thouſands there are that rebel againſt the Light, *that ſay unto God, depart from us, we deſire not the Knowledge of thy Ways.* Chriſt will not tarry where he is not welcome; who would, that hath any whither elſe to go? Obey the Light therefore, leſt God put it out in obſcure Darkneſs.

SERMON XXXIV.

2 COR. IV. 3, 4.

But if our Goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt; in whom the God of this World hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, leſt the Light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the Image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.

The blinding Power of Satan operates the Cauſe of Belief, and Forerunner of Deſtruction; News of Deliverance ſhould make the Hearts of Captives leap for Joy. The Tidings of a Saviour ſhould tranſport the Heart of a loſt Sinner. A Man would think a little Rhetorick might perſuade the naked Soul of a Sinner to put on the rich Robes of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs, which coſt him nothing but Acceptance; or the periſhing ſtarving

THE Averſations of Men from Jeſus Chriſt their only Remedy, is as much to be admired, as lamented;

ſtarving Sinner to accept the Bread of God which cometh down from Heaven, and giveth Light unthe World. This is the great Deſign I have managed in this whole Diſcourſe; the Centre to which all theſe Lines are drawn; many Arguments have been uſed, and many Ways attempted to prevail with Men to apply and put on Chriſt, and I am afraid, all too little. I have but labour'd in vain, and ſpent my Strength for nought; all theſe Diſcourſes are but the beating of the Air, and few, if any, will be perſuaded to come unto Chriſt, who is clearly opened, and freely offered in the Goſpel to them. For alas, while I am *reaſoning*, Satan is *blinding* their Minds with falſe Reaſonings and contrary Perſuaſions; the God of this World turns away the Ears, and draws away the Hearts of almoſt the whole World from Chriſt; *The God of this World hath blinded the Minds of them which believe not, leſt the Light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt who is the Image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.* Satan is a great and jealous Prince, and is well aware, that ſo many of his Subjects as ſhall be brought to ſee the Miſery of their condition, will never endure to abide any longer in ſubjection to him: 'Tis therefore his great Policy to put out their Eyes, that he may ſecure their Souls; to darken their Underſtandings, that he may keep his Intereſt firm and entire in their Wills and Affections; and this makes the effectual Application of Chriſt ſo great a Difficulty; that upon the contrary, it is juſt Matter of Admiration, that any Soul is perſuaded and prevailed with, to quit the ſervice of Satan, and come to Chriſt. And therefore in the laſt place, to diſcover the great difficulty of Converſion, and ſhew you where it is that all our Endeavours ſtick and ſet, ſo that we can move the Deſign no further, with all our tugging and ſtriving, reaſoning and perſuading; as alſo to mourn over and bewail the Miſery of Chriſtleſs and unregenere Souls, with whom we muſt part upon the ſaddeſt Terms; I have choſen this Scripture, which is of a moſt awakening nature, if haply the Lord at laſt may perſuade any ſoul to come over to Chriſt thereby.

Theſe Words come into the Apoſtles Diſcourſe, by way of *Prolepſis*; he had been ſpeaking in the former Chapter of the tranſcendent Excellency of the Goſpel above the Law; and among other reſpects he prefers it to the Law in point of Clearneſs. The Law was an obſcure and cloudy Diſpenſation, there was a Veil upon the Face of *Moſes*, and the Hearts of the People, that they ſhould not ſee to the End of that which is aboliſhed; but under the Goſpel we all with open Face behold as in a Glaſs, the Glory of the Lord. Againſt this Diſcourſe the Apoſtle foreſaw and obviated this Objection. If your Goſpel be ſo clear, what is the reaſon that many who live under the Miniſtration of it (and they none of the meaneſt neither, for Wiſdom and Underſtanding) do yet ſee no Glory nor Excellency in it? To this he returns in the Words I have read, *If our Goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt, whoſe Eyes the God of this World hath blinded*, &c. *q. d.* 'Tis true, Multitudes there are who ſee no Glory in Chriſt or the Goſpel, but the fault is not in either; but in the Minds of them that believe not. The Sun ſhines forth in its Glory, but the Blind ſee no Glory in it; the Fault is not in the Sun, but in the Eye. In the Words themſelves we have three Parts to conſider.

1. A dreadful ſpiritual Judgment inflicted.
2. The wicked Inſtrument by whom it is inflicted.
3. The politick manner in which he doth it.

Firſt, We have here a very dreadful ſpiritual Judgment inflicted upon the Souls of Men, *viz.* the hiding of the Goſpel from them; if our Goſpel be hid. For theſe Words εἰ δὲ καὶ ἔστι, are a Conceſſion, that ſo it is; a very ſad, but undeniable Truth. Many there are that ſee no Beauty in Chriſt, nor Neceſſity of him; though both are ſo plainly and evidently revealed in our Goſpel; *if our Goſpel be hid*: 'tis called *our Goſpel*, not as if St. *Paul* and the other Preachers of it, were the Authors and Inventers of it; but *our Goſpel*, becauſe we are the Preachers and Diſpenſers of it. We are put in truſt with the Goſpel, and though we preach it in the Demonſtration of the Spirit and of Power, uſing all plainneſs of ſpeech to make Men underſtand it; yet it is hid from many under our Miniſtry. 'Tis hid from their Underſtandings, they ſee no Glory in it; Our Goſpel, notwithſtanding all our Endeavours, is a hidden Goſpel unto ſome; this is the ſoreſt and moſt dreadful Judgment.

Secondly, We have here an account of that wicked Inſtrument by whom this Judgment is inflicted, *viz.* *Satan*, called here (by a *Mimeſis*) *the God of this World*; not ſimply and properly, but becauſe he chalenges to himſelf the Honour of a God, rules over a vaſt Empire, and hath multitudes of Souls, even the greater part of the World in ſubjection, and blind obedience to his Government.

Thirdly, Here alſo we have an account of the politick manner of his Government, how he maintains his Dominion among Men, and keeps the World in quiet ſubjection to him; namely, by blinding the Minds of all them that believe not; putting out the Eyes of all his Subjects, darkning that noble Faculty, the Mind or Underſtanding; the thinking, conſidering and reaſoning Soul which the Philoſophers truly call τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν, the leading and directing Faculty: For it is to the Soul what Eyes are to the Body, and it is therefore called *the Eyes of the Underſtanding*, *Eph.* 1. 18. Theſe Eyes Satan blinds (*i. e.*) he darkens the Mind and Underſtanding with Ignorance and Error; ſo that when Men come to ſee and conſider ſpiritual things, *they ſee indeed, but perceive not*, Iſa. 6. 9, 10. They have ſome general confuſed Notions, but no diſtinct, powerful and effectual Apprehenſions of thoſe things: And this is the way indeed, none like it, to bar Men effectually from Jeſus Chriſt, and hinder the *Application of the Benefits of Redemption* to their Souls. 'Tis true, the righteous God permits all this to be done by Satan upon the Souls of Men: but whereſoever he finally prevails thus to blind them, it is, as the Text ſpeaks, ἐν τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις, *in them that are loſt*, or appointed of God unto Perdition. The Elect of God are all blinded for a time, but Chriſt applyeth unto them his *Eye-ſalve*: Effectually opens the Eyes of their Underſtandings, and recovers them thereby out of Satan's Power and Dominion: But as for thoſe who ſtill continue thus blinded, they the *Symptoms* and *Characters* of Eternal Death appear upon their ſouls; they are a company of loſt Men.

Doct. *That the Underſtandings of all Unbelievers are blinded by Satan's Policies, in order to their everlaſting Perdition.*

Four Things muſt be opened in the doctrinal art of this Point.

Firſt, What the Blinding of the Underſtanding, hiding of the Goſpel from the Underſtanding

Secondly, I ſhall demonſtrate that the Underndings of many are thus blinded, and the Goel hidden from them.

Thirdly, I ſhall ſhew what Policies Satan uſes to ind the Minds of Men.

Fourthly, That this Blindneſs is the ſoreſt Judgent, and in order to Mens everlaſting Perdition.

Fifthly, And then apply the whole.

Firſt, We ſhall enquire what the Blinding of Mind, or hiding the Goſpel from it is. Two ts of Men are thus blinded in the World.

1 Thoſe that want the Means of Illumination.

2 Thoſe that have the Means, but are denied the eſſing and Efficacy of them.

The former is the Caſe of the *Pagan World*, who Midnight Darkneſs, for want of the Goſpel. he latter is the Caſe of the *Chriſtian World*. The eateſt Part of them that live within the Sound of Goſpel, being blinded by the God of this World, . 6. 9, 10. *And he ſaid, Go, and tell this People; ye indeed, but underſtand not; and ſee ye indeed, perceive not: Make the Heart of this People fat, make their Ears heavy; and ſhut their Eyes, leſt ſee with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears, and erſtand with their Heart, and convert and be healed.* us when the Son of Righteouſneſs actually a- in the World, it is ſaid, *John* 1. 5. *The light ed in darkneſs, but the darkneſs comprehended it not.* we may ſay of all that Light which is in the derſtanding of all Unbelievers, what *Job* ſpeaks he Grave, *Job* 10. 22. *That the light there is as neſs.* But more particularly to open the nature his ſpiritual Bleſſedneſs, I will ſhew you,

. What it is not oppoſed unto.

. What it is oppoſed unto.

irſt, Let us examine what ſpiritual Blindneſs, or hiding the Goſpel from the Minds of Men is oppoſed unto: And we ſhall find,

irſt, That it is not oppoſed unto natural Wiſ; a Man may be of an acute and clear Underding; Eagle-eyed to diſcern the Myſteries Nature, and yet the Goſpel may be hidden from . Who were more ſagacious and quick-ſighted natural Things, than the heathen *Philoſophers*, own'd for Wiſdom in their Generation? Yet them the Goſpel was but *Fooliſhneſs*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 1. S. *Auguſtine* confeſſeth that before his Conon, he was filled with Offence and Contempt e Simplicity of the Goſpel. *Dedignubar eſſe parus*, ſaith he, I ſcorned to become a Child again. that great *Bradwardine*, the profound *Doctor*, was learned, *uſque ad ſtuporem*, even to a Wonprofeſſed that when he firſt read *Paul's Epiſtles*, eſpiſed them, becauſe he found not in them, *phyſicum ingenium*, thoſe Metaphyſical Notions h he expected. Upon this Account it was Chriſt brake forth into that Pathetical Gratun of his Father's Love to the Elect, *Mat.* 11. 25. *at time Jeſus anſwered, and ſaid, I thank thee, O r, Lord of Heaven and Earth; becauſe thou haſt eſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt real them unto babes.*

ondly, It is not oppoſed to all Light and wledge in ſpiritual Truths. And Man may a true Underſtanding of the Scriptures, give rthodox Expoſition of them, and enlighten Minds of others by them; and yet the Goſpel may be hidden from himſelf, *Matt.* 7. 22. *Many will ſay unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy name?* So, *Rom.* 2. 19. *And are confident that thou thy ſelf art a guide of the blind, a light to them that ſit in darkneſs*, &c. A Man ſhew others the way to Chriſt and Salvation, whilſt both are hid from himſelf.

Thirdly, It is not oppoſed to all manner of Influences upon the Affections; for it is poſſible the Goſpel may touch the Affections themſelves, and cauſe ſome ſweet Motions and Raptures in them; and yet be an hidden Goſpel to the Soul, *Heb* 6. 5, 9.

Secondly, But if theſe three Things may conſiſt with ſpiritual Blindneſs, unto what then is it oppoſed? To which I anſwer, that ſpiritual Blindneſs ſtands only oppoſed unto that ſaving Manifeſtation of Jeſus Chriſt in the Goſpel, by the Spirit whereof the Soul is regenerated, and effectually changed by a real Converſion unto God: Where ever the Goſpel thus comes in the Demonſtration of the Spirit, and of Power; producing ſuch an Effect as this in the Soul; it is no longer an hidden Goſpel to that Soul, tho' ſuch Perſons do not ſee clearly all the Glory which is revealed by the Goſpel: tho' they know but in part, and ſee darkly as through a Glaſs; yet the Eyes of their Underſtandings are open'd, and the things which belong to their Peace are not hidden from them.

Secondly, But tho' this be the Happineſs of ſome Men, yet it is demonſtrable, that the Eyes of many are blinded by the God of this World, and the Goſpel is an hidden Goſpel from them; for,

Firſt, Many that live under the Goſpel are ſo entirely ſwallowed up in the Affairs of this World, that they allow themſelves no Time to ponder the great Concernment of their Souls in the World to come; and judge you what ever the Gifts and Knowledge of theſe Men are, whether the God of this World hath not blinded their Eyes. If it were not ſo, it were impoſſible that ever they ſhould thus waſt the moſt precious Opportunities of Salvation, upon which their everlaſting well-being depends, and ſpend Time at the Door of Eternity about Trifles which ſo little concern them. Yet this is the Caſe of the greateſt Number that go under the Chriſtian Name. The Earth hath opened her Mouth, and ſwallowed up their Time, Thoughts, Studies and Strength, as it did the Bodies of *Corah* and his *Accomplicies*. The firſt, the freeſt, and upon the Matter, the whole of their Time is devoted to the Service of the World; for even at that very Time when they preſent their Bodies before the Lord in the Duties of his Worſhip, their Hearts are wandring after Vanities, and *going after their Covetouſneſs*, Ezek. 43. 31. Judge whether the God of the World hath blinded theſe Men or no, who can ſee ſo much Beauty in the World, but none in Chriſt, and put ſuch an abſolute Neceſſity upon the Vanities of this World, but none upon their own Salvation. If this be not ſpiritual Blindneſs, what is?

Secondly, The great Stillneſs and Quietneſs of Mens Conſciences under the rouzing and awakening Truths of the Goſpel, plainly proves that the God of this World hath blinded their Eyes. For did Men ſee and apprehend the Dangerous Condition they are in, as the Word repreſents it; nothing in the World would quiet them but Chriſt. As ſoon as Mens Eyes come to be open'd, the next enquiry they make, is, *What ſhall we do to be ſav'd?* It is not not poſſible that a Man ſhould hang over

Hell, see Christ and the Hopes of Salvation going, and yet be quiet. O it cannot be, that Conscience should let them be quiet in such a Case, if it were not blinded and stupify'd; but whilst the God of this World, *that strong man armed, keepeth the house, all his goods are in peace*, Luke 11. 20. If once your Eyes were opened by Conviction, a Man may then say, be quiet if you can; sit still, and let the Hopes and Seasons of Salvation pass quietly away if you can. Suppose one should come into the Congregation, and whisper but such a Word as this in your Ears, your Child is fallen into the fire, and is dying, since you came from home; will it be in the Power of all the Friends you have, to quiet you, and make you still after such an Information? much less when a Man apprehends his own Soul in immediate Danger of everlasting Burnings.

Thirdly, The strong Confidences and presumptuous Hopes Men have of Salvation, whilst they remain in the State of Nature, and unregeneracy, plainly shews their Minds to be blinded by the Policy of Satan. This Presumption is one of those *strong* false Reasonings, by which Satan deludes the Understanding, as the Apostle calls them, *Jam.* 1. 22. 'Tis the cunning Sophistry of the Devil, farthered by Self-love, *Prov.* 21 2 *Every way of a man is right in his own eyes*, and partly by Self-ignorance, *Rev.* 3. 17. *Thou saidst I am rich, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art poor.* You have no Fears, no Doubts, no Case to propound that concerns your future State; and why so? but because you have no Sight, your Consciences are quieted because your Eyes are blinded.

Fourthly, The trifling of Men with the Duties of Religion, plainly discovers the blinding Power of Satan upon their Minds and Understandings, else they would never play and dally with the serious and solemn Ordinances of God, at that Rate they do; if their Eyes were once opened, they would be in earnest in Prayer, and apply themselves with the closest Attention of Mind in hearing the Gospel. There are two sorts of Thoughts about any Subject of Meditation. Some think at Distance, and others think close to the Subject. Never do the Thoughts of Men come so close to Christ, to Heaven and to Hell, as they do immediately upon their Illumination. When *John*'s Ministry enlightened the Peoples Minds, it is said *Matt.* 11. 12. *From the days of* John *the Baptist until now, the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.* Surely these Men were more in good earnest, that would receive no Repulse, take no Denial, but even force themselves thro' all Difficulties into Heaven; and so would it be with you. If the God of this World had not blinded your Minds, you would never pray with so much Unconcernedness, nor hear with so much Oscitancy and Carelessness; pray, as if you pray'd not, and hear as if you heard not. It is with many of our Hearts, as it was with *Aristotle*, who after a quaint Oration made before him, was asked how he liked it; truly, said he, I did not hear it; for I was thinking all the while of another Matter.

Fifthly, This also is a plain Evidence, that the God of this World hoth blinded many Mens Eyes among us, for that they fear not to commit great Sins, to avoid small Hazards and Troubles, which all the World could never persuade them to do, if they were not hoodwink'd by the God of this World. Those that have seen sin as sin in the Glass of God's Law, *will choose, as* Moses *did, suffer any Affliction with the People of God, rather than enjoy the Pleasures of Sin, which are but for a season*, Heb. 11. 25. Those that have seen and felt the Evil of Sin in the deep Troubles of their Spirit for it, will account all Reproaches, all Losses, all Sufferings from Men, to be but Flea-bitings to the Burthen of Sin.

Sixthly, The Pride and Self-conceitedness of many Thousands who profess Christianity, plainly shew their Minds to be blinded by the *Sophistry of Satan*, and that they do not understand themselves and the woful state of their own souls. Those that see God in the cleerest Light, abhor themselves in the deepest Humility, *Isa.* 6. 5. *Job* 42. If ever the Lord had effectually opened your eyes by a clear Discovery of your state by Nature, and the course of your Life under the Efficacy and Influence of continual Temptations and Corruptions, how would your Plumes fall? None in the World wou'd rate you lower, than you your selves would. By all which it appears, that Multitudes are blinded by the God of this World.

Thirdly, In the third place, we are to consider what Policies Satan useth to blind the Minds of them that believe not, and we shall find there are three sorts of Policies practised by the God of this World upon the Minds and Understandings of Men, which he darkens, by

1. Hindering the Reception of Gospel-Light.
2. Obstructing the Efficacy of it when received.
3. Making Misapplication of it to other Purposes.

First, It is a great Policy in Satan to blind the Understandings of Men, by hindering and preventing the Reception of Gospel-Light, which doth especially these five ways;

First, By tempting the Dispensers of the Gospel, to darken the Truths thereof in their delivering of them, to shoot over the Heads of the Hearers, in lofty Language and Terms of Art, that common Understandings can give no account when the Sermon is done, what the Preacher would have, but however commend him for a good Scholar, and an excellent Orator. I make no doubt but the Devil is very busie with Ministers in their Studies, tempting them by the Pride of their own Hearts to gratifie his Design here, he teaches them how to paint the Glass, that might keep out the Light.

I acknowledge, a proper, grave and comely Style befits the Lips of *Christ's Ambassadors*, they should not be rude and careless in their Language or Method. But this Affectation of great swelling words of Vanity, is but too like the proud *Gnosticks*, which the *Apostle* is supposed to tax for this Evil, *Jude* Ver. 16. *This is to darken Counsel, by words without knowledge*, Job 38. 2. To amuse and benight poor ignorant souls, and nullifie the design of Preaching; for every thing is accounted so far good as it is good to the end it is ordained for. A sword that hath an Hilt of Gold set thick with Diamonds is no good sword if it hath no edge to cut, or want a good back to follow home the stroke. So that the Ministers of Christ would chuse rather to found than great Words, such as are apt to pierce the Heart, rather than

Qui populariter, trivialiter & simplicissimè docent, optimi ad vulgum concinatores. Bucholtz.

h as tickle the Fancy, and let People beware of thering the Design of Satan against their own h's, in putting a Temptation upon their Mini- rs, by despising plain Preaching. The more ular plain, and intelligible our Discourses are, much the more probable they are to be succes- ; that is the most excellent Oratory that per- des Men to Christ.

Secondly, Satan hinders the Access of Light to Understandings of Men, by imploying their nds about impertinent things, while they are nding upon the Ordinances of God, Thus he pted them in *Ezek.* 33. 31, 32. *And they come thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee, people; and they hear thy Words, but they will do them; for with their Mouth they shew much but their Heart goeth after their Covetousness. lo! thou art unto them as a very lovely Song of one hath a pleasant Voice.* The Modulation of the phet's Voice was very pleasing to their Ears, mean while their Fancies and Thoughts were ding after their Lusts, their Hearts were full arthly Projects.

Thirdly, Satan hinders the Access of Light to the erstandings of Men, by raising Objections, picking Quarrels with the Word, on purpose ake its Authority, and hinder the Assent of Understanding to it, and so the Word makes nore Impression than a Fable or a *Romance* ld do. And never did this Design of Satan in more than in this Atheistical Age, wherein main Pillars and Foundation of Religion are en in the Minds of Multitudes. The Devil persuaded many, that the Gospel is but a ingly devised Fable; *Fabula Christi*, as that heming Pope called it; That Ministers must omething to get a Living. That Heaven and are but Fancies, or at most, Things of great rainty and doubtful credit. This being once ned, the Door of the soul is shut against h. And this Design of Satan hath prospered ore in this Generation, by the corrupt Do- s of seducing Spirits, *which have overthrown ith of some*, 2 Tim. 2. 18. And partly from candalous Lives of loose and vain Professors, Gospel hath been brought into Contempt; specially by Satan's artificial Improvement of orrupt Natures of Men, in an Age wherein cience hath been so much debauched, and sm thereby spread as a Gangrene in the Body ck.

Fourthly, Satan hinders the Access of Light, by g erroneous Minds to draw false Conclusions perverse Inferences from the great and preci- ruths of the Gospel; and thereby bringing under Prejudice and Contempt: Thus he the Errors of Mens Minds about the Do- of *Election*; when he either persuades them, is an unreasonable Doctrine, and not wor- Credit, That God should chuse some, and others every way as good as those he hath n; or if there be any Certainty in that Do- then Men may throw the Reins upon the of their Lusts, and live at what rate they list. God have chosen them to Salvation, their dness shall not hinder it; and if he have nted them unto Wrath, their Diligence and enial cannot prevent it.

us the Doctrine of Free Grace is by the like stry of Satan turned into Lasciviousness. If abound, Men may sin the more freely; and the shortness of our time upon Earth, which in its own nature awakens all Men to Diligence, is by the subtilty of Satan turned to a quite contrary purpose, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we die.*

Fifthly, Satan darkens the Minds of Men, and shuts them up against the Light, by blowing them up with Pride and self-conceitedness, persuading them that they know all these things already, and causing them to contemn the most weighty and precious Truths of God, as trite and vulgar Notions. The Word cannot be received without Meekness and Humility of Mind, *Jam.* 1. 21. *Psal.* 25. 8, 9. and Pride is the Nurse of Ignorance, 1 *Tim.* 6. 4. 1 *Cor.* 8. 7. The Devil is aware of this, and therefore blows up the Pride and Conceitedness of Mens Hearts all that he can: And this Temptation of his generally prevails wherever it meets with a knowing Head, match'd with a graceless and unsanctified Heart. And thus we see by what Wiles and Policies Satan keeps out the Light, and prevents the Access of it to the Minds of Men.

But if he miss his Design here, and Truth gets into the mind, Then

Secondly, He labours to obstruct the Efficacy and Operation of the Light; and though it do shine into the Understanding, yet it shall be imprisoned there; and send down no converting Influences upon the Will and Affections: And this Design he promotes and manages divers ways.

First, By hastening to quench Convictions betime, and nip them in the Bud. Satan knows how dangerous a thing it is, and destructive to his Interest, to suffer Convictions to continue long; and therefore it is said of him, *Mat.* 13. 19. *When any one heareth the word of the Kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his Heart.* Satan is compared in this Scripture to the Fowls in the Air, which pick up the seed before it take any root in the Earth. The Devil is very jealous of this, and therefore labours all he can to destroy the Word before it comes to operate upon the Heart; which he doth sometimes by the Cares of the World, and sometimes by vain Companions, who prove meer Quench-Coals unto the beginning Convictions. One Sinner destroyeth much good.

Secondly, No sooner doth the God of this world observe the Light of Truth begin to operate upon the Heart, but he obstructeth that Design by *Procrastinations* and Delays, which delude and baffle the convinced soul; he persuades them if they will alter their Course, it will be time enough hereafter, when such Incumbrances and Troubles in the World are over; if he prevail here, 'tis a thousand to one but the Work miscarries. *James* 1. 23, 24. If the Hearer of the Word be not a Doer (*i. e.*) a present Doer, while the Impressions of it are fresh upon the soul, *he doth but deceive himself.* For it is with the Heart, as it is with melted Wax, if the seal be clapp'd to it presently, it will receive a fair Impression; but if it be let alone but for a little while, you can make none at all; It was therefore *David*'s great Care and Wisdom to set about the Work of Religion under the first *Impetus* or vigorous motion of his Heart and Affections. *Psal.* 119. 60. *I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy Commandments.* Multitudes of Souls have perished by these Delays. 'Tis a Temptation incident to all that are under beginning Con-

Convictions, especially young Persons, whom the Devil persuades that it were no better than madness in them to abridge and deny themselves so much Delight and Pleasure, and steep their youthful Thoughts in such a melancholy Subject as Religion is.

Thirdly, If all this will not do, but Convictions still continue to get ground in the Conscience, then he endeavours to scare and fright them out of their Convictions, by representing to them the inward Terrors, Troubles and Despairs into which they are about to plunge themselves, and that henceforth they must never expect a pleasant Day or comfortable Hour. Thus doth the God of this World blind the minds of them that believe not, both by hindering the access of Light to the Mind, and the Influence of it upon the Heart.

Thirdly, There is yet one Policy of Satan to keep souls in darkness, and that is, by the misapplication of Truth; persuading them, that whatsoever they read or hear of the misery and danger of Christless and unregenerate Persons, doth not in the least touch or concern them, but the more notorious and prophane part of the World; and by this Policy he blinds the minds of all civil and moral Persons. Thus the *Pharisees trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.* And so the *Laodiceans* thought themselves *rich, and encreased with Goods*; that is, in a very safe and good condition. Now there are divers things notably improved by Satan's Policy, in order to these misapplications of Truth: As,

See my *Touchstone* of Sincerity upon *Rev.* 3. 17, 18.

First, The Freedom of their Lives from the most gross Pollutions of the World. *Mat.* 19. 20. *All these things have I kept from my youth up.* A civil, sober course of Life is a most effectual Blind before the Eyes of many a Man's Conscience.

Secondly, It is the Policy of Satan to prevent Conviction by Conviction: I mean effectual Convictions, by Convictions that have been ineffectual, and are now vanished away. Thus the Troubles that some Persons have been under, must pass for their Conversion, though the Temper of their Heart be the same it was: Their ineffectual troubles are made use of by the Devil to blind them in the true Knowledge and Apprehension of their Condition. For these Men and Women can speak of the Troubles they have had for sin, and the many Tears they have shed for it; whereby thorough Conviction is effectually prevented.

Thirdly, Gifts and Knowledge are improved by the Policy of Satan, against the true Knowledge of Jesus Christ, and our own Estate by Nature. As Conviction is improved by Satan's Policy against Conviction, so is Knowledge against Knowledge. This was the case of them in *Rom.* 2. 17, 18. *Thou art called a Jew, and restest in the Law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest his Will, and approvest the things that are excellent; being instructed out of the Law, and art confident that thou thy self art a guide to the blind, &c.* And this is the Temptation and Delusion of knowing Persons, who are so far from being blind in their own account, that they account themselves the Guides of the Blind: Yet who blinder than such Men?

Fourthly, External Reformation is improved by the Policy of Satan against the spiritual Reformation, and passes current up and down the World. For Conversion, tho' it serves only to strengthe Satan's Interest in the soul, *Mat.* 12. 44. and f want of a real change of Heart, doth but encrea their sin and misery, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20. This is the G neration that is pure in their own Eyes, and y are not washed from their Filthiness. The Cle*ness* of their Hands blinds them in discovering t*Foulness* of their Hearts.

Fifthly, The Policy of Satan improves diligen in some Duties, against the Convictions of oth Duties. The external Duties of Religion, Hearing, Praying, Fasting, against the great D ties of Repenting and Believing. This was th case, *Isa.* 58. 2, 3. *Yet they seek me daily, and d to know my ways, as a Nation that did righteousn and forsook not the Ordinances of their God. They of me the Ordinances of Justice, they take delight approaching to God. Wherefore have we walked, they, and thou seest not? Wherefore have we affli our souls, and thou takest no knowledge?* This Dut improved against Duty, the Externals against Internals of Religion, and multitudes are blind this way.

Sixthly, The Policy of Satan improves Zea gainst Zeal; and thereby blinds a great part of world: He allows Men to be zealous again false Religion, if thereby he may prevent th from being zealous in the true Religion. He verts their Zeal against their own sins, by spend it against other Mens. Thus *Paul* was once blin by his own Zeal for the Law, *Acts* 22. 3. A many Men at this day satisfie themselves in t own Zeal against the Corruptions of God's W ship and the Superstitions of others, who ne felt the Power of True Religion upon their o Hearts; a dangerous Blind of Satan.

Seventhly, The Policy of Satan improves Esteem and Respect Men have from the Peopl God, against their great Duty and Interest to come such themselves, *Rev.* 3. 1. *Thou hast a n that thou livest, but thou art dead.* It is enough many Men that they obtain acceptation among Saints, tho' they be none of that Number; good Opinion of others begets and confirms th good Opinion of themselves.

Eighthly, The Policy of Satan improves sou ness of Judgment, against soundness of He An Orthodox Head against an Orthodox H and Life; Dogmatical Faith against Justify Faith. This was the Case of them before-men ned, *Rom.* 2. 18, 19. Men satisfie themselves, they have a sound Understanding, tho' mean w they have a very rotten Heart. 'Tis enough them that their Heads are regular, tho' their He and Lives be very irregular.

Ninthly, The Policy of Satan improves the B sings of God, against the Blessings of God, bli ing us by the Blessings of Providence, so as no discern the want of spiritual Blessings, persuad Men that the smiles of Providence in their p sperity, success, and thriving designs in the wo are good evidences of the Love of God to t souls, not at all discerning how the Prosperit Fools deceives them, and that Riches are o given to the hurt of the Owners thereof.

Tenthly, The Policy of Satan improves C forts against Comfort, false and unground Comf under the word, against the real Grounds of C fort lying in the souls Interest in Christ. T many Men finding a great deal of comfort in Promises, are so blinded thereby, as never to l

after Union with Christ, the only solid ground of all true Comfort, *Heb.* 6. 5, 9.

And thus you see, how the God of this World blindeth the minds of them that believe not, and how the Gospel is hid to them that are lost.

SERMON XXXV.

2 COR. IV. 3, 4.

But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the God of this World hath blinded the Minds of them which believe not, lest the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God, should shine unto them.

THE Words have been opened, and this Point observ'd:

Doct. *That the Understanding of all Unbelievers are blinded by Satan's Policies, in order to their everlasting Perdition.*

We have shewn already what the Blinding of the Mind, or hiding of the Gospel from it, is; it hath also been demonstrated that the Gospel is hid, and the Minds of many blinded under it; you have also seen what Policies Satan uses to blind the Minds of Men, even in the clearest Light of the Gospel. It remains now that I open to you the dreadful Nature of this Judgment of God upon the Souls of Men, and then make Application of the whole.

There are many Judgments of God inflicted upon the Souls and Bodies of Men in this World; but none of them are so dreadful as those Spiritual Judgments are, which God inflicts immediately upon the Soul: And among Spiritual Judgments few or none are of more dreadful Nature and Consequence, than this of Spiritual Blindness; which will appear by considering

First, the *Subject* of this Judgment, which is the Soul, and the principal Power of the Soul, which is the Mind and understanding Faculty; the Soul is the most precious and valuable Part of Man, and the Mind is the superior and most noble Power of the Soul; it is to the Soul, what the Eye is to the Body, the directive Faculty. The bodily Eye is the most precious Part of the Body. When we would express the Value of a Thing, we say, we prize it as our Eyes. The Loss of the Eyes is a sore Loss, we lose a great part of the Comfort of this world by it. Yet such an Affliction (speaking comparatively) is but a Trifle to this. If our bodily Eyes be blinded, we cannot see the Sun; but if our spiritual Eye be blinded, we cannot see God, we wander in the Paths of Sin, 1 *John* 2. 11. We are led blindfold to Hell by Satan, as the *Syrians* were into *Samaria*, 2 *Kin.* 6. 19, 20. And then our Eyes, like theirs, will be opened to see our Misery, when it is too late. *The Light of the Body is the Eye* (saith Christ.) *If therefore thine Eye be single, thy whole Body shall be full of Light; but if thine Eye be evil, thy whole Body shall be full of Darkness. If therefore the Light that is in thee be Darkness, how great is that Darkness? Mat.* 6. 22, 23. By the Eye he means the practical Judgment, the understanding Faculty, which is the Seat for Principles, the common Treasury of Rules of Practice, according unto which a Man's Life is formed, and his way directed. If therefore this Power of the Soul be darkened, how great must this Darkness be! For now the Blind lead the Blind, and both fall into the Ditch. The blind Judgment mis-guides the blind Affections, and both fall into Hell. O what a sad thing is it, that the Devil should lead that, that leads thee! That he should sit at the Helm, and steer thy Course to Damnation! The blinding of this noble Faculty precipitates the Soul into the most dangerous Courses, Persecution by this means seems to be true Zeal for God, *John* 16. 2. *They that persecute you, shall think that they do God service.* Paul *once thought verily with himself, that he ought to do many things contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth*, Acts 26. 9. (*i. e.*) He thought he had pleased God, when he was imprisoning and persecuting his People; as many do at this day; it will make a Man to sin conscientiously, which is a very dangerous way of sinning, and difficult to be reclaimed.

Secondly, It is a dreadful Judgment, if we consider the Object about which the Understanding is blinded, which is Jesus Christ, and Union with him; Regeneration and the Nature and Necessity thereof. For this Blindness is not universal, but respective and particular. A Man may have abundance of Light and Knowledge in things natural and moral; but spiritual things are hidden from his Eyes. Yea, a Man may know spiritual Things in a natural way, which encreaseth his Blindness; but he cannot discern them spiritually; This is a sore Judgment, and greatly to be bewailed. *Thou hast hid these things* (said Christ) *from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto Babes*, *Mat.* 11. 25. Learned and knowing Men are ignorant of those things, which very *Babes* in Christ understand. They are prudent in the management of Earthly Affairs; but to save their own souls they have no Knowledge. They are able with *Berengarius*, to dispute *de omni scibili*, of every thing investigable by the Light of Nature; yea, to open the Scripture solidly, and defend the Doctrines and Truths of Christ against his Adversaries successfully; and yet blinded in the great Mystery of Regeneration. *Blindness in part* (saith the Apostle) *is happened unto Israel*; and that indeed was the principal Part of Knowledge, *viz.* the Knowledge of Jesus Christ and him crucified, we see farther than they. The literal Knowledge of Christ shines clearly in our Understanding. We are only blinded about those things which should give us saving Interest in him, about the effectual Application of Christ to our own souls.

Thirdly, The dreadful Nature of this spiritual Blindness farther appears from the consideration of the

the Season in which it befals Men, which is the very time of God's Patience, and the only Opportunity they have for Salvation; after these Opportunities are over, their Eyes will be opened to see their Misery, but alas, too late. Upon this account Christ shed those Tears over *Jerusalem*, Luke 19. 42. *O that thou hadst known, at least in this thy Day, the things that belong to thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes.* Now the season of Grace is past and gone; Opportunities are the Golden Spots of Time, and there is much time in a short Opportunity, as there are many Pieces of Silver in one Piece of Gold. Time signifies nothing when Opportunities are gone, to be blinded in the very season of Salvation, is the Judgment of all Judgments, the greatest Misery incident to Man; to have our Eyes opened when the seasons of Salvation are past, is but an Aggravation of Misery: There is a twofold opening of Mens Eyes to see their danger, *viz.*

1. Graciously to prevent Danger.
2. Judicially to aggravate Misery.

They whose Eyes are not opened graciously in this World to see their Disease and Remedy in Christ, shall have their Eyes opened judicially in the World to come, to see their Disease without any Remedy. If God open them now, it is by way of Prevention, if they be not opened until then, it will produce Desperation.

Fourthly, The horrible Nature of this Judgment farther appears, from the exceeding Difficulty of curing it, especially in Men of excellent natural Endowments and Accomplishments, *John* 9. 40, 41. *And some of the Pharisees which were with him, heard these words, and said unto him, are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin; but now ye say, we see, therefore your sin remaineth, q. d.* The Pride and Conceitedness of your Hearts add Obstinacy and Incurableness to your Blindness, these are the *blind People that have Eyes*, Isa 43. 8. *In seeing they see not.* The Conviction of such Men is next to an Impossibility.

Fifthly, The Design and End of this Blindness under the Gospel is most dreadful, so saith my Text, *The God of this World hath blinded the Minds of them which believe not, lest the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God, should shine unto them.* Answerable whereunto are those Words, *Isa.* 6. 10. *Make the Heart of this People fat, and make their Ears heavy, and shut their Eyes, lest they see with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears, and understand with their Hearts, and convert and be healed.* So that it is plain, this Binding is a *Præludium* to Damnation, as the covering of *Haman*'s Face was to his Destruction. When the Lord hath no purpose of Grace and Mercy to a Man's Soul, than to bring about the Damnation of that Man by a righteous Permission; many Occasions of Blindness befal him, which Satan improves effectually to his eternal Ruine; among which fatal Occasions, blind Guides, and scandalous Professors are none of the least, they shall be fitted with Ministers suitable to their Humours, who shall speak smooth things; *If a Man walk in the Spirit, and Falshood* (i. e. by an ἐν δὲ τὸ ψεῦδος —— the Spirit of Falshood) *do lie, saying, I will prophesie to thee of wine and strong drink, he shall even be the prophet of his people*; and the Slips and Falls of Professors shall do the Devil not a little Service in this his fatal Design. *Mat.* 18. 7. *Wo to the world because of offences*: This shall blind them, and harden them to purpose. Thus you see what a dreadful Judgment this is, a stroke of God upon the Soul which cuts off all the present Comforts of Christ and Religion from it, takes away the Bridle of Restraint from Sin, and makes way for the final Ruine of the Soul. A far greater Judgment it is, than the greatest Calamity or Affliction, which can befal us in this world. If our Names suffer by the greatest Reproaches, our Bodies by the most painful Diseases, our Estates by the greatest Losses; if God strike every Comfort we have in this world dead by Affliction: All this is nothing compared with this blinding Judgment of God upon the Soul. For they may come from the tender Love of God to us, *Heb.* 12. 6. But this is the Effect of his wrath; they may cleanse Sin, *Isa.* 27. 9. but this encreases it; they often prove occasions of Conversion, *Job* 36. 8, 9. but this is the great Obstruction to it. In a word, they only wound the Flesh, and that with a curable wound; but this stabbs the Soul, and that with a *mortal* wound.

Ira est Dei non intelligere delicta, ne sequatur pœnitentia. Cyp. Ep. *Percussit sunt animi cæcitate ut nec intelligant delicta, nec plangant: indignantis Dei major hæc est ira,* Cypr. de Lapsis.

First Use of Information.

Infer. 1. *If this be the case of the unbelieving world to be so blinded by the God of the world; how little should we value the Censures and Slanders of the blind world?* Certainly they should move no other Affection but Pity, in our souls: If their Eyes were opened, their Mouths would be shut, they would never traduce Religion and the sincere Professors of it as they do, if Satan had not blinded their Minds: They speak evil of the Things they know not; their Reproaches which they let fly so freely, are but so many Arrows shot by the blind Man's Bow, which only stick in our Cloaths, and can do us no hurt, except we thrust 'em onward by our own Discontent to the wounding of our Spirits. *I could almost be proud upon it,* (said *Luther*) *that I have got an ill Name among the worst of Men.* Beware Christians, that you give them no occasion to blaspheme the Name of your God, and then never trouble your selves, however they use your Names. If they tread it in the Dirt now, God (as one speaks) will take it up, wash off all that Dirt, and deliver it you again clear and shining. Should such Men speak well of us, we might justly suspect ourselves of some Iniquity which administers to them the occasion of it.

Superbus fio quod video no-men pessimum mihi crescere Luth. *Gratias ago Deo meo quod dignum sum quem mundus oderit.* Heron.

Infer. 2. *How absurd and dangerous must it be for Christians to follow the Examples of the blind World?* Let the blind follow the blind, but let not those whom God hath enlightened, do so. Christians, never let those lead you, who are led blindfolded by the Devil themselves. The Holiness and Heavenliness of Christians was wont to set the World a wondring that they would not run with them into the same Excess of Riot, 1 *Pet.* 4. 4. But sure since God hath opened your Eyes, and shewed you the dangerous Courses they walk in, it would be the greatest wonder of all, if you should be the Companions of such Men, and tread in the steps of their Examples. Christian, as humble and lowly Thoughts as thou hast of thy self, yet I would have thee understand thy self to be too good to be the Associate of such Men. *Discamus sanctam superbiam, & sciamus nos esse illis meliores.* If they will walk with you in the way of Duty and Holiness, let them come and welcome: Receive them with both Arms, and

and be glad of their Company; but beware you walk not in their Paths, lest they be a Snare unto you. Did they see the end of their way, they would never walk in it themselves, why then will you walk with them who do see it?

Infer. 3. *If this be so, let Christians be exact, and circumspect in their walking, lest they lay a Stumbling-block before the blind.* 'Tis a great sin to do so in a proper sense. *Lev.* 19. 14. *Thou shalt not put a stumbling-block before the blind.* And a far greater to do it in a Metaphorical sense, *Rom.* 14. 13. 'Tis the express Will of God, *that no Man put a stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way.* 'Tis an Argument of little regard to the Honour of Christ, or the Souls of Men so to do. O Professors, look to your steps. The Devil desires to make use of you for such Purposes. The sins of Thousands of others who make no profession of Godliness, will never so fit his purpose for the blinding of those Mens Eyes, as the least slip or failing of yours will do. 'Tis the living Bird that makes the best stale to draw others into the Net: The grossest Wickedness of prosane Sinners passeth away in silence, but all the Neighbourhood shall ring with your Miscarriages. A righteous Man falling down before the wicked is a troubled *Fountain, and a corrupt Spring, Prov.* 25. 26. The Scandalous Falls of Good Men are like a Bag of Poison cast by Satan into the Spring from whence the whole Town is supplied with Water. You little know what mischief you do, and how many blind Sinners may fall into Hell by your Occasion.

Infer. 4. *How dangerous a thing is Zeal in a wicked Man?* 'Tis a sharp Sword in a blind Man's hand, or like high Mettle in a blind Horse. How much hath the Church of God suffered upon this account, and doth suffer at this day? The world hath ever been full of such blind and blustering Zeal, which like a Hurricane, overturns all that stands in its way: Yea, (as we noted before) it makes a Man a kind of conscientious Persecutor: I confess, it is better for the Persecutor himself to do it ignorantly, because Ignorance leaves him in capacity for Mercy, and sets him a degree lower than the malicious enlighten'd Persecutor, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13. Else it were the dreadful Case described in *Heb.* 10. But yet as it is, *John* 16. 2. these are the fierce and dreadful Enemies of the Church of God. Such a Man was *Paul*, a devout Persecutor, and such Persecution God afterwards suffered to befall himself. *Acts* 13 50. *But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable Women, and the chief Men of the City; and raised Persecution against* Paul *and* Barnabas, *and expelled them out of their Coast.* An erroneous Conscience binds as well as an informed Conscience, and where-ever God gives such Men Opportunity to vent the Spleen and Rage of their Hearts upon his People, they will be sure to do it to purpose. With other men *Gamaliel's* counsel may have some Influence, and they may be afraid lest they be found Fighters against God; but blind Zeal spurs on, and saith as *John* did, *Come see my Zeal for the Lord of Hosts.* O blind Sinners, be sure of your *Mark* before you discharge your *Arrows.* If you shoot a wicked Man (as you suppose him) and find finds one of his dear Children wounded, or destroyed, what Account will you give of the Fact to God, when you shall come before his Judgment Seat?

2d. Use of Exhortation.

This Point is very improveable by way of *Exhortation.* Both,

1. Unto those, who are blinded by the God of this World.
2. To those that are enlightened in the Knowledge of Christ, by the true God.

First, To those who are still blinded by the God of this World, to whom the Lord hath not given to this Day, Eyes to see their Misery in themselves, or their remedy in Christ, so as to make an *essential Application* of him to their own Souls. To all such my Counsel is,

1. To get a Sence of your own Blindness.
2. To seek out for a Cure, whilst yet it may be had.

First, Labour to get a deep Sence of the Misery of such a Condition; for till you be awakened by Conviction, you can never be healed. O that you did but know the true Difference betwixt common and saving Light; the want of this keeps you in Darkness: You think because you know the same Things that the most sanctified Man doth, that therefore there is no Difference betwixt his Knowledge and yours; and are therefore ready to say to them as *Job* to his Friends. *Lo, mine Eye hath seen all this, mine Ear hath heard, and understood it: What ye know, the same do I know also; I am not inferiour unto you, Job* 13. 1, 2. But O that you would be convinced that your Knowledge vastly differs from the Knowledge of Believers. Though you know the same Things that they do, it is a Knowledge of another kind of Nature. You know spiritual Things in another way, meerly by the Light of Reason assisted and improved by the common Light of the Gospel: They know the same Things by spiritual Illumination, and in an experimental way. 1 *John* 2.20. *Ye have an Unction from the holy one, and ye know all things.* Their Knowledge is practical, yours is Idle. They are working out their Salvation by that Light which God hath given them, *Psal.* 111. 10. Their Knowledge of God and Christ produces the Fruits of Faith, Obedience, and Mortification; and heavenly Mindedness in them: It hath no such Fruits in you; whatever Light there be in your Understandings, it makes no alteration at all upon your Hearts. The Light brings them to Heaven, *John* 17. 3. Yours shall be blown out by Death, 1 *Cor.* 13. 8. and your selves left in the Mists of eternal Darkness: Except your Eyes be opened seasonably by the anointing of the Holy Ghost. Conviction is a great Part of your Care.

Secondly, Labour to get a Remedy for this dangerous Disease of your Minds: *Awake to Righteousness, and sin not, for some have not the Knowledge of God; I speak this to your shame*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 34. These speak Incouragement to you, though it be a sore Judgment that lies upon you, and very difficult to be removed: Yet remember Jesus Christ is put into Commission by God the Father, to open the blind Eyes, *Is.* 42. 6, 7. and this excellent *Physician* bespeaks you for his Patients, *Rev.* 3. 18. *Anoint thine Eyes* (saith he) *with Eye-salve that thou mayest see.* Yea, the most enlighten'd Christians were once as dark and blind in spiritual Things as you are, and Christ hath cured them, *Eph.* 5. 8. *Once were you Darkness, now are ye light in the Lord.* Attend therefore upon the Ordinances

Ordinances of the Gospel diligently; that's God's enlightening instrument, by which he couches those *Cataracts* which blind the Eyes of Mens Understandings, *Acts* 26. 18. And if ever you will have your Eyes opened, allow your selves Time to ponder, and consider what you hear. The Duty of Meditation is a very enlightening Duty: Above all cry to the Lord Jesus Christ as that poor Man did, *Lord that mine Eyes may be opened, that I may receive my Sight.* Say, Lord, this is my Disease and Danger, that in seeing I see not. Others see natural Things in a spiritual Way, whilst I see spiritual Things only in a natural Way: Their Light is operative upon their Hearts, mine is but an idle impractical Notion of Religion, which brings forth no Fruit of Holiness. Their Knowledge sets their Hands a Work in Duties of Obedience; mine only sets my Tongue a work in Discourses of those things which my Heart never felt. Lord, open mine Eyes, and make me to see out of this Obscurity: All the Light that is in me is but Darkness. O Lord, enlighten my Darkness, enlighten mine Eyes, lest I sleep the Sleep of Death.

Secondly, Let it be a Word of Counsel and Exhortation to such as once were blind, but do now see.

First, I beseech you, bless God for the least degree of spiritual Illumination. *Truly Light is sweet, and it is a pleasant thing for the Eyes to behold the Sun, Eccles.* 11. 7. But Oh, how sweet is spiritual Light! And what a pleasant thing to behold the Son of Righteousness! Blessed are your Eyes, for they see God hath brought you out of Darkness into marvellous Light. And marvellous indeed it must needs be, when you consider how many wise and prudent Men are under the the Power of spiritual Darkness, whilst such Babes as you, are enlightned. *Mat.* 11. 25. It greatly affected the Heart of Christ, O let it affect yours also.

Secondly, Labour to get a clearer Sight of spiritual Things every Day. For all spiritual Light is encreasing Light, *which shineth more and more unto the perfect Day, Pro.* 4. 18. O if a little spiritual Light be so comfortable, what would more be? The Wisdom of God is *a manifold Wisdom, Eph.* 3. 10. The best of us see but little of it. Labour therefore to know spiritual Things more *extensively*, and more experimentally, *Phil.* 3. 8, 9. Be still encreasing in the Knowledge of God.

Thirdly, Walk as Men whose Eyes are opened. *Once ye were in Darkness, now are ye Light in the Lord; walk as Childeren of the Light, Eph.* 5. 8. Else your Light will but aggravate your Sin. Remember how it displeased God, that *Solomon's* Heart was turned from the Lord God of *Israel who appeared to him twice*, 1 *Kings* 11. 9. Remember how angry God was with the *Heathens* for abusing the dim common Light of nature, *Rom.* 1. 21. How much more Evil is it in you to abuse the most precious Light that shineth in this World? And what mischievous Effects the Abuse of your light will have upon this blind World. It was a smart Rebuke given once by an *Atheist* to a good Man, who being asked by him, how he could satisfie his Conscience to live as he did? nay, rather said the *Atheist*, I wonder how you can satisfie your self to live as you do; for did I believe as you do, that that there is such a Christ, and such a Glory as you believe there is, I would pray and live another Rate than you do.

The Conclusion.

And now, Reader, after all my Discourses of the Method of Christ in purchasing the great Salvation for us, and the way of the Spirit in applying it, and making it effectual to God's Elect; thou hast two Wonders before thine Eyes, either of which may astonish thy Soul in the consideration of them, *viz.*

1. The admirable Grace of God in preparing
2. The desperate Wickedness of Man in rejecting

} this great Salvation.

First, Behold the Riches of the Goodness and Mercy of God for preparing such a Remedy as this for lost Man. This is that which is justly called *The great Mystery of Godliness*, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. That Mystery which the *Prophets* enquired diligently after, yea, which the *Angels desire to look into*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 10, 12. In this glorious Mystery of Redemption that πολυποικιλος σοφια manifold Wisdom of God, or that Wisdom which hath more curious and Admirable Variety in it, is illustriously displayed, *Eph.* 4. 10. Yea, the Contrivement of our Redemption this Way is the most glorious Display of divine *Love* that ever was made, or can be made in this World to the Children of Men: For so the Apostle will be understood, when he saith, *Rom.* 3. 8. συνιστησι τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἀγάπην —— God hath set forth, or presented his Love to Man in the most taking Manner, in a Way that commends it beyond all compare, to the Acceptation of Men. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the World to save Sinners*, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. It might be justly expected, that when this glorious Mystery should come to be published by the Gospel in the Ears of Sinners, all Eyes should be withdrawn from all other Objects, and fixed with Admiration upon Christ, all Hearts should be ravished with these glad Tidings; and every Man pressing to Christ with the greatest Zeal and Diligence. But behold, instead thereof,

Secondly, The desperate Wickedness of the World in rejecting the only Remedy prepared for them. This was long since foretold by the Prophet, *Isa.* 53. 3. *He is despised and rejected of Men, a Man of Sorrows acquainted with Grief; and hid our Faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not*: His poor and mean Appearance, which should render him beyond all Considerations to the Souls of Men (since it was for their Sakes, that he emptied himself of all his Glory) yet this lays him under Contempt, he is looked on as the very off-cast of Men; when his own Love to Man had emptied him of all his Riches, the Wickedness of Men loaded him with Contempt, and as it was prophesied of him, so it was, and, at this Day is sadly verified all the World over; For,

צואים חיר *desitio vinorum. Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se quam quod ridiculos homines facit.* Juven.

First, the *Pagan* World hath no Knowledge of him, they are lost in Darkness. *God hath suffered them to walk in their own Ways*, Acts 14. 16.

Secondly, The *Mahumetans* which overspread so great a Part of the World reject him, and instead of the blessed Gospel which they hiss out with Abhorrence, embrace the *Alcoran*, which they confidently affirm to have come down from God immediately in that *Lalatio Hanzili*, (as they call

it) the Night of Demiſſion, calling all Chriſtians
Caſtrouna, (i. e.) Infidels.
Thirdly, The *Jews* reject him with Abhorrence,
nd ſpit at his very Name, and being blind-
olded by the Devil, they call *Jeſus Anathema*,
Cor. 12. 13. And in a blind Zeal for *Moſes*,
laſpheme him as an Impoſtor. *He came to*
s own, and his own received him not, John 1.

Fourthly, The far greater Part of the Chriſtia-
zed World reject him; thoſe that are called
after his Name, will not ſubmit to
his Government. The *Nobles* of the
World think themſelves diſhonoured
by ſubmitting their Necks to his Yoak.
The *Senſualiſts* of the World will not deny
their Luſts, or forſake their Pleaſures,
for all the Treaſures of Righteouſneſs,
Life and Peace, which his Blood hath
rchaſed. *Worldlings* of the Earth prefer the Dirt
Dung of the World before him; and few there
among them that profeſs Chriſtianity, who
e the Lord Jeſus in Sincerity. The only
aſon why they are called Chriſtians is be-
ſe by the advantageous Caſt of Providence,
were born and educated in a Nation where

iſti nomen
uere, &
per Chri-
ſum perge-
quid aliud
quam pra-
icatio di-
i nominis?
p. de Zelo.

Chriſtianity is profeſſed, and eſtabliſhed by the Laws of the *Country*; and if the Wind ſhould turn, and the publick Authority think fit to *eſtabliſh* another Religion, they can ſhift their Sail, and ſteer a contrary Courſe.

But now Reader, let me tell thee, that if ever God ſend forth theſe two grim *Sergeants*, his Law and thine own Conſcience, to arreſt thee for thy Sins, if thou find thy ſelf dragged away by them towards that Priſon from whence none return, that are once clapt up therein, and that in this unſpeakable Diſtreſs Jeſus Chriſt manifeſt himſelf to thy Soul, and open thy Heart to receive him, and become thy Surety with God, pay all thy Debts, and cancel all thy Obligations, thou wilt love him at another rate than others do; his Blood will run deeper in thine Eyes than it doth in the ſhallow Apprehenſions of the World; he will be *altogether lovely*, and thou wilt account all Things but Dung and Droſs in Compariſon of the Excellency of Jeſus Chriſt thy Lord. To work thy Heart to this Frame theſe Things are written, which the Lord proſper upon thy Soul, by the Bleſſing of his good Spirit upon them.

Bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt.

A

TREATISE

OF THE

SOUL of MAN.

To the much Honoured his dear Kinſman, Mr. John Flave *and Mr.* Edward Criſpe, *of* London, *Merchants; and t reſt of my worthy Friends in* London, Ratcliffe, Shadwe *and* Lymehouſe; *Grace, Mercy, and Peace.*

Dear Friends,

Nihil in terra magnum præter hominem, nihil in homine præter mentem. *Favorin.*

E Cœlo deſcendit γνῶθι σεαυτόν, Juvenal.

AMong all the Creatures in this lower World, none deſerv be ſtiled *Great*, but *Man*; and in *Man* nothing is found thy of that Epithet, but his *Soul.*

The Study and Knowledge of the *Soul* was therefor ways reckon'd a rich and neceſſary Improvement of Time. All have magnified theſe two Words, *Know thy ſelf*, as an *Oracle* deſcending from Heaven.

Nulla ſcientia melior illa qua homo novit ſeipſum: relinque ergo cætera, & teipſum diſcute: per te curre: in te conſiſte: à te incipiat cogitatio tua, & in te finiatur.

No Knowledge, ſaith *Bernard*, is better than that whereby we our ſelves; leave other matters therefore, and ſearch thy ſelf, a ſtand in thy ſelf; let thy Thoughts, as it were, circulate, and end in thy ſelf. Strain not thy Thoughts in vain about thing thy ſelf being neglected.

The Study and Knowledge of *Jeſus Chriſt* muſt ſtill be allow'd to be moſt excellent neceſſary: But yet the Worth and Neceſſity of *Chriſt* is unknown to Men, till th lue, Wants, and Dangers of their own *Souls* be firſt diſcover'd to them.

The Diſaffectedneſs and Averſation of Men to the Study of their own Souls, more to be admir'd; not only becauſe of the Weight and Neceſſity of it, but the al Pleaſure and Sweetneſs that is found therein. What * *Cardan* is experimentally felt by many, that ſcarce any thing is more p and delectable to the Soul of Man, than to know what he is, he may, and ſhall be; and what thoſe Divine and Supreme are, which he is to enjoy after Death, and the Viciſſitudes preſent World. For we are Creatures conſcious to our ſelves of an Immortal and that we have ſomething about us which muſt over-live this mortal Fleſh, and is fore ever and anon ſome way or other hinting and intimating to us its Expectati and Deſignation for a better Life than now it lives in the Body, and that we ſha ceaſe to *be*, when we ceaſe to *breath.*

*. Quid jucundius quam ſcire quid ſimus, quid fuerimus quid erimus, & cum his etiam divina atque ſuprema illa poſt obitum. Mundique viciſſitudines.

And certainly, my Friends, Diſcourſes of the Soul and its Immmortality; of *Heaven* d of *Hell*, the next and only Receptacle of unbodied Spirits, were never more ſeaſona- and neceſſary than in this Atheiſtical Age of the World, wherein all ſerious Piety and houghts of Immortality are redicul'd, and hiſſed out of the Company of many: As if ole old condemn'd *Hereticks* the Θνητοψυχίται, who aſſerted the the Corruptibility and Mor- ity of the Soul as well as Body, had been again revived in our Days.

And as the *Atheiſm* of ſome, ſo the *Tepidity* and unconcern'd Careleſneſs of the moſt, eds and calls for ſuch potent Remedies, as Diſcourſes of this Kind do plentifully af- d. I dare appeal to your charitable Judgments, whether the Converſations and Diſcour- of the *Many*, do indeed look like a ſerious *Purſuit* of Heaven, and a *Flight* from ell?

Long have my Thoughts bended towards this great and excellent *Subject*, and many earneſt ſires I have had, (as I beleive all thinking Perſons muſt needs have) to know what I ſhall be en I breath not. But when I had engaged my Meditations about it, two great Rubs oppo- the farther Progreſs of my Thoughts therein: Namely,

I. The Difficulty of the Subject I had choſen: And,
II. The Diſtractions of the Times in which I was to write upon it.

I. As for the Subject, ſuch is the Subtilty of its Nature, and ſuch the knotty Controverſies which it is involv'd, that it better deſerves that *Inſcription*, than *Minerva*'s Temple at *Saum* * *Never did any Mortal reveal me plainly.*

Ἐμὲ μὲν πίτνει εἰδὼς πωδνητὸς ἀπεσσέλυσεν.

t is but little that the moſt clear and ſharp ſighted do diſcern of r own Souls, now in the State of *Compoſition*; and what can we ively and diſtinctly know of the Life they live in the State of Se- tion? The Darkneſs in which theſe Things are involv'd doth great- xerciſe even the greateſt Wits, and frequently elude and fruſtrate the t generous Attempts. Many great *Scholars* whoſe natural and acquir- Abilities ſingularly furniſhed and qualified them to make a clearer covery, have labour'd in this Field *uſque ad ſudorem & pallorem*, even to Sweat and neſs, and done little more but intangle themſelves and the Subject more than before. s cannot but diſcourage new Attempts.

Animam præſentem mentis acie vix, aut ne vix quidem, aſſequimur; ſed qualis ſit futura, quomodo indagabimus? Laborant hic maxima ingenia & caligo conatus etiam generoſos non rarò eludit. *Joſ. Stetn. de Morte, cap.* 20.

nd yet without ſome Knowledge of the *Habitity* and ſubjective Capacity of our Souls njoy the good of the World to come, even in a State of Abſence from the Body, a Prin- l Relief muſt be cut off from them under the great and manifold Trials they are to ounter in this evil World.

s for my ſelf, I aſſure you, I am deeply ſenſible of the inequality of my Shoulders to Burden; and have often thought (ſince I undertook it) of that grave and neceſſa- Caution of the *Poet* to weild and poiſe the Burden as *Porters* uſe do, before I undertook it. *Zuinglius* blam'd *Caroloſtadius* (as ſome do me) for undertaking the Controverſie of that Age, becauſe, he, *Non habet ſatis humerorum*; his Shoulders are too weak for it.

Sumite materiam veſtris, qui ſcribitis, æquam Viribus; & verſate diù quid ferre recuſent, quid valeant humeri. *Horat.*

nd yet I know Mens Labours proſper not according to the Art and Elegancy of the poſure, but according to the Divine Bleſſing which pleaſeth to accompany them. *us* tells us of a learned *Philoſopher* at the *Council* of *Nice*, who ſtoutly defended his s againſt the greateſt Wits and Scholars there, and yet was at laſt fairly vanquiſh'd by n of no extraordinary Parts; of which Conqueſt the *Philoſopher* gave this candid and in- ous Account, *Againſt Words* (ſaid he) *I oppos'd Words, and what was ſpoken, I overthrew he Art of ſpeaking: But when inſtead of Words, Power came out of the Mouth of the Spea- Words could no longer withſtand Truth; nor Man oppoſe the Power of God.*

that my weak Endeavours might proſper under the like Influence of the Spirit upon the ts of them that ſhall read this inartificial, but well-meant Diſcourſe.

am little concern'd about the Contempts and Cenſures of faſtidious Readers. I have v'd to ſay nothing that exceeds Sobriety, nor to provoke any Man, except my Diſſent his unprov'd Dictates muſt be his Provocation.

rhaps there are ſome Doubts and Difficulties relating to this Subject, which will never be ſolv'd till we come to Heaven. For Man by the Fall being leſs than himſelf, doth not

not underſtand himſelf, nor will ever perfectly do ſo, until he be fully reſtor'd to himſel which will not be whilſt he dwells in a Body of Sin and Death. And yet it is to m paſt Doubt, that this as well as other Subjects might have been much more clear'd than it i if inſtead of the proud Contendings of Maſterly Wits for Victory, all had humbly and peaceabl applied themſelves to the Impartial Search of Truth.

Truth, like an Orient Pearl in the Bottom of a River, would have diſcover'd it ſelf b its native Luſtre and Radiancy, had not the Feet of Heathen *Philoſophers*, cunning *Atheiſ* and daring School *Divines*, diſturb'd and foul'd the Stream.

II. And as the Difficulties of the Subject are many, ſo many have been the Interu tions and Avocations I have met with whilſt it was under my Hand: Which I mentio for no other End but to procure a more favourable Cenſure from you, if it appears l exact than you expected to find it. Such as it is, I do with much Reſpect and Affectio tender it to your Hands, humbly requeſting the Bleſſing of the Spirit may accompany to your Hearts. If you will but allow your ſelves to think cloſe to the Matter befo you, I doubt not but you will find ſomewhat in it apt both to inform your Minds, a quicken your Affections. I know you have a Multiplicity of Buſineſs under your Hand but yet I hope your great Concern makes all others to give Place; and that how c morous and importunate ſoever the Affairs of this World be, you both can and do fi Time to ſit alone, and bethink your ſelves of a more important Buſineſs you have do.

My Friends, we are Borderers upon Eternity: we live upon the Confines of the Spi tual and Impartial World. We muſt ſhortly be aſſociated with bodileſs Beings, and sh have (after a few Days are paſt) no more concerns for Meat, Drink and Sleep, buyi and ſelling, Habitations and Relations, than the Angels of God now have. Beſide, we li here in a State of Trial. Man (as *Scaliger* fitly calls him) is *Utriuſque Mundi nex* one in whom both Worlds do meet; his Body participates of the lower, his Soul of t upper World. Hence it is that he finds ſuch tugging and pulling, this Way, and that Wa upward and downward; both Worlds as it were contending for this invaluable Pri the precious Soul. All Chriſt's Ordinances are inſtituted, and his Officers ordained for other Uſe or End, but the Salvation of Souls: Books are valuable according to their Co ducibility to the End. How rich a Reward of my Labours ſhall I account it, if t Treatiſe of the Soul may but promote the Sanctification and Salvation of any Reade Soul!

To your Hands I firſt tender it. It becomes your Property, not only as a Debt Juſtice, the fulfilling of a Promiſe made you long ſince upon your joint and earneſt I ſires for the Publication of it; but as an Accknowledgment of the many Favours I h receiv'd from you. To one of you I ſtand obliged in the Bond of Relation, and un the Sence of many Kindneſſes, beyond whatever ſuch a Degree of Relation can be f pos'd to exact.

You have here a ſuccinct Account of the Nature, Faculties and Original of the S of Man, as alſo of its Infuſion into the Body by God, without intitling himſelf to the G and Sin reſulting from that their Union.

You will alſo find the Breath of your Noſtrils to be *Nexus*, *Tie*, or *Bond*, which ho your Souls and Bodies in a perſonal Union; and that whilſt the due Graſis and Temp ament of the Body remains, and Breath continues, your Soul hangs as by a weak and ſlen Thred, over the State of a vaſt Eternity in Heaven or in Hell: Which will inform y both of the value of your Breath, and the beſt Way of improving it, whilſt you en it.

The Immortality of the Soul is here aſſerted, proved, and vindicated from the moſt c ſiderable Objections; ſo that it will evidently appear plain, by this Diſcourſe, you do ceaſe to *be*, when you ceaſe to *breath*: And ſeeing they will over-live all Temporal joyments, they muſt neceſſarily periſh, as to all their Joys, Comforts, and Hopes, (whic all the Death that can be incident to an Immortal Spirit) if they be not in the pro Seaſon ſecur'd and provided of that never-periſhing Food of Souls, God in Chriſt, their P tion for ever.

Here you will find the Ground and Reaſons of that ſtrong Inclination which you feel them to have to your Bodies, and the neceſſity (notwithſtanding that) of their vorce and Separation from their beloved Bodies; and that it would manifeſtly be to their judice if it ſhould be otherwiſe. And to overcome the unreaſonable Averſation of Believ and bring them to a more becoming cheaful Submiſſion to the Laws of Death, whenſoe

the Writ of Ejection ſhall be ſerved upon them; you will here find a Repreſentation of that bleſſed Life, comely Order, and moſt delightful Imployment of the incorporeal People inhabiting the City of God; wherein, beſide thoſe ſweet Meditations which are proper to Feaſt your hungry *Affections*, you will meet with divers unuſual, tho' not vain or unuſeful Queſtions ſtated and reſolved; which will be a grateful Entertainment to your inquiſitive and *ſearching Minds*.

'Tis poſſible they may be cenſur'd by ſome as undeterminable and unprofitable *Curioſities*; but as I have a preſumptuous Intruſion into *unrevealed Secrets*, ſo I think it a Weakneſs to be diſcourag'd in the ſearch of Truth, ſo far as it is fit to trace it, by ſuch damping and cauſeleſs Cenſures. Nor am I ſenſible I have in any thing trangreſſed the Bounds of Chriſtian Sobriety, to gratify the Palate of a nice and delicate Reader.

I have alſo here ſet before the Reader an *Idea* or Repreſentation of the State and Caſe of damn'd Souls, that, if it be the Will of God, a ſeaſonable Diſcovery of Hell may be the Means of ſome Men's Recovery out of the Danger of it; and cloſed up the whole with a Demonſtration of the invaluable Precioufneſs of Souls, and the ſeveral dangerous Snares and Artifices of *Satan*, their profeſſed Enemy, to deſtroy and caſt them away for ever.

This is the Deſign and general Scope of the whole, and of the principal Parts of this Treatiſe. And O that God would grant me my Heart's Deſire on your behalf in the Peruſal of it! Even that it may prove a ſanctified inſtrument in his Hand both to prepare you for, and bring you in Love with the unbodied Life, to make you look with Pleaſure into your Graves, and die by conſent of *Will*, as well as Neceſſity of *Nature*. I remember Dr. *Stoughton* in a Sermon preached before King *James*, relates a ſtrange Story of a Child in a Ship wrack faſt aſleep upon its Mothers Lap as ſhe ſate upon a Peice of the Wreck amidſt the Waves; the Child being awaked with the Noiſe, asked the Mother what thoſe Things were; ſhe told it, they were drowning Waves to ſwallow them up; the Child with a pretty ſmiling Countenance, beg'd a Stroke from its *Mother* to beat away thoſe naughty *Waves*, and chid them as if they had been its *Play mates*. Death will ſhortly ſhip-wrack your Bodies; your Souls will ſit upon your Lips ready to expire, as they upon the Wrack ready to go down: Would it not be a comfortable and moſt becoming Frame of Mind to ſit there with as little Dread, as this little One did among the terrible Waves? Surely if our Faith had at firſt united us with Chriſt, and then looſed our Hearts off from this inchanting and enſnaring World, we might make a fair Step towards this moſt deſirable Temper; but Unbelief and earthly Mindedneſs make us loth to venture.

I bluſh to think what bold Adventures thoſe Men made, who upon the Contemplation of the Properties a deſpicable of Stone firſt, adventur'd quite out of ſight of Land under its Guide, Conduct and Direction, and ſecurely truſted both their Lives and Eſtates to it, when all the Eyes of Heaven were veiled from them, amidſt the dark Waters, and thick Clouds of the Sky; when either ſtart, or at leaſt give an unwilling Shrug, when I think of adventuring out of ſight of this World, under the more ſure and ſteady Direction and Conduct of Faith and the Promiſes. To cure theſe Evils in my own and the Reader's Heart, theſe Things are written, and in much Reſpect and Love tendered to your Hands, as a Teſtimony of my Gratitude, and deep Sence of the many Obligations you have put me under. That the Bleſſing of the Spirit may accompany theſe Diſcourſes to your Souls, afford you ſome Aſſiſtance in your laſt and difficult Work of putting them off at Death with a becoming Chearfulneſs, ſaying in that Hour, Can I not ſee God till this Fleſh be laid aſide in the Grave? Muſt I die before I can live like my ſelf? Then take my Body, and go to thy Duſt, that I may be with Chriſt. With this Deſign, and with theſe hearty Wiſhes, dear and honoured Couſin, and worthy Friends, I put theſe Diſcourſes into your Hands, and remain

Your moſt obliged

Kinſman and Servant,

Jo. Flavel.

THE

THE PREFACE.

* Demonſtravimus à communi omnium jam inde à condito orbe gentium ac populorum, præſertim bonorum & literatorum, conſenſione, animam humanam incorruptibilem & immortalem eſſe; eóque, corrupto corpore, ipſam manere ſuperſtitem; ut in ſempiternum aut pro benefactis à Deo coronetur, aut pro malefactis puniatur. *Zanch. de Animarum immortalitate*, p. 653.

AMong many other Largeſſes and rich Endowments beſtowed by the Creator's Bounty upon the Soul of Man, *the* * Sentiments *and Impreſſions of the World to come, and the Ability of* Reflection and Self-intuition, *are peculiar, invaluable and heavenly Gifts. By the former, we have a very great Evidence of our own Immortality, and Deſignation for nobler Employments and Enjoyments than this imbodied State admits; and by the latter we may diſcern the Agreeableneſs of our Hearts, and therein the Validity of our Tittle to that expected Bleſſedneſs.*

But theſe heavenly Gifts are neglected and abuſed all the World over. Degenerate Souls are every where fallen into ſo deep an Oblivion of their excellent Original, Spiritual and Immortal Nature, and Alliance to the Father of Spirits that (to uſe the upbraiding Expreſſion of a great † Philoſopher) *they ſeem to be buried in their Bodies, as ſo many ſilly Worms that lurk in their Holes, and are loath to peep forth, and look abroad*

† ἡ δὲ δειλῶν ψυχὴ κατακεκρυγμένη ἐν σώμασι καὶ ἱματίοις ἐνθεὶς, εἰς φωλεὸν φιλεῖ τὸν φόλεον, &c. Max. Tyr. Diſſ. 41.

So powerfully do the Care, and Pleaſures of this World charm all (except a ſmall Remnant of regenerate Souls) that nothing but ſome ſmart Stroke of Calamity, or terrible Meſſengers of Death can ſtartle them; (and even they are not always able to do it) and when they do, all the Effect is but a tranſient Glance to another, and unwilling Shrug to leave this World; and ſo to ſleep again: And thus the Impreſſions and Sentiments of the World to come (which are the natural Growth and Off-ſpring of the Soul) are either ſtifled and ſuppreſt, as in Atheiſts; *or born down by impetuous maſterly Luſts, as in* Senſualiſts.

And for its ſelf-reflecting and conſidering Power, *it ſeems in many to be a Power received in vain. It is with moſt Souls as it is with the Eye, which ſees not itſelf, tho' it ſees all other Objects. There be thoſe that have almoſt finiſhed the Courſe of a long Life (wherein a great Part of their Time hath* lain *upon their Hands as a cheap and uſeleſs Commodity, which they knew not what to do with) who yet never ſpent one ſolemn, entire Hour in Diſcourſe with their own Souls. What ſerious Heart doth not melt in Compaſſion over the deluded Multitude, who are mocked with Dreams, and perpetually buſied about Trifles? Who are (after ſo many fruſtrated Attempts both of their own, and all paſt Ages) eagerly purſuing the fleeting Shadows, who torture and rack their Brains to find out the Nature and Qualities of Birds, Beaſts, and Plants; indeed any thing rather than their own Souls, which are certainly the moſt excellent Creatures that inhabit this World. They know the true Value and worth of other Things, but are not able to eſtimate the Dignity of that high-born Spirit which is within them. A Spirit which (without the Addition of any more natural Faculties or Powers, if thoſe it hath be but ſanctified and devoted to God) is capable of the higheſt Perfections and Fruitions, even compleat conformity to God, the ſatisfying Viſions of God throughout Eternity. They herd themſelves with* Beaſts, *who are capable of an Equality with* Angels. *O what compaſſionate Tears muſt ſuch a Conſideration as this draw from the Eyes of all that underſtand the Worth of Souls!*

Ita Dei eſt iſta vita mortalis, ubi homo vanitati ſimilis factus eſt; & diis ejus velut umbra prætereunt. *Aug. de Civ. lib. 21. c. 24.*

As for me, it hath been my Sin, and is now the Matter of my Sorrow, that whilſt Miriads *of Souls (of higher Original than mine) are ſome of them beholding the higheſt Majeſty in Heaven, and others giving all Diligence to make ſure their Salvation on Earth; I was carried away ſo many Years in the Courſe of this World (like a Drop with the Current of the Tide) Wholly forgetting my beſt Self, my invaluable Soul; while I prodigally waſted the Stores of my Time and Thoughts upon Vanities, that long ſince paſſed away as the Waters which are remembred no more.* * *It ſhall be no Shame to me to confeſs my Folly, ſince the Matter of my Confeſſion ſhall go to the Glory of my God. I ſtudied to know many other Things, but I know not my ſelf. It was with me as with a Servant to whom his Maſter commits two Things,* viz. *the* Child *and the* Child's Clothes; *the Servant is careful of the Clothes, waſhes and bruſhes, ſtarches and ſteals them, and keeps them ſafe and clean; but the Child is forgotten and loſt. My Body which is but the Garment of my Soul I kept and nouriſhed with exceſſive Care; but my Soul was long forgotten and had been loſt for ever, as others daily are, had not God rouz'd it by the Convictions of his Spirit out of that Oblivion and deadly Slumber.*

* Nec enim pudet ſanctus viros, poſtquam renovata corda fuerint per reſipiſcentiam, lapſus, ſui & dedecoris ad Dei gloriam meminiſſe. Nihil nobis decedit, quod cedit in illius honorem qui præteritis peccatis noſtris ab inferno nos transfert in Cœl. *Brightman in Cantic. p. 21.*

When the God that formed it, out of free Grace to the Work of his own Hands, had thus recovered it to a Senſe of its own Worth and Danger; my next Work is to get it united with Chriſt, *and thereby ſecured from the Wrath to come. Which I found to be a Work difficult to* effect, *(if it be yet effected) and Work of Time to* clear, *tho' but to the Degree of good Hope thro' Grace.*

And since the Hopes and Evidences of Salvation began to spring up in my Soul, and settle the State thereof, I found these three great Words, viz. Christ, Soul *and* Eternity, *to have a far different, and more awful Sound in my Ear than ever they used to have. I looked on them from that Time, as Things of the greatest certainty, and most awful Solemnity. These Things have laid some Weight upon my Thoughts, and I have felt at certain Seasons a strong Inclination to sequester my self from all other Studies and spend my last Days and most fixed Meditations upon these three great and weighty Subjects.*

I know the Subject Matter of my Studies and Enquiries (be it never so weighty) doth not therefore make my Meditations and Discourse upon it great and weighty: Nor am I such a vain Opinionator *as to imagine my Discourses every way suitable to the Dignity of such Subjects; No, no, the more I think and study about them, the more I discern the Indistinctness, Darkness, Crudity, and Confusion of my own Conceptions, and Expression of such great and transcendent Things as those:* But In magnis voluisse sat est, *I resolved to do what I could; and accordingly some Years past I finished and published in two Parts the* Doctrine of Christ; *and by the Acceptation and Success the Lord gave that, he hath encouraged me to go on in this second Part of my Work, how unequal soever my Shoulders are to the Burden of it.*

The Nature, Original, Immortality, *and* Capacity *of mine own Soul, for the present lodged in, and related to this vile Body, destinated to Corruption; together with its* Existence, Imployment, Perfection, Converse with God, *and other* Spirits, *both of its own, and of a superior Rank and Order, when it shall (as I know it shortly must) put off this its* Tabernacle; *These Things have a long time been the Matters of my limited Desires to understand, so far as I could see the Pillar of Fire (God in his Word) enlightening my Way to the Knowledge of them. Yea, such is the Value I have for them, that I have given them the next Place in my Esteem, to the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, and my Interest in him.*

God hath formed me (as he hath other Men) a prospecting Creature. *I feel my self yet uncentred, and short of that State of Rest and Satisfaction to which my Soul in its Natural and Spiritual Capacity hath a Designation. I find that I am in a continual Motion towards my everlasting Abode, and the Expence of my Time; and many Infirmities tell me that I am not far from it: By which I am strongly prompted to look forward, and acquaint my self as much as I can with my next Place, and Imployment. I look with a greedy and inquisitive Eye that way.*

Yet would I not be guilty of an unwarrantable Curiosity, in searching into unrevealed Things which Jesus Christ hath purchased and prepared for me, and all the rest that are waiting for his Appearance and Kingdom. I feel my Curiosity checked and repressed by that elegant Paronomasia, *Rom.* 12. 3. Μὴ ὑπερφρονεῖν παρὸ δεῖ φρονεῖν, ἀλλὰ φρονεῖν εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν, *In all Things I would be wise unto Sobriety. I groan under the Effects of* Adam's *itching Ambition* to know, *and would not by repeating his Sin encrease my own Misery: Nor yet would I be scared by his Example into the contrary Evil of neglecting the Means God hath afforded me, to know all that I can of his revealed Will.*

* *The Helps* Philosophy *affords in some Parts of this Discourse, are too great to be* despised *and too small to be* admired. *I confess I read the Definitions of the Soul given by the ancient* Philosophers, *with a compassionate Smile. When* Thales *calls it* a Nature without Repose; *Asclepiades,* an Exercitation of Sence; *Hesiod,* a Thing composed of Earth and Water; *Parmenides,* a Thing composed of Earth and Fire; Galen *saith it is* Heat; *Hippocrates,* a Spirit diffused thro' the Body; *Plato,* a self-moving Substance; Aristotle, *calls it* Entelechia, that by which the Body is moved: *If my Opinion should be asked, which of all these* Definitions *I like best, I should give the same Answer which* Theocritus *gave an ill* Poet, *repeating many of his Verses, and asking which he liked best,* Those *(said he)* which you have omitted. *Or if they must have the* Garland *as the Prize they have shot for, let them have it upon the same Reason that was once given to him that always shot wide.* Difficilius est toties non attingere, *Because it was the greatest Difficulty to aim so often at the Mark, and never come near it. One Word of God gives me more Light than a thousand such Laborous Trifles. As* Cæsar *was best able to write his own* Commentaries, *so God only can give the best Account of his own Creature, on which he hath impressed his own Image.*

* Cui enim veritas comperta sine Deo? Cui Deus cognitus sine Christo? Cui Christus exploratus sine Spiritu? Cui Spiritus accomodatus sine fide? *Tert. de Anima.*

Modern Philosophers, *assisted by the divine Oracles, must needs come closer to the Mark, and give us a far better Account of the Nature of the Soul. Yet I have endeavoured not to cloud this Subject with their Controversies, or abstruse Notions; remembring what a smart but deserved Check* Tertullian *gives those,* Qui Platonicum & Aristotelicum Christianismum producunt Christianis. *Words are but the Servants of Matter. I value them as* Merchants *do their Ships, not by the gilded* Head *and* Stern, *the Neatness of their* Mould, *or curious* Streamers, *but by the Soundness of their Bottoms, Largeness of their Capacity, and Richness of their Cargo, and Loading. The Quality of this Subject necessitates in many Places the Use of* Scholastick Terms, *which will be obscure to the Vulgar Reader: But apt and proper Words must not be rejected for their Obscurity, except plainer Words could be found that fit the Subject as well, and are as fully expressive of the Matter. The unnecessary I have avoided, and the rest explained as I could.*

The principal Fruits I especially aim at, both to my own and the Reader's Soul, are, That whilst we contemplate the Freedom, Pleasure, and Satisfaction of that Spiritual, Incorporeal People who dwell in the Region of Light and Joy, and are hereby forming to our Selves a true Scriptural Idea *of the blessed State of those disembodied Spirits with whom we are to serve and converse in the Temple-worship in Heaven; and come more explicitly and distinctly to understand the Constitution, Order, and delightful Imployment of those our everlasting Associates: We may answerably feel the fond and inordinate Love of this Animal Life subacted and wrought down; the frightful Vizard of Death drop off, and a more pleasing Aspect appear; that no upright Soul that shall read these Discourses may henceforth be convulsed at the Name of Death, but chearfully aspire, and with pleasant Expectation wait for the blessed Season of its Transportation to that blessed Assembly. 'Tis certainly our Ignorance of the Life of Heaven that makes us dote as we do upon the present Life. There is a Gloom, a thick Mist overspreading the next Life, and hiding even from the Eyes of Believers, the Glory that is there. We send forth our Thoughts to penetrate this Cloud, but they return to us without the desired Success. We reinforce them with a Salley of new and more vigorous Thoughts,*

but

but ſtill they come back in Confuſion and Diſappointment, as to any perfect Account they can bring us from thence; tho' the oftener and cloſer we think ſtill the more we grow up into Acquaintance with theſe excellent Things.

Another Benefit I pray for, and expect from theſe Labours, is, that by deſcribing the horrid State of thoſe Souls which go the other way, and ſhewing to the Living the diſmal Condition of Souls departed in their unregenerate State, ſome may be awakned to a ſeaſonable and effectual Conſideration of their wretched Condition, whilſt they yet continue under the Means, and among the Inſtruments, of their Salvation.

Whatever the Fruits of this Diſcourſe ſhall be to others, I have Cauſe to bleſs God for the Advantage, it hath already given me. I begin to find more than ever I have done, in the ſeparate State of ſanctified Souls, that is capable of attracting an intellectual Nature; and if God will but fix my mind upon this State, and cauſe my pleaſed Thoughts about it to ſettle into a ſteddy Frame and Temper, I ſhall daily more and more depreciate and deſpiſe this common way of exiſtence in a Corporeal Priſon; and when the bleſſed Seaſon of my Departure is at hand, I ſhall take a chearful Farewel of the greater and leſſer Elementary World, to which my Soul hath been confined, and have an abundant Entrance through the broad Gate of Aſſurance, unto the bleſſed unbodied Inhabitants of the World to come.

A TREATISE OF THE SOUL of MAN.

GEN. II. *Verse* 7.

And the Lord God formed Man out of the Dust of the Ground, and breathed into his Nostrils the Breath of Life; and Man became a living Soul.

THree Things (saith * *Athanasius*) are unknown to Men according to their Essence, *viz. God, Angels,* and the *Souls* of Men. Of the *Nature* of the divine and high-born Soul, we may say as the learned † *Whitaker* doth of the way of its Infection by *Original Sin*; it is easier sought than understood, and better understood than explicated: And for its *Original*, the most sagacious and renowned for Wisdom amongst the || antient *Philosophers* understood nothing of it. It is said of *Democritus*, that there is * nothing in the whole Workmanship of Nature of which he did not write; and in a more lofty and swelling *Hyperbole*, they stile their Eagle-eyed *Aristotle*, the Rule, yea, and Miracle of Nature; Learning it self, the very Sun of Knowledge: Yet both these are not only said, but proved by *Lactantius* to be learned Ideots. How had the Schools of *Epicurus* and *Aristotle*, the *Cartesians*, and other Sects of *Philosophers*, abused and troubled the World with a kind of *Philosophical Enthusiasm*, and begat many ridiculous Fancies about the Original of the Soul of Man! and when all is done, three Words of God by the Pen of his inspired *Moses*, enlightens us more than all their subtil Notions of the accidental Concretion of *Atoms*, their *Materia subtilis* and *Anima Mundi*, and the rest of their unintelligible Fancies could ever do.

The account *Moses* gives us in this Context of the Birth of the World, and of Man the *Epitome* of it, is full of Sense, Reason, Congruity, and Clearness; and such as renders all the Essays of all the then Philosophers to be vain, inevident, self-repugnant, and inexplicable *Theories*.

The inspired Penman gives us in this Context a compendious Narrative of the World's Creation, telling more generally the rude, inform, and indigested *Chaos*; and then more particularly the specifying and diversifying of the various beautiful things, thence educed by the Motion of the Spirit brooded upon the Face of the Waters.

When the first Matter was strictly created out of nothing, the Spirit (as *Moses* excellently expresseth it, chap. 1. v. 2.) hovered, or moved over it as a Bird over her Eggs, and, as it were by way of *Incubation*, cherishing and influencing it, did thereby draw forth all the Creatures into their several Forms, and distinct particular Natures, wherein we now with Delight and Admiration behold them.

In this manner and order was the stately Fabrick of the World produced and erected; but as yet it remained as a fair and well furnished *House* without an *Inhabitant*. God had imployed infinite Wisdom and Power about it, and engraven his Name upon the meanest Creature in it; but there was no Creature yet made (except Angels, the Inhabitants of another City) to read the Name, and celebrate the Praises of the Almighty Creator.

He therefore thought the World imperfect till there was a Creature made to contemplate, praise and worship the Maker of it: For this very use and purpose was Man created, not only to see, but consider the Things he saw; discourse, and rationally collect out of them the Things he saw not; and both praise and love the Maker for, and in, them all.

The Palaces of Princes are not beautified and adorned to the intent Men should pay their Respects and Honours to the Walls, but to shew the Grandeur and Magnificence of the King, to whose Person their Honour is due, as *Athenagoras* in his excellent *Apology* for the Christians, speaks. The World is a glorious and magnificent Pile, raised designedly to exhibit the Wisdom and Power of its Creator to the reasonable Creature Man, that from him God might receive the Glory of all his other Works *

Of this Creature Man, the Master-piece of all the visible World, (and therefore crowned King over it the first Moment he was made, *Psal.* 8. 5.) *Moses* in the next place gives us the account, both of his *Original* whence he came, and of the *Dignity* what he is. *The Lord God formed Man out of the Dust of the Ground, and breathed into*

ורוח אלהים מרחפת על פני המים רחפ-Motus com-motus, agitatus fuit: non simplicem motum denotat, sed ejusmodi quam Columba peragit, cum ovis ad excludendum pullos incubat. *Rab. Sol.*

* Tria sunt quæ secundum essentiam hominibus ignota sunt Deus, Angelus, & Anima hominis. *Ath.* in Tract. de defin. Quæri facilius est quam intelligi, & melius intelligitur quam explicatur.

† Plato *doubted*, Aristotle *denied, and* Galen *derided the Doctrine of the Divine Creation.*

|| Nihil est in toto opificio naturæ, de quo non locutus sit Democritus. *And* Aristotle, *they stiled him,* Regula naturæ, Naturæ speculum, Ipsa Eruditio, Scientiarum, *Antistis* literarum & sapientiæ. *Lactan.* lib. 3. cap. 17. 18.

* Veritatem quærit Philosophia, invenit Theologia. *Pic. Miran.*

* Est sanè pulcherrimus hic mundus, non ipse tamen mundus, sed artificiosus ille conditor adorandus est. Ut neque vestro Imperio subditi, cum aliqua re indigent, ut assequantur; cum vos adierint; omissis vobis Dominis ac Principibus, nulloque affectis honore; ad Palatii vestri magnificentiam se convertant: sed Ædificii regii tam elegantem structuram

his

obiter prætereuntes, admirati vos ipsos ante, supraque omnia honorant. *Athen. Apol.*

The Original { I. Of the Body / II. Of the Soul } of Man.

I. The Original of the Body of Man: *Formed out of the Dust of the Ground.* Dust was its original Matter: of Dust was it made, and into Dust it must be resolved, *Gen.* 3. 19. The Consideration is humbling, and serves to tame the Pride of Man, who is apt to dote upon his own Beauty. Man's Body was not made of heavenly Matter, as the radiant Sun, and sparkling Stars: No, nor yet of the most precious and orient earthly Matter; God did not melt down the pure and splendid Gold and Silver, or powder the precious Pearls and sparkling *Diamonds*; but he formed it of the vile and despicable Dust.

עפר מן האדמה סרה. Pulveram tenuissimam ad domandam superbiam. *Fagius.*

We find that the sprinkling of Dust upon new Writing prevents many a foul *blot*: I am sure, the sprinkling of our originary Dust upon our Minds by serious Consideration, is the way to prevent many a proud *Boast*.

However, the baseness of the Matter, and coarseness of the Stuff, serves to set off the admirable Skill of the most wise and powerful *Architect*, who out of such mean and despicable Materials, has fashioned so exact and elegant a Piece. *The Lord God formed Man out of the Dust.*

יהוה אלהים. Dominus Deus. Nomen Dei hic plenum est, propter hominis dignitatem. *Nachm.*

The Lord God.] The Name of God is here set down at full, * to set forth the Dignity of *Man*, the subject Matter wrought upon, as some conceive.

Pressit יצר Compressit, & per Metalepsin, premendo & comprimendo finxit, formavit.

Formed.] Fashioned, or curiously Moulded, and figured it. The Hebrew *Verb* primarily signifies to press, compress, or squeeze together; and by a *Metalepsis*, by pressing and compressing, to mould or fashion, as the Potter doth his Clay. The *Psalmist* useth another Word to express the artificial elegancy of the Body of Man, *Psal.* 139. 15. 16. רקמתי *acupictus sum*, I am embroidered painted, or flourished as with a Needle: We render it *curiously wrought*. Whatsoever Beauty and comely proportion God hath bestowed by Creation upon it, 'tis all answerable to that excellent *Idea*, or Model before conceived in his Mind and Purpose. All this Care and Cost was bestowed upon the Body of Man, which, when all is done, is but the *Case* in which that inestimable Jewel, the Soul, was to be lodged. This therefore I must lay aside, and come to the more noble Subject,

Imaginem mente divinâ conceptam, quasi manu format. *Fagius.*

II. *The Soul of Man:* About which we have before us four Things to ponder in this Text, *viz.*

(1.) The Nature and Property,
(2.) The Descent and Original,
(3.) The manner of Infusion,
(4.) The *Nexus*, or *Bond* that unites
} the Soul of Man.

(1.) The *Nature* and *Property* of it, a *living Soul.* The Word נפש as also the Chaldee *Naphsha*; and *his Nostrils the Breath of Life*; *and Man became a living Soul.* Where we find,

the Greek ψυχὴ have one and the same *Etymology*, all signifying to breathe, or respire; not that the Breath is the Soul, but denoting the manner of its *Infusion* by the Breath of God, and the means of its *continuation* in the Body, by the Breath of the Nostrils. God's Breath infused it, and our Breath continues its Union with the Body. It signifies here the rational Soul: and the Hebrew Word נפש *a Soul* hath a very near affinity with the Word נשמה the Heavens; and indeed there is a nearer affinity betwixt the Things, *viz.* Soul and Heaven, than there is betwixt the Names.

The Epithet חיה which we translate *Living*, the *Arabick* renders *a rational Soul*; and indeed none but a rational deserves the Name of a living Soul: for all other Forms or Souls which are of an earthly Extract, do both depend on, and die with the Matter out of which they were educed; but this being of another Nature, a spiritual and substantial Being, is therefore rightly stiled *a living Soul.*

The *Chaldee* renders it *a speaking Soul.* And indeed it deserves a Remark, that the ability of Speech is conferred on no other Soul but Mans. Other Creatures have apt and excellent Organs; Birds can modulate the Air, and form it into sweet delicious Notes, and charming Sounds; but no Creature except Man, whose Soul is of an Heavenly Nature and Extraction, can *articulate* the Sound, and form it into Words, by which the Notions and Sentiments of one Soul are in a noble, apt, and expeditious manner conveyed to the Understanding of another Soul. And indeed, what should any other Creature do with the faculty or power of Speech without a Principle of Reason to guide and govern it? It is sufficient to them that they discern each others meaning by dumb signs, much after the manner that we traded at first with the *Indians*: But Speech is proper only to the rational or living Soul, however we render it a *living*, a *rational*, or a *speaking* Soul, it distinguishes it the Soul of Man from all other Souls.

(2.) We find here the best Account that was ever given of the *Origin* of the Soul of Man, whence it came, and from whom it derives its being. O what a dust and pudder have the Disputes and Contests of *Philosophers* raised about this matter which is cleared in a few Words in this Scripture.

* *God breathed into his Nostrils the Breath of Life, and Man became a living Soul:* which plainly speaks it to be the immediate effect of God's creating Power. Not a Result from the Matter; no, no, Results flow *sinu materiæ*, out of the Bosom of Matter; but comes *ex halitu divino*, from the Inspiration of God. That which is born of the Flesh, is Flesh; but is a Spirit descending from the Father of Spirits God formed it, but not out of any pre-existent Matter, whether *Celestial* or *Terrestrial*; much out of himself, as the * *Stoicks* speak; but out of nothing. An high born Creature it is, but no Particle of the Deity. The indivisible and immutable Essence of God is utterly repugnant to such Notions: and therefore they speak strictly or warily enough that are bold to call *Ray* or *Emanation* from God.

* Sufflavit ad ostendendum animam hominis extrinseco esse per creationem, simulque creando inspiravit. *Poli Synop. in locum.*

* *The* Stoicks, *saith* Simplicius, *call the soul* ἀπόσπασμα τοῦ θείου pars vel fragmentum Dei: *and* Seneca, Deum in humano corpore hospitantem; *which is near to* Θεὸς ἐν σαρκὶ φανείς

A Spirit it is, and flows by way of Creation, im ediately from the Father of Spirits; but yet 'tis a irit of another inferiour Rank, and Order.

(3.) We have alſo the Account of the Way and nner of its *Infuſion* into the Body, *viz.* by the e Breath of God which gave it its Being. It is erefore a rational, ſcriptural, and juſtifiable Exſſion of S. *Auguſtine*, *Creando infunditur, & infundo creatur*; it is infuſed in creating, and created in infuſing; though Dr. *Brown* * too ſlightingly calls it a meer *Rhetorical Antimetathesis*. Some of the Fa-

* Religio Medici, *Sect.*

rs, as *Juſtin*, *Ireneus*, and *Tertullian*, were of Oion, That the Son of God aſſumed a human pe at this time, in which afterward he often apred to the Fathers, as a *Prelude* to his true and Incarnation; and took Duſt or Clay in his nds, out of which he formed the Body of Man, ording to the Pattern of that Body in which he eared: And that being done, he afterwards by thing infuſed the Soul into it. But I rather k it's an *Anthropopathy*, or uſual Figure in ech, by which the Spirit of God ſtoops to the ecility of our Underſtandings. *He breathed into Noſtrils the Breath of Life*; Heb. *Lifes*. But this al Word הימים notes rather the twofold Life of , in this World, and in that to come; or the ral Faculties and Powers belonging to one and ſame Soul, *viz.* the *intellective*, *ſenſitive*, and *tive* Offices thereof; than that there are more s than one, eſſentially differing, in one and the ſame Man; for that, as * *Aquinas* truly ſaith, is impoſſible. We cannot trace the way of the Spirit, or tell in what manner it was united with this Clod of Earth. But it is enough, that he who formed it, did unite or marry it to the Body. This is clear, me not by way of natural Reſultancy from the , by way of Inſpiration from the Lord; not the warm Boſom of the *Matter*, but from the th of its *Maker*.

* Impoſſibile eſt in uno ne eſſe plures animas ſſentiam differentes; a tantum eſt anima, vegetativæ, & ſenſi- & intellectivæ, offi- fungitur. *Aquin.* 12. . *Art.* 2.

.) Laſtly, we have here the *Nexus*, *Copula*, Tie and, by which it is united with the Body of , *viz. the Breath of his* (*i. e.* of Man's) *Noſtrils*. a moſt aſtoniſhing Myſtery, to ſee Heaven Earth married together in one Perſon; the of the Ground, and an immortal Spirit claſpach other with ſuch dear Embraces and tenove; ſuch a noble and divine Gueſt, to take Reſidence within the Mud-walls of Fleſh and . Alas! how little Affinity, and yet what Affection is found betwixt them!

w that which ſo ſweetly links theſe two difNatures together, and holds them in Union, hing elſe but the Breath of our Noſtrils, as *ext* ſpeaks: It came in with the Breath; Breath ſtays with us, it cannot go from us; ſoon as the Breath departs, it departs alſo. e rich *Elixirs* and *Cordials* in the World canerſwade it to ſtay one Minute after the Breath e. One Puff of Breath will carry away the , holieſt and moſt deſirable Soul that ever in Fleſh and Blood. When our Breath is , our Days are *extinct*, Job 17. 1. *Thou takeſt heir Breath, they die, and return to their Duſt*, 04. 29.

of the Text thus opened, ariſe two Doctripoſitions, which I ſhall inſiſt upon, *viz.*

Doct. I. *That the Soul of Man is of Divine Original, created and inſpired immediately by the Lord.*

Doct. II. *That the Souls and Bodies of Men are link'd or knit together by the feeble Band of the Breath of their Noſtrils.*

In the Proſecution of theſe two Propoſitions many things will come to our Hands, of great Uſe in Religion; which I ſhall labour to lay as clearly and orderly in the Reader's Underſtanding, and preſs as warmly upon his Heart as I can. And firſt of the firſt;

Doct. I. *That the Soul of Man is of Divine Original, created and inſpired immediately by the Lord.*

In this firſt Propoſition *two* Things are to be diſtinctly pondered, *viz.*

I. The Nature
II. The Original } of the *Soul*.

Or *what* it is, and from *whence* it came.

I. The firſt thing which arreſts our Thoughts, and requires their Immoration and Exerciſe, is the *Nature of the Soul*, or what kind of Being it is. *The Nature of the Soul.*

Thoſe that are moſt curiouſly inquiſitive into all other Beings, and put Nature upon the Rack to make her confeſs her Secrets, are in the mean time found ſhamefully ſlight and negligent in the Study of themſelves. Few there are that can prevail with themſelves to ſit down and think cloſe to ſuch Queſtions as theſe are: *What manner of Being is this Soul of mine? Whence came it? Why was it infuſed into this Body? And where muſt it abide, when Death hath diſlodg'd it out of this frail Tabernacle?* There is a natural Averſation in Man to ſuch Exerciſes of Thoughts as theſe, although in the whole Univerſe of Beings in this lower World, a more noble or deſirable Creature is not to be found *.

* Cui igitur de Anima unquam diſputârunt, is certè non de re inani, & quæ nihil præter nomen habeat, ſed de re graviſſima, maximique momenti, quâ nihil ſub cœlo præſtantius, diſputâſſe judicandi ſunt *Zanch. de Anima, lib.* 2. *pag.* 555.

The Soul is the moſt wonderful and aſtoniſhing Piece of Divine Workmanſhip: 'Tis no *Hyperbole* to call it the Breath of *God*, the Beauty of *Man*, the Wonder of *Angels*, and the Envy of *Devils*. One Soul is of more Value than all the Bodies in the World.

The Nature of it is ſo ſpiritual and ſublime, that it cannot be perfectly known by the moſt acute and penetrating Underſtanding, aſſiſted in the Search by all the Aids Philoſophy can contribute.

It is not my Deſign in this Diſcourſe to treat of the ſeveral Faculties and Powers of the Soul, or to give you the Riſe, Natures, or Numbers of its Affections and Paſſions: but I ſhall confine my Diſcourſe to its *general Nature*, and Original. And ſeeing none can ſo well diſcover the Nature of it, as he who is the *Author* of it, as * *Tertullian* ſpeaks, I therefore juſtly expect the beſt Light from his Words, though I will not neglect any other Aid he is pleaſed elſewhere to afford.

* Si quid de Anima examinandum eſt, ad Dei regulas dirigat: certè nullum alium potiorem animæ Demonſtratorem, quàm Auctorem, *&c. Tertul. de Anima.*

† The Soul is variouſly denominated from its ſeveral Powers and Offices, as

† Dum vivificat Corpus anima eſt; dum vult, animus; dum ſcit, mens;

dum recolit, memoria; dum rectum judicat, ratio; dum spirat, Spiritus. *Isidor. Etym.* c.

the Sea from the several Shores it washes. I will not spend time about the several Names by which it is known to us in Scripture, but give you that Description of it, with which my Understanding is most satisfied, which take thus:

The Description of the Soul.

The Soul of Man is a vital, spiritual, and immortal Substance, endowed with an Understanding, Will, and various Affections; created with an Inclination to the Body, and infused thereinto by the Lord.

IN this Description we have the two general Parts into which I distributed this Discourse; *viz.* its general *Nature*, and Divine *Original*. The Nature of the Soul is expressed to us in these following Terms.

I. *It is a* Substance.

That is to say, not a *Quality*, or an *Accident* inhering in another Being, or Subject; as Whiteness doth in the Snow: but a Being * by it self. Qualities and Accidents have no Existence of their own, but require another Being or Subject to their Existence; but the Soul of Man is a substantial Being of it self, which will evidently appear upon the following Grounds.

* Anima est *Ens per se*, (i. e.) non est in aliquo per modum partis, aut formæ, à quo in suo esse dependeat. *Colleg. Conimb. in lib.* 11.

(1.) Because it is in a strict and proper Sense created by God. *He formeth* or createth *the Spirit in Man*, Zech. 12. 1. To him we are advised to *commit it, as to a faithful Creator*, 1 Pet. 4. 19. The substantial Nature of the Soul is implied in the very Notion of its Creation; for * whatsoever is created, is a *Substance*, an *Ens per se*. Accidents are not said to be created, but concreated; the *Crasis* of Humours, and *Results* of Matter, are not Substances created, but things rising in a natural way from created Substances. They flow from, and, as to their very Essence, depend upon pre-existent Matter; but the Soul was created out of nothing, and infused into the Body after it was formed and organized; which evidenceth its substantial Nature.

* Quicquid à Deo proprie creatum est, substantia est: accidentia enim non dicuntur creari, sed concreari, *Polani Syntag. p.* 319.

(2.) This evidenceth the Soul to be a *Substance*, that it can and doth exist and subsist by it self alone, when separated from the Body by Death, *Luke* 23. 43. *To Day shalt thou* (i. e. thy Soul) *be with me in Paradise*; and *Mat.* 10. 28. *Fear not them that kill the Body, but are not able to kill the Soul.* Were the Soul but an Accident, a Quality, a Result, he that kills the Body must needs kill the Soul too; as he that casts a Snow-ball into the Fire must needs destroy the whiteness with the Snow. Accidents fail and perish with their Subjects: but seeing it's plain in these and many other Scriptures, the Soul doth not fail with the Body; nothing can be more plain and evident, than that it is of a substantial Nature.

When the *Spaniards* came first among the poor *Indians*, they thought the Horse and his Rider to be one Creature; as many ignorant ones think the Soul and Body of Man to be nothing but *Breath* and *Body*: whereas indeed they are two distinct Creatures, as vastly different in their Natures as the *Rider* and his *Horse*, or the *Bird* and his *Cage*. While the Man is on Horseback he moves according the motion of the Horse; and whilst the Bird incaged, he eats and drinks, and sleeps, and hops his Cage. But if the Horse fail and die under Rider, or the Cage be broken, the Man can go his own Feet, and the Bird enjoy himself as we yea better, in the open Fields and Woods than the Cage: Neither depend, as to Being or Actio on the Horse or Cage.

(3.) Both *Scripture* and *Philosophy* consent in th that the Soul is the chief, most noble, and prin pal part of Man, from which the whole Man and ought to be denominated. So *Gen.* 46. 26. *the Souls that came with* Jacob *into* Egypt, (*i. e.*) the Persons; as the Latines say, *tot capita*, so ma Heads or Persons. The Apostle in 2 *Cor.* 5. 8. see to exclude the Body from the Notion of *Personal* when he saith, *We are willing rather to be absent fr the Body and to be present with the Lord*: That *Ille* term of *Personality*, is there given to the *Soul* exc sively of the *Body*, for the Body cannot be abs from it self: but *We*, that is, the Souls of Believ may be both absent from it and present w Christ.

To this we may add 2 *Cor.* 4. 16. where Soul is called the *Man*, and the *inner Man* too, Body being but the external Face or Shadow of Man. And to this *Philosophers* agree. The best *Philosophers* are so far from thinking that the Bod the substantial part of Man, and the Soul a th dependent on it; that contrarily they affirm, the Body depends upon the Soul, * and that it is the Soul that conserves and sustains it; and that the Body is in the Soul, rather than the Soul in the Body, and that which is seen is not the Man, but that is the Man which is invisible, that the Body might be killed and the Man not hurt; meaning the Soul, which only deserves the Name of Man. Now if it be the chief part of Man, and that which is only worthy the Name of a Man, and from which therefore whole is and ought to be denominated a Man it be so far from depending on the Body, or be contained within the Body, that the Body re depends on it, and is in it; then surely the must be what we describe it to be, a substa *Being*.

* Anima corpus ani tum conservat, & sustent ubi autem illa relinquit pus, & animalis ratio, ma non est in corpore, quam in loco, cùm à circumscribi nequeat; per totum meat corp non est pars in qua n ta adsit: non enim à re tenetur, sed ipsi corpus. Neque est in pore ut in vase, vel in sed potius in ipsa est *Nyssen. de Anima lib.* ἐν ὅσῳ Ἀνθρωπός ἐστι Anima cujusque est que.

(4.) It is past all controversie, that the Soul *Substance*, because it is the subject of Properties, fections, and Habits; which is the very strict formal Notion of a *Substance*. All the Affect and Passions of Hope, Desire, Love, Delight, Sorrow, and the rest, are all rooted in it, and sp out of it; and so for *Habits*, *Arts* and *Sciences* *; 'tis the Soul in which they are lodged and seated. Having once gotten a promptitude to act, either by some strong, or by some frequent peated acting, they abide in the Soul, even the Acts are intermitted; as in Sleep a Navig Scribe or Musician, are really *Artists*, when are neither sailing, writing, or playing;

* Anima subjectu δεκτικὸν omnium vir & vitiorum, scientiar artium. *Buchan. lat.* 86.

the Habits ſtill remain in their Minds as is evident in this, that when they awake they can perform their ſeveral Works without learning the Rules of their Art anew.

II. *The Soul is a vital Subſtance*, i. e.

A Subſtance which hath an eſſential Principle of Life in itſelf; a living, active Being. A *living* Soul, ſaith *Moſes* in the Text; and hereby it is diſtinguiſhed from, and oppoſed to Matter or Body. The Soul moves it ſelf and the Body too; it hath a ſelf-moving Virtue or Power in it ſelf; whereas the Matter or Body is wholly paſſive, and is moved and acted, not by itſelf, but by this vital Spirit. *Jam.* 2. 26. *The Body without the Spirit is dead.* It acts not at all, but as it is acted by this inviſible Spirit. This is ſo plain that it admits of ſenſible Proof and Demonſtration. Take meer Matter, and compound or divide it, alter it and change it how you will, you can never make it ſee, feel, hear, or act vitally without a quickning and actuating Soul: yet we muſt ſtill remember, that this active vital Principle, the Soul, tho' it hath this vital Power in it ſelf, it hath it not from it ſelf, but in a conſtant receptive Dependence upon God, the firſt Cauſe both of its Being and Power.

III. *It is a Spiritual Subſtance.*

All Subſtances are not groſs, material, viſible and palpable Subſtances, but ſpiritual and immaterial, as well as corporeal Subſtances diſcernible by ſight or touch. To deny this were to turn a downright Sadducee, and to deny the exiſtence of Angels and Spirits, *Acts* 23. 8. The Word *Subſtance*, as it is applied to the Soul of Man, puzzles and confounds the dark Underſtandings of ſome, that know not what to make of an immaterial Subſtance whereas in this place it is no more than **ſubſtare accidentibus*, (i. e.) to be a Subject in which Properties, Affections and Habits are ſeated and ſubjected. This is a Spiritual Subſtance, and is frequently in Scripture called a Spirit; *Into thy Hands I commit my Spirit*, Luke 23. 46. *Lord Jeſus receive my Spirit*, Acts 7. and ſo frequently all over the Scriptures. And the Spirituality of its Nature appears, (1.) By its deſcent in a peculiar way from the Father of Spirits. (2.) In that it rejoyceth in the eſſential Properties of a Spirit. (3.) That at Death it returns to that great Spirit who was its efficient and former. (1.) It deſcends in a peculiar way from the Father of Spirits, as hath been ſhewn in the opening of this Text: God ſtiles himſelf its Father, *Heb.* 12. 9. its former, *Zech.* 12. 1. 'Tis true, he giveth to all living Things ζωὴν καὶ πνοὴν Life and Breath, *Acts* 17. 25. Other Souls are from him as well as the rational Soul; but in a far different way and manner. They flow not immediately from him by Creation, as this doth. It is ſaid, *Gen.* 1. 24. 27. *Let the Earth bring forth the living Creature after its kind*; but *God created Man in his own Image*: Which ſeems plainly to make a ſpecifical difference betwixt the reaſonal and all other Souls.

(2.) It rejoiceth in the eſſential Properties of a Spirit: for it is an incorporeal Subſtance as Spirits are. It hath not *partes extra partes*, extenſion of Parts; nor it is diviſible as the Body is. *It hath* not Dimenſions and Figures as Matter hath; but *is* a moſt pure, inviſible, and (as the acute and judicious Mr. *More* expreſſeth it) indiſcerpible ſubſtance It hath the Principle of Life and Motion in it ſelf, or rather, it is ſuch a Principle it ſelf, and is not moved as the dull and ſluggiſh Matter is, *per aliud*, by another. Its efficacy is great, though it be unſeen, and not liable to the teſt of our touch, as no ſpiritual Subſtances are. *A Spirit* (ſaith Chriſt) *hath not Fleſh and Bones*, Luke 24. 39. We both grant and feel, that the Soul hath a Love and Inclination to the Body, (which indeed is no more than it is neceſſary it ſhould have; yet can we no more infer its Corporiety from that Love to the Body, than we can infer the Corporiety of Angels from their affection and benevolent Love to Men. It is a Spirit of a Nature vaſtly different from the Body in which it is immerſed. *There is* (ſaith a learned Author) *no greater Myſtery in Nature, than the Union betwixt the Soul and Body: That a Mind and Spirit ſhould be ſo tied and link'd to a Clod of Clay, that while that remains in a due Temper, it cannot by any Art or Power free it ſelf!--- What ſo much a kin are a Mind and a piece of Earth, a Clod and a Thought, that they ſhould be thus affixed to one another?* Mr. How's *Fun. Serm. p.* 9. to

Certainly, the Heavenly pure Bodies do not differ ſo much from a Dunghil, as the Soul and Body differ: they differ but as more pure and leſs pure Matter; but theſe, as material and immaterial. If we conſider wherein conſiſts the Being of a Body, and wherein that of a Soul, and then compare them, the Matter will be clear.

We cannot come to an Apprehenſion of their Beings, but by conſidering their primary Paſſions and Properties, whereby they make diſcovery of themſelves. The firſt and primary affection of a Body * (as is rightly obſerved) is that extenſion of Parts whereof it is compounded, and a Capacity of diviſion, upon which, as upon the fundamental Mode, the particular Dimenſions (that is, the Figures) and the local Motion do depend.

* *Philoſophical Eſſay*, p. 2. §. 2. p. 39.

Again, for the Being of our Souls, if we reflect upon our ſelves, we ſhall find that all our Knowledge of them reſolves into this, that we are Beings conſcious to our ſelves of ſeveral kinds of Cogitations; that by our outward Senſes we apprehend bodily Things preſent, and by our Imagination we apprehend Things abſent; and that we oft recover into our Apprehenſion things paſt and gone, and upon our perception of things we find our ſelves variouſly affected.

Let theſe two Properties of a Soul and Body be compared, and upon the firſt view of a conſidering Mind it will appear, that diviſibility is not Apprehenſion, or Judgment, or Deſire, or Diſcourſe: That to cut a Body into ſeveral Parts, or put it into ſeveral Shapes, or bring it to ſeveral Motions, or mix it after ſeveral ways, will never bring it to apprehend, or deſire. No Man can think the combining of Fires and Air, and Water, and Earth, ſhould make the lump of it to know or comprehend what is done to it, or by it. We ſee manifeſtly, that upon the diviſion of the Body, the Soul remains entire and undivided. It is not the loſs of a Leg, or Arm, or Eye, that can maim the Underſtanding, or the Will, or cut off the Affections.

Nay,

* *A Subſtance in this uſe of the Word, is that which ſtands not in reſpect of its being upon any other fellow Creature, as Accidents and Qualities do, whoſe Being is in having their in being in ſome other fellow Creature as their Subject; but this Being* of the Soul, *exiſts in it ſelf.*

Nay, it pervades the Body it dwells in, and is whole in the whole, and in every part, * which it could never do if it were material. Yea, it comprehends in its Understanding, the Body or Matter in which it is lodged; and more than that, it can and doth from Conceptions of pure spiritual and immaterial Beings, which have no Dimensions or Figures; all which shews it to be no corporeal, but a spiritual and immaterial Substance.

* *Understand it negatively, that the Soul is not in the Parts of the Body* per partes, *part in one Part and part in another, seeing it is indivisible, and hath no Parts.*

(3.) As it derives its Being from *the Father of Spirits* in a peculiar way, and rejoiceth in its spiritual Properties: so at Death it returns to *that great Spirit* from whence it came. It is not annihilated, or resolved into soft Air, or suck'd up again by the Element of Fire, or catch'd back again into the Soul of the World, as some have dreamed; but it returns to God who gave it, to give an Account of it self to him and receive its Judgment from him. *Then shall the Dust return to the Earth as it was, and the Spirit shall return to God who gave it,* Eccles. 12. 7. Each part of Man to its like, Dust to Dust, and Spirit to Spirit. Not that the Soul is resolved into God, as the Body is into Earth; but as God created it a rational Spirit, conscious to it self of moral good and evil, so when it hath finish'd its time in the Body, it must appear before the God of the Spirits of all Flesh, its Arbiter and final Judge.

By all which we see, that as it is elevated too high on the one Hand, when it is made a *Particle of God himself*; not only the Creature, but a part of God, * as *Plutarch* and † *Philo-Judeas*, and others have term'd it; (Spirit it is, but of another and inferiour kind:) So it is degraded too low, when it is affirmed to be Matter, tho' the purest, finest, and most subtile in Nature; which approacheth neerest to the Nature of Spirit. A Spirit it is, as much as an Angel is a Spirit, tho' it be a Spirit of another *species*. This is the Name it is known by throughout the Scriptures. In a Word, it is void of mixture and composition; there are no jarring Qualities, compounded Elements, or divisible Parts in the Soul, as there are in Bodies; but it is a pure, simple, invisible and indivisible Substance, which proves its Spirituality, and brings us to the fourth particular, *viz.*

* Anima autem mentis particeps facta, non solum Dei opus est, verum etiam pars, neque ab eo, sed de eo & ex eo facta. *Plut. de Qu. Platon.*

† Quomodo credibile videtur tam exiguam mentem humanam membranul cerebri, aut corde, haud amplis spaciis inclusam, totam Cœli mundique magnitudinem capere, nisi illius divinæ fœliciscque animæ particula esset indivisibilis? *Philo.*

IV. *It is an Immortal Substance.*

The simplicity and spirituality of its Nature, of which I spake before, plainly shews us, that it is in its very Nature designed for Immortality; for such a Being or Substance as this hath, none of the Seeds of Corruption and Death in its Nature, as all material and compounded Beings have. It hath nothing within it tending to dissolution: No jarring Elements, no contrary Qualities are found in Spirits, as there are in other Creatures of a mixed Nature. *Physitians* and *Philosophers* have disputed and contended eagerly about the true causes of natural Death *; and whilst they have been contending about the way, they have come to the end. The ingress of the Soul is obscure, and its Egress not clear. But this seems to be the thing in which they generally center, that the expence and destruction of the † natural Moisture, or radical Balsam, as others call it, which is as the Oil that maintains natural heat, or the Bridle that restrains that flame of Life from departing (as others express it); this is the cause of natural Death. Others ‖ assign the unequal reparation of the Parts of the Body, as the cause of Death. But be it one or other, 'tis evident the Soul, which consists neither of contrariant Qualities, nor of dissimiliar Parts, must be above the reach and stroke of Death. For if the Soul die, it must be either from some Seeds and Principles of Death and Corruption within it self, or by some destructive Power without it self, it must be either by the stroke of some Creature, or from the Hand of God that first formed and created it: But the Hand and Power of no Creature can destroy it; Creatures-power reaches no further than the Body, *Matth.* 10. 28. *They cannot kill the Soul.* And though the Almighty Power of God that created it out of nothing, can as easily reduce it to nothing; yet he will never do so. For besides the designation for Eternity, which is discernible in its very Nature (as before was observed) and which speaks the Intention of God to perpetuate his threatnings of eternal Wrath, and promises of everlasting Life, respectively made to the Souls of Men, as they shall be found in Christ or out of Christ, puts it beyond all doubt that they shall never die; as will be more fully evidenced in the following Discourse.

* Litigamus de via, interim ad terminum rapimur.

† Δεῖ γὰρ λαβεῖν ὅτι τὸ ζῆν τοῖς φύσει ὑγρὸν καὶ θερμὸν, τὸ ζῆν τοῦτον. Τὸ δὲ ζῆσαι ψυχῆσαι, καὶ ἐμψυχῆσαι, καὶ πνεῦμα, σαφὲς γένος. Arist. de long. & brev. vit.

Tum flammat & micat callidum nativum corporis nostri in humido primigenio, ejus humidi substantia consumitur, non aliter, quàm in lampade oleum à flamma exhauritur. *Heurnius* Aphor. 1. Tam diu durat vigor vitæ, quam diu stat calidum nativum, donec ad mortem sit accessus. *J. Bapt. Montan.* Ortus nostri primordia, caloris & humoris nativi habent summum complementum, &c. *Fernelius liber de spir. & cal.* ‖ Vergente ætate, inæqualiter modum sit reparatio, aliæ partes reparantur satis feliciter, sed aliæ ægrè, & in pejus. Ut ab eo tempore corpora humana subire incipiunt tormentum illud *Mezentii*, ut viva in amplexu mortuorum immoriantur. *Verulam. in additu Hist. vit. & mort.*

Well then, I hope so far our way is clear in the search of the Nature of the Soul, that it is a *Substance*, a *spiritual* Substance, and being so, it is also an *immortal Substance*. No doubt remains with me as to either of these. Let us then proceed to the consideration of its Faculties and Powers, by which it may be yet more fully known, and we shall find that,

It is a vital, spiritual, and immortal Substance, endued with an Understanding.

This is the noble leading Faculty of the Soul we are not distinguished from *Brutes* by our Senses but by our *Understanding*. As Grace sets out one Man above another, so Understanding sets the meanest Man above the best of Brutes. Strange and wonderful things are performed by the natural instinct and sagacity of Beasts; but yet what is said of one, is true of them all, *God hath not imparted Understanding to them*, Job 39. 17. This is a Jewel which adorns none but rational Creatures, Men and Angels.

* *It is a Faculty of the reasonable Soul, by which a Man apprehends and judgeth all intelligible things.*

* What the Understanding is.

The *Object* of its *every Being*, ſo far as it is true in ſelf, and apprehenſible by Man. It hath a two fold uſe in the Life of Man, *viz.*

(1) To *diſtinguiſh* Truth from Error and Falſhood. By this Candle of the Lord, lighted up in the Soul of Man, he may diſcern betwixt Duty and Sin, Good and Evil: 'Tis the Eye of the Soul, by which ſeeth the way in which we ſhould go, and the angerous Precipices that are on either ſide. It is e Souls *Taſter*, and diſcerns wholeſom Food from aneful Poyſon, *Job.* 12. 11. *Doth not the ear* (*i. e.* the Underſtanding by the *Ear*) *try Words, as the Mouth ſteth Meat?* It brings all things, as it were, in the amp before it, and then ſorts them, and orderly nks them into their proper *Claſſes* of *lawful* and *un-wful*, neceſſary and indifferent, *expedient* and *in-pedient*, that the Soul may not be damnified by ſtaking one for another. And this Judgment of iſcretion every Man muſt be allowed for himſelf. o Man is obliged to ſhut the Eyes of his own nderſtanding, and follow another Man blind-ld.

(2.) *To direct* and guide us in our Practice. This culty is by *Philoſophers* rightly called τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν *the ding Faculty*, becauſe the Will follows its practi l Dictates. It ſits at Helm, and guides the ourſe of the Soul: Not impelling or rigorouſly forcing its Dictates upon the Will; for the Will nnot be ſo impoſed upon; but by giving it a rective Light, or pointing as it were with its nger, at what it ought to chuſe, and what to re-e.

To this Faculty belong two other excellent and wonderful Powers of the Soul, *viz.*

1. Thoughts.
2. Conſcience.

1. The Power or Ability of Cogitation: *Thoughts* are properly the Actings and Agitations of the Mind, or any actual Operation of the Underſtanding. They are the Muſings of the Mind which are acted in the ſpe-ative part of the Underſtanding. It is obſerva-ble that the * Hebrew Word שיח *ſuach*, which is uſed for Meditation, or thinking, ſig-nifies both to think and to ſpeak in the Mind. When Underſtanding or Mind revolves and meditates Things that come into it, that very Meditation n inward ſpeaking, or a hidden Word in the rt, *Deut.* 15. 9. *Beware leſt there be a Thought in wicked Heart*, as ſome render it: In the Hebrew דבר עם לבבך *a Word in thy Heart*, Mat. 21. 25. Mat. 9. 3, 4 ἔλεγον ἐν ἑαυτοῖς *they ſpake within themſelves, they thought in their Hearts.* The Objects pre-ed to the Mind are the Companions with whom Hearts talk and converſe.

What a Thought is.

cogitatio eſt mentis tatio, *Paſor.* vel actio tis, *Zanch.*

πνω cum puncto ſini-locutus eſt ore, aut & διανοίχομαι eſt ſer-mari intra ſe, (*i. e.*) ſe in animis ſuis.

houghts are the Figments and Creatures of the d: they are formed within in multitudes innu-ble. The Power of Cogitation is in the Mind, yea in the Spirit of the Mind. * The Fancy indeed, while the Soul is embodied, or-rily, and for the moſt part preſents the appear-s and likeneſſes of things to the Mind; yet it orm Thoughts of things which the Fancy can preſent no Image of, as when † the Soul thinks of God, or of it ſelf. This Power of Cogitation goes with the Soul, and is root-ed in it when it is ſeparated from the Body; and by it we ſpeak to God, and con-verſe with *Angels*, and other Spirits in the unbo-died State, as will be more fully opened in the Pro-ceſs of this Diſcourſe.

† *When we think of God, ſaith* Max. Tyr. Diſſ. 1. *we muſt think of nothing material,* μήτε ὕλης τι μετὰ τοῦ θεοῦ νοῶμεν, ἄπειρα γὰρ ἐκεῖνα καὶ ἀσώματα.

2. The *Conſcience* belongs alſo to this Faculty; for it being the Judgment of a Man upon himſelf, with reſpect or relation to the Judgment of God, it muſt needs belong to the underſtanding Part or Fa-culty. *Thoughts* are form-ed in the *ſpeculative*, but *Con-ſcience* belongs to the practi-cal Underſtanding. It is a very high and aw-ful Power; it is *ſolo Deo minor*, and rides (as *Joſeph* did) in the ſecond Chariot; the next and immediate Officer under God. He ſaith of Con-ſcience with reſpect to every Man, as he once ſaid of *Moſes* with reſpect to *Pharaoh*, *See, I have made thee a God to Pharaoh*, Exod. 7. 1. The Voice of Conſcience is the Voice of God; for it is his Vicegerent and Repreſentative. *What it binds on Earth, is bound in Heaven; and what it looſeth on Earth, is looſed in Heaven.* It obſerves, records, and bears Witneſs of all our Actions; and acquits and condemns as in the Name of God for them. Its Conſolations are moſt ſweet, and its Condemnations moſt terrible; ſo terrible, that ſome have choſen Death, which is the King of Terrors, rather than to endure the ſcorching Heat of their own Conſciences. The greateſt Defe-rence and Obedience is due to its Commands, And a Man had better * en-dure any Rack or Torture in the World, than incur the Torments of it. It ac-companies us as our Shadow, where-ever we go; and when all others forſake us, (as at Death they will) Conſci-ence is then with us, and is never more active and vigorous than at that Time. Nor doth it forſake us after Death; but where the Soul goes, it goes, and will be its Companion in the o-ther World for ever. How glad would the Dam-ned be if they might but have left their Con-ſciences behind them when they went hence! But, as *Bernard* rightly ſays, † It is both Witneſs, Judge, Tor-mentor and Priſon; it accuſeth, judgeth, puniſheth, and condemneth.

Judicium appello conſci-entiam, ut ad intellectum eam pertinere oſtendam. *Amts.*

* Quas non oportet mor-tes præeligere, quod non ſupplicium potius ferre; i-mo in quam profundam in-ferni abyſſum non intrare, quam contra conſcientiam atteſtari? *Zuingl.*

† Ipſa judicat, ipſa im-perat, ipſa obſervat, ipſa ju-dex, ipſa tortor, ipſa car-cer, *Bern. lib. de Conſc. c.* 9.

And thus briefly of the Underſtanding, which hath many Offices, and as many Names from thoſe Offices.

It is ſometimes called *Wit, Reaſon, Underſtanding, Opinion, Wiſdom, Judgment.* And why we beſtow ſo many Names upon one and the ſame Faculty, the learned *Author* of that ſmall, but excellent || Tract *de Ani-ma*, gives this true and inge-nious Account.

|| Teipſum, p. 48, 39.

The Wit, *the Pupil of the Soul's clear Eye,*
And in Man's World the only ſhining Star,

Looks

Looks in the Mirrour of the Fantasie,
Where all the Gatherings of the Senses are;
And after by discoursing to and fro,
Anticipating and comparing Things,
She doth all universal Natures know,
And all Effects *into their* Causes *brings.*

When she rates Things, and moves from Ground to Ground,
The Name of Reason *she obtains by this:*
But when by Reason she the Truth hath found,
And standeth fix'd, she Understanding *is.*
When her Ascent she lightly doth incline
To either Part, she is Opinion *light:*
But when she doth by Principles define
A certain Truth, she hath true Judgment's *Sight.*

And as from Senses, Reason's Work doth spring,
So many Reasons Understanding gain;
And many Understandings Knowledge bring,
And by much Knowledge Wisdom we obtain.

VI. God hath endued the Soul of Man not only with an *Understanding* to discern and direct, but but also a *Will* to govern, moderate, and over-rule the Actions of this Life.

6. Endu'd with a *Will.*

The Will is a Faculty of the rational Soul, whereby a Man either chuseth or refuseth the Things which the Understanding discerns andknows.

What the Will is.

This is a very high and noble Power of the Soul. The Understanding seems to bear the same Relation to the Will, as a grave Councellor doth to a great *Prince.* It glories in two Excellencies, *viz.*

1. Liberty.
2. Dominion.

1. It hath Freedom and Liberty; it cannot be compelled and forced: Coaction is repugnant to its very Nature. In this it differs from the Understanding, that the Understanding is wrought upon *necessarily*, but the Will acts *spontaneously.* This Liberty of the Will respects the Choice or Refusal of the means for attaining those Ends it prosecutes, according as it finds them more or less conducible thereunto. The Liberty of the Will must be understood to be in Things *natural*, which are within its own proper Sphere, not in Things *supernatural.* It can move or not move the *Body* as it pleases, but it cannot move towards *Christ* in the Way of Faith as it pleaseth; it can open or shut the Hand or Eye at its Pleasure, but not the Heart. True indeed, it is not compelled or forced to turn to God by supernatural Grace, but in a Way suitable to its Nature, it is determined and drawn to Christ, *Psal.* 110. 3. It is drawn by a mighty Power, and yet runs freely; *Cant.* 1. 4. *Draw me, and I will run after thee.*

Ἐνυσιεχὲ ἑξωσία αὐτὸ ἀφαιρεῖσθαι. ZENO.

Efficacious Grace, and victorious Delight, is a Thing very different from compulsive Force. 'Pelagius (as late * Author speaks) at first gave all to Malure, acknowledged no Necessity of Divine Grace; but when this proud Doctrine found little Countenance, he called Nature by the Name of Grace; and when that Deceit was discovered, he acknowledged no other Grace but outward Instruction, or the Benefit of external Revelation, to discourse and put Men in mind of their Duty. Being yet driven farther, he acknowledged the Grace of Pardon; and before a Man could do any Thing acceptably, there was a Necessity of the Remission of Sin, and then he might obey God perfectly. But that not sufficing, he acknowledged another Grace, *viz.* the Example of Christ, which doth both secure our Rule and encourage our Practice. And last of all, his Followers own'd some kind of internal Grace, but they made that to consist in some Illumination of the Understanding, or moral Persuasion, by probable Arguments, to excite the Will, and this not absolutely necessary, but only for Facilitation, as a Horse to a Journey, which otherwise a Man might go a foot. Others grant the secret Influences of God's Grace, but make the Will of Man a co-ordinate Cause with God, namely that God doth propound the Object, hold forth inducing Considerations; give some remote Power and Assistance; but still there is an Indifferency in the Will of Man, to accept or refuse as liketh him best. Thus have they been forced to quit and change their Ground; but still the Pride of Nature will not let Men see the Necessity of divine efficacious Influences upon the Will and the Consistency thereof with natural Liberty.

* *Dr.* Manto *in* Psal. 119. *v.* 36.

2. Its Dignity in its *Dominion* as well as in its Liberty. The Will hath an *Empire* and Sceptre belonging to it; yea, a double Empire; for it rules.

Imperium { 1. Despoticum. 2. Politicum. } { 1. Over the *imperio dispotico*, by Way of absolute Command. 2. Over the other Powers and Passions of the Soul, *imperio politico*, by Way of *Suasion.*

(1.) The Will, like an absolute Sovereign * reigns over the Body, (*i. e.*) its external Members by way of absolute Command. It saith, as the *Centurion* did, I am in Authority, and God hath put the many Members of the Body in subjection to me: I say to one, move, and it moves; to another, stop, and it stops; and to a third do this, and it doth. The obsequious Members of the Body like so many Servants, have their Eyes waiting on the imperial Commands of the Will, and it is admirable to behold with what great Dispatch and Speed they execute its Commands, as if their obedient Motion were rather concomitant than subsequent Acts to the Will's Mandates. Let it but command to have the Windows of the Body open or shut, and it's done in a Moment, in the Twinkling of an Eye; and so for the rest of the external Senses and Members, they pay it most ready Obedience. Yet when I say, the Will hath a *despotical* and absolute Sovereignity over the Members, it must be understood with a double Limitation. *First* they are only at its beck for Use and Service; it can use them whilst well, and rightly disposed; but it cannot perpetuate them or restore them when indisposed. If the Soul quits the Health and Life of the Body never so intensely and vehemently, it cannot keep off Death one Moment the longer from it. And *secon*

* Homo non agit ex necessitate naturæ, sed libertate, sc. modo rationali, hoc est modo imperii. Ad imperium requiritur dictamen primum intellectus practici & stante efficacia imperii voluntas liberè, movet. *Cumel. de Volun. p.* 50.

ts Sovereignty no way intrenches upon nor in-erferes with the Dominion of Providence over e Members of the Body, and the various Mo-ons of them. God hath reserved a Sovereign *gative Voice* to himself, whatever Decrees the ill passes. *Jeroboam* stretches out his Hand a-inst the Man of God to smite him; but God its a *Remora* in the very Instant to the loco-otive Faculty, that tho' he would never so fain, he uld not pull in his Hand again to him, 1 *Kings* . 4. The Will commands the Service of the ongue, and chargeth to deliver faithfully such or h Words, in which, it may be, the Ruin of me good Man may be imported; and when comes to do its Office, the Tongue falters; d contrary to the Command of the Will, drops e Word that discovers and defeats the Design the Will, according to that in *Job* 12. 20. *removeth away the Speech of the Trusty.* This s despotical and sovereign Power over the ex nal Members of the Body.

(2.) It hath a *political* Power over the Facul and Passions of the Soul, not by way of olute Command, but by way of *Suasion* and *asion.* Thus it can oft-times persuade the Un standing and Thoughts to lay by this or that ect, and apply themselves to the Study of ther. It can bridle and restrain the Affections Passions, but yet it hath no absolute Com-d over the inner, as it hath over the out-d Man. Its Weakness and Inability to govern inner Man appears in two Things more espe-y remarkable, *viz.* 1. It cannot with all its er and Skill command and fetch off the ughts from some Subjects which are set on me Times with extraordinary Weight upon oul. However the Thoughts may obsequiously w its beck at some Times, yea, for the most ; yet there are Cases and Seasons, in which uthority and Persuasions cannot disengage one ght:

(1.) When God hath to do with the Soul e Work of Conversion, when he convinceth of and Danger, and sets a Man's Evil in order e his Eyes: these are terrible Representations, hain would the carnal Will disengage the ghts from some sad Subjects, and strives by nner of Persuasions and diversions so to do; ll to no Purpose *Psal* 51. *v.* 3. *My Sin is before me.* The Thoughts are fixed, and is no removing of them. It may give them e interruption, but they return with the mpetuous Violence. And instead of gaining off, they at last (or rather God by them gains e Will also.

When *Satan* hath to do with the Soul in y of *Temptation* and hellish *Suggestion*: Look Carnal Will opposed it self to the hts in the former Case to no purpose; the Sanctified Will opposes it self to them in ase, oft-times with as little Effect or Succes, hat opposeth his weak Breath to the strong t of a mighty River. Well were it, if ctified Will were now the Master of the , and could controul the Thoughts of the but like a mad Horse, the *Fancy* takes it in its Teeth, and runs whither it ; the Will cannot govern it. Think quite Way, saith the *Will*; turn thy Thoughts r Things; but much the near, the Soul a deaf Ear to its Councels. 2. It can-t and compose a raging Conscience, and

reduce it at its Pleasure to Rest and Peace. This is the peculiar Work of God. He only that stills the stormy Seas, can quiet the distressed and Tempestuous Soul. The Impotence of the Will in this Case is known to all that have been in those Deeps of Trouble. And this is the Misery of the *Devil* and the *Damned*, that tho' they would never so fain, yet they cannot get rid of those tormenting Impressions made upon them by their own trembling and condemning Consciences. There would not be so many pale, sweating, affrighted Consciences on Earth, and in Hell, if the Will had any Command or Power over them.

Tam frigida mens est
Criminibus; tacitâ sudant præcordia culpâ.

'Tis an horrible Sight to see such a Trembling upon all the Members, such a cold Sweat upon the panting Bosom of a self-condemned and wrath-presaging Soul, in which it can by no means relieve or help it self. These Things are exempt from the Liberty and Dominion of the Will of Man; but notwithstanding these Exemptions, it is a noble Faculty, and hath a vastly-extended Empire in the Soul of Man; it is the Door of the Soul, at which the Spirit of God knocks for entrance. When this is won, the Soul is won to Christ; and if this stand out in Rebellion against him, he is barred out of the Soul, and can have no saving Union with it. The Truth of Grace is to be judged and discerned by its Compliance with his call, and the Measure of Grace to be estimated by the Degree of its Subjection to his Will.

VII. The Soul of Man is not only indued with an *Understanding*, and *Will*, but also with *various Affections* and *Passions*, which are of great Use and Service to it, and speak the Excellency of its Nature. They are originally design'd and appointed for the Happiness of Man, in promoting and securing its chiefest Good, to which Purpose they have a natural aptitude: For the true Happiness and Rest of the Soul not being in it self, nor in any other Creature but in God, the Soul must necessarily move out of it self, and beyond all other created Beings, to find and enjoy its true Felicity in him. The Soul considered at a Distance from God, its true Rest and Happiness, is furnished and provided with *Desire* and *Hope* to him. These are the Arms it is to stretch out towards him, in a State of Absence from him. And seeing it is to meet with many Obstacles, Enemies and Difficulties in its Course, which hinder its Motion, and hazard its Fruition of him, God hath planted in it *Fear*, *Grief*, *Indignation*, *Jealousie*, *Anger*, &c. to grapple with, and break, thro' those intercurrent Difficulties and Hazards. By these Weapons in the Hands of Grace, it conflicts with that which opposes its Passages to God, as the Apostle expresseth that Holy Fret and Passion of the *Corinthians*, and what a Fume their Souls were in by the gracious Motion of the irracible Appetite; 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. *For behold this self-same Thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly Sort; what Carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing your selves, yea, what Indignation,*

7. Furnished with various Affections and Passions.

Passio animæ nihil aliud est, quam motius appetivæ virtutis prosecutione boni, vel fuga mali.

dignation, yea, what Fear, yea, what vehement Desire, yea, what Zeal, yea, what Revenge? Much like the Raging and Strugling of Waters, which are interrupted in their Course by some *Dam* or *Obstacle*, which they strive to bear down, and sweep away before them.

But the Soul considered in full Union with and Fruition of God, and supreme Happiness, is accordingly furnished with Affections of *Love*, *Delight*, and *Joy*; whereby it rests in him, and enjoys its proper Blessedness in his Presence for ever. Yea, even in this Life these Affections are in an imperfect Degree exercised upon God, according to the Prelibations and Enjoyments it hath of him by Faith in its Way to Heaven. In a Word,

The True Uses and most excellent Ends for which these Affections and Passions are bestowed upon the Soul of Man, are to qualify it, and make it a fit Subject to be wrought upon in a moral way of Persuasions and Allurements, in order to its Union with Christ, for (for by the Affections, as Mr. *Fenner* rightly observes, the Soul becomes marriagible, or capable of being espoused to him;) and being so, then to assist it in the Prosecution of its full enjoyment in Heaven, as we heard but now.

But alas! how are they corrupted and inverted by Sin! The *concupiscible* Appetite greedily fastens upon the Creature, not upon God; and the *irascible* Appetite is turn'd against Holiness, not Sin. But I must insist no farther on this Subject here, it deserves an entire Treatise by it self.

VIII. The Soul of Man hath in the very Frame and Nature of it, an inclination to the Body. There is in it a certain *Pondus* or Inclination which naturally bends or sways it towards Matter, or a Body. There are three different Natures found in living Creatures, *viz.*

1. The Brutal.
2. The Angelical.
3. The Humane.

(1.) The Soul of a *Brute* is wholly confined to, and dependent on the Matter or Body with which it is united. It is dependent on it both *in esse & in operari*, in its being and working; it is but a material Form, which rises from, and perisheth with the Body. *The Soul of a Brute* (saith a great Person) *is a fluid bodily Substance, the more lively, and refined Part of Blood (called Spirit) quick in Motion, and from the* Arteries *by the Branches of the* Carotides *carried to the Brain; and from thence conveyed to the* Nerves *and* Muscles, *move the whole Frame and Mass of the Body; and receiving only certain weak Impressions from the Senses, and of short Continuance, hindered and obstructed of its Work and Motion, vanishes into the soft Air.*

Lord Chief Justice Hale *in his Treatise* de Anima, p. 56.

(2.) An Angel is a Spirit free from a Body, and created without an Appetite or Inclination to be embodied. The *Stoicks* call the Angels ἀσώματας ψυχὰς, Souly Substances; and the *Peripatetick*s, *formas abstractas*, abstract Forms. They are Spirits free from the Fetters and Clogs of the Body.

* An Angel is a perfect Soul, and an Humane Soul is an imperfect Angel. Yet Angels have no such rooted Disaffection and Abhorrence of a Body, but they have, and can, in a ready Obedience to their Lord's Commands, and Delight to serve him, assume Bodies for a Time to converse with Men in them, (*i. e.*) Aerial Bodies. So we read, *Gen.* 18. 2. *Three Men* (i. e. Angels in humane Shape and Appearance) stood by *Abraham*, and talked with him; and CHRIST's Sepulchre, *Luke* 24. *There appear two Men in shining Garments.* But They abide these Bodies as we do in an Inn, for a Night or short Season: They dwell not in them as our Souls in those Houses of Flesh, which we cannot put off at Pleasure, as they do; but as we walk in our Garments, which we can put off without Pain.

* Angelus est anima perfecta, & anima est Angelus imperfectus. *Bell. de ascen. mentis.*

(3.) The humane Soul is neither wholly [illegible] to the Body, as the brutal Soul is, nor created without Inclination to a Body, as Angels are, but loves, and inclines to it, tho' it can both live and act without it, when it is parted from it at Death. The Proof of this Assertion, and the Reasons why God created it with such an Inclination, will in their proper Place be more fully spoken to in the following Discourse. One that I shall add, is, That in this, as well as in some other Respects, our Souls are made *a little lower than the Angels*; but when they are uncloathed of the Body, and have received it again in a glorious Edition, a spiritual Body, then they shall be in a Manner equal to Angels in the Way and Manner of Being.

Thus I have, as briefly as I can, dispatched the first Thing propounded, *viz.* the Nature of the Soul, in the Explication of these several particulars: It is a *Substance*, a vital, *Spiritual*, immortal *Substance*, a *Substance* endued with Understanding, *Will*, *Affections*, and an *Inclination* to the Body. And now we are come to the

II. Branch, viz. *Its Original and Infusion.*

I. As to its *Original*, I have described it to be immediately from God, in the Way of Creation, an Honour done to no other living Creature but Angels. The World hath been troubled with a great many extravagant and wild Notions about the Original of the Soul of Man; (a clear Mark and Argument of its Apostacy from God). * *Solinus* writes of one, who by a Wound in the hinder Part of his Head, fell into such a Degree of Ignorance and Oblivion, that he forgot his own Name, and could not tell whether he had any Name at all. But what a stunning Blow did Man receive by the Fall, that he should forget the very Author of their Being, and rather claim Alliance, and derive the Being of his Soul from any Thing than God; tho' it bears the very Marks and Characters of its Divine Author and Father upon it! One principal Errors about the *Origin* of the Soul, that wild Notion of *Epicurus* hath been of late flat by the Pens of many learned Men, (and it is a Vanity to strike one Blow more at it) may be reduced to these three Heads.

* *Solinus* refert [illegible] dam, quod accepto, in occipitio ad tan[illegible] venit ignorantiam, ciret se habuisse *Augusto dun. de* Mundi, lib. 4. c. 24.

(1.)

(1.) Some affirm it to be by way of † *Traduction*, or natural generation from the Parents to the Child. This Opinion is very ancient, *Tertullian* and divers of the *Western Fathers* closed with it, as judging it best expedient to solve the Difficulties of the Soul's Taint and Defilement with Original Sin. But *Antiquity* is no Pasport for Errors. The grey Hairs of Opinion (as one well notes) are then honourable, when they are found in the Way of Truth. Doctor *Brown* tells us, *He should rather incline to the* Creation, *than the* Traduction *of the Soul, tho' either opinion* (saith he) *will consist well enough with Religion, did not one Objection haunt him, and this is a Confusion from the equivocal and monstrous Productions by unnatural Copulations; as of a Man and Beast: For if the Soul of Man* (saith he) *be not transmitted and transfused in the Seed, why are not those Productions meerly Beasts, but have also an Impression and Tincture of Reason in as high a Measure as it can evidence it self in those improper Organs?*

† Datur agens Physicum quod aliud esse non potest quam parens; qui ei semini animam materiæ sinu elicit.

* Religio Medici, *Sect.* 36.

Which way the *Doctor's* Judgment had inclined in this Controversy, had been of no great Consideration to the Determination of it; tho' it is pity we should lose his Consent and Company, for the sake of such a beastly Objection as this, which haunts his Mind: For if there be any such Creatures, that seem to have a Tincture of Reason, it is but a Tincture, and a seeming, not a real Tincture neither, which many other Brutes have.

The Doctor is too well acquainted with Philosophy, and a Man of too much Reason to allow himself to think that such a Production, as he speaks of, hath two Natures and essential Forms in one Body, as of a *Man* and a *Horse*. He knows that every Entity hath but one specifical Essence, and can have no more except he will make one and the same Thing under divers Species in the Predicament of Substance. And as there cannot be two distinct Forms, so neither can there be a Mixtion of them in the *Centaur* or monstrous Birth: For *ex duobus entibus per se, non fit unum per se.* But he confesseth this *Objection* was bred among the Weeds and Tares of his own Brain, (a rank Soil no doubt) and I am pretty confident he had weeded it out in his latter Years; for had this Notion of the *Centaurs* (that is, half Horse half Man) put into its proper Place among his vulgar Errors, *Book* I. *Ch.* 4. And so I suppose that he being out of the Way, he return'd again to us.

(2.) A second Opinion was, that they were *created* by *Angels*; and that which gave the Ground (such as it is) to this Opinion, or Fancy, was the Similitude or Resemblance which is found betwixt Angels and the Souls of Men. But this Fancy needs not any Industry to overthrow it; though it be certain there is a Similitude and Resemblance * betwixt Angels and Souls, both being immaterial and spiritual Substances, yet Angels neither propagate by generation, nor is it in their Power to create the least Fly or Worm in the World, much less the Soul of Man, the highest, and noblest, and most excellent Being. Great Power they have, but no creating Power, that is God's incommunicable Property; and procreate our Souls they did not, for they are Spirits yet Spirits of another *Species*.

* Perfectum est quod asibi simile producit, immateriales substantiæ sunt perfectiores corporatæ: ergo cum alias sibi secundum speciem similes efficiant, potitione poterunt Angeli entiam aliquam incorporum inferioris naturæ are, id est, Animam nam. *D. Dionys c.* 4. *divinis nominibus.*

(3.) A third Sort there are who deny not, that Souls are created Substances, and proceeded from God; but affirm withal, that he created them *simul, & semel*, together and at once, as the *Angels* were, and not one by one, as Men are born into the World. Of this Opinion was *Plato*, who thought * all humane Souls to be created together before their Bodies, and placed in some glorious and suitable Mansions, as the Stars, till at last growing weary of heavenly, and falling in love with Earthly Things, for a Punishment of that Crime, they were cast into Bodies, as into so many Prisons. *Origin* suck'd in the Notion of the Pre-existence of Souls. And upon this Supposition it was that *Porphyry* tells us, in the Life of *Plotinus*, he blushed as often as he thought of his being in a Body, as a Man that liv'd in Reputation and Honour, blushes when he is lodged in a Prison. The Ground on which the *Stoicks* bottom'd their Opinion was, the great Dignity and Excellency of the Soul, which inclin'd them to think they had never been degraded and abased as they are by dwelling in such vile Bodies, but for their Faults; and that it was for some former Sin of theirs, that they slid down into gross Matter, and were caught into a vital Union with it: Whereas, had they not sinned, they had liv'd in celestial and splendid Habitations more suitable to their Dignity.

The coetaneous Creation of Souls rejected.

* *Plato in Timæo* finxit Deum omnes animas humanas ante corpora simul creasse, & in comparibus stellis constituisse: tum eas cœlestium rerum tædio, & terrenarum amore captas, ut tanti sceleris pœnas luerent, in corpora tanquam in carcerem conjectas.

But this is a pure Creature of Fancy; for (1) no Soul in the World is conscious to it self of such a Pre-existence, nor can remember when it was owner of any other Habitation than that it now dwells in. (2.) Nor doth the Scripture give us the least Hint of any such Thing. Some indeed would catch hold of that Expression, *Gen.* 2. 2. *God rested the seventh Day from all the Works which he had made*: And it is true, he did so, the Work of Creation was finished and sealed up, as to any new *Species* or kind of Creature to be created; no other sort of Souls will be created, than that which was at first: But yet God still creates individual Souls (*My Father worketh hitherto, and I work*) of the same Kind and Nature with *Adam's* Soul. And (3.) for their Detrusion into these Bodies as a Punishment of their Sins in the former state; if we speak of Sin in *Individuals*, or particular Persons; the Scripture mentions none, either original, or actual, defiling any Soul in any other Way but by its Union with the Body. Pre-existence therefore is but a Dream.

But to me it's clear, that the Soul receives not its Beginning by Traduction or Generation; for that which is generable, is also corruptible; but the spiritual immortal Soul (as it hath been prov'd to be) is not subject to Corruption. Nor is it imaginable how a Soul should be produced out of Matter, which is not endued with Reason: Or how a bodily Substance can impart that to another, which it hath not in it self. If it be said, the Soul of the Child proceeds from the Parents, that cannot be; for spiritual Substances are impartible,

and nothing can be discinded from them. * And it is absurd to think the Soul of *Adam* should spring from one Original, and the Souls of his Off spring from another, whilst both his and theirs are one and the same Nature and *Species*. To all which let me add, that as this Assertion of their Creation is most *reasonable*, so it is most *scriptural*. It is reasonable to think and say, † that no active Power can act beyond or above the proper Sphere of its activity and Abilitiy. But if the Soul be elicited out of the Power of Matter, here would be an Effect produced abundantly more noble and excellent than its Cause. And as it is most reasonable, so it is most scriptural. To this Purpose divers Testimonies of Scripture are cited and produced by our Divines, amongst which we may single out four, which are of special Remark and Use; *Heb.* 12. 9. *Furthermore, we had Fathers of our Flesh which corrected us and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection to* [*the Father of Spirits*] *and live?* Here God is called the Father of Spirits, or of Souls, and that in an emphatical *Antithesis*, or Contradistinction to our natural Fathers of our Flesh, or Bodies only. The true Scope and Sense of this Text is with great Judgment and Clearness given us by that learned and judicious Divine Mr. * *Pemble*, in these Words: [Nothing is more plain and emphatical than this *Antethesis*, We receive our Flesh and Body from our Parents, but our Souls from God: if then we patiently bear the Chastisements of our Parents, who are Authors of the vilest Part, and have the least Right or Power over us, with how much more equal a Mind should we bear his Chastisements, who hath the supreme Right to us, as he is the Father and only Giver of that which is most expedient in us, *viz.* our Souls or Spirits?] Here it seems Evident, that our Souls flow not to us in the material Channel of fleshly Generation or Descent, as our Bodies do, but immediately from God their proper Father, in the way of Creation. Yet he begets them not out of his own Essence or Substance, as Christ his natural Son is begotten, but ἐκ μὴ ὄντων, out of Nothing that had been before, as *Theodoret* well expresseth it. Agreeable hereunto is that place also in † *Zech.* 12. 1. *The Lord which stretcheth forth the Heavens, and laieth the Foundations of the Earth, and formeth the Spirit of Man within him:* Where the forming of the Spirit or Soul of Man is associated with those two other glorious Effects of God's creating Powers, namely, the Expansion of the Heavens, and laying the Foundations of the Earth; all three are here equally assumed by the Lord, as his remarkable and glorious Works of Creation. He that created the one, did as much create the other.

Now the two former we find frequently instanced in Scripture, as the Effects of his creating Power, or Works implying the Almighty Power of God; and therefore are presented as strong Props to our Faith, when it is weak and staggering, for want of visible Matter of Incouragement, *Is.* 40. 22. and 42. 5. *Jer.* 10. 12. *Job* 9. 8. *Psal.* 104. 2. q. d. Are my People in Captivity, and their Faith nonplust and at a Loss, because there's nothing in night that hath a Tendency to their Deliverance, no prepared Matter for their Salvation? Why let them consider who it was that created the Heavens, and the Earth, yea, and their Souls also, which are so perplexed with Doubts, out of Nothing; the same God that did this, can also create Deliverance for his People, tho' there be no pre-exestent Matter to work it out of.

Add to this that excellent Place of *Solomon* in *Eccles.* 12. 7. *Then shall the Dust return to the Earth as it was; and the Spirit to God who gave it.* Where he shews us what becomes of Man, and how each Part, of which he consists, is bestowed and disposed of after his Dissolution, by Death. And thus he states it: These two constitutive Parts of Man are a *Soul*, and a *Body*: These two Parts have two distinct Originals: The Body as to its material Cause is *Dust*, the Soul in its Nature is a *Spirit*, and as to its Origin, it proceeded from the *Father of Spirits*; 'tis his own Creature in an immediate Way. *He gave it*: He gave it the Being it hath by Creation, and gave it to us (*i. e.*) to our Bodies by Inspiration. Now *qualis Genesis, talis Analysis*: When Death dissolves the Union which is betwixt them, each Part returns to that from whence it came, Dust to Dust, and the Spirit to God that gave it. The Body is expressed by its material Cause Dust; the Soul only by its *efficient* Cause, the Gift of God, because it had no material Cause at all, nor was made out of any pre-existent Matter, as the Body was. And therefore *Solomon* here speaks of God, as if he had only to do with the Soul, leaving the Body to its material and instrumental Causes; with whom he concurs by a general Influence. 'Tis God, not Man alone; or God by Man, that hath given us these Bodies; but 'tis not Man but God alone who hath given us these Souls. He therefore passeth by the Body, and speaks of the Soul as the Gift of God, because that part of Man, and that only flows immediately from God, and to Death returns to him that gave it. All the Expressions, The *Father of Spirits*, *the Former* of the Spirit in Man, the Giver of the Spirit, how agreeable are they to each other, and all of them to the Point under Hand, that the Soul flows from God by immediate Creation? You see it hath no Principle out of which (according to the Order of Nature) it did arise as the Body had, and therefore it hath no Principle it can be returned, as the Body hath, but returns to God its efficient Cause, if reconciled, to a Father, not only by Creation but Adoption; if unreconciled, as a Creature guilty of unnatural Rebellion against God that formed it, to be judged.

* Absurdum est aliunde esse animam nostram, aliunde animam Adæ; cum omnes sunt ejusdem speciei. *Zanch.*

† Nulla virtus activa agit ultra suum genus, sed Anima intellectiva excedit tutum genus, corporeæ naturæ, cum si substantia spiritualis, &c. *Conimbr.*

* Pemble de Originæ Animæ *p.* 59. Nihil apertius & ἐμφατικὸν ista Antithesi, Carnem corpusque à parentibus, animas à Deo accipimus; quod si vilioris partis Authores, & qui minus in nos juris habent, parienter castigantes ferimus; quam æquiore animo feremus cum qui supremum in nos jus obtinet, utpote partis, quæ in nobis est præstantissima, unicus Dator Conditorque?

† Testimonium satis clarum, quo docemur, pari passu hæc tria ambulare; expansionem cœli, fundationem terræ, & formationem animæ rationalis.

Resolvit Solomon utramque hominis partem in sua prima principia. Ut ergo corpus in terram unde sumptum est resolvit; ita etiam si anima ex substantia cœlesti, vel ex anima (ut Plato ait) mundi essa facta, in eam resolvisse Solomon. Cum vero simpliciter de ipsa dicit, eam redituram ad Deum qui dedit illam; docet eam nihilo in quod resolvi non possit, creatam esse. *Zanch.*

II. God created and infused it into the Body, with an inherent Inclination and Affection to it. The Nature of the Soul and Body are vastly different, there is no Affinity or Similitude betwixt them; but it is in this Case, as in that of Marriage. Two Persons of vastly different Educations, Constitutions and Inclinations, coming under God's Ordinance, into the nearest Relation to each other, find their Affections knit and endeared by their Relation to a Degree beyond that which results from the Union of Blood: so it is here. Whence this Affection rises, in what Acts it is discovered, and for what Reason implanted, will be at large discovered in a distinct Branch of the following Discourse, to which it is assigned. Mean while I find my self concerned to vindicate what hath here been asserted from the Arguments which are urged against the immediate Creation and Infusion of the Soul, and in defence of the Opinion of its Traduction from the Parents. To conceal, or dissemble the Arguments and Objections, would be but a betraying of the Truth I have here asserted, and give occasion for some Jealousy, that they are unanswerable. To come then to an Issue, and first:

Anima, quæ est corporis organici perfectio, corpus necessarium est; non est enim forma separata (*i. e.*) propriè forma est, itaque adeo, ut anima à corpore disjuncta, *vivat* tamen & inclinationem retineat suam, quam corporis resurrectio consequitur *Camerarius paleæt. in Math. p.* 124. Object. I.

Obj. 1. It is urged, that it is manifest in it self, and generally yielded, that the Souls of all other Creatures come by Generation, and therefore it's probable that humane Souls flow in the same Channel also.

Sol. There is a Specifick difference betwixt rational Souls, and the Souls of all other Creatures, and therefore no Force at all in the Consequence. A material Form may rise out of Matter; but a spiritual rational Being (as the Soul of Man is) cannot so rise, being much more noble and excellent than Matter is.

What Animal is there in the World, out of whose Soul the Acts of Reason spring, and flow, as they do out of human Souls? Are they capable of inventing, (or which is much less) of learning the Arts and Sciences? Can they correct their Senses, and demonstrate a Star to be far greater than the whole Earth, which to the Eye appears no bigger than the Rowel of a Spur? Do they foreknow the Positions, and Combinations of the Planets, and the Eclipses of the Sun and Moon many Years before they suffer them? And if they cannot perform these Acts of Reason, as it is sure they cannot, how much less can they know, fear, love, delight in God, and long for the Enjoyment of him? These things do plainly evince humane Souls to be of another *Species*, and therefore of a better Original than the Souls of Brutes. If all have a Common Nature and Original, why are they not all capable of performing the same rational and virtuous Acts?

Obj. 2. But tho' it should be granted that the Soul of the first Man was by immediate Creation and Inspiration from God; yet it follows not, that the Souls of all his Posterity must be so too. God might create him with a Power of begetting other Souls after his own Image. The first Tree was created with its Seed in its self to propagate its Kind, so might the first Man.

1. Trees, Animals and such-like, were not created immediately out of Nothing, as the Soul of Man was; but the Earth was pre-existent Matter out of which they were produced by the Word of God's Blessing and Power; but Man's Soul was immediately breathed into him by God, and had no pre-existent Matter at all: And besides, all humane Souls being of one *Species*, have therefore one and the same Original: The Soul of the poorest Child is of equal Dignity with the Soul of *Adam*. And if we consult *Job* 33. 4. we shall find *Elihu* giving us there the same Account, and almost in the same Words, of the Original of *his* Soul, that *Moses* in my Text gives us of *Adam*'s Soul: *The Spirit of God hath formed me, and the Breath of the Almighty hath given me Life.*

Sol. 2. But it is evident, Souls spring not from the Parent, as one Plant or Animal doth from another; for they have their Seed in themselves apt and proper to produce their Kind; but the Seed of Souls is not to be found in Man: It is not to be found in his Body; for then (as was said before) a spiritual and nobler Essence must be produced out of a material and baser Matter (*i. e.*) the Matter must give to the Soul that which it hath not in it self, nor is it to be found in its Soul; for the Soul being a pure, simple, and invisible Being, can suffer nothing to be discinded from it towards the production of another Soul. A Spirit, as the Soul is, is *Substantia simplex & impartibilis*; an uncompounded and indiscerpible or impartible Being. Nor can it spring partly from the Body, and partly from the Soul, as from Con-causes; for then it should be partly corporeal, and partly incorporeal, as its Causes are. So that there is no Matter, Seed, or Principle of Souls found in Man; and to be sure (as *Baronius* strongly argues) * he cannot produce a Soul without pre-existent Matter; for that were to make him Omnipotent; and assign a creating Power to a Creature. Besides that which is generable is also corruptible, as we see Trees, Animals, *&c.* which are produced that way, to be; but the Soul is not corruptible, as hath in part been already proved, and will more fully in the following Discourse. So that *Adam*'s Soul and the Souls of his Posterity spring not from each other, but all from God by Creation.

* Pater neque producit animam filii ex aliqua re præexistente; neque producit eam ex nulla re præexistente; hoc enim est creare: ergo nullo modo eam producit. *Baronius differt. secunda de Origine Animæ, p.* 120.

Obj. 3. If the Soul be created and infused immediately by God, either it comes out of his hands pure, or impure; if pure, how comes it to be defiled and tainted with Sin? If impure, how do we free God from being the Author of Sin.

Sol. If the question be, whether Souls be pure or impure as they are united with their Bodies? the Answer is, They are impure, and tainted as soon as united: For the Union constitutes a Child of *Adam*, and consequently a sinful impure Creature. But if it respect the condition and State in which *God* created them, I answer with *Baronius* † They are created neither *morally* pure, nor impure; they receive neither Purity nor Impurity from him, but only their naked Essence, and the natural Powers and Properties flowing therefrom. He inspires not any Impurity into them; for he cannot be the Author of Sin, who is the Revenger of it. Nor doth he create them in their original Purity and Rectitude; for

† Animæ nostræ à Deo creare neque accipiunt puritatem, seu justitiam; neq; impuritatem & propensionem ad malum: Sed tantum essentiam spiritualem, & proprietates ab essentia dimanantes. *Baron. exercit. p.* 103.

for the Sin of *Adam* loſt that, and God juſtly withholds it from his Poſterity. Who wonders (ſaith * one) to ſee the Children, the Palaces, and Gardens of Traitors to droop and decay, and the Arms of his Houſe, and the Badge of his Nobility, to be defaced and reverſed? That which is is abuſed by Man to the Diſhonour of God, may juſtly be deſtroyed (I add in this Caſe or *with hold*) by God to the Detriment of Man. *Adam* voluntarily and *actually* deprived himſelf, and *meritoriouſly* deprived all his Poſterity of that original Righteouſneſs and Purity in which he was created. As an Holy God, he cannot inſpire any Impurity, and as a juſt and righteous God, he may and doth with-hold, or create them void and deſtitute of that Holineſs and Righteouſneſs which was once *their* Happineſs and Glory.

* Jenkins *on* Jude, *Vol.* 1. *p.* 559.

Obj. 4. But how come they then to be defiled and tainted with Original Sin? It's confeſſed God did not impure them, and the Body cannot; for its being Matter, cannot act upon a Spirit; yea of it ſelf it's a dead Lump, and cannot act at all.

Sol. What if this be one of the Myſteries reſerved for the World to come, about which we cannot in this ſtate ſolve every Difficulty that can be moved? muſt we therefore deny its Divine Original? What if I cannot underſtand ſome Myſteries or anſwer ſome Queſtions about the *Hypoſtatical Union* of the Two Natures in the wonderful Perſon of our *Emmanuel*? muſt I therefore queſtion whether he be Θεάνθρωπος, God-Man? We muſt remain ignorant of ſome Things about our own Souls, till we come into the Condition of the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect. Mean Time I think it much more our Concernment to ſtudy how we may get Sin out of our Souls, than to puzzle our Brains to find how it came into them.

Man ſince the Fall, being leſs than himſelf, underſtands not himſelf; nor will he fully, till he be fully reſtored to himſelf in Glory. Norton's Orth. Evang. *p.* 337.

But that the *Objector* may not take this for an handſome ſlide or go by to his great Objection, I return to it in a few Particulars.

The Soul (ſay ſome) in the Moment of its Creation and Infuſion by God, being united with the Body by the plaſtick and formative Virtue of the paternal Seed; the Parent may be truly ſaid to generate the Man tho' he do not produce the Form: becauſe proper Generation conſiſts in this Union, and not the Production of Parts. So that Original Sin is not propagated from Body to Body, nor yet from Soul to Soul; but from Man to Man.

(1.) That I think not Original Sin follows either part ſingly; it comes neither by the Soul alone, nor by the Body alone apart from the Soul; but upon the Union and Conjunction of both in One Perſon. 'Tis the Union of theſe Two which conſtitutes a Child of *Adam*, and as ſuch only we are capable of being infected with his Sin.

(2.) And whereas it is confidently aſſerted in the Objection, That Sin cannot come into the Soul by or from the Body, becauſe it being Matter, cannot act upon a Spirit: I ſay, this is *gratis dictum*, eaſily ſpoken; but difficultly proved. Cannot the Body act upon, or influence the Soul? Pray then how comes it to paſs that ſo many Souls become fooliſh, forgetful, injudicious, *&c.* by their Union with ill diſpoſed Bodies? Nothing is more ſenſibly plain and evident, than that there is a reciprocal Communication betwixt the Soul and Body. The Body doth as really (tho' we know not how) affect the Soul with its Diſpoſitions, as the Soul influences it with Life and Motion. The more excellent any Form is, the more intimate is its Union and Conjunction with the Matter. The Soul of Man hath therefore a more intimate and perfect Union with the Body, than Light with the Air; which is made by ſome the beſt Emblem and Similitude to ſhadow forth this Union. But the Union betwixt them are too intimate to be conceiv'd by the help of any ſuch Similitudes. That this infection is by way of *Phyſicial Agency*, as a ruſty Scabbard infects and defiles a bright Sword, when ſheathed therein; I will not confidently affirm, as ſome do. It may be by way of *Natural Concomitancy*, as *Eſtius* will have it; or to ſpeak, as Dr. *Reynolds* (modeſtly, and as becomes Men that are conſcious of Darkneſs and Weakneſs) by way of ineffable Reſultancy and Emanation.

(3.) In ſum, Original Sin conſiſts in two things *viz.*

1. In the Privation of that original Rectitude which ought to be in us.

2. In that habitual Concupiſence which carrieth Nature to inordinate Motions.

This Privation and inordinate Inclination, make up that Original Corruption, the riſe whereof we are ſearching for: And to bring us as near as we can come, without a daring Intruſion into unrevealed Secrets, our ſolid *Divines* proceed by theſe ſteps in anſwering this Objection.

(1.) If it be demanded, how it comes to paſs that an *Infant* becomes guilty of *Adam*'s ſin; The anſwer is, becauſe he is a Child of *Adam* by natural Generation.

(2.) But why is he deprived of that Original Rectitude in which *Adam* was created? They anſwer becauſe *Adam* loſt it by his ſin, and therefore could not tranſmit what he had loſt to his Poſterity.

(3.) But how comes he to be inclined to that which is evil? their anſwer is, becauſe he wants the Original Rectitude: For whoſoever wants Original Rectitude, naturally inclines to that which is evil. And ſo Propenſion of Nature to that which is evil, ſeems to be by way of Concomitancy, with the defect or want of Original Righteouſneſs.

And thus I have given ſome account of the Nature and Original of the Soul of Man, tho' alas my dim Eyes ſee but little of its Excellency and Glory. Yet by what hath been ſaid, it appears the Maſterpiece of all God's Works of Creation in this lower World.

But becauſe I ſuſpect the Deſcription I have given to it will be obſcure and cloudy to vulgar Readers of a plain and low capacity, by reaſon of Diſuſe of *Philoſophical* Terms which I have been forced to make uſe of; and reckoning my ſelf a Debtor to the weak and unlearned, as well as others, I will endeavour to ſtrip the Deſcription of the Soul, for their ſakes, out of thoſe artificial Terms which obſcure it to them, and preſent it once more in the most plain and intelligible *Epitome* I am capable to give it in; that ſo the weaker underſtanding may be able to form a true Notion of the Nature and Original of the Soul in this manner.

The Soul a Subſtance,

This Soul of mine is a true and real Being; not a Fancy, a Conceit, a very nothing. It hath a proper and true being in it whether I conceit it or not. Nor indeed can I conceive of it, but by it. It is not ſuch a thing as Whiteneſs is in Snow, a meer Accident, which

pends upon the Snow in which it is, for the Being ithath: and muſt periſh as ſoon as the Snow is diſ- ſolved: my Soul doth not ſo depend upon my Bo- dy, or any other Fellow-Creature for its Being; but is as truly ſubſtance as my Body is, tho' not of ſo groſs and material a kind and nature. My Soul can and will ſubſiſt and remain what it is, when my Body is ſeparated from it. So that I find my Soul to be the moſt ſubſtantial and noble part of me; it is not my Body, but my Soul which makes me a Man. And if this depart, all the reſt of me is but a dead Log, a Lump of inanimate Clay, a heap of vile Duſt and Corruption. From this independent Subſiſtence it hath in it ſelf, and the Dependence its Properties and Affections have upon it, I truly ap prehend and call it a *Subſtance*.

but a Spiritual Subſtance.

But yet when I call it a Subſtance, I muſt not con- ceive of it as a groſs mate- rial palpable Subſtance, ſuch as my Body is, which I can ſee and feel. No there are *Spiritual Subſtances* as well as groſs, viſible, *material Subſtances*. An An- gel is a ſpiritual *Subſtance*, a real Creature, and yet imperceptible by my Sight or Touch, ſuch a Sub- ſtance is my Soul. Spiritual Subſtances are as real, and much more excellent then bodily Subſtances are. I can neither ſee, hear, nor feel it; but I both ſee, hear, and feel by it.

A Vital Subſtance.

My Soul is alſo a vital Subſtance. It is a Princi- ple of Life to my Body: It hath a Life in it ſelf, and quickens my Body there- with. My Soul is the Spring of all the Actions and Motions of Life which I perform. It hath been an Error taken in from my Childhood, That Senſe is performed in the outward Organs, or Members of my Body; as Touching in the Hand, Seeing in the Eye, Hearing in the Ear, *&c.* in them, I ſay, and not only by them, as if nothing were required to make Senſe, but an *Object* and an *Organ*. No, no, 'tis not my Eye that ſeeth, nor my Ear that heareth, nor my Hand that toucheth, but my Soul in and by them performs all this. Let but an *Apoplex* hinder the Operations of my Soul in the Brain, and of how little uſe are my Eyes, Ears, Hands or Feet to me? My Life is originally in my Soul, and ſecondarily by way of communication, in my Body. So that I find my Soul to be a *vital*, as well as a *Spiritual Sub- ſtance*.

An Immortal *Subſtance*.

And Being both a vital and ſpiritual Subſtance, I muſt needs conclude it to be an immortal Subſtance. For in ſuch a pure, ſpi- ritual Nature, as my Soul is, there can be found no Seeds or Principles of Death. Where there is no Compoſition there will be no Diſſolution. My Bo- dy indeed having ſo many Jarring Humours, mixed Elements, and contrary Qualities in it, muſt needs fail and die at laſt: But my Soul was formed for Immortality, by the ſimplicity and ſpirituality of its Nature. No ſword can pierce it from without, nor Oppoſition can deſtroy it from within; Man will not, and God will not.

Endued with *Underſtand- ing, Will* and *Affections*.

And being an immortal Spirit fitted and framed to live for ever, I find that God hath anſwerably endued and furniſh'd it with an *Underſtanding*, *Will*, and *Affe- ctions* whereby it is capable of being wrought up- on by the Spirit in the way of Grace and Sanctifi- cation in this World in order to the enjoyment of God, its chief Happineſs in the World to come.

By this its *Underſtanding*, I am diſtinguiſhed from and advanced above all other Creatures in this World. I can apprehend, diſtinguiſh, and judge of all other intelligible Beings. By my *Underſtanding* I diſcern Truth from Falſhood, Good from Evil; it ſhews me what is fit for me to chuſe, and what to refuſe.

To this Faculty or Power of *Underſtanding*, my Thoughts and Conſcience do belong; the former to my *ſpeculative*, the latter to my *practical Under- ſtanding*. My Thoughts are all formed in my Mind or Underſtanding in innumerable Multitudes and vareity. By it I can think of things preſent, or ab- ſent; viſible, or inviſible; of God, or my ſelf; of this World, or the World to come.

To my *Underſtanding* alſo belongs my *Conſcience*, a noble, divine, and awful Power: By which I ſum- mon and judge my ſelf, as at a ſolemn *Tribunal*; bind and looſe, condemn and acquit my ſelf and actions, but ſtill with an eye and reſpect to the Judgment of God. Hence are my beſt Comforts, and worſt Terrors.

This *Underſtanding* of mine is a Director and Guide of my *Will*; This is a *Councellor*; This is a *Prince*: it freely chuſeth and refuſeth as my Underſtand- ing directs and ſuggeſts to it. The Members of my Body, and the Paſſions of my Soul, are under its Dominion: the former are under its abſolute Com- mand, the latter under its ſuaſions and inſinuations, tho' not abſolutely and always with effect and ſuc- ceſs.

And both my *Underſtanding* and *Will*, I find to have great influence upon my *Affections*.

Theſe Paſſions and *Affections* of my Soul are of great uſe and dignity. I find them as manifold as there are Conſiderations of Good and Evil. They are the ſtrong and ſenſible Motions of my Soul, ac- cording to my apprehenſions of Good and Evil. By them my Soul is capable of Union with the higheſt Good. By Love and Delight I am capable of enjoy- ing God, and reſting in Him as the Centre of my Soul. This noble *Underſtanding*, *Thoughts*, *Conſcience*, *Will*, *Paſſions*, and *Affections*, are the principal Facul- ties, Acts, and Power of this my high and heavenly born Soul. And being thus richly endowed and furniſhed,

Created and infus'd with an inclination to the Bo- dy.

I find it could never riſe out of Matter, or come in- to my Body by way of na- tural Generation; the Souls of Brutes, that riſe that way, are deſtitute of Underſtanding, Reaſon, Conſcience, and ſuch other excellent Faculties and Powers as I find in my own Soul. They cannot know, or love, or delight in God, or ſet their Affections upon things ſpiritual, inviſible and eternal, as *my Soul* is capable to do; is was therefore created and infuſed imme- diately into this Body of mine by the Father of Spi- rits, and that with a ſtrong Inclination and tender Affection to my Fleſh, without which it would be remiſs and careleſs in performing its ſeveral Duties and Offices to it, during the time of its abode there- in.

Fearfully and wonderfully therefore am I made, and deſigned for nobler ends and uſes, than for a few days to eat, and drink, and ſleep, and talk, and die. My Soul is of more value than ten thou- ſand Worlds. *What ſhall a Man give in exchange for his Soul?*

USE

USE I.

FROM the several Parts and Branches of this Description of the Soul, we may gather the choice Fruits which naturally grow upon them in the following *Inferences* and Deductions of Truth and Duty. For we may say of them all what the *Historian* doth of *Palestine*, that there is *nihil infructuosum, nihil sterile*, no Branch or Shrub is barren, or unfruitful. Let us then search it Branch by Branch; and,

Inference I.

FROM the substantial Nature of the Soul, which we have proved to be a Being distinct from the Body, and subsisting by it self, we are informed, *That great is the difference betwixt the Death of Man, and the Death of all other Creatures in the World.* Their Souls depend on, and perish with their Bodies; but Ours neither result from them, nor perish with them. My Body is not a Body, when my Soul hath forsaken it; but my Soul will remain a Soul, when this Body is crumbled into Dust. Men may live like Beasts, a meer sensual Life; yea, in some sense, they may die like Beasts, a stupid Death; but in this there will be found a vast difference: Death kills both Parts of the Beasts, destroys the Matter and Form; it toucheth only One part of Man; it destroyeth the Body, and only *dislodgeth* the Soul, but cannot *destroy* it.

1. The Soul a substantial Being.

Tanta prærogativa manifestè testatur ipsius animam, penes quam ratio principatus est, non esse materialem & caducam, sed superioris cujusdem atque eminentis naturæ, à conditione reliquarum animarum longè distantem. *Conimb. Disp. de Anima separ.* p. 584.

In some things *Solomon* shews the Agreement betwixt our Death and Theirs, *Eccles.* 3. 19, 20, 21. *That which befalleth the Sons of Men, befalleth the Beasts; even one thing befalleth them. As the one dieth, so dieth the other; all go to one place; all are of the Dust, and all turn to Dust again.* We breathe the same common Air they breathe; we feel the same Pains of Death they feel; our Bodies are resolved into the same Earth theirs are. Oh! but in this is the difference, *The Spirit of Man goeth upward, but the Spirit of a Beast goeth downward to the Earth.* Their Spirits go two ways at their Dissolution; the one to the Earth, and the other to God that gave it, as he speaks *Chap.* 12. 7. Tho' our Respiration and Expiration have some Agreement, yet great is the odds in the Consequences of Death to the one and the other. They have no Pleasures nor Pains besides those they enjoy or feel now; but so have We; and those eternal or unspeakable too. The Soul of Man, like the Bird in the shell, is still growing or ripening in Sin or Grace, till at last the Shell breaks by Death, and the Soul flees away to the place it is prepared for, and where it must abide for ever. The Body, which is but its Shell, perisheth; but the Soul lives when it is fallen away.

Concretum, fuit, & discretum est; reditiq; undevenerat: terra deorsum, spiritus sursum. *Epibea.*

How doth this consideration expose and aggravate the Folly and the Madness of this sensual World, who herd themselves with Beasts, tho' tho' they have Souls so near of kin to Angels! The Princes and Nobles of the World abhor to associate themselves with *Mechanicks* in their shops or to take a place among the sottish Rabble upon an Ale-bench; they know and keep their Distance and *Decorum*, as still carrying with them a sense of Honour, and abhorring to act beneath it: But we equalize our high and noble Souls in the way of Life with the Beasts that perish. Our Tables differ little from the *Crib* at which they feed; or our Houses from the *Stalls* and *Stables* in which they lie down to rest, in respect of any Divine Worship, or Heavenly Communication that is to be heard there. Happy had it been for such Men (if so they live and die) that their Souls hath been of no higher Extraction, or larger Capacity, or longer Duration than that of a Beast: for then, as their Comforts, so also their Miseries had ended at Death. And such they will one Day wish they had been.

A separate Soul immediately capable of Blessedness.

Inference II.

THE Soul of Man being a Substance, and not depending in its Being on the Body, or any other Fellow-creature; *There can be no reason on the Soul's account, why its Blessedness should be delayed till the Resurrection of the Body.*

'Tis a great mistake (and 'tis well 'tis so) that the Soul is capable only of sociable Glory, or a Blessedness in partnership with the Body; and that it can neither exert its own Powers, nor enjoy its own Happiness, in the Absence of the Body. The Opinion of a sleeping Interval took its rise from this Error, (as it is usual for one Soul to be so dependent on the Body, at least in all its Operations that when Death rends it from the Body, it must needs be left as in a Swoon, or Sleep, unable to exert its proper Powers, or enjoy that Felicity which we ascribe to it in its state of separation.

But certainly its substantial Nature being considered, it will be found, that whatever Perfection soever the Body receives from the Soul, and how necessary soever its Dependence upon it is, * the Soul receives not its Perfection from the Body, nor doth it necessarily depend on it in its principal Operations; but it can live and act out of a Body, as well as in it. Yea, I doubt not but it enjoys it self in a much more sweet and perfect Liberty than ever it did or could whilst it was clogg'd and fettered with a Body of flesh. Doubtless, † saith *Tertullian*, when it is separated, and as it were strained by Death, it comes out of Darkness into its own pure, perfect light, and quickly finds it self a substantial Being able to act freely in that light. Before the Eyes of the dead Body are clos'd, I doubt not but the believing Soul with open Eyes beholdeth the Face of Jesus Christ *Luke* 23. 43. *Philp*, 1. 23. But this will also be farther spoken to hereafter.

* Anima rationalis nihil perfectionis recipit à materia, quod extra illam non possit recipere. *Conimb. Disp.* 2. *Art.* 3.

† Procul dubio cum de mortis exprimitur de corporis cretione carnis; & ipsa exemptio pressione colatur, certo quodam oppanso corpore erumpit in apertum, ad merum & purum, & suam lucem, statim semetipsam in expeditione substantiæ recognoscit, tanquam de somno emergens abnubilis ginibus ad varietates. *Tertul. in lib. de Anima.*

Inference III.

THE Souls of Men being created immediately out of nothing, and seminally traduced; it follows, *That all Souls by nature are of equal Value and Dignity*

gnity: One Soul is not more excellent, honourable, or cious than another; but all by nature equally precious.
The Soul of the pooreſt Beggar that cries at the oor for a Cruſt, is in its own nature of equal Digni- and Value with the Soul of the moſt glorious Mo- rch that ſits upon the Throne. And this appears be ſo.

1. Becauſe all Souls flow out of one and the ſame untain, *viz.* the creating Power of God. They re not made of better or worſe, finer or courſer tter, but ἐξ μὴ ὄντων, out of nothing at all. The ſame mighty Power was put forth, to the forming of , as of another. *All Souls are mine*, ſaith he that ated them, *Ezek.* 18. 4. the Soul of the Child well as of the Father; the Soul of the *Beggar* as l as the *King*; thoſe that had no pre-exiſtent tter, but received their Beings from the ſame cient Cauſe, muſt needs be equal in in their ori- al Nature and Value. The Bodies of Men, that formed out of Matter, do greatly differ from another; ſome are moulded (as we ſay) *è me- luto*, out of better and finer Clay; ſome are e exact, elegant, vigorous, and beautiful than ers: but Souls have no Matter of which they ſift, are not ſo differenced.

All Souls are created with a Capacity of en- ng the infinite and bleſſed God. They need ther Powers, Faculties, or Capacities than they y Nature endued with (if theſe be but ſancti- nd devoted to God) to make them equally hap- nd bleſſed with them that are now before the one of God in Heaven, and with unſpeakable ght and Joy behold his bleſſed Face. We paſs gh the Fields, and take up an Egg which lies r a Clod, and ſee nothing in it but a little id Matter; yea, but in that Egg is ſeminally potentially contained ſuch a melodious Lark as y be at the ſame time we ſee mounting Hea- ard, and ſinging delicious Notes above. So ere. Thoſe poor deſpiſed Souls, that are now d in crazy deſpicable places on the Earth. in their Natures the ſame capacity for the ſame oyments and Enjoyments with thoſe in ven. They have no higher Original than theſe , and theſe have the ſame capacity and ability them. They are Beings improvable by Grace, e higheſt Perfections attainable by any Crea- If thou be never ſo mean, baſe, and deſpica- Creature in other reſpects, yet haſt thou a which hath the ſame Alliance to the Father rits, the ſame Capacity to enjoy him in Glo- at the moſt excellent and renowned Saints e- d.

All Souls are rated and valued in God's Book ccount at one and the ſame Price; and there- y Nature are of equal Worth and Dignity. the Law, the rich and the poor were to give me Ranſom, *Exod.* 30. 15. *The rich ſhall not ve and the poor ſhall not give leſs than half a ſhekel.* Redemption of Souls by the Blood of Chriſt ne and the ſame Price. The pooreſt and oſt deſpiſed Soul that believes in Jeſus, is as indebted to him for the Ranſom of his Soul, greateſt and moſt illuſtrious Perſon in the *Moſes*, *Abraham*, *Paul*, &c. did not coſt one Farthing more than poor *Lazarus*, or the ſt among all the Saints did. *The Righteouſneſs is unto all, and upon all that believe, and there is rence*, Rom. 3. 22.

yet we muſt not underſtand this *Parity* of hu- ouls univerſally, or in all reſpects. Tho' be- ing of one *Species* and common Nature, they are all equal, and thoſe of them that are purchaſed by the Blood of Chriſt are all purchaſed at one rate; yet there are divers other Reſpects and Conſiderations, wherein there are remarkable differences betwixt Soul and Soul. As (1.) Some Souls are much better lodg'd and accommodated in their Bodies than others are, tho' none dwell at perfect Reſt and Eaſe. God hath lodged ſome Souls in ſtrong, vigorous, comely Bodies; others in feeble, crazy, deformed and uncomfortable ones. The Hiſtorian ſaith of *Galba*, *Anima Galbæ malè habitat*; The Soul of *Galba* dwelt in an ill Body. And a much better Man than *Galba* was as ill accomodated. *John* wiſhes in behalf of his beloved *Gaius*, that his Body might but proſper as his Soul did, *Epiſt.* 3. *v.* 2: *Timothy* had his often Infirmities. Indeed the World is full of Inſtances and Examples of this kind. * If ſome Souls had the Advantages of ſuch Bodies as others have, who make little, or very bad uſe of them; oh what ſervice would they do for God! (2.) There is a remarkable difference alſo betwixt Soul and Soul, in reſpect of Natural Gifts and Abilities of Mind. Some have great advantages above others in this reſpect. The natural Spirits and Organs of the Body being more brisk and apt, the Soul is more vegete, vigorous, and able to exert it ſelf in its Functions and Operations. How clear, nimble, and firm are the Apprehenſions, Fancies and Memories of ſome Souls beyond others! What a Prodigy of Memory, Fancy, and Judgment, was *Father* Paul the *Venetian*! and *Suarez*, of whom *Strada* ſaith, ſuch was the ſtrength of his Parts, that he had all St. *Auguſtine*'s Works (the moſt copious and various of the Fathers) as it were by heart, *ſo that I have ſeen him* (ſaith he) † *readily pointing with the finger to any Place or Page he diſputed of.* Our Dr. *Reynolds* excelled this way, to the aſtoniſhment of all that knew him, ſo that he was a *living Library*, a third *Univerſity*. But above all, the Character given by *Vives* of *Budeus* is amazing, *That there was nothing written in Greek or Latin which he had not turned over and examined; that both Languages were alike to him, ſpeaking either with more facility than he did the* French, *his Mother-tongue; and all by the penetrating force of his own natural parts, without a Tutor: ſo that* ‖ France *never brought forth a Man of ſharper Wit, more piercing Judgment, exact Diligence, and greater Learning, nor in his time* Italy *it ſelf.* Fœlix & fœcundum ingenium, quod in ſe uno invenit & Doctorem, & Diſcipulum! *A happy and fruitful Wit, which in it ſelf found both a Maſter and a Scholar!* And yet *Paſquier* relates what is much more admirable of a young Man, who came to *Paris* in the 20th year of his age, and in the year 1445, ſhewed him ſelf ſo excellent in all the *Arts*, *Sciences* and *Languages*, that if a Man of ordinary good Wit, and ſound Conſtitution, ſhould live an hundred years, and during that time ſtudy inceſſantly, without eating, drinking, ſleeping, or any Recreation, he could hardly attain to that perfection. (3.) And yet a far greater difference is made betwixt one Soul and another, by the ſanctifying Work of the Spirit,

* Toſtatus *Biſhop of* Abulum *had ſo ſtrong and firm a Conſtitution to endure ſevere Studies, that he is ſaid* ænea inteſtina habuiſſe *to have had a Body of Braſs.*

† Statim quo loco quaque pagina diſſeruerit, ea ſuper re expeditè docentem, ac digito commonſtrantem ſæpe vidimus.

‖ Quo viro, Gallia, acutiore ingenio, acriore judicio, exactiore diligentia, majore eruditione, nullum unquam produxit; hac verò ætate hæc Italia quidem. *Lud. Viv. in* 17 *cap. de Civ. Dei.*

of God. This makes yet a greater Disparity; for it alters and new molds the Frame and Temper of the Soul, and restores the lost Image of God to it; by reason whereof the *Righteous* is truly said to be *more excellent than his neighbour*, Prov. 12. 26. This ennobles the Soul, and stamps the highest Dignity and Glory upon it, that it is capable of in this World 'Tis true it hath naturally an Excellency and Perpetuity in it above other Beings; as *Cedar* hath not only a Beauty and Fragrancy, but a Soundness and Durability far beyond other Trees of the Wood: But when it comes under the Sanctification of the Spirit, then it is a *Cedar* over-laid with gold. (4) Lastly, a wonderful Difference will be made betwixt one Soul and another, by the Judgment of God in the great day. Some will be blessed, and others cursed Souls, *Matth.* 25. *ult.* some received into Glory, others shut out into everlasting Misery; *Matth.* 8. 11. 12. *Many shall come from the East, and West, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of Heaven; but the children of the Kingdom shall be cast out into outer Darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth.* And that which will be the sting and aggravation of the Difference which will then be made, will be this Parity and Equality in the Nature and Capacity of every Soul: by reason whereof they that perish, will find they were as naturally capable of Blessedness, as those that enjoy it; and that it was their own inexcusable *Negligence* and *Obstinacy* that were their ruine.

Inference IV.

III. The Soul a created Substance.

IF God be the immediate Creator and Former of the Soul of Man, *Then Sin must needs involve the most unnatural Evil in it, as it is an horrid Violation of the very Law of Nature.* No Title can be so full, so absolute, as that which Creation gives. How clear is the light of Reason? If God created my Soul, then my Soul had once no being at all: That it had still remained nothing, had not the Pleasure of its Creator chosen and called it into the being it hath, out of the Millions of meer possible Beings: For as there are Millions of possible Beings, which yet are nothing; so there are Millions of possible Beings which never shall be at all. So that since the Pleasure and Power of God was the only Fountain of my Being, he needs must be the *rightful Owner* of it What can be more his own, than that whose very Being flowed meerly from him, and which had never been at all, had he not called it out of nothing?

And seeing the same Pleasure of God which gave it a Being, gave it also a reasonable Being, by Laws, which other inferior Natures are incapable of; it must needs Follow then he is the *Supreme Governour*, as well as the rightful Owner of this Soul.

Moreover it is plain that he who gave my Soul its Being, and such a Being, gave it also all the Good it ever had, hath, or shall have; and that it neither is, nor hath any thing but what is purely from him: And therefore he must needs be my most *bountiful Benefactor*, as well as *absolute Owner and supreme Governour*. There is not a Soul which he hath created, but stands bound to him, in all these Ties and Titles. Now for such a Creature, to turn rebelliously upon its *absolute Owner*, whose only and wholly it is; upon its *supreme Governour*, to whom it owes entire and absolute Obedience; upon its *Bountiful Benefactor*, from whom it hath received all and every Mercy it ever had, or hath; to violate his Laws, slight his Sovereignity, despise his Goodness, contemn his Threatnings, pierce his very Heart with Grief, darken the Glory of all his Attributes, confederate with Satan, his malicious Enemy and strike as far as a Creature can strike, at his very Being, (for in a Sense, *Omne peccatum est Deicidium*, every Sin strikes at the Life and very Existence of God:) Blush, O Heavens, at this; and be ye horribly afraid! O cursed Sin, the Evil of all Evils which no Epithet can match; no Name worse than its own, can be invented, *sinful Sin.* This is as if some venomous Branch should drop Poison upon the root that bears it. Love and Gratitude to Benefactors, is an indelible Principle ingraven by Nature, upon the Hearts, of all Men. It teaches Children to love and honour their *Parents*, who are but meer Instruments of their Being. O how just must this Perdition be, who casting off the very Bonds of Nature, turn again with enmity against that, God, in whom they both live, and move and have their Being! O think, and think again on what an holy * Man once said; What a sad Charge will this be against many a Man at the great Day, when God shall say, Had thou been made a Dog, I never had had so much Dishonour as I have had? 'Tis Pity God should not have Honour from the meanest Creature that ever he made, from every Pile of Grass in the Field or Stone in the Street; much more that he should not have Glory from a Soul more precious and excellent than all the other Works of his Hands. Surely 'tis better for us our Souls had still remained only in the number of possible Beings, and had never had an actual Existence in the second Rank of Beings, but a very little lower than the Angels; that we should still be dishonouring God by it. O that he should be put to levy his Glory from us *passively*; that it should be with us as it was with *Nebuchadnezzar*, from whom God had more Glory when he was driven out amongst the Beasts of the Field, than when he sat on the Throne. In like manner his Glory will rise passively from us, when driven out amongst Devils, and not actively and voluntarily, as from the Saints.

* *Mr.* Burroughs's *Excellency of the Soul of Man*, P. 232.

Inference V.

IF God create and inspire the reasonable Soul immediately, *this should instruct and incite all Christian Parents, to pray earnestly for their Children, not when they are born into the World, but when they are conceived in the Womb.*

It is of great Concernment both to us, and our Children, not only to receive them from the Womb with Bodies perfectly and comely fashioned, but also with such Souls inspired into them, whereby they may Glorify God to all Eternity. 'Tis natural to Parents to desire to have their Children sound and perfect in all their Bodily Members; and it would be a grievous Affliction to see them come into the World defective, monstrous, and misshapen Births; should a Leg, an Arm, an Eye be wanting, such a defect would make their Lives miserable, and the Parents uncomfortable. But how few are concerned with what Soul they are born into

World! Good God (saith * *Musculus*) how shall we find, who are equally solicitous to have such Children as may live piously and honestly, as they are to leave them Inheritances, upon which they may live splendidly and bravely? It pleaseth us to see our own Image stamp't upon their Bodies; but O! how few pray, even whilst they are in the Womb, that their Souls may in due time bear the Image of the heavenly, and not animate and use the Members of their Bodies, as Weapons of unrighteousness against the God that formed them?

Certainly except they be quickened with such Souls, as may in this World be united with Christ, better had it been for them that they had perished in the Womb, whilst they were pure *Embryoes*, and had never come into the Account of Men and Women; for such *Embryoes* go for nothing in the World, being only Rudiments and rough Draughts of Bodies, never animated and informed by a reasonable Soul; *Job.* 3. 11, 12. But as soon as such a Soul enters into them, though for never so little a time, it entails Eternity upon them. We also know, that as soon as ever God breathes or infuses their Souls into them, Sin presently enters, and Death by Sin, and that by us, as the Instruments of conveying it unto them: Which should have the Efficacy of a mighty Argument with us, to lay our Prayers and Tears for Mercy in the very Foundation of that Union.

Think on this Particularly, you that are Mothers of Children, when you find the Fruit of the Womb quickened within you, that you then bear a Creature within you of more value than all this visible World; a Creature, upon whom, from that very moment, an Eternity of Happiness or Misery is entailed; and therefore it concerns you to travel as in pain for their Souls, before you feel the Sorrows and Pangs of Travail for their Bodies. O! what a pity is it, that a part of your selves should eternally perish! That so rare and excellent a Creature as that you bear, should be cast away for ever, for want of a new Creation superadded to that it hath already! O let your Cries and Prayers for them, anticipate your Kisses and Embraces of them. If you be faithful and successful herein, then happy the Womb that bears them; if not, happy had it been for them, that the Knees had prevented them, and the Breasts they have sucked. O! you cannot begin your suits for Mercy too early for them, nor continue them too long, though your Prayers measure all the time betwixt their Conception and their Birth.

* Bone Deus! quam paucos reperias qui tam solliciti quomodo pie & honeste vivant filii, quàm curent ut amplam relinquant eis hæreditatem, qui post illorum splendidè & bravè delicientur? *Musc.* in 38 *Gen.*

Inference VI.

MOreover, if God have created our Souls vital Substances, to animate and act those Bodies,

A vital Substance.

How indispensably necessary is it that a Principle of spiritual Life do quicken and govern that which quickens and governs our Bodies, and all the powers of them? Otherwise, *tho' in a natural sense we have living Souls, yet they are dead whilst they*

† The Apostle in 1 *Cor.* 15. 45, 46. compares the natural Life we live, by the Union of our Souls and Bodies, with the spiritual Life we live, by the Union of our Souls with Jesus Christ. *And so it is written* (*viz.* in my Text) *The first Man* Adam *was made a living Soul, the last* Adam *was made a quickening Spirit.* He opposes the animal to the spiritual Life, and the two *Adams* from whom they come, and shews in both respects, the Excellency of the spiritual above the Animal Life; not in Point of *Priority*, for that which is natural, is before that which is spiritual, (and it must be so, because the natural Soul is the recipient Subject of the Spirits quickning and Sanctifying Operations;) but in point of Dignity and real Excellency. To how little purpose, or rather to what a dismal and miserable purpose, we are made living Souls, except the Lord from Heaven by his quickning Power makes us spiritual and holy Souls? The natural Soul rules and uses the Body, as an *Artificer* doth his Tools: and except the Lord renew it by Grace, Satan will rule that which rules thee, and so all thy Members will be Instruments of Iniquity to fight against God. The Actions performed by our Bodies, are justly reputed and rekon'd by God to the Soul, † because the Soul is the Spring of all its Motions, the Fountain of its Life and Operations. What it doth by the Body its Instrument, is as if it were done immediately by it self; for without the Soul it can do nothing.

* Corpus organo simile est anima Artificis rationem obtinet. *Irenæus lib.* 2.

† Omnia quæcunque fecerit corpus, sive bonum, sive malum, animæ reputantur. *Origen. in Job.*

Inference VII.

V. A Spiritual Substance.

MOreover, from the immaterial and spiritual nature of the Soul we are informed, *That Communion with God, and the Enjoyment of him, are the true and proper Intentions and Purposes for which the Soul of Man was created.*

Such a Nature as this, is not fitted to live upon grosse, material and perishing things, as the Body doth. The Food of every Creature is agreeable to its Nature; one cannot subsist upon that which another doth: as we see among the several Sorts of Animals, what is Food to one, is none to another. In the same Plant is found a Root, which is Food for *Swine*, a Stalk which is Food for *Sheep*, a Flower which feeds the *Bee*, a Seed on which the *Bird* lives: The *Sheep* cannot live upon the Root, as the *Swine* doth; nor the *Bird* upon the Flower as the *Bee* doth; but every one feeds upon the different Parts of the *Plant*, which are agreeable to its Nature. So it is here, our Bodies being of an earthly material Nature, can live upon things earthly and material, as most agreeable to them; they can relish and suck out the sweetness of these things; but the Soul can find nothing in them suitable to its Nature and Appetite; it must have spiritual Food, or perish. It were therefore too brutish, and unworthy of a Man that understood the Nature of his own Soul, to chear it up with the Stores of earthly Provision made for it, as he did, *Luke* 12. 20. *I will say to my Soul, Soul, thou hast much Goods laid up for many years take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.* Alas, the Soul can no more eat, drink, and be merry with carnal things, than the Body can with spiritual and immaterial things: It cannot feed upon Bread that perisheth, it can relish no more in the best and daintiest Fare of an earthly Growth, than in the White of an Egg: But bring it to a reconciled God in Christ, to the Covenant of Grace, and the sweet Promises of the Gospel; set before it the Joys, Com-

forts and Earnests of the Spirit; and if it be a sanctified renewed Soul, it can make a rich Feast upon these. These make it a Feast of fat things, full of Marrow, as it is express'd *Isa.* 25. 6. Spiritual things are proper Food for spiritual and immaterial Souls.

Inference VIII.

THE spiritual Nature of the Soul farther informs us, *That no acceptable Service can be performed to God, except the Soul be employed and engag'd therein.*

VI A Spiritual Substance.

The *Body* hath its part and share in God's Worship, as well as the *Soul*; but its part is inconsiderable in comparison: *Prov.* 23. 26. *My Son, give me thy heart*, (i. e.) thy Soul, thy Spirit. The holy and religious Acts of the *Soul* are suitable to the nature of the Object of Worship: *John* 4. 24. *God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in Truth.* Spirits only can have Communion with that great Spirit. They were made Spirits for that very end, that they might be capable of Converse with the Father of Spirits. They that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in Truth; that is, with inward Love, Fear, Delight and Desires of Soul, that is, to worship him in our Spirits: And in *Truth* (*i. e.*) according to the Rule of his Word which prescribes our Duty. *Spirit* respects the inward Power; *Truth*, the outward Form. The former strikes at Hypocrisie, the latter at Superstition and Idolatry: The one opposes the Inventions of our Heads, the other the Looseness and Formality of our Hearts.

No doubt but the Service of the Body is due to God, and expected by him: For both the Souls and Bodies of his People are bought with a Price, and therefore he expects we glorifie him with our Souls and Bodies, which are his: But the service of the Body is not accepted of him, otherwise than it is animated and enlivened by an obedient Soul, and both sprinkled with the Blood of Christ. Separate from these, bodily Exercise profits nothing, 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. What pleasure can God take in the Fruits and Evidences of Mens Hypocrisie? *Ezek.* 33. 31.

Holy *Paul* appeals to God in this matter, *Rom.* 1. 9. *God is my witness* (saith he) *whom I serve with my spirit*; q. d. I serve God in my Spirit, and he knows that I do so. I dare appeal to him who searches my Heart, that it is not idle and unconcerned in his Service. The Lord humble us, the best of us, for our careless, dead, gadding, and vain Spirits, even when we are engaged in his solemn services. Oh that we were once so spiritual, to follow every Excursion from his service with a Groan, and retract every wandring Thought with a deep Sigh! Alas, a cold and wandring Spirit in Duty is the Disease of most Men, and the very Temper and Constitution of unsanctified ones. It is a weighty and excellent Expression of the *Jews* in their *Euchologium*, or Prayer-Book, *Wherewithal shall I come before his Face, unless it be with my Spirit? For Man hath nothing more precious to present to God than his Soul.* Indeed it is the best Man hath: Thy Heart is thy *totum posse*; 'tis all that thou art able to present to him. If thou cast thy Soul into thy Duty, thou dost as the poor Widow did, cast in all thou hast: And such an Offering the great God takes more pleasure than in all the external, costly, pompous Ceremonies, adorned Temples, and external Devotions in the World. It is a remarkable and astonishing Expression of his own in this Case, *Isa* 66. 1, 2. *Thus saith the Lord, The Heaven is my Throne, and the Earth is my Footstool: Where is the House that ye built me, and where is the place of my rest? For all these things have mine hands made, and all these things have been, saith the Lord; but unto this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my Word*; q. d. Think not to please me with magnificent Temples, and adorned Altars; if I had pleasure in such things, Heaven is a more glorious Throne than any you can build me; and yet I have more delight in a poor contrite Spirit, that trembles with an holy Awe and Reverence at my Word, than I have in Heaven or Earth, or all the Works of my Hands in either. Oh! if there had been more trembling at his Word, there had not been such trembling as now there is, under Fears of the Loss and Removal of it. Some can superstitiously reverence and kiss the sacred Dust of the Sanctuary, as they call it, and express a great deal of Zeal for the Externals of Religion, but little consider how small the Interest of these things is in Religion, and how little God looks at, or regards them.

במה אקדם פנין בי אם ברוחיבי ארץ ליאש נכבד מנפשר h. e. qua re potius præveniam faciem ejus nisi spiritu meo? nihil enim est homini pretiosius anima sua.

Inference IX.

HOW *much are the Spirits of Men sunk by Sin, how low the Dignity and Excellency of their Nature!*

Our Souls are Spirits by Nature, yet have they naturally no Delight in things spiritual: They decline that which is homogeneal and suitable to Spirits, and relish nothing but what is carnal and unsuitable to them. How are its Affections invited and mis-placed by Sin! That noble, spiritual, heaven-born Creature the Soul, whose Element and Center God alone should be, is now sunk into a deep Oblivion both of God and it self, and wholly spends its strength in the pursuit of sensual and earthly Enjoyments, and becomes a mere Drudge and Slave to the Body. Carnal things must measure out and govern its Delights and Hopes, its Fears and Sorrows. Oh! how unseemly is it to behold such an high-born Spirit lacqueying up and down the World in the service of the perishing Flesh. *Their heart* (saith the Prophet) *goeth after their covetousness*, Ezek. 33. 31. as a Servant at the Beck or Nod of his Master.

Oh, how many are there to be found in every place, who melt down the precious Affections and Strength of their Souls, in sensitive brutish Pleasures and Delights? *James* 5. 5. *Ye have lived in pleasures upon earth*, as the Fish in the Water, or rather as the Eel in the Mud; never once lifting up a Thought or Desire to the spiritual and eternal Pleasures that are at God's right-hand.

Our Creation did not set us so low; we were made capable of better and higher things.

God did not inspire such a noble, excellent, spiritual Soul into us, meerly to salt our Bodies, or carry them up and down this World for a few years to gaze at the Vanities of it. It was a great saying of an Heathen, * *I am greater, and born to greater things, than that I should be a Slave to my Body.* We have a Spirit about us, that

* Major sum, & ad majora natus, quam ut corporis mei sim mancipium. *Senec.*

might better understand its Original, and know it is not so base a Being, as its daily Employments speak it to be. The Lord raise our Apprehensions to a due Value of the Dignity of our own Souls, that we may turn from these sordid Employments with a generous Disdain, and set our Affections on what is agreeable to, and worthy of an high-born Spirit.

Inference X.

VII. The Soul an immortal Substance.

IS the Soul of Man a vital, spiritual, and *immortal Substance? Then it is no wonder, that we find the Refreshments and Impressions of the World to come, naturally engraven upon the Souls of Men all the World over.* These Impressions and Sentiments of another Life after this, do as naturally and necessarily spring out of an *immortal Nature*, as Branches spring out of the Body of a Tree, or Feathers out of the Body of a Bird. So fairly and firmly are the Characters and Impressions of the Life to come sealed upon the *immortal Spirits* of all Men, that no Man can offer Violence to this Truth, but he must also do Violence to his own Soul, and unman himself by the Denial of it. Who feels not a Cheerfulness to spring from his absolving, and an Horror from his accusing Conscience? Neither of which could rise from any other Principle than this. We are Beings conscious to our selves of a future state, and that our Souls do not vanish when our Breath doth; that we cease not to be, when we cease to breathe.

And this is common to the most barbarous and salvage Heathens: *They shew* (saith the Apostle) *the work of the Law written in their hearts, their Conscience also bearing them witness, and their thoughts in the mean time accusing, or else excusing one another.* By the Work of the Law, understand the Sum and Substance of the Ten Commandments, comprizing the Duties to be done, and the Sins to be avoided. This Work of the Law is said to be written in the Hearts of the *Gentiles*, who had no external written Law; upon their Hearts it was written, tho' many of them gave themselves over to all Uncleanness: And they *shewed*, or gave evidence and proof, that there was such a Law written upon their Hearts. They shewed it two ways: (1.) Some of them shew'd it in their Temperance, Righteousness, and moral Honesty, wherein they excelled many of us, who have far greater Advantages and Obligations. (2.) In the Efficacy of their Consciences; which, as it cleared and comforted them for things well done; so it witnessed against them, yea, judged and condemned them for things done. And these Evidences of a Law written on the Heart are to be found, where-ever Men are to be found. Their Ignorance and Barbarity cannot stifle these Sentiments, and Impressions of a future State, and a just Tribunal to which it must come. And the Universality of it plainly evinces, that it springs not out of Education, but the very nature of an immortal Soul.

Let none say that these universal Impressions are but the Effects of an universal *Tradition*, which have been Time out of Mind spread among the Nations of the World: For as no such universal Tradition can be proved; so if it could, the very Propension that is found in the Minds of all Men living to embrace and close with the Proposals of a Life to come, will evince the Agreeableness of them to the Nature of an immortal Soul. Yea, the natural closing of the Soul with these Proposals, will amount to an Evidence of the Reality and Existence of those invisible Things. For as the natural Senses, and their Organs, prove that there are Colours, Sounds, Savours, and Juices; as well as, or rather because there are Eyes, Ears, &c. naturally fitted to close with, and receive them; so it is here, if the Soul naturally looks beyond the Line of Time, to Things eternal, and cannot bound and confine its Thoughts and Expectations within the too narrow Limits of present Things, surely there is such a future State, as well as Souls made apprehensive of it, and propense to close with the Discoveries thereof. So natural are the Notions of a future State to the Souls of Men, that those who have set themselves designedly to banish them, and struggled hard to suppress them, as Things irksom and grievous to them, giving Interruption to their sensual Lusts and Pleasures; yet still these Apprehensions have returned upon them, and gotten a just Victory over all their Objections and Prejudices; they follow them whersoever they go; they can no more flee from them, than from themselves; whereby they evidence themselves to be natural and indelible Things.

Inference XI.

VIII. Endued with *Understanding, Will* and *Affections.*

HAth God endued the Soul of Man with Understanding, Will and Affections, whereby it is made capable of knowing, loving, and enjoying God? *'Tis then no Wonder to find the Malice and Envy of Satan engaged against Man more than any other Creature, and against the Soul of Man rather than any thing else.*

It grates that Spirit of Envy, to see the Soul of Man adorning and preparing by Sanctification to fill that Place in Glory from which he fell irrecoverably. It cut *Haman* to the very Heart, to see the Honour that was done to *Mordecai*; much more doth it grate and gall Satan, to see what Jesus Christ hath purchased and designed for the Souls of Men. Other Creatures being naturally uncapable of this Happiness, do therefore escape his Fury; but Men shall be sure to feel it, as far as he can reach them; 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. *Your Adversary the Devil, goeth about like a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour. He walks to and fro,* that speaks his Diligence; *seeking whom he may devour,* that speaks his Design; his Restlessness in doing Mischief, is all the Rest and Relief he hath in his own Torments. 'Tis a Mark of pure and perfect Malice, to endeavour to destroy, tho' he knows he shall never be successful in his Attempts. We read of many Bodies possessed by him; but he never takes up his Quarters in the Body of any but with Design to mischief the Soul. No Room but the best

best in the House will satisfy him; no Blood so sweet to him as Soul-blood. If he raise Persecution against the Bodies of Men, it is to destroy their Souls: Holiness is that he hates, and Happiness is the Object of his Envy; The Soul being the Subject of both, is therefore pursued by him as his Prey.

Inference XII.

UPon the consideration both of its excellent Nature and divine Original, it follows, *That the Corruption and Defacing of such an excellent Creature by Sin, deserves to be lamented, and greatly bewailed; and the Recovery of it by Sanctification to be studied, and diligently prosecuted, as the great Concern of all Men.*

What a beautiful and blessed Creature was the Soul of Man at first, whilst it stood in its Integrity? His Mind was bright, clear, and apprehensive of the Law and Will of God: His Will chearfully complied therewith; his sensitive Appetite and inferior Powers stood in an obedient subordination. God made Man upright, *Eccles.* 7. 20. ישר streight, and equal, bending to neither extreme. The Law of God was fairly engraven on the Table of his Heart. Principles of Holiness and Righteousness were inlayed in the frame of his Mind, fitting him for an exact and punctual Discharge of his Duties both to God and Man. This was the soundness of his Constitution, the healthful Temper of his inner Man, whereby it became the very Region of Light, Peace, Purity, and Pleasure. For think how serene, lightsome, and placid the state of the Soul must be, in which there was no Obliquity, not a Jar with the Divine Will; but Joy and Peace continually transfused through all its Faculties!

But Sin hath defaced its Beauty, raz'd out the Divine Image which was its Glory, and stampt the very Image of Satan upon it; turn'd all its noble Powers and Faculties against the Author of its Being. Surely, if all the Posterity of *Adam*, from the beginning to the end of the World, should do nothing else but weep and sigh for the Sin and Misery of the Fall, it could not be sufficiently deplored: Other Sins, like single Bullets, kill particular Persons; but *Adam's* Sin, like a Chain shot, mowed down all Mankind at once. It murder'd him self *actually*, all his Posterity *virtually*, and Christ himself *occasionally*. Oh! what a black Train of Doleful Consequents attend this Sin! It hath darkned the bright Eye of the Soul's Understanding, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. made its complying and obedient Will stubborn and rebellious, *Joh.* 5. 40. rendered his tender Heart obdurate and senseless, *Ezek.* 36. 26. filled its serene and peaceful Conscience with Guilt and Terror, *Tit.* 1. 15. The consideration of these things is very humbling, and could cause those that glory in their high and illustrious Descents, to wrap their silver Star in *Cypress*, and cover all their Glory with a mourning Veil. But this is but one part of their Duty.

How should this consideration provoke us to apply our selves with most serious Diligence to recover our lost Beauty and Dignity, in the way of Sanctification! This is the great and most proper use of the Fall, as *Musculus* excellently speaks; *ut gratiam Christi eo subnixius ambiamus*, to inflame our Desires the more vehemently after Grace.

Sanctification restores the Beauty of the Soul, which Sin defaced, *Ephes.* 4. 24. *Col.* 3. 10. Yea, it restores it with this advantage, that it shall never be lost again; Holiness is the Beauty of God impress'd upon the Soul, and the Impression is everlasting. Other Beauty is but a fading Flower: Time will plough up deep Furrows upon the faireſt Faces, but this will be fresh to Eternity.

All moral Vertues, homilitical Qualities, which adorn and beautifie Nature, and make it attractive and lovely in the Eyes of Men, are but separable Accidents, which Death discinds and crops off like a sweet Flower from the stalk. Job 4. 21. *Doth not their excellency that is in them go away?* But Sanctification is inseparable, and will ascend with the Soul into Heaven. Oh! that God would set the Glass of the Law before us, that we may see what defiled Souls we have by Nature, that we might come by Faith to Jesus Christ, who cometh to us by Water and by Blood, 1 *Joh.* 5. 6.

Inference XIII.

TO conclude. Upon the consideration of the whole matter before us, If this excellent Creature the Soul receive both its Being and Excellencies from God; *Then he that formed it must needs have the full and only right to possess and use it, and is therefore most injuriously kept out of the possession, by unsanctified and disobedient Persons.*

The Soul of Man is a Building of God; he hath laid out the Treasures of his Wisdom, Power and Goodness in this noble Structure; he built it for a Habitation for Himself to dwell in; and indeed such noble Rooms as the Understanding, Will, and Affections, are too good for any other to inhabit. But Sin hath set open the Gates of this hallowed Temple, let in the Abomination that maketh desolate. All the Doors of the Soul are barred and chained up against Christ, by Ignorance and Infidelity; he seeks for Admission into the Soul which he hath made, but findeth none. A forcible Entry he will not make; but expects when the Will shall bring him the Keys of the Soul, and to its rightful Owner. So he expresseth himself to us in Rev. 3. 20. *Behold I stand at the door and knock: If any Man hear my Voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him and he with me.* His *standing at the Door*, denotes his earnest Desire, and patient Waiting, in the Use of all those Means that are introductive of Jesus Christ into the Souls of Men. His *knocking* signifies the various Essays he makes by Ordinances and Providences externally, and the Convictions and Persuasions of his Spirit, and the Consciences of Sinners internally: every Call of the Word, and every Conviction of Conscience is a Call, a Knock from Heaven, at the Door of the Soul, for Admission of Christ into it. By *the Soul's hearing his Voice, and opening the Door*, understand its Approbation, and Consent to the Motion and Offer of God. By Christ's *coming in*, is meant his uniting that Soul unto himself that opens unto him. And as his *coming in* denotes Union,

his *supping with* the Soul, and the Soul with him, denotes his sweet Communion; imperfect here, complete and full in Heaven.

Oh the admirable Condescension of God to poor Sinners! The God that formed you with a Word, can as easily ruin you with a Frown; yet waits at the Gates of your Souls for Admission into them. There be many *Souls* within the sound of this Complaint, that have kept God out of his own Right all their Days. They have shut out Jesus Christ, and delivered up their *Souls* to Satan; if he but knock by a slight Temptation, the Door is presently opened: but Jesus Christ may wait in vain upon them, from Sabbath to Sabbath, and from Year to Year. But the longest Day of his Patience hath an End; and there is a refusal of Grace, after which no more Tenders of Mercy shall be ever made.

What say you, Souls? will you at last open the Door to Jesus Christ, or will you still exclude him? If you will open to him, he will not come in empty-handed, he will bring a Feast with him, such a Feast as you never tasted any thing like it in your Lives: But if you will not open to him, then I call Heaven and Earth to witness against you this day, that you have once more barr'd the Doors of your Souls against him, whose Pleasure and Power gave them their very Beings; against him who is their sovereign Lord, and rightful Owner; and consequently, this Act of yours must stop your Mouths, and deprive you of all Pleas and Apologies, when you shall knock hereafter at the Door of Mercy, and God shall for ever shut it up against you, according to his just, but dreadful Threatnings, *Matt.* 7. 21. *Prov.* 1. 24, 25. And thus much of the divine Original, and excellent Nature of the *Soul* of Man.

Having taken a View of this excellent Creature the Soul, in opening the former Proposition; we come next to the Consideration of its Union with the Body, in this second Proposition:

Doct. II. *That the Souls and Bodies of Men are knit together by the feeble Band of the* Breath *in their Nostrils.*

There is (saith a learned Man) *no greater Mystery in Nature, than the Union betwixt the Soul and Body; That a Mind and Spirit should be so tied and linked with a Clod of Clay, that while that remains in a due Temper, it cannot by any Art or Power free it self. It can by an Act of the Will move an Hand, or a Foot, or the whole Body, but cannot move from it one Inch. If it move hither, or thither, or by a Leap upward do rebound a little, the Body still follows; it cannot shake it off, or throw it off. We cannot take our selves out; (by any allowable Means we cannot; nor by any at all unless we are at least, within meer Human Power) as long as the Temperament lasts. While that remains we can go; if that fail, we cannot stay; though there be so many open Avenues (could we suppose any material Bounds to hem in, or exclude a Spirit) we cannot go out or in at pleasure. A wonderful thing! I wonder we no more wonder at our own Make and Frame in this respect. —— What so much a-kin are a Mind and a piece of Earth, a Clod and a Thought, that they should be thus affixed to one another?*

Mr. How *in a Funeral Sermon*, p. 9, 10.

My Design here is to shew by what Ligament, Tie, or Bond it hath pleased the great and wise Creator, to affix and link these so different Parts of Man together: And this *Moses* in the Text tells us, is no other but the Breath of his Nostrils.

The Breath and Soul of Man are two distinct things. His Breath is not his Soul, nor his Soul his Breath, but the *Nexus* or Bond that couples and unites his Soul and Body in a personal Union. The Body hath no Life in it self, but its Life results from its Union with the Soul, *Jam.* 2. 26. This Union is maintained by the Breath of our Nostrils, which upon that account is here called the *Breath of Life. Breath is an Act of Life, proceeding from the Soul's Union with its Body, and ending with the Dissolution of it.* Life is continu'd by its *Respiration*, and ended by its *Expiration.* Whilst we live, and whilst Breath is in our Bodies, are Terms *synonymous.*

What Breath is.

That little Quantity of Air, which we thus breathe in and out at our Nostrils, is more to us, than all the three Regions of Air, which fill up the vast space between Earth and Heaven. It is in a sense our Life.

For the the Use and Office of Respiration, the *Lungs* were formed and placed where they are, not without the most wise Counsel and Direction of God. They are that Organ in the * Body, which by the Help of that *Artery* called *Arteria Trachea*, leading to them as a Channel, for the Passage of Air from the Mouth and Nostrils, the Air is transmitted to, and ventilated by them for the Refreshment of the † Heart, and exhaling the Fumes thereof.

What the Lungs are.

* Pulmo est spirandi & respirandi instrumentum, ad pulmones inducitur, fistula, quæ dicitur Trachea arteria, ad geminos usus condita, &c.

† Cor movetur motu duplici, nempe διαστολῆς & συστολῆς, qua calor innatus attracto aere mitigatur & refrigeratur, *Alsted. Theol. Nat.* p. (mihi) 614.

The Heart hath continual need of such a Vent and Refreshment; and therefore the Lungs, like a Pair of Bellows, must be kept continually going. Longer than Breath is going, the Heart is dying; that which stops the one, suffocates the other.

And here we may with Admiration contemplate the Wonders by which our Lives are continued. These Lungs are the most frail and tender Part of the Body, and kept in continual Motion and Agitation; yet are made serviceable for seventy or eighty Years together, which is the Wonder of Providence. Were a Piece of Brass, Iron or Steel kept in continual and incessant Use, it would not endure half the time. In a word, the || Heart, that noble Part of the Body, is the *Shop* wherein the *Spirits* are laboured and prepared, which therefore is in

|| Quia cor est fons vitæ & officina spirituum operosissima, ita ut perpetuo motu pendulum agitetur; utique etiam vehementer incalescit, ita ut si calor iste per respirationem non continu-

restringueretur, necesse fuerit, & calidum & humidum nativum nimia affluatione opprimi & suffocari. Pulmones sunt nihil aliud quàm folles quidam naturales, qui sese dilatando aërem attrahunt, inque cor effundunt, ita ut cor perpetuò æstuans, aëre refrigeretur; qui, aer ubi intra cordis meatus incaluit, iterum à corde effunditur in pulmones, qui sese contrahendo foras emittunt. *Keckerm. Phys.* p. 142.

God hath therefore prepared the Lungs for this service; which being of a thin, porous, and spungy substance can easily be dilated and contracted. By dilating themselves, they attract and suck in the Air into themselves; first duly to prepare and temper it, and then communicate it to the Heart for its Refreshment; which being quickly heated in the Heart, is again breathed out by the Lungs by contracting themselves again. This double Motion of Inspiration and Expiration we call *Respiration*; and this Respiration is the Bond that holds our Souls and Bodies together.

And indeed, this is but a feeble Bond, a very slender and weak Thread, which holds our Souls and Bodies in union. What more *volatile*, *evanid* and *uncertain*, than a Puff of Breath? The Nostrils are the outer Door of the Body, our Breath is continually in our Nostrils; and how soon may that depart, which is Day and Night at the door, as if it were still taking leave of us? Our Breath is always going; and what is still going, will be gone at last. How small a difference is there betwixt Respiration and Expiration, a breathing and a breathless Lump of Clay? Breath cannot continue long, and Death cannot stay a Moment behind it. Psal. 104. 29. *Thou takest away their Breath, they die, and return to their Dust.* Life is Breath given, and Death is Breath taken away. The Breath of Man is like a written Sentence, in which there are divers Comma's, or short Pauses, after which speedily follows a full Stop, and there's an end of it.

Some conceive *Solomon* Points at the continual Motion of the Lungs, in that figurative and elegant Description of the Death of Man, Eccles. 12. 6. *Or ever the Silver Cord be loosed, or the golden Bowl be broken; or the Pitcher be broken at the Fountain, or the Wheel be broken at the Cistern.* The double Motion of the Lungs he seems here to compare to the double Motion of the Buckets in a Well; the Turn of the Wheel sends one down, and draws the other up. But as we use to say proverbially, The Bucket or Pitcher that goes so often to the Cestern or Well, is broken at last: so must we say of these, they will fail at last. One sitting by the Bedside of a dying Person, sighed out this compassionate Expression, *Ah! quid sumus?* His sick Friend hearing it, replied, *Pulvis, & umbra, fumus*, Dust, a Shadow, a puff of Wind. The Wind without us is fickle and inconstant to a Proverb, and so is that within us too. Many grudge at the Shortness of Life; but considering the Feebleness of this Bond, we have more cause to wonder at the Slowness of Death. For let us seriously consider the Frailty of our Breath on a double account, *viz.*

Pulmones sunt veluti rotæ ad Cisternam: sicut enim rota in fonte situlam modo deprimit deorsum, modo sursum attollit; ita & pulmones perpetuo motu aërem attrahunt, & expellunt. *Alsted. Theol. Nat.* p. 623.

1. In respect of our Breathing Instruments.
2. Or of breath-stopping Accidents.

1. Great is the Frailty of our breathing Instruments. What is flesh but Weakness? even the most solid and substantial; it is as fading Grass, *Isa.* 40. 6. But our * Lungs are the most lax, spongy, and tender of all Flesh, if that which is so airy, light, and spumous, deserve the Name of Flesh. And as it is the most frail of all Flesh, so it is in continual Motion, labouring night and Day, without rest or intermission; and that which wants alternate Rest cannot be durable. We see Motion wears out the Wheels of the Watch, tho' made of Brass; but our *strength* (as Job speaks) *is not the strength* of Stones *nor our Bones* (the most solid, much less our Lungs, the most frail and feeble Parts) *of* Brass. Beside,

* Est enim substantia pulmonum caro laxa, spongiosa, aerea; & similis coagulatæ spumæ sanguinis. *Alsted. ib.*

2. There are a multitude of breath-stopping Accidents, which may, and daily do beat the last Breath out of Mens Noistrils, before any Decay of nature cause it to expire.

Many mortal Diseases are incident to these frail and tender Parts. Phtysicks, Interenations, Ulcers, easily bar the Passage of our Breath there; yea, and Slighter Accidents, which immediately touch not that Part, are sufficient to stop our Breath, and dislodge our Souls. A *Fly*, a *Gnat*, the Stone of a *Raisin*, a *Crum* of Bread, have often done it. There is not a Pore in the Body, but is a Door large enough to let in Death; nor a Creature so despicably small, but is strong enough (if God commissionate it) to serve a Writ of Ejectment upon the Soul. The Multitudes of Diseases are so many lighted Candles put to this slender Thread of our Breath, besides the infinite Diversity of external Accidents, by which Multitudes daily Perish: So that there are as great and astonishing Wonders in our Preservation as in our Creation.

Inference I.

HOW admirable then is the Mystery of Providence in the daily Continuation of the Breath of our Nostrils.

That our Breath is yet in our Nostrils, is only from hence, that he who breathed it into them at first is our Life, and the length of our Days, as it is *Deut.* 30. 20. It is because our Breath is in his Hand, *Dan.* 5. 23. not in our own, or in our Enemies Hand. Till he take it away, none shall be able to do it; *Psal.* 104. 29. *Thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their Dust.*

'Tis neither Food nor Physick, but God in and by them, that *holdeth our Souls in Life*, Psal. 66. 9. We hang every moment of our Life over the Grave, and the Gulph of Eternity, by this slender Thread of our Breath: but it cannot break, how feeble soever it be, till the time appointed be fully come. If it be not extinguished and suffocated as others daily are, it is because he puts none of these Diseases upon us, as it is *Exod.* 15. 26. or if he do, yet he is *Jehovah Rophe*, the Lord that healeth us, as it follows in that Text.

We live in the midst of cruel enemies, yea, *among them that breath out cruelty*, as the *Psalmist* complaineth, *Psal.* 27. 12. Such Breath would quickly suffocate ours, did not he in whose hand ours is wonderfully prevent it. Oh what cause have we to employ and spend that Breath in his Praise, who works so many daily Wonders to secure it!

Infer. 2. Is it but a puff of feeble Breath which holds our Souls and Bodies in Union? *Then every Man is deeply concerned to make all haste, to take all possible care and pains to secure a better and more durable habitation for his Soul in Heaven, whilst yet it sojourns in this frail Tabernacle of the Body.*

The time is at hand, when all these comely and active Bodies shall be so many breathless Carcases, no more capable of any use or service for our Souls than the seats you sit on, or the dead bodies that lie under your feet. Your breath is yet in your Nostrils, and all the means and seasons of Salvation will expire with it; and then it will be as impossible for the best Minister in the world to help your Souls, as for the ablest *Physician* to recover your Bodies. As Physick comes too late for the one, so Counsels and Persuasions for the other.

Three things are worth thinking on in this matter.

1. That you are not without the hopes and possibilities of Salvation, whilst the breath of life is in your Nostrils. A mercy (how lightly soever you value it) that would ravish with joy those miserable Souls that have already shot the gulf of Eternity, and turn the shrieks and groans of the damned into joyful shouts and acclamations of praise. Poor wretch, consider what thou read'st; that thy Soul is not yet in Christ, is thy greatest misery; but that yet it may be in Christ, is an unspeakable mercy; though thy Salvation be not yet secured, yet what a mercy is it that it is not desperate?

2. When this uncertain breath is once expired, the last hope of every unregenerate person is gone for ever: It is as impossible to recover hope, as it is to recover your departed breath, or recal the day that is past. When the breath is gone, the *Compositum* is dissolved; we cease to be what now we are, and our life is as water spilt on the ground, which shall not be gather'd up till the Resurrection. Our life is carried like a precious liquor in a brittle Glass, which death breaks to pieces. The Spirit is immediately presented to God, and fixed in its unalterable State, *Heb.* 9. 27. All means of Salvation now cease for ever; no *Ambassadors* of peace are sent to the Dead; no more Calls or strivings of the Spirit: no more place for Repentance. O! what an inconceivable weight hath God hanged on a puff of breath!

3. And since matters stand thus, it is to be admired what shift Men make to quiet themselves in so dangerous a state as most Souls live in; quiet and unconcerned, and yet but one puff of breath betwixt them and Hell! O the stupifying and besotting nature of Sin! O the efficacy and power of spiritual Delusions! Are our lives such a throng and hurry of business, that we have no time to go alone and think where we are, and where we shortly must be? What shall I say? If bodily concerns be so weighty, and the matters of Eternity such trifles; if meat and drink, and trade, and children, be such great things, and Christ, and Soul, and Heaven, Hell, and the World to come, such little things in your eyes, you will not be long in that opinion I dare assure you.

Inference III.

Is the Tie so weak betwixt our Souls and Bodies? how close and near then do all our Souls confine and border upon Eternity?

There is no more but a puff of breath, a blast of wind betwixt Time and Eternity: There is a breath which will be our last breath; Respiration must and will terminate in Expiration: The Dead are the *Inhabitants*, and the Living are *Borderers* upon the invisible world. This consideration deserves a dwelling place in the hearts of all Men, whether,

I. Regenerate, or
II. Unregenerate.

I. Regenerate Souls should ponder this with pleasure. O 'tis transporting to think how small a matter is betwixt them and their complete Salvation. No sooner is your breath gone, but the full desire of your hearts is come; every breath you draw, draws you a degree nearer to your perfect happiness; *Rom.* 13. 11. *Now is your Salvation nearer than when you believed*; therefore both your chearfulness and diligence should be greater than when you were * in the infancy of your Faith. You have run through a considerable part of your Christian course and race, and are now come nearer the Globe and prize of eternal Life. O despond not, loiter not now at last, who were so fervent and zealous in the beginning.

* Hoc dicit, quod in fidei primordiis, ferventiores, & ad opera bona alacriores fuissent fideles; temporis autem progressu, refriguissent. *Estius in loc.*

'Tis transporting to think how near you approach the Region of light and joy. O that you would distinctly consider,

1. Where you lately were.
2. Where now you are.
3. Where shortly you shall be.

1. You that are now so near Salvation, were lately very near unto Damnation: there was but a puff of breath betwixt you and Hell. How many nights did you sleep securely in the state of nature and unregeneracy? How quietly did you rest upon the brink of Hell, not once imagining the danger you were in? Had any of those sicknesses you then suffered, been suffered by God, like a candle, to burn asunder this slender thread of life which was so near them, you had been as miserable and as hopeless, as those that now are roaring in the lowest Hell. I have heard of one that rid over a dangerous Bridge in the night, who upon the review of the place next day, fell into a swoon, when he was sensible of that danger which the darkness of the night hid from him. O Reader, shall not an escape from Hell affect thee, as much as such an escape would do?

2. 'Tis no less marvellous to consider where you now are; you that were afar off, are now made nigh, *Ephes.* 2. 13. you that were not beloved, are now beloved, *Rom.* 9. 25. You

were in the state of death and condemnation; you are now passed from death to life, by your free justification, 1 *John* 3. 14. Your union with Christ hath set you free from condemnation, *Rom.* 8. 1. Die you must tho' Christ be in you, but there is no hazard or hurt in your death. The stopping of your breath can put no stop to your happiness, it will hasten, not hinder it: If the pale Horse come for you, Heaven, not Hell will now follow him; your sins are pardoned, the covenant of your Salvation sealed. Death is disarmed of its fatal sting; and what then should hinder you from a like Triumph even upon your death-bed with that, 1 Cor. 15. 55. *O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?*

3. And yet you have more room for Joy, whilst you consider where you must and shall be shortly. You are now *in Christ*, but in a few days you shall be *with Christ* as well as in him; 'tis well now, but it will be better e'er long. Your sin is now fully *pardoned*, but not fully *purged* out of your Souls. Your *Persons* are freed from guilt, but your *Hearts* are not either freed from filth or grief: But in a little time you shall be absolutely and eternally freed from both. Your present condition is in Heaven, compared with your former, and your future state will be an Heaven indeed, compared with your present *The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day*, Prov. 4. 18.

II. But on the other side, what meditation can be more startling and amazing to all the unregenerate and Christless World? Ponder it, thou poor Christless and unsanctified Soul. Get thee out of the noise and clamour of this World, which makes such a continual din in thine ears, and consider how thou hangest over the mouth of Hell it self, by the feeble Thread which is spun every moment out of thy Nostrils; as soon as that gives way, thou art gone for ever. What shift do you make to quiet your fears, and eat, drink, and labour with any pleasure? 'Tis storied of *Dionysius* the Tyrant, that when *Damocles* would have flattered him into a conceit of the perfection of his happiness, as he was an absolute sovereign Prince, and could do what he pleased with others, as his Vassals; *Dionysius*, to confute his fancy, caused him to be placed at a Table richly furnished, and attended with the most curious Musick, but just over his head hanged a sharp and heavy Sword by one single hair; which when *Damocles* saw, no Meat would go down with him, but he earnestly begged for a discharge from that place. This is the lively Emblem of thy condition, thou unregenerate man.

There are *three* things in thy state sadly opposed to the former state last described.

1. The state you were born in, was bad.
2. The state you are now in, is worse.
3. The state you shall shortly be in, if you thus continue, will be unspeakably worst of all.

1. The state you were born in, was a sad state; you were born in sin, *Psal.* 51, 5. and under wrath, *Ephes.* 2. 3. The Womb of Nature cast you forth into this World defiled and condemned Creatures.

2. The state you are in now, is much worse than that you were born in; for what have you been doing ever since you were born, but treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath? *Rom.* 2. 5. For every Sand of Time which run out of the Glass of God's patience towards you, a Drop of Wrath hath been running into the Vials of his Indignation against you. Oh! what a Treasure of Sin and Wrath then is laid up in so many years as you have lived in sin! Every sin committed, every mercy abused, every Call of God neglected and slighted, adds still more and more to this Treasure.

3. It will be much worse shortly than it is now, except preventing, renewing Grace step in betwixt you and that Wrath into which you are hastning so fast. 'Tis sad to be under the *Sentence* of Condemnation, but unspeakably worse to be under the *Execution* of that Sentence. To be a *Christless* man is lamentable, but to be a *hopeless* man is more lamentable. For tho' you be now without Christ, yet whilst the Breath of Life is in your Nostrils you are not absolutely without hope: but when once that Breath is gone, all the World cannot save or help you. Your last Breath and your last Hope expire together. Tho' you be under God's damning Sentence, yet that Sentence through the riches of forbearance is not executed; but as soon as you die, all that Wrath which hang'd over your heads so many years, in the black Clouds of God's threatnings, will pour down in a furious storm upon you, which will never break up whilst God is God. Oh! think, and think again, and let your thoughts think close to this sad and solemn Subject, there is but a Breath betwixt you and Hell.

Inference IV.

Doth God maintain your Life by Breath? Let no that Breath destroy your Life, which God gave to preserve it.

No man can live without Breath; and yet some might live longer than they do, if their Breath were better employed. *

Some mens Throats have been cut by their own Tongues, as the *Arabian Proverb* intimates. Life and Death (saith *Solomon*) are in the power of the Tongue. *Criticks* observe, that a *Word* and a *Plague* grow upon the same Root in the *Hebrew* Tongue. 'Tis certain that some Mens Breath hath been baneful Poyson both to themselves and others. It was a Word that cut off the life of *Adonijah*, 1 *King.* 2. 25. and thousands since his day have died upon the point of the same Weapon. 'Tis therefore wholesom Advice that is given us, Psal. 34. 12. *What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.*

And the more evil the times are, the stricter guard we should keep upon our lips. *It is an evil time, the prudent will keep silence*, Amos 5. 13. When wicked men watch to make a man an *offender for a word*, as it is, *Isa.* 29. 20, 21. it behoves us to be upon our watch, that we offend not with our lips. 'Tis good to keep what is not safe to trust. *David* was a deaf and dumb man, when in the company of wicked men, *Psal.* 38. 13. he thought silence then to be his prudence. It is bet-

* Cave, ne feriat lingua tua collum tuum. *Scal. Arab. Prov. Cent.* 1.

better they should *call* you fools, than *find* you so.

Inference V.

Employ not that Breath to the dishonour of God, which was first given, and is still graciously maintained by him for your comfort and good.

'Twere better you had never breathed at all, than to spend your Breath in prophane Oaths, or foolish and idle Chat, whereby at once you wound the Name of God, draw guilt upon your own Souls, and help on the ruin of others. That is a startling Text, *Matt.* 12. 36. *But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof in the day of Judgment.*

To give an account, is here, by a *Metalepsis* of the Antecedent for the *Consequent*, put for punishment in Hell-fire, without an intervening change of heart, and sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus.

And there is more evil in this abuse of our Breath, than we can easily discern, especially upon two Accounts, (1.) Because it is a sin most frequently committed, and seldom repented of. The intercourse betwixt the Heart and Tongue is quick, and the sense of the evil as easily and quickly passeth away. (2.) Because the poisonous and malignant influence thereof abides and continues long after: Our words may mischief others, not only a long time after they are spoken, but a long time after the Tongue that spake them is turned to Dust. How many years may a foolish or filthy word, a prophane scoff, an atheistical expression, stick in the minds of them that heard them, after the speaker's death! A word spoken is *physically* transient, and pass'd away with the breath that delivered it: but it's *morally* permanent; for as to its moral efficacy, no more is required, but its objective existence in the minds and thoughts of them that once heard it: And upon that very ground *Suarez* argues for a general Judgment, after Men have past at death their particular Judgment; because (saith he) long after that, abundance of Good and Evil will be done in this World by the dead, in the persons of others that over-live them. For look, as it was said of *Abel*, that being dead he yet speaketh: so it may be said of *Julian*, *Porphyry*, and multitudes of scoffing *Atheists*, that being dead, they yet speak. Oh therefore get a sanctified Heart, to season your Breath, that it may minister Grace to the hearers.

Inference VI.

Let your Breath promote the spiritual life of others, as well as maintain the natural life in your selves.

Tho' the maintaining of your natural life be one end why God gave you breath, yet it is not the only, or principal end of it. Your Breath must be Food to others, as well as Life to you: Prov. 10. 21. *The lips of the righteous feed many.* It will be comfortable to resign that Breath to God at Death, which hath been instrumental to his Glory in this Life. It was no low Encomium Christ gave of the Church, when he said, Cant. 4 11. *Thy lips, Oh my Spouse, drop as the Honeycomb, Honey and Milk are under thy tongue.* Sweet, wholsome, and pleasant words, drop from her lips. They drop (saith Christ) *as the Honeycomb.* Some drops ever and anon fall actually, and others hang at the same time prepared and ready to fall. Such a prepared and habitual disposition should every Christian continually have. Your words may stick upon mens hearts to their Edification and Salvation, when you are in your Graves. Your Tongues may now sow that precious Seed, which may spring up to the praise of God, tho' you may not live to reap the comfort of it in this World. *John* 4. 36, 37. 'Tis a rich expence of your Breath, to bring but one Soul to God, and yet God hath used the Breath of one, as his Instrument, to save, edifie, and comfort the Souls of thousands, *Prov.* 11. 30. *The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he that winneth Souls is wise.* The good Lord make all his People wise in this.

Surely, whether we consider the invaluable worth and preciousness of Souls, the benefits you have had from the breath of others your selves, the innate Property of Grace where-ever it is, to diffuse and communicate it self; how short a time you have to breath, and how comfortable it will be, when you breath your last, to remember how it hath been employed for God: All this should open your lips, to counsel, reprove, and comfort others, as often as opportunity is ministred.

Did Christ spend his *Blood* for our Souls, and shall not we spend our *Breath* for them? Oh! let our Lips dispence Knowledge. If you will not spend your *Breath* for God, how will you spend your *Blood* for him? If you will not *speak* for him, I doubt you will not *die* for him. Away with a sullen reservedness, away with unprofitable Chat, all Subjects of Discourse are not fit for a Christian's Lips. 'Tis a grave Admonition God once gave his People by the Pen of a faithful * Minister. *You may rue* (saith he) *the opportunities you have lost.* * *Mr.* West. *Here lay a poor Wretch with one foot in Hell, would he not have started back, if he had had light to discover his danger? Well, you are now together, something you must say; the same breath would serve for a compassionate Admonition as for a complacent Impertinency, which will redound to neither of your advantages. You part, the Man dies, and in the midst of Hell cries out against you, one word of yours might have saved me; you had me in your reach, you might have told me my danger; you forbare, I hardened; the Lord reward your negligence.*

Inference VII.

If Breath be the tie betwixt Soul and Body, *how are we concerned to improve, and draw forth the precious Breath of Ministers and Christians whilst it is yet in their Nostrils?*

The Breath of many Ministers is *judicially* stopt already, their Breath serves to little other use than to preserve their own lives; it will be stopt e'er long by Death, and then

those excellent Treasures of Gifts and Graces wherewith they are richly furnished, will be gone out of your reach, never to be further useful to your Souls. You should do by them therefore (as one aptly speaks) as Scholars do by some choice Book they have borrowed, and must return in a few days to the Owner: They diligently read it night and day, and carefully transcribe the most useful and excellent Notes they can find in it, that they may make them their own when the Book is called out of their hands.

But alas! we rather divert, than draw forth these Excellencies that are in them. You may yet converse with them, and greatly benefit your selves by these Converses; but (as one speaks) by the stream of your impertinent talk that season is neglected: afterwards you see your lack of your Knowledge, but then the Instrument is removed. How must it gall an awakened Jew, to think what discourse he had with Jesus Christ! *Is it lawful to give Tribute to* Cesar? *Why do not thy Disciples fast?* Oh! had I nothing else to enquire of the Lord Jesus? Would it not have been more pertinent to have asked, What shall I do to be saved? But he is gone, and I dead in my Sins. How many persons have we sent away, that had a word of Wisdom in their hearts, having only learnt from them what a Clock it is, what Weather, or what News; forgetting to ask our own hearts, What is all this to us? and to enquire of them things worthy of their Wisdom and Experience. *Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a Fool, seeing he hath no heart to it?* Prov. 17. 16. The expence of one minutes breath in season, may, if God concur with it, be to you the ground of breathing forth Praises to God to all Eternity.

Inference VIII.

Are Souls and Bodies tack'd together by so frail a thing as a puff of Breath? *How vain and groundless then are all those Pleasures Men take in their carnal Projects and Designs in this World!*

We lay the plot and design of our future earthly Felicity in our own thoughts; we mould and contrive a design for a long and pleasant Life. The Model for raising an Estate is already formed in our thoughts, and we have not patience to defer our pleasure till the accomplishment of it, but presently draw a train of pleasing Consequents from this *Chimera*, and our thoughts can stoop to nothing less than sitting down all the remainder of our days in the very lap of Delight and Pleasure; forgetting that our Breath is all the while in our Nostrils, and may expire the next moment; and if it do, the structure of all our Expectations and Projects comes to nothing in the same moment. *His Breath goeth forth, he returneth to his Dust: and in that very day his thoughts perish,* Psal. 146. 4. The whole frame of his thoughts falls instantly abroad, by drawing out this one pin, his Breath. 'Tis good with all our earthly designs to mingle the serious thoughts of the Dominion of Providence, and our own frailty; *James* 4. 15. *If the Lord will, and we live.*

'Tis become a common Observation, that as soon as Men have accomplished their earthly designs, and begin to hug and bless themselves in their own Acquisitions, a sudden and unexpected period is put to their Lives and Pleasures, as you may see *Luke* 12. 19, 20. *Dan.* 4. 30.

Oh then drive moderately; you will be at the end of all these things sooner than you imagine. We need not victual a Ship to cross the Channel, as they do that are bound to the *Indies*. *What is your Life? It is even a Vapour, which appeareth for a little while, and then vanisheth away*, James 4. 14. In one moment the Projects of many years are overturned for ever.

Inference IX.

Is it but a puff of Breath that holds Man in life? *Then build not too much hope and confidence upon any Man.*

Build not too high upon so feeble a foundation. *Cease ye from Man* (saith the Prophet) *whose Breath is in his Nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?* Isa. 2. 22. There are two things that should deter us from dependence upon any man, *viz.* his *falseness* and his *frailty*. Grace in a great measure may cure the first, but not the last. The best of Men must die, as well as the worst, *Rom.* 8. 10. 'tis a vanity therefore to rely upon any man. It was the saying of a *Philosopher*, when he heard how Merchants lost great Estates at Sea in a moment, *Non amo fœlicitatem è funibus pendentem*; I love not that happiness (saith he) which hangs upon a Rope. But all the happiness of many men hangs upon a far weaker thing than a Rope, even the perishing Breath of a Creature.

Let not Parents raise their hopes too high, or lean too hard upon their Children. Say not of thy Child, as *Lamech* did of *Noah*, *This Son shall comfort us*, Gen. 5. 29. The World is full of the laments and bitter cries of disappointed Parents. Let not the Wife depend too much on her Husband, as if her earthly comforts were secured in him against all danger. God is often provok'd to stop our friends Breath, that thereby he may stop our way to sin, 1 *Tim.* 5. 5. The trust and dependence of a Soul is too weighty to be hang'd upon such a weak and rotten pin as a Creature's breath is.

Inference X.

To conclude; If this frail Breath be all that differenceth the living from the dead, *Then fear not Man whose Breath is in his Nostrils.* There is as little ground for our *fear* of Man, as there is for our *trust* in Man. As Death in a moment can make the best Man *useless*, and put him out of capacity to do us any *good*; so it can in a moment make the worst Man *harmless*, and put him out of a capacity to do us any *injury*. Indeed if the Breath of our Enemies were in their power, and ours at their mercy, there would be just cause to tremble at them; but they are neither masters of their own or ours. *Who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die?* said God to *Jacob*, *Isa.*

Isa. 51. 12. The Breath of the mightiest is no better secured than of the meanest, nor never in more danger to be stopt than when they breath out Threatnings against the Upright.

Julian's breath was soon stopt after he threatned to root out the *Galileans*. Queen *Mary* resigned her breath at the very time when she had filled the Prisons with many of Christ's Sheep designed for the slaughter. Read *Isa.* 17. 12. and see what Mushrooms we are afraid of. The best way to continue your Relations and Friends to your comfort, is to give God, and not them, your dependence; and the best way to secure your selves against the rage of Enemies, is to give God your fear, and not them. And thus much of the Nature of the Soul, and its Tie with the Body.

Rev. VI. 9, 10, 11.

And when he had opened the Fifth Seal, I saw under the Altar the Souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the Testimony which they held.

And they cried with a loud Voice, saying, How long, O Lord! holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our Blood on them that dwell on the Earth?

And white Robes were given unto every one of them, and it was said unto them, That they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also, and their Brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

HAving from the former Text spoken of the *Nature* of the Soul and the Tie betwixt it and the Body; I shall from this Scripture evince the *Immortality of the Soul*, which is a chief part of its Excellency and Glory; and in this Scripture it hath a firm foundation.

This Book of the *Revelation* completes and seals up the whole Sacred Canon, *Rev.* 22. 18. It also comprehends all the great and signal events of Providence, relating either to the Christian Church, or to its Antichristian Enemies, in the several Periods of Time, to the end of the World, *Chap.* 1. 19. All which the Spirit of God discovers to us in the opening of the seven Seals, the sounding of the seven Trumpets, and the pouring out of the seven Vials.

The first *five Seals* express the State of the Church under the bloody, persecuting Heathen Emperours.

Seal 1. The First Seal opened, *ver.* 2, gives the Church a very encouraging and comfortable prospect of the *Victories*, *Successes*, and *Triumphs* of Christ, notwithstanding the Rage, Subtlety, and Power of all its Enemies. He shall ride on conquering, and to conquer, and his Arrows shall be sharp in the hearts of his Enemies, whereby the People shall fall under him: And this chearing Prospect was no more than was needful. For,

Seal 2. The Seal opened, *v.* 3, 4. represents the first bloody Persecution of the Church under *Nero*, whom *Tertullian* calls *Dedicator Damnationis nostræ*: He that first condemned Christians to the Slaughter. And the Persecution under him is set forth by the Type of a *red Horse*, and a great Sword in the hand of him that rode thereon. His cruelty is by *Paul* compared to the *mouth of a Lion*, 2 Tim. 4. 17. *Paul*, *Peter*, *Bartholomew*, *Barnabas*, *Mark*, are all said to die by his cruel hand; and so fierce was his rage against the Christians, that at that time, as *Eusebius* * saith, a Man might see Cities lie full of dead Bodies, the old and young, Men and Women, cast out naked, without any reverence of Persons or Sex, in the open street.

Tertul. Apol. c. 5.

* Adeo ut videret repletas humanis corporibus civitates, jacentes mortuos, simul cum parvulis senes, fœminarumque, absque ulla sexûs reverentia, in publico rejecta Cadavera. *Tacit. l.* 15. *Annal.*

And when the day failed, Christians (saith *Tacitus*) were burnt in the Night instead of Torches, to give them Light in the streets.

Seal 3. The third Seal opened, *ver.* 5. 6. sets forth the Calamities which should befal the Church by Famine; yet not so much a litteral, as a figurative Famine, as a grave and learned Commentator * expounds it, like that mentioned *Amos* 8. 11. 12. which fell out under *Maximinus* and *Trajan*; the former directing the Persecution, especially against Ministers, in which many bright Lamps were extinguished; the latter expresly condemned all Christian Meetings and Assemblies by a Law. The Type by which this Persecution was set forth, is a *black Horse*. A gloomy and dismal day it was indeed to the poor Saints, when they ate the Bread of their Souls as it were by weight; for he that sate on him had a pair of Ballances in his hand. Then did *John* hear this sad Voice, *A measure of Wheat for a penny, and three measures of Barley for a penny.* The quantity was but the ordinary Allowance to keep a Man alive for a day; and a Roman Penny was the ordinary Wages given for a day's Work to a Labourer. The meaning is, that in those days all the spiritual food men should get to keep their Souls alive from day to day, with all their Travel and Labour, should be but sufficient for that end.

* Durham in loc.

Seal 4. The fourth Seal opened, *ver.* 7, 8. represents a much more sad and doleful State of the Church; for under it are found all the former Sufferings, with some new kinds of trouble superadded. Under this Seal Death rides upon the *pale Horse*, and Hell, or the Grave follows him. 'Tis conceived to point at the Persecution under *Diocle-*

sian,

cleſian, when the Church was mowed down as a Meadow.

Seal 5. The fifth Seal is opened in my *Text*, under which the Lord Jeſus repreſents to his Servant *John*, the ſtate and condition of thoſe precious Souls which had been torn and ſeparated from their Bodies by the bloody hands of Tyrants, for his Names ſake, under all the former Perſecutions. The deſign whereof is, to ſupport and encourage all that were to come after in the ſame bloody path. *I ſaw under the Altar*, &c. In which we have an account,

1. Of what *John* ſaw.
2. Of what he heard.

1. We have an account of what he ſaw: *I ſaw the Souls of them that were ſlain for the Word of God, and for the Teſtimony which they held.*

Souls in this place are not put for the *Blood*, or the dead *Carcaſs* of the Saints who were ſlain, as ſome have groundleſly imagined; but are to be underſtood properly and ſtrictly for thoſe ſpiritual and immortal Subſtances which once had a vital Union with their Bodies but were now ſeparated from them by a violent Death; yet ſtill retained a love and inclination to them, even in the ſtate of ſeparation; and are therefore here brought in complaining of the ſhedding of their Blood, and deſtruction of their Bodies.

Ἦδον τὰς ψυχὰς. Anima pro immortali Spiritu hominis capitur, ſicuti *Matt.* 10. 28. hoc ſenſu dicit hîc Johannes ſe vidiſſe animas, *&c. Marlorat. in loc.*

Theſe Souls (even of all that died for Chriſt, from *Abel* to that time) *John* ſaw, that is, *in Spirit*; for theſe immaterial Subſtances are not perceptible by the groſs external ſenſes. He had the privilege and favour of a ſpiritual repreſentation of them, being therein extraordinarily aſſiſted, as *Paul* was when his Soul was rapt into the third Heaven, and heard things unutterable, 2 *Cor.* 12. 2. God gave him a tranſient viſible repreſentation of thoſe holy Souls, and that *under the Altar*; he means not any material *Altar*, as that at *Jeruſalem* was; but as the holy place figured Heaven, ſo the *Altar* figured Jeſus Chriſt, *Heb.* 13. 10. And moſt aptly Chriſt is repreſented to *John* in this figure, and Souls of the Martyrs at the foot or baſis of this Altar; thereby to inform us (1.) That however Men look upon the Death of thoſe perſons, and tho' they kill their Names by Slanders, as well as their perſons by the Sword; yet in God's account they die as Sacrifices, and their Blood is no other than a Drink-offering poured out to God, which he highly prizeth, and graciouſly accepteth. Sutable whereunto *Pauls* expreſſion is, *Philip.* 2. 17. (2.) That the value and acceptation their Death and Blood-ſhed hath with God, is through Chriſt, and upon his account; for it is the Altar which ſanctifieth the Gift, *Matth.* 23. 19. And (3.) it informs us that theſe holy Souls, now in a ſtate of ſeparation from their Bodies, were very near to *Jeſus Chriſt* in Heaven. They lay as it were at his foot.

Animæ corporibus exutæ inviſibiles ſunt oculis corporeis; vidit ergo eas Johannes Spiritu. *Paræus in loc.*

Once more, they are here deſcribed to us by the cauſe of their Sufferings and Death in this World, and that was, *for the Word of God, and for the Teſtimony which they held*; (i. e.) They died in defence of the Truths, or Will of God revealed in his Word, againſt the Corruption, Oppoſitions, and innovations of Men. As one of the *Martyrs* that held up the Bible at the Stake, ſaying, This is it that hath brought me hither. They died not as Malefactors, but as Witneſſes: they gave a threefold Teſtimony to the Truth, a Lip-teſtimony, a Life Teſtimony, and a Blood-Teſtimony: whilſt the Hypocrite gives but one, and many Chriſtians but two. Thus we have an account of what *John* ſaw.

2. Next he tells us what he *heard*; and that was,

(1.) A vehement Cry from thoſe Souls to God.
(2.) A gracious Anſwer from God to them.

(1.) The Cry which they uttered with a loud voice was this, *How long, O Lord, Holy and True, doſt thou not avenge our Blood on them that dwell on the Earth?* A cry like that from the Blood of *Abel*. Yet let it be remembred, (1.) This Cry doth not imply theſe holy Souls to be in a reſtleſs State, or to want true ſatisfaction and repoſe out of the Body; nor yet, (2.) That they carried with them to Heaven any malevolent or revengeful diſpoſition: that which is principally ſignified by this Cry, is their vehement deſire after the abolition of the Kingdom of Satan, and the completion and conſummation of Chriſt's Kingdom in this World: That thoſe his Enemies, which oppoſe his Kingdom by ſlaying his Saints, may be made his footſtool; which is the ſame thing Chriſt waits for in Glory, *Heb.* 10. 13.

(2.) Here we find God's gracious Anſwer to the cry of theſe Souls, in which he ſpeaks ſatisfaction to them two ways:

1. By ſomewhat given them for preſent.
2. By ſomewhat promiſed them hereafter.

1. That which he gives them in hand; *White Robes were given to every one of them.* It is generally agreed, that theſe white Robes given them denote heavenly Glory, the ſame which is promiſed to all ſincere and faithful ones, who preſerve themſelves pure from the corruptions and defilements of the World, *Rev.* 3. 4. And it is as much as if God ſhould have ſaid to them, Altho' the time be not come to ſatisfie your deſires in the final ruine and overthrow of Satan's tyrannical Kingdom in the World, and Chriſt's conſummate Conqueſt of all his Enemies, yet it ſhall be well with you in the mean time; you ſhall *walk with me in white, and enjoy your Glory in Heaven.*

1. And this is not all; but the very things they cry for ſhall be given them alſo after a little ſeaſon; *q. d.* wait but a little while, till the reſt that are to follow in the ſame ſuffering path be got through the Red Sea of *Martyrdom*, as you are, and then you ſhall ſee the foot of Chriſt upon the Necks of all his Enemies, and Juſtice ſhall fully avenge the precious innocent Blood of all the Saints, which in all Ages hath been ſhed for my ſake; from the Blood of *Abel* to the laſt that ſhall ever ſuffer for righteouſneſs ſake in the World. From all which, this Concluſion is moſt fair and obvious.

Doct.

Doct. *That the Souls of Men perish not with their Bodies, but do certainly over-live them, and subsist in a state of separation from them.* Mat. 10. 28. *Fear not them that kill the Body, but are not able to kill the Soul.*

The Bodies of these *Martyrs* of Jesus were destroyed by divers sorts of Torments, but their Souls were out of the reach of all those cruel Engines: they were in safety under the *Altar*, and in Glory, clothed with their white Robes, when the Bodies they lately inhabited on Earth were turned to Ashes, and torn to pieces by wild Beasts.

The Point I am to discourse from this Scripture, is the Immortality of the Soul. For the better understanding whereof, let it be noted that there is a twofold Immortality.

I. Simple, and absolute in its own Nature.
II. Derived, dependent, and from the pleasure of God.

In the former sense, God only hath Immortality, as the Apostle speaks, 1 *Tim.* 6. 16. Our Souls have it as a Gift from him. He that created our Souls out of nothing, can, if he please, reduce them to nothing again; but he hath bestowed Immortality upon them, and produced them in a Nature sutable to that his appointment, fitted for an everlasting Life. So that tho' God by his absolute Power can, yet he never will annihilate them, but they shall and must live for ever in endless Blessedness or Misery; Death must destroy these mortal Bodies, but it cannot destroy our Souls. And the certainty of this Assertion is grounded upon these Reasons, and will be cleared by these following Arguments.

Argument I.

The first Argument for proof of the Soul's Immortality, may be taken from the Simplicity, Spirituality, and Uncompoundedness of its Nature: It is a pure, simple, unmixed Being. † Death is the dissolution of things compounded; where therefore no composition or mixture is found, no Death or Dissolution can follow.

† Interitus est discessus, secretio, & direptus earum partium quæ conjunctione aliquâ tenebantur. *Tull.*

Death is the great Divider, but it is of things that are divisible. The more simple, pure, and refined any material thing is, by so much the more permanent and durable it is found to be. The nearer it approacheth to the Nature of Spirits, the farther it is remov'd from the power of Death: but that which is not material, or mixed at all, is wholly exempt from the stroke and power of Death. It is from the contrariant qualities and jarring humours in mixed Bodies, that they come under the Law and Power of Dissolution. *Matter* and *Mixture* are the doors at which Death enters naturally upon the Creatures.

But the Soul of Man is a simple, spiritual, immaterial, and unmixed Being, not compounded of Matter and Form, as other Creatures are, but void of Matter, and altogether spiritual; as may appear in the vast capacity of its Understanding Faculty, which cannot be straitned by receiving multitudes of Truths into it. It need not empty it self of what it had received before, to make way for more Truth; nor doth it find it self clogg'd or burdened by the greatest multitudes or varieties of Truths; but the more it knows, the more it still desires to know. Its Capacity and Appetite are found to enlarge themselves according to the increase of Knowledge. So that, to speak as the matter is, If the Knowledge of all Arts, Sciences, and Mysteries of Nature could be gathered into the Mind of one Man, yet that Mind would thirst, and even burn with desire after more Knowledge, and find more room for it than it did when it first sipt and relish'd the sweetness of Truth. Knowledge, as Knowledge, never burdens or cloys the Mind; but like fire increases and enlarges, as it finds more Matter to work upon. Now this could never be, if the Soul were a material Being. Take the largest Vessel, and you shall find that the more you pour into it, the less room is still left for more; and when it is full, you cannot pour in one drop more, except you let out what was in it before. But the Soul is no such Vessel, it can retain all it had, and be still receptive of more; so that nothing can fill it and satisfie it, but that which is infinite and perfect.

Intus existens prohibet alienum.

The natural appetite after food is sometimes sharp and eager, but then there is a stint and measure, beyond which it craves not; but the appetite of the Mind is more eager and unlimited; it never saith, till it come to rest in God, it is enough, because the faculty which produceth it, is more active, spiritual, and immaterial. All Matter hath its limits, bounds, and measures, beyond which it cannot be extended. But the Soul is boundless, and its appetitions infinite; it rests not, but in the spiritual and infinite Being, God alone being its adequated Object, and able to satisfie its desires, which plainly proves it to be a spiritual, immaterial, and simple Being. And being so, two things necessarily follow therefrom.

Appetitus finis est infinitas. *There is no end of desiring, till we attain the desired End, which is God.*

1. That it is void of any Principle of Corruption in it self.
2. That it is not liable to any stroke of Death, by any adverse power without it self.

1. It cannot be liable to Death from any Seeds or Principles of Corruption within it self; for where there is no Composition, there is no Dissolution: the spirituality and simplicity of the Soul admits of no Corruption.

2. Nor is it liable to Death, by any adverse power without it self; no Sword can touch it, no Instrument of Death can reach it: 'tis above the reach of all Adversaries, *Mat.* 10. 28. *Fear not them that kill the Body, but cannot kill the Soul.* The bounds and limits of Creature power are here fixed by Jesus Christ, beyond which they cannot go. They can wound, torment, and destroy the Body, when God permits them: but the Soul is out of their reach; a Sword can no more hurt or wound it, than it can wound or hurt the Light; and consequently it is, and must needs be of an immortal Nature.

Objecti

Object. But there ſeems to be a decay upon our Souls in our old Age, and Decays argue and imply Corruption, and are ſo many ſteps and tendencies towards the Death and Diſſolution thereof. The experience of the whole World ſhews us how the Apprehenſions, Judgments, Wit and Memory of old Men fail, even to that degree, that they become Children again, in reſpect of the abilities of their Minds: their Souls only ſerving as it were to ſalt their Bodies, and keep them from putrefaction for a few days longer.

Sol. 'Tis a great miſtake, there is not the leaſt decay upon the Soul, no time makes any change upon the Eſſence of the Soul: all the alteration that is made is upon the Organs and Inſtruments of the Body, which decay in time, and become inept and unſerviceable to the Soul.

The Soul, like an expert and skilful *Muſician*, is as able as ever it was, but the Body, its *Inſtrument*, is out of Tune: and the ableſt Artiſt can make no pleaſing Melody upon an Inſtrument whoſe ſtrings are broken, or ſo relaxed that they cannot be ſcrued up to their due height.

Let *Hippocrates* the Prince of *Phyſicians* decide this matter for us. † The Soul (ſaith he) cannot be changed or altered as to its eſſence by the acceſs of Meat or Drink, or any other thing whatſoever; but all the alterations that are made, muſt be referred either to the ſpirits with which it mixeth it ſelf, or to the Veſſels and Organs through which it ſtreameth. So that this proves not its corruptibility, and being neither corruptible in it ſelf, nor vulnerable by any Creature without it ſelf; nor ſeeing Man cannot, and God will not deſtroy it, the concluſion is ſtrongly inferred, *that therefore it is immortal.*

† Anima noſtra quoad eſſentiam mutari non poteſt, aut alterari, ſive cibi, ſive potus, ſive cujuſcunque rei alterius acceſſu: referenda eſt enim omnium alterationum cauſa, aut ad vaſa, ſive organa quæ permeat. *Hip. lib. 1. de diæta.*

Argu. II. The Immortality of the Souls of Men may be concluded from the promiſes of everlaſting Bleſſedneſs, and the threatnings of everlaſting Miſeries, reſpectively made in the Scriptures of Truth, to the godly and ungodly, after this life; which Promiſes and Threatnings had been altogether vain and deluſory, if our Souls periſh with our Bodies.

1. God has made many everlaſting Promiſes of Bleſſedneſs, yea he hath eſtabliſhed an everlaſting Covenant betwixt himſelf and the Souls of the Righteous, promiſing to be their God for ever, and to beſtow endleſs Bleſſedneſs upon them in the World to come. Such a Promiſe is that, *John* 8. 28. *I give unto them eternal life, and they ſhall never periſh.* And *Joh.* 4. 14. *Whoſoever drinketh of the Water that I ſhall give him, ſhall never thirſt; but the Water that I ſhall give him, ſhall be in him a Well of Water, ſpringing up into everlaſting life.* And again, *John* 11. 26. *Whoſoever liveth and believeth in me, ſhall never die.* And once more, Rom. 2. 7. *To them who by patient continuance in well doing, ſeek for Glory and Honour, and Immortality, eternal Life;* with multitudes more of like nature.

Now if theſe be no vain and deluſory Promiſes, (as to be ſure they are not, being the Words of the true and faithful God) then thoſe Souls to whom they are made, muſt live for ever: for if the ſubject of the Promiſes fail, conſequently the performance of the Promiſes muſt fail too. For how ſhall they be made good, when thoſe to whom they are made, are periſhed?

Let it not be objected here, That the Bodies of Believers are concerned in the Peomiſes, as well as their Souls, and yet their Bodies periſh notwithſtanding.

For we ſay, tho' their Bodies die, yet they ſhall live again, and enjoy the fruit of the Promiſes in eternal Glory: And whilſt their Bodies lie in the grave, their Souls are with God, enjoying the covenanted Bleſſedneſs in Heaven, *Rom.* 8. 10, 11. and ſo the Covenant-bond is not looſed betwixt them and God, by Death, which it muſt needs be, in caſe the Soul periſh when the Body doth. And upon this Hypotheſis that Argument of Chriſt is built, *Matt.* 22. 32. proving the Reſurrection from the Covenant God made with *Abraham, Iſaac,* and *Jacob*; *I am the God of* Abraham, *and the God of* Iſaac, *and the God of* Jacob: *God is not the God of the Dead, but of the Living, q. d.* If *Abraham, Iſaac,* and *Jacob,* be periſhed in Soul as well as in Body, how then is God their God; what is become of the Promiſe and Covenant relation? for if one *Correlate* fail, the *Relation* neceſſary fails with it. If God be their God, then certainly they are in being; for God is not the God of the Dead, *i. e.* of thoſe that are utterly periſhed. Therefore it muſt needs be, that tho' their Bodies be naturally dead, yet their Souls ſtill live; and their Bodies muſt live again at the Reſurrection by vertue of the ſame Promiſe.

On the contrary, many threatnings of eternal Miſery after this life are found in the Scriptures of Truth againſt ungodly and wicked Perſons. Such is that in 2 *Theſ.* 1. 7. 8, 9. *The Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from Heaven in flaming Fire, to render Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting Deſtruction, from the preſence of the Lord, and the Glory of his Power.* And ſpeaking of the Torments of the Damned, *Chriſt* thus expreſſeth the miſery of ſuch wretched Souls in Hell, *Mark* 9. 44. *Where their Worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.* But how ſhall the wicked be puniſhed with everlaſting Deſtruction, if their Souls have not an everlaſting Duration? Or how can it be ſaid, *That their Worm* (*viz.* the remorſe and anguiſh of their Conſciences) *dieth not,* if their Souls die? Puniſhment can endure no longer than its ſubject endureth. If the being of the Soul ceaſe, its pains and puniſhments muſt have an end.

You ſee then, there are everlaſting Promiſes and Threatnings to be fulfilled, both upon the Godly and Ungodly, *He that believeth on the Son, hath everlaſting life; and he that believeth not the Son, ſhall not ſee Life, but the wrath of God abideth on him,* John 3. 36. The Believer ſhall never ſee Spiritual death, *viz.* the ſeparation of his Soul from God; and the Unbeliever ſhall never ſee Life, *viz.* the bleſſed fruition of God; but the Wrath of God ſhall abide on him. If Wrath muſt abide on him, he muſt abide alſo as the wretched ſubject thereof, which is another Argument of the Immortality of Souls.

Argu.

Argument III. The Immortality of the Soul is a Truth asserted and attested by the universal consent of all Nations and Ages of the World.

* Multum dare solemus præsumptioni omnium hominum; cum de Animæ Æternitate disserimus, non leve momentum apud nos habet consensus hominum aut timentium inferos, aut colentium. *Seneca Ep.* 7.

* *We give much* (saith *Seneca*) *to the Presumption of all Men*, and that justly; for it would be hard to think that an Error should obtain the general consent of Mankind, or that God would suffer all the World, in all Ages of it, to bow down under an universal Deception.

This Doctrine sticks close to the Nature of Man; it springs up easily, and without force from his Conscience. It hath been allowed as an unquestionable thing, not only among Christians, who have the Oracles of God to teach and confirm this Doctrine, but among *Heathens* also, who had no other Light but that of Nature, to guide them into the knowledge and belief of it. Learned *Zanchius* cites out of *Cicero* an excellent passage to this purpose. † *In every thing* (saith he) *the consent of all Nations is to be accounted the Law of Nature*; and therefore with all good Men it should be instead of a thousand Demonstrations: and to resist it, (as he there adds) what is it, but to resist the Voice of God? and how much more, when with this consent the Word of God doth also consent? As for the consent of Nations in this point, the learned Author last mentioned hath industriously gathered many great and famous Testimonies from the antient *Chaldeans*, *Grecians*, *Pythagoreans*, *Stoicks*, *Platonists*, &c. which evidently shew they made no doubt of the Immortality of their Souls. How plain is that of *Phocylides*? Ψυχὴ ϑ ἀϑάνατος, καὶ ἀγήρως ζωὴ διὰ παντός. Speaking of the Soul, in opposition to the Body, which must be resolved into dust, he saith, *But for the Soul, that is Immortal, and never grows old, but lives for ever.* And *Trismegistus*, the famous and celebrated Philosopher, gives this account of Man. * That he consists of two parts, being mortal in respect of his Body, but immortal in respect of his Soul, which is his best and principal part, *Plato* not only asserts the Immortality of the Souls of Men, but disputes for it, and among other Arguments urges this. † *That if it were not so, wicked Men would certainly have the advantage of righteous and good Men, who after they have committed all manner of evils, should suffer none.* But what speak I of *Philosophers*? the most barbarous Nations in the World constantly believe it ||. The *Turks* acknowledge it in their *Alcboran*; and tho' they grosly mistake the Nature of Heaven, in fansying it to be a Paradise of sensual Pleasures, as well as the way thither, by their Impostor *Mahomet*; yet 'tis plain they believe the Soul's Immortality, and that it lives in pain or pleasure after this life.

† In omni re consensio omnium gentium Lex Naturæ putanda est; eoque instar mille demonstrationum talis consensio apud bonos esse debet. *Zanch. de Immort. Amarum, p.* 644.

* Ἄνθρωπος δυσλύτης, διὰ μὲν σῶμα θνητὸς, ἀϑάνατος δὲ διὰ ψυχήν, ἣ ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος.

† εἰ μὴ γὰρ, &c. Si enim Mors dissolutio esset utriusque (corporis sc. & animæ) lucrum foret malis cum moriuntur. *Plat. in Ep.* Quid de Turcis, Tartaris, Moschis, Indis, Persis, aliisque omnibus nunc temporis barbaris nationibus dicam? Nemo tam barbarus aut impius est quin sentiat post mortem superesse loca in quibus animæ aut pro malefactis puniantur, aut coronentur, deniciisq; perfruantur pro benefactis. *Zanch. ubi supra.*

The very salvage and *illiterate Indians* are so fully persuaded of the Soul's Immortality that Wives cast themselves chearfully into the Flames to attend the Souls of their Husbands; and Subjects, to attend the Souls of their Kings into the other World.

Two things are objected against this Argument.

1. That some particular Persons have denied this Doctrine, as *Epicurus*, *&c.* and by Argument maintained the contrary.

To which I answer, That tho' they have done so, yet (1). This no way shakes the Argument from the consent of Nations, because some few persons have denied it: we truly say the Earth is Spherical, tho' there be many Hills and Risings in it. If *Democritus* put out his own eyes, must we therefore say all the World is blind?

(2). It is worth thinking on, whether they that have questioned the Immortality of the Soul, have not rather made it the matter of their option and desire, than of their Faith and Persuasion. We distinguish *Atheists* into three Classes, such as are so in *Practice*, in *Desire*, or in *Judgment*; but of the former sorts there may be found multitudes, to one that is so in his settled judgment. If you think it strange that any Man should wish his Soul to be mortal, *Hierocles* gives us the true reason of it. * *A wicked Man* (saith he) *is afraid of his Judge, and therefore wishes his Soul and Body may perish together by Death, rather than it should come to Gods Tribunal.*

* Ὁ κακὸς ἀθάνατον εἶναι πῶς ἂν αὐτῷ ψυχήν τε καὶ σῶμα μὴ ἐπιθυμήσειεν ἢ φθαρτὸν ἐκεῖ δικάσην. Hier.

Object. 2. Nor can the strength of the Argument be eluded by saying, *all this may be but an universal Tradition*, one Nation receiving it from another.

Sol. For as this is neither true in it self, nor possible to be made good, so if it were, it would not invalidate the Argument: for if it were not a Truth agreeable to the light of Nature, and so easily received by all Men upon the proposal of it, it were impossible that all Nations in the World should embrace it so readily, and hold it so tenaciously as they do.

Argument IV. The Immortality of the Soul may be evinced from the everlasting Habits which are subjected and inherent in it. If these Habits abide for ever, certainly so must the Souls in which they are planted.

The Souls of good Men are the good Ground, in which the Seed of Grace is sown by the Spirit, *Matth.* 13. 23. (*i. e.*) the Subjects in which gracious properties and affections do inhere and dwell, (which is the formal notion of a Substance) and these implanted Graces are everlasting things. So, *John* 4. 14. *It shall be in him a Well of Water, springing up into everlasting Life*, (*i. e.*) the Graces of the Spirit shall be in Believers permanent Habits, fixed Principles, which shall never decay. And therefore that Seed of Grace which is cast into their Souls at their Regeneration, is in 1 *Pet.* 1. 23. called *incorruptible Seed, which liveth and abideth for ever*: and it is incorruptible, not only considered abstractly, in its own simple nature, but concretely, as it is in the sanctified Soul, its subject: for it is said, 1 *John* 3. 9. *The Seed of God remaineth in him.* It abideth for ever in the Soul. If then these two thing be clear to us, *viz.*

1. That the Habits of Grace be everlasting;

2. That they are inseparable from sanctified Souls;

It must needs follow that the Soul, their Subject, is so too, an everlasting and immortal Soul. And how plainly do both these Propositions lie before us in the Scriptures? As for the immortal and interminable nature of saving Grace, it is plain to him that considers, not only what the fore-cited Scriptures speak about it, calling it *incorruptible Seed, a Well of Water springing up into everlasting life*; but add to these what is said of these divine Qualities, in 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. where they are called the *Divine nature*; and *Ephes.* 4. 18. *The Life of God*, noting the perpetuity of these Principles in Believers, as well as their resemblance of God in Holiness, who are endowed with them.

I know it is a great question among Divines, *An gratia in renatis sit naturâ & essentiâ sua interminabilis?* Whether these Principles of Grace in the Regenerate be everlasting and interminable in their own nature and essence? For my own part, I think that God only is naturally, essentially, and absolutely interminable and immortal. But these gracious Habits, planted by him in the Soul, are so by virtue of God's Appointment, Promise and Covenant. And sure it is that by reason hereof they are interminate, which is enough for my purpose if they be not essentially interminable. Tho' Grace be but a Creature, and therefore hath a *posse morti*, yet it is a Creature begotten by the Word and Spirit of God, which live and abide for ever, and a Creature within the Promise and Covenant of God by reason whereof it can never actually die.

And then as for the inseparableness of these Graces from the Souls in whom they are planted, how clear is this from *John* 2. 27. where sanctifying Grace is compared to an Unction, and this Unction is said to abide in them? And 1 *John* 3. 9. 'tis called the Seed of God, which remaineth in the Soul. All our natural and moral Excellencies and Endowments go away when we die; *Job* 4. 21. *Doth not their Excellency that is in them go away?* Men may outlive their acquired Gifts, but not their supernatural Graces. These stick by the Soul, as *Ruth* to *Naomi*, and where it goes they go too: so that when the Soul is dislodged by Death, all its graces ascend up with it into Glory; it carries away all its Faith, Love, Delight in God, all its comfortable experiences, and fruits of Communion with God, along with it to Heaven. For Death is so far from divesting the Soul of its Graces, that it perfects in a moment all that was defective in them; 1 *Cor.* 13. 10. *When that which is perfect shall come, then that which is in part shall be done away*, as the Twilight is done away when the Sun is up, and at its Zenith. So then, Grace never dieth, and this never-dying Grace is inseparable from its Subject; by which it is plain to him that considers, that as Graces, so Souls abide for ever.

Object. But this only proves the Immortality of regenerate Souls.

Sol. It doth so. But then consider, as there be gracious habits in the Regenerate that never die, so there are vicious habits in the Unregenerate, that can never be seperated from them in the World to come. Hence *John* 8. 21. they are said to *die in their sins*; and *Job* 20. 11. *Their iniquities lie down with them in the dust*; and *Ezek.* 24. 13. *They shall never be purged.* Remarkable is that place, *Rev.* 22. 11. *Let him that is filthy, be filthy still.* And if guilt sticks so fast, and sin be so deeply engraven in impenitent Souls, they also must remain for ever, to bear the Punishment of them.

Argument V. The Immortality of the Soul of Man may be evinced from the Dignity of Man above all other Creatures, (Angels only excepted) and his Dominion over them all.

In this the Scriptures are clear, that Man is the Master piece of all God's other Works; *Psal.* 8, 5. 6. *For thou hast made him a little lower than the Angels, and hast crowned him with Glory and Honour. Thou hast made him to have Dominion over the Works of thy hand, thou hast put all things under his feet.* Other Creatures were made for his service, and he is crown'd King over them all. One Man is of more worth than all the inferiour Creatures.

But wherein is his Dignity and Excellency above all other Creatures, if not in respect of the Capacity and Immortality of his Soul? Sure it can be found no where else; for as to the Body, many of the Creatures excel Man in the perfections of Sense, greatness of Strength, agility of Members, *&c. Nos aper auditu præcellit, aranea tactu, vultur odoratu, linx visu, simia gustu:* And for Beauty, *Solomon in all his Glory was not arrayed like one of the Lillies of the field.* The Beasts and Fowls enjoy more pleasure, and live divested of those cares and cumbers which perplex and wear out the Lives of Men. It cannot be in respect of bodily Perfections or Pleasures that Man excels other Creatures.

If you say, He excels them all in respect of that noble Endowment of Reason, which is peculiar to Man, and his singular Excellency above them all.

'Tis true, this is his glory: But if you deprive the reasonable Soul of Immortality, you despoil it of all, both of its glory and comfort, and put the reasonable into a worse condition than the unreasonable and brutish Creatures. For if the Soul may die with the Body, and Man perish as the Beast, happier is the life of the Beast, which is perplexed with no cares nor fears about futurities; our Reason serves to little other purpose but to be an Engine of Torture, a meer Rack to our Souls.

Certainly the Privilege of Man doth not consist in that, as abstracted from Immortality. But in this it properly consists, that he enjoys not only a reasonable, but also rejoiceth in an immortal Soul, which shall overlive the World, and subsist separate from the Body, and abide for ever, when all other Souls being but material Form, perish with that Matter on which they depend. This is the proper Dignity of Man above the Beast that perisheth; and to deprive him of Immortality, and leave him his Reason, is but to leave him a more miserable and wretched Creature than any that God hath put under his feet. For Man is a prospecting Creature, and raiseth up to himself vast hopes and fears from the World to come: by these he is restrained from the sensual Pleasures which other Creatures freely enjoy, and exercised with ten thousand Cares which they are unacquainted with; and to fail at last of all his hopes and expectations of Happiness in the World to come, is to fall many degrees lower than the lowest Creature shall fall; even so much lower as his expectations and hopes had lifted him higher.

Argument VI. The Souls of Men must be immortal,

mortal, or else the desires of Immortality are planted in their Souls in vain.

That there are desires of Immortality found in the Hearts of all Men, is a Truth too evident to be denied or doubted. Man cannot bound and terminate his desires within the narrow limits of this World, and the time that measures it. Nothing that can be measured by time is commensurate to the desires of Man's Soul. No *Motto* better sutes it than this, *Non est mortale quod opto*; I seek for that which will not die, *Rom.* 2. *v.* 7. And his great relief against Death lies in this, *Non omnis moriar*; That he shall not totally perish. Yea, we find in all Men, even in those that seem to be most drowned and lost in the loves and delights of this present World, a natural desire to continue their Names and Memories to Posterity after Death. Hence it is said, *Psal.* 49. 11. *Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling-places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names.*

I beseech Men for God's sake, that if at any time there arise in them a desire, or a wish that others should speak well of them rather than evil after their death, then at that time they would seriously consider whether those motions are not from some Spirit, to continue a Spirit after it leaves its earthy Habitation, rather than from an earthly Spirit, a Vapour, which cannot act, or imagine, or desire, or fear things beyond its continuance. Hale de Anim p 73.

And hence is the desire of Children, which is, as one saith, *nodosa Æternitas*, a knotty Eternity; when our thread is spun out and cut off, their Thread is knit to it; and so we dream of a continued succession in our Name and Family.

Absalom had no Children to continue his memory; to supply which defect, he reared up a Pillar, 2 *Sam.* 18. 18. Now it cannot be imagined that God should plant the desire of Immortality in those Souls that are incapable of it; nor yet can we give a rational account how these apprehensions of Immortality should come into the Souls of Men, except they themselves be of an Immortal Nature. For, either these Notions and Apprehensions of Immortality are impress'd upon our Souls by God, or do naturally spring out of the Souls of Men: If God impress them, those impressions are made in vain, if there be no such thing as Immortality to be enjoyed; and if they spring and rise naturally out of our Souls, that is a sufficient evidence of their Immortality. For we can no more conceive and form to our selves Ideas and Notions of Immortality, if our Souls be mortal, than the Brutes, which are void of Reason, can form to themselves Notions and Conceptions of Rationality. So then the very Apprehensions and Desires that are found in Mens Hearts of Immortality, do plainly speak them to be of an Immortal Nature.

It forms conceptions of things spiritual and abstract from matter, and discerns Objects which have no dimensions, figure, colour, or affection of matter. Si conceptus de immortalitate fons sit ipsamet anima, est ipsa immortalis; quoniam quod momentaneum est, ideam naturæ perennis fabricare non potest, quemadmodum anima rationis expers, conceptum rationalitatis formare nequit. *Cherne de morte*, p. 198.

Argument VII. Moreover, the account given us in Scripture of the return of several Souls into their own Bodies again, after death, and real separation from them, shews us that the Soul subsists and lives in a separate state after death, and perisheth not by the stroke of death: for if it were annihilated or destroyed by death, the same Soul could never be restored again to the same Body. A dead Body may indeed be acted by an assisting Form, which may move and carry it from place to place: So the Devil hath acted the dead Bodies of many; but they cannot be said to live again by their own Souls, after a real separation by death, unless those Souls overlived the Bodies they forsook at death, and had their abode in another place and state. You have divers unquestionable Examples of the Souls return into the Body recorded in Scripture. As that of the *Shunamite's* Son, 2 *King.* 4. 18, 19, 20, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37. That of the Ruler's Daughter, *Mat.* 9, 18, 23, 24, 25. That of the Widow's Son, *Luke* 7. 12, 13, 14, 15. And that of *Lazarus*, *John* 11. 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45. These are no other * but the very same Souls, their own Souls, which returned into them again; which, as *Chrysostom* well observes, is a great proof of their Immortality, against them that think the Soul is annihilated after the death of the Body.

* Non aliam, sed ipsam priorem animam corpori mortuo restitutam esse, contra eos qui putaverunt & hodie putant animam post mortem corporis nihil esse.

'Tis true, the Scripture gives us no account of any sense or apprehension they retained after their re-union, of the place or state they were in during their separation. There seemed to be a perfect ἀμνησία, forgetfulness of all that they saw or felt in the state of separation. And indeed it was necessary it should be so, that our Faith might be built rather upon the sure Promises of God, than such Reports and Narratives of them that came to us from the dead, *Luke* 16. 31. And if we believe not the Word, neither would we believe *if one came from the dead.*

Argument VIII. Moreover, eighthly, The supposition of the Soul's perishing with the Body, is subversive of the Christian Religion in the principal Doctrines and Duties thereof: Take away the Immortality of the Soul, and all Religion falls to the ground. I will instance in,

1. The Doctrines } of Religion.
2. The Duties }

First, It overthrows the main Principles and Doctrines of Christian Religion, upon which both our Faith and Comfort is founded; and consequently, it undoes and ruins us, as to all solid hope and true joy. The Doctrines or Principles it overthrows, are, among many others, such as follow.

1. It nullifies and makes void the great design and end of God's eternal Election. The Scriptures tell us, That from all Eternity God hath chosen a certain number in Christ Jesus, to Eternal Life, and to the means by which they shall attain it, out of meer good Pleasure, and for the Praise of his Grace. This was (1). an eternal Act of God, *Ephes.* 1. 4. long before we had our Being, *Rom.* 9. 11. (2). This choice of God, or his purpose to save some, is immutable, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. *Jam.* 1. 17. (3). This choice he made in Christ, *Eph.* 1. 4. Not that Christ is the cause of God's chusing us: for we were not elected because we were, but that we might be in Christ. Christ was ordain'd to be the *Medium* of the execution of this Decree. And all the Mercies which were purposed and ordained for us, were to be purchased by the Blood of Christ. He was not the *Cause* of the Decree, but the Purchaser of the Mercies decreed for us. (4). This choice was of a certain number of Persons, who are all known to God, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. and all given to

Christ in the Covenant of Redemption, *John* 17. 2, 6. So that no Elect person can be a Reprobate, no Reprobate an Elect person. (5). This number was chosen to Salvation, 1 *Thes.* 5. 9. No less did God design for them than glory and happiness, and that for ever. (6). The same persons that are appointed to Salvation as the End, are also appointed to Sanctification as the Way and Means by which they shall attain that End, 1 *Pet.* 1. 1, 2. 2 *Thes.* 2. 13, 14. (7). The impulsive cause of this choice was the meer good pleasure of his Will, 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. *Rom.* 9. 15. 16. *Ephes.* 1. 9. (8). The end of all this is, the praise of his glorious Grace, *Eph.* 1. 5, 6. to make a glorious Manifestation of the Riches of his Grace for ever. This is the account the Scripture gives us of God's eternal Choice.

But if our Souls be mortal, and perish with our Bodies, all this is a mistake, and we are imposed upon, and our Understandings abused by this Doctrine: For to what purpose are all these Decrees and Contrivances of God from everlasting, if our Souls perish with our Bodies? Certainly, if it be so, he loses all the Thoughts and Counsels of his Heart about us; and that Counsel of his Will, which is so much celebrated in the Scriptures, and admired by his People, comes to nought. For this is evident to every Man's consideration, That if the Soul (which is the Object about which all those Counsels and Thoughts of God were employed and laid out) fail in its Being, all those Thoughts and Counsels that have been employ'd about it, and spent on it, must necessarily fail, and come to nothing with it. The Thoughts of his Heart cannot stand fast, as it is said *Psal.* 33. 11. if the Soul slide, about which they are conversant. In that day the elect Soul perisheth, the eternal Consultations and Purposes of God's heart perish with it. *Keckerman* tells us, that * *Albertus Magnus*, with abundance of Art, and the study of thirty years, made a vocal Statue in the Form of a Man. It was a rare contrivance, and much admired; the cunning Artist had so fram'd it, that by Wheels and other *Machines* plac'd within it, it could pronounce words articulately. *Aquinas* being surprized to hear the Statue speak, was affrighted at it, and brake it all to pieces; upon which *Albertus* told him he had at one blow destroy'd the work of thirty years. Such a blow would the death of the Soul give to the Counsels and Thoughts, not of Man, but of God, not of thirty years, but from everlasting.

* *Albertus Mag.* statuam hominis construxit, quæ cum libramentis quibusdam, rotis, atq; aliis machinis intra latentibus peritissimè compositis, linguam quadam ratione & disciplina moventibus, articulata verba pronunciaret.

If the Souls of Men perish at death, either God never did appoint any Souls to Salvation, as the Scriptures testifie he did, 1 *Thess.* 5. 9. or else the foundation of God stands not sure, as his Word tells us it doth, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. So then this supposition overturns the eternal Decrees and Counsels of God, which is the first thing.

2. It overthrows the Covenant of Redemption betwixt the Father and the Son, before this World was made. There was a federal Transaction betwixt the Father and the Son from eternity about our Salvation, 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. *Zech.* 6. 13. In that Covenant Christ engaged to redeem the Elect by his Blood; and the Father promised him a reward of those his sufferings, *Isa.* 53. 12. Accordingly he hath poured out his Soul to death for them, finished the work, *Joh.* 17. 4. and is now in Heaven, expecting the full reward and fruits of his sufferings, which consist not in his own personal Glory, which he there enjoys, but in the completeness and fulness of his Mystical Body, *John* 17. 24.

But certainly, if our Souls perish with our Bodies, Christ hath a very bad bargain of it: nor can that promise be ever made good to him; *Isa.* 53. 12. *He shall see of the travel of his Soul, and be satisfied.* He hath done his Work, but where is his Reward? See how this supposition strikes at the Justice of God, and wounds his faithfulness in his Covenant with his Son. He hath as much Comfort and Reward from the Travail of his Soul, as a Mother that is delivered after many sharp pangs of a Child that dies almost as soon as born.

3 It overthrows the Doctrines of *Christ's Incarnation, Death, Resurrection, Ascension,* and *Intercession* in Heaven for us. And these are the main Pillars both of our Faith and Comfort: Take away these, and take away our Lives too, for these are the springs of all Joy and Comfort to the People of God, *Rom.* 8. 34.

His *Incarnation* was necessary to capacitate him for his Mediatorial Work: it was not only a part of it, but such a part, without which he could discharge no other part of it. This was the wonder of Men and Angels, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. A God incarnate is the World's wonder; No condescension like this, *Philip.* 2. 6, 7.

The *Death* of Christ hath the nature and respect of a Ransom, or equivalent Price laid down to the Justice of God for our Redemption, *Mat.* 20. 28. *Acts* 20. 28. It brought our Souls from under the Curse, and purchased for them everlasting Blessedness, *Galat.* 4. 4, 5.

The *Resurrection* of Christ from the dead hath the nature both of a Testimony of his finishing the Work of our Redemption, and the Father's full satisfaction therein, *John* 6. 10. and of a Principle of our Resurrection to eternal Life, 1 *Cor.* 15. 20.

The *Ascension* of Christ into Heaven was in the capacity and relation of a Fore runner, *Heb.* 6. 20. It was to prepare places for the Redeemed, who were to come after him to glory in their several generations, *John* 14. 2, 3.

The *Intercession* of Christ in Heaven is for the security of our purchased Inheritance to us, and to prevent any new breaches which might be made by our sins, whereby it might be forfeited, and we divested of it again, 1 *Joh.* 2. 1, 2.

All these jointly make up the foundation of our Faith, and hope of Glory: But if our Souls perish, or be annihilated at death, our Faith, Hope, and Comforts, are all Delusions, vain Dreams, which do but amuse our fond Imaginations. For,

(1). It was not worth so great a stoop and abasement of the blessed God, as he submitted to in his Incarnation, when he appeared in flesh, yea, in the likeness of sinful flesh, *Rom.* 8. 3. and made himself of no reputation, *Philip.* 2. 7. An act that is, and ever will be admired by Men and Angels: I say, it was not worth so great a Miracle as this, to procure for us the vanishing comfort of a few years, and that short-liv'd comfort no other than a deluding Dream, or mocking Phantasm: for seeing it consists in hope and expectation from the World to come, as the Scriptures every where speak, 1 *Thes.* 5. 8. and 2 *Cor.* 3. 12.

3. 12. *Rom.* 5. 3, 4, 5. if there be no ſuch enjoyments for us there (as moſt certainly there are not, if our Souls periſh) it is but a vanity, a thing of nought, that was the errand upon which the Son of God came from the Father's Boſom, to procure for us.

(2). And for what, think you, was the Blood of God upon the Croſs? What was ſo vaſt and inconceivable a Treaſure expended to purchaſe? What! the flattering and vain hopes of a few years, of which we may ſay as it was ſaid of the *Roman* Conſulſhip, *unius anni volaticum gaudium*; the fugitive joy of a year: yea, not only ſhort-liv'd and vain hopes in themſelves, but ſuch for the ſake whereof we abridge our ſelves of the pleaſures and deſires of the fleſh, 1 *John* 3. 3. and ſubmit our ſelves to the greateſt ſufferings in the World, *Rom.* 8. 18. For the Hope of *Iſrael* am I bound with this Chain, *&c. Acts* 28. 20. Was this the Purchaſe of his Blood? Was this it for which he ſweat, and groan'd, and bled, and di'd? Was that precious Blood no more worth than ſuch a trifle as this?

(3). To what purpoſe did Chriſt riſe again from the dead? was it not to be the *firſt-fruits of them that ſleep*? Did he not riſe as the common Head of Believers, to give us aſſurance we ſhall not periſh and be utterly loſt in the grave? *Col.* 1. 18. But if our Souls periſh at death, there can be no Reſurrection; and if none, then Chriſt died and roſe in vain, *we are yet in our ſins*, and all thoſe abſurdities are unavoidable, with which the Apoſtle loads this ſuppoſition, 1 *Cor.* 15. 13. *&c.*

(4). And to as little purpoſe was his triumphant Aſcenſion into Heaven, if we can have no benefit by it. The profeſſed end of his Aſcenſion was *to prepare a place for us*, *John* 14. 2. But to what purpoſe are thoſe Manſions in the Heavens prepared, if the Inhabitants for whom they are prepared be utterly loſt? And why is he called the *Fore-runner*, if there be none to follow him? as ſurely they are not, if our *Souls* periſh with our *Bodies*. Thoſe heavenly Manſions, that City prepared by God, muſt ſtand void for ever if this be ſo.

(5). To conclude; In vain is the Interceſſion of Chriſt in Heaven for us, if this be ſo. They that ſhall never come thither, have no buſineſs there to be tranſacted by their Advocate for them. So that the whole *Doctrine of Redemption by Chriſt* is utterly ſubverted by this one ſuppoſition.

4. As it ſubverts the *Doctrine* of *Redemption by Chriſt*, and all the Hopes and Comforts we build there, ſo it utterly deſtroys all the Works of the Spirit upon the hearts of Believers, and makes them vaniſh into nothing.

There are divers Acts and Offices of the Spirit of God about and upon our Souls, I will only ſingle out *three*, *viz.* his *ſanctifying*, *ſealing*, and *comforting Work*; all things of great weight with Believers.

(1). His *ſanctifying Work*, whereby he alters the frames and tempers of our Souls, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. *Old things are paſſed away, all things are become new.*

The declared and direct end of this Work of the Spirit upon our Souls, is to attemper and diſpoſe them for Heaven, *Col.* 1. 12. For ſeeing *nothing that is unclean can enter into the holy place*, Rev. 21. 27. *and without Holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord*, Heb. 12. 14. it is neceſſary that all thoſe that have this hope in them, ſhould expect to be partakers of their hopes in the way of Purification, 1 *John* 3. 3. And this is the ground upon which the People of God do mortifie their Luſts, and take ſo much pains with their own Hearts, *Mat.* 18. 8. counting it better (as their Lord tells them) *to enter into Life halt or maimed, than having two eyes or hands to be caſt into Hell.* But to what purpoſe is all this ſelf-denial, all theſe heart-ſearchings, heart-humblings, cries and tears upon the account of Sin, and for an Heart ſuited to the Will of God, if there be no ſuch Life to be enjoyed *with God, after this Animal Life is finiſhed*?

Object. If you ſay there is a preſent advantage reſulting to us in this World, from our abſtinence and ſelf-denial; we have the truer and longer enjoyment of our Comforts on Earth by it: Debauchery and Licentiouſneſs do not only flat the Appetite, and debaſe and alloy the Comforts of this World, but cut ſhort our Lives by the exorbitances and abuſes of them.

Sol. Tho' there be a Truth in this worth our noting, yet (1.) Morality could have done all this without *Sanctification*; there was no need for the pouring out of the Spirit, for ſo low an uſe and purpoſe as this. (2.) And therefore as the *Wiſdom* of God would be cenſured and impeached, in ſending his Spirit for an end which could as well be attained without it; ſo the *Veracity* of God muſt needs be affronted by it, who, as you heard before, hath declared our *Salvation* to be the end of our *Sanctification.*

(2). His *Sealing*, *Witneſſing*, and *Aſſuring* Work. We have a full account in the Scriptures, of theſe Offices and Works of the Spirit, and ſome ſpiritual ſenſe and feeling of them upon our own hearts, which are too good aſſurances that there are ſuch things as his bearing witneſs with our Spirit, *Rom.* 8. 16. *his ſealing us to the day of Redemption*, Eph. 4. 30. *his earneſts given into our hearts*, 2 Cor. 1. 22. All which Acts and Works of the Spirit have a direct and clear aſpect upon the Life to come, and the Happineſs of our Souls in the full enjoyment of God to Eternity; for it is to that Life we are now ſealed; and of the full ſum of that Glory, that theſe are the Pledges and Earneſts of. But if our Souls periſh by death, theſe Witneſſes of the Spirit are deluſions, and his Earneſts are given us but in jeſt.

(3). His *Comforting Work* is a ſweet fruit and effect ſenſibly felt and taſted by Believers in this World. He is from this Office ſtiled the *Comforter*, John 16. 7. *ſignanter, & eminenter*: He ſo comforts, as none other doth, or can. And what is the matter of his Comforts, but the Bleſſedneſs to come, the Joys of the coming World? *John* 16. 13. *Eye hath not ſeen*, &c.

Upon the account of theſe unſeen things, he enableth Believers to glory in Tribulations, *Rom.* 5. 4. to deſpiſe preſent things, whether the ſmiles or the frowns of the World, *Heb.* 11. 24. and *v.* 26. But if the Being of our Souls fail at death, theſe are but the fantaſtick Joys of Men in a Dream, and the experiences of all God's People are found but ſo many fond conceits, and groſs miſtakes.

5. This ſuppoſition overthrows the Doctrine of the *Reſurrection*, which is the Conſolation of Chriſtians. We believe according to the Scripture, that after Death hath divorced our Souls and Bodies for a time, they ſhall meet again, and be re-united, and that the Joy at their re-union will be to all that are in Chriſt, greater than the Sorrows they felt at parting. This ſeems not incredible to us, whatever natural improbabilities

and

and carnal reasons may be against it, *Acts* 26. 8. and that because the Almighty power, which is able to subdue all things to himself, undertakes this task, *Philip.* 3. 21.

We believe this very same *numerical Body* shall rise again, *Job.* 21. 27. by the return of the same Soul into it, which now dwelleth in it; and that we shall be the same persons that now we are: the *remunerative Justice* of God requiring it to be so.

We believe the Souls of the righteous shall be much better accommodated, and have a more comfortable habitation in their Bodies than now they have, 1 *Cor.* 15. 42, 43. seeing they shall be made like unto Christ's glorious Body, *Phil.* 3. 21. and that then we shall live after the manner of Angels, *Luke* 20. 36. without the necessities of this animal life. These are the things we look for according to promise; and this expectation is our great relief against (1.) the fears of death, 1 *Cor.* 15 55. (2.) Against the death of our Friends and Relations, 1 *Thess.* 4. 14. (3.) Against all the pressures and afflictions of this life, *Job* 19. 25. 26, 27.

But if the being of our Souls fail at death, all hopes and comforts from the Resurrection fail with it; for it is not imaginable that the Body should rise till it be revived, nor how it should be revived, but by the re-union of the Soul with it: and if it be not the same Soul that now inhabits it, we cannot be the same persons in the Resurrection we are now; and consequently, this supposition subverts not only the Doctrine of the Resurrection, but,

6. It overthrows also the faith of the *Judgment to come.* For if the Soul perish, the Body cannot rise; or if it rise by a new created Soul; the person raised is another, and not the same that lived and died in this World; and consequently, the rewards and punishments to be bestowed and awarded to all men in that day, cannot be just and equal: for we believe, according to the Scriptures, that,

(1) The Actions which men perform in this life, are not transient, but are filed to their account in the world to come; Gal. 6. 7. *here we sow, and there we reap.* Actions done in this World are two ways considerable, *viz. Physically*, or *Morally*; in the first consideration they are transient, in the last, permanent and everlasting. A Word is spoken, or an Act done, in a moment; but tho' it be past and gone, and perhaps by us quite forgotten, God registers it in his Book, in order to the day of account.

(2) We believe that God hath appointed a day in which all men shall appear before his Judgment-seat, to give an account of all they have done in the Body, whether it be good or evil, 2 *Cor.* 5. 10.

(3) And that in order hereunto, the very same persons shall be restored by the Resurrection and appear before God, the very same Bodies and Souls, which did good or evil in this World: Shall not the Judg of all the earth do right? Justice requires that the rewards and punishments be then distributed to the same persons that did good or evil in this World: which strongly infers the immortality of the Soul, and that it certainly overlives the Body, and must come back from the respective places of their abode, to be again united to them, in order to their great account.

By all which you see the clearest proof of the Soul's Immortality, and how the contrary supposition overthrows our Faith, Duties, and Comforts Yet notwithstanding all this, how apt are we to suspect this Doctrine, and remain still dissatisfied and doubting about it, when all is said? Which comes to pass partly from the subtlety of Satan, who knows he can never persuade men to live the life of Beasts, till he first persuade them to think they shall die as the Beasts do. (2.) and *partly* from the influence of Sense, and Reason upon us, whereby we do too much suffer our selves to be swayed, and imposed upon in matters of greatest moment in Religion. For these being proper *Arbiters* and Judges in other matters within their sphere, they are arrogant, and we easy enough to admit to them be *Arbiters* also in things that are quite above them. Hence come such plausible objections as these:

Obj. 1. The Soul seems to vanish and die, when it leaves the Body: for when it hath strugled as long as it can keep its possession in the Body, and at last is forced to depart, we can perceive nothing but a puff of breath, which immediately vanishes into air, and is lost.

Sol. We cannot perceive, therefore it is nothing but what we do and can perceive, *viz.* a puff of vanishing breath. By this argument the being of the Soul in the Body is as questionable, as after its departure out of the Body; for we cannot discern it by sight in the Body: yea, by this Argument we may as well deny the existence of God and Angels, as of Souls; for it is a spiritual and invisible Being as they are; our gross senses are incapable of discerning Spirits, which are immaterial and invisible substances.

Object. 2. But you allow the Soul to have a rise and beginning, it is not eternal *à parte ante*; and it is certain, whatever had a beginning must have an end.

Sol. Every thing which had a beginning may have an end, and what once was nothing, may by the power that created it, be reduced to nothing again. But tho' we allow it may be so, by the absolute power of God, we deny the consequence, that therefore it shall and must be so. Angels had a beginning, but shall never have an end. And indeed their Immortality, as well as ours, flows not so much from the nature of either, as from the will and pleasure of God who hath appointed them to be so. He can, but never will annihilate them.

Object. 3. But the Soul depends upon Matter in its operations, nothing is in the Understanding which was not first in the Senses; it useth the natural Spirits as its servants and tools in all its Operations, and therefore how can it either subsist or act in a state of *Separation*?

Sol. 1. The Hypothesis is not only uncertain, but certainly false. There are acts performed by the Soul, even whilst it is in the Body, wherein it makes no use at all of the Body. Such are the acts of Self-intuition, and Self-reflection: and what will you say of its acts in Raptures and Extasies, such as that of *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 12. 2, and *John*, *Rev.* 21. 10. what use did their Souls make of the bodily Senses or natural Spirits then?

Sol. 2. And tho' in its ordinary actions in this Life it doth use the Body as its Tool or Instrument in working, doth it thence follow that it can neither subsist or act separate from them in the other World? Whilst a Man is on horse-back in his Journey, he useth the help and service of

his Horse, and is moved according to the motion of his Horse; but doth it thence follow, he cannot stand nor walk alone when dismounted at his Journey's end? We know Angels both live and act, without the ministery of the Bodies, and our Souls are spiritual *Substances* as well as they.

Object. 4. But many Scriptures seem to favour the total cessation of the Soul's actions, if not of its Being also after Separation as that in 2 *Sam.* 14. 14. We must needs die, and are as Water spilt upon the ground which cannot be gathered up; and *Psal.* 88. 10, 11, 12. with *Isaiah* 38. 18, 19. The dead cannot praise *thee.*

Sol. Those words of the Woman of *Tekoa* are not to be understood absolutely, but respectively: and the meaning is, that the Soul is in the Body as some precious liquor in a brittle glass, which being broken by death, the Soul is irrecoverably gone, as the Water spilt on the ground, which by no humane power or art of Man can be recovered again. All the means in the World cannot fetch it back into the Body again. She speaks not of the Resurrection, or what shall be done in the World to come, by the Almighty power of God, but of what is impossible to be done in this World by all the skill and power of Man.

And for the expressions of *Heman* and *Hezekiah*, they only respect and relate to those services their Souls were now imployed about for the praise of God, which respect to the conversion or edification of others, as *Psal.* 30. 8, 9. or at most, to that mediate Service and Worship, which they give God, in and by their attendance upon his Ordinances in this World, and not of that immediate service and praise that is performed and given him in Heaven by the Spirits of just Men made perfect; such was the sweetness they had found in these Ordinances and Duties, that they express themselves as loth to leave them.

The same Answer solves also the Objections grounded upon other mistaken Scriptures, as that *Psal.* 78. 39. where Man is called a Wind, that passeth away, and cometh not again. It is only expressive of the frailty and vanity of the present animal Life we live in this World to which we shall return no more after death; it denies not Life to departed Souls, but the end of this animal Life at death: the Life we live in the other World, is of a different nature.

Inference I. Is the Soul immortal, Then *'tis impossible for Souls to find full rest and contentment in any enjoyments on this side Heaven.* All temporary things are inadequate, and therefore unsatisfying to our Souls. What gives the Soul rest and satisfaction, must be as durable as the Soul is; for if we could possibly find in this World a condition and state of things most agreeable in all other respects to our desires and wishes, yet if the Soul be conscious to it self, that it shall and must overlive and leave them all behind it, it can never reach true contentment in the greatest affluence and confluence of them. Man being an immortal, is therefore a prospecting Creature, and can never be satisfied with this, that 'tis well with him at present, except he can be satisfied that it shall be for ever. The thoughts of leaving our delightful and pleasant enjoyments, imbitters them all to us whilst we have them. All outward things are in *fluxu continuo*, passing away as the Waters, 1 *Cor.* 7. 31. Riches are uncertain, 1 *Tim.* 6. 17. *They fly away as an Eagle towards Heaven, and with Wings of their own making*, Prov. 23. 5. (*i. e.*) As the Feathers that enable a Bird to fly from us, grow out of his own substance, so doth that vanity that carries away all earthly enjoyments. This alone will spoil all contentment.

Infer. II. *Then see the ground and reason of Satan's envy and enmity against the Soul, and his restless designs and endeavours to destroy it.* It grates that Spirit of Envy, to find himself, who is by nature immortal, sunk everlastingly and irrecoverably in Misery, and the Souls of Men appointed to fill up those vacant places in Heaven from which the Angels fell. No Creature but Man is envied by Satan, and the Soul of Man much more than his Body: 'Tis true, he afflicts the Bodies of Men when God permits him, but he ever aims at the Soul when he wounds the Body. *Heb.* 10. 37. This roaring Lion is continually going about, *seeking whom he may devour*, 1 Pet. 5. 8. 'Tis the precious Soul he hunts after; that's the *Morsus Diaboli*, the bit he gapes for, as the Wolf tears the Fleece to come at the Flesh. All the pleasure those miserable Creatures find, is the success of their Temptations upon the Souls of Men. 'Tis a kind of delight to them to plunge Souls into the same condemnation and misery with themselves. This is the trade they have been driving ever since their Fall. By destroying souls, he at once exercises his Revenge against God, and his Envy against Man, which is all the relief his miserable condition allows him.

Infer. III. Do the Souls of Men over-live their Bodies? *Then 'tis the height of madness and spiritual Infatuation, to destroy the Soul for the Body's Sake*; to cast away an immortal Soul for the gratification of perishing flesh; to ruin the precious Soul for ever, for the pleasures of Sin which are but for a moment: yet this is the madness of millions of Men. They will drown their own Souls in everlasting perdition, to procure unnecessary things for the Body, 1 *Tim.* 6. 9. *They that will be rich*, &c. Every cheat and circumvention in dealing, every lie, every act of oppression, is a wound given the immortal Soul for the procuring some accommodations to the Body.

O what Soul-undoing bargains do some make with the Devil! Some sell their Souls outright for the gratification of their Lusts, 1 *King*, 21. 20. Many pawn their Souls to Satan in a conditional bargain, so do all that venture upon Sin, upon a presumption of Pardon and Repentance. The *Devil* is a great trader for *Souls*, he hath all sorts of Commodities to suit all Mens humours that will deal with him. He hath Profits for the Covetous, Honours for the Ambitious, Pleasures for the Voluptuous: but a Soul is the price at which he sells them; only he will be content to sell at a day, and not require present pay: so that it be paid on a death-bed, in a dying hour, he is satisfied. But Oh! what an undoing bargain do Sinners make, to part with a Treasure for a Trifle! *Mat.* 16. 26. the precious Soul for ever, *for the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season*! Heb. 11. 25. We are charmed with the present pleasure and sweetness there is in Sin; but how bitter will the after-fruits thereof be! See the Texts in the Margin; you will say hereafter as *Jonathan* did, 1 Sam. 14. 31. *I tasted but a little Honey, and I must die.*

Prov. 20. 17. Prov. 23. 31, 32. Job. 20. 12, 13. Jam. 1. 15.

Infer. IV. *Then the exposing of the Body to danger, yea, to certain destruction, for the preservation of the Soul, is the dictate of spiritual Wisdom, and that which*

every Chriſtian is bound to chuſe and practiſe, when both Intereſts come in full oppoſition, Heb. 11. 35. Dan. 3. 28. Rev. 12. 11. No promiſes of Preferment, no threats of Torments, have been able to prevail with the People of God to give the leaſt wound, or do the leaſt wrong to their own Souls. When *Secundus* was commanded to deliver his Bible, he anſwered, *Chriſtianus ſum, non traditor*; I am a Chriſtian, I will not deliver it: then they deſired him to deliver *aliquam ecvolam*, a Chip, a Straw, any thing that came to his hand, in lieu of it: he refuſed to redeem his Life by delivering the leaſt trifle on that account to ſave it.

That is a great word of our Lord's, *Luke* 9. 24. *He that will ſave his Life, ſhall loſe it; and he that loſeth it for my ſake ſhall find it.* Chriſtians, this is your Duty and Wiſdom, and muſt be your Reſolution and Practice in the day of Temptation, to yield your Bodies to preſerve your Souls, as we offer our Arm to defend the Head. Oh! better thy Body had never been given thee, than that it ſhould be a ſnare to thy Soul, and the inſtrument of caſting it away for ever. Oh! how dear are ſome perſons like to pay for their tenderneſs and indulgence to the fleſh, when the hour of Temptation ſhall come! Mortifie your irregular affections to the Body, and never hazard your precious immortal Souls for their ſakes. 'Tis the character of an Hypocrite to chuſe Sin rather than Affliction, *Job* 36. 21. But if ever thou haſt been in the deeps of ſpiritual troubles for ſin, if God have opened thine eyes to ſee the evil of ſin, the immenſe weight and value of thy Soul, and of Eternity, *Thou wilt not count thy life dear to thee to finiſh thy courſe with joy,* Acts 20. 24.

Infer. V. If the Soul be an immortal Being, that ſhall have no end, *Then 'tis the great concern of all men to ſtrive to the utmoſt for the Salvations of their Souls, whatever become of all leſſer temporary Intereſts in this World,* Luke 13. 24. There is a gate, (*i. e.*) an introductive means of Life and Salvation: this gate is ſtrait (*i. e.*) there are a world of difficulties to be encounter'd in the way of Salvation: but he that values and loves his never-dying Soul, muſt and will be diligent and conſtant in the uſe of all thoſe means that have a tendency to Salvation, be they never ſo difficult or unpleaſant to fleſh and blood. There be difficulties from within our ſelves, ſuch as Mortification, Self-denial, Contempt of the World, parting with all at the call of Chriſt: and difficulties from without, the Reproaches, Perſecutions, and Sufferings for Chriſt, which would not be ſo great as they are, were it not for our unmortified Luſts within; but be they what they will, we are bound to ſtrive through them all, for the Salvation of our precious and immortal Souls.

(1.) For 'tis the greateſt concernment of the Soul, yea, of our own Souls; we are bound to do much for the ſaving of another's Soul, 2 *Tim.* 2. 10. much more for our own; this is our darling, *Pſal.* 22. our only one.

(2.) Others have done and ſuffered much for the ſaving of their Souls; and are not ours, or ought they not to be, as dear to us, as the Souls of any others have been to them? *Mat.* 21. 32.

(3.) The utmoſt diligence is little enough to ſave them. Do all that you can do, and ſuffer all that you can ſuffer, and deny your ſelves as deeply as ever any did, yet you ſhall find all this little enough to ſecure them, 1 *Pet.* 4. 18. The Righteous themſelves are ſcarcely ſaved, 1 *Cor.* 9. 24.

(4.) The time to ſtrive for Salvation is very ſhort and uncertain, *Luke* 13. 25. *Joh.* 12. 35. 'Twill be to no purpoſe, when the ſeaſons and opportunities of Salvation are once over. There is no ſtriving in Hell, a death-pang of Deſpair hath ſeized them, hope is extinguiſhed, and endeavours fail.

(5.) Doth not Reaſon dictate and direct you to do now, whilſt you are in the way, as you will wiſh you had don, and repent with rage, and ſelf-indignation, becauſe you did it not, when you come to the end, and behold the final iſſues of things? Suppoſe but thy ſelf now either, (1.) upon a death-bed, launching into Eternity; (2.) or at the Bar of Chriſt; (3). or in view of Heaven; (4.) or in the ſight and hearing of the Damned: what think you? will you not then wiſh, Oh! that I had ſpent every moment in the World, that could poſſibly be redeemed from the pure neceſſities of Life, in Prayer, in hearing, in ſtriving for Salvation? From a proſpect of this it was, that one ſpent many hours daily on his knees to the macerating of his Body; and being admoniſhed of the danger of health, and adviſed to relax, he anſwered, *I muſt die, I muſt die.*

Object. 1. Do not ſay, you have many incumbrances, and other employments in the World: for (1.) *One thing is neceſſary,* Luke 10. 42. Thoſe are *Conveniences,* but this is of *abſolute neceſſity.* (2.) They will thrive the better for this, *Mat.* 6. 33. *Seek this, and they ſhall be added.* (3.) Do but *redeem the time* that can be redeemed to this purpoſe; let not ſo much precious time run waſte as daily doth.

Object. 2. Say not, no Man can ſave his Soul by his own ſtriving, and therefore 'tis to little purpoſe; for it is not of *him that willeth,* or of *him that runneth,* but of *God that ſheweth mercy,* Rom. 9. 16.

True, this in it ſelf cannot ſave you; but what then? muſt we oppoſe thoſe things which God hath ſubordinated? Bring this home to your natural or civil actions, eating, drinking, ploughing or ſowing, and ſee how the conſequence will look.

Object. 3. Say not, 'tis a mercenary Doctrine, and diſparages free Grace; for are not all the Enjoyments and Comforts of this Life confeſſedly from free Grace, tho' God hath diſpenſed them to you in the way of your diligence and induſtry.

Object. 4. To conclude; Say not, the difficulties of Salvation are inſuperable; 'tis ſo hard to watch every motion of the heart, to deny every Luſt, to reſiſt a ſutable Temptation, to ſuffer the *loſs of All for Chriſt,* that there is no hope for overcoming them.

For (1.) God can and doth make difficult things eaſie to his People, who work in the ſtrength of Chriſt, *Phil.* 4. 13. (2.) Theſe ſame difficulties are before all others that are before you, yet it diſcourageth not them, *Phil.* 3. 11. *Others ſtrive to the uttermoſt.* There are extremes found in this matter: ſome work for Salvation, as an hireling for his Wages, ſo the Papiſts; theſe diſparage *Grace,* and cry up *Works.* Others cry down *Obedience* as legal, as the *Antinomians,* and cry up *Grace* to the diſparagement of *Duties.* Avoid *both* theſe, and ſee that you ſtrive: but (1.) think not Heaven to be the price of your ſtriving, *Rom.* 4. 3. (2.) Strive, but not for a ſpurt; let this care and diligence run throughout your lives; whilſt you are living, be you ſtill ſtriving: your Souls are worth

worth it, and infinitely more than all this amounts to.

Infer. VI. Doth the Soul over-live the Body, and abide for ever? *Then 'tis a great evil and folly to be excessively careful for the mortal Body, and negligent of the immortal Inhabitant.* In a too much indulged Body, there ever dwells a too-much neglected Soul.

The Body is but *a vile thing*, Phil. 3. 21. the Soul *more valuable than the whole World*, Mat. 16. 26. To spend time, care, and pains for a vile Body, whilst little or no regard is had to the precious immortal Soul, is an unwarrantable folly and madness. *To have a clear and washed Body, and a Soul all filth*, (as one speaks) *a Body neatly cloathed and dressed, with a Soul all naked and unready; a Body fed, and a Soul starved; a Body full of the Creature, and a Soul empty of Christ; these are poor Souls indeed.* We smile at little Children, who in a kind of laborious idleness take a great deal of pains to make and trim their Babies, or build their little Houses of sticks and straws: And what are they but Children of a bigger size, that keep such ado about the Body, a House of Clay, a weak Pile, that must perish in a few days. 'Tis admirable, and very convictive of most Christians what we read in a Heathen. *I confess* (saith *Seneca*) *there is a love to the Body implanted in us all; we have the tutelage and charge of it; we may be kind and indulgent to it, but must not serve it; but he that serves it, is a servant to many cares, fears, and passions. Let us have a diligent care of it, yet so as when Reason requires, when our Dignity or Faith requires it, we commit it to the fire.*

Fateor insitam esse nobis corporis nostri charitatem. Fateor nos hujus gerere tutelam, nec nego indulgendum illi, serviendum nego. Multis enim serviet qui corpori servit, qui pro illo nimium timet, qui ad illud omnia refert; hujus nos nimius amor timoribus inquietat, solicitudinibus onerat, contumeliis objicit: honestum ei vile est cui corpus nimis charum est: agatur ejus diligentissimè cura: ita tamen, ut cum exiget ratio, cum dignitas, cum fides, mittendum in ignem sit. *Senec. Ep* 14. *p.* 545.

'Tis true, the Body is beloved of the Soul, and God requires, that it moderately care for the necessities and conveniences of it; but to be fond, indulgent, and constantly solicitous about it, is both the sin and snare of the Soul. One of the Fathers being invited to dine with a Lady, and waiting some hours till she was dress'd, and fit to come down; when he saw her, he fell a weeping; and being demanded why he wept, *Oh!* saith he, *I am troubled that you should spend so many hours this morning in pinning and trimming your Body, when I have not spent half the time in praying, repenting, and caring for my own Soul.* Two things a Master commits to his Servant's care, (saith one) the Child, and the Child's Cloaths: It will be but a poor excuse for the Servant to say, at his Master's return, Sir, here are all the Child's Cloaths neat and clean, but the Child is lost. Much so will be the account that many will give to God of their Souls and Bodies at the great day, *Lord, here is my Body, I was very careful for it, I neglected nothing that belonged to its content and welfare: but for my Soul, that is lost and cast away for ever, I took little care or thought about it.* 'Tis remarkable what the Apostle saith, *Rom.* 8. 12. We owe nothing to the flesh, we are not in its debt, we have given it all, more than all that belongs to it: but we owe many an hour, many a care, many a deep thought to our Souls, which we have defrauded of for the vile Body's sake. You have robb'd your Souls to pay your Flesh. This is madness.

Infer. VII. *How great a Blessing is the Gospel, which brings Life and Immortality to light, the most desirable Mercies to immortal Souls!* This is the great benefit we receive by it, as the Apostle speaks, 2 Tim. 1. 10. *Christ hath abolished Death, and brought Life and Immortality to light by the Gospel.* Life and Immortality by a ἐν διὰ δυοῖν, is put for immortal Life, the thing which all immortal Souls desire and long for. These desires are found in Souls that enjoy not the Gospel-light; for, as I said before, they naturally spring out of the very Nature of all immortal Souls: But how and where it is to be obtained, that is a secret for which we are entirely beholden to the Gospel-discovery. It lay hid in the Womb of God's purpose, till by the light of Gospel-Revelation it was made manifest. But now all men may see what are the gracious thoughts and purposes of God concerning Men, and what that is he hath designed for their Immortal Souls, even an Immortal Life; and this Life is to be obtained by Christ, than which no tidings can be more welcome, sweet or acceptable to us.

Oh therefore study the Gospel. *This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent*, John 17. 3. And see that you prize the Gospel above all earthly Treasures. *'Tis a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation.* You have two inestimable benefits and blessings by it. (1.) It manifests and reveals eternal life to you, which you could never have come to the knowledge of any other way; those that are without it, are groping or feeling after God in the dark, *Acts* 17. 27. Poor Souls are conscious to themselves, that there is a just and terrible God, and that their sins offend and provoke him; but how to attone the offended Deity they know not, *Micah* 6. 6, 7. But the way of Reconciliation and Life is clearly discovered to us by the Gospel. (2). As it manifests and reveals Eternal Life to us, so it frames and moulds our hearts, as God's sanctifying Instrument for the enjoyment of it. 'Tis not only the Instrument of Revelation, but of Salvation, the Word of Life, as well as the Word of Light, *Phil.* 2. 16. It can open your Hearts as well as your Eyes, and is therefore to be entertained as that which is the first rank of Blessings, a peerless and inestimable Blessing.

Infer. VIII. If our Souls be Immortal, *certainly our Enemies are not so formidable as we are apt by our sinful fears to represent them.* They may, when God permits them, destroy your Bodies, they cannot touch or destroy your Souls, *Mat.* 10. 28. As to your Bodies, no Enemy can touch them till there be leave and permission given them by God, *Job* 1. 10. The Bodies of the Saints as well as their Souls, are within the line or hedge of Divine Providence: they are securely fenc'd, sometimes mediately by the Ministry of Angels, *Psal.* 34. 7. and sometimes immediately by his own Hand and Power, *Zech.* 2. 5. As to their Souls, whatever power Enemies may have upon them, (when Divine Permission opens a gap in the hedge of Providence for them) yet they cannot reach their Souls to hurt them, or destroy them, but by their own consent. They can destroy our perishing Flesh, it is obnoxious to their malice and rage; they cannot reach home to the Soul: no Sword can cut asunder the band of Union between them and Christ; they would be

dreadful Enemies indeed if they could do so. Why then do we tremble and fear at this rate, as if Soul and Body were at their mercy, and in their power and hand? The Souls of those *Martyrs* were in safety under the *Alter* in Heaven, they were cloathed with *white Robes*, when their Bodies were given to be meat to the Fowls of Heaven, and Beasts of the Earth. The Devil drives but a poor trade by the Persecution of the Saints; he tears the *Nest*, but the *Bird* escapes; he cracks the *Shell*, but loseth the *Kernel*. Two things make a powerful defensative against our fears: (1). That all our Enemies are in the hand of Providence. (2). That all Providences are steered by that promise, *Rom.* 8. 28.

Infer. IX. If Souls be Immortal, *then there must needs be a vast difference betwixt the aspects and influences of Death upon the Godly and Ungodly.*

Oh! if Souls would but seriously consider what an alteration Death will make upon their condition, for evil or for good, how useful would such Meditations be to them! (1.) They may be disseized and turned out of these houses of Clay, and live in a state of separation from them: of this there is an inevitable necessity, *Eccl.* 8. 8. 'Tis vain to say, I am not ready; ready or unready, they must depart when their Lease is out. 'Tis as vain to say, I am not willing; for willing or unwilling, they must be gone; there's no hanging back, and begging, *Lord, let death take another at this time, and spare me*; for no man dies by a Proxy. (2). The time of our Souls departure is at hand, 2 *Pet.* 1. 13, 14. *Job* 16. 22. The most firm and well-built Body can stand but a few days, but our ruinous Tabernacles give our Souls warning that the day of their departure is at hand. The lamp of Life is almost burnt down, the glass of Time is almost run; yet a few, a very few days and nights more, and then time, nights and days shall be no more. (3.) When that most certain and near-approaching time is come, wonderful alterations will be made on the state of all Souls, godly and ungodly.

(1.) A marvellous alteration will then be made on the Souls of the godly. For (1.) No sooner is the dividing stroke given by Death, and the parting pull over, but they shall find themselves in the arms of Angels, mounting them through the upper Regions in a few moments, far above all the aspectable Heavens, *Luke* 16. 22. The airy Region is indeed the place where Devils inhabit, and have their haunts and walks; but Angels are the Saints Convoy thro' Satan's Territories from the arms of mourning Friends into the welcome arms of officious and benevolent Angels. (2.) From the sight and converses of Men to the sight of God, Christ, and the general assembly of blessed and sinless Spirits. The Soul takes its leave of all men at death, *Isa.* 38. 11. Farewel vain World, with all the mixed and imperfect comforts of it, and welcome the more sweet, suitable, and satisfying company of Father, Son, and Spirit, holy Angels, and perfected Saints, *Heb.* 12. 13. (3.) From the bondage of corruption to perfect liberty, and everlasting freedom; so much is implied, *Heb.* 12. 13. *The Spirits of just men made perfect.* (4.) From all fears, doubtings, and questionings of our conditions, and anxious debates of our title to Christ, to the cleerest, fullest, and most satisfying assurance: for what a Man sees, how can he doubt of it? (5.) From all burdens of affliction, inward and outward, under which we have groaned all our days, to everlasting rest and ease, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1, 2, 3. Oh what a blessed change to the Righteous must this be!

(2.) A marvelous change will also be then made upon the Souls of the ungodly, who shall then part from (1.) All their comforts and pleasant enjoyments in the World, for here they had their consolation, *Luke* 16. 25. here was all their Portion, *Psal.* 17. 14. and in a moment find themselves arrested and seized by Satan, as God's Gaoler, hurrying them away to the Prison of Hell, 1 *Pet.* 3. 19. *there to be reserved to the judgment of the great day*, Jude *ver.* 6. (2.) From under the means of Grace, Life, and Salvation, to a state perfectly void of all means, instruments, and opportunities of Salvation, *John* 9. 4. *Eccles.* 9. 10. never to hear the joyful sound of Preaching or Praying any more; never to hear the wooing Voice of the blessed Bridegroom, saying, Come unto me, Come unto me, any more. (3.) From all their vain, ungrounded, presumptuous Hopes of Heaven, into absolute and final Desperation of Mercy. The very sinews and nerves of hope are cut by death, Prov. 14. 32. *The wicked is driven away in his wickedness, but the righteous hath hope in his death.* These are the great and astonishing alterations that will be made upon our Souls, after they part with the Bodies which they now inhabit. Oh that we, who cannot but be conscious to our selves that we must over-live our Bodies, were more thoughtful of the condition they must enter into, after that separation which is at hand.

Infer. X. If our Souls be Immortal, *then Death is neither to be feared by them in Heaven, nor hoped for by them in Hell.* The Being of Souls never fails, whether they be in a state of Blessedness or of Misery. *In glory they are ever with the Lord*, 1 Thess. 4. 17. There shall be no death there, *Rev.* 21. 4. And in Hell, tho' they shall wish for death, yet death shall flee from them. Tho' there be no fears of annihilation in Heaven, yet there be many vain wishes for it in Hell, but to no purpose; there never will be an end put either to their being or to their torments. In this respect no other Creature is capable of the Misery that wicked Men are capable of: When they die, there is the end of all their Misery; but it is not so with men. Better therefore had it been for them, if God had created them in the basest and lowest order and rank of Creatures; a Dog, a Toad, a Worm is better than a Man in endless Misery, ever dying, and never dead. *And so much of the Soul's Immortality.*

O mors dulcis es, quibus amara fuisti: te solum desiderant, qui te solum oderunt. *August.*

Ephes. V. 29.

For no Man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as the Lord the Church.

HAving given some account of the Nature and Immortality of the Soul, we next come to discourse its *Love and Inclination to the Body* with which it is united, from this Text. The scope of the Apostle is, to press Christians to the exact

exact discharge of those relative Duties they owe to each other; particularly he here urgeth the mutual Duties of *Husbands* and *Wives*, ver. 22. Wives to an *obedient Subjection*; Husbands, to a *tender Love* of their Wives. This Exhortation he enforceth from the intimate Union, which by the Ordinance of God is betwixt them, they being now *one Flesh*. And this Union he illustrates by comparing it with,

1. The *Mystical Union* of *Christ* and the *Church*.
2. The *Natural Union* of the *Soul* and *Body*.

And from both these, as excellent Examples and Patterns, he with great strength of Argument urgeth the Duty of Love; *ver.* 28. *So ought Men to love their Wives as their own Bodies; he that loveth his Wife, loveth himself.* Self-love is naturally implanted in all Men, and it is the Rule by which we measure out and dispense our Love to others. —— *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.*

This *Self-Love* he opens in this place, by,

(1.) The Universality of it.

(2.) The Effects that evidence it.

(1.) The Universality of it, *No Man ever yet hated his own Flesh.* By *Flesh*, understand the Body, by an usual *Metonymy* of a part for the whole called Flesh. By *hating it*, understand a simple hatred, or hatred it self. 'Tis usual for Men to hate the deformities and diseases of their own Bodies, and upon that account to deal with the Members of their own Bodies as if they hated them; hence it is, they willingly stretch forth a gangren'd Leg or Arm to be cut off, for the preservation of the rest: but this is not simple hatred of a Man's self, but rather an Argument of the strength of the Soul's love to the Body, that it will be content to endure so much pain and anguish for its sake. And if the Soul be at any time weary of, and willing to part, not with a single Member only, but with the whole Body, and loaths its Union with it any longer, yet it hates and loaths it not simply in and for it self, but because it is so filled with Diseases all over, and loads the Soul daily with so much grief, that, how well soever the Soul loves it in it self, yet upon such sad terms and conditions it would not be tied to it. This was *Job*'s case, *Job* 10. 1. *My Soul is weary of my Life*; yet not simply of his Life, but *such a Life*, in pain and trouble. Except it be in such respects and cases, *No man*, saith he, *ever yet hated his own Flesh*; i. e. no Man in his right mind, and in the exercise of his Reason and Sense; for we must except distracted and delirious Men, who know not what they do, as also Men under the terrors of Conscience, when God suffers it to rage in extremity, as *Spira*, and others, who would have been glad with their own hands to have cut the Thread that tied their miserable Souls to their Bodies, supposing that way, and by that change, to find some Relief. Either of these cases forces Men to act beside the stated Rule of Nature and Reason.

(2.) This *Love of the Soul to the Body* is further discovered by the Effects which evidence it, *viz.* its nourishing and cherishing the Body, ἐκτρέφει καὶ θάλπει. These two comprize the Necessaries for the Body, *viz.* Food and Rayment. The first signifies to nourish with proper food; the latter, to warm by cloathing, as the word θαλπῆν is render'd, *Jam.* 2. 16. to which the *Hebrew* word חם answers, *Job* 31. 20. The Care and Provision of these things for the Body evidences the Soul's Love to it.

Doct. *That the Souls of Men are strongly inclined, and tenderly affected, towards the Bodies in which they now dwell.*

The Soul's Love to the Body is so strong, natural, and inseparable, that it is made the Rule and Measure by which we dispense and proportion our Love to others, *Mat.* 19. 29. *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.* And the Apostle, *Galat.* 5. 14. tells us, That the whole Law, (*i. e.*) the second Table of the Law, is fulfilled, or summ'd up in this Precept, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.* The meaning is not, that all and every one who is our Neighbour must be equally near to us as our own Bodies; but it intends (1.) The sincerity of our Love to others, which must be without Dissimulation, for we dissemble not in Self-love. (2.) That we be as careful to avoid injuring others, as we would our selves, *Matth.* 7. 12. To do by others, or measure to them, as we would have done, or measured unto us: for which Rule, *Severus* the Heathen Emperour honoured Christ and Christianity, and caused it to be written in Capital Letters of Gold. (3.) That we take direction from this Principle of Self love, to measure out our Care, Love and Respects to others, according to the different degrees of nearness in which we stand to them. As, (1.) The Wife of our Bosom, to whom by this Rule, is due our first Care and Love, as in the Text. (2.) Our Children and Family, 1 *Tim.* 5. 8. (3.) To all in general, whether we have any Bond of natural Relation upon them or no; but especially those to whom we are spiritually related, as *Gal.* 6. 10. And indeed, as every Christian hath a right to our Love and Care, above other Men, so in some cases, we are to exceed this Rule of Self-love, by a transcendent act of Self-denial for them, 1 *John* 3. 16. And *Paul* went higher than that, in a glorious excess of Charity to the Community or Body, of God's People, preferring their Salvation not only to his own Body, but to his Soul also, *Rom.* 9. 3. But to these extraordinary Cases we are seldom called; and if we be, the Gospel furnisheth us with an higher Rule than Self-love, *John* 13. 34. But by this principle of Self-love in all ordinary Cases, we must proportion and dispense our Love to all others: by which you see what a deep rooted fixed Principle in Nature Self-love is, how universal and permanent alone this is, which else were not fit to be made the measure of our Love to all others.

Two things will deserve our Consideration in the Doctrinal part of this point.

First, Wherein the Soul evidenceth its love to the Body.

Secondly, What are the Grounds and fundamental Causes or Reasons of its love to it; and then apply it.

First, Wherein the Soul evidenceth its love to the Body, and that it doth in divers respects.

1. In its *Cares* for the things needful to the Body, as the Text speaks, in *nourishing* and *cherishing* it, (*i. e.*) taking care for Food and Rayment for it. This Care is universal, it's implanted in the most salvage and barbarous People; and is generally so excessive and exorbitant, that tho' it never needs a Spur, yet most times and with most Men it doth need a Curb; and therefore Christ in *Matth.* 6. 32. shews how those Cares torture and distract the Nations of the World, warms

them against the like Excesses, and propounds a Rule to them for the allay and mitigation of them, *v.* 25, 26, 27. So doth the Apostle also, 1. *Cor.* 7. 29, 30, 31. To speak as the matter is, most Souls are over-heated with their Cares, and eager pursuit after the concerns of the Body. They pant after the Dust of the Earth. They pierce themselves through with many Sorrows, 1 *Tim.* 6. 10. They are cumbred like *Martha* with much Serving. 'Tis a perfect Drudg and Slave to the Body, bestowing all its time, strength and studies about the Body: for one Soul that puts the Question to it self, *what shall I do to be saved?* a thousand are to be found, that mind nothing more, but, *What shall I eat, what shall I drink, and wherewith shall I and mine be cloathed?* I do not say, that these are proofs of the Soul's regular Love to the Body; no, they differ from it, as a Fever from natural Heat. This is a doating Fondness upon the Body. He truly loves his Body, that moderately and ordinately cares for what is necessary for it, and can keep it under, 1 *Cor.* 9. 27. and deny its whining Appetite, when Indulgence is prejudicial to the Soul, or warms its Lusts. Believers themselves find it hard to keep the Golden Bridle of Moderation upon their Affections in this matter. 'Tis not every Man hath attained *Agur*'s cool Temper, *Prov.* 30. 8. that can slack his pace, and drive moderately, where the Interests of the Body are concerned: the best Souls are too warm, the generality are in raging Heats, which distract their minds, as that word, *Mat.* 6. μὴ μεριμνᾶτε, signifies. If the Body were not exceeding dear to the Soul, it would never torture it self day and night with such anxious Cares about it.

2. The Soul discovers its esteem and value for the Body in all the *Fears* it hath about it. Did not the Soul love it exceedingly, it would never be affrighted for it, and on its account, so much and so often as it is. What a panick fear do the dangers of the Body cast the Soul into? *Isa.* 7. 2. When the Body is in danger, the Soul is in distraction, the Soul is in fears and tremblings about it: These Fears flow from the Soul's tender Love and Affection to the Body; if it did not love it so intensely, it would never afflict and torment it self at that rate it doth about it: Satan the professed Enemy of our Souls, being throughly acquainted with those Fears which flow from the Fountain of Love to the Body, politickly improves them in the way of temptation, to the utter ruin of some, and the great hazard of other Souls; he edges and sharpens his Temptations upon us this way; he puts our Bodies into danger, that he may thereby endanger our Souls; he reckons, if he can but draw the Body into danger, fear will quickly drive the Soul into Temptation: It is not so much from Satan's Malice or Hatred of our Bodies, that he stirs up Persecutions against us; but he knows the tie of Affection is so strong betwixt these friends, that Love will draw, and Fear will drive the Soul into many and great Hazards of its own Happiness, to free the Body out of those Dangers. Prov. 29. 25. *The Fear of Man brings a Snare*: and Heb. 11. 37. *tortured and tempted.*

Upon this ground also it is, that this Life becomes a Life of Temptation to all Men, and there is no freedom from that danger, till we be freed from the Body, and set at liberty by Death. Separated Souls are the only free Souls. They that carry no Flesh about them, need carry no Fears of Temptation within them. 'Tis the Body which catches the sparks of Temptation.

3. The Soul manifests its dear Love and Affection to the Body, by its *Sympathy*, and compassionate feeling of all its burdens: Whatever touches the Body by way of *Injury*, affects the Soul also by way of *Sympathy*. The Soul and Body are as strings of two Musical Instruments, set exactly at one height; if one be touched, the other trembles. They laugh and cry, are sick and well together. This is a wonderful Mystery, and a rare Secret (as a learned Man observes) how the Soul comes to sympathize with the Body, and to have not only a knowledge, but as it were a feeling of its Necessities and Infirmities; how this fleshly Lump comes to affect, and make its deep impressions upon a Creature of so different a nature from it, as the Soul or Spirit is. But that it doth so, tho' we know not how, is plain and sensible to any man. If any Member of the Body, tho' but the lowest and meanest be in pain and misery, the Soul is presently affected with it, and commands the Eyes to watch, yea to weep, the Hands to bind it up with all tenderness, and defend it from the least injurious touch; the Lips to complain of its misery, and beg pity and help from others for it. If the Body be in danger, how are the Faculties of the Soul, Understanding, Memory, Invention, *&c.* employ'd with utmost strength and concernment for its deliverance! This is a real and unexceptionable evidence of its dear and tender Love to the Body. As those that belong to one mystical Body shew their sincere Love this way, 1 *Cor.* 12. 25, 26. *Ephes.* 4. 19. so the Soul.

4. The Soul manifesteth its love to the Body by its *fears* of Death, and extreme *aversation* to a separation from it. On this account Death is called in *Job* 18. 14. *the King of Terrors*, or the *black Prince*, or *the Prince of Clouds and Darkness*, as some translate that place. We read it, *the King of Terrors*, meaning that the Terrors at Death are such Terrors as subdue and keep down all other Terrors under them, as a Prince doth his Subjects. Other Terrors compared with those that the Soul conceives and conflicts with at parting, are no more than a cut finger to the laying ones Head on the Block: Oh! the Soul and Body are strongly twisted and knit together in dear Bands of intimate Union and Affection, and these Bands cannot be broken without much struggling. Oh! 'tis a hard thing for the Soul to bid the Body farewel; 'tis a bitter parting, a doleful separation: Nothing is heard in that hour but the most deep and emphatical Groans; I say, *emphatical Groans*, the deep sense and meaning of which, the living are but little acquainted with: for no Man living hath yet felt the Sorrows of a parting pull; whatever other Sorrows he hath felt in the Body, yet they must be supposed to be far short of these.

The Sorrows of Death are in Scripture set forth unto us, by the bearing Throes of a travailing Woman, *Acts* 2. 24. ὠδῖνας θανάτου and what those mean, many can tell: The Soul is in labour, it will not let go its hold of the Body but by constraint; Death is a close Siege, and when the Soul is beaten out of its Body, it disputes the passage with Death, as Soldiers use to do an Enemy that enters by Storm, and fights and strives to the last. It's also compar'd to a *Battle*, or *sharp*

sharp Fight, Eccles. 8. 8. *that War*. That War with an Emphasis. No Conflict so sharp, each labour to the utmost to drive the other from the ground they stand on, and win the Field. And tho' Grace much over-powers Nature in this matter, and reconciles it to Death, and makes it desire to be dissolved, yet Saints wholly put not off this Reluctation of Nature, 2 *Cor.* 5. 2. Not that we would be uncloathed; as it is with one willing to wade over a Brook to his Father's House, puts his Foot into the Water, and feels it cold, starts backward, and is loth to venture in; *Not that we wou'd be uncloathed*. And if it be so with sanctified Souls, how is it, think you, with others? Mark the Scripture Language, *Job* 27. 8. God taketh away their Souls, saith our Translation; but the Root is, נשל *extrahere*, and signifies to pull out by plain force and violence. A graceless Soul dieth not by consent, but force. Thus *Adrian* bewailed his departure, *O Animula, vagula, blandula, heu quo vadis!* Yea, tho' the Soul have never so long a time been in the Body, tho' it should live as long as the *Antediluvian Fathers* did for many hundred Years, yet still it would be loth to part; yea, tho' it endure abundance of Misery in the Body, and have little rest or Comfort, but time spent in Griefs and Fears, yet for all that 'tis loth to part with it. All this shews a strong Inclination and Affection to it.

5. Its desire of *Re-union* continuing still with it in its state of Separation, speaks its love to the Body. As the Soul parted with it in Grief and Sorrow, so it still retains even in Glory an Inclination to Re-union, and waits for a Day of Re-espousals: and to that Sense, some searching and judicious Men understand those words of *Job*, ch. 14. 14. *If a Man die, shall he live again?* viz. by a Resurrection: if so, then all the days of my appointed Separation, my Soul in Heaven shall wait till that Change come. And to the same sense is that cry of separated Souls, *Rev.* 6. 9, 10, 11. *How long, O Lord how long?* (i. e.) to the Consummation of all things, when Judgment shall be executed on them that killed our Bodies, and our Bodies so long absent, restored to us again? In that day of Resurrection, the Souls of the Saints come willingly from Heaven it self, to repossess their Bodies, and bring them to a Partnership with them in their Glory: for it is with the Soul in Heaven as it is with an Husband who is richly entertained, feasted, and lodged abroad, but his dear Wife is solitary and comfortless; it abates the completeness of his Joy. Therefore we say, The Saints Joy is not consummate till that Day.

There is an exercise for Faith, Hope, and Desires on this account in Heaven.

The Union of Soul and Body is natural, their Separation is not so: many benefits will redound to both by a Re-union, and the Resurrection of the Body is provided by God, as the grand relief against those prejudices and losses the Bodies of the Saints sustain by separation. I say not that the Propension or Inclination of the Soul to Re-union with its Body, is accompanied with any perturbation or Anxiety in its State of Separation; for it enjoys God, and in him a placid rest; and as the Body, so the Soul rests in hope; 'tis such a hope as disturbs not the rest of either: but when the time is come for the Soul to be Re-espoused, it is highly gratified by that second Marriage, glad it is to see its old dear Companion, as two Friends after a long Separation. And so much of the Evidence of the Soul's love to the Body.

Secondly, Next we are to enquire into the Grounds and Reasons of its Love and Inclination to the Body. And,

1. The fundamental Ground and Reason thereof will be found in their *Natural Union* with each other. There my Text lays it: *No Man ever yet hated his [own] flesh.* Mark, the Body is the Soul's own; they are strictly married and related to each other: the Soul hath a propriety in its Body, these two make up, or constitute one Person: True, they are not essentially one, they have far different Natures, but they are personally one; and tho' the Soul be *what* it was, after its separation, yet to make a Man the *who* he was, (*i. e.*) the same complete and perfect Person, they must be reunited. Hence springs its Love to the Body. Every Man loves his own, *John* 17. 19. All the World is in love with its own, and hence it cares to provide for its welfare, 1 *Tim.* 5. 8. *If any Man provide not for his own, he is worse than an Infidel.* For Nature teacheth all Men to do so. Why are Children dearer to Parents than to all others, but because they are their own? *Job* 19. 17. But our Wives, our Children, our Goods, are not so much our own as our Bodies are; this is the nearest of all Natural Unions.

And this is no more than necessary for the conversation of the species, else the Body would be neglected, exposed, and quickly perish, being had in no more regard than any other Body.

In this Propriety and Relation are involved the Reasons and Motives of our love to, and care over the Body, which is no more than what is necessary to their Preservation. For, were it not for this Propriety and Relation, no Man would be at any more cost or pains for his own Body, than for that of a Stranger. 'Tis Propriety which naturally draws Love, Care, and Tenderness along with it; and these are ordered by the Wisdom of Providence, for the conservation of the Body, which would quickly perish without it.

2. The Body is the Soul's ancient *Acquaintance*, and intimate *Friend*, with whom it hath assiduously and familiarly conversed from its beginning. They have been Partners in each others Comforts and Sorrows. They may say to each other, as *Miconius* did to his Collegue, with whom he had spent twenty Years in the Government of the *Thuringian Church*: *Cucurrimus, certavimus, laboravimus, pugnavimus, vicimus, & viximus conjunctissime*; We have run, laboured, fought, overcome, and lived most intimately and lovingly together. Consuetude and daily Conversation begets and conciliates Friendship and Love betwixt Creatures of contrary Natures: Let a Lamb be brought up with a Lion, and the Lion will express a Tenderness towards it, much more the Soul to its own Body.

3. The Body is the Soul's House and beloved Habitation, where it was born, and hath lived ever since it had a Being, and in which it hath enjoyed all its Comforts, natural and supernatural, which cannot but strengthen the Soul's Engagement to it. Upon this account the Apostle calls it the *Soul's home*, 2 Cor. 5. 6. *Whilst we are at home in the Body.* 'Tis true, this House is not so comfortable a Habitation, that it should be much desired by many Souls: we may say of many

many gracious Souls, that they pay a dear Rent for the House they dwell in; or, as it was said of *Galba*, *Anima Galbæ male habitat*, their Souls are but ill accommodated; but yet it is their home, and therefore beloved by them.

4. The Body is the Soul's Instrument by which it doth its Work and Business in the World, both natural and religious, *Rom.* 6. 13. Through the bodily senses it takes in all the natural Comforts of this World, and by the bodily Members it performs all its Duties and Services. When these are broken and laid aside by Death, the Soul knows it can work no more in that way it now doth, *John* 9. 4. *Eccles.* 9. 10. Natural Men love their Bodies for the natural Pleasures they are instrumental to convey to their Souls; and spiritual Men, for the use and service they are of to their own and others Souls, *Phil.* 1. 23.

5. The Body is the Soul's Partner in the benefit of Christ's Purchases. It was bought with the same Price, 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. sanctified by the same Spirit, 1 *Thess.* 5. 23. interested in the same Promises, *Matt.* 22. 32. and designed for the same Glory, 1 *Thess.* 4. 16, 17. So that we may say of it as it was said of *Augustine* and his Friend *Alippius*, they are *sanguine Christi conglutinati*, glewed together by the Blood of Christ. And thus of the grounds and reasons of its Love.

Infer. 1. Is it so? *Learn hence the mighty strength and prevalence of Divine Love, which over-powering all natural Affections, doth not only enable the Souls of Men to take their separation from the Body patiently, but to long for it ardently*, Phil. 1. 23. While some need *patience* to *die*, others need it as much to *live*, 2 Thess. 3. 5. 'Tis said, *Rev.* 12. 11. *They loved not their lives.* And indeed on these terms they first closed with Christ, *Luke* 12. 26. *to hate their lives for his sake*, (i. e.) to love them in so remiss a Degree, that whenever they shall come in competition with Christ, to regard them no more than the things we hate.

The love of Christ is to be the supreme love, and all others to be subordinate to it, or quenched by it. 'Tis not its own comfort in the Body it principally and ultimately designs and aims at, but Christ's Glory; and so this may be furthered by the death of the Body, its death thereupon becomes as eligible to the Soul as its Life, *Phil.* 1. 20. Oh! this is a high pitch of Grace, a great attainment, to say as one did, *Vivere renuo, ut Christo vivam*; I refuse life, to be with Christ: Or another, when he was asked whether he was willing to die? answered, *Illius est nolle mori, qui nolit ire ad Christum*; Let him be loth to die, that is loth to go to Christ. So, 2 *Cor.* 5. *We are willing rather to be absent from the Body, and present with the Lord.*

'Tis not every Christian that can arrive to this degree of Love; tho' they love Christ sincerely, yet they shrink from Death cowardly, and are loth to be gone. There are *two* sorts of Grounds upon which Christians may be loth to be unbodied; 1. Sinful. 2. Allowable.

1. The sinful and unjustifiable grounds are such as these, *viz.* (1) Guilt upon the Conscience, which will damp and discourage the Soul, and make it loth to die. It arms Death with terror, *the sting of Death is sin.* (2.) Unmortified Affections to the World, I mean in such a degree as is necessary to sweeten Death, and make a Man a Voluntier in that sharp Engagement with that last and dreadful Enemy. It is with our Hearts as with Fuel; if green, and full of sap, it will not burn; but if that be dried up, it catches presently. Mortification is the drying up of carnal Affections to the Creature, which is that that resists Death, as green Wood doth the fire. (3.) The weakness and cloudiness of Faith. You need Faith to die by, as well as to live by, *Heb.* 11. 13. *All these died by Faith.* The less strength there is in Faith, the more in Death. A strong Believer welcomes the Messengers of Death, when a weak one, unless extraordinarily assisted, trembles at them.

2. There are grounds on which we may desire a longer continuance in the Body, *warrantably* and allowably: As (1.) to do him yet more service in our Bodies, before we lay them down. This the Saints have pleaded for longer Life, *Psal.* 30. 9. *Psal.* 88. 11, 12, 13. and *Isa.* 38. 18, 19. (2.) To see the Clouds of God's anger dispelled, whether publick or personal, and a clear Light break out e'er we die; *Psal.* 27. 13. (3.) They may desire with submission to outlive the days of Persecution, and not to be delivered into the hands of cruel Men, but come to their Graves in peace, *Psal.* 31. 15. and 2 *Thess.* 3. 2. that they may be delivered from absurd Men.

3. But tho' some Christians shun Death upon a sinful account, and others upon a justifiable one; yet others there are, who seeing their Title clear, their Work done, and relishing the Joys of Heaven in the prelibations of Faith, are willing to be unclothed, and to be with Christ. Their love to Christ hath extinguished in them the love of Life; and they can say with *Paul*, Acts 21. 13. *I am ready. Ignatius* longed to come to those Beasts that were to devour him; and to many of the Primitive Christians Christ was so dear, that their Lives were cheap, and low priz'd things for his Enjoyment. And here indeed is the glory and triumph of a Christian's Faith and Love to Christ: For (1.) it enables him to part chearfully with what he sees and feels, for what his Eyes yet never saw, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. *Whom having not seen, ye love.* (2.) To part with what is dearest on Earth, and lies nearest the Heart of all he enjoys, for Christ's sake. (3.) To reconcile his Heart to what is most abhorrent and formidable to Nature. (4.) To endure the greatest of pains and torments to be with him. (5.) To cast himself into the vast Ocean of Eternity, the most amazing change, to be with Christ. Oh the glorious Conquests of Love!

Infer. 2. *Then the Apostacy of unregenerate Professors in times of imminent Danger is not to be wondred at.* They will and must warp from Christ, when their Lives are in hazard for him. The love of the Body will certainly prevail over their love to Christ and Religion. *Amor meus pondus meum.* Self-love will now draw. Love is the weight of the Soul, which inclines and determines it, in the competition of Interests, and the predominant Interest always carries it. Every unregenerate Professor loves his own Life more than Christ, prefers his Body before his Soul; such a one may upon divers accounts, as Education, Example, slight Convictions of Conscience, or ostentation of Gifts, fall into a Profession of Religion, and continue a long time in that Profession, before he visibly recede from Christ. *Hope* of the Resurrection of the Interest of Religion in the World; *Shame* of retracting his Profession; *Applause* of his Zeal and Constancy in

higher Trials; the Peace of his own Conscience, and many such Motives, may prevail with a carnal Professor to endure a while; but when dangers of Life come to an height, they are gone, *Matth.* 24. 8, 9, 10. And therefore our Lord tells us, That they who hate not their Lives, cannot be his *Disciples*, Luke 12. 26. Now will they lose their Lives by saving them, *Mat.* 16. 25. And the Reasons are plain and forcible. For,

1. Now is the proper season for the predominant Love to be discovered, it can be hid no longer: And the love of Life is the predominant Love in all such persons; for do but compare it with their love to Christ, and it will easily be found so. They love their Lives *truly* and *really*, they love Christ but feignedly and pretendedly; and the *real* will and must prevail over the *feigned* Love. They love their Lives *fervently* and intensely, they love Christ but *coldly* and *remisly*: And the fervent Love will prevail over the remiss Love. Their love to their Bodies hath a root *in themselves*, their Love to Christ hath no root in themselves, *Mat.* 13.21. And that which hath a root mustneeds outlast and outlive thatwhich hathnone.

2. Because when Life is in hazard, Conscience will work in them by way of discouragement; 'twill hint the danger of their eternal state to them, and tell them they may cast away their Souls for ever in a Bravado; for tho' the Cause they are called to suffer for be good, yet their Condition is bad; and if the *Condition* be not good as well as the *Cause*, a Man is lost for ever, tho' he suffer for it, 1 *Cor.* 13. 3. Conscience, which encourages and supports the Upright, will daunt and appal the Hypocrite, and tell him, he is not on the same terms in Sufferings that other Men are.

3. Because then all the Springs by which their Profession was fed and maintained, fail and dry up. Now the Wind that was in their *backs* is come about, and blows a storm in their *faces*; no Preferments nor Honours are now to be had from Religion. These mens Sufferings are a perfect surprize to them, for they never counted the Cost, *Luke* 14. 28. Now they must stand alone, and resist unto Blood, and sacrifice all Visibles for Invisibles; and this they can never do.

Oh therefore Professors look to your Hearts, try their predominant Love; compare your love to Christ with that to your Lives. Now the like question will be put to you that once was put to *Peter*, John 21. 15. *Lovest thou me more than these?* What say you to this? You think now, you do, but alas, your love is not yet brought to the fire to be tried: You think you hate sin, but will you be able to strive unto blood against sin? *Heb.* 12. 4. Will you chuse suffering rather than sin? *Job* 36. 21. O try your love to Christ before God bring it to the trial. Sure I am, the love of Life will make you warp in the hour of temptation; except,

1. You sat down and counted the Cost of Religion before-hand: If you set out in Procession only for a *Walk*, not for a *Journey*; if you go to Sea for *Recreation*, not for a *Voyage*; if you be mounted among other Processors only to *take the Air*, and not to engage an *Enemy* in sharp and bloody Encounters, you are gone.

2. Except you live by Faith, and not by Sense, *Cor.* 4. 18. *Whilst we look not at the things that are seen.* You must ballance present Sufferings with future Glory. You must go by that account and reckoning, *Rom.* 8. 18. or you are gone. *Now the Just shall live by Faith*; and if Faith don't *support*, your fears will certainly sink you.

3. Except you be sincere and plain-hearted in Religion, driving no design in it but to save your Souls; else see your lot in that Example, 2 *Tim.* 4. 10. *Demas hath forsaken me.* O take heed of a cunning, subdolous, double heart in Religion; be plain, be open, care not if your Ends lie open to the eyes of all the World.

4. Except you experience the power of Religion in your own Souls, as well as wear the name of it. O my Brethren, 'tis not a name to live that will do you service now. Many Ships are gone down to the bottom, for all the brave names of the *Success*, the *Prosperous*, the *Happy Return*, and so will you. There is a knowing in our selves by taste and real experience, *Heb.* 10. 34. which doth a Soul more service in a suffering hour, than all the splendid Names and Titles in the World.

5. Except you make it your daily work to crucify the Flesh, deny self for Christ, in all the Forms and Interests of it. He that can't deny himself, will deny Jesus Christ, *Mat.* 16. 24. let him deny himself, take up his Cross, and follow me, else he can't be my Disciple. Ponder these things in your Hearts, whilst yet God delays the Trial.

Infer. III. If the Souls of Men be naturally so strongly inclin'd and affected towards the Body; *then hence you may plainly see the Wisdom of God in all the Afflictions and Burdens he lays upon his People in this World, and find that all is but enough to wean off their Souls from their Bodies, and make them willing to part with them.*

The Life of the Saints in this World, is generally a burdened and a groaning Life; 2 *Cor.* 5. 2. *In this Tabernacle we groan, being burdened.* Here the Saints feel, (1) A burden of Sin. *Rom.* 7. 24. this is a dead and a sinking weight. (2.) A burden of Affliction; of this all are partakers, *Heb.* 12. tho' not all in an equal degree, or in the same kind, yet all have their burdens equal to, and even beyond their own strength to support it; 2 *Cor.* 1. 8. *pressed above measure.* (3.) A burden of inward troubles for Sin, and outward troubles in the Flesh both together, so had *Job*, *Heman*, *David*, &c.

Certainly this befals them not, (1.) Casually, *Job* 5. 6. It rises not out of the Dust: (2) Nor because God loves and regards them not, for they are fruits of his love; *Heb.* 12. 6. *whom he loveth he correcteth:* (3.) Nor because he takes pleasure in our Groans; *Lament.* 3. *To tread under his feet the Prisoners of the Earth the Lord hath no pleasure:* 'Tis not for his own *pleasure*, but his Childrens *profit*, *Heb.* 12. 10. And among the profits that result from these burdens, this is not the least, to make you less fond of the Body than you would else be, and more willing to be gone to your everlasting Rest. And certainly all the diseases and pains we endure in the Body, whether they be upon inward or outward accounts, by Passion or Compassion from God or Men, will be found but enough to wean us, and loose off our Hearts from the fond love of Life. Afflictions are bitter things to our taste, *Ruth* 1. 20. so bitter, that *Naomi* thought a name of a contrary signification fitter for her afflicted Condition; call me *Marah* (*i.e.*) bitter, not *Naomi*, pleasant, beautiful. And the Church, *Lam.* 3. 19. calls them Wormwood and Gall.

The

The great design of God in afflicting them, is the same that a tender Mother projects in putting Wormwood to her Breast when she would wean the Child.

It hath been observed by some discreet and grave Ministers, that before their remove from one place to another, God hath permitted and ordered some weaning Providence to befal them; either denying wonted success to their labour, or alienating and cooling the affections of their People towards them, which not only makes the manner of their departure more easy, but the grounds of it more clear. Much so it falls out in our natural Death, the comfort of the World is imbittered to us before we leave it; the longer we live in it, the less we shall like it. We overlive most of our Comforts which engaged our Hearts to it, that we may more freely take our leave of it. It were good for Christians to observe the voice of such Providences as these, and answer the Designs of them in a greater willingness to die.

1. Is thy Body which was once hale and vigorous, now become a crazy, sickly, pained Body to thee, neither useful to God, nor comfortable to thee? a *Tabernacle* to groan and sigh in? And little hopes it will be recovered to a better temper; God hath ordained this to make thee willing to be divorced from it: the less *desirable* Life is, the less *formidable* Death will be.

2. Is thy Estate decayed and blasted by Providence, so that thy life which was once full of Creature-comforts, is now fill'd with Cares and Anxieties; O 'tis a weaning Providence to thee, and bespeaks thee the more chearfully to bid the World farewel. The less comfort it gives you, the less it should entangle and engage you. We little know with what aking Hearts, and pensive Breasts, many of God's People walk up and down, tho' for Religion, or Reputation sake they put a good face upon it; but by these things, God is bespeaking and preparing them for a better State.

3. Is an Husband, a Wife, or dear Children dead, and with them the comfort of Life laid in the Dust? why this the Lord sees necessary to do to persuade you to come after willingly? 'Tis the cutting a sunder the roots in the Earth, that thou mayst fall the more easily. O how many stroaks must God give at our Names, Estates, Relations, and Health, before we will give way to the last stroak of Death that fells us to the ground?

4. Do the times frown upon Religion? Do all things seem to threaten stormy times at hand? Are desirable Assemblies scattered? Nothing but sorrows and sufferings to be expected in this World? By these things God will imbitter the Earth, and sweeten Heaven to his People.

5. Is the beauty and sweetness of Christian Society defaced and decayed? Does that Communion which was wont to be pithy, substantial, spiritual, and edifying, become either frothy or contentious; so that thy Soul has no pleasure in it; This also is a weaning Providence to our Souls; *Strigelius* desired to die that he might be freed *ab implacabilibus Theologorum odiis*, from the Wranglings and Contentions that were in his time. Our fond affection to the Body requires all this, and much more to wean and mortify them.

Infer. IV. *How comfortable is the Doctrine of the Resurrection to Believers, which assures them of receiving their Bodies again, tho' they part with them for a time!*

Believers must die as well as others; their Union with Christ privileges them not from a Separation from their Bodies, *Rom.* 8. 10. *Heb.* 9. 27. But yet they have special grounds of Consolation against this doleful separation above all others. For,

1. Tho' they part with them, yet they part in hopes of receiving them again, 1 *Thess.* 4. 13, 14. They take not a final leave of them when they die. Husbandmen cast their Seed corn into the Earth chearfully and willingly, because they part with it in hope; so should we when we commit our Bodies to the Earth at Death.

2. Tho' Death separate these dear Friends from each other, yet it cannot separate either the one or other from Christ, *Luke* 20. 37, 38. *I am the God of* Abraham, *&c.* Your very Dust is God's, and the Grave rots not the bond of the Covenant.

3. The very same Body we lay down at Death, we shall assume again at the Resurrection; not only the same *specifical*, but the same *numerical* Body; *Job* 19. 25, 26. *With these Eyes shall I see God.*

4. The unbodied Soul shall not find the want of its Body so as to afflict or disquiet it; nor the Body the want of its Soul; but the one shall be at rest in Heaven, and the other sweet asleep in the Grave; and all that long interval shall slide away without any afflicting sense of each other's absence. The time will be long, *Job* 14. 12. but if it were longer, it cannot be afflicting, considering how the Soul is clothed immediately, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1, 2. and how the Body sleeps sweetly in Jesus, 1 *Thess.* 4. 14.

5. When the day of their re-espousals is come, the Soul will find the Body so transformed and improved, that it shall never receive prejudice from it any more, but a singular addition to its Happiness and Glory. Now it clogs us: Mat. 26. 41. *The Spirit indeed is willing, but the Flesh is weak.* It incumbers us with cares to provide for it, and eats up time and thoughts; but then it will be a spiritual Body, 1 *Cor.* 15. 43. like to the *Angels* for manner of subsistence, *Luke* 20. 35, 36. 1 *Cor.* 6. 13. and, which is the highest step of Glory, like unto Christ's glorious Body, *Phil.* 3. 21. Well therefore might the Father say, *Resurrectio mortuorum est Consolatio Christianorum*; The Resurrection of the Dead is the Consolation of Christians.

Use II. *Of Reproof.* In the next place let me press you to regulate your love to your Bodies, by the rules of Religion and right Reason: I must press you to love them, tho' Nature it self teacheth you so to do; but I press you to love them as Christians, as Men that understand the right use and improvement of their Bodies. There are *two* sorts of errors in our love to the Body, one in *Defect*, the other in *Excess*; both come fitly here to be censured and healed.

First, Some offend in the *defect* of love to their own Bodies, who use them as if they had no love for them, whose Souls act as if they were enemies to their own Bodies: They do not *formally* and directly hate them, but consequentially and *eventually* they may be said to hate them, and that

(1.) By defiling them with filthy Lusts; so the Apostle speaks, 1 *Cor.* 6. 18. *Every sin that Ma*

Man doth, is without the Body, but he that committeth Adultery sinneth against his own Body: in other sins 'tis the Instrument, but here 'tis both Instrument and Object; not only God, but your own Bodies are abused, and wronged by it. The Body may be considered *two* ways, either. 1, As our Vessel; or
2. As the Spirit's Temple.

1. As our *Vessel* or Instrument for natural and spiritual uses and services: and on that account we should not injure or defile it, 1 *Thess.* 4. 4, 5. but possess it in Sanctification and Honour. The lusts of Uncleanness, Gluttony, and Drunkenness quench the vigour, blast the beauty, and destroy the health and honour of the Body; and so render it both naturally and morally unfit for the service and use of the Soul.

2. And the injury is yet greater, if we consider it as the Spirit's *Temple*. On this ground the Apostle strongly convinceth, and dissuadeth Christians from these abuses of the *Body*, 1 *Cor.* 6. 15, 16. He argues from the Dignity God will put upon our Bodies by the Resurrection, *ver.* 13, 14. They are to be transformed, and made like unto Christ's glorious Body; and from the Honour he has already put upon the Bodies of the Saints in their union with Christ, *ver.* 15, 16. They, as well the Soul, are ingrafted into him, and joined with him; they are his Temples, to be dedicated, hallowed, and consecrated to his service. O let them not be made a *sink* for lusts, or meer strainers for meat and drink.

(2.) By *macerating* them with covetous lusts, denying them their due comforts and refreshments, and unmercifully burdening them with labours and sorrows about things that perish. (1) Some deny their Bodies due comforts and refreshments, which the natural and positive Laws of God both allow and command. Their Souls are cruel Step-mothers to their Bodies, and keep them too short; not out of a prudent and Christian design to starve their lusts, but to advance their estates. Of this evil *Solomon* speaks, *Eccles.* 6. 22. *There is an evil which I have seen under the Sun, and it is common among men; A man to whom God hath given Riches, Wealth and Honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his Soul of all that he desireth; yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it. This is vanity, and it is an evil disease.* *Tenacity* is a disease of the Soul, like that of a *Dyscracy* in the stomach, which so indispoſeth it that it cannot receive with any appetite or delight the best refreshments at a plentiful Table. (2) And others there are that wrong and abuse their own Bodies by laying unreasonable and unmerciful loads upon them, especially loads of grief and sorrow, wasting and weakning them beyond all rules of Reason or Religion. If a friend or relation die, they have less mercy on their own Bodies, than a conscientious Man hath on the Horse he rides. Cares and sorrows are as deadly to the Body as a Sword, 1 *Tim.* 6. 10. Intense and immoderate Griefs about worldly losses and crosses have slain their ten thousands: and which is strange, the Soul seems to take a certain kind of Pleasure in loading and tormenting the Body. There is a real truth in that strange Expression of *Seneca*, Sorrow it self hath a certain kind of pleasure attending it.

Inest quiddam dulce tristitiæ. Senec. Ep. 99.

The Souls of some Mourners do willingly excite and provoke their own Griefs, when they begin to abate, which is like the whetting of the Knife that grows dull, to make it cut the deeper into the Body. Thus, as *Seneca* observes, some Parents that have lost their beloved Children, willingly call to mind their pleasant Sayings, and pretty Actions, to find a kind of pleasure in a fresh shower of Tears for them; when, poor hearts! sorrow hath so broken them already, that they need Consolations under their present Sorrows, rather than irritations of new ones. And the Soul's unmercifulness to the Body, *is in* such Cases farther discovered by its obstinate refusal of all that is comforting and relieving. So it is said of *Rachel*, Jerem. 31. 15. *Rachel weeping for her children, would not be comforted, because they were not.* So the *Israelites* harkned not unto *Moses*, because of the anguish of Spirit, and the cruel Bondage, *Exod.* 6. 9. Thus we studiously rake together, and exasperate whatsoever is piercing, wounding, and overwhelming; and shut our Ears to all that is relieving and supporting, which is cruelty to our own Bodies, and that which hath so far broken the health and strength of some Bodies, that they are never like to be useful instruments to the Soul any more in this World; such deep and desperate Wounds have their own Souls given them by immoderate Grief, as will never be perfectly healed but by the Resurrection. Of those wounds the body may say, as it is *Zech.* 13. 6. These are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house (or by the hand) of my friend; thus my own Soul hath dealt cruelly and unmercifully with me.

Cum occurrant sermones eorum jucundi, conversatio hilaris, officiosa pietas; tunc oculi velut in gaudio relaxantur. Id. ibid.

Secondly, Others offend in the *Excess* and extravagancy of their love to the Body, and these are a hundred to one in number with those that sin in defect of love. My friends, upon a due search it will be found, that the love of our Souls generally degenerates into fondness and folly: There is but little well tempered and ordinate love found among Men. We make fondlings, yea, we make *Idols* of our own Bodies; we rob God, yea our own Souls, to give to the Body. It is not a natural and kindly heat of love, but a meer feverish heat which preys upon the very Spirits of Religion, which is found with many of us. This feverish distemper may be discovered by the beating of our pulse in 3 or 4 particulars.

(1.) This appears by our sinful indulgence to our whining appetites. We give the flesh whatsoever it craves, and can deny it nothing it desires; pampering the Body, to the great injury and hazard of the Soul. Some have their Conversation in the lusts of the flesh, as it is, *Eph.* 2. 3. trading only in those things that please and pamper the flesh: *They sow to the flesh*, Gal. 6. 8. (*i. e.*) all their studies and labours are but the *sowing of the seeds of pleasure to the flesh.* Not a handful of spiritual seed sown in Prayer

for the Soul all the day long; what the Body craves, the obsequious Soul like a slave, is at its beck to give it. *Tit.* 3. 3. *Serving divers lusts and pleasures*; attending to every knock and call, to fulfil the desires of the flesh. O how little do these Men understand the life of Religion, or the great design of Christianity? which consists in mortifying, and not pampering and gratifying the Body, *Rom.* 14. 13, 14. And according to that rule all serious Christians order their Bodies, giving them what is needful to keep them serviceable and useful to the Soul, but not gratifying their irregular desires; giving what their *wants*, not what their *wantonness* calls for. So *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 9. 27. I beat it down, and keep it under; he understood it as his *Servant* not his *Master*. He knew that *Hagar* would quickly perk up, and domineer over *Sarah*, expect more attendance than the Soul, except it were kept under: These two verbs, ὑπωπιάζω and παιδαγωγῶ are very emphatical; the former signifies to make it black and blew with buffeting, the other, to bring it under by checks and rebukes, as Masters that understand their Place and Authority use to do with insolent and wanton Servants.

It was a rare Expression of a *Heathen*, *Major sum, & ad majora natus, quàm ut corporis mei sim mancipium*: I am greater, and born to greater things, than that I should be a drudg or vassal to my Body. And it was the saying of a pious Divine, when he felt the Flesh rebellious and wanton, *Ego faciam, asselle, ut non calcitres*: I will make thee, thou Ass, that thou shalt not kick. I know the superstitious Papists place much of Religion in these external things, but tho' they abuse them to an ill purpose, there is a necessary and lawful use of these abridgments and restraints upon the Body; and it will be impossible to mortify, and starve our Lusts, without a due rigour and severity to our Flesh. But how little are many acquainted with these things? They deal with their Bodies as *David* with *Adonijah*, of whom it's said, 1 *Kings* 1. 6. His Father had not displeased him at any time, in saying, Why hast thou done so? And just so our Flesh requites us by its Rebellions and Treasons against the Soul; it seeks the life of the Soul, which seeks nothing more than its content and pleasure: this is not ordinate love, but fondness and folly, and what we shall bitterly repent for at last.

(2.) It appears by our sparing and favouring of them, in the necessary uses and services we have for them in Religion. Many will rather starve their Souls, than work and exercise their Bodies, or disturb their sluggish rest: thus the idle excuses and pretences of endangering our Health, oftentimes put by the duties of Religion, or at least lose the fittest and propereſt season for them: We are lazying upon our beds when we should be wrestling upon our knees: The World is suffered to get the start of Religion in the Morning, and so Religion is never able to overtake it all the day long. This was none of *David*'s course, he prevented the dawning of the Morning, and cried, *Psal.* 119. 147. and *Psal.* 5. 3. *My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord, in the morning will I direct my Prayer unto thee, and will look up.* And indeed we should consecrate unto God the freshest and fittest parts of our time, when our bodily Senses are most vigorous; and we would do so (except God by his providence disable us) were our Hearts fully set for God, and Religion lay with weight upon our Spirits.

Some I confess cannot receive this injunction, being naturally disabled by prevailing Infirmities; but those that can, ought to do so. But O how many slothful excuses doth the Flesh invent to put off duty! We shall injure our Health, *&c.* O the hypocrisy of such pleas! If profit or pleasure call us up, we have no shifts, but can rise early, and sit up late.

O Friends, why hath God given you Bodies, if not to waste and wear them out in his service, and the service of your own Souls? if your Bodies must not be put to it, and exercised this way, where is the Mercy of having a Body? If a stately Horse were given you on this condition, that you must not ride or work him, what benefit would such a gift be to you? Your Bodies must and will wear out, and it's better wear them with working, than with rusting: we are generally more solicitous to live long, than to live usefully and serviceably; and it may be our Health had been more precious in the eyes of God, if it had been less precious in our own eyes. 'Tis just with God to destroy that Health with diseases, which he sees we would cast away in slothfulness and idleness. Think with thy self, had such a Soul as *Timothy*'s or *Gaius*'s been blest with such a Body as thine, so strong and vigorous, so apt and able for service, they would have honoured God more in it in a day, than perhaps you do in a year. Certainly this is not Love, but Laziness; not a due improvement, but a sinful neglect and abuse of the Body, to let it rust out into idleness, which might be imployed so many ways for God, for your own and others Souls. Well, remember Death will shortly dissolve them, and then they can be of no more use; and if you expect God should put Glory and Honour upon them at the Resurrection, use them for God now, with a faithful self-denying diligence.

(3.) It appears by our cowardly shrinking from dangers that threaten them, when the Glory of God, our own and others Salvation, bid us expose and not regard them. Some there are, that rather than they will adventure their Flesh to the rage of Man, will hazard their Souls to the wrath of God. They are too tender to suffer pain or restraint for Christ, but consider not what sufferings are prepared for the fearful and unbelieving in the World to come, *Rev.* 21. 8. How many sad examples do the Church Histories of antient and latter times afford us, of Men who consulting with flesh and blood in time of danger, have in pity to their Bodies ruined their Souls!

Here the Soul receives a deadly wound upon it self, to ward it off from the Body. So did Spira.

There be but few like-minded with *Paul*, who set a low price upon his liberty or life for Christ, *Acts* 20. 24. or with those worthy *Jews*,

Jews, Dan. 3.28. who yielded their *Bodies* to preserve their *Consciences*. Few of *Chrysostom*'s mind, who told the *Empress, Nil nisi peccatum timeo*, I fear nothing but Sin; or of *Basil*'s who told the *Emperor*, God threatned Hell, whereas he threatned but a Prison. That is a remarkable Rule that Christ gives us, *Mat.* 10.28. The sum of it is, to set God against Man, the Soul against the Body, and Hell against temporal sufferings; and so surmounting these low fleshly considerations, to cleave to our duty in the face of dangers. You read, *Gal.* 1.16. how in pursuit of duty, tho' surrounded with danger, *Paul* would not confer or *consult with flesh and blood*, i.e. ask its opinion which were best, or stay for its consent till it were willing to suffer; he understood not that the Flesh had any voice at the Council-table in his Soul, but willing or unwilling, if duty call for it, he was resolved to hazard it for God.

We have a great many little *Politicians* among us, who think to husband their Lives and Liberties a great deal better than other plain-hearted and too forward Christians do: but these *Politicks* will be their *perdition*, and their craft will betray them to ruin. They will lose their Lives by saving them, when others will save them by losing them. *Matth.* 10.39. For the interest of the Body depends on and follows the safety of the Souls as the Cabin doth the Ship.

O my Friends, let me beg you not to love your Bodies into Hell, and your Souls too for their sakes: be not so scar'd at the sufferings of the Body, as with poor *Spira* to dash them both against the wrath of the great and terrible God. Most of those Souls that are now in Hell, are there upon the account of their indulgence to the flesh, they could not deny the *Flesh*, and now are denied by *God*. They could not suffer from *Men*, and now must suffer the vengeance of *eternal Fire*.

(4.) In a word; it appears we love them fondly and irregularly, in that we cannot with any patience think of death and separation from them. How do some men fright at the very name of Death! and no Arguments can persuade them seriously to think of an unbodied and separated state. 'Tis as Death to them, to bring their thoughts close to that ungrateful Subject. A Christian that loves his Body regularly and moderately, can look into his own Grave with a composed mind, and speak familiarly of it, as *Job* 17.14. And *Peter* speaks of the putting off of his Body by Death, as a man would of the putting off of his Cloaths at night, 2 *Pet.* 1.13, 14. And certainly such men have a great advantage above all others, both as to the tranquillity of their Life and Death. You know a parting time must come, and the more fond you are of them, the more bitter and doleful that time will be. Nothing, except the guilt, and terrible charges of Conscience, put men into terrors at death, more than our fondness of the Body. I confess, Christless persons have a great deal of reason to be shy of death; their dying day is their undoing day: but for Christians to startle and fright at it, is strange, considering how great a friend Death will be to them that are in Christ. What are you afraid of? What, to go to Christ? to be freed of Sin and Affliction too soon? Certainly this hath not been so comfortable a habitation to you, that you should be loth to exchange it for a heavenly one.

Use III. *Of Exhortation.*

To conclude; Seeing there is so strict a Friendship and tender Affection betwixt Soul and Body, let me persuade every Soul of you to express your love to the Body, by labouring to get Union with Jesus Christ, and thereby to prevent the utter ruin of both to all Eternity.

Souls, if you love your selves, or the Bodies you dwell in, shew it by your preventing care in season, lest they be cast away for ever. How can you say you love them, when you daily expose them to the everlasting wrath of God, by employing them as Weapons of Unrighteousness, to fight against him that formed them? You feed and pamper them on Earth, you give them all the delights and pleasures you can procure for them in this World; but you take no care what shall become of them, nor your Souls neither, after Death hath seperated them. Oh cruel Souls! cruel not to others, but to your selves, and to your own flesh, which you pretend so much love to! Is this your love to your Bodies? What, to employ them in Satan's service on Earth, and then to be cast as a Prey to him for ever in Hell? You think the rigor and mortification of the Saints, their abstemiousness and self-denial, their cares, fears, and diligence, to be too great severity to their Bodies: but they know, these are the most real evidences of their true love to them; they love them too well to cast them away as you do. Alas! your love to the Body doth not consist in feeding, and cloathing, and pleasing it; but in getting it united to Christ, and made the *Temple of the Holy Ghost*; in using it for God, and dedicating it to God.

I beseech you, Brethren, by the Mercies of God, to present your Bodies living Sacrifices to God, which is your reasonable service, *Rom.* 12.1. The Soul should look upon the Body as a wise Parent upon a rebellious or wanton Child, that would (if left to it self) quickly bring it self to the *Gallows*; the Father looks on him with compassion and melting bowels, and saith, with the Rod in his hand, and Tears in his eyes, *My Child, my naughty, disobedient, headstrong Child, I resolve to chastise thee severely, I love thee too well to suffer thee to be ruin'd, if my care or corrections may prevent it.* So should our Souls evidence their love to, and care over their own rebellious flesh. 'Tis cruelty, not love or pity, to indulge them to their own destruction.

Except you have *gracious Souls*, you shall never have *glorified Bodies*: except your Souls be united with Christ, the happiness of your Bodies as well as Souls is lost to all Eternity. Know you not that the everlasting condition of your Bodies follows and depends on the Interest your Souls now get in Christ? Oh! that this one sad Truth might sink deep into all our considerations this day; That if your Bodies be snares to your Souls, and your Souls be now regardless of the future estate of themselves and them; assuredly they will have a bitter parting at Death, a terrible meeting a-

gain at the Resurrection, and horrid reflections upon each other, naturally charging their Ruin upon each other to all Eternity. Whilst they that are in Christ part in hope, meet with joy, and bless God for each other for evermore.

II Pet. I. 13, 14.

Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this Tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance.

Knowing that shortly I must put off this my Tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.

AT the 10th of this Chapter, the Apostle sums up his foregoing Precepts and Exhortations in one great and most important Duty, the *making sure of their Calling and Election.* This Exhortation he enforceth on them by a most solemn and weighty motive, *ver.* 11. *Even an abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom.* No Work of greater necessity or difficulty, than to make sure our Salvation, no Argument more forcible and prevalent, than an easie and free entrance into Glory at death, an εὐσυναίσια, a sweet and comfortable dissolution, to enter the Port of Glory before a Wind, with our full lading of Comfort, Peace and Joy in believing, our Sails full, and our Streamers flying: Oh! how much better is this, than to lie Windbound, I mean Heart-bound, at the Harbour's mouth! tos'd up and down with fears, doubts, and manifold temptations, making many a-board to fetch the *Harbour*; for so much is signified in his figurative and allusive expression, *ver.* 11.

And for their encouragement in this great and difficult work, he engageth himself by promise to give them all the assistance he can, whilst God should continue his life; and knowing that would be but a little while, he resolves to use his utmost endeavour to secure these things in their Memories after his death, that they might not die with him. This is the general scope and order of the Words.

Wherein more particularly we have,

1. His exemplary industry and diligence in his Ministerial Work.
2. The Consideration stimulating and provoking him thereunto.

1. His exemplary industry and diligence in his Ministerial Work. In which two things are remarkable, *viz.* (1.) The quality of his work, which was *to stir them up, by putting them in remembrance,* to keep the heavenly flame of Love and Zeal lively upon the Altar of their Hearts. He well knew what a sleepy Disease the best Christians are troubled with, and therefore he had need to be stirring them up, and awakening them to their Duty. (2.) The *constancy* of his Work, *as long as I am in this Tabernacle*; (*i. e.*) as long as I live in this World. The Body is here called a *Tabernacle,* in respect of its moveableness and frailty, and in opposition to that House made without hands, *eternal in the Heavens.* And it is observable how he limits and bounds his serviceableness to them by his commoration in his Tabernacle or Body, as well knowing after death he could be no longer useful to them, or any others in this World. Death puts an end to all our Ministerial usefulness: but till that time he judged it meet, and becoming him, to be aiding and assisting their Faith: Our Life and Labour must end together.

Διεγείρειν, excitare, expergefacere, *i. e.* mentes vestras tanquam dormitantes ac torpescentes, &c. *Poli Synopsis.*

2. We have here the Motive or Consideration stimulating and provoking him to this diligence, knowing that I must shortly *put off this Tabernacle, even as the Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me*: In which words he gives an account of, (1.) The speediness; (2.) Necessity; (3.) Voluntariness of his Death, and the way and means by which he knew it. All these must be considered singly and apart, and then valued all together, as they amount to a weighty Argument or Motive to excite him to a diligence in his Duty.

(1.) He reflects upon the speediness or near approach of his death. *I must, (shortly) put off this my Tabernacle*; which is a form of Speech of the same importance with that of *Paul,* 2 Tim. 4. 6. *The time of my departure is at hand,* my time in the Body is almost at an end.

Ταχινὴ. brevi futurum, *Every Christian knows not the time of his death, as Peter did, by special Revelation. ——But tho' we know it not by a word spoken to us in particular, we know it by a word written for all in common,* Eccl. 9. 5. *The living know that they must die.*

(2.) The necessity of his death: It is not I *may,* but I *must* put off this my Tabernacle; yea, I must put it off shortly; for so the Lord had shewed him: Christ had signified it expresly to him, *John* 21. 18, 19. And besides this, most Expositors think this Clause refers to some special Vision or Revelation which *Peter* had of the time and manner of his own death: so that besides the natural necessity, or the inevitableness of his death by the Law of Nature, he was certified of it by special Revelation. We have here also,

(3.) The voluntariness of his death; for Voluntariness is consistent enough with the necessity of the Event. I must put off, or lay down my Tabernacle; he saith not, I must be torn by violence from it, but I must *depose,* or *lay it down. Camero* will have the word here used for Death, properly to signifie the laying down of one's Garments: he made no more of putting off his Body than his Garments.

Deponere dicit, ut significet se voluntariè mortem obiturum esse pro Christo. *Pool.*

Upon the consideration of the whole matter, the speediness of his death, which he knew to be at hand; the necessity of it, that when it came he must be gone from, and could be no more useful to them; and his own inclination to be with Christ in a better state, being as willing to be gone as a weary Traveller to be at home; he judged it meet, or becoming him, as he was called of Christ to feed his Sheep, as he was gifted extraordinarily for the Church's service, full of spiritual Excellencies, all which in a short time would be taken away from them by death:

I

I say, upon all these accounts he could not but judge it meet to be stirring them up, and every way striving to be as useful as he might.

Hence the Note will be,

Doct. *How strong soever the Affections and Inclinations of Souls are to the fleshly Tabernacles they now live in, yet they must put them off, and that speedily.*

(1) *The certainty of death,* Job 16. 22.

The point lies very plain before us in the Scriptures. That is a remarkable expression we have in *Job* 16. 22. *When a few years are come, I shall go the way whence I shall not return.* In the Hebrew it is, When the years of number, or my numbred years are come; years so numbred, that they are circumscribed in a very short period of Time. When those few years are past, then I must go to my long home, my everlasting abode, never more to return to this World: *The way whence I shall not return*; elsewhere called *the way of all flesh*, Josh. 23. 15. and *the way of all the Earth*, 1 King. 2. 2.

Anni numeri (*i. e.*) qui numerati sunt adeo ut brevissima periodo circumscripti.

There is no man that hath power over the Spirit to retain the Spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death, and there is no discharge in that War. Eccl. 8. 8. By Spirit understand the natural Spirit, or breath of Life, which, as I shewed before, connects or ties the Soul and Body together. This Spirit no man can retain in the day of death. *We can* (as one speaks) *as well stop the Chariot of the Sun when posting to night, and chase away the shadows of the evening, as escape this hour of darkness that is coming upon us.*

Mortem (*inquit Senaca*) nulla diligentia evitat, nulla fœlicitas domat, nulla potentia vincit.

A Man may escape the Wars by pleading privilege of years, or weakness of Body, or the King's Protection, or by sending another in his room; but in this War the Press is so strict, that it admits no dispensation; young or old, weak or strong, willing or unwilling, all's one, into the Field we must go, and look that last and most dreadful Enemy in the face. 'Tis in vain to think of sending another in our room, for no man dieth by Proxy; or to think of compounding with Death, as those self-deluding Fools did, *Isa.* 28. 15. who thought they had been discharged of the Debt by seeing the Sergeant: No, no! there is no discharge in that War. *Nihil prodest ora concludere, & vitam fugientem retinere*, saith *Hierom* on that Text; Let us shut our mouths never so close, struggle against death never so hard, there is no more retaining the Spirit, than a Woman can retain the Fruit of her Womb, when the full time of her deliverance is come. Suppose a Man were sitting upon a Throne of Majesty, surrounded with armed Guards, or in the midst of a College of expert and learned Physicians, Death will pass all these Guards to deliver thee the fatal Message: Neither can Arts help thee, when Nature it self gives thee up.

The Law of Mortality binds all, good and bad, young and old, the most useful and desirable Saints, whom the World can worst spare, as well as useless and undesirable Sinners, *Rom.* 8. 10. *And if Christ* (or tho' Christ) *be in you, the Body is dead because of Sin.* Peter himself must put off his Tabernacle, for they are but Tabernacles, frail and movable frames, not built for continuance: these will drop off from our Souls, as the Shell falls off from the Bird in the Nest; be our earthly Tabernacles never so strong or pleasant, we must depose them, and that *shortly*; our Lease in them will quickly expire, we have but a short term. *James* 4. 14. like a thin Mist in the Morning, which the Sun presently dissipates; this is a Metaphor chosen from the Air: You have one from the Land, where the swift Post runs, *Job* 9. 25. So doth our Life from Stage to Stage, till its journey be finished; and a third from the Waters, there fail the swift Ships, *Job* 9. 26. which weighing Anchor, and putting into the Sea, continually lessen the Land, till at last they have quite lost sight of it: from the Fire, *Psal.* 58. 4. The lives of Men are as soon extinct as a blaze made with dry Thorns, which is almost as soon out as in. Thus you see how the Spirit of God hath borrowed Metaphors from all the Elements of Nature, to shadow forth the brevity and frailty of that Life we now live in these Tabernacles: so that we may say as one did before us, *Nescio an dicenda sit vita mortalis, an vitalis mors*; I know not which to call it, a mortal Life, or a living Death.

(2) *The speediness of death. The Scriptures horrour Metaphors from all the Elements to this purpose.*

The continuance of these our Tabernacles or Bodies is short, whether we consider them *absolutely* or *comparatively*.

1. *Absolutely*. If they should stand 70 or 80 years, which is the longest duration, *Psal.* 90. 10. how soon will that time run out? What are years that are past but as a Dream that is vanished, or as the waters that are past away? it is *in fluxu continuo*: there is no stopping its swift course, or calling back a moment that is past. Death set out in its journey towards us the same hour we were born; and how near is it come this day to many of us? It hath us in chase, and will quickly fetch us up, and overtake us; but few stand so long as the utmost date.

2. *Comparatively*. Let us compare our time in these Tabernacles, (1.) either with Eternity, or with him who inhabits it, and it shrinks up into nothing; *Psal.* 39. 5. *Mine age is nothing unto thee.* So vast is the disproportion, that it seems not only little, but nothing at all. Or (2.) with the duration of the Bodies of Men in the first Ages of the World, when they lived many hundred years in these fleshly Tabernacles. The length of their Life was the benefit of the World, because Religion was then [illegible], a thing handed down from Father to Son; but certainly it would be no benefit to us that are in Christ, to be so long suspended the fruition of God in the everlasting Rest.

The grounds and reasons of this Necessity that lies upon all, to put off their earthly Tabernacles so soon, are.

1. The Law of God, or his Appointment.
2. The Providence of God ordering it suitable to this Appointment.

1. The

1. The Law or appointment of God which came in force immediately upon the Fall; *Gen.* 2. 17. *In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* And accordingly it took place upon all Mankind immediately upon the first Transgression, *Rom.* 5. 12. *Death entered by sin.* The threatning was not his immediate actual personal Death in the day that he should eat, but a state of Mortality to commence from that time to him and his posterity; hence it's said, *Heb.* 9. 27. *It is appointed to all Men once to die.*

2. The Providence of God ordering and framing the Body of Man suitably to this his appointment; a frail, weak Creature, having the seeds of death in his Constitution: thousands of Diseases and Infirmities are bred in his Nature, and the smallest pore in his Body is a door large enough to let in death. Hence his Body is compared to a piece of Cloth which Moths have fretted, *Psal.* 39. 11. it's become a sorry rotten thing which cannot long hang together. And indeed it is a wonder it continues so long as it doth.

Quotidie morimur, quotidie enim demitur aliqua pars vitæ; & tunc quoque cum crescimus, vita decrescit. Infantiam amisimus, deinde Adolescentiam, usque ad hesternam. Quicquid transit temporis perit.

And both these, *viz.* the divine Appointment and Providence, are in pursuance of a double design, or for the payment of a twofold debt which God owes to the first and to the second *Adam*.

(1.) By cutting off the Life, or dissolving the Tabernacles of wicked Men, God pays that debt of Justice owing to the first *Adam*'s sinful Posterity, whose sins cry daily to his Justice to cut them off. *Rom.* 6. 23. *The wages of sin is death.* And indeed it is admirable that his patience suffers ungodly Men to live so long as they do, for he endures with much long suffering, *Rom.* 9. 22. He sees all their sins, he is grieved at the heart with them: his forbearance doth but encourage them the more to sin against him; *Eccles.* 8. 11. *Because Sentence,* &c. yet forbears: *Forty years long was I grieved with this Generation,* Psal. 95. 10. And it's wonderful that Patience doth not crack under such a Load. *Habakkuk* admired it, *Habak.* 1. 13. *Thou art of purer Eyes,* &c. Yet he suffers them to spend lavishly upon his patience from year to year, but Justice must do its Office at last.

(2.) By cutting off the lives of good Men, God pays to Christ the reward of his Sufferings, the end of his Death, which was to bring many Sons to Glory, *Heb.* 2. 10. Alas! it answers not Christ's end and intention in dying, to have his People so remote from him; *John* 17. 24. *He would have them where he is, that they might behold his Glory.* Two vehement desires are satisfied by this appointment of God, and its execution, *viz.*

1. Christ's,
2. The Saints.

1. Christ's desires are satisfied; for this is the thing he all along kept his eye upon in the whole Work of his Mediation; it was to bring us to God, 1 *Pet.* 3. 18. Tho' he be in Glory, yet his Mystical Body is not full till all the Elect be gathered in by Conversion, and gathered home by Glorification, *Ephes.* 1. 23. The Church is his fulness. He is not fully satisfied till he see his Seed, the Souls he died for, safe in Heaven; and then the Debt due to him for all his Sufferings is fully paid him, *Isa.* 53. 11. He sees the travail of his Soul. As it is the greatest satisfaction and pleasure a Man is capable of in this World, to see a great Design which hath been long projecting and managing, at last by an orderly Conduct brought to its perfection.

2. The desires of the Saints are hereby satisfied, and their weary Souls brought to rest. Oh! what do gracious Souls more pant after than the full enjoyment of God, and the Visions of his Face! the state of freedom from sin, and complete conformity to Jesus Christ! From the day of their espousals to Christ, these desires have been working in their Souls. Love and Patience have each acted its part in them, 2 *Thess.* 3. 5. Love hath put them into a holy ardor and longing to be with Christ; Patience hath qualified and allayed those desires, and supported the Soul under the delay. Love cries, Come, Lord, come; Patience commands us to wait the appointed time. This appointed time on which so great hopes and expectations depend, is the time of dissolving these Tabernacles; for till then the Soul's Rest is suspended; and if it were perfectly freed from all other loads and burdens, both of Sin and Affliction, yet its very absence from Christ would alone make it restless: for it is with the Soul in the Body, as it is with any other Creature that is off its Centre, it doth and must gravitate and propend, it is still moving and inclining farther, and feels not it self easie and at rest where it is, be its condition in other respects never so easie, 2 *Cor.* 5. 6. *Whilst we are at home in the Body, we are absent from the Lord.* You have a little Shadow or Emblem of this in other Creatures: You see the Rivers, tho' they glide never so sweetly betwixt the fragrant Banks of the most pleasant Meadows in their course and passage, yet on they go towards the Sea; and if they meet with never so many Rocks or Hills to resist their course, they will either strive to get a passage through them, or if that may not be, they will fetch a compass, and creep about them, and nothing can stop them till by a central force they have finished their weary course, and poured themselves into the bosom of the Ocean. Or as it is with your selves, when abroad from your Habitations and Relations; this may be pleasing a little while; but if every day might be a Festival, it would not long please you, because you are not at home.

The main Motives that persuade gracious Souls to abide here, are to finish the Work of their own Salvation, and farther other Mens; but as their Evidences for Heaven grow clearer to themselves, and their capacity of service less to others, so must their desires to be with Christ be more and more inflamed.

Now the case so standing, that Christ's condition in Heaven being a condition of desire and longing for the enjoyment of his People there, and all the Glory of Heaven would not content him without that; and the con-

condition of his People on Earth being also a state of longing, groaning, and panting to be with him, and all the Pleasures and Delights and Comforts they have on Earth will not content them without it: How wise and gracious an appointment of Heaven is it, that these our Tabernacles shall and must be put off, and that shortly! For hereby a full and mutual satisfaction is given to the restless desires both of Christ's heart and of theirs. See the reflected flames of Love betwixt them in *Rev.* 22. *The Spirit, and the Bride say, Come, and let him that is athirst come; Behold, I come quickly even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly.* Delays make the heart sad, *Prov.* 13. 12. Should our commoration on Earth be long, our Patience had need be much greater than it is; but under all our burdens here, this is our relief, it is but a little while, and all will be well, as well as our Souls can desire to have it.

Infer. I. Must we put off these Tabernacles? Is Death necessary and inevitable? *Then 'tis our wisdom to sweeten to our selves that Cup which we must drink, and make that as pleasant to us as we can, which we know cannot be avoided.* Die we must, whether we be fit or unfit, willing or unwilling: 'tis to no purpose to shrug at the name, or shrink back from the thing. In all Ages of the World, Death hath swept the Stage clean of one Generation to make room for another, and so it will from Age to Age till the Stage be taken down in the general dissolution.

But tho' Death be inevitable by all, it is not alike evil, bitter and dreadful to all. Some *tremble*, others *triumph* at the appearance of it. Some meet it half way, receive it as a friend, and can bid it welcome, and die by consent, making that the matter of their Election, which in it self is necessary and unavoidable: so did *Paul, Philip.* 1. 23. But others are drawn or rent by plain violence from the Body, *Job* 27. 8. when God draws out their Souls.

That Man is happy indeed, whose heart falls in with the appointment of God, so voluntarily and freely, as that he dare not only look Death in the face with confidence, but go along with it by consent of will. Remarkable to this purpose is that which the Apostle asserts of the frame of his own heart, 2 *Cor.* 5. 8. *We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the Body, and present with the Lord.* Here is both *Confidence* and *Complacence*, with respect to Death. Θαρρῦμεν. The word signifies Courage, Fortitude; or, if you will, an undaunted boldness and presence of Mind, when we look the King of Terrors in the face. We dare venture upon Death, we dare take it by the cold hand, and bid it welcome. We dare defie its Enmity, and deride its noxious Power, 1 *Cor.* 15. 55. *O death, where is thy sting?* And that's not all, we have complacence in it, as well as confidence to encounter it. Εὐδοκῦμεν. We are willing; the Translation is too flat, *We are well pleased*; it is a desirable, a grateful thing to us, to die; but yet not in an absolute, but comparative consideration, εὐδοκῦμεν μᾶλλον, we are willing *rather*, (i. e.) rather than not see and enjoy our Lord Jesus Christ; rather than to be here always sinning and groaning. There is no complacency in Death, in it self it is not desirable. But if we must go thro' that streight gate, or not see God; we are willing rather to be absent from the Body. So that you see Death was not the matter of his submission only, he did not yield to what he could not avoid, but he ballances the evils of Death with the privileges it admits the Soul into, and then pronounces, εὐδοκῦμεν, we are content, yea, *pleased* to die.

We cannot live always if we would, and our Hearts should be wrought to that frame, as to say, we would not live always if we could. *Job* 7. 16. *I would not live always, or long*, saith he. But why should *Job* deprecate that which was not attainable? *I would not live alway*; he needed not to trouble himself about that, it being impossible that he should: both statute and natural Law forbid it. Ay, but this is his sense: Supposing no such necessity as there is, if it were pure matter of election; upon a due ballancing of Accounts, and comparing the Good and Evil of Death, I would not be confin'd always, or for any long time to the Body: It would be a Bondage unsupportable to be here always.

Indeed those that have their Portion, their All, in this life, have no desire to be gone hence. They that were never changed by Grace, desire no change by Death; if such a Concession were made to them, as was once to an *English* Parliament, That they should never be dissolved but by their own consent, when would they say as *Paul, I desire to be dissolved?* But it's far otherwise with them whose Portion and Affections are in another World; they would not live always if they might; knowing, that never to die, is never to be happy.

Quest. If you say, *This is an excellent and most desirable temper of Soul; but how did these holy men attain it? Or what is the course we may take to get the like frame of willingness?*

Sol. They attained it, and you may attain it in such Methods as these.

1. They lived in the believing views of the invisible World, and so must you, if ever Death be desirable in your eyes, 2 *Cor.* 4. 18. It's said of all that died comfortably, *that they died in Faith*, Heb. 11. 13. You will never be willing to go along with Death, except you know where it will carry you.

2. They had assurance of Heaven, as well as Faith to discern it. Assurance is a lump of Sugar indeed in the bitter Cup of Death; nothing sweetens like it. So 2 *Cor.* 5. 1. so *Job* 19. 26, 27. This puts Roses into the pale Cheeks of Death, and makes it amiable, 1 *Cor.* 15. 55, 56. and *Rom.* 8. 38, 39.

3. Their Hearts were weaned from this World, and the inordinate affectation of a terrene life, *Phil.* 3. 8. all was dung and dross for Christ; they trampled under foot what we hug in our bosoms. So 'tis said, *Heb.* 10. 34. *Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in your selves*, &c. And so it must be with us, if ever we obtain a complacency in Death.

4. They ordered their Conversations with much Integrity, and so kept their Consciences pure and void of offence; *Acts* 24. 16. *Herein do*

do I exercise my self, &c. and this was their comfort at last, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. *This is our rejoycing*, &c. So *Job* 27. 5. *My Integrity will I not let go till I die.* Oh! this unstings Death of all its terrors.

5. They kept their love to Christ at the height: that flame was vehement in their Souls, and made them despise the terror, and desire the friendly assistance of Death, to bring them to the sight of Jesus Christ. *Phil.* 1. 23. so *Ignatius*, *O how I long*, &c. Thus it must be with you, if ever you make Death eligible and lovely to you, which is terrible in it self. There is a lovelinesse in the Death, as well as in the Life of a Christian: *Let me die the death of the righteous*, said *Balaam.*

Inser. II. *Many cry out on a death bed, O send for Ministers and Christians to pray! Alas! what can they do then? Is that a time for so great a work to be shuffled up in a hurry amidst distractions and agonies?*

Must we put off these Tabernacles of Flesh? *How necessary is it that every Soul look out in season, and make provision for another habitation?* If you must be turned out of one House, you must provide another, or lie in the streets. This the Apostle comforted himself with, That *if uncloathed, he shall not be found naked*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1. a Building of God, a House not made with hands. You must turn out, and that shortly, from these earthly habitations. Oh! what provision have you made for your Souls against that day? The Soul of *Adrian* was at a sad loss, when he saw he must be turned out of this World; *O Animula vagula, blandula, heu quo vadis!* But it was *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*'s privilege, that God had prepared for them a City, *Heb.* 11. 16.

I know 'tis a common presumption of most Men, that they shall be in Heaven, when they can be no longer on Earth. *Præsumendo sperant, & sperando pereunt.* But a few moments will convince them of their fatal mistake; their poor Souls will meet with a confounding repulse, like that, *Matth.* 7. 22. There is indeed a City full of heavenly Mansions prepared for some: but who are they that are entitled to it, and may confidently expect to be received into it? To be sure, not the presumptuous, who make a Bridge of their own Shadows, and so fall and perish in the Waters. Brethren, it is one of the most solemn enquiries you were ever put upon: and therefore I beseech you see whether your Characters set you among those Men or no.

1. Those that are new-born shall be cloathed with their new House from Heaven, when Death uncloths them of these Tabernacles: The *New Jerusalem* hath none but new born Inhabitants, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3, 4. and Christ tells us, *John* 3. 3. *all others are excluded.* Glory is the Privilege of Grace. Let Nature be adorned and cultivated how it will, if not renewed by Grace, there's no hope of Glory. You must be born again, or turned back again from the Gates of Heaven disappointed. You must be regenerated or damned. This alters the temper of thy heart, and sutes it to the life of God which is indispensably necessary to them that shall live with him. Else Heaven would be no Heaven to us, *Rom.* 8. 7. and therefore we must be wrought this way to it, 2 *Cor.* 5. 5. No privilege of Nature, no duties of Religion avail without this, *Gal.* 6. 15. If Morality without Regeneration could bring Men to Heaven, why are not the Heathens there? If Strictness in Duty without Regeneration, why not the Pharisees there? Believe it, neither Names nor Duties, no nor the Blood of Christ, ever did or shall bring one Soul to glory without it. O then thou that boastest of a house in Heaven, lay thine hand on thy heart, and ask it; Am I a new Creature (*i. e.*) Am I renewed (1) In my state and condition? 1 *John* 3. 14. past from death to life. (2) In my frame and temper? *Eph.* 5. 8. once darkness, now light in the Lord. (3) In my practice and conversation? *Eph.* 2. 12, 13. 1 *Cor.* 6. 11. If not, my Soul is destitute of a habitation in the City of God; and when I die, my Body must lie in the lonely house of the Grave, that dark Vault and Prison, and my Soul be shut out from God into outer darkness.

2. Those that live as Strangers and Pilgrims on Earth, seeking a better place and state than this World affords them, for them God hath made preparations in Glory, *Heb.* 11. 13, 16. If you be strangers on earth, you are the Inhabitants of Heaven. Now there be six things included in this Character. (1) They look not on this World as their own home, nor on the people of it, as their own people, 2 *Cor.* 5. 8. ἐνδημῆσαι, *to be unpeopled.* These are none of my fellow-Citizens, we must go two ways at death. (2) They set not their affections on things present as their portion, 1 *Cor.* 4, 18. *Psal.* 17. 13, 14. Their Bodies are here, their Hearts in Heaven. (3) Their carriage and manner of life not like the Men of this World, 1 *Pet.* 4. 4. ξενίζονται. So the Rule guides them, *Rom.* 12. 2. and so their course is steered; at least intended, *Philip.* 3. 20. our τὸ πολίτευμα, our Trade is in Heaven. (4.) Their *Dialect* and Language differs from the *Natives* of this World. Their Language is earthly, 1 *John* 4. 5, 6. but these have a *pure lip*, Zeph. 3. 9. (5) Their Society and chosen Companions are not of this World, *Psal.* 16. 3. They are a company of themselves, *Act.* 4. 21. (6) Their spirit and temper of heart is not after the World, 1 *Cor.* 2. 12. They have *another Spirit*, Num. 14. 24. These things discover us to be strangers on earth, and consequently the Men for whom God hath prepared heavenly Habitations when we die.

3. Those that live and die by Faith, shall not fail to be received into a better Habitation by Death. This is another Character of them that shall be received into Glory, laid down in the same place, *Heb.* 11. 13. They lived by Faith and then they died, they died embracing the Promises, which is *Characteristical* of those that shall dwell in that heavenly City; and implies, (1.) Intimate acquaintance with the Promises, they are things well known and familiarized to them. The word ἀσπασάμενοι, *Salutantes*, saluting them, is a *Metaphor* from the manner of parting betwixt two dear and intimate Friends. The Faith of a Christian embraces the Promises in its arms, as dear friends use to do at parting, and saith, Fare-

Farewel sweet Promises, from which I have sucked out so much relief and refreshment in all the troubles of my life; I must now live no more by Faith on you, but by sight: O you have often cheared my Soul, and been my Song in the house of my Pilgrimage. (2.) It implies the firm credit that a Believer gives to things unseen, upon the grounds of the Promises, as if he did sensibly take and grasp them in his very arms and bosom. They take Christ, and all the invisible things in the Promises into their sensible embraces, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. Faith is to them instead of Eyes. (3.) It implies the sincerity of a Believer's profession, who dares trust to that at last gasp, which he professed to believe in the midst of life, and the Comforts of this World. As he professed to believe in health, so you shall find his Actings when his eye and heart strings are cracking, *Rom.* 14. 9. Christ in the Promises was his professed joy in life, and this is what he grasps at death and lays his last hold on. (4.) It shews you whence all a Believer's comforts come in life and death. O 'tis from the Promises, Christ in the Promises is the spring of their Consolation. This they fetch their comfort from, when the World cannot administer one drop of refreshment to them. There be two great works Faith performs for the Saints, one in life, the other death. In life it is the Principle of Mortification to their sins, in death it is the spring of Consolation to their hearts: It makes them die whilst they live, and live when they die.

4. Those that love the Person and Appearance of Christ, have a mark that sets them among the Inhabitants of Heaven and Glory, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. but then this Love must be (1) Sincere, and without hypocrisy. (2) Supreme, and above all others Beloved. (3) Conforming the Soul to Christ; if Sincere and Supreme, it will be transformative. (4) Longing to be with him. Such Love is a mark of Souls for whom Heaven is prepared.

Infer. III. Must we put off our Tabernacles, and that shortly? *What a Spur is this to a diligent redemption and improvement of time?* This is the use *Peter* made of it here, and every one of us should make. It was said of *Bishop Hooper*, he was spare in his *diet*, spare in his *words*, but most of all spare of his *time*. You have but little time in these Tabernacles, what pity is it to waste much out of a little?

(1) *Great* is the worth and excellency of Time, all the Treasures of the World cannot *protract*, *stop*, or *call back* one minute of time. Oh what is Man, that the heavenly Bodies should be wheel'd about by Almighty Power in constant Revolutions, to beget Time for him! *Psal.* 8. 3.

(2.) More precious are the seasons and Opportunities that are in time for our Souls; those are the golden spots of Time, like the Pearl in the Oyster-shell, of much more value than the Shell that contains it. There is much time in a short opportunity. There is a day on which our eternal happiness depends, *Luke* 19. 41, 42. *Heb.* 4. 7.

(3.) Invaluable are the things which God doth for Mens Souls in time. There are works wrought upon Mens hearts in a seasonable hour in this life, which have an influence into the Soul's happiness throughout Eternity. There is a time of Mercy, a time of Love, *viz.* of Illumination and Conversion; and on that point of Time, Eternal Life hangs in the whole weight of it.

(4.) Lost opportunity is never to be recovered by the Soul any more, *Ezek.* 24. 13. *Rev.* 22. 11. To come before the opportunity, is to come before the Bird be *hatch'd*; and to come after it, is to come when the Bird is *flown*. There is no calling back time, when it is once past. See this in the Examples you find, *Luke* 13. 26. *Eccles.* 9. 10.

(5.) It is wholly uncertain to every Soul, whether the present day may not determine his Lease in this Tabernacle, and a Writ of Ejection be served by Death upon his Soul to morrow, *James* 4. 13. *Luke* 12. 20.

(6.) As soon as ever Time shall end, Eternity takes place. The stream of Time delivers Souls daily into the boundless Ocean of vast Eternity. *Ab hoc momento pendet æternitas.* We are now measured by Time, hereafter by Eternity.

(7.) In Eternity all things are fixed and unalterable. We have no more to do, all means and works are at an end, *John* 9. 4. and *Eccles.* 11. 3. *As the Tree falls, so it lies.* Oh that these weighty Considerations might lie upon your hearts, as long as you are in these Tabernacles! If they did, (1.) The Unregenerate would not so desperately hazard their eternal Happiness, by trifling away their precious seasons under the Gospel. Oh how many aged Sinners, gray-headed Sinners hear me this day, who in fifty or sixty years never redeemed one solemn hour to take their poor Souls aside out of the clutter and distracting noise of the World, to ask and debate this question with them, *Oh my Soul, how stands the case with thee in reference to the World to come!* They have found no time to bethink themselves in what World their Souls shall be landed, when Time shall deliver them up into Eternity. Their whole Life hath been a continual diversion from one trifle to another; they have been serious in trifles, and trifled in things most serious: this will afford horrid reflections in the World to come. (2.) The Regenerate would not cast away the comfort of their lives in the Evidences of eternal Life, at so cheap a rate as they do. May I not say to you, as the Apostle doth, *Heb.* 5. 12. for the time you have had under the Gospel, you might have attained a rich Treasure both of Grace and Comfort; *Turpe est senex elementarius.* Is it not shameful and inexcusable, to be where you were twenty years past? Oh! let these things sink deep into every Soul.

Infer. IV. Must we shortly put off these our Tabernacles? *Then slack your pace, and cool your selves; be not too eager in the prosecution of earthly designs.* Oh! what bustling is here for the World, and for provisions for futurity, when as far less would serve the turn! We need not victual a Ship to cross the *Channel* to *France*, as if she were bound to the *Indies*. Most Mens Provisions, at least their Cares and Thoughts, are far beyond the preparati-

ons of their abode in this World. The folly of this, Christ discovers in that Parable, *Luke* 12. 19. and on this very account gives him the Title of *a Fool*, who provided for years, many years; when, poor Soul, he had not one night to enjoy those Provisions.

Oh the multitude of thoughts and cares this World needlesly devours! We keep our selves in such a continual hurry and crowd of cares, thoughts and employments about the concerns of the Body; that we can find little time to be alone, communing with our own hearts about our great Concernments in Eternity. It is with many of us in respect of our Souls, and their great Interests, as it is with a Man that is deep in thoughts about some Subject that wholly swallows him up, he seeth not what he seeth, nor heareth what he heareth of any other matter: His eyes seem to look upon this or that, but it's all one as if he did not. So it was with *Archimedes*, who was so intent in drawing his *Mathematical Schemes*, that tho' all the City was in an Alarm, the Enemy had taken it by storm, the Streets filled with dreadful cries, and dead Bodies, the Souldiers came into his particular House, nay, entred his very Study, and pluck'd him by the sleeve, before he took any notice of it: Even so many Mens hearts are so profoundly immersed and drowned in earthly Cares, Thoughts, Projects or Pleasures, that Death must come to their very Houses, yea, and pull them by the sleeve, and tell them its Errand, before they will begin to awake, and come to a serious Consideration of things more important.

Infer. V. If we must shortly put off these Tabernacles, *then the groaning and mourning time of Believers is but short: how heavy soever their burden be, yet they shall carry it but a little way.* It's said, 2 *Cor.* 5. 4. *We that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burthened.* Good Souls in this state are every where groaning under heavy pressures. Their burdens are of two sorts, *Sympathetical*, whereby they grieve with, and on the account of others, and so every true Member of the Church of God ought to sympathize, both with God, *Psal.* 139. 21. *Am not I grieved with them that rise up against thee?* Psal. 42. 10. it is as with a Sword in their bones; and with the People of God, *Zeph.* 3. 18. sorrowful for the solemn Assembly, so 2 *Cor.* 11. 29. *Who is offended, and I burn not?* And indeed, it is an argument of rich, as well as true Grace, that we can, and do heartily mourn with, and for the Interest and People of God, tho' our own Lot in the World, as *Nehemiah's*, be never so comfortable. Or else our burdens are *Idiopathetical*, (*i. e.*) such as we bear upon our own proper account and score. And where is the Christian that hath not his own burden, yea, many burdens on him at once? Some groan under the burden of Sin, *Rom.* 7. 24. Scarce one day are the Tears off from some Eye-lids on this account. And who groans not under the burden of Affliction, either *inward* upon the Soul, *Prov.* 18. 14. *Job* 6. 1, 2, 3. or *outward* upon the Body, State, Relations, &c. These things make the people of God a burden to themselves, *Job* 7. 20, 21. Yea, under these burdens they would sink, did not the Lord sustain them, *Psal.* 55. 22.

But God will put a speedy and final end to all these things. When you put off this Tabernacle, you put off with it all those burdens, inward and outward. The Soul presently feels a great load off its shoulders; it shall never groan more, God shall thenceforth wipe away all tears from their eyes: For why are those burdens now permitted and imposed by the Lord upon you, but (1) To prevent Sin, *Hosea* 2. 6. They are your Clogs, to keep you from straying. (2) To purge out Sin, *Isa.* 27. 9. (3) To make you long more for Heaven, and the Rest to come. But all these ends are accomplished in that day you put off your Tabernacles, for then Sin is gone, and Rest is come.

Inf. VI. Must you shortly put off those Tabernacles? *Then spare them not whilst you have them, but employ them for God with all diligence.* Shortly they shall be useless to you, yea, Meat for Worms; now they may be serviceable, and their Service is their Honour: you received them not for such low ends as you employ them for. See, 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. *Glorify God in your Souls and Bodies, which are his*: You expect to have them *glorious* Bodies one day; Oh then let them be *serviceable* Bodies now. Be not fond of them to that degree many are, who chuse rather to have them *eaten out with rust*, than *worn out with service.* It is your present honour to be active, and will be your singular comfort another day. What greater comfort, when you come to put them off at death, than this, that you have employed them faithfully for God?

Ambrose said of Valentinian, *No man was ever such a Servant to his Master, as* Valentinian's *Body was to his Soul.*

Infer. VII. Look beyond this embodied state, and learn to live now as you hope to live shortly; begin to be what you expect to be. You know the time is at hand that you shall live above all bodily concernments and employments, the Soul shall be a drudge to the Body no more. You shall be as the Angels, *Matt.* 22. 30. not marrying, nor given in Marriage, which is *Synechdochically* put for all carnal Employments and Enjoyments; eat no more, drink no more, sleep no more, buy and sell no more. Now sute your selves as much as your state and the duties of Religion will suffer you, to that state beforehand. The sum of what I aim at is in, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29, 30. Be in all your Relations as if you had none. Look on those things as if already they were not, which shortly must be none of yours; and both acquaint and accustom your thoughts to the life of separation from the Body, which you must shortly live. Which brings me home to the next point, *viz.* *The Condition of Humane Souls in a state of Separation.*

HEB. XII. 23.

——τὰ πνεύματα δικαίων τετελειωμένων.

—— *And to the* Spirits *of just Men made perfect.*

THE particular scope of this Context falls in with the general design of the whole Gospel, which is to persuade Men to a life of

of Holineſs. The *Matter* of the Exhortation is moſt *weighty*, and the *Arguments* enforcing it moſt *powerful*: He doth not talk, but diſpute; he doth not ſay, but prove, that greater and more powerful engagements unto Holineſs lie upon thoſe who live under the Goſpel, than upon the People who lived under the Law. And thus the Argument lies in this *Context*.

If God at the delivering of the Law upon *Mount Sinai* ſtrictly enjoined and required ſo great Purity and Holineſs in that People, ſignified by the *Ceremonies* of two days preparation, the waſhing of their cloaths, abſtinence from conjugal Society, *&c. Ex.* 19. 10. much more doth he require and expect it in Us, who are come under a much more excellent and heavenly Diſpenſation than theirs was.

To make good the *Sequel*, he compares the *legal* and the *evangelical* Diſpenſations in many particulars, *ver.* 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23. giving the Goſpel the preference throughout the whole *Collation*.

In ſum, the privileges of the New Teſtament-Believers are here ſtated both *negatively* and *poſitively*.

1. *Negatively*, by ſhewing what we are exempted from.

2. *Poſitively*, ſhewing what we are to come unto.

1. *Negatively*, What we are exempted or freed from; ver. 18, 19, 20, 21. *We are not come unto the Mount that might be touched*, &c. The ſum of all is this, that the promulgation of the Law was accompanied with amazing dread and terror. For, after *Moſes* by command from God had ſanctified the *Mount*, and ſet *Pails* about it, that neither *Prieſt* nor *People*, Man nor Beaſt, might touch the very Borders of it, leaſt they die; the Lord deſcended in fire upon the top of the *Mountain* the third day in the morning, with moſt terrible tokens of Divine Majeſty, *ſc.* with Thundrings, Lightnings, dark Clouds, and the noiſe of a *Trumpet* exceeding loud; the *Mount* was covered with ſmoke, as the ſmoke of a Furnace, and flames mounting up into the midſt of Heaven, the whole Mountain ſhaking and trembling exceedingly: Out of this horrid Tempeſt the awful Voice of God was heard, all the People in the Camp trembling, yea, and *Moſes* himſelf quaking for fear.

Crebris micat ignibus æther.

This was the manner of the Law's promulgation: but to ſuch a terrible Diſpenſation as this we are not come, which is the negative part of our privilege.

2. He opens the poſitive Privileges to which we are come.

(1.) *Ye are come* (ſaith he) *to Mount Sion*, not the Earthly, but the Spiritual *Sion*. *Mount Sion* was the place celebrated above all the World for the Worſhip of God, *Pſal.* 87. 7. *All my ſprings* (ſaith God) *are in thee*. There was the Temple, the Ark of the Covenant, the glory of the Lord dwelling between the *Cherubims*. The *Prieſts* that attended the ſervice of God, had their reſidence there, as the Angels have in Heaven. Thither the Tribes went up from all quarters of *Juda*, *Pſal.* 84. the Children of God now do to Heaven from all quarters of the World. *Judea* was the beſt Kingdom in the World; *Jeruſalem* the beſt City in that Kingdom; and *Sion* the moſt glorious place in that City. Here Chriſt taught his heavenly Doctrine; near to it he finiſhed his glorious work of Redemption. Hence the everlaſting Goſpel went forth into all the World: and on theſe conſiderations it's put to ſignifie the Goſpel-Church or State in this place, and is therefore called *the heavenly Jeruſalem* in the following words. We do not come to the literal *Sion*, nor to the *earthly Jeruſalem*; but to the Goſpel-Church, or State, which may be called a Heaven upon Earth, compared with that *literal Jeruſalem*.

(2.) Ye are come *to an innumerable company of Angels.*] Gr. to **myriads of Angels*, a *myriad* is ten thouſand; but myriads in the plural number, and ſet down indefinitely too, may note many millions of Angels: And therefore we fitly render it, *to an innumerable company of Angels*.

* μυριάσιν ἀγγέλων, Helleniſtæ dicunt μυριάδας, ſine alio additamento, ad ſignificandam innumeram multitudinem. *Grot.*

They had the miniſtry of *Angels* as well as we, thouſands of them miniſtred to the Lord in the diſpenſation of the Law at *Sinai*, *Pſal.* 68. 17. But this notwithſtanding, we are come to a much clearer knowledg both of their preſent Miniſtry for us on Earth, *Heb.* 1. 14. and of our fellowſhip and equality with them in Heaven, *Luke* 20. 36.

(3.) *Ye are come to the general Aſſembly and Church of the firſt-born, whoſe names are written* (or enrolled) *in Heaven*] This alſo greatly commends and amplifies the Privileges of New Teſtament-Believers; the Church of God in former ages was circumſcribed and ſhut up within the narrow limits of one ſmall Kingdom, which was as a Garden incloſed out of a waſte Wilderneſs: but now by the calling in of the *Gentiles* the Church is extended far and wide, *Eph.* 3. 5, 6. It is become a great Aſſembly, comprizing the Believers of all Nations under Heaven; and ſo ſpeaking of them *collectively*, it is the general Convention or Aſſembly, which is alſo dignified and enobled by two illuſtrious Characters, *viz.* (1.) That it is *the Church of the firſt-born*, (i. e.) conſiſting of Members dignified and privileged above others, as the firſt-born among the *Iſraelites* did excel their younger Brethren. (2.) That their *Names are written in Heaven*, (i. e.) regiſtred or enrolled in God's Book as Children and Heirs of the heavenly Inheritance, as the firſt-born in *Iſrael* were regiſtred in order to the Prieſthood, *Numb.* 3. 40, 41.

Primogeniti Iſraelitarum ſcripti erant in matricula terreſtri, hi verò in albo cœliſti.

(4) Ye are come *to God the judge of all.*] But why to God the Judg? this ſeems to ſpoil the harmony, and jar with the other parts of the diſcourſe. No, no; they are come to God as a righteous Judg, who as ſuch will *pardon* them, 1 *Joh.* 1. 9. *crown* them, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. and avenge them on all their oppreſſing and perſecuting Enemies, 1. *Theſſ.* 1. 5, 6, 7.

(5.) *And to the ſpirits of juſt Men made perfect.*] A moſt glorious privilege indeed, in which we are diſtinctly to conſider,

1. The quality of thoſe with whom we

are associated or taken into fellowship.

2. The way and manner of our association with them.

1. The quality of those with whom we are associated, or to whom we are said to be *come*, and they are described by three Characters, *viz.*

(1.) Spirits of Men.

(2.) Spirits of just Men.

(3.) Spirits of just Men perfected or consummated.

(1.) They are called *Spirits*, that is, immaterial Substances, strictly opposed to Bodies, which are no way the objects of our exteriour Senses, neither visible to the eye, or sensible to the touch, which were called properly *Souls* whilst they animated Bodies in this lower World; but now being loosed and separated from them by death, and existing alone in the World above, they are properly and strictly stiled *Spirits*.

(2.) They are the *Spirits of just Men.*] Man may be termed *just* two ways, (1.) By a full discharge and acquittance from the guilt of all his Sins, and so Believers are *just Men* even whilst they live on Earth groaning under other imperfections, *Acts* 13. 39. Or, (2.) By a total freedom from the pollution of any Sin. And tho' in this sense there is not a just Man upon Earth that doth good, and sinneth not, *Eccles.* 7. 22. yet even in this sense *Adam* was just before the Fall, *Eccles.* 7. 29. according to his *original Constitution*; and all Believers are so, in their *glorified condition*, all Sin being perfectly purged out of them, and its existence utterly destroyed in them. On which account

(3.) They are called the Spirits of just Men *made perfect*,] or consummate. The word *perfect* is not here to be understood *absolutely*, but *synecdochically*; they are not perfect in every respect, for one part of these just Men lies rotten in the grave: but they are perfected, for so much as concerns their *Spirit*; tho' the Flesh perish and lie in dishonour, yet their Spirits being once loosed from the Body, and freed radically and perfectly from Sin, are presently admitted to the facial vision and fruition of God, which is the culminating point (as I may call it) higher than which the Spirit of Man aspires not, and attaining to this, it is for so much as concerns it self, made *perfect*. Even as the Body at last lodg'd in its centre, gravitates no more, but is at perfect Rest; so it is with the Spirit of Man come home to God in glory, 'tis now consummate, no more need to be done to make it as perfectly happy as it is capable to be made, which is the first thing to be considered, *viz.* the quality of those with whom we are associated.

2. The second follows, namely, the way and manner of our association with the blessed Spirits of just Men, noted in this expression, [*we are come.*] He saith not, *we shall come* hereafter, when the Resurrection hath restored our Bodies, or after the general Judgment; but, *we are come* to these Spirits of just Men. The meaning whereof we may take up in these three particulars.

(1.) We that live under the Gospel-light, are come to a clearer apprehension, sight and knowledge of the blessed and happy estate of the Souls of the Righteous after death, than ever they had, or ordinarily could have, who lived under the Types and Shadows of the Law, *Ephes.* 3. 4, 5. And so we are come to them, in respect of *clearer apprehension.*

(2.) We are come to those blessed Spirits in our *Representative*, Christ, who hath carried our Nature into the very midst of them, and whom they all behold with highest admiration and delight. By Christ who is entred into that holy place where these Spirits of just Men live, we are come into a near relation with them: For he being the common Head, both to them in Heaven, and to us on Earth, we and they consequently make but one Body or Society, *Eph.* 2. 19. Whereupon (notwithstanding the different and remote Countries they and we live in) we are said *to sit together with them in heavenly places*, Eph. 3. 15. & 2. 6.

(3.) *We are come.*] That is, we are as good as come, or we are upon the matter come; there remains nothing betwixt them and us but a puff of Breath, a little space of time, which shortens every moment: We are come to the very borders of their Country, and there is nothing to speak of betwixt them and us: and by this expression, *We are come*, he teacheth us to account and reckon those things as present, which so shortly will be present to us, and to look upon them as if they already were, which is the highest and most comfortable life of Faith we can live on Earth. Hence the Note is,

Doct. *That righteous and holy Souls once separated from their Bodies by death, are immediately perfected in themselves, and associated with others alike perfect in the Kingdom of God.*

That the Spirits of just men at the time of their separation from their Bodies do not utterly fail in their Beings, nor that they are so prejudic'd and wounded by death, that they cannot exert their own proper acts in the absence of the Body, hath been already cleared in the foregoing parts of this Treatise, and will be more fully cleared from this Text.

But the true level and aim of this Discourse is at a higher Mark, *viz.* the far more excellent free and noble Life the Souls of the Just begin to live immediately after their Bodies are dropt off them by death, at which time they begin to live like themselves, a pleasant, free and divine Life. So much at least is included in the *Apostle's Epithet* in my Text, Spirits of just Men made *perfect*; and suitable thereto are his words in 1 *Cor.* 13. 10, 12. *When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face: now I know in part, but then I shall know, even as I am known.*

These two *Adverbs*, *Now* and *Then*, distinguish the two-fold state of gracious Souls, and shew what it is whilst they are confined in the Body, and what it shall be from the time of their emancipation and freedom from the clog of Mortality. *Now* we are imperfect, but *then* that which is perfect takes place, and that which is imperfect is done away, as the imperfect Twilight is done away by the opening of the perfect Day.

And it deserves a serious Animadversion That this perfect state doth not succeed the imperfect one after a long interval, (as long betw

betwixt the Dissolution and Resurrection of the Body) but the imperfect state of the Soul is immediately done away by the coming of the perfect one. The Glass is laid by as useless, when we come to see face to face, and eye to eye.

The Waters will prove very deep here, too deep for any Line of mine to fathom; there is a cloud always over-shadowing the World to come, a gloom and haziness upon that state; fain we would, with our weak and feeble beam of imperfect Knowledge, penetrate this Cloud, and dispel this gloom and haziness, but cannot: We think seriously and close to this great and awful Subject, but our thoughts cannot pierce through it; we reinforce those thoughts by a sally or thick succession of fresh thoughts, and yet all will not do, our thoughts return to us either in confusion, or without the expected success. For, alas! how little is it that we know or can know of our own Souls now whilst they are embodied, much less of their unbodied state! The Apostle tells us, 1 Cor. 2. 9. *That eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of Man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* And another Apostle adds, *It doth not yet appear what we shall be,* 1 John 3. 2.

Yet all this is no discouragement to the search and regular enquiry into the future state; for tho' Reason cannot penetrate these Mysteries, yet God hath *revealed them to us* (tho' not perfectly) *by his Spirit.* And tho' we know not (particularly and circumstantially) what we shall be, yet this we know, that *we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.* And it is our privilege and happiness, that we are come to the Spirits of just Men made perfect, *(i.e.)* to a clearer knowledg of that state than was ordinarily attainable by Believers under former Dispensations.

These things premised, I will proceed to open my apprehensions of the separate state of the Spirits of just Men made perfect, in *twelve Propositions*; whereby, as by so many steps, we may orderly advance as far as safely and warrantably we may into the knowledge of this great Mystery, clearing what afterwards shall remain obscure in the solution of several Questions relating to this Subject, and then apply the whole in several Uses of this great Point: And the first Proposition is this:

Prop. I. There is a two-fold *Separation* of the Soul from the Body; *viz.* one *Mental*, the other *Real*: Or,

1. Intellectual, by the Mind only.
2. Physical, by the stroke of Death.

Separatio per intellectum fit, cum duo revera conjuncta, separatim concipimus. *Conimbr. de Anima*, p. 595.

1. Of intellectual or mental Separation, I am first to speak in this Proposition; and it is nothing else but an act of the Understanding or Mind, conceiving or considering the Soul and Body as separated and parted each from other, whilst yet they are united in a personal oneness by the Breath of Life. This mental Separation may and ought to be frequently and seriously made, before Death makes the real and actual Separation; and the more frequently and seriously we do it, the less horror and distraction will attend that real and fatal stroke whenever it shall be given. For hereby we learn to bear it gradually, and by gentle essays to acquaint our shoulders with the burden of it. *Separation* is a word that hath much of horror in the very sound, and useth to have much more in the sense and feeling of it, else it would not deserve that title, *Job* 8. 14. *The King of Terrors*, or the most terrible of all terribles; But acquaintance and familiarity abates that horror, and that two ways especially,

(1.) As it is preventive of much guilt.

(2.) As it gains a more inward knowledge of its Nature.

(1.) The serious and fixed thoughts of the parting hour is preventive of much guilt; and the greatest part of the horror of Death rises out of the guilt of sin; *The sting of Death is sin,* 1 Cor. 15. 56. *Augustine* saith,

Nothing more recals a Man from sin, than the frequent meditation of death. I dare not say it is the strongest of all Curbs to keep us back from sin, but I am sure it is a very strong one.

Nihil sic revocat à peccato, quam frequens mortis meditatio. *Aug.*

Let a Soul but seriously meditate what a change Death will make shortly upon his person and condition; and the natural effects of such a Meditation, through the Blessing of God upon it, will be a flatting and quenching of its keen and raging Appetite after the ensnaring Vanities of this World (which draw Men into so much guilt) a conscientious fear of sin, and an awakened care of Duty. It was once demanded of a very holy Man (who spent much more than the ordinary allowance of time in Prayer, and searching his own heart) why he so macerated his own Body by such frequent and long-continued Duties? His Answer was, *Oh! I must die, I must die.* Nothing could separate him from Duty, who had already separated his Soul from his Body, and all this World by fixed and deep thoughts of Death.

Qui considerat qualis erit in morte, semper pavidus erit in operatione, atq; inde in oculis sui conditoris vivet. Nihil quod transit, appetit; & pene mortuum se considerat, quia se morituum non ignorat, *Greg. Mor.* 12.

(2.) Hereby we gain a more inward knowledge and acquaintance with the nature of Death: and the more we are acquainted with it, the less it terrifies us. A *Lion* is much more dreadful to him that never saw him, than he is to his *Keeper* who feedeth him every day. A pitch'd Battle is more frightful and scaring to a new-listed Soldier that never took his place in the Field before, nor saw the dreadful countenance of an Army ready to engage, nor heard the thundring noise of Cannon, and Volleys of Shot, the shouts of Armies, and groans of dying Men on every side, than it is to an old Soldier who hath been used to such things. The like we may observe in *Seamen*, who it may be trembled at first, and now can sing in a Storm.

Scarce any thing is more necessary for weak and timorous Believers to meditate on, than the time of their separation. Our hearts will be apt to start and boggle at the first view of Death; but it is good to do by them as Men use

use to do by young Colts, ride them up to that which they fright at, and make them smell to it, which is the way to cure them. *Look, as Bread* (saith one) *is more necessary than other Food, so the Meditation of Death is more necessary than many other Meditations.* Every time we change our habitations, we should realize therein our great change. Our Souls must shortly leave this, and be lodged for a longer season in another Mansion. When we put off our cloaths at night, we have a fit occasion to consider, that we must strip nearer one of these days, and put off, not our cloaths only, but the Body that wears them too.

Sicut panis necessarius est præ cæteris elementis, ita intenta mortis meditatio necessaria est præ cæteris donis & exercitiis. *Dionys.*

Holy *Job* had by frequent thoughts familiarized Death and the Grave to himself, and could speak of them, as Men use to speak of their Houses and dearest Relations, Job 17. 14. *I have said to Corruption, Thou art my Father; to the Worm, Thou art my Mother and Sister.* But it needs much Grace to bring and hold the Heart to this Work; and therefore *Moses* begs it of God, *Psal.* 90. 12. *So teach us to number our days*, and *David*, *Psal.* 39. 4. *Lord, make me know my end.* Yea, the advantages of it have been acknowledged by Men whose Light was less, and Diversions more than ours. The *Jews* for this use and end had their Sepulchres built before-hand, and that in their *Gardens* of Pleasure too; that they might season the delights of Life with the frequent thoughts of Death, *John* 19. 41.

Philip of *Macedon* would be awakened by his *Page* every morning with this sentence, *Memento te esse mortalem*; Remember, oh King! thou art a mortal Man. A great Emperor of *Constantinople* not only at his Inauguration, but at his great Feasts, ordered a *Mason* to bring two Stones before him, and say, *Chuse, oh Emperour! which of the two thou wilt for thy Tombstone.* Reader, thou wilt find mental separation much easier than real separation: 'tis easier to *think* of Death, than it is to *feel* it; and the *more* we think of it, the *less* we are like to feel it.

Elige ab his saxis ex quo, invictissime Cæsar, tibi tumulum me fabricare velis.

Prop. II. *Actual Separation may be considered either* in fieri, *in the Previous Pangs and foregoing Agonies of it; or* in facto esse, *in the last separating stroke which actually parts the Soul and Body asunder, lays the Body prostrate and dead at the feet of Death, and thrusts the Soul quite out of its ancient and beloved habitation.*

1. Let it be considered in the previous Pangs and fore-running Agonies which commonly make way for this actual Dissolution: And to the People of God, this is the worst and bittereſt part of Death, (except those conflicts with Satan, which they sometimes grapple with on a Death-bed) which they encounter at that time. There is (saith one) no poniard in Death it self, like those in the way or prologue to it. I like not *to die* said another, but I care not if *I were dead*; the end is better than the way. The conflicts and struggles of Nature with Death are bitter and sharp, pains unknown to Men before, whatever pains they have endured: nor can it be expected to be otherwise, seeing the ties and ingagements betwixt the Soul and Body are so strong, as we shew'd before.

The Soul will not easily part with the Body, but disputes the passages with Death from Member to Member, (like resolute Soldiers in a stormed Garison) till at last it is forced to yield up the *Fort Royal* into the hands of victorious Death, and leave the dearly beloved Body a Captive to it.

This is the dark side of Death to all good Men; and tho' it be not worth naming in comparison with the dreadful *consequents* of death to all others, yet in it self it is terrible.

* Separation is not natural to the Soul, which was created with an inclination to the Body; 'tis natural indeed to clasp and embrace, to love and cherish its own Body; but to be divided from it, is grievous and preternatural.

* Cum separatio naturalis non sit, neq; etiam violenta; fit consequens, ut ex approbata Philosophorum approbatione, præternaturalis esse dicatur. *Conimb.*

The Agonies of Death are expressed in Scripture by a word which signifies the travelling pains of a Woman, yea, by the sharpest and acute pains they feel, even the birth-pangs, or bearing throes, *Acts* 2. 24.

Τὰς ὠδῖνας τοῦ θανάτου, partûs dolorem.

And yet all are not handled alike roughly by the hands of death; some are favoured with a desirable εὐθανασία, gentle and easy death.

'Tis the privilege of some Christians to have their Souls fetcht out of their Bodies as it were by a kiss from the mouth of God, as the Jewish *Rabbins* use to express the manner of *Moses* his death. Mr. *Bolten* felt no pain at his death, but the cold hand of his friend who asked him what pain he felt. Yea, holy *Bayneham* in the midst of the flames professed it was to him as a Bed of Roses.

Every Believer is equally freed from the sting and curse of Death; but every one is not equally favoured in the agonies and pains of Death.

2. Separation from the Body is to be considered *in facto esse*, (i. e.) in the result and issue of all these bitter pangs and agonies, which end in the actual dissolution of Soul and Body.

* Death, or actual separation, is nothing else but the dissolving of the tie, or loosing of the bond of Union betwixt the Soul and Body. † Some call it the privation of the second act of the Soul, that is, its act of informing or enlivening the Body. Others, according to Scripture-phrase, the departing of the Soul from the Body. So *Peter* stiles it, 2 *Pet.* 1. 15. μετὰ τὴν ἐμὴν ἔξοδον, after my departure *i. e.* after my death. *Augustine* ‖ calls it laying down of a heavy burden, provided there be not another burden for the Soul to bear afterwards, which will sink it unto Hell.

* Θανατὸς ἐστι ψυχῆς καὶ σώματος διάλυσις, vel animæ a corpore discessus, *Vives.*

† Privatio actus secundi ejusdem animæ, id est, informationis seu unionis erga corpus. *Conimbr.*

‖ Relictio corporis depositio sarcinæ gravis, modo alia sarcina non patietur, quâ homo præcipitetur in gehennam. *August.*

In

In respect of the Body which the Soul now forsakes, it is called *the putting off this Tabernacle*, 2 Pet. 1. 14. and the dissolving the earthly House or Tabernacle, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1.

In respect of the *terminus à quo*, the place from which the Soul removes at death, it is called our departure hence, *Phil.* 1. 23. or our weighing anchor, and loosing from this coast or shoar to sail to another.

In respect of the *terminus ad quem*, the place to which the Spirits of the Just go at death, it is called our going to, or being with the Lord, *ibid.* To conclude, in respect of that which doth most lively resemble and shadow it forth, it is called our *falling asleep*, Act 7. *ult.* our *sleeping in Jesus*, 1 Thess. 4. 14. This *Metaphor* of sleep must be stretched no farther than the Spirit of God designed in the choice of it, which was not to favour and countenance the fancy of a sleeping Soul after death; but to represent its state of placid rest in Jesus's bosom, if it refer at all to the Soul: for I think it most properly respects the Body; and thence the Sepulchers where the bodies of the Saints were laid, got the name of κοιμητηρια, Dormitories, or sleeping places.

Locus Sepulturæ consecratus, κοιμητηριον, hoc est, dormitorium appellatur.

This is its last farewel to this world, never to return to a low animal life more. *Job* 7. 9, 10. For *as the cloud is consumed and vanished away, so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more; he shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more.* The Soul is no more bound to a Body, nor a retainer to the Sun, Moon or Stars, to meat, drink and sleep, but is become a free, single, abstracted Being, a separate and pure Spirit, which the Latins call *Lemures*, *Manes*, *Ghosts* or *Souls* of the dead, and my Text *Spirits made perfect*, a being much like unto the *Angels* who are Πνεύματα ἀσωμάτους, bodiless Powers. An Angel, as one speaks, is a perfect Soul, a Soul is an imperfect Angel, I do not say that upon their separation they became Angels; for they will still remain a distinct *Species* of Spirits.

Semper à corporis compedibus, & nexibus liberi. *Max. Tyr.*

Angels have no inclination to Bodies, nor were ever fettered with clogs of flesh as Souls were. And by this you see what a difference there is betwixt these two considerations of death. How ghastly and affrighting is it in its previous pangs! how lovely and desirable in the issue and result of them! which is but the change of Earth for Heaven, Men for God, Sin and Misery for Perfection and Glory.

Prop III. *The separation of the Soul and Body makes a great and wonderful change upon both, but especially upon the Soul.*

There is a twofold change made upon Man by death, one upon his *Body*, another upon his *Soul*. The change upon the body is great, and visible to every eye. A living Body is changed into a dead Carcase; A beautiful and comely Body, into a loathsom spectacle: that which lately was the object of delight and love, is hereby made an abhorrence to all flesh; *Bury my dead out of my sight*, Gen. 23. 4. What the Sun is to the greater, that the Soul is to the lesser World. When the Sun shines comfortably, how vegete and chearful do all things look! how well do they thrive and prosper! The *Birds* sing merrily, the *Beasts* play wantonly, the whole Creation enjoyeth a day of light and joy: but when he departs, what a night of horror followeth! How are all things wrapt up in the sable Mantle of darkness! Or if it but abate its heat, as in Winter, the Creatures are as it were buried in the Winding-sheet of Winter's Frost and Snow: just so it is with the Body, when the Soul shineth pleasantly upon it, or departs from it.

That Body which was fed so assiduously, cared for so anxiously, loved so passionately, is now tumbled into a Pit, and left to the mercy of crawling Worms. The change which Judgment made upon that great and flourishing City *Niniveh*, is a fit Emblem to shadow forth that change which Death makes upon human Bodies: That great and renowned City was once full of People which thronged the streets thereof; there you might have seen Children playing upon the Thresholds, Beauties shewing themselves through the Windows, Melody sounding in its Palaces: but what an alteration was made upon it, the Prophet *Zephaniah* describes, Chap. 2. v. 14. *Flocks shall lie down in the midst of her, all the Beasts of the Nations; both the Cormorant and the Bittern shall lodge in the upper Lintels of it; their Voice shall sing in the Windows; Desolation shall be in the Thresholds, for he shall uncover the Cedar work*

Thus it is with the Body when Death hath dislodged the Soul. Worms nestle in the holes where the beautiful Eyes were once placed; Corruption and desolation is upon all parts of that stately Structure. But this being a vulgar Theme, I shall leave the Body to the Dust from whence it came, and follow the Soul, which is my proper Subject, pointing at the changes which are made on it.

The Essence of the Soul is not destroyed or changed by the Body's Ruin; it is substantially the self-same Soul that it was when in the Body. The supposition of an essential change, would disorder the whole frame and model of God's eternal Design for the Redemption and Glorification of it, *Rom.* 8. 29. 30. But tho' it undergo no substantial change at Death, yet divers great and remarkable alterations are made upon it by sundering it from the Body. As,

1. It is not where it was. It was in a Body, immers'd in Matter, married unto Flesh and Blood; but now it is out of the Body, uncloathed, and stript naked out of its garments of flesh, like pure Gold melted out of the Ore with which it was commixed; or as a Bird let out of her Cage into the open Fields and Woods. This makes a great and wonderful change on it.

2. Being free from the Body, it is consequently discharged and freed from all those cares, studies, fears and sorrows to which it was here enthralled and subjected upon the Body's account. It puts off all those Passions and Burdens with it, never spends one thought more about Food and Raiment, Health and Sickness, Wives and Children, Riches or Poverty; but lives henceforth after the manner of Angels, *Mat.* 22. 30. It is now unrelated to, and therefore unconcerned about all these things.

3. In

3. In the unbodied ſtate it is perfectly freed from ſin, both in the Acts and Habits: a Mercy it never enjoyed ſince the firſt moment it dwelt in the Body. The cure of this diſeaſe was indeed begun in the Work of Sanctification, but it is not perfected till the day of the Soul's Glorification. 'Tis now, and not till now, a Spirit made perfect; that is, a Soul enjoying its perfect health and rectitude. No more groans, tears or lamentations upon the account of indwelling Sin.

4. The way and manner of its converſe with, and enjoyment of God is changed. There are two *mediums*, by which Souls converſe with God in the Body, *viz.*

(1.) One internal, *ſc.* Faith.

(2.) The other external, *ſc.* Ordinances.

(1.) If a Man walk with God on Earth, it muſt be in the uſe and exerciſe of Faith, 2 *Cor.* 5. 7. nor can there be any Communion carried on betwixt God and the Soul without it, *Heb.* 11. 6.

(2.) The external *mediums* are the Ordinances of God, or Duties of Religion, both publick and private, *Pſal.* 63. 2. Betwixt theſe two *mediums* of Communion with God, this remarkable difference is found: The Soul may ſee and enjoy God by Faith, in the want or abſence of Ordinances; but there is no ſeeing or converſing with God in the greateſt plenty and purity of Ordinances, without Faith, *Heb.* 4. 2.

But in the ſame moment the Soul is cut off from union with the Body, it is alſo cut off from both theſe ways of enjoying God, 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. *Iſa.* 38. 11. but yet the Soul is no loſer, nay, it is the greateſt *gainer* by this change. The Child is no loſer by ceaſing to derive its Nouriſhment by the Navel, when it comes to receive it by the Mouth; a more noble way, whereby it gets a new pleaſure in taſting the variety of all delectable food. *Hezekiah* bemoan'd the loſs of Ordinances upon his ſuppoſed death-bed, ſaying, *I ſhall not ſee the Lord, even the Lord in the Land of the Living: q. d.* Now farewel Temple and Ordinances; I ſhall never go any more into his Temple, where my Soul hath been ſo often cheared and refreſh'd with the diſplays of his grace and Goodneſs; I ſhall never more join with the Aſſembly of his People on Earth. And ſuppoſe he had not, ſure he would have loſt nothing, had he then exchanged the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, for the Temple in Heaven, and Communion with ſinful imperfect Saints on Earth, for fellowſhip with Angels, and *the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect*. By this change we loſe no more than he loſeth, who whilſt he ſtands delightfully contemplating the Image of his deareſt Friend in a glaſs, hath the glaſs ſnatch'd away by his Friend, whom he now ſeeth face to face.

Upon this change of the mediums of Communion, it will follow, that the Communion betwixt God and the ſeparate Soul, excels all the Communion it ever had with him on Earth, in

(1.) The Clearneſs.

(2.) The Sweetneſs,

(3.) The Conſtancy of it.

(1.) It's Viſions of God in the ſtate of Separation are more clear, diſtinct, and direct than they were on earth; Clouds and Shadows are now fled away. The Soul now ſeeth as it is ſeen, and knoweth as it is known; its apprehenſions of God there differ from thoſe it had here, as the crude and confuſed apprehenſions of a Child, do from thoſe we have in the manly ſtate.

(2.) They are alſo more ſweet and raviſhing. As our Viſions are, ſo are our Pleaſures: Perfect Viſions produce perfect Pleaſures. The faculties of the Soul now, and never till now, lie level to that rule, *Mat.* 22. 37. The Viſions of God command and call forth all the heart and ſoul, mind and ſtrength, into acts of love and delight. It was not ſo here, if the Spirit was willing, the Fleſh was weak; but there the clog is off from the foot of the Will.

(3.) More conſtant, fixed, and ſteddy. 'Tis one of the greateſt Difficulties in Religion, to fix the thoughts, and cure the wildneſs and rovings of the Fancy. The heart is not ſteddy with God, and hence are its ups and downs, heatings and coolings; which are things unknown in the perfect ſtate. By all which it appears, the change by Diſſolution is great and marvellous both upon Body and Soul, but upon the Soul more eſpecially.

Prop. VI. *The Souls of the Righteous, at the inſtant of their Separation, are received by the bleſſed Angels, and by them transferred unto the place of Bleſſedneſs.*

Tho' Angels are by nature a ſuperiour order of Spirits, differing from Men in dignity, as the *Nobles* and *Barons* in the Kingdoms of this World, differ from inferiour Subjects; yet are they made miniſtring Spirits, (*i. e.*) ſerviceable Creatures in the Kingdom of Providence to the meaneſt of the Saints, *Heb.* 1. 14. and herein the Lord puts a ſingular honour upon his People, in making ſuch excellent Creatures as Angels ſerviceable to them, *Luther* aſſigns to them a double office, *ſc.* to ſing the Praiſes of God on high, and to watch over his Saints here below. Their Miniſtry is diſtinguiſhed into three branches: Νουθετικὸν, for admonition or warning; Φυλακτικὸν, for protection and defence; Βοηθητικὸν, for ſuccour, help and comfort. This laſt office they perform more eſpecially at the Soul's departure. Like tender *Nurſes*, they keep us whilſt we live, and bring us home in their Arms to our Father's houſe when we die.

They are about our death-beds, waiting to receive their precious charge into their arms and boſoms. When *Lazarus* breathed out his Soul, the Text ſaith, it was *carried by the Angels into Abraham's boſom*, Luke 16. 22. And upon this account, *Tertullian* calls them *Evocatores animarum*, the Callers forth of Souls. At the Tranſlation of *Elijah*, they appeared in the form of Horſes and Chariots of fire, 2 *Kings* 11. Horſes and Chariots are not only deſigned for conveyance, but for conveyance in State; and truly it is no ſmall honour to have ſuch a noble Convoy and Guard to attend our Soul to Heaven.

Object. If it be demanded, *What need is there of their help or company? Cannot God by his immediate hand and power gather home the Souls of his people to himſelf at death? He inſpired them into our Bodies without their help, and can receive them again when we expire them, without their aid.*

Sol. True, he can do so; but it hath pleased him to appoint this method of our Translation, not out of meer necessity, but bounty. Souls ascend not to God in the virtue of the Angels wings or arms, but of Christ's Ascension. Had not he ascended as our Head and Representative, all the Angels in Heaven could not have brought our Souls thither. He ascended by his own Power, and we ascend by the virtue of his Ascension. 'Tis therefore rather for the State and *Decorum*, than any absolute necessity, that they attend us in our Ascension.

God will not only have his People brought home to him safely, but honourably. They shall come to their Father's House in a becoming Equipage, as the Children of a King. This puts honour upon our Ascension-day, that Day is adorned by the attendance of such illustrious Creatures upon us. 'Tis no small honour which God herein designs for us, that Creatures of greater dignity than our selves shall be sent from Heaven to attend and wait upon us thither.

Yea, that our Ascension-day should in this resemble Christ's Ascension, is an honour indeed. When he ascended, there were multitudes of these heavenly Creatures to wait upon him, *Psal.* 68. 17, 18. *The Chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of Angels; the Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place. Thou hast ascended on high,* &c. A Cloud was prepared as a Royal Chariot, to carry up the King of Glory to his Princely Pavilion, and then a Royal Guard of mighty Angels to wait upon his Chariot; if not for support, yet for the greater state and solemnity of their Lord's Ascension. And O what Jubilations of blessed Angels were heard that day in Heaven! How was the whole City of God moved at his coming! the Triumph is not ended to this day, no, nor never shall.

Now herein God greatly honours his People, that there shall be some resemblance and conformity betwixt their Ascension and Christ's; * *Angels* rejoice to attend those to Heaven, who must be their fellow-Citizens for ever in Heaven! It is convenient also, that those who had the charge of us all our life, should attend us to our Father's house at our death. In the one they finish their Ministry, in the other they begin their more intimate Society.

Moreover the Angels are they whom God will imploy to gather together his Elect from the four Winds of Heaven at the great day, *Mat.* 24. 31. And who more fit to attend their spirits to Heaven singly, than those who must collect them into one Body at last, and wait on that collective Body when they shall be brought to Christ? *Psal.* 45. 14.

Object. But the sight and presence of Angels is exceeding awful, and overwhelming to humane nature: will rather astonish and terrify, than refresh and cheer us, to find our selves, all on a sudden surrounded and beset with such Majestick Creatures. We see what effects the appearance of an Angel *hath had on good Men in this World. We shall die, (saith* Manoah*) for we have seen God,* Judg. 13. 22. *Eliphaz, a Spirit passed before my face, the hair of my flesh stood up,* Job 4. 15.

Sol. True, whilst our Souls inhabit these mortal and sinful Bodies, the appearance of Angels is terrible to them, and cannot be otherwise, partly upon a *natural*, and partly upon a *moral* account. The dread of Angels naturally falls upon our Animal Spirits: They shrink and tremble at the approach of Spirits; not only the Spirits of Men, but of Beasts, quail at it. A Dog or a Horse is terrified at it, as well as a Man, *Numb.* 22. 25. The dread of Spirits strikes the animal or natural Spirits primarily; and the Mind or rational Soul by consent. There is also another cause of fear in Man, upon the sight and presence of *Angels, viz.* a consciousness of guilt. Wherever there is guilt, there will be fear, especially upon any extraordinary appearance of God to us, tho' it be but mediately by an Angel.

But when the Soul is freed both from flesh and sin, and shall enjoy it self in a Nature like to these pure and holy Spirits, the dread of Angels is then vanished, and the Soul will take great content and satisfaction in their Company and Communion: The Soul then finds it self a fit Companion for them, looks upon them as its fellow-servants; for so they are, *Rev.* 19. 10. And the Angels look upon the Spirits of just Men, not as inferiors and Underlings, but with great respect, as Spirits in some sense nearer to Christ than themselves: So that henceforth no dread falls upon us from the presence of these excellent Creatures; but each enjoyeth singular delight in each others society. And thus we see in what honourable and pleasing company the Souls of the Just go hence to their Father's House and Bosom.

Prop. V. *The Soul is not so maimed and prejudiced by its separation from the Body, but that it both can and doth live, and act without it; and performs the Acts of Cogitation and Volition, without the aid and Ministry of the Body.*

I know it is objected by them that assert the Soul's sleeping till the Resurrection; that tho' it's Essence be not destroy'd by death, yet its Operations are obstructed by the want and absence of the Body, its Tool and Instrument: and thus they form their Objection.

Object. *All that the Soul understands it understands by* Species; *that is, the Images of things which are first formed in the Phantasy: As when we would conceive the Nature of a House, a Ship, a Man, or a Beast; we first form the Image or Species thereof in our fancy, and then exercise our thoughts about it: But this depending upon bodily Organs and Instruments, the separated Soul can form no such Images. It hath no such innate* Species *of its own, but comes into the World an* abrasa tabula, *white paper; and being deprived by separation of the help of Senses and Phantasms, it consequently understands nothing.*

Thus the Soul in its state of Separation is represented to us as wounded in its Powers and Operations, to that degree which seems to extinguish the very nature of it. But,

Sol. 1. We deny that the Soul knows nothing now but by Phantasms and Images; for it knows it self, its own Nature and Powers, of

* *Quomodo inservierunt capiti, eo modo inserviunt etiam membris. Gaudent inservire illis in terris, quos aliquando socios habebunt in cœlis. Gerhard.*

Conditiones intellectus sunt tres: (1) Objectum, ens verum & intelligibile. (2) Phantasma, vel species sensilis in Phantasia latens. (3) Species intelligibilis quæ est accidens spirituale, repræsentans idealiter intellectui rem materialem existentem extra intellectum.

Intellectus incorporea & immaterialia contemplatur, ut Deum & intelligentias; sed hæc nullo modo in

phantasiam cadunt, cum sunt extra limites corporearum virium, *Conimb. de An. l. 3. c 8. Q. 8.*

which it cannot possibly feign or form any Image or Representation, whatForm, Shape or Figure, can the fancy of a Man cast his own Soul into, to help him to understand its Nature?

And what shall we say of its understanding during an Extasy, or Rapture? Doth the Soul know nothing at such a time: Doth a dull Torpor seize and benumb its intellectual Powers? No, no, the Understanding is never more bright, clear, apprehensive and perfect, than when the Body in an Extasy is laid aside as to any use or assistance of the mind. The Soul for that space uses not the Body's assistance, as the very words *Extasy* and *Rapture* convince us.

Si autem hoc non est ex natura animæ, sed per accidens hoc convenit ei, ex eo quod corpori alligatur, sicut Platonici posuerunt, de facili quæstio solvi potest. Nam remoto impedimento corporis, rediret anima ad suam naturam. *Aquin. p. 1. Q. 8. Art. 1.*

2. To understand by *Species* doth not agree to the Soul naturally and necessarily, but by accident, as it is now in union with the Body: Were it but once loosed from the Body, it would understand better without them than ever it did in the Body by them. A Man that is on horse-back, must move according to the motion of the Horse he rides; but if he were on foot, he then uses his own proper motion as he pleaseth; so here. But tho' we grant the Soul doth in many cases now make use of Phantasms, and that the agitation of the Spirits, which are in the Brain and Heart, are conjunct with its Acts of Cogitation and Intellection: Yet as a searching Scholar well observes, the Spirits are rather Subjects than Instruments of those Actions; and the whole essence of those Acts is antecedent to the motion of the Spirits, As when we use a Pen in writing, or a Knife in cutting, there is an operation of the Soul upon them, before there can be any operation by them *. They act as they are first acted, and so do these bodily Spirits. So that to speak properly, the Body is bettered, by the use the Soul makes of it in these its noble Actions; but the Soul is not advantaged by being tied to such a Body, it can do its own work without it, its Operations follow its Essence, not the Body to which it is for a time united.

* How's *Blessedness*, pag. 174 175.

In sum, 'Tis much more absonous and difficult to conceive a stupified, benumbed, and unactive Soul, whose very Nature is to be active, lively, and always in motion, than it is to conceive a Soul freed from the shackles and clogs of the Body, acting freely according to its own Nature. I wish the favourers of this Opinion may take heed, lest it carry them farther than they intend, even to a denial of its Existence and Immortality, and turn them into downright *Sensatists* or *Atheists*.

Prop. VI. *That the separated Souls of the Just, having finished all their Work of Obedience on Earth, and the Spirit having finished all his Work of Sanctification upon them, they do ascend to God, with all the habits of Grace inherent in them; and all the comfortable Improvements of their Graces accompanying and following them.*

This Proposition is to be opened and confirmed in these four Branches.

(1.) When a gracious Soul is separated from the Body, all its Work of Obedience in this World is finished. There Death is called the *finishing of our course*, Acts 20. 24. *the night, when man works no more*, John 9. 4. *There is no working in the Grave*, Eccles. 9. 10. for Death dissolves the *Compositum*, and removes the Soul immediately to another World, where it can act for it self only, but not for others, as it was wont to do on Earth. *I shall see Man no more* (saith *Hezekiah*) *with the Inhabitants of the World*, Isa. 38. 11. That which was said of *David's* death, is as true of every Christian, that *having served his generation according to the will of God, he fell asleep*, Acts 13. 36.

I do not say this lower World receives no benefit at all by them after their death; for tho' they can speak no more, write no more, pray for, and instruct the Inhabitants of this World no more, nor exhibit to them the beauty of Religion in any new Acts or Examples of theirs, (which is that I mean by saying *they have finished all their Work of Obedience on Earth*) yet the benefit of what they did whilst in the Body, still remains after they are gone; as the Apostle speaks of *Abel*, Heb. 11. 4. *Who being dead, yet speaketh*. This way indeed abundance of service will be done for the Souls of Men upon Earth, long after they are gone to Heaven. And this should greatly quicken us to leave as much as we can behind us, for the good of Posterity, that *after our decease* (as the Apostle speaks, 2 *Pet.* 1. 15.) they may have our Words and Examples in remembrance. But for any service to be done *de novo*, after death, it is not to be expected. We have accomplished as a Hireling our day, and have not a stroke more to do.

(2.) As all our Work of Obedience is then finished by us, so at death all the Work of God is finished by his Spirit upon us. The last hand is then put to all the preparatory Work for Glory, not a stroke more to be done upon it afterwards; which appears as well by the immediate succession of the Life of Glory, (whereof I shall speak in another Proposition) as by the cessation of all sanctifying Means and Instruments, which are totally laid aside as things of no more use after this stroke is given; *Adepto fine, cessant media*, Means are useless, when the End is attain'd. *There is no work*, saith *Solomon*, *in the grave*. How short soever the Soul's stay and abode in the Body was, tho' it were regenerated one day, and separated the next, yet all is wrought upon it, which God ever intended should be wrought in this World, and there is no Preparation work in the other World.

(3.) But tho' the Soul leave all the means of Grace behind it, yet it carries away with it to Heaven all those habits of Grace which were planted and improved in it in this World, by the Blessing of the Spirit upon those means. Tho' it leave the Ordinances, it loseth not the Effects and Fruits of them, tho' they cease, their Effects still live. *The truth dwelleth in us and shall be in us for ever*, 1 John 2. 17. *The Seed of God remaineth in us*, 1 John 3. 9.

Common Gifts fail at Death, but saving Grace sticks fast in the Soul, and ascends with it into Glory. Gracious habits are inseparable. Glory doth not destroy, but perfect them. They are the Soul's meetness for Heaven, Col. 1. 12. and therefore it shall not come into his presence

presence, leaving its meetness behind it. In vain is all the Work of the Spirit upon us in this World, if we carry it not along with us into that World, seeing all his Works upon us in this Life have a respect and relation to the Life to come.

Look therefore as the same natural Faculties and Powers which the Soul had (tho' it could not use them) in its imperfect Body in the Womb, came with it into this World, where they freely exerted themselves in the most noble Actions of natural Life; so the habits of Grace which by Regeneration are here implanted in a weak and imperfect Soul, go with it to Glory, where they exert themselves in a more high and perfect way of acting than ever they did here below. The languishing spark of Love is there a vehement flame; the faint, remiss, and infrequent delight in God, is there at a constant, ravishing, and transporting height.

(4.) To conclude, As all implanted habits of Grace ascend with the sanctified Soul to Heaven; (for the Soul ascends not thither as a natural, but as a new Creature) so all the effects, result, and sweet improvements of those Graces, which we gathered as the pleasant fruits of them on Earth, these accompany and follow the Soul into the other World also; *Their works follow them*, Rev. 14. 13.) They go not before in the Notion of Merits to make way for them, but they follow or accompany them as Evidences, and comfortable Experiences. I doubt not, but the very remembrance of what pass'd betwixt God and the Soul here, betwixt the day of its Espousals to Christ, and its Divorce from the Body, will be one sweet Ingredient into their Blessedness and Joy, when they shall be singing in the upper Region the Song of *Moses* and of the *Lamb*. They were never given to be lost, or left behind us. And thus you see with what a rich Cargo the Soul sails to the other World, tho' if it had no other, it would never drop Anchor there.

Prop. VII. *The Souls of the Just, when separated from their Bodies, do not wander up and down this World, nor hover about the Sepulchres where their Bodies lie; nor are they detain'd in any Purgatory, in order to their more perfect Purification; nor do they fall asleep in a benummed stupid state: but do forthwith pass into Glory, and are immediately with the Lord.*

When once the mind of Man leaves the Scripture-guidance and direction, which is to what the Compass or Pole-star is to a Ship in e wide Ocean, whither will it not wander? what uncertainties will it not fluctuate? and on what Rocks and Quicksands must it inevibly be cast? Many have been the foolish and oundless Conceits and Fancies of Men about e Receptacles of departed Souls.

1. Some have assigned them a restless wanng Life, now here, now there, without any rtain dwelling-place any where. The only ound for this fancy, is the frequent Apparions of the Ghosts or Spirits of the dead, hereof many Instances are given; and who here that is a stranger to such Stories? Now, departed Souls were fixed any where, this orld would be quiet and free from such dirbances.

I make no doubt but very many of these Stories have been the industrious Fictions and Devices of wicked and superstitious Votaries to gain reputation to their way, speaking Lies in hypocrisie, to draw Disciples after them. And many others have been the Tricks and Impostures of Satan himself, to shake the Credit of the Saints Rest in Heaven, and the Imprisonment of ungodly Souls in Hell, as will more fully appear when I come to speak to that Question more particularly.

2. Others think, when they are loosed from the Body at death, they hover about the graves and solitary places where their Bodies lie, as willing, seeing they can dwell no longer in them, to abide as near them as they can; just as the surviving Turtle keeps near the place where his Mate died, and may be heard mourning for a long time about that part of the Wood. This Opinion seeks countenance and protection from that Law, *Deut.* 18. 10. 11. which prohibits Men to consult with the Dead; of which restraint there had been no need nor use, if it had not been practised; and such practices had not been continued, if departed Souls had not frequented those places, and given Answers to their Questions. But what I said before of Satan's Impostures, is enough for the present to return to this also.

3. The *Papists* send them immediately to *Purgatory*, in order to their more thorow Purification. This Purgatory *Bellarmine* thus describes: *It is a certain place wherein, as in a Prison, Souls are purged after this life, that were not fully purged here, to the intent they may enter pure into Heaven; and tho' the Church* (saith he) *hath not defined the place, yet the Schoolmen say, it is in the bowels of the Earth, and upon the borders of Hell.* And to countenance this profitable Fable, divers Scriptures are by them abused and misapplied, as 1 *Cor.* 3. 15. *Matth.* 5. 25, 26. 1 *Pet.* 3. 19. All which have been fully rescued out of their hands, and abundantly vindicated by our Divines, who have proved, God never kindled that fire to purifie Souls; but the *Pope* to warm his own *Kitchen*.

Bell. lib. 2. de Purg. cap. 6.

4. Another sort there are, who affirm, they neither wander about this World, nor go into Purgatory, but are cast by Death into a Swoon or Sleep; remaining in a kind of benummed condition, till the Resurrection of the Body. This was the Error of *Beryllus*; and *Irenæus* seems to border too near upon it, when he saith, ‖ *The Souls of Disciples shall go to an invisible place appointed for them of God, and shall there tarry till the Resurrection, waiting for that time: and then receiving their Bodies, and perfectly, (i. e.) corporeally, rising again, as Christ did, they shall come to the sight of God.*

‖ Discipulorum Animæ abibunt in invisibilem locum, definitam eis a Deo; & ibi usque ad Resurrectionem commorabuntur, sustinentes Resurrectionem: post, recipientes corpora, & perfecte resurgentes, (*i. e.*) corporaliter, quemadmodum & Dominus resurrexit, sic venient ad conspectum Dei. *Iren. lib.* 5.

All these mistakes will fall together by one stroke; for if it evidently appear (as I hope it will) that the Spirits of the Just are immediately taken to God, and do converse with, and enjoy him in Heaven; then all these Fancies vanish, without any more labour about them particularly. Now there are four Considera-

tions which to me put the immediate Glorification of the departed Souls of Believers beyond all rational doubt.

1. Heaven is as ready and fit to receive them as ever it shall be.

2. They are as ready and fit for Heaven as ever they shall be.

3. The Scripture is plainly for it. And,

4. There is nothing in Reason against it.

1. Heaven is as fit and ready to receive them when they die, as ever it shall be. Heaven is prepared for Believers, (1.) By the purpose and decree of God, and so far it was prepared from the foundation of the World, *Matth.* 25. 34. (2.) By the Death of Christ whose Blood made the purchase of it for Believers, and so meritoriously opened the Gates thereof, which our Sins had barred up against us, *Heb.* 10. 19, 20. (3.) By the Ascension of Christ into that holy place, as our Representative and Forerunner, *John* 14. 2. This is all that is necessary to be done for the preparation of Heaven; and all this is done, as much as ever God design'd should be done to it, in order to its preparation for our Souls. So that no delay can be upon that account.

2. The departed Souls of Believers are as ready for Heaven as ever they shall be. For there is no Preparation-work to be done by them, or upon them after Death, *John* 9. 3. *Eccles.* 9. 10. Their Justification was complete before Death, and now their Sanctification is so too; Sin, which came in by the union, going out at the separation of their Souls and Bodies. They are *Spirits made perfect.*

3. The Scripture is plain and full for their immediate Glorification; *Luke* 23. 43. *To day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.* Luke 16. 22. *The Beggar died, and was carried by the Angels into* Abraham's *bosom.* Phil. 1. 21. *I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is far better.* The Scripture speaks but of two ways by which Souls see and enjoy God, *viz.* Faith and Sight; the one imperfect suited to this Life, the other perfect, fitted for the Life to come; and this immediately succeeding that, for the imperfect is done away by the coming of that which is perfect, as the Twilight is done away by the advancing of the perfect Day.

4. To conclude, There is nothing in Reason lying in bar to it. It hath been proved before, that the Soul in its unbodied state, is capable to enjoy Blessedness, and can perform its acts of Intellection, Volition, &c. not only as well, but much better than it did when embodied. I conclude therefore, that seeing Heaven is already as much prepar'd for Believers, as it need be, or can be; and they as much prepar'd from the time of their Dissolution, as ever they shall be; the Scriptures also being so plain for it, and no bar in Reason against it: all the forementioned Opinions are but the Dreams and Fancies of Men, who have forsaken their Scripture-guide; and this remains an unshaken Truth, That the Spirits of the Just go immediately to Glory, from the time of their separation.

Prop. VIII. *At the time of a gracious Soul's separation from the Body, it is instantly and perfectly freed from sin, which till that time dwelt in it from its beginning; but thenceforth shall do so no more.*

Immediately upon their separation from the Body, they are Spirits *made perfect*, as my Text stiles them; and that Epithet *Perfect* could never suite them, if there were any remaining root or habit of Corruption in them.

Ideoque vocat consecratos, vel perfectos, quia carnis infirmitatibus non amplius sint obnoxii, depositâ ipsâ carne. *Marl. in loc.*

The time, yea, the set time is now come, to put an end to all the dolorous groans of gracious Souls upon the account of indwelling Sin. What the Angel said to *Joshua*, Zech. 3. 3, 4. the same doth God say of every upright Soul at the time of its separation, *Take away the filthy Garments from him, and cloath him with change of Raiments, and set a fair Mitre upon his head.* Thus the Garments spotted with the Flesh, are taken away with the Body of Flesh, and the pure unchangeable Robes of perfect Holiness cloathed upon the Soul, in which it appears without fault before the Throne of God, *Rev.* 14. 5.

There is a threefold burdensom Evil in Sin, under which all regenerated Souls groan in this Life, *viz.* (1.) The Guilt; (2.) The Filth; (3.) The Inherence of it in their Nature. And there is a threefold Remedy or Cure of these Evils. The Guilt of Sin is remedied by *Justification*: The Filth of Sin is inchoatively healed by *Sanctification*: The Inherence of Sin is totally eradicated by *Glorification*. For as it entred into our Persons by the Union of our Souls and Bodies, so it is perfectly cast out by their Disunion or Separation at Death. The last stroke is then given to the Work of Sanctification, and the last is evermore the perfecting stroke: Sin languished under imperfect Sanctification in the time of Life, but it gives up the Ghost under perfected Sanctification, from and after Death. Sanctification gave it its deadly wound, but Glorification its final abolition. For it is with our Sins after Regeneration as it was with that Beast mentioned *Dan.* 7. 12. which tho' it was *wounded with a deadly wound, yet its Life was prolonged for a season*: And this is the appointed season for its expiration. For if at their dissolution they are immediately received into Glory (as it hath been prov'd they are in our seventh Proposition) they must necessarily be freed perfectly from Sin, immediately upon their dissolution; because nothing that is unclean can enter into that pure and holy place: They must be, as the Text truly represents them, *the Spirits of just Men made perfect.*

For if so great holiness and purity be required in all that draw nigh to God upon Earth, as you read *Psal.* 93. 5. certainly those who are admitted immediately to his Throne must be without fault, according to *Revel.* 7. 14, 15, 16, 17.

When a compounded Being comes to be dissolved, each part returns to its own Principle; so it is here. The Spirit of Man, and all the Grace that is in it, came from God, and to him they return at death, and are perfected in him and by him: The Flesh returns to the Earth whence it came, and all that Body of Sin is destroyed with it; neither the one or other shall be a snare or clog to the Soul any more. A Christian in this World is but Gold in the Ore; at Death the pure Gold is melted out and separated, and the Dross cast away and consumed.

Hence

Hence three *Consectaries* offer themselves to us.

Consect. I. That a Believer's Life and Warfare end together. We lay not down our weapons of War till we lie down in the dust; 2 *Tim.* 4. 7. *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course.* The Course and Conflict you see are finished together. Tho' they commence from different terms, yet they always terminate together. Grace and Sin have each acted its part upon the Stage of Time, and the Victory hovered doubtfully, sometimes over Sin, and sometimes over Grace, but now the War is ended, and the Quarrel decided, Grace keeps its ground, and Sin is finally vanquished. Now, and never before, the gracious *Soul* stands triumphing like that noble *Argive,*

In vacua solus Sessor Plausorque Theatro:

no; an Enemy left to renew the Combat; the War is ended; and with it all the fears and sorrows of the Saints.

Consect. II. Separated Souls become impeccable, or free from all the hazard of Sin, from the time of their separation. For, there being no root of sin now inherent in them, consequently no temptation to sin can fasten upon them: all temptations have their handles in the corruption of our Natures. Did not Satan find matter prepared within us, dry Tinder fitted to his hand, he might strike in temptations long enough before one of his hellish sparks could catch or fasten upon us. Temptations are grievous exercises to Believers; they are *darts, Eph.* 6. 16. they are *thorns, 2 Cor.* 12. 7. But the separate Soul is out of Gunshot: 'twere as good discharge an Arrow at the body of the Sun, as a temptation at a translated Soul.

Consect. III. Separated Souls are more lovely Companions, and their Converses more sweet and delightful than ever they were in this World. It was their corruption which spoil'd their Communion on Earth, and it is their spotless Holiness which makes it incomparably pleasant in Heaven. The best and loveliest Saints have something in them which is distastful; even sweet Briars, and holy Thistles, have their offensive Prickles: but when that which was so lovely on Earth is made perfect in Heaven, and nothing of that remains in Heaven, which was so offensive in them on Earth; Oh what blessed delightful Companions will they be! Oh blessed Society! Oh most desirable Companions! let my Soul for ever be united to their assembly. I love them under their Corruptions, but how shall my Soul be knit to them when it seeth them shining in their Perfections!

Prop. IX. *The Pleasure and Delights of the separate Spirits of the Just, are incomparably greater and sweeter, than those they did, or at any time could experience in their bodily state.*

With what a pleasant face would death smile upon Believers, what Roses would it raise in its pale cheeks, if this Proposition were but well settled in our hearts by faith! And if we will not be wanting to our selves, it may be firmly setled there, by these four Considerations, which demonstrate it.

Consideration I. *Whatsoever Pleasure any man receives in this World, he receives it by means of his Soul.* Even all corporeal and sensitive delights have no other relish and sweetness, but what the Soul gives them; which is demonstrable by this, that if a man be placed amidst all the pleasing Objects and Circumstances in the World, if he were in that Center where he might have the confluence of all the delights of this World; yet if the Spirit be wounded, there is no more relish or savour in them, than in the white of an Egg. What pleasure had *Spira* in his Liberty, Estate, Wife and Children; These things were indeed proposed and urged again and again to relieve him; but instead of pleasure, they became his horrour: let but the mind be wounded, and all the mirth is marr'd; one touch from God upon the Spirit, destroys all the joy of this World. Nay,

Let but the intention of the mind be strongly carried another way, and for that time, (though there be no guilt or wound upon the Soul) the most pleasant enjoyments lose their pleasure. What delight, think you, would bags of Gold, sumptuous Feasts, or exquisit Melody have afforded to *Archimedes*, when he was wholly intent upon his Mathematical lines? By this then it is evident, that the rise of all pleasure is in the mind, and the most agreeable and pleasing Objects and Enjoyments signify nothing without it: The mind must be sound in it self, and at leisure to attend them, or we can have no pleasure from them.

Consideration II. *Of all Natural Pleasures in the World, Intellectual Pleasures are found to be most agreeable and connatural to the Soul of man.*

The more refined and remote from sense any pleasure is, the more grateful it is to the Soul; those are certainly the sweetest Delights that spring out of the mind. A drop of intellectual pleasure is valued by a generous and well tempered Soul, above the whole Ocean of impure Joys, which come to it sophisticated and tang'd through the muddy Channels of sense.

No sensualists in the world can extract such pleasure out of Gold, Silver, Meat, and drink; as a searching and contemplating mind finds in the discovery of Truth. * *Heinsius*, that learned Library-keeper of *Leyden*, professed, that when he had shut up himself among so many illustrious Souls, he seemed to sit down there as in the very lap of Eternity, and heartily pitied the Rich and Covetous Worldlings that were strangers to his Delights.

* In qua simulac pedem posui, foribus pessulum obdo; & in ipso æternitatis gremio inter tot illustres animas sedem mihi sumo, cum ingenti quidem animo: ut subinde magnatum miserear, qui hanc fœlicitatem ignorant. *Epist. Prin.*

And * *Cardan* tells us, that to know the secrets of Nature, and the order of the Universe, hath greater pleasure and sweetness in it, than the thoughts of Man can fathom, or any Mortal hope for. Yea, such Beauty, saith * *Plutarch*, there is in the Study of the *Mathematicks*, that it were unworthy to compare such Baubles and Bubbles as Riches with it. Yea, saith another †, it were a sweet thing to be extinguished in those Studies.

* Arcana cœli, naturæ secreta, ordinem Universi scire, majoris felicitatis & dulcedinis est, quam cogitatione quis assequi potest, aut mortalis sperare.

* Talis est Mathematum pulchritudo, ut his indignum sit divitiarum phaleras istas & bullas & puerilia spectacula comparari. † Dulce est extingui Mathematicarum artium studio *Leon. Digg.*

Julius

Julius Scaliger was so delighted with *Poetry*, that he protested he had rather be the Author of twelve Verses in *Lucan*, than *Emperour* of *Germany*. And to say truth, there is a kind of ||enchanting sweetness in those intellectual Pleasures and Feasts of the mind; such a delight as hardly suffers the mind to be pull'd away from it. These Pleasures have a finer edg, a higher gust, a more agreeable savour to the mind than sensitive ones; as approaching much nearer to the nature of the Soul, which is spiritual.

|| Talis suavitas ut cum quis ea degustaverit, quasi Circeis poculis captus, non potest unquam ab illis divelli. *Cardan.*

Consid. III. And as Intellectual pleasures do as far exceed all sensitive pleasures as those which are proper to a man, do those which we have in common with Beasts: so *Divine Pleasures do again much more surmount Intellectual ones.* For what compare is there betwixt those joys which surprize a *Scholar* in the discovery of the Secrets of Nature, and those that overwhelm and swallow up the *Christian* in the discovery of the Glorious Mysteries of Redemption by Christ, and his own personal interest therein!

To solve the *Phenomena* of Nature is pleasant, but to solve all the difficulties about our Title to Christ and his Covenant, that is ravishing. *Archimedes* his εὕρηκα, *I have found it*, was but the frisk or skip of a Boy, to that rapturous voice of the *Spouse*, *My Beloved is mine, and I am his.* These are Entertainments for Angels, 1 *Pet.* 1. 12. a short Salvation for the season it is felt and tasted, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. after these delights all others are insipid and dry. And yet one step higher.

Consid. IV. *All that divine Pleasure which ever the holiest and devoutest Soul enjoyed in the Body, is but a sip, or prelibation, compared with those full droughts it hath in the unbodied state.*

Whilst it is embodied, it rejoiceth in the Earnests and Pledges of joy; but when it is unbodied, it receives the full sum; *Psal.* 16. 11. *In thy Presence is fulness of Joy.* This fulness of Joy is not to be expected, because not to be supported in this World. The Joy of Heaven would quickly make the hoops of Nature fly. When a good man had but a little more than ordinary of the Joy of the Lord poured into his Soul, he was heard to cry, Hold, Lord, hold, thy poor Creature is but a clay Vessel, and can hold no more. These Pleasures the Soul hath in the Body, are of the same kind indeed with those in Heaven, but are exceeding short of them in divers other respects.

1. The Spiritual Pleasures the Soul hath in the Body, are but by *reflection*; but those it enjoys out of the Body, are by immediate *intuition*, 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. now in a glass, then face to face.

2. The Pleasures it now hath, tho' they be of a Divine nature, yet they are relished by the vitiated Appetite of a sick and distempered Soul; the embodied Soul is diseased and sickly, it hath many Distempers hanging about it. Now we know the most pleasant things lose much of their pleasure to a sick man; the separate Soul is made perfect, throughly cured of all Diseases, restored to its perfect health; and consequently Divine Pleasures must needs have a higher gust and relish in Heaven than ever they had on earth.

3. The Pleasures of a gracious Soul on earth are but rare and seldom, meeting with many and long interruptions? and many of them occasioned by the Body, which often calls down the Soul to attend its Necessities, and converse with things of a far different nature: But from these, and all other ungrateful and prejudicial Avocations, the separated Soul is discharged and set free; so that its whole Eternity is spent in the highest Delights.

4. The highest Pleasures of a gracious Soul in the Body, are but the Pleasures of an uncentred Soul, which is still gravitating and striving forward, and consequently can be but low and very imperfect, in comparison with those it enjoys, when it is centred and fixed in its everlasting Rest. They differ as the shadow of the Labourer for an hour in the day, from his Rest in his Bed when his Work is ended.

5. To conclude, the Pleasures it hath here, are but the Pleasures of Hope and Expectation, which cannot bear any proportion to those of sight and full fruition. O see the advantages of an unbodied state!

Prop. X. *That Gracious Souls separate from the Body, do attain to the perfection of knowledge with more ease than they attained any small degree of knowledge whilst they dwelt in the Body.*

Great are the Inconveniences and Prejudices, under which Souls labour in their Pursuits after knowledg in this Life, *Veritas in puteo*, Truth lies deep. And it is hard, even with much labour, pains, and study, to pump up one clear Notion; for the Soul cannot now act as it would, but is fain to act as it can, according to the Limitations and Permissions of the Body, to which it is confined: by heedful *Observations*, and painful *Searches*, it is forced to deduce one thing from another, and is too often deceived and imposed upon by such tedious, and manifold Connections.

Beside, Truth now is forced in compliance with our weakness, and distance from the Fountain, to descend from Heaven under Vails, Shadows, and Umbrages, thereby to contract some kind of Affinity with our Fancies and exterior Senses first, that so it may with more advantage transmit it self on our Understanding. It must come under some vail or other to us, whilst we are vailed with Mortality, because the Soul cannot behold it in its native lustre, nor converse otherwise with it.

Lumen supremum nunquam descendit sine indumento; impossibile est aliter nobis lucere radium divinum, nisi varietate sacrorum velaminum circumvelatum. *Dionys. Areop. de cælest. Hier. cap.* 1.

And hence it was that *Augustin* made his rational Conjecture, Why Men use to be so much delighted with *Metaphors*, because they are so much proportioned to our Senses, with which our reason in this embodied state hath contracted such an Intimacy and Familiarity? But when the Soul lays aside its vail of Flesh, Truth also puts off her vail, and shews the Soul her naked, beautiful, and ravishing face. It henceforth beholds all truth in God the fountain of Truth. There are five ways by which men attain the knowledg of God, say the *Schools*, four of which the Soul makes use of in this World; but the fifth, which is the most perfect

perfect, is reserved for the separate state. Men discern God here,

(1.) *In vestigio*, by his foot-steps in the Works of Creation. God hath impreſt the marks of his Wiſdom and Power upon the Creatures, by which impreſſions we do diſcern that God hath been there. Thus the very Heathen arrive to ſome knowledge of a God, *Rom.* 1. 20. *Acts* 17. 24. 27.

(2.) *In Umbra*, by his ſhadow: if you ſee the ſhadow of a Man, you gueſs at his Stature and Dimenſions thereby. Thus Chriſt made ſome diſcovery of himſelf to the World, in the *Moſaical Ceremonies*, and antient Types and Umbrages, *Heb.* 10. 1.

(3.) *In Speculo*, in a Glaſs: This gives us a much clearer repreſentation of a perſon than either his *foot-ſteps* or *ſhadow* could: This is an imperfect or darker Viſion of his face by way of reflection. And thus God is ſeen in his Word and Ordinances, wherein as *in a glaſs we behold the glory of the Lord*, 2 Cor. 3. 18.

(4.) *In Filio*, in his *own Son*, who is the living Image and expreſs Character of his Father. Thus ſometimes we ſee a Child ſo lively repreſenting his Father in Speech, Gate, Geſture, and every Lineament of his face, that we may ſay, *Sic Oculos, ſic ille Manus, ſic Ora ferebat*: Juſt ſo his Father ſpake, ſo he went, and juſt ſuch a one he was.

Thus we know God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. who is the expreſs image of his Father, *Heb.* 1. 3. and *John* 14. 9. This is the higheſt way of attaining the knowledg of God in this Life. But then, in the unbodied ſtate we ſee him,

(5.) *Face to Face*, with a direct viſion. This is to *ſee him as he is*: The Believer is a Candidate for this degree now, but cannot be inveſted with it, till diveſted of this Body of Fleſh. Yet the Soul when unbodied and made perfect, attaineth, not to a *comprehenſive knowledg* of God, for it will ſtill remain a finite being, and ſo cannot comprehend that which is infinite. That queſtion, Job 11. 7. *Canſt thou find out the Almighty to perfection*: may be put to the higheſt Graduate in Heaven. And yet,

1. To ſee God, face to face, and know him as he is, will be a knowledg of the Divine Eſſence it ſelf. To ſee the Divine Eſſence, is to ſee God as he is, *i. e.* to ſee him ſo perfectly and fully, that the underſtanding can proceed no farther in point of knowledge concerning that great Queſtion, *What is God?* Thus no Man hath ſeen, or can ſee God in this World. Even *Moſes* himſelf could not ſee God, *Exod.* 33. 18, 19, 20. But the Spirits of the Juſt made perfect have ſatisfying apprehenſions, tho' no perfect comprehenſions of the Divine Eſſence.

2. In this light they clearly diſcern thoſe deep Myſteries which they here rack'd their thoughts upon, but could not penetrate in this Life. There they will know what is to be known of the Union of the two Natures in the wonderful Perſon of our *Emmanuel*; and the manner of the ſubſiſtence of each Perſon in the moſt glorious and undivided Godhead, *John* 14. 20. The ſeveral Attributes of God will then be unfolded to our Underſtandings; for his Eſſence and Attributes are not two things, *Rev.* 4. 8, 9, 10, 11. Oh! what a raviſhing ſight will this be!

The Myſteries of the Scriptures, and Providences of God, will be no Myſteries then: Curioſity it ſelf will be there ſatisfied.

3. This immediate knowledge and ſight of God face to face, will be infinitely more ſweet and raviſhingly pleaſant than any or all the views we had of him here by Faith ever were, or poſſibly could be. There is a joy unſpeakable in the Viſions of Faith, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. but it comes far ſhort of the facial Viſion. Who can tell the full importance of that one Text, *Rev.* 22. 4. *The Throne of the Lamb ſhall be in it, and they ſhall ſee his face?* Oh for ſuch a Heaven (ſaid one) as but to look through the Key-hole, and get one glimpſe of that lovely Face! Earth cannot bear ſuch ſights. This Light overwhelms and confounds the inadequate Faculties of imperfect and embodied Souls. But there is *lumen confortans*, a chearing, ſtrengthening, pleaſant light, as the light of *the Morning Star*, Rev. 2. 28.

4. This ſight of God will be appropriative and applicative. We there ſee him as our own God and Portion. Without a clear Intereſt in him, the ſight of him could never be beatifical and ſatisfying. Sight without Intereſt is like the Light of a Glow-worm, Light without Heat. All Doubts and Objections are ſolv'd and anſwer'd in the firſt ſight of this bleſſed Face.

5. To conclude: This perfect and moſt comfortable Knowledge is attained without labour by the ſeparate Soul. Here every degree of knowledge was with the price of much pains. How many weary hours and aking heads did the acquiſition of a little knowledge ſtand us in! But then it flows in upon the Soul eaſily. It was the ſaying of a great Uſurer, *I once took much pains to get a little*, (meaning the firſt ſtock) *but now I get much without any pains at all.* Oh lovely ſtate of ſeparation! That Body which interpoſed, clogg'd and clouded the willing and capable Spirit, being drawn aſide (as a Curtain) by Death, the Light of Glory now ſhines upon it, and round about it, without any interception or lett.

Prop. XI. *The ſeparated Souls of the Juſt do live in a more high and excellent way of Communion with God in his Temple-worſhip in Heaven, than ever they did in the ſweeteſt Goſpel Ordinances, and moſt ſpiritual Duties, in which they converſed with him here on Earth.*

That Saints on Earth have real Communion with God, and that this Communion is the joy of their Hearts, the Life of their Life, and their relief under all preſſures and troubles in this Life, is a Truth ſo firmly ſealed upon their Hearts by experience, as well as clearly revealed in the Word, that there can remain no doubt about it among thoſe that have any ſaving acquaintance with the Life and Power of Religion.

This Communion with God is of that precious value with Believers, that it unſpeakably endears all thoſe Duties and Ordinances to them, which as means and inſtruments are uſeful to maintain it.

At death, the people of God part with all thoſe precious Ordinances and Duties, they being only deſigned for, and fitted to the preſent ſtate of Imperfection, *Eph.* 4. 12, 13. but not at all to their loſs, no more than it is to his that

that loses the light of his Candle by the rising of the Sun. A Candle, a Star, is comfortable in the night; but useless when the Sun is up, and in its Meridian Glory. Christian, pray much, hear much, and drive as profitable a Trade as thou canst among the Ordinances of God, and Duties of Religion: For the time is at hand that you shall serve and wait on God no more this way.

But yet think not your Souls shall be discharged from all Worship and Service of God when you die: No, you will find Heaven to be *a Temple* built for Worship, and the Worship there to be much transcendent to all that in which you were here employ'd. The *Sanctuary* was a pattern of Heaven in this very respect, *Heb.* 9. 23. And on this very account it is called *Sion* in my Text, and the *heavenly Jerusalem*; as denoting a Church-state, and the spiritual Worship there performed by the Spirits of just Men made perfect.

Some help we may have to understand the nature thereof, by comparing it with that Worship and Service which we perform to God here in this state of Imperfection, and by considering the agreements and disagreements betwixt them. In this they agree, that the Worship above and below are both addressed and directed to one and the same Object, *Father, Son* and *Spirit*; all centers and terminates in God. They also agree in the general Quality, and common Nature; they are both spiritual Worship. But there are divers remarkable differences betwixt the one and the other, as will be manifest in the following Collation.

1. All our Worship on Earth is performed and transacted by Faith, as the instrument and mean thereof, *Heb.* 11. 6. *He that cometh to God must believe,* &c. In Heaven Faith ceaseth, and Sight takes place of it, 1 *Cor.* 5. 7. There we *see* what here we only believe. There are now before us Ordinances, Scriptures, Ministers, and the Assemblies of Saints in the places of Worship: but if we have any Communion with God, by or among these, we must set our selves to believe those we see not. By realizing and applying invisible things, we here get sometimes, and with no small pains, a taste of Heaven, and a transient glance of that Glory. In this service our faith is put hard to it, it must work and fight at once; resolutely act; whilst Sense and Reason stand by contradicting and quarrelling with it. And if with much ado, we get but one sensible touch of Heaven upon our Spirits, if we get a little spiritual warmth and melting of our Affections towards God, we call that day a good day, and it is so indeed.

But in Heaven all things are carried at a higher rate, the Joy of the Lord overflows us without any labour or pains of ours to procure it. We may say of it there, as the *Prophet* speaks of the dew and showers upon the grass, *which tarrieth not for Man, nor waiteth for the Sons of Men*, Mic. 5. 7.

2. No Grace is or can be acted here, without the clog of a contrary corruption upon its heel: *Rom.* 7. 21. *When I would do good, evil is present with me.* Every beam of Faith is presently darkened by a cloud of Unbelief, *Mark* 9. 24. *Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief.* We often Read in the Book of Experience (saith one) what an inconstant fickle thing the heart is in duties: Now it is with us, by and by it's fled away and gone; we know not where to find it: It is constant only in its inconstancy and lubricity. There is iniquity in our most holy things, which needs pardon, *Exod.* 28. 38. Our best Duties have enough in them to damn us, as well as our worst Sins: but in that perfect state above, Grace flows purely out of the Soul, as beams do from the Sun, or Chrystal streams from the purest Fountain. No impure, or imperfect acts proceed from Spirits made perfect.

Sæpè in libro experientiæ legimus, quomodo à corde nostro relinquimur, nunc est nobiscum, nunc alibi, nunc avolat, nunc recurrit: in sola lubricitate manens. *Bern.*

3. Here the Graces of the Saints never, or very rarely acted in their highest and most intense degree. When they love God most fervently, there is some coldness in their love. Who comes up to the height of that rule, *Mat.* 22, 37. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy mind, and all thy strength?* When we meditate on God, it is not in the depth of our thoughts, without some wanderings and extravagancies; 'tis very hard if not impossible for the Soul to stand long in its full bent to God.

But in Heaven it doth so, and will do so for ever, without any relaxation or remission of its fervour. Christ among the Saints and Angels in Heaven, is as a mighty Load-stone cast in among many Needles, which leap to him, and fix themselves inseparably upon him. They all act in glory as the fire doth here, to the utmost of their power and ability. There is no note lower, than Glory to God in the highest.

(4.) The most spiritual Souls on Earth, who live most with God, have and must have their daily and frequent intermissions. The necessities of the Body, as well as the defectiveness of their Graces; require and necessitate it to be so. Our hands with *Moses* will hang down and grow weary. Our Affections will cool and fall, do what we can.

But as the Spirits of just Men made perfect know no remissions in the degree, so neither any intermissions in the actings of their Grace: *They shall serve him day and night in his Temple,* Rev. 7. 15. You that would purchase the continuance of your spiritual Comforts but for a day, with all that you have in this World, will there enjoy them at full without any intermitting throughout eternity.

5. If the best hearts on earth be at any time more than ordinarily enlarged in spiritual comforts, they need presently some humbling providence to hide pride from their eyes. Even *Paul* himself must have a thorn in the flesh, a Messenger of Satan to buffet him. *Bernard* could never perform any duty with comfortable enlargement, but he seemed to hear his own heart whisper thus, *Bene fecisti, Bernarde,* O well done *Bernard.*

But in Heaven, the highest comforts are injoyed in the deepest humility, and the intire glory is ascribed to God without any unworthy defalcations. *Rev.* 4. 10. They put not the Crown upon their own heads, but Christ's; they cast down their own Crowns, and fall down at the feet of him that sitteth upon the Throne.

6. All

6. All Aſſemblies for Worſhip in this world are mixed: they conſiſt of regenerate and unregenerate, living and dead Souls; this ſpoils the harmony, and allays the comfort of mutual Communion. In a Congregation conſiſting of a thouſand perſons, Ah! how few comparatively are there that are heartily concerned in the Duty! But it is not ſo above. There are ten thouſand times ten thouſand, even thouſands of thouſands before the Throne, loving, adoring, praiſing, and triumphing together, and not a jarring ſtring in all their Harps.

7. Here the Worſhip of God is impured, mixed, and adulterated by the ſinful additions and inventions of Men. This gracious Souls groan under as a heavy burden, ſighing and praying for Reformation; as knowing they can expect no more of God's Preſence, than there is of his Order and Inſtitution in Worſhip. But above, all the Worſhip is pure, the leaſt pin in the heavenly *Tabernacle* is according to the perfect Pattern of the Divine Will.

8. We have here Duties of divers kinds and natures to perform. All our time is not to be ſpent in loving, praiſing, and delighting in God: but we muſt turn our ſelves alſo to ſearching, watching, and ſoul-humbling work. Sometimes we are called to get up our Hearts to the higheſt praiſe, and then to humble them to the duſt for ſin and judgments; one while to ſing his Praiſes, and another while to ſigh even to the breaking of our loins: but the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect, have but one kind of imployment, *viz.* praiſing, loving and delighting in God. There is no groaning, ſighing, ſearching or watching-work in that ſtate.

9. The moſt illuminated Believers on earth have but dark and crude apprehenſions of Chriſt's Interceſſion work in Heaven, or of the way and manner in which it is there performed by him. We know indeed that our High-Prieſt is for us enter'd within the Vail, *Heb.* 6. 20. That he appears in that moſt holy place for us, *Heb.* 9. 24. That he there repreſents his ſufferings for us to God, ſtanding before him as a Lamb that had been ſlain, *Rev.* 5. 6. That he offers up our Prayers with his Incenſe to God, *Rev.* 8. 3.

But the immediate intuition of the whole performance by the perſon of Chriſt in Heaven, the beholding of him in his work there, with the ſmiles and honours, the delight and ſatisfaction of the Father in his Perſon and Work; certainly this muſt be a far different thing, and what muſt make more deep and ſutable impreſſions upon our hearts than ever the moſt affecting view of them by Faith at this diſtance could do.

10. *In ſuch raviſhing ſights, and joyful aſcriptions of Glory to him that ſitteth upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for evermore, all the ſeparated Spirits of the Juſt are imployed and wholly taken up in Heaven as they come in their ſeveral times thither; and will be ſo imployed in that Temple-ſervice unto the end of the world, when Chriſt ſhall deliver up the Kingdom to his Father, and thenceforth God ſhall be all in all.*

The illuſtration and confirmation of this Aſſertion we have in theſe two or three particulars.

(1.) That all the Spirits of juſt men from the beginning of the World, until Chriſt's aſcenſion into Heaven, did enter into Heaven as a place of Reſt, as a City prepared for them of God, *Heb.* 11. 16. and did enjoy Bleſſedneſs and Glory there: but yet there ſeems to be an alteration even in Heaven it ſelf, ſince the Aſcenſion of Chriſt into it, and ſuch an alteration as advanceth the Glory thereof both to Angels and Saints. 'Heaven it ſelf (ſaith 'one who is now there) was 'not what it is, before the entrance of Chriſt into the Sanctuary for the adminiſtration of 'his Office. Neither the Saints departed, nor 'the Angels themſelves were participant of that 'Glory which now they are. Neither yet doth 'this argue any defect in Heaven, or the State 'thereof in its primitive conſtitution: For the 'perfection of any ſtate hath reſpect unto that 'order of things which it is originally ſuted 'unto. Take all things in the order of the firſt 'Creation, and with reſpect thereunto, Heaven 'was perfect in Glory from the beginning, *&c.* 'Whatever was their reſt, refreſh-'ment and bleſſedneſs; whatever 'were their enjoyments of the pre-'ſence of God; yet was there no Throne of 'Grace erected in Heaven, no high Prieſt ap-'pearing before it, no Lamb as it had been 'ſlain, no joint aſcription of Glory unto him 'that ſits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb 'for ever; *God having ordained ſome better thing for us, that they without us ſhould not be made perfect,* Heb. 11. 40.

Dr. Owen's Chriſtologia, *p.* 158.

p. 355.

Priuſquam ad noſtra tempora perventum eſt.

Now both the Angels and Saints in Heaven do behold Chriſt in his Prieſtly Office within that Sanctuary, a ſight never ſeen in Heaven before.

(2.) This frame of heavenly Worſhip will continue as it is until the end of the World, and then another alteration will be made in the manner of his diſpenſatory Kingdom: *For then he muſt deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; and then ſhall the Son alſo himſelf be ſubject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be All in All,* as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* 15. 24. 28. So that as the preſent ſtate of Heaven is not in all reſpects, what it was before Chriſt's Aſcenſion thither; ſo after the conſummation of the Mediatorial Kingdom, and the gathering all the Elect into Glory, it will not in all reſpects be what now it is.

Chriſt will never ceaſe to be the immediate Head of the whole glorified Creation. God having gathered all the Elect, both Angels and Men, unto a head in him, and he being the Knot or Center of that collective Body; the whole frame of the glorified Church would be diſſolved, ſhould he loſe his relation of a Head to it. Yea, I doubt not but he will for ever continue to be the *medium* of Communication betwixt God and his glorified Church: God will ſtill Communicate himſelf to us thro' Chriſt, and our adherence, love and delight, will ſtill be thro' Chriſt: In a word, whatever change ſhall be made, the Perſon of Chriſt, and therein his humane nature, ſhall ſtill continue to be the eternal Object of Divine Glory, Praiſe, and Worſhip, *Rev.* 22. 4.

But when he ſhall have gathered home all his Elect to Glory, he will reſign his Diſpen-

satory Kingdom, and become subject (*as Man and as Head of that Body which he purchased*) to his Father himself, *that God may be All in All*, as it is 1 *Cor.* 15. 28.

Nam si dispensativum hoc regnum nunquam traditurus esset, nunquam regni naturalis usum plenum esset recepturus. *Junius.*

(1) *All in All*, that is, All the Saints shall be filled and abundantly satisfied in and from God alone; there shall be no emptiness, no want, no complaint: For as there is water enough in one Sea to fill all Rivers, light enough in one Sun to illuminate all the World; so all Souls shall be eternally filled, satisfied, and blessed in one God. Surely there is enough in God for Millions of Souls; for if there be enough in God for all the Angels, *Mat.* 18. 10. yea enough in God for Jesus Christ, *Col.* 1. 19. there must be enough for all our Souls; the capacity of Angels is larger than ours; the capacity of Christ is larger than that of Angels: he that fills them, can and will therefore fill us, or be all in all to us.

(2.) *All in All*, that is, complete satisfaction to all the Saints in the absence of all other things, out of which they were wont to suck some comfort and delight in this World. He will now be instead of all; eminently all without them. We shall suck no more sweetness out of Food, Sleep, Relations, Ordinances, *&c.* there will be no more need or use of them, than there is of Candles in the Sunshine, *Rev.* 22. 5.

(3.) *All in All*, that is, God only shall be loved, praised, and admired by all the Saints, they shall love no Creature out of God, but all in God, or rather God in them all. This is that blessed state to which all things tend, for which the Angels and glorified Souls in Heaven long. Hence it is that there is joy in Heaven upon the conversion of any poor sinner on Earth; because thereby the Body of Christ mystical advanceth towards its fullness and completeness, *Luke* 15. 10. No sooner is a poor Soul struck by the word to the heart, and sent home crying, O sick! sick! sick of sin, and sick for Christ! but the news of it is quickly in Heaven, and is matter of great joy there because they wait as well as Christ, for the time of Consummation. To conclude, Those that went first to Heaven before Christ's Ascension, were fully at rest in God, and blessed in his enjoyment, and yet upon Christ's Ascension thither, their happiness was advanced: 'tis a new Heaven as it were to feed their eyes upon the *Man Christ Jesus* there. Those that now stand before the Throne, ravished with the Face of Christ, and ascribing Glory to him for ever, are also in a most blessed state, and are filled with the joy of the Lord. And yet, two things still remain to be farther done, before they are, as they shall be for ever, *viz.* the Restitution of their Bodies, which yet lie in the Dust, and the delivering up of the dispensatory Kingdom, upon the coming in of the fulness of all their fellow-Saints; and after that no more alteration for ever, but they shall be both in Soul and Body for ever with the Lord. What Tongue of Man or Angel can give us the complete *Emphasis* of that word, *ever with the Lord*? or that, of God's being *All in All*? O what hath God prepared for them that love him!

Prop. XII. *It pleaseth God at some times, even in this life, to give some men the foresight and taste of that Blessedness, which holy separated Souls do now enjoy, and themselves shall shortly enjoy with God in Glory.*

Specimens and *Earnests* of Heaven are no unknown things upon Earth. As the Grapes of *Eshcol*, so the joy of Heaven may be tasted before we come thither, and these Foresights and Prelibations of Heaven are either,

1. Extraordinary, or
2. Ordinary.

1. *Extraordinary*, for the way and manner; when the Soul is either, (1) Rapt from the Body for a short time, in an *Extasy*, when in a visional way heavenly things are presented to it: or, (2) When the bodily eye is elevated and strengthned above its natural vigor and ability, to behold the astonishing objects of the other World.

(1.) Of the first sort and rank was that famous Rapture of *Paul*, mentioned, 2 *Cor.* 12. 2, 3. *I knew a Man in Christ fourteen years ago, (whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the Body I cannot tell, God knoweth) such an one caught up to the third Heaven*, &c. * 'Tis questionable indeed, whether the Soul of the *Apostle* was really separated from his Body, whilst he suffered that Extasy, or whether his senses were only laid as it were asleep for that time; he himself could not determine the Question, much less can any other: but whether so or so, this seems evident, that his senses were for that time utterly useless to him. If his Body was not dead, it was all one as if it had been so, for any use his Soul then made of it. † In Extasies all the Senses and Powers are idle, except the Understanding: his Soul for that time seemed to be disjoined from his Body, much as a flame of fire, which you shall sometimes see to play and hover at a distance from the Wood, and then catching the Fewel again. Probably this was that *Trance* he fell into in the *Temple*, when he was praying, mentioned in *Acts* 22. 17.

* Non constat, an Anima Pauli fuerit tunc à corpore separata, cum ipse id se nescire fatetur. Unde quid illi circa abstractionem à sensibus reipsa acciderit, affirmare non possumus: videlicet num mortuo Corpore, per separationem animæ, extincti fuerint in eo sensus: vel non mortuo, consopiti duntaxat. *Colleg. Conimbr. lib.* 3. *Art.* 3. *p.* 512.

† In extasi feriari omnes potentias præter intellectum. *Abulen.*

In this Rapture his Soul ascended above this World, it was caught up into *Paradise*, into the third Heaven, the place in which Christ's Soul was after his death: and there he heard those ἄρρητα ῥήματα, unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a Man to utter: For alas! poor Mortals cannot pronounce the *Shibboleth* of Heaven; the heavenly Inhabitants talk in no other *Dialect*; but the Language of Heaven is not properly spoken by any but the Inhabitants of Heaven. Now *Paul* was not admitted into their Society at that time, as he was at his death, but was only a Spectator, a stander-by, as the Angels are in the Assemblies of the Saints here on Earth. But O what a day was that day to his Soul! It was as one of the days of Heaven; no words could signify to another man what he felt, what he tasted in that hour. Such favours will not be indulged to many; he was a *chosen Vessel*, and appointed to extraordinary

nary Sufferings for Christ, and it was necessary his Supports and Encouragements should be answerable.

Isaiah 6. 1, 2. *Ezekiel* 1 1. *Dan.* 10. 8, 9. *Apoc* 1. 17.

It was no less extraordinary and wonderful a Vision which *Isaiah*, *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, and *John* had: such Representations of God as overwhelmed them, and made Nature faint under them, and no wonder; for if the eyes of Creatures be so weak, that they cannot directly behold such a glorious Creature as the Sun; how much less can they bear the glorious Excellency and Majesty of God?

(2.) And sometimes without an Extasy, Representations of Christ and the Glory of Heaven have been made, and the very bodily eye fortified and elevated above its natural vigour and ability to behold them. Thus it was with *Stephen* at his Martyrdom, *Acts* 7, 55, 56. *Who being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into Heaven, and saw the Glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.* That this was not a sight of Faith, but an extraordinary sight by the bodily eye, is evident from its effect upon his outward Man, it made his face shine as the face of an Angel.

2. There are also beside this, *ordinary* and more common foretastes of Heaven, and the Glory to come, with which many Believers are favoured in this World. And such are those which come into the heart upon the steddy and more fixed views of the World to come by Faith, and the more raised spiritual actings of Grace in Duty. *Believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory,* 1 Pet. 1. 8. χαρᾷ ἀνεκλαλήτῳ καὶ δεδοξασμένῃ, with a glorified Joy, or a joy of the same kind and nature with the joy of glorified Spirits, tho' in an inferior and allayed degree.

And yet with the allowance of its Allay and Rebatement, it is like new Wine put into old and crazy Bottles, which is ready to make them fly; and would do so, should they be of any long continuance. *Stay me* (saith the Spouse) *with Flaggons, comfort me with Apples, I am sick of love,* Cant. 2. 5. The Sickness was not the sickness of Desire, or of Grief; of that she had complained before: but the sickness of Love. (*i. e.*) She was ready to faint under the insupportable weight of Christ's manifested and sealed Love, not able to bear what she felt, pained with the Love of Christ; and the desired Cure speaks this to be her Case, *Stay me with Flaggons, comfort me with Apples.* As if she had said, Lord, support and underprop my soul, for it reels, staggers, and fails under the pressure and weight of thy Love. Much like the case of a holy Man, who cried out, under the overwhelming sense of the Love of Christ shed abroad into his heart in prayer, Hold, Lord, hold, thy poor Creature is a Clay vessel, and can hold no more. Tho' these Joys bring not the Soul into a perfect *Extasy*, they certainly bring it as near as may be to it. Mr. *Fox* tells us of one *Giles* of *Bruxels*, a godly Martyr, who in Prison spent most of his time apart from the rest in secret Prayer; in which his Soul was so ardent and intent, that he often forgot himself and the time; and when he was called to Meat, he neither saw nor heard those that stood by him, till he was lifted up by the arms;

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and then he would gently speak to them, as one newly awaked out of a sweet sleep. These foretastes of Heaven may, from the manner of their conveyance, be distinguished into,

1. Mediate: And, 2. Immediate.

1. *Mediate*, in and by the previous use and exercise of Faith, heart examination, *&c.* the Spirit of God concurring with, and blessing of such Duties as these, helps the Soul by them to a sight of its interest in Christ, and the Glory to come; which being gained, Joy is no more under the Soul's command. I have with good assurance this account of a Minister, 'who being alone in a journey, and willing 'to make the best improvement he could of 'that day's Solitude, set himself to a close ex-'amination of the state of his Soul, and then of 'the Life to come, and the manner of its being 'and living in Heaven, in the views of all 'those things which are now pure Objects of 'Faith and Hope. After a while he perceived 'his thoughts begin to fix, and come closer 'to these great and astonishing things than was 'usual; and as his Mind settled upon them, 'his Affections began to rise with answerable 'livelines and vigour.

'He therefore (whilst he was yet master 'of his own thoughts) lifted up his heart to God 'in a short ejaculation that God would so or-'der it in his Providence, that he might meet 'with no interruption from Company, or any 'other Accident in that Journey, which was 'granted him: for in all that day's Journey, 'he neither met, overtook, or was overtaken 'by any. Thus going on his way, his thoughts 'began to swell and rise higher and higher 'like the waters in *Ezekiel*'s Vision, till at last 'they became an overflowing flood. Such 'was the intention of his mind, such the ra-'vishing tastes of heavenly Joys, and such the 'full assurance of his interest therein, that he 'utterly lost a sight and sense of this World, 'and all the concerns thereof; and for some 'hours knew no more where he was, than if 'he had been in a deep sleep upon his Bed. At 'last he began to perceive himself very faint, 'and almost choked with blood; which run-'ning in abundance from his nose, had disco-'lour'd his Clothes and his Horse from the 'shoulder to the hoof. He found himself al-'most spent and Nature to faint under the 'pressure of Joy unspeakable and unsupporta-'ble; and at last perceiving a Spring of water 'in his way, he with some difficulty alighted 'to cleanse and cool his face and hands which 'were drenched in Blood, Tears and Sweat.

'By that Spring he sat down, and washed; 'earnestly desiring if it were the pleasure of 'God, that it might be his parting-place from 'this World: he said, Death had the most a-'miable face in his eye that ever he beheld, 'except the face of Jesus Christ which made 'it so; and that he could not remember (tho' 'he believed he should die there) that he had 'once thought of his dear Wife or Children 'or any other earthly Concernment.

'But having drank of that Spring, his Spi-'rits revived, the Blood stenched, and he 'mounted his Horse again; and on he went in 'the same frame of Spirit till he had finished 'a Journey of near thirty miles, and came at 'night to his Inn, Where being come, he great-

'ly admired how he came thither, that his 'Horse, without his direction, had brought 'him thither and that he fell not all that day; 'which past not without several Trances of 'considerable continuance.

'Being alighted, the Innkeeper came to 'him, with some astonishment, (being ac-'quainted with him formerly) O Sir, said he, 'what is the matter with you? You look 'like a dead Man. Friend, replied he, I was 'never better in my life. Shew me my Cham-'ber, cause my Cloak to be cleansed, burn 'me a little Wine, and that is all I desire of 'you for the present. Accordingly it was 'done, and a Supper sent up, which he could 'not touch; but requested of the people, 'they would not trouble or disturb him for 'that night. All this night passed without one 'wink of sleep, tho' he never had a sweeter 'nights rest in all his life. Still, still, the Joy 'of the Lord overflowed him, and he seem-'ed to be an Inhabitant of the other World. 'The next morning being come, he was ear-'ly on horseback again, fearing the Diver-'tisement in the Inn might bereave him of his 'Joy; for he said it was now with him, as 'with a Man that carries a rich Treasure a-'bout him, who suspects every *Passenger* to be 'a *Thief*: but within a few hours he was sen-'sible of the ebbing of the Tide; and before 'night, tho' there was a heavenly serenity 'and sweet peace upon his Spirit, which con-'tinued long with him, yet the Transports of 'Joy were over, and the fine edg of his delight 'blunted. He many years after called that 'day one of the days of Heaven, and profess'd 'he understood more of the Life of Heaven 'by it, than by all the Books he ever read, or 'Discourses he ever entertained about it. This was indeed an extraordinary foretaste of Hea-ven for degree, but it came in the ordinary way and method of Faith and Meditation.

2. There are also *immediate* Illapses of hea-venly Joy into the hearts of Believers at some times; of which we may speak as the *Prophet* doth of the Dew and Rain, that *it tarrieth not for Man, nor waiteth for the Sons of Men*, a sur-prizing Light and Joy, like that *Cant.* 6. 12. *Or ever I was aware, my Soul made me like the Cha-riots of Aminadab.*

There is a Witness of the Spirit distinct from that of Water and Blood, 1 *John* 5. 8. that is, a Witness, or Sealing, which comes not in an argumentative way, by reasoning from either Justification or Sanctification; but seems to come immediately from the Spirit. I know both sorts of Testimonies, how clear and sweet soever they are for the present, are liable afterwards to be called into question; but certainly, during the abode of them upon the Soul, they are no less than *a short Salvation*, a real participation of the Joy of the Lord. And that which makes them so ravishing and transporting, is,

(1.) The infinite weight with which the concerns of Eternity lie upon the hearts and thoughts of the People of God; nothing lies so near to their Spirits in all the World, as the matters of Salvation do, and have still done ever since God throughly awakened them in their first effectual Conviction. 'Tis said of *Luther, There was such a strong im-pression of God upon his Spirit in his first Conviction, that there was neither Heat, nor Blood, nor Sense, nor Speech discernable in him.* Tho' it rise to that height but in a few, yet it settles in a deep, serious, and most solemn sense and sollicitude in all. This heightens the Joy.

Nec calor, nec sanguis, nec sensus, nec vox, superesset, *Ep. ad Melanct.*

(2.) The restlesness of the Soul, whilst mat-ters of Salvation hang in a dubious suspence must needs proportionably overflow it with Joy when God shall clear it. It was the saying of one, and is the sense of many more, I have born (said she) seven Children, and they have all cost me dear; yet could I be well content to bear them all over again, for one glimpse of the Love of God to my Soul. This heigh-tens the Joy above expression.

And now, having explained the substance of the Doctrine in these twelve Propositions, *it re-mains, that as a* Mantissa, *or Cast upon the whole, I farther clear what belongs to this Subject, in the solution of several* Queries *about the Soul in its unbodied and separate state: and tho' the Nature of some of these Queries may seem too cu-rious, yet I shall labour to speak according to the Rules of Sobriety, and contain my self within the line of Modesty, in what I shall speak about them: And the* first *is this,*

Query 1. *Whether any Notion or Conception can be formed of a separate Soul? And if so, How we may be assisted duly to form it, and conceive of it?*

Sol. 1. It must be acknowledged not only very difficult, but an impossible task, for a Soul immersed in Matter, and so unacquain-ted with its own Nature and Powers, as it is in its embodied state, to gain a perfect, clear, and adequate Conception of what it shall be in the World to come. Expect not then a per-fect Image, much less any magnificent Draught of this excellent Creature: this would be the same thing as to go about to depaint the Sun in its Glory, Motions, and Influences, with a Pencil. I shall think I have done enough, if I can but give you any umbrage or faint repre-sentation of this sublime and spiritual Being, and the manner of its subsisting and acting out of the Body. For seeing it is by Nature in-visible, and in most of its Actions (whilst it is in the state of Composition) it makes the same use of the Body and natural Spirits, that a Scribe doth of his Pen and Ink, without which he can-not decipher the Characters which are formed in his fancy; it must needs be difficult to con-ceive how it subsists and acts in its separate state.

Sol. 2. But tho' we acknowledge it to be a great ficulty to trace it beyond the limits of this World, tho' we perceive nothing to depart from the Body at the instant of its expiration but a puff of breath, which vanishes like smoke into the Air; and tho' Atheistical Wits daringly pronounce an immaterial Substance to be a meer *Jargon*, a contradiction *in terminis*; which being joined together, destroy one another: Yet all this doth not make the Notion of a separate Soul impossible, much less under-mine its Existence in its unbodied and lonely state; the Scriptures having so abundantly ob-viated all these Atheistical Suggestions, by so many plain discoveries of the happiness of some an

Hobbs's Levi-athan, cap. 34

and misery of others after this Life. Yea, my Text answers us, that Death is so far from *destroying* or *annihilating*, that it *perfects* the Spirits of the Just.

Sol. 3. There can be no more difficulty in conceiving of a separate Soul, than there is in conceiving of an Angel. For it is certain that a separated Soul and an Angel are the liveliest and clearest Representations of each other, in the whole number of created Beings. Some make the difference betwixt them little more, than of a Sword in the Scabbard from one that is naked. A Soul is but a *Genius* in the Body, and a *Genius* (or Angel) is a Soul out of a Body. An Angel (saith another) is a complete and perfect Soul, a Soul an imperfect and incomplete Angel.

Dr. More's Immortality of the Soul, l. 2 c. 7. § 4, & 8. Bell. de Ascen. mentis.

The separate Soul doth not become an Angel by putting off the Body; they are, and still will be divers *Species*: but in this they agree, that in their common Nature they are both *Spirits*, that is, *immaterial Substances, endued with Understanding, Will, and active Power.* And I know not why the one should not be as intelligible as the other; or if there be any advantage, the Soul certainly must have it, seeing our acquaintance with Souls is much more intimate than with Angels. Angels indeed have larger Capacities, and have no natural inclination to be embodied as Souls have; but their common Nature, as they are Spirits, is the same: And if we can conceive of one, we may also of the other.

Sol. 4. But the difficulty seems to lie in this, how the Soul can subsist alone without a Body; and how the habits of Grace, which were infused into it in this Life by Sanctification, do inhere in it, or can be reduced into act by it, when it hath no bodily Organs to work by.

As to the first, there is no difficulty at all, if we once rightly apprehend what is meant when we call it *a spiritual Substance*; that is, *a Being by it self, independent upon any other Creature as to its existence*, as was opened before: the Soul depends not for its Life upon the Body, but the Body upon the Soul. It is the same Sword when it is drawn, as it was when sheathed in its Scabbard; the Soul is as much it self when separated from the Body, as it was when united with it; its Being is independent on it, it can live and act in a Body, and it can do so without it: for it is a distinct Being from its Body, a substantial Being by it self. And,

Sol. 5. As for the habits of Grace which accompany it to Heaven, it would much facilitate our apprehension of it, if we but compare acquired and infused habits with each other. 'Tis true, they are of different Natures and Originals, but the Soul is the subject of them both, and their inhesion and improvement is much after the same manner.

Take we then an acquired habit into consideration, which is nothing else but *a permanent Quality rendring the subject of it prompt and ready to perform a work with ease*; suppose that of *Musick*, or *Writing*, and we shall find these habits to be safely lodged in the Soul, as well when the Body is laid into the deepest sleep, which is the Image of Death, as when it is awake and most active; for they are both Artists when asleep, and need learn no new Rules to play or write when you awake them: which shews the habits to be permanently rooted in their minds.

Infused habits of Grace are as deeply rooted in the Soul, yea, deeper than any acquired habit can be: for when knowledge and tongues shall be done away, Love abideth, 1 *Cor.* 13. 8. *viz.* after Death, when the Body is asleep in the Grave.

Sol. 6. Add hereto, that these habits of Grace are inseparably rooted or lodged in a subject which is by nature a *Spirit*, that is to say, an intelligent active Being, able to use its Faculties of * *Understanding, Will*, and *Affections*, and consequently in their use to reduce these habits of Grace inherent in them into act, without the help of the Body: For to suppose otherwise, were to dispirit it, and destroy the very Nature of it.

* *The Understanding and Will are the primary Faculties of the Soul, and are therefore called* Inorganical, *because not fixed to any Member of the Body, as the sensitive Appetite and locomotive powers are to their proper Organs. The Soul therefore hath the free use and exercise of them in its separate state.*

Moreover, let this Spirit thus furnished with gracious habits be now considered in separation from the Body, in which state it enjoyeth and rejoiceth in a double Privilege it never had before, *viz. Perfection* both of it self, and of its Graces, and the nearest access it is capable of; 2 *Cor.* 5. 6. *Absent from the Body, and present with the Lord.* It hath now no Body to clog or cloud it, nor can it complain of distance from God as it did in this World. Oh! at what rate must we conceive the love and delight of a Soul under these great Advantages, to cast out their very Spirits, as I may say, in their glorious Activities and Exercises! Well then, here you find 'a *Spirit* naturally endued with *Understanding, Will* and *Affections*: in these Faculties 'and Affections the habits of Grace permanently rooted, which therefore accompany it in 'its ascension to Glory: an ability to use and 'exercise their Faculties and Graces, and that 'in a more excellent degree and manner, than 'it did or could in this World, the subject and 'habits inherent being now both made perfect: 'the clog of Flesh knock'd off, and all distance 'from God removed, by its coming home to 'him, even as near as the capacity of the Soul 'can admit. Conceive such a Spirit so qualified, 'now rank'd in its proper order among innu'merable other holy and blessed Spirits which 'surround the Throne of God, beholding his 'Face with infinite delectation, and acting all 'its Powers and Graces to the Highest in the 'worshipping, praising, loving, and admiring 'him that sitteth on the Throne, and the Lamb 'for evermore. And then you have a true, tho' imperfect *Idea* or *Notion* of the Spirit of a *just Man made perfect.*

I will not here make use of the other Glass to represent a damned Soul, separate for a time from its Body, and for ever from the Lord: That will be shewn you in its proper place.

Qu. 2. *Whether there be any difference in the separation of gracious Souls from their Bodies? And if so, in what particulars doth the difference appear?*

Sol. For the clear stating and satisfying this Question, I will lay down some things *negatively*, and some things *positively* about it. On the *negative* part I desire two things may be noted.

1. That

1. That there is no difference betwixt the separation of one gracious Soul and another, *in point of safety*. Every regenerate Soul is fully secured in and by Jesus Christ from the danger of perishing, and is out of hazard of the Wrath to come.

This must needs be so, because all that are in Christ are equally justified by the imputation of Christ's Righteousness, without difference, to them all; *Rom.* 3. 22. *Even the Righteousness of God, which is by Faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference:* By vertue whereof, they are all equally secured from Wrath to come, one as well as another. As all that sailed with *Paul*, so all that die in Christ come safe to the shoar of Glory, and not one of them is lost. The sting of Death smites none that are in Christ.

2. There is no difference betwixt the departing Souls of just Men, in respect of the supporting presence of God with them in that their hour of distress; that Promise belongs to them all, *Psal.* 91. 15. *I will be with him in trouble*; and so doth that, *Heb.* 13. 5. *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* Their God is certainly with them all, to order the circumstances of their death, and all the Occurrences of that day, to his Glory, and their Good. *Supports* I have (said a good Man in such an hour) tho' *Suavities* I want; and so they have also who meet with the hardest tug at death.

But notwithstanding their equality in these Privileges, there is a great difference betwixt the departing Souls of just Men. And this difference is manifest both in the

1. External } Circumstances of
2. Internal } their Death.

1. In the External Circumstances of their Death, all have not one and the same passage to Heaven in all respects; for,

(1.) Some go thither by the ordinary road of a natural death from their Beds, and the arms of lamenting Friends, to the arms and bosom of Jesus Christ: But others swim through the Red Sea to *Canaan*, from a *Scaffold* to the *Throne*, from a Gibbet or Stake to their Father's house, from insulting Enemies to their triumphant Brethren, the Palm-bearing multitude. This is a rough, but honourable way to Glory.

(2.) Some lie long under the hand of death, before it dispatch them, it approaches them by slow and lingring paces, they feel every step of death distinctly as it comes on towards them: But others are favoured with a quick dispatch, a short passage from hence to Glory. *Hezekiah* feared a pining sickness, *Isa.* 38. 10, 12. what he feared, many feel. O how many days, yea weeks and months, have many gracious Souls dwelt upon the brink of the Pit, crying, How long, Lord, how long!

(3.) The pains and throes of Death are more acute and sharp to some of God's people than to others: Death is bitter in the most mild and gentle form of it. Two such dear and intimate friends as the Soul and Body are, cannot part without some tears, groans, or sighs; and those more deep and emphatical than the groans and sighs of the living use to be: But yet (comparatively speaking) the death of one may be stiled sweet and easy to another's. *Latimer* and *Ridley* found it so, tho' burnt in the same flame.

In this respect all things come alike to all, and the same difference is found in the worst, as well as in the best Men: Some like *Sheep* are laid in the Grave, *Psal.* 49. 14. others die in the bitterness of their Soul, *Job* 21. 25. and by this no Man knows either love or hatred.

2. There are besides these, some remarkable Internal differences in the dissolution of good Men: the sum whereof is in this,

1*st*. That some gracious Souls have a very hard, strait, difficult entrance into Heaven: just as it is with Ships that sail by a very bare wind; all their art, care and pains, will but just weather some Head-land or Cape: they steer fast by some dangerous Rock or Sand, and with a thousand fears and dangers, win their *Port* at last. Saved they are, but yet (to use the Apostle's phrase) scarcely saved, or saved as by fire. And this difficulty ariseth to them from one or all these causes:

(1) It ordinarily ariseth from the weakness of their faith, which is in many Souls without either the light of evidence or strength of reliance; neither able to dissolve their doubts, nor steadily repose their hearts: and thus they die, much at the rate they lived, poor doubting and cloudy, tho' precious Souls. They can neither speak much of the comfort of past experiences, nor of the present foretastes of Heaven.

(2.) The violent assaults and batteries of Temptations make the passage exceeding difficult to some. O the sharp conflicts and dreadful combates many poor Souls endure upon a death-bed! O the charges of hypocrisy fortified by neglects of duty, formality, and by-ends in duty, falls into a sin after conviction and humiliation, *&c.* all which the Soul is apt to yield to, and admit the dreadful conclusion.

These are the last, and therefore oft-times the most violent conflicts. The malice of Satan will send them halting to Heaven, if he cannot bar them out of it.

(3.) To conclude: The hiding of God's face, puts terror into the face of death, and makes a dying day a dark and gloomy day. All darkness disposes to fear, but none like inward darkness. They must like a Ship in distress, venture into the *Harbour* in the dark, tho' they see not their Land-marks.

2*dly*. But others have the privilege of an εὐθανασία, easy death, a comfortable and sweet passage into Glory, through the broad gate of assurance, 2 *Pet.* 1. 11. even an abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom. What a difference doth God make, not only betwixt those that have Grace, and those that have none, but betwixt gracious Souls themselves in this matter; The things which usually make an easy passage to Heaven are,

(1.) A Pardon clear'd, *Isa.* 33. 24. The sense of Pardon swallows up the sense of Pain.

(2.) A Heart weaned from this World, *Heb.* 11. 13, 9, 16. A Heart loosed from the World, is a foot out of the snare. Mortified limbs are cut off from the Body with little pain.

(3.) Fervent love to Christ, and longings to be with him, *Phil.* 1. 23. He that loves Christ fervently, must needs loath absence from Christ proportionably.

(4.) Purity and peace of Conscience make a death-bed soft and easy. The strains and wounds of Conscience in the time of life, are so

so many Thorns in our bed or pillow in the time of death, 1 *John* 3. 21. But integrity gives boldness.

(5.) The work of obedience faithfully finished, or a steddy course of holiness throughout our Life, is that which usually yields much peace and joy in Death, *Acts* 20. 24.

(6.) But above all the presence of the Comforter with us in that cloudy and dark day, turns it into one of the days of Heaven, 1 *Pet.* 4. 14. And thus you see, tho' all dying Christians be equally safe, and all supported and carried through by the power of God; yet their farewels to the Body are not alike chearful. There are many external, and internal circumstantial differences in the deaths of good Men, as well as a substantial and essential difference betwixt all their deaths, and the death of a wicked Man.

Quest. III. *Whether any Souls have notices, and forewarnings given them by Signs or Predictions in an extraordinary way, of their approaching Separation?*

Terms opened. The terms of this Question need a little explanation. Let us therefore briefly consider what is meant by *Signs*, what by *Predictions*, and what by *extraordinary Signs* and *Predictions*.

Signum est quod aliud repræsentat quam quod cernitur.

A *Sign* is that which represents something else to us than that which is seen or heard. And a sign of death, is that which gives notice to our minds that our departure is at hand.

Prædicere est aliquem de re aliqua eventura præmonere.

A *Prediction* is a fore-warning of a person more plainly and expresly of any thing which is afterwards to fall out or come to pass: and a Prediction of Death is an express notice or message informing us of our own, or of another's Death, to the end the mind may be actually disposed to an expectation thereof.

Of Signs, some are *ordinary*, and natural; some *extraordinary*, and supernatural, or at least preternatural.

There are natural Symptoms and Prognosticks of Death which are common to most dying persons, and by which Physicians inform themselves and others of the state of the Sick. These are out of this Question, we have nothing to do with them here; but I am enquiring after extraordinary Signs and Predictions by words, or things forewarning us immediately, or by others, of our approaching Death. The Question is, Whether such intimations of Death be at any time truly given unto Men; or whether we are to take them for fabulous reports, and superstitious fancies?

For the Negative, the following grounds are laid.

Reasons for the Negative. *Reason* I. The sufficient ordinary provision God hath made in this case, renders all such extraordinary notices and intimations of our Death needless: and be sure the most wise God doth nothing in vain. We have three standing, ordinary, and sufficient means to premonish us of our departure hence, *viz.* the Scriptures, Reason, and daily Examples of Mortality before our Eyes. The Scriptures tell us our life is but *a vapour, which appeareth for a little while, and then vanisheth away*; James 4. 14. *That our days are but as a hand breadth, and that every man in his best estate is vanity*, Psal. 39. 5.

Reason tells us, so feeble a tie as our Breath is, can never secure our lives long. *The living know that they must die, Eccles.* 9. 5. The radical moisture which is daily consuming by the flame of life, must needs be spent e're long.

And all the Graves we see opened so frequently are sufficient warnings that we our selves must shortly follow. Therefore, as there was no need of *Manna* when Bread might be had in an ordinary way, so neither is there need of extraordinary signs when God hath abundantly furnished us with standing and ordinary means for this purpose.

Reason II. And as the Scriptures render such signs needless, so they seem to be directly against them. Christ commands us to watch, because *we know not in what hour the Lord cometh.* Yea, even *Isaac* himself, an extraordinary person, and endued with a Spirit of Prophecy, whereby he foretold the condition of his Sons after him, yet it's said, *Gen.* 27. 2. *That he knew not the day of his death.* And it is not reasonable to think that common persons should know that, which extraordinary and prophetick persons knew not.

Reason III. All Mankind belong either to God or the Devil. To such as belong to God, such extraordinary warnings are needless, for they have a watchful Principle within them, which continually prompts them to mind their change; and besides, death cannot endanger those that are in Christ, how suddenly or unexpectedly soever it should befal them.

And for wicked men, it cannot be thought God should favour and privilege them in this matter above his own Children; and as for Satan, he knows not the time of their death himself: and if he did, it would thwart his design and interest to discover it to them, *Luke* 11. 21. So that upon the whole, it should seem such Signs and Predictions are of no use, and the relations and reports of them fabulous.

E contra. But tho' these Reasons make the common and daily use of such Signs and Predictions needless, yet they destroy not the credibility of them in all cases, and at all times. For,

1. There are recorded instances in Scripture of premonition and predictions of the Death of persons. Thus the Death of *Abijah* was foretold to his Mother by the Prophet, and the precise hour thereof, which fell out answerably, 1 *King.* 14. 6. 12. And thus the Death of the King of *Assyria* was foretold exactly both as to kind and place, *Isa.* 37. 7, 37, 38.

2. These Predictions serve to other ends and uses sometimes, than the preparation of the persons warned, even to display the foreknowledge, power and justice of God in marking out his Enemies for ruin. And thus *the Lord is known by the judgments that he executeth*, Psa. 9. 16.

Thus Mr. *Knox* predicted the very place and manner of the death of the *Laird of Grange*. You have sometime seen the courage and constancy of the *Laird of Grange* in the cause of God, and now that unhappy Man is casting himself away. I pray you go to him from me (said Mr. *Knox*) and tell him that unless he forsakes that wicked course he is in, the Rock wherein he confideth, shall not defend him, nor the carnal Wisdom of that Man (meaning the young

Clark's *Lives*, p. 277.

young *Leshington*) whom he counteth half a God, shall help him: but he shall be shamefully pull'd out of that Nest, and his Carcass hung before the Sun. And even so it fell out the following year, when the Castle was taken, and his Body hang'd out before the Sun. Thus God exactly fulfilled the Prediction of his Death.

The same Mr. *Knox* in the year 1566. being in the Pulpit at *Edinburgh* upon the Lord's day, a Paper was given up to him, among many others, wherein these words were scoffingly written concerning the Earl of *Murray*, who was slain the day before, *Take up the Man whom ye accounted another God.* At the end of the Sermon, Mr. *Knox* bewailed the loss of the Church and State by the Death of that vertuous Man; and then added, *There is one in this company that makes this Murder the subject of his Mirth, for which all good men should be sorry; but I tell him he shall die where there should be none to lament him.* The Man that wrote the Paper, was one *Thomas Metellan*, a young *Gentleman*, who shortly after, in his Travels, died in *Italy*, having none to assist, or lament him.

3. And others have had Premonitions and Signs of their own Deaths, which accordingly fell out. And these Premonitions have been given them, sometimes by strong irresistible Impressions upon their Minds, sometimes in Dreams, and sometimes by unusual Elevations of their Spirits in Duties of Communion with God.

(1) Some have had strong and irresistible impressions of their approaching change made upon their Minds. So had Sir *Anthony Wingfield*, who was slain at *Brest*, *Anno* 1594. At his undertaking of that Expedition, he was strongly persuaded it would be his death; and therefore so settled and disposed of his Estate, as one that never reckoned to return again. And the day before he died, he took order for payment of his debts, as one that strongly presaged the time was now at hand, which accordingly fell out the next day.

Sir John Norris his Expedition. pag 46.

Much of the same nature was that of the late *Earl* of *Marlborough*, who fell in the *Holland* War. He not only presaged his own fall in that Encounter, (which was exactly answered in the event) but left behind him that memorable and excellent Letter, which evidenced to all the World, what deep fixed apprehensions of Eternity it had left upon his Spirit. Many examples of this nature might be produced, of such as have in their perfect health foretold their own death; and others who have dropt such passages as were afterwards better understood by their sorrowful friends, than when they first dropt from their lips.

(2.) Others have been premonished of their death by *Dreams*, sometimes their own, and sometimes others. The learned and judicious *Amyraldus* gives us this well attested relation of *Lewis* of *Bourbon*, That a little before his journey from *Dreux*, he dreamed that he had fought three successful Battels, wherein his three great Enemies were slain, but that at last he himself wasmortally wounded; and that after they were laid one uponanother, he also was laid upon the dead Bodies. The event was remarkable; for *Marescbal* of St. *Andree* was killed at *Dreux*, the *Duke of Guise* at *Orleans*, the Constable of *Montmorancy* at St. *Denis*: and this was the *Triumvirate* which had sworn the ruin of those of the Reformed Religion, and the destruction of that *Prince*. At last he himself was slain at *Basac*, as if there had been a continuation of deaths and funerals.

Amyraldus of Divine Dreams, pag. 122, 123.

Suetonius in the life of *Julius Cæsar*, tells us that the night before he was slain, he had divers premonitions thereof, for that night all the doors and windows of his chamber flew open; his wife also dreamed that *Cæsar* was slain, and that she had him in her arms. The next day he was slain in *Pompey*'s Court, having receiv'd 23 wounds in his Body.

Pamelius in the life of *Cyprian* tells us for a most certain and well attested truth, that upon his first entrance into *Garubis* (the place of his banishment) it was revealed to him in a dream, or vision, that upon that very day twelvemonth, he should be consummate: which accordingly fell out; for a little before the time prefixed, there came suddenly two *Apparitors* to bring him before the new *Proconsul Galeius*, by whom he was condemned, as having been a Standard-bearer of his Sect, and an Enemy of the Gods. Whereupon he was condemned to be beheaded, a multitude of Christians following him crying, Let us die together with him.

Pamelius in vita Cyprian.

And as remarkable is that recorded by the learned and ingenious Dr. *Sterne*, of Mr. *Usher* of *Ireland*, a man, saith he, of great integrity, dear to others by his merits, and my kinsman in blood: who upon the 28*th* day of *July* 1657. went from this to a better World. About four of the Clock the day before he died, a *Matron*, who died a little before, and whilst living was dear to Mr. *Usher*, appeared to him in his sleep, and invited him to sup with her the next night: he at first denied her, but she more vehemently pressing her request on him, at last he consented, and that very night he died.

Dr. Sterne's dissertatio de morte, p. 163.

I have also the fullest assurance that can be of the truth of this following Narrative. A Person yet living was greatly concerned about the welfare of his dear Father and Mother, who were both shut up in *London* in the time of the great Contagion in 1665. Many Letters he sent to them, and many hearty prayers to Heaven for them. But about a fortnight before they were infected, he fell about break of day into this dream, that he was in a great *Inn* which was full of company, and being very desirous to find a private room, where he might seek God for his parents life, he went from room to room, but found company in them all; at last casting his eye into a little chamber which was empty, he went into it, lockt the door, kneeled down by the outside of the bed, fixing his eyes upon the plaister'd wall within side the bed; and whilst he was vehemently begging of God the life of his Friends, there appeared upon the plaster of the wall before him the Sun and the Moon, shining in their full strength. The sight at first amaz'd and discomposed him so far, that he could not continue his Prayer, but kept his eye fixed upon the body of the Sun; at last a small line or ring of black, no bigger than that of a Text-pen, circled the Sun, which increasing sensibly, eclipsed in a little time the

the whole Body of it, and turned it into a blackish colour; which done, the figure of the Sun was immediately changed into a perfect Death's head, and after a little while vanished quite away; the *Moon* still continued shining as before; but whilst he intently beheld it, it also darkned in like manner, and turned also into another Death's head and vanished. This made so great an impression upon the beholder's mind, that he immediately awaked in confusion and perplexity of thoughts about his dream; and awaking his Wife, related the particulars to her with much emotion and concernment; but how to apply it he could not presently tell, only he was satisfied that the dream was of an extraordinary nature. At last *Joseph*'s dream came to his thoughts with the like *Emblems*, and their interpretation, which fully satisfied him that God had warned and prepared him thereby for a sudden parting with his dear Relations, which answerably fell out in the same order, his Father dying that day fortnight following, and his Mother just a month afterwards.

I know there is much vanity in dreams, and yet I am fully satisfied some are weighty, significant, and declarative of the purposes of God.

(3.) Lastly, An unusual and extraordinary elevation of the Soul to God, and enlargement in Communion with him, hath been a signifying forerunner of the death of some good men. For as the *Body* hath its *levamen anteferale*, lightning before death, and is more vegete and brisk a little before its dissolution; so it is sometimes with the *Soul* also. I have known some persons to arrive on a sudden to such heights of love to God, and vehement longings to be dissolved, that they might be with Christ, that I could not but look upon it, as Christ did upon the box of Ointment, as done against their death. And so indeed it hath proved in the event.

Thus it was with that renowned Saint, Mr. *Brewen* of *Stapleford*: as he excelled others in the holiness of his life, so he much excelled himself towards his death, his motions towards Heaven being then most vigorous and quick. The day before his last sickness, he had such extraordinary enlargements of heart in his Closet-Duty, that he seemed to forget all the concernments of his Body, and this lower World. And when his Wife told him, Sir, I fear you have done your self hurt with rising so early; he answered, 'If you had seen such glorious things as I saw this morning in private prayer with God, you would not have said so: for they were so wonderful and unspeakable, that whether I was in the Body, or out of the Body, with *Paul*, I cannot tell.'

And so it was with learned and holy Mr. *Rivet*, who seemed as a man in Heaven, just before he went thither. And so it hath been with thousands beside these. I confess it is not the fruit of every gracious Soul, (as was shew'd you in the last Question) nor doth it make any difference as to the safety of the Soul, whatever it makes as to comfort. Let all therefore labour to make sure their Union with Christ, and live in the daily Exercises of Grace in the duties of Religion: and then, tho' God should give them no such extraordinary warnings one way or another, they shall never be surprized to death to their loss, let it come never so unexpectedly upon them.

Quest. It may be also queried whether Satan by his Instruments may not foretel the death of some men? How else did the *Witch* of *Endor* foretel the death of *Saul*? And the *Southsayers* the death of *Cæsar* upon the *Ides*, (*i. e.*) the fifteenth day of *March*, which was the fatal day to him?

Sol. 4. Foreknowledge of things to come which appear not in their next causes, is certainly the Lord's Prerogative; *Isa.* 41. 23. Whatever therefore *Satan* doth in this matter, must be done either by conjecture, or commission. As to the case of *Saul*, 'tis not to be questioned but that Satan knowing the Kingdom was made to *David* by promise, and that the Lord was departed from *Saul*, and seeing how near the *Armies* were to a Battle, might strongly conjecture and conclude, and accordingly tell him *To morrow thou shalt be with me*, 1 Sam. 28. 19.

And so for the death of *Cæsar*, The Devil knew the Conspiracy was strong against him, and the Plot laid for that day; and so it was both easy to him to reveal it to the *Southsayers*, and his interest to do it, thereby to bring that cursed Art into reputation.

As for other signs and forwarnings of death, by the unusual resort of doleful Creatures, as *Owls* and *Ravens*, vulgarly accounted ominous: *Wall watches*, upon this account called *Death watches*; and the eating of wearing apparel by *Rats*: I look upon them generally as superstitious fancies not worthy to be regarded among Christians. God may, but I know not what ground we have to believe that he doth, commissionate such Creatures to bring us the message of death from him. To conclude therefore

Let no man expect or depend upon any such extraordinary premonitions and warnings of his change, or neglect his daily work and duty of preparation for it. We have warnings in the Word, in the examples of Mortality frequently before us, in all the Diseases and decays we often feel in our own Bodies; and by the signs of the times, which threaten death and desolation. Be ye therefore always ready, for ye know not in what Watch of the night your Lord cometh.

Quest. IV. *Whether separated Souls have any knowledge of, or commerce and intercourse with men in this life: and if not, What is to be thought of the Apparitions of the Dead?*

1. *By separated Souls*, understand the departed Souls both of Godly and Ungodly indifferently, and not as it is restrained to one sort only in the Text; for of both it is pretended there are frequent Apparitions after death.

2. By the knowledge such Souls are supposed to have after death both of persons and things in this lower World, we understand not a general knowledge, which one sort of them have of the state and condition of the Church militant on earth; for this we think cannot be denied to the Spirits of the Just made perfect, seeing they are still fellow-Members with us of the same mystical Body of Christ, and do behold our High-Priest appearing before God, and offering up our prayers for us, and long for the consummation of the Body of Christ, as well as cry for vengeance against the persecutors thereof, *Rev.* 6. 10. Nor do I think those words, *Isa.* 63. 16. repugnant hereunto. *Abraham is ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledgeth us not*: for I look upon the import of those words only as a

humble acknowledgment of their defection, which rendred them unworthy that their Forefathers should own or acknowledge them any more for their Children; and not as implying their utter ignorance or total oblivion of the Churches state on earth.

But I here understand such a particular knowledge of our personal states and conditions, as they once had when they dwelt amongst us in the Body; and this seems to be denied them by those Scriptures alledged against it in the margin.

Job 14 21. Eccles. 9.5,6. John 19. 25.

3. By commerce and intercourse; understand not their intercession with God for us, which the *Papists* affirm; but their concernments about our natural or civil interests in this World, so as to be useful to our *Persons*, by warning us of death, or dangers; or to our *Estates*, by disquieting such as wrong us in not fulfilling the Wills and Testaments they once made; or by giving us notice by words or signs of the death of our friends who died at a distance from us, or come to some violent and untimely end.

The sense of the Words being thus determined, and the Question so stated, I will for the resolution of it give you,

I. The strength of what I find offered for the *Affirmative*.

II. The general Concessions, or what may be granted.

III. My own Judgment about it, with the grounds thereof.

I. Some there are even among the learned and judicious who are for the *Affirmative* part of the Question, and do with much confidence assert, That departed Souls both know our particular concerns in this World, and intermeddle with them: confirming their assertion both by reasons to convince us that *it may be so*, and variety of instances that *it is so*. I will produce both the one and the other, and give them a due consideration and censure.

The substance of what is pleaded for the Affirmative, I find thus collected and improved by Dr. *Sterne*, a learned Physician in *Ireland*, in his Book entituled, *A Dissertation concerning Death*; where he offers us these four Arguments to convince that it is possible for departed Souls thus to appear, and perform such Offices for their Friends on Earth.

Dissertatio de mort. à p. 208 ad p. 214.

Argum. I. Angels by command from God are useful and helpful to Men; they are the *Saints Guardians*, and it is probable that each Christian hath his peculiar Angel: whence it will follow that separated Souls do mingle themselves with *human affairs*, and that because they are Angels, at least equal unto Angels, *Luke* 20. 36. Besides, they being Spirits that were once embodied, must needs be more fit for this employment than those who never had any Tie at all to a Body, unless we can imagine them to have lost the remembrance of all that ever they did and suffered in the Body, as also that they put off and buried all their Affections to us with their Bodies, which is hard to think. Even as Christ our High-Priest is qualified for that Office above all others in Heaven, because he once dwelt and suffered in a Body like ours here upon Earth; so separated Souls are qualified above all other Spirits who are unrelated to Bodies of Flesh.

(1.) Angeli jussu Dei hominibus opitulantur, haudquaquam ambigitur; unde animas à corpore solutas sese rebus humanis miscere comprobari videtur. Sequelæ fundamentum duplex est, prius, quod Animæ separatæ Angeli sunt, saltem Angelis æquales; posterius, quod magis idonei sunt quibus officium generi humano succurrendi demanderur, quàm Spiritus inter quos & corpus nullus unquam intercessit nexus, &c.

Argum. II. The Church triumphant and militant are but one Body; and by how much better the triumphant are than the militant, by so much the more propense they are to succour and help the other that stand in need of it. This being the case, we cannot imagine but they are inclin'd to perform all good Offices for us; for else they should do less for us now they are in a state of the highest Perfection in Heaven, than they did, or were willing to do in their imperfect state on Earth.

(2.) Ecclesiæ est corpus unum, cujus membra quò meliora, eò magis ad aliis ejusdem corporis membris opitulandum sunt propensa: hujus autem corporis pars altera est triumphans in cœlis, altera militans in terris; illa melior, hæc opis magis indiga, &c.

Arg. III. A *Will* or *Testament* (as *Ulpian* defines it) is the just sentence or declaration of our minds concerning that which we would have done after our decease. These testaments have always, and among all Nations, been religiously observed, as the Apostle witnesseth, *Gal.* 3. 15. The reasons of this so religious observance are a presumption that those who made them when alive, continue in the same mind and will after death; that they take care for the fulfilling of them, and revenge the non-performance upon the unjust Executors. For otherwise there can be no reason why so great a stress should be laid upon the Will of the Dead, if they care not whether their Wills be performed or no. Why should we be so sollicitous and studious about it, and pay so great a reverence to it, but upon this account?

(3.) Testamentum (*Ulpiano* definiente) est voluntatis nostræ justa sententia, de eo quod post mortem nostram fieri volumus. Testamentum autem tanquam res sacra ab omnibus gentibus religiosè observatur, *Gal.* 3. 15. Ratio autem tam religiosæ tamque universalis observantiæ est, quoniam animas eorum qui Testamenta condiderant, etiam suam post mortem, in eadem voluntate perseverare, ejus complementa curare, ac denique ejus vel executrices, vel non præstitæ vindices esse præsumitur.

Arg. IV. The Scriptures forbid consultations with the dead, *Deut.* 18. 10, 11. This prohibition supposeth some did consult them, and received Answers from them; which must needs imply some commerce betwixt the living and the Souls that are departed. And considering he had before forbidden their consultation with the Devil, it appears that here we must needs understand the very Souls of the Dead, and not the Devil personating them only.

(4.) In sacris Scripturis consulere mortuos passim prohibetur, ut *Deut.* 8. 10, 11. Sed si homines à mortuis non suscitentur, legibus haud opus est; & si mortui rogati non aliquando responderent, ab hominibus haudquaquam consulerentur. *Sterne de Mort. ubi sup.*

These are the Arguments of this learned Author for the *Affirmative*, which he closes with two necessary Cautions: *First*, That this lays no foundation for religious Worship or Invocation of departed Souls; those that are helpful to us, are not therefore to be worshipped. *Secondly*, That we must acknowledge our selves to be under much darkness as to the way and manner of the converse of Spirits with us. The

Dr. More's Immortality of the Soul, l. 2. c. 16.

The most acute and learned * Dr. *More* I find of the same opinion. He affirms, that departed Souls are capable of a vital Union with an airy Vehicle (or Body) in which they can easily move from place to place, and appear to the living; and act in their Affairs as in detecting Murders, rebuking injurious Executors, visiting and counselling their Wives and Children, forewarning them of such and such courses, *&c.* To which we may add the profession of the Spirit thus appearing, of being the Soul of such a one; as also the similitude of the person: And all this ado is in things very just and serious, unfit for a Devil with that care and kindness to promote; and as unfit for a good *Genius*, it being below so Noble a Nature to tell a Lie. All these things put together, and rightly weighed, the violence of prejudice not pulling down the ballance; I dare appeal (saith he) to any, Whether it will not be certainly carried for the present Cause? and whether any indifferenc Judge ought not to conclude, if these Stories which are so frequent every where, and in all Ages, concerning the *Ghosts* of Men appearing, be but true, That it is true also that they are their Ghosts, *&c?*

These are the strongest Arguments I meet with, for the *Affirmative*, that the matter is possible, it may be so; and then adding the creditable Instances that it is so, the matter seems to be determin'd.

To this purpose Dr. *Sterne* alledges several instances out of Scripture, as that appearance of *Samuel* unto *Saul*, and the conference betwixt them, as also the Letters that were sent to *Jehoram* by *Elijah*, after that *Elijah* was translated to Heaven, as appears by comparing, 2 *Chron.* 21. 12. with, 2 *Kings* 3. 11. In which appears that in *Jehosaphat*'s time who preceded this *Jehoram*, *Elijah* was dead, and yet in *Jehoram*'s time who succeeded him, he is said to receive Letters from *Elijah*. The appearance and conference also betwixt Christ and *Moses* and *Elias* upon the Mount, in the presence of some of the Disciples, confirms it, *Matth.* 17. 3.

These are the principal Scripture-instances, others are almost innumerable. From among that vast heap I will select some few that are most material, and of cleareſt Credit.

† It is a thing (saith my Author) both known and frequent, that the Inhabitants of the *Scotish Isles*, when their Friends are dying, come to them, and request them that upon such or such a day after their Death, and in such a place, they would meet them; which the Dead accordingly do at the time and place agreed upon, and have sometimes discourse with them.

† Insularum Scoticarum incolæ ad ægros, cum pro deploratis habentur, accedunt, & rogant, ut certo à morte die, locoq; certo ipsos conveniant; quod & mortui tempore & loco præstitutis præstant. *Sterne ibid.*

Infinite Examples of Murders (saith Dr. *More*) have been discovered by Dreams, the Souls of the Persons murdered seeming to appear to some or other asleep, and to make their complaints to them; giving us a notable Example out of *Baronius* of *Marsilius Ficinus*, who having made a solemn Vow with *Michael Mercatus*, (after they had been pretty warmly disputing of the Immortality of the Soul out of the Principles of their Master *Plato*) that whether of them two die first, he should appear to his Friend, and give him certain information of that Truth: It was *Ficinus* his fate to die first and that not long after this mutual Resolution. He was mindful of his Promise when he had left the Body; for *Mercatus* being very intent at his studies, betimes on a Morning heard a Horse riding with all speed, and observed that he stopt at his Window, and therewith heard the Voice of his Friend *Ficinus*, crying out aloud, *O Michael, Michael vera, vera, sunt illa:* That is, *O Michael, Michael*, those things are true, they are. Whereupon he suddenly opened his Window, and espying *Marsilius* upon a *white Steed*, called after him, but he vanished out of his sight. He sent therefore presently to *Florence* to know how *Marsilius* did, and understood that he died about that hour he called at his Window.

Much to the same purpose is that so famous and well attested story of the apparition of Major *George Sydenham* to Captain *William Dyke*, both of *Somersetshire*, attested by the worthy and learned Dr. *Thomas Dyke* a near Kinsman of the *Captain*'s, and by Mr. *Douch*, to whom both the *Major* and *Captain* were intimately known. The sum is this, The *Major* and *Captain* had many disputes about the Being of a God, and the Immortality of the Soul, in which points they could never be resolved, tho' they much sought for and desired it; and therefore it was at last fully agreed betwixt them, that he that died first, should the third night after his Funeral, come betwixt the hours of twelve and one, to the little house in the Garden adjoining to *Major Sydenham's* House at *Dulverton* in *Somersetshire*. The *Major* died first, and the Captain happened to lie that very night which was appointed, in the same Chamber and Bed with Dr. *Dyke*; he acquainted the *Doctor* with the appointment, and his resolution to attend the place and hour that Night, for which purpose he got the Key of that Garden. The *Doctor* could by no means divert his purpose, but when the hour came he was upon the place, where he waited two hours and a half, neither seeing nor hearing any thing more than usual. About six weeks after the Captain and *Doctor* went to *Eaton*, and lay both in the same *Inn*, but not in the same Chamber, as before at *Dulverton*.

Sad. Trium. Part. 2. p. 183.

The morning before they went thence, the Captain staid longer than was usual in his Chamber, and at length came into the *Doctor*'s Chamber, but in Visage and Form much differing from himself, with his Hair and Eyes staring, and his whole body shaking and trembling: Whereat the *Doctor* wondering, demanded what is the matter, Cousin Captain? The Captain replies, I have seen my Major: At which the Doctor seeming to smile, the Captain said, If ever I saw him in my life, I saw him but now; adding as followeth: This morning (said he) after it was light, some one came to my Bed-side, and suddenly drawing back the Curtains, calls, *Cap, Cap,* (which was the term of familiarity that the *Major* used to call the *Captain* by) to whom I replied, What, my *Major*: To which he returns, I could not come at the time appointed, but I am now come to tell you, *That there is a God, and a very just and terrible one; and if you do not turn over a new leaf, you will find it so.* This stuck so close to him, little Meat would go down with him at dinner, tho' a handsom Treat was

provided; these words were sounding in his ears frequently, during the remainder of his life: he was never shy or scrupulous to relate it to any that asked him concerning it, or ever mentioned it but with horror and trepidation. They were both men of a brisk Humour and jolly Conversation, of very quick and keen parts, having been both *University* and *Inns of Court* Gentlemen.

The Apparition of the Ghost of Sir *George Villiers*, Father of the Duke of *Buckingham*, giving three solemn Warnings, by three several Apparitions to his Servant Mr. *Parker*, is a known and credible Story. But I will wade no farther into Particulars, they are almost innumerable; let these suffice for a taste.

II. In the next place therefore I will lay down some,

Concessions about this Matter: And the

First Concession is this: *That the separated Souls or Spirits of Men are capable of performing and executing any Ministry or Service for God, (if he should please to commissionate them so to do) as well as Angels are, whom we know he frequently imploys about the Persons and Affairs of his People on Earth.*

Tho' they become not *Angels* by their separation, as *Maximus Tyrius* calls them, but remain Spirits specifically distinct from them, yet are they spiritual Substances as the Angels are: This their Nature capacitates them either to live and act out of the Body, or to assume (as Angels do) an *aerial Body* for the time of their ministry: Nor do I know any thing in Scripture or *Philosophy* repugnant hereunto.

Concess. 2. *It cannot be doubted but upon some special and extraordinary reasons and occasions, some departed Souls have returned to, and appeared in this World by order and commission from God.*

This is too manifest to be doubted by any that understand and believe the Instances recorded in Scripture. *Moses* and *Elias*, long after their departure, appeared to, and talked with Christ upon the holy Mount, in the presence of some of his *Apostles*, Mat. 17. 3. nor is there any reason to question the reality of their Apparition, or to think it to be no more than a *Phantasm*, or imaginary resemblance of these Persons, but very *Moses* and *Elias* themselves: For they came to be Witnesses to Christ's Prophetical Office; and it was not fit so great a Point should be attested by imaginary Witnesses, or that they should be called *Moses* and *Elias* if they were not the very same Persons.

Non enim conveniebat ut veritas mendacio, vel imaginariis testibus probaretur. *Maldon. Capellus in loc.*

'Tis therefore most likely they both appeared in their own Bodies: for *Moses*'s Body we know was hidden by the Lord, and *Elias* his Body immediately translated with his Soul to Heaven: when therefore the Lord would send them upon this solemn Errand, the Soul of *Moses* probably reassumed that Body which was never found by Man, and *Elias* was already embodied, and fit immediately for his Expedition.

Credibilius est verè coporibus suis apparuisse? *Percus in loc.*

In like manner we read, *Mat.* 27. 52, 53. that at the Resurrection of our Lord, *many Bodies of the Saints arose, and appeared unto many*: these were no *Phantasms*, but the very Souls of the departed Saints returned (having reassumed their own Bodies) unto this World, not only to confirm the truth of Christ's Resurrection, and adorn that great Day, but as a *specimen* or handsel of the Resurrection of all Saints in the virtue of his Resurrection at the great Day.

Nor will I deny, but upon some lesser (tho' never without weighty and solemn) Occasions and Reasons, God may sometimes send the Souls of the Dead back again into this World, as in the cases before recited, to evidence against the *Atheism* of Men, *&c. Augustine* relates a memorable Example which fell out at *Millain*, where a certain Citizen being dead, there came a *Creditor* to whom he had been indebted, and unjustly demanded the Money of his Son. The Son knew the Debt was satisfied by his *Father*; but having no Acquittance to shew, his Father appeared to him in his sleep, and shew'd him where the Acquittance lay: whether it were the very Soul of his *Father*, or rather an *Angel*, as *Augustine* thinks, is not certain, tho' the one as well as the other be possible. But tho' rarely, and upon some weighty and solemn Occasions some Souls have returned and appeared; yet I judge this is not frequently done upon slight and ordinary Errands: And therefore to give you my own thoughts, I judge,

Aug. in lib. de cura pro mortuis agenda.

Concess. 3. *That those Apparitions which seem to be, and are generally reputed and taken for the Souls of the Dead, are not indeed so, but other Spirits putting on the Shapes and Resemblances of the Dead, and (for the most part) tricks of the Devil to delude or disquiet Men.*

In this I think the learned Dr. *Brown* delivered his Judgment more solidly and orthodoxly, than in some other Points, where he saith, 'I believe that the whole Frame of a 'Beast doth perish, and is left in the same state 'after death, as before it was materialled into 'life: that the Souls of Men know neither con'trary, nor corruption: that they subsist be'yond the Body, and continue by the Privilege 'of their proper Nature, and without a Mira'cle: that the Souls of the Faithful, as they 'leave Earth, take possession of Heaven, that 'those Apparitions and Ghosts of departed Per'sons, are not the wandring Souls of *Men*, but 'the unquiet Walks of *Devils*, prompting and 'suggesting us unto *Mischief, Blood*, and *Villany*. 'And with this Opinion I concur as to the or'dinary and common Apparitions of the Dead: And my Reasons are,

Religio Med. Sect 37. p. 82.

(1.) Because the Scriptures every where describe the state of departed Souls as a fixed state either in Heaven or in Hell; and assign the good or evil done in this World by Spirits, not to the departed Spirits of Men, but to Angels or Devils: and it is our duty to regulate our Conceits by Scripture, and not according to the vain Philosophy of the Heathens, or the superstitious Traditions and Opinions of Men.

As for the Souls of the godly, they are at rest with Christ, *Rev.* 14. 13. *Isa.* 57. 2. and as fixed as Pillars in the House of God, *Rev.* 3. 12.

And for the Wicked, their Spirits are confin'd and secured in Hell as in a Prison, 1 *Pet.* 3. 19. there is a fixed Gulph betwixt them and the living, *Luke* 16. 27 — 31.

What good Offices are to be done by Spirits for us, the Angels are God's Commission-Officers to do them, *Heb.* 1. 14. *They are all ministring Spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be Heirs*

Heirs of Salvation: These are the Spirits sent forth to walk to and fro through the Earth, *Zech.* 1. 10. Their Ministry was *emblematically* represented in *Jacob*'s Vision, where they were seen ascending and descending as upon a Ladder, betwixt Heaven and Earth, *Gen.* 28. 12. Yea, their very name *Angel* is a name of Office, signifying a Messenger, or one sent.

And for the mischief done by Spirits in this World, the Scriptures ascribe that to the Devils; those unquiet Spirits have their Walks in this World, they compass the whole Earth, and walk up and down in it, *Job* 1. 7. and 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. they can assume any shape; yea, I doubt not but he can act their Bodies when dead, as well as he did their Souls and Bodies when alive: How great his Power is this way, appears in what is so often done by him in the Bodies of *Witches*. They are not ordinarily therefore the Spirits of Men, but other Spirits that appear to us.

(2.) If God should ordinarily permit the Spirits of Men inhabiting the other World, a liberty so frequently to visit this, what a gap would it open for *Satan* to beguile and deceive the living! What might he not by this means impose upon weak and credulous Mortals? There hath been a great deal of Superstition and Idolatry already introduced under this pretence: he hath often personated Saints departed, and pretended himself to be the Ghost of some venerable person, whose love to the Souls of the people, and care for their Salvation drew him from Heaven to reveal some special Secret to them. Swarms of Errors, and superstitious and idolatrous Opinions and Practices are this way conveyed by the tricks and artifices of Satan among the Papists, which I will not blot my Paper withal; only I desire it may be considered, that if this were a thing so frequently permitted by God, as is pretended, upon what dangerous terms had he left his Church in this World, seeing he hath left no certain marks by which we may distinguish one Spirit from another, or a true Messenger from Heaven from a counterfeit and pretended one.

Quid enim idololatriam inter Ethnicos & Christianos magis propagavit? Hinc fluxerunt multæ peregrinationes, Monasteria, Deluba, Dies festi, & alia, *Lav. in Job* 33.

But God hath tied us to the sure and standing rule of his Word; forbidding us to give heed to any other voice or spirit leading us another way, *Isa.* 8. 19. 2 *Thes.* 2. 1, 2. *Gal.* 1. 8. It was therefore a discreet reply which one of the Antients made, when in a Prayer a Vision of *Christ* appeared to him, and told him, thy prayers are heard, for thou art worthy: the good man immediately clapt his hands upon his eyes, and said, *Nolo hic videre Christum*, &c. *I will not see Christ here, it is enough for me that I shall behold him in Heaven.*

To conclude. My Opinion upon the whole is this, that altho' it cannot be denied, but in some grand extraordinary cases, as at the Transfiguration and Resurrection of Christ, God did, and perhaps sometimes tho' rarely, may order or permit departed Souls to return into this World; yet for the most part I judge those Apparitions are not the Souls of the dead, but other Spirits, and for the most part evil ones.

Of this Judgment was St. *Augustine*, who when he had at full related the Story above of the Father's Ghost directing his Son to the Acquittance; yet will not allow it to be the very Soul of his Father, but an *Angel*: where he farther adds, If (saith he) the Souls of the dead might be present in our affairs, they would not forsake us in this sort; especially my Mother *Monica*, who in her life cou'd never be without me, surely she would not thus leave me being dead.

Lib. de cura pro mortuis.

Obj. 1. *But it was pleaded before, that we allow the Apparitions of Angels; and departed Souls, if they be not Angels, at least are equal unto Angels, and in respect of their late relation to us, are more propense to help us, than Spirits of another sort can be supposed to be.*

Sol. It seems too bold and imposing upon Soveraign Wisdom to tell him what Messengers are fittest for him to send and imploy in his service: who hath taught him, or been his Counsellor?

Obj. 2. *But these Offices seem to pertain properly to them as they are not only fellow members, but the most excellent members of the mystical Body, to whom it belongs to assist the meanner and weaker.*

Sol. If there be any force of reason in this Plea, it carries it rather for the Angels than for departed Souls: for Angels are gather'd under the same common head with the Saints; the Text tells us, *we are come to an innumerable company of Angels*: they and the Saints are fellow Citizens, and we know they are a more noble order of Spirits; and as for their love to the Elect, it is exceeding great, as great to be sure as the departed Souls of our dearest Relatives can be. For after death they sustain no more civil Relations to us: all that they do sustain is as fellow-members of the same body, or fellow-Citizens, which Angels also are as well as they.

Object. 3. *But, saith the* Doctor, *the reason why all Nations pay so great honour and religious care to the Will of the Dead, is a supposition that they still continue in the same mind after death, and will avenge the Falsifications of Trusts upon injurious Executors, else no reason can be given why so great a stress should be laid upon the Will of the Dead.*

Sol. This is *gratis dictum*, to say no worse, a cheap and unwary expression: Can no reason be given for the religious observance of the Testaments of the dead but this Supposition? I deny it: for tho' they that made them be dead, yet God, who is witness to all such acts and trusts, liveth: and tho' they cannot avenge the frauds, and injustice of men, he both can and will do it, 1 *Thes.* 4. 6. which I think is a weightier ground and reason to inforce duty upon men than the fear of Ghosts. Besides, this is a case wherein all the living are concerned, all that die must commit a trust to them that survive; and if frauds should be committed with impunity, who could safely repose confidence in another; *Quod tangit omnes, tangi debet ab omnibus*; that which is of general concernment, and becomes every man's interest, infers a general obligation upon all.

As for the Letters of *Elijah*, 'tis a vanity to think they came post from Heaven; no, no, they were doubtless left behind him out of due care to the Government, and produced in that fit occasion.

Object. 4. *But what need of a Law to prohibit Necromancy or consultation with the dead, if it were not practicable!*

Sol. I do not think the wicked Art there prohibited enabled them to recal departed Souls; but it was a conversing with the Devil who personated the dead, and therein a kind of homage was paid him to the dishonour of God; or he

might possibly raise the Bodies of wicked men, and appear in them: but I think the Spirits of the dead return not, except as was before limited.

Object. 5. *But the matters they discover are found to be true and the causes in which they concern themselves are just; real Murders are detected by them, and real Frauds and Injuries corrected and rectified: but the Devil being himself a Liar and Deceiver, would never do it; 'tis not his interest to discover or discourage such things.*

Sol. Tho' it be not his interest meerly to discover it, yet it is certainly his interest to precipitate wicked men, and hasten their ruin by the hand of Justice; and he will speak the truth, and seem to own a righteous cause to bring about his great design of ruining the Souls and Bodies of men. I will shut up with three Cautions,

Caution I. Strain not Conscience to enrich posterity: be true to the trusts committed to you by the Dead, or by the Living, remembring, that tho' they be dead and cannot avenge the wrong, yet the Lord lives, and will surely do it in a severer manner than they could, should they appear in the most terrible and frightful forms to you: Besides, your own Consciences will haunt you worse than a Ghost. Be just and true therefore in all your Promises and Trusts, for God is the Avenger.

Caution II. Finish your work for Eternity before you die: for *as the Cloud is consumed, and vanished away, so he that goeth down to the Grave shall come up no more; he shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more*, Job 7. 9, 10 Your Souls will be fixed in Eternity soon after they are loosed from your Bodies: when Death comes, away you must go, willing or unwilling, ready or unready; but no returning hither how willing soever.

Caution III. Keep your selves from that heathenish and accursed practice of consulting the Devil about your absent or dead Relations; a practice too common in Sea-port Towns, and of deep and heinous guilt before God: *Isa.* 8. 19. *And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar Spirits, and unto Wizards that peep and mutter; should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?*

You need not call the Devil twice, that subtle and officious Spirit draws the living into his Net by such a bait as this: You meet your mortal Enemy under the disguise of your dead Friend.

Query 5. *Whether the separated Souls of the Just in Heaven, have any converse or communication with each other? and how that can be, seeing all the Organs and Instruments of speech and hearing are laid aside with their Bodies?*

It seems impossible that separated or unbodied Spirits should converse together, seeing the Instruments by which the thoughts are communicated from one to another, are perished in the Grave. Suppose the Tongue of a man to be cut out, his Eyes and Hands perished or made useless whilst the Soul remains in the Body; it may enjoy its own thoughts within it self, but it is impossible to signify them to another by words or signs.

Or suppose a Man in a deep sleep (wherein the Senses are only bound for a little time) he may indeed exercise his own fancy in a pleasant Dream, but another cannot understand how it is entertained; but in death the Senses are not bound but extinguished.

Beside, we must not think the felicity of the departed holy Souls to consist in mutual Converses one with another, but in their ineffable Visions of God, and Communion with him. To him who is Omniscient, and understands their most inward thoughts, they can freely communicate them, and receive his, as well as pour forth their own love; but to do it to their fellow Creatures, who see not as God doth, seems impossible.

Indeed it was never doubted, but after the Resurrection they shall both know and talk with one another in a more excellent and perfect manner than now they do; but till that time, the Reasons above seem to persuade us, that all the Converses above are only betwixt God and them, which indeed is enough to make them happy: and indeed, if this ability be allowed to separated Souls, it seems to render the Resurrection of their Bodies needless: for they are well enough without them. But certainly the Spirits of just Men are not *Mutes*: such an August Assembly of holy and excellent Spirits do not live together in their Father's House without mutual Converse and Fellowship with each other, as well as with God.

That acute and judicious Divine, Mr. *Joseph Symonds*, in the Epistle to his Book, entituled, *Sight and Faith*, expresseth himself about this matter thus. 'I often think (saith he) of the 'Communion of the Spirits of Men, which 'certainly is more than many are acquainted 'with: tho' we act one upon another in our 'present state, by the help of sense; yet we are 'wrought and designed to a more excellent 'way. Angels and the Spirits of Men made 'perfect, converse and trade in a mutual *Communication*, not without sense, but without such 'sense as ours. This, as eternal Life, begins 'here, and is found in some degrees in this mortal State, tho' not in so visible appearances as 'to lie open to much observation.

'Angels good and bad do act upon our Spirits, and our Spirits hold converse with them, 'and with the Father of Spirits, which may be 'discerned in secret Parlies and Discourses betwixt them and us; much of this appears in 'David's Psalms: and there passeth not only an 'inward speech, but there are invisible approaches, entertainments and touches, which 'Paul found when bound in the Spirit, and under the working of God, which wrought in 'him mightily, *Col.* 1. 29. it is also most certain 'that our Souls are not mute and shut out from 'all mutual Traffick with each other, except 'what they have by the mediation of Senses.

'Instances are found, that (as they of two 'Needles touch'd with the Load-stone) the Spirit of one at a distance hath found it self affected with the motion and state of another. 'And this we are sensible of, that there is a 'strong desire in us to Communion of Spirits; 'and that because the way most ready and convenient to our bodily state is by sense, we are 'carried with much inclination to maintain intercourse of our minds and Spirits by sense; 'but as being made to a better way, our Souls 'are not satisfied with this present way, as 'being both painful, and short. We cannot 'give an exact Copy of our Apprehensions, 'Desires, Delights, and other affections by these 'two great Mediators of Communion, the '*Eye*, and the *Ear*: but because we are in so 'great a measure confin'd to this course, our Souls,

'Souls, as it were, ſtand in theſe two gates, to 'ſend and receive mutual Embaſſies each from 'other. Which way, as it is ſhort in it ſelf, ſo it 'is much ſhortned by diſtances, diſaffections, 'impotencies, and diſparities.

I cannot imagine that Men in the ſtate of Imperfection ſhould have ſo many ways to communicate their Minds, as by ſpeaking, writing, &c. yea, that the very Birds and Beaſts are by nature enabled to ſignify to each other their Inclinations; and that the Spirits of juſt Men (which are the beſt of all human Spirits, and that when made perfect too, which is the beſt and higheſt ſtate attainable by them) ſhould have none, but live at a greater diſadvantage in this reſpect, than they did, or the very Birds and Beaſts in this World do. The ſum of my thoughts about this matter, I will lay down in the following *Sections*.

Sect. 1. The *ſtate of Heaven* (as was at large open'd in our eleventh Propoſition) being an Aſſociation of Angels and bleſſed Souls for the glorifying and praiſing of God in his Temple there, and this Worſhip being carried on by joint conſent, as appears by their joint aſcriptions of Glory to God, *Rev.* 7. 9, 10, 11, 12. they muſt of neceſſity for the orderly carrying on of this Heavenly Worſhip, underſtand each others minds, and communicate their thoughts: for without this 'tis not imaginable how a joint or common Service, in which thouſands of thouſands are employed, can be decorouſly and orderly managed, except we conceive of them as ſo many *Machines*, or wind-Inſtruments that are managed by an intelligent Agent, tho' themſelves be ſenſleſs, and meerly paſſive: Certainly their conſent is a different thing from that of the Keys of a *Harpſicord*, or ſtrings of a *Lute*, they are intelligent Beings, who underſtand their own and each others mind: and beſides, without this ability, that Society in Heaven would be leſs comfortable, as to mutual refreſhing Fellowſhip, than the Society of the Saints is here. So that it is not to be doubted, but theſe noble and excellent Spirits can, and do communicate their thoughts to each other, and that in a moſt excellent way.

Sect. 2. But yet we cannot imagine theſe Communications betwixt them to be by words formed by ſuch Inſtruments and Organs of Speech as we now uſe, for they are bodileſs Beings: words and articular ſounds are fitted to the uſe and ſervice of embodied Spirits. It is therefore probable, that they convey and communicate their minds to one another, as the bleſſed Angels do, not with Tongues of fleſh, (tho' we read of *the Tongues of Angels*, 1 Cor. 13. 1.) but in a way ſomewhat analogous to this, tho' much more noble and excellent. For look, as the Scripture ſtiles the moſt excellent Food, Angels Food; ſo the moſt excellent Speech, or moſt eloquent Tongues Angels Tongues. The pureſt Rhetorick that ever flowed from the lips of the moſt charming *Orator*, is but babbling, to the Language of Angels, or of Spirits made perfect.

Conſtat Angelos linguas non habere; eſt autem in iis aliquid ἀνάλογον linguis, per quod conceptus ſibi mutuò tradunt. *Lightf.*

When *Paul* was wrapt into the third Heaven, where he was admitted to the ſight and hearing of this bleſſed Aſſembly, it's ſaid he heard ἄρρητα ῥήματα words unſpeakable, ſpiritual Language, ſuch as his Tongue neither could, or ought to utter, ſuch as none but heavenly Inhabitants can ſpeak: and *Dan.* 8. 13. *I heard* (ſaith *Daniel*) *one Saint ſpeaking, and another Saint ſaid unto that certain Saint that ſpake*, &c. He heard the enquiries of the Angels, deſiring to know the Myſtery from the mouth of Chriſt. A Language they have, but not like ours.

Sect. 3. The Communications of Angels and Souls in Heaven, is therefore conceived to be an ability in thoſe bleſſed Spirits ſilently and without ſound to inſtil and inſinuate their minds and thoughts to each other, by a meer act of their Wills: juſt as we now ſpeak to God or our ſelves in our hearts, when our lips do not move, or the leaſt outward ſign appears.

Dicimur nobis ipſis in animo loqui, cum aliquid actu cogitamus, & animo volvimus: cogitamus autem actu, ex voluntatis imperio, hoc eſt, cum volumus. *Zanch.*

There are two ways by which the Souls of Men ſpeak, one *outwardly* by the Inſtruments of Speech or ſenſible ſigns, the other *inwardly*, without ſound or ſign. This inward ſilent Speech is nothing elſe but an act of the will, calling forth ſuch things into our actual thoughts and meditations, which before lay hid and quiet in the Memory, or habit of Knowledge. Theſe thoughts, or actual revolvings of things in the mind, are in Scripture called דבר לבב, a Word of Speech in the Heart, *Deut.* 15. 9. Take heed to thy ſelf, that there be not a wicked word in thy Heart, we tranſlate it a *wicked thought*: thoughts are the words and voice of the Soul: And ſo, *Matth.* 9. 3. they ſpake within themſelves, *i. e.* their Souls ſpake, tho' their lips moved not. All Meditation is an inward Speech in the Soul, and therefore שיח indifferently ſignifies both to ſpeak, and to meditate. The Objects which we revolve in our thoughts, are ſo many Companions with whom we converſe: and thus a Man (like *Heinſius*) may be in the midſt of abundance of excellent Company when he is alone. And this is ſilent talk to our ſelves, without any ſound or noiſe.

שיח בפה שמאל, locutus eſt ore, aut corde cogitavit, meditatus eſt.

Obj. But you will ſay, *Tho' the Spirit of a Man can thus talk to or with it ſelf; yet this can ſignify nothing to others*: For what Man knoweth the things of a Man ſave the Spirit of a Man that is in him? 1 Cor. 2. 11. *It is not therefore enough to open this internal door of the Will; for except we open alſo the external door of lips, no Man can know our minds or be admitted into the ſecrets of our Souls: ſhould we never ſo earneſtly deſire that another ſhould know our mind, except we pleaſe alſo to diſcover it by word or ſign, he cannot know it; and therefore an act of the Will is not ſufficient without ſome external ſignification ſuperadded. And theſe Souls being bodileſs, can give no ſuch outward ſignification.*

Duo ſunt oſtia aliorum reſpectu, quorum niſi utrumque à te referetur, fieri non poteſt, ut quæ tu habes intellectu, & corde tuo occulta, ea alius habere, & cognoſcere queat. Unum ex parte animi eſt voluntas; niſi enim quæ occulta latent in corde tuo, ea velis aliis patefieri, quis ea percipiat? alterum eſt ipſum corpus carneum; ac proinde licèt, quaſi operto priori interiorique oſtio, velis, quæ in animo volvis, alicui patefacere, niſi tamen hoc etiam alterum externum reſeres, nullo modo ab aliis hominibus cognoſci poterunt. *Zanch. de operibus Dei, lib.* 3. *cap.* 19.

Sol. 'Tis indeed needful among Men in this World

World to unlock another door beside that of their Will, to communicate the Secrets of their hearts to others; but Angels, and the Spirits of Men having no Bodies, consequently have but one door, to wit, that of the Will to open; and the opening thereof (which is done by act or desire in a moment) is enough to discover so much of their minds, as they would have discovered to another Spirit. If they keep the door of their Will shut, no Angel or Spirit can know what is in their thoughts, without a Revelation from God; and if they but will or desire others should know, no words can so fully manifest one Man's mind to another, as such an act of the Will doth manifest theirs. And this, saith learned *Zanchy*, is the Tongue of *Angels*, and the same way the Spirits of Men have to make known their minds in the unbodied state. It is but the turning the Key of the Will, and their thoughts or desires are presently seen and known by others, to whom they will discover them, as a Man's face is seen in a glass, when he pleaseth to turn his face to it. Would one Spirit make known his mind to another? it is but to will he should know is, and it is immediately known.

Quoniam igitur Angeli iis carent crassis corporibus idcirco nihil impedit, quo minus quæ unus Angelus in sua versat mente, ea alter videat, nisi ejus voluntas: si enim ea nolit ab altero reciri, nunquam, nisi Deo revelante, rescientur. *Zanch.* ubi supra.

Sect. 4. This internal way of speaking and communication among Spirits, is much more noble, perfect, and excellent, than that which is in use among us by words and signs: And that in two respects, *viz.*

1. Of clearness.
2. Of dispatch and speed.

1. Spiritual Language is more clearly expressive of the mind and thoughts, than words, writings, or any other external signs can be. The greatest Masters of Language do often cloud their meaning for want of words fit and full enough to express it: Truth suffers by the poverty and ambiguity of words: many Controversies are but meer strifes about words, and scufflings in the dark, by the mistakes of each others sense and meaning: few have the ability of putting their own meanings into apt, proper and full expressions; and if they can, yet others to whom they speak, want an answerable ability of understanding, and clearness of apprehension to receive it. If we could discern the true and natural sense of things, just as it is in the mind of the Speaker or Writer, how many Controversies would be thereby quickly ended?

But Spirits unbodied so convey their sense and mind to one another, that there can be no mistakes, no darkning of Counsel by words without our knowledge; but one receives it just as it lies in the other's mind.

2. Spiritual Language is more easy, and of quicker dispatch. Some Men have voluble tongues, and are much more ready and presential than others, their tongues are as the Pen of a ready Scribe; and others, no less ready with their hands, which keep peace with, yea, outrun the Tongue of the Speaker, as *Martial* notes,

Currant verba licet, manus est velocior illis;
Nondum lingua suum dextra peregit opus.

Martial. Epig. lib. 14 Ep. 208.

Yet all this is but bungling work to the ready dispatch of Spirits, one act of the Will opens the Window to discern the mind of another clearly; so that the converse of Spirits must needs be more excellent in both respects, than any we are accustomed to, or acquainted with in this World. I will shut up this Question with

One COROLLARY.

Long to be associated with the Spirits of just Men made perfect. You that are going to join that blessed Assembly, will even in this respect gain an invaluable advantage. 'Tis true, there is much of comfort in the present converses of embodied, and imperfect Saints: 'tis sweet to fast and pray, to sigh and groan together; 'tis sweeter to rejoice and praise our God together. 'Tis sweet to talk of Heaven with our faces thitherward: but alas! what is this to the converses that are among the Spirits of just Men made perfect! With what melting hearts have we sometimes sate under the Doctrine of the Gospel! How have our ears been chain'd with delight to the Preacher's lips, whilst he hath been discoursing of those ravishing subjects, *Christ* and *Heaven*! But alas! how dry and dull a thing is the best of this, to the language of Heaven! Three things debase and spoil the communications of the Saints on earth, *viz.* the darkness, dulness, and frothiness thereof.

1. The darkness and ignorance of our Understandings. How crude, weak, and indigested are our highest and purest Notions of spiritual things! we speak of them but as Children, 1 *Cor.* 13. 11. For alas, the vail is yet upon our faces. The Body of sin, and the Body of flesh, cast a very dark shadow upon the World to come; but the apprehensions of separated Souls are most bright and clear. This darkness begets mistakes, mistakes beget so many quarrels and janglings, that our fellowship on Earth loseth at once both its profit and pleasure.

2. There is much dulness and deadness accompanying the Communion of Saints on earth, abundance of precious time is wasted among us in unprofitable silence; and when we engage in discourses of Heaven, that discourse is often little better than silence; our words freeze betwixt our lips, and we speak not with that concernedness and warmth of Spirit which sutes with such subjects.

It is not so among our Brethren above; their Affections are at the highest Peg, giving Glory to God in the highest.

3. To conclude; in the discourses of the best Men on Earth, there is too much froth and vanity. Many words, like water, run away at the waste spout; but there God is the Center in which all terminates. O therefore let us long to be among the unbodied people. This World will never sute us with Companions in all things agreeable to the desires of our hearts. The best Company are got together in the upper Room; an Hour there is better than an Age below. Whatever fellowship Saints leave on Earth, they shall be sure to find better in Heaven.

Query VI. *Whether the separated Souls of the Just in Heaven, do incline to a reunion with their own Bodies? and how that reunion is at last effected?*

That these blessed Souls have no such inclination or desire, these Reasons seem to perswade.

1. That their Bodies, whilst they lived in them, were no better than so many Prisons. Many were the prejudices, damages and miseries they sustained and suffered in them. It kept them at an uncomfortable distance from the Lord, 2 *Cor.* 5. 6. Their bemoaning cries spake their uneasy state. How often hath every gracious Soul thus lamented it self! *Wo is me that I dwell in Mesheck.* It inclosed their Souls within its mud walls, which intercepted the

Animam conceptu suo obstruit, & obscurat, & concretione carnis infæcat; unde illi velut per carneum specular obsoletior lux rerum est. Proculdubio cum vi mortis exprimitur de concretione carnis, & ipsa expressione colatur, certè de oppanso corporis erumpit in apertum, ad meram, & puram, & suam lucem. *Tertul. de Anima.*

the Light and Joy of God's Face. Death therefore did a most friendly office when it set it at Liberty, and brought it forth into its own pure and pleasant Light and Liberty. These blessed Spirits now rejoyce as Prisoners do in their recovered Liberty: and can it be supposed, after all these Sufferings, Groans and Sighs to be dissolved they can be willing to be embodied again? Surely there is as little reason for Souls at liberty, to desire to be again embodied, as there is for a Bird got out of the Snare or Cage, to fly back again to its place of confinement and restraint. Yea, when we consider how loth holy Souls, when under the excruciating pains of sickness, and as yet in the sight of this alluring World, have been to hear of a return to it by the recovery of their health; we cannot think, but being quite out of the sight of this, and in the fruition of the other World, the thoughts of the Body must needs be more loathsome to them than ever.

We read, that when a good Man in time of his Sickness, was told by his Friends, that some hopeful Signs of his Recovery began now to appear; he answered, And must I then return to this Body? I was as a Sheep driven out of the Storm, almost to the Fold; and then driven back into the Storm again: Or as a weary Traveller near his home, who must go back again to fetch something he had neglected: Or as an *Apprentice* whose time was almost out, and then must begin a new Term. Of some others it hath been also noted, that the greatest Infirmities they discovered upon their Death-bed, have been their too passionate desires to be dissolved, and their unsubmissiveness to God's Will in their longer stay in the Body. Now, the Bodies of the Saints being so chearfully forsaken, and that only upon a foretaste of Heaven by Faith; how can it be thought they should find any Inclination to a reunion, when they are so abundantly satisfied with the Joys of his face in Heaven? Certainly the Body hath been no such pleasant habitation to the Soul, that it should cast an eye or thought that way, when it is once delivered out of it. If it were burthensome here, a thought of it would be loathsome there.

2. We have shew'd before, that the separate Soul wants not the help of the Body, but lives and acts at a more free and comfortable rate than ever before. 'Tis true, it is not now delighted with meat and drink, with smells and sounds as it was wont to be: But then it must be considered, that it is happiness and perfection not to need them. It is now become equal to the Angels in the way and manner of its living; and what it enjoyed by the ministry of the Body, it eminently and more perfectly enjoys without it. What perfections can the Soul receive from matter? What can a lump of flesh add to a spirit? And if it can add nothing to it, there is no reason why it should hanker after it, and incline to a re-union with it. It added nothing of happiness to it, but much of trouble, and therefore becomes justly undesirable to it.

Anima rationalis nihil perfectionis recipit à materia, quod extra illam non possit recipere; ergo cum separata fuerit, in illam propensa non dicetur. *Conimb.*

3. The supposition of such a propension and inclination, seems no way to suit with that state of perfect rest which the Souls of the Just enjoy in Heaven. The Scriptures tell us that at Death they enter into Rest, *Isa.* 57. 2. *Heb.* 4. 9. That they rest from their labours, *Rev.* 14. 13. But that which inclines and desires (especially when the desired enjoyment, as in this case, is suspended so long) must be as far from Rest, as it is from satisfaction in the enjoyment of the thing desired. We know what *Solomon* hath observed of such a life, (and his observation is experimentally true) that *hope deferr'd makes the heart sick*, Prov. 13. 12. Who finds not his own desires a very rack to him in such cases? If we be kept but a few days in earnest expectation and desire of an absent Friend, and he comes not, what an uneasy life do we live? But here we must suppose some have such an unsatisfied life for hundreds, and others for thousands of years already; and how much longer they may remain so, who can tell? We use to say, Lovers hours are full of Eternity. These reasons seem to carry it for the Negative.

But if the matter be weighed once more, with the following reasons in the counter-scale, and prejudice do not pull down the balance; we shall find the contrary Conclusion much more strong and rational. For,

Argum. I. The Soul and Body are the two essential constitutive parts of Man; either of these being wanting, the Man is not complete and perfect. The good of the whole, is the good of the parts themselves; and every thing hath a natural desire and appetite to its own good and perfection. 'Tis confessed, the Soul, for as much as concerns it self singly, is made perfect, and enjoys blessedness in the absence of the Body; but this is only the perfection and blessedness of one part of Man; the other part, *viz.* the Body, lies in obscurity and corruption: and 'till both be blessed and blessed together in a state of composition and reunion, the whole Man is not made perfect. For this therefore the Soul must wait.

Anima separata ad unionem corporis propensa est, nam illa vult totius compositi actualem constitutionem; cum propter hanc tanquam finem illa sit, & in entium latitudine inveniatur. Atque hæc est illa perfectio quam anima obtinet ex illo appetitu: nam bonum totius compositi, est bonum ipsarum partium. Affirmandum itaq; est, animam separatam naturaliter desiderare resurrectionem. *Alstedii Nat. Theol. pars prima, p.* 214, 215.

Argum. II. Tho' Death hath dissolv'd the Union, yet it hath not destroyed the relation betwixt the Soul and Body; that dust is more to it than all the dust of the whole earth. Hence it is that the whole person of a Believer is sometimes denominated from that part of him, namely his Body, which remains captivated by death in the grave. Hence 2 *Thes.* 4. 15. dead Believers are called *those that sleep*, which must needs properly respect the Body, for the Soul sleeps not, and shews what a firm and dear relation still remains betwixt these absent Friends. Now we all know the mighty power of relation, if it be at least among *Entities*, yet surely it is one of the greatest things in the World in *efficacy*.

It is difficult to bear the absence of our dear Relatives, especially if we be in prosperity, and they in adversity: as the case here is betwixt the Spirit in Heaven, and its Body in the Grave; this associated with Angels, that prey'd upon by Worms. *Joseph*'s case is the livelieft *Emblem* that

occurs to my present thoughts to illustrate the point in hand. He was advanced to be Lord over all *Egypt*, living in the greatest pomp and splendor there: but his Father and Brethren were at the same time ready to perish in the land of *Canaan*. He had been many years separated from them, but neither the length of time, nor honours of the Court could alienate his affections from them. O see the mighty power of Relation! No sooner doth he see his Brethren, and understand their case, and the pining condition of *Jacob* his Father, but his bowels yerned, and his compassions rolled together for them. Yea, he could not forbear, nor stifle his own affections, though he knew how injurious his Brethren had been to him, and betrayed him, as the Body hath the Soul: Yet all this notwithstanding, he breaks forth into tears and outcries over them, which made the house ring again with the news that *Joseph*'s Brethren were come. Nor could he be at rest in the lap of honour and plenty, untill he had gotten home his dear and antient Relations to him. Thus stands the case betwixt Soul and Body:

Gen. 43. 29, 30, 31.

Argum. III. The regret, reluctancy, and sorrows expressed by the Soul at parting, do strongly argue its inclination to a re-union with it, when it is actually separated from it. For why should we surmise that the Soul which mourn'd and groan'd so deeply at parting, which clasp'd and embraced it so dearly and affectionately, which fought, strugled and disputed the passage with Death every foot and inch of ground it got, and would not part with the Body 'till by plain force it was rent out of its arms, should not, when absent, desire to see and enjoy its old and endeared friend again? Hath it lost its affection, though it continue its relation? that's very improbable; Or doth its advancement in Heaven make it regardless of its Body, which lies in contempt and misery? that's an effect which Christ's personal Glory never produced in him towards us, nor a good man's preferment would produce in him to his poor and miserable friends in this World, as we see in the case of *Joseph* but now instanced in. It is therefore harsh and incongruous to suppose the Soul's love to the Body was extinguished in the parting hour, and that now, out of sight, out of mind

Object. But was it not urged before in opposition to this assertion, that the Souls of the righteous looked upon their Bodies as the Prisons, and sighed for deliverance by death, and greatly rejoiced in the hope and fore-sight of that Liberty death would restore them to? How doth this consist with such reluctancies at parting, and inclinations to re-union.

Sol. The Objection doth not suppose any Man to be totally free from all reluctancies and unwillingness to die. The holiest Souls that ever lived in Bodies of flesh will give an unwilling shrug when it comes to the parting point, 2 *Cor.* 5. 2. But this their willingness to be gone arises from two other grounds, which make it consistent enough with its reluctancies at parting, and inclination to a second meeting.

(1.) This willingness to die, doth not suppose the Soul's love to the Body to be utterly extinguished, but mastered and overpowered by another and stronger love. There is in every Christian a double love, one natural to the Body, and the things below; the other surpernatural, to Christ, and the things above; the latter doth not extinguish, tho' it conquer and subdue the other. Love to the Body pulls backward, love to Christ pulls forward, and finally prevails. This is so consistent with it that it supposes natural reluctation and unwillingness to part.

(2.) The willingness of God's people to be dissolved, must not be understood *absolutely*, but *comparatively*: In that sense the *Apostle* will be understood, 2 *Cor.* 5. 8. *We are confident I say, and willing rather to be absent from the Body, and present with the Lord*, (i. e.) Rather than to live always a life of sin, sorrow and absence from God, Death is not desirable in and for it self, but only as it is the Soul's outlet from sin, and its inlet to God.

So that the very best desire is but comparatively, and it is but few who find the love of this animal life subacted and overpowered by high raised acts of faith and love. The generality even of good Souls feel strong renitencies, and suffer sharp conflicts at their dissolution. All which discovers with what lothness and unwillingness the Soul unclasps its arms to let go its Body. Now as *Divines* argue the frame of Christ's heart in Heaven towards his people on earth, from all those endearing passages and demonstrations of love he gave them at parting; so we here argue the continued love and inclination of the Soul to its Body after it is in Heaven, from the manifold demonstrations it gave of its affection to it in this World, especially in the parting hour. No considerations in all the World, less than the more full fruition of God, and freedom from sin, could possibly have prevailed with it to quit the Body, tho' but for a *time*, and leave it in the dust. Which is our third Argument:

Argum. IV. And as the dolorous parting hour evidenceth it, so doth the Joy with which it receives it again at the Resurrection. If it part from it so heavily, and meet it again with joy unspeakable; sure then it still retaineth much love for it, and desires to be re-espoused to it, in the interval. Now, that its meeting in the Resurrection is a day of joy to the Soul, is evident, because it is called *the time of Refreshment*, Acts 3. 19. And they *awake with singing out of the dust*, Isa. 26. 19. If the direct and immediate scope of the *Prophet* point not (as some think it doth) at the Resurrection, yet it is allowed by all to be a very lively allusion to it; which is sufficient for my purpose. And indeed none that understands and believes the design and business of that day, can possibly doubt but there was reason enough to call it a time of refreshment, a singing morning; for the Souls of the righteous come from Heaven with Christ, and the whole Host of shouting Angels; not to be *spectators* only, but the *subjects* of that day's Triumph. They come to re-assume; and be re-espoused to their own Bodies, this being the appointed time for God to vindicate and rescue them from the tyrannical power of the Grave, to endow them with spiritual qualities at their second marriage to their Souls, that in both parts they may be completely happy. O the joyful claspings and dear embraces betwixt them, who but themselves can understand! And by the way, this removes the Objection fore-mentioned, of the miseries and prejudices the Soul suffered in this World, in and from the Body: For now it receives it a spiritual Body, (*i. e.*) so subdued to, and fitted for the use of the Spirit, as never to impede, clog, or obstruct its motions and inclinations any more,

1 *Cor.* 15.

1 *Cor.* 15. 44. In this hope it parted from it, and with this conſolation it now receives it again.

Argum. V. There are many *Scriptures* which very much favour, if they do not poſitively conclude the Soul's inclination to, and deſire to be re-united with its own Body, even whilſt it is in the ſtate of its ſingle glorification in Heaven. Certainly our Souls leave not our Bodies at death, as the *Oſtrich* doth her Egg in the ſand, without any farther regard to it, or concernment for it; but they are repreſented as crying to God to remember, avenge, and vindicate them, *Rev.* 6. 10, 11. How long, Lord, how long wilt thou not avenge our Blood? *Our Blood*, ſpeaks both the continued Relation and ſuitable Affection they have to their abſent Bodies.

And to the ſame ſenſe a judicious and learned Pen expounds that place, *Job* 14. 14. (which is commonly but I know not how fitly, accommodated to another purpoſe) *All the days of my appointed time will I wait 'till my change come*; which words, by a diligent comparing of the Context, appear to have this for their proper ſcope and ſenſe.

Mr. How's *Bleſſedneſs of the Righteous*, p. 170, 171.

'*Job* in the former Verſe had expreſſed his 'confidence by way of petition, that at a ſet 'and appointed time God would remember him, 'ſo as to recal him out of the Grave; and now 'minded to ſpeak out more fully, puts the Que'ſtion to himſelf, *If a Man die, ſhall he live again?* 'And thus anſwers it, *All the days of my appointed 'time* (that is, of the appointed time which he 'mentioned before, when God ſhould revive him 'out of the Duſt) *will I wait till my change come*; 'that is, that glorious change, when the corrup'tion of a loathſome Grave ſhould be exchang'd 'for immortal Glory: which he amplifies and 'utters more expreſly, ver. 15. *Thou ſhalt call, and I 'will anſwer: thou ſhalt have a deſire to the work of 'thy hands*; thou wilt not always forget to reſtore 'and perfect thine own Creature. And ſurely 'this waiting is not the act of his inanimate 'ſleeping Duſt, but of that part which ſhould be 'capable of ſuch an Action; *q. d.* I, in that part 'which ſhall be ſtill alive, ſhall patiently wait the 'appointed time of reviving me in that part alſo, 'which Death and the Grave ſhall inſult over in a 'temporary triumph in the mean time.'

Upon theſe grounds I think the inclination of the ſeparated Spirits of the Juſt to their own Bodies to be a juſtifiable Opinion. As for the Damned, we have no reaſon to think ſuch a re-union to be deſirable to them; for alas! it will be but the increaſe and aggravation of their Torments; which conſideration is ſufficient to over-power and ſtifle the inclination of Nature, and make the very thoughts of it horrid and dreadful. To what end (as the Prophet ſpeaks in another caſe) is it for them to deſire that day? It will be a day of darkneſs and gloomineſs to them; re-union being deſigned to complete the Happineſs of the one, and the miſery of the other.

But before I take off my hand, and diſmiſs this Queſtion, I muſt remember that I am Debtor to two Objections.

Object. 1. *The Soul can both live and act ſeparate from the Body, it needs it not; and if it don't want, why ſhould it deſire it?*

Sol. The life and actings of the glorified are conſiderable two ways, (1.) Singly and abſtractedly for the life and action of one part: and ſo we confeſs the Soul lives happily, and acts forth its own powers freely in the ſtate of ſeparation. (2.) Perſonally, or concretely, as it is the life and action of the whole Man, and ſo it doth both need and deſire the conjunction or re-union of the Body; for the Body is not only a part of Chriſt's Purchaſe as well as the Soul, and is to have its own Glory as well as it, but it is alſo a conſtitutive part of a complete glorified Perſon; and ſo conſidered, the Saints are not perfectly happy 'till this re-union be effected, which is the true ground and reaſon of this its deſire.

Object. 2. *But this Hypotheſis ſeems to thwart the account given in Scripture of the reſt, and placid ſtate of ſeparate Souls: for look as Bodies which gravitate and propend do not reſt, ſo neither do Souls which incline and deſire.*

Sol. There is a vaſt difference betwixt the tendencies and propenſions of Souls in the way to Glory, and in Glory: we that are abſent from the Lord, can find no reſt in the way; but thoſe that are with the Lord can reſt in Jeſus, and yet wait without anxiety, or ſelf-torturing impatience, for the Accompliſhment of the Promiſes to their abſent Bodies, *Rev.* 6. 10, 11.

Corollary. Let this provoke us all to get ſanctified Souls to rule and uſe theſe their Bodies now for God. This will abundantly ſweeten their parting at Death, and their meeting again at the Reſurrection of the Juſt: elſe their parting will be doleful, and their next meeting dreadful. And ſo much for the doctrine of Separation.

The Uſes *of the Point.*

OUR way is now open to the Improvement and Uſe of this excellent Subject and Doctrine of Separation; and certainly it affords as rich an entertainment for our Affections as for our Minds, in the following Uſes; of which the firſt will be for our Information in ſix practical *Inferences.*

Infer. I. If this be the life and ſtate of gracious Souls after their ſeparation from the Body, *Then holy perſons ought not to entertain diſmal and terrifying thoughts of their own diſſolution.*

The Apprehenſions and thoughts of Death ſhould have a peculiar pleaſantneſs in the minds of Believers. You have heard into what a bleſſed Preſence and Communion Death introduceth your Souls; how it leads you out of a Body of Sin, a World of Sorrows, the Society of imperfect Saints, to an innumerable company of Angels, and to the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect, to that lovely Mount *Sion*, to the heavenly Sanctuary, to the bleſſed Viſions of the Face of God. Oh! methinks there hath been enough ſaid, to make all the Souls in whom the well-grounded hopes of the life of Glory are found, to cry out with the Apoſtle, *We are confident, I ſay, yea, and willing rather to be abſent from the Body, and preſent with the Lord*, 2 Cor. 5. 8.

When good *Muſculus* drew near his end, how ſweet and pleaſant was this Meditation to his Soul! Hear his Swan-like Song:

* *Nil ſupereſt, vitæ frigus præcordia captat;*
Sed, tu Chriſte, mihi vita perennis ades:
Quid trepidas anima, ad ſedes abitura quietis?
En tibi ductor adeſt Angelus ille tuus.
Linque domum hanc miſeram, nunc in ſua fata ruentem;
Quam tibi fida Dei dextera reſtituet.

* *Melchior Adams*, in vita Muſculi, p. 385.

Peccaſti? Scio, ſed Chriſtus credentibus in ſe,
Peccata expurgat ſanguine cuncta ſuo.
Horribilis mors eſt? Fateor, ſed proxima vita eſt,
Ad quam te Chriſti gratia certa vocat.
Præſto eſt de Satana, peccato & morte triumphans
Chriſtus; ad hunc igitur læta alacriſque migra.

Which may be thus tranſlated

Cold Death my heart invades, my life doth flie.
O Chriſt, my everlaſting life draw nigh.
Why quivereſt thou, my ſoul, within my Breaſt?
Thine Angel's come to lead thee to thy reſt.
Quit chearfully this drooping houſe of clay;
God will reſtore it in the appointed day.
Has't ſinn'd? I know it, let not that be urg'd;
For Chriſt thy ſins with his own Blood hath purg'd.
Is Death afrighting? True, but yet withal
Conſider Chriſt thro' Death to life doth call.
He triumphs over Satan, Sin, and Death;
Therefore with joy reſign thy dying breath.

Much in the ſame chearful frame was the heart of dying *Bullinger*, when his mournful Friends expreſſed their ſenſe of the loſs they ſhould ſuſtain by his removal. Why, ſaid he, if God will make any farther uſe of my Labours in the Miniſtry, he will renew my ſtrength, and I will gladly ſerve him: But if he pleaſe (as I deſire he would) to call me hence, I am ready to obey his Will; and nothing more pleaſant can befal me, than to leave this ſinful and miſerable World to go to my Saviour Chriſt. O that all who are out of the danger of death were thus got out of the dread of death too.

Si Deo viſum fuerit me a opera ulterius in Eccleſiæ miniſterio uti, ipſe vires ſuppeditabit, & libens illi parebo; ſin me voluerit (quod opto) ex hac vita evocare, paratus ſum illius voluntati obſequi; ac nihil eſt quod jucundius poſſit mihi contingere, quam ex hoc miſero & corruptiſſimo ſeculo ad Chriſtum ſervatorem meum migrare. *Idem ibid.*

Let them only tremble and be convuls'd at the thoughts and ſight of death, whoſe Souls muſt fall into the hands of a ſin-revenging God by the ſtroke of Death; who are to breathe out their laſt hope with their laſt breath. Death is *yours*, ſaith the *Apoſtle*, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22. your Friend, your Privilege, your Paſſage to Heaven; 'tis your ignorance of it which breeds your fears about it.

Infer. II. *Gather from hence the abſolute indiſpenſable neceſſity of your Union with Chriſt, before your diſſolution by Death.*

Woe to that Soul which ſhall be ſeparated from its Body before it be united with Chriſt: none but the Spirits of juſt Men are made perfect at Death. Righteous Souls are the only qualified Subjects of Bleſſedneſs.

'Tis true, every Soul hath a natural capacity of Happineſs, but gracious Souls only have an actual meetneſs for Glory. The Scriptures tell us in round and plain words, that *without Holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord*, Heb. 12. 14. that *except we be regenerate and born again we cannot ſee the Kingdom of God*, John 3. 3. You make the greateſt adventure that ever was made by man; indeed an adventure infinitely too great for any man to make, when you ſhoot the Gulph of vaſt Eternity upon terms of hazard and uncertainty.

What thinkeſt thou, Reader? dareſt thou adventure thy Soul and eternal Happineſs upon it, that the work of Regeneration and Sanctification, that very ſame work of Grace which the Spirit of God hangs all thy Hopes of Heaven upon in theſe Scriptures, is truly wrought by him in thy Soul? Conſider it well, pauſe upon it again and again before thou go forth. Should a miſtake be committed here, (and nothing is more eaſy or common all the World over than ſuch miſtakes) thou art irrecoverably gone. This venture can be made but once, and the miſcarriage is never to be retrieved afterwards; thou haſt not another Soul to adventure, nor a ſecond adventure to make of this. Well might the Apoſtle *Peter* call for all diligence to make our calling and our election ſure: That can never be made too ſure, which is ſo invaluable in its worth, and to be but once adventured.

Infer. III. *How prejudicial is it to dying men to be then incumbred, diverted and diſtracted about earthly concernments, when the time of their departure is at hand!*

The buſineſs and imployment of dying perſons is of ſo vaſt importance and weight, that every moment of their time, need to be carefully ſaved and applied to this their preſent and moſt important concern. How well ſoever you have improved the time of life, believe it you will find work enough upon your hands at death: dying hours will be found to be buſy and laborious hours, even to the moſt painful, ſerious and induſtrious Souls, whoſe life hath been moſtly ſpent in preparations for death. Leave not the proper buſineſs of other days to that day; for that day will have buſineſs enough of its own. Sufficient for that day are the labours thereof. Let a few Conſiderations be pondered to clear and confirm this Inference.

Conſid. 1. The buſineſs and imployment of dying Perſons is of the moſt ſerious, awful and ſolemn nature and importance; it is their laſt preparatory work on earth, to their immediate appearance before God their Judge, *Heb.* 9. 27. it is their ſhooting the Gulph into Eternity, and leaving this World, and all their acquaintance and intereſts therein for ever, *Iſai.* 28. 11. It is therefore a Work by it ſelf to die; a Work requiring the moſt intenſe, deep and undiſturbed exerciſes of all the Abilities and Graces of the inner man; and all little enough.

Conſid. 2. Time is exceeding precious with dying men; the laſt ſand is ready to fall, and therefore not to be waſted as it was wont to be. When we had a fair proſpect of many years before us, we made little account of an hour or day; but now one of thoſe hours which we ſo carelefly laviſhed away, is of more value than all this World to us, eſpecially if the whole weight of Eternity ſhould hang upon it, (as oftentimes it doth) then the loſs of that portion of time, is the loſs of Soul, Body, and Hope for evermore.

Conſid. 3. Much of that little precious time of departing Souls will be unavoidably taken up and imployed about the inexcuſable preſſing calls and neceſſities of diſtreſſed Nature; all that you can do for your Souls muſt then be done only by fits and ſnatches, in the midſt of many diſturbances and frequent interruptions: So that it is rarely found that a dying man can purſue a ſerious Meditation with calm and fixed thoughts; for beſides the pains and faintings of the Body, the Abilities of the mind uſually fail. Here alſo they fall into a ſad *Dilemma*; if they do not with the utmoſt intention of mind fix their hearts and thoughts on Chriſt, they loſe their comfort if godly, and their Souls if ungodly; and if they do, *Friends* and *Phyſicians* aſſure them they will deſtroy their Bodies. Theſe are the ſtraits of men bordering cloſe

cloſe upon Eternity; they muſt haſtily catch a few moments in the intervals of pain, and then are put by all again.

Conſid. 4. There is no man living but hath ſomething to do for his own Soul in a dying Hour, and ſomething for others alſo.

Suppoſe the beſt that can be ſuppoſed, that the Soul be in real Union with Chriſt, and that Union be alſo clear; yet it is ſeldom found but there are ſome aſſaults of *Satan*; or if not, yet how many Relations and Friends need our Experiences and Counſels at ſuch a time? How many things ſhall we have to do after our great and main work is done? And others have a great deal more to do, though as ſafe as the former. O the Knots and Objections that are then to be diſſolv'd and anſwer'd! The unuſual Onſets and Aſſaults of *Satan* that are then to be reſiſted! And yet moſt dying perſons have much more upon their hands than either of the former. The whole work of Repentance and Faith is to do when time is even done.

Conſid. 5. Few, yea very few are found furniſhed with Wiſdom, Experience and Faithfulneſs to give dying Perſons any conſiderable Aſſiſtance in Soul Affairs: it may be there may be found among the Viſitants of the Sick, now and then a perſon who hath a word of Wiſdom in his heart; but then either he wants opportunity, or courage and faithfulneſs to do the part of a true ſpiritual Friend. *Elihu* deſcribes the perſon ſo qualified as he ought for this work, *Job* 33. 23, 24. and calls him *one among a thouſand.* Some are too cloſe and reſerved, others too trifling and impertinent: Some are willing, but want ability; others are able, but want faithfulneſs: ſome cut too deep by uncharitable cenſoriouſneſs, others skin over the wound too ſlightly, ſpeaking Peace where God and Conſcience ſpeak none. So that little help is to be expected.

Conſid 6. How much therefore doth it deſerve to be lamented, that where there is ſo much to do, ſo little time to do it, and ſo few to help in the beſt improvement of it, all ſhould be loſt as to their Souls by earthly incumbrances and worldly affairs, which might have been done ſooner and better in a more proper ſeaſon! O therefore let me perſwade all men to take heed of bringing the proper buſineſs of healthful days to their ſick beds.

Infer. IV. *What an excellent Creature is the Soul of Man, which is capable, not only of ſuch preparations for God whilſt it is in the Body, but of ſuch ſights and enjoyments of God when it lives without a Body?*

Here the Spirit of God works upon it in the way of Grace and Sanctification, *Eph.* 2. 10. The ſcope and deſign of this his Workmanſhip, is to qualify and make us meet for the Life of Heaven, 2 *Cor.* 5. 5. For this ſelf-ſame thing, or purpoſe, our Souls are wrought or moulded by Grace into quite another frame and temper than that which Nature gave them: and when he hath wrought out and finiſhed all that he intends to be wrought in the way of Sanctification, then ſhall it be called up to the higheſt Enjoyments and Imployments for ever that a Creature is ſuſceptible of.

Herein the Dignity of the Soul appears, that no other Creature in this World beſide it, hath a natural capacity, either to be ſanctified inherently in this World, or glorified everlaſtingly in that to come, to be transformed into the Image, and filled with the Joy of the Lord. There are *Myriads* of other Souls in this World beſides ours, but to none of them is the Spirit of Sanctification ſent, but only to ours; The Souls of *Animals* ſerve only to move the dull and ſluggiſh matter, and take in for a few days the ſenſitive Pleaſures of the Creation, and ſo expire, having no natural capacity of, or deſignation for any higher Imployment or Enjoyment.

And it deſerves a moſt ſerious animadverſion, that this vaſt capacity of the Soul for eternal Bleſſedneſs, muſt of neceſſity make it capable of ſo much the more miſery and ſelf-torment, if at laſt it fail of that Bleſſedneſs: For it is apparent they do not periſh becauſe they are *uncapable*, but becauſe they are *unwilling*; not becauſe their Souls wanted any natural Faculty that others have, but becauſe they would not open thoſe they have to receive Chriſt in the way of Faith and Obedience, as others did.

Think upon this you that live only to eat, and drink, and ſleep, and play, as the Birds and Beaſts of the Field do; what need was there of a reaſonable Soul for ſuch ſenſual Employments? Do not your noble Faculties ſpeak your deſignation for higher uſes? and will you not wiſh to exchange Souls with the moſt vile and deſpicable *Animal* in this World, if it were poſſible to be done? Certainly it were better for you to have no capacity of eternal Bleſſedneſs, (as they have not) if you do not enjoy it; and no capacity of torment beyond this life, (as they have not) if you muſt certainly endure it.

Infer. V. *If our Souls and Bodies muſt be ſeparated ſhortly, how patiently ſhould we bear all leſſer Separations, that may or will be made betwixt us and any other Enjoyments in this World?*

No Union is ſo intimate, ſtrict, and dear, as that betwixt your Souls and Bodies. All your Relations and Enjoyments in this World, hang looſer from your Souls than your Bodies do: and if it be your duty patiently and ſubmiſſively to ſuffer a painful parting pull from your Bodies; it is doubtleſs your duty to ſuffer meekly and patiently a ſeparation from other things, which are but a prelude to it, and a meer ſhadow of it. 'Tis good to put ſuch Caſes to our ſelves in the midſt of our pleaſant Injoyments.

I have now many comfortable *Relatives* in the World, Wife, Children, Kindred, and Friends; God hath made them pleaſant to me, but he may bereave me of all theſe. Doth not Providence ring ſuch changes all the World over! Are not all Kingdoms, Cities, and Towns, full of the ſighs and laments of Widows, Orphans, and Friends bereaved of their pleaſant and uſeful Relations? But if God will have it ſo, 'tis our duty to bound our Sorrows, remembring *the time is ſhort*, 1 Cor. 7. 29. In a few Days we muſt be ſtript much nearer, even out of our own Bodies by Death.

God may alſo ſeparate betwixt me and my health by ſickneſs, ſo that the pleaſure of this World ſhall be cut off from me; but ſickneſs is not death, though it be a prelude and ſtep towards it: I may well bear this with patience who muſt ſubmiſſively bear ſharper pains than theſe e'er long. Yea, and well may I bear this ſubmiſſively, conſidering that by ſuch imbittering and weaning Providences God is preparing me for a much eaſier Diſſolution, than if I ſhould live at eaſe in the Body all my Days, till Death come to make ſo great and ſudden a change upon me.

God may also separate betwixt me and my liberty by restraint. It hath been the lot of the best Men that ever were in the World; and if it should be ours also, we should not be much startled at it, considering these Bodies of ours must be shortly pent up in a straiter, darker, and more loathsome place of confinement, than any Prison in this World can be. The Grave is a darker place, *Job* 17. 13. and your abode there will be longer, *Eccl.* 11. 8.

These and all other our outward Enjoyments are separable things, and it's good thus to alleviate our loss of them.

Infer. VI. *How heavenly should the tempers and frames of those Souls be who are Candidates for Heaven, and must be so shortly numbered with the Spirits of just Men made perfect!*

'Tis reasonable that we all begin to be, that which we expect to be for ever; to learn that way of living and conversing, which we believe must be our everlasting Life and Business in the World to come. Let them that hope to live with *Angels* in Heaven, learn to live like Angels on Earth, in Holiness, Activity, and ready Obedience.

There is the greatest reason that our minds be there where our Souls are to be for ever. A spiritual mind will be found *possible*, *congruous*, *sweet*, and *evidential* of an Interest in that Glory, to all those holy Souls who are preparing and designed for it.

1. It is *possible*, notwithstanding the Clogs and Entanglements of the Body, to be heavenly minded. Others have attained it, *Phil.* 3. 20. Two things make a heavenly Conversation possible to Men, *viz.*

(1.) The natural Abilities,
(2.) The gracious Principles, } of the Mind.

(1.) The natural Abilities of the mind, that can in a minute's time dispatch a nimble Messenger to Heaven, and mount its thoughts from this to that world in a trice. The power of Cogitation is a rich Indowment of the Soul, such as no other creature on Earth is participant of. Tho' spiritual thoughs be not the natural growth of the Soul, yet thoughts capable of being spiritualized are. And without this ability of projecting thoughts, all intercourse must have been cut off.

(2.) The gracious Principles implanted in the Soul, do actually incline the mind, and mount its thoughts Heaven-ward. Yea, this will prove more than a possibility of a Conversation in Heaven; whilst Saints tabernacle on Earth in bodies of flesh, it will almost prove an impossibility that it should be otherwise, for these spiritual Principles setting the bent and tendency of the heart Heaven-ward, we must act against the very law of our new Nature, when we place our Affections elsewhere.

2. A mind in Heaven is most *congruous*, decorous and comely for those that are the enroll'd Inhabitants of that heavenly City. Where should a Christian's *Love* be, but where his *Lord* is? Our *hearts* and our *homes* do not use to be long asunder. It becomes you so to think, and so to speak now, as those who make account to be shortly singing *Hallelujahs* before the Throne.

3. 'Tis most *sweet* and delightful; no pleasure in all this World comparable to this pleasure; Rom. 8. 6. *To be spiritually minded is life and peace.* 'Tis a young Heaven born in the Soul in its way thither.

4. To conclude: it is *evidential* of your Interest in it: An agreeable frame is the surest title, *Col.* 3. 1, 2. *Math.* 6. 21. If Heaven attract your minds now, it will center them for ever.

Use II. This Doctrine of the separation of the Spirits of the Just from their Bodies, as it lies before you in this Discourse, affords a singular help to all the People of God, to entertain lovely and pleasant thoughts of that Day, to make Death not only an unregretted, but a most pleasant and desirable thing to their Souls.

I know there is a pure, simple, natural fear of Death, from which you must not expect to be perfectly freed by all the Arguments in the World. And there is a reverential awful fear of Death, which it would be your prejudice and loss to have destroyed. You will have a natural, and ought to have a reverential fear of Death: the one flows from your *sensitive*, the other from your *sanctified* nature.

But it is a third sort of fear which doth you all the mischief, a fear springing in gracious Souls out of the weakness of their Graces, and the strength of their unmortified Affections; a fear arising partly out of the darkness of our *minds*, and partly out of the sensuality and earthliness of our *hearts*; this fear is that which so convulseth our Souls when Death is near, and imbitters our lives, even whilst it is at a distance. He that hath been over-heated in his Affections to this World, and over-cooled by diversions and temptations, neglects and intermissions, to that World, cannot chuse but give an unwilling shrug, if not a frightful screech at the appearance of Death.

And this being the sad case of too many good and upright Souls for the main: and there being so few even amongst serious Christians that have attained to that *courage* and *complacence* in the thoughts of Death which the Apostle speaks of, 2 *Cor.* 5. 8. to be both *confident* and willing rather to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord; I will from this Discourse furnish them with some special assistance therein. But withal, I must tell you upon what great disadvantages I am here to dispute with your fears: so strong is the current of natural and vicious fear, that except a special hand of God back and set on the Arguments that shall be urged, they will be as easily swept away before it, as so many straws by a rapid Torrent; nor will it be to any more purpose to oppose my breath to them, than to the Tides and Waves of the Sea.

Moreover, I am fully convinced by long and often experience, how unsteady and inconstant the frames and tempers of the best hearts are; and that if it be not full home, yet it is next to an impossibility to fix them in such a temper as this I aim at is. Where is that Man to be found, who after the revolutions of many years, and in those years various dispensations of providence without him, altering his condition, and greater variety of temptations within, can yet say, notwithstanding all these various Aspects and Positions, his heart hath still held one steddy and invariable tenour and course?

Alas, there be very few (if any) of such sound and athletick temper of mind, whose Pulse beats with an even stroke, through all inequalities of condition, alike free and willing at one time as another, to be uncloathed of the Body, and to be with Christ. This height of Faith, and depth of Mortification; this strength of love to Christ, and ardour of holy desire, are degrees of Grace to which very few attain.

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The Caſe ſtanding thus, it is no more than needs, to urge all ſorts of Arguments upon our timorous and unſteady hearts; and it's like to prove a hard and difficult task to bring the heart but to a quiet and unregretting ſubmiſſion to the appointment of God herein, though ſubmiſſion be one of the loweſt ſteps of duty in this Caſe.

If it be hard to fix our thoughts but an hour on ſuch an unpleaſing ſubject as Death, how hard muſt it be to bring over the conſent of the will? If we cannot endure it at a diſtance in our thoughts, how ſhall we embrace and hug it in our boſoms? If our thoughts fly back with diſtaſte and impatience, no wonder if our will be obſtinate and refractary. We muſt firſt prevail with our thoughts to fix themſelves, and think cloſe to ſuch a ſubject, before it can be expected we chearfully reſign our ſelves into the hands of Death. We cannot be willing to go along with Death, 'till we have ſome acquaintance with it; and acquainted with it we cannot be, 'till we accuſtom our ſelves to think aſſiduouſly and calmly of it They that have dwelt many years at Death's door, both in reſpect of the condition of their Bodies, and diſpoſition of their Minds, yet find reluctancy enough when it comes to the point.

Object. *But if ſeparation from the Body be (as it is) an enemy to nature, and there be no poſſibility to extinguiſh natural averſation: to what purpoſe is it to argue and perſuade, where there is no expectation of ſucceſs?*

Sol. Death is conſiderable two ways by the people of God:

1. As an Enemy to Nature.
2. As a *Medium* to Glory.

If we conſider it ſimply in it ſelf, as an Enemy to Nature, there is nothing in it for which we ſhould deſire it; but if we conſider it as a *Medium* or Paſſage into Glory, yea, the only ordinary way through which all the Saints muſt paſs out of this into a better State; ſo it will appear not only tolerable, but deſirable to prepared Souls. Were there not a *Shoar* of Glory on the other Side of theſe black Waters of Death, for my own part I ſhould rather chuſe to live meanly than to die eaſily. If both Parts were to periſh at Death, there were no reaſon to perſuade one to be willing to deliver up the other. It were a Madneſs for the Soul to deſire to be diſſolv'd, if it were ſo far from being better out of the Body than in it, that it ſhould have no being at all. But, Chriſtians let me tell you, Death is ſo far from being a *Bar*, that it is a *Bridge* in your Way to Glory, and you are never like to come thither but by paſſing over it; except therefore you will look beyond it, you will never ſee any Deſirableneſs in it. *I deſire to be diſſolv'd* (ſaith *Paul*) *and to be with Chriſt, which is far better.* To be with *Death* is *ſad*, but to be with *Chriſt* is *ſweet*; to endure the *Pains* of *Death* is *doleful*, but to ſee the *Face* of *Chriſt* is *joyful*; to part with your pleaſant *Habitations* is *irkſome*, but to be lodged in the Heavenly *Manſions* is moſt *delightful*; *parting Hour* with dear Relations is *cutting*, but *meeting Hour* with Jeſus Chriſt is *tranſporting*; to be rid of your own *Bodies* is not *pleaſing*, but to be rid of *Sin*, and that for ever, what can be more pleaſing to a gracious Soul?

You ſee then in what ſenſe I preſent Death as a deſirable thing to the People of God: And therefore ſeeing Nature teacheth us (as the *Apoſtle* ſpeaks) to put the more abundant Comelineſs upon the uncomely Parts; ſuffer me to dreſs up Death in its beſt Ornaments, and preſent it to you in the following Arguments, as a beautiful and comely Object of your conditional and well regulated Deſires. And,

Argum. I. *If upon a fair and juſt Account there ſhall appear to be more gain to Believers in* Death, *than there is in* Life: *Reaſon muſt needs vote Death to be better to them that are in Chriſt, than Life can be; and conſequently it ſhould be deſirable in their Eyes.*

'Tis a clear Dictate of Reaſon in Caſe of Choice to chuſe that which is beſt for us. Who is there that freely exerciſes Reaſon and Choice together, that will not do ſo?

What *Merchant* will not part with a Hundred Pounds worth of Glaſs *Beads* and *Pendents* for a Tun of Gold? A few *Tinſel* Toys, for as many rich *Diamonds*? *Mercatura eſt amittere, ut lucreris*; that is true *Merchandize*, to part with Things of leſſer, for Things of greater Value.

Now, if you will be tried and determined by God's Book of *Rates*, then the Caſe is determined quickly, and the Advantage appears exceedingly upon *Death's* Side, *Philip.* 1. 21. *To me to live, is Chriſt; and to die, is gain.*

Object. *True, it might be ſo to* Paul, *who was eminent in Grace, and ripe for Glory; but it may be Loſs to others, who have not attained the height of his Holineſs or Aſſurance.*

Sol. The true and plain Senſe of the Objection is this, Whether Heaven and Chriſt be as much Gain to him that enjoys them, tho' behind others both in Grace and Obedience, as it is to them who are more eminent in Grace, and have done and ſuffered more for their Sake? And let it be determined by your ſelves. But if your Meaning be, that *Paul* was ready for Death, and ſo are not you; his Work and Courſe was almoſt comfortably finiſhed, and ſo is not yours; his Death therefore muſt needs be gain to him, but it may be Loſs to you, even the Loſs of all that you are worth for ever.

To this I ſay, The Wiſdom of God orders the Time of his Peoples Death, as well as all other Circumſtances about it: and in this, your Hearts may be at perfect reſt, That being in Chriſt, you can never die to your Loſs, die when you will. I know you will reply, That if your Union with Chriſt were clear, the Controverſie were ended; but then you muſt alſo conſider, they are as ſafe who die by an Act of Recumbency upon Chriſt, as thoſe that die in the fulleſt aſſurance of their Intereſt in him.

And beſide, your Reluctancies and Averſations to Death are none of your Way to aſſurance; but ſuch a ſtrong Averſation to Sin, and ſuch a vehement Deſire after, and Love to Chriſt, as can make you willing to quit all that is dear and deſirable to you in this World for his Sake, is the very next Door or Step to Aſſurance; and if the Lord bring your Hearts to this Frame, and fix them there, it is not like you will be long without it.

But to return; *Paul* had here valued Life, with a full Allowance of all the Benefits and Advantages of it; *To me to live, is Chriſt*; that is, If I live, I ſhall live in Communion with Chriſt, and ſervice for Chriſt, and in the Midſt of all thoſe Comforts which uſually reſult from both. Here's Life with the moſt weighty and deſirable Benefits of it laid in one Scale, and he lays *Death*, and probably a violent Death too, (for of that he ſpeaks afterwards, *Ch.* 2. 17.) in t'other Scale. Thus he fills the Scale, and the Balance breaks

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on Death's side; yea, it comes down with a πολλῷ μᾶλλον κρεῖσσον, a far far better.

Mr. How in Mrs. Margaret Baxter's Funeral Sermon.

But here falls in (as an * excellent Person observes) a rub in the way: there are in this Case two Judges, the *Flesh* and the *Spirit*, and they cannot agree upon the Values, but contradict each other. Nature saith, It's far far better to live than to die, and will not be beaten off from it. What then? I hope you will not put blind and partial Nature in Competition with God also, as you do Life with Death. But seeing Nature can plead so powerfully, as well as Grace, let us hear what those strong Reasons are, that are urged by the Flesh *on Life's Side*, and what the Soul hath to reply and plead on Death's Side, (for the Body can plead, and that charmingly too, tho' not by Words and Sounds) and then determine the Matter as we shall see Cause: but be sure Prejudice pull not down the *Balance*.

1. *The Pleas of Nature for Life, and against Dissolution.*

And here the doleful Voice of Nature, laments, pleads, and bemoans it self to the willing Soul.

'Oh my Soul! what dost thou mean 'by these thy Desires to be dissolved? 'Art thou in earnest, when thou 'saist thou art willing to leave thine own Body 'and be gone? Consider, and think again e'er 'thou bid me farewel, what thou art to me, and 'what I have been and am to thee; thou art my 'Soul, that is, my Prop, my Beauty, my Ho 'nour, my Life, and indeed all that is comfortable to me. If thou depart, what am I but a 'Spectacle of Pity, an abhorr'd Carcase in a 'few Moments? a Prey to the Worms, a Captive 'to Death? If thou depart, my Candle is put 'out, and I am left in the Horrors of Darkness.

'I am thy House, thy delightful Habitation, 'the House in which thou hast dwelt from the 'first moment of thy Creation, and never lodg-'edst one Night in any other: Every Room in me 'hath one way or other been a Banquetting-room 'for thy Entertainment, a Room of Pleasure; 'all my Senses have been *Purveyors* for thy De-'light; my Members have all of them been thine 'Instruments and Servants to execute thy Com-'mands and Pleasure. If thou and I part, it 'must be in a Showre: thou shalt feel such Pains, 'such travailling Throes, such deep emphatical 'Groans, such Sweats, such Agonies as thou never 'felt'st before. For Death hath somewhat of An-'guish peculiar to it self, and which is unknown, 'tho' guessed at by the Living. Besides, whenever 'thou leavest me, thou leavest all that is and 'hath been comfortable to thee in this World: 'thy House shall know thee no more, *Job* 7. 10. 'thy Lands, thy Money, thy Trade, which have 'cost thee so many careful Thoughts, and yield-'ed thee so many Refreshments, shall be thine 'no longer; Death will strip thee out of all these, 'and leave thee naked.

'Thou hast also, since thou becamest mine, 'contracted manifold Relations in the World, 'which I know are dear unto thee, I know it by 'costly Experience. How hast thou made me to 'wear and waste my self in Labours, Cares, and 'Watchings for them? But if thou wilt be gone, 'all these must be left exposed, God knows to 'what Wants, Abuses, and Miseries! for I can do 'nothing for them or my self, if once thou leave 'me. Thus it charms and pleads; thus it lay-eth, as it were, violent Hands upon the Soul, and saith, 'Oh my Soul! thou shalt not depart. It hangs about it much as the Wife and Children of good *Galeacius Carracciolus* did about him, when he was leaving *Italy* to go to *Geneva* (a lively Emblem of the Case before us.) It saith to the Soul, as *Joab* did to *David*, *Thou hast shamed my Face this Day, in that thou lovest thine Enemy*, Death, *and hatest me thy Friend.* 'Oh my Soul! my Life! my 'Darling! my dear and only One! let nothing 'but unavoidable Necessity part Thee and Me. All this the Flesh can plead, and a great deal more than this, and that a thousand times more powerfully and feelingly than any Words can plead the Case. And all its Arguments are back'd by Sense: Sight and Feeling attest what Nature speaks.

2. *The Pleas of Faith in behalf of Death.*

Let us in the next Place weigh the Pleas and Reasons, which, notwithstanding all this, do overpower and prevail with the believing Soul to be gone, and quit its own Body, and return no more to the Elementary World.

And thus the Power of Faith and Love enable it to reply:

'My dear Body, the Companion and Partner 'of my Comforts and Troubles in the Days of my 'Pilgrimage on Earth, great is my Love, and 'strong are the Bonds of my Affections to thee. 'Thou hast been tenderly, yea, excessively be-'loved by me; my Cares and Fears for thee, 'have been unexpressible, and nothing but the 'love of Jesus Christ is strong enough to gain my 'Consent to part with thee; thy Interest in my 'Affection is great; but as great as it is, and as 'much as I prize thee, I can shake thee off, and 'thrust thee aside to go to Christ.

'Nor may this seem absurd or unreasonable, 'considering that God never designed thee for a *Mansion*, but only a temporary *Tabernacle* to me: 'tis true, I have had some Comfort during my 'abode in thee; but I enjoyed those Comforts 'only *in* thee, not *from* thee; and many more I 'might have enjoyed, hadst thou not been a Snare 'and a Clog to me.

'Tis thou that hast eaten up my Time, and 'distracted my Thoughts, ensnared my Affections, and drawn me under much Sin and Sorrow. 'However, tho' we may weep over each other as 'Accessaries to the Sins and Miseries we have drawn 'upon our selves, yet in this is our joint Relief, 'that the Blood of Christ hath cleansed us both 'from all Sin.

'And therefore I can part the more easily and 'comfortably from thee, because I part in Hope 'to receive and enjoy thee in a far better Condi-'tion than I leave thee. It is for both our Interests to part for a time: For mine, because I 'shall thereby be freed and delivered from Sin 'and Sorrow, and immediately obtain Rest with 'God, and the Satisfaction of all my Desires in 'his Presence and Enjoyment, which there is no 'other way to obtain, but by Separation from 'thee: and why should I live a groaning, bur-'dened, restless Life always, to gratifie thy fond 'and irrational Desires? If thou lovedst me, thou 'wouldst rejoice, and not repine at my Happiness. 'Parents willingly part with their Children at the 'greatest distance for their Preferment, how 'dearly soever they love them; and dost thou 'envy or repine at mine? I lived many Months 'suffocating obscure Life with thee in the Womb, 'and neither thou nor I had ever tasted or expe-'rienced the Comforts of this World, and the various

'various Delights of Sense, if we had not cast 'the *Secundine*, and struggled hard for an Entrance 'into this World. And now we are here, alas! 'tho' thou art contented to abide, I live in thee, 'but as we both lived in the Womb, an obscure, 'uneasie, and unsutable Life. Thou canst feed 'upon material Bread, and delight thy self amidst 'the variety of sensitive Objects thou findest here: 'But what are all these things to me? I cannot 'subsist by them; that which is Food to thee, is 'but Chaff, Wind, and Vanity to me. If I stay 'with thee, I shall be still sinning, and still 'groaning: when I leave thee, I shall be imme-'diately freed from both, and arrive at the 'sum and perfection of all my Hopes, Desires, 'and whatsoever I have aimed at, and laboured 'for' in all the Duties of my Life. Let us there-'fore be content to part.

'Shrink not at the horror of a Grave: 'tis in-'deed a dark and solitary House, and the days of 'darkness may be many: but to thee, my dear 'Companion, it shall be a bed of rest; yea, a 'perfumed bed, where thy Lord Jesus lay before 'thee. And let the time of thy abode there be ne-'ver so long, thou shalt not measure it, nor find 'the least tediousness in it. A thousand years 'there shall seem no more in the morning of the 'Resurrection, than the sweetest Nap of an hour 'long seemed to be, when I was wont to lay thee 'upon thy bed to rest.

'The Worms in the Grave shall be nothing to 'thee, nor give thee the thousandth part of that 'trouble that a Flea was wont to do. And tho' I 'leave thee, Jesus Christ shall watch in the mean 'time over thy Dust, and not suffer a grain of it 'to be lost. And I will return assuredly to thee 'again at the time appointed: I take not an ever-'lasting farewel of thee, but depart for a time, 'that I may receive thee for ever. To conclude, 'there is an unavoidable necessity of our parting; 'whether willing or unwilling, we must be sepa-'rated: but the consent of my Will to part with 'thee for the enjoyment of Jesus Christ, will be 'highly acceptable to God, and as a lump of Su-'gar to sweeten the bitter Cup of Death to us 'both.

This, and much more, the gracious Soul hath to say for its separation from the Body, by which it is easie to discern where the gain and advantage of Death lies to all Believers; and consequently how much it must be every way their Interest to be unbodied.

Arg. II. To be weary of the Body upon the pure account and reason of our hatred to sin, and long-ing desires after Jesus Christ, argues strongly Grace in Truth and Grace in Strength: it is both the *Test* of our sincerity, and *Measure* of our attainment and *maturity* of Grace and upon both accounts highly covetable by all the People of God.

It is so great an evidence of the Truth of Grace, that the Scriptures have made it the *descriptive Peri-phrasis* of a Christian: So we find it in 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. the Crown of Life is there promised to all them that love the appearance of Christ; *i. e.* those that love to think of it, that delight to steep their thoughts in subjects belonging to the other World, and cast many a yearning look that way: and, 2 *Pet.* 3. 12. they are described to be such as are *looking for, and hasting to the coming of the day of God.* Their earnest expectations and longings do not only put them upon making all the haste they can to be with Christ, but it makes the interposing time seem so tedious and slow, that with their most vehement wishes and desires, they do what they can to accelerate and hasten it, as Rev. 22. *Come Lord Jesus, come quickly.* Lovers hours, saith the *Proverb*, are full of Eternity. 'Oh, said Mr. *Rutherford*, 'that Christ would make long strides! Oh that 'he would fold up the Heavens as an old Cloak, 'and shovel time and days out of the way! Such desires as these can spring from none but gracious and renewed Souls: for Nature is wholly disaffect-ed to a removal hence upon such motives and con-siderations as these. If others wish at any time for Death, 'tis but in a pet, a present passion provoked by some intolerable anguish, or great distress of Nature. But to look, and long, and hasten to the other World, out of a weariness of sin and a hear-ty willingness to be with Christ, supposes necessa-rily a deep-rooted hatred of sin, abhorring it more than Death it self, the greatest of natural evils; and a real sight of things invisible by the Eye of Faith, without which it is impossible any man's heart should be thus fram'd and temper'd.

And as it evidenceth the truth, so also the strength and maturity of Grace: For, alas! how many thousands of gracious Souls that love the Lord Jesus in sincerity, are to be found quite be-low this temper of mind! Oh! 'tis but here and there one among the Lord's own people that have reached this height and eminence of Faith and Love. It is with the Fruits of the Spirit just as it is with the Fruits of the Earth; some are green and raw, and others are ripe and mellow: the first stick fast on the Branches, you may sha ke and shake again, and not one will drop; or as those Fruits that grow in the Hedges, with their Coats and Integuments enwrapping them, as *Nuts*, &c. you may try your strength upon them, and sooner break your Nails than disclose and separate them, so fast and close do their husks stick to them: but when time and the influences of Heaven have ripen'd and brought them to their perfection, the *Apples* drop into your Hands without the least touch, and the *Nut* falls out of its Case of its own accord: So, much more so, doth the Soul part from its Body when ma-turated, and come to its Strength and Vigour.

Arg. III. It may greatly prevail upon the Will and Resolution of a Believer, to adventure boldly and chearfully upon Death, that our Bodies, of which we are bereaved and deprived by Death, shall be most certainly and advantageously re-stored to us by the Resurrection. The Resurre-ction of the Dead is the Encouragement and Con-solation of the Dying. The more our Faith is establish'd in the Doctrine of the Resurrection, the more we shall surmount the Fears of Dis-solution. If *Paul* urged it as an Argument to re-concile *Philemon* to his Servant *Onesimus*, v. 15. *That he therefore departed for a Season, that* Philemon *might receive him for ever*; the same Argument may reconcile every Believer to Death, and take off the prejudice of the Soul against it. You shall surely receive your Bodies again, and enjoy them for ever.

Now the Doctrine of the Resurrection is as sure in it self, as it is comfortable to us; the depth and strength of its Foundation fully answers to the height and sweetness of its Consolation. Be pleased to try the two Pillars thereof, and see which of them may be doubted or shaken, *Matth.* 22. 29. *You err* (saith Christ to the *Sadducees*, who de-nied this Doctrine) *not knowing the Scriptures, and the*

the Power of God. This is the ground and root of their Error, not knowing the Scriptures, and the Power of God: *q d.* did you know and believe the Scriptures of God, and the Power of God, you would never question this Doctrine of the Resurrection, which is built upon them both. The *Power* of God convinceth all Men that know and believe it, that it *may be so*, and the *Scriptures* of God convince all that know and believe them, that it *must be so.* As for his Power, who can doubt it? At the Command and *Fiat* of God, the Earth brought forth every living Creature after his kind, *Gen.* 1. 24, 25. at his Command *Lazarus* came forth, *John* 11. 43. And was there not as much difficulty in either of these, as in our Resurrection? By this Power our Souls were quickened and raised from the Death of Sin and Guilt, to the Spiritual Life of Christ, *Eph.* 1. 19. And is it not as easie to raise a dead Body as a dead Soul? But what stand I arguing in so plain a Case, when we are assured this mighty Power is able to subdue all things to it self? *Phil.* 3. 21.

And then, for his Promise that it shall be so, what can be plainer? See 1 *Thess.* 4. 15, 16. *This we say unto you by the Word of the Lord*, &c. (*i. e.*) in the Name or Authority of the Lord, and by Commission and Warrant from him. He first opens his Commission, shews his Credentials, and then publishes the comfortable Doctrine of the Resurrection, and the Saints Preheminence to all others therein.

Well then, what remains in Death to fright and scare a Believer? Is it our parting with these Bodies? Why, it is not for ever that we part with them; as sure as the Power and Promises of God are true, firm, and sufficient to accomplish it, we shall see and enjoy them again. This comforted *Job*, chap. 19. 25, 26. over all his Diseases, when of all his Enjoyments that once he had, he could not say, My Friends, my Children, my Estate; yet then he could say, My *Redeemer.* When he looked upon a poor, wasted, withered, loathsom Body of his own, and saw nothing but a Skeleton, an Image of Death, yet then could he see it a glorious Body, by viewing it believingly in this Glass of the Resurrection. So then all the Damage we can receive by Death, is but the absence of our Bodies for a Time; during which Time the Covenant-relation betwixt God and them holds good and firm, *Matth.* 22. 32. He therefore will take care of them, and in due Time restore them with marvellous Improvements and Endowments to us again, divested of all their Infirmities, and cloathed with Heavenly Qualities and Perfections, 1 *Cor.* 15. 43, 44. And in the mean Time the Soul attains its Rest, and Happiness, and Satisfaction in the blessed God.

Arg. IV. The Consideration of what we part from, and what we go to, should make the *Medium* by which we pass from so much Evil to so great Good, lovely and desirable in our Eyes, how unpleasing or bitter soever it be in it self.

No Man desires *Physick* for it self. There is no Pleasure in bitter Pills and loathsom Potions, except what rises from the End, *viz.* the disburdening of Nature, and recovery of Health; and this gives it a value with the Sick and Pained. Under a like Consideration is Death desired by sick and pained Souls, who find it better to Die once, than Groan under Burdens continually.

Death certainly is the best *Physician* next and under Jesus Christ, that ever was employed about them; for it Cures radically and perfectly, so that the Soul never relapses more into any Distemper. Other Medicines are but *Anodynes*, or at best they relieve us but in Part, and for a Time; but this goes through the Work, and perfects the Cure at once. Methinks that Call of Christ which he gives his Spouse in *Can.* 4. 8. (*Come with me from* Lebanon, (*my Spouse*) *with me from* Lebanon: *and look from the top of* Amana, *from the top of* Shenir *and* Hermon, *from the Lions Dens, from the Mountains of Leopards*) scarce suites any Time so well as the Time of Death. Then it is that we depart from the *Lions Dens*, and the Mountains of *Leopards*, Places uncomfortable and unsafe. More particularly at Death the Saints depart,

1. From Defiling Corruptions		1. Perfect Purity.
2. From Heart-sinking Sorrows		2. Fulness of Joy.
3. From entangling Temptations	to	3. Everlasting Freedom
4. From distressing Persecutions		4. Full Rest.
5. From pinching Wants		5. Universal Supplies.
6. From distracting Fears		6. Highest Security.
7. From deluding Shadows		7. Substantial Good.

1. From defiling Corruptions into perfect Purity. No Sin hangs about the *separated*, tho' it do about the *sanctified* Soul. They come out of the Body suitable to that Character and Encomium, *Cant.* 4. 7. *Thou art all fair, my Love, there is no spot in thee.* It doth that for the Saints, which all their Graces and Duties, all their Mercies and Afflictions, could never do. Faith is a great Purifier, Communion with God a great Cleanser, sanctified Afflictions a Refiner's Fire and Fuller's Soap; these have all done their Parts, and been useful in their Places: But none of them, nor all together, perfected this Cure till Death come, and then the Work is done, and the Cure perfected.

All Weeping, all Praying, all Believing, all Hearing, all Sacraments, all the Means and Instruments in the World, cannot do what Death will do for thee. One dying Hour will do what Ten thousand praying Hours never did, nor could do. In this Hour the Design of all those Hours is accomplished; as he that is dead by Mortification is at present Freedom from Sin in respect of Imputation and Dominion, *Rom.* 6. 7. so he that is justified and mortified, when dead naturally, is immediately freed from the very indwelling and existence of Sin in him. We read of the washing of the Robes of the Saints, in *Revel.* 7. 14. The Blood of the Lamb cleanseth them from every Spot; but it doth it gradually. The last Spot of Guilt indeed was fetch'd out by one Act of Justification; but the last Spot of Faith is not fetched out till the Time of their Dissolution; when they are come out of the Agonies of Death (which the Scripture calls *great Tribulation*) then, and not till then, are they perfectly cleansed. Sin brought in Death, and Death carries out Sin.

Oh! what a pure, lovely, shining Creature, is the separated Spirit of a just Man! how clear is its Judgment, how ordinate its Will, how holy and altogether heavenly are all its Affections now! and never till now it feels it self perfectly well, and as it would be.

2. From Heart-sinking Sorrows into Fulness of Joy. The Life we now live is a groaning Life, 2 *Cor.* 5. 2. where is the Christian, that if his inside could be seen, and his Heart laid naked, would not be found Wounded from many Hands? from the Hand of God, of Enemies, of Friends, of Satan; but especially by the Hands of its own Corruptions? Christ our Head was stiled a *Man of Sorrows,*

Sorrows, from the multitude of his Sorrows; and it is the Lot of all his to be in a State of Sorrow in the Body. *In the World* (saith he) *you shall have Trouble.* When I consider how oft the Candle of Sorrow is held to the Thread of Life, I justly wonder how it is protracted to such a length. What Friend, what Enjoyment had we ever in this World, from which no Sorrow, nay, many Sorrows have not sprung up to us? And if the best Comforts bring forth Sorrows, what do the worst Things we meet here bring forth? I suppose there are many Thousands of God's People this Day in the World, that have as much Reason to assume the same new Name that *Naomi* did, and say, Call me *Marah*. Look as Day and Night divide all Time betwixt them; so do our Comforts and our Sorrows, only with this Difference, that our Nights of Sorrow, like Winter-Nights, are long, cold, and dark; and our Days of Comfort short, and frequently over-cast.

But when we put off these Bodies, we put off our mourning Garments with them, and shall never Sorrow any more: Thenceforth God wipes away all Tears from his Peoples Eyes, *Rev.* 2. 4. And that is not all, but they enter into their Master's Joy, even Fulness of Joy and Pleasures for evermore. Groans are turned into Triumphs, and Sighs and Tears into joyful Acclamations and Songs of Praise. Oh that we were once made sensible throughly of the Advantages that come by this Exchange!

3. From entangling Temptations into everlasting Freedom. 'Tis this Body, and the Interests and Concerns of it, upon which Satan raises most of his Batteries against our Souls: 'Tis our Flesh that causeth our Souls to Sin; and whilst the Soul dwells in the Body, it is within Satan's reach to tempt, and defile, and trouble it. Oh what grievous Things do the best Souls endure and suffer on this Account!

Temptations are of two Sorts; ordinary and mediate, by Satan's exciting and managing our Corruptions, by presenting Objects to them; or extraordinary and immediate, like fiery Darts shot immediately out of Hell into the Soul, which puts it all into a Flame and Combustion: Of the former you read in *Ja.* 1. 14. the latter in *Eph.* 6. 16. and upon the account of the one and other, the People of God are weary of their Lives. Think what a Grief it must be to a Soul that loves God, to feel in it self such Things as militate against and wound the Name and Honour of God, which is, and ought to be dearer to it than its Life.

But by the Door of Death every gracious Soul makes its escape from the tempting Power of Satan: He can no more touch or affect the Soul with any Temptation, than we can batter the Body of the Sun with Snow-balls: For as Satan can have no access to that Place of Blessedness where the Souls of the Saints are; so if he could, he can find nothing in them to fasten a Temptation upon. The *School-men* give this as the Reason why the Saints in Heaven are impeccable, because all their Thoughts and Affections are everlastingly fixed in, and employed about the Blessed God, whose Face they continually behold in Glory.

4. From distressing Persecutions into full and perfect Rest. As Death sets us free from the Power of Satan, so from the reach of all Persecutors; *There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at Rest*, as it is in *Job* 3. 17. The price of one *Ahab*, who had sold himself to work Wickedness, was a Stock sufficient to purchase many Years trouble to all *Israel*, 1 Kings 18 17. *Wicked Men are as the unquiet troubled Sea which cannot rest*, Isa 57. 20. They cannot rest from troubling the Saints, till they cease to be wicked or to live: When God puts out the Candle of their Lives, they are silent in darkness, 1 *Sam.* 2. 9. And when God puts out the Candle of our Life, we are at rest, tho' they rage never so much in this World. Death is the Saints *quietus est*, their full and final Discharge from persecuting Enemies. When we are dying, we may say, as *Psal.* 9. 6. *O thou Enemy, Destructions are come to a perpetual End.*

God may put an end to these Persecutions before Death, and such a Time according to Promise is to be expected, *when our Officers shall be Peace, and our Exactor Righteousness*, Isa. 60. 17. but if the accomplishment of the Promise be reserved for Ages to come, and we must spend our Days under the Oppression of the Wicked; yet this is our Comfort, we know when we shall be far enough out of their reach.

5. From pinching Wants to universal Supplies. This is the Day in which the Lord abundantly satisfies the Desires, and supplies the Needs of all his People. There are two Sorts of Wants upon the People of God: *Spiritual* and *Temporal.*

Spiritual Wants are the just Complaints of all gracious Souls. You read, 1 *Thess.* 3. 10. of that which is lacking in the Faith of the Saints: There are none but find many Things lacking to the Perfection of every Grace. Our *Knowledge* of God wants *Clearness* and *Efficacy*; our *Love* to God *Fervour* and *Constancy*; our *Faith* wants *Strength* and *Stability*: Darkness mixes it self with our Knowledge, Deadness with our Love, Unbelief with the purest Acts of Faith. Go where you will, you shall find God's People every where complaining of their Spiritual Wants: one of a dark Head, another of a dead Heart, another of a treacherous Memory. Thus they are loading one another with their Complaints.

Temporal, outward Wants pinch hard also upon many of God's People: The greatest number of them consist of the Poor of this World, *Jam.* 2. 5. Those whose Souls are discharged and acquitted by God, whose Debts are paid by Jesus Christ, may yet be intangled in a brake of Cares and Troubles in the World, and know not which way to turn themselves in their Straits and Difficulties. But by Death the Saints pass from all their Wants inward and outward to a State of complete Satisfaction, where nothing is lacking: From that Day all their Spiritual Wants are Supplied; for they are now arrived to *the Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ, to a perfect Man*, Eph. 4. 13. Now *that which is perfect is come, and all that was in part is done away*, 1 Cor. 13. 10.

And for outward Wants, they shall feel them no more: For putting off the Body, we must needs put off all Cares and Concerns about it. *Meats for the Belly, and the Belly for Meats, God shall destroy both it and them*, 1 Cor. 6. 13.

6. From distracting Fears into the highest Security and Rest of Thoughts for evermore. The Fears of God's People are either about their Souls, or about their Bodies; the Fears they have about their Souls are inexpressible. Two Things especially exercise their Fears about their Souls. (1.) Whether they be really united to Christ? (2.) Whether they shall be able to continue and persevere

severe in the ways of Christ to the End? they are afraid of their *Sincerity* and of their *stability*: And these Fears accompany many of God's People from their Regeneration to their Dissolution. O what would they not give, what would they not do, yea, what would they not endure to get full Satisfaction in those Things! Every working of Corruption, every discovery made by Temptation, puts them into a fright, and makes them question all that ever was wrought in them.

And as their Fears are great about the inward, so also about the outward Man; especially when such bloody Preparations seem to be making by the Enemies that have acted such, and so many bloody Tragedies already in the World.

But at Death they enter into a perfect Peace and Security, *Isa.* 57. 2. No wind of fear shall ever ruffle and disturb their Souls, and put them into a Storm any more.

7. From deluding Shadows into substantial Good. This World is the World of Shadows, and delusive Appearances. Here we are imposed upon and baffled by empty and deceitful Vanities. All we have here, is little else but a Dream: At Death the Soul awakes out of its Dream, and finds it self in the World of Realities, where it feeds upon substantial good to Satisfaction, *Psal.* 17. 15.

Now the Advantages accruing to the Soul by Death, being so great, and many; tho' the *Medium* be harsh and ungrateful in it self, yet there is all the Reason in the World we should covet it for the Benefits that come by it.

Arg. V. The foretastes we have had of Heaven already in the Body, should make all the Saints long to be unbodied for the full and perfect Fruition of that Joy; seeing it cannot be fully and perfectly enjoyed by the Soul, till it hath put off the Body by Death.

That there are Prelibations, First-fruits, and Earnests of future Glory given at certain Seasons to Believers in this Life, is put beyond all Doubting, not only by Scripture-testimonies, but frequent Experiences of God's People. I speak not only with the Scriptures, but with the clear Experience of many Saints; when I say, here are to be felt and tasted, even here in the Body, the Earnests of our Inheritance, *Eph.* 1. 14. *The First-fruits of the Spirit*, Rom. 8. 23. *The sealing of the Spirit*, Eph. 1. 13. *The very Joy of the Lord*, 1 Pet. 1. 8. of the same kind, tho' in a remisser degree, with that of the Glorified.

That the fulness of this Joy cannot be in us whilst we Tabernacle in Bodies of Flesh, is as plain. When *Moses* desired a sight of that Face which the Spirits of just Men made perfect do continually behold and adore, the Answer was, *No Man can see my Face and live*, Exod. 33. 18, 19. 20. *q. d. Moses*, thou askest a great Thing, and understandest not how unable thou art to support that which thou desirest: Should I shew thee my Glory in this compounded State thou now art, it would confound thee, and swallow thee up. Nature, as now constituted, cannot support such a weight of Glory: A Ray, a glimpse of this Light overpowers Man, and breaks such a Clay Vessel to pieces; which is the Reason why the Resurrection must intervene betwixt this State, and that of the Body's Glorification.

And it is not to be doubted, but one main End and Reason why these foretastes of Heaven are given us in the Body, is to embolden the Soul to venture through Death it self for the full Enjoyment of those Delights and Pleasures. They are like the Grapes of *Eshcol* to the faint-hearted *Israelites*; or the sweet Wines of *Italy* to the Gauls, which once tasted, made them restless till they had conquer'd that good Country where they grow. Rom. 8. 23. *We which have the First-fruits of the Spirit, even we our selves do groan within our selves, waiting for the Adoption*, viz. *the Redemption of our Bodies.*

Well then, reflect seriously upon those sweet tastes that you have had of God and his Love in your sincere and secret Addresses to him, and Converses with him. What a holy forgetfulness of all Things in this World hath it wrought! How insipid and tasteless hath it rendered the sweetest Creature-enjoyments! What willingness to be dissolved for a more full Fruition of it! God this way brings Heaven nigh to your Souls, out of Design to overcome your Reluctancies at Death, through which you must pass to the Enjoyment of it. And after all those sights and tastes both of the Truth and Goodness of that State, shall we still reluctate and hang back, as if we had never tasted how good the Lord is! O you may justly question, whether you ever had a real taste of Jesus Christ, if that taste do not kindle Coals of Fire in your Bosoms, I mean ardent longings to be with him, and to be satiated with his Love.

If you have been privileged with a taste of that hidden *Manna*, with the sight of Things invisible, with Joys unspeakable and full of Glory, and yet are loth to be gone to the Fountain whence also this flows; certainly you herein both cross the Design of the Spirit in giving them, and cast a vile disgrace and reproach upon the blessed God, as thinking there is more bitterness in Death, than there is sweetness in his Presence. Yea, it argues the Strength of that Unbelief which still remains in your Hearts, that after so many tastes, and trials as you have had, you still remain doubtful and hesitating about the certainty and reality of Things invisible.

O what ado hath God with his froward and peevish Children! If he had only revealed the future State to us in his Word, as the pure Object of Faith, and required us to die upon the meer credit of his Promise, without such Pawns, Pledges, and Earnests as these are; were there not Reason enough for it? But after such, and so many wonderful and amazing Condescensions, wherein he doth as it were say, Soul, if yet thou doubtest, I will bring Heaven to thee, thou shall have it in thy own Hand, thy Eyes shall see it, thy Hands shall handle it, thy Mouth shall taste it; how inexcusable is our Reluctancy?

Arg. VI. *It should greatly fortify the People of God against the Fears of Dissolution, to consider that Death can neither destroy the Being of their Souls by Annihilation, nor the Hopes and Expectations they have of Blessedness by disappointment and frustration*, Prov. 14. 32. *The Righteous hath hope in his Death.* Tho' all Earthly Things fail at Death (upon which account dying is expressed by failing, *Luke* 16. 19.) yet neither the Soul, nor the well-grounded Hope can fail. The *Anchor* of a Believer's Hope is firm and sure, *Heb.* 6. 18. It will not come home in the greatest Storm that can beat upon the Soul. For (1.) God hath foreknown and chosen them to Salvation before the World was, 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. *And this Foundation of God standeth sure, having this Seal, the Lord knoweth who are his*, 2 Tim. 2. 19. His

His Decrees are as firm as Mountains of Brass, *Zech.* 6. 1. (2.) God hath justified their Persons, and therein destroyed the Power of Death over them, 1 *Cor.* 15. 55, 56, 57 *O Death where is thy Sting? O Grave where is thy Victory? The Sting of Death is Sin, the strength of Sin is the Law.* If all the hurtful Power of Death lies in Sin, and all the destructive Power of Sin rises from the Law; then neither Death nor Sin have any Power to destroy the Believer, in whom the Righteousness of the Law is fulfilled, *Rom* 8. 4. namely, by the imputation of the Righteousness of Christ to them, in respect of which they are as righteous, as if in their own Persons they had perfectly obeyed all its Commands, or suffered all its Penalties. Thus Death loseth its Sting, its Curse, and killing Power over the Souls of all that are in Christ. (3.) God hath sanctified their Natures, which Sanctification is not only a sure Evidence of their *Election* and *Justification*, 2 Thess. 1. 5, 6. Rom 8. 1. but a sure Pledge of their *Glorification* also, 2 *Cor.* 5. 4, 5. Yea, (4.) He hath made a sure and an everlasting Covenant with Believers, and among other gracious Privileges thereby conferred upon them, Death is found in the *Inventory*, 1 Cor. 13. 21 *Death is yours*; to die is Gain to them: it destroys their Enemies, and the distance that is betwixt Christ and them. (5.) He hath sealed them to this Glory by the Holy Spirit, *Eph.* 4. 30. So that their Hopes are too firmly built to be destroyed by Death; and if it cannot destroy their Souls, nor overthrow their Hopes, they need not fear all that it can do besides.

Arg. VII: *It may greatly encourage and embolden the People of God to die, considering that tho' at Death they take the last Sight and View of all that is dear to them on Earth; yet then they are admitted to the first immediate sight and blessed Vision of God, which will be their Happiness to all Eternity.*

When *Hezekiah* was upon his supposed Death-bed, he complained, *Isa.* 38. 11. *I shall see Man no more with the Inhabitants of the World.* We shall see thenceforth these Corporeal People no more. We shall see our Habitations and Dwelling-Places no more. *Job* 7. 9, 10, 11. We shall see our Children and dear Relations no more, *Job* 14. 21. *His Sons come to Honour, and he knoweth it not.* These things make Death terrible to Men; but that which cures all this trouble is, that we shall neither need, nor desire them, being thenceforth admitted to the beatifical Vision of the blessed God himself.

It is the Expectation and Hope of this, which comforteth the Souls of the Righteous here, *Psal.* 17. 15. *When I awake, I shall behold thy Face in Righteousness.* Those weak and dim Representations made by Faith at a distance are the very joy and rejoicing of a Believer's Soul now, 1 *Pet.* 1. 7, 8. but how sweet and transporting soever these Visions of Faith be, they are not worthy to be named in comparison with the immediate and beatifical Vision, 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. This is the very sum of a Believer's Blessedness: And what it is we cannot comprehend in this imperfect State only in general, we may gather these Conclusions about it, from the account given of it in the Scriptures.

Lumen gloriæ est actualis illustratio, (*i. e.*) influxus Dei supernaturalis elevans intellectum ad visionem essentiæ divinæ. *Smiffing Tract.* 2. *Dis.* 6. N. 33.

1. That it will not be such a sight of God as we now have by the mediation of Faith, but a direct, immediate and intuitive Vision of God, 1 Joh. 3. 2. *We shall see him as he is*, 1 Cor. 13. 12. *Then Face to Face.* Which far transcends the Vision of Faith, in clearness and in comfort. This seems to import no less than the very sight of the Divine Essence, that which *Moses* desired on Earth to see, but could not, *Ex.* 33. 20. nor can be seen by any Man dwelling in a Body, 1 *Tim.* 6. 16. nor by unbodied Souls comprehensively, so God only sees himself: Our Eyes see the Sun, which they cannot comprehend, yet truly apprehend. God will then be known in his Essence, and in the glory of all his Attributes: This sight of the Attributes of God gives the Occasion and Matter of those Ascriptions of Praise and Glory to him, which is the proper Employment of glorified Souls, *Rev.* 4. 11. and 5. 12, 13. which is the proper Employment of Angels, *Isa.* 6. 3. Oh how different is this from what we now have through Faith, Duties, and Ordinances! See the difference betwixt Knowledge by Reports, and immediate Sight, in that Example of the *Queen of the South*, 1 Kings 10. 5. the former only excited her Desires, the latter transported and wrapt her very Soul.

Some may think such a Vision of God to exceed the Abilities of Nature, and Capacities of any Creature. But, as a learned Man rightly observes, if the Divine Nature be capable of Union with a Creature, as it's evident in the Person of Christ, it is also capable of being the Object of Vision to the Creature. Beside, we must know the light of Glory hath the same respect to this blessed Vision, that assisting Grace hath to the Acts of Faith and Obedience performed here on Earth. It is a comforting, Soul-strengthening Light, not to dazle and over-power, but comfort, strengthen and clear the Eye of the Creature's Understanding: Rev. 2. 28. *I will give him the Morning Star, Lumen confortans*; and *Psal.* 36. 9. *In thy Light we shall see Light.* Norton's *Orthodox Evang.* p. 329.

2. It will be a *satisfying* Sight, *Ps.* 17. 15. so perfectly quieting and giving rest to the Soul in all its Powers, that they neither can proceed, nor desire to proceed any farther. The Understanding can know no more, the Will can will no more; the Affections of Joy, Delight and Love are at full rest and quiet in their proper Centre. For all good is in the chiefest Good eminently; as all the light of the Candles in the World is in the Sun, and all the Rivers in the World in the Sea. That which makes the Understanding, Will, and Affections move farther, as being restless, and unsatisfied in all Discoveries and Enjoyments here, is the limited and imperfect Nature of Things we now converse with; as if you bring a great Ship that draws much Water into a narrow and shallow River, she can neither sail nor swim, but is presently aground: But let that Ship have Sea-room enough, then she can turn and sail before the Wind, because there is depth of Water, and room enough: So 'tis here; all that delighted, but could never satisfie you in the Creature, is eminently in God; and what was imperfectly in them, is perfectly to be enjoyed in Him, 1 *Cor.* 15. 28. *God shall be all in all*; the Comforts you had here were but drop by drop, inflaming, not satisfying the Appetite of the Soul: But then *the Lamb which is in the midst of the Throne shall feed them, and lead them unto Fountains of living Water*, Rev. 7. 17. The Object fills the Faculties.

3. It will be an *appropriating* Vision of God; you shall see him as your own God, and proper Portion;

tion; elſe it could never be a ſatisfying Viſion, *Job* 19. 27. *Whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf!* Not look on him as another's God, but as my God and Portion for ever. *Balaam* ſaw Chriſt by a Spirit of Prophecy; but he had no Comfort, becauſe no Intereſt in him, *Numb.* 24. 17. The Wicked ſhall ſee him, but without Joy, yea, with weeping Eyes, and gnaſhing of Teeth, because they cannot ſee him as their Lord, *Luke* 13. 28. 'Tis but a poor Comfort to ſtarving Beggars to ſtand quivering and famiſhing in the Streets in a cold dark Night, and ſee the Lights in the Bridegroom's Houſe, the noble Diſhes ſerved in, and to hear the Muſick and Mirth of the Gueſts that feaſt within. Here it will be as clear that he is *our God*, as that he is *God*. Aſſurance is that which many Souls have deſired, prayed, and panted for, but cannot attain. There be many rubs and ſtumbling-blocks in the way to that ſweet Enjoyment; but here we find what we have been ſo long ſeeking: There be no doubts, ſcruples, objections, puzling Caſes, to exerciſe your own, or others Thoughts. But as theſe did ariſe from one of theſe Grounds, *viz.* the working of Corruption, the efficacy of Temptation, or divine withdrawments, and the hidings of God's Face: So all theſe being removed perfectly and for ever in that State, the Heavens muſt needs be clear, and not a cloud of Doubt or Fear to be ſeen for ever.

4. It will be a *deeply affecting* Sight; your Eyes will now ſo affect your Hearts, as they were never affected before. The firſt view of God will ſnatch away your Hearts to him, as a greater Flame doth the leſs. Love will not now diſtill from the Heart as Waters from a *cold Still*, but guſh out as from a Sluce or Flood-gate pulled up. The Soul will not move after God ſo deadly and ſlowly as it doth now, but be as the Chariots of *Aminadab*, *Cant.* 6. 12. We may ſay of the Frames of our Hearts there, compared with what they are here, as it is ſaid, *Deut.* 12. 8, 9. *You ſhall not love*, or delight in, *God as you do this Day*. If the perfection of that State would admit Shame or Sorrow, how ſhould we bluſh and mourn in Heaven to think how cold our Love, and how low our Delights in God were on Earth! 1 John 4. 16. *God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God.* Look as Iron put into the Fire becomes all fiery, ſo the Soul dwelling in the God of Love, becomes all Love, all Delight, all Joy. Oh what Tranſports muſt that Soul feel, that abides under the Line of Love! feels the perpendicular Beams of electing, creating, redeeming, preſerving Love, beating powerfully upon it, and melting it into Love! See ſome of their Tranſports, *Rev.* 5. 13, 14.

5. It will be an *everlaſting Viſion of God*, 1 Theſ. 4. 17. *So ſhall we be ever with the Lord*, [ever with the Lord.] Who can find Words to open the deep Senſe of theſe few Words? *Vacabimus & videbimus, videbimus & amabimus, amabimus & laudabimus in ſine ſine ſine*, ſaith bleſſed *Auſtin*. This is the everlaſting Sabbath which hath no Night, *Rev.* 22. 4, 5. The eternal Happineſs purchaſed for the Saints by the invaluable Blood of Chriſt. If one Hour's enjoyment of God in the way of Faith be ſo ſweet, and no Price can be put upon it, nothing on Earth taken in exchange for it; what muſt a whole Eternity in the immediate, and full Viſions of that bleſſed Face in Heaven be!

Well then, if ſuch Sights as theſe immediately ſucceed the Sight you have on Earth, either by Senſe of Things natural, or by Reaſon of Things intellectual, or by Faith of Things ſpiritual, who that believes the Truth, and expects the fulfilling of ſuch Promiſes as theſe, would not be willing to have his Eyes cloſed by Death as ſoon as God ſhall pleaſe? I have read of a holy Man that had ſweet Communion with God in Prayer, who in the cloſe of his Duty cryed out, *Claudimini oculi mei, claudimini*, &c. *Be ſhut, O my Eyes, be ſhut; you ſhall never ſee any Thing on Earth like that I have now ſeen.* Ah! little do the Friends of dead Believers think what Viſions of God, what raviſhing Sights of Chriſt, the Souls of their Friends have, when they are cloſing their Eyes with Tears.

Arg. VIII. *The Conſideration of the evil Days that are to come, ſhould make the People of God willing to accept of a hiding Place in the Grave, as a ſpecial Favour from God.*

It is accounted an Act of Favour by God, *Iſa.* 57. 1, 2. to be taken away from the *evil to come*. There are two Kinds of Evils to come, the Evil of *Sin*, and the evil of *Sufferings*. Sins to come are terrible to gracious Hearts, when Temptations ſhall be at their Height and Strength. Oh what warping and ſhrinking, what diſſembling, yea, downright denying the known Truths and Ways of God, may you ſee every where? Many Conſciences will then be wounded and waſted. Many Scandals and Rocks of Offence will be rolled into the Way of Godlineſs. Chriſt will be expoſed and put to open Shame. Should we only be Spectators of ſuch Tragedies as theſe, it were enough to overwhelm a gracious and tender Heart: but what upright Heart is there without Fears and Jealouſies of being brought under the guilt of theſe Evils in it ſelf, as well as the Shame and Grief for them in others? Oh! it were a thouſand Times better for you to die in the Purity and Integrity of your Conſciences, than to protract a miſerable Life without them. Oh! think what a World it is that you are like to leave behind you in Reſpect of that to come!

And as there are many Evils of Sin to come, ſo there are many Evils of Sufferings coming on: *The Days of Viſitation are come, the Days of Recompence are come, and Iſrael ſhall know it*, Hoſ. 9. 7. All the Sufferings you have yet met with, have been in Books and Hiſtories; you never ſaw the Martyrdom of the Saints, but in the Pictures and Stories; but you will find it quite another Thing to be the *Subjects* of theſe Cruelties, than to be the meer *Readers* or *Relaters* of them. 'Tis one Thing to ſee the painted Lyon on a Sign-poſt, and another to meet the living Lion roaring upon you. Ah! little do we imagine how the Hearts of Men are convuls'd, what Fears, what Faintings invade their Spirits when they are to meet the King of Terrors, in the frightful Formalities of a violent Death.

The Conſideration of theſe Things will diſcover to you the Reaſon of that ſtrange Wiſh of *Job*, chap. 14. 13. *Oh that thou wouldſt hide me in the Grave; that thou wouldſt keep me in ſecret till thy Wrath be paſt!* And it deſerves a ſerious Thought, that when the Holy Ghoſt had, in *Rev.* 14. 9, 10, 11, 12. deſcribed the miſerable Plight of thoſe poor Souls, who being overcome by their own Fears, and the Love of this World, ſhould plunge themſelves firſt into a deep Guilt, by Compliance with

with *Antichrist*, and receiving his Mark; then into a Hell upon Earth, the remorse and horror of their own Consciences, which gives them no rest day nor night; he immediately subjoins, *ver.* 13. *Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; yea, from henceforth, saith the Spirit*, &c. Oh! 'tis a special Blessing and favour to be hid out of the way *of those temptations and torments in a seasonable and quiet grave.*

Arg. IX. *Your fixed aversation and unwillingness to die, will provoke God to imbitter your Lives with much more afflictions than you have yet felt, or would feel, if your hearts were more mortified and weaned in this point.*

You cannot think of your own deaths with pleasure, no nor yet with patience. Well, take heed, lest this draw down such Trouble upon you, as shall make you at last to say with *Job*, chap. 10. 1. *My soul is weary of my Life*; an expression much like that, 2 *Sam.* 1. 9. *Anguish is come upon me, because my life is whole in me.* My Soul is hardned, or become cruel against my life, as the *Chaldee* renders it.

There is a twofold weariness of life; one from an excellency of Spirit, a noble Principle, the ardent love of Jesus Christ, *Phil.* 1. 23. *I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ.* Another from the meer pressures of affliction and anguish of Spirit, under heavy and successive strokes from the hand of God and Men. Is it not more excellent and desirable to groan for Death under a pressure of love *to* Christ, than of afflictions *from* Christ?

I am convinced that very many of our afflictions come upon this score and account, to make us willing to die.

Is it not sad that God is forced to bring Death upon all our comfortable and desirable Things in this World, before he can gain our Consents to be gone? Why will you put God upon such Work as this? Why cannot he have your Hearts at a cheaper Rate? If you could die, many of your Comforts, for ought I know, might live. Had *Joab* come to *Absalom* when he sent for him the first or second Time, *Absalom* had never set his Field of Barley on Fire, 2 *Sam.* 14. 30. And were you more obedient to the Will of God in this Matter, 'tis likely he would not consume your Health, and Estates, and Relations, with such heavy Strokes, as he hath done, and will yet farther do, except your Wills be more compliant.

Alas! to cut off your comforts one after another, and make you live a groaning life, the Lord hath no pleasure in it; but he had rather you should lose these things, than that he should lose your Hearts on Earth, or Company in Heaven: *Impatiens ægrotus crudelem facit Medicum.*

Arg. X. *The Decree of Death cannot be reversed, nor is there any other ordinary Passage for the Soul into Glory, but through the gates of Death.* Heb. 9. 27. *It is appointed for all men once to die, but after that the Judgment.*

There is but one way to pass out of the obscure suffocating Life in the Womb, into the more free and nobler Life in the World, *viz.* through the throes and agonies of Birth: And there is ordinarily but one way to pass from this sinning, groaning Life we live in this World, to the enjoyment of God and the Glory above, *viz.* through the agonies of Death. You must cast, as it were, your *Secundine* once again, I mean this vile Body, before you can be happy. Heaven cannot come down to you, you cannot see God and live, *Exod.* 33. 20. It would certainly confound and break you to pieces like an earthen Pitcher, should God but ray forth his Glory upon you in the state you now are; and it is sure you cannot expect the ordinary favour of such a translation as *Enoch* had, *Heb.* 11. 5, or as those Believers shall have, that shall be found alive at Christ's coming, 1 *Thess.* 4. 17 You must go the common road that all the Saints go; but tho' you cannot avoid, you may sweeten it. God will not reverse his Decree, but you may, and ought to arm your selves against the fears of it. *Ahasuerus* would not recal the Proclamation he had emitted against the *Jews*, but he gave them full liberty to take up arms to defend themselves against their Enemies. 'Tis much so here, the Sentence cannot be revoked; but yet he gives you leave, yea, he commands you to arm your selves against Death, and defy it, and trample it under the feet of Faith.

Arg. XI. *When you find your hearts reluctate at the thoughts of leaving the Body, and the comforts of this World, then consider how willingly and chearfully Jesus Christ left Heaven, and the Bosom of his Father, to come down to this World for your sakes*, Prov. 8. 30, 31. Psal. 40. 7. *Lo, I come*, &c.

O compare the frames of your Hearts with his in this Point, and shame your selves out of so unbecoming a temper of Spirit.

(1.) He left Heaven, and all the Delights and Glory of it, to come down to this World to be abased and humbled to the lowest; you leave this World of sin and misery to ascend to Heaven, to be exalted to the highest. He came hither to be impoverished, you go thither to be enriched, 2 *Cor.* 8. 9 yet he came willingly, and we go grudgingly.

(2.) He came from Heaven to Earth, to be made sin for us, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21 we go from Earth to Heaven, to be fully and everlastingly delivered from sin; yet he came more willingly to bear our sins, than we go to be delivered from them.

(3.) He came to take a Body of Flesh, to suffer and die in, *Heb.* 2. 24. you leave your Bodies that you may never suffer in or by them any more.

(4.) As his Incarnation was a deep abasement, so his Death was the most bitter death that ever was tasted by any from the beginning, or ever shall be to the end of the World; and yet how obediently doth he submit to both at the Father's Call, *Luke* 12. 50. *I have a Baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitned till it be accomplished!* Ah Christian, your Death cannot have the Ten thousandth part of that bitterness in it that Christ's had! I remember one of the Martyrs being asked, why his Heart was so light at death? returned this Answer, Because Christ's Heart was so heavy at his death. O there is a vast difference betwixt one and the other; the Wrath of God, and Curse of the Law were in his death, *Gal* 3. 13. but there is neither Wrath nor Curse in their death who die in the Lord, *Rom.* 8 1.

God forsook him when he hanged upon the Tree in the Agonies of death, *Matth.* 27. 46. *My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?* But you shall not be forsaken; He will make all your Bed in sickness, *Psal.* 41. 3. He will never leave you nor forsake you, *Heb.* 13. 5.

Yet he regretted not, but went as a Sheep or Lamb, *Isa.* 53. 7. O reason your selves out of this Reluctancy at death, by this great Example and Pattern of Obedience.

Arg XII. Lastly, *Let no Christian be affrighted at Death, considering that the death of Christ is the death, of Death, and hath utterly disarmed it of all its destructive Power.*

If you tremble when you look upon Death, yet you cannot but triumph when you look believingly upon Christ.

For, (1.) Christ died (O Believer) for thy sins, *Rom.* 4. 25. his Death was an expiatory Sacrifice for all thy Guilt, *Gal.* 3. 13. so that thou shalt not die in thy Sins: The Pangs of Death may, and must be on thy outward Man, but the guilt of Sin, and the Condemnation of God shall not be upon thy inner Man.

(2.) The Death of Christ in thy room hath utterly destroyed the power of Death, which once was in the hand of Satan, *Heb.* 2. 14. *Col.* 2. 14, 15. his Power was not *authoritative*, but *executive*: Not as the power of a *King*, but of a *Sheriff*; which is none at all when a Pardon is produced.

(3.) Christ hath assured us, That his Victory over Death shall be compleat in our Persons. It is already a compleat personal Victory, in respect of himself, *Rom.* 6. 9. he dieth no more, Death hath no more dominion over him. It's an incompleat Victory already as to our Persons. It can dissolve the Union of our Souls and Bodies, but the Union betwixt Christ and our Souls it can never dissolve, *Rom.* 8. 38, 39. and as for the power it still retains over our Dust, that also shall be destroyed at the Resurrection, 1 *Cor.* 15. 25,26. compared with *ver.* 54, 55, 56, 57. so that there is no cause for any Soul in Christ to tremble at the Thoughts of a separation from the Body, but rather to embrace it as a privilege; *Death is ours.*

O that these Arguments might prevail! O that they might at last win the Consent of our Hearts to go along with Death, which is the *Messenger* sent by God to bring us home to our Father's House!

But I doubt when all is said, we are where we were, all this suffices not to overcome the Regrets and Reluctances of Nature; still the matter sticks in our Minds, and we cannot conquer our disinclined Wills in this matter. What is the matter? Where lie the Rubs and Hindrances? O that God would remove them at last!

Obj. 1. *This is a common Plea with many, I am not ready and fit to die; were I ready, I should be willing to be gone.*

Sol. (1.) How long soever you live in the Body, there will be somewhat still out of order, something still to do: For you must be in a state of imperfection while you remain here, and according to this Plea, you will never be willing to die. (2.) Your willingness to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, is one special part of your fitness for Death: And till you attain it in some good measure, you are not so fit to die as you should be. (3.) If you be in Christ, you have a fundamental fitness for Death, tho' you may want some circumstantial preparatives. And as to all that is wanting in your Sanctification or Obedience now, it will be compleated in a moment upon your dissolution.

Obj 2. *Others plead, the desire they have to live, is in order to God's farther Service by them in this world. Oh, say they, it was* David's *happiness to die, when he had served his generation according to the will of God,* Acts 13. 36. *If we had done so too, we should say with* Simeon, *Now lettest thou thy Servant depart in peace.*

Sol. (1.) God needs not your hands to carry on his Service in the World: he can do it by other hands when you are gone. Many of greater gifts and graces than you are daily laid in the grave to teach you, God needs no man's help to carry on his Work.

(2.) If the Service of God be so dear to you there is higher and more excellent Service for you in Heaven, than any you ever were, or can be employ'd in here on Earth. Oh! why don't you long to be amidst the thick of Angels and Spirits made perfect in the Temple-Service in Heaven?

Obj. 3. *O but my Relations in the world lie near my heart, what will become of them when I am gone?*

Sol. (1.) 'Tis pity they should lie nearer your heart than Jesus Christ: If they do, you have little reason to desire Death indeed.

(2.) Who took care of you, when Death snatch'd your dear Relations from you, who possibly felt the same workings of heart that you now do? Did you not experience the truth of that word, *Psal.* 27. 10. *When Father and Mother forsake me, then the Lord taketh me up?* And if you be in the Covenant, God hath prevented this Plea with his Promise, *Jer.* 49. 11. *Leave thy fatherless Children to me, I will keep them alive; and let their Widows trust in me.*

Obj. 4. *But I desire to live to see the felicity of* Zion *before I go hence, and the answer of the many Prayers I have sown for it; I am loath to leave the people of God in so sad a condition.*

Sol. The publickness of thy Spirit, and love to *Zion*, is doubtless pleasing to God: But it is better for you to be in Heaven one day, than to live over again all the days you have lived on Earth in the best Times that ever the Church of God enjoyed in this World: The Promises shall be accomplished, tho' you may not live to see their Accomplishment; die you in the faith of it, as *Joseph* did, *Gen.* 50. 24.

But, alas! the matter doth not stick here: this is not the main Hindrance. I will tell you where I think it lies: (1.) In the hesitancy and staggering of our Faith about the certainty and reality of things invisible. (2.) In some special guilt upon the Conscience, which appals us. (3.) In a negligent and careless course of Life, which is not ordinarily blessed with much evidence or comfort. (4.) In the deep engagements of our Hearts to earthly things: they could not be so cold to Christ, if they were not over-heated with other things. Till these Distempers be cured, no Arguments can prosper that are spent to this end. The Lord dissolve all those Ties betwixt us and this World, which hinder our Consent and Willingness to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is far better.

And now we have had a glance and glimmering Light, a faint umbrage of the State of the separated Souls of the Just in Heaven: It remains that I shew you somewhat of the State and Case of the damned Souls in Hell. A dreadful Representation it is; but it is necessary we hear of Hell, that we may not feel it.

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1 PET. iii. ver. 19.

Of which also he went and preached to the Spirits in Prison.

IN the former Discourse we have had a view of Heaven, and of the Spirits of Just Men made perfect, the Inhabitants of that blessed Region of Light and Glory.

In this Scripture we have the contrary Glass representing the unspeakable Misery of those Souls or Spirits which are separated by Death from their Bodies for a time, and by Sin from God for ever; arrested

arrested by the Law, and secured in the Prison of Hell, unto the Judgment of the great day

A Sermon of Hell may keep some Souls out of Hell, and a Sermon of Heaven be the means to help others to Heaven. The desire of my heart is, that the Conversations of all those who shall read these Discourses of Heaven and Hell might look more like a diligent flight from the one, and pursuit of the other.

The scope of the Context is a persuasive to Patience, upon a Prospect of manifold Tribulations coming upon the Christian Churches, strongly enforced by Christ's Example, who both in his own Person, *ver.* 18. and by his Spirit in his Servants, *ver.* 19. exercised wonderful patience and long-suffering, as a pattern to his People.

This 19th Verse gives us an account of his Long-suffering towards that disobedient and immorigerous Generation of Sinners, on whom he waited an hundred and twenty Years in the Ministry of *Noah.*

There are difficulties in the Text. *Estius* reckons no less than ten Expositions of it, and saith it is a very difficult Scripture in the Judgment of almost all *Interpreters.* But yet I must say those Difficulties are rather brought to it, than found in it. It is a Text which hath been rack'd and tortur'd by Popish *Expositors* to make it speak Christ's local descent into Hell, and to confess their Doctrine of *Purgatory*; Things which it knew not.

Locus hic omnium pæne interpretum judicio difficillimus. *Estius.*

But if we will take its genuine Sense, it only relates the Sin and Misery of those contumacious Persons on whom the Spirit of God waited so long in the Ministry of *Noah*, giving an Account of,

1. Their Sin on Earth.
2. Their Punishment in Hell.

1. Their Sin on Earth, which is both specified and aggravated. (1.) *Specified*; namely, their disobedience: they were sometimes disobedient and unpersuadable; neither Precepts nor Examples could bring them to repentance. (2.) This their disobedience is *aggravated* by the expence of God's patience upon them for the space of a hundred and twenty Years, not only forbearing them so long, but striving with them, as *Moses* expresseth it; or waiting on them, as the Apostle here: but all to no purpose, they were obstinate, stubborn, and unpersuadable to the very last.

2. Behold therefore, in the next place, the dreadful, but most just and equal Punishment of these Sinners in *Hell*; they are called *Spirits in Prison*, i. e. the Souls now in Hell.

At that time when *Peter* wrote of them, they were not entire Men, but *Spirits* in the proper sense, *i. e.* separated Souls, bodiless and lonely Souls: whilst in the Body, it is properly a Soul; but when separated, a Spirit, according to Scripture-language, and the strict Notion of such a Being.

Psal. 31. 6. Eccles. 12. 7. Acts 7. 50.

These Spirits or Souls in the State of Separation are said to be in a *Prison*, that is, in Hell, as the word elsewhere notes, *Rev.* 20. 7. and *Jude v.* 6. *comp.* Heaven and Hell are the only Receptacles of departed or separated Souls.

Thus you have in a few words the natural and genuine sense of the place, and it is but a waste of time to repeat and refel the many false and forced Interpretations of this Text, which corrupt Minds and mercenary Pens have perplex'd and darkened it withal. That which I level at, is comprized in this plain Proposition.

Doct. *That the Souls or Spirits of all men, who dy in a state of unbelief and disobedience, are immediately committed to the Prison of Hell, there to suffer the wrath of God due to their sins.*

Hell is shadowed forth to us in Scripture by divers Metaphors; for we cannot conceive spiritual things, unless they be so cloathed and shadowed out unto us. *Augustine* gives this reason for the frequent use of Metaphors and Allegories in Scripture, because they are so much proportioned to our senses, with which our senses have contracted an Intimacy and familiarity, and therefore God, to accommodate his Truth to our capacity, doth as it were this way embody it in earthly expressions, according to that celebrated observation of the *Cabbalists*, *Lumen supremum nunquam descendit sine indumento:* The pure and supreme light never descends to us without a garment or covering. In the Old Testament the place and state of damned Souls is set forth by Metaphors taken from the most remarkable places and exemplary acts of vengeance upon Sinners in this World; as the overthrow of the Giants by the Flood, those prodigious Sinners that fought against Heaven, and were swept by the Flood into the place of Torments. To this *Solomon* is conceiv'd to allude in *Prov.* 21. 16. *The man that wanders out of the way of understanding, shall remain in the congregation of the dead*; in the *Heb.* it is, he shall remain with the *Rephaims*, or Giants. These Giants were the Men that more especially provoked God to bring the Flood upon the World; they are also noted as the first Inhabitants of Hell, therefore from them the place of Torments takes its name, and the Damned are said to remain in the place of Giants.

Spiritualia capere non possumus nisi adumbrata.

Hell called the place of Giants, and why.

Sometimes Hell is called *Tophet*, *Isa.* 30. 33. This *Tophet* was in the Valley of *Hinnom*, and was famous for divers things. There the children of *Israel* caused their children to pass through the fire to *Moloch*, or sacrificed them to the Devil, drowning their horrible shrieks and ejulations with the noise of Drums.

Hell called Tophet, and why.

In this Valley also was the memorable slaughter of eighteen hundred thousand of the *Assyrian* Camp, by an Angel, in one night.

There also the *Babylonians* murdered the people of *Jerusalem* at the taking of the City, *Jer.* 7. 31, 32. So that *Tophet* was a meer shambles, the publick chopping block on which the limbs both of young and old were quartered out by thousands; it was filled with dead bodies till there was no place for burial. By all which it appears that no spot of ground in the World was so famous for the fires kindled in it to destroy men, for the doleful cries that echo'd from it, or the innumerable multitudes that perished in it; for which reason it is made the *Emblem* of Hell. Sometimes it is called a *Lake a fire burning with brimstone*, Rev. 19. 20. denoting the most exquisite torment by an intense and durable flame.

Hell a lake of fire.

And in the Text it is called *a Prison*, where the Spirits of ungodly men are both *detained* and *punished.* This Notion of a Prison gives us a lively representation of the miserable state of damned Souls, and that especially in the following particulars.

A Prison.

First, Prisoners are arrested and seized by Authority of Law; 'tis the Law which sends them thither,

thither, and keeps them there; the *Mittimus* of a Justice is but the Instrument of the Law, whereby they are deprived of liberty, and taken into custody. The Law of God which Sinners have both violated and despised, at death takes hold of them and arrests them. 'Tis the Law which claps up their Spirits in Prison, and in the Name and Authority of the great and terrible God commits them to Hell All that are out of Christ are under the curse and damning sentence of the Law, which now comes to be executed on them, *Gal.* 3 10

Secondly, Prisoners are carried or haled to Prison by force and constraint. Natural force backs legal Authority. The Law is executed by rough and resolute Bailiffs, who compel them to go, tho never so much against their will. This also is the case of the Wicked at death. Satan is God's Bailiff to hurry away the Law-condemned Souls to the infernal Prison. The Devil hath the power of Death, *Heb.* 2. 14. as the Executioner hath of the Body of a condemned Man.

Thirdly, Prisoners are chained and bolted in Prison to prevent their escape; so are damned Spirits secured by the Power of God, and chained by their own guilty and trembling consciences in Hell unto the time of Judgment and the fulness of misery; not that they have no torment in the mean time; alas! were there no more but that fearful expectation of wrath and fiery indignation, spoken of by the Apostle, *Heb.* 10. 27. it were an inexpressible torment; but there is a farther degree of torment to be awarded them at the Judgment of the great day, to which they are therefore kept as in Chains and Prisons.

Fourthly, Prisons are dark and noisom places, not built for pleasure, as other houses are, but for punishment, so is Hell, Jude v. 6. *Reserved in everlasting Chains under darkness*, as he there describes the place of torments, yea utter darkness, *Matt.* 8 12. extreme or perfect darkness *Philosophers* tell us of the darkness of this World, *non dantur puræ tenebræ*, that there is no pure or perfect darkness here without some mixture of light; but there is not a glade of light, not a spark of hope or comfort shining into that Prison.

Fifthly, Mournful sighs and groans are heard in Prisons, *Psal.* 97. 11. Let the *sighing of the Prisoners come before thee*, saith the *Psalmist*. But deeper sighs and emphatical groans are heard in Hell, *There shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth*, Mat. 8. 12. Those that could not groan under the sense of sin on Earth, shall howl under anguish and desparation in Hell.

Sixthly, There is a time when Prisoners are brought out of the Prison to be judged, and then return in a worse condition than before to the place from whence they came. God also hath appointed a Day for the solemn condemnation of those Spirits in Prison. The Scriptures call it the Judgment of the great Day, *Jude v. 6.* from the great Business that is to be done therein, and the great and solemn Assembly that shall then appear before God.

But I will insist no longer upon the display of the *Metaphor*. My business is to give you a representation of the state and condition of damned Souls in Hell, and to assist your conceptions of them and of their state.

'Tis a dreadful sight I am to give you this day; but how much better is it to see than to feel that Wrath? the Treasures thereof shall shortly be broken up, and poured forth upon Spirits of Men.

You had in the former Discourse a faint umbrage of the Spirits of just men in Glory; in this you will have an imperfect representation of the Spirits of wicked men in Hell: and look as the former cannot be adequate and perfect, because that happiness passeth our knowledge; so neither can this be so, because the Misery of the Damned passeth our fear.

The case and state of a damned Spirit will be best opened in these following Propositions.

Prop. 1. *That the guilt of all Sin gathers to and settles in the Conscience of every Christless Sinner and makes up a vast treasure of guilt in the course of his life in this World.*

The high and awful power of Conscience belonging to the understanding Faculty in the Soul of Man, was spoken to before as to its general Nature, *Pag.* 19. And that Conscience certainly accompanies it, and is inseparable from it, was there shewed. I am *here* to consider it as the *seat* or *center* of guilt in all unregenerate and lost Souls. For look as the tides wash up, and leave the slime and filth upon the *shore*, even so all the corruption and sin that is in the other faculties of the Soul settle upon the Conscience. *Their mind and conscience* (saith the Apostle) *is defiled*, Tit. 1. 15. it is as it were the *sink* of a sinner's Soul into which all filth runs, and guilt settles.

The Conscience of every Believer is purged from its filthiness by the Blood of Christ, *Heb.* 9. 14. his Blood and his Spirit purify it and pacify it, whereby it becomes the region of Light and Peace; but all the guilt which hath been long contracting through the life of an Unbeliever, fixes it self deep and fast in his Conscience; *It is written upon the Tables of their hearts as with a Pen of Iron*, Jer 17. 1. (*i. e.*) Guilt is as a mark or character fashioned or engraven in the very substance of the Soul, as Letters are cut into Glass with a Diamond.

Conscience is not only the principal *Engagée* obliged unto God as a Judge, but the principal *Director* and *Guide* of the Soul in its courses and actions, and consequently the guilt of all sin falls upon it, and rests in it. The Soul is both the spring and fountain of all actions, that go outward from Man, and the term or receptacle of all actions inward; but in both sorts of actions going outward and coming inward, Conscience is the chief *Counsellor*, *Guide* and *Director* in all, and so the guilt which is contracted either way, must be upon its head. 'Tis the bridle of the Soul to restrain it from sin, the eye of the Soul to direct its course; and therefore is principally chargeable with all the evils of Life. Bodily members are but instruments, and the Will it self, as high and noble a faculty or power as it is, moveth not, until the Judgment cometh to a conclusion, and the debate be ended in the mind.

Now in the whole course and compass of a Sinner's Life in this World, what treasures of guilt must needs be lodged in his Conscience? What a *Magazine* of sin and filth must be laid up there? 'Tis said of a wicked Man, *Job* 20. 11. *His bones are full of the sins of his youth*; meaning his Spirit, Mind or Conscience is as full of Sin, as Bones are of Marrow; yea, the very sins of his youth are enough to fill them: and *Rom.* 2. 5. they are said *to treasure up wrath against the day of wrath* which is only done by treasuring up guilt; for Wrath and Guilt are treasured up together in proportion to each other. Every day of his life vast sums have been cast into this Treasury, and the patience of God waiteth till it be full, before he call the sinner to an account and reckoning, *Gen* 15. 16.

Prop 2. *All the sin and guilt contracted upon the Souls and Consciences of impenitent Men in this World, accompanies and follows their departed Souls to Judgment, and there brings them under the dreadful condemnation*

nation of the great and terrible God which cuts off all their hop esand comforts for ever.

If you believe not that I am he, you shall die in your sins, John 8. 24. & Job 20. 11. *His bones are full of the sins of his youth, which shall lie down with him in the dust.* No Proposition lies clearer in Scripture, or should lie with greater weight on the hearts of sinners: nothing but pardon can remove guilt; but without Faith and Repentance there never was nor shall be a pardon, *Acts* 10. 43. *Rom.* 3. 24, 25. *Luke* 24. 46, 47. Look as the Graces of Believers, so the sins of Unbelievers follow the Soul whithersoever it goes. All their sins who die out of Christ, cry to them when they go hence, *We are thy Works and we will follow thee.* The acts of sin are transient, but the guilt and effects of it are permanent; and it is evident by this, that in the great Day their Consciences, which are the Books of Record, wherein all their sins are registred, will be opened, and they shall be judged by them, and out of them, *Rev.* 20. 12.

Now before that general Judgment, every Soul comes to its particular Judgment, and that immediately after death: of this I apprehend the Apostle to speak in *Heb.* 9. 27. *It is appointed for all men once to die, but after that the Judgment.* The Soul is presently stated by this Judgment in its everlasting and fixed condition. The Soul of a wicked Man appearing before God in all its sin and guilt, and by him sentenced, immediately it gives up all its hope, *Prov.* 11. 7. *When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish; and the hope of unjust men perisheth.* His *strong* hope perisheth, as some read it, (*i. e.*) his strong delusion: for, alas! he took his own shadow for a Bridge over the great Waters, and is unexpectedly plunged into the gulph of eternal misery, as *Matt.* 7. 22.

Etiam spes valentissima.

This perishing or cutting off of hope, is that which is called in Scripture *the death of the Soul*, for so long the Soul will live as it hath any hope. The deferring of hope makes it sick, but the final cutting off of hope strikes it quite dead, (*i. e.*) dead as to all joy, comfort, or expectation of any for ever, which is that death which an immortal Soul is capable to suffer: the Righteous hath hope in his death, but every unregenerate man in the World breathes out his last hope in a few moments after his last breath, which strikes terror into the very center of the Soul, and is a death-wound to it.

Prop. 3. *The Souls of the damned are exceeding large and spacious subjects of wrath and torment; and in their separate state their capacity is greatly enlarged both by laying asleep all those Affections whose exercise is relieving, and throughly awakening all those Passions which are tormenting.*

The Soul of Man being by nature a Spirit, an intelligent Spirit, and in its substantial faculties assimilated to God, whose Image it bears; it must for that reason be exquisitely sensible of all the impressions and touches of the wrath of God upon it. The Spirit of Man is a most tender, sensible and apprehensive Creature: the Eye of the Body is not so sensible of a touch, a Nerve of the Body is not so sensible when pricked, as the Spirit of Man is of the least touch of God's indignation upon it. *A wounded Spirit who can bear?* Prov. 18. 14. Other external wounds upon the Body, inflicted either by Man or God, are tolerable; but that which immediately touches the Spirit of Man is insufferable, who can bear or endure it?

And as the Spirit of Man hath the most delicate and exquisite sense of misery; so it hath a vast capacity to receive and let in the fulness of anguish and misery into it; it is a large Vessel, called, *Rom.* 9. 22. *A Vessel of wrath fitted to destruction.* The large capacity of the Soul is seen in this, that it is not in the power of all the Creatures in the World to satisfie and fill it: It can drink up (as one speaks) all the Rivers of created good, and its thirst not quenched by such a draught; but after all, it cries, Give, give. Nothing but an infinite God can quiet and satisfie its appetite and raging thirst.

And as it is capable and receptive of more good than is found in all the Creatures, so it is capable of more misery and anguish than all the Creatures can inflict upon it. Let all the Elements or Men on Earth, yea, all the Devils and damned in Hell, conspire and unite in a design to torment Man; yet when they have done all, his Spirit is capable of a farther degree of torment; a torment as much beyond it, as a Rack is beyond a hard Bed, or the Sword in his Bowels is beyond the scratch of a Pin. The Devils indeed are the Executioners and Tormentors of the damned; but if that were all they were capable to suffer, the torments of the damned would be comparatively mild and gentle to what they are. Oh the largeness of the Understanding of Man! what will it not take into its vast capacity!

But add to this, that damned Souls have all those Affections laid in a deep and everlasting sleep, the exercises whereof would be relieving, by emptying their Souls of any part of their misery; and all those Passions throughly and everlastingly awakened, which increase their torments.

The Affections of joy, delight and hope, are all benumbed in them, and laid fast asleep, never to be awakened into act any more. Their hope in Scripture is said to *perish*, (*i. e.*) it so perisheth, that after Death it shall never exert another Act to all Eternity. The activity of any of these Affections would be like a cooling gale or refreshing spring amidst their torments; but, as *Adrian* lamented himself, *nunquam jocos dabis*, thou shalt never be merry more.

And as these Affections are laid asleep, so their Passions are roused and throughly awakened to torment them; so awakened, as never to sleep any more. The Souls of Men are sometimes jogg'd and startl'd in this World, by the words or rods of God, but presently they sleep again, and forget all: but hereafter the Eyes of their Souls will be continually held waking to behold and consider their misery; their Understandings will be clear and most apprehensive; their thoughts fixed and determined; their consciences active and efficacious: and by all this their capacity to take in the fulness of their misery enlarged to the uttermost.

Prop. 4. *The wrath, indignation, and revenge of God poured out as the just reward of sin upon the so capacious Souls of the damned, is the principal part of their misery in Hell.*

In the third Proposition I shew'd you that the Souls of the damned can hold more misery than all the creatures can inflict upon them. When the Soul suffers from the hand of Man, its sufferings are but either by way of sympathy with the Body; or if immediately, yet it is but a light stroke the hand of a creature can give: But when it has to do with a sin-revenging God, and that immediately, this stroke *cuts off* the Spirit of Man, as 'tis express'd, *Psal.* 88. 16. The Body is the cloathing of

the Soul. Moſt of the Arrows ſhot at the Soul in this World do but ſtick in the cloaths, (*i. e.*) reach the outward man: but in Hell, the Spirit of Man is *the white* at which God himſelf ſhoots. All his envenomed Arrows ſtrike the Soul, which is after death laid bare and naked to be wounded by his hand. At death, the Soul of every wicked man immediately falls into the hands of the living God, and *it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Heb.* 10. 31. Their puniſhment is *from the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power*, 2 Theſ. 1. 9. They are not put over to their fellow Creatures to be puniſhed, but God will do it himſelf, and glorifie his Power as well as Juſtice in their puniſhment. The wrath of God lies immediately upon their Spirits, and this is the *fiery indignation which devoureth the adverſarics*, Heb. 10. 27. A fire that licks up the very Spirit of Man. Who knoweth the power of his anger? *Pſal.* 90. 11. How inſupportable it is you may a little gueſs by that expreſſion of the Prophet *Nahum*, ch. 1. 5, 6. *The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burnt at his preſence, yea, the World and all that dwell therein. Who can ſtand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceneſs of his anger? His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.*

And as if anger and wrath were not words of a ſufficient edge and ſharpneſs, it's called *fiery indignation* and *vengeance* words denoting the moſt intenſe degree of divine wrath. For indeed his power is to be glorified in the deſtruction of his enemies, and therefore now he will do it to purpoſe. He takes them now into his own hands. No creature can come at the Soul immediately, that is God's prerogative, and now he hath to do with it himſelf in fury and revenges poured out. Can thy hands be ſtrong, or thy heart endure when I ſhall deal with thee? *Ezek.* 22. 14. Alas, the ſpirit quails and dies under it. This is the Hell of Hells.

What doleful cries and laments have we heard from God's deareſt children, when but ſome few drops of his anger have been ſprinkled upon their Souls here in this World! alas, there is no compare betwixt the anger, or fatherly diſcipline of God over the Spirits of his children, and the indignation poured out from the beginning of revenges upon his enemies.

Prop. 5. *The ſeparate Spirit of a damned Man becomes a tormentor to it ſelf by the various and efficacious actings of its own Conſcience, which are a ſpecial part of its torment in the other World.*

Conſcience, which ſhould have been the ſinner's *curb* on *Earth*, becomes the *Whip* that muſt laſh his Soul in *Hell*. Neither is there any faculty or power belonging to the Soul of man ſo fit and able to do it as his own Conſcience. That which was the ſeat and center of all guilt, now becomes the ſeat and center of all torments. The ſuſpenſion of its tormenting power in this World is a myſtery and wonder to all that duly conſider it. For certainly ſhould the Lord let a ſinner's Conſcience fly upon him with rage in the midſt of his ſins and pleaſures, it would put him into a Hell upon Earth, as we ſee in the doleful inſtances of *Judas*, *Spira*, &c. but he keeps a hand of reſtraint upon them generally in this life, and ſuffers them to ſleep quietly by a grumbling or ſeared Conſcience, which couches by them as a ſleepy *Lion*, and lets them alone.

But no ſooner is the Chriſtleſs Soul turn'd out of the Body, and caſt for eternity at the Bar of God, but Conſcience is rouzed, and put into a rage never to be appeaſed any more. It now racks and tortures the miſerable Soul with its utmoſt efficacy and activity. The mere preſages and forebodings of wrath by the Conſciences of ſinners in this World, have made them lie with a ghaſtly paleneſs in their faces, an univerſal trembling in all their members, a cold ſweating horror upon their panting boſoms, like men already in Hell: but this, all this is but as the ſweating or giving of the ſtones before the great rain falls. The activities of Conſcience (eſpecially in Hell) are various, vigorous, and dreadful to conſider, ſuch are its *recognitions*, *accuſations*, *condemnations*, *upbraidings*, *ſhamings*, and *fearful expectations*.

1. The Conſciences of the Damned will recognize, and bring back the ſins committed in this World freſh to their mind: for what is Conſcience, but a Regiſter, or Book of Records wherein every ſin is rank'd in its proper place and order? This act of Conſcience is fundamental to all its other acts; for it cannot accuſe, condemn, upbraid, or ſhame us for that it hath loſt out of its memory, and hath no ſenſe of. *Son remember*, ſaid *Abraham* to *Dives* in the midſt of his torments. This remembrance of ſins paſt, mercies paſt, opportunities paſt, but eſpecially of hope paſt and gone with them, never to be recovered any more, is like that fire not blown (of which *Zophar* ſpeaks) which conſumes him, or the glittering Sword coming out of his Gall, *Job* 20. 24, &c.

2. It chargeth and accuſeth the damned Soul, and its charges are home, poſitive, and *ſelf*-evident charges: a thouſand legal and unexceptionable Witneſſes cannot confirm any point more than one Witneſs in a man's boſom can do, *Rom.* 2. 15. it convicts and ſtops their mouths, leaving them without any excuſe or Apology. Juſt and righteous are the Judgments of God upon thee, faithful Conſcience: in all this Ocean of miſery, there is not one drop of injury or wrong: the Judgment of God is according unto truth.

3. It *condemns* as well as chargeth and witneſſeth, and that with a dreadful Sentence; backing and approving the Sentence and Judgment of God, 1 *John* 3. 21. every ſelf-deſtroyer will be a ſelf-condemner: This is a prime part of their miſery.

——— *Prima eſt hæc ultio, quod ſe*
Judice nemo nocens abſolvitur, improba quamvis
Gratia fallacis Prætoris vicerit urnam. Juv. Sat. 13.

4. The upbraidings of Conſcience in Hell are terrible and inſufferable things: to be continually hit in the teeth and twitted with our madneſs, wilfulneſs, and obſtinacy, as the cauſe of all that eternal miſery which we have pull'd down upon our own heads, what is it but the rubbing of the wound with Salt and Vinegar? Of this torment holy *Job* was afraid, and therefore reſolv'd what in him lay to prevent it, when he ſaith *Job* 27. 6. *My heart* (*i. e.* Conſcience) *ſhall not reproach me ſo long as I live.* O the twits and taunts of Conſcience are cruel cuts and laſhes to the Soul!

5. The *ſhamings* of Conſcience are unſufferable torments. Shame ariſeth from the turpitude of diſcovered actions. If ſome mens ſecret filthineſſes were but publiſhed in this World, it would confound them; what then will it be, when all ſhall lie open, as it will after this life, and their own Conſciences ſhall caſt the ſhame of all upon them? They ſhall not only be derided by God, *Prov.* 1. 26. but by their own Conſciences alſo.

Laſtly

Lastly, The fearful expectations of Conscience still looking forward into more and more wrath to come, this is the very sum and complement of their misery. What makes a Prison so dreadful to a Malefactor, but the trembling expectations he there lives under of the approaching Assizes? Much after the same rate, or rather after the rate of condemned persons preparing for Execution, do these Spirits in Prison live in the other World. But alas no instance or similitude can reach home to their case.

Prop. 6. *That which makes the torments and terrors of the damned Spirits so extreme and terrible, is, that they are unrelievable miseries, and torments for ever.*

They are not capable either of,

1. A partial relief by any mitigation, or
2. A complete relief by a final cessation.

1. Not of a partial relief by any mitigation: could they but divert their thoughts from their misery, as they were wont to do in *this world*, drink and forget their sorrows; or had they but any hope of the abatement of their misery, it would be a relief to them: But both these are impossible. Their thoughts are fixed and determined: to remove them (tho' but for a moment) from their misery, is as impossible as to remove a Mountain: their sin and misery is ever before them. As the Blessed in Heaven are *bono confirmati*, so fixed and settled in blessedness, that they are not diverted one moment from beholding the blessed face of God, for they are ever with the Lord: so the Damned in Hell are *malo obfirmati*, so settled and fixed in the midst of all evil, that their thoughts and miseries are inseparable for ever.

2. Much less can their undone state admit the least hope of relief by a final cessation of their misery. All hope perisheth from them, and the perishing of their hope is the plainest proof that can be given of the eternity of their misery. For were there but the remotest possibility of deliverance at last, hope would hang upon that possibility: and whilst hope lives, the Soul is not quite dead; the death of hope is the death of a man's Spirit: the cutting off of the Soul from God, and the last act of hope to see or enjoy him for ever, is that death which an immortal Soul is capable of suffering. *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire*, is that sentence which strikes Hope and Soul dead for ever. In these six Propositions you have the true and terrible representation of the *Spirits in Prison*, or the state of damned Souls. I have not mentioned their association with Devils, or the dismal place of their confinement, which tho' they complete their misery, yet are not the principal parts of it, but rather Accessories to it, or Rivers running into the Ocean of their misery. The sum of their misery lies in what was opened before, and the improvement of it is in that which followeth.

Infer. I. Is this the state of ungodly Souls after death? Then it follows, that *neither Death nor Annihilation are the worst of evils incident to Man. Aristotle* calls Death *the most terrible of all terribles*, and the *Schoolmen* affirm *Annihilation* to be a greater evil than the most miserable Being: But it is neither so nor so; the wrath of God, the worm of Conscience, are much more bitter than Death: The pains of Death are natural and bodily pains: the wrath of God and anguish of Conscience are spiritual and inward: that is but the pain of a few hours or days, these are the unrelieved torments of Eternity.

And as for *Annihilation*, what a favour would the damned account it! Indeed if we respect the Glory of God's Justice, which is exemplified and illustrated in the ruin of these miserable Souls, it is better they should abide as the eternal Monuments thereof, than not to be at all; but with respect to themselves we may say, as Christ doth of the Son of Perdition, *Mat.* 26. 24. *Good had it been for them if they had never been born.* For a Man's Soul to be of no other use than a Vessel of Wrath, to receive the indignation, and be filled with the fury of God; surely an untimely Birth, that never was animated with a reasonable Soul, is better than they: for alas! they seek for Death, but it flies from them. The Immortality of their Souls, which was their dignity and privilege above other Creatures, is now their misery, and that which continually feeds and perpetuates their flame. Here is a Being without the comfort of it, a Being only to howl and tremble under Divine Wrath; a Being therefore which they would gladly exchange with the contemptiblest Fly, or most loathsom Toad, but it cannot be exchanged or annihilated.

Infer. II. Hence it follows, *that the Pleasures of Sin are dear bought and costly Pleasures.* There is a greater disproportion betwixt that Pleasure and this Wrath, than betwixt a drop of Honey and a Sea of *Gall*. Could a man distil all the imaginary pleasure of sin, and drink nothing else but the highest and most refined delights of it all his life, tho' his life should be protracted to the term of *Methuselah's*; yet one day, or night under the Wrath of God would make it a dear bargain. But,

1. 'Tis certain Sin hath no such Pleasures to give you: they are embitter'd either by adverse strokes of Providence from without, or painful and dreadful gripes and twinges of Conscience, within; *Job* 20. 14. *His meat in his Bowels is turned it is the gall of Asps within him.*

2. Tis as certain, the time of a sinner is near its period when he is at the height of his pleasure in sin: for look, as high delights in God speak the maturity of a Soul for Heaven, and it will not be long before such be in Heaven; so the heights of delight in sin, answerably speak the maturity of such a Soul for Hell, and it will not be long e'er it be there. Sin is now a big *Embryo*, and speedily the Soul travails with Death.

3. According to the measure of delights Men have had in sin, will be the degrees and measures of their Torments in Hell, *Rev.* 18. 7. so much torment and sorrow as there was delight and pleasure in Sin.

4. To conclude, *The Pleasures of Sin are* but *for a season*, as you read, *Heb.* 11. 25. but the Wrath of God in Hell is for ever and ever. There is a time when the pleasures of sin cannot be called *Pleasures to come*, but the Wrath of God that will still be *Wrath to come.* Oh! consider for what a trifle you sell your Souls. When *Lysimachus* parted with his Kingdom for a draught of Water, he said when he had drank it, *For how short a pleasure have I sold a Kingdom!* And *Jonathan* lamented, 1 *Sam.* 14. 43. *I tasted but a little Honey, and I must die.* Satan would not charm so powerfully as he doth with the pleasures of Sin, if this point were well believed and heartily applied.

Infer. III. *What a matchless madness is it to cast the Soul into God's Prison, to save the Body out of Man's Prison!*

Men have their Prisons, and God hath his: but because the one is an Object of Sense, and the other

other an Object of Faith, that only is feared, and this ſlighted all over this unbelieving World; except by a very ſmall Number of Men who tremble at the Word of God. Now this I ſay is the Height of Madneſs, and will appear to be ſo in a juſt Collation of both in a few Particulars. (1.) Man's Priſon reſtrains the Body only, God's Priſon Soul and Body, *Mat.* 10. 28. The Spirits of Men (as my Text ſpeaks) are the Priſoners there. Oh what a vaſt Odds doth this ſingle Difference make! A thouſand Times more than the captivating and binding of the greateſt King or Emperour differs from the Impriſonment of a poor Mechanick or vagrant Beggar. (2.) In Man's Priſon there are many Comforts and unſpeakable Refreſhments from Heaven, but in God's Priſon none, but the direct contrary. You read of the Apoſtles, *Acts* 16. 25. how they ſang in the Priſon: the Spirit of God made them a Banquet of heavenly Joys, and they could not but ſing at it: tho' their Feet were in the Stocks, their Spirits were never more at Liberty. *Algerius* dated his Letters *from the delectable Orchard of the* Leonine *Priſon*; *where*, ſaith he, *flows the ſweeteſt Nectar.* Another tells us, Chriſt was always kind to him; but ſince he became a Priſoner for him, he even overcame himſelf in Kindneſs. *I verily think* (ſaith he) *the Chains of my Lord are all overlaid with pure Gold; and his Croſs perfumed.* But the worſt Terrors of the Priſoners in Hell come from the Preſence of the Lord, 2 Theſ. 1. 9. *God is a Terror to them.* (3.) The Cauſe for which a Man is caſt into Priſon by Men, may be his Duty, and ſo his Conſcience muſt be at leaſt quiet, if not joyful in ſuch Sufferings. So was it with *Paul*, Acts 28. 20. *For the Hope of* Iſrael *am I bound with this Chain*: This diffuſes Joy and Peace through the Conſcience into the whole Man. But the Cauſe for which Men are caſt into God's Priſon, is their Sin and Guilt, which arms their own Conſciences againſt them, and makes them, as you heard before, Self-tormentors, terrors to themſelves. What odds is here! (4.) In Man's Priſon the moſt excellent Company and ſweet Society may be found. *Paul* and *Silas* were fellow-priſoners. In Queen *Mary*'s Days the moſt excellent Company to be found in *England* was in the Priſons: Priſons were turned into Churches. But in God's Priſon no better Society is to be found than that of Devils and damned Reprobates, *Mat.* 25. 41. (5.) In Man's Priſon there is Hope of a comfortable Deliverance; but in God's Priſon none: *Mat.* 5. 26. *Thou ſhalt not come out thence, till thou haſt paid the laſt Mite.* 'Tis an everlaſting Priſon.

Compare theſe few obvious Particulars, and judge then what is to be thought of that Man, who ſtands readier to caſt himſelf into any Guilt, than into the leaſt Suffering. What is it but as if a Man ſhould offer his Neck to the Sword, to ſave his Hand? The Lord convince us what trifles our Eſtates, Liberties, and Lives are to our Souls, or to the Peace and Purity of our Conſciences.

Infer. IV. *What an invaluable Mercy is the Pardon of Sin, which ſets the Soul out of Danger of going into this Priſon!* When the Debt is ſatisfied, a Man may walk as boldly before the Priſon-door as he doth before his own: they that owe nothing, fear no Bailiffs. 'Tis the Law (as I ſaid before) that commits Men to Priſon, a *Mittimus* is but an Inſtrument of Law; but the Righteouſneſs of the Law is fulfilled in them that believe, *Rom.* 8. 4. Yea, they are made *the Righteouſneſs of God in him*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. There can be no Proceſs of Law againſt them. For who ſhall condemn when it is God that juſtifieth? Rom. 8. 33, 34. And that Divine Juſtice might be no Bar to our Faith and Comfort, he adds, *It is Chriſt that died*; and yet farther, to aſſure us that his Death had made plenary Satisfaction to God for all our Sins and Debts, it is added, *yea, rather, that is riſen again: q. d.* If the Debts of Believers to God were not fully paid and ſatisfied for by the Blood of Chriſt, how comes it to paſs that our Surety is diſcharged, as by his Reſurrection he appears to be? Oh Believer! thy Bonds are cancell'd, the Hand-writing that was againſt thee is nailed to the Croſs, the Blood of Chriſt hath done that for thee that all the Gold and Silver in the world could not do, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18, 19. It is a Counterprice fully anſwering to thy Debts, *Mat.* 20. 28. And hence, to the eternal Joy of thy Heart, reſult three Properties of thy Pardon, which are able to make thine Eyes guſh out with Tears of Joy whilſt thou art reading of it.

Ἀντίλυτρον eſt pretium ex adverſo reſpondens.

1. It is a free *Pardon* to thy Soul; tho' it coſt Chriſt dear, it coſts Thee nothing. We have Redemption, even *the Remiſſion of Sins, according to the Riches of his Grace*, Eph. 1. 7. The *Project* of it was God's, not thine; the Price for it was Chriſt's Blood, not thine; the Glory and Riches of free Grace are illuſtriouſly diſplayed in thy Forgiveneſs.

2. It is as *full* as it is *free*; a compleat and perfect Cauſe produceth a complete and perfect Effect, *Acts* 13. 39 *Juſtified from all Things.* Whatever thy Sins be for *Nature*, *Number*, or *Circumſtances* of Aggravations they cannot exceed the Value of the meritorious Cauſe of Remiſſion. The Blood of Chriſt cleanſeth us from all Sin.

3. It muſt be as *firm* as it is free and full, even an irrevocable Pardon for evermore. Chriſt did not ſhed his Blood at a Hazard; the Way of Juſtification by Faith, makes the Promiſe ſure, *Rom.* 4. 16. The Juſtified ſhall never come again under Condemnation. Oh the unſpeakable Joy that flows from this Spring! Oh the Triumphs of Faith upon this Foundation!

Is it not raviſhing, melting, overwhelming, and amazing, to think thus with thy ſelf? Here ſit I with a joyful Plenary free Pardon of Sin in my Hand, whilſt many who never ſinned to that Height and Degree I have, lie groaning, howling, ſweating, and trembling under the Indignation of God, poured out like Fire upon their Souls in Hell. A greater Sinner ſaved, and leſſer damned. Oh how unſpeakably ſweet is that *Reſt* into which my terrified and diſquieted Soul is come by Faith! *Rom.* 5. 1. *Heb.* 4. 3. *We which have believed, do enter into Reſt.* Oh bleſſed Calm after a dreadful Tempeſt! This poor Breaſt of mine was lately panting, ſweating, trembling under the Horrors of Wrath to come, terrified with the Viſions of Hell. No other Sound was in mine Ears, but that of fiery Indignation to devour the Adverſaries. Oh what Price can be put upon my *quietus eſt*! What Value upon a Pardon, delivered as it were at the Ladders foot! Oh precious Hand of Faith that receives it! But oh the moſt precious Blood of Chriſt which purchaſed it! If Satan now come with his *Accuſations*, the Law with its *Comminations*, Death with its dreadful Summons, I have in a Readineſs to anſwer them all.

Here is the Law, the Wrath of God, and everlaſting Burnings, the juſt Demerit of Sin upon one Side, and a poor ſinful Creature on the other: but

but the Covenant of Grace hath solv'd all. An *Act of Oblivion* is past in Heaven, *I will forgive their Iniquities, and their Sins and Transgressions will I remember no more.* In this Act of Grace my Soul is included; I am in Christ, and there is no Condemnation. Die I must, but damned I shall not be: My Debts are paid, my Bonds are cancelled, my Conscience is quieted; let Death do its worst, it shall do me no Harm; that Blood which satisfies God, may well satisfy me.

Infer. V. *How amazingly sad and deplorable is the Security and Stilness of the Consciences of Sinners under all their own Guilts, and the immediate Danger of God's Everlasting Wrath.*

Philosophers observe that before an Earth-quake the Wind lies, and the Weather is exceeding calm and still, not a Breath of Wind going. So it is in the Consciences of many just before the Tempest and Storm of God's Wrath pours down upon them. What a golden Morning open'd upon *Sodom*, and began that fatal Day! Little did they imagine Showers of Fire had been ready to fall from so pleasant and serene a Sky as they saw over their Heads. How secure, still, and unconcerned are those to Day, who it may be shall rage, roar, and tremble in Hell to Morrow! *Cæsar* hearing of a Citizen of *Rome* who was deep in Debt, and yet slept soundly, would needs have his Pillow, as supposing there was some strange charming Virtue in it.

It is wonderful to consider what Shift Men make to keep their Consciences in that Stilness and quiet they do, under such Loads of Guilt and Threatnings of Wrath ready to be executed upon them. It must be some strong *Opium* that so stupifies and benumbs their Consciences; and upon Inquiry into the Matter we shall find it to be the Effect of,

1. A strong Delusion of Satan.
2. A spiritual judicial Stroke of God.

1. This Stilness of Conscience upon the Brink of Damnation proceeds from the strong Delusions of Satan; blinding their Eyes: and feeding their false Hopes: he removes the evil Day at many Years imaginay Distance from them, and interposeth many a fair Day betwixt them and it, and in that interposed Season, Time enough to prepare for it; without such an Artifice as this, his House would be in an Uproar, but this keeps all in Peace, *Luke* 11. 21. By presuming he feeds their Hopes, and by their Hopes destroys their Souls. Some he diverts from all serious Thoughts of this Day, by the *Pleasures*, and others by the Cares of this Life: and so that Day cometh upon them unawares, *L.* 21. 34.

Præsumendo sperant, & sperando pereunt.

2. This Stilness of Conscience in so miserable and dangerous a State, is the Effect of a spiritual, judicial Stroke of God upon the Children of Wrath. That's a dreadful Word, *Isa.* 6. 10. *Make the Heart of this People fat, and make their Ears heavy, and shut their Eyes:* The Eye and Ear are the two principal Doors or Inlets to the Heart; when these are shut, the Heart must needs be insensible, as the Fat of the Body is. There is a Spirit of a deep Sleep poured out judicially upon some Men, *Isa.* 29. 10. such as that upon *Adam* when God took a *Rib* from his Side, and he felt it not: but this is upon the Soul, and is the same as to give up a Man to a reprobate Sense.

Pinguedo non refractaria solum facit animalia, sed omnis expers sensus est, contentientius Physicis. *Glass.*

Inf. IV. *The Case of distressed Consciences upon Earth, is exceeding sad, and calls upon all for the tenderest Pity, and utmost Help from Men.*

You see the Labourings of Conscience under the Sense of Guilt and Wrath, is a special Part of the Torments of Hell; of which there is not a livelier Emblem or Picture, than the Distresses of Conscience in this World.

It must be thankfully confessed there are two great Differences betwixt the Terrors of Conscience here, and there: One in the *Degrees* of Anguish, the other in the *Reliefs* of that Anguish. The ordinary Distresses of Conscience here, compared with those of the Damned, are as the Flame of a Candle to a fiery Oven, a mild and gentle Fire; or as the Sparks that fly out of the Top of a Chimney, to the dreadful Eruptions of *Vesuvius*, or Mount *Ætna*. Besides, these are capable of Relief, but those are unrelievable: their Hearts die, because their Hope is perished from the Lord.

But yet of all the Miseries and Distresses incident to Men in this World, none like those of distressed Consciences; the Terrors of God set themselves in Array, or are drawn up in *Battalia* against the Soul, *Job* 6. 4. *Whilst I suffer thy Terrors* (saith *Heman*) *I am distracted*, Psal. 88. 15. Yea, they not only distract, but cut off the Spirit, as he adds, *ver.* 16. They lick up the very Spirit of a Man, and none can bear them, *Prov.* 18. 14. for now a Man hath to do immediately with God; yea, with the Wrath of the great and dreadful God: and this Wrath which is the most acute and sharp of all Torments, falls upon the most tender and sensible Part, the Spirit and Mind, which now lies open and naked before him to be wounded by it. No Creature can administer the least Relief, by the Application of any temporal Comfort or Refreshment to it. Gold and Silver, Wife and Children, Meat and Melody, signify no more than the drawing off a silk Stocking to cure the *Paroxysms* of the *Gout*.

All that can be done for their Relief, is by seasonable, judicious and tender Applications of spiritual Remedies; and what can be done, ought to be done for them. What Heart can hear a Voice like that of *Job*, *Have Pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my Friends; for the Hand of God hath touched me*; and not melt into Compassions over them? Is there a Word of Wisdom in thy Heart? let thy Tongue apply it to the Relief of thy distressed Brother: whilst his Heart meditates *Terrour*, let thine meditate his *Succour*. It is not impossible but thou who lendest a friendly Hand to another, mayest e'er long need one thy self; and he that hath ever felt the Terrours of the Almighty upon his Soul, hath Motive enough to draw forth the Bowels of his Pity to another in the like Case.

Alas for poor distressed Souls, who have either none about them that understand, and are able and willing to speak a Word in Season to their weary Souls, or too many about them to exasperate their Sorrows, and persecute them whom God hath smitten. You that have both Ability and Opportunity for it, are under the strongest Engagements in the World to endeavour their Relief with all Faithfulness, Seriousness, Compassion and Constancy. Did Christ shed his Blood for the saving of Souls, and wilt not thou spend thy Breath for them? Shall any Man that hath found Mercy from God, shew none to his Brother? God forbid. A Soul in Hell is out of

of your reach, but these that are in the Suburbs of Hell are not: the Candle of intense sorrow is put to the Thread of their miserable life; and should they be suffered to drop into Hell whilst you stand by as unconcerned? Spectators of such a Tragedy will have little peace. Your unmercifulness to their Souls will be a wound to your own.

Infer. VII. *Be hence informed of the evil that is in sin, be convinced of the evil that is in it by the eternal misery that follows it.*

If Hell be out of measure dreadful, then Sin must be out of measure sinful: The Torments of Hell do not exceed the demerit of Sin, tho' they exceed the Understandings of Men to conceive them. God will lay upon no man more than is right. Sin is the Founder of Hell: all the Miseries and Torments there are but the Treasures of Wrath which Sinners in all Ages have been treasuring up; and how dreadful soever it be, it is but the Ἀπωλία, the Recompence which is meet, *Rom. 6. ult. The Wages of sin is Death.*

We have slight thoughts of sin; *Fools make a mock of sin*: but if the Lord by the convictions of mens Consciences did but lead them through the Chambers of Death, and give them a sight of the Wrath to come; could we but see the *Piles* that are made in Hell (as the Prophet calls them, *Isa.* 30. 33.) to maintain the flames of Vengeance to Eternity; could we but understand in what *Dialect* the damned speak of sin, who see the Treasures of Wrath broken up to avenge it, surely it would alter our apprehensions of sin, and strike cold to the very heart of sinners.

Cannot the Extremity and Eternity of Hell torments exceed the evil that is in Sin? What words then can express the evil of it? Hell flames have the nature of a *Punishment*, but not of an *atonement*.

Oh think on this, you that look upon Sin as the veriest trifle, that will sin for the value of a Penny, that look upon all the humiliations, broken-hearted confessions, and bitter moans of the Saints under Sin, as frenzy or melancholy, slighting them as a company of half-witted hypochondriack persons! Thou that never hadst one sick night or sad day in all thy life upon the account of sin, let me tell thee, that breast of thine must be the seat of sorrow; that frothy airy Spirit of thine must be acquainted with emphatical sobs and groans. God grant it may be on this side Hell by effectual Repentance, else it must be there in the extremity and eternity of Sorrows.

Inf. VIII. *What Enemies are they to the Souls of Men, who are Satan's Instruments to draw them into sin, or who suffer sin to lie upon them!*

When there were but two persons in the World, one drew the other into Sin; and among the millions of Men and Women now in the World, where are there two to be found that have in no case been snares to draw some into sin? Some tempt *designedly*, taking the Devil's work out of his hands; others *virtually* and *consequentially*, by Examples, which have a compelling power to draw others with them into sin. The first sort are among the worst of *Sinners*, *Prov.* 1. 10. the latter are among the best of *Saints*; see *Gal.* 2. 14. Whose Conversations is so much in Heaven, that nothing falls out in the course thereof, which may not farther some or other in their way to Hell?

Among wicked Men there are five sorts eminently accessory to the guilt and ruin of other Men's Souls. (1.) Loose *Professors*, whose lives give their lips the lye; whose Conversations make their Professions blush. (2.) Scandalous *Apostates*, whose Fall is more prejudicial than their Profession was ever beneficial to others. (3.) Cruel *Persecutors*, who make the Lives, Liberties, and Estates of Men the occasion of the ruin of their Consciences. (4.) Ignorant and faithless *Ministers*, who strengthen the hands of the wicked, that they should not return from their wickedness. (5.) Wicked *Relations*, who quench and damp every hopeful beginning of conviction and affection in their friends. Of all which I shall distinctly speak in the next Discourse to which therefore I remit it at present.

And many there are who suffer sin to lie upon others, without a wise and seasonable reproof to recover them.

Oh what cruelty to Souls is here! The day is coming in which they will curse the time that ever they knew you: 'tis possible you may repent, but then it may be those whose Souls you have help'd to ruin are gone, and quite out of your reach. The Lord make you sensible what you have done in season, lest your repentance come too late for your selves and them also.

Infer. IX. *How poor a comfort is it to him that carries all his Sins out of this World with him, to leave much earthly Treasure (especially if gotten by Sin) behind him?*

It is a poor consolation to be praised where thou art not, and tormented where thou art; to purchase a life of pleasure to others on earth, at the price of thy own everlasting misery in Hell. All the consolation sensual, voluptuous and oppressing Worldlings have, is but this, that they were *coached to Hell* in Pomp and State, and have left the same *Chariot* to bring their graceless Children after them in the same Equipage to the place of Torments. There be five Considerations provoking pity to them that are thus past into a miserable Eternity, and caution to all that are following after in the same path.

Quid prodest esse quod esse non prodest? *Tertul.*

First, that fatal mistake in the practical understanding and judgment of Man deserves a compassionate lamentation, as the cause and reason of their eternal miscarriage and ruin. They looked upon trifles as things of greatest necessity, and the most necessary things as meer trifles; putting the greatest weight and value upon that which little concerned them, and none at all upon their greatest Concernment in the whole World, *Luke* 12. 21.

Secondly, The perpetual diversions that the trifles of this World gave them from the main use and end of their time. O what a hurry and thick succession of earthly business and encumbrances filled up their days! So that they could find no time to go alone, and think of the awful and weighty concernments of the World to come, *James* 5. 5.

Thirdly, The total waste and expence of the only season of Salvation about these vanished, impertinent trifles, which is never more to be recovered, *Eccles.* 9. 10.

Fourthly, that these deluding shadows, the pleasures of a moment, is all that they had in exchange for their Souls, a goodly price it was valued at, *Mat.* 16. 26.

Fifthly, That by such a life they have not only ruined their own Souls, but put their posterity, by their education of them in the same course of life, into the same path of destruction, in which they

they went to Hell before them: *Psal.* 49. 13. *Their posterity approve their saying.*

Infer. X. *How rational and commendable is the courage and resolution of those Christians who chuse to bear all sufferings in this World from the hands of Men, rather than to defile and wound their Consciences with sin, and thereby expose their Souls to the wrath of God for ever!*

That which men now call Pride, Humour, Fancy, and Stubbornness, will one day appear to be their great Wisdom, and the Excellency of their Spirits. It is the tenderness of their *Consciences*, not the pride and stoutness of their stomachs, which makes them inflexible to sin; they know the terrors of a wounded Conscience, and had rather endure any other trouble from the hands of Men than fall by known sin into the hands of an angry God. Try them in other matters wherein the glory of God and peace or purity of their Consciences are not concerned, and see if you can charge them with stubbornness and singularity. It was the excellency of the Spirits of the Primitive Christians, that they durst tell the Emperor to his face, when he threatned them with torments; Pardon us, O *Emperor*, thou threatnest us with a Prison, but God with Hell. Do we call that ingenuity and good nature, which makes the mind soft and tractable to temptations, and will rather venture upon guilt than be esteemed singular?

Ignosce, Imperator, tu carcerem minaris, Deus Gehennam.

Salvian tells us of some in his time, who were compelled to be evil, lest they should be accounted vile: and was that their excellency? May I not fitly apply the words of *Salvian* here: O in what honour and repute is Christ among Christians, when Religion shall make them base and ignoble! He that understands what the Punishment of sin will be in Hell, should endure all things rather than yield to sin on Earth. Indeed, if you threaten, and tempt others to violate their Consciences, could you bear the Wrath of God for them in Hell, it were somewhat; but we know there is no suffering by a *Proxy* there, they tremble at the Word of God, and have felt the burden of guilt, and dare not yield to sin, tho' they yield their Estates and Bodies to prevent it.

Mali esse cogentur, ne viles habeantur.

Infer. XI. *How patiently should we bear the Afflictions of this life, by which sin is prevented and purged?*

The discipline of our Spirits belongs to God the Father of Spirits; he corrects us here, that we may not be punished hereafter, 1 Cor. 11. 32. *We are chastened of the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the World.* It is better for us to groan under Afflictions on Earth, than to roar under revenging Wrath in Hell. Parents who are wise as well as tender, had rather hear their Children sob and cry under the Rod, than stand with Halters about their Necks on the Ladder, bewailing the destructive indulgence of their Parents.

Your Chastisements when sanctified are preventive of all the misery opened before. It is therefore as unreasonable to murmur against God, because you smart under his Rod, as it would be to accuse your dearest Friend of cruelty, because he strain'd your Arm to snatch you from the fall of a House or Wall which he saw ready to crush and overwhelm you in its ruins.

If we had less Affliction, we should have more Guilt. We see how apt we are to break over the hedge, and go astray from God, with all the clogs of Afflictions designed for our restraint; what should we do if we had no clog at all? It is better for you to be whipt to Heaven with all the Rods of Affliction, than coached to Hell with all the Pleasures of the World.

Christian, thy God sees, if thou do not, that all these troubles are few enough to save thee from Sin and Hell. Thy corruptions require all these Rods, and all little enough. *If need be, ye are in heaviness*, 1 Pet. 1. 6. If there be need for it, thy dearest comforts on Earth shall die, that thy Soul may live; but if thy mortification to them render thy removal needless, thou and they shall live together. 'Tis better be preserved in Brine, than rot in Honey. Sanctified Afflictions working under the efficacy of the Blood of Christ, are the safest way to our Souls.

Infer. XII. *How doleful a change doth the death of wicked Men make upon them! from palaces on Earth, to the Prison of Hell.*

No sooner is the Soul of a wicked Man stept out of his own door at death, but the *Serjeants* of Hell are immediately upon it, serving the dreadful Summons on the Law-condemned Wretch. This Arrest terrifies it more than the Hand-writing upon the plaister of the Wall did him, *Dan.* 5. 5. How are all a Man's apprehensions changed in a moment! Out of what a deep sleep are most, and out of what a pleasant dream of Heaven are some awaked and startled at death, by the dreadful Arrest and Summons of God to Condemnation.

How quickly would all a Sinner's mirth be dampt and turned into howlings in this World, if Conscience were but thoroughly awakned! It is but for God to change our Apprehensions now, and it would be done in a moment: but the eyes of most mens Souls are not opened, till death hath shut their bodily eyes; and then how sudden, and how sad a change is made in one day!

O think what it is to pass from all the pleasures and delights of this world into the torments and miseries of that World; from a pleasant Habitation, into an infernal Prison; from the depth of Security, to the extremity of Desperation; from the Arms and Bosoms of dearest Friends and Relations, to the Society of damned Spirits! Lord, what a Change is here! Had a gracious Change been made upon their Hearts by Grace, no such doleful Change could have been made upon their state by Death: Little do their surviving Friends think what they feel, or what is their estate in the other World, whilst they are honouring their Bodies with splendid and pompous Funerals. None on Earth have so much reason to fear Death, to make much of Life, and use all means to continue it, as those who will and must be so great losers by the exchange.

Infer. XIII. *See here the certainty and inevitableness of the Judgment.*

This Prison which is continually filling with the Spirits of wicked Men, is an undeniable evidence of it: for why is Hell called *a Prison*, and why are the Spirits of Men confined and chained there, but with respect to the Judgment of the great Day? As there is a necessary connection betwixt Sin and Punishment, so betwixt punishing and trying the Offender; there are millions of Souls in custody, a world of Spirits in Prison; these must be brought forth to their Trial, for God will lay upon no man more than is right; the legality of their *Mittimus* to Hell, will be evidenced

ced in their solemn Day of Trial. God hath therefore *appointed a Day in which he will judge the World in Righteousness, by that Man whom he hath ordained*, Acts 17. 21.

Here Sinners run in Arrears, and contract vast Debts; in Hell they are seiz'd and committed, at Judgment tried and cast for the same. This will be a dreadful Day, those that have spent so prodigally upon the Patience of God, must now come to a severe Account for all; they have past their particular Judgment immediately after Death, *Eccles.* 12. 7. *Heb.* 9. 27. By this they know how they shall speed in the general Judgment, and how it shall be with them for ever, but tho' this private Judgment secures their Damnation sufficiently, yet it clears not the Justice of God before Angels and Men sufficiently, and therefore they must appear once more before his Bar, 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. In the fearful Expectation of this Day, those trembling Spirits now lie in Prison, and that fearful Expectation is a principal Part of their present Misery and Torment. You that refuse to come to the Throne of Grace, see if you can refuse to make your Appearance at the Bar of Justice; you that brav'd and brow-beat your Ministers that warn'd you of it, see if you can outbrave your Judge too as you did them. Nothing more sure or awful than such a Day as this.

Infer. XIV. *How much are Ministers, Parents, and all to whom the Charge of Souls is committed, bound to do all that in them lies, to prevent their everlasting Misery in the World to come!*

The great Apostle of the Gentiles found the Consideration of the Terror of the Lord as a Spur urging and enforcing him to a ministerial Faithfulness and Diligence; 2 *Cor.* 5. 11. *Knowing therefore the Terror of the Lord, we persuade Men.* And the same he presseth upon *Timothy*, 2 Tim. 4. 1, 2. *I charge thee therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his Kingdom; preach the Word; be instant in Season and out of Season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and Doctrine.* Oh that those to whom so great a Trust as the Souls of Men is committed, would labour to acquit themselves with all Faithfulness therein, as *Paul* did, warning every one Night and Day with Tears, that if we cannot prevent their Ruin, which is most desirable; yet at least we may be able to take God to witness, as he did, that we are pure from the Blood of all Men.

Oh! consider, my Brethren, if your faithful Plainness and unweary'd Diligence to save Mens Souls produce no other Fruit but the Hatred of you now; yet it is much easier for you to bear that, than that they and you too should bear the Wrath of God for ever.

We have all of us personal Guilt enough upon us, let us not add other Mens Guilt to our Account: to be guilty of the Blood of the meanest Man upon Earth, is a Sin which will cry in your Consciences; but to be guilty of the Blood of Souls, Lord, who can bear it! Christ thought them worth his Heart-blood, and are they not worth the Expence of our Breath? Did He sweat Blood to save them, and will not we move our Lips to save them? 'Tis certainly a sore Judgment to the Souls of Men, when such Ministers are set over them as never understood the Value of their Peoples Souls, or were never heartily concerned about the Salvation of their own Souls.

MATTH. XVI. 26.

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his Soul?

Difficult Duties need to be enforced with powerful Arguments. In the 24th Verse of this Chapter our Lord presseth upon his Disciples the deepest and hardest Duties of Self-denial, acquaints them upon what Terms they must be admitted into his Service: *If any Man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross and follow me.*

This hard and difficult Duty he enforceth upon them by a double Argument, *viz.* From,

1. The Vanity of all sinful Shifts from it, *v.* 25.
2. The Value of their Souls, which is imported in it, *v.* 26.

They may shift off their Duty to the Loss of their Souls, or save their Souls by the Loss of such Trifles. If they esteem their Souls above the World, and can be content to put all other Things to the Hazard for their Salvation, making Account to save nothing but them by Christianity; then they come up to Christs' Terms, and may warrantably and boldly call him their Lord and Master; and to sweeten this Choice to them, he doth in my Text balance the Soul and all the World, weighing them one against the other, and shews them the infinite Odds and Disproportion betwixt them: *What is a Man profited, if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? or what shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul?*

What is a Man profited?] There is a plain *Meiosis* in the Phrase; and the meaning is, how inestimably and irreparably is a Man damnified! what a Soul-ruining Bargain would a Man make!

If he should gain the whole World.] There is a plain *Hyperbole* in this Phrase; for it never was, nor will be the Lot of any Man to be the sole Owner and Possessor of the whole World *. But suppose all the Power, Pleasure, Wealth, and Honour of the whole World were bid and offer'd in exchange for a Man's Soul: What a dear Purchase would it be at such a Rate! *What were this,* † says one, *but to win* Venice, *and then be hang'd at the Gate of it?* As that Man acts like a mad Man, that goes about to purchase a Treasure of Gold with the loss of his Life; for Life being lost, what is all the Gold in the World to him? he can have no Enjoyment of it, or Comfort in it: So here, what is all the World, or as many Worlds as there are Creatures in it, when the Soul is lost, if he gain this?

* Hypothetica hâc hyperbole amissionis salutis æternæ atrocitas summa notatur. *S. Glassius.*

† Non magis juvabitur quam qui acquirit *Venetias*, ipse verò suspendatur ad portam. *Pareus in loc.*

And lose his own Soul.] The Comparison lies here betwixt one single Soul and the whole World. The whole World is no Price for the poorest, meanest, and most despised Soul that lives in it.

By *losing the Soul*, we are not to understand the Destruction of its Being, but of its Happiness and Comfort, the cutting it off from God, and all the Hopes of his Favour and Enjoyment for ever. This is the *Loss* here intended, a Loss never to be repaired

repaired. The whole World can be no Recompence for a Loss *to the Soul*, if it be but the Loss of its Purity or Peace for a Time; much less can it Recompence the Loss *of the Soul* in the Loss of all its Happiness for ever. When a Man's chief Happiness is finally lost, then is his Soul lost: For what Benefit can it be, nay, how great a Misery must it be, to have a Being perpetuated in Torments for ever? This is the *Fine* or *Mulct* which is set upon Sin, as some render the Word. What shall a Man gain by such Pleasures, for which God will mulct or fine him at the Rate or Price of his own Soul? that is, of all the Happiness, Joy, and Comfort of it to all Eternity.

Animâ verò suâ mulctetur. *Bez. Maldon.*

Or what shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul? The Question aggravates the Sense, and amplifies the Loss and Damage of the Man that sells his Soul for the whole World. There is no Recompence in all the World for the Hazard or Danger of the Soul one Hour; nor would a Man that understands what Soul and Eternity are, put it into Danger for ten Thousand Worlds, much less for a Penny, yea, for nothing, as many do: but to barter or *exchange* it for *the World*, to take any thing in lieu of it; this is the Height of Madness. The Way of Buying in former Times was not by Money, but by the Exchange of one Commodity for another; and to this Custom *Brugensis* thinks this Phrase is alusive. Now what Commodity is found in all the World; or who that is not blinded by the God of this World, can think that the whole World it self, if all the Rocks in it were Rocks of Diamonds, and the Seas and Rivers were liquid Gold, is a Commodity of equivalent worth to his own Soul? Hence two Notes rise naturally.

Interrogatio exaggerans.

Ἀντάλλαγμα vocat id quo dato, redimitur aliquid; juxta priscorum commercia quæ non monetâ, sed rerum permutatione constabant. *Brugens.*

Doct. I. *That one Soul is of more Value than the whole World.*

Doct. II. *How precious and invaluable soever the Soul of Man is, it may be lost and cast away for ever.*

I begin with the First.

Doct. I. *That one Soul is of more Value than the whole World.*

I need not spend much time in the Proof of it, when you have consider'd, that he who bought them hath here weighed and valued them; and that the Point before us is the Result and Conclusion of one that hath the best Reason to know the true worth of them. That which I have to do, is to gather out of Scriptures the Particulars; which put together, make up the full Demonstration of the Point. And,

1. The invaluable Worth of Souls appears from the Manner of their Creation. They were created immediately by God, as hath been proved, and that not without the Deliberation of the whole *Trinity*; *Gen.* 1. 26. *Let us make Man.* For the Production of other Creatures, it was enough to give out the Word of his Command. *Let there be Light, let the Earth and the Waters bring forth*; but when he comes to Man, then you have no *Fiat*, *let there be*, but he puts his own Hand immediately to it, as to the Master-piece of the whole Creation: Yea, a Council is call'd about it; *Let us*, implying the just Consultation and Deliberation of all the Persons in the Godhead about it, that our Hearts might be raised to the Expectation of some extraordinary Work to follow; great Counsels and wise Debates being both the Forerunners and Foundations of great Actions and Events to ensue thereupon. Thus *Elihu* in *Job* 35. 10. *None saith, Where is God my Makers?* And *David* in *Psal.* 149. 2. *Let Israel rejoice in his Makers:* In both Places the Word is plural. The Consultation here is only amongst the Divine Persons, no Angels are called to this Council-Table, the whole Matter was to be conducted by the Wisdom, and effected by the Power of God; and therefore there was no need to consult with any but himself, the Wisdom of Angels being from him: But this great Council shews what an excellent Creature was now to be produced, and the Excellency of that Creature Man was principally in his Soul; for the Bodies of other Creatures, which were made by the Word of his Command, are as beautiful, elegant, and neat as the Body of Man; yea, and in some Respects more excellent. The Soul then was that rare Piece which God in so condescending an Expression tells us was created with the Deliberation of the Godhead; those great and excellent Persons laid their Heads, as it were, together to project its Being.

And by the Way, this may smartly check the Pride and Arrogance of Souls, who dare take it upon them to teach God, as we interpretatively do in our Censures of his Works, and Murmurs at his Disposals of us. Shall that Soul, which is the Product of his Wisdom and Counsel, dare to instruct or counsel its Maker? But that by the bye. You see there is a transcendent Dignity and Worth in the Soul of Man above all other Beings in the World, by the peculiar way of its Production into the Number of created Beings: No wise Man deliberates long, or calls a Council about ordinary Matters, much less the All-wise God.

2. The Soul hath in it self an intrinsick Worth and Excellency worthy of that Divine Original whence it sprang: View it in its noble Faculties and admirable Powers, and it will appear to be a creature upon which God hath laid out the Riches of his Wisdom and Power.

There you shall find a *Mind* susceptive of all Light, both natural and spiritual, shining as the Candle of God in the inner Man, closing with Truth as the Iron doth with the attractive Loadstone, a Shop in which all Arts and Sciences are laboured and formed: What are all the famous Libraries and Monuments of Learning, but so many Systems of Thoughts laboured and perfected in the active inquisitive Minds of Men? Truth is its natural and delectable Object, it pursues eagerly after it, and even spends it self and the Body too in the Chase and Prosecution of Truth; when it lies deep, as a subterranean Treasure, the Mind sends out innumerable Thoughts, re-inforcing each other in thick Successions, to dig for, and compass that invaluable Treasure; if it be disguised by Misrepresentations and vulgar Prejudice, and trampled in the Dirt under that Disguise, there is an Ability in the Mind to discern it by some Lines and Features, which are well known to it, and both own, honour and vindicate it under all that Dirt and Obloquy, with more Respect than a Man will take up a Piece of Gold, or a sparkling Diamond out of the Gutter; it searches after it by many painful Deductions of Reason, and Triumphs more in the Discovery of it, than in all earthly Treasures;

Veritas in puteo.

εὑρηκα, εὑρηκα. Archim.

no Gratification of Senſe like that of the Mind, when it graſps its Prey for which it hunted.

The Mind paſſes through all the Works of Creation, it views the ſeveral Creatures on Earth, conſiders the Fabrick, Uſe, and Beauty of *Animals*, the Signatures of Plants, penetrating thereby into their Nature and Virtues: it views the vaſt Ocean, and the large Train of Cauſes laid together in all theſe Things, for the Good of Man, by God, whoſe Name it reads in the moſt diminutive Creature it beholds on Earth.

It can in a Moment mount it ſelf from Earth to Heaven, view the Face thereof, deſcribe the Motions of the Sun in the *Ecliptick*, calculate Tables for the Motions of the Planets and fixed Stars, invent convenient *Cycles* for the Computations of Time, foretell at a great Diſtance the Diſmal Eclipſes of the Sun and Moon, to the very *Digit*, and the portentous Conjunctions of the Planets, to the very Minute of their Ingreſs: theſe are the pleaſant Imployments of the Underſtanding.

But there is a higher Game at which this Eagle plays, it reckons it ſelf all this while imploy'd as much beneath its Capacity, as *Domitian* in catching Flies; tho' theſe be lawful and pleaſant Exerciſes, when it hath Leiſure for them, yet it is fitted for a much nobler Exerciſe, even to penetrate the glorious Myſteries of Redemption, to trace redeeming Love through all the aſtoniſhing Methods, and manifold Diſcoveries of it; and yet higher than all this, it is capable of an immediate Sight or facial Viſion of the bleſſed God, ſhort of which it receives no Pleaſure that is fully agreeable to its noble Powers and infinite Appetite.

View its *Will*, and you ſhall find it like a *Queen* upon the Throne of the Soul, ſwaying the Scepter of Liberty in her hand, (as one expreſſeth it) with all the affections waiting and attending upon her. No Tyrant can force it, no Torment can wreſt the golden Scepter of Liberty out of its Hand, the Keys of all the Chambers of the Soul hang at its Girdle, theſe it delivers to Chriſt in the Day of his Power; victorious Grace ſweetly determines it by gaining its Conſent, but commits no Rape upon it by unnatural Coaction. God accepts its Offering, tho' full of Imperfections; but no Service is accepted without it, how excellent ſoever the Matter of it. *Culverwell.*

View the *Conſcience* and *Thoughts* with their ſelf-reflective abilities, wherein the Soul retires into it ſelf, and ſits concealed from all Eyes but his that made it, judging its own Actions, and cenſuring its Eſtate; viewing its Face in its own Glaſs, and correcting the Indecencies it diſcovers there: Things of greateſt Moment and Importance are ſilently tranſacted in this Council-chamber betwixt the Soul and God; ſo remote from the Knowledge of all Creatures, that neither Angels, Devils, or Men can know what it is doing there, but by uncertain Gueſs, or Revelation from God: here it impleads, condemns, and acquits it ſelf as at a privy Seſſion, with Reſpect of the Judgment of the great Day; here it meets with the beſt of Comforts, and with the worſt of Terrors. 1 Cor. 2. 11. Rom. 2. 15. 2 Cor. 1. 12.

Take a ſurvey of its *Paſſions* and *Affections*, and you will find them admirable: ſee how they are placed by Divine Wiſdom in the Soul, ſome for Defence and Safety, others for Delight and Pleaſure. *Anger* actuates the Spirit, and rouzeth its Courage, enabling it to break through Difficulties: *Fear* keeps *Centinel*, watching upon all Dangers that approach us: *Hope* foreſtals the good, and anticipates the Joys of the next Life, and thereby ſupports and ſtrengthens the Soul under all the Diſcouragements and Preſſures of the preſent Life: *Love* unites us to the chiefeſt Good; he that dwelleth in Love, dwells in God, and God in him: *Zeal* is the Dagger which Love draws in God's Cauſe and Quarrel, to ſecure it ſelf from Sin, and teſtify its Reſentments of God's Diſhonour.

O what a Divine Spark is the Soul of Man! well might Chriſt prefer it in Dignity to the whole World.

3. The Worth of a Soul may be gathered and diſcerned from its ſubjective Capacity and Hability both of Grace and Glory. It is capable of all the Graces of the Spirit, of being fill'd with the Fulneſs of God, *Eph.* 3. 19. to live to God here, and with God for ever. What excellent Graces do adorn ſome Souls! How are all the Rooms richly hanged with Divine and Coſtly Hangings, that God may dwell in them! This makes it like the carved Works of the Temple, overlaid with pure Gold; here is Glory upon Glory, a new Creation upon the old; in the innermoſt Parts of ſome Souls is a ſpiritual Altar erected with this Inſcription, *Holineſs to the Lord:* Here the Soul offers up it ſelf to God in the ſacred Flames of Love, and here it ſacrifices its vile Affections, devoting them to Deſtruction to the Glory of its God: here God walks with Delight, even a Delight beyond what he takes in all the ſtately Structures and magnificent adorned Temples in the whole World, *Iſa.* 66. 1, 2.

No other Soul beſides Man's is marriageable to Chriſt, or capable of Eſpouſals to the King of Glory; they were not deſigned, and therefore not endued with a Capacity for ſuch an Honour as his: but ſuch a Capacity hath every Soul, even the meaneſt on Earth, and ſuch Honour have all his Saints; others may, but they are betrothed to Chriſt in this World, and ſhall be preſented without Spot before him in the World to come. 2 Cor. 11. Eph. 5. 27.

It is now a lovely and excellent Creature in its naked natural State, much more beautiful and excellent in its ſanctified and gracious State; but what ſhall we ſay, or how ſhall we conceive of it, when all Spots of Sin are perfectly waſhed off its beautiful Face in Heaven, and the Glory of the Lord is riſen upon it! When its filthy Garments are taken away, and the pure Robes of perfect Holineſs, as well as Righteouſneſs, ſuperinduced upon this excellent Creature! If the imperfect Beauty of it, begun in Sanctification, enamoured its Saviour, and made him ſay, Thou haſt raviſhed my Heart with one of thine Eyes, with one of the Chains of thy Neck; what will its Beauty and his Delight in it be in the Seaſon of perfect Glorification! As we imagine the Circles in the Heavens to be vaſtly greater than thoſe we view upon the *Globe*, ſo muſt we imagine in the Caſe before us.

4. The Preparations God makes for Souls in Heaven, ſpeak their great Worth and Value. When you lift up your Eyes to Heaven, and behold that beſpangled Azure Canopy beſet and inlaid with ſo many golden Studs, and ſparkling Gems, you ſee but the Floor or Pavement of that Place which God hath prepared for ſome Souls. He furniſhes this World for us before he puts us into it, but as delightful and beautiful as it is, it

is no more to be compared with the Father's House in Heaven, than the smallest ruined *Chapel* your Eyes ever beheld, is to be compar'd with *Solomon's* Temple when it stood in all its shining Glory.

When you see a stately and magnificent Structure built, richest Hangings and Furniture prepared to adorn it, you conclude some great Persons are to come thither; such Preparations speak the Quality of the *Guests*.

Now Heaven, yea the Heaven of Heavens, the Palace of the great King, the Presence-chamber of the Godhead, is prepared, not only by God's Decree and Christ's Death, but by his Ascension thither in our Names, and as our Forerunner, for all renewed and redeemed Souls: *Joh.* 14. 2. *In my Father's House are many Mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you: I go to prepare a Place for you.*

And where is the Place prepared for them, but in his Father's House? the same Place, the very same House where the Father, Son and Spirit themselves do dwell: such is the Love of Christ to Souls, that he will not dwell in one House, and they in another; but as he speaks, *Joh.* 12. 26. *Where I am, there shall my Servant also be.* There is Room enough in the Father's House for Christ and all the Souls he redeemed to live and dwell together for evermore. His Ascension thither was in the Capacity of a common or publick Person, to take Livery and Seisin of those many Mansions for them, which are to be filled with their Inhabitants, as they come thither in their respective Times and Orders.

5. The great Price with which they were redeemed and purchased, speaks their Dignity and Value. No wise Man will purchase a Trifle at a great Price, much less the most wise God. Now the Redemption of every Soul stood in no less than the most precious Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ: 1 *Pet.* 1. 18, 19. *You know* (saith the Apostle there) *that we were not redeemed with corruptible Things, as Silver and Gold, ——— but with the precious Blood of Christ, as a Lamb without Blemish or Spot.* All the Gold and Silver in the World was no Ransome for one Soul; nay, all the Blood of the Creatures, had it been shed as a Sacrifice to the Glory of Justice, or even the Blood which is most dear to us, as being derived from our own, I mean the Blood of our dear Children, even of our first-born, the Beginning of our Strength, which usually have the Strength of Affection: I say, none of this could purchase a Pardon for the smallest Sin that ever any Soul committed, much less was it able to purchase the Soul it self. *Micah* 6. 6, 7. thousands of Rams, and ten thousand Rivers of Oil, or our First-born are no Ransom to God for the Sin of the Soul. It is only the precious Blood of Christ that is a just Ransom or Counterprice, as it's called, *Mat.* 20. 28.

Now who can compute the Value of that Blood? such was the Worth of the Blood of Christ, which by the Communication of Properties is truly stiled the Blood of God, that one Drop of it is above the Estimations of Men and Angels; and yet before the Soul of the meanest Man or Woman in the World could be redeemed, every Drop of his Blood must be shed; for no less than his Death could be a Price for our Souls. Hence then we evidently discern an invaluable worth in Souls. A whole Kingdom is taxed when a King is to be ransomed; the Delight and Darling of God's Soul must die when our Souls are to be redeemed. O the worth of Souls!

6. This evidences the transcendent Dignity and Worth of Souls, that *Eternity is stampt upon their Actions*, and theirs only of all the Beings in this World: The Acts of Souls are immortal, as their Nature is, whereas the Actions of other Animals having neither moral Goodness nor moral Evil in them, pass away as their Beings do.

The Apostle therefore in *Gal.* 6. 7. compares the Actions of Men in this World to Seed sown, and tells us of everlasting Fruits we shall reap from them in the next Life: they have the same Respect to a future Account that Seed hath to the Harvest; *he that soweth Iniquity shall reap Vanity*, (i. e.) everlasting Disappointment and Misery, *Prov.* 22. 8. and they that now sow in Tears, shall then reap in Joy, *Psal.* 126. 5. Every gracious Action is the Seed of Joy, and every sinful Action the Seed of Sorrow; and this makes the great Difference betwixt the Actions of a rational Soul, and those done by Beasts: and if it were not so, Man would then be wholly sway'd by Sense and present Things, as the Beasts are, and all Religion would vanish with this Distinction of Actions.

Our Actions are considerable two Ways, *physically* and *morally*; in the first Sense they are *transient*, in the last *permanent*: a Word is past as soon as spoken, but yet it must and will be recalled and brought into the Judgment of the great Day, *Mat.* 12. 36. Whatever therefore a Man shall speak, think or do, once spoken, thought, or done, it becomes eternal, and abides for ever. Now, what is it that puts so great a Difference betwixt humane and brutal Actions; but the excellent Nature of the reasonable Soul? 'Tis this which stamps Immortality upon humane Actions, and is at once a clear Proof both of the Immortality and Dignity of the Soul of Man above all other Creatures in this World.

7. The Contentions of both Worlds, the Strife of Heaven and Hell about the Soul of Man, speaks it a most precious and invaluable Treasure.

The Soul of Man is the Prize about which Heaven and Hell contend: the great Design of Heaven is to save it, and all the Plots of Hell to ruin it. Man is a Borderer betwixt both Kingdoms, he lives here upon the Confines of the spiritual and material World; and therefore *Scaliger* fitly calls him, *Utriusque mundi nexus*, one in whom both Worlds meet: his Body is of the Earth, earthly; his Soul the Off-spring of a Deity, heavenly. It is then no wonder to find such tugging and pulling this Way and that Way, upward and downward, such Sallies from Heaven to rescue and save it, such Excursions from Hell to captivate and ruin it.

The infinite Wisdom of God hath laid the Plot and Design for its Salvation by Christ in so great Depth of Counsel, that the Angels of Heaven are astonished at it, and desire to pry into it. Christ, in Pursuance of this eternal Project, came from Heaven professedly to seek and to save lost Souls, *Luke* 19. 10. He compares himself to a good Shepherd, who leaveth the ninety nine to seek one lost Sheep, and having found it, brings it Home upon his Shoulders, rejoycing that he hath found it, *Luke* 15. 5.

Hell imploys all its Skill and Policy, sets a-work all Whiles and Stratagems to destroy and ruin it: 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. *Your Adversary the Devil go-*

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eth about as a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour. The strong Man armed gets the first Possession of the Soul, and with all his forces and policies labours to secure it as his property, *Luke* 11. 21. Christ raises all the spiritual Militia, the very *posse Cœli*, the Powers of Heaven to rescue it, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5. And do Heaven and Earth thus contend, think you, *de lana caprina*, for a thing of nought? No, no, if there were not some singular and peculiar excellency and worth in Man's Soul, both worlds would never tug and pull at this rate which should win that Prize. It was a great argument of the worth and excellency of *Homer*, that incomparable *Poet*, that seven Cities contended for the honour of his Nativity.

Ἑπτὰ πόλεις διεζήτουν περὶ εἶζαν Ὁμήρου.
Σμύρνα Ῥόδος, Κολοφών, Σαλαμίς, Χίος, Ἄργος, Ἀθῆναι.

Smyrna, Rhodes, Colophon, Salamis, Chius, Argos, and *Athens* were all at strife about one poor Man, who should crown themselves with the honour of his Birth: but when Heaven and Hell shall contend about a Soul, certainly it much more speaks the dignity of it, than the contention of seven Cities for one *Homer*.

What are all the wooings, expostulations, and passionate beseechings of Christ's Ministers? what are all the convictions of Conscience, and strong impressions made upon the Affections? what are all strokes from Heaven upon Men in the way of Sin? I say, what are all these but the tuggings of Heaven to draw Souls out of the Snares of Hell?

And what are the hellish Temptations that Men feel in their Hearts, the alluring Objects presented to their Eyes, the ensnaring Examples that are set round about them, but the tuggings of Satan, if possible, to draw the Souls of Men into the same condemnation and misery with himself?

Would Heaven and Hell be up in arms, as it were, and strive at this rate for nothing? Thy Soul, O Man, how vilely soever thou depreciatest and slightest it, is of high esteem, a rich Purchase, a Creature of nobler rank than thou art aware of. The wise Merchant knows the value of Gold and Diamonds, tho' ignorant *Indians* would part with them for Glass Beads and Tinsel Toys. And this leads us to

8. The eighth Evidence of the invaluable worth of Souls, which is the joy in Heaven, and the rage in Hell for the gain and loss of the Soul of Man.

Christ who came from Heaven, and well knew the frame and disposition of the Inhabitants of that City tells us, That *there is joy in the presence of the Angels of God over one Sinner that repenteth*, Luke 16. 7, 10. No sooner is the heart of a Sinner darted with conviction, broken with sorrow for Sin, and begins to cry, *Men and Brethren what shall I do?* but the News is quickly in Heaven, and sets all the City of God a rejoicing at it, as is in the chief City of a Kingdom when a young Prince is born.

Quoties bene agimus, gaudent Angeli, & tristantur Dæmones; quoties à bono devíamus, Diabolum lætificamus, & Angelos suo gaudio defraudamus. *August.*

We never read that Christ laughed in all his time on Earth; but we read that he once rejoiced in Spirit, *Luke* 10. 21. And what was the occasion of that his Joy, but the success of the Gospel in the Salvation of the Souls of Men? Now certainly it must be some great Good that so affects Christ and all his Angels in Heaven at the sight of it: the degree of a wise Man's Joy is according to the value of the Object thereof: no Man that is wise will rejoice, and feel his heart leap within him for gladness at a small or common thing.

And as there is joy in Heaven for the saving, so certainly there is grief and rage in Hell for the loss of a Soul. No sooner had God by *Paul*'s Ministry converted one poor *Lydia*, at *Philippi*, whither he was call'd by an immediate Express from Heaven for that service, but the Devil put all the City into an uproar, as if an Enemy had landed on their Coast; and raised a violent Persecution, which quickly drave him thence, *Acts* 16. 9, 14, 22.

And indeed what are all the fierce and cruel Persecutions of God's faithful Ministers, but so many efforts of the rage and malice of Hell against them for plucking Souls as so many Captives and Preys out of his Paws? For this he owes them a spight, and will be sure to pay them, if ever he get them at an Advantage. But all this Joy and Grief demonstrates the high and great value of the Prize which is won by Heaven, and lost by Hell.

9. The Institution of Gospel-Ordinances, and the appointment of so many Gospel-Officers purposely for the saving of Souls, is no small evidence of their value and esteem.

No Man would light and maintain a Lamp fed with golden Oil, and keep it burning from Age to Age, if the work to be done by the light of it were not of a very precious and important nature; what else are the Dispensations of the Gospel, but Lamps burning with golden Oil to *Light* Souls to Heaven? *Zech.* 4. 2, 3. 4. & 12. compared: a magnificent Vision is there presented to the Prophet, *viz.* a Candlestick of Gold with a *Bowl* or *Cistern* upon the top of it, and seven Shafts with seven Lamps at the ends thereof, all lighted: and that these Lamps might have a constant supply of Oil, without any accessory humane help, there are presented (as growing by the Candlestick) two fresh and green Olive-trees on each side thereof, *ver.* 3. which do empty out of themselves golden Oil, *ver.* 12. naturally dropping and distilling it into that Bowl, and the two Pipes thereof to feed the Lamps continually. Under this stately Emblem you have a lively representation of the spiritual Gifts and Graces distilled by the Spirit into the Ministers of the Gospel, for the use and benefit of the Church, as you find not only by the Angel's Exposition of it here, but by the Spirit's allusion to it, and accommodation of it in *Rev.* 11. 3, 4. See herein what price God puts upon the Salvation of Souls: Gospel-Lamps are maintain'd for their sakes, not with the sweat of Ministers brows, or the expence and waste of their Spirits, but by the precious Gifts and Graces of God's Spirit continually dropping into them for the use and service of Souls. These ministerial Gifts and Graces are Christ's Ascension-gifts, *Eph.* 4. 8. *When he ascended up on high, he gave gifts unto Men*; and what were the Royal Gifts of that triumphant day? why, he *gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ.* It is an allusion to the *Roman Triumphs*, wherein the Conqueror did *spargere missilia*, scatter abroad his treasures among the People. It is reported of the *Palm-tree*, saith one, that when it was first planted in *Italy*, they water'd its roots with Wine, to make it take the bet-

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ter with the Soil; but God waters our Souls with what is infinitely more costly than Wine, he waters them with the Heart-blood of Christ, and the precious Gifts and Graces of the Spirit, which certainly he would never do, if they were not of great worth in his Eyes. O how many excellent Ministers who were, as is said of *John*, burning and shining Lights in their places and generations, have spent themselves, and how many are there who are willing to spend and be spent, as *Paul* was, for the Salvation of Souls! God is at great expences for them, and therefore puts a very high value upon them.

Now all this respects the Soul of Man, that is the object of all ministerial labours. The Soul is the *terminus actionum ad intra*, the subject on which God works, and upon which he spends all those invaluable treasures. 'Tis the Soul which he aims at, and principally designs and levels all to, and reckons it not too dear a rate to save them at.

No Man will dig for common Stones with golden Mattocks, the instruments that would be worn out being of far greater value than the thing. This may convince us of what worth our Souls are, and at what rates they are set in God's Book, that such instruments are sent abroad into the World, and such precious Gifts and Graces like golden Oil spent continually for their Salvation: whether *Paul* or *Apollo*, or *Cephas*, all are yours, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22. (*i. e.*) all set apart for the service and salvation of your Souls.

10. The great Encouragements and Rewards God propounds, and promiseth to them that win Souls, speaks their worth, and God's great esteem of them.

There cannot be a more acceptable Service done to God, than for a Man to set himself heartily and diligently to the Conversion of Souls: so many Souls as a Man instrumently saves, so many *Diadems* will God Crown him withal in the great Day. St. *Paul* calls his converted *Philippians* his *Joy and his Crown*, Phil. 4. 1. and tells the converted *Thessalonians*, they were his *Crown of rejoicing in the presence of Jesus Christ at his coming*, 1 Thess. 2. 19. There is a full reward assured by promise to those that labour in this great Service, *Dan.* 12. 3. *And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever.* The Wisdom here spoken of, I conceive not to be only that whereby a Man is made wise to the salvation of his own Soul, but whereby he is also furnished with skill for the saving of other Mens Souls, according to that, *Prov.* 11. 30. *He that winneth Souls is wise*, and so the latter Phrase is exegetical of it, meaning one and the same thing by being wise, and turning many unto Righteousness: and to put Men upon the study of this Wisdom, he puts a very honourable title upon them, calling them מצדיקי רבים, the *Justifiers of many*, as in 1 *Thes.* 4. 16. they are said to save others. Here is singular honour put upon the very Instruments imploy'd in this honourable Service, and that is not all, but their Reward is great hereafter, as well as their Honour great at present: they shall *shine as the Brightness of the Firmament, and the Stars for ever and ever.* The Firmament shines like a Sapphire in it self, and the Stars and Planets more gloriously again; but those that faithfully labour in this work of saving Souls, shall shine in Glory for ever and ever, when the Firmament shall be parched up as a scrowl. O what Rewards and Honours are here to provoke Men to the study of saving Souls! God will richly recompense all our pains in this work: if we did but only sow the seed in our days, and another enter into our Labour, and water what we sowed, so that neither the first hath the comfort of finishing the Work, nor the last the honour of beginning it; but one did somewhat towards it in the work of Conviction, and the other carried it on to greater maturity and perfection, and so neither the one or other began and finished the Work singly; yet both shall rejoice in Heaven together, *John* 4. 36.

You see what Honours God puts upon the very Instruments imploy'd in this work, even the honour to be Saviours under God of Mens Souls, *James* 5. 20. and what a full reward of Glory, Joy and Comfort they shall have in Heaven: all which speaks the great value of the Soul with God. Such Encouragements and such Rewards would never have been propounded and promised, if God had not a singular estimation of them.

And the more to quicken his Instruments to all diligence in this great work, he works upon their fears as well as hopes: threatens them with *Hell*, as well as incourages them with the hopes of Heaven; tells them he will require the blood of all those Souls that perish by their negligence; *Their blood*, saith he, *will I require at the Watchman's hands*, Ezek. 33. 6. which are rather Thunder-bolts than Words, saith *Chrysostom.* By all which you see what weight God lays upon the saving or losing of Souls, such severe charges, great encouragements, and terrible threats had never been proposed in Scripture, if the Souls of men had not been invaluably precious.

11. It is no small Evidence of the precious and invaluable worth of Souls, that God manifests so great and tender *Care* over them, and is so much concern'd about the evil that befals them.

Among many others, there are two things in which the tender care of God for the good of Souls is manifested.

(1.) In his tenderness over them in times of distress and danger: as a tender Father will not leave his sick Child in other hands, but sits up and watches by him himself, and administers the Cordials with his own hands; even so the great God expresseth his care and tenderness, *Isa.* 57. 15. *I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble Spirit, to revive the Spirit of the humble, and to revive the Heart of the contrite ones.* Behold the condescending tenderness of the highest Majesty! Is a Soul ready to faint and fail, Oh, how soon is God with it, with a reviving Cordial in his hand, lest the Spirit should fail before him, and the Soul which he hath made? as it is *vers.* 16 yea, he put it into Christ's Commission to preach good tydings to the meek, and to bind up the broken hearted, *Isa.* 61. 1. and not only inserts it in Christ's Commission, but gives the same in solemn charge to all his inferior messengers whom he imploys about them, *Isa.* 35. 3. *Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees; say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not.*

(2.) His special regard to Souls is evidenced in his severe prohibitions to all others to do nothing that may be an occasion of ruin to them. He charges it upon all, *That no man put a stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall in his brother's way*, Rom. 14. 13. that by the abuse of our own liberty, *we destroy not him for whom Christ died*, Rom. 14. 15. And what doth all this signify, but the precious and invaluable worth of Souls?

12. Lastly,

12. Lastly, It is not the least evidence of the dignity of mens Souls, that God hath appointed the whole Host of Angels to be their Guardians and Attendants.

Are they not all ministring Spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of Salvation? Heb. 1. 14.

Are they not?] It is no doubtful question, but the strongest way of affirmation; nothing is surer than that they are.

All] Not one of that heavenly Company excepted. The highest Angel thinks it no disparagement to serve a Soul for whom Christ died. Well may they all stoop to serve them, when they see Christ their Lord hath stooped even to death to save them. They are all of them

Ministring Spirits] Λειτουργικὰ πνεύματα, publick Officers to whom their Tutelage is committed: to them it belongs to attend, serve, protect, and relieve them. The greatest Peers and Barons in the Kingdom think it not below them to wait upon the Heir apparent to the Crown in his minority; and no less dignity is here stampt by God upon the Souls of Men, whom he calls

Heirs of Salvation.] And in some respect nearer to Christ than themselves are; on this Account it is that the Angels delight to serve them. Christ's little Ones upon Earth have their Angels, which always behold the Face of God in Heaven, *Mat.* 18. 10. and therefore saith our Lord there, *Take heed you despise not One of these little Ones*; they are greater Persons than you are aware of. Nor is it enough that one Angel is appointed to wait upon all or many of them, but many Angels, even a whole Host of them are sent sometimes to attend upon one of them. As *Jacob* was going on his way, the Angels of God met him; and when he saw them, he said, *This is God's Host*, Gen. 32. 1, 2.

The same two Offices which belong to a Nurse, to whom the Father commits his Child, belong also to the Angels of Heaven, with respect to the Children of God, *viz.* to keep them tenderly while they are abroad, and bring them Home to their Father's House at last. And how clearly doth all this evince and demonstrate the great Dignity and value of Souls? Was it an Argument of the Grandeur and Magnificence of King *Solomon*, that he had two hundred Men with *Targets*, and three hundred Men with Shields of beaten Gold for his ordinary Guard every Day? And is it not a Mark of far greater Dignity than ever *Solomon* had in all his Glory, to have Hosts of Angels attending us? In comparison with one of this Guard *Solomon* himself was but a Worm in all his Magnificence.

And now lay all these Arguments together, and see what they will amount to. You have before you no ordinary Creature? for, (1.) It was not produced as other Creatures were, by a meer Word of Command, but by the Deliberation of the great Council of Heaven: and, (2.) Such are the high and noble Faculties and Powers found in it, as render it agreable to, and becoming such a Divine Original. Yea, (3.) by reason of these its admirable Powers it becomes a capable Subject both of Grace here, and Glory hereafter. (4.) Nor is this its Capacity in vain; for God hath made glorious Preparations for some of them in Heaven. (5.) And purchased them for Heaven, and Heaven for them at an invaluable Price, even the precious Blood of Christ. (6.) And stampt Immortality upon their Actions as well as Natures. (7.) Both Worlds contend and strive for the Soul as a Prize of greatest Value. (8.) Their Conversion to Christ is the Triumph of Heaven, and Rage of Hell. (9.) The Lamps of Gospel-Ordinances are maintained over all the reformed Christian World to light them in their Passage to Heaven. (10.) Great Rewards are propounded to all that shall heartily endeavour the Salvation of them. (11.) The Care of Heaven is exceeding great and tender over them. And (12.) the heavenly Host of Angels have the Charge of them, and reckon it their Honour to serve them. These Things duly weighed, bring home the Conclusion with demonstrative Clearness to every Man's Understanding, *That one Soul is of more Value than the whole World*, which was the Thing to be proved. What remains is the Improvement of this excellent Subject in these following Inferences.

Infer. I. The Soul of Man appearing to be a Creature of such transcendent Dignity and Excellency, this Truth appears of equal Clearness with it, *That 'twas not made for the Body, but the Body for it; and therefore it is a vile Abuse of the noble and high-born Soul, to subject it to the Lusts, and enslave it to the Drudgery of the inferiour and moreignble Part.*

The very Law of Nature assigns the most honourable Places and Imployments to the most noble and excellent Creatures, and the baser and inferiour to Things of the lowest Rank and Quality. The Sun, Moon, and Stars are placed by this Law in the Heavens; but the *Ignis fatuus* and the Glow-worm in the Fens and Ditches. *Princes* are set upon Thrones of Glory, the *Beggars* lodg'd in Barns and Stables: And if at any Time this Order of Nature be inverted, and the baser suppress and perk over the more noble and honourable Beings, it is looked upon as a kind of Prodigy in the Civil World: and so *Solomon* represents it, *Eccles.* 10. 7. *I have seen Servants upon Horses, and Princes walking as Servants upon the Earth, (i. e.)* I have seen Men that are worthy of no better Imployments than to rub Horses Heels, in the Saddle with their Trappings; and Men who deserve to bear rule, and to govern Kingdoms, Men who for their great Ability and Integrity deserved to sit at Helm, and moderate the Affairs of Kingdoms, these have I seen walking as Servants upon the Earth; and this he calls an Evil under the Sun, tha tis an *Ataxy*, Confusion or Disorder in the Course of Nature.

Now there can never be that Difference and vast Odds betwixt one Man and another, as there is betwixt the Soul and Body of every Man. A King upon the Throne is not so much above a Beggar that cries at our Doors for a Crust, as the Soul is above a Body; for the Soul of a Beggar is of the same Species, Original, and Capacity of Happiness with the Soul of the most illustrious Prince; and sometimes greater Excellencies of Mind are found in the lowest Rank and Order of Men: *Better is a poor and wise Child than an old and foolish King*, Eccles. 4. 13. but the Soul of the meanest Person in the World is better than all the Bodies in it; and therefore to make the noble and high-born Soul a slave, a meer drudge to the vile body, as the *Apostle* calls it, *Phil.* 3. 21. *The Body of this Vileness*; what is it but to set the Beggar on Horse-back, and make the King lacquey after him on foot?

It

Major sum, & ad majora natus, quam ut corporis mei sim mancipium. *Sen.*

It was a generous Resentment that a Heathen had of the Dignity of his own Soul, and a very just Abhorrence of so vile an Abuse of it, when he said, *I am greater, and born to greater things, than that I should be a slave to my body.*

I know there is a debt of duty the Soul owes to its own Body, and few Souls are to be found too careless or dilatory in the discharge thereof: where one Soul needs the *Spur* in this case, thousands need the *Curb*. Most Souls are over-heated with Zeal for the concerns of the flesh, worn out and spent in its constant drudgery: their whole life is but a *serving of divers lusts and pleasures*, as the *Apostle* speaks, *Tit.* 3. 3. Imperious Lusts are cruel Task-Masters, they give the Soul no rest; the more provision the Soul brings in to satisfy them, the more they rage, like fire by the addition of more fuel. What a sad sight is it to see a noble immortal Soul *enslaved*, as the *Apostle*'s word is, *Tit.* 1. 7. *to Wine?* to filthy *lucre*, to a thousand sorts of Vassalage; like a *Tapster* in a common *Inn*, now running up stairs, and then down, at every ones knock and call:

Μὴ οἴνῳ πολλῷ δεδικλωμένας.

O what perpetual hurry and noise do thousands of Souls live in! so that they have no time to retire into themselves, and think for what end and use they were created, and sent into this World: all their thoughts, all their cares, all their studies and labours are taken up about that perishing, clogging, ensnaring Body, which must shortly fall a prey to the worms. How many millions of poor Creatures are there that labour and toil all their life long for a poor, bare maintenance of their Bodies, and never think they have any other business to do in this World?

And how many of a higher rank are charm'd by a thick succession of fleshly delights and pleasures into a deep oblivion of their eternal concerns? so that their whole life is but one intire diversion from the great business and proper end of it: *Jam.* 5. 5. *Ye have lived in pleasures on earth*, living in them as the Fish doth in the water, its proper Element, or the *Eel* in the mud. Sometimes it falls out at the very close of a vain voluptuous Life, when they see all their delights shrinking away at the approaches and appearance of Death, that they begin to be a little startled at the change which is about to be made upon them, and to cry, Oh, what shall we do now! Ah poor Souls! is that a time to think what you shall do, when you are just stepping into the awful state of Eternity? Oh, that this had been thought on in season! but you could find no leisure for one such thought. Now you begin to wish time had been rescued out of the hands of the cares and pleasures of this life for better purposes; but it's gone, and never more to be recalled.

Infer. II. *Is the Soul so invaluably precious? then the Salvation of the Soul is to be the great care and business of every man in this life.*

Where one thought is spent about this question, *What shall I eat, drink, and put on?* a thousand shou'd be spent about that question, *What shall I do to be saved?* If a Treasure of ten or twenty thousand pounds were committed to your trust and charge, and for which (in case of loss) you must be responsible, would not your thoughts, cares, and fears be working night and day about it, 'till you be satisfied it is safe and out of danger? and then your mind would be at rest, but not before. Thy Soul, Oh man, is more worth than the Crowns and Treasures of all the Princes in the World! if all their Exchequers were drained, and all their Crown-Jewels sold to their full value, they could never make up half a ransom for the Soul of the poorest and meanest man. This invaluable Treasure is committed to your Charge; if it be lost, you are lost for ever. That which St. *Matthew* calls the losing of the Soul in my Text, St. *Luke* calls *losing himself*: if the Soul be lost, the Man is lost: the Body is but as a Boat fastened to the stern of a stately Ship, if the Ship sink, the Boat follows it.

Oh, therefore what thoughts, what fears, what cares should exercise the minds of men day and night, 'till their precious Souls be out of all danger! Methinks the sound of this *Text* should ring a perpetual *Alarm* in the ears of careless sinners, and make them hasten to the Ensurance-Office, as Merchants do, who have great Adventures in danger at Sea. It was Counsel given once to a King, and worthy to be prest upon all, from the King to the Beggar, to ruminate these Words of Christ one quarter of an hour every day, *What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own Soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his Soul?* Certainly it would make men slack their pace, and cool themselves in their hot and earnest pursuit of the trifles of this World, and convince them, that they have somewhat else to do of far greater importance.

It was not without great and weighty reason therefore, that the Apostle *Peter* exhorts to all diligence to make our calling and election sure, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. There are two words in this Text of extraordinary weight, *Give all diligence*, the word is *study*; the utmost intention of the mind, pondering and comparing things in the thoughts, valuing reasons for, and objections against the point before us, this is study; and such as calls for all diligence where the subject matter is (as to be sure, here it is) of the greatest importance: And what is the subject matter of all this study and diligence? Why, it is the most solemn of all works that ever came under the hand of man, to make our calling and election *sure*, firm, stable, or fixed, as a Building raised upon a square and strong Foundation; or as a Conclusion is sure, when regularly drawn from certain and indubitable premisses; there can never be too much care, too much study or pains, about that which can never be too well secured.

σπουδάσατε. βεβαίαν.

Many Souls never spent one solemn Hour in a close and serious debate about this matter; others have taken a great deal of pains about it, they have broken many nights sleep, poured out many prayers, made many a deep search into their own hearts, walked with much conscientious watchfulness and tenderness, proposed many a serious case of Conscience to the most judicious and skilful Ministers and Christians; and after all, the security is not such as fully satisfies: and probably one reason of it may be the great weight wherewith the matters of this Salvation lie upon their Spirits. Oh, that these Soul-concerns did bear upon all, as they do upon some: it requires more time, more thoughts, more prayers to make these things sure, than most are aware of.

Infer. III. *If the Soul be so precious, then certainly it is the special care of Heaven, that which God looks*

more particularly after, than any other Creature on Earth.

There is an active vigilant Providence that superintends every Creature upon Earth: there is not the most despicable diminutive Creature that lives in the World, left without the line of Providence. God is therefore said to give them all their meat in due season, and for that end they all wait upon him, *Psal.* 104. 27. as a great and provident House-keeper orders daily convenient provisions for all his Family, even to the least and lowest among them: the smallest Insects and Gnats which swarm so thick in the Air, and of the usefulness of whose Being it is hard to give an account; yet, as the incomparably learned Dr. *Moore* well observes, these all find nourishment in the World, which would be lost if they did not, and are again convenient nourishment themselves to others that prey upon them. Antid. p. 82.

But man is the peculiar, special care of God, and the Soul of man much more than the Body. Hence Christ fortifies the Faith of Christians against all distrusts of Divine Providence, even from their Excellency above other Creatures; *Matth.* 10. 31. *Ye are of more value than many Sparrows*: and *Matth.* 6. 26. your heavenly Father feeds the Fowls of the Air, *and are ye not much better than they?* and *vers.* 30 he cloathes the grass of the field, *and shall he not much more cloathe you?* And so the *Apostle*, 1 Cor. 9. 9. *Doth God take care for Oxen? or saith he it altogether for our Sakes? For our Sakes no doubt this is written.* In all which Places the Dignity of Man above all *Animals* and *Vegetables*, in Respect of the natural Excellency of his reasonable Soul, but especially the gracious Endowments of it, which endear it far more to its Maker; this is the very Hinge of the Argument, and a firm Ground for the Believer's Faith of God's tender Care over both Parts, but especially the Soul. The Body of a Believer is God's Creature as well as his Soul; but that being of less Value, hath not such a Degree of Care and Tenderness expressed towards it, as the Soul hath: the Father's Care is not so much for the Child's Clothes, as it is for the Child himself. Besides, the immediate Wants and Troubles of the Soul, which are *Idiopathetical*, are far more sharp and pinching than those it suffers upon the Body's Account, which are but *Sympathetical*; and therefore when-ever such an excellent Creature, as a sanctified Soul, which is in Christ, or a Soul designed to be sanctified, which is moving towards Christ, falls under those heavy Pressures and Distresses (as it often does) and is ready to fail; let it be assured its merciful Creator will not fail to relieve, support, revive, and deliver it as often as it shall fall into those deep Distresses.

Hear how his compassionate Tenderness is expressed towards distressed Souls, *Isa.* 49. 15. *Can a Woman forget her sucking Child, that she should not have Compassion on the Son of her Womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.*

Sooner shall a *Woman*, the more tender *Sex*, forget (not the Nurse-child that only sucks her Breast, but) the Child, yea the Son of her Womb, and that now when grown and placed abroad, but whilst it hangs upon her Breast, and draws Love from her Heart, as well as Milk from her Breast: then God will forget a Soul that fears him. Let gracious Souls fortify their Faith therefore in the Divine Care, by considering with what peculiar Eye of Estimation and Care God looks upon them above all other Creatures in the World: only beware you so eye not the natural or spiritual Excellencies of your Souls, as to expect Mercy for the Sake thereof, as if your Souls were worthy for whose Sake God should do this: no, no, Sin hath nonsuited that Plea, all is of free Grace, not of Debt: but he minds us to what Reputation the new Creation brings the Soul with its God.

Infer. IV. *If the Soul of Man be so precious, how precious and dear to all Believers should the Redeemer and Saviour of their precious Souls be?*

Unto you therefore that believe, he is precious, saith the Apostle, 1 *Pet.* 2. 7. tho he be yet out of our Sight, he should never be one whole Hour together out of your Hearts and Thoughts: 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. *Whom having not seen ye love; whom tho' now you see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory.* The very Name of Christ, saith *Bernard*, is Honey in the Mouth, Melody in the Ear, and a very Jubilee in the Heart. The blessed Martyr Mr. *Lambert* made this his *Motto*, *None but Christ*, *None but Christ*. *Molinus* was seldom observ'd to mention his Name without dropping Eyes. *Julius Palmer*, in the midst of the Flames moved his scorched Lips, and was heard to say, *Sweet Jesus*, and fell asleep. *Paul* fastens upon his Name as a *Bee* upon a sweet Flower, and mentions it no less than ten Times in the Compass of ten Verses, 1 *Cor.* 1. as if he knew not how to leave it.

Mel in ore, melos in aure, jubilum in corde. Bern.

There is a twofold *Preciousness* of Christ, one in Respect of his essential Excellency and Glory; in this Respect he is glorious as the only begotten Son of God, the Brightness of his Father's Glory, and the express Image or Character of his Person, *Heb.* 1. the other in Respect of his relative Usefulness and Sutableness to all the Needs and Wants of poor Sinners; as he is *the Lord our Righteousness*, made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption: none discern this Preciousness of Christ, but those that have been convinced of Sin, and have apprehended the Wrath to come, the just Demerit of Sin, and fled for Refuge to the Hope set before them: and to them he is precious indeed. Consider him as a Saviour from Wrath to come, and he will appear the most lovely and desirable in all the World to your Souls: he that understands the Value of his own Soul, the dreadful Nature of the Wrath of God, the near Approaches of Wrath to his own Soul, and the astonishing Love of Christ in delivering him from it, by bearing that Wrath in his Place and Room in his own Person, cannot chuse but estimate Christ above ten thousand Worlds.

Infer. V. *How great a Trust and Charge lieth upon them to whom the Care of Souls is committed, and from whom an Account for other Mens, as well as their own Souls shall certainly be required?*

Ministers are appointed of God to watch for the Souls of their People, and that as Men that must give an Account, *Heb.* 13. 17. The Word here translated *watch*, signifies such Watchfulness as that of *Shepherds* who keep their Flocks by Night in Places infested by *Wolves*, and watch whole Nights together for their Safety. If a Man were a Keeper only of Sheep or Swine, it were no great Matter if the Wolf now and then carried away one whilst he slept; but Ministers have Charge of Souls, on

'Αγρυπνεῖν est noctes in somnis agere, quod solent viri βυλήφοροι, pernox solliciudo.

of which, as Christ assures us in the Text, is more worth than the whole World. Hear what one speaks upon this Point.

Gildas Salvian, p. 260.

'God purchased the Church with his own 'Blood: Oh what an Argument is here to quicken 'the negligent? and what an Argument to con-'demn those that will not be quickned up to their 'Duty by it? O, saith one of the antient Doctors, 'if Christ had but committed to my Keeping one 'Spoonful of his Blood in a fragil Glass, how cu-'riously should I preserve it, and how tender 'should I be of that Glass! If then he have com-'mitted to me the Purchase of that Blood, should 'I not carefully look to my Charge?

'What, Sirs, shall we despise the Blood of 'Christ? shall we think it was shed for them 'that are not worthy of our Care? O then let us 'hear those Arguments of Christ whenever we 'feel our Selves grow dull and careless. Did I 'die for them, and wilt thou not look after them! 'Were they worth my Blood, and are they not 'worth thy Labour? Did I come down from 'Heaven to Earth, to seek and to save that which 'is lost, and wilt not thou go to the next Door, 'or Street, or Village, to seek them? How small 'is thy Labour or Condescension to mine? I de-'based my Self to this, but it is thy Honour to 'be so imployed.

Let not that Man think to be saved by the Blood of Christ himself, that makes light of Precious Souls, who are the Purchase of that Blood.

And no less Charge lieth upon Parents, to whom God hath committed the Care of their Childrens Souls; and Masters that have the Guardianship of the Souls as well as Bodies of their Families: the Command is laid immediately upon you, that they sanctify God's Sabbaths, *Exod.* 20. 10, to command your Houshold in the Way of the Lord *Gen.* 18. 19.

O Parents, consider with your selves what strong Engagements lie upon you to do all you are capable of doing for the Salvation of the precious Souls of your dear Children. Remember, their Souls are infinitely of more Value than their Bodies; that they came into the World under Sin and Condemnation; that you were the Instruments of propagating that Sin to them, and bringing them into that Misery; that you know their Dispositions, and how to sute them better than others can, that the Bonds of Nature give you singular Advantages to prevail, and be successful in your Exhortations beyond what any others have; that you are always with them, aad can chuse Opportunities, which others cannot; that you and they must shortly part, and never meet again, till you meet at the Judgment-seat of Christ; that it will be an unconceivably dreadful Day to see them stand at Christ's Left Hand among the cursed and condemned, there cursing the Day that ever they were born of such ignorant and negligent, such careless and cruel Parents as took no Care to instruct, reprove, or exhort them. O who can think without Horror of the Cries and Curses of his own Child in Hell, cast away by the very Instrument of its Being?

Is this the Love you bear them, to betray them to eternal Misery? Was there no other Provision to be made, but for their Bodies? Did you think you had fully acquitted your Duty, when you had got an Estate for them? O that God would effectually touch your Hearts with a becoming Sense of the Value and Danger of their Souls, and your own too, in the Neglect of that great and solemn Trust committed to you with respect to them. And you, Masters, consider, tho' God hath set you above, and your Servants below, yet are their Souls equally precious with yours: they have another Master that expects Service from them, as well as you: do not only allow them Time, but give them your Exhortations and Commands, not to neglect their own Souls, whilst they attend your Business: think not your Business will prosper the less, because it is in the Hand of a praying Servant; their Souls are of greater Concernment than any Business of yours can be.

Infer. VI. *Are Souls so precious? then certainly the Means and Instruments of their Salvation must be exceeding precious too, and the Removal of them a sore Judgment.*

The Dignity of the Subject gives Value to the Instruments imploy'd about it. It is no ordinary Mercy for Souls to come into such a Part of the World, and in such a Time as furnisheth them with the best Helps for Salvation. Ordinances and Ministers receive their Value not only from their *Author*, but their *Object*: they have a Dignity stampt upon them by their Usefulness to the Souls of Men, *Acts* 20. 32. it is the *seed* of Life, 1 *Pet.* 1. 23: the regenerating Instrument. It is the *bread of Life* and *Job* 23. 12. more than our necessary Food. The Word is a *Light* shining in the dark World to direct our Souls through all the Snares laid for them, unto Glory. It is the Soul's *Cordial* in all the fainting Fits, *Psal.* 119. 50. What shall I say of the Word and Ordinances of God, the Sun that shines in Heaven to give us Light? the Fountains, Springs and Rivers that stream for our Refreshment, the Corn and Cattle on the Earth, yea the very Air we breathe in, is not so useful, so necessary, so precious to our Bodies, as the World is to our Souls.

It cannot therefore but be a sore Judgment, and a dreadful Token of God's Indignation and Wrath to Hell, a Restraint or Scarcity of the Means of Salvation among us; but should there be (which God in Mercy prevent) a removal and total Loss of these Things, Wrath would then come upon us to the uttermost. What will the Condition of precious Souls be, when the Means of Salvation are cut off from them? When that Famine, worse than of Bread and Water, is come upon them? *Amos* 8. 11. When the Ark of God (the Symbol of his Presence) was taken, it is said, 1 *Sam.* 4. 13. *That all the City cried out.* When *Paul* took his Leave of *Antioch*, and told them they should see his Face no more, how did the poor Christians lament and mourn, as cut at the Heart by that killing Word? *Acts* 20. 37, 38. It made Christ's Bowels to yern and roll within him, when he saw the Multitude scatter'd as Sheep having no Shepherd, *Mat.* 9. 36.

Matthew Paris tells us in the Year 1072 when Preaching was suppreſt at *Rome*, Letters were framed as coming from Hell wherein the Devil gave them Thanks for the Multitude of Souls sent to him that Year: but we need no Letters from Hell, we have a sad Account from Heaven in what a sad State those Souls are left from whom the Means of Salvation are cut off: *Where no Vision is, the People perish*, Prov. 29. 18. and *Hosea*

Hosea 4. 6. *My People are destroyed for Lack of Knowledge.*

'Tis sad when those Stars that guide Souls to Christ (as that which the wise men saw did) are set, and wandring Stars shall shine in their places. O if God remove the Golden Candle-stick out of its place, what but the desolation and ruin of millions of Souls must follow?

We account it insufferable cruelty for a Man to undertake the piloting of a Ship full of Passengers, who never learnt his *Compass*; or an ignorant *Empirick* to get his living by killing Mens Bodies; but much more lamentable will the state of Souls be, if ever they fall, (which God in Mercy prevent) into the Hands of Popish Guides, or blind Leaders of the blind.

Infer. VII. *If the Soul be of so precious a nature it can never live upon such base and vile food as earthly things are.*

The Apostle, *Phil.* 3. 8, 9. calls the things of this World *Dogs meat*, and judge if that be proper food for such noble and high-born Creatures as our Souls are. An immaterial Being, can never live upon material things; they are no bread for Souls, as the Prophet speaks, *Isa.* 55. 2. *Why do ye spend Money* (*i. e.* time and pains, thought and cares,) *for that which is not bread?* Your Souls can no more live upon *carnal*, that your Bodies on *spiritual* things. Earthly things have a double defect in them, by reason whereof they are called things of nought: *Amos* 6. 13. of no worth or value: they are neither *suitable* nor *durable*, and therefore in the Soul's eye not *valuable*.

Σκύβαλον, quasi κυνίβαλον; id quod à nobis rejectum projicitur canibus.

1. They are not *suitable*. What are Corn and Wine, Gold and Silver, Pleasures and Honours to the Soul? The body and bodily senses can find somewhat of Refreshment in them; but not the Spirit: that which is bread to the Body, affords no more nourishment to the Soul than Wind or Ashes, *Isa.* 44. 20. *He feedeth of Ashes.* Ashes are that light and dry matter into which fuel is reduced by the fire: the fuel before it was burnt, had nothing in it fit for nourishment; or if the sap or juice that was in it might in any respect be useful that way, yet all that is devoured and lickt up by the Fire, and not the least nutriment left in the Ashes? and such are all earthly things to the Soul of Man: *I am the Bread of Life*, saith *Christ*. A Soul can feed and feast it self upon Christ and the Promises, these are things full of marrow and fatness, substantial and proper Soul-nutriment.

Cinis est crassior illa materia in quam combustum redigitur.

2. As earthly things are no way *suitable* to the Soul, so neither are they *durable*. The *Apostle* reduceth all earthly things to three heads, the lust of the Eye, the lust of the Flesh, and the pride of Life, 1 *Joh.* 2. 16. he calls them all by the name of that which gives the lustre and beauty to them, and pronounceth them all fading, transitory Vanities, they all *pass away*; as time, so these things that are measured by time, are *in fluxu continuo*, always going, and at last will be all gone. Now the Soul being of an immortal nature, and these things of a perishing nature; it must necessarily and unavoidably follow, that the Soul must overlive them all: and if it will do so, what a dismal case are those Souls in, for whom no other provision is made, but that on which it cannot subsist whilst it hath them, no more than the Body can upon Ashes or Wind? and if it could, yet they will shortly fail it, and pass away for ever. So then it is beyond debate, that there lies a plain necessity upon every Man to make provision in time of things more suitable and durable than earthly Treasures are, or the Soul must perish as to its comfort to all eternity.

Hence is that weighty counsel of him that came to save them, *Luke* 12. 23. *Provide your selves bags that wax not old, a treasure in Heaven that faileth not*, (*i. e.*) a happiness which will last as long as your Souls last. Certainly the moth-eaten things of this World are no provision for immortal Spirits, and yet multitudes think of no other provision for them, but live as if they had nothing to do in this World but to get an Estate.

Alas! what are all these things to the Soul? They signify somewhat indeed to the Body, and that but for a little time; for after the Resurrection the Bodies of the Saints become spiritual *in* their qualities, and no more need these material things than the Angels do: 'Tis madness therefore to be so intent upon cares for the Body, as to neglect the Soul; but to ruin the Soul and drown it in perdition for the sake of these provisions for the flesh, is the height of madness.

Infer. VIII. *If the Soul be so invaluably precious, then it is a rational and well advised resolution and practice to expose all other things to hazard, yea, to certain loss, for the preservation of the more precious Soul.*

'Tis better our Bodies and all their comforts should perish, than our Souls should perish for their Sakes. Nature teaches us to offer a hand or arm to the stroke of a sword, to save a blow from the head, or put by a thrust at the heart. It is recorded to the praise of those three Worthies, *Dan.* 3. 28. *That they yielded their Bodies that they might not serve nor worship any God, except their own God.* By this rule all the Martyrs of Christ governed themselves, still slighting and exposing to ruin their Bodies and Estates to preserve their Souls, reckoning to save nothing by religion but their Souls, and that they had lost nothing, if they could save them; *They loved not their lives unto the death*, Re. 12. 11.

Then do we live like Christians, when the care of our Bodies is swallowed up and subdued by that of our Souls, and all Creature-loves by the love of Christ. Those blessed Souls hated their own Bodies, and counted them their enemies, when they would draw them from Christ and his Truths, and plunge their Souls into guilt and danger. This was the result of all their debates with the flesh in the hour of temptation; cannot we live but to the dishonour of Christ, and the ruin of our own Souls by sinful compliance against our Consciences; then welcome the worst of Deaths rather than such a Life.

Look into the stories of the Martyrs, and you shall find this was the rule they still governed themselves by; a Dungeon, a Stake, a Gibbet, any thing rather than guilt upon the inner Man: Death was welcome even in its most dreadful form, to escape ruin to their precious and immortal Souls. One kissed the Apparitor that brought him the tidings of death. Another being advised, when he came to the critical point, on which his life depended, to have a care of himself: So I will, said he, I will be as careful as I can of my best self, my Soul. These Men understood the value and precious worth of their own Souls; certainly we shall never prove courageous and constant in Sufferings, till we understand the worth of our Souls,

Souls as they did. Consider and compare these Sufferings in a few obvious particulars, and then determine the matter in thine own breast.

(1.) How much easier it is to endure the torments of Men in our own Bodies, than to feel the terrors of God in our Consciences. Can the Creature strike with an Arm like God? O think what it is for the Wrath of God to come into a Man's bowels like water, and like oil into his bones, as the expression is, *Psal.* 109. 18. Sure there is no compare betwixt the strokes of God and Men.

(2.) The sufferings of the Body are but for a moment. When the *Proconsul* told *Polycarp* that he would tame him with Fire: he replied, Your Fire shall burn but for the space an hour, and then it shall be extinguished; but the Fire that shall devour the Wicked will never be quenched: The sufferings of a moment are *nothing* to eternal sufferings.

(3.) Sufferings for Christ are usually sweetned and made easy by the consolations of the Spirit; but Hell-torments have no relief, they admit of no ease.

(4.) The life you shall live in that body, for whose sake you have damned your Souls, will not be worth the having; it will be a life without comfort, light or joy; and what is there in life separate from the joy and comfort of life?

(5.) In a word, if you sacrifice your Bodies for God and your Souls, freely offer them up in love to Christ and his Truth, your Souls will joyfully receive and meet them again at the Resurrection of the Just; but if your poor Souls be now ensnared and destroyed by their fond indulgence to their Bodies, you will leave them at Death despairing, and meet them at the Resurrection howling.

Infer. IX. To conclude, *If the Soul be so invaluably precious, how great and irreparable a loss must the loss of a Soul to all Eternity be!*

There is a double loss of the Soul of Man, the one in *Adam*, which loss is recoverable by Christ; the other by final impenitence and unbelief, cutting it off from Christ, in this it is irreparable and irrecoverable. Souls lost by *Adam*'s sin are within the reach of the Arms of Christ; but in the shipwrack of personal infidelity there is no plank to save the Soul so cast away; of all losses this is the most lamentable, yet what more common? O what a shriek doth the unregenerate Soul make, when it sees whereto it must go, and that there is no remedy! Three Cries are dreadful to hear on Earth, yet all three are drown'd by a more terrible Cry in the other World. The cry of a condemn'd Prisoner at the Bar, the cry of drowning Seamen and Passengers in a shipwrack, the cries of conquer'd Soldiers in the Field; all these are fearful Cries, yet nothing to that of a Soul cast away to all Eternity, and lost in the depth of Hell.

If a Man, as *Chrysostom* well observes, lose an Eye, an Arm, a Hand, or Leg, it is a great loss; but yet if one be lost, there is another to help him: for *omnia Deus dedit duplicia*, God hath given us all those members double; *Animam verò unam*, but we have but one Soul, and if that be damned, there is not another to be saved.

And it is no small Aggravation to this loss, that it was a wilful loss. We had the offers and means of Salvation pentifully afforded us: we were warn'd of this danger over and over: we were intreated and beseech'd upon the knee of importunity, not to throw away our Souls by an obstinate rejection of Christ and Grace; we saw the diligence and care of others for the salvation of their Souls; some rejoicing in the comfortable assurance of it, and others giving all diligence to make their Calling and Election sure; we knew that our Souls were as capable of blessedness as any of those that are enjoying God in Heaven, or panting after that enjoyment on Earth: yea, some Souls that are now irrecoverably gone, and many others who are going after them, once were, and now are not far from the Kingdom of God: they had convictions of Sin, a sense of their lost and miserable state; they began to treat with Christ in Prayer, to converse with his Ministers and People about their condition: and after all this, even when they seemed to have clean escaped the snares of Satan, to be again intangled and overcome; when even come to Harbours mouth, to be driven back again, and cast away upon the Rocks: O what a loss will this be!

O thou that createdst Souls with a capacity to know, love, and enjoy thee for ever; who out of thine unsearchable Grace sentest thine own Son out of thy bosom to seek and save that which was lost, pity those poor Souls that cannot pity themselves: let Mercy yet interpose it self betwixt them and eternal ruin; awaken them out of their pleasant slumber, tho' it be at the brink of damnation, lest they perish, and there be none to deliver them.

Doct. II. *How precious and invaluable soever the Soul of Man is, it may be lost and cast away for ever.*

This Proposition is supposed and implied in our Saviour's words in the Text, and plainly expressed in *Mat.* 7. 13. *Wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.* The way to Hell is throng'd with Passengers, 'tis a beaten road, one draws another along with him, and scoffs at them that are afraid to follow, 1 *Pet.* 4. 4. *Facilis descensus Averni*; 'tis pleasant sailing with Wind and Tide. Some derive the word Hell from a Verb which signifies to carry or thrust in: millions go in, but none return thence: millions are gone down already, and millions more are coming after as fast as Satan and their own lusts can hurry them onward. You read not only of single persons, but whole nations drown'd in this Gulph, *Psal.* 9. 17. *The Wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the nations that forget God.* How rare is the conversion of a Soul in the dark places of the Earth, where the sound of the Gospel is not heard? the Devil drives them along in huge droves to destruction, scarce a Man reluctating or hanging back.

Infernus ab inferendo dicitur, quia ita inferuntur & præcipitantur, ut nunquam ascensuri sint.

And tho' some Nations enjoy the inestimable privilege of the Gospel of Salvation; yet multitudes of precious Souls perish notwithstanding, sinking into Hell daily as it were betwixt the merciful Arms of a Saviour stretched out to save them. The light of Salvation is risen upon us, but Satan draws the thick curtains of ignorance and prejudice about the multitude, that not a beam of saving light can shine into their hearts: 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. *But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the God of this World hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*

If our Gospel.] Ours, not by way of institution, as the Authors, but by way of dispensation, as the Ministers and Preachers of it: and certainly it was never preached with that clearness, authority,

ty, and efficacy by any meer Man, as it was by *Paul* and the rest of the *Apostles*; and yet the Gospel so powerfully preached, is by him here supposed to

Be hid.] If not as to the general light and superficial knowledge of it, yet as to its saving influence and converting efficacy upon their hearts; this never reacheth home to the Souls and Spirits of multitudes that hear it; but it is never finally so hidden, except

To them that are lost.] So that all those to whom the converting and saving power of the Gospel never comes, whatever other knowledge they have, whatever duties they perform, whatever names and reputations they may have among Men, yet this Text looks upon them all as *a lost generation*; they may have as many amiable homiletical Vertues, as sweet and lovely Natures, as clear and piercing Eyes in all other things as any others; but they are such however

Whose eyes the God of this World hath blinded.] Satan is here called the God of this World, not properly, but by a *Mimesis*, because he challenges to himself the honour of a God, and hath a world of Subjects that obey him; and to secure their obedience he blinds them, that they may never see a better way or state than that he hath drawn them into. Therefore he is called the Ruler of the darkness of this World, who rules in the Hearts of the Children of disobedience. The eye of the Soul is the Mind, that thinking, considering and reasoning power of the Soul; this is, as the *Philosophers* truly call it, the τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν, the leading faculty to all the rest, the Guide to all the other faculties, which in the order of nature follow this their Leader: if this be blinded, the Will which is *cæca potentia*, a blind power in it self, and all the Affections blindly following the Blind, all must needs fall into the ditch. And this is the case of the far greater part of even the professing World. Let us suppose a number of blind Men upon an Island, where there are many smooth paths, all leading to the top of a perpendicular *Cliff*; and these blind Men going on continually, some in one path, and some in another, but all in some one of those many paths which lead to the brink of their ruin, which they see not, it must needs follow, if they all move forward, the whole number will in a short time be cast away, the Island clear'd, and its Inhabitants dead and lost in the bottom of the Sea. This is the Case of the unregenerate World: they are now upon this habitable spot of Earth, environed with the vast Ocean of Eternity; there are multitudes of paths leading to eternal misery; one Man takes this way, and another that: as it is, *Isa.* 53. 6. *We have turned every one to his own way*; one to the way of Pride, another to the way of Covetousness, a 3d to the way of Persecution, a 4th to the way of Civility and Morality; and so on they go, not once making a stand, or questioning to what end it will bring them, till at last over they go at death, and we hear no more of them in this World; and thus one generation of sinners follows another, and they that come after applaud and approve those miserable wretches that went before them, *Psal.* 49. 13. and so Hell fills, and the World empties its Inhabitants daily into it. Now I will make it my work, out of a dear regard to the precious Souls of Men, and in hope to prevent (which the Lord in mercy grant) the loss and ruin of some under whose eyes this Discourse shall fall, to note some of the principal ways in which precious Souls are lost, and to put such bars into them as I am capable to put; and, among many more, I will set a mark upon these following twelve paths, wherein millions of Souls have been lost, and millions more are confidently and securely following after, among which 'tis likely some are within one step, one day or hour to their eternal downfal and destruction. There is but one way in all the world to save and preserve the precious Souls of Men, but there are many ways to lose and destroy them: it is as it is in our natural Birth and Death, but one way into the World, but a multitude out of it. And first,

The first way to Hell discovered.

1. And to begin where indeed the ruin of very many doth begin, it will be found that *an ill Education is the high way to destruction*; Vice need not be planted; if the Gardener neglect to dress, sow, and manure his Garden, he need not give the Weeds a greater advantage; but if he also scatter the seed of Hemlock, Docks, and Nettles into it, he spoils it, and makes it fit for nothing. Many Parents, and those godly too, are guilty of too many neglects through carelessness, worldly incumbrances, or fond indulgence; and whilst they neglect the season of sowing better seed, the Devil takes hold of it; if they will not improve it, he will; if they teach them not to pray, he will teach them to curse, swear and lye; if they put not the *Bible* or *Catechism* in their hands, he will put *obscene Ballads* into them: and thus the off-spring of many godly Parents turn into degenerate Plants, and prove a generation that know not the God of their Fathers. This debauch'd Age can furnish us with too many sad instances hereof. Thus they are spoiled in the bud; simple ignorance in youth becomes affected and wilful ignorance in age; blushing sins in children become impudent sins in age: and all this for want of a timely and prudent preventing care. Others there are of the rude and ignorant multitude, who are bred themselves much like the Beasts they daily converse withal; and so they are fitly described, *Job* 30. 6, 7. Go into their houses, and you may sooner find in the window, or upon the shelf, a *pack of Cards* than a *Bible* or a *Catechism*; their *Beds* and *Tables* differ little or not at all from the *Stalls* and *Cribs* where Beasts lie down and feed, in respect of any Worship of God among them; or if for fashion-sake a few words be huddl'd over in the evening when their Bodies are tir'd, the Man saith something, he scarce knows what, the Wife is asleep in one corner, the Children in another, and the Servants in a third. This is the Education multitudes of Parents give their Children all the week; and when the Sabbath comes, the most they learn to know at Church is where their own seat stands, and that it is necessary to speak with such a neighbour after Prayers, about such or such a bargain or business for the next week.

And others there are who breed their Children as *profanely* as these do *sottishly*, teaching them by their examples the newest Oaths that were last minted in Hell, and to revile and scoff all serious Godliness and the sincere Professors of it, smiling to hear with what an Emphasis they can talk in the Dialect of Devils, and how wittily they can droll upon godly Ministers and Christians.

Such Families are Nurseries for Hell; and tho' God by an extraordinary hand of Providence now and then snatch a Soul by conversion from among them, as a brand out of the fire, yet generally they

they die as they live, going to the generation of their Fathers, where they shall never see light, *Psal.* 49. 19. I know Education and Regeneration are two things; but I also know one is frequently made the Instrument of the other, and that the savour of what first seasons our youth (generally) abides to old age, *Prov.* 22. 6. We may observe all the World over, how tenacious Men are of that which is παλαιμαθὲς, delivered to them by their Parents. Oh! what a cut must it be to the heart of that Father, whose Son's life shall tell his conscience what a prophane Son's lips once told his Father to his Face: *If I have done evil, I have learnt it of you!* Had they felt more of your prudent correction, it might have prevented their destruction: *Prov.* 23. 14. *Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.* That this is a common beaten path to Hell, is beyond all question; but how to bar it up, and stop the multitudes that are engaged in it to their own ruin, this is the labour, this is the work. I cannot be large, but I will offer a few weighty Considerations.

Quo semel est imbuta recens, &c.

Si male feci à te didici.

The first way to Hell barr'd.

1. Let all Parents consider what a fearful thing it is to be the Instruments of ruining for ever those that received their Beings instrumentally from them; and to seek whose Good they stand obliged by all the Laws of God and Nature.

In vain are all your cares and studies for their Bodies, whilst their Souls perish for want of knowledge. You rejoiced at their Birth, but they will have cause to curse the day they were born of you, and say, *Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which I was conceived.* You were sollicitous for their Bodies, but careless of their Souls; earnest to see them rich, but indifferent whether they were gracious; you neglected to teach them the way of salvation; but the *Devil* did not neglect to teach them the way of sin. You will one day wish you had never been Parents, when the doleful cries of your damned children shall ring such notes as these in your ears: *Oh cursed Father! Oh cruel merciless Mother! whose Examples have drawn me after you into all this misery. You had time enough, and motives enough to have warned me of this place and misery whilst my heart was tender, and my affections pliable: Had it not been as easie to have put a Bible as a Play-book before me? To have chastised me when I provoked God by sin, as when I provoked you about a trifle? One word spoken in season might have saved my Soul; one reproof wisely given, and set on by your example, might have preserved me. Had it not been the same pains to have asked me, Child, what wilt thou do to be saved? As, what wilt thou do to live in the World? Or had I but observed any serious Religion in you, had I but found or heard my Father or Mother upon their knees in Prayer, it might have awakened me to a consideration of my condition. In my youth I was shame-fac'd, fearful, credulous, and apt to imitate; had you had but Wisdom, as other Parents have, to have taken hold of any of these handles in time, you had rescued my Soul from Hell. Nay, so cruel have you been to your own Child, that you allowed me no time (if I had had a disposition) for any exercise of Religion; yea, you have quenched and stifled the sparks of convictions and better inclinations that sometimes were in my heart. Oh! happy had it been, if I had never been born of you, or seen your Faces.* This must be the result and issue of your negligence, except God by some other hand (which is no thanks to you) rescue them from their impending ruin.

2. Let all Children, whose unhappy Lot it is to be born of and educated by carnal and irreligious Parents, consider God hath endued them with Reason, and a Conscience of their own, to enable them to make a better choice than their Parents did, and that there is no taking Sanctuary from the Wrath of God in their Parents examples. We read in 1 *Kings* 14. 13. of a good *Abijah*, *in whom was found some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam.* Here was a Child that would not follow his wicked Father to Hell, tho' he had both the Authority of a Father and of a King over him. You must honour your Parents, but still you must prefer your God before them. God will never lay it to your account as your sin, but place it to the account of your duty and comfort, that you refused to follow them in the paths of sin and destruction. No awe of God, no tie of Nature binds you to obey their commands, or tread in their steps, farther than they command in God's Authority and Name, and walk in his Ways. Your temptations indeed are strong, and disadvantages great, but the greater will the mercy of your deliverance be. It will be no Plea for you at the Judgment-seat to say, Lord, my Father or Mother did so and so before me, and I thought I might safely follow them; or thus and thus they commanded me, and I thought I was bound by thy command to obey them: therefore look to your own Souls, if they be so desperate to cast away their own. If some Children had not minded their own Salvation more than their Parents minded it, they had never been saved.

Amandus genitor, sed præponendus Creator.

3. Let this consideration work upon the hearts and bowels of all serious Christians to pity and help those that are like to perish under this temptation; and if their Parents be so ignorant that they cannot, or so negligent that they do not instruct and warn their own Children, you that at any time have an opportunity to help them, have compassion on them, and do it. 'Tis true, they are none of your Children by Nature: but would it not be a singular honour and comfort to you, if God should make them so by Grace? Thousands of Children (and it may be some of you) are more indebted to meer strangers upon this account, than to their neareſt Relations; you know not how much good an occasional word may do them: all have not ability to be so publickly useful this way, as a late worthy Minister of our own Nation hath been, who in compassion to the dark and barbarous corners in *Wales*, where Ignorance and Poverty shut up the way of Salvation to them, at a vast expence procured the Translation and Printing of the Bible in their own Tongue, and freely sent it among them. Oh you that have the Bowels of Christians in you, pity and help them! What is it, for the saving of a precious Soul, to drop a serious Exhortation, as you have opportunity, upon them, to bestow a Bible or suitable Book upon them? Believe it, these little number of shillings and pence so bestow'd, will stand for more in the *Audit-day* than all the *hundreds and thousands* other ways expended.

The second way to Hell discovered.

II. A second way to Hell, in which multitudes are found hastning to their own Damnation, is the way of *affected Ignorance.* The generality of People, even in a Land enlightned with the Gospel, are found grosly ignorant of Christ, the true and only way to Heaven, and of Repentance and

Faith,

Faith, the only way to Christ; and thus the People perish for want of knowledge, *Hos.* 4. 6. If the Tree of knowledge had been hedg'd in from the common People, as it is in Popish Countries, and it had been criminal to find a Bible in our houses, there might have been some cloke and pretence for our ignorance; but to be stupidly ignorant of the most obvious, plain and necessary Truths, and yet bred up among Bibles and Ministers. Oh! how ominous a darkness is this, foreboding the blackness of darkness for ever! For if the hiding of the Gospel from the hearts of Men be a token to them that they are lost Souls, how much notional light soever they may have; much more must they be lost to all intents, from whose hearts and heads too it is judicially hidden. They that know not God, are in the catalogue of the Damned, 2 *Thess.* 1. 8. And if this be life eternal, to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent; then this must be death eternal, to be grosly and affectedly ignorant both of God the End, and Christ the Way, by the Rule of true Opposition, *Joh.* 17. 3.

Look over the several Countries in the professing World, go into the Families of Country-farmers, Day-labourers, and poor People, and except here and there a Family or Person into whose heart God hath graciously shined, what barbarous brutish ignorance overspreads them! They converse from morning to night with Beasts, tho' they have Souls which are fit Companions for Angels, and capable of sweet converse with God. The Earth hath open'd her Mouth, and swallowed up all their time, strength, thoughts, and Souls, as it did the bodies of *Corah* and his Company. They know the value of a Horse or Cow, but know not the worth of Christ, Pardon, or their own Souls. They mind daily what work they have to do with their hands, but forget all they have to do upon their knees. Their whole care is to pay their Fine or Rent to their Landlord, but not a thought who shall pay their debts to God. They are so far from putting unnecessary business aside to make way for the service of God, that God's service is put aside as an unnecessary business, to make way for the World: the World holds them fast till they are asleep, and will be sure to visit them assoon as their Eyes are open, that there may be no vacancy or door of opportunity left open for a thought of their Souls, or another life to slip in. Or if at any time they think or speak of these Matters, then the World, like *Pharaoh* when *Israel* spake of Sacrificing, is sure to speak of more work.

And thus they live and die without knowledge: there is no key of knowledge (as it is fitly called, *Luke* 11. 52.) to open the door of the Soul to Christ, he and his Ministers therefore must stand without; pity they may, but help they cannot till knowledge open the Door, Satan is Ruler of the darkness of this World, *Eph.* 6. 12. that is, of all blind and ignorant Souls. Ignorance is the chain with which he binds them fast to himself; and till that Chain be knockt off by Divine Illumination, they cannot be emancipated and made free of Christ's Kingdom; *Acts* 26. 18. *To turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God.* Ignorance indeed incapacitates a man to commit the unpardonable sin; but what the near, whilst it disposes him to all other sins which damn as well as that? By Ignorance it is that all the Essays of the Gospel for Mens Salvation are frustrated; that naked Assent is put in the place of saving Faith, Morality mistaken for Regeneration, a few dead Duties laid in the room of Christ and his Righteousness. Indeed it would fill a greater Book than this is to shew the mischievous effects of Ignorance, and how many ways it destroys the precious Souls of men; but seeing I can speak but little in this place to it, let me bar up this way to Hell, if it be possible, by a few serious Considerations.

The second way to Hell shut up.

1. Let the Ignorant consider, God hath created their Souls with a capacity of knowing him and enjoying him, as well as others that are fam'd in the world for Knowledge and Wisdom. *There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.* The faculty is in Man, but the Wisdom and Knowledge that enlightens it, from God; as the *Dial* shews the hour of the day, when the Sun beams fall upon it. If therefore God be sought unto in the use of such helps and means as you have, even the weakest and dullest Soul hath a capacity of being made wise unto Salvation, *Psal.* 19. 7. *The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.*

Augustine tells us of a Man so weak and simple, that he was commonly reputed a Fool in all the Neighbourhood; and yet saith, I believe the grace and fear of God was in him: for when he heard any swear, or take the Name of God in vain, he would throw stones at them, and shew his indignation against sin, by all the signs he could make.

2. You that are so grosly ignorant in the matters of your Salvation, are many of you very knowing, prudent, and subtle Persons in the Affairs of the World, *Luke* 16. 8. *The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light.* Had those parts, which you have, been improved and heightned by study and observation about spirituals, as they have been about earthly things, you had neither been so ignorant or dead-hearted as you are; you might have been as well vers'd in your *Bibles*, as you are in the *Almanacks* you yearly buy and study; you might have understood the proper seasons of Salvation, as well as of Husbandry. The great and necessary points on which your Salvation depends are not so many, or so abstruse and intricate, but your plain and inartificial heads might have understood them, and that with less pains than you have been at for your Bodies. What tho' you cannot comprehend the *subtilties* of *School-men*, you may apprehend the *Essentials* of Christianity. If you cannot strictly and scholastically define Faith; what hinders, if your hearts were set upon Christ and Salvation, but you may feel it? which is more than many learned men do that can define and dispute about it. You cannot put an Argument in Mood and Figure; no matter, if you can by comparing your Bibles and Hearts together draw savingly and experimentally this Conclusion, I am in Christ, and my sins are pardoned. You cannot determine whether Faith goes before Repentance, or Repentance before Faith; but for all that you might feel both the one and the other upon your own Souls, which is infinitely better. 'Tis not therefore your incapacity, but negligence and worldliness that is your ruin.

3. How many are there of your own rank order, and education, all whose external advantages and helps you have, and all your incumbrances and discouragements they had, who yet have attain'd to an excellent degree of saving knowledge and heavenly wisdom? How often have I heard such spiritual, savoury, experimental Truths in Conference and Prayer from plain Rusticks,

sticks, such spiritual Reasonings about the great Concerns of Salvation, such judicious and satisfying resolutions of Cases depending upon the sensible and experimental part of Religion, as have humbled, convinced, and shamed me, and made me say, *Surgunt indocti, &c.* these are the men that will take Heaven from the proud and scornful *Ingenioſi* of the World; not many wise, not many learned and acute? Many knowing and learned Heads are in Hell, and many illiterate and weak ones gone to Heaven; and others in the way thither, who never had better Education, stronger Parts, or more Leisure than your selves: so that you are without excuse.

4. To conclude, Would you heartily seek it of God, and would the Spirit (which he hath promised to give them that ask him) become your Teacher, How soon would the Light of the saving Knowledge of God, in the face of Christ, shine into your Hearts! No matter how ignorant, dull, and weak the Scholar be, if God once become the Teacher. You are not able to purchase, or want time to read many Books; but if once you were sanctified Persons, the Anointing you would receive from the Father, would teach you all things, 1 *Joh.* 2. 27. Your own Hearts would serve you for a Commentary upon a great part of the *Bible*; it would make you of a quick Understanding in the Fear of the Lord: One Drop of your Knowledge would be more worth than all learned Arts and Sciences in the World to you. And is God so far from you, and his illuminating Spirit at such a Distance, that there is no Hope for you to find him? Is there never a private Corner about your Houses or Barns, or in the Fields, where you can turn aside, if it be but a quarter of an hour at a time, to pour out your Souls to God, and beg the Spirit of him? Miserable Wretch! Is thy whole Life such a cumber and clutter of Cares and Puzzles about the World, that thou hast no leisure to mind God, Soul, or Eternity? Oh, doleful State! The Lord in mercy pity and awaken thee. Wilt thou not once strive and struggle to save thy Soul? What, perish as it were by consent! How great then is thy Blindness!

The third way to Hell discovered.

Quam frigida & jejuna sit eorum defensio qui exemplo, *&c.* potentiorum se tutos putant? *Jun. Paral.* l. 2. Argumentum turpissimum est turba. *Sen.*

III. A vast multitude of precious Souls are lost for ever, by following the Examples, and being carried away with the course of this World. 'Tis indeed a poor Excuse, a silly Argument, That the Multitude do as we do; yet, as *Junius* rightly observes, Mens Consciences take Sanctuary here, and they think themselves safe in it; for thus they reason, *If I do as the generality do, I shall speed no worse than they speed; and certainly God is more merciful than to suffer the greatest part of Mankind to perish.* They resolve to follow the beaten Road, let it lead whither it will.

Thus the *Ephesians* in their unregenerate State *walked according to the course of this world*, Eph. 2. 2. and the *Corinthians were carried away unto dumb Idols, even as they were led*, 1 Cor. 12. 2. just as a drop of Water is carried and moved according to the course and current of the Tide; for look as every drop of Water in the Sea is of one and the same common Nature, so are all carnal and unsanctified persons; and as these Waters being collected into one vast body in the Ocean, unite their strength, and make a strong current this way or that; so doth the whole collective body of the unregenerate World, all the particular drops move as the Tide moveth. Hence they are said *to have received the spirit of the world*, 1 Cor. 2. 12. one common Spirit or Principle acts and rules them all, and therefore they must needs be carried away in the same course. And there are two special Considerations that seem to determine them, by a kind of necessity to do as the multitude do; the one is, that they find it the easiest and most commodious way to the Flesh, here they meet with quietness and safety; hereby they are exempt from reproaches, losses, persecutions, and distresses for Conscience-sake: Rest is sweet, and here only they think to find it. The other is the prejudice of singularity and manifold tribulations they see that little handful that walk counter to the course of the World involved in; this startles them from their company, and fixes them where they are. Against such sensible Arguments it is to no purpose to oppose spiritual Considerations, Motives drawn from the safety of the Soul, or importance of Eternity, than it is for a Man to turn the Tide or Course of a River with his weak Breath.

Add to this, That as one sinner confirms and fixes another, wedging in each other, as Men in a Crowd, who must move as it moves; so they make it their business to render all that differ from them odious and ridiculous. So the Apostle notes their practice, and Satan's policy in it, 1 *Pet.* 4. 4. wherein they think it strange, that ye run not with them into the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you; ξενίζονται, they gaze strangely at them, as the Hen that hath hatched Patridge-eggs, looks strangely after them when she seeth them take the wing, and soar aloft, not knowing that they are of a higher kind than her own Chickens. And that is not all; they not only gaze at them as a strange generation, making them signs and wonders in *Israel*, as the Prophet speaks; but they defame, revile, and speak evil of them, representing them as a pack of Hypocrites, as turbulent, factious, seditious persons, the very Pests of the times and places they live in; and all this, not for doing any evil against them, but only for not doing evil with them, because they *run not with them into the same excess of riot.* Thus the world smiles upon its own, and derides those that are afraid to follow them to Hell, by which it sweeps away the multitude with it in the same course.

Nemo errat sibi ipsi, sed dementiam spargit in proximos. *Sen.*

The third way to Hell shut up.

But oh! if the Spirit of God would please to set on and follow home the following Considerations to your hearts, you would certainly resolve to take a persecuted path to Heaven, tho' few accompany you therein, rather than swim like dead Fishes with the stream into the dead Sea of eternal misery.

1. Tho' you go with the consent and current of the World, yet you go against the express Law and prohibition of God. He hath laid his Command upon you, *not to be conformed to the world*, Rom. 12. 2. *That you live not the rest of your time to the lusts of men, but to the will of God*, 1 Pet. 4. 2. *That you follow not a multitude to do evil*, Exod. 23. 2. *That you go not in the way of evil men*, Prov. 4. 14. *That you have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.* All these, and many more, are commands flowing from the highest Sovereign Authority, obliging your Consciences to obedience under the greatest penalties; by them your state must be cast to all eternity in the day of Judgment: You may make a pish of the Precept, but see if you can do so of the Penalty.

2. Other men in all ages of the world, that were as much concerned in the world as you, and valued

their lives, liberties, and estates as well as you, have yet got out of the crowd, disengaged themselves from the way of the multitude, and taken a more solitary and suffering path, out of a due regard to the safety of their Souls: And why should not you love them as well, and care for them as much as ever any that went before you did? *Noah* walked with God all alone, when all flesh had corrupted their ways. *Elijah* was zealous for the Lord, when he knew of none to stand by him, but thought he had been left alone. *Job* was upright with God in the Land of *Uz*. *Lot* stood by himself a godly Nonconformist in a vile debauched *Sodom*. *David* was as a wonder to many; so was *Jeremiah* and those few with him for signs and wonders in *Israel*. I demand of your consciences, what discouragements have you that these men had not? or what encouragements had they that you have not? Why should not the Salvation of your Souls be as precious in your eyes, as theirs was in theirs? Shall you be impoverished and persecuted, if you embrace the way of Holiness? so were they. Shall you be reproached, scorned, and reviled? so were they. All your discouragements were theirs, and all their motives and encouragements are yours.

3. Is not the way which you have chosen marked out by Christ as the way to Destruction? and that which you dare not chuse and embrace, as the way to life? See the marks he has given you of both in that one Text, *Mat.* 7 13, 14 *Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* And where now is your encouragement and hope, that God will be more merciful than to damn so great a part of the World? If you will do as the *Many* do, dream not of speeding as well as that little flock, separated by Sanctification from the Multitude, shall speed. You have your choice, to be damned with many or saved with few; to take the broad smooth-beaten road to Hell, or the difficult, suffering, self-denying path to Heaven. Oh then make a seasonable necessary stand, and pause a while; consider your ways, and turn your feet to God's Testimonies: 'tis a great and special part of your Salvation to save your selves from this untoward generation.

The Fourth way of losing the Soul opened.

IV. Multitudes of Souls are daily lost by rooted *habits*, and long-continued *Custom* in sin. When Men have been long settled in an evil way, they are difficultly reclaimed. *Physicians* find it hard to cure a *Cachexy*, or ill habit of body; but it's far more difficult to cure an ill custom and habit in sin. Jer. 13. 23. *Can the Leopard change his spots, or the Æthiopian his skin? then may ye also do good, that have been accustomed to do evil.* The spots of a *Leopard*, and the hue of an *Æthiopian*, are not by way of external accidental adhesion; if so, washing would fetch them off: but they are innate and contemper'd, belonging to the Constitution, and not to be alter'd; so are sinful habits and customs in the minds of sinners: by this means it becomes a second Nature as it were, and strongly determines the mind to sin. *A teneris assuescere multum est*, It's a great matter to be accustomed to this way or that, saith *Seneca*; yea, *Caput rei est, hoc vel illo modo hominem assuefieri*, 'Tis the very head or root of the matter to be so or so accustomed, saith *Aristotle*. Very much of the strength of sin rises from customary sinning. A brand that hath been once in the fire easily catches the second time. Every repeated act of sin lesseneth fear, and strengtheneth inclination. A horse that took an ill stroke at first breaking, and hath continued many years in it, is very difficultly, if ever, to be brought to a better way. What men have been accustomed to from their childhood, they are tenacious of in their old age. Hence it is, so few are converted to Christ in their old age. It was recorded for a wonder in the primitive times, that *Marcus Caius Victorius* became a Christian in his old age. Time and usage fix the roots of sin deep in the Soul. Old Trees will not bow as tender Plants do. Hence all essays and attempts to draw men from the course they have walked in from their youth, are frustraneous and successless. The Drunkard, the Adulterer, yea, the self-righteous Moralist, are by long-continued usage so fixed in their course, and all this while Conscience so stupified by often repeated acts of sin, that it is naturally as impossible to remove a Mountain, as a Sinner's Will thus confirmed in his Wickedness. However, let trial be made, and the success left to him to whom no length of time, or difficulty, must be objected or opposed.

The fourth way to Hell shut up, by two Considerations.

1. Let it be considered, the longer any man hath been engaged in, and accustomed to the way of sin, the more reason and need he hath speedily and without delay to repent, and reform his course; there is yet a possibility of Mercy, a season of Salvation left; how far soever a Soul be gone on towards Hell, none can say it is yet too late. When Mr. *Bilney* the Martyr heard a minister preaching thus: *Oh thou old sinner, thou hast gone on in a course of sin these fifty or sixty years, dost thou think that Christ will accept thee now, or take the Devil's leavings?* Good God! said he, what preaching of Christ is here! had such Doctrine been preached to me in the day of my troubles, it had been enough utterly to have discouraged me from Repentance and Faith. No, no, Sinner, it is not yet too late, if at last thy Heart be touched with a real sense of thy sin and danger. The Word is plain, Isa. 55. 7. *Let the Wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.*

An abundant pardon thou needest; thy sins by long-continued custom and frequent repetitions have been abundantly aggravated; and an abundant pardon is with God for poor sinners: he will abundantly pardon, but then thou must come up to his terms; thou must not expect pardon or mercy when thy sins have forsaken thee, but upon thy forsaking them, yea, such a forsaking as includes a resolution or decree in thy Will to return to them no more, *Hos.* 14. 8. there must be a change of thy way, and that not from Prophaneness to Civility only, which is but to change one false way to Heaven for another, or the dirty road to Hell for a cleanlier path on the other side the hedge; but a total and final forsaking of every way of sin, as to the love and habitual practice of it; yea, and thy thoughts too, as well as thy ways: there must be an internal, as well as an external change upon thee; yea, a positive, as well as a negative change; a turning to the Lord, as well as a turning from sin: and then how long soever thou hast walked in the road towards Hell, there will be time enough, and mercy enough to secure thy returning Soul safe to Heaven.

2. Canst

2. Canst thou not forbear thy customary sin upon lesser motives than the salvation of thy Soul? and if thou canst, wilt thou not much more do it for the saving of thy precious immortal Soul? Suppose there were but a pecuniary mulct of a hundred pounds to be certainly levied upon thy Estate for every Oath thou swearest, or every time thou art drunk, wouldst thou not rather chuse reformation than beggary? And is not the loss of thy Soul a penalty infinitely heavier than a little money? But as the wise Heathen observed, *Ea sola emi putamus, pro quibus pecuniam solvimus; ea gratuita vocamus, pro quibus nos ipsos impendimus*: We reckon those things only to be bought which we part with money for; and that we have those things *gratis*, for which we pay our selves. Is nothing cheap in our eyes but our selves, our Souls? Do we call that *gratis*, that will cost us so dear? *Darius* threw away his Massy Crown when he fled before *Alexander*, that it might not hinder him in his flight. Sure your Souls are more worth than your money; and all the enjoyments you have in this World. It had been an ancient custom among the Citizens of *Antioch* to wash themselves in the *Baths*; but the King forbidding it, they all presently forbore, for fear of his displeasure: whereupon *Chrysostom* convinced them of the Vanity of that plea for customary sinning. You see, saith he, how soon fear can break off an old custom; and shall not the fear of God be as powerful to over-master it in us, as the fear of man? O friends, believe it, it is better for you to cut off a right hand, or pluck out a right eye, than having two hands or eyes, to be cast into Hell; where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched.

Senec. Ep. 42. Gratuita nobis videntur quæ charissimè constant; quæ emere nollemus, si domus nobis nostra pro illis esset danda, *&c.*

Ὁρᾷς ὅτι ἔστι φόβῳ ἐυκόλως λυθῆναι συνήθεια, &c. *Hom.* 14.

The fifth way of losing the Soul opened.

V. The fifth way by which a vast multitude of Souls are eternally lost, is by the baits of sensual and sinful Pleasures.

Some customary sins have little or no pleasure in them, as swearing, malice, *&c.* but others allure and entice the Soul by the sensual delight that is in them. This is the bait with which multitudes are enticed, ensnared, and ruined to all eternity. It is a true and grave observation of the *Philosopher*, that we are impelled as it were to that which is evil, by the alluring blandishments of pleasure. This was the first bait by which Satan caught the Souls of our first Parents in Innocency, *Gen.* 3. 6. *The tree was pleasant to the eye.* Pleasure quickens the principles of sin in us, and inflames the desires of the heart after it. Every pleasant sin hath a world of customers, and cost what will, they resolve to have it. I have read of a certain Fruit which the *Spaniards* found in the *Indies*, which was exceeding pleasant to the taste; but Nature had so fenced it, and double-guarded it with sharp and dangerous thorns, that it was very difficult to come at it: They tore their clothes, nay, their flesh to get it; and therefore called the Fruit, *Comfits in Hell.* Such are all the pleasures of Sin, *Comfits in Hell.* Damnation is the price of them; and yet the sensitive appetive is so outragious and mad after them, that at the price of their Souls they will have them. Thus the Wicked are described, *Job* 21. 13. *They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave*: that is, their whole stock of time is spent in cares and labours to get wealth; and when they have gotten it, the rest of their life is spent in those sensual Pleasures that wealth brings in, or in making provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts of it. The rich Man, in the *Parable*, that fared deliciously every day, *Luke* 16. where his voluptuous life is described, and in that description the occasion of his damnation is insinuated: in a pampered and indulged Body is usually found a neglected, starved Soul. But how shall the ruin of Souls this way be prevented.

Voluptatum blanditiis deditiis, ad ea ferenda omnia quæ prasentia sunt impellimur. *Epist. l.* 2. *ep.* 3.

The fifth way to Hell shut up by three Considerations.

1. Consider how the Morality of Heathens hath bridled their sensual lusts and appetites, and caused them with a generous disdain to repel those brutish Pleasures as things below a Man. What more foolish, what more base, saith *Seneca*, than to patch up the good of a reasonable Soul out of things unreasonable? That is the Pleasure worthy of a Man, not to glut his Body, not to irritate those Lusts, in whose quietness is our safety. This is the constant Doctrine of all the *Stoicks*.

Quid stultius turpiusve quàm bonum rationalis animi, ex irrationalibus nectere? *Sen. Epist.* 92.

Oh, what a shame is it to hear Heathenism outbrave Christianity, and Principles of meer Morality enable men to live more soberly, temperately, and abstemiously than those who enjoy the greatest Pattern and highest Motives in the Christian Religion are found to do? *Thou embracest Pleasures*, saith the Heathen, *but I bridle it; thou enjoyest it, I only use it; thou thinkest it thy chief good, I esteem it not so much as good; thou dost all things for pleasure sake, but I nothing at all on that account.* These therefore shall be your Judges.

Illa est voluptas & homine & viro digna, non implere corpus, & faginare, nec cupiditates irritare quarum tristissima est quies. *De Benef. l.* 7. *c.* 11.

2. Always remember sensual Pleasures are but the baits with which Satan angles for the precious Soul; there is a fatal Hook under them. O if Men were but aware of this, they would never purchase pleasure at so dear a rate: *Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant; but he knoweth not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depth of Hell*, Prov. 9. 17, 18. *Pliny* tells us, That the *Mermaids* have most enchanting, charming Voices, and frequent pleasant green Meadows, but heaps of dead mens Bones are always found where they haunt: that which tickles the Fancy stabs the Soul. If the pain (as *Anacreon* well observes) were before the Pleasure, no Man would be tempted by it, but the Pleasure being first and sensible, and the Torment coming after, and as yet invisible, this allures so many to distruction. *At last it biteth like a Serpent, and stingeth like an Adder*, Prov. 23. 32. If Sin did sting and bite at first, none would touch it; but it tickles first, and wounds afterward. O what Man, that is in his wits, would purchase eternal Torments for the sensual, brutish pleasures of a moment! But the Pleasures of Sin bewitch the Affections, blind the Judgment, stupify the Heart, so that sober and impartial thoughts find no place. The Heart is enticed, the Lusts are enraged; cost what it will, sinners will gratify their Lusts.

Breve est quod delectat, æternum quod cruciat.

3. If you are for pleasure, certainly you are out of the way to it, who seek it in the fulfilling of your Lusts. If your Hearts were once sanctified, and brought under the government of the Spirit, you would quickly find a far more excellent Pleasure in the *crucifying* of your lusts, than now you seek in the gratification and fulfilling of them: *Rom* 8. 13. *If ye through the spirit mortifie the deeds of the Body, ye shall live*; *i. e.* ye shall live the most joyful, peaceful, and comfortable life of all Persons in the world, a life of highest delight and true pleasure: for so far as your lusts are mortified, the vigorous healthful frame and due temper of your Souls is restored, and your Evidences for Heaven cleared, both which are the springs of all spiritual delight and pleasure Can any Creature-enjoyment, or any beastly Lust, afford a pleasure like this? Don't you find the Life you live in sinful Pleasures quite beneath the dignity of a Man? and are they not followed with bitter after-reckonings, gripes, and flashes of Conscience? Even in the midst of laughter the heart is sad, and the end of that mirth is heaviness. Oh! ponder seriously what a trifle you sell your precious Souls for. Is it not a goodly Price you value them at? the fugitive, empty, beastly Pleasures of a Moment for the Torments of Eternity!

The sixth Way of losing the Soul opened.

VI. There are also innumerable Souls lost for ever by the distracting Cares of this World, which eat up all their Time, Thoughts, and Studies, so that there is no Room for Christ, or one serious Hour about Salvation. It is too true an Observation that Sir *Walter Rawleigh* made on the common Mechanicks and poor Labourers, their Bodies are the *Anvils* of Pain, and their Souls the *Hives* of unnumbred Cares and Sorrows, whilst the voluptuous and rich spend their time and studies in purveying for new pleasures, and filling their Heads with projects of that Nature. The poorer sort have their heads and hearts filled day and night with anxious thoughts and cares how to get bread, pay their Rent or Debts and struggle thro' the miserable Necessities that pinch them on every side; many Children it may be to provide for, and little or nothing out of which to make it; here is brick to be made, and no straw to make it of; he borrows here to pay there; Debts increase, and Abilities decrease; he toils his Body all the Day, and when his tir'd Carcase calls for rest to enable him for new work to morrow, the cares of the World invade him upon his bed, and keep him sighing or musing there when (poor Man!) he had Load enough before for one.

And now what room is there left for Salvation-work? or how can any spiritual seed that is cast into such a brake of Thorns prosper? *The Cares of this Life* (saith Christ) *spring up and choak it*, *Mark* 4. 19. Tell not them of Heaven and Christ, they must have Bread, talk not to them of the Necessity or comfort of a pardon, they must pay their Debts to Men. Oh the confused buz and clutter that these thoughts and cares make in their Heads! so that no other Voice can be heard. And thus multitudes spend their whole Life in a miserable Servitude in this World, and by that are cast upon a more miserable and restless state for ever in the World to come; one Hell here, and another hereafter. And what shall be done for them? is there no way for their Deliverance? Oh that God would direct and bless the following Considerations to them, if it may be expected they may at any time get through the Brake in which they are involved, and find them at Leisure to bethink themselves!

The sixth way to Hell shut up by five Considerations.

1. Bethink thy self, poor Soul! as much as thou art involved and plunged in the Necessities and distracting Cares of this Life; others, many others, as poor, as necessitous, and every way as much embroil'd in the Cares of the world as you are, have minded their Souls, and taken all Care and Pains for their Salvation notwithstanding: yea, tho' millions of your rank and order are destroyed by these snares of the Devil, yet God hath a very great number, indeed the greatest of any rank of Men, among those that are low, poor, and necessitous in the World. The Church is called *the Congregation of the poor*, Psal. 74. 20 because it consisteth mostly of Men and Women of the lowest and most despicable Condition in this World. They are all poor in *Spirit*, and most of them poor in *Purse*. *Hearken, my beloved Brethren*, (saith *James*) *hath not God chosen the poor of this World, rich in Faith, and Heirs of the Kingdom?* Jam. 2. 5.

Now if others, many others, as much entangl'd in the necessities, cares, and troubles of the World as you, have yet struggl'd through all those Difficulties and Discouragements to Heaven, why should not you strive for Christ and Salvation as well as they? Your Souls are as valuable as theirs, and their Discouragements and Hindrances as great and as many as yours.

2. Consider, your poor and necessitous condition in the World hath something in it of motive and advantage to excite and quicken you to a greater Diligence for Salvation, than is found in a more full, easie, and prosperous State: for God hath hereby imbitter'd this World to you, and made you drink deeper of the troubles of it than other Men: they have the *honey*, and you the *gall*; they have the *flour*, and you the *bran*. But then, as you have not the *Pleasures*, so you have not the *Snares* of a prosperous condition; and your daily Troubles, Cares, and Labours in it, do even prompt you to seek rest in Heaven, which you cannot find on Earth. Can you think you were made for a worse Condition than the Beasts? What, to have two *Hells*, one here, and another hereafter? Surely as low, miserable, and despicable as you are, you are capable of as much Happiness as any of the Nobles of the World, and in your low and afflicted condition stand nearer to the door of hope than they do. Ah! methinks these thoughts do even put themselves upon you, when your Spirits are overloaded with the cares, and your Bodies tir'd with the labours of this Life. Is this the life of troubles I must expect on earth? hath God denied me the Pleasures of this World? Oh then let it be my care, my study, my business to make sure of Christ, to win Heaven, that I may not be miserable in both Worlds. How can you avoid such Thoughts, or put by such meditations, which your very station and condition even forceth upon you?

3. Consider how all your troubles in this World would be sweetned, and all your burdens lightned, if once your Souls were in *Christ*, and in *Covenant with God*. Oh what hearts-ease would Faith give you! what sweet relief would you find in Prayer! These Things, like the *opening of a vein*, or *Tumor when ripe*, would suddenly cool, relieve, and ease your Spirits. Could you but go to God as a Father, and pour out your Hearts before him, and roll all your cares and burdens, wants and sorrows upon him, you would find a speedy out-let to your troubles

troubles, and an in-let to all peace, all comforts, and all refreshments, such as all the riches, honours and fulness of this World cannot give: you would then find Providence engage it self for your supply, and issue all your troubles to your advantage; you would suck the Breasts of those Promises in the Margin, and say, all the dainties in the World cannot make you such another feast; you would then see your bread, your cloaths, and all provisions for you and yours in God's Promises, when you are brought to an exigence, and would certainly find performances as well as promises all along the course of your life.

Heb. 13. 5. Isa. 41. 17. Psal. 34. 9, 10. Psal. 91. 15. Rom. 8. 28.

4. Say not you have no Time to mind another World; God hath not put any of you under such an unhappy necessity; you have one whole Day every Week allow'd you by God and Man for your Souls; you have some spare time every day, which you know you spend worse than in heavenly thoughts and exercises; yea, most Callings are such as will admit of spiritual exercises of thoughts, even when your hands are exercised in the affairs of this Life. Besides, there are none of you but have, and must have daily some relaxations and rest from business; and if your hearts were spiritual, and set upon Heaven, you would find more time than you think on, without prejudice to your Callings, yea, to the great furtherance of them, to spend with God. I can tell you when and where I have found poor Servants hard at work for Salvation, labouring for Christ, some in the Fields, others in Barns and Stables, where they could find any privacy, to pour out their Souls to God in Prayer. As Lovers will make hard shifts to converse together, so will the Soul that is devoted to God, and in earnest for Heaven. And tho' your opportunities be not so large, they may be as sweet, as successful, and to be sure sincere, as those whose condition affords them more time, and greater external Conveniences than you enjoy. More business is sometimes dispatch'd in a quarter of an hour in Prayer, yea, let me say in a few hearty Ejaculations of Soul to God in a few Minutes, than in many long and elaborate Duties. If thou cast in thy two Mites of Time into the Treasury of Prayer, having no more, thou maist, as Christ said of the poor Widow, *give more than those that cast in of their great Abundance of Time and Talents.*

5. Lastly, Consider, *Jesus Christ* is no respecter of Persons; the poorest and vilest on Earth are as welcome to him as the greatest. He chose a poor and mean Condition in this World himself, conversed mostly among the poor, never refused any because of his poverty: *God accepteth not the Persons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor; for they are all the work of his hands,* Job 34. 19. and that both in respect of their *natural Constitution*, as Men, and their *civil Conditions*, as rich or poor Men. Riches and Poverty make a great Difference in the Respects of Men, but none at all with God. If thou be one of God's Poor, he will accept, love, and honour thee above the greatest (if graceless) person in the World. Poverty is no Bar to Christ or Heaven, tho' it be to the respects of Men and pleasures of this Life. Away then with all vain pretences against a Life of Godliness from the meanness of your outward Condition. Heaven was not made for the rich, and Hell only for the poor. No, no; how hard soever you find the way thither, I am sure Christ saith, *it's hard for a rich Man to enter into that Kingdom.*

The seventh way of losing the Soul discovered.

VII. The seventh beaten path to Destruction is by groundless presumption; *præsumendo sperant, & sperando pereunt*; by presumption they have hope, and by that hope they perish.

There are divers objects of Presumption, amongst which these three are most usual, and most fatal, *viz.* that they have,

1. That Grace which they have not.
2. That Mercy in God they will not find.
3. That time before them which will fail 'em.

1. Many presume they have that Grace in them, which God knoweth they have not: So did *Laodicea*, Rev. 3. 17. *Thou sayest; I am rich, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, poor, blind, and naked.* Here is a dangerous Conspiracy betwixt a cunning Devil, and an ignorant proud Heart, to ruin the Soul for ever: they stamp their common Grace for special: they put the old Creature, by a general profession, into the new Creature's habit, and lay a confident Claim to all the Privileges of the Children of God.

2. They presume upon such Mercy in God, as they will never find: they expect pardoning and saving Mercy out of Christ, in an unregenerate State, when there is not one drop of Mercy dispensed in any other Way. The whole œconomy of Grace is managed by the Mediator, *Jude* ver. 21. all saving Mercies come thro' him, upon all that are in him, and upon no others. God is indeed a merciful God, and yet presumptuous sinners will find Judgment without Mercy, because they are not found in the proper Way and Method of Mercy. Thousands and ten thousands carve out and dispose the Mercy of God at their own Pleasure, write their own Pardons in what Terms they think fit; and if they had God's Seal to confirm and ratifie them, it were all well: but alas! it is but a night-vision, a dream of their own brain.

3. But especially, Men presume upon time enough for repentance hereafter: they question not but there be as fit and as fair Opportunities of Salvation to come, as are already past; and in this Snare of the Devil thousands are taken in the very prime and vigour of their youth: That Age is voluptuous, and loves not to be interrupted with severe and serious thoughts and courses; and here is a Salvo fitted exactly to suite their Inclination, and quiet them in their way, that they may pursue their Lusts without Interruption.

I cannot follow the Sin of Presumption at present in all these its courses and ways, and will therefore apply my self to the case last mentioned, which is so common to the World.

The 7th way to Destruction shut up by five weighty Considerations.

1. I would beg all those young voluptuous sinners, whose feet are fast held in the snare of this Temptation, seriously to bethink themselves, Whether they are not old enough to be damned, whilst they judge themselves too young to be seriously godly. There are Multitudes in Hell of your Age and size: you may find Graves in the Church-yard of your own Length, and Skulls of your own Size. Men will not spare a Nest of young Snakes because they are little. If you die Christless and unregenerate, 'tis the same thing whether you be old or young; there is abundance of young Spray as well as old Loggs burning in the flames of hell.

Pœnitet me, Domine, quod sero te amavi, *Aug.*

2. If you knew the Weight and Difficulty of Salvation Work, you would never think you could begin too soon. Religion is a Business will take up all your time: many have repented they began so late, none that they began too soon. Say not, *the penitent Thief found mercy at the last hour*; for his Conversion was extraordinary, and we must not hope for Miracles. Besides, he could never encourage himself in Sin with the Hope and Expectation of such a miraculous Conversion. He was the only Example of a Sinner that was ever so recovered in Scripture, and this was recorded not to nourish Presumption, but to prevent Despair. If ten thousand Persons died of the Plague, and one only of the whole Number infected with it escaped, it's no great Encouragement that you shall make the second. Oh! think, and think again, how many thousands now on Earth have been tugging and striving 40 or 50 Years together *to make their Calling and Election sure*, and yet to this Day it is not so sure as they would have it: they are afraid, after all, time will fail them for finishing, and you think 'tis too early for beginning so great a Work.

3. Others have begun sooner than you, and finished the great and main work before you have done one stroak. *Abijah* was very young, scarce got out of his childhood, *when the grace of God was found in him*, 1 Kings 14. 13. The fear of God was in *Obadiah* when but a *Youth*, 1 *Kings* 18. 12. *Timothy* was not only a Christian, but a Preacher of the Gospel, *in the morning of his life*, 2 Tim. 3. 15. What have you to plead for yourselves, which they had not? or what Arguments and Motives to Godliness had they that you have not? You shall be judged *per pares*, by those of your own Age and Size; their *Seriousness* shall condemn your *Vanity*.

4. The *Morning* of your Life is the Flower of your Time, the freshest and fittest of all your Life for your great Work: now your Hearts are *tender* and *impressive*, your Affections *flowing* and *tractable*, your Heads clear of distracting Cares and Hurries of Business, which come on afterwards in thick Successions: *Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, whilst the evil days come not*, Eccles. 12. 1, 2. If a Man have an important Business to do, he will take the *Morning* for it, knowing if that be slipt, a Croud and Hurry of Business will come on afterwards to distract and hinder him. I presume if all the Converts in the World were examined in this Point, it would be found that at least ten to one were wrought upon in their Youth: that is the moulding Age.

5. And if this proper hopeful Season be elapsed, it is very unlikely that ever you be wrought upon afterwards. How thin and rare in the World are the Instances and Examples of *Conversion* in old Age! Long-continu'd Customs in sin harden the Heart, fix the Will, and root the Habits of Vice so deep in the Soul, that there is no altering of them; your Ears then are so accustomed to the Sounds of the Word, that *Christ* and *Sin*, *Heaven* and *Hell*, *Soul* and *Eternity*, have lost their awful Sound and Efficacy with you. But it is a Question only to be decided by the Event, Whether ever you shall attain to the Years of your Fathers? It is not the sprightly Vigour of your Youth that can secure you from Death. What a Madness then is it to put your Souls and eternal Happiness upon such a blind Adventure? What if your Presumption of so many fair and proper Opportunities hereafter fail you, as it hath failed many Millions, who had as rational and hopeful a Prospect of them as you can have; where are you then? And if you should have more Time and Means than you do presume upon, are you sure your Hearts will be as flexible and impressive, as now they are? Oh! beware of this sin of vain Presumption, to which the Generality of the Damned owe their everlasting Ruin.

The eighth way of losing the Soul opened.

VIII. The eighth way of ruining the precious Soul, is by drinking in the Principles of *Atheism*, and living without God in the World.

Atheism stabs the Soul to Death at one Stroak, and puts it quite out of the way of Salvation. Other sinners are worse than *Beasts*, but *Atheists* are worse than *Devils*, for they *believe* and *tremble*: these banish God out of their Thoughts, and what they can out of the World, living as *without God in the world*, Eph. 2. 12. It is a sin that quencheth all *Religion* in the Soul. He that knows not his Landlord, cannot pay his Rent: He that assents not to the Being of a God, destroys the Foundation of all religious Worship; he cannot fear, love, or obey him, whose Being he believes not. This sin strikes at the Life of God, and destroys the Life of the Soul.

Some are Atheists in *Opinion*, but Multitudes are so in *Practice*: *The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God*, Psal. 14. 1. Tho' he hath engraven his Name upon every Creature, and written it upon the Table of their own Hearts, yet they will not read it: or if they have a slight fluctuating Notion, or a secret Suspicion of a Deity, yet they neither acknowledge his Presence nor his Providence: *Fingunt Deum talem qui nec videt, nec punit*: They say, *How doth God know? can he judge through the dark Clouds? thick clouds are a covering to him, that he seeth not*, Job 22. 14.

Others profess to believe his Being, but their Lives daily give their Lips the Lye; for they give no Evidence in Practice of his Fear, Love, or Dependance on him. If they believe his Being they plainly shew they value not his Favour, delight not in his Presence, love not his Ways or People; but lie down and rise, eat and drink, live and die without the worship or acknowledgment of him, except so much as the Law of the Country, or Custom of the place extorts from them. These Dregs of time produce abundance of Atheists of both sorts: many ridicule and hiss Religion out of all Companies into which they come; and others live down all Sense of Religion: they customarily attend indeed on the external Duties of it, hear the Word; but when the greatest and most important Duties are urged upon them, their inward Thought is, this is the Preacher's Calling, and the Man must say something to fill up his Hour, and get his Living. If they dare not put their Thoughts into Words, and call the Gospel *Fabula Christi*, the Fable of Christ, as a wicked Pope once did; or say of Hell and the dreadful Sufferings of the Damned, as *Galderinus* the Jesuit did, *tunc credam cum illuc venero*, I will believe it when I see it: yet their Hearts and Lives are of the same Complexion with these Mens Words. They do not heartily assent to the Truth of the Gospel which they hear; and tho' bare Assent would not save them, yet their Assent or Non-assent will certainly damn them, except the Lord heal their Understandings and Hearts by

by the Light and Life of Religion. To this last sort I shall offer a few Things.

The 8th way to Hell shut up by six weighty Considerations.

1. You that attend upon the Ordinances, but believe them no more than so many devised Fables, not heartily assent to the Truth of what you hear; know assuredly, that the Word shall never do your Souls good, it can never come to your Hearts and Affections in its regenerating and sanctifying Efficacy, whilst it is stopt and obstructed in your Understandings in the Act of Assent. And thus you may sit under the best Ordinances all your Lives, and be no more the better for them, than the Rocks are for all the Showers of Rain that fall upon them: *Heb.* 4. 2. *The Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.* This is Satan's chief Strength and Fastness, wherein he trusteth: he fears no Argument, whilst he can maintain this Post: the Devil hath no surer Prisoner than the Atheist; there's no escaping out of his Possession and Power, whilst this Blot of Unbelief is shut home in the Mind or Understanding. An unbelieved Truth never converted or saved one Soul from the beginning of the World, nor never shall to the end of it. Those Bodies that have the *Boulema*, or Dog appetite, whatever they eat, it affords them no nourishment or satisfaction, they thrive not with the best Fare: just so it is with your Souls, no Duties, no Ordinances can possibly do them good: as in Argumentation no Conclusion, be it never so regularly drawn, and strongly inferred, is of any force to him that denies Principles.

2. If you assent not to the Truth of the Gospel, you not only make God speak to your Souls in vain, which is fatal to them; but you also make God a Liar, which is the greatest Affront a Creature can put upon his Maker: 1 *John* 5. 10. *He that believeth not God, hath made him a Liar.* Vile Dust, darest thou rise up against the God that made thee, and give him the Lye! An Affront which they Fellow-Creature cannot put up, or bear at thy Hands. Darest thou at once stab his Honour, and thy own Soul? Are not the things that thou lookest on as *Romances* and golden Dreams, meer Artifice neatly contrived to cheat and awe the World; are they not all built upon the Veracity of God? which is the firmest Foundation and greatest Security in the World. Hath he not intermingled for our Satisfaction, not only frequent Assertions, but his Asseverations and Oath to put all beyond Doubt? And yet dare any of you lift up your ignorant blind Understandings against all this, and give him the Lye? Surely the Wrath of God shall smoke against every Soul of Man that doth so, and his own bitter, lamentable, doleful Experience shall be his Conviction shortly, except he repent.

3. Dare any of you give the Thoughts of your Hearts as certain Conclusions under your Hand, and stand by them to the last, and venture all upon them?

Wretched *Atheist*! bethink thy self, pause a while, examine thine own Breast; whatever thy vile Atheistical Thoughts sometimes are, is there not at other times a Fear of the contrary? A Jealousy that all these Things which thou deridest and sportest thy wicked Fancy with, may and will prove true at last; when thou readest, or heares that Text, *John* 3. 18. *He that believeth not, is condemned already*; His *Mittimus* is already made for Hell: Doth not thy Conscience give thee a secret Gird, like a Stich in thy Side? Dare you venture all upon this Issue, that if those things you find in the World be true, you will stand to the hazard of them? If that be a truth, *Mark* 16. 16. *He that believeth not, shall be damned*, you will be content to be damned? Or if, *Rom* 8. 13. be a Truth, That *they which live after the flesh shall die*, you will run the hazard, and bear the Penalty of eternal death? If *Heb* 12. 14. prove true, That *without holiness no man shall see God*, you will be content to be banished from his Presence for evermore? Speak your Hearts in this Matter, and tell us, Don't you live betwixt Atheistical Surmises, that all these are but cunning Artifices, and Fears that at last they will prove the greatest Verities?

4. Hath not God given you all the Satisfaction you can reasonably desire of the undoubted Truth and Certainty of his Word? What would you have, which you have not already? Would you have a Voice from Heaven? the Scriptures you read or hear are a more sure Word than such a Voice would be, 2 *Pet.* 1. 19. Or would you have a Messenger from Hell? He that believeth not the written Word, neither would believe *if one should rise from the dead*, Luke 16. 31. View the innate Characters of the Scripture, is it not altogether Pure and Holy, full of Divine Wisdom and Awful Majesty, and in every respect such as evidenceth its Author to be the Wise, Holy, and Just God, who searcheth the Hearts and Reins? Look upon the Seals and Confirmations of it; hath not God confirmed it by divers Miracles from Heaven, a Seal which neither Men or Devils could counterfeit? And don't you see the Blessing and Power of God accompanying it in the Conversion and wondreful change of Men's Hearts and Lives, which can be done by no other Hand than God's? Say not, the Miracles which confirm the Gospel are but uncertain Traditions, and except you your selves see them wrought you cannot believe them. There are a thousand Things which you do believe, tho' you never saw them; and what you require for your Satisfaction, every Man may require the same for his; and so Christ must live in all parts of this World, and repeat his Miracles over and over in all Ages to satisfy the unreasonable Incredulity of those that question their Truth, after the fullest Confirmation and Seal hath been given that is capable to be given, or the Heart of Man can desire should be given; and if all this should be done, you might be as far from believing, as now you are; for many of those that saw and heard the Things wrought by Christ, contradicted and blasphemed, and so might you.

5. Satan, who undermines your Assent to these Things, is forced to give his own: he that tempts you to look on them as *Fables*, himself knows and is convinced that they are Realities; *The Devils also believe and tremble*, Jam. 2. 19. they know and feel the Truth of these Things, tho' it be their great Design and Interest to shake your Assent to them: they know Christ is the Son of God, and that there will be a Day in which he will judge the World in Righteousness, and that there are Torments prepared for themselves, and all whom they seduce from God, *Matt.* 8. 29. If you ungod God, you must unman your selves; yea, not only make your selves less than Men, but worse than Devils.

6. In a word, let thy own Heart, O Atheist, be Judge, whether these be real Doubts still sticking

ing in your Minds, after you have done all that becomes Men to do for Satisfaction in such important Cases? Or whether they be not such Principles as you willingly foment and nourish in your Hearts, as a Protection to your sensual Lusts, whose Pleasures you would fain have without Interruptions and Over-awings by the Fears of a Judgment to come, and a righteous Retribution from a just and terrible God! Examine your Hearts in that Point, and you will soon find the Cheat to be in that I here point you to: you have not studied the World impartially, nor brought your Doubts and Scruples with a humble, unbiassed, teachable Spirit to those that are wise and able to resolve them, much less prayed for the Spirit of Illumination; but willingly entertained whatever Atheistical Wits invent, or the Devil suggests, as a Defensative against the Checks of Conscience, and Fears of Hell in the way of Sin. You are loath those things should be true, which the Scriptures speak, and are glad of any colourable Argument or Pretence to still your own Consciences. Is not this the Case? The Lord stop your desperate Course; your Paths lead to Hell.

The ninth way of losing the precious Soul opened.

IX. Precious Souls are daily plunged into the Gulph of Perdition by *Profaneness* and *Debauchery*. How many every where lie wallowing in this Puddle? glorying in their Shame, and running into all excess of Riot? The Hypocrite steals to Hell in a private close way of concealed sin; but the Prophane gallop along the publick Road at Noon-day: *They declare their sin as* Sodom, *and hide it not*; Isa. 3. 9. *The shew of their countenance testifieth against them.* The Hypocrite hath Devotion in his Countenance, and Heaven in his Mouth; you know not by his Words and Countenance, whither he is going; but the Prophane hide it not, they are past Shame, and above blushing at the horrid'st Impieties. Look as God hath some Servants more eminent, forward, and couragious in the ways of Godliness than others, Men that will not hide their Principles, or be ashamed of the Ways of Godliness in the Face of Danger; so the Devil hath some Servants as eminent for Wickedness, who scorn to sneak to Hell by Concealment of their Wickedness, but avow and own it without Fear or Shame in the open Sight of Heaven and Earth. Wherever they come, they defile the Air they breathe in with horrid Blasphemies and obscene Discourses not to be named, and leave a strong Scent of Hell behind them.

This Age hath brought forth Multitudes of these Monsters, the Reproach and Shame of the Nation that bred them. I have little Hope to stop one of them in the career and full speed to Hell. They have lost the *Sense of Sin*, the Restraints of *Shame* and *Fear*; and then what is left to check them in their Course? I cannot hope that such a Discourse as this shall ever come into their Hands, except it be to sacrifice it to the Flames; yet not knowing the Ways of Providence which are unsearchable, and what Use God may make upon one Occasion or another of these following Considerations, I will adventure to drop a few Words upon these forlorn Sinners, as far as they seem to be gone beyond Recovery; beseeching the Lord to make way for these Things to their Hands and Hearts, and make them the Instruments of pulling some of them as Brands out of the Burning.

The ninth way to Hell by Profaneness stopt.

1. And first, let it be laid to Heart, that tho' the Case and State of many thousand Souls be doubtful and uncertain, so that neither themselves, nor any other know what they are, or to whom they belong; yet their Condition is without Controversy miserable and forlorn; all Men know whose they are, and whither they are going. The Apostle appeals in this Case to the Bar of every Man's Reason and Conscience, as a thing allowed and yielded by all, *Eph.* 5. 5. *For this ye know* (saith he) *that no Whoremonger, nor unclean Person, nor covetous Man, who is an Idolater, hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God.* This is a clear Case, there is no Controversy about it. Many there be in a doubtful Case, but no doubt of these, they are fast and sure in the Power of Satan; and as sure as God is a God of Truth, they that die in this Condition shall never see his Face. And to the same purpose again, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9. *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inhereit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the Kingdom of God. Know ye not?* saith he, *q. d.* Sure you cannot be so ignorant and blind to think that there is any room in Heaven for such Wretches as these. If the Righteous be scarcely saved, where shall the Sinner and the Ungodly appear? If all Strictness, Holiness, Self-denial, Diligence, be all little enough to win Heaven, what Hope can there be of those that not only cast off all Duties of Religion, but also cast themselves into all the opposite Ways and Courses which directly lead to Damnation? He that refuseth his Food endangers his Life; but he that drinks Poison, certainly and speedily destroys it.

2. As far as you are gone in a Course of Profaneness, you are not yet gone beyond the reach of Mercy and all hopes of Salvation, if now at last, after all your Debaucheries and Profaneness, the Lord touch your Hearts with the Sense of your sinful and miserable Estate, and turn your Feet to his Testimonies. When the Apostle in 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10. had told us the Doom of such Men, upon the Supposition of their Perseverance in that Course; yet presently he adds, as a Motive to their Repentance, an Example of Mercy upon such Wretches as these: *And such were some of you, but ye are washed*, v. 11. The golden Scepter of free Grace hath been held forth to many as prophane and notorious Sinners as you, to a blaspheming *Saul*, to a *Mary Magdalen*, to a *Manasseh*. 'Tis not the Greatness of the Sin, but the Impenitence and Infidelity of the Sinner, that ruins him. Well then, there is a Certainty of Damnation if you go, and yet a possibility of Forgiveness and Mercy before you, a Mercy invaluable.

3. Nay, this is not all; but in some respect there is more Probability and Hope of your Return and Repentance, than there is of many others who have led a more sober, smooth, and civil Life than you have done. Your Profaneness hath more dishonoured God, but the Morality and Civility of some Men secures them faster in the Snare of the Devil: they have many Things in themselves to build up their presumptuous Hopes upon, but you have *nothing*. It is hard for Conviction to reach that Man's Conscience that hath a Righteousness of his own to trust in: but methinks it should have an easier Access to yours, whose notorious Courses lay your Consciences naked and bare before the Word to be wounded by it. Christ's Ministry

Ministry had little Success among the *Pharisees* who were Righteous in their own Eyes, but it wrought effectually upon *Publicans* and *Sinners*. Hence Christ told them, *Mat.* 21. 31. That *Publicans and Harlots go into the Kingdom of God before them*. *Publicans* were esteemed the worst of Men, and *Harlots* the worst of Women; yet the one and other, as vile as they were, stood fairer for Conviction, and consequently for Salvation, than those that thought they needed *no Repentance*. All this is Matter of Hope, and runs into a powerful Motive and loud Call to Repentance. *He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear.*

The tenth way leading to Destruction marked.

X. Deep and fixed Prejudices against Godliness and the sincere Professors thereof, precipitate thousands of Souls into their own Ruin and Damnation.

It was not without a weighty Reason that *Christ* denounced that Woe upon the World, *Mat.* 18. 7. *Wo unto the world because of offences*. The poor World will be ruin'd by Scandals and Prejudices; they will take such *Offences* at the Ways of *Godliness*, that they will never have good Thoughts of them any more. *This Sect is every where spoken against*, Acts 28. 22. and so Christians are condemned, διὰ τὸ φήμην, because of the common Reproach, as *Justin Martyr* complain'd. All the Scandals which fall out in the Church, are so many Swords and Daggers put into the Hands of the wicked World to murder their own Souls withal. Some have sucked in such Opinions of the Ways of Godliness, as make them irreconcilable Enemies to them, and fierce Opposers of them. And from hence are most of the Persecutions that befal the People of God. When you see Showers of Slanders and Reproaches going before, expect Storms of Persecutions coming after. Slanders beget Prejudices, and these prepare for Persecutions. Oh! how keen and fierce are the Minds of many against the upright and innocent Servants of God, whom they have first represented to themselves in such an odious Dress and Character as the Devil hath drawn them in, upon their Fancies and Imaginations! So the *primitive Christians* were represented to the Heathens as *Monsters*, and their Conventions in the Night, occasioned by the Fury of Persecutors, were reported to be for *lascivious* and *barbarous ends*, to *deflower Virgins*, and *murder innocent Children*: and by this Artifice the Heathens were secured against Conversion to Christ. This hath been the Policy of Hell from the beginning, and it hath prospered so much in the World, that Satan hath no Reason to change his Hand. But how may this Plot of Hell be defeated, and the Ruin of Souls prevented?

The tenth way of destroying Souls shut up by two Counsels.

1. It will be impossible to prevent the Ruin of a great part of the World by Prejudices against the ways of Godliness, except those that profess them, walk more holily and conformably to the Rule and Pattern of Christ, whose Name is called upon them. I shall therefore first address my Discourse to the *Professors of Religion*, beseeching them in the Bowels of Christ to take Pity upon the Multitudes of Souls which are daily ruined and destroyed by their Scandals and Miscarriages. Did you live according to the Rules you profess, *your well-doing would put to silence the Ignorance of foolish Men*, 1 Pet. 2. 15. and consequently the Ruin of many might be prevented. I remember *Bernard*, speaking of the lewd and loose Life of the Priests of his time, sighs out this just and bitter Complaint to God about it; *Misera eorum conversatio plebis tuæ miserabilis subversio est*: Oh Lord, saith he, their miserable Conversation is the miserable Subversion of thy People. Oh! of how many who glory in the Title of *Sons of the Church*, may Christ say, as *Jacob* did of his two lewd Sons *Simeon* and *Levi*, *Ye have troubled me, to make me to stink among the Inhabitants of the Land!* *Gen.* 34. 30.

Bern. in Conversf. Pauli, Ser. 1.

And how many Professors, who pretend to more than ordinary Reformation and Holiness, do shed Soul-blood by their scandalous Conversations? *Salvian* brings in the Wicked of his Age upbraiding the Looseness of Christians in this manner, *Behold, those men who boast themselves redeemed from the tyranny of Satan, and profess themselves dead to the world, yet are conquer'd by the Lusts of it*. And *Cyprian* long before his Day, brings in the Heathens thus insulting over looser Christians: *Where is that Catholick Law which they believe? Where are the Examples of Piety and Chastity which they should learn? They read the Gospel, yet are immodest: they hear the Apostles, yet are drunk*. Oh Professors! where are your Bowels to the poor Souls of Sinners? If your Neighbour's Ox or Ass fall into the Pit, you are bound to deliver him if you can; and will you not do as much for a precious Soul as you would do for a Beast? nay, you dig Pits by your scandalous Lives to destroy them. If you sin, there are Instruments enough to spread it, and Multitudes of Souls ready prepar'd to take the Infection. Say not, If they do, the Fault is theirs; for tho' they are *Principals* in the Murder of their own Souls by taking the Scandal, yet you are *Accessories* in giving it: He is a mad Man that will kill himself with a Sword, and he no better that will put it into his Hand.

Ecce qui jactant se redemptos à tyrannide Satanæ, qui prædicant se mortuos mundo, nihilominus à cupiditatibus suis vincuntur, *Salvian*. Ubi est catholica lex quam credunt? ubi pietatis & castitatis exempla quæ discant? Evangelia legunt, & impudici sunt; Apostolos audiunt, & inebriantur. *Cypr.*

Oh therefore, if you have any Regard to the precious Souls of Men, live up to the Rules of your Profession. Oh! be blameless and harmless, the Sons of God without Rebuke in the midst of a perverse and froward Generation: let the Heavenliness of your Conversation stop those Mouths that accuse you as Men of a worldly Spirit: let them see by your Moderation in seeking it, your Patience in losing it, your Readiness in distributing it, that it is a groundless Calumny under which your Names suffer. Let them see by your Apparel, Company, and Discourses, you are not such proud lofty Spirits as you are represented to be. Convince them by your Flexibleness to all Things that are lawful and expedient, by manifesting as much as in you lieth, that it is the pure Bond and Tie of Conscience which keeps you from Compliance in all other Things, and by your Meekness in suffering for such Noncompliance, that you are not such turbulent, factious Incendiaries, as the Wicked World slanderously reports you to be. Convince the World by your exact Righteousness in all your civil Dealings, and by the Lip of Truth in all your Promises' and Engagements, that you have the Fear of God in your Hearts, as well as the Livery of Christianity upon your Backs. In a word, so live that none may have just ground to believe the impudent Slanders the Devil raises in the World against you. Let your Light so shine before Men,

that they may glorify your Father which is in Heaven. Without your care and circumspection, the shedding of a world of precious Soul-blood can never be prevented.

2. Let me advise and beseech all Men to be so just to others, and merciful to their own Souls, as not to cast them away for ever, by receiving prejudices against Godliness from the miscarriages of some that make more than a common profession of it. If others stumble before you, and break their shins, don't you stumble at them, and break your necks. To prevent this fatal effect of scandal and prejudice at Religion, I desire a few Particulars may be impartially weighed.

First, Very many of those Scandals bandied up and down the World against the Professors of Godliness, are devised and forged in Hell, as so many traps and snares to catch and destroy Mens Souls, to beget an irreconcileable aversion and enmity in men to the ways of God. *They devise deceitful matters* (saith the Psalmist) *against them that are quiet in the land*, Psal. 35. 20. So *Jer.* 18. 18. *Come, say they, let us devise devices against Jeremiah, and smite him with the tongue.* And there is as little equity in the credulous receiver, as there is honesty in the wicked forger of these slanders. With one arrow of censure you wound no less than three, *viz.* the honour of God, your innocent Brother, and your own Souls. As to the two former wounds, they will in due time be healed. God will vindicate his own Name fully, and the reputation of his innocent Servants shall be cleared and repaired abundantly; but mean time your Souls may perish by the wounds prejudices have given, so that you may never be reconciled to Godliness and its Professors whilst you live, but turn Scoffers and Persecutors of them.

Secondly, Examine whether the matters that are charged upon them as their *Crimes*, be not their *Duties*. Sometimes it falls out to be so, and if so, you fight more immediately and directly against God than Men. This was *David*'s case *Psal.* 69. 10. *When I wept, and chastned my Soul, that was to my reproach*; my pity was turned to reproach. They called his tears Crocodile's tears, and his fastings hypocritical shadows of devotion and humility. Thus the very matter of his duty was turned into scorn and reproach. And so it was with the primitive Christians, their very owning of themselves to be Christians, was crime enough to condemn them.

Thirdly, if Professors of Religion do in some things act unbecoming their holy Profession, yet every slip and failing in their lives is no sufficient Warrant for you to censure their Persons as hypocrites, much less to fall upon Religion it self, and condemn it for the faults of them that profess it. There's many an upright heart overtaken by temptation. You see their Miscarriages, but you see not their Humiliations and Self-condemnations before God for them. "Foul and fearful (saith a "grave Divine) was the scandal "of *David*; and what was the "issue? presently the Enemies of "God and Godliness began to lift their heads, and "fall foul upon *David*'s Religion, 2 *Sam.* 12. they "blasphemed the Name of God. O this is he that "was so grand a Zealot, that the Zeal of God's "House did eat him up. This is the Man, that "out of his transcendant Zeal, danced before the "Ark. This is he that prayed thrice a Day, at "morning, noon, and night. This is he that "was so precise and strict in his Family, that a "wicked person should not dwell in his House. "This your great precise Zealot hath defiled the "Wife, and murdered the Husband. Now you "see what his Religion is, now you see what comes "of this profession of so much Holiness and God-"liness.

Jer. Dyke, *of Scandal*, p. 33.

O that Men would seriously consider their Evil in such censures as these! What is all this to Religion? Doth Religion any way countenance or patronize such Practices? Nay, doth it not impartially and severely condemn them? It is the glory of the Christian Religion, that it is pure and undefiled, *Jam.* 1. 27. These Practices flow from no Principle of Religion, nor are chargeable upon it, for it teacheth men the very contrary, *Tit.* 2. 11, 12. If I see a Papist sin boldly or an *Arminian* slight Grace, I justly condemn their Principles in and with their Practices, because Popery sets Pardons to sale, and Arminianism exalts nature into the place of Grace: but doth the Doctrine of the Gospel lead to any Immoralities? Charge it, if you can.

Fourthly, and as senseless a thing it is to condemn all for the miscarriages and faults of some, which yet is the common practice of the World. Are all that profess Godliness loose and careless? No, no; many are an ornament to their holy Profession, and the glory of Christianity. And why must the innocent be condemned for the guilty? What is your reason and ground for that? Why might not the Enemies of Christianity have condemned the eleven Apostles upon the fall of *Judas*? had they not as good warrant for it, as you have for this?

Lastly, You little know what a snare of the Devil is laid for your Souls in all those prejudices and offences you take at the ways and Professors of Godliness; and what a Woe you bring upon your own Souls by them. You speak Evil of persons and things you know not, and prejudice is like still to keep you in ignorance of them. *Woe to the World* (saith Christ) *because of Offences*; and *blessed is he that is not offended at me.*

The eleventh way of ruining the precious Soul opened.

XI. The eleventh way wherein abundance of precious Souls perish in the christianized and professing World, is the way of *formal Hypocrisie* in Religion, and *Zeal* about the *Externals* of Worship. Such a Generation of Men have in all Ages mingled themselves with the sincere Worshippers of God; and the inducement to it is obvious, the *form of Godliness* is an honour, but the *power* of it a burden. By the *former*, earthly Interests are accommodated, by the latter they are frequently exposed and hazarded.

We find in the *Jewish* Church abundance of such Chaff intermixed with the Wheat, which the Doctrine of Christ discovered and purged out of the flour, *Mat.* 3. 9, 12. Such were the *Pharisees*, who were exceeding zealous for Traditions, and the external Rites and Ceremonies of the Law, but inwardly full of all filthiness, *Mat.* 15. 7, 8, 9. Men that honoured the dead, and persecuted the living Saints; that reverenced the material Temple, and destroyed the living Temples; that strain'd at Gnats of Ceremonies, and swallowed down the grossest Immoralities.

And well had it been if this generation had ended with that state and time of the Church: but we find a Prophecy of the increase of these Men in the latter days, 2 *Tim.* 3. 5. which is every where sadly verified. Religion runs into stalk and blade, into leaves and suckers, which should be concocted into

into pith and fruit. Yea, it is of sad consideration, that amongst many high pretenders to Reformation, their Zeal, which should nourish the vitals of Religion, and maintain their daily work of Mortification and Communion with God, spends it self in some by-opinion, whilst practical Godliness visibly languisheth in their Conversations. How many are there that hate doctrinal Errors, who yet perish by practical ones: who hate a false doctrine, but mean time perish by a false Heart! 'Tis very difficult to reclaim this sort of Men from the error of their way, and thereby save their Souls from Hell; however, let the means be used, and the success left with God.

The eleventh way to Hell by Formality barred up.

1. No sin entangles the Souls of Men faster, or damns them with more certainty and aggravation, than the sin of formal Hypocrisie. It holds the Soul fastest on Earth, and sinks it deepest into Hell. There was no sort of Men upon whom the Doctrine of *Christ* and the *Apostles* had so little success and effect, as the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*; they derided him, when *Publicans* and *Sinners* trembled and believed, *Luke* 16. 14, 15. The form of Godliness wards off all Convictions: their zeal for the *Externals of Religion* secures them against the fears of Damnation, whilst in the mean while their Hypocrisie plunges them deeper into Hell, than others that never made such shews of *Sanctimony* and *Devotion*: *He shall appoint him his portion with Hypocrites*, Mat. 24. 51. that is, he shall be punished in Hell as Hypocrites are punished, *viz.* with the greatest and sorest punishment. Hypocrisie is a double iniquity, and will be punished with double destruction: their ungrounded hopes of Heaven serve but to pully up their wretched Souls to a greater height of vain confidence, which gives them the more dreadful jerk in their lamentable and eternal disappointment.

2 Blind superstitious Zeal, which spends it self only about the *Externals of Religion*, usually prepares and engageth Men in a more violent Persecution of those that are *really godly and conscientious*. The Lord opened a great door of opportunity at *Antioch* to *Paul*; the whole City came together to attend the discoveries of Christ in the first publication of the Gospel, and the poor *Gentiles* began to taste the sweetness of the Gospel; but the Devil perceiving his Kingdom begin to totter, immediately stirred up his Instruments to persecute the Apostles, and drive them out of the Countrey; and who more fit for that work than the devout and honourable Women? *Acts* 13. 15. these stirred up their Husbands, and all they had influence upon, under a fair pretence of zeal for the *Law*, to obstruct the Progress of the *Gospel*. *No Bird* (saith one) *like the living Bird to draw others into the Net*. Men of greatest names and pretensions to Religion, if graceless, are the most dangerous Instruments the Devil can employ to the ruin and extirpation of true Godliness. Such a Zealot was *Paul* in his unregenerate state.

Satan per costam, tanquam per scalam, ad cor ascendit. *Gregor.*

3. Nothing is more common than to find men hot and zealous against *false Worship*, whilst their hearts are as cold as a stone in the *Vitals* and *Essentials* of *true Religion*. Many can dispute warmly against *Adoration of Images*, *Praying to Angels and Saints departed*, who all the while are like those dead Images which others Worship. *Jehu* was a Zealot against Idolatry, and yet the vital power of true Godliness was a stranger to his Soul, 2 *Kings* 10. 15, 16. The *Pharisees* spared no pains to make a *Proselyte*, and yet all the while were the Children of the Devil themselves, *Mat.* 23. 15.

This is a sad case, yet what more common? The Lord open the eyes of these men, and convince them in season that their Zeal runs in the wrong Channel, and spends it self upon things which shall never profit them. Oh! if they were but as much concerned to promote the love of God, and life of Godliness in themselves and others, as they are about some external Accidents and Appendages of Religion, what Blessings would they be to the World, and what evidence would they have of their own sincerity?

The twelfth way to Hell opened.

XII. The twelfth way to Hell, in which many Souls are carried on smoothly and securely to their own Destruction, is the way of *meer Civility* and *moral Honesty*, wherein men rest as in a safe state, never doubting but a civil life will produce an issue in a happy death. *Moral Honesty* is a lovely thing, and greatly tends to the peace and order of the World; but it is not *saving Grace*, nor gives any Man a good title to *Christ* and *Salvation*. Indeed there can be no Grace in that Soul in which *Civility* and *moral Honesty* is not found; but this may be found in thousands that have no Grace.

That which ruins Mens Souls, is not the exercise of moral Vertues, but their reliance upon 'em: they use their morality as a shield to secure their Consciences from the convictions of the Word, which would shew them their sinful and miserable state by Nature. Thus the *Pharisees*, Luke 18. 11, 12. *God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers, or even as this Publican*; he blesseth himself in the conceits of his own safety and happiness. Let debauch'd and prophane persons look to it, I am well enough; tho' alas, poor man! his being less evil at best could but procure him a cooler Hell, or a milder Flame. This was the case of the young Man, *Mat.* 19. 20. and like a young Man indeed he reasons. He sums up all the stock of his civil Life, and thinks it strange if that be not enough to make a purchase of eternal Life. *What lack I yet?* Alas, poor Soul! every thing necessary to Salvation: the very first stone was not laid when he thought the building was finished. And this is the case of multitudes, both young and old: and that which greatly confirms and settles them in this their dangerous security, is the general, indistinct Doctrine of some, who pretend to be Guides to the Souls of others; the scope of whose ministry aims at no higher mark than to civilize the people, and press moral Duties upon them, as if this were all that were necessary to Salvation: nay, 'tis well if some do not industriously pull down the pale of distinction betwixt *Morality* and *Regeneration*, and tell the world in plain *English*, *That there is no reason to put a difference betwixt such as are baptized and live morally honest, and those that have saving Grace; and they that do so, are only a few who are highly conceited of themselves, and censorious of all others, whom they please to vote formal and moral.*

This indeed is the way to fix them where they are: if *Christ* had not taken another method with *Nicodemus*, and his Ministers had not pressed *the necessity of Regeneration*, and *the insufficiency of moral honesty to Salvation*, how thin had the number of true Converts been, tho' at most they are but a handful in comparison of the *Unregenerate!*

Oh! that God would bleſs what follows, to undeceive and ſave ſome poor Soul out of this dangerous ſnare of the Devil!

The twelfth way to Damnation barred by three Conſiderations.

1. Blind not your ſelves with the luſtre of your own moral Vertues, a life ſmoothly drawn with Civility through the World: for though it muſt be acknowledged there is a lovelineſs and attracting ſweetneſs in Morality and Civility, yet theſe things rather reſpect *Earth* than *Heaven*, and are deſigned for the conſervation of the Order and Peace of this World, not for your Salvation and Title to the World to come. Without Juſtice and Truth, *Kingdoms* and *Common-wealths* would become *Mountains of prey* and *Dens of robbery*. Where there is no Truſt, there can be no Traffick; and where there is no Truth, there can be no Truſt. Civility is the very Baſis of humane Society, a world of good accrues to men by it, and abundance of miſchief is prevented by it; but it never gave any man *an Intereſt in Chriſt*, or *a Title to Salvation*. The *Romans* and *Lacedemonians*, who periſhed in the darkneſs of Heatheniſm, excelled in *Morality*; there is nothing of *Chriſt* or *Regeneration* in theſe things, how much of excellency ſoever be aſcribed to them. *Paul* the *Phariſee* was a blameleſs perſon touching the Law, and yet at the ſame time not only utterly ignorant of *Chriſt*, but a bitter Enemy to him and all that were his. 'Till you can find another way to Heaven than by *Regeneration*, *Repentance*, and *Faith*, never lean upon ſuch a deceitful and rotten prop as meer Civility is.

2. *Civilized Nature* is *unſanctified Nature* ſtill; and without *Sanctification* there is no *Salvation*, *Heb.* 12. 14. Civility adorneth Nature, but doth not change it. Moral Vertues are ſo many ſweet flowers ſtrewed over a dead Corps, which hide the loathſomeneſs of it, but inſpire not life into it. Morality hides and covers, but never mortifies nor cures the Corruptions of Nature; and mortified they muſt be, or you cannot be ſaved. Take the beſt Nature in the World, and let it be adorned with all the Ornaments of Morality (which they call *Homoletical Vertues*) and add to theſe all the common gifts of the Spirit, which are for aſſiſtance and miniſtry; yet all this cannot ſecure that Soul from Hell, or be the ground-work for a juſt claim to any promiſe of Salvation: all this is but nature improved, not *regenerated*. Morality is neither produc'd as ſaving Grace is, nor works ſuch effects as Grace does. There are no pangs of *Repentance* introducing it, it may coſt many an *aking head*, but no *aking heart* for Sin; no ſuch diſtreſſed outcries as that, *Acts* 2. 37. *Men and Brethren, what ſhall we do?* Nor doth it produce ſuch humility, ſelf-abaſement, heavenly tempers, and tendencies of Soul, as Grace doth. Cheat not you ſelves then in ſo important a concern as Salvation is, with an empty ſhadow.

Abſcondit, non abſcindit vitia. *Lactant.*

3. Civility is not only found in multitudes that are out of *Chriſt*, but may be the cauſe and reaſon why they are *Chriſtleſs*. Miſtake not, I am not pleading the cauſe of *Prophaneneſs*, nor diſputing Civility out of the World; I heartily wiſh there were more of it to be found in every place, it would exceedingly promote the Peace, Order, and Tranquility of the World: but yet it is certain, that the Eyes of thouſands are ſo dazled with the luſtre of their own Morality, that they ſee no need of *Chriſt*, nor feel any want of *his Righteouſneſs*, and this is the ruine of their Souls. Thus *Chriſt* brings in the *Phariſee* with his proud boaſt, that he is *no Extortioner, Adulterer, nor unjuſt, or ſuch an one as that Publican*, *Luke* 18. 11. Oh, what a Saint doth he vote himſelf, when he compar'd his life with the other's! Well then, beware you be not deceiv'd by thinking you are ſafe becauſe you are got out of the dirty road to Hell, when all the while you are only ſtept over the hedge into a cleaner path to Damnation. *You have had a ſhort account of ſome few of thoſe many ways in which the precious Souls of Men are eternally loſt: let us briefly apply it in the following Inferences.*

Infer. I. If there be ſo many ways of loſing the Soul, and ſuch multitudes of Souls loſt in every one of them, *then the number of ſaved Souls muſt needs be exceeding ſmall.*

The number of the Saved may be conſidered either *abſolutely* or *comparatively*. In the firſt conſideration they appear great and many, even a great multitude which no man can number, *Rev.* 7. 9: but if compared with thoſe that are loſt, they make but *a ſmall remnant*, Iſa. 1. 9. *a little flock*, Mat. 12. 32. For when we conſider how vaſtly the Kingdom of Satan is extended, who is called *the God of this World*, from the world of people who are in ſubjection to him; how ſmall a part of this earthly Globe is enlightened with the Beams of Goſpel-light, and that Satan is acknowledged Ruler of all the reſt, *Eph.* 6. 12. But when 'tis farther conſidered, that out of this ſpot on which the light of the Goſpel is riſen, the far greateſt part are loſt alſo: Oh, what a poor handful remains left to *Jeſus Chriſt*, as the purchaſe of his Blood!

'Tis of trembling conſideration, how many thouſands of Families amongſt us are meer Nurſeries for Hell, Parents bringing forth and breeding up Children for the Devil; not one word of God (except it be in the way of Blaſphemy or Prophaneneſs) to be heard among them. How naturally their ignorant and wicked Education puts them in the courſe and tide of the world, which carries them away irreſiſtibly to *Hell*; how one ſinner confirms and animates another in the ſame ſinful courſe, 'till they be all paſt hope or remedy; how the *Rich* are taken with the baits of ſenſual pleaſures, and the *Poor* loſt in the brake of diſtracting worldly cares, except here and there a Soul pluck'd out of the ſnare of the Devil by the wonderful power and arm of God. On the one ſide, you may ſee multitudes drown'd in *open Prophaneneſs and Debauchery*; and on the other ſide, many thouſands ſecurely ſleeping in the ſtate of *Civility and Morality*. Some *Key-cold*, and without the leaſt ſenſe of Religion; others *Hell-hot* with blind zeal and ſuperſtitious madneſs againſt *true Godlineſs* and the *ſincere Practitioners* of it. Some living all their days under the *Ordinances of God*, and never touch'd with any conviction of their Sin or miſery; others convinc'd, and making ſome faint offers at Religion, but their convictions (like bloſſoms nipt with a froſty morning) fall off, and no fruit follows. And as *Rubies*, *Sapphires*, and *Diamonds* are very few in compariſon of the *Pebbles* and *common ſtones* of the Earth; ſo are *true Chriſtians* in compariſon of multitudes that periſh in the Snares of Satan.

Infer. II. *How little reaſon have the unregenerate to glory and boaſt themſelves in their earthly acquiſitions and ſucceſſes, whilſt mean time their Souls are loſt!* they have gotten other things, but loſt their Souls. 'Tis ſtrange to ſee how ſome men by rolling a ſmall Fortune up and down the World (as Boys do a ſnow-ball)

ball) have increaſed the heap, and raiſed a great Eſtate; they have attained their deſign and aim in the World, and hug themſelves in the pleaſed thoughts of their happineſs: but, alas! among all the thoughts of their gains there is not one thought of what they have loſt. Oh! if ſuch a thought as this could find room in their Hearts: *I have gotten an Eſtate, but I have loſt my Soul; I have much of the World, but nothing of Chriſt; Gold and Silver I have, but Grace, Peace, and Pardon I have not; my Body is well provided for, but my Soul is naked, empty, and deſtitute.* Such a thought, like the Sentence written on the Wall, would make their hearts quail within them. What a rapture and tranſport of joy did the ſight of a full Barn caſt that worldling into! *Luke* 12. 19, 20. *Soul, take thine eaſe, eat, drink, and be merry*; little dreaming that death was juſt then at the door to take away the Cloth, Gueſt, and all together; that the next hour his *Friends* would be ſcrambling for his Eſtate, the *Worms* for his Body, and the *Devils* for his Soul.

Oh! how many have not only loſt their Souls whilſt they have been drudging for the World, but have *ſold* their Souls to purchaſe a little of the World; parted by conſent with their beſt treaſure for a very trifle, and yet think they have a great bargain of it! Surely, if poor Sinners did but apprehend what they have loſt, as well as what they have gained, their gains would yield them as little comfort as *Judas*'s Money did, for which he ſold both his Soul and Saviour. Inſtead of thoſe pleaſing frolicks of wanton worldlings, what a cold ſhiver would run through all their bones and bowels, did they but underſtand what it is to loſe a gracious God and a precious Soul, and both eternally and irrecoverably!

The juſt God remains ſtill to avenge and puniſh the ſinner: but the Favour of God, that friendly look, is gone; the Peace of God, that Heaven upon Earth, is gone; the Eſſence of the Soul remains ſtill, but its purity, peace, joy, hope, and happineſs, theſe are gone: and theſe being gone, what can remain, but a tormenting piercing ſight of thoſe things for which you have ſold them?

Infer. III. *Hence let us eſtimate the evil of ſin, and ſee what a dreadful thing that is which men commonly ſport themſelves with, and make ſo light of: it is not only a wrong and injury to the Soul, but the loſs and utter ruin of the Soul for ever.*

It is ſaid, *Prov.* 8. 36. *He that ſinneth againſt me, wrongeth his own Soul.* And if this were all the miſchief ſin did us, it were bad enough; a wrong to the Soul is a greater evil than the ruine of the body or eſtate, and all the outward enjoyments of this life can be: but to *loſe* the precious Soul, and deſtroy it to all eternity, Oh, who can eſtimate ſuch a loſs! Now the reſult and laſt effect of ſin is death, the death of the precious Soul, *Rom.* 6. 21. *The end of thoſe things is death.* So *Ezek.* 18. 4. *The Soul that ſinneth ſhall die.*

Sin doth not deſtroy the being of the Soul by *annihilation*, but it doth that which the Damned ſhall find and acknowledge to be much worſe; it cuts off the Soul from God, and deprives it of all its felicity, joy, and pleaſure, which conſiſts in the enjoyment of him. Such is the dolefulneſs and fearfulneſs of this reſult and iſſue of ſin, that when God himſelf ſpeaks of it, he puts on a paſſion, and ſpeaks of it with the moſt feeling concernment; *Ezek.* 33. 11. *As I live, ſaith the Lord, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked: Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die, O houſe of Iſrael? q. d.* Why will ye wilfully caſt away your own Souls? Why will ye chuſe the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon at the price of my wrath and fury poured out for ever? O think of this, you that make ſo light a matter of committing ſin! We pity thoſe who in the depth of Melancholy or Deſperation lay violent hands upon themſelves, and in a deſperate mood cut their own Throats: but certainly for a Man to murder his own Soul, is an act of Wickedneſs as much beyond it as the value of the Soul is above the Body.

Infer. IV. *What an invaluable Mercy is Jeſus Chriſt to the World, who came on purpoſe to ſeek and to ſave ſuch as were loſt?*

In *Adam* all were ſhipwreck'd and caſt away, *Chriſt* is the Plank of Mercy let down from Heaven to ſave ſome. The loſs of Souls by the Fall had been as irrecoverable as the loſs of the fallen Angels, had not God in a way above all humane Thoughts and Counſels contrived the method of their Redemption. 'Tis aſtoniſhing to conſider the admirable harmony and glorious triumph of all the Divine Attributes in this great Project of Heaven for the recovery of loſt Souls. 'Tis the wonder of Angels, 1 *Pet.* 1. 12. The great Myſtery of Godlineſs, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. the matter and burden of the triumphant Song of redeemed Saints, *Rev.* 1. 5. And well it may, when we conſider a more noble Species of Creatures finally loſt, and no mediator of Reconciliation appointed betwixt God and them: this is to ſave an earthen Pitcher, whilſt the Veſſel of Gold is let fall, and no hand is ſtretched out to ſave it.

But what is moſt aſtoniſhing is, that ſo great a Perſon as the Son of God ſhould come himſelf from the Father's Boſom, to ſave us by putting himſelf into our room and ſtead, being made a Curſe for us, *Gal.* 3. 13. he leaves the Boſom of his Father, and all the ineffable delights of Heaven, diſrobes himſelf of his Glory, and is found in faſhion as a Man, yea, becomes as a Worm and no Man, ſubmits to the loweſt ſtep and degree of Abaſement, to ſave loſt *Sinners*. What a low ſtoop doth Chriſt make in his Humiliation to catch the Souls of poor *Sinners* out of Hell! Herein was Love, that God ſent his own Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins, 1 *Joh.* 4. 10. and ſo God loved the World, *Joh.* 3. 16. at this rate he was content to ſave loſt Sinners.

How ſeaſonable was this work of Mercy, both in its general *Exhibition* to the World in the Incarnation of Chriſt, and in its particular *Application* to the Soul of every loſt *Sinner* by the Spirit! When he was firſt exhibited to the World, he found them all as loſt Sheep gone aſtray, every one turning to his own way, *Iſa.* 53. 6. he ſpeaks of our loſt Eſtate by Nature, both *collectively* or in general. *We all went aſtray*, and *diſtributively* or in particular, *Every one turned to his own way*; and then in the fulneſs of time a Saviour appeared.

And how ſeaſonable was it in its particular Application? How ſecurely were we wandering onwards in the paths of Deſtruction, fearing no danger, when he graciouſly opened our Eyes by conviction and pulled us back by heart-turning Grace! No Mercy like this: it's an aſtoniſhing act of Grace that ſtands alone.

Infer. V. *If there be ſo many ways to Hell, and ſo few that eſcape it, how are all concerned to ſtrive to the utmoſt for their own Salvation.*

In *Luke* 13. 23. a certain Perſon propoſed a curious queſtion to Chriſt, *Lord, are there few that be ſaved?*

saved? He saw a multitude flocking to Christ, and thronging with great zeal to hear him, and he could not conceive but Heaven must fill proportionably to the numbers he saw in the way thither: but Christ's answer. *ver.* 24. at once rebukes the curiosity of the Questionist, fully solves the question propounded, and sets home his own duty and greatest concernments upon him. It rebukes his curiosity, and is as if he should say, Be the number of the Saved more or less, what is that to thee? strive thou to be one of them. It fully solves the question propounded, by distinguishing those that attend upon the means of Salvation into *Seekers* and *Strivers*. In the first respect there are many who by a cheap and easy profession *seek* Heaven; but take them under the notion of *Strivers, i. e* persons heartily ingaged in Religion, and who make it their business, and so they will shrink up into a small number; and it presseth home his great business and concern upon him, *Strive to enter in at the strait Gate.*

By *Gate* understand whatsoever is introductive to Blessedness and Salvation. By the Epithet *strait*, understand the difficulties and severities attending Religion, all that suffering and self-denial which those that are bound for Heaven must count and cast upon. And by *striving*, understand the diligent and constant use of all those means and duties, how hard, irksom, and costly soever they be. The word ἀγωνίζεσθε hath a deep Sense and Emphasis, and imports striving even to an Agony: and this duty is enforced two ways upon him, and every Man else; first by the indisputable Soveraignty of Christ, from whom the command comes; and also from the deep interest and concern every Soul hath in the commanded Duty. It is not only a simple compliance with the Will of God, but what also involves our own Salvation and eternal Happiness in it: our great duty and our great interest are twisted together in this command; your eternal Happiness depends upon the success of it. A man is not crowned, except he strive *lawfully, i. e.* successfully and prevalently. O therefore so run, so strive, that ye may obtain. If you have any value for your Souls, if you would not be miserable to Eternity, strive, strive. Believe it, you will find that the assurance of Salvation drops not down from Heaven in a night-dream, as the *Turks* fable their *Alcoran* to have done in that *lailato hanzili*, Night of Demission, as they call it; no, no, the Righteous themselves are scarcely saved: many seek, but few find; strive therefore as Men and Women that are heartily concerned for their own Salvation. Sit not with folded arms like so many heaps of stupidity and sloth; whilst the door of hope is yet open, and such a sweet Voice from Heaven calls to you, saying, strive, Souls, strive; if ever you expect to be partakers of the Blessedness that is here to be enjoyed, strive to the uttermost of your abilities and opportunities. Such a Heaven is worth striving to obtain; such a Hell is worth striving to escape; such an invaluable Soul is worth striving to save.

I confess Heaven is not the purchase or reward of your striving! No Soul shall boastingly say there, Is not this the Glory which my duties and diligence purchased for me? And yet on the other side it is as true, that without striving you shall never set foot there. Say not, it depends upon the pleasure of God, and not upon your Diligence; for it is his declared will and pleasure to bring men to Glory in the way, tho' not for the sake of their own striving. As in the works of your civil Calling, you know all the care, toil, and sweat of the Husbandman avails nothing of it self, except the Sun and Rain quicken and ripen the Fruits of the Earth; and yet no wise man will neglect plowing and harrowing, sowing and weeding, because these Labours avail not without the Influences of Heaven, but waits for them in the way of his duty and diligence; rational hope sets all the world awork. Do they plow in hope, and sow in hope, and will not you pray in hope, and hear in hope? You that know your Souls to be hitherto strangers to Christ, and the regenerating Work of the Spirit; how is it, that you take them not aside sometimes out of the distracting noise and hurries of the World, and thus bemoan them?

O my poor, graceless, Christless, miserable Soul, how sad a case art thou in! others have, but thou never feltest the burden of Sin; thousands in the World are striving and labouring, searching and praying to make their Calling and Election sure, whilst thou sittest still with folded hands in a supine regardlessness of the misery that is hastening upon thee. Canst thou endure the devouring Wrath of God! Canst thou dwell with everlasting burnings? Hast thou fansied a tolerable Hell? Or is it easy to perish? Why dost thou not cast thy self at the Feet of Christ, and cry as long as breath will last, Lord, pity a sinful, miserable, undone, and self-condemning Soul? Lord, smite this rocky heart, subdue this stubborn Will, heal and save an undone Soul ready to perish. The characters of Death are upon it, it must be changed or condemned, and that in a little time. Bowels of pity, hear the cry of a Soul distressed, and ready to perish.

And you that do not understand the case and state your Souls are in, have you never a Bible near you? O turn to those places, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10. where you will presently find the more obvious marks and characters God hath set upon the Children of Perdition; and if you find not your self in that Catalogue among the Unrighteous, Fornicators, Idolaters, Adulterers, Effeminate, Thieves, Covetous, Drunkards, Revilers, Extortioners, *&c.* then turn to *John* 3. 3. and solemnly ask thy own Soul this question, Am I born again? Am I a new Creature? or still in the same Condition I was born in? What solid evidence of the new birth have I to rely upon, if I were now within a few gasps of Death? Am not I the Man or Woman who live in the very same sins which the Word of God makes the Symptoms and Characters of Damnation? And doth not my *Conscience* witness against me, that I am utterly void and destitute of all that saving Grace, and a meer stranger to the regenerating work of the Spirit, without which there can be no well bottom'd hope of Salvation? and if so, are not the tokens of Death upon me? Am not I a person markt out for misery? And shall I sit still in a state of so much danger, and not once strive to make an escape from the Wrath to come? Is this vile Body worth so much toil and labour to support and preserve it? And is not my Soul worth as much care and diligence to secure it from the everlasting wrath of the great, just, and terrible God? O that the consideration of the Wrath to come, the multitudes all the World over preparing as fuel for it, and the door of Opportunity yet held open to Souls by the hand of Grace to escape that Wrath, might prevail with thy heart, Reader, to strive,

and

and that to the uttermoſt, to ſecure thy precious Soul from the impending ruin.

EPHES. 5. 16.

.....Redeeming the time (or opportunity) *becauſe the days are evil.*

TIME is deſervedly reckoned among the moſt precious Mercies of this Life; and that which makes it ſo valuable are the commodious ſeaſons and opportunities for Salvation which are vouchſafed to us therein, Opportunity is the golden ſpot of Time, the ſweet and beautiful flower growing upon the ſtalk of Time. If Time be a *Ring* of Gold, Opportunity is the rich *Diamond* that gives it both its value and glory. The Apoſtle well knew the Value of Time; and ſeeing how prodigally it was waſted by the moſt, doth therefore in this place earneſtly preſs all men to redeem, ſave and improve it with the utmoſt Diligence. In this and the former Five, we have,

Καιρὸς ἀνθ' χρόνου.

1*ſt*. The Duty injoyned, *Walk circumſpectly.*
2*ly*. The *Injunction* explained;
1. More generally, *Not as fools, but as wiſe.*
2. More particularly, *Redeeming the Time.*
3. The Exhortation ſtrongly inforced with a powerful Motive, *Becauſe the days are evil.*

Among theſe particulars, my Diſcourſe is principally concerned about the Redemption of Time or Opportunities, which in this life are graciouſly vouchſafed us in order to that which is to come: and here it will be needful to inquire,

1. What the Apoſtle means by *Time.*
2. What by the *Redemption of Time.*

1. Time is taken more largely or ſtrictly according to the double acceptation of the Hebrew Word עת which ſignifies ſometimes *Time*, and ſometimes *Occaſion, Seaſon*, or *Opportunity*, and accordingly is expreſt by χρόνος and καιρὸς, *Tempus* and *Tempeſtivitas:* the latter is the word here uſed, and denotes the commodiouſneſs and fitneſs of ſome parts of Time above others for the ſucceſsful and proſperous *management* and accompliſhment of our main and great Buſineſs here, which is to ſecure our intereſt in Chriſt, and glorify God in a courſe of fruitful Obedience. For theſe great and weighty Purpoſes our Time is graciouſly *lengthened* out, and many fit Opportunities preſented us in the Revolutions thereof.

2. By the *Redemption of Time* we muſt underſtand the ſtudy, care, and diligence of Chriſtians at the rate of all poſſible pains, at the expence of all earthly pleaſures, eaſe, and gratifications of the Fleſh, to reſcue their precious Seaſons both of Salvation and Service out of the hands of Temptations, which ſo commonly rob unwary Souls of them. Satan trucks with us for our time, as we did at firſt with the ſilly *Indians* for their *Gold* and *Diamonds*, who were *content* to exchange them for *Glaſs-Beads* and *Tinſel-Toys*. Many fair ſeaſons are forced or cheated out of our hands by the Importunity of earthly cares, or deceitfulneſs of ſenſual pleaſures; at the expence and loſs of theſe we muſt redeem and reſcue our time for higher and better uſes and purpoſes. We muſt ſpend thoſe hours in prayer, meditation, ſearching our hearts, mortifying our luſts: which others do, and our fleſh fain would ſpend in ſenſual pleaſures, and gratifications of the fleſhly appetite. If ever we expect to win the Port of Glory, we muſt be as diligent and careful as *Sea-men* are to take every gale that blows directly or obliquely, to ſet them forward in their Voyage. The note from hence is this:

Ἐξαγοραζόμενοι τὸν καιρὸν.

Doct. *That the wiſdom of a Chriſtian is eminently diſcovered in ſaving and improving all Opportunities in this World, for that World which is to come.*

God hangs the great things of Eternity upon the ſmall wiers of times and ſeaſons in this world: that may be done or neglected in a day, which may be the ground-work of joy or ſorrow to all Eternity. There is a nick of opportunity which gives both ſucceſs and facility to the great and weighty affairs of the Soul, as well as Body; to come before it, is to ſeek the Bird before it be hatcht; and to come after it, is to ſeek it when it is fled. There is a twofold ſeaſon or opportunity of Salvation.

1. One was Chriſt's ſeaſon for the Purchaſe of it.
2. The other is ours for the Application of it.

1. Chriſt had a ſeaſon aſſigned him for the impetration and purchaſe of our Salvation; ſo you hear his Father beſpeaking him, *Iſa.* 49. 8. *Thus ſaith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of Salvation have I helped thee,* בערת רצוי, *in tempore opportuno voluntatis, vel placito.* It was Chriſt's wiſdom to ſet in with the Father's time, to comply with his ſeaſon; and it became a day of Salvation, becauſe it was the acceptable time which Chriſt took for it.

2. Men have their ſeaſons and opportunities for the application of Chriſt, and his Benefits to their own Souls: 2 *Cor.* 6. 1, 2. *We then as workers together with God, beſeech you alſo, that you receive not the Grace of God in vain; for he ſaith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of Salvation have I ſuccoured thee. Behold now, is the accepted time now is the day of Salvation.* He exhorts the *Corinthians* not to dally or trifle any longer in the great Concerns of their Salvation; for now, ſaith he, is your day. Chriſt had his Day to purchaſe it, and he procured a Day alſo for you to apply it, and this is that day; you enjoy it, you live under it: that golden day is now running: Oh! ſee that you fruſtrate not the deſign thereof, by receiving the Goſpel-grace in vain:

Now two things concur to make a fit ſeaſon of Salvation:

1. The external Means and Inſtruments.
2. The agency of the Spirit internally by or with thoſe external Means.

1. Men have a ſeaſon of Salvation, when God ſends the Means and Inſtruments of Salvation among them. When the Goſpel is powerfully preached among a people, there is a door opened to them; 2 *Cor.* 2. 12. *When I came to Troas to preach the Goſpel, a door was opened to me of the Lord.* God as it were unlocks the door of Heaven by the preaching of the Goſpel: Souls have then an opportunity to ſtep in and be ſaved.

2. But yet 'tis not a *wide and effectual door*, (as the Apoſtle phraſes it, 1 *Cor.* 16. 9) till the Spirit of God joins with, and works on the heart by thoſe external means and inſtruments; as the waters of the Pool of *Bethesda* had no inherent ſanative virtue in themſelves, till the Angel deſcended and troubled them: but both together make a bleſſed ſeaſon for the ſouls of men. Then he ſtands at the door, and knocks by convictions and

and Persuasions, *Rev.* 3. 20. strives with Men, as he did with the old World by the Ministry of *Noah*, *Gen.* 6. 3. Now the Door of Opportunity is indeed opened; but this will not always last; there is a time when *the Spirit ceases to strive*, and when *the door is shut*, Luke 13. 25.

There is a Season when by the fresh Impression of some *Ordinance* or *Providence*, Mens Hearts are awakened, and their Affections stirred. It is now with *Souls* as with *Fruit Trees* in the Spring when they put forth Blossoms: if they knit and set, Fruit follows; if they be nipt and blasted, no Fruit can be expected. For all Convictions and Motions of the Affections are to Grace, much the same as Blossoms are to Fruit, which are but the Rudiment thereof, *fructus imperfectus & ordinabilis*, somewhat in order to it; and look as *that* is a critical and hazardous Season to *Trees*, so is *this* to *Souls*. I do not say it is in the Power of any Soul to make the Work of the Spirit effectual and abiding, by adding his Endeavours to the Spirit's Motions; for then *Conversion* would not be the free and arbitrary Act of the Spirit, as in *Joh.* 3. 8. neither would Souls be born of God, but of the Will of Man, contrary to *Joh.* 1. 13. And yet it is not to be thought or said, that Mens Endeavours and Strivings are altogether vain, needless, and insignificant; because, tho' they cannot make God's Grace effectual, his Grace can make *them* effectual; they are our Duty, and God can bless them to our great Advantage. Now there are, among others, five remarkable Essays, Efforts, or Strivings of a Soul under the Impression and Hand of the Spirit, that greatly tend to the fixing, setling, and securing of that great Work on the Soul: and it is seldom known any Soul miscarries in whom these Things are found.

1 Deep, serious, and fixed Consideration, which lets Conviction deep into the Soul, and settles it, and roots it fast in the Heart, *Psal.* 119. 59. *I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy Testimonies.* There are close and anxious Debates in those Souls in whom *Convictions* prosper to full *Conversion*: they sit alone, and think close to their great and eternal Concerns: they carry their Thoughts back to the Evils of their Life past, then smite on the Thigh, and cry, *What have I done?* They run their Thoughts forward into Eternity, and that to a great depth, and then cry, *What shall I do to be saved?* They deliberate and weigh in their most advised Thoughts what is to be done, and that speedily, for escaping Wrath to come: thus they fix those tender, weak, and hazardous Motions, that die away in many Souls; and in the Loss of them their Seasons of Salvation are lost.

2 The first Stirrings and Motions of the Spirit upon Mens Hearts do become a Season of Salvation to them, when they are accompanied with spiritual, fervent, and frequent Prayer: so it was with *Paul*, Acts 9 11. *Behold, he prayeth.* It's a good sign when Souls get alone, and affect Privacy and Retirement, to pour out their Fears, Sorrows, and Requests unto God. It is in the Espousals of a Soul to Christ, as it is in other Marriages; a third Person may make the Motion, and bring the Parties together, but they only betwixt themselves must conclude and agree the Matter. Prayer is the first Breath which the new Creature draws in, and the last (ordinarily) it breaths out in this World. This nourishes and maturates those weak and tender first Motions after God, and brings them to some *Consistence* and *Fixedness* in the Soul.

3. Then do those Motions of the Spirit on Mens Hearts make a Season of Salvation to them, when they remain and settle in the Heart, and are in them *per modum quietis*, by way of Rest and Abode, following the Man from Place to Place, from Day to Day; so that whatever unpleasing Diversions the Necessities and Incumbrances of this World at any time give, yet still they return again upon the Heart, and will not vanish, or suffer any long Suspension: but in others, who lose their blessed Advantage and Season, it's quite contrary; *James* 1. 23, 24. *They are as one that seeth his natural face in a glass, and goeth away and forgetteth what manner of man he was*: He sees some Spot on his Face, or disorder in his Band, which he purposeth to correct; but one Occurrence or another chops in, and he forgets what he saw in the Glass, and so goes all the Day with his Spot upon him. This was an evanid light purpose, which came to nothing for want of a present Execution; just so it is with many in reference to their great Concerns: but if the Impression abide in its strength, if it return, and follow the Soul, and will not let it be quiet, it's like then to prosper and prove the time of Mercy indeed to such Souls.

4. An anxious *Sollicitude* and *Inquisitiveness* about the Means and Ways of *Salvation*, speaks an effectual *door of Salvation* to be set open to the Souls of Men, *Acts* 2. 37. & 16. 30. *Sirs, what must I do to be saved? Men and Brethren, what shall we do? q. d.* we are in a miserable Condition; oh you the Ministers of Christ, instruct, counsel, and shew us what Course to take: is there no Balm in *Gilead?* no Door of Hope in this Valley of *Achor?* Alas! we are not able to dwell with our own Fears, Terrors, and Presages of Wrath to come. Oh for a Messenger, one among a thousand, to teach us the way of Salvation. Thus the Lord rivets and fixes those Motions in some Souls, that vanish like a *Morning Mist* or *Dew* in others.

5. Lastly, That which secures and completes this Work, is the Execution of those Purposes and Convictions, by falling strait to the Work of *Faith* and *Repentance* in good earnest, dallying no more with so great a Concern, standing no longer at *shall I? shall I?* when mean while time flies away, and Opportunities may be lost; but bring their Thoughts and Debates to a peremptory Resolution as the *Lepers* at *Samaria* did; and seeing themselves shut up to one only Door of Hope, there they resolve to take their Station, lying at the Feet of *Jesus Christ*, and cast their poor burdened Souls upon him, whatever be the Issue. When the Spirit of God ripens his first Motions to this, and carries them thro' that critical Season thus far, there is an effectual Door of Opportunity opened indeed; this is an acceptable time, a Day of Salvation: but oh! how many thousands miscarry in this Season, and, like Trees removed from one Soil to another, die in the Removal!

But certainly, it is the most *solemn* and *important concern* of every Soul to watch upon all these Seasons of Salvation, when God comes nigh to them by *Convictions* and *Motions* of his Spirit; and to put the same Value on these Things that they do upon their Souls, and the Salvation of them. This is the Door of Hope set open, a fresh Gale to carry you home to your Port of Glory. Salvation is now come nigh to your Souls; there is but a little betwixt you and Blessedness. Wise and happy is that Soul which knows and improves its Season. To persuade and press Men to discern and improve such

such Seasons as these, is the principal Work of the Preachers of the Gospel, and that special Work to which I now address my self in the following Motives and Arguments

Arg. I. And first, who that hath the free Exercise of Reason, and the Sense of a future eternal Estate, would carelesly neglect any Season of Salvation, whilst he seeth all the rational World so carefully attending and watching all Opportunities to promote and secure their lower Concerns and Designs for the present Life?

Is not the saving of a Man's Soul as weighty a Concern as the getting of an Estate? You cannot but observe how careful Merchants are to nick the Opportunity which promiseth them a good turn; how yare poor Seamen look out for a Wind to waft them to their Port, and industriously shift their Sails to improve every Flaw that may set them on their Voyage; how many Miles Tradesmen will travel to be in Season at a Fair, to put off or purchase Goods to their Advantage: no Entertainments, Recreations, or Importunities of Friends can prevail with any of these to lose a Day on which their Business depends; all Things must give way to their Business; they all understand their Salvation, and will not be diverted. But, alas! what childish Toys are all these compared their Seasons! What is the Loss of a little Money, to the Loss of a Man's Soul? If a Man's Life depended upon his being at such a Place by such a precise Hour, sure he would not over-sleep his time that Morning; and had he but the least Fear of coming too late, every Stroke of the Clock would strike to his Heart; and yet Remissness and Carelessness in such a Case as this, is infinitely more excusable than in the Matter of Salvation. Certainly the Sollicitude and Care of all the World for the Interests thereof, yea, your own Diligence and Circumspection in Temporal Things, will be an uncontrolable and confounding Self-conviction to you in the Day of your Account, and leave you without Plea or Apology for your supine Neglects of the Seasons of Salvation.

Arg. II. The Consideration of the Uncertainty and slippery Nature of these Spiritual Seasons must awaken in us all Care and Diligence to secure and improve them. This nick of Opportunity is *tempus labile*, a slippery Season; it is but short in it self, and very uncertain; *To day, whilst it is said to day* (saith the Apostle) *if ye will hear his voice*, Heb. 3. 13. *q. d.* you have now a short, uncertain, but most precious and valuable Season for your Souls, lay hold on it whilst it is called *to day*: for if this Season be let slip, the time to come is called by another Name, that is, not *to day*, but *to morrow*. Your time is the *present time*; take heed of *protracting* and putting it off till that which is called *to day* (which is your *only season*) be past and gone. This precious Inch of Time, tho' it be more worth than all the other greater Parts and Portions of your Time, yet it is as much *in flaxu*, in hasty Motion and Expence as other Parts of Time are: and being once lost, is never more to be recalled or recovered. Few Men know or understand it whilst it is current: other Seasons for natural or civil Actions are *known* and *stated*, but the time of Grace is not so easily discerned, and therefore commonly mistaken and lost: and this comes to pass partly through,

1. Presumptuous Hopes.
2. Discouraging Fears.

1. Presumptuous Hopes, which put it too far forth, and perswade us this Season is yet to come: that we have before us, and that *to morrow* shall be as *to day*. *Thus through Presumption Men hope and by their presumptuous hopes they perish.* This is the Ruin of most Souls that perish. Præsumendo sperant, & sperando periunt.

2 Discouraging Fears put it too far back, and represent it as long since past and gone, whilst yet in being, and in our Hands. By such Pangs of Desperation Satan cuts the Nerves of *Industry* and *Diligence*, and causes Souls to yield themselves as *by consent* for lost and hopeless, even whilst the Gospel is opening their Eyes to see their Sin and Misery, which is a part of the Work for their Recovery. Thus thousands are blinded, that they cannot discern the Season of Mercy, and so it slides from them, as if it had never been.

God came near them in the Means of their *Conversion*, yea, and nearer in the Motions of his Spirit upon their *Consciences* and *Affections*; but they knew not the time of their Visitation, and now the Things of their Peace are *hid from their Eyes*. Had those Convictions been obeyed, and those Purposes that were begotten in their Hearts been followed by answerable Executions of them, happy had they been to all Eternity: but their careless Neglects have quenched them, and the Door is shut, and who knows whether it may be opened any more? Oh! dally not with the Spirit of God, resist not his Calls; his Motions on the Soul are tender Things; they may soon be quenched, and never recovered.

Arg. III. Neglect not the Seasons of Mercy, the Day of Grace, because Opportunity facilitates the great Work of your Salvation: it is much easier to be done in such a Season than it can be afterwards: an Impression is easily made on Wax when melted; but stay till it be hardened, and if you lay the greatest Weight on the Seal, it leaves not its Impress upon it. Much so it is with the Heart; there is a Season when God makes it soft and yielding, when the Affections are thawed and melted under the Word. Conscience is full of Sense and Activity, the Will pliable: now is the time to set in with the motions of the Spirit: there is now a Gale from Heaven, if you will take it; and if not, it tarries not for Man, nor waits for the Sons of Men. Neglect of the Season is the Loss of the Soul. The Heart, like melted Wax, will naturally harden again; and then to how little purpose are your own feeble Essays? *Heb.* 3. 15: 'tis both easie and successful striving, when the Spirit of God strives in you, and with you; you are now Workers together with God, and such Work goes on smoothly and sweetly: that which is in motion is easily mov'd; but if once the Heart be set, you may tug to little purpose.

Arg. IV. The *infinite Importance* and Weight of Salvation is alone instead of all *Motives* and *Arguments* to make Men prize and improve every proper season for it. It is no *ordinary concern*, it is your *Life*, yea, it is your *eternal Life*; the solemnity and Awfulness of such a Business as this, is enough to swallow up the Spirit of Man. Oh what an awful sound have such words as these, *Ever with the Lord*! Suppose you saw the Glory of Heaven, the full Reward of all the Labours and Sufferings of the Saints, the blessed Harvest of all their Prayers, Tears, Diligence, and Self-denial in this World; or suppose you had a true Representation of the Torments of Hell, and could but hear the Wailings of the Damned for the Neglect of the

Season of Mercy, and their *passionate*, but *vain* Wishes for one of those Days which they have lost: would you think any Care, any Pains, any Self-denial too much to save and redeem one of these Opportunities? Surely you would have a far higher Estimation of them than ever you had in your Lives.

A Trial for a Man's whole Estate is accounted a *solemn Business* among Men; the Cast of a *Dye* for a Man's Life is a *weighty Action*, and seldom done without *Anxiety of the Mind*, and *trembling of the Hand*: yet both these are but *Childrens Play* compared with *Salvation-work*.

Three Things put an *unspeakable Solemnity* upon this Matter: it is the *precious Soul*, which is above all Valuation, that lies at Stake, and is to be saved or lost. The *saving* or *losing* of it is not for a time, but *for ever*; and this is the *only Season* in which it will be *eternally saved*, or *cast away*: all hangs upon a little Inch of time, which being over-slipt and lost, is never more to be recalled or recovered. *Lord! with what serious Spirits, deep and weighty Consideration, Fears and Tremblings of Heart, should Men and Women attend the Seasons of their Salvation!*

Believe it, Reader, since thy Soul projected its first thought, there never was a more *weighty* and *concerning* subject than this presented to thy thoughts. Oh, therefore let not thy thoughts trifle about it, and slide from it as they use to do in other things of *common concernment*.

Argum. 5. If we value the true pleasure of life, or solid comfort of our Souls at death, let us by no means neglect the special *seasons* and *opportunities* of Salvation we now enjoy.

These two things, the *pleasure of life*, and *comfort in death*, should be priz'd by every man more than his two eyes: certainly no being at all is more desirable than a Being without these: take away the true spiritual pleasure of Life, and you level the Life of *Man* with the *Beast that perisheth*; and take away the hope and comfort of the Soul in Death, and you sink him infinitely below the Beast, and make him a Being only capable of misery for ever.

Now there can be no true spiritual pleasure found in that Soul that has neglected and lost his *only season of Salvation*: all the solid delight and comfort of life results from the settlement and security of a Man's *great concern* in the proper season thereof. The true Mirth of the *converted Prodigal* bears date from the time of his *return* and *reconciliation to his Father, Luke* 15. 24. Two things are absolutely pre-requisite to the comfort of life, *viz. a change of the state by Justification*, and *a change of the frame and temper of the heart by Sanctification*. To be in a pardoned state is matter of all joy, *Mat.* 9. 2. and *to be spiritually-minded is Life and Peace, Rom.* 8. 6. No good News comes to any man before this, and no bad News can sink a Man's heart after this.

And for *hope and comfort in death*, let none be so fond to expect it, 'till he have first complied with, and obeyed God's call in the time thereof: a careless life never did, nor never will produce a comfortable Death. What is more common among all that die not stupid and senseless, as well as unregenerate and Christless, than the bitter dolorous complaints of their mis-spent time, and losing their season of Mercy? *Reader, if thou wouldst not feel that anguish thou hast seen and heard others to be in on this account, know the time of thy Visitation, and finish thy great work whilst it is day.*

Argum. 6. Neglect no season of Salvation which is graciously afforded you, because your time is short; *Death* and *Eternity* are at the door. *You know that you must shortly put off these Tabernacles*, 2 Pet. 1. 13, 14. that when a few years are come, *you shall go the way whence you shall not return*, Job 16. 22. All the living are listed soldiers, and must conflict hand to hand with that dreadful Enemy Death, and there is no discharge in that War, *Eccles.* 8. 8. It will be vain to say, you are not *willing* to die; for *willing* or *unwilling*, away you must go when Death calls for you. It will be as vain to say, you are not *ready*; for *ready* or *unready*, you must be gone when Death comes: your readiness to die would indeed be a Cordial to your hearts in death; but then you must improve and ply the time of life, and husband your opportunities diligently; carelessness of Life, and readiness for Death, are inconsistent, and exclusive of each other. The Bed is sweeter to none than the hard Labourer, and the Grave comfortable to none but the laborious Christian. You knew nothing can be done by you after Death; the *Compositum* is then dissolved; you cease to be what you were, to enjoy the means you had, and to work as you did. Oh, therefore slip not the *only season* you have both of attaining the end of Life, and escaping the danger and hour of Death.

The USE.

I shall close all with a word of Exhortation, I perswading (if possible) the *careless* and *unthinking* Neglecters of their precious Time and Soul, to awake out of that deep and dangerous security in which they lie fast asleep on the very brink of Eternity; and *to day, whilst it is yet called to day*, to hear God's voice calling them to *Repentance* and *Faith*, and thereby to *Christ* and *everlasting Blessedness*. *Behold, he yet stands at the door, and knocks*, Rev. 3. 20. The door of Hope is not yet finally shut, there are yet some stirrings at certain times in mens Consciences; God comes near them in his Word, and in some rouzing acts of Providence, the death of a near Relation, the seizure of a dangerous Disease, the blasting and disappointment of a man's great design and project for this World, a fall into some notorious Sin; these and such-like methods of Providence, as well as the convincing voice of the Word, have the efficacy of an awakening voice to Mens drowzy Consciences; and if careless Sinners would but attend to them, and follow home those motions they make upon their hearts, who knows to what these weak beginnings might arise and prosper? The Souls of Men are as it were embarked in the Calls of God, your Life is bound up in them; if these be lost, your Souls are lost; if these abide upon you, and grow up to *sound Conversion*, you are saved by them. More particularly consider,

1. What a mercy it is to have your lot providentially cast under the Gospel; to be born under and bred up with the Means and Instruments of *Conversion* and *Salvation*. We have lived from our youth up under the Calls of God, and within the joyful sound of the Gospel: *God hath not dealt so with other Nations*, Psal 147. 20. Tho' others should seek the means of Life, they cannot find them; and tho' you seek them not, you can hardly miss them.

2. How great a mercy is it to have your lives lengthened out hitherto by God's patience under the Gospel! that neither *that golden lamp* nor the lamp of your life (both which are liable to be extinguish-

tinguished every moment) are yet put out. Thousands and ten thousands, your contemporaries, are gone out of the hearing of the voice of the Gospel, they shall never hear another Call, the Treaty of God is ended with them, the Master of the house is risen up, and the doors are shut. Your neglects and provocations have not been inferiour to theirs, but God's patience and goodness has exceeded and abounded to you beyond whatever it did to them.

3. Bethink your selves what an aggravation of your misery it will be, to sink into Hell with the Calls of God sounding in your ears! to sink into eternal misery betwixt the tender out-stretched arms of Mercy! this is the Hell of Hell, the Emphasis of Damnation, the racking Engine on which the Consciences of the Damned are tortured. *And thou Capernaum, which art exalted to Heaven, shalt be brought down to Hell*, Mat. 11. 23. Such a fall, after so high an exaltation, is the very *Strappado* which will torment your Consciences. Hell will prove a cooler and milder place to the Heathens that never enjoyed your Light, Means, and Mercies in this World, than it will to you. None sink so deep into Misery in the World to come, as they that fall from the fairest Opportunities of Salvation in this World.

4. Let no man expect that God will hear his cries and intreaties in time of Misery, who neglects and slights the Calls of God in time of Mercy. God calls, but Men will not hear; the day is coming *when they shall cry, but God will not hear*, Prov. 1. 24, 25. *Will God hear his cry, when trouble cometh upon him?* Job 27. 9. No, no, he will not: and this is but a just retribution from the righteous God, whose Calls and Counsels Men have set at naught. But, whatever men now think of it, it is certainly the greatest Misery incident to man in all the World; for as no words can make another fully sensible what a privilege it is to have the ear, favour, pity, and help of God in a day of straits: so it is impossible for any words to express the doleful state and case of that Soul whom God casts off in Trouble, and whose cries he shuts out.

5. Beware of neglecting any Call of God, because that Call you are now tempted to neglect, may be the last Call God ever intends to give your Soul. Sure I am, there is a Call which will be the last Call of God to rebellious Sinners, and after that no more Calls, but an eternal deep silence; *his Spirit shall not always strive with man*; and the more Motions and Calls you have already slighted, the more probable it is that this may be the last Voice of God in a way of Mercy to thy Soul: and what if, after this, God should seal up thy Heart, and judicially harden it; make thy Will utterly inflexible, and thine Ears deaf, as he threatens, Isa. 6. 10. what an undone miserable Man or Woman art thou then! Oh! beware of provoking the dreadest of all Judgments, by persisting any longer in a course of Rebellion against Light and Mercy.

6. Whilst your hearts put off and neglect God's Calls, you can by no means arrive to the evidence and assurance of your Election; for your Election is only secured by your effectual calling, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. there is no way for Men to discern their Names written in the Book of Life, but by reading the Work of Sanctification in their Hearts, *Rom.* 10. 8. Desire no miraculous Voice from Heaven, no extraordinary signs, or unscriptural notices and intimations in this matter: Lord, let me but find my heart complying with thy Calls, my will obediently submitting to thy Commands; Sin my burden, and Christ my desire: I never crave a fairer or surer evidence of thy electing love to my Soul; and if I had an *Oracle* from Heaven, an extraordinary Messenger from the other World, to tell me thou lovest me, I have no reason to credit such a voice, whilst I find my heart wholly sensual, averse to God, and indisposed to all that is spiritual.

7. What reason have you why you should not presently embrace the Call of God, and thankfully lay hold on the first Opportunity and season of Salvation? Have you any greater matters in hand than the Salvation of your precious Souls? Is there any thing in the World that more concerns you? If the Affairs of this Life be so indispensibly necessary, and those of the World to come so indifferent; if you think Meat and Drink, Trade and Business, Wife and Children, be so great Things, and Christ, Soul, and Eternity, so little Things; or tho' you think Salvation of the greatest necessity, yet it may safely enough be put off to an uncertain time, I may assure you, you will not long be of this mind. How soon are all the mistakes of men in these matters rectified in a few moments after Death! *Rectified* I say, but not *remedied*; your *Opinion* will be changed, but not your *Condition*.

8. Do you not every day easily and readily obey the Calls of Satan and your Lusts, whilst God and Conscience are suffered to call and strive in vain? If Satan or your Lusts call you to the Tavern, to the World, and sinful Pleasures, you speedily comply with their Call, and yield a ready obedience: if Pride, Covetousness, or Passion and Revenge call, they need not call twice; and shall God and Conscience call only in vain? Lord, what a Creature is Man become! If a vain Companion call, you have no power to deny him; if God call, you have no ear to hear him.

9. You cannot but observe the obedience and diligence of many others, how seriously, painfully, and assiduously they ply and follow the work of their own Salvation, and yet are no more concerned in the Events and Consequences of these things than you are. Doth it not trouble you when you compare your selves with them? Do not such thoughts as these sometimes arise upon such Observations? *Lord, what a difference is there like to be betwixt their end and mine, when there is so apparent a difference in our course and conversation? Doth not God distinguish persons in this World by the frames of their hearts, and tenour of their lives, in order to the great distinction he will make betwixt one and another in the day of Judgment? Have not I as precious a Soul to save or lose as any of them? What is the matter that I sit with folded arms, whilst they are working out their Salvation with fear and trembling? Why should any Man or Woman in the World be more careful for their Souls, than I for mine? Surely its capacity and excellency is equal with theirs, tho' my care and diligence be so unequal.*

10. To conclude, God will shortly give you an irresistible call to the Grave, and after that his Voice shall call to you in your Graves, *Arise ye dead, and come to Judgment*: But woe be to you, woe and alas that ever you were born, if you should hear the Call of God to die, before you have heard and obeyed his Call to Christ! Will your death-bed be easie to you? Can you with any hope or comfort shoot the Gulph of Eternity, before you have done one act for the security of your Souls from the Wrath to come? 'Tis a dreadful thing for a poor Christless Soul to sit quivering upon the Lips of a

dying Sinner, not able to ſtay, nor yet to endure a parting pull from the Body in ſuch a caſe as it is.

In a word; If that *God* that made, and will ſhortly judge you; if the *Redeemer* that ſhed his invaluable Blood, and now offers you the purchaſes and benefits of it; if you have any love to, or care of your own Souls, which are more worth than the whole World; if you have any value for *Heaven*, or dread of *Hell*, then for God's ſake, for Chriſt's ſake, for your precious Soul's ſake, trifle with Heaven and Hell no longer, but be in earneſt to work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling. Could I think of any other Means or Motives to ſecure your Souls from danger, I would ſurely uſe them. Could I reach your Hearts effectually, I would deeply impreſs this great Concern upon them; but I can neither do God's part nor yours; it is ſome eaſe to me, I have in ſincerity (tho' with much imperfection and feebleneſs) done part of my own: the Lord proſper it by the Bleſſing of his Spirit on the Hearts of them that read it. *Amen.*

A Practical Treatiſe of FEAR.

Wherein the various *Kinds*, *Uſes*, *Cauſes*, *Effects*, and *Remedies* thereof are diſtinctly opened and preſcribed, for the Relief and Encouragement of all thoſe that fear God in theſe doubtful and diſtracting Times.

To the Right Worſhipful Sir JOHN HARTOP, Knight and Baronet.

SIR,

AMong all the Creatures God hath made (Devils only excepted) Man is the moſt apt and able to be his own Tormenter; and of all the ſcourges with which he laſheth and afflicteth both his Mind and Body, none is found ſo cruel and intolerable as his own Fears. *The worſe the times are like to be, the more need the Mind hath of ſuccour and encouragement, to confirm and fortifie it for hard encounters; but from the worſt proſpect,* Fear *inflicts the deepeſt and moſt dangerous Wounds upon the Mind of Man, cutting the very Nerves of its paſſive Fortitude and bearing Ability.*

The Grief we ſuffer from Evil felt, would be light and eaſy, were it not incenſed by Fear; *Reaſon would do much, and Religion more, to demulce and lenifie our Sorrows, did not* Fear *betray the ſuccours of both. And it is from* things to come *that this proſpecting Creature raiſeth up to himſelf vaſt Hopes and Fears; If he have a fair and encouraging proſpect of ſerene and proſperous days from the* Scheme *and Poſition of ſecond Cauſes,* Hope *immediately fills his heart with chearineſs, and diſplays the Signals of it in his very Face, anſwerable to that fair benign Aſpect of things: but if the face of things to come be threatning and inauſpicious,* Fear *gains the Aſcendant over the Mind, an unmanly and unchriſtian faintneſs perſuades it, and among the many other Miſchiefs it inflicts, this is not the leaſt, that it brings the Evil of* to morrow *upon* to day, *and ſo makes the* Duties *of to day wholly unſerviceable to the* Evils *of to morrow; which is as much as if a man having an intricate and difficult buſineſs cut out for the next day, which requires the utmoſt intentions both of his Mind and Body, and (haply) might be proſperouſly managed if both were duly prepared, ſhould lie all the night reſtleſs and diſquieted about the Event, torturing and ſpending himſelf with his own preſaging Fears, ſo that when the day is come, and the buſineſs calls for him, his ſtrength is no way equal to the burden of it, but he faints and fails under it.*

There is indeed an excellent uſe that God makes of our Fears to ſtimulate our ſlothful hearts to greater vigilance and preparation for evils; and there is a miſchievous uſe Satan *makes of our Fears, to caſt us under Deſpondency and unbecoming Puſillanimity; and I reckon it one of the greateſt Difficulties of Religion to cut by a thred here, and ſo to manage our ſelves under threatning or doubtful Providences, as to be touched with ſo much ſenſe of thoſe approaching evils, as may prepare us to bear them; and yet to enjoy that conſtancy and firmneſs of mind in the worſt times, that may anſwer the excellent Principles we are profeſſedly governed by.*

Theſe laſt times are certainly the moſt perilous times; great things are yet to be acted upon the Stage *of this World before it be taken down, and the* Scena antepenultima, *latter-end, I ſay not the laſt, will be a* Tragedy. *There is an* ultima clades adhuc metuenda, *a diſmal ſlaughter of the Witneſſes of Chriſt, yet to be expected: the laſt bite of the cruel Beaſt will be deadly, and if we flatter not our ſelves, all things ſeem to be diſpoſing themſelves in the courſe of Providence towards it.*

But, Sir, If our Union with Chriſt be ſure in it ſelf, and ſure to us alſo; if Faith give us the daily viſions and Prælibations of the World to come, what well-compoſed Spectators ſhall we be of theſe Tragedies! Let things be toſſed, ſuſque, deque, *and the Mountains caſt into the midſt of the Sea, yet then the aſſured Chriſtian may ſing his Song upon* Alamoth, *A Song compoſed for God's hidden ones. This ſo poiſeth and ſteddies the mind, that we may enjoy the comfort and tranquility of a reſigned will, when others are at their wits end.* Pſal. 46.

With deſign to promote this bleſſed frame in my own and others hearts in theſe frightful times, I meditated, and now publiſh this ſmall Tract, to which a dear Friend (from whom I have often had the fair Idea *and Character of your excellent Spirit) hath occaſioned the prefixing of your worthy Name; I beg pardon for ſuch an unuſual Preſumption, as alſo your Charity in cenſuring the Faults that will appear in it, when it ſhall come under ſo exact and judicious an eye; it may be uſeful, tho' it be not elegant; its ſeaſonableneſs is its beſt commendation, and its aim better than its performance. As for you,* Sir, *I hope Faith hath really placed your Soul in that ſerene and happy ſtation where* Seneca *fanſied Moral Vertue to have placed a good Man,* Fatendum eſt, cacumine Olympi conſtitutus, ſupra ventos & procellas, & omnes res humanas. *Above the Storms and Tempeſts of this unquiet and diſtracting World. But there are many gracious perſons at this day labouring under their own Fears, and whoſe hearts are ready to fail with looking for thoſe things that are coming to try them that dwell upon the Earth; and poſſibly ſomewhat of relief may be adminiſtred to many ſuch by this Diſcourſe; ſome bivious and ſtaggering Souls may be eſtabliſhed; ſoul-diſcouraged and fainting Spirits may be revived; ſome doubts may be diſſolved that have long perplexed gracious hearts. Whatever uſe it may be of to any, I humbly call in the aid of your Prayers to my own for a ſpecial Bleſſing upon it, and remain,* Sir, *Yours to honour, love, and ſerve you,*

John Flavell.

Isa. viii. *v.* 12, 13, *and part of the* 14.

Say ye not a confederacy to all them to whom this people shall say a confederacy; neither fear ye [their fear] nor be afraid. v. 13. *Sanctifie the Lord of hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread;* v. 14. *And he shall be for a* Sanctuary.

CHAP. I.

Wherein the Text and Context are opened, the Doctrines propounded, and the general Method stated.

THere is not more diversity found in the outward features, than in the inward tempers and dispositions of men: some are as timorous as Hares, and start at every sound, or yelp of a dog; others are bold as Lyons, and can face dangers without trembling. Some fear more than they ought, and some before they ought, and others when they ought not at all. The carnal person fears man, not God; the strong Christian fears God, not man; the weak Christian fears man too much, and God too little.

There is a Fear which is the effect of sin, springing from guilt, and hurrying the Soul into more guilt; and there is a fear which is the effect of grace, springing from our love to God and his interest, and driving the Soul to God in the way of duty. The less fear any man hath, the more happiness, except it be of that fear which is our happiness and our excellency.

It cannot be said of any man as it is said of *Leviathan*, *Job* 41. 33. that he is made without fear; those that have most fortitude, are not without some fears: And when the Church is in the storms of Persecution, and almost covered with the waves, the stoutest Passengers in it may suffer as much this boisterous passion within, as from the storm without; and all for want of throughly believing, or not seasonably remembring, that the Lord High Admiral of all the Ocean, and Commander of all the Winds is on board the Ship, to steer and to preserve it in the storm.

A pregnant instance hereof is furnished to our hands in this Context, where you find the best men trembling in expectation of the worst events both on the Church in general, and themselves in particular. *Their hearts were moved like the trees of the wood shaken with the wind*, ch. 7. v. 2.

And indeed if their dangers were to be measured by sense only, their fears were not above the value of the cause, yea, their dangers seemed to exceed their fears; for it was the invasion of a foreign and cruel enemy, even the *Assyrian*, who were to break in upon them like a breach of the Sea, and overflow the land of *Immanuel*, v. 7. *The Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river strong and many; even the King of* Assyria *and all his glory, and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks.* And as the 7 *ver.* resembles the enemy to waters which quickly drown the country into which they break, so the 8 *ver.* tells you, how far they should prevail, and how near it should come to a general and total ruine. *He shall pass through Judah, he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck, and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O* Immanuel. All the body should be under water, except the capital City, which remained above water.

Having thus described the power and success of the invading enemy, in the 9 and 10 *verses* he derides their plots and combinations, assuring them that altho' God for just and holy ends would permit them for a time to afflict his people, yet in the issue of all their Councils and Cruelties should recoil upon themselves, and end in their own ruine and confusion.

And thereupon *Isaiah* is commanded to encourage the feeble and trembling hearts of such as feared God in those distracted and frightful times, *v.* 11, 12, 13. *The Lord spake unto me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying, Say ye not a confederacy*, &c.

God speaking to the Prophet by a strong hand, imports the strong and mighty impression that was made upon his heart by the Spirit of Prophecy: wherein the Lord did as it were lay his hand upon him, as a man doth upon one to whom he is about to impart some special secret in a familiar way, *q. d.* Come hither *Isaiah* (drawing him to him at the same instant with a friendly hand) take deep notice of what I am now to give thee in charge, both with respect to thy self, and my elect people that follow thee; *Say not you a confederacy to all them to whom this people shall say a confederacy*, (i. e.) let not these frightful tidings work upon you, as they do upon *Ahaz*, and the common multitude with him, who are so terrified and scared with the approaching dangers, that all their councils, thoughts and studies are taken up in preventing it, by making a confederacy or league with the *Assyrian*; or if that cannot be, then with some foreign power that may secure them against the *Assyrian*: but their eyes are not at all to me for protection and deliverance: they expect more from *Egypt* than from *Heaven*, from a broken reed than from the rock of ages. Fear not you their fear; their fear drives them from God to the Creature; it first *distracts* them, and then *ensnares* them. Hos. 5. 13.

But on the contrary, see that thou, and all the faithful in the land with thee, do sanctifie me in your hearts, and make me your fear and your dread, (*i. e.*) rely upon me by faith in this day of trouble, and see that you give me the glory of my Wisdom, Power, and Faithfulness; by relying intirely upon those my Attributes engaged for you in so many tried promises: and do not betake your selves to such sinful and vain shifts as those do that have no interest in me, nor experience of me. This is the general scope and design of the Text; wherein more particularly you have,

1. An evil practice prohibited.
2. An effectual remedy prescribed.
3. A singular encouragement to apply that remedy.

1. An

1. An evil Practice prohibited, *Fear not their fear, neither be afraid.* This is that sinful principle, which was but too apt to incline them to do as others did, *scil.* to say a confederacy. Sinful fears are apt to drive the best men into sinful compliances, and indirect Shifts to help themselves.

Their fear may be understood two ways;

1. Subjectively.
2. Effectively.

1. *Subjectively*, for the self same fear wherewith the carnal and unbelieving *Jews* feared: a fear that enslaved them in bondage of Spirit; a fear that is the fruit of sin, a sin in its own Nature, the cause of much Sin to them, and a just punishment of God upon them for their other sins.

2. *Effectively*, Let not your fear produce in you such mischievous Effects as their fear doth; to make you forget God, magnifie the creature, prefer your own wits and policies to the Almighty power, and unspotted faithfulness of God; if you say, but how shall we help it;

2. Why in the next place you have, An *effectual Remedy prescribed, But sanctifie the Lord of hosts himself, and let him be your fear and your dread.* The fear of God will swallow up the fear of Man, a reverential awe and dread of God will extinguish the slavish fear of the creature; as the Sun-shine puts out fire; or as one Fire fetches out another: so will this fear fetch out that.

By sanctifying the Lord of Hosts himself, is meant a due ascription of the Glory of his Sovereign power, wisdom and faithfulness, not only in verbal and professed acknowledgments thereof, but especially in those internal acts of affiance, resignation, and intire dependence on him, which as they are the choicest respects of the creature towards its God, and give him the greatest glory, so they are certainly the most beneficial and comfortable acts we can perform for our own peace and safety in times of danger.

If a man do really look to God in a day of trouble and fear, as to the *Lord of Hosts*, (*i. e.*) one that governs all the creatures, and all their actions; at whose beck and command all the Armies of Heaven and Earth are, and then can rely upon the care and love of this God, as a child in danger of trouble reposes on, and commits himself with greatest Confidence to the care and protection of his Father: O what peace, what rest must necessarily follow upon this! Who would be afraid to pass through the midst of armed Troops and Regiments, whilst he knows that the General of that Army is his own Father? The more power this filial fear of God obtains in our Hearts, the less will you dread the power of the Creature. When the *Dictator* ruled at *Rome*, then all other *Officers* ceased; and so in a great measure will all other fears where the fear of God is *Dictator* in the heart. This is the Remedy.

3. And to enable us to apply this remedy in the worst and most difficult times, we have a singular *encouragement* proposed. If we will thus sanctifie the Lord of Hosts himself, by such an acknowledgment of, and child-like dependence on him in times of danger, then he will be to us for a *Sanctuary* (*i. e.*) he will surely protect, defend and provide for us in the worst times and cases, then will the Lord *Create upon every dwelling-place of mount* Zion *and upon her Assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a defence, and there shall be a Tabernacle for a shadow in the day-time from the heat, and for a place of refuge and for a covert from the storm, and from rain.* Let the winds roar, the rain beat, the lightnings flash, you are in safety, and have a good roof over your heads. Hence these two Points of Doctrine offer themselves.

Asili loco.

Præstabit vos inaccessos, & inviolabiles ab his regibus.

Doct. I. *That the best men are too apt to be overcome with slavish fears in times of imminent distress and danger.*

Doct. II. *That the fear of God is the most effectual means to extinguish the sinful fear of man, and to secure us from danger.*

These two Points take in the Substance and Scope of the Text, but because I design to treat in the following Chapters, of the *Kinds, Nature, Uses, Causes, Effects*, and *Remedies* of Fear, I shall not distinctly prosecute them, but proceed in this order in the following Chapters.

CHAP. II.

Wherein the kinds and nature of Fear are opened, and particularly the distracting slavish Fear of Creatures.

Sect. I. THERE is a threefold Fear found in Men, *viz.*

1. Natural
2. Sinful
3. Religious

} Fear.

Natural Fear, of which all are Partakers that partake of the common nature, not one excepted.

Natural Fear is the trouble or perturbation of mind from the apprehension of approaching evil, or impending danger.

The Greek word φόβος comes from a Verb that signifies Flight; this is not always sinful, but it is always the Fruit and Consequent of sin. Since sin entered into our Nature there is no shaking off Fear, no sooner had *Adam* trangressed, but he feared and fled, hiding himself among the Trees of the Garden, *Gen.* 3. 8. when he had trangressed the Covenant, he presently feared the Execution of the Curse. First he *eats*, then he *hides*. And his afflictive Passion is from him transmitted and derived to all his Children.

φέβομαι fugio, perfect. med. πέφοβα, inde φόβος timor, fuga.

To this natural Fear it pleased our Lord *Jesus Christ* to subject himself in the Days of his Flesh, he was afraid, yea, he was sore amazed, *Mark* 14. 33. For though his humane Nature was absolutely free from sin, yet he came in the *likeness of sinful flesh*, Rom. 8. 3.

This Fear creates great Trouble and Perturbation in the Mind, 1 *John* 4. 18. *Fear hath torment*; in proportion to the Danger is the Fear, and in *proportion* to the fear, the Trouble and Distraction of the Mind, if the Fear be exceeding great, Reason is displaced, and can conduct us no farther, as the *Psalmist* speaks of Mariners in a Storm. *they are at their wits end*, Psal. 107. 27. or as it is varied in the *Margin*, all Wisdom is swallowed up, and this is the meaning of *Deut.* 28 25. that they should go out against their Enemies one way, and *flee before them seven ways*, (*i. e.*) so great shall be the Fright and Distraction that they shall attempt now one way, then another, striving every way, but liking none; for Fear so far betrays

Rector in incerto est, nec quid fugiatve petatve, invenit. *Ovid.*

betrays the Succours of Reason, that their Counsels are always in Uncertainty and at a Loss, and the usual Voice of a Man in this Condition is, *I know not what to do, I know not which way to turn.*

Evil is the Object of Fear, and the greater the Evil is, the stronger the Fear must needs be, and therefore the terrors of an awakened and terrified conscience must be allowed to be the greatest of Terrors, because in that Case a Man hath to do with a great and terrible God, and is scared with Apprehensions of his infinite and eternal Wrath, than which no Evil is or can be greater. You see at what height Christ's Conflict with it wrought, when it made him sweat as it were great Clots of Blood. Of all temporal Evils Death is the greatest, and therefore *Job* calls it *the King of Terrors*, Job 18. 14. or the most Terrible of Terribles. *Thuanus* relates two strange Instances of the Fear of Death: One of a certain Captain who was so terrified with the Fear of Death, that he poured out a kind of bloody Sweat from all Parts of his Body. Another is of a young Man condemned for a small Matter by *Sixtus Quintus*, who was so vehemently terrified with the Fears of Death, that he shed a kind of bloody Tears. These are strange and terrible Effects of Fear, but vastly short of what Christ felt and suffered, who grapled with a far greater Evil than the Terrors of Death, even the Wrath of an incensed God poured out to the full, and that immediately upon him.

Dux quidam indigno mortis metu, adeo concussus fuit, ut sanguineum sudorem toto corpore fudit. *Hist. lib.* 11.

Juvenis ob levem causam à Sixto V. damnatus, præ doloris vehementia fertur lacrymas cruentes fudisse, *lib.* 80.

But yet Evil, as Evil is rather the Object of Hatred than of Fear, it must be an imminent or near approaching Evil, which we see not how to escape or put by, that provokes Fear, and rowzes this Lion. And therefore the Saints in Glory are perfectly freed from Fear, because they are out of the Reach of all Danger: Nor do we that are here in the midst of Evils fear them till we see them approaching us, and we see not how to avoid them. To hear of Fire, Plague, or the Sword in the *Indies*, doth not affright us, because the Evil is so remote from us; its far enough off, we are in no danger of it; but when it is in the Town, much more when within our own Dwellings, we tremble. Evil hurts us not by a simple Apprehension of its nature, but of its union; and all Propinquity is a Degree of Union, as a learned Divine speaks.

Dr. *Reynolds.*

And it's worth Observation, that all carnal Security is maintained by putting Evils at a great distance from us; as it is noted of those secure Sensualists, *Amos* 6. 3. *They put far from them the evil day.* The Meaning is not that they did, or could put the Evil one minute farther from them in Reality, but only by Imagination and Fancy; they shut their own Eyes, and would not see it, lest it should give an unpleasing Interruption to their Mirth; and this is the Reason why Death puts the Living into no more Fear, because it is apprehended as remote, and at an undetermined distance, whereas if the precise time of Death were known, especially if that time were near, it would greatly scare and terrifie.

This is the Nature of natural Fear, the Infelicity of Nature, which we all groan under the Effects of: It is in all the Creatures in some degree, but among them all none suffer more by it than Man, for hereby he becomes his own Tormentor; nor is any Torment greater than this when it prevails in a high degree upon us. Indeed all Constitutions and Tempers admit not the same degrees of fear; some are naturally courageous and stout, like the *Lion* for Magnanimity and Fortitude; others exceeding timorous and faint-hearted, like the *Hare* or *Hart*, one little Dog will make a hundred of them fear and flee before him. *Luther* was a Man of great Courage and Presence of Mind in dangers, *Melancthon* very timorous and subject to Despondency. Thus the Difference betwixt them is expressed in one of *Luther's* Letters to him:

Epist. ad Melanc. Ann. 1549.

'I am well-nigh a secure Spectator 'of Things, and esteem not any thing these fierce 'threatning *Papists*. I much dislike those anxious 'Cares which as thou writest do almost consume 'thee. There might be as great a Stock of Grace in one as in the other, but *Melancthon's* Grace had not the Advantage of so stout and courageous a Temper of Body and Mind as *Luther's* had. Thus briefly of natural Fear.

Sect. II. There is a Fear which is formally and intrinsically sinful, not only our Infelicity, but our Fault, not our simple Affliction and Burden, but our great Evil and Provocation; and such is the Fear here dissuaded, called *their fear* (*i. e.*) the Fear wherewith carnal and unbelieving Men do fear, when Dangers threaten them; and the sinfulness of it lies in five Things.

1. In the Spring and Cause of it, which is Unbelief, and an unworthy Distrust of God, when we dare not rely upon the Security of a Divine Promise, nor trust to God's Protection in the way of our Duty. This was the very Case of that People, *Isa.* 30. 15. *This saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in returning and rest shall ye be saved, in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength; and ye would not, but ye said no, for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and we will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift, one thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one,* &c.

Thus stood the Case, *Sennacherib* with a mighty Host was ready to invade them; this puts them into a Fright; in this Distress God assures them by the Mouth of the Prophet, that in *returning and rest they should be saved, in quietness and confidence should be their strength.* The meaning is, never perplex your selves with various Counsels and Projects to secure your selves under the Wings of *Egypt* or any other *Protector*, but with a composed, quiet, and calm Temper of Mind rest upon my Power by Faith, take my Promises for your Security, this shall be your Salvation and your strength, more effectual to your Preservation than Armies, Garisons, or any Creature-defence in the World; one act of Faith shall do you better Service than *Pharaoh* and all his Forces can do.

But ye said no, *q. d.* we dare not trust to that, a good *horse* will do us more Service at such a time than a good *Promise*; *Egypt* is a better Security in their Eye than *Heaven.* This is the Fruit of gross Infidelity. And as wicked Men do thus forsake God, and cleave to the Creature in time of Trouble, so there is found a Spice of this distrustfulness of God producing Fear and Trouble in the best Men. It was in the Disciples themselves, *Mat.* 8. 26. *Why are you fearful, O ye of little Faith?* A Storm had befallen them at Sea, and danger began to threaten them, and presently you find a Storm within, their fears were more boisterous than the Winds, and had more need of calming than the Sea;

Sea; and it was all from their unbelief, as Christ tells them; the less their Faith the greater their Fear. If a man can but rely upon God in a promise, so far as he is enabled to believe, so far he will reckon himself well secured. *Illyricus* in his Catalogue of the witnesses relates this remarkable passage of one *Andreas Proles*, a godly aged Divine who lived somewhat before *Luther*, and taught many Points soundly, according to his light then, he was called to a *Synod* at *Millain*, and afterwards in the *Lateran*, where opposing a proposition of the *Pope* about burdening the Church with a new Holiday, he was brought into much danger, and escaping very narrowly from *Rome*, he bought him a *Bow* and *Weapons*, but as he was riding, he began to bethink himself, That the cause was not *his* but *God's*, and not to be maintained with sword and bow, and if it were, yet what could such a decrepit old man do with weapons? Upon which he threw away his weapons, committed himself, his cause, and his journey to God, relied upon his promises more than sword or bow, and came home safe, and afterward died quietly in his bed.

Illyr. Cat. Test. lib. 19.

2. The sinfulness of Fear lies in the excess and immoderacy of it, when we fear more than we ought? for it may be truly said of our fears as the *Philosopher* speaks of waters, *difficile suis terminis continentur*, 'tis hard to keep them within bounds, every bush is a Bear, every petty trouble puts us into a fright, our fear exceeds the value and merit of the cause. 'Tis a great sin to love or fear any creature above the rate of a creature, as if they were masters of all our temporal and eternal comforts. Thus when the men of *Israel* heard of the confederacy and conjunction of their enemies against them, the Text saith, *their hearts were moved, as the Trees of the wood are moved with the wind, Isai.* 7. 1. or as we use to say *proverbially*, like an *Aspine leaf*: 'tis a sad sight to behold men shaking and quivering as the trees do on a windy day, yet thus did the house of *David*, partly through the remembrance of past calamities, but especially through incredulity in God's protecting care in their present and future dangers? yea, this is too often the fault of good men in creature fear, as well as in creature love, to transgress the due bounds of moderation. 'Tis noted of *Jacob* though a man of much Faith, and one that had the sweetest encouragements to strengthen it from former experiences, and God's gracious promises to be with him; yet when *Esau* was come nigh, he was *greatly afraid and distressed, Gen.* 32. 7. It was but a little before that God had graciously appeared to him, and sent a Royal Guard of Angels to attend him, even two hosts or armies of Angels, *v.* 1, 2. and yet as soon as *Esau* approached him, he was afraid, greatly afraid, yea, greatly afraid and distressed, notwithstanding such an encouraging vision as this was.

3. The sinfulness of our Fears lies in the inordinacy of them; to fear it more than we ought is bad enough, but to magnifie its power above the power of a creature; to exalt the power of any creature by our fears, and give it such an ascendant over us, as if it had an Arbitrary and absolute dominion over us, or over our comforts, to do with them what it pleased; this is to put the creature out of its own Class and Rank, into the place of God, and is therefore a very sinful and evil fear.

To *trust* in any creature as if it had the power of a God to *help* us, or to *fear* any creature, as if it had the power of a God to *hurt* us, is exceeding sinful, and highly provoking to God. This inordinate trust is taxed and condemned in *Isai.* 31. 3. They would needs go down to *Egypt* for help, and trust in their horses and horsemen, because they were strong (*i. e.*) in their opinion they were able to secure them against all those dangers the Prophet from the Lord's own mouth had threatened them with; but to take them off from this sinful and inordinate dependance on the creature, he tells them, *v.* 3. *Now the* Egyptians *are men and not God, and their horses flesh, and not spirit, when the Lord shall stretch forth his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down; and they shall fail together*, q. d. 'Tis a sinful and dangerous mistake for one creature, to give that trust and dependance to another creature which is due only to God, to look upon men as if they were Gods, and horses as if they were Spirits: All creatures, even the strongest, are but as the Hop, the Vine, or the Ivy, if they clasp about the pole, the wall, or the oak; they may be supported, as you also may by leaning upon God, but if they depend, and intangle themselves one upon another, as you and the *Egyptians* do, you shall fail, and fall all together.

And as one creature is apt inordinately and sinfully thus to trust and lean upon another; so there is as great a proneness in the creatures inordinately to fear and dread each other, as if the creature feared were rather a God, than a Man, rather a Spirit than Flesh; and thus our fear magnifies and exalts the creature, and puts it as it were into the room and place of God. This was the Sin which God rebuked in his own people, *Isai.* 51. 12, 13. *I even I am he that comforteth thee, who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the Son of Man which shall be made as grass, and forgettest the Lord thy maker*, &c. See how fear exalts man, and depresseth God, it thinks upon the noxious power of men so much, that it forgets the saving power of God, as if that stood for nothing; thus a mortal worm that shall perish as the grass, eclipses the glory of the great God, that stretched forth the Heavens, and laid the Foundations of the Earth.

And this was the evil against which Christ cautioned his own *Disciples* in *Matth.* 10. 28. *Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* q. d. Have a care you never fear any man, be he armed with never so much power, and rage; as if the power of making or marring you for ever were in his hands, as if you lay at the feet of his will and pleasure to be saved or ruined for ever. Fear not him that can only touch your bodies as if he would damn your Souls, invest not any creature with the sovereign and incommunicable power of God.

4. The sinfulness of Fear consists in the distracting influence it hath upon the hearts of men, whereby it discomposeth and unfits them for the discharge of their duties.

Fear sometimes puts men into such an hurry, and their thoughts into such disorder, that for the present they have scarce any succour or relief from their graces, or from their reason; for under an extraordinary fear both grace and reason like the wheels of a watch wound above its due height, stand still, and have no motion at all. It is rare to find a man of that largeness and constancy of heart and mind in a day of fear, that was found in *Jehoshaphat*, 2 *Chro.* 20. 2, 3. *Then there came some that told* Jehoshaphat, *saying, there cometh a great multitude*

multitude against thee from beyond the sea, on this side Syria, *and behold they be in* Hazazon-Tamar *which is* Engedi, *and* Jehoshaphat *feared, and set himself to seek the Lord.* He set himself (*i. e.*) he composed and fixed his heart for Prayer in the time of so great a fright, and terrible an alarm: But it is rare to find such constancy and evenness of mind as this; in like cases it is with most in great frights, as the *Prophet* describes the condition of the Jews, *Isaiah* 22. 2, 3. when the City of *Jerusalem* was besieged and the Enemy came under the walls of it; that which a little before was the *joyous City*, or as some read the revelling City, is now in such a panick fear, that it is full of stirs and tumults, some run up to the tops of the houses either to hide or bewail themselves, or take a view of the dreadful Enemy without; others prevent the sword of the Enemy, and die by fear before hand, their own apprehensions of misery killed them before the sword of any other Enemy once touched them, but you read of none that ran into their closets to seek the Lord; the City was full of stirs, but not of Prayers; alas, Fear made them cry to the Mountains, rather than to God, *ver.* 5. The best Men find it hard to keep their thoughts from wandering and their minds from distraction in the greatest calm of peace, but a thousand times harder in the hurries and tumults of Fear.

5. The sinfulness of Fear consists in the power it hath to dispose and incline men to the use of sinful means to put by their danger, and to cast them into the hands and power of temptation. *The fear of man bringeth a snare, Prov.* 29. 25. or puts and lays a snare before him; Satan spreads the net, and Fear like the stalking horse drives men right into it. It was Fear which drew *Abraham* that great Believer into the snare of Dissimulation, to the great Disparagement of Religion, for it was somewhat an odd sight to see *Abimilech* an Heathen so schooling an *Abraham* for it, as he did *Gen.* 20. 9. And for the same evil you find God chiding his People, in *Isaiah* 57. 11. *And of whom hast thou been afraid, or feared that thou hast lyed and hast not remembred me?* There is a double lye occasioned by Fear, one in *words*, another in *deeds*: Hypocrisie is a lye done, a practical lye, and our Church History abounds with sad Examples of Dissimulation thro' Fear: 'tis Satan's great engine to make his Temptations victorious and successful with Men.

6. There is an holy and laudable Fear, a Fear which is our *treasure*, not our *torment*, the chief ornament of the Soul, its beauty and perfection, not its infelicity or sin, *viz.* the awful filial Fear of God; natural Fear is a pure or simple passion of the Soul; sinful Fear is the disordered and corrupt passion of the Soul; but this is the natural passion sanctified, and thereby changed and baptized into the Name and Nature of a Spiritual Grace. This Fear is also mentioned in my Text, and prescribed as an Antidote against sinful Fears; it devours carnal Fears as *Moses* Serpent did those of the *Enchanters*. It's one of the forest Judgments to be in the Fear of man day and night, *Deut.* 28. 65, 66, 67. and one of the sweetest Mercies to be in the Fear of God all the day long, *Prov.* 23. 17. The Fear of men shortens our days, *Isaiah* 22. 34. but the fear of the Lord prolongeth our days, *Prov.* 10. 27. The fear of the Lord is a Fountain of Life, *Prov.* 14. 27 But the Fear of Man a Fountain of Mischiefs and Miseries. By the Fear of the Lord men depart from evil, *Prov.* 16. 6. but by the Fear of Men, Men run themselves into evil *Prov.* 29. 25.

This Fear is *a gracious habit or principle planted by God in the Soul, whereby the Soul is kept under an holy awe of the Eye of God, and from thence is inclined to perform and do what pleaseth him, and to shun and avoid whatsoever he forbids and hates.*

1. It is planted in the Soul as a permanent and fixed habit, it is not of the natural growth and production of man's heart, but of supernatural infusion and implantation. *Jer.* 32. 40. *I will put my fear into their inward parts.* To fear man is natural, but to fear God is wholly supernatural

2. This gracious Fear puts the Soul under the awe of God's eye, *Psal* 119. 161. *My heart standeth in awe of thy word.* 'Tis the reproach of the servants of men to be *eye-servants*, but it is the praise and honour of God's Servants to be so.

3. This respect to the eye of God inclines them to perform and do whatsoever pleaseth him, and is commanded by him; hence fearing God, and working righteousness are connected and linked together, *Acts* 10. 35. if we truly fear God, we dare not but do the things he commands, and if his fear be exalted in our hearts to an high degree, it will enable us to obey him in duties accompanied with deepest self-denial, *Gen.* 22. 12. *Now I know thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.*

4. This Fear engageth, and in some degree inableth the Soul, in which it is, to shun and avoid whatsoever is displeasing to God, and forbidden by him; in this *Job* discovered himself a true fearer of God, he would not touch what God had forbidden, and therefore was honoured with this excellent Character, *He was one that feared God, and eschewed evil, Job* 1. 3.

And thus of the several Kinds of Fear.

CHAP. III.

Shewing the various Uses *of* Fear, *both* Natural, Sinful, *and* Religious, *in the Government of the world by Providence.*

HAving taken a brief View of the several kinds and sorts of Fear that are found among men, our next work will be to open the Uses of them in the Government of this World, for one way or other they all subserve the most wise and holy purposes of God therein. And we will first enquire into

1. *The* Use *of natural Fear.*

Which if we well consider, it will be found exceeding necessary and useful to make man a governable creature by Law, and consequently the order, comfort and tranquility of the world necessarily depends upon it. How immorigerous and intractable would the corruptions of man's nature make him, and uncapable of any moral restraint from the most flagitious and barbarous crimes, had not God planted such a passion as this is his nature, which like a bridle curbs in the corrupt propensions thereof. If fear did not clap its manacles and fetters upon the wild and boisterous lusts of men, they would certainly bear down all milder motives and break loose from all ingenuous bands of restraint, the world would inevitably be filled with disorders,

Est timor instar freni quo equus regitur, hic metus si toleretur, omnia conciderent. *Lavat. in Pro.* 29. v. 25.

tumults, rapines, theft, murders, and all manner of rumblenness, and unrighteousness, *nec Pisces ab hospite tutus*, Men would become like the Fishes of the Sea as the Prophet complains, *Habak.* 1. 14. where the greater swallow up a multitude of the smaller Fry alive at one gulp; Propriety could not be maintained in the World, no Man's Person could be safe or inviolate; power and opportunity to do mischief would measure out to Men their Lot and Inheritance, and consequently all Societies must disband and break up. We say, and the Observation is sure, *He that fears not his own, may easily be master of another man's life.* 'Tis Law, and fear of Punishment that keeps the World in order; Men are afraid to *do* evil, because they are afraid to *suffer* it; they see the Law hath inseparably link'd penal and moral Evils together; if they will presume upon the one, they must necessarily pull the other upon them too: and this keeps them in some Order and Decorum; there would be no Order or Security without Laws: but if Laws had no annexed Penalties to enforce them, and give them their Sanction, as good there were no Laws; they would have no more Power to restrain the Corruptions of Mens Hearts, than the new Cords or green Withs had to bind *Sampson*. And yet, if the severest Penalties in the World were annexed to, or appointed by the Law, they could signifie nothing to the Ends of Government without Fears. This is that tender sensible Power or Passion on which Threatnings work, and so brings Men under moral Government and Restraint, *Rom.* 13, 3, 4. *Magistrates are a terror to evil works; wilt thou not then be afraid of the power? but if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain.* And by this means a world of Evil is restrained and prevented in the World.

Intellectualis creatura eo ipso quod creatura est, superiorem habet, cujus providentiæ & ordinationi subjacet; & qua intellectualis est capax est gubernationis moralis, qua dirigatur ad bonum, & arceatur à malo; & talis lex est illi simpliciter necessaria, ut convenienter suæ naturæ vivere possit. *Suarez de leg. pt.* 1. *c.* 3.

It was the Custom and Policy of the *Persians* (I cannot say laudable) at the Death of their Kings to give every Man Liberty for the space of five Days to do what he would; and such Mischiefs were done every where by the unbridled Lusts of Men in those Days, that it made the People long and pray for the Instalment of their next King, it exceedingly endeared Government to them: Blessed be God for Law and Government, for curbing by this Means the raging Lusts of the Hearts of Men, and procuring Rest and Comfort for us in the World this way.

2. *The Use of sinful Fear.*

This is formally evil and sinful in its own nature, as well as the fruit of sin, and off-spring of sinful nature, yet the Lord knows how to overrule it in his providential Government of the world to his own wise and holy purposes; and he doth so,

First, by making it his scourge to punish his Enemies. If men will not fear *God*, they shall fear *Men*, yea, they shall be made a terror to *themselves*. And indeed it is a dreadful punishment for *God* to deliver a Man up into the hands of his own fears. I think there is scarce a greater torment to be found in the World, than for a Man to be his own Tormentor, and his mind made a Rack, an Engine of Torture to his Body. We read in 2 *Kings* 17. 25. that God sent Lions among the People, but certainly that is not so bad as for God to let loose our own Fears upon us. No Lion is so cruel as this Passion, and therefore *David* esteemed it so great a Deliverance to be delivered from all his Fears, *Psal.* 34. 4. It is a dreadful threatning which is recorded in *Deut.* 28. 65, 66, 67. against the disobedient and rebellious, *Thou shalt find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest, but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind; and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have no assurance of thy life; in the morning thou shalt say, would God it were even, and at even thou shalt say, would God it were morning, for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.* When Fear hath once seized the Heart, you may see deaths colours displayed in the Face. What a dismal Life do they live, who have neither any Peace by Day, nor Rest by Night, but wearisome Days and Nights are appointed them! The Days of such Men are tiresome Days; they wish for the Night, hoping it may give them a little rest; but their Fears go to Bed with them, their Hearts pant, and meditate Terror; and then, Oh that it were Day again!

Calamitosus est animus futuri anxius, & ante miserias miser. *Sen.*

2. By Fear God punisheth his Enemies in Hell: it is that *flagellum Dei*, terrible Scourge of God, by which a great part of the Torment of the Damned is inflicted on them. Divines use to make this tripartite distinction of Hell Torments, and tell us God punishes the Wicked there partly by remembrance what is past, *viz.* the Mercies and Means they once had, but are there irrecoverably lost, partly by the Sense of Things present, even the Wrath of God overlaying Soul and Body, and partly by the Fear of what is to come; and sure this is not the least part of the Misery of those wretched Cast-aways. Oh that fearful Expectation of fiery Indignation! more and more of God's Wrath still coming on as the Waves of the Seas, thrusting forward one another; yea, this is that which makes the Devils tremble, *Jam.* 2. 19. φρίσσουσι; the Word signifies such a Noise as the Roar of the Sea, or the Roaring of the Waves when they break themselves against the Rocks, and this is occasioned by the Fears which are continually held as a Whip over them.

3. Providence makes use of the slavish Fears and Terrors of wicked Men to dissipate and scatter them when they are combined and confederated against the People of God; by these have they been routed and put to flight when there hath been no other visible Power to do it: It's said, *Psal.* 78. 55. God cast out the Heathen before his People *Israel*; and by what means were those mighty Nations subdued? not by the Strength or Multitudes of the *Israelites*, but by their own fears; for it is said, *Josh.* 24. 11, 12. *The Lord sent the hornet before them, which drave them out.* These *Hornets* were the Fears and Terrors of their own guilty and presaging Minds, which buzzed and swarmed in their own Breasts, and stung them to the Heart worse than the Swords of the *Israelites* could

Crabrones per metaphoram repentinum terrorem significant, qui in animos male sibi conscios à Deo immissus fuit. *Lavater in loc.*

could do. *Theodoret* relates a memorable Story of *Sapores* King of *Persia*, who had besieged many Christians in the City *Nisibis*, and put them to great straits, so that little hopes of Safety were left them; but in the depth of their Distress God sent an Army of Hornets and Gnats among their Enemies, which got into the Trunks of their Elephants and Ears and Nostrils of their Horses, which so enraged them, that they brake their Harness, cast their Riders, and put all to the Rout, by which Providence the Christians escaped. These Hornets were terrible to them; but Fears, which are Hornets in a Figure, are ten thousand times more terrible: they will quell and sink the very Hearts of the stoutest Men; yea, they will quickly make those that in their Pride and Haughtiness took themselves rather to be Gods and Almighty Powers, to know themselves to be but Men, as it is *Psal.* 9. 20. *Put them in fear, O Lord, that they may know themselves to be but men:* One Fright will scare them out of a thousand fond Conceits and idle Dreams.

Sapores Rex Persarum cum urbem Nisibin qua erant Christiani, obsedisset, eamque affligeret, magna vis Crabronum, & Culicum repente venit, & in Promuscides cavas Elephantorum consedit, complevitq; aures Equorum, ita ut sessores excusserint, & turbatos ordines in fugam converterint. *Hist. lib.* 2. *cap.* 20.

3. *The Use of religious Fear.*

If God can make such Fruit to grow upon such a Bramble as the sinful slavish Fear of Man is, what may we expect from religious Fear, a choice Root of his own Spirits planting? The Uses and Benefits hereof are innumerable and inestimable; but I must contract, and will only instance in three special Uses of it.

1. By this Fear the People of God are excited to, and confirmed in the way of their Duty, *Eccles.* 12. 13. *Fear God, and keep his Commandments.* It is *Custos utriusque Tabulæ*, the Keeper of both Tables, because the Duties of both Tables are influenced by it. 'Tis this Fear of God that makes us have a due Respect to all his Commands, and it is as powerful to confirm us in, as it is to excite us to our Duties, *Jer.* 32. 40. *I will put my fear into their inwards, and they shall not depart from me.* Look, as he that soweth doth not regard the Winds, but goes on in his Labour whatever Weather the Face of Heaven threatens; so he that fears God will be found in the way of his Duty, let the Aspect of the Times be never so lowring and discouraging; and truly, this is no small Advantage in times of Frights and Distractions. Slavish Fear sets a Man upon the Devil's Ground, Religious Fear upon God's Ground: and how vast an odds is there in the Choice of our Ground, when we are to endure a great Fight of Affliction!

2. Another excellent use of this Fear, is to preserve the Purity and Peace of our Consciences, by preventing Grief and Guilt therein, *Prov.* 16. 6. *The fear of the Lord is to depart from evil.* See how it kept *Joseph*, *Gen.* 39. 9 and *Nehemiah*, ch. 5. 15. And this Benefit is invaluable, especially in a Day of outward Calamity and Distress. Look in what Degree the Fear of God prevails in our Hearts, answerable thereunto will the Serenity, Peace and Quietness of our Consciences be; and proportionable unto that will our Strength and Comfort be in the evil Day, and our Courage and Confidence to look Dangers in the Face.

3. To conclude, A principal Use of this Fear of God is to awaken us to make timely Provisions for future Distresses, that whensoever they come, they may not come by way of Surprize upon us. Thus *Noah*, being moved with Fear, prepared an Ark, *Heb.* 11. 7. It was the Instrument of his and his Families Salvation. Some Men owe their Death to their Fears; but good Men in a sense owe their Lives to their Fears; sinful Fears have slain some, and godly Fears have saved others. *A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil,* (saith *Solomon*) *but a fool rageth and is confident.* His Fears give him a timely Alarm before the Enemy fall into his Quarters and beat them up, by this means he hath time to get into his Chambers of Security and Rest, before the Storm fall; but the Fool rageth and is confident, he never fears till he begin to feel; yea. most times he is past all Hope before he begin to have any Fears.

These are some of the Uses God makes of the several kinds of Fear.

CHAP. IV.

Wherein the Springs and Causes of sinful Fear are searched out, and the Evils of such Fears thence discovered.

Sect. I. HAving shewn before the Kinds and Uses of Fear, it remains that next we search out the Springs from which these Waters of *Marah* are derived, and fed. And,

1 *Cause.* First, we shall find the sinful Fears of most good Men to spring out of their Ignorance, and the Darkness of their own Minds. All Darkness disposes to Fear, but none like intellectual Darkness. You read, *Cant.* 3. 8. how *Solomon's* Life-guard had every Man his Sword upon his Thigh, *because of fear in the night.* The Night is the frightful Season, in the Dark every Bush is a Bear; we sometimes smile by Day, to see what silly Things those were that scared us in the Night: So it is here; were our Judgment but duly informed, how soon would our Hearts be quieted?

Now there is a five-fold Ignorance out of which our Fears are generated.

1. Ignorance of God. Either we know not, or at least duly consider not his Almighty Power, vigilant Care, unspotted Faithfulness, and how they are all engaged by Covenant for his People. This Ignorance and Inconsiderateness lay at the Root of their Fears, *Isa.* 40. 27, 28. *My way* (saith Sion) *is hid from the Lord, and my judgment passed over from God*: Words imparting a suspicion that God had left her out of the Account of his Providence, and the Catalogue of those whom he would look after, and take Care for.

But were it once throughly understood and believed what Power there is in God's Hand to defend us, what Tenderness in his Bowels to commiserate us, what Faithfulness in all the Promises in which they are made over to us, Oh how quiet and calm would our Hearts be! Our Courage would quickly up, and our Fears down.

2. Our Ignorance of Men generates our Fears of Men; we fear them because we do not know them; if we understood them better, we would fear them less; we over-value them, and then fright at them: They say the Lion is painted more fierce than he is; I am sure our Fancy paints out Man more dreadful than indeed he is; If wicked

Men, especially if Multitudes of wicked Men, be confederated against us, our Hearts quail, and presently apprehend inevitable Ruine. *The floods of the ungodly made me afraid*, saith *David*, (*i. e.*) the Multitudes of them, which he thought, like a Flood, or mighty Torrent of Water, must needs sweep away such a Straw, such a Feather as he was before them; but mean time we know or consider not that they have no Power against us, but what is given them from above, and that it's usual with God to cramp their Hands, and clap on the Bands of Restraint upon them, when their Hearts are fully set in them to do mischief: did we see and consider them as they are in the Hand of our God, we should not tremble at them as we do.

3. Ignorance of our selves, and the Relations we have to God, creates slavish Fears in our Hearts. For did Believers but throughly understand how dear they are to God, what Relations they sustain to him, of what Account and Value they are in his Eyes, and how well they are secured by his faithful Promises and gracious Presence, they would not start and tremble at every Noise, and Appearance of danger as they do. God reckon'd it enough to cure all *Abraham*'s sinful Fears, when he told him how his God stood engaged for his Defence, *Gen.* 15. 1. *Fear not*, Abraham, *I am thy shield.* *Isaiah* 51. 12.

And noble *Nehemiah* valu'd himself in times of Danger and Fear by his Interest in God, as his Words import, *Neh.* 6. 11. The Conspiracy against him was strong, the Danger he and the faithful with him at that time were in, was extraordinary; some therefore advised to flee to the *Temple*, and barracado themselves there against the enemy: but *Nehemiah* understood himself better; *Should such a man as I flee? and who being as I am, would flee?* saith he; *q. d.* a Man so called of God to this Service, a Man under such Promises, a Man of such manifold and manifest Experiences, should such a Man flee? Let others who have no such Encouragements flee if they will; for my part I will not flee. I remember it was an Argument used by *Tertullian* to quiet the Fears, and stay the flight of Christians in those bloody Times; Art thou afraid of a Man, oh Christian! when Devils are afraid of thee as a Prisoner is of his Judge, and whom the World ought to fear, as being one that shall judge the World. Oh that we could without Pride and Vanity but value our selves duly, according to our Christian Dignities and Privileges, which if ever it be necessary to count over and value, it is in such times of danger and fear when the Heart is so prone to dejection and sinking fears.

Tertul. de fuga. Times hominem, Christiane, quem timeri oportet ab Angelis, siquidem Angelos judicaturus es: quem timeri oportet à Dæmoniis, siquidem & in Dæmoniis accepisti potestatem: quem timeri oportet ab universo mundo, siquidem & in te mundus judicatur.

4. Ignorance of our dangers and troubles causes our frights and terrors; we mistake them, and therefore are frighted at them; we are ignorant of two things in our troubles among others, *viz.*

1. The Comforts that are in them.
2. The Outlets and Escapes from them.

There is a vast odds betwixt the outward Appearance and Face of Trouble and the Inside of it; 'tis a Lion to the Eye at a distance, but open it, and there is Honey in its Belly. *Paul* and *Silas* met that in a Prison that made them sing at midnight, and so have many more since their Day.

And as we are ignorant of the Comforts that are sometimes found in our Troubles, so of the outlets and doors of escape God can, and often doth open out of trouble; *To God the Lord belong the issues from death*, Psal. 68. 20. *He knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation*, 2 Pet. 2. 9. he can with every temptation make a way to escape, 1 Cor. 10. 13. the Poor captive Exile cast upon nothing but dying in the Pit, making their Graves in the Land of their Captivity, *Isa.* 51. 14. for they could think upon none but the usual Methods of Deliverance, Power or Price, and they had neither; little did they dream of such immediate Influences of God upon the King's Heart, to make him dismiss them freely, contrary to all Rules of State-Policy, *Isa.* 45. 13.

5. But especially the fears of good men arise out of their ignorance and inconsiderateness of the *Covenant of Grace.* If we were better acquainted with the nature, extent, and stability of the *Covenant*, our Hearts would be much freed thereby from these tormenting Passions; this Covenant would be a *Panacea*, an universal Remedy against all our fears upon spiritual or temporal accounts, as will be made evident hereafter in this discourse.

Caus. 2. Another cause and fountain of sinful fear is guilt upon the Conscience. A Servant of sin cannot but first or last be a slave of fear; and they that have done Evil cannot chuse but expect evil. No sooner had *Adam* defiled and wounded his Conscience with guilt, but he presently trembles and hides himself: so it is with his children; God calls to him not in a threatning, but gentle dialect; not in a tempest, but in the cool of the day: yet it terrifies him, there being in himself *mens conscia facti*, a guilty and condemning Conscience, *Gen.* 3. 8. 'Tis *Seneca*'s Observation, that a guilty Conscience is a terrible Whip and Torment to the sinner, perpetually lashing him with sollicitous thoughts and fears, that he knows not where to be secure, nor dare he trust to any Promises of Protection, but distrusts all, doubts and jealouseth all. Of such it is said, *Job* 15. 21. That *a dreadful sound is in their ears*; noting not only the effects of real, but also of imaginary dangers: his own presaging mind and troubled fancy scares him where no real danger is, suitable to that *Prov.* 28. 1. *The wicked fleeth when none pursues, but the righteous is bold as a lion.* Just as they say of Sheep, that they are affrighted by the clattering of their own feet when once they are set a running, so is the guilty Sinner with the Noise of his own Conscience, which sounds nothing in his ears but misery, wrath and hell. We may say of all wicked Men in their frights as *Tacitus* doth of *Tyrants*, That if it were possible to open their inside, their mind, and conscience many terrible stripes and wounds would be found there; and it's said *Isa.* 33. 14. the sinners in *Sion* are afraid, trembling taketh hold of the hypocrite. Fear and trembling as naturally ariseth out of guilt, as the sparks do out of a fiery charcoal. Histories abundantly furnish us with sad Examples of the Truth of this Observation. *Catiline*, that Monster of Wickedness, would start at any sudden Noise, being haunted with the Furies of his own evil Conscience. *Charles* IX. after his bloody and barbarous Massacre of the Protestants, could nei-

Male facinorum conscientia flagellari, & plurimum illi tormentorum esse eo quod perpetuo illam sollicitudo urget, ac verberat quod sponsoribus securitatis suæ non potest credere. *Sen. Epist.* 97.

Si recludantur mentes Tyrannorum posse aspici laniatus & ictus. *Annal.*

neither ſleep nor wake without Muſick to divert his thoughts. And our *Richard* III. after the murder of his two innocent Nephews, ſaw divers images or ſhapes like Devils in his ſleep, pulling and hauling him. Mr. *Ward* tells of a *Jeſuit* in *Lancaſhire*, who being followed by one that had found his glove, out of no other deſign but to reſtore it to him, but being purſued by his own guilty Conſcience alſo, he leap'd over the next hedge, and was drown'd. And remarkable is that which Mr. *Fox* relates of Cardinal *Creſcentius*, who fanſied the Devil was walking in his Chamber, and ſometimes couching under his Table, as he was writing Letters to *Rome* againſt the Proteſtants. *Impius tantum metuit, quantum nocuit:* ſo much miſchief as Conſcience tells them they have done, ſo much it bids them expect. *Wolfius* tells us of one *John Hofmeſter* who fell ſick with the very terrors of his own Conſcience in his Inn, as he was travelling towards *Auſpurge* in *Germany*, and was frighted by his own Conſcience to that degree, that they were fain to bind him in his bed with chains; and all that they could get from him was, *I am caſt away for ever, I have grievouſly wounded my own Conſcience.*

To this wounded and trembling Conſcience is oppoſed the *Spirit of a ſound mind*, mentioned 2 *Tim.* 1. 7. *God hath not given us the ſpirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a ſound mind*; A ſound mind is in this place the ſame thing with a pure and peaceable Conſcience, a mind or conſcience not infirmed or wounded with guilt, as we ſay a ſound or hail body which hath no diſeaſe to infirm it, ſuch a mind is oppoſed to the Spirit of Fear; it will make a man bold as a Lion; *Nil conſcire tibi, nullâ palleſcere culpâ, hic murus aheneus eſto* ——

An evil and guilty Conſcience foments Fears and Terrours three ways.

1, By aggravating ſmall matters and blowing them up to the height of the moſt fatal and deſtructive evils; ſo it was with *Cain*, *Gen.* 4. 14. *Every one that meets me will ſlay me.* Now every Child was a *Giant* in his eye, and any body he met, his over-match. A guilty Conſcience gives a man no ſight of his Enemy, but thro' a magnifying or multiplying Glaſs.

2. It begets Fears, by interpreting all doubtful caſes in the worſt ſenſe that can be faſtened upon them; *Peſſimus in dubiis Augur timor.* If the *Swallows* do but chatter in the chimney, *Beſſus* interprets it to be a diſcovery of his crime, that they are telling tales of him, and ſaying, *Beſſus* killed a Man. Nay,

3. If a guilty Conſcience have nothing to aggravate, and magnifie, nor any doubtful matter to interpret in a frightful ſenſe, it can and often doth create fears and terrors out of nothing at all: the rules of Fear are not like the rules in *Arithmetick* where many nothings make nothing, but fear can make ſomething out of nothing, yea, many things and great things out of nothing at all, *Pſal.* 53. 5. *there were they in great fear where no fear was*; here was a great fear raiſed or created out of nothing at all; had their fear been examined, and hunted home to its original, it would have been found a pure creature of fancy, a *Chimæra* having no *fundamentum in re*, no other Foundation but a troubled fancy, and a guilty conſcience; thus it was with *Paſhur*, he was a very wicked man, and a bitter enemy to the *Prophet Jeremy*, and if there be none to fright and terrifie from abroad rather than he ſhall want it, he ſhall be a terror to himſelf, *Jer.* 20. 3, 4. he was his own bugbear, afraid of his own ſhadow; and truly this is a great plague and miſery: he that is a terror to himſelf, can no more flee from terrors than he can flee from himſelf. Oh, the efficacy of Conſcience! how doth it arreſt the ſtouteſt ſinners and make them tremble when there is no viſible external cauſe of fear! *Nemo, ſe judice, nocens abſolvitur.*

In metu & periculo plura & majora videntur metuentibus, cum creduntur facilius, tum finguntur impunius. *Cicero.*

1 *Object.* But may not a good man whoſe ſins are pardoned be affrighted with his own fancies, and ſcared with his own imaginations?

Sol. No doubt he may, for there is a twofold fountain of Fears, one in the body, another in the ſoul, one in the conſtitution, another in the conſcience; it is the affliction and infelicity of many pardoned and gracious ſouls to be united and married to ſuch diſtempered and ill habited bodies as ſhall afflict them without any real cauſe from within, and wound them by their own diſeaſes and diſtempers, and theſe wounds can no more be prevented or cured by their reaſon or religion, than any other bodily diſeaſe, ſuppoſe an Ague or a Fever, can be ſo cured. Thus Phyſicians tell us when aduſt choler or melancholy overflows and abounds in the body, as in the Hypochondriacal diſtempers, *&c.* what ſad effects it hath upon the mind as well as upon the body, there is not only a ſad and fearful aſpect or countenance without, but ſorrow, fear, and afflicting thoughts within; this is a ſore affliction to many good men whoſe Conſciences are ſprinkled with the blood of Chriſt from guilt, but yet God ſees good to clog them with ſuch afflictions as this for their humiliation, and for the prevention of worſe evils.

Fernel. Pathiol. lib. 2. *cap.* 16. Corporis habitus ſiccus & macilentus, aſpectus inconſtans, horridus ac mœſtus, in morbis animæ metus & mœſtitia, taciturnitas, ſolicitudo, inanis rerum commentatio, ſomnus turbulentus, horrendis inſomniis fluctuans, & agitatus ſpectris rerum nigrarum, &c.

2. *Object.* But many bold and daring ſinners are found, who notwithſtanding all the guilt with which their conſciences are loaded, can look dangers in the face without trembling, yea, they can look Death it ſelf the King of terrors in the face, with leſs fear than better men.

Sol. True, but the reaſon of that is from a ſpiritual judgment of God upon their hearts and conſciences, whereby they are hardened, and ſeared as with an hot Iron, 2 *Tim.* 4. 2. and ſo Conſcience is diſabled for the preſent, to do its office, it cannot put forth its efficacy and activity now, when it might be uſeful to their Salvation, but it will do it to purpoſe hereafter when their caſe ſhall be remedileſs.

3. *Cauſe.* We ſee what a forge of Fears a guilty Conſcience is, and no leſs is the ſin of *Unbelief*, the real and proper cauſe of moſt diſtracting and afflictive Fears; ſo much as our Souls are empty of *Faith*, they are in times of trouble filled with *Fear*. We read of ſome that have died by no other hand but their own Fears; but we never read of any that died by Fear, who were once brought to live by Faith: If men would but dig to the root of their Fears, they ſhould certainly find unbelief there, *Mat.* 8. 26. *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little Faith?* The leſs faith ſtill the more fear: Fear is generated by unbelief, and unbelief ſtrenghtened by fear, as in nature there is an obſervable κυκλογένεσις circular generation, vapours beget ſhowers, and ſhowers new vapours; ſo it is in things moral, and

therefore

therefore all the skill in the world can never cure us of the diſeaſe of fear, till God firſt cure us of our unbelief; Chriſt therefore took the right method, to rid the diſciples of their fear, by rebuking their unbelief. The remains of this ſin in God's own people is the cauſe and fountain of their fears, and more particularly to ſhew how fear is generated by unbelief, let a few particulars be heedfully adverted.

1. Unbelief weakens and ſtumbles the aſſenting act of Faith, and thereby cuts off from the Soul in a great meaſure its principal relief againſt dangers and troubles. It is the uſe and office of Faith to reallize to the Soul the inviſible things of the world to come, and thereby encourage it againſt the fears and dangers of the preſent World: Thus *Moſes forſook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the King, for he endured, as ſeeing him that is inviſible*, Heb. 11. 27 If this aſſenting act of Faith be weakened or ſtaggered in the ſoul, if once inviſibles ſeem uncertainties, and viſibles the only realities, no wonder we are ſo ſcared and frighted when theſe viſible and ſenſible comforts are expoſed and endangered, as they often are and will be in this mutable world. That man muſt needs be afraid to ſtand his ground, that is not throughly perſuaded the ground he ſtands on is firm and good; 'tis not to be wondered that men ſhould tremble, who ſeem to feel the ground ſhake and reel under them.

Multa fidem promiſſa levant.

2. Unbelief ſhuts up the refugees of the Soul in the divine promiſes, and by leaving it without thoſe refugees, muſt needs leave it in the hands of fears and terrors. That which fortifies and emboldens a Chriſtian in evil times, is his dependance upon God for a protection, *Pſal.* 143. 9. *I fly unto thee to hide me.* The cutting off of this retreat (which nothing but unbelief can do) deprives the Soul of all thoſe ſuccours and ſupports which the promiſes afford, and conſequently fills the heart with anxiety and fear.

3. Unbelief makes men negligent and careleſs in providing for troubles before they come, and ſo brings them by way of ſurprize upon them; and the more ſurprizing any evil is, the more frightful it is always found to be: we cannot think that *Noah* was ſo affrighted at the Flood when it began to ſwell above all the hills and mountains, as all the reſt of the world was; nor was there any reaſon that he ſhould, having foreſeen it by Faith, and made proviſion for it, *Heb.* 11. 7. *By faith* Noah *being warned of God, prepared an Ark.* *Auguſtine* relates a very pertinent and memorable ſtory of *Paulinus* Biſhop of *Nola*, who was a very rich man both in Goods and Grace; he had much of the World in his *hands*, but little of it in his *heart*; and it was well there was not, for the *Goths*, a barbarous people, breaking into that City, like ſo many Devils, fell upon the prey; thoſe that truſted to the Treaſures which they had, were deceived and ruined by them, for the rich were put to tortures to confeſs where they had hid their Moneys: This good Biſhop fell into their hands, and loſt all he had, but was ſcarce moved at the loſs, as appears by his Prayer, which my Author relates thus: *Lord, let me not be troubled for my gold and ſilver; thou knoweſt it is not my Treaſure*, that *I have laid up in Heaven, according to thy command. I was warned of this Judgment before it came, and provided for it; and where all my intereſt lies, Lord, thou knoweſt.*

Aug. de civit. Dei, l. 1. c. 10.

Thus Mr. *Bradford*, when the Keeper's Wife came running into his chamber ſuddenly, with words able to have put the moſt men in the world into a trembling poſture: Oh Mr. *Bradford!* I bring you heavy tidings; to morrow you muſt be burned, and your chain is now buying: he put off his hat, and ſaid, *Lord, I thank thee, I have looked for this a great while, it is not terrible to me; God make me worthy of ſuch a Mercy.* See the benefit of proſpect of, and preparation for ſufferings!

4. Unbelief leaves our deareſt intereſts and concerns in our own hands, it commits nothing to God, and conſequently muſt needs fill the heart with diſtracting fears when imminent dangers threaten us. Reader, if this be thy caſe, thou wilt be a *Magor meſſabib*, ſurrounded with terrors, whenſoever thou ſhalt be ſurrounded with dangers and troubles. Believers, in this as well as in many other things have the advantage of thee, that they have committed all that is precious and valuable to them into the hands of God, by faith; to him they have committed the keeping of their Souls, 1 *Pet.* 4. 19. and all their eternal concernments, 2 *Tim.* 1. 16. And theſe being put into ſafe hands, they are not diſtracted with fears about other matters of leſs value, but can truſt them where they have intruſted the greater, and enjoy the quietneſs and peace of a reſigned Soul to God, *Prov.* 16. 3. but as for thee, thy life, thy liberty, yea, which is infinitely more than all theſe things, thy Soul will lie upon thy hands in the day of trouble, and thou wilt not know what to do with them, nor which way to diſpoſe of them. Oh! theſe be the dreadful ſtraits and frights that unbelief leaves men in; 'tis a fountain of fears and diſtractions. And indeed it cannot but diſtract and confound carnal men, in whom it reigns, and is in its full ſtrength, when ſad experience ſhews us what fears and tremblings the very remains and reliques of this ſin begets in the beſt men, who are not fully freed from it. If the unpurged reliques of unbelief in them can thus darken and cloud their evidences, thus greaten and multiply their dangers; if it can draw ſuch ſad and frightful concluſions in their hearts, notwithſtanding all the contrary experiences of their lives, as we ſee in that ſad inſtance, 1 *Sam.* 27. 1. What panick fears, and unrelieved terrors muſt it put thoſe men under, where it is in its full ſtrength and dominion.

4. *Cauſe.* Moreover, we ſhall find many of our Fears raiſed and provoked in us by the *Promiſcuous adminiſtrations* of Providence in this World, when we read in Scripture, that *there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked, and all things come alike to all*, Eccleſ. 9. 2. that when the Sword is drawn, God ſuffers it to cut off the righteous and the wicked, *Ezek.* 21. 3. The Sword makes no difference, where God hath made ſo great a difference by grace, it neither diſtinguiſhes faces, nor breaſts, but is as ſoon ſheath'd in the bowels of the beſt as the worſt of men. When we read how the ſame fire of God's indignation devours the green tree and the dry tree, *Ezek.* 20. 47. how the basket of good Figs (the Emblem of the beſt men of thoſe times) were carried into *Babylon* as well as the bad, *Jer.* 24. 5. how the fleſh of God's Saints hath been given for meat to the Fowls of Heaven, and to the Beaſts of the Field; *Pſal.* 97. 12. and how the wicked have devoured the man that is more righteous than himſelf, as it is *Hab.* 1. 13. I ſay, when we obſerve ſuch things in Scripture, and find our obſervations confirmed by the Accounts and Hiſtories of former and latter Ages;

Ages; when we reflect upon the unspeakable miseries and butcheries of those plain-hearted and precious Servants of Christ the *Albingenses* and *Waldenses*, how they fell as a prey to their cruel Adversaries, notwithstanding the convincing simplicity and holiness of their lives, and all their fervent cries and appeals to God; how the very flower of the reformed Protestant Interest in *France* was cut off with more than barbarous inhumanity, so that the streets were washed, and the canals of *Paris* ran with their precious blood.

What horrid and unparallell'd torture the servants of God felt in that cruel Massacre in *Ireland*, a History too tragical for a tender hearted Reader to stay long upon; and how in our own land the most eminent Ministers and Christians were sent to Heaven in a fiery Chariot in those doleful *Marian* Days: I say, when we read and consider such things as these, it rouzes our fears, and puts us into frights, when we see our selves threatned with the same enemies and dangers; when the feet of them that carried out the dear servants of God in bloody winding-sheets to their graves stand at the door to carry us forth next, if Providence loose their chain, and give them a permission so to do; and our fears on this account are heightened by considering and revolving these four things in our thoughts, which we are always more inclined to do, than the things that should fortifie our Faith, and heighten our Christian Courage; as,

1. We are very apt to consider, that as the same race and kind of men that committed these outrages upon our brethren are still in being, and that their rage and malice is not abated in the least degree, but is as fierce and cruel as ever it was, *Gal.* 4. 29. *As then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.* So it was then, and just so it is still, the old enmity is entailed upon all wicked men from generation to generation; *Multi adhuc sunt qui clavum sanguine Abelis rubentem adhuc circumferunt.* Cain's Club is to this day carried up and down the World stained with the blood of *Abel*, as *Bucholtzer* speaks. 'Tis a rooted antipathy, and it runs in a blood, and will run as long as there are wicked men, from whom and to whom it shall be propagated, and a Devil in Hell, by whom it will not fail to be exasperated and irritated.

2. We know also that nothing hinders the execution of their wicked purposes against us, but the restraints of Providence; should God loose the chain, and give them leave to act forth the malice and rage that is in their hearts, no pity would be shewn by them, or could be rationally expected from them, *Psal.* 124. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. We live among Lions, and them that are set on fire of Hell, *Psal.* 57. 4. The only reason of our safety is this, that he who is the Keeper of the Lions is also the Shepherd of the Sheep.

3. We find that God hath many times let loose these Lions upon his people, and given them leave to tear his Lambs in pieces, and suck the blood of his Saints: how well soever he loves them, yet hath he often delivered them into the hands of his enemies, and suffered them to perpetuate and act the greatest cruelties upon them; the best men have suffered the worst things, and the histories of all ages have delivered down unto us the most tragical relations of their barbarous usage.

4. We are also conscious to our selves how far short we come in holiness, innocency, and spiritual excellency of those excellent persons who have suffered these things, and therefore have no ground to expect more favour from Providence than they found; we know also there is no promise in the Scriptures to which they had not as good a claim and title as our selves: with us are found as great, yea, greater sins than in them, and therefore have no reason to please our selves with the fond imaginations of extraordinary exemptions. If we think these evils shall not come in our days, 'tis like many of them thought so too; and yet they did, and we may find it quite otherwise; *Lam.* 4. 12. *Who would have thought that the enemy should have entred in at the gates of Jerusalem?* The revolving of these and such-like considerations in our thoughts, and mixing our own unbelief with them, creates a world of fears even in good men, 'till by resignation of all to God, and acting Faith upon the promises that assure us of the Sanctification of all our troubles, as that *Rom.* 8. 28. God's presence with us in our troubles, as that *Psal.* 91. 15. his moderation of our troubles to that measure and degree in which they are supportable, *Isa.* 27. 8. and the safe and comfortable outlet and final deliverance from them all at last, according to that in *Rev.* 7. 17. We do at last recover our hearts out of the hands of our fears again, and compose them to a quiet and sweet satisfaction in the wise and holy pleasure of our God.

5. *Cause.* Our immoderate love of life, and the comforts and conveniences thereof, may be assigned as a proper and real ground and cause of our sinful fears, when the dangers of the times threaten the one or other: did we love our lives less, we should fear and tremble less than we do. It is said of those renowned Saints, *Rev.* 12. 11. *They overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death.*

They overcame not only the fury of their enemies without them, but their sinful fears within them; and this victory was atchieved by their mortification, to the inordinate and immoderate love of life. Certainly, their own fears had overcome them, if they had not first overcome the love of life: it was not therefore without very great reason that our Lord enjoined it upon all his disciples and followers, to *hate their own lives*, *Luke* 14. 26. not absolutely, but in comparison and competition with him, (*i. e.*) to love it in so remiss a degree, as to slight and undervalue it as a poor low thing in such a comparison; he foresaw what sharp trials and sufferings were coming upon them, and he knew if the fond and immoderate love of life were not overcome and mortified in them, it would make them warp and bend under such temptations.

This was it that freed *Paul* from slavish fears, and made him so magnanimous and undaunted. Indeed he had less fear upon his spirit, tho' he was to suffer those hard and sharp things in his own person, than his Friends had who only sympathized with him, and were not farther concerned than by their own love and pity: he spake like a man who was rather a spectator than a sufferer, *Acts* 20. 24, 25. *none of these things move me*, saith he. Great Soul! not moved with Bonds and Afflictions! how did he attain so great courage and constancy of mind in such deep and dreadful sufferings! It was enough to have moved the stoutest man in the world, yea, and to have removed the resolutions of any that had not loved *Christ* better than his own life: but life was a trifle to him in comparison with *Jesus Christ*, for so he tells us in the next words, *I count not my life dear unto me*, *q. d.* 'Tis a low-priz'd commodity in my eyes, not worth the saving or regarding

regarding on such sinful terms. Oh! how many have parted with Christ, Peace, and eternal Life, for fear of losing that which *Paul* regarded not. And if we bring our thoughts closer to the matter, we shall soon find that this is a fountain of fears in times of danger, and that from this excessive love of life we are rack'd and tortur'd with ten thousand terrors. For,

1. Life is the greatest and nearest interest men naturally have in this world, and that which wraps up all other inferiour interests in it self, *Job* 2. 4. *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life.* It is a real truth, though it came from the mouth of the Father of lyes; afflictions never touch the quick till they touch the life; liberty, estates, and other accommodations in this world receive their value and estimation from hence, if life be cut off these accidents perish, and are of no account, *Gen.* 25. 32. *Behold, I am at the point to die, (said* Esau) *and what profit shall this birthright do to me?*

2. Life being naturally the deareſt interest of men in this World, the richest treasure, and most beloved thing on earth to a natural man; that which strikes at, and endangers life, must in his eyes be the greatest evil that can befall him; on this account death becomes terrible to men; yea, as *Job* calls it, the *King of Terrors*, *Job* 18. 14. The black prince or the prince of clouds and darkness, as some translate those words: Yea, so terrible is death upon this account, that the very fear of it hath sometimes precipitated men into the hands of it, as we sometimes observe in times of pestilence, the excessive fear of Plague hath induced it.

Nonnullos ob timorem morte subitanea periisse refert Galenus. Quod igitur homo, timore mortis quæ est terribilissima, ex sententia *Aristotelis* aliorumque pené omnium moriatur, mirandum non est. Fugi mali, ipsum interdum accersit, quod liquet exemplis eorum, quorum metus mortem à judice ipsis designatam prævenit. *Stern. de virt. p.* 167.

3. Though death be terrible in any shape, in the mildest form it can appear in; yet a violent and bloody death by the hands of cruel and mercileſs Men, is the most terrible form that death can appear in; 'tis now the King of terrors indeed, in the most ghastly representation and frighful form, in its scarlet Robes, and terrifying formalities, in a violent death all the barbarous cruelty that the wit of our enemies can invent, or their malice inflict, is mingled together; in a violent death are many deaths contrived into one, and it oftentimes approaches men by such slow and deliberated paces, that they feel every tread of its foot as it advanceth towards them. *Moriatur, ut sentiat se mori*, Let him so die, (said the Tyrant) that he may feel himself to die, yea, and how he dies by inch-meal or slow and lingring degrees; this is exceeding frightful, especially to those that are of a more soft and tender nature and temper, who must needs be struck thro' with the terrors of death, except the Lord arm them against it with the assurance of a better life, and sweeten these bitter apprehensions by the foretasts of it. This is enough to put even sanctified nature into a consternation, and make a very gracious heart to sink, unless it be so upheld by Divine strength and comfort: And hence come many, very many of our fears, and terrors, especially when the same enemies that have been accustomed to this bloody work, shall be found confederating and designing again to break in upon us, and act over again asmuch cruelty as ever they have done upon our brethren in times past.

6. *Cause.* To conclude, many of our sinful fears and consternations flow from the influences of Satan upon our phantasies. They say winds, and storms are oft times raised by Satan both by sea and land, and I never doubted but the Prince of the power of the air by God's Permission can, and often doth put the world into great frights and disturbances by such tempests, *Job* 1. 19. He can raise the loftiest winds, pour down roaring showers, rattle in the air with fearful claps of thunder, and scare the lower world with terrible flashes of lightning. And I doubt not but he hath by the same permission a great deal of influence and power upon the fancies and passions of men. And can raise more terrible storms and tempests within us, than ever we heard or felt without us; he can by leave from God approach our *Phantasies*, disturb and trouble them exceedingly by forming frightful Idea's there; for Satan not only works upon men mediately by the ministry of their external senses, but by reason of his Spiritual angelical nature, he can have immediate access to the internal sense also, as appears by diabolical dreams, and by practising upon that power of the Soul, he influences the passions of it, and puts it under very dreadful apprehensions and consternations: Now if Satan can provoke and exasperate the fury and rage of wicked men, as it is evident he can do, *Rev.* 2. 10. and so disturb our fancies and influence our passions, as there is no reason to doubt but by leave from God he can do, as well as he can go to the magazines and store-houses of thunder, lightnings, and storm. O what inward storms of fear can he shake our hearts withal, and if God give him but a permission how ready will he be to do it; seeing it is so conducible to his design: for by putting men into such frights he at once weakens their hands in duty as is plain from his attempt this way upon Nehemiah, *Chap.* 6. 13. and if he prevail there, he drives them into the snares, and trains of his temptations, as the fisherman and fowler do the birds and fishes into their nets, when once they have flusht and frighted them out of their coverts. And thus you have some account of the principal and true causes of our Sinful Fears.

CHAP. V.

Laying open the sinful and lamentable effects of slavish and inordinate Fear both in carnal and regenerate Persons.

Sect. 1. HAving taken a view in the former Chapters of the Kinds and Causes of Fear, and seen what lies at the root of Slavish Fear and both breeds and feeds it, what fruit can we expect from such a cursed Plant, but Gall and Wormwood, fruit as bitter as death it self? Let us then in the next place examine and well consider these following and deplorable effects of fear to excite us to apply our selves the more concernedly to those directions that follow in the close of this Treatise for the cure of it. And

1 *Effect.* The first Effect of this sinful and exorbitant passion, is *distraction* of mind and thoughts in duty; both *Cicero* and *Quintilian* will have the word *tumultus*, a tumult to come from *timor multus*, much fear, 'tis a compound of those two words;

much

much fear raises great Uproars and Tumults in the Soul, and puts all into Hurries and Distractions, so that we cannot attend upon any Service of God, with profit or comfort. It was therefore a very necessary Mercy that was requested of God, *Luke* 1. 74. *That we being delivered out of the Hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear.* For it is impossible to serve God without Distractions, till we can serve him without the slavish fear of enemies. The reverential fear of God is the greatest spur to duty, and choicest Help in it, but the distracting Fears of Men will either wholly divert us from our Duty, or destroy the comfort and benefit of our Duties; 'tis a deadly Snare of the Devil, to hinder all comfortable Intercourse with God.

It is very remarkable, that when the Apostle was giving his Advice to the *Corinthians*, about marriage in those times of Persecution and Difficulty, he commends to them a single Life as most eligible: where it may be without sinful Inconveniencies, and that principally for this reason, *That they might attend upon the Lord without distractions*, 1 *Cor.* 7. 35. He foresaw what Streights, Cares, and Fears must unavoidably distract them in such times that were most clogged and incumbred with families, and relations; when a Man should be thinking, O what shall I do now to get my Doubts and Fears resolved about my Interest in Christ? How may I so behave my self in my sufferings as to credit Religion, and not become a Scandal and Stumbling-stone to others? His Thoughts are taken up with other Cares and Fears! O what will become of my Wife and poor little ones! what shall I do with them, and for them, to secure them from Danger?

I doubt not but it is a great design of the Devil to keep us in continual alarms and frights, and to puzzle our Heads and Hearts with a thousand difficulties which possibly may never befall us, or if they do, shall never prove so fatal to us as we fansie them, and all this is to unfit us for our present duties, and destroy our comfort therein; for if by frights and terrors of mind he can but once distract our thoughts, he gains three great points, upon us, to our unspeakable loss.

1. Hereby he will cut off the freedom and sweetness of our communion with God in duties, and what an empty shell will the best duties be, when this kernel is wormed out by such a subtle artifice? Prayer as *Damascen* aptly expresses it, is Ἀνάβασις τοῦ νοῦ, the ascension of the mind or soul to God; but Distraction clips its wings; he can never offer up his soul and thoughts to God, that hath not the possession of them himself: and he that is under distracting fears possesseth not himself. The life of all communion with God in Prayer, consists in the harmony that is betwixt our hearts and words, and both with the will of God, this harmony is spoiled by distractions, aud so Satan gains that point.

2. But this is not all he gains, and we lose by distracting fears; for as they cut off the freedom and sweetness of our Intercourse with God in prayer, so they cut off the Soul from the succours and reliefs it might otherwise draw from the promises. We find when the *Israelites* were in great bondage, wherein their minds were distracted with fears and sorrows, they regarded not the supporting promises of Deliverance sent them by *Moses*, *Exod.* 6. 3. *David* had an express and particular Promise of the Kingdom from the mouth of God, which must needs include his Deliverance out of the Hand of *Saul*, and all his Stratagems to destroy him; but yet when imminent Hazards were before his Eyes, he was afraid, and that Fear betrayed the Succours from the Promise, so that it drew a quite contrary Conclusion, 1 *Sam.* 27. 1. *I shall one day perish by the hand of* Saul: *All men are liars*, not excepting *Samuel* himself who had assured him of the Kingdom. This is always the Property and Nature of Fear (as I shewed before) to make Men distrust the best security when they are in imminent Peril: But Oh! what a Mischief is this to make us suspicious of the Promises which are our chief Relief and Support in Times of Trouble: Our Fears will unfit us for Prayer, they will also shake the credit of the Promises with us, and so great is the Damage we receive both ways, that it were better for us to lose our two Eyes, than two such Advantages in Trouble. But,

3. This is not all, by our present Fears we lose the Benefit and Comfort of all our past Experiences, and the singular Relief we might have from all that Faithfulness and Goodness of God which our Eyes have seen in former Streights and Dangers, the present fear clouds them all, *Isai.* 51. 12, 13. Men and Dangers are so much minded, that God is forgotten, even the God that hath hitherto preserved us, though our former Fears told us, the Enemy was daily ready to devour us. All these sweet Reliefs are cut off from us by our distracting Fears, and that at a time when we have most need of them.

Effect 2. Dissimulation and Hypocrisie is the Fruit of slavish Fear; Distraction you see is bad enough, but Dissimulation is worse than Distraction, and yet as bad as it is, Fear hath driven good Men into this Snare; it will make even an upright Soul warp and bend from the Rules of that Integrity and Candor which should be inseparable at all times from a Christian: Of whom (saith God to his *Israel*) hast thou been afraid, that thou hast lyed, and hast not remembred me? God finds Falshood, and charges it upon Fear, *q. d.* I know it was against the Resolutions of my Peoples Hearts thus to dissemble, this certainly is the Effect of a Fright; Who is he that hath scared you into this Evil? It was *Abraham*'s Fear that made him dissemble to the Reproach of his Religion, *Gen.* 20. 2, 11. And indeed it was but an odd sight to see an Heathen so schooling and reproving great *Abraham* about it as he there doth.

It was nothing but Fear that drew his Son *Isaac* into the like Snare, *Gen.* 26. 7. And it was Fear that overcame *Peter* against his Promise as well as Principle to say concerning his dear Saviour, *I know not the man*, Matth. 26. 69. Had *Abraham* at that time remember'd and acted his Faith freely upon what the Lord said to him, *Gen.* 17. 1. *Fear not*, Abraham, *I am thy shield*, he had escaped both the sin and shame into which he fell, but even that great Believer was foil'd by his own Fears; and certainly this is a great Evil, a complicated Mischief. For,

1. By these Falls and Scandals, Religion is made vile and contemptible in the Eyes of the World, it reflects with much Reproach upon God and his Promises, as if his Word were not sufficient Security for us to rely upon in Times of Trouble, as if it were safer trusting to our Wit, yea, to sin, than to the Promises.

2. It greatly weakens the Hands of others, and proves a sore Discouragement to 'em in their Trials,

to see their Brethren faint for Fear, and ashamed to own their Principles; sometimes it hath this mischievous Effect, but it is always improved by Satan and wicked Men to this Purpose. And,

3. It will be a terrible Blow and Wound to our own Consciences, for such flaws in our Integrity we may be kept waking and sighing many a Night; O see the Mischiefs of a timorous and faint Spirit!

Effect 3. Slavish Fears of the Creature exceedingly strengthen our temptations in times of Danger, and make them very efficacious and prevalent upon us, *Prov.* 29. 25. *The fear of man brings a snare.* Satan spreads the Net, but we are not within its Reach, till our own Fears drive us into it; the recoiling of our Spirits from some imminent Danger, may cause the Pulse of a true Christian to intermit and faulter, how regular soever it beats at other times; this will cause great Trepidation and Timidity in Men that are sincere and upright, and that is it that brings the Snare over their Souls. *Aaron* was a good Man, and Idolatry he knew to be a great sin, yet Fear prevailed with that good Man to give too much way to that great Evil, *Exod.* 32. 22. *Thou knowest the people that they are set upon mischief,* saith he in his own Excuse in the Matter of the golden Calf, *q d.* Lord, I durst do no otherwise at that time, the People were violently and passionately set upon it; had I resisted them, it might have cost me dear.

It was fear that prevailed with *Origen* to yield so far as he did in offering Incense to the *Idol*, the consideration of which fact brake his heart to pieces. It was nothing but fear that made *David* play the fool, and act so dishonourably as he did, 1 *Sam.* 21. 12. Fear is a Snare in which Satan hath caught as many Souls as in any other of his stratagems and toils whatsoever. It were easie to give instances, so many and so sad, as would enlarge this head even to tediousness, but I chuse rather to come to the Particulars wherein the danger of this snare of the Devil consists. And,

1. Herein lies the ensnaring danger of sinful fear, that it drives men out of their proper station, out of their place and duty, beside which there is none to be found but what is Satan's ground. The subtle enemy of our Salvation is aware that we are out of gun-shot, beyond his reach, whilst we abide with God in the way of our duty, that the Lord is with us, whilst we are with him, and there is no attempting our Ruin under the wings of his protection. If ever therefore he meaneth to do any thing upon us, he must get us off that ground, and from under those wings; and there is nothing like fear to do this; then we are as the Birds that are wandring from their Nests, *Prov.* 27. 8. or like *Shimei* out of his limits.

2. Fear is usually the first passion in the Soul that beats a parley with the enemy, and treats with the tempter about terms of rendition: and as the *French* Proverb is, *The Castle that parleys is half won.* 'Tis Fear that consults with flesh and blood, whilst Faith is engaged with God for the supply of strength to endure the siege. We have a sad and doleful instance of this in *Spira*; he tells us how his own fears betrayed him, by parlying with the tempter; for thus Mr. *Bacon* in the History of his Life records the occasion of his fall: 'Whilst *Spira* was tossing upon the restless waves 'of doubts, without Guide to trust to, or Haven 'to flee to for succour, on the sudden, God's spi'rit assisting, he felt a calm, and began to dis'course with himself in this manner: *Why wanderest 'thou thus in Uncertainties? Unhappy man! cast away 'fear, put on thy shield of faith; where is thy wonted cou'rage, thy goodness, thy constancy? Remember that 'Christ's glory lies at the stake, suffer then without 'fear, and he will defend thee, he will tell thee what 'thou shalt answer; he can beat down all danger, bring 'thee out of Prison, raise thee from the dead; consider 'Peter in the dungeon, the Martyrs in the fire,* &c.

'Now was *Spira* in reasonable quiet, being re'solved to yield to those weighty reasons; yet 'holding it Wisdom to examine all things, he con'sults also with flesh and blood; thus the battle 'renews, and the flesh begins in this manner: *Be 'well advis'd, fond man, consider reasons on both sides, 'and then judge: how canst thou thus overween thine 'own sufficiency, as thou neither regardest the exam'ples of thy progenitors, nor the judgment of the whole 'Church? Dost thou not consider what misery this days 'rashness will bring thee unto? Thou shalt lose all thy 'substance gotten with so much care and travail, thou 'shalt undergo the most exquisite torments that malice 'it self can devise, thou shalt be counted an Heretick of 'all, and to close up all, thou shalt die shamefully. 'What thinkest thou of the loathsom stinking dungeon, 'the bloody ax, the burning faggot? Are they delight'ful,* &c. Thus thro' fear he first parly'd with the 'tempter, consulted with flesh and blood, and 'at last fainted and yielded.

3. 'Tis fear that makes men impatient of waiting God's time and method of deliverance, and so precipitates the Soul and drives it into the snare of the next temptation, *Isa.* 51. 14. *The captive exile hasteth to be delivered out of the pit.* Any way or means of escape that comes next to hand, saith Fear, is better than to lie here in the pit; and when the Soul is thus prepared by its own fears, it becomes an easie Prey to the next temptation; by all which you see the mischief that comes by fear in times of danger.

Effect 4. Fear naturally produceth pusillanimity and cowardliness in men, a poor low spirit, that presently faints and yields upon every slight assault; it extinguisheth all Christian Courage and Magnanimity where-ever it prevails, and therefore you find it joined frequently in the Scriptures with discouragement, *Deut.* 1. 21. *Fear not, neither be discouraged with fainting and trembling,* Deut. 20. 3. *Let not your hearts faint, fear not, and do not tremble*; with dismayedness, *Deut.* 31. 6. and faint-heartedness, *Isa.* 7. 4. these are the effects and consequents of sinful fear: And how dangerous a thing it is to have our Courage extinguish'd, and faintness of heart prevail upon us in a time when we have the greatest need and use of courage, and our perseverance, peace, and eternal happiness rely and depend so much upon it, let all serious Christians judge. 'Tis sad to us, and dishonourable to Religion, to have the hearts of Women, as it's said of *Egypt*, *Isa.* 19. 16. when we should play the men, as the Apostle exhorts us, 1 *Cor.* 16. 13. We find in all ages those that have manifested most Courage for Christ in time of trial, have been those whose Faith hath surmounted Fear, and whose Hearts were above all Discouragements from this World.

Such a Man was *Basil*, as appears by his Answer to *Valens* the Emperor, who tempting him with Offers of Preferment, received this Answer, *Offer these Things*, said he, *to children*; and when he threatned him with grievous Sufferings, he replied, *Threaten these Things to your purple Gallants,*

lants, that give themselves to pleasure, and are afraid to die.

And this was the Spirit of Courage and Magnanimity with which the Generality of the primitive Christians were animated, they feared not the Faces of Tyrants, they shrunk not from the most cruel Torments; and it redounded not a little to the Credit of Christianity, when one of *Julian*'s Nobles, present at the tormenting of *Marcus*, Bishop of *Arethusa*, told the Apostate to his Face, *We are ashamed, Oh Emperor, the Christians laugh at your Cruelty and grow more resolute by it.* So *Lactantius* also testifies of them, *Our Women and Children*, saith he, *not to speak of Men, overcome their Torments, and the Fire cannot fetch so much as a sigh from them.* If carnal Fear once get the Ascendant over us, all our Courage and Resolution will flag, and melt away, we may suffer out of unavoidable Necessity, but shall never honour Christ and Religion by our Sufferings.

Effect 5. Carnal Fear is the very Root of Apostacy, it hath made thousands of Professors to faint and fall away in the Hour of Temptation; it is not so much from the Fury of our Enemies without, as from our Fears within, that Temptations become victorious over us; from the beginning of Fears Christ dates the beginning of Apostacy, *Mat.* 24. 9, 10. *Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you, and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake, and then shall many be offended.* When Troubles and Dangers come to an height, then Fears begin to work at an height too, and then is the critical Hour; Fears are high, and Faith is low; Temptation strong, and Resistance weak. Satan knocks at the Door, and Fear opens it, and yields up the Soul to him, except special Aid and Assistance come in seasonably from Heaven; so long as we can profess Religion without any great hazard of Life, Liberty, or Estates, we shew much Zeal and Forwardness in the Ways of Godliness: but when it comes to the Sharps, to *resisting unto blood*, few will be found to own and assert it openly in the Face of such Dangers. The first Retreat is usually made from a free and open to a close and concealed Practice of Religion; not opening our Windows, as *Daniel* did, to shew we care not who knows we dare worship our God, and are not ashamed of our Duties, but hiding our Principles and Practices with all the Art and Care imaginable, reckoning it well if we can escape Danger by letting fall our Profession which might expose us to it: but if the Inquest go on, and we cannot be secured any longer under this Refuge, we must comply with false Worship, and give some open Signal that we do so, or else be marked out for Ruin; then saith Fear, Give a little more ground, and retreat to the next Security, which is to comply seemingly with that which we do not allow, hoping God will be merciful to us, and accept us, if we keep our Hearts for him, tho' we are forced thus to dissemble and hide our Principles. *Eamus ad communem errorem*, said *Calderinus*, when going to the Mass, Let us go to the common Error; and, as *Seneca* adviseth about worshipping the *Roman* Gods, *In animi religione non habebat, sed in actibus fingat*; let us make a semblance and shew of worshipping them, tho' our Hearts give no religious Respect to them. But if still the Temptation hunt us farther, and we come to be more narrowly sifted, and put to a severer Test, by subscribing contrary Articles, or renouncing our former avowed Principles, and that upon penalty of Death, and Loss of all that is dear to us in this World; now nothing in all the World hazards our eternal Salvation as our own Fears will do; this is like to be the Rock on which we shall split all, and make an horrible Shipwreck both of Truth and Peace. This was the Case of *Cranmer*, whose Fears caused him to subscribe against the Dictates of his own Conscience, and cowardly to betray the known Truth; and indeed there is no Temptation in the World that hath overthrown so many, as that which hath been back'd and edg'd with Fear; the Love of Preferments and Honours hath slain its thousands, but fear of Sufferings its ten thousands.

Effect. 6. Sinful Fear puts Men under great Bondage of Spirit, and makes Death a thousand times more terrible and intolerable than it would otherwise be to us. You read of some, *Heb.* 2. 15. *who thro' the fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage*, (*i. e.*) it kept them in a miserable anxiety and perplexity of mind, like slaves that tremble at the Whip which is held over them: thus many thousands live under the lash; so terrible is the Name of Death, especially a violent Death, that they are not able with Patience to hear it mentioned; which gave the ground of that Saying, *Præstat semel, quam semper mori*; It's better to die once, than to be dying always. And surely there is not a more miserable Life any poor Creature can live, than such a trembling Life as this is. For,

1. Such a Bondage as this destroys all the Comfort and Pleasure of Life; no Pleasure can grow or thrive under the Shadow of this cursed Plant. *Nil ei beatum cui semper aliquis terror impendeat*, saith *Cicero*; all the Comforts we possess in this World are imbitter'd by it. 'Tis storied of *Democles*, a flatterer of *Dionysius* the Tyrant, that he told him he was the happiest Man in the World, having Wealth, Power, Majesty, and abundance of all Things: *Dionysius* sets the Flatter in all his own Pomp at a Table furnished with all Dainties, and attended upon as a King, but with an heavy sharp Sword hanging by a single Horse-hair right over his Head; this made him quake and tremble, so that he could neither eat nor drink, but desired to be freed from that Estate. The Design was to convince him how miserable a Life they live who live under the continual Terrors of impending Death and Ruin. It was a sore Judgment which God threatned against them in *Jer.* 5. 6. *A Lion out of the forrest shall slay them, and a Wolf of the Evening shall spoil them; a Leopard shall watch over their Cities, every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces.* What a miserable Life must those People live, who could not stir out of the City, but they presently were seized by Lions, Wolves and Leopards, that watch'd over them, and lurk'd in all the Avenues to make them a Prey! and yet this is more tolerable than for a Man's own fear to watch continually over him. *Cicer. Tusc. Q.* 15.

2. And yet I could wish this were the worst of it, and that our fears destroyed no better comforts than the natural Comforts of this life: but, alas! they also destroy our spiritual comforts, which we might have from God's Promises and our own and others Experiences, which are incomparably the sweetest Pleasures Men have in this World: But as no Creature-comfort is pleasant, so no Promise relishes like it self to him that lives in this Bondage of Fear; when the Terrors of Death are great, the Consolations of the Almighty are small.

In the written Word are found all sorts of refreshing, strengthning, and heart-reviving Promises, prepared by the Wisdom and Care of God for our

Relief in the Days of Darkneſs and Trouble; promiſes of Support under the heavieſt Burdens and Preſſures, *Iſa.* 41. 10. *Fear not, for I am with thee; be not diſmayed, for I am thy God; I will ſtrengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteouſneſs.* A promiſe able to make the moſt timorous and trembling Soul to ſhout with the joy of men in harveſt, or as they that divide the ſpoil.

There are found the encouraging promiſes of defence and protection, *Iſa.* 27. 2, 3. and *Iſa.* 33. 2. promiſes that lead us into the Almighty power of God, and put us under the wings of his care in time of danger.

Promiſes of moderation and mitigation in the day of ſharp affliction that we may be able to bear it, *Iſa.* 27. 8. 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. Promiſes of deliverance out of troubles, if the malice of man bring us into trouble, the mercy of God will aſſuredly bring us out, *Pſal.* 91. 14, 15. and *Pſal.* 125. 3. And, which is moſt comfortable of all the reſt, Promiſes to ſanctifie and bleſs our troubles to our good, ſo that they ſhall not only ceaſe to be hurtful, but by vertue of the promiſe become exceeding beneficial to us, *Iſa.* 27. 9. *Rom.* 8. 28.

All theſe promiſes are provided by our tender Father for us againſt a day of ſtraits and fears; and becauſe he knew our weakneſs, and how apt our fears would be to make us ſuſpect our ſecurity by them, he hath for the performance of them engaged his Wiſdom, Power, Care, Faithfulneſs, and Unchangeableneſs, 2 *Pet.* 2. 9. *Iſa.* 27. 2, 3. 2 *Chron.* 16. 9. 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. *Iſaiah* 43. 1, 2. In the midſt of ſuch promiſes ſo ſealed, how chearful and magnanimous ſhould we be in the worſt times! And ſay as *David*, Pſal. 49. 5. *Why ſhould I fear in the day of evil?* Let thoſe that have no God to flee to, no promiſe to rely upon, let them fear in the day of evil, I have no cauſe to do ſo. But even from theſe moſt comfortable refuges in the promiſes our own fears beat us; we are ſo ſcared that we mind them not, ſo as to draw Encouragement, Reſolution, and Courage from them. Thus the Shields of the mighty are vilely caſt away.

So for all the choice Records of the Saints experiences in all former troubles and diſtreſſes, God hath by a ſingular Providence (aiming at our relief in future diſtreſſes) preſerv'd them for us; if danger threaten us, we may turn to the recorded experiences his people have left us of the ſtrange and mighty influence of his Providence upon the hearts of their enemies, to ſhew them favour, *Gen.* 31. 29. *Pſal.* 106 46. *Jer.* 15. 11.

There are alſo found the ancient Rolls and Records of the admirable methods of his peoples deliverance, contriv'd by his infinite and unſearchable Wiſdom for them, when all their own thoughts have been at a loſs, and their underſtandings poſed and ſtaggered, *Exod.* 15. 6. 2 *Chron.* 20. 12, 15. 2 *Kings* 19. 3, 7.

There are the recorded experiences of God's unſpotted faithfulneſs, which never failed any Soul that durſt truſt himſelf in its arms, *Mica.* 6. 4, 5. *Joſh.* 7. 9.

There are alſo to be found the Records of his tender and moſt fatherly care for his children, who have been to him as a peculiar treaſure in times of danger, *Pſal.* 40. 17. *Deut.* 32. 10, 11, 12. *Iſa.* 49. 16. *Job* 36. 7. 2 *Chron.* 16. 9.

All theſe and many more ſupports and cordials are made ready to our hand, and provided for a day of trouble: but alas! to what purpoſe, if our own fears ſo tranſport us, that we can neither apply them, nor ſo much as calmly ponder and conſider them.

3. To conclude, by theſe Fears we are depriv'd of thoſe manifold Advantages we might gain by the calm and compoſed meditations of our own death, and the change it will make upon us; could we ſit down in peace, and meditate in a familiar way upon death: could we look with a compoſed and well ſettled mind into our own graves, and not be ſcared and frighted with the thoughts of death, and ſtartle whenever we take it (though but in our *thoughts*) by the cold hand: to what ſeriouſneſs would thoſe meditations frame us: and what abundance of evils would they prevent in our converſations? The ſprinkling of duſt upon new writing prevents many a blot and blur in our Books or Letters: and could we thus ſprinkle the duſt of the grave upon our minds, it would prevent many a ſin and miſcarriage in our words and actions. But there is no profit or advantage redounding to us either from promiſes, experiences, or death it ſelf, when the Soul is diſcompoſed and put into confuſion by its own fears. And thus you ſee ſome of thoſe many miſchievous effects of your own fears.

CHAP. VI.

Preſcribing the Rules to cure our ſinful Fears, and prevent theſe ſad and woful effects of them.

Sect. I. WE are now come to the moſt difficult part of the work, *viz. the Cure* of the ſinful and ſlaviſh fear of creatures in times of danger, which if it might thro' the bleſſing of God be effected, we might live at hearts eaſe in the midſt of all our enemies and troubles, and, like the Sun in the Heavens, keep on our ſteddy courſe in the darkeſt and gloomieſt day. But before I come to the particular Rules, it will be neceſſary, for the prevention of miſtakes to lay down three uſeful Cautions about this matter.

1 *Caution.* Underſtand that none but thoſe that are in Chriſt are capable to improve the following *Rules* to their advantage. The ſecurity of our Souls is the great Argument uſed by Chriſt to extinguiſh our fears of *them that kill the body*, *Mat.* 10. 28. But if the Soul muſt unavoidably periſh when the Body doth, if it muſt drop into Hell before the Body be laid in the Grave, if he that *kills the Body* doth by the ſame ſtroak *cut off the Soul* from all the *means* and *poſſibilities* of *Mercy* and *Happineſs* for ever, what can be offered in ſuch a caſe, to relieve a man againſt fear and trembling?

2 *Caution.* Expect not a *perfect cure of your fears* in this life; whilſt there are *enemies* and *dangers*, there will be *ſome fears* working in the beſt hearts: if our *Faith* could be perfected, our *Fears* would be perfectly cured; but whilſt there is ſo much *weakneſs* in our *Faith*, there will be too much *ſtrength* in our *Fears*. And for thoſe who are *naturally timorous*, who have more of this paſſion in their conſtitution than other men have, and thoſe in whom *Melancholy* is a rooted and chronical diſeaſe, it will be hard for them totally to rid themſelves of fears and dejections, tho' in the uſe of ſuch *helps* and *means* as follow they may be greatly relieved againſt the tyranny of them, and enabled to poſſeſs their Souls in much more tranquility and comfort.

3 *Caution.* Whoſoever expects the benefit of the following *Preſcriptions* and *Rules*, muſt not think the *reading* or *bare remembring* them will do the work, but

but he must work them into his heart by believing and *fixed meditation*, and live in the daily practice of them. It is not our opening of our case to a *Physician*, nor his *Prescriptions* and *written Directions*, that will cure a man, but he must resolve to take the *bitter* and *nauseous Potion*, how much soever he loath it; to abstain from hurtful diet, how well soever he loves it, if ever he expect to be a sound and healthful man. So it is in this case also. These things premised, the

1 *Rule.* The first Rule to relieve us against our Slavish Fears, *Is seriously to consider, and more throughly to study the Covenant of Grace, within the blessed Clasp and Bond whereof all Believers are.* I think the clear understanding of the Nature, Extent, and Stability of the Covenant, and of our interest therein, would go a great way in the cure of our sinful and slavish Fears.

A Covenant is more than a naked promise; in the Covenant, God hath graciously consulted our weakness, fears, and doubts, and therefore proceeds with us in the highest way of solemnity, confirming his Promises by Oaths, *Heb.* 6 13, 17. and by Seals, *Rom.* 4. 11. Putting himself under the most solemn ties and engagements that can be, to his people, that from so firm a ratification of the Covenant with us, we might have strong consolation, *Heb.* 6. 18. He hath so ordered it, that it might afford strong supports, and the most reviving cordials to our faint and timorous Spirits, in all the plunges of trouble both from within, and from without. In the Covenant God makes over himself to his people, to be unto them a God, *Jer.* 31. 33. *Heb.* 8. 10. Wherein the Lord bestows himself in all his glorious Essential Properties upon us, to the end that whatsoever his Almighty Power, Infinite Wisdom, and Incomprehensible Mercy can afford for our Protection, Support, Deliverance, Direction, Pardon, or Refreshment; we might be assured shall be faithfully performed to us in all the Straits, Fears, and Exigencies of our Lives. This God expects we should improve by Faith, as the most sovereign antidote against all our Fears in this World. *Isaiah* 43. 1, 2. *Thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel; fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine; when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, &c.* Isaiah 41. 10. *Fear not, for I am with thee, be not dismaied for I am thy God.*

And if thou, Reader, be within the bond of this Covenant, thou mayest surely find enough there to quiet thy heart, whatever the matter or ground of thy Fears be: If God be thy Covenant God, he will be with thee in all thy streights, wants, and troubles, he will never leave, nor forsake thee. From the Covenant it was that *David* encouraged himself against all his troubles. 2 *Sam.* 23. 5. *Although my house be not so with God, yet hath he made with me an everlasting Covenant, well ordered in all things and sure; and this is all my Salvation, and all my desire, though he make it not to grow.* He could fetch all reliefs, all comforts, all Salvations out of it, and why cannot we? He desired no more for the support of his heart; *this is all my desire*; and sure if we understood and believed it as he did, we could desire no more to quiet and comfort our hearts than what this Covenant affords us. For,

1. Are we afraid what our enemies will do? We know we are in the midst of Potent, Politick, and enraged enemies; we have heard what they have done, and see what they are preparing to do again? we tremble to think what bloody Tragedies are like to be acted over again in the World by their cruel hands: But O what heroick and noble acts of Faith should the Covenant of thy God enable thee to exert amidst all these Fears? if God be thy God, then thou hast an Almighty God on thy side, and that is enough to extinguish all these Fears, *Psal.* 118. *The Lord is on my side, I will not fear what man can do unto me.* Your fears come in the name of man, but your help in the name of the Lord: Let them plot, threaten, yea, and smite too; God is a shield to all that fear him, and if God be for us, who can be against us?

2. Are we afraid what God will do? fear it not, your God will do nothing against your good; think not that he may forget you, it cannot be; sooner, may a tender mother forget her sucking-child, *Isaiah* 49. 15. no, no, *He withdraweth not his eye from the Righteous, Job* 36. 7. His eyes are continually upon all the dangers and wants of our Souls and Bodies there is not a danger or a enemy stirring against you, but his eye is upon it, 2 *Chron.* 16. 9.

Are you afraid he will forsake and cast you off? 'Tis true, your sins have deserved he should do so, but he hath secured you fully against that fear in his Covenant, *Jer.* 32. 40. *I will not turn away from them to do them good.* All your fears of God's forgetting or forsaking you, spring out of your ignorance of the Covenant.

3. Are you afraid what you shall do? 'Tis usual for the people of God to propose difficult cases to themselves, and put startling questions to their own hearts; and there may be an excellent use of them, to rouze them out of security, put them upon the search and tryal of their conditions and estates, and make preparation for the worst; but Satan usually improves it to a quite contrary end, to deject, affright, and discourage them. O if fiery trials should come, if my liberty and life come once to be toucht in earnest, I fear I shall never have strength to go on a step farther in the way of Religion: I am afraid I shall faint in the first encounter, I shall deny the words of the holy one, make shipwrack of Faith and a good Conscience in the first gust of temptation. I can hear, and pray, and profess; but I doubt I cannot burn, or bleed, or lie in a dungeon for Christ. If I can scarce run with footmen in the land of peace, how do I think to contend with Horses in these swellings of *Jordan?*

But yet all these are but groundless fears, either forged in thy own misgiving heart, or secretly shuffled by Satan into it; for God hath abundantly secured thee against fear in this very particular, by that most sweet supporting and blessed promise, annexed to the former, in the same Text, *Jer.* 32. 40. *I will put my fear into their hearts, and that they shall not depart from me.* Here is another kind of Fear, than that which so startles thee, promised to be put into thy heart, not a fear to shake and undermine thy assurance as this doth, but to guard and maintain it. And this is the fear that shall be enabled to vanquish and expel all thy other fears.

4. Or are you afraid what the Church shall do? And what will become of the *Ark* of God? Do you see a storm gathering, winds begin to roar, the waves to swell; and are you afraid what will become of that Vessel the Church, in which you have so great an interest?

It is an Argument of the publickness and excellency of thy Spirit, to be thus touched with the feeling

feeling sense of the Churches sufferings, and dangers. Most Men seek their own things, and not the things that are of Christ, *Phil.* 2 21. But yet it is your sin so to fear as to sink and faint under a spirit of despondency, and discouragement, which yet many good men are but too apt to do. I remember an excellent passage in a Letter of *Luther*'s to *Melancthon* upon this very account. *In private troubles, saith he, I am weaker, and thou art stronger; thou despisest thy own life, but feares the publick Cause: but for the publick I am at rest, being assured that the Cause is just and true, yea, that it is Christ's and God's Cause. I am well-nigh a secure spectator of things, and esteem not any thing these fierce and threatning Papists. I beseech thee by Christ neglect not so Divine Promises and Consolations, where the Scripture saith, Cast thy Care upon the Lord, wait upon the Lord, be strong, and he shall comfort thy heart.* And in another Epistle: *I much dislike, those anxious cares, which as thou writest do almost consume thee. 'Tis not the greatness of the danger, but the greatness of thy unbelief.* John Huss *and others were under greater danger than we; and if it be great, he is great that orders it. Why do you afflict your self? if the cause be bad, let us renounce it; if it be good why do we make him a liar who bids us be still? as if you were able to do any good by such unprofitable cares. I beseech thee, thou that in other things art valiant, fight against thy self, thine own greatest Enemy, that puts Weapons into Satan's hand.*

Ep. ad Melanct. Anno 1549.

Anno 1530.

You see how good men may be even *overwhelmed* with *publick fears*; but certainly if we did well consider the *bond of the Covenant* that is betwixt *God* and *his people*, we should be more quiet and composed. For by reason thereof it is, 1. That *God is in the midst of them*, *Psal.* 46. 1, 2, 3, 4. When any great danger threatned the *reformed Church* in its tender beginnings in *Luther*'s time, he would say, *Come, let us sing the* 46 *Psalm*; and indeed it is a lovely Song for such times; it bears the title of *A Song upon Alamoth*, or a Song for the hidden ones, God is with them to cover them under his wings. 2. And it is plain matter of fact, evident to all the World, that no people under the Heavens have been so long and so wonderfully preserved as the Church hath been; it hath overlived many bloody Massacres, terrible Persecutions, subtle and cruel Enemies; still God hath preserved and delivered it, for his Promises oblige him to it, amongst which those two are signal and eminent ones, *Jer.* 30. 11. *Isa.* 27. 2. 3. And it is obvious to all that will consider things, that there are the self-same *motives* in God, and the self-same *grounds* and *reasons* before him, to take care of his Church and People, that ever were in him, or did ever lie before him from the beginning of the world. For (1) The Relation is still the same. What tho' *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, those renowned Believers, be in their graves, and those that succeed be far inferiour to them in *Grace* and *spiritual Excellency*; yet saith the *Church*, *Doubtless thou art our Father.* There is the same tie and bond betwixt the Father and the youngest weakest child in the family, as the eldest and strongest. (2) His *pity* and *mercy* is still the same, for *that endures for ever:* his bowels yern as tenderly over his people in their present, as ever they did in any *past afflictions* or *streights.* (3) The rage and malice of *his* and *his peoples enemies* is still the same, they will reflect as blasphemously and dishonourably upon God now, should he give up his people, as ever they did. *Moses*'s Argument is as good now as ever it was, *What will the* Egyptians *say*? and so is *Joshua*'s too, *What wilt thou do unto thy great name*? Oh! if these things were more throughly studied and believed, they would appease many Fears.

2. *Rule. Work upon your hearts the consideration of the many mischiefs and miseries men draw upon themselves and others, both in this world and that to come, by their own sinful fears.*

1. The miseries and calamities that sinful fear brings upon men in this world are unspeakable: this is it that hath plunged the Consciences of so many poor wretches into such deep distresses; this it is that hath put them upon the Rack, and made them roar like men in Hell among the Damned. Some have been recovered, and others have perished in these deeps of horror and despair. *In the year* 1550 *there was at* Ferrara *in* Italy *one* Faninus, *who by reading good Books was by the grace of God converted to the knowledge of the truth, wherein he found such sweetness, that by constant reading, meditation and prayer he grew so expert in the Scriptures, that he was able to instruct others; and tho' he durst not go out of the bounds of his Calling to preach openly, yet by conference and private exhortations he did good to many. This coming to the knowledge of the Pope's Clients, they apprehended and committed him to Prison, where he renounced the Truth, and was thereupon released: But it was not long before the Lord met with him for it; so as falling into horrible torments of Conscience, he was near unto utter despair; nor could he be freed from those terrors, before he had fully resolved to venture his life more faithfully in the service of Christ.*

Clark's examp. p. 27.

Dreadful was that voice which poor *Spira* seemed to hear in his own Conscience, as soon as ever his sinful fears had prevailed upon him to renounce the truth. *Thou wicked wretch, thou hast denied me, thou hast renounced the Covenant of thine obedience, thou hast broken thy vow; hence, Apostate, bear with thee the sentence of thine eternal Damnation.* Presently he falls into a swoon, quaking and trembling and still affirmed to his Death, *that from that time he never found any ease or peace in his mind*; but professed, *that he was captivated under the revenging hand of the Almighty God; and that he continually heard the sentence of Christ, the just Judge, against him; and that he knew he was utterly undone, and could neither hope for Grace, or that Christ should intercede for him to the Father.*

In our dreadful *Marian* days, Sir *John Cheek*, who had been Tutor to King *Edward* VI. was cast into the *Tower*, and kept close Prisoner, and there put to this miserable choice, *either to forgo his life, or that which was more precious, his liberty of Conscience*; neither could his liberty be procured by his great friends at any lower rate than to recant his Religion: This he was very unwilling to accept of, 'till his hard Imprisonment, joined with threats of much worse in case of his refusal, at last wrought so upon him whilst he consulted with flesh and blood, as drew from him an *Abrenunciation* of that Truth which he had so long professed, and still believed: Upon this he was restor'd to his liberty, but never to his comfort; for the sense of his own Apostacy, and the daily sight of the cruel butcheries exercised upon others for their constant adherence to the Truth, made such impressions upon his broken Spirit, as brought him to a speedy end of his life, yet not without some comfortable hopes at last.

Our own Histories abound with multitudes of such doleful Examples.

Some

Some have been in such horror of Conscience, that they have chosen strangling rather than life; they have felt that anguish of Conscience that hath put them upon *desperate resolutions* and *attempts* against their own lives to rid themselves of it. This was the case of *Peter Moon*, who being driven by his own fears to deny the Truth, presently fell into such horror of Conscience, that seeing a *sword* hanging in his Parlor, would have sheathed it in his own bowels. So *Spira* before-mention'd when he was near his end, saw a *knife* on the table, and running to it, would have mischiefed himself, had not his Friends prevented him; thereupon he said, *Oh! that I were above God, for I know that he will have no mercy on me. He lay about eight weeks* (saith the Historian) *in a continual burning, neither desiring or receiving any thing but by force, and that without digestion, till he became as an Anatomy; vehemently raging for Drink, yet fearful to live long; dreadful of Hell, yet coveting Death; in a continual torment, yet his own Tormentor; and thus consuming himself with grief and horror, impatience and despair, like a living Man in Hell, he represented an extraordinary example of God's Justice and Power, and so ended his miserable Life.*

Surely it were good to fright our selves by such dreadful Examples out of our sinful Fears; is any misery we can fear from the hands of man like *this*? Oh, Reader! believe it, *it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of an angry God.* Hadst thou ever felt the rage and efficacy of a wounded and distressed Conscience, as these poor wretches felt it, no fears or threats of Men should drive thee into such an Hell upon Earth as this is.

2. And yet, tho' this be a doleful case, it is not the worst case your own sinful fears will cast you into, except the Lord overcome and extinguish them in you by the fear of his Name, they will not only bring you into a kind of Hell upon Earth, but into *Hell it self* for evermore: for so the righteous God hath said in his word of truth, *Rev.* 21. 8. *But the fearful and unbelieving*, &c. *shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.* Behold here the Martial Law of Heaven executed upon *Cowards* and *Renegadoes*, whose fears make them revolt from *Christ* in the time of danger. Think upon this, you *timorous* and *faint-hearted* Professors: you cannot bear the thoughts of lying in a nasty Dungeon, how will you lie then in the lake of fire and brimstone? You are afraid of the face and frowns of a man that shall die, but how will you live among Devils? Is the wrath of man like the fury of God poured out? Is not the little finger of God heavier than the loins of all the Tyrants in the World? Remember what Christ hath said, *Mat.* 10. 33. *But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my father which is in Heaven.* Reader, the time is coming when he that spake these words shall break out of Heaven with a shout, accompanied with Myriads of Angels, and ten thousands of his Saints, the Heavens and the Earth shall be in dreadful conflagrations round about him; the last Trump shall sound, the Graves shall open, the Earth and Sea shall give up the dead that are in them. Thine Eyes shall see him ascend the awful Throne of Judgment, his faithful ones that feared not to own and appear for him in the face of all enemies and dangers, sitting on the Bench as Assessors with him; and then to be disclaimed and renounced for ever by *Jesus Christ* in the face of that great Assembly, and proclaimed a Delinquent, a Traitor to him, that deniedst his Name and Truths because of the frowns of a fellow-creature long since withered as the grass. O how wilt thou be able to endure this! Now put both these together in thy serious consideration, think on the terrors of Conscience here, and the desperate horror of it in Hell; this as a parboiling, that as a roasting in the flames of God's insufferable wrath: these as some scalding drops sprinkled before-hand upon thy Conscience, that tender and sensible part of man; that as the lake burning for ever with fire and brimstone. Oh! who would suffer himself to be driven into all this misery, by the fears of those sufferings which can but touch the flesh; and for their duration, they are but for a moment!

Think, and think again upon those words of Christ, *Mark* 8. 35. *He that will save his life, shall lose it.* It may be a prolonging of a miserable life, a life worse than death, even in thine own account; a life without the comfort or joy of life; a life ending in the second death; and all this for fear of a trifle compared with what thou shalt afterwards feel in thine own Conscience, and less than a trifle. *nothing*, compared with what thou must suffer from God for ever.

3. *Rule. He that will overcome his fears of sufferings, must foresee and provide before-hand for them.*

The fear of *Caution* is a good cure to the fear of *Distraction*; the more of *that*, the less of *this*; *this* fear will cure *that*, as one fire draws forth another. *Heb.* 11. 7. *Noah being moved with fear, prepared an Ark.* In which he provided as much for the rest and quiet of his mind, as he did for the safety of his person and family. That which makes evils so frightful as they are, is their coming by way of surprize upon us. Those troubles that find us secure do leave us distracted and desperate. Presumption of continued tranquility proves one of the greatest aggravations of misery. Trouble will lie heavy enough when it comes by way of expectation, but it is intolerable when it comes quite contrary to expectation. It will be the lot of *Babylon* to suffer the unexpected Vials of God's wrath, and I wish none but she and her children may be so surprized. *Rev* 18. 7. Oh! it were well for us, if in the midst of our pleasant enjoyments we would be putting the difficultest Cases to our selves, and mingle a few such thoughts as these with all our earthly enjoyments and comforts.

I am now at ease in the midst of my habitation, but the time may be at hand when my habitation shall be in a Prison. I see no faces at present but those of friends, full of smiles and honours; I may see none shortly but the faces of enemies, full of frowns and terrors. I have now an Estate to supply my wants, and provide for my family; but this may shortly fall as a prey to the enemy, they may sweep away all that I have gathered, reap the Fruits of all my labours. —— *impius has segetes.* I have yet my life given me for a prey; but, oh! how soon may it fall into cruel and blood-thirsty hands! I have no better security for these things than the Martyrs had, who suffered the loss of all these things for Christ's sake. A double Advantage would result to us upon such meditations as these, *viz.* the Advantage,

1. Of acquaintance with
2. Of preparation for

} Troubles.

1. Hereby our thoughts would be better acquainted with these evils; and the more they are acquainted, the less they will start and fright at them. We should not think it strange concerning the fiery trial, as it is 1 *Pet.* 4. 12. It is with our thoughts

Thoughts as it is with young Colts, and so they start at every new thing they meet; but we cure them of it, by bringing them home to that they start at, and making them smell to it; better Acquaintance cures this startling Humour at them. The Newness of Evil, saith a late grave and learned Divine, is the Cause of fear, when the Mind it self hath had no preceding Encounter with it, whereby to judge of its Strength, nor Example of another Man's prosperous Issue, to confirm its Hopes in the like Success: For, as I noted before out of the *Philosophers*, Experience is instead of Armour, and is a kind of Fortitude, enabling both to judge, and to bear Troubles; for there are some Things which are μορμολύκεια καὶ περίαπτα, Scarecrows and Vizors which Children fear, only out of Ignorance; assoon as they are known they cease to be terrible.

Dr. *Edw. Reynolds.*

Epictet.

I know our Minds naturally reluctate, and decline such harsh and unpleasant Subjects: 'Tis hard to bring our Thoughts to them in good earnest, and harder to dwell so long as is necessary to this end upon them. We had rather take a pleasant Prospect of future Felicity and Prosperity in this World; of multiplying our Days as the Sand, and at last dying quietly in our Nest, as *Job* speaks. Our Thoughts run nimbly upon such pleasant Fancies like oyled Wheels, and have need of trigging, but when they come into the deep and dirty ways of suffering, there they drive heavily like *Pharaoh*'s Chariots, dismounted from their Wheels. But that which is most pleasant, is not always most useful and necessary; our Lord was well acquainted with Griefs, though our Thoughts be such great Strangers to them, he often thought and spake of his Sufferings, and of the bloody Baptism, with which he was to be baptized, *Luke* 12. 50. and he not only minded his own Sufferings before-hand, but when he perceived the fond Imaginations, and vain Fancies of some that followed and professed him, deluding them with Expectations of earthly Prosperity and Rest; he gave their Thoughts a Turn to this less pleasing, but more needful Subject, the Things they were to suffer for his Name; instead of answering a foolish and groundless question, of sitting on his Right and Left-hand, like earthly *Grandees*, he rebukes the Folly of the *Questionist*, and asks a less pleasing Question, *Matt.* 20. 22. *But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask, are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of? And to be baptized with the baptism that I shall be baptized with? q. d.* You do but abuse your selves with such fond and idle Dreams, there is other Imployment cut out for you in the purposes of God; Instead of sitting upon Thrones and Tribunals, it would become you to think of being brought before them as Prisoners to receive your Doom and Sentence to die for my Sake, these Thoughts would do you a great deal more Service.

2. As such Meditations would acquaint us better, so they would prepare us better to encounter Troubles and difficult Things when they come. Readiness and Preparation would subdue and banish our Fears; we are never much scared with that for which our Minds are prepared. There is the same Difference in this Case, as there is betwixt a Soldier in compleat Armour, and ready at every point for his Enemy; and one that is alarm'd in his Bed, who hath laid his Cloaths in one Place, and his Arms in another, when his Enemy is breaking open his Chamber Door upon him. It was not therefore without the most weighty Reason, that the Apostle presses us so earnestly, *Eph.* 6. 13, 14. *Take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand. Stand therefore, having your loyns girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of Righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace.* We see the Benefit of such Provisions and Previsions for suffering in that great Example of Courage and Constancy, *Acts* 12. 13. *I am ready* (saith *Paul*) *not only to be bound, but to die at* Jerusalem. And the same Courage and Constancy remained in him, when he was entering the very Lists, and going to lay his very Neck upon the Block, 2 *Tim.* 4. 6. *I am ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand.* The word σπένδομαι properly signifies a *Libation* or drink-offering, wherein some conceive he alluded to the very kind of his own Death, *viz.* by the Sword: His Heart was brought to that frame, that he could with as much Willingness pour out his Blood for Christ, as the *Priests* used to pour out the drink-offering to the Lord. 'Tis true, all the Meditations and Preparations in the World made by us, are not sufficient in themselves to carry us through such difficult Services, 'tis one thing to see Death as our Fancy limns it out at a distance and another thing to look Death it self in the Face. We can behold the painted Lion without fear, but the living Lyon makes us tremble; but yet tho' our suffering-strength comes not from our own Preparations, or Forethoughts of Death, but from God's gracious Assistance, yet usually that assistance of his is communicated to us, in and by the conscionable and humble use of these means; let us therefore be found waiting upon God for Strength, Patience, and Resolutions to suffer as it becomes Christians, in the daily serious use of those means whereby he is pleased to communicate to his People.

Rule 4. *If ever you will subdue your own slavish fears, Commit your selves, and all that is yours into the hands of God by Faith.*

This Rule is fully confirmed by that Scripture, *Prov.* 16. 3. *Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established.* The greatest part of our Trouble and Burden in times of Danger, arises from the Unsetledness and Distraction of our own Thoughts, and the way to calm and quiet our Thoughts is to commit all to God. This Rule is to be applied for this End and Purpose when we are going to meet Death it self, and that in all its terrible Formalities, and most frightful appearances, 1 *Pet.* 4 9. *Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.* And if this committing Act of Faith be so useful at such a time, when the Thoughts must be supposed to be in the greatest hurry, and fears in their full Strength; much more will it establish the Heart, and calm its Passions in lesser Troubles, you know what Ease and Relief it would be to you, if you had a Trial depending in Law for your Estates, and your Hearts were overloaded and distracted with Cares and Fears about the Issue of it: If one whom you know to be very skilful and faithful, should say to you at such a time, trouble not your self any farther about this Business, never break an hour's sleep more for this Matter; be you as an unconcerned Spectator, commit it to me,

me, and trust me with the Management of it; I will make it my own Concernment, and save you harmless. O what a Burden, what an heavy Load would you feel your selves eased of, assoon as you had thus transferred, and committed it to such a hand! then you would be able to eat with pleasure, and sleep in quietness: Much more ease and quietness doth your committing the Matter of your fears to God give, even so much more, as his power, wisdom, and faithfulness is greater than what is to be found in Men. But to make this Rule practicable, and improvable to peace, quietness of heart in an evil day, it will be necessary that you well understand,

1. *What the committing act of Faith is.*
2. *What grounds and encouragements Believers have for it.*

1. Study well the nature of this committing act of Faith, and what it *supposes* or *implies* in it; for all Men cannot commit themselves to God, 'tis his own People only that can do it; nor is it every thing they can commit to God, they cannot commit themselves to his care and protection in any way but only in *his own ways*. Know more particularly,

1. That he who will commit himself to God, must commit himself to him in well doing, as the Apostle limits it in 1 *Pet.* 4. 19. and in things agreeable to his will; else we would make God a Patron and Protector of our sins, *Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing.* We cannot commit our *Sins*, but our *Duties*, to God's Protection: God is so great a Friend to *Truth* and *Righteousness*, that in such a Case he will not take your part, how dear soever you be to him, if Truth be found on your Enemies part, and the Mistake on yours. Think not to entitle God to your *errors* and *failings*, much less to any *sinful designs*: you may commit a doubtful Case to him to be decided, but not a sinful Case to be protected. It is in vain to shelter any Cause of your own under his Wings, except you can write upon it as *David* did, *Ps.* 74. 22. *Thine own cause, O Lord, thine own as well as mine;* Lord, plead thine own cause.

2. He that commits his All to God, supposes and firmly believes that all Events and Issues of Things are in God's Hands; that he only can direct, over-rule, and order them all as he pleaseth. Upon this Supposition the committing acts of Faith in all ours fears and distresses are built: *I trusted in thee, O Lord, I said thou art my God, my times are in thy hand, deliver me from the hands of my enemies, and from them that persecute me.* His firm Assent to this great Truth, *that his times were in God's hands*, was the Reason why he committed himself into that hand. If our Times, our Lives, or Comforts were in our Enemies hands, it were to little purpose for us to commit our selves into God's Hands. And here the contrary Senses and Methods of Faith and Unbelief are as conspicuous as in any one thing whatsoever: Unbelief persuades Men that their Lives and all that is dear to them is in the Hands of their Enemies, and therefore persuades them the best way they can take to secure themselves, is by compliance with the Will of their Enemies, and pleasing them: But Faith determines quite contrary, it tells us, *We and all that is ours is in God's hand, and no enemy can touch us or ours till He give them a permission; and therefore it is our duty and interest to please him, and commit all to him.*

3. The committing of our selves to God implies the Resignation of our Wills to the Will of God, to be disposed of as seems good in his Eyes: So *David* commits to God the Event of that sad and doubtful Providence which made him fly for his Life from a strong Conspiracy, 2 *Sam.* 15. 25. *And the king said unto Zadok, Carry back the Ark of God into the city; if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both it and his habitation: but if he thus say, I have no delight in thee, behold here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good to him*; *q. d.* Lord, the Conspiracy against my Life is strong, the Danger great, the Issue exceeding doubtful: but I commit it all into thy Hand; if *David* may yet be used in any farther Service for his God, I shall see this City and thy lovely *Temple* again: but if not, I lie at thy Foot to be disposed either for Life or Death, for the earthly or the heavenly *Jerusalem*, as seemeth best in thine Eyes. This Submission to divine Pleasure is included in the committing act of Faith. Christian, what saist thou to it? Is thy will content to go back, that the will of God may come on, and take place of it? It may be thou canst refer a difficult Case to God, provided that he will determine and issue it according to thy Desires; but in Truth that is no Submission or Resignation at all, but a sinful limiting of, and prescribing to God. It was an excellent Reply that a choice Christian once made to another; when a beloved and only Child lay in a dangerous Sickness at the point of Death, a Friend asked the Mother, What would you now desire of God in reference to your Child? Would you beg of him its Life or Death in this Extremity it is now in? The Mother answered, *I refer that to the Will of God.* But, said her Friend, if God would refer it to you, what would you chuse then? *Why truly* said she, *if God would refer it to me, I would even refer it to God again.* This is the true committing of our selves and our troublesome Concerns to the Lord.

4. The committing Act of Faith implies our renouncing and disclaiming all Confidence and Trust in the Arm of Flesh, and an Expectation of Relief from God only. If we commit our selves to God, we must cease from Man, *Isa.* 2. 22. To trust God in part, and the Creature in part, is to set one foot upon a *Rock* and the other in a *Quicksand.* Those Acts of Faith that give the intire Glory to God, give real Relief and Comfort to us.

2. Let us see what Grounds and Encouragements the People of God have to commit themselves and all the Matters of their fear to God, and so to enjoy the Peace and Comfort of a resigned Will; and there are two Sorts of Encouragements before you, let the Case be as difficult and frightful as it will; you may find sufficient Encouragements in God, and somewhat from your selves, *viz.* your Relation to him, and Experiences of him.

1. In God there is all that your Hearts can desire to encourage you to trust him over all, and commit all into his Hands. For,

1. He is able to help and relieve you; let the Case be never so bad, yet *let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord is plenteous redemption*, Psal. 130. 7, 8. Plenteous Redemption (*i. e.*) all the Stores of Power, choice of Methods, Plenty of Means, abundance of ways to save his People, when they can see no way out of their Troubles: therefore hope *Israel* in *Jehovah.*

2. As his Power is *Almighty*, so his Wisdom is *Infinite* and unsearchable; *He is a God of Judg-*

ment, bleſſed are all they that wait for him, Iſa. 30. 18. When the Apoſtle *Peter* had related the wonderful Preſervations of *Noah* in the Deluge, and of *Lot* in *Sodom*, one in a general Deſtruction of the World by Water, and the other in the Overthrow of thoſe Cities by Fire; he concludes, and ſo ſhould we, *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation,* 2 *Pet.* 2. 9. Some Men have much Power, but little Wiſdom to manage it, others are wiſe and prudent, but want Ability; in God there is an infinite fulneſs of both.

3. His Love to, and Tenderneſs over his People, is tranſcendent and unparallell'd; and this ſets his Wiſdom and Power both a work for their good; hence it is that his Eyes of Providence run continually throughout the whole Earth, to ſhew himſelf ſtrong in the Behalf of them whoſe Hearts are perfect, (*i. e.*) upright towards him, 2 *Chron.* 16. 9. Thus you ſee how he is every way fitted as a proper Object of your Truſt.

2. Conſider your ſelves, and you ſhall find Encouragements to commit all to God. For,

1. You are his Children, and to whom ſhould Children commit themſelves in Dangers and Fears but to their own father? *Doubtleſs thou art our father,* ſaith thy diſtreſſed Church, *Iſa.* 63. 15, 16. Yea, Chriſtian, *Thy maker is thy husband, Iſa.* 54. 5. Is not that a ſufficient ground to caſt thy ſelf upon him? What! a Child not truſt its own Father? a Wife not commit her ſelf to her own Husband?

2. You have truſted him with a far greater Concern already than your Eſtates, Liberties, or Lives; you have committed your Souls to him, and your eternal Intereſts, 2 *Tim.* 1. 12. Shall we commit the Jewel, and diſpute the Cabinet? truſt him for Heaven, and doubt him for Earth?

3. You have ever found him faithful in all that you truſted him with, all your Experiences are ſo many good grounds of Confidence, *Pſal.* 9. 10 Well then, reſolve to truſt God over all, and quietly leave the Diſpoſe of every thing to him; he hath been with you in all former Straights, Wants and Fears, hitherto he hath helped you, and cannot he do ſo again, except you tell him how? Oh! truſt in his Wiſdom, Power and Love, and lean not to your own Underſtandings. The fruit of Reſignation will be Peace.

Rule 5. *If ever you will get rid of your fears and diſtractions, get your affections mortified to the world, and to the inordinate and immoderate love of every enjoyment in the world.*

The more you are mortified, the leſs you will be terrified; 'tis not the dead, but the living World, that puts our Hearts into ſuch *fears* and *tremblings*; if our Hearts were once crucified, they wou'd ſoon be quieted. 'Tis the Strength of our *affections* that puts ſo much Strength into our *afflictions.* It was not therefore without great Reaſon that the Apoſtle compares the Life of a *Chriſtian* to the Life of a *Soldier,* who if he mean to follow the *Camp,* and acquit himſelf bravely in fight, muſt not *intangle himſelf with the affairs of this life,* 2 *Tim.* 2. 4. Sure there is no following Chriſt's Camp, but with a diſintangled Heart from the World, for proportionable to the Heat of our Love will be the ſtrength and height of our fears about theſe things; more particularly, if ever you will rid your ſelves of your uncomfortable and uncomely fears, uſe all God's Means to mortifie your Affections to the exorbitant Eſteem and Love of,

1. Your Eſtates. 2. Your Liberty. 3. Your Lives.

1. Get mortified and cooled Hearts to your Poſſeſſions and Eſtates in the World. The *pooreſt Age* afforded the *richeſt Chriſtians* and *nobleſt Martyrs.* Ships deepeſt laden are not beſt for Encounters. The believing Hebrews *took joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods, knowing in themſelves that they had in heaven a better and enduring ſubſtance,* Heb. 10. 34. They carried it rather like unconcerned *ſpectators* than the true *proprietors*; they rejoiced when rude Soldiers carried out their Goods, as if ſo many Friends had been bringing them in. And whence was this, but from an Heart fixed upon Heaven, and mortified to Things upon Earth? Doubtleſs they eſteemed and valued their Eſtates as the good Providences of God for their more comfortable Accommodation in this World; but it ſeems they did, and oh that we could look upon them as Mercies of the loweſt and meaneſt Rank and Nature. The Subſtance laid up in Heaven was a better Subſtance, and as long as *that* was ſafe, the Loſs of *this* did not afflict them.

They could bleſs God for theſe Things which for a little time did miniſter Refreſhment to them, but they knew them to be tranſitory Enjoyments, things that would make to themſelves Wings and flee away, if their Enemies had not touch'd them; but the Subſtance laid up for them in Heaven, that was an *enduring ſubſtance.* So far as thoſe earthly Things might further them towards Heavenly things, ſo far they prized and valued them, but if Satan would turn them into *ſnares* and *temptations* to deprive them of their better Subſtance in Heaven, they could eaſily ſlight them, and take the Spoiling of them joyfully. In a ſtreſs of Weather, when the Ship is ready to ſink and *founder* in a Storm, all Hands are readily employed to throw the richeſt Goods over-board; no Man ſaith it's pity to caſt them away, but reaſon dictates to a Man in that Caſe, Better theſe periſh, than I periſh with and for them. Theſe be the Wares that ſome will not caſt over-board, and therefore they are ſaid to drown Men in Perdition, 1 *Tim.* 6. 9. *Demas* would *rather periſh than part with theſe things,* 2 Tim. 4. 10. But, Reader, conſider ſeriouſly what Comfort they can yield thee, when thou muſt look upon them as the price for which thou haſt ſold Heaven, and all the Hopes of Glory; even as much as the price of Blood yielded *Judas*; and ſo they will enſnare thee, if thy unmortified Heart be over-heated with the Love of them as his was.

2. Be mortified to your Liberty, and take heed of placing too great an Eſteem upon it, or Neceſſity in it. Liberty is a deſirable thing to the very Birds of the Air, accommodate them the beſt you can in your Cages, feed them with the richeſt Fare, they had rather be cold and hungry with their Liberty in the Woods, than fat and warm in your Houſes. But yet, as ſweet as it is, there may be more Comfort and Sweetneſs in parting with it, than in keeping it, as the Caſe may ſtand. The Doors of a Priſon can lock you in, but they cannot lock the Comforter out. *Paul* and *Silas* loſt their Liberty for *Chriſt*, but not their Comfort with it; they never were ſo truly at Liberty, as when their Feet were made faſt in the Stocks, they never far'd ſo deliciouſly as when they fed upon Priſoners Fare. God ſpread a Table for them in the Priſon, ſent them in a rich Feaſt, yea, and they had Muſick at their Feaſt too, and that at midnight, *Acts* 16. 25.

Patmos

Patmos was a barren Island, and a Place designed for banish'd Persons; it lay in the *Ægean* Sea, not far from the Coast of the lesser *Asia*: it was inhabited by none, because of the exceeding Barrenness of it, but such who were appointed to it for their Punishment; so that here *John* could meet with no more earthly Refreshment than what the barren Rocks, or wild and desperate Persons condemned to live upon it, could afford. Ay, but there, there it was that Christ appeared to him in unexpressible Glory; there it was that he had those ravishing Visions, and saw the whole Scheme of Providence in the Government of this World; there he saw the *New Jerusalem* coming down from God out of Heaven, as a Bride prepared for her Husband. This made a *Patmos* become a *Paradise*; never did any Place afford him such Comfort as this did. So that Christians may not think there is so strict and necessary a Connexion betwixt *Liberty* and *Comfort*, that he that takes away the *first*, must needs deprive them of the other.

Rev. 1, 9. 10.

Again, Suppose we should be so fond of our Liberty as to exchange Truth and a good Conscience for it: cannot God so imbitter it to you, yea, hath he not so imbitter'd it to many, that they were quickly weary of it, and glad of an Opportunity to exchange it for a Prison. Our own *Martyrology* furnishes us with many sad Examples of it. Oh! what will you do with your bitter dear-bought Liberty, when your Peace is taken away from the inward Man? when God shall clap up your Souls in Prison, and put your Consciences into his Bonds and Fetters, then you will say as the Martyr did, *I am in Prison till I be in Prison.*

3. Be mortified to the inordinate and fond Love of Life, as ever you expect Relief against the Fears of Death. Reason thy self into a lower value of thy Life. Methinks you have Arguments enough to cure your Fondness in this point. Have you found it such a pleasant Life to you, for so much of it as is past? You know how the Apostle represents it, 2 *Cor.* 5. 4. *We that are in this tabernacle do groan being burthened.* And is a burthen'd and a groaning Life so desirable? You know also as he speaks in the next Verse, that *whilst you are at home in the body, you are absent from the Lord.* And is a state of Absence from *Jesus Christ* so desirable to a Soul that loves him? Can you find much pleasure so far from home? You may fansie what you will, but upon serious Recollection you will be able to tell your selves, that till you be dead you will never be out of the reach of Satan's temptations, never freed from your own indwelling Corruptions, these Conflicts cannot have an end till Life be ended. You also stand convinc'd that till you be dead your Souls cannot be satisfied, nor your Desires be at rest; have what Comforts soever from God in the way of Faith and Course of Duties, your Hearts are still off the Center, and will still gravitate and gasp heavenward. You also know that die you must, and the time of your Departure is at hand; and of all Deaths, if you might have your Choice, none is more honourable to God, or like to be so evidential and comfortable to you, as a violent Death for Christ; therein you come to him by Consent and Choice, not by Necessity and Constraint; therein you give a publick Testimony for Christ, which is the highest use that ever our Blood can be put to, or honoured by; and for the Pain and Torment, as the Martyr said, *He that takes away from my torment, takes away from my reward.* But even in that point God can make it easier to you than a natural death would be; he will be with you in your Extremity, and administer such reviving Cordials as other Men must not look to taste, at least not ordinarily, they being prepared and reserved for such, against such an Hour.

Oh then work out the inordinate Love of Life by working in such mortifying Considerations upon your own Hearts; and if once you gain but this point, you will quickly find all your Pains and Prayers richly answered in the Ease and Rest of your Hearts, in the most scaring and frightful times.

Rule 6. *Eye the encouraging Examples of those that have trod the path of sufferings before you, and strive to imitate such worthy patterns.*

Behold the Cloud of Witnesses encompassing you round about; a Cloud like that over the *Israelites* to *direct* you; yea, a Cloud for multitude of excellent Persons to animate and encourage you, *Heb.* 12. 1. *Oh take them for an ensample in suffering affliction and patience*, Ja. 5. 10. Examples of excellent Persons that have broken the Ice, and beaten the Path before us, are of excellent use to suppress our Fears, and rouze our Courage in our own Encounters.

The first Sufferers had the hardest task; they that first entred the Lists for Christ, wanted those Helps to suppress fear which they have left unto us. Strange and untried Torments are most terrible, for *magnitudinem rerum consuetudo subducit*, trial and Acquaintance abates the formidable greatness of Evils; they knew not the strength of that Enemy they were to engage, but we fight with an Enemy that hath been often beaten and triumph'd over by our Brethren that went before us. Certainly we that live in the last times have the best Helps that ever any had to subdue their Fears; we have heard of the Courage and Constancy of our Brethren, in as sharp Trials of their Courage as ever we can be called to; we have read with what Christian Gallantry they have triumphed over all sorts of sufferings and torments, how they have been strengthened with all Might in the inner Man unto all Patience and Long-suffering, with Joyfulness, 1 *Col.* 11. how they have gone away from the Courts that censured and punished them, rejoycing that they were honoured to be dishonoured for Christ, as the strict reading of that Text is, *Acts* 5. 41. counting the Reproaches of Christ greater than the Treasures of *Egypt*, *Heb.* 11. 26. which at that time was the Magazine of the World for Riches: You read what *trials they have had of cruel mockings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonments; how they were stoned, sawn asunder, tempted slain with the sword, wandered about in Sheeps Skins, and Goats Skins, destitute, afflicted, tormented, Heb.* 11. 36, 37. In all which they obtained a good Report; they came out of the Field with triumphant Faith and Patience; and this was not the Effect of an overheated Zeal at the first Outset, but the same Spirit of Courage was found among Christians in after Ages, who have put off their Persecutors with a kind of pleasant Scorn and Contempt of Torments.

ὅτι κατηξιώθησαν ἐπιμαθεῖναι.

So did *Basil*, truly sirnamed the Great, when *Valens* the Emperor in a great Rage threatned him with Banishment, and Tortures, as to the

Socrates. Hist. l. 4. c. 26.

first, said he, I little regard it, for the Earth is the Lord's, and the Fulness thereof; and as for Tortures what can they do upon such a poor thin Body as mine, nothing but Skin and Bone? And at another time when *Eusebius* Governour of *Pontus* told him in a great Rage, he would tear his very Liver out of his Bowels: Truly said *Basil*, you shall do me a very good turn in it, to take out my naughty Liver; which inflames and diseaseth my whole Body. Their Enemies have professed the Christians put them to shame, by smiling at their Cruelties and Threatnings. *Ignatius* his Love to Christ had so perfectly overcome all Fears of Sufferings, that when he was going to be thrown for a Prey among the Lyons and Leopards, he professed he longed to be among them, and, said he, if they will not dispatch me the sooner, I will provoke them, that I may be with my sweet Jesus. And if we come down to later Ages, we shall find as stout Champions for Christ. The Courage and Undauntedness of *Luther* is trumpeted abroad throughout the Christian World, it would swell this small *Tract* too much, but to note the most eminent Instances of his Courage for Christ: The last he gave was by his Sorrow in his last Sickness, that he must carry his Blood to the Grave. The like Heroick Spirit appeared in divers Persons of Honour and Eminency, who zealously espoused the same Cause of Reformation with him. Remarkable to this purpose is that famous Epistle written by *Ulricus ab Hutten*, a German Knight, in Defence of *Luther*'s Cause against the Cardinals and Bishops assembled at *Worms*. *I will go through* (said he) *with what I have undertaken against you, and will stir up men to seek their freedom: Such as yield not to me at first, I will overcome with importunity; I neither care nor fear what may befal me, being prepared for either event; either to ruin you, to the great benefit of my Country, or my self to fall with a good Conscience; therefore that you may see with what Confidence I contemn your Threats, I do profess my self to be your irreconcilable enemy, whilst ye persecute* Luther *and such as he is. No power of yours, no injury of fortune shall alter this mind in me; though you take away my life, yet this well deserving of mine towards my countries liberty shall not die. I know that my endeavour to remove such as you are, and to place worthy Ministers in your room, is acceptable to God; and in the last judgment, I trust it will be safer for me to have offended you, than to have had your favour.*

It was also a brave Heroick Spirit by which *John* Duke of *Saxony* was acted to defend the Reformation, who despising all the Favours and Offers of the Court, and of *Rome*, and the Terrors of Death it self; appeared as my Author speaks in its behalf against all the Devils, and the *Pope*, in three publick Imperial Assemblies, saying openly to their Faces, I must serve God, or the World; and which of these two do ye think is the better? And as soon as *Luther*'s Sermons were forbidden, he hasted away, saying, I will not stay there where I cannot have my Liberty to serve God:

Spangenberg. ad An. 1531.

And now, Reader, thou hast a little taste of the Courage and Zeal of those Worthies who are gone before thee in Defence of that Cause for which thou feareſt to suffer. Most Men, saith *Chrysostom*, that read or hear such Examples, are like the Spectators of the Roman *Gladiators*, who stood by and praised their Courage, but durst not enter the Lists, to undertake what they did. If ever thou wilt get like Courage for Christ, thus improve such famous Examples.

1. Make use of them to obviate the Prejudice of singularity; you see you have store of good Company, the same things you are like to suffer for Christ, have been accomplished in the rest of your Brethren in the World, 1 *Pet.* 5. 9.

2. Improve them against the Prejudice of all that shame that attends Sufferings, here you may see the most excellent Persons in the World reckoning it their Glory to suffer the vilest things for Jesus Christ, *Acts* 5. 31. *Heb.* 11. 26.

3. Improve them against the Conceit of the insupportableness of Sufferings. Lo here, poor weak Creatures which have been carried honourably and comfortably through the cruellest and difficulteſt Sufferings for Christ. Our Women and Children, not to speak of Men (saith *Tertullian*) overcome their Tormentors, and the Fire cannot fetch so much as a sigh from them.

4. Improve them against thine own Unbelief, and Staggerings at the Faithfulness of God in that Promise, *Isa.* 43. 2. *When thou passest through the fire, I will be with thee*, &c. Lo here you have the recorded and faithful Testimonies of such as have tried it, with one Voice witnessing for God, *Thy word is truth, thy word is truth.*

5. Improve them against the sensible weakness of your own Graces, are you afraid your Faith, Love, and Patience are too weak to carry you through great Trials? Why, doubtless so were many of them too, they were Men of like Fears, troubled with a bad Heart, and a busie Devil as well as you, they also had their Clouds and Damps as you have; yet the Almighty Power of God supported them; and out of weakness they were made strong: Despond not therefore but get a Judgment satisfied, *Psal.* 44. 22. A Conscience sprinkled, 2 *Tim.* 1. 7. And a Call cleared, *Dan.* 6. 10. Exercise Faith also with respect to Divine Assistances, and everlasting Rewards as they did: and doubt not but the same God that enabled them to finish their Course with Joy, will be as good to you as he was to them. Consider, Christ hath done as much for you as he did for any of them, and deserves as much from you as from any of them; and hath prepared the same Glory for you, that he prepared for them: O that such Considerations might provoke you to shew as much Courage and Love to Christ, as any of them ever did.

Rule 7. *If ever you will get above the power of your own fears in a suffering day, make haste to clear your interest in Christ, and your pardon in his blood before that evil day come.*

The clearer this is, the bolder you will be; an assured Christian was never known to be a Coward in Sufferings: It is impossible to be clear of Fears, till you are cleared of the Doubts about Interest in, and pardon by Christ. Nothing is found more strengthning to our Fears, than that which clouds our Evidences; and nothing more to quiet and cure our Fears than that which clears our Evidences. The shedding abroad of God's Love in our Hearts, will quickly fill them with a Spirit of glorying in Tribulations, *Rom.* 5. 5. When the believing *Hebrews* once came to know in themselves that they had an enduring Substance in Heaven, they quickly found in themselves an unconcerned Heart for the Loss of their Comforts on Earth, *Heb.* 10. 34. and so should we too. For,

1. Assu-

1. Assurance satisfies a man that his treasure and true happiness is secured to him, and laid out of the reach of all his enemies; and so long as that is safe, he hath all the reason in the world to be quiet, and chearful, *I know* (saith *Paul*) *whom I have believed, and am perswaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day*, 2 *Tim.* 1. 12. And he gives this as the reason why he was not ashamed of Christ's sufferings.

2. The assured Christian knows that if death it self come, (which is the worst men can inflict) he shall be no loser by the exchange; nay he shall make the best bargain that ever he made since he first parted with all in his afflictions, to follow Christ. There are two rich bargains a Christian makes; one is when he exchanges the world for Christ in his first choice at his conversion, in point of love and estimation: the other is when he actually parts with the world for Christ at his dissolution: both these are rich bargains, and upon this ground it was the Apostle said, *To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain, Phil.* 1. 21. The death of a believer in Christ, is gain unspeakable, but if a man would make the utmost gain by dying, he shall find it in dying for Christ as well as in Christ: And to shew you wherein the gain of such a death lies, let a few particulars be weighed, wherein the gain will be cast up in both; he that is assured he dies in Christ, knows,

1. That his living time is his labouring time, but his dying time is his harvest time, whilst we live we are plowing and sowing in all the duties of Religion, but when we die, then we reap the fruit and comfort of all our Labours and Duties, *Gal.* 6. 8, 9. As much therefore as the reaping time is better than the sowing and plowing time, so much better is the Death than the Life of a Believer.

2. A Believers living time is his fighting time, but his dying time is his conquering and triumphing time, 1 *Cor.* 15. 55, 56. The conflict is sharp, but the triumph is sweet; and as much as victory and triumph is better than fighting, so much is Death better than Life, to him that dieth in Jesus.

3. A Believers living time is his tiresom and weary time, but his dying time is his resting and sleeping time. *Isa.* 57. 2. Here we spend and faint, there we rest in our beds, and as much as refreshing rest in sleep is better than tiring and fainting, so much is a Believers death better than his life.

4. A Believers living time is his waiting and longing time, but his time of dying is the time of enjoying what he hath long wished and waited for, *Phil.* 1. 23. Here we groan and sigh for Christ, there we behold and enjoy Christ, and so much as vision and fruition is better and sweeter than hoping and waiting for it; so much is a Believers death better than his life.

2. As the advantage a Believer makes of death is great to him by dying only in Christ; so it is much greater, and the richest improvement that can be made of death to die for Christ as well as in Christ: For compare them in a few particulars and you shall find;

1. That though a natural death hath less *horrour*, yet a violent death for Christ hath more *honour* in it. To him that dies united with Christ the grave is *a bed of rest*; but to him that dies as a Martyr for Christ, the grave is a bed of honour. *To you* (saith the Apostle) *it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe, but also to suffer for his sake*, 1 *Phil.* 29. To you it is granted as a great honour and favour to suffer for Christ; all that live in Christ have not the honour to lay down their lives for Christ. It was the great trouble of *Ludovicus Marsacus* a Knight of *France*, to be exempted because of his dignity, from wearing his chain for Christ, as the other Prisoners did; and he resented it, as a great injury, Give me (saith he to his Keeper) my chain as well as they, and create me a Knight of that noble Order.

Cur me non quoque torque donas, & illustris illius ordinis militem non creas?

2. By a natural death we only submit our selves to the unavoidable consequence of sin, but in dying a violent death for Christ, we give our testimony against the evil of sin, and for the precious truths of Jesus Christ. The first is the payment of a debt of justice due by the fall of *Adam*; the second is the payment of a debt of thankfulness and obedience due to Christ, who redeemed us with his own Blood. Thus we become witnesses for God, as well as sufferers upon the account of sin: In the first, sin witnesseth against us, in this we witness against it; and indeed it is a great testimony against the evil of sin: We declare to all the world that there is not so much evil in a Dungeon, in a bloody Ax, or consuming flames; as there is in sin: That it is far better to lose our carnal friends, estates, liberties, and lives, than part with Christ's truths and a good Conscience, as *Zuinglius* said, What sort of death should not a Christian chuse, what punishment should he not rather undergo; yea, into what vault of hell should he not rather chuse to be cast than to witness against truth and Conscience.

Quas non oportet mortes præeligere, quod non supplicium potius ferre, imo in quam profundam inferni Abyssum non intrare, quam contra conscientiam attestari?

3. A natural death in Christ may be as safe to our selves, but a violent death for Christ, will be more beneficial to others; by the former we shall come to heaven our selves, but by the latter we may bring many Souls thither. The blood of the Martyrs is truly called the seed of the Church. Many waxed confident by *Paul*'s bonds, his sufferings fell out to the furtherance of the Gospel, and so may ours: In this case a Christian, like *Sampson*, doth greater service against Satan and his cause, by his death, than by his life.

If we only die a natural death in our beds we die in possession of the truths of Christ our selves; but if we die Martyrs for Christ, we secure that precious inheritance to the generations to come, and those that are yet unborn shall bless God, not only for his truths, but for our courage, zeal, and constancy by which it was preserved for them, and transmitted to them.

By all this you see that death to a Believer is great gain, it's great gain if he only die in Christ, it's all that, and a great deal more added, if he also die for Christ: and he that is assured of such advantages by death either way, must needs feel his fears of death shrink away before such assurances; yea, he will rather have life in patience, and death in desire; he will not only submit quietly, but rejoyce exceedingly to be used by God in such honourable imployment. Assurance will call a bloody death a safe passage to *Canaan* thro' the Red Sea. It will call *Satan* that instigates these his instruments, and all that are imployed in such bloody work by him, so many *Balaams* brought to curse,

Potius nobis deliciæ quam tormenta sunt, *Basil.*

curse, but they do indeed bless the people of God, and not curse them. The assured Christian, looks upon his death as his wedding day, *Rev.* 19. 7. And therefore it doth not much differ whether the horse sent to fetch him to Christ be pale, or red, so he may be with Christ his love as *Ignatius* call'd him.

He looks upon death as his day of enlargement out of Prison, 2 *Cor.* 5. 8. and it is not much odds what hand opens the door, or whether a friend or enemy close his eyes, so he have his liberty, and may be with Christ.

O then, give the Lord no rest till your hearts be at rest by the assurance of his love, and the pardon of your sins; when you can boldly say the Lord *is your help*, you will quickly say what immediately follows, *I will not fear what man shall do unto me*, *Heb* 13. 6. And why, if thy heart be upright, mayst thou not attain it? Full assurance is possible, else it had not been put into the command. 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. The sealing graces are in you, the sealing spirit is ready to do it for you, the sealing promises belong to you; but we give not all diligence, and therefore go without the comfort of it. Would we pray more, and strive more, would we keep our hearts with a stricter watch, mortifie sin more throughly, and walk before God more accurately; how soon may we attain this blessed assurance, and in it an excellent cure for our distracting and slavish Fears.

8. *Rule. Let him that designs to free himself of distracting fears, be careful to maintain the purity of his conscience, and integrity of his ways, in the whole course of his conversation in this world.*

Uprightness will give us boldness, and Purity will yield us peace. Isa. 32. *The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever.* Look as fear follows guilt and guile, so peace and quietness follow righteousness and sincerity, *Prov.* 28. 1. *The wicked flee when none pursueth, but the righteous are bold as a lion.* His confidence is great, because his conscience is quiet, the peace of God guards his heart and mind. There are three remarkable steps by which Christians rise to the height of courage in tribulations, *Rom.* 5. 1, 2, 3, 4. First they are justified and acquitted from guilt by Faith, *v.* 1. Then they are brought into a state of favour and acceptation with God, *v.* 2. Thence they rise one step higher, even to a view of Heaven, and the glory to come, *v.* 3. and from thence they take an easie step to glorying in tribulations, *v.* 4.

I say, 'tis an easie step; for let a Man once obtain the pardon of sin, the favour of God, and a believing view and prospect of the glory to come; and it is so easie to triumph in tribulation, in such a station as that is, that it will be as hard to hinder it, as to hinder a man from laughing when he is tickl'd.

Christians have always found it a spring of courage and comfort, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. *This is our rejoicing, even the testimony of our consciences, that in all sincerity and godly simplicity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in this world.* Their hearts did not reproach them with by-ends in Religion; their consciences witnessed that they made not Religion a cloak to cover any fleshly design, but were sincere in what they professed; and this enabl'd them to rejoice in the midst of sufferings. An earthen vessel set empty to the fire will crack and fly in pieces; and so will an hypocritical, formal, and meer nominal Christian: but he that hath such substantial and real Principles of courage as these within him, will endure the trial, and be never the worse for the fire.

The very Heathens discovered the Advantage of moral integrity, and the peace it yielded to their natural consciences in times of trouble. *Nil conscire tibi, nullâ pallescere culpa, Hic murus aheneus esto,*—— It was to them as a wall of brass. Much more will godly simplicity, and the sprinkling of the blood of Christ upon our consciences, secure and encourage our hearts. This Atheistical Age laughs conscience and purity to scorn; but let them laugh, this it is will make thee laugh when they shall cry. *Paul* exercised himself, or made it his business, *To have always a conscience void of offence, both towards God and towards Man*, Acts 24. 16. And it was richly worth his labour, it repayed him ten thousand fold in the peace, courage, and comfort it gave him in all the troubles of his life, which were great and many.

ἀσκῶ meditor, operam do.

Conscience must be the bearing shoulder on which the burden must lie; beware therefore it be not gauled with guilt, or put out of joint by any fall into sin, 'tis sad bearing on such a shoulder; instead of bearing your burdens, you will not be able to bear its pain and anguish. To prevent this, carefully observe these Rules.

1. Over-awe your hearts every day and in every place with the eye of God. This walking as before God will keep you upright, *Gen.* 17. 1. If you so speak and live as those that know God sees you, such will be your uprightness, that you will not care if all the world see you too. An artist came to *Drusius*, and offered to build him an house so contrived, that he might do what he would within doors, and no man see him: *Nay*, said *Drusius*, *so build it that every one may see.*

2. Do no action, undertake no design that you dare not preface with Prayer; this is your Rule, *Phil.* 4. 6. Touch not that you dare not pray for a blessing upon; if you dare not pray, dare not engage; if you cannot send your Prayers before, be confident shame and guilt will follow after.

3. Be more afraid of grieving God, or wounding Conscience, than of displeasing or losing all the friends you have in the world besides; look upon every adventure upon sin to escape danger, to be the same thing as if you should sink the Ship to avoid one that you take to be a Pirate; or as the fatal mistake of two Vials wherein there is Poyson and Physick.

4. What counsel you would give another, that give your selves when the case shall be your own; your judgment is most clear, when Intereſt is least felt. *David*'s judgment was very upright, when he judged himself in a remote Parable.

5. Be willing to bear the faithful reproofs of your faults from Men, as the reproving voice of God; for they are no less when duly administred. This will be a good help to keep you upright, *Psal.* 135. 23, 24. *Let the righteous smite me, &c.* It is said of Sir *Anthony Cope*, that he sham'd none so much as himself in his Family Prayers, and desir'd the Ministers of his Acquaintance not to favour his faults; but *tell me*, said he, and *spare not.*

6. Be mindful daily of your dying day, and your great Audit-day, and do all with respect to them. Thus keep your integrity and peace, and that will keep out your fears and terrors.

9. *Rule*

9. *Rule. Carefully record the experiences of God's care over you, and faithfulness to you in all your past dangers and distresses, and apply them to the cure of your present fears and despondencies.*

Recorded experiences are excellent remedies, *Exod.* 17. 14. *Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of* Joshua. There were two things in that Record; the Victory obtained over *Amalek*, and the way of obtaining it *by incessant Prayer*: and there were two things to be done to secure this Mercy for their use and benefit in future fears, it must be recorded and rehearsed, preserved from oblivion, and seasonably produced for relief.

There are two special assistances given us against fear by experience.

1. It abates the terror of sufferings.
2. It assists Faith in the promises.

1. Experience greatly abates the terror of sufferings, and makes them less formidable and scaring than otherwise they would be. Fear saith, They are deep waters, and will drown us; Experience saith, They are much shallower than we think, and are safely fordable; others have, and we may pass through that Red-Sea, and not be overwhelmed. Fear saith, The pains of death are unconceivable, sharp, and bitter, the living little know what the dying feel; and to lie in a stinking Prison in continual expectations of a cruel death, is an insupportable evil: Experience contradicts all these false reports which make our hearts faint, as the second Spies did the daunting stories of the first; and assures us, Prisons and death are not, when we come home to them for Christ, what they seem and appear to be at a distance. O what a good report have those faithful men given, who have searched and tried these things! who have gone down themselves into the valley of the shadow of death, and seen what there is in a Prison, and in Death it self, so long as they were in sight and hearing able by words or signs to contradict our false Notions of it. Oh what a sweet account did *Pomponius Algerius* give of his stinking Prison at *Lions* in *France!* dating all his Letters whilst he was there, *From the delectable Orchard of the* Leonine *Prison:* and when carried to *Venice*, in a Letter from the Prison there, he writes thus to his Christian friends: *I shall utter that which scarce any will believe, I have found a nest of* Honey *in the entrails of a* Lion, *a Paradise of Pleasure in a deep dark dungeon, in a place of Sorrow and Death tranquility of Hope and Life.* Oh! here it is that the Spirit of God and of Glory rests upon us.

So blessed Mr. *Philpot*, our own Martyr, in one of his sweet encouraging Letters: *O how my heart leaps* (saith he) *that I am so near to eternal bliss! God forgive me my unthankfulness and unworthiness of so great glory. I have so much joy of the Reward prepared for me, the most wretched Sinner, that tho' I be in the place of darkness and mourning, yet I cannot lament, but am night and day so joyful as tho' I were under no cross at all; in all the days of my life I was never so joyful, the name of the Lord be praised.*

Others have given the signals agreed upon betwixt them and their friends in the midst of the flames, thereby to the last confirming this truth, That God makes the inside of sufferings quite another thing to what the appearance and outside of them is to sense. Thus the experience of others abates the terrors of sufferings to you; and all this is fully confirmed by the personal experience you your selves have had of the supports and comforts of God, whereinsoever you have conscientiously suffered for his sake.

2. And this cannot but be a singular assistance to your Faith; your own and others experiences, just like *Aaron* and *Hur*, stay up the hands of Faith on the one side and the other, that they hang not down, whilst your fears, like those *Amalekites*, fall before you. For what is experience, but the bringing down of the Divine Promises to the test of sense and feeling? It is our duty to believe the Promises without trial and experiments, but it is easier to do it after so many trials; so that your own and others experiences, carefully recorded and seasonably applied, would be food to your Faith, and a cure to many of your fears in a suffering day.

10. *Rule. You can never free your self from sinful fears, 'till you throughly believe and consider Christ's providential Kingdom over all the creatures and affairs in this lower world.*

Poor timorous Soul! is there not a King, a supreme Lord under whom Devils and Men are? hath not Christ the reins of government in his hands? *Mat.* 28. 18 *Phil.* 2. 9, 10, 11, 12. *John* 17. 2. Were this dominion of Christ, and dependence of all creatures on him, well studied and believed, it would cut off both our trust in men, and our fear of men; we should soon discern they have no power either to help us or to hurt us, but what they receive from above. Our enemies are apt to over-rate their own power in their pride, and we are as apt to over-rate it too in our fears. *Knowest thou not* (saith *Pilate* to Christ) *that I have power to crucifie thee, and I have power to release thee? q. d.* Refusest thou to answer me? dost thou not know who and what I am? Yes, yes, saith Christ, I know thee well enough to be a poor impotent creature, who hast no power at all but what is given thee from above; I know thee, and therefore do not fear thee. But we are apt to take their own boasts for truth, and believe their power to be such as they vainly vogue it to be; whereas in truth all your enemies are sustained by Christ, *Col.* 1. 17. they are bounded and limited by Christ, *Rev.* 2. 10. Providence hath its influences upon their hearts and wills immediately, *Jer.* 15. 11. *Psal.* 106. 46. So that they cannot do whatever they would do, but their wills as well as their hands are ordered by God. *Jacob* was in *Laban*'s and in *Esau*'s hands; both hated him, but neither could hurt him. *David* was in *Saul*'s hand, who hunted for him as a prey, yet is forced to dismiss him quietly, blessing instead of slaying him. *Melancthon* and *Pomeren* both fell into the hands of *Charles* V. than whom *Christendom* had not a more prudent Prince, nor the Church of Christ a fiercer enemy; yet he treats these great and active Reformers gently, dismisseth them freely, not once forbidding them to preach or print the Doctrine which he so much opposed and hated.

Oh Christian! if ever thou wilt get above thy fears, settle these things upon thy heart by faith.

1. That the reins of Government are in *Christ*'s hands; enemies, like wild horses, may prance and tramp up and down the world, as tho' they would tread down all that are in their way; but the bridle of providence is in their mouths, and upon their proud necks, 2 *Kings* 19. 28. and that bridle hath a strong curb.

2. The care of the Saints properly pertains to *Christ*; he is the head of the body, *Eph.* 1. 22, 23. our consulting head; and it were a reproach and dishonour to *Christ*, to fill our own heads with distracting cares and fears, when we have so wise an head to consult and contrive for us.

3. You

3. You have lived all your days upon the care of *Christ* hitherto; no truth is more manifest than this, that there hath been a Wisdom beyond your own, that hath guided your ways, *Jer.* 10. 23. a Power above your own, that hath supported your burdens, *Psal.* 73. 26. a spring of relief out of your selves that hath supplied all your wants, *Luke* 22. 35. He hath performed all things for you.

4. *Jesus Christ* hath secured his people by many promises to take care of them, how dangerous soever the times shall be, *Eccles.* 8. 12. *Psal.* 76. 10 *Amos* 9. 8, 9. *Rom.* 8. 28. Oh! if these things were throughly believed and well improved, fears could no more distract or afflict our hearts, than storms or clouds could trouble the upper Region: but we forget his Providences and Promises, and so are justly left in the hands of our own fears to be afflicted for it.

11. *Rule. Subject your carnal reasonings to Faith, and keep your thoughts more under the government of Faith, if ever you expect a composed and quiet heart in distracting evil times.*

He that layeth aside the Rules of Faith, and measures all things by the rule of his own shallow reason will be his own bugbear; if reason may be permitted to judge all things, and to make its own inferences and conclusions from the aspects and appearances of second causes, your hearts shall have no rest day nor night; this alone will keep you in continual Alarms.

And yet how apt are the best men to measure things by this rule, and to judge of all God's designs and mysterious providences by it! In other things it is the Judge and *Arbiter*, and therefore we would make it so here too; and what it concludes and dictates we are prone to believe, because its dictates are back'd and befriended by sense, whence it gathers its intelligence and information. *O quam sapiens argumentatrix sibi videtur ratio humana?* How wise and strong do its Arguments and Conclusions seem to us! saith *Luther*. This carnal reason is the thing that puts us into such confusions of mind and thoughts. 'Tis this that,

1. Quarrels with the promises, shakes their credit, and our confidence in them, *Ex.* 5. 22, 23.

2. 'Tis this that boldly limits the Divine Power, and assigns it boundaries of its own fixing, *Psal.* 78. 20, 41.

3. 'Tis carnal reason that draws desperate conclusions from providential appearances and aspects, 1 *Sam.* 27. 1. and prognosticates our ruin from them.

4. 'Tis this carnal reason that puts us upon sinful shifts and indirect courses to deliver and save our selves from danger, which do but the more perplex and entangle us, *Isa.* 30. 15, 16.

5. It is mostly from our arrogant reasonings that our thoughts are discomposed and divided; from this fountain it is that they flow into our hearts in multitudes when dangers are near, *Psal.* 94. 19. *Psal.* 42. 1.

All these mischiefs owe themselves to the exorbitant actings and intrusions of our carnal reasons; but these things ought not to be so, this is beside Rule. For,

1. Tho' there be nothing in the matters of Faith or Providence contrary to right Reason, yet there are many things in both, quite above the reach, and beyond the ken of reason, *Isa.* 55. 8. And,

2. The confident dictates of reason are frequently confuted by experience all the world over; 'tis every day made a liar, and the frights it puts us into, proved to be vain and groundless, *Isa.* 51. 13.

Nothing then can be better for us, than to resign up our reason to Faith, to see all things thro' the promises, and trust God over all events.

12. *Rule. To conclude, exalt the fear of God in your hearts, and let it gain the ascendant over all your other fears:*

This is the prescription in my Text for the cure of all our slavish fears, and indeed all the forementioned Rules for the cure of sinful fears run into this, and are reducible to it. For,

1. Doth the knowledge and application of the Covenant of Grace cure our Fears? The fear of God is both a part of that Covenant, and an Evidence of our interest in it, *Jer.* 32. 40.

2. Doth sinful fear plunge men into such distresses of Conscience? Why, the fear of God will preserve your ways clean and pure, *Psal.* 19. 9. and so those mischiefs will be prevented.

3. Doth fore-sight and provision for evil days prevent distracting Fears when they come? Nothing like the Fear of God enables us to such a prevision and provision for them, *Heb.* 11. 7.

4. Do we relieve our selves against fear by committing all to God? Surely it is the fear of God that drives us to him as our only *Asylum* and sure refuge, *Mal.* 3. 16. *They feared God, and thought upon his Name,* (*i. e.*) they meditated his Name, which was their refuge, his Attributes their chambers of rest.

5. Must our affections to the world be mortified before our fears can be subdued? This is the instrument of mortification, *Neh.* 5. 15.

6. Do the worthy examples of those that are gonebefore us, tend to the cure of our cowardice and fears? Why, the fear of God will provoke in you an holy self-jealousie, lest you fail of the grace they manifested, and come short of those excellent patterns, *Heb.* 12. 15.

7. Is the assurance of interest in God, and the pardon of sin, such an excellent Antidote against slavish fear? Why, he that walks in the fear of God, shall walk in the comforts of the Holy Ghost also, *Acts* 9. 31.

8. Is integrity of heart and way such a fountain of courage in evil times? Know, Reader, no grace promotes this integrity and uprightness more than the fear of God doth, *Prov.* 16. 6. *Prov.* 23. 17.

9. Do the reviving of past experiences suppress sinful fears? No doubt this was the subject which the fear of God put them upon, for mutual encouragement, *Mal.* 3. 16.

10. Are the Providences of God in this world such cordials against fear? The fear of God is the very character and mark of those Persons over whom his Providence shall watch in the difficultest times, *Eccles.* 8. 12.

11. Doth our trusting in our own reason, and making it our rule and measure, breed so many fears? Why, the fear of God will take men off from such self-confidence, and bring them to trust the faithful God with all doubtful issues and events, as the very scope of my Text fully manifests. Fear not their fear; their fear moving by the direction of carnal reason, drove them not to God, but to the *Assyrian* for help. Follow not you their example in this. But how shall they help it? Why, *sanctify the Lord of Hosts, and make him your Fear.*

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Answering the most material Pleas for slavish Fears, and dissolving the common Objections against Courage and Constancy of Mind in times of Danger.

THE Pleas and Excuses for our cowardly Faintness in the Day of Trouble are endless, and so would his Task be that should undertake particularly to answer them all. 'Tis but the cutting off an *Hydra*'s Head, when one is gone, ten more start up; what is most material I will here take into Consideration. When good Men (for with such I am dealing in this Chapter) see a formidable Face and Appearance of sharp and bloody times approaching them, they begin to tremble, their Hearts faint, and their Hands hang down with unbecoming Despondency, and Pusillanimity; their Thoughts are so distracted, their Reason and Faith so clouded by their Fears, that their Temptations are thereby exceedingly strengthened upon them, and their Principles and Professions brought under the Derision and Contempts of their Enemies; and if their Brethren to whom God hath given more Courage and Constancy, and who discern the Mischief like to ensue from their uncomely Carriage, admonish and advise them of it: They have abundance of Pleas and Defences for their Fears, yea, when they reason the point of suffering in their own Thoughts, and the Matter is debated (as in such times it's common) betwixt Faith and Fear, O what endless Work do their Fears put upon their Faith to solve all the *Buts* and *Ifs* which their Fears will object or suppose.

Some of the principal of them I think it worth while here to consider, and endeavour to satisfie, that if possible I may prevail with all gracious Persons to be more magnanimous. And first of all,

1 *Plea.* Sufferings for Christ are strange things to the Christians of this Age, we have had the happy Lot to fall into milder times than the Primitive Christians did, or those that strugled in our own Land in the beginning of Reformation; and therefore we may be excused for our Fears, by reason of our own unacquaintedness with Sufferings in our times.

Answer. 1. One fault is but a bad Excuse for another, why are Sufferings such Strangers to you? Why did you not cast upon them in the Days of Peace, and reckon that such Days must come? Did you not covenant with Christ to follow him whithersoever he should go, to take up your Cross and follow him? And did not the World plainly tell you, that *All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution*, 2 *Tim.* 3. 12. *And that we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God*, Acts 14. 22. Did we fall asleep in quiet and prosperous Days, and dream of Halcyon Days all our time on Earth? that the Mountain of our Prosperity stood strong, and we should never be moved? That we should die in our Nest, and multiply our Days as the Sand; *Babylon*'s Children indeed dream so, *Rev.* 18. 7. but the Children of *Sion* should be better instructed. Alas! how soon may the brightest Day be overcast? The Weather is not so variable, as the State of the Church in this World is; now a Calm, *Acts* 9. 31. and then a Storm, *Acts* 12. 1, 2. You could not but know what contingent and variable Things on Earth are; why then did you delude your selves with such fond Dreams? But as a learned Man rightly observes, *Mundus senescens patitur Phantasias*, The older the World grows, the more drowzie and doting it still grows, and these are the Days in which the wise as well as the foolish Virgins slumber. Sure 'tis but a bad Plea, after so many Warnings from the Word, and from the Rod to say, I did not think of such times, I dreamed not of them. *Gerson.*

2. Or if you say, though you have conversed with Death and Sufferings by Speculation, yet you lived not in such times wherein you might see (as other Sufferers did) the encouraging Faith, Patience and Zeal of others set before your Eyes in a lively Pattern and Example. Sufferings were not only familiarized to them by frequency, but facilitated also by the daily Examples of those that went before them.

But think you indeed that nothing but Encouragement and Advantage to Followers, arose from the Trials of those that went before? Alas, there were sometimes the greatest Damps and Discouragements imaginable; the Zeal of those that followed hath often been inflamed by the Faintings of those that were tried before them. In the Seventh Persecution under *Decius*, there were standing before the Tribunal, certain of the Warriours or Knights, *viz.* *Ammon*, *Zenon*, *Ptolomeus*, *Ingenuus*, and a certain aged Man called *Theophilus*, who all standing by as Spectators when a certain Christian was examined, and there seeing him for fear, ready to decline, and fall away, did almost burst for Sorrow within themselves: they made signs to him with their Hands, and all Gestures of the Body to be constant; this being noted by all the Standers by, they were ready to lay hold upon them; but they preventing the Matter, pressed up of their own accord, before the Bench of the Judge, professing themselves to be Christians, insomuch that both the *President* and the *Benchers* were all astonished, and the Christians which were judged, the more encouraged. Such damping Spectacles the Christians of former Ages had frequently set them before them. *Anno* 250.

And it was no small Trial to some of them, to hear the Faintings and Abnegation of those that went before them, pleaded against their Constancy; as in the time of *Valens* it was urged by the Persecutors: Those that came to their Trial before you, have acknowledged their Errors, begged our Pardon, and returned to us; and why will you stand it out so obstinately? But the Christians answered, *Nos hac potissimum ratione viriliter stabimus, For this very reason we will stand to it the more manfully, to repair their scandal, by our greater courage for Christ.* These were the helps and advantages they often had in those days, therefore lay not so much stress upon that; their courage undoubtedly flowed from an higher spring and better principle, than the company they suffered with.

3. And if presidents and experiences of others to break the Ice before you, be so great an advantage, surely we that live in these latter times have the most and best helps of that nature that ever any people in the world had. You have all their examples recorded for your encouragement, and therefore *Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, as though some strange thing had happened to you*,

as the Apostle speaks, 1 *Pet.* 4. 12. This Plea is weighed, and no great weight found in it.

2 *Plea.* But my Nature is soft and tender, my constitution more weak and subject to the Impressions of Fear than others; some that have robust Bodies and hardy stout Minds, may better grapple with such Difficulties than I can, who by Constitution and Education am altogether unfit to grapple with those Torments that I have not Patience enough to hear related; my Heart faints and dies within me, if I do but read or hear of the barbarous Usages of the Martyrs, and therefore I may well be excused for my Fears and Faint-heartedness when the Case is like to be my own.

Answer. 1. 'Tis a great Mistake to think that the meer Strength of natural constitution can carry any one thro' such sufferings for Christ, or that natural tenderness and weakness divinely assisted, cannot bear the heaviest burden that ever God laid upon the Shoulders of any sufferer for *Christ*. Our suffering and bearing abilities are not from Nature, but from Grace We find men of strong bodies, and resolute daring minds, have fainted in the time of trial. Dr. *Pendleton* in our own story was a Man of a robust and massy body, and a resolute daring mind; yet when he came to the trial, he utterly fainted and fell off. On the other side, what poor feeble bodies have sustained the greatest torments, and out of weakness been made strong! *Heb.* 11. 34. The Virgin *Eulalia* of *Emerita* in *Portugal* was young and tender, for twelve years old, and with much indulgence and tenderness brought up in an honourable Family, being a Person of considerable Quality; yet how courageously did she sustain the most cruel torments for *Christ!* When the Judge fawn'd upon her with this tempting Language, *Why wilt thou kill thy self, so young a flower, and so near those honourable Marriages and great Dowries thou mightiest enjoy?* Instead of returning a retracting or doubtful Answer, *Eulalia* threw down the Idol, and spurn'd abroad with her feet the heap of Incense prepared for the censers; and when the Executioner came to her, she entertain'd him with this language: *Go to, thou Hangman, burn, cut, mangle thou these earthly members; it is an easier matter to break a brittle substance, but the inward mind thou shalt not hurt.* And when one Joint was pull'd from another, she said, *Behold what a pleasure it is for them, oh Christ! that remember thy triumphant victories, to attain unto these high Dignities.* So that our constitutional strength is not to be made the measure of our passive fortitude: God can make the feeblest and tendrest person stand, when strong bodies and blustering, resolute daring minds faint and fall.

Acts and Mon. V. 1. p. 120.

2. Are our bodies so weak, and hearts so tender, that we can bear no sufferings for Christ? Then we are no way fit to be his followers. Christianity is a Warfare, and Christians must endure hardship, 2 *Tim.* 2. 3. Delicacy and Tenderness is as odd a sight in a Christian as it is in a Soldier; and we cannot be Christ's Disciples except we deliberate the terms, and having considered well what it is like to cost us, do resolve in the strength of God to run the hazard of all with him and for him. 'Tis in vain to talk of a Religion that we think not worthy the suffering and enduring any great matter for.

3. And if indeed, Reader, thy constitution be so delicate and tender, that thou art not able to bear the thoughts of torments for Christ, how is it thou art not more terrified with the torments of Hell, which all they that deny Christ on earth must feel and bear eternally? Oh what is the wrath of Man in comparison with the wrath of God! but as the bite of a flea to the rendings of a Lion. This is the consideration propounded by Christ in *Mat.* 10. 28. *Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* The infinite and insupportable wrath of the great and terrible God should make our Souls shrink and shake at the thoughts of it, rather than the Sufferings of the flesh, which are but for a moment.

4. Know that the wisdom and tenderness of thy father will proportion the burden thou must bear to thy back that must bear it; he will rebate in measure, and not overload thy feeble Shoulders: Thou shalt find those things easie in trial, that now seem insupportable in the terrible prospect; a way of escape or support will certainly be opened, that thou maist be able to bear it.

3 *Plea.* But others plead the sad experience they have had of their own feebleness and weakness in former trials and exercises of an inferior nature, in which their Faith and Patience hath failed them: and how can they imagine they shall ever be able to stand in the fiercest and most fiery trial? If we have run with the footmen, and they have wearied us in the land of peace, how shall we then contend with horses in the swellings of *Jordan*? *Jer.* 12. 5.

Answer. 1. We are strong or weak in all our trials, be they great or small, according to the assisting grace we receive from above; if he leave us in a common and light trial to our own strength, it will be our over-match, and if he assist us in great and extraordinary trials we shall be more than Conquerors. At one time *Abraham* could offer up his only Son to God with his own hand; at another time he is so afraid of his life, that he acts very unsuitable to the Character of a Believer, and was shamefully rebuk'd for it by *Abimelech*. At one time *David* could say, *Tho' an host encamp against me I will not fear*; at another time he feigns himself mad, and acted beneath himself, both as a Man, and as a Man enriched with so much faith and experience. At one time *Peter* is afraid to be interrogated by a Maid; at another time he could boldly confront the whole Council, and own Christ and his Truths to their Faces. In extraordinary trials we may warrantably expect extraordinary assistances, and by them we shall be carried through the greatest, how often soever we have failed in smaller trials.

2. The design and end of God in giving us experience of our own weakness in lesser troubles, is not to discourage and daunt us against we come to greater (which is the use Satan here makes of it) but to take us off from self-confidence and self-dependence; to make us see our own weakness, that we may more heartily and humbly betake our selves to him in the way of faith and fervent supplication.

4. *Plea.* But some will object that they cannot help their fears and tremblings when any danger appears; because fear is the disease, at least the sad effect and symptom of a disease, with which God hath wounded them; a deep and fixed melancholy hath so far prevailed, that the least trouble overcomes them: If any sad afflictive providence befal, or but threaten them; their fears presently rise, and their hearts sink, sleep departs, thoughts tumul-

tumultuate, the blood boils, and the whole frame of nature is put into disorder. If therefore the Lord should permit such great and dreadful trials to befal them, they can think of nothing less than dying by the hand of their own fears, before the hand of any enemy touch them; or which is a thousand times worse, be driven by their fears into the Net of temptation, even to deny the Lord that bought them.

Answer. This I know is the sad Case of many gracious persons, and I have reason to pity those that are thus exercised; O 'tis an heavy stroke, a dismal state, a deep wound indeed: But yet the wisdom of God hath ordered this affliction upon his people for gracious ends and uses; hereby they are made the more tender and watchful, circumspect and careful in their ways, that they may shun and escape as many occasions of trouble as they can, being so unable to grapple with them: I say not but there are higher and nobler motives that make 'em circumspect and tender, but yet the preservation of our own quietness is useful in its place, and 'tis a mercy if that or any thing else be sanctified to prevent sin, and promote care of duty. This is your clog to keep you from straying.

2. And when you shall be called forth to greater trials, that which you now call your snare, may be your advantage, and that in divers respects.

1. These very distempers of body and mind serve to imbitter the comforts and pleasures of this world to you, and make life it self less desirable to you than it is to others, they much wean your hearts from, and make life more burdensom to you than it is to others, who enjoy more of the pleasure and sweetness of it than you can do. I have often thought this to be one design and end of Providence in permitting such distempers to seize so many gracious persons as labour under it, and providence knows how to make use of this effect to singular purpose and advantage to you, when a call to suffering shall come; this may have its place and use under higher and more spiritual considerations to facilitate death, and make your separation from this world the more easie to you; for though it be a more noble and raised act of faith and self-denial to offer up to God our lives, when they are made most pleasant and desirable to us upon natural accounts, yet it is not so easie to part with them as it is when God hath first imbittered them to us. Your lives are of little value to you now, because of this burdensome clog you must draw after you, but if you should increase your burden by so horrid an addition of guilt, as the denying of Christ, or his known truths would do, you would not know what to do with such a life; it would certainly lie upon your hands as a burthen. God knows how to use these things in the way of his providence to your great advantage.

It was common with the Martyrs to sweeten death to themselves, by reckoning what infirmities it would cure them of, one of his blindness, another of his lameness, &c.

2. Art thou a poor melancholy and timorous person? Certainly if thou be gracious as well as timorous this will drive thee nearer to God; and the greater thy dangers are, the more frequent and fervent will thy addresses to him be: Thou feelest the need of everlasting arms underneath to bear thee up under, and to carry thee thro' smaller troubles, that other persons make nothing of, much more in such deep trials, that put the strongest Christians to the utmost of their faith and patience.

And 3dly. What if the Lord will make an advantage out of your weakness, to display more evidently his own power in your report? you know what the Apostle saith, 1 *Cor.* 12. 9, 10. *And he said unto me, my grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness: most gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me ——. for when I am weak then am I strong.* If his Infirmities might serve as a foil to set off the grace of God with a more bright and sparkling lustre, he would rejoice in his Infirmities, and so should you: Well then, let not this discourage you, the infirmity of nature you complain of may make death the less terrible: it served to that purpose to blessed *Basil* (as you heard before) when his enemy threaten'd to tear out his Liver, he thought it a kindness to have that Liver torn out that had given him so much trouble. It may drive thee nearer to God, and minister a fit opportunity for the display of his grace in the time of need.

5 *Plea.* But what if God should hide his face from my soul in the day of my streights and troubles, and not only so, but permit Satan to buffet me with his horrid temptations and injections, and so I should sail like the Ship in which *Paul* sailed, betwixt these two boisterous Seas; what can I suspect less than a shipwrack of my soul, body, and all the comforts of both, in this world, and in that to come?

Answer. 1. So far as the fears of such a misery awaken you to prayer for the prevention of it, it may be serviceable to your souls, but when it only works distraction and despondency of mind, it is your sin, and Satan's snare. The Prophet *Jeremy* made a good use of such a supposed evil by way of deprecation, *Jer.* 17. 17. *Be not a terror unto me, thou art my hope in the day of evil. q. d.* In the evil day I have no place of retreat or refuge, but thy love and favour; Lord, that is all I have to depend on, and relieve my self by: I comfort my self against trouble with this confidence, that if men be cruel, yet thou wilt be kind; if they frown, thou wilt smile; if the world cast me out, thou wilt take me in; but if thou shouldest be a terror to me instead of a comforter, if they afflict my body, and thou affright my soul with thy frowns too; what a deplorable condition shall I be in then! improve it to such an end as he did, to secure the favour of God, and it will do you no harm.

2. It is not usual with God to estrange himself from his people in trouble, nor to frown upon them when Men do. The common experience of Believers stands ready to attest and seal this truth, that Christians never find more kindness from God, than when they feel most cruelty from Men for his sake: consult the whole cloud of witnesses, and you will find they have still found the undoubted verity of that tried word in 1 *Pet.* 4. 14. That *the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon sufferers.* The expression seems to allude to the Dove that *Noah* sent forth out of the Ark, which flew over the watry world, but could not rest her self any where till she returned to the Ark. So the Spirit of God, called here the Spirit of Glory, from his effects and fruits, *viz.* his chearing, sealing and reviving influences which make Men glory and triumph in the most afflicted state. This Spirit of God seems like that Dove to hover up and down, to flee hither and thither, over this person and that, but resteth not so long upon any, as those that suffer for righteousness sake, there he commonly takes up his abode and residence.

3. And what if it ſhould fall out in ſome reſpect according to your fears, that Heaven and Earth ſhould be both clouded together? yet it will not be long before the pleaſant light will ſpring up to you again, *Pſal.* 112. 4. *Unto the upright there ariſeth light in the darkneſs.* You ſhall have his ſupporting preſence 'till the comforter do come. When Mr. *Glover* came within ſight of the ſtake, he ſuddenly cries out, *Oh* Auſtin! *he is come! he is come!*

6. *Plea.* Oh! but what if my trial ſhould be long, and the ſiege of Temptations tedious? then I am perſwaded I am loſt; I am no way able to continue long in a Priſon, or in tortures for Chriſt, I have no ſtrength to endure a long ſiege, my patience is too ſhort to hold out from month to month, and from year to year, as many have done. Oh! I dread the thoughts of long-continued trials, I tremble to think what muſt be the iſſue.

Anſwer. 1. Cannot you diſtruſt your own ſtrength, and ability, but you muſt alſo limit God's? What if you have but a ſmall ſtock of patience? cannot the Lord ſtrengthen you with all might in the inner-man unto all patience and long-ſuffering with joyfulneſs, according to his glorious power, 1 *Col.* 11? And is it not his promiſe to confirm you to the end, 1 *Cor.* 1. 8? You neither know *how much*, nor *how long* you can bear and ſuffer. It is not inherent, but aſſiſting Grace, by which your ſuffering abilities are to be meaſured. God can make that little ſtock of patience you have to hold out as the poor Widow's Cruiſe of Oyl did, 'till deliverance come; he can enable your patience unto its perfect work, (*i. e.*) to work as *extenſively* to all the kinds and ſorts of trials, as *intenſively* to the higheſt degree of trial, and as *protenſively* to the longeſt duration and continuance of your trials, as he would have it: If this be a marvellous thing in your eyes, muſt it be ſo in God's eyes alſo?

2. The Lord knows the proper ſeaſon to come in to the relief of your ſliding and fainting patience, and will aſſuredly come in accordingly in that ſeaſon; for ſo run the promiſes, *The Lord ſhall judge his people, and repent himſelf for his ſervants when he ſeeth that their power is gone, and that there is none ſhut up or left,* *Deut.* 32. 36. *Cum duplicantur lateres venit* Moſes; In the Mount of difficulties and extremities it ſhall be ſeen. *The rod of the wicked ſhall not reſt upon the lot of the righteous, leſt the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity,* Pſal. 125. 3. *Ubi deſinit humanum, ibi incipit divinum auxilium*; God's power watches the opportunity of your weakneſs.

7. *Plea.* But what if I ſhould be put to cruel and exquiſite tortures, ſuppoſe to the rack, to the fire, or ſuch moſt dreadful ſufferings as other Chriſtians have been? What ſhall I do? do I think I am able to bear it? is my ſtrength the ſtrength of ſtone, or are my bones braſs, that ever I ſhould endure ſuch barbarous cruelties? Alas! Death in the mildeſt form is terrible to me: how terrible then muſt ſuch a Death be?

Anſwer. Who enabled thoſe Chriſtians you mention to endure theſe things? They loved their lives, and ſenſed their pains as well as you, they had the ſame thoughts and fears, many of them, that you now have; yet God carried them through all, and ſo he can you. Did not he make the devouring Flames a bed of Roſes to ſome of them? was he not within the fires? did he not abate the extremity of the torment, and enable weak and tender perſons to endure them patiently and chearfully? ſome ſinging in the midſt of flames, others clapping their hands triumphantly, and to the laſt ſight that could be had of them in this world nothing appeared but ſigns and demonſtrations of joy unſpeakable. Ah Friends! we judge of ſufferings by the out-ſide and appearance, which is terrible; but we know not the in-ſide of ſufferings, which is exceeding comfortable. Oh! when ſhall we have done with our unbelieving *ifs* and *buts*, our queſtionings and doubtings of the Power, Wiſdom, and tender care of our God over us, and learn to truſt him over all. Now *the Juſt ſhall live by Faith*; and he that lives by Faith ſhall never die by Fear. The more you truſt God, the leſs you will torment your ſelves. I have done; the Lord ſtrengthen, ſtabliſh, and ſettle the trembling and feeble hearts of his people, by what hath been ſo ſeaſonably offered for their relief by a weak hand. *Amen.*

The Righteous Man's Refuge.

The Epiſtle to the Reader.

Chriſtian Reader,

IF Heinſius, *when he had ſhut up himſelf in the Library at* Leiden, *reckoned himſelf placed in the very lap of Eternity, becauſe he converſed there with ſo many Divine Souls, and profeſſed, he took his ſeat in it with ſo lofty a Spirit and ſweet Content, that he heartily pitied all the great and rich men of the World, that were ignorant of the Happineſs he there daily enjoyed: How much more may that Soul rejoyce in its own Happineſs, who hath ſhut himſelf up in the Chambers of the Divine Attributes, and exerciſe pity for the expoſed and miſerable multitude that are left as a prey to the Temptations and Troubles of the World.*

Plerumque in qua ſimulac pedem poſui, foribus peſſulum obdo, & in ipſo æternitatis gremio inter tot illuſtres animas ſedem mihi ſumo; cum ingenti quidem animo, ut ſubinde Magnatum me miſereat qui felicitatem hanc ignorant. *Epiſtola prima.*

That the days are evil, is a Truth preached to us by the convincing Voice of Senſe; and that they are like to be worſe, few can doubt that look into the moral Cauſes of evil Times, the impudent height of ſin, or into the Prophecies relating to theſe latter days; for whom the ſharpeſt Sufferings are appointed, to make way for the ſweeteſt Mercies. A faithful Watchman of our own hath given us freſh and late warning in theſe words of Truth: Hath God ſaid nothing? Doth Faith ſee nothing of a flood coming upon us? Is there ſuch a Deluge of ſin among us, and doth not that propheſie to us a Deluge of Wrath? Lift up your eyes, Chriſtians, ſtand, and look through the Land, Eaſtward and Weſtward, Northward and Southward, and tell me what you ſee? Behold, a Flood cometh, a Flood of ſin is already broken forth upon us, the Fountains of the great Deeps are broken up, and the Windows of Hell

Mr. R. A. of *Godly Fear.* p. 13.

Hell are opened, &c. *In such an evil day as this is, happy is the Soul that hath made God its refuge, even the most high God its habitation. He shall sit,* Noah-*like,* Mediis tranquillus in undis, *safe from the fear of evil. In consideration of the distress of many unprovided Souls for the misery that is coming on them, and not knowing how short my useful time will be to any, (for I know it cannot be long) I have endeavoured once more the assistance of poor Christians in these two small Treatises, one of* Fear, *the other of* Preparation *for the worst Times; which it may be is the last help I shall this way be able to afford them. It is therefore my earnest request to all that fear the Lord, and tremble at his Word, to redeem their time with double diligence, because the days are evil. To clear up their interest in Christ and the Promises, lest the darkness of their spiritual Estate, meeting with such a night of outward darkness overwhelmed them with Terrors insupportable. Some help is offered in this Treatise to direct the gracious Soul to its rest in God: May the Blessings of his Spirit accompany them, and bless them to the Soul of him that readeth; it will be matter of joy beyond all earthly joys to the heart of*

Thy Friend and Servant in Christ,

John Flavell.

Isa. xxvi. *v.* 20. *Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thy self as it were for a little moment 'till the indignation be over-past.*

CHAP. I.

Wherein the literal and real importance of the Text are considered, the Doctrine propounded, and the method of the following Discourse stated.

Sect. I. MAN being a prudent and prospecting creature, can never be satisfied with present safety, except he may also see himself well secured against future dangers. Upon all appearances of trouble, 'tis natural to him to seek a refuge, that he may be able to *shun* what he is loath to suffer, and survive those calamities which will ruin the defenceless and exposed multitude. Natural Men seek refuge in natural things. *The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit,* Prov. 18. 11. *Hypocrites* make lies their refuge, and under falshood do they hide themselves, *Isa.* 28. 15. not doubting but they shall stand dry and safe, when the over-flowing flood lays all others under water. But,

Godly men make God himself their hiding-place, to him they have still betaken themselves in all ages, as often as calamities have befallen the world, *Psal.* 46. 1. *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.* As chickens run under the wings of the hen for safety when the kite hovers over them, so do they fly to their God for sanctuary, *Psal.* 56. 3. *At what time I am afraid, I will trust in thee; q. d.* Lord, if a Storm of Trouble at any time overtake me, I will make bold to come under thy roof for shelter; and indeed not so bold as welcome; 'tis no presumption in them after so gracious an invitation from their God, *Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers.*

My Friends, a sound of trouble is in our ears; the clouds gather and blacken upon us more and more: Distress of Nations with perplexity seems to be near, our day hastens to an end and the shadows of the night are stretching forth upon us. What greater service therefore can I do for your Souls, than by the light of this scripture (as with a candle in my hand) to lead you to your Chambers, and shew you your Lodgings in the Attributes and Promises of God, before I take my leave of you, and bid you good night.

O with what satisfaction should I part with you, were I but sure to leave you under Christ's wings! It was Christ's lamentation over *Jerusalem,* that they would not be gathered under his wings, when the *Roman* Eagle was ready to hover over that City; and you know how dear they paid for their obstinacy and infidelity. Be warned by that dreadful example, and among the rest of your mercies bless God heartily for this, That so sweet a voice sounds from Heaven in your ears this day, this day of frights and troubles; *Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers,* &c.

This Chapter contains a lovely song fitted for the lips of God's *Israel,* notwithstanding their sad captivity; for their God was with them in *Babylon,* and heard their hearts there with many promises of deliverance, and in the mystical sense, it relates to the New Testament Churches, of whose troubles, protections, and deliverances, the *Jews* in *Babylon* were a *Type.*

This Chapter, tho' full of excellent and seasonable truths, will be too long to Analize; it shall suffice to search back only to the 17. *verse,* where you find the poor captived Church under despondency of mind, comparing her condition to that of a woman in travail, who hath many sharp pains, and bitter throes, yet cannot be delivered, much like that in 2 *Kings* 19. 3. *The children are come to the birth and there is no strength to bring forth.*

Against this discouragement a double relief is applyed in the following verses, the one is a *Promise* of full deliverance at last; the other an *Invitation* into a sure sanctuary and place of defence for the present, untill the time of their full deliverance came. The promise we have in *verse* 19. *Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise; awake and sing ye that dwell in the dust,* &c. Their captivity was a civil death, and *Babylon* as a grave to them. So it is elsewhere described, *Ezek.* 37. *v.* 1, 2, 14. *I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves and bring you into the land of* Israel. And therefore their deliverance is carried under the notion of a resurrection in that promise.

Object. Yea, (might they reply) the hopes of deliverance at last is some comfort, but alas, that may be far off; How shall we subsist till then?

Sol. Well enough, for as you have in that promise a sure ground of deliverance at last, so in the interim here is a gracious invitation into a place of security for the present, *Come, my people, enter thou into thy Chambers.* In which invitation Four things call for our close attention.

1. The *Form* of the invitation, including in it the qualified subject, *Come, my people.* God's own peculiar people, who have chosen God for their portion; and resigned up themselves sincerely to him in the

the Covenant, are the persons here invited, the same which he before called the righteous nation that kept the truth, *verse* 2. he means those that remained faithful to God (as many of them did in *Babylon*, witness their sorrow for *Sion*, *Psal* 137. *per totum*; and their solemn appeal to God that their hearts were not turned back, nor had their steps declined though they were sore broken in the place of Dragons, and covered with the shadow of death, *Psal.* 44. 18, 19, 20. These are the people invited to the chambers of security. And the form of invitation is full of tender compassion; *Come, my people*; like a tender father that sees a storm coming upon his children in the fields, and takes them by the hand, saying, Come away my dear children, hasten home with me lest the storm overtake you, or as the Lord said to *Noah* before the Deluge, Come thou and all thy house into the Ark, and God shut him in, *Gen.* 7. 1, 16. This is the form of the invitation, *Come, my people.*

2. The privilege invited to; *Enter thou into thy Chambers.* There is some variety, and indeed variety rather than contrariety in the exposition of these words.

2. In this all are agreed, that by their Chambers, is not meant the Chambers of their own Houses; for alas, their Houses were left unto them desolate; and if not, yet they could be no security to them now, when neither their own houses nor their fortified city was able to defend them before. *Ezek.* 21. 13.

Grotius expounds it of the Grave, and makes these Chambers the same with the Chambers of death. *Ite in cubicula, i. e. sepulchra vestra.* The grave indeed is a place of security where God sometimes hides some of his people in troublesome times, as is plain in *Isa.* 57. 1, 2. but I cannot allow this to be the sense of this Text; God doth not comfort his captives with a natural against a civil death, but with protection in their troubles upon earth, as is evident from the scope of the whole Chapter. Grot. in loc.

By Chambers therefore, others understand the Chambers of Divine Providence, where the Saints are hid in evil days. So our *Annotators* on the place, and no doubt but this is in part the special intendment of the Text.

Others understand the *Attributes* and *Promises* of God to be here meant, as well as his providences. And I conceive all three make the sense of the Text full, (*i. e.*) the Divine Attributes engaged in the promise and exercised or actuated in the providences of God; these are the sanctuaries and refuges of God's people in days of trouble.

Calvin understands it of the quiet repose of the Believers mind in God, but that is rather the effect of his security, than the place of it. It's God's Attributes or his Name (which is the same thing) to which the righteous fly and are safe, *Prov.* 18. 10.

Object. But you will say, why are they called *their Chambers?* Those Attributes are not theirs, but God's.

Sol. The answer is easie, though they be God's Properties, yet they are his Peoples Privileges, and Benefits; for when God makes over himself to them in Covenant to be their God, he doth as it were deliver to them the Keys of all his Attributes for their benefit and security; and is as if he should say, my wisdom is yours, to contrive for your good; my power is yours, to protect your persons; my mercy yours, to forgive your sins: my all-sufficiency yours to supply your wants? all that I am, and all that I have, is for your benefit and comfort. These are the Chambers provided for the Saints lodgings, and into these they are invited to enter. *Enter thou into thy Chambers.* By entering into them understand their actual faith exercised in acts of affiance, and resignation to God in all their dangers. So *Psal.* 56. 3. *At what time I am afraid* (saith *David*) *I will trust in thee: q. d.* Lord, if a Storm come I will make bold to shelter my self from it under thy wings by faith; look as unbelief shuts the doors of all God's Attributes and promises against us; so faith opens them all to the Soul, and so much of the privilege invited to, which is the second thing.

3. We have here a needful caution for the securing of this privilege to our selves in evil times, *shut thy doors about thee.* Or as the *Syriack* renders דערך behind or after thee, *i. e.* saith *Calvin*, *Diligenter cavendum ne ulla rimula diabolo ad nos pateat.* Care must be taken that no passage be left open to the Devil to creep in after us and drive us out of our refuge; for so it falls out too often with God's people, when they are at rest in God's name or promises, *Satan* creeps in by unbelieving doubts and puzling objections, and beats them out of their refuge back again into trouble; it is therefore of great concernment in such times especially, *not to give place to the Devil*, as the phrase is, *Eph.* 4. 17. but cleave to God by a resolved reliance.

4. Lastly, we are to note with what Arguments or motives they are prest to betake themselves to this refuge. There are two found in the Text, the one working upon their *fear*, the other upon their *hope.*

1. That which works upon their *fear*, is a supposition of a storm coming, the indignation of God will fall like a tempest; this is supposed in the Text, and plainly expressed in the Words following, *For the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the Inhabitants of the earth*, ver. 21.

2. The other is fitted to work upon their *hope*, though his Indignation fall like a storm, yet it will not continue long; it shall be but for a moment, better days and more comfortable dispensations will follow. From all which the general Observation is this.

Doct. That the Attributes, Promises, and Providences of God are the Chambers of rest and security, in which his people are to hide themselves, when they foresee the storms of his indignation coming upon the World.

The name of the Lord (saith *Solomon*) *is a strong Tower; the righteous run into it, and are safe*, *Prov.* 18. 10. And his Attributes are his name, *Exod.* 34. 5. For by them he is known as a man is known by his name, and this his name is a strong Tower for his peoples security; now what is the use and end of a Tower in a City, but to receive and secure the Inhabitants when the outworks are beaten to the ground, the walls scaled, and the houses left desolate?

And as it is here resembled to a Tower, so in *Isa.* 33. 16. Its shadowed out unto us by a munition of rocks, *His place of defence shall be a munition of rocks.* How secure is that person that is invironed with rocks on every side? Yea you will say, but yet a rock is but a cold and barren refuge, though other enemies cannot, yet hunger and thirst can invade and kill him there. No, in this rock is a store-house of provision, as well as a magazine for defence; so it follows *Bread shall be given him and his water shall be sure.*

And sometimes it is resembled to us by the wings of a fowl, spread with much tenderness over her young for their defence, *Psal.* 57. 1. *Yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge until these calamities be overpast.* So *Psal.* 17. 8. *Keep me as the apple of*

of thine eye, hide me under the ſhadow of thy wings. No part of the body hath more guards upon it, than the apple of the eye. God is as careful to preſerve his people, as men are to preſerve their eyes; *and he that toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eyes.* But we need not go from one Metaphor to another, to ſhew you where the Saints refuge is in time of danger, you have a whole bundle of them lying together in that one Scripture, *Pſal.* 18. 2. *The Lord is my rock and my fortreſs, and my deliverer, my God, my ſtrength in whom I will truſt, my buckler, and the horn of my ſalvation, and my high tower.* Where you find all kinds of defence, whether natural, or artificial, under a pleaſant variety of apt Metaphors, aſcribed to God for the ſecurity of his people.

Now for the caſting of this great point into as eaſy and profitable a Method as I can; I ſhall reſolve this general Truth into theſe following Propoſitions, which are implied or expreſſed in the Text and Doctrine thence deduced; and the firſt is this.

1 Prop. *That there are times and ſeaſons appointed by God for the pouring out of his indignation upon the world.*

2 Prop. *That God's own people are concerned in, and ought to be affected with thoſe Judgments.*

3 Prop. *That God hath a ſpecial and particular care of his people in the days of his Indignation.*

4 Prop. *That God uſually premoniſhes the world, eſpecially his own people, of his Judgments before they befall them.*

5 Prop. *That God's Attributes, Promiſes, and Providences are prepared for the ſecurity of his people, in the greateſt diſtreſſes that befall them in the world.*

6 Prop. *That none but God's people are taken into thoſe chambers of ſecurity, or can expect his ſpecial protection in evil times.*

And then I ſhall apply the whole in the proper ſes of it.

CHAP. II.

emonſtrating the firſt Propoſition, That there are times and ſeaſons appointed by God for the pouring out of his indignation upon the world.

ect. I. THis is plainly implyed in the Text, that there are times of indignation appointed to befal the world; yea, and more than is; not only that ſuch times ſhall come, but the uration and continuance is alſo under an appointlent. *Hide thy ſelf for a little moment, until the indigtion be over-paſt.* The Prophet tells us in *Zeph.* 2. 2. at theſe ſtormy times are under a decree, and at decree is there compared to a pregnant Woan which is to go out her appointed months, and len to travail and bring forth: Even ſo it is in the dgments God brings upon the world. We ſee em not in the days of provocation, *ſed adhuc fœtus utero latet,* but all this while it is in the womb of e decree, and at the appointed ſeaſon they ſhall beme viſible to the world. As there are in Nature ir Halcyon days, and cloudy, overcaſt, and ſtory: So 'tis in providences, *Eccleſ.* 7. 14. *God hath one over againſt the other.* Yea, one is the occaſi- of the other; for look as the Sun in a hot day hales abundance of vapours from the Earth and a, theſe occaſion ſhowers, thunder and tempeſts, d thoſe again clear the Air, and diſpoſe it to fair ather again. So it is here, Proſperity is the occan of abundance of ſin, this brings on adverſity m the juſtice of God to correct it; adverſity be- ſanctified, humbles, reforms, and purges the ople of God, and this again by mercy procures their proſperity: So you find the Account ſtated in *Pſal.* 107. 17. *Fools becauſe of their iniquities are afflicted, then they cry to the Lord in their troubles, and he ſaveth them out of their diſtreſſes.*

And this appointment of times of diſtreſs is both profitable and neceſſary for the world, eſpecially God's own people in it.

In general, hereby the Being and Righteouſneſs of God is cleared and vindicated againſt the Atheiſm and Infidelity of the world, *Pſal.* 9. 16. *The Lord is known by the Judgments that he executeth.* Impunity is the occaſion of many Atheiſtical Thoughts in the world. *Jer.* 48. 11. *Moab hath been at eaſe from his youth, and he hath ſetled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from veſſel to veſſel, neither hath he gone into captivity; therefore his taſte remaineth in him, and his ſcent is not changed.* So *Pſal.* 55. 19. *Becauſe they have no changes therefore they fear not God.* Kingdoms, Families, and particular perſons, like ſtanding waters and ponds, are apt to corrupt by-long continued peace and proſperity; the Lord therefore ſees it neceſſary to purge the world by his judgments; *When thy judgments are in the Earth, the Inhabitants of the world will learn righteouſneſs.* Thoſe Sermons that God preaches from Heaven by the terrible voice of his judgments, ſtartle and rouze the ſecure world, more than all the warnings and exhortations of his Miniſters could ever do. Thoſe that ſlept ſecurely under our Miniſtry, will fear and tremble under his rods; thoſe that are without faith are not without ſenſe and feeling, their own eyes will affect their hearts, though our words could make no impreſſion on them.

Sect. II. But of what uſe ſoever theſe National Judgments are to others, to be ſure they ſhall be beneficial to God's own people; when others die by fear, they ſhall live by faith, If they be baneful poiſon to the wicked, they ſhall be healthful Phyſick to the Godly. For,

1. By theſe Calamities God will mortifie and purge their corruptions; this winter weather ſhall be uſeful to deſtroy and rot thoſe rank weeds, which the Summer of proſperity bred, *Iſa.* 27. 9. *By this therefore ſhall the Iniquity of* Jacob *be purged.* Phyſick in its own nature is griping and unpleaſant; but very uſeful and neceſſary to purge the body from noxious and malignant humours, which retained may put life it ſelf in hazard: and it is with the body Politick, as with the body Natural.

2. National Judgments drive the people of God nearer to him, and one to another; they drive the people of God to their knees, and make them pray more frequently, more fervently, and more feelingly than they were wont to do; in this poſture you find them in *ver.* 8, 9. of this Chapter. *Yea, in the way of thy Judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee, the deſire of our ſoul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my ſoul have I deſired thee in the night, yea, with my ſpirit within me will I ſeek thee early.*

3. In a word, by theſe diſtractions and diſtreſſes of Nations, the people of God are more weaned from the world, and made to long vehemently after heaven; being now convinced by experience that this is not their reſt. When all things are tranquil and proſperous, God's own people are but too apt to fall aſleep and dream of pleaſure and reſt on earth, to ſay as *Job* in his proſperity, *I ſhall die in my neſt, I ſhall multiply my days as the ſand.* And then are their heads and hearts filled with many projects and deſigns, to promote their comforts, and make proviſion for their accommodations on earth: The multiplicity

tiplicity of earthly cares and comforts take up their time and thoughts, too much, and make them that they mind death and eternity too little. But saith God, this must not be so, things must not go on at this rate, the prosperous world must not thus enchant my people; I must imbitter the earth that I may thereby sweeten heaven the more to them; when they find no rest below, they will surely seek it above.

These and such like are the gracious designs and ends of God in shaking the world by his terrible judgments, but yet, though national troubles must necessarily come, the wisest of men cannot positively determine the precise time of those judgments; we may indeed by the signs of the times discern their near approach; yet our judgment can be but probable and conjectural, seeing there are tacite conditions in the dreadfullest threatnings, *Jer.* 18. 7, 8. *Jonah* 3. 9, 10. And such is the merciful nature of God, that he oft times turns away his anger from his people. when it seems ready to pour down upon them, *Psal.* 78. 38. The consideration whereof no way indulges security, but encourages to repentance, and greater fervency in Prayer.

CHAP. III.

Opening and confirming the second Proposition, viz. *That God's own people are much concerned in, and ought to be suitably affected with, those Judgments that befal the Nation wherein they live.*

Sect. I. IF God's people have no concernment in these things, why are they called upon in this Text, to turn into their chambers, hide themselves, and shut their doors, till the indignation be overpast? Certainly though God hath better provided for them than others, yet they are two ways concerned in these cases as much as others: *Viz.*

1. Upon a Political
2. Upon a Religious } Account.

1. Upon a Political account, as they are members of the community, and so are equally concerned in the good or evil that befal the Nation in which they live, their Cabbins must follow the fate of the Ship in which they Sail, their Lives, Liberties, Estates, and Interest sink and swim with the publick. The good figs were carried away with the bad, *Jer.* 24. 5. In these outward respects it often times bears as hard upon the righteous as upon the wicked. *Ezek.* 21. 3. *I will draw forth my Sword out of his Sheath and will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked.* In these outward respects as it is with the good, so with the sinner, *Eccles.* 9. 2. The same fire that burns the dry tree, oftentimes burns the green tree too. *Ezek.* 20. 47. Grace is above all hazards, but creature enjoyments and comforts are not. The sins of the *Sodomites* involve not only their own houses and estates, but *Lot*'s also, in the ruin and overthrow; wicked men often fare the better for the company of the godly, and the godly often fare the worse for the company of the wicked

And it is not to be wondered at, if we consider that even the Saints themselves have an hand in the provocation of these judgments, as well as others, *Deut.* 32. 19. *And when the Lord saw it he abhorred them because of the provoking of his sons and of his daughters.* We have contributed to the common heap of guilt, and therefore must justifie God if we partake with others in the common calamity.

2. They are greatly concerned in such judgments upon a religious and christian account, for it is usual for the flood of God's judgments not only to sweep away our civil and natural, but our spiritual and best enjoyments and comforts. Thus the Ordinances of God ceased in *Babylon*, and there the faithful bewailed their misery upon that account, *Psal.* 137. *per totum*; *we wept when we remembred thee, O Zion.* Not only *Israel* flies, but the *Ark* is taken Prisoner by the Enemy, 1 *Sam.* 4. 11. And you find the people of God more deeply concerned upon this account, than for all their outward losses and other sufferings, *Zeph.* 3. 18. *I will gather them of thee that are sorrowful for the Solemn Assemblies, to whom the reproach of it was a Burthen.* For by how much our souls are more excellent than our bodies, and the concerns of Eternity over-balance those of time; by so much more are we concerned in the loss of our spiritual, more than of our temporal mercies and enjoyments.

Grace indeed cannot be lost, but the means and instruments by which it is begotten may; the golden candlestick is one of the moveables in God's house, *Rev.* 2. 5.

Thus you see a twofold concernment that the People of God have in the Effects of National Judgments.

Sect. II. This being So, how should all that fear God be affected with the appearances and signs of his indignation? So was *David*, *Psal.* 119. 120. *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.* He that feared not a Bear, a Lyon, a *Goliah*, yet trembleth at God's judgments. So did *Habakkuk*, *chap.* 3. *v.* 16. *When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice, rottenness entred into my bones.* Expressions denoting the deepest seizures of fear and greatest Consternations; not that I would perswade you to such slavish fear, or unchristian dejection, as is not only sinful in it self, but the cause and inlet of many other sins: But to a due Sense both of the evils of misery that will befal the Nation when God's Indignation comes upon it; and the evils of Sin that have incensed it; and to such a fear of both as may seasonably awaken us to the use of all preventing remedies. And first,

1. O that all would lay to heart the National miseries that God's indignation threatens upon us. It is said, *Psal.* 107. 34. *A fruitful land is turned into barrenness for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.* It was long since told *England* by one of its faithful Watchmen. * * The Nation and
' Church in which we are, is the com- Mr. Strong.
' mon Ship in which we are all em-
' barked, and if this in judgment be cast away
' whether dashed against the rocks of any Foreign
' power, or swallowed up in the quicksands of do-
' mestick divisions, it must needs hazard all the
' Passengers: Or if you were sure, that for your
' parts you might be safe: would it not be a bitter
' thing, to stand upon the shore, and see such a
' glorious vessel as this Nation is, to be cast away
' To see this glorious Land defaced, the blessed
' Gospel polluted, the golden candlestick remov-
' ed, it cannot but affect men that have any bowels
' Or if this move you not, yet to see a strange
' to Lord it in thy habitation, and thy dwelling
' place to cast thee out; for your delightsome dwel-
' lings, your fruitful pleasant and well tilled fields
' to be made a prey; for you to sow, and another

'to reap *Impias has ſegetes*; for the delicate woman 'upon whom the wind muſt not blow, to be ex-'poſed to the luſt and cruelty of an enemy, and 'be glad to fly away naked to prolong a miſerable 'life, which they would be glad to part with for 'death, were it not for fear of the exchange. 'For the tender mother to look upon the Child of 'her womb; and conſider, muſt this child in 'whom I have placed the hope of my age; for,

Omnis in Aſcanio ſtat chari cura parentis;

'He that hath been ſo tenderly bred up, muſt he 'fall into the rough hands of a bloody Soldier, 'skilful to deſtroy? It had been well for me if 'God had given me dry breaſts, or a miſcarrying 'womb, rather than to bring forth children unto 'murtherers; or if you might be ſafe, how could 'you endure to ſee the miſeries that ſhould come 'upon your people, and the deſtruction of your 'Kindred'. Thus far he. But alas! What ſecurity have any of us as to our earthly comforts from the common calamity? We may pleaſe our ſelves as *Baruch* did, *Jer.* 45. 4, 5. and dream of exemption, but by ſo much the greater will our diſtreſs be, when it ſhall ſurprize us.

2. You that are the people of God ought to be deeply affected with the ſpiritual miſeries that threaten us in the day of God's indignation: do you conſider what the removing the Candleſtick out of its place is? A departing Goſpel, the going down of the Sun upon the Prophets, the loſs of your ſweet Sabbaths, and Goſpel Feaſts, and the groſs darkneſs of Popery to fill the earth: O it is hard parting with theſe things, it's ſaid, 1 *Sam.* 7. 2. when the *Ark* was removed, *that all the houſe of Iſrael lamented after the Lord.* Pity your own Souls, and be deeply affected with the miſery of others, the poor Chriſtleſs world, who are like to periſh for want of Viſion, *Prov.* 29. 18. In the Year 1072, ſaith *Matthew Paris*, Preaching was ſuppreſſed at *Rome*, and then Letters were framed by ſome as coming from Hell; in which the Devil gives them thanks for the multitude of Souls ſent to him that Year.

3. But eſpecially labour to affect your hearts with the ſins that have incenſed God's indignation: So did the Saints in *Jeruſalem*, *Ezek.* 9. 4. they ſighed and mourned for all the abominations committed in it. So did *Lot*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 7. *He vexed his righteous ſoul from day to day:* So did *David*, *Pſal.* 119. 136. *Rivers of water run down mine eyes, becauſe Men kept not thy law.* O who that loves God can refrain tears, to ſee the God of pity, the God of tender mercies, a father full of bowels of compaſſion, ſo incenſed and provoked to indiguation! Oh, it is an heart-melting conſideration where there is any ingenuity. If our afflictions grieve God to the heart as it doth *Judg.* 10. 16. our Souls ſhould be grieved for his diſhonour.

4. To conclude, get upon your hearts ſuch a ſenſe of God's indignation as may quicken you to the uſe of preventing duties. So *Amos* 4. 12. *Becauſe I will do this prepare to meet thy God, O Iſrael.* So the Prophet, *Zeph.* 2. 1, 2. *Gather your ſelves together before the decree bring forth.* It was *Moſes* his honour to ſtand in the breach, *Pſal.* 106. 23. And *Abraham's* to plead ſo with God, *tho' he did not prevail.*

CHAP. IV.

Confirming the third Propoſition. viz. *That God hath a ſpecial and peculiar care of his own in the days of his indignation.*

Sect. I. PRopriety and Relation engages Care and Sollicitude in times of Danger; we ſee God hath put ſuch a *Storge*, and inclination into the very creatures, that they will expoſe themſelves to preſerve their young; and it cannot be imagined that the fountain of Pity which dropt this tenderneſs into the bowels of the creatures, ſhould not abound with it himſelf; is there ſuch ſtrong inclination in the very birds of the air, that they will hazard their own lives to ſave their young; much more is God ſolicitous for his people. *Iſa.* 31. 5. *As birds flying, &c.* to their neſts when their young are in danger: *So will the Lord of Hoſts defend* Jeruſalem. No mother is more ſolicitous for her deareſt Child in danger and diſtreſs, than the Lord is for his people. *Iſa.* 40. 15. *Can a Woman forget her ſucking Child, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſſion on the ſon of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.* A woman [the more affectionate ſex] forget her child, a piece of her ſelf, her ſucking child, which together with Milk from the Breaſt, draws Love from the Heart! This may rather be ſuppoſed, than that the Lord ſhould forget his people.

Two things muſt here be cleared. 1. That it is ſo. 2. Why it is ſo.

1. That it is ſo, will appear from,
   1. Scripture Emblems.
   2. Scripture Promiſes.
   3. Scripture Inſtances.

1. Scripture *Emblems*; and among many, I will upon this occaſion ſingle out two or three principal ones. In *Ezek.* 5. 1, 2, 3. *And thou Son of man take thee a ſharp knife, take thee a barbers razor, and cauſe it to paſs upon thine head and upon thy beard, then take the balances to weigh and divide the hair; thou ſhalt burn with fire a third part in the midſt of the City, when the days of the ſiege are fulfilled; and thou ſhalt take a third part, and ſmite about it with a knife; and a third part thou ſhalt ſcatter in the wind, and I will draw out a ſword after them: Thou ſhalt alſo take thereof a few in number, and bind them in thy skirts.* You find this truth ſhadowed out in this excellent Emblem: *Jeruſalem* the capital City is the Head, the numerous Inhabitants are the Hair, the King of Babylon the Razor, the weighing it in balances is the exactneſs of God's procedure in Judgment with them; the fire, knife, and wind, are the various Judgments to which the people were appointed; the hiding of a few in the Prophet's skirt, is the care of God for the preſervation of his own remnant in the common Calamity. This is one Emblem clearing this point. And then in *Ezek.* 9. 3, 4. the ſame truth is preſented to us in another Emblem, as lively and ſignificant as the former. *And behold, ſix men came from the way of the higher gate, which lieth toward the North, and every man a ſlaughter-weapon in his hand, and one among them was cloathed in linen, with a writers inkhorn by his ſide, and they went in and ſtood before the brazen Altar; and the glory of the God of Iſrael was gone up from the Cherub, whereupon he was, to the threſhold of his houſe, and he called to the man cloathed in linen, which had the writers inkhorn by his ſide; and the Lord ſaid unto him, Go through the midſt of the City, through the midſt of Jeruſalem, and ſet a mark upon*

the foreheads of the men that ſigh, and cry for all the abominations that be done in the midſt thereof. The Men that had charge over the City are the Angels appointed for that ſervice; ſome with ſlaughter-weapons, whoſe work it was to deſtroy; but one among them had a writer's inkhorn by his ſide, and he was employ'd to take the names, and mark the perſons of God's faithful ones among them, whom the Lord intended to preſerve and hide in that common overthrow and deſolation of the City, and theſe were to be all marked Man by Man before the deſtroying Angel was to begin his bloody work. Oh! ſee the tender care of God over his upright mourning ſervants! Once more, the ſame Truth is repreſented in a third Emblem, *Mal.* 3. 17. *And they ſhall be mine, ſaith the Lord, in the day that I make up my jewels, and I will ſpare them as a man ſpareth his own ſon that ſerveth him:* Where the World is compared to an houſe on fire, God to the Maſter and Father of the Family, the Wicked to the uſeleſs Lumber therein, the Saints to the Children and Jewels in the Houſe; about theſe his firſt and principal care of preſervation is exerciſed, theſe he will be ſure to ſave, whatever become of the reſt. Thus you have the choſen Emblems that illuſtrate this comfortable truth.

2. As theſe Scripture Emblems illuſtrate it, ſo there are many excellent Scripture *Promiſes* to confirm it, *Iſa.* 32. 2. *A man ſhall be for an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempeſt: as rivers of water in a dry place.* This Man is the Man Chriſt Jeſus, the tempeſt ſpoken of, are the miſeries and calamities of War, which make the land on which it falls, an hot, dry, and weary land; in the midſt and rage whereof, Chriſt ſhall be to his faithful ones a covert for protection, a river of water for ſupply, and a ſhadow for refreſhment; that is to ſay, whatſoever ſhall be neceſſary either for their ſafety or comfort. Chriſt is not only a ſhadow to his people from the wrath of God, but alſo from the rage of Men. Again, *Zech.* 2. 5. *I will be a wall of fire round about*; alluding to Travellers in the Deſert, who to prevent danger from wild Beaſts in the night, uſe to make a circular fire round about the place where they lie down to reſt, and this fire was as a wall to ſecure them. You have the like gracious promiſe made to the poor captivated Church in *Ezek.* 11. 16. *Although I have caſt them far off among the heathen, and ſcattered them among the countrys, yet will I be to them as a little ſanctuary in the countrys where they ſhall come.*

A little ſanctuary. The word is variouſly render'd and expounded; ſome *Adverbially*, and render it *pauliſper*, a Sanctuary for a little while, *viz.* during their danger, at the ſhortneſs of which this Adverb points. So *Junius*. Others *Adjectively*, as we tranſlate it, *Templum paucorum*, as *Vatablus*. There was but a handful of them, and God would be as a Sanctuary to ſecure and protect that remnant.

מְעַט

3. And all theſe Promiſes have in all ages been faithfully fulfilled to the Saints. You have an excellent Scripture for this, 2 *Pet.* 2. 4, 5, 6. when the flood was brought upon the old World, there was one *Noah* a righteous Man in it, and for him God provided an Ark. When *Sodom* was overthrown, there was one *Lot* in it, a juſt Man, and God ſecur'd him out of danger; upon which that comfortable concluſion is built, *ver.* 9. *The Lord knows how to deliver the godly.* When *Jeruſalem* was deſtroyed, a *Pella* was provided as a refuge for the godly there. Remarkable is that place to this purpoſe, *Iſai.* 25. 4. *Thou haſt been a ſtrength to the poor, a ſtrength to the needy in his diſtreſs, a refuge from the ſtorm, a ſhadow from the heat, when the blaſt of the terrible one is as a ſtorm againſt the wall.* And this hath God been not only once or twice, but in all Ages, *Pſal.* 90. 1. *Lord, thou haſt been our dwelling-place in all generations*; or as the Hebrew, in generations and generations. What he hath been in former generations to his diſtreſſed people, that he is, and will be without alteration in all generations.

Sect. II. Yet we muſt remember, that all who are preſerved in common calamities are not the people of God; nor are all that are indeed his people preſerved: he hath people enough to divide into two ranks, as the Husbandman his Corn, ſome for the Mill, and ſome to reſerve for Seed. There be Stars enough in the Heaven to ſhine in both *Hemiſpheres*, and there are Saints enough in the World, ſome to ſhine in Heaven, and ſome to preſerve the Church on Earth.

1. All that are preſerv'd are not the people of God. In the Ark a wicked *Cham* was preſerv'd, and thoſe that were preſerv'd in *Egypt*, many of them were afterwards deſtroy'd for their unbelief, *Jud.* 5. So in *Ezekiel*'s viſion, a part even of thoſe hairs which were ſpared were afterwards caſt into the fire, *Ezek.* 5. 4. Preſervation from the dominion of ſin, and the wrath to come, is peculiar to God's own people; but as for *temporal deliverances* we cannot infer that concluſion.

2. Nor yet can we ſay that all God's people ſhall be preſerved; that Promiſe, *Zeph.* 2. 3. leaves it upon a *may be*; many a precious Chriſtian hath fallen in the common calamity; they have been preſerved in, but not from trouble.

But it is uſual with God to preſerve ſome in the foreſt Judgments: And the grounds of it are,

1. Becauſe ſome muſt be left as a ſeed to propagate and preſerve the Church, which is perpetual, and can never fail; he never ſo overthrows Nations as *Sodom* was overthrown, *Iſa.* 1. 9. This was the ground of that promiſe, *Jer.* 30. 11. *For I am with thee, ſaith the Lord, to ſave thee, though I make a full end of all nations whither I have ſcattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee.* And of that Plea, *Amos* 7. 2. *O Lord God, forgive I beſeech thee; by whom ſhall Jacob riſe? for he is ſmall.* Except the Lord had left a ſmall remnant, we had been as *Sodom*. Remarkable to this purpoſe, is that Scripture, *Iſa.* 6. 13. *But yet in it ſhall be a tenth, and it ſhall return, and ſhall be eaten: as a Teyl-tree, and as an Oak, whoſe ſubſtance is in them when they caſt their leaves; ſo the holy ſeed ſhall be the ſubſtance thereof.* This preſerved remnant is the holy ſeed, by which the Church is propagated and continued, *Pſal.* 102. 28.

2. Becauſe God will even in this world own and reward the fears and ſorrows of his people for the ſins of the times, and ſufferings of the Church, with the joy and comfort of better times, and a participation of *Sion*'s conſolation; ſo *Iſa.* 66. 10. *Rejoice ye with* Jeruſalem, *ye that have mourned for her.* They that have ſown in tears, do ſometimes live to reap in joy, *Pſal.* 125. 6. They ſhall ſay as *Iſa.* 25. 9. *Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he is come to ſave us.* And thoſe that live not to reap down in this world the harveſt of their own prayers and tears, ſhall be no loſers: a full and better reward ſhall be given them in Heaven, *Iſa.* 57. 22.

3. Becauſe the preſerved remnant of Saints are they that muſt actually give unto God the glory of all his providential adminiſtrations in the world, both of judgments and mercies upon others, and towards

towards themſelves. *They that go down to the pit do not celebrate his praiſe the living the living, they praiſe him, Iſa.* 38. 18, 19. Thus when God turned back *Sion*'s captivity, the remnant of Saints that were preſerved, were they that recorded his praiſe, *Pſal.* 126. 1, 2. *Then was our mouth filled with laughter.* And fully to this ſenſe is that Scripture, *Pſal.* 102. 19, 20, 21. *He delivers thoſe that are appointed to death, i. e.* that Men had doomed to death, *that they may declare the name of the Lord in* Sion, *and his praiſe in* Jeruſalem.

4. The hiding of the Saints in evil days, is the greateſt diſcovery of the hand of God in the world; when he *hides* them, he *ſhews* himſelf, and that both to the Saints and to their enemies.

It is one of the moſt glorious Myſteries of Providence that ever the world beheld, *viz.* the ſtrange and wonderful protection of poor helpleſs Chriſtians from the rage and fury of their mighty and malicious enemies; though they walk viſibly among them, yet they are as it were hid from their hands, but not from their eyes. So *Jer.* 1. 18. You find God made that Prophet among the envious Princes, and againſt an enraged and mighty King, *as a defenced City, and as an iron pillar, and as a brazen wall.* And indeed it was eaſier to them to conquer and take in the ſtrongeſt Fort or Garriſon, than that ſingle perſon, who yet walked day by day naked and open among them. So *Luther*, a poor Monk was made invincible, all the Papal Power could not touch him, for God hid him. All the World againſt one *Athanaſius*, and yet not able to deſtroy him, for God hid him. This is the diſplay of the glorious Power of God in the world, and he hath much honour by it.

Well then, if there be a God that takes care of his own in evil days; do not you be diſtractingly careful what ſhall become of you in ſuch times; you cannot ſee how it's poſſible for you to eſcape, but 2 *Pet.* 2, 4, 5, 6. the Lord knows how to deliver when you do not. Little did *Lot* know the way and manner of his preſervation, till God opened it to him, nor *Noah* till God contrived it for him: there was no way to be contrived by them for eſcape. He that knew how to deliver them, can deliver you alſo.

Leave your ſelves to God's diſpoſe, it ſhall certainly be to your advantage; the Church is his peculiar care, *Iſa.* 27. 3. *I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment, leſt any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.*

The more you commit your ſelves to his Care, the more you engage it, *Iſa.* 26. 3. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whoſe mind is ſtaid on thee, becauſe he truſteth in thee.* He will certainly find a place of Safety for his people under or in Heaven.

Neither be too much dejected when the number of viſible Profeſſors ſeems but ſmall; think not the Church will periſh when it is brought ſo low. This was *Elijah*'s caſe, he thought he had been left alone, that Religion had been preſerved in his ſingle perſon, as the *Phenix* of the world: but ſee 1 *Kings* 19. 18. God hath enough left, if we were in our graves, to continue Religion in the World; it concerns Him more than You to look to that.

CHAP. V.

Evincing the fourth Propoſition, viz That God uſually premoniſheth the World, eſpecially his own, of his Judgments, before they befall them.

Sect. I. GOD firſt warns, and then ſmites, he delights not to ſurprize Men; when Indignation was coming, he tells his people of it in the Text, and admoniſheth them to hide themſelves. *Surely the Lord will do nothing but he revealeth his ſecrets to his ſervants the Prophets*, Amos 3. 7. Thus when the flood was to come upon the old World, he gave them 120 years warning of it, *Gen.* 6. 3. compared with 1 *Pet.* 3. 19. So when *Sodom* was to be deſtroyed, God would not hide it from *Abraham*; *Gen.* 18. 17. *Shall I hide from* Abraham *the thing that I do?* The like diſcovery was made unto *Lot*, *Gen.* 19. 12, 13, 14. So when the Captivity was at hand, *Ezekiel* was commanded to give the *Jews* ſolemn warning of it from God, *Ezek.* 3. 17. *Hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.*

And when their City and Temple was to be deſtroyed by the *Romans*, how plainly did Chriſt foretel them of it by his own mouth! *Luke* 19. 43, 44. *Thine enemies ſhall caſt a trench about thee, and compaſs thee round, and keep thee in on every ſide, and ſhall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee, and they ſhall not leave thee one ſtone upon another, becauſe thou kneweſt not the time of thy viſitation.* *Joſephus* alſo tells us that a little before the execution of this Judgment upon them, a Voice was heard in the Temple, *Migremus hinc*, Let us go hence; which voice *Tacitus* alſo in his Annals, mentions, *Audita major humana vox, excedere Deos, ſimul ingens motus excedentium.* It was more than an humane voice, telling them God was departing from them, and withal there was heard the ruſhing noiſe as of ſome that were going out of the Temple.

Joſeph. de bel. Jud. l. 7. c. 2. Tac. lib. 21.

And as there were extraordinary premonitions of approaching judgments by revelation to the Prophets of old, and ſigns from heaven; ſo there ſtill are ſtanding and ordinary rules by which the world may be admoniſhed of God's judgments before they come upon them.

And the general rule, by which men may diſcern the indignation of God before it comes, is this.

☞ *When the ſame provocations, and evils are found in one Nation, which have brought down the wrath of God upon another nation; this is an evident ſign of God's Judgment at the door.* For God is unchangeably holy and juſt, and will not favour that in one people, which he hath puniſhed in another; nor bleſs that in one age, which he hath curſed in another. And therefore that which hath been a ſign of Judgment to one, muſt be ſo to all.

Here it is that the carcaſes of thoſe ſinners whoſe ſins had caſt them away, are as it were caſt up upon the Scripture ſhore, for a warning to all others that they ſteer not the ſame ill courſe they did. 1 *Cor.* 10. 6. *Now theſe things were our examples.* The *Iſraelites* are made examples to us, plainly intimating that if we tread the ſame path, we muſt expect the ſame puniſhment. Let us therefore conſider what were the evils that provoked God's judgments againſt his ancient people, whom he was ſo loth to give up, *Hoſ.* 11. 8. and ſo long ere he did give up, *Jer.* 15. 6. and we ſhall find by the concurrent accounts that the Prophets give.

1. That God's worſhip among them was generally mixed and corrupted with their own inventions, for ſo it is ſaid, *Pſal.* 106. 40, 41. *They went a whoring with their own inventions.* And this ſo inflamed the wrath of God, who is a jealous God, and tender over his own honour, that he abhorred his own inheritance; yea, he expreſſes himſelf as a man doth whoſe heart is broken by the unfaithfulneſs of his wife, *Ezek.* 6. 9. Upon this account

his profeſſing people became the generation of his wrath, *Jer.* 7. 29, 30.

2. Incorrigible obſtinacy under gentler correction, *Amos* 4. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. Scarcity, Mildews, Peſtilence, and Sword had been upon them; and ſtill thoſe that remained, though ſaved as a brand out of the fire, in which their fellow ſinners periſhed, would not return to God; and this haſtened on the general ruin, *ver.* 12. This preſages the ruine of Nations indeed.

3. Stupidity and ſenſleſneſs of God's hand was a ſad Omen, and cauſe of that peoples ruin; ſo *Iſa.* 26. 10, 11. *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not ſee.* No nor yet when his hand is laid on, *Iſa.* 42. 24, 25. It is not ſome ſmall drop of God's anger that paſſes without obſervation, but the *fury of his anger; not ſome light skirmiſh of his judgments with them, but the ſtrength of battle*: Not in a corner upon ſome particular perſon, or family, but that which ſet him on fire round about: yet all this could not awaken them. *He hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the ſtrength of battel, and it hath ſet him on fire round about, yet he knew it not, and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.* Prodigious ſtupidity! to be in the midſt of flames, yea, to be ſeized by them, and deſtroyed ſooner than awakened. So you find again in *Hoſ.* 7. 9. *Gray hairs were here and there upon* Ephraim, *yet he knew it not.* Youth and Age are eaſily diſtinguiſhed, and gray hairs do plainly diſtinguiſh them, being the plain tokens of a declining State, yet they took no notice of them. Such ſtupidity is ever more the fore-runner of miſery.

4. Perſecution of God's faithful Miniſters and People, was another forerunning ſign of their ruine, 2 *Chron.* 36. 16. *They mocked the meſſengers of God, and deſpiſed his words, and miſuſed his Prophets until the wrath of the Lord aroſe againſt his people, till there was no remedy.* There were alſo a number of upright Souls among them, that deſired to worſhip God according to his own preſcription, but a ſnare was laid for them in *Mizpah*, and a net ſpread upon *Tabor*; and therefore was judgment towards that people; *Hoſ.* 5. 1. *Mizpah*, and *Tabor* were places in the way lying betwixt *Samaria* and *Jeruſalem*, where the true worſhip of God was, and there were *Informers* or Spies ſet by the Prieſts to intercept ſuch as would venture to ſerve God at *Jeruſalem* according to his own preſcription, this alſo foreboded the judgments of God upon that nation.

5. The decay of the life and power of Godlineſs among them plainly foreſhewed their ruin at hand, *Hoſ.* 4. 18. *Their drink is ſour*, where under the *Metaphor* of dead and ſour drink, which hath loſt its ſpirit and is become flat; their formal, heartleſs, and perfunctory duties are ſeverely taxed and condemned.

6. To conclude, the mutual animoſities, and feuds among that profeſſing people, evidently ſhewed judgment to be at the door. *Hoſ.* 9. 7. *The days of viſitation are come, the days of recompence are come*, Iſrael *ſhall know it: the Prophet is a fool, the ſpiritual man is made for the multitude of thine iniquity; and the great hatred.* This great hatred was one of the greateſt ſins, and ſaddeſt ſigns upon them. This Spirit of enmity ſowed by the Devil among them haſtened their calamity. If *Ephraim* will envy *Judah*, and *Judah* vex *Ephraim* the common enemy ſhall part the fray: when the whole Nation was under water, and the *Roman* Armies under the very walls of *Jeruſalem* their own Hiſtorians tell us, what bitter contentions and ſharp conflicts continued among them to the very laſt. Theſe things muſt be looked upon by all wiſe and conſiderate Men, no otherwiſe than we look upon glaring Meteors, and blazing Comets, portending judgment and ruine at the door. We have had indeed terrible Signs in Heaven, a dreadful rod of God ſhaken over us of late, which all Men ought to behold with trembling; yet I muſt ſay thoſe moral Signs of judgments forementioned, are much more terrible and portentous. According therefore to the evidence of theſe ſigns among us; let all upright hearts be affected and awakened with expectations of God's righteous judgments. It is indeed below faith to expect evil days with deſpondency and diſtraction; but ſurely it is a noble exerciſe of faith, ſo to expect them, as to make due preparation for them.

Sect. II. And if we enquire for what End God gives ſuch warnings to the world, and premoniſhes them from Heaven of the judgments that are coming on the earth, know that he doth it upon a threefold account.

1. To prevent their Execution.
2. To leave the Careleſs inexcuſable.
3. To make them more tolerable and eaſie to his own people.

1. Warning is given with deſign to prevent the execution of judgments; this is plain from *Amos* 4. 12. *Therefore will I do this unto thee*; there is warning given; *and becauſe I will do this, prepare to meet thy God, O Iſrael*: There is the gracious deſign of preventing it, by bringing them ſeaſonably upon their knees at the foot of an angry God: You ſee the Lord expects it from all his Children, that they fall at his feet in deep humiliation, and fervent interceſſion whenever he goes forth in the way of judgment. What elſe was the deſign of God in ſending *Jonah* to *Nineveh* with that dreadful meſſage, but to excite them to repentance, and prevent their ruine? This *Jonah* gueſſed at, and therefore declined the meſſage to ſecure his credit, well knowing, that if they took warning and repented, the gracious nature of God would ſoon melt into compaſſion over them: Free grace would make him appear as a liar among the people; for to that ſenſe his own words ſound, *Jonah* 4. 2. *Was not this my ſaying when I was yet in my Country, Therefore I fled before unto* Tarſhiſh, *for I knew that thou art a gracious God, q. d.* I thought before hand it would come to this; I knew how willing thou art to be prevented by repentance; therefore to ſecure my credit, I fled to *Tarſhiſh*.

2. He forewarns of judgments to leave the Incorrigible wholly inexcuſable, that thoſe who have neither ſenſe of Sin, nor fear of Judgment before, might have no cloak for their folly, nor plea for themſelves afterward; *What wilt thou ſay when he ſhall puniſh thee? Jer.* 13. 21, 22. *q. d.* What Plea or Apology is left thee after ſo many fair warnings? You cannot ſay you were ſurprized, before you were admoniſhed, or ruined before you were warned.

3. God warns of Judgments before they come to make them the more eaſie to his people when they come indeed; thus in *John* 16. 4. Chriſt foretold his Diſciples of their approaching ſufferings, that when they came, they ſhould not be found amazed at them, or unprovided for them; for unexpected miſeries are aſtoniſhing to the beſt men, and deſtructive to wicked men, *Luke* 17. 26, 27, 28.

Well

Well then if it be ſo, let all that are wiſe in heart conſider the Signs of the times, and ſeaſonably hearken to God's warnings. *The Lord's voice crieth to the City, and the man of wiſdom ſhall ſeek thy name; hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it,* Micah 6. 9. 'Tis our wiſdom to way-lay our troubles, and provide for the worſt eſtate, whilſt we enjoy the beſt: happy is he that is at once believing and praying for good days, and preparing for the worſt. *Noah's* example is our advantage, *Heb.* 11. 7. *Who by faith being warned of God of things not ſeen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an Ark.* Preventing mercies are the moſt raviſhing mercies, *Pſal.* 59. 10. And preventing calamities are the ſoreſt calamities, *Amos* 9. 10.

And let us heartily bewail the ſupineneſs and careleſsneſs of the world in which we live, who take no notice of God's warnings, but put the evil day far from them, *Amos* 6. 3. who will admit no *fear*, till they are paſt all *hope*; they ſee God houſing his Saints apace, yet will not ſee the evil to come from which God takes them, *Iſa.* 57. 1, 2. *The righteous periſheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none conſidering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come? he ſhall enter into peace, they ſhall reſt in their beds, each one walking in his uprightneſs.* They hear the cry of ſin which is gone up to heaven, but cry not for the abominations that are committed, nor tremble at the judgments that they will procure.

O careleſs Sinners drowned in Stupidity, and ſleeping like *Jonah* under the Hatches, when others are upon their knees and at their wits end! do Saints tremble, and are you ſecure? Have not you more reaſon to be afraid than they; If Judgments come, the greateſt harm it can do them, is but to haſten them to Heaven; but as for you, it may hurry you away to Hell: They only fear tribulation in the way; but you will not fear damnation in the end. Believe it Reader, in days of common calamity both Heaven and Hell will fill apace.

CHAP. VI.

Demonſtrating the fifth Propoſition, viz. *That God's Attributes, Promiſes, and Providences, are prepared for the ſecurity of his people in the greateſt diſtreſſes that befal them in the World.*

Sect. I. HAving more briefly diſpatched the foregoing preliminary Propoſitions it remains that we now more fully open this fifth Propoſition, which contains the main ſubject matter of this Diſcourſe; here therefore our meditations muſt fix and abide, and truly ſuch is the diliciouſneſs of the ſubject to ſpiritual hearts, that I judge it wholly needleſs to offer any other motive beſides it ſelf to engage your affections. Let us therefore view our *Chambers*, and ſee how well God hath provided for his Children in all their diſtreſſes that befal them in this world; it is our Fathers voice that calls to us, *Come my people, enter thou into thy chambers.* And the

1. *Cham.* which comes to be opened as a Refuge to diſtreſſed Believers in a ſtormy day, is that moſt ſecure and ſafe Attribute of *Divine Power*: into this let us firſt enter by ſerious and believing meditation, and ſee how ſafe they are whom God hides under the protection thereof in the worſt and moſt dangerous days. In opening this Attribute we ſhall conſider it,

1. In its own Nature and Property.
2. With reſpect to the Promiſes.
3. As it is actuated by Providence on the behalf of diſtreſſed Saints.

And then give you a comfortable proſpect of their ſafe and happy condition, who take up their lodgings by Faith in this Attribute of God.

1. Let us conſider the Power of God in it ſelf, and we ſhall find it repreſented to us in the Scriptures in theſe three lovely Properties, *viz.*

1. Omnipotent
2. Supreme
3. Everlaſting

} Power.

1. As an Omnipotent and All-ſufficient Power; which hath no bounds or limits, but the pleaſure and will of God, *Dan.* 4 34, 35. *He doth according to his will in the armies of Heaven; and among the Inhabitants of the earth, and none can ſtay his hand, or ſay unto him, What doſt thou?* So *Pſalm* 135. 6. *Whatſoever the Lord pleaſed that did he, in Heaven, and in Earth, in the Seas, and all deep places.* You ſee Divine pleaſure is the only rule according to which Divine Power exerts it ſelf in the world; we are not therefore to limit and reſtrain it in our narrow and ſhallow thoughts, and to think in this or in that the Power of God may help or ſecure us; but to believe that he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think. Thus theſe Worthies, *Dan.* 3. 17. by Faith exalted the power of God above the order and common rule of ſecond cauſes. *Our God whom we ſerve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O King.* Their faith reſting it ſelf upon the Omnipotent power of God, expected deliverance from it in an extraordinary way; 'tis true, this is no ſtanding rule for our faith ordinarily to work by; nor have we ground to expect ſuch miraculous Salvations, but yet when extraordinary difficulties preſs us, and the common ways and means of deliverance are ſhut up, we ought by faith to exalt the Omnipotency of God, by aſcribing the glory thereof to him, and leave our ſelves to his good pleaſure, without ſtraitning or narrowing his Almighty power, according to the mold of our poor low thoughts and apprehenſions of it: For ſo the Lord himſelf directeth our faith in difficult caſes, *Iſa.* 55. 8, 9. *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, ſaith the Lord; for as the Heavens are higher than the earth; ſo are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* He ſpeaks there of his pardoning mercy which he will not have his people to contract, and limit according to the model and platform of their own deſponding, miſgiving and unbelieving thoughts; but to exalt and glorifie it, according to its unbounded fulneſs; as it is in the thoughts of God, the fountain of that Mercy; ſo it ought to be with reſpect to his power, about which his thoughts and ours do vaſtly differ; the power of God as we caſt it in the mold of our thoughts, is as vaſtly different and diſproportionate from what it is in the thoughts of God the fountain thereof; as the earth is to the heavens, which is but a ſmall inconſiderate point compared with them.

2. The power of God is a Supreme and Sovereign power, from which all creature power is derived, and by which it is over ruled, reſtrained, and limited at his pleaſure. *Nebuchadnezzar* was a great Monarch, he ruled over other Kings, yet he held his Kingdom from God; it was God that placed not only the Crown upon his head, but his head upon his ſhoulders, *Dan.* 2. 37. *Thou, O King,*

art a King of Kings; for the God of Heaven hath given thee a Kingdom, power, and ſtrength, and glory. Hence it follows, that no creature can move tongue or hand againſt any of God's people, but by vertue of a Commiſſion or permiſſion from their God, albeit they think not ſo. *Knoweſt thou not,* ſaith *Pilate* unto Chriſt, *that I have power to crucifie thee, and power to releaſe thee?* Proud worm! what an ignorant, and inſolent boaſt was this of his own power! and how doth Chriſt ſpoil and ſhame it in his anſwer? *John* 19. 10. *Thou couldeſt have no power at all againſt me, except it were given thee from above.*

Wicked Men like wild horſes would run over and trample under foot all the people of God in the world, were it not that the bridle of divine providence had a ſtrong curb to reſtrain them: *Ezek.* 22. 6. *The Princes of* Iſrael *every one were in thee, to their power to ſhed blood.* And it was well for God's *Iſrael* that their power was not as large as their wills were; this world is a raging and boiſterous Sea, which ſorely toſſes the Paſſengers for Heaven that ſail upon it, but this is their comfort and ſecurity: *The Lord ſtilleth the noiſe of the Sea, the noiſe of the waves, and the tumult of the people, Pſal.* 65. 7. Moral as well as natural waves, are checked and bounded by Divine Power. *Surely the wrath of man ſhall praiſe thee, and the remainder of wrath thou ſhalt reſtrain, Pſal.* 76. 10. As a man turns ſo much water into the channel as will drive the mill, and turns away the reſt into another ſluce.

Yea, not only the power of man, but the power of Devils alſo is under the reſtraint and limitation of this power, *Rev.* 3. 10. *Satan ſhall caſt ſome of you into priſon, and ye ſhall have tribulation ten days.* He would have caſt them into their graves, yea, into hell if he could, but it muſt be only into a Priſon: He would have kept them in priſon, 'till they had died and rotted there, but it muſt be only for ten days. Oh glorious Sovereign power! which thus keeps the reins of Government in its own hand!

3. The power of God is an everlaſting power; time doth not weaken or diminiſh it, as it doth all creature powers, *Iſa.* 40. 28. *The Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary, Iſa.* 59. 1. *The Lord's hand is not ſhortned* (*i. e.*) He hath as much power now as ever he had, and can do for his people as much as ever he did; time will decay the power of the ſtrongeſt creature, and make him faint and feeble; but the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not. *Thou* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *abideſt for ever, thy years flee not, Pſal.* 102. 27. In God's working there is no expence of his ſtrength, he is able to do as much as ever he did, to all over again all the glorious deliverances that ever he wrought for his people from the beginning of the World; to do as much for his Church now as he did at the Red Sea; and upon this ground the Church builds its Plea, *Iſa.* 51. 9, 10. *Awake, awake, put on ſtrength, O arm of the Lord, awake as in the ancient days in the generations of old, art thou not it that haſt cut* Rahab, *and wounded the Dragon? q. d.* Lord why ſhould not thy people at this day expect as glorious productions of thy power as any of them found in former ages?

Sect. II. Let us view the power of God in the vaſt extent of its operation, and then you will find it working beyond the line,

1. Of Creature Power.
2. Of Creature Expectation.
3. Of Humane Probability.

1. Beyond the line of all created power, even upon the hearts, thoughts and minds of men, where no creature hath any Juriſdiction. So *Gen.* 31. 29. God bound up the Spirit of *Laban,* and becalmed it towards *Jacob.* So *Pſal.* 106. 46. *He made them alſo to be pitied of all them that carried them captives.* Thus the Lord promiſed *Jeremy, Jer.* 15. 11. *I will cauſe the enemies to entreat thee well, in the time of evil.* This power of God ſoftens the hearts of the moſt fierce and cruel enemies, and ſweetens the ſpirits of the moſt bitter and enraged foes of his people.

2. Beyond the line of all Creature Expectations, *Eph.* 3. 20. *God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think.* He doth ſo in *Spirituals*; as appears by thoſe two famous Parables, *Luke* 15. 19, 22. *And am no more worthy to be called thy Son; make me as one of thy hired ſervants. But the Father ſaid to his ſervants, bring forth the beſt robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and ſhoes on his feet.* The Prodigal deſired to be but as an hired ſervant, and lo, the fatted Calf is killed for him, and muſick to his meat, and the gold ring upon his finger. And in *Matth.* 18. 26, 27. The debtor did but deſire patience and the creditor forgave the Debt. Oh, thinks a poor humbled Sinner, If I might have but the leaſt glimpſe of hope, how ſweet would it be! But God brings him to more than he expects, even the clear ſhining of aſſurance. It is ſo in *Temporals,* the Church confeſſes the Lord *did things they looked not for, Iſa.* 64. 3. And in both Spirituals and Temporals this power moves in an higher Orb than our thoughts, Iſa. 55. 8, 9. *My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor my ways your ways; but as far as the heavens are above the earth, ſo are my thoughts above your thoughts.* The earth is but a *punctum* to the heavens; all its talleſt Cedars, Mountains, and Pyramids cannot reach it: He ſpeaks, as was ſaid before, of God's pitying, pardoning, and merciful thoughts, and ſhews that no Creature can think of God, as he doth of the creature under ſin, or under miſery. Our thoughts are not his; either Firſt, by way of *ſimple cogitation* we cannot think ſuch thoughts towards others in miſery, by way of pity; or under ſin againſt us by way of pardon, as God doth: Nor ſecondly, are our thoughts as God's in reſpect of *reflexive comprehenſion; i. e.* We cannot conceive or comprehend what thoſe thoughts of God towards us are; when we fall into ſin or miſery, juſt as he thinks them, they are altered, debaſed, and ſtraitned as ſoon as ever they come into our thoughts. See an excellent inſtance in *Gen.* 48. 11. *I had not thought to ſee thy face, and lo, God hath ſhewed me all thy ſeed.* A ſurprizing providence; and thus the Divine Power works in a Sphere above all the thoughts, prayers, and expectations of men.

3. It works beyond all probabilities, and rational conjectures of men; this Almighty power hath created deliverances for the people of God, when things have been brought to the loweſt ebb, and all the means of ſalvation have been hid from their eyes. We have diverſe famous inſtances of this in Scripture, wherein we may obſerve a remarkable *gradation* in the working of this almighty power: It is ſaid in the 2 *Kings* 15. 26, 27. *The Lord ſaw the affliction of* Iſrael, *that it was very bitter, for there was not any ſhut up, nor any left; nor any helper for* Iſrael. A deplorable ſtate: how inevitable was their ruine to the eye of ſenſe? Well might it be called a bitter affliction; yet from this immediate power aroſe for them a ſweet and unexpected Salvation; and if we look into 2 *Cor.* 1. 9, 10. we ſhall find the Apoſtles and choiceſt Chriſtians of thoſe times, giving up themſelves

themſelves as loſt men, all ways of eſcape being quite out of ſight; for ſo much thoſe words ſignifie *We had the ſentence of death in our ſelves*; *i. e.* We yielded our ſelves for dead men. But though they were ſentenced to death, yea, though they ſentenced themſelves, this power which wrought above all their thoughts, and rational conjectures, reprieved them. And yet one ſtep-farther in *Ezek.* 37. 4, 5, 6, 7. The people of God are there repreſented as actually dead, yea, as in their graves, yea as rotted in their graves, and their very bones dry, like thoſe that are dead of old; ſo utterly improbable was their recovery: Yet by the working of this almighty power which ſubdueth all things to it ſelf, their graves in *Babylon* were opened, the breath of life came into them, bone came to bone, and there ſtood up a very great Army; it was the working of this power above the thoughts of man's heart, which gave the ground of that famous Proverb, *Gen.* 22. 14. *In the Mount of the Lord it ſhall be ſeen.* And the ground of that famous Promiſe, *Zech.* 14. 7. *At evening time it ſhall be light*; *i. e.* Light ſhall unexpectedly ſpring up, when all Men according to the courſe and order of Nature, expect nothing but encreaſing darkneſs. How extenſive is the power of God in its glorious operations!

Sect. III. Let us view the power of God in its relation to the promiſes, for ſo it becomes our Sanctuary in the day of trouble; if the *Power* of God be the *Chamber*, 'tis the *Promiſe* of God which is that Golden *Key* that opens it. And if we well conſult the Scriptures in this matter, we ſhall find the Almighty power of God made over to his people by promiſe, for many excellent ends and uſes in the day of their trouble. As,

1. To uphold and ſupport them, when their own ſtrength fails, *Iſa.* 41. 10. *Fear thou not, for I am with thee, be not diſmayed for I am thy God: I will ſtrengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteouſneſs.* And which of the Saints have not ſenſibly felt theſe everlaſting arms, underneath their ſpirits, when afflictions have preſſed them above their own ſtrength? So runs the promiſe to *Paul* in 2 *Cor.* 12. 9. *My grace is ſufficient for thee, for my ſtrength is made perfect in weakneſs*; *i. e.* It is made known in thy weakneſs. Our weakneſs adds nothing to God's power, it doth not make his power perfect, but it hath the better advantage of its diſcovery, and puts forth it ſelf more ſignally and conſpicuouſly in our weakneſs; as the ſtars which never ſhine ſo gloriouſly, as in the darkeſt night.

2. To preſerve them in all their dangers, to which they lie expoſed in Soul and Body. 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. *You are kept* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *by the mighty power of God.* Kept as in a Garriſon; this is their arm every morning, as it is *Iſa.* 33. 2. *O Lord be gracious unto us, we have waited for thee, be thou their arm every morning, our ſalvation alſo in the time of trouble.* The Arm is that member which is fitted for the defence of the body, and for that end ſo placed by the God of Nature, that it may guard every part above and below it; but as good they were bound behind our backs, for any help they can give us in ſome caſes: It is God's Arm that defends us, and not our own. This inviſible power of God makes the Saints the world's wonder. *Pſal.* 71. 7. *I am as a wonder to many, but thou art my ſtrong refuge.* To ſee poor defenceleſs Creatures preſerved, in the midſt of furious enemies, that is juſt matter of wonder; but God being their inviſible refuge, that ſolves the wonder; to this end the power of God is by promiſe engaged to his people, *Iſa.* 27. 3. *I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment, leſt any hurt it; I will keep it night and day.* And thus they ſubſiſt in the midſt of dangers and troubles; as the burning Buſh (the Emblem of the Church) did amidſt the devouring flames, *Exod.* 3. 3.

3. To deliver them out of their diſtreſſes, ſo runs the promiſe, *Pſal.* 91. 14, 15. *Becauſe he hath ſet his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him; I will ſet him on high, becauſe he hath known my name; he ſhall call upon me, and I will anſwer him, I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him, and honour him.* And *Jer.* 30. 7. *Alas, for that day is great, ſo that none is like it: It is even the time of* Jacob's *trouble, but ye ſhall be ſaved out of it.* And ſurely there can be no diſtreſs ſo great, no caſe of Believers ſo forlorn; but,

1. It's eaſie with God to ſave them out of it. Are they to the eye of Senſe loſt, as hopeleſs as men in the grave? Yet ſee *Ezek.* 37. 12. *O my people, I will open your graves, and cauſe you to come out of your graves, and bring you into the land of* Iſrael. And he doth whatever he doth eaſily, with a word, *Pſal.* 44. 4. *Thou art my King, O God, command deliverances for* Jacob. And it requireth no more violent motion to do it, than he that ſwimmeth in the water uſes, *Iſa.* 25. 11. A gentle eaſie motion of the hand doth it.

2. And as the power of God can deliver them eaſily, ſo ſpeedily. Their deliverance is often wrought by way of ſurprizal. *Iſa.* 17. 14. *Behold, at evening tide trouble, and in the morning he is not.* So the Church prays, in *Pſal.* 126. 4. *turn again our captivity, as the ſtreams in the South.* The Southern Countries are dry, the ſtreams there come not in a gentle and flow current, but being occaſioned by violent ſudden ſpouts of Rain, they preſently overflow the Country, and as ſoon retire: So ſpeedily can the power of God free his people from their dangers and fears.

3. Yea, ſuch is the excellency of his delivering power, that he can ſave alone without any contribution of creature aids. So *Iſa.* 59. 16. *He wondered that there was no interceſſour; therefore his haad brought ſalvation unto him, and his righteouſneſs ſuſtained him.* We read indeed *Judg.* 5. 23. Of helping the Lord, but that is not to expreſs his *need*, but their *duty*; we have continual need of God, but he hath no need of us; he uſes inſtruments, but not out of neceſſity, his arm alone can ſave us, be the danger never ſo great, or the viſible means of deliverance never ſo remote.

4. Once more, let us view this Chamber of Divine power, as it is continually opened by the hand of providence, to receive and ſecure the people of God in all their dangers. 'Tis ſaid, 2 *Chro.* 16. 9. *The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to ſhew himſelf ſtrong in behalf of them, whoſe heart is perfect towards him.* Where you have an excellent account of the immediacy, univerſality, and efficacy of Divine Providence, as it uſes and applies this Divine Power for the guard and defence of that people, who are its charge; he doth not only ſet Angels to watch for them, but his own eyes keep *Sentinel*, even thoſe ſeven eyes of Providence mentioned *Zech.* 3. 9. which *never ſleep nor ſlumber*; for they are ſaid to run continually to and fro, and that not in this or that particular place only, for the ſervice of ſome more eminent and excellent perſons; but thro' the whole earth. 'Tis an encompaſſing and ſurrounding providence which hath its eye upon all, whoſe hearts are upright; all the Saints are within the line of its care and protection; the eye of Providence diſcovereth all their dangers, and its arm defends them, for he ſhews himſelf ſtrong in their behalf.

The

The ſecret, but Almighty efficacy of Providence is alſo excellently deſcribed to us in *Ezek.* 1. 8. where the Angels are ſaid to have their hands under their wings, working ſecretly and undiſcernibly, but very effectually for the Saints committed to their charge. Like unto which is that in *Hab.* 3. 4. Where it is ſaid of God, that *He had horns coming out of his hands, and there was the hiding of his power.* The hand is the inſtrument of action, denoting God's active power, and the horns coming out of them are the glorious raies and beams of that power ſhining forth in the ſalvation of his people: O that we could ſun our ſelves in thoſe chearful and reviving beams of Divine Power, by conſidering how glorioufly they have broken forth, and ſhone out for the ſalvation of his people in all Ages. So it did for *Iſrael* at the red Sea, *Exod.* 15. 6. So for *Jehoſhaphat* in that great ſtreight, 2 *Chron.* 20. 12, 15. And ſo in the time of *Hezekiah*, 2 *Kings* 19. 3. 7. Yea in all ages from the beginning of the World the Saints have been ſheltered under theſe wings of Divine Power, *Iſa.* 51. 9, 10. Thus Providence hath hanged and adorned this Chamber of Divine Power with the delightful Hiſtories of the Churches manifold preſervations by it.

Sect. IV. Having taken a ſhort view of this glorious Chamber of God's Power abſolutely in it ſelf, and alſo in relation to his promiſes and providences, it remains now, that I preſs and perſwade all the people of God under their fears and dangers according to God's gracious invitation to enter into it ſhut their doors, and to behold with delight this glorious Attribute working for them in all their exigencies and diſtreſſes.

1. Enter into this Chamber of Divine Power, all ye that fear the Lord, and hide your ſelves there in theſe dangerous and diſtreſsful days; let me ſay to you as the Prophet did to the poor diſtreſſed *Jews*, *Zech.* 9. 12. *Turn ye to your ſtrong hold, ye priſoners of hope.* Strong holds might they ſay; Why, where are they? The walls of *Jeruſalem* are in the duſt, the Temple burnt with fire, *Sion* an heap, what meaneſt thou then in telling us of our ſtrong holds? Why, admit all this, yet there is *Satis præſidii in uno Deo*, Refuge enough for you in God alone, as *Calvin* excellently notes upon that place. Chriſtian, art not thou able to fetch a good ſubſiſtence for thy Son by Faith, out of the Almighty power of God? The renowned Saints of old did ſo. *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob* met with as many difficulties and plunges of trouble in their time, as ever you did or ſhall meet with; yet by the exerciſe of their faith upon this Attribute, they lived comfortably, and why cannot you? *Exod.* 6. 3. *I appeared* (ſaith God) *unto* Abraham, Iſaac, *and* Jacob, *by the name of God Almighty.* They kept houſe and feaſted by Faith upon this name of mine; O that we could do as *Abraham* did, *Rom.* 4. 21. We have the ſame Attribute, but alas, we have not ſuch a Faith as his was to improve it. It is eaſie to believe the Almighty power of God in a calm, but not ſo eaſie to reſign our ſelves to it, and ſecurely reſt upon it in a ſtorm of adverſity; But oh what peace and reſt would our Faith procure us by the free uſe and exerciſe of it this way, to aſſiſt your faith in this difficulty wherein we find the faith of a *Moſes* ſometimes ſtaggered. Let me briefly offer you theſe four following encouragements.

1. Conſider how your gracious God hath engaged this his Almighty Power by Promiſe and Covenant for the ſecurity of his people, God pawned it as it were to *Abraham* in that famous promiſe, *Gen.* 17. 1. *I am the Almighty God, walk thou before me, and be perfect.* And *Gen.* 15. 1. *Fear not*, Abraham, *I am thy ſhield.* Say not, this was *Abraham*'s peculiar privilege, for if you conſult *Hoſ.* 12. 4. and *Heb.* 13. 5, 6. you will find that Believers in theſe days, have as good a title to the promiſes made in thoſe days, as thoſe worthies had to whom they were immediately made.

2. If you be Believers, your relation to God ſtrongly engageth his power for you, as well as his own promiſes, *Surely* (ſaith God) *they are my people, children that will not lye; ſo he became their Saviour, Iſa.* 63. 8. We ſay Relations have the leaſt of *Entity*, but the greateſt of *efficacy*; you find it ſo in your own experience, let a wife, child, or friend be in imminent danger, and it ſhall engage all the power you have to ſuccour and deliver them.

3. This glorious power of God is engaged for you by the very malice and wickedneſs of your enemies, who will be apt to impute the ruine of the Saints to the defect of power in their God; from whence thoſe excellent arguments are drawn, *Numb.* 14. 15, 16. *Now if you ſhall kill all his people as one man, then the nations which have heard the fame of thee, will ſpeak, ſaying, becauſe the Lord was not able to bring this people into the land, which he ſware unto them, therefore he hath ſlain them in the wilderneſs.* And again, *Deut.* 32. 26, 27. you ſhall find the Lord improving this argument for them himſelf; if they do not plead it for themſelves, he will. *I would ſcatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to ceaſe from among men, were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, leſt their adverſaries ſhould behave themſelves ſtrangely, and leſt they ſhould ſay, our hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this.* O ſee how much you are beholding to the very rage of your enemies for your deliverances from them!

4. To conclude, the very reliance of your Souls by faith upon the power of God, your very leaning upon his arm engages it for your protection *Iſa.* 26. 3. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whoſe mind is ſtayed on thee, becauſe he truſteth in thee.* Puzzle not your ſelves therefore any longer about qualifications; but know that the very acting of your faith on God, the recumbency of your Souls upon him, is that which will engage him for your defence, how weak and defective ſoever thou art in other reſpects.

2. Having thus entered by Faith into this Chamber of Divine Power, the next counſel the Text gives you is, to ſhut the door behind you, *i. e.* after the acting of your faith, and the quiet repoſe of your Souls upon God's Almighty Power, then take heed leſt unbelieving fears and jealouſies creep in again and diſturb the reſt of your Souls in God, you find a ſad inſtance of this in *Moſes*, *Numb.* 11. 21. 23. After ſo many glorious acts and triumphs of his Faith, how were his heels tripped up by diffidence which crept in afterwards! Good men may be poſed with difficult Providences, and made to ſtagger. The *Iſraelites* had lived upon miracles many years, yet *Pſal.* 78. 20. *Can he give bread alſo?* Good *Martha* objects difficulty to Chriſt, *Joh.* 11. 39. *By this time he ſtinketh.* Oh! tis a glorious thing to give God the glory of his Almighty Power in difficult caſes that we cannot comprehend. See *Zech.* 8. 6. *If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in theſe days, ſhould it be alſo marvellous in mine eyes? ſaith the Lord of hoſts.* Difficulties are for Men, but not for God: becauſe it is marvellous in your eyes, muſt it be ſo in Gods? Various Objections will be apt to ariſe in your hearts to drive you out of this your refuge. As,

1 *Object.* Oh! but the long continuance of our troubles and diſtreſſes will ſink our very hearts, *Iſa.* 40. 27.

40. 27. *Why ſayeſt thou*, O Jacob, *and ſpeakeſt*, O Iſrael, *my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is paſſed over from my God?*

Sol. But, oh! wait upon God without fainting, *Heb.* 2. 3. *The viſion is yet for an appointed time, but at the end of it ſhall ſpeak and not lye: though it tarry, wait for it, becauſe it will ſurely come, it will not tarry.*

2. *Object.* Oh but our former hopes and expectations of deliverance are fruſtrated, *Jer.* 8. 15. *We looked for peace, but no good came: and for a time of health, and behold trouble.*

Sol. Oh, but yet be not diſcouraged; ſee how the *Pſalmiſt* begins the 69th *Pſalm* with *trembling*, and ends it with triumph; the husbandman waiteth, and ſo muſt you.

3. *Object.* But there is no ſign or appearance of our deliverance.

Sol. What then, this is no new thing, *Pſal.* 74. 9. *We ſee not our ſigns, there is no more any Prophet, neither is there any among us that knoweth how long.*

4. *Object.* But all things work contrary to our hope.

Sol. Why, ſo did things with *Abraham*; yet ſee, *Rom.* 4. 18. *againſt hope, he believed in hope.*

3. Obſerve further with delight the outgoings and glorious workings of Divine Power for you, and for the Church in times of trouble; this is ſweet entertainment for your Souls, 'tis food for faith, *Pſal.* 74. 14. *Thou brakeſt the heads of Leviathan in pieces, and gaveſt him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderneſs.* And here I beſeech you behold and admire,

1. Its myſterious and admirable protection of the Saints in all their dangers. They feed as Sheep in the midſt of Wolves, *Luke* 10. 3. They lie among them that are ſet on fire, *Pſal.* 57. 4. *Their habitation is in the midſt of deceit. Jer.* 9. 6. Yet they are kept in ſafety by the mighty Power of God.

2. Behold and admire it in caſting the bonds of reſtraint upon your enemies, that tho' they would, yet they cannot hurt you; our dangers are viſible, and our fears great, but our ſecurity and ſafety admirable, *Iſa.* 51. 13. *Thou haſt feared continually every day, becauſe of the fury of the oppreſſor, as if he were ready to deſtroy; and where is the fury of the oppreſſor?*

3. Behold its opening unexpected and unlikely refuges and ſecurities for the Saints in their diſtreſſes; *Iſa.* 16. 4. *Let mine outcaſts dwell with thee*, Moab, *be thou a covert to them from the face of the Spoiler; for the Extortioner is at an end, the Spoiler ceaſeth, the Oppreſſors are conſumed out of the Land.* Rev. 12. 16. *The earth helped the Woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and ſwallowed up the flood which the Dragon caſt out of his mouth.*

4. Behold it fruſtating all the deſigns of our enemies againſt us, *Iſa.* 54. 17. *No weapon that is formed againſt thee ſhall proſper, and every tongue that ſhall riſe againſt thee in judgment thou ſhalt condemn. Behold, I have created the Smith*, Iſa. 54. 16. *q. d.* He that created the Smith, can order as he pleaſeth the Weapon made by him; hence our enemies are not maſters of their own deſigns.

Oh then depend upon this Power of God, for it is your ſecurity; there is a twofold dependance, the one natural and neceſſary, the other elective.

1. Natural dependance, ſo all do and muſt depend upon him.

2. Elective and voluntary, and ſo we all ought to depend upon him; and for your encouragement take this Scripture, *Pſal.* 9. 9, 10. *The Lord alſo will be a refuge for the oppreſſed, a refuge in times of trouble, and they that know thy name will put their truſt in thee, for thou, Lord, haſt not forſaken them that ſeek thee.* And thus of the firſt Attribute of God, prepared for the ſafety of his people in times of trouble.

CHAP. VII.

Opening that glorious Attribute of Divine Wiſdom as a ſecond Chamber of Security to the Saints in difficult Times.

Sect. I. THE next Chamber of Divine Protection into which I ſhall lead you, is the *Infinite Wiſdom of God*; I call it the next, becauſe I ſo find it placed in Scripture, *Job* 36. 5. *He is mighty in power and wiſdom.* Dan. 2. 20. *Wiſdom and might are his.*

This Attribute may be fitly called the *Council-Chamber* of Heaven, where all things are contrived in deepeſt wiſdom, which are afterwards wrought in the world by power, *Eph.* 1. 11. *He worketh all things after the counſel of his own will.* Counſel in the Creature implies weakneſs and defect; we are not able at one thought to fathom the depth of a buſineſs, and therefore muſt deliberate and ſpend many thoughts about it, and when we have ſpent all our own thoughts we are oft times at a loſs, and muſt borrow help, and ask counſel of others; but in God it notes the perfection of his underſtanding, for as thoſe acts of the creature which are the reſults of deliberation and counſel, are the height and top of all rational contrivement; ſo in its accommodation to God, it notes the excellent reſults of his infinite and moſt perfect underſtanding.

Now this wiſdom of God is to be conſidered either,

Abſolutely, or, Relatively.

1. Abſolutely in it ſelf, and ſo it is, *That, whereby he moſt perfectly and exactly knows himſelf, and all things without himſelf, ordering and diſpoſing them in the moſt convenient manner to the glory of his own name.*

Wiſdom comprehends two things, 1. Knowledge of the natures of things, which in the creature is called *Science.* 2. Knowledge how to govern, order and diſpoſe them, which in the Creature is called *Prudence*; theſe things in Man are but faint ſhadows of that which is in God in the moſt abſolute perfection; he fully knows himſelf, for his Underſtanding is infinite, *Pſal.* 147. 5. and the thoughts he thinks towards us, *Jer.* 29. 11. And as he perfectly underſtands himſelf, ſo likewiſe all things that are without himſelf. *Acts* 15. 18. *Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.* Together with all the ſecret deſigns, thoughts, and purpoſes which lie hid from all others in the inmoſt receſſes of mens hearts, *Pſal.* 139. 2.

And as he perfectly knows all things, ſo he fully underſtands how to govern and direct them to the beſt end, even the exalting of his own praiſe, *Pſal.* 104. 24. *Rom.* 11. 36. *for of him, and through him, and to him are all things*: of him, as the *efficient cauſe*; thro' him, as the *conſerving cauſe*: and to him, as the *final cauſe.* And in this wiſe diſpoſition of all things, he hath a gracious reſpect to the good of his choſen, *Rom.* 8. 28. *All things ſhall work together for good to them that love God.* More particularly, the Wiſdom of God is to be conſidered by us in its excellent Properties, amongſt which theſe four following are eminently conſpicuous, as it is the

1. Original,
2. Eſſential,
3. Perfect, and
4. Only Wiſdom.

1. The Wiſdom of God is the Original Wiſdom, from which all the Wiſdom found in Angels or Men is derived, and unto that Fountain we are directed to go,

go, for ſupplies of Wiſdom, *Ja.* 1. 5. *If any man lack wiſdom, let him ask it of God.* There is indeed a Spirit in Man, but it is the inſpiration of the Almighty that giveth underſtanding, *Job* 32. 8. The natural faculty is ours, but the Illumination thereof is God's, the underſtanding of the Creature is as the Dial, which ſignifies nothing till the Sun ſhine upon it.

2. God's Wiſdom is Eſſential Wiſdom. Wiſdom in the Creature is but a quality ſeparable from the ſubject; but in God it is his Nature, his very Eſſence, he can as ſoon ceaſe to be God, as to be moſt wiſe.

3. The Wiſdom of God is perfect Wiſdom, full of it ſelf, and excluſive of its contrary; the wiſeſt of men are not wiſe at all times; the greateſt Wits are not without ſome mixture of madneſs; it is an high attainment in human Wiſdom to underſtand our own weakneſs and folly; the deepeſt heads are but ſhallows, but the wiſdom of God is an unſearchable depth, *Rom.* 11. 33. *O the depth of the riches, both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God! how unſearchable are his judgments, and his ways paſt finding out?*

4. To conclude, The Wiſdom of God is the only Wiſdom; there is no Wiſdom without him, none againſt him, he is the only wiſe God, *Jude v.* 25.

2. The Wiſdom of God muſt be conſidered *Relatively*, and that in a double Reſpect:

1. To his Promiſes. 2. To his Providences.

Sect. II. Let us view it in its relation to the Promiſes, where you ſhall find it made over by God to his people for divers excellent uſes and purpoſes in times of diſtreſs and danger. As,

1. It is made over to them in Promiſes for their direction and guidance when they know not what to do, or which way to take. So *Pſal.* 25. 9. *The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way*; and *Iſa.* 58. 11. 8. *The Lord ſhall guide thee continually*; and *Pſal.* 32. 8. *I will guide thee with mine eye.* And with this the *Pſalmiſt* encourages himſelf, *Pſal.* 73. 24. *Thou ſhalt guide me with thy counſel, and afterwards receive me to glory.* O what an invaluable Mercy is this! we ſhould make ſhipwreck both of our temporal and eternal Mercies quickly, were it not for the guidance of Divine Wiſdom.

2. To extricate them when involved in difficulties. So 2 *Pet.* 2. 9. *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation.* They know not how, but their God doth; they are often at a loſs, but He is never. So 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. *There hath no temptation taken you, but ſuch as is common to man, but God is faithful, who will not ſuffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation alſo make a way to eſcape, that ye may be able to bear it.*

3. To over-rule and order all their troubles to their good, and real advantage. So runs that moſt comprehenſive promiſe, *Rom.* 18. 28. *All things ſhall work together for good to them that love God.* In the Faith whereof *Paul* concludes, *Phil.* 1. 19. Even this ſhall work for his Salvation. Thus the people of God were ſent into captivity for their good, *Jer.* 24. 8. and *Joſeph* into *Egypt*, *Gen.* 50. 20. *Ye thought evil againſt me, but God meant it unto good, to bring to paſs as it is this day, to ſave much people alive.*

2. Let us view the Wiſdom of God in its relation to his Providences, for there it ſhines forth eminently, *Ezek.* 1 18. The wheels were full of eyes *i. e.* the motions and providential revolutions in this lower World are very judicious and adviſed motions; *Non cæco impetu volvuntur rotæ*; It hath a fetch and deſign which no man underſtands till it open it ſelf in the event.

The enemies of the Church are oft-times men of the fineſt brains, and deepeſt policies: *Herod* a Fox for ſubtilty, *Luke* 13. 32. *Julian* and *Ahitophel*, with many others, who have digged as deep as Hell in their Counſels, and laid their deſigns ſo ſure, that they doubted not to be maſters of it; yet their hands could not perform their enterprize.

The Wiſdom of Providence hath ſtill befooled them, and baffled the cunningeſt headpieces that ever undertook any deſign againſt the Church, as faſt as ever they aroſe; and here the Wiſdom of Providence is remarkable in three things eſpecially.

1. In revealing and diſcovering the ſecret conſpiracies and counſels of the Churches enemies, and thereby fruſtrating their deſigns, *Gen.* 27. 41, 42. *Providence* (as one calls it) is the Bird of the Air that carries tidings, and whiſtles deeds of darkneſs: *Job* 12. 22. *He diſcovereth deep things out of darkneſs, and bringeth out to light the ſhadow of death.* And this God hath done both *immediately* and *mediately*. 1. Immediately, 2 *Kings* 6. 11. What counſel ſoever the King of *Syria* took in his Bedchamber was ſtill diſcovered by the Lord to the Prophet. So true is that *Job* 44. 22. *There is no darkneſs nor ſhadow of death where the workers of iniquity may hide themſelves.* Thus the Deſign of *Herod* is revealed to *Joſeph* in a Dream.

But commonly he doth it by means; as,

1. By giving knowledge of it to ſome that are under obligations of duty or affection to reveal it to thoſe that are concerned in the danger. So *Paul*'s Siſter's Son, *Acts* 23. 16. revealed the Conſpiracy againſt his life, and ſo the Plot miſcarried by revealing it before it was ripe for execution.

2. By the failure of ſome circumſtance, the whole is brought to light; there be many fine threds upon which the deſigns of Politicians hang; if one break, the whole deſign is unravell'd. Thus the Wiſdom of God ſometimes prevents his peoples ruin, by taking away the ſpeech of the truſty from him, and making their own tongues to fall upon themſelves.

3. By their own confeſſion, ſo *Pſal.* 64. 5, 6, 7, 8. where you have the Plot laid, ver. 5. *They encourage themſelves in an evil matter, they commune of laying ſnares privily, they ſay, who ſhall ſee them?* The deep Contrivance of it, ver. 6. *They ſearch out iniquity, they accompliſh a diligent ſearch, both the inward thoughts of every one of them, and the heart is deep.* Their Plot deſtroy'd, v. 7. *But God ſhall ſhoot at them with an arrow, ſuddenly ſhall they be wounded.* The method or way of Providence in deſtroying it, v. 8. *So they ſhall make their own tongue to fall upon themſelves, all that ſee them ſhall flee away.* Thus hath the wiſdom of our God wrought for us this day beyond all the thoughts of our hearts; and oh that it might make ſuch Impreſſions upon all our Hearts, as follow in the 9, and 10 verſes, *All men ſhall fear, and ſhall declare the work of God, for they ſhall wiſely conſider his doing. The righteous ſhall be glad in the Lord, and ſhall truſt in him, and all the upright in heart ſhall glory.*

2. The wiſdom of God diſcovers it ſelf in behalf of that people who are his own, in diverting the danger from them, and putting by the deadly thruſts their enemies make at them; thus it ſpoils their game by an unforeſeen rub in the green, and that eſpecially three ways.

1. By making their counſels to jar among themſelves, in which jars is the ſweeteſt harmony of providence; thus the counſel of *Ahithophel* jars with the counſel of *Hushai*, 2 *Sam.* 17. 5, 7. by which means *David* eſcaped: the *Phariſees* claſhed with the

the *Sadducees*, *Acts* 23. 7. and by that means *Paul* escaped.

2. By cutting out other work, and starting some new design which like a fresh scent puts the dogs to a loss. Thus the people of God in *Jerusalem* were delivered by a diversion, 2 *Kings* 19. 7. *Behold, I will send a blast upon him. and he shall hear a rumour and shall return to his own land, and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land*, so Rabshakeh *returned*. By this means also was *David* delivered from the hand of *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 23. 27. And in this method of Providence, that Scripture is often fulfilled, *Prov.* 21. 18. *The wicked shall be a ransom for the Righteous, and the transgressour for the upright.*

3. By cutting off the capital enemies of his Church, by whose seasonable destruction they are delivered. Thus fell *Julian*, that bitter enemy of the Christians, when he was preparing to put his last and most bloody design against them in Execution. And thus fell *Haman*, *Nero*, and many more in the very height and heat of their designs against the Church.

3. The Wisdom of God gloriously displays it self in causing the designs of the wicked, like a surcharged gun to recoil upon and destroy themselves: It often falls out with the undermining enemies of the Church, as it sometimes doth with them that dig deep *Mines* in the Earth, who are destroyed and buried in their own work; *Psal.* 9. 15, 16. *The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made, in the net which they hid is their own foot taken. The Lord is known by the judgments which he executeth, the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgajon, Selah.* There is a double mercy in this providence, one in delivering the Saints from the danger, the other in causing it to fall upon the contrivers, and is therefore celebrated with a double note of attention: in these observable strokes, the righteousness of God shines forth, in repaying his peoples enemies in their own coin.

——— nec lex est justior ulla,
Quam necis Artifices arte perire sua.

Thus *Haman* did eat the first-fruits of that tree which his own hands planted, and thus *Jerusalem* becomes a burthensome stone to all that burthen themselves with it, *Zech.* 12. 3.

4. Admire and adore the Wisdom of your God in those great and unexpected advantages, which arise to you out of those very dangers and designs of your enemies that threatned your ruine; the very hands of your very enemies are sometimes made the instruments of your advancement and enlargement; your persecutions become your privileges, the Motto of the *Palm* tree fitly becomes yours, *Suppressa Resurgo.*

In three things the Wisdom of God makes advantage out of your troubles.

1. In fortifying your Souls and Bodies with suitable strength, when any eminent trial is intended for you: So it was with the Apostles, 2 *Cor.* 1. 5. *As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation by Christ.* God lays in suitably to what men lay on mercilesly: Christ would not draw the poor timorous disciples out of *Jerusalem* unto hard encounters, until first he had endued them with power from on high, *Luke* 24. 49.

2. The Wisdom of your God can and often doth make your very troubles and sufferings instead of so many ordinances to strengthen your Faith and fortifie your Patience. So the Heads of *Leviathan* became meat to his people inhabiting the Wilderness, *Psal.* 74 14. And so the Plots of *Balak* and *Balaam* were designed by God to be as a standing instructing ordinance for the encouragement of his peoples Faith in future difficulties. *Micah* 6 5 *O my people remember now what* Balak *King of* Moab *consulted, and what* Balaam *the son of* Beor *answered him from* Shittim *unto* Gilgal *that ye may know the righteousness of the Lord. q. d.* You cannot but remember how those your enemies courted me with multitudes of Offerings to deliver you up into their hands, and how faithfully I stood by you in all those dangers; that Plot discovered at once the policy of your enemies, and the righteousness of your God.

3. His Wisdom is discovered to your advantage in permitting your dangers to grow to an extremity, on purpose to magnifie his goodness, and increase your comfort in your deliverance from it. *Psal.* 126. 1. *When the Lord turned our captivity we were as them that dreamed.* Proportionable to the greatness of your dangers will your joys be.

Sect III. Well then if the Wisdom of God shines forth so gloriously in the times of his peoples trouble; be perswaded by Faith to enter into this Chamber also; it is a Chamber where a believing Soul may enjoy the sweetest rest and quietness in the most hurrying and distracting Times; shut the door behind you, and improve this Attribute to your best Advantage.

1. Enter into this Chamber by Faith, believe firmly that the management of all the Affairs of this world, whether publick or personal, is in the hands of your All wise God; more particularly, exercise your faith about the Wisdom of God in these things.

1. Believe that the Wisdom of God can contrive and order the way of our escape and deliverance, when all doors of hope are shut up to sense and reason; we know not what to do, said good *Jehoshaphat*, but our eyes are unto thee. *q. d* Lord though I am at a loss and see no way of escape, thou art never at a loss. The Lord (saith *Peter* knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of Temptation: Divine wisdom hath infinite methods and ways of deliverance unknown to man, till they are opened in the event.

2. Believe that the Wisdom of God can turn your greatest troubles and fears into the choicest blessings and mercies to you: I know (saith *Paul*) that this shall turn to my salvation, *Phil.* 1. 19. meaning his bonds and sufferings for Christ Divine wisdom can give you honey out of the carcase of the Lion, cause you to part with those afflictions, admiring and blessing God for them, which you met with fear and trembling, as suspecting your destruction was imported in them.

3. In consideration of both these, resign up your selves to the wisdom of God, and lean not to your own understandings; *Commit thy way unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established, Prov.* 16. 3. When *Melancthon* was oppressed with cares and doubts about the distracting affairs of the Church in his time, *Luther* thus chides him out of his despondency, *Desinet Philippus esse rector mundi*, do not thou presume to be the Governour of the world; but leave the reins of Government in his hand that made it, and best knows how to rule it: Let God alone to chuse thy lot and portion, to order thy condition, and manage all thy affairs, and let thy Soul take its Rest in this quiet Chamber of Divine Wisdom. But then,

2. Be sure to shut thy door behind thee, and beware lest unbelief, anxieties, fears and doubts creep unto thee to disturb thy rest, and shake thy faith in

this point; we are apt in two cases to be stumbled in this matter.

1. When subtle and cunning Enemies are engaged against us; this was *David's* case, 2 *Sam.* 15. 31. *One told* David, *saying*, Ahithophel *is among the conspirators with* Absalom; *and* David *said*, O *Lord, I pray thee turn the counsel of* Ahithophel *into foolishness.* When he heard *Ahithophel* was with the Conspirators, it greatly puzzled him. Though a whole Conclave of Politicians be against us, yet if God be with us let us not fear.

2. When our own Reason intrudes too far, and offers its dictates too boldly in the Case, we are apt to say in the arrogancy of our own Reason, we cannot be delivered; but oh that we would learn to resign it up to the Wisdom of God. The Lord knows how to deliver the godly. When the question was asked the Prophet, *Ezek.* 37. 3. Can these dry bones live? He answers, Lord thou knowest. That's excellent counsel, *Prov.* 3. 5. *Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not to thine own understanding.*

3. Improve the Wisdom of God for your selves in all difficult and distressful cases.

1. Beg of God to exercise his Wisdom for you when Enemies conspire against you: So did *David*, 2 *Sam* 15. 31. *Lord, turn the counsel of* Ahithophel *into foolishness!* O 'tis the noblest and surest way to vanquish an Enemy: it was but asked and done.

2. Comfort your selves with this when ever you are at a loss in your own thoughts, and know not what to do, then commit all to divine Conduct; let God steer for you in a Storm; he loves to be trusted, *Psal.* 37. 5. *Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.*

3. Encourage your selves from this when the Church is in the greatest danger, and most sorely shaken; O that is a blessed promise, *Zech.* 3. 9. *Upon one stone shall be seven eyes.* Meaning Christ, and the Church built on him as the chief corner Stone; the seven Eyes are the seven Eyes of Providence, which are never all asleep.

CHAP. VIII.

Opening that glorious Attribute of divine Faithfulness as a third Chamber of Security to the People of God in times of Distress and Danger.

Sect. I. HAving viewed the Saints Refuge in the Power and Wisdom of God, we next proceed to a third Chamber of Safety for the Saints refuge, *viz.* The faithfulness of God.

In this Attribute is our safety and rest amidst the confusions of the World and daily Disappointments we are vexed withal through the vanity and falseness of the Creature: As to Creatures, the very best of them are but vanity, yea, vanity of vanity, the vaineſt vanity, *Eccles.* 1. 2. *Every Man in his best estate is altogether vanity*, Psal. 39. 5. Yea, those that we expect most from, give us most of trouble, *Micah* 7. 5. Neerest Relations bring up the rear of sorrows, *Job* 6. 15. *My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook.* Especially their deceit appears most when we have most need of their help, *Psal.* 142. 4. How great a mercy is it then to have a refuge in the faithfulness of God, as *David* had; *I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me, refuge failed me, no man cared for my soul.* And likewise the Church, *Micah* 7. 7. *I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation, my God will hear me.* A time may come when you shall not know where to trust in all this World: Let me therefore open to you this Chamber of rest in the faithfulness of God, against such a day, and this I shall do in a twofold Consideration of it, *viz.*

1. Absolutely in its own Nature.
2. Relatively in the Promises and Providences of God.

1. Absolutely, and so the faithfulness of God is his sincerity, firmness, and constancy in performing his word to his People in all times and cases. So *Moses* describes him to *Israel*, Deut. 7. 9. *Know therefore that the Lord thy God he is God, the faithful God.* And *Joshua* appeals to their experience for the vindication of it, *Josh.* 23. 14. *Ye know in all your hearts, and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass, and not one thing hath failed thereof.* And it is also fully asserted, *Jer.* 31. 35, 36, 37. and greatly admired even in the darkest day, *Lam.* 3. 23. *Great is thy faithfulness.* And it is well for us that his faithfulness is great, for great is that weight that leans upon it, even all our hopes for both worlds, for this world, and for that to come, *Tit.* 1. 2. *In hope of eternal life which God that cannot lye promised before the world began.*

It was a very dishonourable character that *Suidas* gave of *Tiberius*, *Eorum quæ appetebat ne quicquam præ se ferebat, & eorum quæ dicebat, ne quicquam facere volebat, i. e.* He never made shew of having what he desired to have, nor ever minded to do what he promised to do: But God is faithful, and that will appear by these following Evidences of it.

1. *Evid.* By his exact fulfilling of his Promises of the longest date. So *Acts* 7. 6. four hundred and thirty Years were run out before the Promise of *Israel's* deliverance out of *Egypt* was accomplished, yet *Acts* 7. 17. when the time of the Promise was come, God was punctual to a day: Seventy Years in *Babylon*, and at the expiration of that time they returned, 2 *Chron.* 36. 21. Men may forget, but God cannot, *Isa.* 49. 15, 16.

2 *Evid.* By making way for his Promises through the greatest difficulties, and seeming impossibilities. So to *Abraham* when old, *Gen.* 18. 13, 14. *Is there any thing too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time will I return unto thee, according to the time of life; and* Sarah *shall have a Son.* And likewise to the *Israelites*, Can these dry bones live? *Ezek.* 37. 3. Difficulties are for Men, not God, *Gen.* 18. 14. What art thou O great Mountain, *Zec.* 8. 6. *If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith the Lord of hosts.*

3. *Evid.* By fulfilling promises to his people, when their hopes and expectations have been given up. So *Ezek.* 37. 11. Our Bones are dry, our Hopes lost, we are cut off for our part. And *Isa.* 49. 14. *Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.* There may be much unbelief in good Men, their faith may be sorely staggered, yet God is faithful, Men may question his promises, yet God cannot deny himself, 2 *Tim.* 2. 13.

4. *Evid.* By God's appealing to his People, and referring the matter to their own judgment, *Micah* 6. 3, 4, 5. O *my People, what have I done unto thee, and wherein have I wearied thee? Testifie against me, for I brought thee up out of the land of* Egypt, *and redeemed thee out of the house of servants, and I sent before thee* Moses, Aaron, *and* Miriam. O *my people, remember now what* Balak *King of* Moab *consulted, and what* Balaam *the Son of* Beor *answered him from* Shittim *unto* Gilgal, *that ye may know the righteousness of the*

Lord

Lord. q. d. If I have failed in a *Punctilio* of my promiſe, ſhew it; did not *Balak* and *Balaam* court me, and try all ways to win me over to them by multitudes of Sacrifices, yet I did not deſert you. So *Jer.* 2. 31. *O generation, ſee ye the word of the Lord, have I been a wilderneſs unto* Iſrael, *a land of darkneſs? wherefore ſay my people, we are Lords, we will come no more unto thee?* Iſa. 44. 8.

5. *Evid.* The faithfulneſs of God is abundantly cleared by the conſtant Teſtimonies given unto it in all Ages by them that have tryed it, they have all witneſſed for God, and atteſted his unſpotted faithfulneſs to the generations that were to come. So did *Joſhua* 23. 14. *All is come to paſs*; and ſo did *Daniel*, *Chap.* 9. 4. *O Lord the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him:* With which *David's* Teſtimony concurs, *Pſal.* 146. 6. *Happy is he that hath the God of* Jacob *for his help, whoſe hope is in the Lord his God, which made the heaven and earth, the ſea and all that therein is, which keepeth truth for ever.* Thus his People have been witneſſes in all generations, unto the faithfulneſs of God in his promiſes; the conſideration whereof leaves no doubt or objection behind it.

Sect. II. And if we enquire into the grounds and reaſons why God is, and ever muſt be moſt faithful in performing his Promiſes, we ſhall find it is built upon ſtable and unſhaken Pillars: *viz.*

1. The Holineſs of his Nature.
2. The All-ſufficiency of his Power.
3. The Honour of his Name.
4. The Unchangeableneſs of his Nature.

1. The Faithfulneſs of God is built upon the perfect Holineſs of his Nature, by reaſon whereof it is impoſſible for God to lye, *Tit.* 1. 2. *Heb.* 6. 18. The deceitfulneſs of man flows from the corruption of the Humane Nature, but *God is not as man that he ſhould lye, neither as the ſon of man that he ſhould repent; hath he ſaid, and ſhall he not do it? Or hath he ſpoken, and ſhall he not make it good? Numb.* 23. 19. If there be no defect in his Being, there can be none in his working; if his Nature be pure Holineſs, all his ways muſt be perfect Faithfulneſs.

2. It is built upon the All-ſufficiency of his Power whatſoever he hath promiſed to his People, he is able to perform it; Men ſometimes falſifie their promiſes through the defects of ability to perform them: but God never out-promiſed himſelf; if he will work none can lett, *Iſa.* 43. 13. He can do whatſoever he pleaſeth to do, *Pſal.* 135. 6. The Holineſs of his Nature engageth, and the Almightineſs of his Power enables him to be faithful.

3. The glory and honour of his Name may aſſure us of his faithfulneſs in making good the Promiſes, and all that good which is in the promiſes to a tittle; for wherever you find a promiſe of God, you alſo find the Name and Honour of God given as a ſecurity for the performance of it; and ſo his Name hath ever been pleaded with him by his People, as a mighty Argument to work for them, *Joſhua* 7. 9. *What wilt thou do to thy great name? q. d.* Lord thine Honour is a thouſand times more than our lives, it is no ſuch great matter what becomes of us; but ah, Lord, it is of infinite concernment that the glory of thy Name be ſecured, and thy faithfulneſs kept pure and unſpotted in the world. So again, *Exod.* 32. 11, 12. *And* Moſes *beſought the Lord his God, and ſaid, Lord, why doth thy wrath wax hot againſt the people, which thou haſt brought out of the land of* Egypt, *with great power, and with a mighty hand? Wherefore ſhould the* Egyptians *ſpeak and ſay, for miſchief did he bring them out to ſlay them in the mountains, and to conſume them from the face of the earth? turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil againſt thy people. q. d.* It will be ſad enough for the hands of the *Egyptians* to fall upon thy people, but infinitely worſe for the Tongues of the *Egyptians* to fall upon thy Name.

4. The unchangeableneſs of his Nature gives us the fulleſt aſſurance of his faithfulneſs in the Promiſes, *Mal.* 3. 6. *I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye ſons of* Jacob *are not conſumed.* God's unchangeableneſs is his Peoples indempnity, and beſt ſecurity in the midſt of dangers; whilſt there is not yea and nay with God, there ſhould be no ups and downs, offs and ons in our Faith; that which gives ſteadineſs to the Promiſes, ſhould give ſteadineſs alſo to our expectations for the performance of them; and ſo much briefly of the faithfulneſs of God abſolutely conſidered in the nature and grounds of it.

2. Next let us view the Faithfulneſs of God, as it relates to the many great and precious Promiſes made unto his people for their ſecurity both in their

1. Temporal
2. Spiritual

} Concernments.

1. We find the Faithfulneſs of God pawned and pledged for the ſecurity of his people in their Spiritual and eternal concernments, againſt all their dangers and fears, threatning them on that account, and that more eſpecially in theſe three reſpects.

1. It is given them as their great and beſt ſecurity for the Pardon of their ſins, 1 *John* 1. 9. *If we confeſs our ſins he is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins, and to cleanſe us from all unrighteouſneſs.* Our greateſt danger comes from ſin; Guilt is a fountain of fears, a pardoned Soul only can look other troubles in the face boldly: As Guilt breeds fear, ſo Pardon breeds Courage, and God's Faithfulneſs in the Covenant is as it were that Pardon-Office from whence we fetch our diſcharges and acquittances, *Iſa.* 43. 25. *I, even I am he, that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions for mine own ſake.* The promiſes of remiſſion are made for Chriſt's ſake, and when made, they muſt be fulfilled for his own, that is his faithfulneſs ſake.

2. It is engaged for the perſeverance of the Saints and their continuance in the ways of God in the moſt hazardous and difficult times; this was the encouragement given them, 1 *Cor* 1. 8, 9. *Who ſhall alſo confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameleſs in the day of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; God is faithful by whom ye were called unto the fellowſhip of his Son Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* Ah Lord! might thoſe *Corinthians* ſay, the powers of the World are againſt us, ſuffering and Death before us, a treacherous and fearful Heart within us. Ay, but yet fear not, Chriſt ſhall confirm you, whoſoever oppoſes you; though the World and your own Hearts be deceitful, yet comfort your ſelves with this, your God is faithful.

3. The faithfulneſs of God is given by Promiſe for his Peoples ſecurity in, and encouragement againſt all their ſufferings and afflictions in this world, 2 *Theſ.* 3. 2, 3, *That we may be delivered from unreaſonable and wicked men, for all men have not faith; but the Lord is faithful, who ſhall ſtabliſh you, and keep you from evil.* He prays they may be delivered from abſurd, treacherous and unfaithful men, who would trapan and betray them to ruine; but this is propoſed as their Relief that when the treachery of men ſhall bring them into troubles, the Faithfulneſs of God ſhall ſupport them under, and deliver them out of thoſe troubles; they ſhall have ſpiritual Supports from God, under their deepeſt ſufferings from men, 1 *Pet.* 4. 19.

2. God's

2. God's Faithfulneſs is engaged for his peoples indempnity and ſecurity amidſt the Temporal and outward evils whereunto they are liable in this world; and that either to preſerve them from troubles, *Pſal.* 91. 1, 2, 3, 4. or to open a ſeaſonable door of deliverance out of trouble, 1 *Cor.* 10 13. In both or either of which the hearts of Chriſtians may be at reſt in this troubleſome world; for what need thoſe troubles fright us, which either ſhall never touch us, or if they do, ſhall never hurt, much leſs ruin us.

Sect. III. Having taken a ſhort view of God's Faithfulneſs in the Promiſes, it will be a lovely ſight to take one view of it more as it is actuated, and exerted in his Providences over his people; believe it, Chriſtians, the Faithfulneſs of God runs through all his works of Providence, whenever he goes forth to work in the World, *Faithfulneſs is the girdle of his loins*, *Iſa.* 11. 5. It is an alluſion to workmen who going forth in the morning to their labour, gird their loins or reins with a girdle, now there is no work wrought by God in this world, but his faithfulneſs is as the girdle of his loins. The conſideration whereof ſhould make the moſt deſpondent believer, *gird up the Loins of his mind*, that is, encourage and ſtrengthen his drooping and diſcouraged heart. Thoſe works of God which are wrought in Faithfulneſs and in purſuit of his eternal purpoſes and gracious promiſes, ſhould rather delight, than affright us, in beholding of them. It pluckt out the Sting of *David*'s affliction when he conſidered it was in very faithfulneſs, that God had afflicted him, *Pſal.* 119. 89, 90 But more particularly, let us behold with delight the faithfulneſs of God, making good ſix ſorts of Promiſes to his People, in the days of their affliction and trouble, *viz.*

1. The Promiſes of Preſervation.
2. The Promiſes of Support.
3. The Promiſes of Direction.
4. The Promiſes of Proviſion.
5. The Promiſes of Deliverance.
6. The Promiſes of Ordering and Directing the Event to their Advantage.

1. There are Promiſes in the Word for your preſervation from ruine, and what you read in thoſe promiſes you daily ſee the ſame fulfilled in your own experiences. You have a promiſe in *Pſal.* 57. 3. *He ſhall ſend from Heaven, and ſave me from the reproach of him that would ſwallow me up.* Selah. *God ſhall ſend forth his mercy and his truth.* Say now, have you not found it ſo, when Hell hath ſent forth its Temptations to defile you? The World its perſecutions to deſtroy your own heart, its unbelieving fears to deſtract and ſink you, hath not your God ſent forth alſo his mercy and his truth to ſave you? Hath not his truth been your ſhield and buckler? *Pſal.* 91. 4. May you not ſay with the Church it is of his mercy you are not conſumed, his mercies are new every morning, and great is his faithfulneſs, *Lam.* 3. 23.

2. As you have ſeen it actually fulfilling the promiſes for your preſervation, ſo you may ſee it making good all the promiſes in his word for your ſupport in troubles. That is a ſweet promiſe, *Pſal.* 91. 15. *I will be with him in trouble: I will deliver him.* You have alſo a very ſupporting promiſe in *Iſa.* 41. 10. *Fear not thou, for I am with thee: be not diſmayed for I am thy God: I will ſtrengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteouſneſs.* Oh! how evidently hath the faithfulneſs of God ſhone forth in the performance of his word to you in this reſpect! you are his witneſſes, you would have ſunk in the deep waters of trouble if it had not been ſo. So ſpeaks *David*, *Pſal.* 73. 26. *My heart and my fleſh faileth, but God is the Strength of my heart; and my portion for ever.* Have you not found it ſo with you as it is in 2 *Cor.* 12. 10. *Therefore I take pleaſure in infirmities, in reproaches, in neceſſities, in perſecutions, in diſtreſſes for Chriſt's ſake: for when I am weak, then am I ſtrong.* God's ſtrength hath been made perfect in your weakneſs, by this you have been carried through all your troubles; hitherto hath he helped you.

3. As you have ſeen it faithfully fulfilling the promiſes for your preſervation, and ſupport; So you have ſeen it in the direction of your ways. So runs that promiſe, *Pſal.* 32. 8. *I will inſtruct thee and teach thee in the way that thou ſhalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.* Certain it is, *That the way of man is not in himſelf*, Jer. 10. 23. O how faithfully hath your God guided you, and ſtood by you in all the difficult caſes of your Life! Is not that promiſe, *Heb.* 13. 5. faithfully fulfilled to a tittle, *I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee?* Surely you can ſet your Seal to that in *John* 17. 17. *Thy word is Truth*; had you been left to your own counſels you had certainly periſhed; as it is ſaid of them in *Pſal.* 81. 12. *I gave them up unto their own hearts luſts: and they walked in their own counſels.*

4. As there are promiſes in the word for your preſervation, ſupport, and direction; So in the fourth place there are promiſes for your *proviſions*, as in *Pſal.* 34. 9. the Lord hath promiſed that *They that fear him ſhall not want.* When they are driven to extremity, he will provide, *Iſa.* 41. 17. *When the poor and needy ſeek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirſt, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of* Iſrael *will not forſake them.* And is not this faithfully performed? *He hath given meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his Covenant*, Pſal. 111. 5. In all the Exigences of your lives, you have found him faithful to this day; you are his witneſſes that his Providences never failed you, his care hath been renewed every morning for you; how great is his faithfulneſs?

5. You alſo find in the word ſome reviving promiſes for your deliverances. You have a very ſweet promiſe in *Pſal.* 91. 14. *Becauſe he hath ſet his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him*: and again, *Pſal.* 50. 15. *Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee*; you have done ſo, and he hath made a way to eſcape. Our lives are ſo many monuments of mercy; we have lived among lions, yet preſerved, *Pſal.* 57. 4. The burning Buſh was an embleme of the Church miraculouſly preſerved.

6. There are promiſes in the word for the ordering and directing all the occurrences of providence to your great advantages; ſo it is promiſed, *Rom.* 8. 28. *That all things ſhall work together for good, to them that love God.* Fear not, Chriſtians, however you find it now, whilſt you are toſſing to and fro upon the unſtable waves of this world; you ſhall find to be ſure when you come to heaven, that all the troubles of your lives were guided as ſteddily by this promiſe, as ever any Ship at Sea was directed to its Port, by the Compaſs or North-Star.

And now what remains, but that I preſs you as before,

1. To enter into this Chamber of Divine Faithfulneſs.

2. To ſhut the door behind you,

3. And then to live comfortably on it in evil days.

1. Enter into this Chamber of God's Faithfulneſs by Faith, and hide your ſelves there. Every man

is a lye, but God is true, eternally and unchangeably faithful. Oh! exercise your Faith upon it, be at rest in it.

Now there are two great and weighty Arguments to press you to enter into this Chamber of Divine Faithfulness.

1 *Arg.* Is fetch'd from the Nature of God, who cannot lye, *Tit.* 1. 2. *He is not as man, that he should lye,* Numb. 23. 19. *Neither the Son of man that he should repent: hath he said and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?* Remember upon what everlasting steddy grounds the faithfulness of God is built. These are immutable things, *Heb.* 6. 18. This *Abraham* built upon, *Rom.* 4. 21. *being fully persuaded, that what he had promised, he was able also to perform.* He accounted him faithful that promised. What would you expect or require in the person that you are to trust? You would,

1. Expect a clear promise; and lo! you have a thousand all the Scripture over, fitted to all the cases of your Souls and Bodies. This you may plead with God, as *David, Psal.* 119. 49. *Remember the word unto thy Servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.* So *Jacob* pleaded, *Gen.* 32. 12. *Thou saidst, I will surely do thee good.* These are God's Bonds and Obligations.

2. You would expect sufficient power to make good what he promiseth. This is in God as a fair foundation of Faith, *Isa.* 26. 4. *Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength*; Because of thy strength we will wait on thee: Creatures cannot, but God can do what he will.

3. You would expect infinite goodness and mercy inclining him to help and save you. Why, so it is here, *Psal.* 130. 7. *Let* Israel *hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.* So *Moses,* Exod. 33. 18. *I beseech thee show me thy glory.* The request was, a view of God's glory: the answer is, *My goodness shall pass before thee*; which hints to us, that tho' all God's Attributes be glorious, yet that he most glories in is his *Goodness.* And then,

4. You would expect that none of his Promises were ever blotted or stained by his unfaithfulness at any time; and so it is here, *Josh.* 23. 14. *Not one thing hath failed*; all are come to pass, all ages have seal'd this conclusion, *Thy word is truth, thy word is truth.*

2. *Arg.* Besides all this, you have the encouragement of all former experiences, both others, and your own, as a second Argument to press you to enter into this Chamber of Safety, the faithfulness of God,

1. You have the experiences of others. Saints have reckon'd the experiences of others that lived a thousand years before them, as excellent Arguments to quicken their Faith: So *Hos.* 12. 4. he had power over the Angel, and prevailed; he found him in *Bethel,* and there he spake, Remember there was a *Joseph* with us in Prison, a *Jeremy* in the Dungeon, a *Daniel* in the Den, a *Peter* in Chains, an *Hezekiah* upon the brink of the grave; and they all found the help of God most faithfully protecting them and saving them in all their troubles. Suitable to this is that in *Psal.* 22. 4, 5. *Our fathers trusted in thee; they trusted, and thou deliveredst them; they cryed unto thee, and were delivered; they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.*

2. Your own experiences may encourage your Faith: So *David*'s did, 1 *Sam.* 17. 37. *The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the Lion, and out of the paw of the Bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.* So did *Paul*'s experience encourage his Faith, in 2 *Cor.* 1. 10. *Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us.* Thus enter into the Faithfulness of God by Faith.

2. Let me beg you to be sure to shut the doors behind you, against all unbelieving doubts, jealousies, and suspicions of the Faithfulness of God; the best men may find temptations of that nature; so did good *Asaph,* tho' an eminent Saint, *Psal.* 77. 78. *Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore?* These jealousies are apt to creep in upon the minds of men, especially when,

1. God delays to answer our Prayers as soon as we expect the return of them; we are all in haste for a speedy answer, forgetting that seasons of Prayer are our seed-times; and when we have sown that precious seed, we must wait for the Harvest, as the Husbandman doth. Even a precious *Heman* may find a faint qualm of unbelief and despondency seizing him by the long suspension of God's answers, *Psal.* 88. 9, 10, 11.

2. 'Twill be hard to shut the door upon unbelief, when all things in the eye of our sense and reason seem to work against the Promise. It will require an *Abraham*'s Faith at such a time to glorifie God by believing in hope against hope, *Rom.* 4. 18. If ever thou hop'st to enjoy the sweet repose and rest of a Christian in evil times, thou must resolve, whatever thine eyes do see, or thy senses report, to hold fast this as a most sure conclusion; God is faithful, and his word is sure; and that altho' *clouds and darkness be round about him, yet righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne,* Psal. 97. 2.

Oh that you would once learn to keep house upon God's Faithfulness, and fetch your daily reliefs and supports thence, whensoever you are pressed and assaulted, either,

1. By spiritual troubles. When you walk in darkness, and have no light, then you are to live by acts of trust and recumbency upon the most faithful one, *Isa.* 50. 10. Or,

2. By temporal distresses; so did the people of God of old, *Hab.* 3. 17, 18. He lived by faith on this Attribute, when all visible comforts and supplies were out of sight.

But especially let me warn and caution you against five principal enemies to your repose upon the Faithfulness of God, *viz.*

1. Distracting cares, which divide the mind, and eat out the peace and comfort of the heart, and which is worst of all, they reflect very dishonourably upon God, who hath pledged his Faithfulness and Truth for our security; against which I pray you bar the door of those two Scriptures, *Phil.* 4. 6. *Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.* And that in 1 *Pet.* 5. 7. *Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.*

2. Bar the door against unchristian despondency, another enemy to the sweet repose of your Souls in this comfortable and quiet chamber of divine faithfulness; you will find this unbecoming and uncomfortable distemper of mind insinuating and creeping in upon you, except you believe and reason it out, as *David* did, *Psal.* 42. 11. *Why art thou cast down, O my Soul, and why disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him!*

3. Bar the door of your heart against carnal policies and sinful shifts, which war against your own Faith, and God's Faithfulness, as much as any other

enemy

enemy whatſoever. This was the Fault of good *David* in a day of trouble, 1 *Sam.* 27. 1. *And* David *ſaid to his heart, I ſhall now periſh one day by the hand of* Saul; *there is nothing better for me than that I ſhould ſpeedily eſcape into the land of the* Philiſtines. Alas, poor *David!* nothing better than this? Time was when thou couldſt think on a better way, when thou couldſt ſay *at what time I am afraid I will truſt in thee.* How doſt thou forget thy ſelf in this ſtrait! doth thy old refuge in God fail thee now, can the *Philiſtines* ſecure thee better than the *Promiſes*? wilt thou fly from thy beſt friend to thy worſt enemies? But what need we wonder at *David*, who find the ſame diſtemper almoſt unavoidable to our ſelves in like caſes?

4. Shut the door againſt diſcontents at, and murmurings againſt the diſpoſitions of Providence, whatever you feel or fear: I perſuade you not to a *Stoical Apathy*, and ſenſeleſneſs of the evils of the times, that would preclude the exerciſe of patience. If the Martyrs had all had the dead Palſie before they came to the fire, their Faith and Patience had not triumphed ſo glorioufly as they did; but on the contrary, beware of grudgings againſt the ways and will of God, than which nothing militates more againſt your Faith and the Peace and Quietneſs of your Hearts.

5. To conclude, ſhut the door againſt all ſuſpicions and jealouſies of the firmneſs and ſtability of the Promiſes when you find all ſenſible comforts ſhaking and trembling under your feet; have a care of ſuch dangerous queſtions as that, *Pſal.* 77. 8. *Doth his promiſe fail?* Theſe are the things which undermine the foundation both of your faith and comfort.

3. In a word, having ſhelter'd your Souls in this Chamber of reſt, and thus ſhut the doors behind you, all that you have to do is to take your reſt in God, and enjoy the pleaſure of a reſigned ſoul into the hands of a faithful Creator, by oppoſing the Faithfulneſs of God to all the fickleneſs and unfaithfulneſs you will daily find in men, *Micah* 7. 6, 7. yea, to the weakneſs and fading of your own natural ſtrength and ability, *Pſal.* 73. 26. *My fleſh and my heart faileth, but God is the ſtrength of my heart, and my portion for ever.* And ſo much of the *Third Chamber* prepared for Believers in the Name of their God.

CHAP. IX.

Opening to Believers the Unchangeableneſs of God, as a fourth Chamber of Refuge and Reſt in Times of Trouble.

Sect. I. IT is ſaid, *Prov.* 9. 1. *Wiſdom hath builded her houſe, ſhe hath hewen out her ſeven pillars,* (*i. e.*) She hath raiſed her whole building upon ſolid and ſtable foundations; for indeed the ſtrength of every building is according to the ground-work upon which it is erected. *Debile fundamentum fallit opus*; The Wiſdom and Love of God have built an Houſe for a Refuge and Sanctuary to Believers in tempeſtuous and evil times, containing many pleaſant and comfortable Chambers prepared for their lodgings, till the calamities be over-paſt; three of them have been already opened, *viz.* The Power, Wiſdom, and Faithfulneſs of God.

The laſt of which leads into a fourth much like unto it, namely, the *unchangeableneſs* of God; wherein his people may find as much reſt and comfort amidſt the viciſſitudes of this unſtable World, as in any of the former. This World is compared, *Rev.* 15. 2. to *a Sea of glaſs mingled with fire.* A Sea for its turbulency and inſtability; a Sea of glaſs for the brittleneſs and frailty of every thing in it; and a Sea of glaſs mingled with fire, to repreſent the ſharp ſufferings and fiery trials, with which the Saints are exerciſed here below. The only ſupport and comfort we have againſt the fickleneſs and inſtability of the Creature, is the Unchangeableneſs of God. There is a twofold Changeableneſs in the Creature:

1. Natural, the effect of Sin.
2. Sinful in its own Nature.

1. Natural, let in by the Fall upon all the Creation; by reaſon whereof the ſweeteſt Creature is but a fading flower, *Pſal.* 102. 26. Time, like a Moth, frets out the beſt wrought garment with which we cloath and deck our ſelves in this World, *temporalia rapit tempus.* Our moſt pleaſant Enjoyments, Wives, Children, Eſtates, like the Gourd in which *Jonas* ſo delighted himſelf, may wither in a night; Sin rings theſe changes all the World over.

2. Sinful, from the falſeneſs, inconſtancy, deceitfulneſs of the creature; *Solomon* puts a hard queſtion which may poſe the whole World to anſwer it, *Prov.* 20. 6. *A faithful Man who can find?* The meaning is, a man of perfect and univerſal Faithfulneſs is a *Phœnix*, ſeldom or never to be found in this world; for when a queſtion in Scripture is moved and let fall again without any anſwer, then the ſenſe is Negative; but tho' the believer deſpair of finding an unchangeable man, it is his happineſs and comfort to find an unchangeable God.

The unchangeableneſs of God will appear three ways.

1. By Scripture Emblems.
2. By Scripture Aſſertions.
3. By convincing Arguments

1. By Scripture Emblems: Remarkable to this purpoſe is that place, *Jam.* 1. 17. where God is called *the Father of lights, with whom is no variableneſs, neither ſhadow of turning*; no variableneſs. The word is, παραλλαγὴ, an Aſtronomical Term, commonly applied to the heavenly Bodies, which have their Parallaxes, *i. e.* their Declinations, Revolutions, Viciſſitudes, Eclipſes, Increaſes and Decreaſes: but God is a Sun that never riſes nor ſets, but is everlaſtingly and unchangeably one and the ſame; with him is no variableneſs nor ſhadow of turning, τροπῆς ἀποσκίασμα. The Sun in its *Zenith* caſts no ſhadow, it is the *Tropick*, or turning of its courſe, that cauſes the ſhadow; the very ſubſtance of turning is with Man; but not the leaſt ſhadow of turning with God. And in *Deut.* 32. 4. *Moſes* tells us, *God is a rock, and his work is perfect.* And indeed perfect working neceſſarily follows a perfect Being. Now there is nothing found in Nature more ſolid, fixed, and immutable, than a rock; the firmeſt buildings will decay; a few ages will make them a ruinous heap; but tho' one age paſs away, and another comes, the rocks abide where and what they were; *Our God is the rock of ages*; and yet one ſtep higher, in *Zech.* 6. 1. his decrees and purpoſes are called mountains of Braſs, that is, moſt firm, durable, and unchangeable purpoſes. Thus the immutability of God is ſhadowed forth to us in Scripture Emblems.

2. The ſame alſo you will find in plain, poſitive Scripture-Aſſertions; ſuch as theſe that follow, *Mal.* 3. 6. *I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye ſons of* Jacob *are not conſumed.* And *Job* 23. 13. *He is in one mind, and who can turn him?* Men are in one mind to day, and another to morrow; the winds are not more variable than the minds of Men; but God is in one mind, the purpoſes of his heart never change. *Thou art the ſame*, or, as ſome tranſlate, *Thou art thy ſelf for ever, Pſal.* 102. 27. Thus when *Moſes* deſired to know his name, that he might tell *Pharoah*

Pharoah from whom he came; the Anſwer is, *I am hath ſent me, Exod.* 3. 14. not I was, or I will be, but *I am that I am*, noting the abſolute Unchangeableneſs of his Nature.

3. The Unchangeableneſs of God is fully proved by convincing arguments which Divines commonly draw from ſuch *Topics* as theſe, *viz.*

1. The Perfection of his Goodneſs.
2. The Purity of his Nature.
3. The Glory of his Name.

1. *Arg.* From the Perfection of his Goodneſs and Bleſſedneſs, God is *Optimus, maximus*, the beſt and chiefeſt good, and in that ſenſe, *There is none good but one, which is God, Mark* 10. 18. From whence it is thus argued, If there be any change in God, that change muſt either be for the better, or for the worſe, or into a State equal with that he poſſeſſed before.

But not for the better, for then he could not be the chief good; nor for the worſe, for then he muſt ceaſe to be God, the perfection of whoſe Nature is perfectly excluſive of all defects; nor into an equal ſtate of goodneſs with that he poſſeſſed before; that notion would involve *Polytheiſm*, and ſuppoſe two firſt and equal Beings, beſides the vanity of ſuch a change would be abſolutely repugnant to the Wiſdom of God.

Therefore with the Father of lights can be no variableneſs nor ſhadow of turning.

2. *Arg.* The Unchangeableneſs of God may be evinced from the Purity, Sincerity, and Uncompoundedneſs of his Being, in which there neither is, nor can be the leaſt mixture, he being a pure act. From whence it is thus argued;

If there be any change in God, that change muſt be made either by ſomething without himſelf; or by ſomething within himſelf, or by both together.

But it cannot be by any thing without himſelf; for in him all created dependent Beings live and move, and enjoy the Beings they have; and all the changes that are among them, are from the pleaſure of this unchangeable Being, he changeth them, but it is not poſſible for him, upon whoſe pleaſure they ſo intirely and abſolutely depend, both as to their Beings, and workings, to ſuffer any change himſelf from, or by them.

Nor can any ſuch change be made upon God by any thing within himſelf; for that would ſuppoſe action and paſſion, *movens & motum*, a mixture and compoſition in his Nature, which is abſolutely rejected and excluded by the ſimplicity and purity thereof; ſeeing therefore it can neither be from any power without him, nor any mixture within him, there can be no change at all made on him.

3. *Arg.* That is by no means to be aſcribed to God, which at once eclipſes the glory of his name, and overthrows the hopes and comforts of all his people.

But ſo would the ſuppoſition of mutability in God do, this would level him with the vain changeable creature; whereas it is a principal part of his glory, that *He is not as man that he ſhould lye, neither the Son of man that he ſhould repent, Numb.* 23. 19. This alſo would overthrow the hopes and comforts of all his people, which are built upon this Attribute as upon their ſtable and ſolid foundation: Among divers other we find three principal privileges of the people of God, built upon his Immutability, *viz.*

1. Their Perſeverance in Grace.
2. Their Comfort in the Promiſes.
3. Their Hopes of Eternal Life.

1. Their Perſeverance in Grace is built upon the foundation of God's unchangeableneſs; one main reaſon why Chriſtians never repent of their choice of Chriſt and the ways of Godlineſs, is becauſe the gifts and calling of God are without Repentance, *Rom.* 11. 29. Should God but once repent of the gifts of grace he hath beſtowed on us, and alter in his love towards us, how ſoon would our love to God, and delight in God vaniſh, as the image in the glaſs doth when the man that looked upon it hath once turned away his Face?

2. All their comfort in the Promiſes is built upon God's unchangeableneſs. The promiſes are the ſprings of conſolation; ſhould they fail and dry up, the whole world could not afford them one drop of Spiritual comfort to refreſh their thirſty Souls; the ſtrength of our conſolation immediately reſults from the ſtability and firmneſs of the Scripture promiſes, *Heb.* 6. 18.

3. Their hope of eternal life depends upon the unchangeableneſs of God that hath promiſed, *Tit.* 1. 2. *In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lye, promiſed before the world began.* Take away then the Immutability of God, and you at once darken and eclipſe his Glory, and overturn the perſeverance, conſolations, and hopes of all his people; but bleſſed be God theſe things are built upon firm foundations.

1. His Nature is unchangeable, *Thou art the ſame for ever, Pſ.* 102. 27. The Heavens tho' they be the pureſt, and therefore the moſt durable and unchangeable part of the creation; yet they ſhall periſh and wax old, and be changed as a veſture, but our God is the ſame for ever.

2. His Power is unchangeable, *Iſa.* 59. 1. *The Lord's hand is not ſhortened.* Time will enfeeble the ſtrongeſt creature, and cut ſhort the Power of the hands of the mighty, they cannot do in their decrepit age as they were wont to do in their youthful and vigorous age; but the Lords hand never is, nor can be ſhortened.

3. The counſels and purpoſes of his heart are unchangeable, *Pſ.* 33. 11. *The counſel of the Lord ſtandeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.*

4. The goodneſs, truth, and mercy of God are Unchangeable, *Pſal.* 100. 5. *The Lord is good, his mercy is everlaſting, and his truth endureth to all generations.*

5. The word of God is Unchangeable. Though all fleſh be as graſs, and the goodlineſs thereof as the flower of the field, yet the word of our God ſhall ſtand for ever; all the Promiſes contained therein are ſure and ſtedfaſt: Not yea and nay, but yea and Amen for ever, 2 *Cor.* 1. 20.

6. The love of God is an unchangeable love, *Jer.* 31. 3. *Yea, I have loved thee with an everlaſting love.*

7. In a word, all the gracious Pardons of God are unchangeable; as they are full without exceptions, ſo they are final Pardons without any revocation. *I will be merciful to their unrighteouſneſs, and their iniquities and ſins will I remember no more, Heb.* 8. 12. And thus much briefly of God's unchangeableneſs abſolutely conſidered in it ſelf.

Sect. II. Let us next conſider, and believingly view the Unchangeableneſs of God in its reſpect and relation,

1. To his Promiſes.
2. To his Providences.

1. The Immutability of God gives down its comforts to Believers through the Promiſes, there is no other way by which they can have a comfortable admiſſion into this Chamber or Attribute of God; and there are ſix ſorts of promiſes in the word, by which it is highly improveable to their ſupport and comfort in an evil day. For,

1. The unchangeable God hath engaged himſelf by promiſe to be with his people in all times and in all ſtreights, *Heb.* 13. 5. *I will never leave thee nor forſake thee.* The life, joy, and comfort of a Believer lies in the boſom of that Promiſe, the concluſion of Faith from thence is ſweet and ſure: If I ſhall never be forſaken of my God, let Hell and Earth do their worſt, I can never be miſerable.

2. The unchangeable God hath promiſed to maintain their graces, and thereby his intereſt in them for ever, *Jer.* 32. 40. *And I will make an everlaſting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good: But I will put my fear in their Hearts, that they ſhall not turn away from me.* Where the Lord undertakes for both parts in the Covenant, his own and theirs: *I will not depart from them*; Oh unexpreſſible mercy! Yea, but Lord, may the poor believer ſay, that is not ſo much my fear, as that my treacherous heart will turn away from thee. No, ſaith God, I will take care for that alſo; I will put my Fear into thy Heart, and thou ſhalt never depart from me.

3. The unchangeable God hath promiſed to eſtabliſh the Covenant with them for ever; ſo that thoſe who are once taken into that gracious Covenant ſhall never be turned out of it again, *Iſa.* 54. 10. *The Mountains ſhall depart, and the Hills be removed, but my kindneſs ſhall not depart from thee, neither ſhall the Covenant of my peace be removed, ſaith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.*

4. The unchangeable God hath ſecured his loving kindneſs to his people by promiſe under all the trials, and ſmarting rods of affliction with which he chaſtens them in this World: he hath reſerved to himſelf the liberty of afflicting them, but bound himſelf by promiſe never to remove his favour from them, *Pſal.* 89. 33, 34. *I will viſit their tranſgreſſion with the rod, and their iniquity with ſtripes, nevertheleſs my loving kindneſs will I not take from them, nor ſuffer my faithfulneſs to fail.*

5. The promiſes of a joyful Reſurrection from the dead are grounded upon the immutability of God, *Matth.* 22. 32. *I am the God of* Abraham, *the God of* Iſaac, *and the God of* Jacob; *God is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living.* Death hath made a great change upon them, but none upon their God; though they be not, He is ſtill the ſame: therefore they are not loſt in death, but ſhall aſſuredly be found again in the reſurrection.

6. To conclude, the promiſes of the Saints eternal happineſs with God in Heaven are founded in his immutability, 1 *Cor.* 1. 8, 9. *Tit.* 1. 2. By all which you ſee what a pleaſant lodging is prepared for the Saints in the unchangeable promiſes of God, amidſt all the changes and alterations here below.

2. Once more, let us view the unchangeableneſs of God in his Providences towards his people, whatever changes it makes upon us, or whatever changes we ſeem to diſcern in it, nothing is more certain than this, that it holds one and the ſame tenor, purſues one and the ſame deſign in all that it doth upon us, or about us. Providences indeed are very variable, but the deſigns and ends of God in them all are invariable, and the ſame for ever. It is noted in *Ezek.* 1. 12. *that the wheels went ſtraight forward; whither the ſpirit was to go, they went, and they turned not when they went.* As it is in nature, ſo in Providence, you have one day fair, halcyon, and bright, another dark and full of ſtorms; one ſeaſon hot, another cold; but all theſe ſerve to one and the ſame end and deſign to make the Earth fruitful; and the aim of all Providences is to make you holy and happy. That is a ſweet Promiſe, *Rom.* 8. 28. *All things ſhall work together for good to them that love God.* This is the compaſs by which all Providences ſteer their courſe, as a Ship at Sea doth by the Chard: but more particularly, let us note the unchangeableneſs of God in his Providences of all kinds, *effective* and *permiſſive*, and ſee in them all his unchangeable righteouſneſs and goodneſs.

1. It muſt needs be ſo, conſidering the unchangeableneſs of his Decree, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. *The Foundation of God ſtandeth ſure.* Providences ſerve, but never fruſtrate, execute, but cannot make void the Decree; ſo that you may ſay of the moſt afflicting Providences, as *David* doth of the ſtormy Winds, *Pſal.* 148. 8. *They all fulfill thy word.*

2. The Wiſdom of God proves it; he will not ſuffer his Works or Permiſſions to claſh with his deſigns and purpoſes: Divine Wiſdom ſhews it ſelf in the ſteddy direction of all things to the ultimate end. To open this in ſome particulars, conſider,

1. Doth the Lord permit wicked Men to rage and inſult, perſecute and vex his People? Yet all this while Providence is in its right way, it walks in as direct a line to your good, as when it is in a more pleaſant path of Peace, *Jer.* 24. 5. *Thus ſaith the Lord, the God of* Iſrael, *like theſe good figs, ſo will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of* Judah, *whom I have ſent out of this place into the land of the* Chaldeans *for their good.* Iſrael was ſent to *Babylon* for their good. This improves your Faith and Patience, *Rev.* 13. 10. Here is the Patience and Faith of the Saints. So *Rom.* 5. 2, 3. *By whom alſo we have acceſs by Faith into this grace, wherein we ſtand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God; and not only ſo, but we glory in tribulations alſo; knowing that tribulation worketh patience.* By this you are weaned from, and mortified to this World.

2. Doth the Lord in his Providence order many and frequent, cloſe and ſmarting afflictions for you? Why, lo! here is the ſame deſign managing as effectually, as if all the peace and proſperity in the World were ordered for you: The face of Providence indeed is not the ſame, but the love of God is ſtill the ſame; he loves you as much when he ſmites, as when he ſmiles on you: for what are his ends in afflicting you, and what the ſanctified fruits of your afflictions? Is it not,

1. To purge your iniquities? *Iſa.* 27. 9. *By this therefore ſhall the iniquity of* Jacob *be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his ſin.*

2. To reduce our hearts to God? *Pſal.* 119. 67. *Before I was afflicted I went aſtray, but now have I kept thy word.*

3. To quicken you to your duties: Let the beſt man be without afflictions, and he will quickly grow dull in the way of his duty.

3. Doth God let looſe the chain of Satan to tempt and buffet you? Yet is he ſtill the ſame God to you as before; for do but obſerve his ends in that permiſſion, and you will find, that by theſe things the Lord is leading you towards that deſired aſſurance of his love which your Souls long after. Few Chriſtians attain to any conſiderable Settlement of Soul, but by ſuch ſhakings and combats; the end of theſe permiſſions is to put you to your knees, and blow up a greater flame and fervour of Spirit in Prayer, 2 *Cor.* 12. 8. So that eventually theſe permiſſions of Providence prove ſingular advantages and bleſſings to you.

Sect. III.

Sect. III. What remains then, ſeeing God is unchangeable in his love to his people, purſuing the great ends of all his gracious Promiſes in a ſteddy courſe of Providence, wherein he will never effect, or permit any thing that is really repugnant to his own glory or their good; but that we enter alſo into this Chamber of Reſt, ſhut the doors about us, and comfortably improve the unchangeableneſs of God, while we ſee nothing but changes and troubles here below.

1. Enter into God's unchangeableneſs by Faith, take up your lodgings in this ſweet Attribute alſo; and to encourage your Faith thereunto, ſeriouſly conſider a few particulars.

1. Conſider how conſtant, firm, and unchangeable God hath been to his people in all times and ſtreights; not one among the many thouſands of his people that are paſſed on before you, but by frequent and certain experience have found him ſo. What a ſingular encouragement ſhould this be to our Faith in the caſe before us? *Pſal.* 9. 10. *They that know thy name, will put their truſt in thee, for thou, Lord, haſt not forſaken them that ſeek thee.* So *Iſa.* 25. 4. *Thou haſt been a ſtrength to the poor, a ſtrength to the needy in his diſtreſs, a refuge from the ſtorm, a ſhadow from the heat, when the blaſt of the terrible ones is as the ſtorm againſt the wall.* Neither is there any thing in your experience contradictory to the encouraging reports others have made of God; you muſt acknowledge, that notwithſtanding your own changeableneſs, who have hardly been able to maintain your hearts in any ſpiritual frame towards God for one day together, yet his mercies towards you have been new every morning, and great hath been his Faithfulneſs. You have often turned aſide from the way of your duty, and have not followed God in a ſteddy courſe of Obedience; and yet for all that, his goodneſs and mercy have followed you all the days of your life, as it is *Pſal.* 23. 6.

2. Conſider how often you have doubted and miſtruſted the unchangeableneſs of God, and been forced with ſhame and ſorrow to retract your folly therein; God hath many times convinced you that his love to you is an unchangeable love, how many changes ſoever in the courſe of his Providence have paſſed over you; conſult *Iſa.* 49. 14. and *Pſal.* 77, 78. and ſee how the caſes are parallel both in reſpect of Gods conſtancy to them and you, and the inconſtancy of his peoples Faith then, and yours now; your fears and doubts are the ſame with theirs; though his goodneſs and love have been as unchangeable to you as ever it was to them.

3. Conſider the Advocateſhip and Interceſſion of Jeſus Chriſt in Heaven for you, by vertue whereof the favour and love of God becomes unalterable towards his people. If any thing can be ſuppoſed to cool or quench the love of God towards you, nothing in the world is more like to do it than your ſin; and this indeed is that which you fear will eſtrange and alienate the heart of your God from you. But, Reader, if thou be one that ſincerely mourneſt for all the grief and diſhonour of God by thy ſin, appliеſt the blood of ſprinkling to thy Soul by Faith, and makeſt mortification and watchfulneſs thy daily buſineſs; comfort thy ſelf againſt that fear from that ſingular encouragement given thee in this caſe, 1 *Joh* 2. 1, 2. *My little Children, theſe things write I unto you that ye ſin not; and if any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our ſins.* Look as the death of Chriſt healed the great breach betwixt God and thy Soul, by thy reconciliation at firſt; ſo the powerful Interceſſion of Chriſt in Heaven effectually prevents all new breaches betwixt God and thy Soul afterwards, ſo that he will never totally and finally caſt thee off again.

4. Shut the door behind you againſt all objections, ſcruples, and queſtionings of God's immutability, and by a reſolved and ſteddy Faith maintain the honour of God in this point, by the conſtant adherence to it, and dependance upon it; and eſpecially ſee that you give him the glory of his unchangeableneſs.

2. When thou ſhalt ſee the greateſt alterations and changes made by his Providence in the World. What though thou ſhouldeſt live to ſee all things turned upſide down, the foundations out of courſe, all things drawing into a Sea of confuſion and trouble? Yet in the midſt of thoſe publick diſtractions and diſtreſs of Nations, encourage thou thy ſelf in this: thy God, and his love to his people, is the ſame for ever. *Pſal.* 46. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *God is our refuge and ſtrength, a very preſent help in trouble; Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be moved, and the mountains be carried into the midſt of the Sea. God is in the midſt of her, ſhe ſhall not be moved.*

2. Live by Faith upon God's unchangeableneſs under the greateſt changes of your own condition in this world. Providence may make great alterations upon all your outward comforts, it may caſt you down, how dear ſoever you be to God, from riches into poverty, from health into ſickneſs, from honour into reproach, from liberty into bondage; thou mayeſt overlive thy comfortable relations, and of a *Naomi* become a *Marah. Thou haſt lifted me up, and caſt me down,* ſaid as good a man as you, *Pſal.* 102. 10. Yet ſtill it is your duty, and will be your great privilege in the midſt of all theſe changes, to act your faith upon the never-changing God, as that holy man did, *Hab.* 3. 17. *Although the fig-tree ſhall not bloſſom, neither fruit be in the vine; the labour of the olive ſhall fail; and the fields ſhall yield no meat; the flocks ſhall be cut off from the fold, and there ſhall be no herd in the ſtalls; yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation; q. d.* Suppoſe a thouſand diſappointments of my earthly hopes, yet will I maintain my hope in God. Oh Chriſtian! with how many Yets, Notwithſtandings, and Nevertheleſſes, muſt thy Faith bear up in Times of Trouble, or thou'lt ſink?

3. See thou live upon God's Unchangeableneſs, when Age and Sickneſs ſhall inform thee, that thy great change is at hand; though thy heart and thy fleſh fail, comfort thy ſelf with this; thy God will never fail thee. *Pſal.* 73. 16. *O God* (ſaith *David*) *thou haſt taught me from my youth, and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works, now alſo when I am old and grey-headed, forſake me not,* Pſal. 71. 17, 18.

4. Live upon the unchangeableneſs of God under the greateſt and ſaddeſt changes of your ſpiritual condition; God may cloud the light of his countenance over thy Soul, he may fill thee with fears and troubles, and the Comforter that ſhould relieve thee may ſeem to be far off; yet ſtill maintain thy Faith in the unchangeableneſs of his loves; truſt in the Name of the Lord, ſtay thy ſelf upon thy God when thou walkeſt in darkneſs, and haſt no light, *Iſa.* 50. 17. Thus ſhut thy door.

3. Improve the unchangeableneſs of God to thy beſt Advantage in the worſt Times, by drawing thence ſuch comfortable Concluſions as theſe.

1. If God be an unchangeable God in his promiſes, and in his love to his people, what ſhould hinder but the people of God may live happily and comfortably in the ſaddeſt times, and greateſt troubles upon earth. *As ſorrowful, yet always rejoycing, as poor, yet ought to quench a Chriſtians mirth that is not able to ſeparate him from the love of Chriſt*, Rom. 8. 35.

2. If God be an unchangeable God in his love to his people; then it becomes all that have ſpecial intereſt in this God, to be unchangeable and immoveable in the ways of their obedience towards him: God will not caſt you off, ſee that you caſt not off your duties, no not when they are ſurrounded with difficulties; he loves you, though you often grieve him by ſin; ſee that you ſtill love him, though he often grieve and burden you by affliction: he will own you for his People under the greateſt contempts and reproaches of the World; ſee that you own and honour his Ways and Truths when you are under moſt Reproach from a vile World.

CHAP. X.

Opening the Care of God for his People in times of trouble, as the fifth Chamber of Reſt to Believers.

Sect. I. CAre in the general Notion of it, as it is applied to the Creature, imports the ſtudiouſneſs, and ſolicitouſneſs of our Thoughts, for the ſafety and welfare of our ſelves, or thoſe we love, and highly value. Now though there be no ſuch thing properly in God, at whoſe diſpoſe and pleaſure all events are, and to whoſe counſels and appointments, all difficulties muſt give way, yet he is pleaſed to accommodate himſelf to our weakneſs, and expreſs his regard and love to his People, by ſuch things as one Creature doth to another to which it is endeared by relation or affection. To this purpoſe we find many ſignificant, ſynonymous Expreſſions in Scripture, all importing the care of God over his People in a pleaſant variety of notion and expreſſion, as *Nahum* 1. 7. *The Lord is good, a ſtrong hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that truſt in him.*

He knoweth them, *i. e.* he hath a ſpecial, tender, and careful eye upon them, to ſee their wants ſupplied, and to protect them in all their dangers; for in the common and general ſenſe, he knoweth them that truſt not in him, as well as thoſe that do; and farther to clear this ſence of the place, it is ſaid, *Pſalm* 40. 17. *The Lord thinketh on them.* Importing not only ſimple cogitation, but the immoration or abiding of his thoughts upon them, as our thoughts are wont to do, upon that which we highly eſteem, eſpecially when any danger is near it. And yet farther to clear this ſenſe, it is ſaid, *Job* 36. 7. *He withdraweth not his eye from the righteous.* As when *Moſes* was expoſed in the Ark of Bulruſhes, where his life was in imminent hazards by the waters of *Nilus* upon one ſide, and the *Egyptian* Cut-throats on the other; his Siſter *Miriam* kept watch at a diſtance, to ſee what would be done to him. Her Eye was never off that Ark wherein her dear Brother lay; fear and care engaged her eye to keep a true watch for him. Thus the Lord withdraweth not his eye from the righteous. To the ſame purpoſe is that expreſſion, *Deut.* 33. 3. *Yea, he loved the People; all his Saints are in thy hand.* That which we dearly love and prize above ordinary, we keep in our own hands for its ſecurity, as not thinking it ſafe enough in any other hand or place. And once more, *Iſa.* 49. 16. God is ſaid to engrave them upon the Palms of his Hands, alluding to what is cuſtomary among Men, who when they would charge their Memories with ſomething of ſpecial concernment, uſe to change a Ring, or bind a Thred about the Finger, to put them in mind of it. Thus is the Care of our God expreſſed to us in Scripture Notions. The amount of all which, is given us in that one proper and full Expreſſion of the Apoſtle, 1 *Pet.* 5. 7. *He careth for you.* To open this Chamber of *Divine care*, as a place of ſweeteſt reſt, to our anxious and perplexed minds, in times of difficulty and hazard, it will be neceſſary that you ſeriouſly ponder,

1. The Grounds and Reaſons
2. The Extent and Compaſs
3. The Lovely Properties

} of the care of God.

1. The grounds and reaſons of God's care for his people; which are,

1. The ſtrict and dear Relations in which he is pleaſed to own them. Believers are his children, and you know how naturally children engage and draw forth the Father's care for them. This is the argument Chriſt uſes, *Matth.* 6. 31, 32. *Therefore take no thought, ſaying, what ſhall we eat? Or what ſhall we drink? Or wherewithal ſhall we be cloathed? For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all theſe things.* Children, eſpecially when young, diſquiet not themſelves about proviſions for back or belly, but leave that to the care of their Parents, from whom by the Tye and Bonds of Nature and Love, they expect proviſion for all thoſe wants: Every one takes care for his own; much more doth God for his own Children, and indeed he expects his Children ſhould live upon his Care; as our Children in their Minority, do upon ours.

2. God precious eſtimation and value of them, engages his conſtant care for them. Believers are his Jewels, *Mal.* 3. 17. his peculiar people, 1 *Pet.* 2. 6. his ſpecial portion or treaſure in this world, *Deut.* 32. 9. and as ſuch he prizes and eſteems them above all the people of the earth, and accordingly exerciſeth his ſpecial care in all the dangers they are here expoſed to. Special love engageth peculiar care.

3. The dangers and fears of the people of God, in this World, are many and great, and were it not for the Lord's aſſiduous and tender care over them, they muſt neceſſarily be ruined, both in ſoul and body by them. The Church is God's Vineyard, its Enemies as ſo many wild Boars to root it up: Upon this account he ſaith, *Iſa.* 27. 3: *I the Lord do keep it, leſt any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.* And indeed it is well for *Iſrael*, that he that keepeth it, never ſlumbreth nor ſleepeth, *Pſalm* 121. 4. that our houſes are in peace, that we and our dear relations fall not as a prey, into cruel and bloody hands, skilful to deſtroy, that we find any reſt, or comfort in ſo evil and dangerous a world, it is wholly and only to be aſcribed to the care of God over us and ours.

4. Jeſus Chriſt hath ſolemnly recommended all the people of God, to his particular care. It was one of the laſt expreſſions of Chriſt's love to them at the parting hour, *John* 17. 11. *And now I am no more in the world, but theſe are in the world; and I come to thee: Holy Father, keep through thine own name thoſe whom thou haſt given me, q. d.* While I have been perſonally preſent with them, I took the ſame Care of them, as a Shepherd doth of his Flock, or a tender Father of his Children: But now

now I muſt leave them in the world, and in the midſt of a world of dangers, fears, and troubles, againſt which they can make no proviſion or defence themſelves. Father remember them, look after them, when I ſhall be removed from them, they are thine, as well as mine; and I recommend them with my laſt breath to thy care and protection. This is a ſpecial ground alſo of God's care for them.

5. Believers daily caſt themſelves upon the care of God, and reſign themſelves unto it in their daily Prayers. And by their often renewed acts of Faith, than which no act is found more engaging from the Creature upon its God; though there be nothing of merit, yet there is much engaging efficacy in it, *Iſa.* 26. 3. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whoſe mind is ſtayed on thee: becauſe he truſted in thee.* We find it ſo among our ſelves, the more firmly and entirely any one truſteth to us, and dependeth upon us, the more he engageth us to protect or relieve him. Now this is the daily work of Chriſtians to truſt God over all, and put all their concernments into his hand, which very truſt and dependance draws forth the care of God for them.

6. In a word, the many promiſes God hath made to his people, to preſerve, ſupport, and ſupply them in all the times of need, engageth the care of God for them, as often as ſuch wants or dangers befall them; for indeed herein, he at once takes care for their neceſſity, and for his own honour and glory. They truſt to his word, and rely upon his promiſes, which therefore he will be carefull to make good. This was the Argument which the Church pleaded in the time of imminent danger, to engage the care of God for them, *Pſal.* 74. 20. *Have reſpect unto the Covenant: for the dark places of the Earth are full of the habitations of cruelty, q. d.* O Lord, thy people are in the midſt of cruel enemies, take care for their protection, and though there be no worth in them, to which thou ſhouldeſt have reſpect, yet have reſpect unto thine own Covenant: let the glory of thy Name draw forth thy care to thy people.

Sect. II. We have ſeen the grounds and reaſons of God's care over his people, let us next view the extent and compaſs of this divine care; and here methinks the Lord ſaith to his people as he ſaid to *Abraham*, *Gen.* 13, 14, 15. *Lift up now thine eyes from the place where thou art, northward, and ſouthward, and eaſtward, and weſtward, for all the land which thou ſeeſt, to thee will I give it, and to thy ſeed for ever.* So here, poor timorous dejected Believer, lift up thine eyes where thou art, and take a view of all the promiſes in the Scriptures of truth; promiſes of ſupports under all burthens, ſupplies of all wants, deliverances out of all dangers, aſſiſtances in all diſtreſſes; to thee have I given them all as a portion for ever. This care of God walks the round, and encompaſſeth the Souls and Bodies of them that fear him day and night. There is no intereſt or concern of either found without the Line of his all ſurrounding Care, and every one of his children are enfolded in his Fatherly Arms, *Deut.* 33. 3. *All his Saints are in thy hand.* All and every one of their wants and ſtreights are obſerved by this Care, in order to their ſupply, *Phil.* 4. 19. *My God ſhall ſupply all your wants.*

1. Great is the care of God over the Bodies of his people, and all the dangers and neceſſities of them as they daily grow; your meat and drink are daily provided for you by your Father's care, *Pſalm* 111. 5. *He hath given meat unto them that fear him; he will ever be mindful of his Covenant.* It is from this Care of thy Heavenly Father, that neceſſary proviſions have been made for thee, of which it may be thou haſt had no foreſight: This is the God that hath fed thee all thy life long, *Gen.* 48. 15. It is from the ſame care thy body hath been cloathed, *Mat.* 6. 28. *How much more ſhall he cloath you, O ye of little faith?* It is through this Care, you ſleep in peace, and your reſt is made ſweet unto you, *Prov.* 3. 24. *When thou lyeſt down thou ſhalt not be afraid; yea, thou ſhalt lie down, and thy ſleep ſhall be ſweet.* In a word; thou oweſt all thy recoveries from dangerous diſeaſes, and narrow eſcapes from the grave to this care of thy God over thee, *He is the Lord that healeth thee, Exod.* 15. 26. That the incenſed humours of thy body had not overflowed their banks, like an inundation of the Sea, when they raged in thy dangerous diſeaſes, is only becauſe thy God took the care of thee, and ſet them their bounds.

2. Divine Care extends it ſelf to the Souls of all that fear God, and to all the concernments of their Souls; and manifeſtly diſcovers it ſelf in all the gracious proviſions it hath made for them. More particularly, it is from this tenderly Fatherly care that,

1. A Saviour was provided to redeem them when they were ruined and loſt by ſin, *John* 3. 16. *Rom.* 8. 32.

2. That ſpiritual cordials are provided to refreſh them in all their ſinking ſorrows, and inward diſtreſſes, *Pſal.* 94. 19.

3. That a door of deliverance is opened to them, when they are ſorely preſſed upon by temptations, and ready to be overwhelmed, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13.

4. That a ſtrength above their own comes in ſeaſonably to ſupport them, when they are almoſt overweighed with inward troubles, when great weights are upon them, the everlaſting arms are underneath them, *Pſal.* 138. 3. *Iſa.* 57. 16.

5. That their ruine is prevented when they are upon the dangerous and ſlippery brink of temptations, and their feet almoſt gone, *Pſalm* 73. 12. *Hoſ.* 2. 6. 2. *Cor.* 12. 7.

6. That they are recovered again after dangerous falls by ſin, and not left as a Prey and Trophy to their enemy, *Hoſ.* 14. 4.

7. That they are guided and directed in the right way, when they are at a loſs, and know not what courſe to take, *Pſam* 16. 11. *Pſalm* 73. 24.

8. That they are eſtabliſhed and confirmed in Chriſt in the moſt ſhaking and overturning times of trouble and perſecution; ſo that neither their heart turneth back, nor their ſteps decline from his ways, *Jer.* 32. 40. *John* 4. 14.

9. That they are upheld under ſpiritual deſertions, and recovered again out of that diſmal darkneſs into the chearful light of God's Countenance, *Iſa.* 57. 16.

10. That they are at laſt brought ſafe to Heaven through the innumerable hazards and dangers all along their way thither, *Heb.* 11. 16. In all theſe things the care of their God eminently diſcovers it ſelf for their Souls.

3. Once more let us conſider the Care of God for his people in the lovely properties thereof. As,

1. It is a Fatherly care, than which none is more great or tender, *Matth.* 6. 8. *Your father knoweth that you have need of all theſe things.* And indeed the greateſt and tendereſt care of an earthly Father is but a faint ſhadow of that tender care which is in the heart of God over his Children; for

for to that end we find them compared, *Matth.* 7. 11. *If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more ſhall your father which is in heaven, give good things to them which ask him.* The care of Parents is careleſneſs it ſelf compared with that care which God takes of his.

2. The care of God is an univerſal care, watching over all his people in all ages, places and dangers, 2 *Chron.* 16. 9. *The eyes of the Lord run to and fro through the whole earth, to ſhew himſelf ſtrong in behalf of them whoſe heart is perfect towards him.* This was apply'd by way of reproof to *Aſa*, who out of a ſinful diſtruſt of the care of God, relyed upon the help of *Syria*, as if there had not been a God in Heaven to take care of him and the people.

3. God's care over his, is aſſiduous and continual; *his mercies are new every morning, great is his faithfulneſs, Lam.* 3. 22, 23. *He keeps his people night and day, Iſa.* 27. 3. Could Satan, or his inſtruments find ſuch an hour wherein the ſeven eyes of Providence ſhould be all aſleep, that would be the fatal hour to our Souls and Bodies; but he that keepeth *Iſrael* ſlumbereth not.

4. God's care over his, is exceeding tender, far beyond the tenderneſs that the moſt affectionate mother ever felt in her heart towards the child that hanged on her breaſt, *Iſa.* 49. 15. *Can a mother forget her ſucking child*, &c. *they may, yet will not I forget thee.* The birds of the air are not ſo tender of their young in the neſt, as God is of his people in the world, *Iſa.* 31. 5. Mercy fills the heart of God, yea, multitudes of tender mercies, *Pſal.* 51. 1.

5. The care of God is a ſeaſonable care, which is always ſure to nick the opportunity and proper ſeaſon of relieving his people; in the mount of the Lord it ſhall be ſeen: The beauty of Providence is much ſeen in this thing, wherever you feel a want; this care finds a ſupply; and thus much briefly of the care of God abſolutely conſidered in it ſelf.

Sect. III. It remains that we alſo conſider the care of God in its twofold reſpect, *viz.*

1. To his Promiſes.
1. To his Providences.

1. There are multitudes of Promiſes found in the Scriptures, exactly fitted as ſo many keys to open the door of this comfortable Chamber to receive, and ſecure all that fear God, whatever their wants, fears, or diſtreſſes are. Theſe are reducible into two Claſſes, or Ranks, *viz.*

1. More general and comprehenſive,
2. More particular Promiſes.

The general and more comprehenſive Promiſes are found in the general expreſſions of the Covenant, as that to *Abraham*, Gen. 17. 1. *I am God Almighty, walk thou before me and be perfect. q. d.* Let it be thy care to walk exactly in the paths of obedience before me, and I will take care to ſupply all thy wants from the never failing fountain of my alſufficiency; and of the ſame tenour is that, 2 *Cor.* 6. 19. I will be to them a Father, and they ſhall be my ſons and daughters, *i. e.* Expect your proviſions from my care, as children do from their father. More particularly, there are ſix ſorts of Promiſes, wherein the care of God is particularly made over to his people in the greateſt hazards and difficulties in this life, *viz.*

1. It is aſſigned and made over to them to ſupply all their needs, ſo far as the Glory of God and Advancement of their ſpiritual and eternal good ſhall require it, *Pſal.* 34. 9. *They that fear the Lord ſhall not want any good thing.* All your livelihood is in that Promiſe; thence comes your daily bread; your own and your families meat is in that cupboard.

2. It is made over to the Church and People of God for their defence againſt all danger, *Iſa.* 54. 17. *No weapon that is formed againſt thee ſhall proſper.* This promiſe wards off all the deadly blows, and puts by all the mortal thruſts that are made at you; here the care of God forms it ſelf into a ſhield for your defence.

3. The care of God is engaged by promiſe for the moderation and mitigation of your afflictions, that they may not exceed your abilities to bear them, *Iſa.* 27. 8, 9. *In meaſure when it ſhooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it; he ſtayeth the rough wind in the day of the eaſtwind*, if the wind blow from a cold corner, this Promiſe moderates it, that it blow not a ſtorm; all the ſparing mercies and ſweetning circumſtances, which gracious Souls thankfully note in the ſharpeſt trials come from this promiſe, wherein the care of God is engaged for that purpoſe.

4. Divine care is put under the bond of a promiſe, for the direction and guidance of all their troubles and trials to an happy iſſue, *Rom.* 8. 28. *All things ſhall work together for good.* From what quarter ſoever the Wind bloweth, God will take care that it ſhall be uſeful to drive you to your Port; the very Providences that caſt you down, by vertue of this promiſe prove as ſerviceable and beneficial as thoſe that lift you up.

5. The care of God ſtands engaged in the promiſe for the help and aid of his people in all the extremities and exigencies of their lives, *Pſal.* 46. 1. *God is our refuge and ſtrength, a very preſent help in trouble.* Never is the care of God more viſible and conſpicuous, than in ſuch times of need.

6. Laſtly, the care of God is engaged to carry his people ſafe through all the dangers of the way, and bring them all home to glory at laſt, *John* 10. 28. *I give unto them eternal life, and they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall any man pluck them out of my hand.* This care of God thus engaged for you is your convoy to accompany and ſecure you till it ſee you ſafe into your harbour of eternal reſt.

2. You have heard how the care of God is engaged for you by promiſe; now ſee how it actuates, and exerts it ſelf for the people of God in the various methods of Providence; and here, oh here is the ſweeteſt pleaſure of the Chriſtian life, a delight far tranſcending all the delights of this life. Sit down Chriſtian in this Chamber alſo, and make but ſuch obſervations upon the care of thy God as follow, and then tell me whether the world with all its pleaſures and delights can give thee ſuch an other entertainment.

1. Reflect upon the conſtant, ſweet, and ſuitable proviſions that from time to time have been prepared for thee and thine, by this care of thy God; from whence ſoever thy wants did come, I am ſure from hence came thy ſupplies, it hath enabled thee to return the ſame anſwer the diſciples did to that queſtion, *Luke* 22. 35. *Lacked ye any thing, and they ſaid nothing.*

2. Reflect with admiration upon the various difficulties of your lives, wherein your thoughts have been entangled, and out of which you have been extricated and delivered by the care of God over you: How oft have your thoughts been like a ravelled skeyn of ſilk, ſo entangled and perplexed with the difficulties and fears before you, that you could find no end, but the longer you thought, the more you were puzled, till you have left thinking, and fell to praying; and there you have found the

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right end to wind up all your thoughts upon the bottom of peace and ſweet contentment, according to that direction, *Pſalm* 37. 5. *Commit thy way unto the Lord, truſt alſo in him, and he ſhall bring it to paſs.*

3. Obſerve with a melting heart how the care of thy God hath diſpoſed and directed thy way to unforeſeen advantages: had he not ordered thy ſteps when, and as he did, thou hadſt not been in poſſeſſion of thoſe Temporal and Spiritual mercies that ſweeten thy life at this day. Surely the ſteps of good men are ordered by the Lord; and as for thee Chriſtian, what reaſon haſt thou with an heart overflowing with love and thankfulneſs to look up and ſay, *My father, thou art the guide of my youth?* It is ſweet to live by faith upon Divine care. Oh what a Serene life might we live, careful for nothing, but making known our requeſt unto God in every thing, *Phil.* 4. 6. caſting all our care on him that careth for us, 1 *Pet.* 5. 7. perplexing our thoughts about nothing, but rolling every burthen upon godly Faith. Thus lived holy *Muſculus* when reduced to extreme poverty, and danger at the ſame time; then it was that he ſolaced his Soul with that comfortable *Diſtich*, a good leſſon for others,

Eſt Deus in cœlis, qui providus omnia curat,
Credentes nuſquam deſeruiſſe poteſt.

The provident care of his heavenly father, made his heart as quiet as the child at the breaſt. Chriſtian, thou knoweſt not what diſtreſsful days are coming upon the earth, nor what perſonal trials ſhall befal thee in this world; but I adviſe thee as thou valueſt the tranquility and comfort of thy life: Shut up thy ſelf by Faith in this Chamber of Divine Care, it is thy beſt ſecurity in this world: Reflect frequently and thankfully upon the manifold ſupports, ſupplies, and ſalvations thou haſt already had, from this fountain of mercies, and be not diſcouraged at new difficulties. When an eminent Chriſtian was told of ſome that way-laid him to deſtroy him: his anſwer was, *Si Deus mei curam non habet, quid vivo:* In like manner thou mayeſt ſay, if God had not taken care for thee, how couldſt thou have lived till now? How couldeſt thou have over-lived ſo many troubles, fears and dangers as thou haſt done?

CHAP. XI.

Opening the ſixth and laſt Chamber, viz. *The Love of God, as a reſting place to believing Souls in evil times.*

Sect. I. THough all the Attributes in the name or chambers of this houſe of God are glorious, and excellent; yet this of love is tranſcendently glorious: Of this room it may be ſaid as it was of *Solomon*'s royal Chariot, *Cant.* 3. 10. *The midſt thereof is paved with love.* In this Attribute the glory of God is ſignally and eminently manifeſted, 1 *John* 4. 9, 10. And upon this foundation the hopes and comforts of all Believers are built and founded, *Rom.* 8. 35. *Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt? Shall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword?* He defies and deſpiſes them all, becauſe neither of them alone, nor all together by their united ſtrength, can unclaſp the arms of Divine Love, in which Believers are ſafely enfolded. In this Attribute God's people by Faith entrench themſelves, and of it a Believer ſaith, *Hic murus aheneus eſto,* this ſhall be my ſtrong hold and fortreſs in the day of trouble, and well may we ſo eſteem and reckon it, if we conſider,

1. That wherever the ſpecial love of God goes, there the ſpecial preſence of God goes alſo, *John* 14. 23. *He ſhall be loved of my father, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.* And O how ſecure and ſafe muſt thoſe be (however times govern) with whom God himſelf maketh his abode! For as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *Pſal.* 91. 1. *He that dwells in the ſecret place of the moſt high, ſhall abide under the ſhadow of the Almighty.* And he that is overſhadowed by an Almighty power, needs not fear how many mighty enemies combine againſt him.

2. Wherever the ſpecial love of God is placed, that perſon becomes, precious and highly valuable in the eyes of God; he appretiates and eſtimates ſuch a man as his peculiar treaſure, which naturally and neceſſarily draws and ſpreads the wing of Divine care over him for his protection, *Deut.* 33. 12. *The beloved of the Lord ſhall dwell in ſafety by him, and the Lord ſhall cover him all the day long.* Things of greateſt value are always kept in ſafeſt cuſtody.

3. Upon whomſoever the ſpecial love of God is ſet, there all events and iſſues of troubles are ſure to be over-ruled to the eternal advantage of that Soul, *Rom.* 8. 28. Which conſideration alone is ſufficient to unſting all the troubles in the world, and make the beloved of the Lord ſhout and triumph in the midſt of tribulations.

But let us enter yet farther into this glorious Chamber of Divine love, and more particularly view the admirable properties thereof, though when all is done, it will be found a love paſſing knowledge; our thoughts may admire, but can never meaſure it.

1. And firſt you will find it an ancient love whoſe ſpring is in eternity it ſelf. Believer, God is thine ancient friend, who foreſaw and loved thee, before thou, yea, before this world was in being; the fruits and effects thereof thou gathereſt in time, but the root that produces them was before all times, *Prov.* 8. 22, 23. *The Lord poſſeſſed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was ſet up from everlaſting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.* Thus was the love of God contriving, and providing the beſt of mercies in Chriſt for us; while as yet there were no ſuch creatures in the world, nor a world prepared to receive us.

2. The love of God to his people is a free, and altogether undeſerved love; it muſt needs be ſo, ſeeing it prevented our very being, which had it not done, yet no motives had been found in us, to allure it to us more than others, *Deut.* 7. 7. *The Lord did not ſet his love upon you, nor chuſe you, becauſe ye were more in number than any people, (for ye were the feweſt of all people) but becauſe the Lord loved you.* So that we cannot find one ſtone of our merit in the foundation of this love; for thoſe whom it embraceth in its arms are, *Immerentes, & male merentes,* ill deſerving as well as undeſerving, we were loved of God, before we were lovely in our ſelves; it is freely pitched upon us, not purchaſed by us, *Iſa.* 43. 24.

3. The love of God to Believers is a bountiful love, ſtreaming forth continually mercies both innumerable and invaluable to the Souls and Bodies, 2 *Pet.* 1. 3. Chriſtian, it would quickly weary thine arm, yea, let me ſay the arm of an *Angel,* but to write down the thouſandth part of the mercies which have already flowed out of this precious fountain to thee; though all thou haſt received,

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or ſhalt receive in this world, are but the beginnings of mercy, and firſt-fruits of the love of God to thee; 'tis the love of God which daily loads thee with benefits, as the expreſſion is, *Pſal.* 68. 19. And if thou art daily loaded with mercies, what an heap of mercies will the mercies of thy whole life be.

4. The love of God to believers is a diſtinguiſhing love, not the portion of all, no, nor yet of many beſides thee, 1 *Cor.* 1. 26. The generality of the world dwell in the Room of common Providence, not in the Chamber of ſpecial love into which God hath admitted thee; this conſideration ſhould make thee break out in admiration, as it is, *John* 19. 22. Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifeſt thy ſelf to me, and not to the world.

5. The Love of God to Believers is a love tranſcendent to all creature love, it moves in an higher Sphere than the love of any creature doth, *Rom.* 5. 6, 7, 8. We read of *Jacob*'s love to *Rachel*, which is ſo celebrated in the ſacred Story for the fervour of it, and yet all that enabled him to ſuffer was but the Summers heat and the Winters cold; a trifle to what the love of Chriſt engaged, and enabled him to ſuffer for thy ſake. We read alſo of the love of *David* to *Abſalom* which made him wiſh, would God I had died for thee, O *Abſalom*, my Son, my Son. This love was only manifeſted in a wiſh, which haply might have been retracted too, had there been an exchange to be made indeed; but the life of Chriſt, worth millions of his life, was actually and willingly ſtaked down for thy Soul. We read of the love of one Diſciple manifeſted to another Diſciple in a Cup of cold Water; but Chriſt hath manifeſted his love to thee in pouring out his warmeſt Heart Blood for thy redemption. O what a tranſcendent love is the divine love!

6. To conclude, (though, alas, little is ſaid of the love of God,) it is an everlaſting and unchangeable love. Hills and Mountains ſhall ſooner ſtart from their Baſes, than his loving kindneſs depart from his People, *Iſa.* 54. 10. Though he afflict us ſtill he loves us, *Pſal.* 89. 32, 33. Nay, though we grieve him, yet ſtill he loves us, *Mark* 16. 7. *Tell the Diſciples, and tell* Peter. *Peter* had grieved Chriſt, denied Chriſt, yet will he not renounce nor caſt off *Peter*.

Sect. II. Well then, if God hath opened to your Souls ſuch a Chamber of love, where your Souls may be raviſhed with daily Delights, as well as ſecured from danger and ruine: O that you would enter into it by Faith, and dwell for ever in the love of God! I mean, clear up your intereſt in it, and then ſolace your Souls in the delights of it. Need I to uſe an Argument, or ſpend one Motive to preſs you to enter into ſuch an Heaven upon Earth? If the deadneſs of thy Heart doth need it take into Conſideration, Reader, theſe few that follow.

1. *Motive.* Ponder with thy ſelf how ſad and miſerable the caſe will be with thee in the days of calamity and diſtreſs, if the love of God ſhall then be clouded to thy ſoul; in thoſe days ſuch as love thee will either be abſent from thee, or impotent to help thee, all thy friends and familiars may be removed far off, and whither then wilt thou turn, ſhould God be far off too? This was that evil which *Jeremiah* ſo vehemently deprecated, *Ch.* 17. *v.* 17. *Be not a terrour unto me, thou art my hope in the day of evil. q. d.* O Lord my Soul depends upon refreſhment, and comfort from thee, when all the ſprings of earthly comfort are dried up. Shouldeſt thou be a terrour to me in the day of evil, it will be the moſt terrible diſappointment that ever befel my Soul; if thou be kind, I care not who be cruel; if I have the love of God, I value not the hatred of Men; but if God be a terrour, who or what can be a Comforter? The love of God is the alone refuge to which the gracious Soul retreats upon all creature diſappointments, and failings. This therefore is the main Thing to be feared againſt the evil Day.

2. *Mot.* The knowledge and aſſurance of the love of God is a Mercy attainable by a gracious Soul, notwithſtanding the imperfections of Grace. *Peter* had his falls and failings as well as other Chriſtians, yet when Chriſt puts the queſtion home to him, *Joh.* 21. 15. Simon *ſon of* Jonas *loveſt thou me more than theſe*, he was able to return a clear poſitive anſwer; *Yea, Lord, thou knoweſt that I love thee.* Study thy heart Chriſtian, and ſtudy the Scriptures; if thou canſt find the ſincere love of God in thy heart, that Scripture will clear the love of God to thy Soul, 1 *John* 4. 19. *We love him becauſe he firſt loved us.* If thou lay thine hand upon a ſtone wall, and feel it warm, thou mayeſt conclude the Sun-beams have ſhone upon it; for warmth is not naturally in dead Stones. Our love to God is but the reflex Beam of his love to us, and we know there can be no reflex without a direct Beam. Thouſands of Chriſtians do at this day actually poſſeſs the raviſhing ſenſe of divine love, whoſe fears and complaints have been the ſame that thine now are; that God who indulged this favour to them, can do as much for thee.

3. *Mot.* Think how well thou wilt be provided for the worſt and difficulteſt times, when the love of God ſhall be well ſecured to thy ſoul; when the love of God, *i. e.* the ſenſe of his love is once ſhed abroad in the heart by the holy Ghoſt, which for that end, among others, is given unto us, we ſhall then be able to glory in tribulation, *Rom.* 5. 3, 5. We may then bid defiance to all the adverſe powers of Hell, and Earth, and ſay, Now do your worſt: we are out of your reach, and above all your terrors and affrights. Be adviſed then to ſit cloſe to this work: clear but this point once, and the worſt is paſt. O lie at the feet of God night and Day, give him no reſt, take no denial from him, fill thy mouth with pleas and arguments? tell him, Lord, it is neither for Corn nor Wine that I ſeek thee, but only for thy love; beſtow thy other gifts upon whom thou wilt, only ſeal up thy love to my Soul.

And Laſtly, I adviſe thee, *Reader*, to be exceeding careful, when God admits thee into the ſenſe of his love, to ſhut the door behind thee, leſt thy Soul be ſoon expelled thence, by the ſubtilty of Satan, who envies nothing more, than ſuch an happineſs as this: that envious Spirit totally deſpairs of the leaſt drop of ſuch a Mercy, and therefore ſwells with envy at thy enjoyment of it; but if ever thou faſten thy hand of faith upon this mercy, looſe not thy hold by every objection with which he will rap thy fingers.

1. If he object the many ſharp Afflictions, and manifold rods of God upon thee, call not the love of God in queſtion for that; but remember what he ſaith, *Heb.* 12. 6. *Whom the Lord loveth he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every ſon whom he receiveth.* Fatherly Corrections are ſo far from being inconſiſtent with the love of God, that his love is rather queſtionable without them, than for them; they are love tokens, not marks of hatred.

2. Yie

2. Yield not up thy claim and title to the love of God, becauſe he ſometimes hides away his face from thee; thou knoweſt the Sun is up, and going on in its regular courſe, in the darkeſt and cloſeſt day. *My God, my God,* ſaith Chriſt himſelf, *Why haſt thou forſaken me?* believe he is ſtill thy God. and his love immutable, when the ſenſe and manifeſtations thereof do fail.

3. Call not the love of God into queſtion, becauſe of thy great vileneſs and unworthineſs; ſay not when thou moſt loatheſt thy ſelf, God muſt needs loath thee too; he can love where thou loatheſt. *Return, return,* O Shulamite, *return, return, that we may look upon thee: what will ye ſee in the* Shulamite? *as it were the company of two Armies.* The Spouſe was exceeding beautiful in the Eyes of others, when moſt baſe and vile in her own: What would you ſee in the *Shulamite?* alas, there is nothing in me, at the beſt, but Conflicts and Wars, betwixt Grace and Corruption, as it were betwixt two Armies, *Cant.* 6. 13.

4. Quit not thy claim to the Love of God, becauſe he ſeems to ſhut out thy Prayers, and delays to anſwer the long continued deſires and importunities of thy Soul in ſome caſes. *David* would neither cenſure his God, no nor call in queſtion his intereſt in him, becauſe of ſuch a delay and ſilence, *Pſal.* 22. 1, 2. *My God, My God.* The claim is doubled, *ver.* 1. and yet in the next breath he ſaith, *I cry in the day time, but thou heareſt not, and in the night ſeaſon, I am not ſilent.*

Thus I have offered you ſome advice and aſſiſtance, how to ſecure your ſelves in theſe Divine Attributes, *viz.* The Power, Wiſdom, Faithfulneſs, Unchangeableneſs, Care and Love of God, as in ſo many Sanctuaries, and comfortable Refuges in the days of common Calamity. It is noted even of the *Egyptians,* when the ſtorm of Hail was coming upon the Land, *Exod.* 9. 20. *He that feared the word of the Lord among the ſervants of* Pharaoh, *made his ſervants and his cattle flee into the houſes,* Let not an *Egyptian* take more care of his beaſts than Chriſtians of their Souls. Stormy days are coming, God hath provided you a Refuge, and given you ſeaſonable Præmonitions, and Calls from Heaven, to haſten into them before Deſolations come. The Lord help us to hear his Calls, and comply with them, which will be as much our Privilege, as it is our Duty. And ſo much of the *Fifth Propoſition, viz.* That God's Attributes, Promiſes, and Providences, are prepared for the ſecurity of his people in the greateſt diſtreſſes that befal them in the world.

PROPOSITION VI.

That none but God's own People are taken into theſe Chambers of Security, or can expect his ſpecial Protection in Evil Times.

Sect. I. THis *Propoſition* deſcribes and clears the qualified ſubject of this Privilege God's own People, and none but ſuch can warrantably claim ſpecial Protection in evil times; and this is conſonant to the current account of Scripture. *Iſa.* 3. 10, 11. *Say ye unto the righteous, it ſhall be well with him. Wo to the wicked, it ſhall be ill with him.* He ſpeaks concerning the day of *Jeruſalem's* ruin, and *Judah's* fall, as appears, *ver.* 8. So great a difference will God make even in this world, betwixt the righteous, and the wicked. In *Nah.* 1. you have alſo a terrible day deſcribed, wherein *Baſhan, Carmel,* and *Lebanon,* the moſt pleaſant and fruitful places of the land ſhall languiſh, *ver.* 4. The mountains ſhall quake, the hills melt, the earth, and thoſe that dwell therein burnt up, *ver.* 5. The indignation and fury of God poured out like fire, *ver.* 6. The privileged people in this terrible day are God's own people, they only are taken into ſecurity, *ver.* 7. The Lord is good, a ſtrong hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that truſt in him, *i. e.* he ſo knoweth them, as to care and provide for them in that evil day, and ſo throughout the whole Scripture, you ſhall find the Promiſes of Protection ſtill made to the people of God. When the *Chaldean* Army, like a devouring fire, was ready to ſieze upon the Land, the ſinners in *Sion* were afraid, fearfulneſs ſurprized the hypocrites, for who among us (ſay they) ſhall dwell with devouring fire, and everlaſting burning? Yes, ſaith God, ſome there are that ſhall abide that day, *viz. He that walketh righteouſly, and ſpeaketh uprightly; he ſhall dwell on high, his place of defence ſhall be the munition of rocks, i. e.* God will be a ſanctuary to them, when others ſhall be as ſtubble before the flames, *Iſa.* 33. 14, 15, 16.

But for the right ſtating of this Propoſition, three things muſt be heedfully adverted.

1. That all good men are not always exempted from the ſtroke of outward Calamities; in that ſenſe the righteous may periſh, and merciful men be taken away, yea, they may periſh in love, and be taken away in mercy from the evil to come, *Iſa.* 57. 1, 2. *Micah* 7. 1, 2.

2. That all wicked men are not always expoſed to external miſeries, but *a juſt man may periſh in his righteouſneſs, and a wicked man prolong his life in his wickedneſs,* Eccleſ. 7. 15.

3. But in this ſenſe we are to underſtand the Propoſition, That none, but the people of God, have right, by promiſe, to his ſpecial protection in evil days, and that all ſuch ſhall either be preſerved from the ſtroke of calamities, or from the deadly ſting, namely eternal ruin, by them; though they ſhould fall by the hands of enemies, yet they die, as *Joſiah* did, in Peace, 2 *Kings* 22. 19, 20. If they be taken away, it is but out of the way of greater miſchiefs: death doth but lay the Saints in their beds of reſt, when it hurries away others into everlaſting miſeries: If they be not excuſed from troubles, yet their troubles are ſure to be ſanctified to their eternal good, *Rom.* 8. 28. And the Lord will be with them in their troubles, *Pſal.* 91. 15. *Iſa.* 41. 10.

Two things remain to be conſidered, before we finiſh this laſt Propoſition: *viz.*

1. Who the People of God are?
2. Why this Privilege is peculiar to them?

1. Who are the People of God? The Scripture deſcribes them two ways; Negatively, and Poſitively; Negatively, in oppoſition to thoſe who are not the People of God, but are (1.) the ſervants of ſin, obeying it in the luſt of it, which the People of God neither are, nor dare to do, *Rom.* 6. 11, 12. *&c.* (2.) The men of this World, who have their portion in this life, ſavouring and minding the things of the world only, whereas the People of God are called out of the world, *Joh.* 17. 16. and principally ſtudy, and labour after the higher concernments of the world to come, *Rom.* 8. 5. (3.) The Vaſſals of Satan doing his luſt, and in ſubjection to his power, *Acts* 26. 18. *Epheſ.* 2. 2. from which bondage the People of God are made free. (4.) Nor yet are they their own, living wholly to themſelves, and ſeeking only their own ends,

as others do, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19, 20. Theſe, all theſe are not the People of God, God will not own them for ſuch; they but deceive themſelves in thinking, and calling themſelves ſo: but then *poſitively.* They are (1.) a people regenerated, and born again *Joh.* 1. 13. Their regeneration gives them both the eſſence and denomination of the people of God: it is as impoſſible to be the children of God, without regeneration, as it is to be the children of Men without generation. (2.) They are people in Covenant with God, *Ezek.* 16. 8. *I entered into a Covenant with thee, and thou becameſt mine.* For in this Covenant they give themſelves to the Lord, 2 *Cor.* 8. 5. They avouch the Lord to be their God, and make over themſelves to him to be his people, *Jer.* 31. 33. devoting unto God all that they are, their ſouls, and bodies, with every faculty and member incluſively *Rom.* 12. 1. *Luke* 10. 27. All that they have, *Rom.* 11. 36. all is dedicated and devoted to the Lord's uſe and ſervice, and theſe only are the people of God.

2. The laſt thing to be cleared is, Why the people of God, and none beſide them, have this peculiar privilege of an hiding-place in the day of trouble? And the grounds of it are,

1. Becauſe they only have ſpecial intereſt in God, and propriety is the ground on which they claim and expect protection: I am thine, ſave me, *Pſal.* 119. 94. Upon this very ground it was, that *David* encouraged himſelf in one of his greateſt plunges and diſtreſſes of his whole life, 1 *Sam.* 30. 6. *But* David *encouraged himſelf in the Lord his God.*

2. The people of God only are at peace with God; and where there is no Peace, there can be no Protection: The harbours and gariſons of one Kingdom never receive into their Protection the Subjects of another Kingdom that are in open hoſtility againſt them. Now there is open War betwixt God and the Wicked, *Pſal.* 7. 11. *Zech.* 11. 8. 'Till they have Peace with God, they can claim no Protection from God.

3. The promiſes of Protection are made only to God's people; and where there is no promiſe, there can be no warrantable claim to Protection, 2 *Cor.* 1. 20. 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. Common Providence may ſhelter them for a time, but the Saints only have the Keys of the Promiſes which open the Chambers or Attributes of God to them.

4. None but the people of God walk in the ways of God, and none but thoſe that walk in his way can groundedly expect his Protection; for ſo runs the promiſe, 2 *Chron.* 15. 2. *I am with you, whilſt you are with me, i. e.* I am with you, by way of Protection, Direction, Supportation, and Salvation, whilſt you are with me in the duties of Obedience, and exerciſes of your Graces; ſee that you love, fear, and obey me, and then depend upon it I will look after, and take care of you.

5. To conclude: The people of God only flee to God for Sanctuary, and caſt themſelves upon him for Protection, *Pſal.* 56. 3. *At what time I am afraid, I will truſt in thee.* Pſal. 18. 2. *The Lord is my rock, and my fortreſs, and my deliverer; my God, my ſtrength, in whom I will truſt, my buckler, and the horn of my ſalvation, and my high tower.* This their confidence in God and reliance upon him, engages him to protect them in their dangers, *Iſa.* 26. 3. All others put themſelves out of God's Protection, by making fleſh their Arm, and ſo giving the honour of God to the Creature, *Jer.* 17. 5. And thus much for clearing this laſt Propoſition alſo. All that remains will be diſpatched in brief and cloſe Application of the point thus opened and confirmed.

CHAP. XII.

Containing the firſt Uſe of the Point, in ſeveral informing Conſectaries, *and* Deductions *of Truth from it.*

Sect. I.

Conſect. 1. FRom the whole of this Diſcourſe we may be informed what a miſerable and ſhiftleſs People all thoſe will be in times of trouble, who have no ſpecial Intereſt in God or the Promiſes. Sad and lamentable was the caſe of *Saul*, as it is by himſelf expreſſed, 1 *Sam.* 28. 15. *I am ſore diſtreſſed, for the* Philiſtines *make war againſt me, and God is departed from me, and anſwereth me no more.* It is a wonderful and unaccountable thing, how carnal Men and Women ſubſiſt, and bear up, when their earthly props and hopes ſink under and fail them; ſo long as any creature-comfort is left, thither they will retreat for relief and ſuccour: but if all fail, as quickly they may, whither will they turn for comfort, having not a God nor a Promiſe to flee to? which the people of God can do, when all things elſe fail them, *Heb.* 3. 17. Their different conditions in the day of trouble, is clearly expreſſed in *Zeph.* 2. 3, 4. *Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment, ſeek righteouſneſs, ſeek meekneſs, it may be ye ſhall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger.* There is God's *may be*, which is better ſecurity than Man's *ſhall be*, for their temporal deliverance: but what ſhall become of others, that have no refuge but in the Creature? Why, the miſery and ſhiftleſsneſs of their condition follows in the next words: *Gaza ſhall be forſaken, and Aſhkelon a deſolation; they ſhall drive out* Aſhdod *at noon-day, and* Ekron *ſhall be rooted up; i. e.* All their earthly ſecurities ſhall fail them; their ſtrong hold ſhall not ſecure them; they ſhall find no ſhelter in the ſcorching heat of the day of trouble. *Moab, Aſhdod,* and *Ekron,* have no more benefit by the Promiſes made to *Sion,* than the Inhabitants of *Rome* can claim by the Charter of *London.* If a wicked or hypocritical perſon cry to God in his diſtreſs, he will not hear him, *Prov.* 1. 25, 26. *Job* 27. 9. but will bid him go to his earthly Refuges which he hath choſen; if he go to the Promiſes, knock at thoſe doors of hope, they cannot relieve him, being all made in Chriſt to Believers; if to the Name and Attributes of God, all the doors are ſhut againſt them, *Pſal.* 34. 16. There are ſeven dreadful Aggravations of a wicked man's Troubles;

(1.) When Troubles come upon him, the Curſe of God follows him into his carnal Refuges; Jer. 17. 5. *Curſed be the man that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arm, and whoſe heart departeth from the Lord.* Trouble is the Arrow, and this Curſe the Venom of the Arrow, which makes the Wound incurable.

2. When troubles fall upon him from without, a guilty Conſcience will terrifie him from within; ſo that the Mind can give no relief to the Body, but both ſink under their own weights; it is not ſo with the people of God, they have inward relief under outward preſſures, 2 *Cor* 4. 16.

3. The guſts and ſtorms of wicked mens troubles may blow them into Hell, and hurry them into eternal Deſtruction; if Death march towards them upon the pale Horſe, Hell always follows him, *Rev.* 6. 8.

4. If troubles and diſtreſſes overwhelm their hearts, they can give them no vent or eaſe by Prayer,

Prayer, Faith, and Reſignation to God, as his people uſe to do, 1 *Sam.* 1. 18.

5. When their troubles and diſtreſſes come, then comes the hour and power of their temptation, and to ſhun ſorrow they will fall into ſin, having no promiſe to be kept in the Hour of Temptation, as the Saints have, *Rev.* 3. 10.

6. When their troubles come, they will be left alone in the midſt of them; theſe are their burthens, and they alone muſt bear them. God's gracious, comfortable, ſupporting preſence is only with his own people.

7. If Trouble or Death come upon them as a ſtorm, they have no Anchor of Hope to drop in the ſtorm; *The wicked is driven away in his wickedneſs: but the righteous hath hope in his death*, Prov. 14. 32. By all which it appears that a Chriſtleſs perſon is a moſt helpleſs and ſhifleſs Creature in the day of trouble.

2 *Conſect.* Secondly, Hence it follows, *That Chriſtians ought not to droop like other men in the day of trouble.* A wicked man's boldneſs, and a Chriſtian's cowardlineſs in times of affliction, are alike ungrounded and uncomely. Why ſhould thy heart, Chriſtian, deſpond and ſink at this rate, upon the proſpect of approaching troubles? Are there not ſafe and comfortable Chambers taken up, and provided for thee againſt that day? Is not the Name of the Lord a ſtrong Tower, into which thou may'ſt run and be ſafe? The heart of a good man, ſaith *Chryſoſtom*, ſhould at all times be like the higher Heavens, ſerene, tranquil and clear, whatever Thunders and Lightnings, Storms and Tempeſts, trouble and diſturbance terrifie the lower world. If a Man have a good Roof over his head, where he can ſit dry and warm, what need he trouble himſelf to hear the Winds roar, the Lightnings flaſh, and the Rains pour down without doors? Why, this is thy privilege, Chriſtian; *A Man* (to wit, the Man Jeſus Chriſt) *ſhall be as an hiding-place from the Wind, a covert from the Tempeſt: as rivers of water in a dry place, as the ſhadow of a great rock in a weary land*, Iſa. 32. 2. Art thou in Chriſt and in the Covenant? give me then one good reaſon for thy dejections in a day of trouble; or if thou haſt none to give, hearken to theſe Reaſons againſt it.

1. If thou be in Chriſt, thy Sins are forgiven thee; and why ſhould not a pardoned Soul be a chearful Soul in Adverſity? Afflictions may buz and hum about thee, like Bees that have loſt their ſting, but they can never hurt thee.

2. If thou be in Chriſt, thy God is with thee in all thy troubles; and how can thy heart ſink or faint in ſuch a preſence? Let them that are alone in troubles fail under them: but don't thou do ſo, that art ſurrounded with Almighty Power, Grace and Love, *Iſa.* 43. 1, 2.

3. If thou be in Chriſt, thy greateſt afflictions ſhall prove thy beſt Friends and Benefactors, *Rom.* 8. 28. Sure then thou art more afraid than hurt, thou miſtakeſt thy beſt friends for thy worſt enemies, thou and thy afflictions ſhall part more comfortably than you met.

4. If thou be in Chriſt, thy Treaſure is ſafe, thy eternal happineſs is out of the reach of all thine Enemies, *Luke* 12. 4. *Luke* 10. 42. And if that be ſafe, thou haſt no cauſe to be ſad; to droop and tremble at the hazard of earthly comforts, whilſt heavenly and eternal things are ſafe, is as if a man that had gotten his Pardon from the King, and had it ſafe in his Boſom, ſhould be found weeping upon the way home, becauſe he hath loſt his Staff or Glove. Theſe Reaſons are ſtrong againſt the dejections of God's people under outward troubles; but yet I am ſenſible that all the reaſoning in the world will not prevent their dejections, except they will take pains to clear up their Intereſt in God againſt ſuch a day, *Pſal.* 18. 2. and will act their Faith by way of adherence and dependence upon God in want of the former light and evidence, *Iſa.* 50. 10. And laſtly, that they keep their conſciences pure and inviolate, which will be a ſpring of comfort in the midſt of troubles, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12.

3. *Conſect.* Thirdly, *It hence appears to be the greateſt folly and vanity in the world, to make any thing but God our refuge in the day of trouble.* This practice, as you heard but now, is under God's Curſe, and that which is curſed of God, can never be comfortable to us. It is an honour peculiar to God, the right of Heaven, and therefore curſed Sacrilege to beſtow it on the Creature. We read of ſome that make Lyes their refuge, and hide themſelves under Falſhood, thinking when the overflowing Sourge comes it ſhall not come nigh unto them, *Iſa.* 28. 15. They will truſt to their Wits and Policies, they will fawn and flatter, lye and diſſemble, caſt themſelves into a thouſand ſhapes and forms to ſave themſelves; but all in vain, the Flood ſhall ſweep away their refuge of lyes. Others make riches their truſt and confidence, *Prov.* 10. 15. *The rich man's wealth is his ſtrong City.* If enemies come, their Money ſhall be their ranſom: but, oh! what a poor refuge will this be! It may betray, but cannot ſecure them. *Behold, ſaith God, I will ſtir up the* Medes *againſt them, which ſhall not regard ſilver; and as for gold, they ſhall not delight in it*, Iſa. 13. 17. Riches profit not in the day of wrath, *Prov.* 11. 4. *Job* bleſſed God in the day of his adverſity, that he had not made gold his hope, or the fine gold his confidence, *Job* 31. 24. Bleſs not thou thy ſelf that thou haſt ſuch things to beſtow thy hope and truſt upon. Others make men their refuge, eſpecially great and powerful men: but to how little purpoſe is it! *Put not your truſt in Princes, nor in the ſon of man, in whom there is no help*, Pſal. 146. 3, 4. They cannot keep their Crowns upon their Heads, no, nor their Heads upon their Shoulders; the greateſt Men are but Duſt, and what can Duſt do to Duſt? Three things aggravate their miſery, who miſplace their confidence by beſtowing it on any Creature. 1. That Creature will certainly deceive them; Men are deceitful Men, *Pſal.* 62. 9. Riches are deceitful Riches, 1 *Tim.* 6. 17. Every thing you lean on beſide God will ſtart aſide, like a deceitful Bow, *Pſal.* 78. 57. (2.) The diſappointment of your hopes from the Creature will enflame your affliction, and greatly aggravate your ſorrow, 2 *Kings* 18. 21. The broken reeds of *Egypt* will not only fail, but pierce you. (3.) In a word, God will take none into his protection, who make any thing beſides himſelf their hope and confidence; if we fly from God to the Creature, God will ſay to the Creature, Thou ſhalt go; except I have thy dependence, thou ſhalt never have my protection; where I have no honour, thou ſhalt have no comfort.

4 *Conſect.* Fourthly, The former Diſcourſe yields us alſo this comfortable concluſion, *That whatever confuſions, deſolations, and troubles be in the earth, the Church and People of God can never be wholly exterminated and deſtroyed, ſeeing ſuch a ſecure refuge is prepared for them of God*, Pſal. 102. 28. *The Children of thy ſervants ſhall continue, and their ſeed ſhall be eſtabliſhed before thee.* Which is aſſigned as the true reaſon of

its perpetuity and ſafety, *Pſal.* 48. 3. *God is known in her palaces for a refuge.* The Church's Enemies have tried the utmoſt of their Policies and Powers in all Ages againſt it, but to no purpoſe: whilſt they have been plotting and perſecuting, the preſerved Remnant have been ſinging their Song upon *Alamoth*, even Praiſes to their great Preſerver; tho' they have no external viſible defence, yet are they as ſafe as Salvation it ſelf can make them, *for ſalvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks*, Iſa. 26. 1, 2. Four things are exceeding remarkable in the Church's Preſervation: (1.) No people were ever ſo fiercely oppoſed by the Powers of this World, *The Kings of the earth have ſet themſelves, and the Rulers have taken Counſel together*, Pſal. 2. 2. All methods and artifices have been tryed, ſometimes to jeer and ſcoff them out of their Religion, ſo did the *Apoſtate Julian*: and ſometimes by cruel tortures to affright them from their Religion; the variety, and more than barbarous inhumanity whereof the Church hiſtories give us a ſad and amazing account. (2.) Under theſe cruel Perſecutions they have ſeemed to be utterly loſt, to the eye of ſenſe and reaſon; *Iam left alone*, ſaid *Elijah*, *and they ſeek my life*, 1 Kings 19. 10. *By whom, Lord, ſhall Jacob ariſe*, ſaid *Amos*, *for he is very ſmall?* Amos 7. 2. (3.) Notwithſtanding all which, the Church hath out-lived all its dangers; it is the true *Phœnix* which hath out-lived the Deluge. (4.) Such deliverances are proper and peculiar to the Church alone; no people, beſides the people of God, have ſuch Salvations upon Record. The great and famous Monarchies of the World have daſh'd one another to pieces, like earthen Potſheards.

——*Sic Medus ademit*
Aſſyrio, Syroque tulit moderamina Perſes.

And all this by vertue of that promiſe, *Jer.* 30. 11. *For I am with thee, ſaith the Lord, to ſave thee; tho' I make a full end of all Nations whither I have ſcattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee.*

5 *Conſect.* Fifthly, to conclude: If this be ſo, *then it is a deep and dangerous policy of Satan to ſhut up our refuge in God againſt us, as much as may be in times of trouble.* Satan, like a cunning Fowler, deſpairs of getting the Birds in his Net, except he can beat them out of their coverts; it is therefore his great deſign, to eſtrange and alienate the Saints from their God, as much as he can, thereby to cut off their retreat to him in times of trouble; a miſchief which the people of God have always vehemently deprecated, *Pſal.* 102. 2. *Jer.* 17. 17. and oh that we would beware of it, and ſhun this miſchief, by our ſeaſonable preventing watchfulneſs. There are, among others, three ſpecial Projects of Satan, whereby he manages this miſchievous deſign againſt the people of God.

1. By drawing their Conſciences under guilt, on purpoſe to deſtroy the liberty, freedom, and child-like confidence of their Souls, in their addreſſes to God. This, if any thing in the world will do it, *Job* 11. 14, 15. What a loſs will that poor Soul be at, in times of trouble, whoſe grumbling and condemning conſcience will not ſuffer him to look up chearfully and believingly in the face of its God and Father, having loſt its ancient freedom at the Throne of Grace?

2. By prevailing with them to neglect and intermit the courſe of their daily duties, and thereby to let down their communion with God, and in a great meaſure loſe their acquaintance with him. This is a dangerous Policy of the Devil, and an unſpeakable prejudice to the Soul. Oh Chriſtian! take heed of a lazy ſlothful ſpirit, or a vain and earthly heart, which will eaſily ſuffer the Duties of Religion to be joſtled aſide, and put by for every trivial occaſion; eſpecially beware of ſlight, formal, ſuperficial and dead-hearted performances of duty, which is little better than the intermiſſion of them, it may indeed prevent the ſcandal, but can never give thee the comfort of Religion.

3. By beclouding their intereſt in God, and darkening their titles and evidences, by thick clouds of doubts and fears. This is the ſad caſe of many a poor Chriſtian in a day of trouble, without fightings, within fears. Brethren, I beſeech you, think often what thoſe things are, which uſually put men into ſuch frights and ſtreights, when imminent dangers ſtare them in the face, what it is that daunts and damps the hearts of Chriſtians at ſuch times; and as you value the peace and freedom of your Souls with God, give not matter for your conſciences to reproach you of miſ-ſpent time, indulged ſins, neglected duties, formality or hypocriſie in duties, ſiniſter, and by-ends in your tranſactions with God or Man: preſerve the purity and peace of your conſciences, as you would preſerve your two eyes; if by ſuch wiles the Devil cannot bar you from your God, or ſhut up your refuge in him, your outward troubles can do you no hurt.

The Second Uſe, of Direction and Advice.

Sect. II. The Providence of God in theſe days, giving us ſuch loud warnings of approaching judgment; how are all that are wiſe in heart, and of underſtanding of the times, now more-eſpecially concerned to clear their intereſt in theſe bleſſed Attributes of God, which have here been opened, as their only refuge in the evil day. Let me therefore perſuade and preſs you to betake your ſelves to God, your Refuge and ſtrong Hold in Trouble, and that more-eſpecially in theſe two great Duties, *viz.*

1. Of fervent Supplication.
2. Of univerſal Reſignation.

1. Betake your ſelves to God by fervent Prayer and Supplication. Let me ſay of theſe Times, as holy Mr. *Perkins* did of his, *Non ſunt iſta litigandi, ſed orandi tempora*; Theſe are no times for Chriſtians to contend and ſtrive one with another, but with their united cries to ſtrive with God, and, among other requeſts, ſtrongly to enforce and follow home that of *David*, *Pſal.* 71. 2, 3. *Deliver me in thy righteouſneſs, and cauſe me to eſcape; incline thine ear unto me, and ſave me; be thou my ſtrong habitation, whereunto I may continually reſort.* That's a true and weighty obſervation of *Auſtin*, *Non facilè inveniuntur præſidia in adverſitate, quæ non fuerint in pace quæſita*; A refuge is not to be found in trouble, except it be provided before-hand in peace. *For this*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *ſhall every one that is godly pray unto thee, in a time when thou maiſt be found, ſurely in the floods of great waters they ſhall not come nigh unto him*, Pſal. 32. 6. Had not *Noah* prepared and ſecured himſelf in the Ark, before the floods of great water came, he had not ſate, as he did, *mediis tranquillus in undis*; ſleeping quietly, when others were periſhing in the waters. Gather your ſelves therefore together, before the Decree bring forth; ſeek the Lord, all ye meek of the Earth, be more frequent, and more fervent in Prayer, now than ever; you have all the encouragements in the world to incite you to this Duty: the nature of your God is exceeding pitiful, tender, and compaſſionate, *Jam.* 5. 11. The endeared relations betwixt God and you give ſingular encouragement of ſucceſs: Shall not God hear his

his own Elect, which cry unto him day and night? *Luke* 18. 7. The ſweet returns and anſwers of former Prayers are ſo many motives and encouragements to follow cloſe that thriving Trade; *Pſal.* 52. 1, 2, 3. And above all, your prevalent Advocate in the Heavens ſhould encourage you to come frequently and boldly to the Throne of Grace, that you may obtain Mercy, and find Grace, to help in the time of need, *Heb.* 4. 16. In two things I ſhall briefly offer a little direction here, *viz.*

1. As to the matter } of Prayer.
2. As to the manner }

1. As to the matter of Prayer, I mean ſuch as the ſtate and condition of the times, now more eſpecially, ſuggeſt.

(1.) Unite your Prayers, and cry mightily to the Lord, that if it be his good pleaſure, this cup of wrath which ſeems to be mingled and prepared, may paſs from his People. Now cry to God, as they are directed to do, *Joel* 2. 17. *Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen ſhou'd rule over them: wherefore ſhould they ſay among the people, Where is their God?* O pray, That *England* may not be delivered into the hands of blood-thirſty Papiſts, that the golden Candleſtick may not be removed, that Idolatry may not return into thoſe places where God hath been ſo ſweetly worſhipped; that a Land ſo peculiarly bleſſed with Goſpel-light, wherein ſo many thouſand Sons, and Daughters, have been born to God, may not at laſt become an *Aceldama*, a great Shambles, to quarter out the Limbs of his dear Saints; that the pleaſant Plant of Reformation, planted with his own right hand, and watered with ſo many Tears, yea with ſo much blood, may not at laſt be rooted up by the wild Boar out of the Foreſt!

(2.) Pray indeſinently, That you may be kept from the ſins and temptations of the times. O watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation; if you cannot prevail with God, to turn away his Anger, yet be importunate with him, that you may be kept from Sin, that if you loſe your outward Peace, you may be able to keep inward Peace, that you may never ſacrifice your Conſciences, to ſave your Fleſh, that you may never fall under the diſpleaſure of God, to avoid the rage of Men. Ah Friends, we little think what a fearful havock an hour of temptation will make in ſuch a profeſſing Nation as this is; then ſhall many be offended. *Matth.* 24. 10. O pray, that you may never give offence to others, by ſcandal, or take offence your ſelves at the ways of God, whatever ſufferings and ſharp Tryals ſhall come.

(3.) Pray earneſtly for the ſanctification of all your troubles, to your eternal good; an unſanctified comfort never did any man good, and a ſanctified trouble never did any man hurt; be more earneſt therefore with God, rather to have your troubles ſanctified, than prevented; to get the bleſſing, than to avoid the ſmart of them; if they cannot be turned away from you, pray they may be turned to your ſalvation.

2. Betake your ſelves to God your refuge by Faith, reſigning and committing all into his Hands, *Now the juſt ſhall live by faith, Heb.* 10. 38. The more you can truſt God, the more you ſecure your ſelves from danger; he that can live by Faith, ſhall never die by Fear, and be ſure to inform your ſelves well in two things, *viz.*

1. What it is to truſt God over all.
2. What grounds you have ſo to do.

1. Be well inſtructed in the Nature of this Duty, there are ſix things imported in ſuch Acts, of Reſignation.

1. An awakened ſenſe of our dangers and hazards. *At what time I am afraid I will truſt in thee, Pſal.* 56. 3. Suffering times are reſigning times, 1 *Pet.* 4. 19. *Let them that ſuffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their ſouls to him in well doing; as unto a faithful creator.* And the greater and nearer our dangers are, the more frequent and vigorous ſhould the actings of our faith this way be; Be not far from me, for trouble is near.

2. Reſignation to God neceſſarily implies our renunciation, and diſclaiming of all other refuges. Aſhur *ſhall not ſave us, we will not ride upon horſes, neither will we ſay any more to the work of our hands, ye are our Gods, for in thee the fatherleſs findeth mercy, Hoſ.* 14. 3. He that relies upon God, muſt ceaſe from Man; reſignation to God excludes not the uſe of lawful Means, but it doth exclude dependence upon them.

3. Reſignation to God is always grounded upon an intereſt in God, we have no warrant, nor encouragement to expect protection from him in trouble, except we can come to him as Children to a Father: It is the filial relation that gives encouragement to this fiducial reſignation, and the clearer that relation and intereſt is, the more bold and confident thoſe acts of Faith will be, *Pſal.* 86. 2. *Preſerve my ſoul, for I am holy. O thou my God ſave thy ſervant that truſteth in thee.* And again, *Pſal.* 119. 94. *I am thine, ſave me.* I ſpeak not here of the firſt act of Faith, which flows not from an intereſt, but gives the Soul an intereſt in God. Nor do I ſay that poor doubting and timorous Believers whoſe intereſt in him is dark and dubious, have no warrant to reſign themſelves and their concernments into his hands, for it is both their Right and Duty to do it: But certainly the clearer our intereſt is, the more facile and comfortable will thoſe Acts be.

4. The committing acts of Faith imply a full acknowledment and owning of God's Power to protect us, be the danger never ſo imminent, *Pſal.* 31. 15. *My times are in thy hand, deliver me from the hands of mine enemies, and from them that perſecute me. q. d.* O Lord I am fully ſatisfied, my life is not at the diſpoſe of mine enemies, 'tis not in their hands, but in thine; all the traps and ſnares they lay for it ſhall not ſhorten one minute of my time, I know thine hand is fully able to protect me, and therefore into thine hands I reſign my ſelf, and all I have.

5. Reſignation involves in it an expectation of help and ſafety from God, when we ſee no way of ſecurity from Men. *O Lord,* ſaith *Jehoſhaphat, We have no might nor no ſtrength, neither know we what to do, but our eyes are unto thee,* 2 *Chron.* 20. 12. So *David, Pſal.* 62. 5, 6. *My ſoul wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him, he only is my rock and my ſalvation, he is my defence I ſhall not be moved.*

6. Reſignation to God implies the leaving of our ſelves and our concernments with him to be diſpoſed of according to his good pleaſure; the reſigning Soul deſires the Lord to do with him what he will, and is content to take what Lot divine pleaſure ſhall caſt for him, 2 *Sam.* 15. 25. *And the King ſaid unto Zadok, carry back the Ark of God into the City, if I ſhall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again and ſhew me both it and his habitation; but if he thus ſay, I have no delight in thee, behold, here am I, let him*

him do to me as ſeemeth good unto him. And ſo much of the Nature of this Duty, that we may underſtand what to do.

2. Next let me ſhew you what encouragements you that are the People of God, have to this duty, and they will appear to be great and many.

The Soverignty and abſolute Dominion of God over all Creatures, is a ſingular encouragement to all, *Pſal.* 59. 9. *Becauſe of his ſtrength will I wait upon thee, for God is my defence.* If a man were in danger amidſt a great Army of rude and inſolent Souldiers, and were to put himſelf under the protection of any one, it would be his wiſdom to chuſe to do it under the *General* who had all the Souldiers of his Army at his Beck. Chriſtian, thy God unto whoſe hands thou committeſt thy ſelf, is Lord General of all the Hoſts and Armies in Heaven and Earth; how ſafe muſt thou then be in his hands?

2. The unſearchable and perfect Wiſdom of God is a mighty encouragement to commit our ſelves into his hands, *with him is plenteous redemption, Pſal.* 130. *ult. i. e.* Choice and variety of ways and methods to ſave his people; we are, but God never is at a loſs to find a door for our eſcape, 2 *Pet.* 2. 9. *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation.*

3. The infinite tenderneſs and compaſſionateneſs of our God is a ſweet encouragement to reſign and commit our ſelves and all we have into his hands, his mercy is incomparably tender towards his people, infinitely beyond whatever any creature felt ſtirring in its own bowels towards another that came out of its bowels, *Iſa.* 49. 15. This compaſſion of God engageth the two forementioned Attributes, *viz.* his Power and Wiſdom, for the preſervation and relief of his people, as often as diſtreſſes befall them. Yea,

4. The very diſtreſſes his people are in, do, as it were, awake the Almighty power of God for their defence and reſcue; our diſtreſſes are not only proper ſeaſons, but powerful motives to his ſaving power, *Deut.* 36. *For the Lord ſhall judge his people, and repent himſelf for his ſervants, when he ſeeth that their power is gone, and there is none ſhut up or left.* God makes it an argument to himſelf, and his people *Plead it as an argument with him, be not far from me, for trouble is near, for there is none to help.*

5. We have already committed greater and weightier concernments into his hand than the deareſt intereſt we have in this World, we have intruſted our ſouls with him, 1 *Pet.* 4. 19. 2 *Tim.* 1. 12. Well therefore may we commit the leſſer, who have intruſted the greater with him; what are our lives, liberties, eſtates, and relations, compared with our Souls, and the eternal ſafety and happineſs of them!

6. The committing act of Faith is the great and only expedient to procure and ſecure the peace and tranquility of our minds, amidſt the diſtractions and troubles of the preſent World; the greateſt part of our affliction and trouble in ſuch days, is from the working of our own thoughts; theſe torments from within are worſe than any from without; and the reſignation of all to God by Faith is their beſt and only cure, *Prov.* 16. 3. *Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts ſhall be eſtabliſhed.* A bleſſed calmneſs of mind, a ſweet tranquility and ſettlement of thoughts follows immediately hereupon, *Iſa.* 94. 19. Oh then, leave all with God, and quietly expect a comfortable iſſue; and for the better ſettlement, and ſecurity of thy peace in times of diſtraction and trouble, I beſeech thee, Reader, carefully to watch and guard againſt theſe two evils.

1. *Caution.* Beware of Infidelity and diſtruſtfulneſs of God and his Promiſes, which ſecretly lurks in thy heart, and is hugely apt to bewray it ſelf; when great diſtreſſes and troubles befall thee, thou wilt know it by ſuch Symptoms as theſe. 1. In an over haſty and eager deſire after preſent deliverance, *Iſa.* 51. 14. *The captive exile haſteneth that he may be looſed, and that he ſhould not die in the pit, nor that his bread ſhould fail.* The leſs Faith, always the more impatience, and the more ability to believe, the more patience to wait. 2. It will diſcover it ſelf in our readineſs to cloſe with and catch at ſinful mediums and methods of deliverance, *Iſa.* 30. 15, 16. And this is the handle of temptation and occaſion of Apoſtacy. *But he that believeth will not make haſte, Iſa.* 26. 18. No more haſte than good ſpeed. 3. It will ſhew it ſelf, in diſtracting cares and fears about events, which will rack the mind with various and endleſs tortures.

2. *Caution.* Beware of dejection and deſpondency of mind in evil times, take heed of a poor low ſpirit, that will preſently ſink and give up its hope upon every appearance and face of trouble; it is a promiſe made unto the righteous, *Pſal.* 112. 7. *He ſhall not be afraid of evil tidings, his heart is fixed truſting in the Lord.* The truſting of God fixes the heart, and the fixing of the heart fortifies it againſt Fear: but I know what many poor Chriſtians will ſay in this caſe, their timorouſneſs and deſpondency ariſes not ſo much from the greatneſs of outward evils, as from the darkneſs and doubtfulneſs of their Spiritual and inward condition, which doubtleſs is the very truth of the caſe, which brings me to the laſt uſe of this point.

Uſe the Third.

Search and examine your hearts, Chriſtians, whether thoſe graces and qualifications to which God hath promiſed protection in evil times may not be found upon an impartial ſearch in your hearts; amongſt which I will ſingle out three principal ones, as the proper matters of your ſelf examination, *viz.*

1. Uprightneſs of Heart and Way.
2. Humiliation for your own and others ſins.
3. Righteouſneſs in doing and meekneſs in ſuffering the Will of God.

1. Uprightneſs and Integrity of heart and way. To this qualification belong many ſweet promiſes of protection, ſuch is that *Prov.* 2. 7. *He is a buckler to them that walk uprightly, Pſal.* 7. 10. *My defence is of God, which ſaveth the upright in heart.* If your hearts be true to God, theſe promiſes ſhall be truly performed to you, but beware you deceive not your ſelves in ſo great a point as this is; thy heart cannot be an upright heart, except, (1.) It be a renewed heart; the Natural heart is always a falſe heart, 'tis only regeneration that gives the heart a right temper and frame; all the duties and labours in the world can never keep that heart right in its courſe, which is not firſt ſet right for God by a principle of renovation. (2.) We cannot judge our ſelves upright, except uprightneſs be the ſetled frame and ſtanding bent of our hearts, *Pſal.* 119. 112, 117. It is not our integrity in one or two ſingle actions, but in the general courſe, and complex frame of our lives and ways, that will prove our integrity to God. (3.) Then may we reckon our ſelves upright, when the dread and awe of God's all-ſeeing eye keeps our hearts and ſteps from turning aſide to iniquity,

quity, *Gen.* 39. 9. 2 *Cor.* 2, 17. That's a ſincere and upright heart indeed, that finds it ſelf at all times and in all places overawed from ſin, by the eye of God upon him. (4.) That man's heart alſo is upright with God, who purely aims at and deſigns the glory of God, as the ſcope and end of his life and actions, who lives not to himſelf, neither acts ultimately and principally for himſelf, but lives to God as a perſon dedicated and devoted to him, *Rom.* 14. 7 (5.) That heart alſo is upright with God, which governs it ſelf and its ways by the directions and rules of the Word, *Pſal.* 119. 11, 24, 133. Happy is that Soul that finds ſuch evidences of Integrity in it ſelf, when it is brought to the trial of it at the Bar of the Word, *Heb.* 4. 12. at the Bar of Conſcience, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. at the Bar of Afflictions, *Pſal.* 119. 87. and at the Bar of ſtrong Temptations, *Gen.* 39. 9. The Eyes of the Lord ſhall run to and fro through the whole Earth, to ſhew himſelf ſtrong in the behalf of ſuch whoſe hearts are thus perfect towards him.

2. Another gracious qualification, intitling the Soul to God's ſpecial Protection in the worſt and moſt dangerous times, is the true humiliation for our own and other Mens ſins: *Go, ſet a mark,* ſaith God, *upon the foreheads of the men that ſigh and cry for all the abominations that be done in the midſt thereof* Ezek. 9. 4. Theſe that thus mourn, when others laugh, ſhall laugh when others mourn. *Lot* was the only Mourner in *Sodom*, and he was the only perſon exempted from deſtruction in the ruin and overthrow thereof, 2 *Pet.* 2. 7. That's a ſweet and bleſſed privilege mentioned in *Iſa.* 66. 10. *Rejoice ye with* Jeruſalem, *and be glad with her all ye that love her rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her, that ye may ſuck and be ſatisfied with the breaſts of her conſolations, that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.* Be contented, Chriſtians, to bear your part in *Sion's* groans and ſorrows, you may live to bear your part in her triumphs and ſongs of deliverance; it is an Argument of the true publickneſs and tenderneſs of your Spirits for preſent, and as ſweet a ſign as can appear upon your Souls, that you are reſerved for better days.

3. Righteouſneſs in doing, and meekneſs in ſuffering the Will of God, is another Mark or Note, diſtinguiſhing and deſcribing thoſe perſons whom God will preſerve in the evil day. You have both theſe together in *Zeph.* 2. 3. *Seek ye the Lord, all ye the meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgments, ſeek Righteouſneſs, ſeek Meekneſs; it may be ye ſhall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger.* The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their Prayers, 1 *Pet.* 3. 12. If righteouſneſs brings you into danger, the righteous God will take care of you in that danger, and bring you out of it. Oh! tis a ſingular comfort, when a man can ſay, *It was not my Sin,* but my Duty, that brought me into trouble; this Affliction met me in the path and way of my duty; 'tis for thy ſake, O Lord, that I am in trouble; as the Martyr that held up the Bible at the Stake, ſaying, *This hath brought me hither.*

To conclude, Manage all your Sufferings for Chriſt with Chriſtian Meekneſs: A Righteouſneſs muſt bring you into them, ſo Meekneſs muſt carry you through them; if you avenge your ſelves, you take the Cauſe out of God's hand into your own, but the meek Chriſtian leaves it to the Lord, and ſhall never have cauſe to repent of his ſo doing. If thou have an upright heart with God, a tender and mournful heart for ſin, and thou ſuffer with Meekneſs for Righteouſneſs-ſake, thou art one of thoſe Souls to whom that ſweet Voice is directed in my Text,

Come, my People, enter thou into thy Chambers, and ſhut thy doors about thee; hide thy ſelf, as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation be over-paſt.

ΠΑΑΝΗΛΟΓΙΑ.

A Succinct and Seaſonable DISCOURSE of the Occaſions, Cauſes, Nature, Riſe, Growth, and Remedies of MENTAL ERRORS.

THE Reverend Author of the enſuing Treatiſes, having in them explained and defended ſeveral Goſpel-Truths, unto which divers things in the Writings of the Reverend Dr. *Criſp* deceaſed, do ſeem very oppoſite; whereas ſome of us who ſubſcribed a Paper, the deſign whereof was only to teſtify, That we believed certain Writings of the Doctor's *never before publiſhed*, were faithfully tranſcribed by his Son, the Publiſher of them; which Paper is now, by the Bookſeller, prefixed to the whole Volume, containing a large Preface, which we never ſaw till after the Publication, together with all the Doctor's former Works that were *publiſhed many years before*; and are hereupon, by ſome weak People, miſunderſtood, as if by that Certificate, we intended an Approbation of all that is contained in that Volume. We declare, we had no ſuch Intention: As the Paper we ſubſcribed hath no word in it that gives any ſuch intimation: But are all well pleaſed theſe latter Writings are publiſh'd (in reference whereto we only certified our belief, which we fixedly retain, of the Publiſher's fidelity) as they contain many paſſages in them, that may in ſome meaſure remedy the hard and hurtful conſtruction that many expreſſions were more liable to *in the former*; whereof the Doctor ſeem'd apprehenſive himſelf, when in the beginning of his Diſcourſe, on *Tit.* 2. 11, 12. he ſpeaks thus: [*Beloved, I am jealous of you with an holy jealouſie,* 1 Cor. 11. 2, 3. *Leſt after the ſweet wooing of you in Chriſt's Name, that ye might be eſpouſed unto him; I ſay, I am jealous, and fear, leſt as the Serpent beguiled* Eve, *through his ſubtilty, namely, bewitching her to a preſumptuous licentious adventuring on God's gentleneſs, while ſhe taſted the forbidden Fruit; ſo your minds ſhould be corrupted from the ſimplicity that is in him, namely by preſuming too much upon him, and adventuring to conti-*

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me in Sin, in hope that Grace may abound. For the preventing of which dangerous miſcarriage, which hath been the dangerous lot of many Thouſands, I thought good to ſtep in with this Text, which I am perſuaded will prove a ſeaſonable warning to ſome at leaſt.] And this pious Caution of the Author herein, leſt he ſhould be miſunderſtood, gives us ſome grounds to believe, that he intended them not in the more exceptionable ſenſe. 'Tis beſt, if any unwary Reader receive hurt, that he receive his healing alſo from the ſame hand. And whereas a Paper was printed upon this occaſion, ſoon after the Publication of the Doctor's Works, we willingly adopt ſo much of it as is requiſite to our own preſent purpoſe, which is to this effect:

'Some who ſubſcribed this Certificate, ſaw only the Paper it ſelf, to which Subſcription was deſired; never having peruſed the Works of Dr. *Criſp*. The Certificate only concerned the Son, not the Father; and certified only concerning the Son, That they who ſhould ſubſcribe it, believed him in this, to deal truly; that he was not a *Falſarius*; that he would not ſay that was his Father's, which was not ſo; a Paper ſo ſober, ſo modeſt, was (*taken by it ſelf*) ſcarce refuſable by a Friend.

'The Son's Preface, ſome that ſubſcribed this Certificate, ſaw not, nor had any notice, or the leaſt imagination of its Contents, otherwiſe the part of a Friend had certainly been done, as well in adviſing againſt much of the Preface as in ſubſcribing the Certificate.

'For the Works of this Reverend Perſon themſelves, as it no way concern'd the ſubſcribing this Certificate, to know what they were; ſo from the opinion that went of the Author, among many good Men, That he was a Learned, Pious, Good Man, it was ſuppoſed they were likely to have in them many good and uſeful things; to which it was only needful to think them *his*, not *to think them perfect*.

'We may in ſome reſpect judge of Books as of Men, *i. e.* reckon, that though divers very valuable Men, have had remarkable failings; yet that upon the whole, 'tis better they have lived and been known in the World, than that they ſhould not have lived, or have lived obſcure.

'The Truth is (which we have often conſidered) that though the great Doctrines of Chriſtian Religion do make a moſt cohèrent, comely Scheme, which every one ſhould labour to comprehend and digeſt in his mind; yet when the Goſpel firſt becomes effectual for the changing mens hearts, 'tis by God's Bleſſing this or that paſſage which drops; the moſt diſcern not the ſeries and connection of Truths at firſt, and too little afterwards.

'Upon that view of Dr. *Criſp*'s Writings we have had ſince the Publication, we find there are many things ſaid in them, with that good ſavour, quickneſs, and ſpirit, as to be very apt to make good impreſſions upon men's hearts; and do judge, that being greatly affected with the Grace of God to Sinners himſelf, his Sermons did thereupon run much in that ſtrain. All our minds are little, and incomprehenſive; we cannot receive the weight and impreſſion of all neceſſary things at once, but with ſome inequality; ſo that when the Seal goes deeper in ſome part, 'tis the ſhallower in ſome others.

'If ſome parts of Dr. *Criſp*'s Works be more liable to exception, the danger of hurt thereby ſeems in ſome meaſure obviated *in ſome other*: As when he ſays, *p.* 46. *Vol.* 1. *Sanctification of Life, is an inſeparable Companion with the Juſtification of a Perſon by the Free Grace of Chriſt*: And Vol. 4. p. 93. *That in reſpect of the Rules of Righteouſneſs, or the Matter of Obedience, we are under the Law ſtill, or elſe we are Lawleſs, to live every Man as ſeems good in his own eyes, which I know no true Chriſtian does ſo much as think.*

'In like manner, whereas, *Vol.* 2. *Serm.* 15. *and perhaps elſewhere, the Doctor ſeems to be againſt evidencing our Juſtification and Union to Chriſt, by our Sanctification and new Obedience; we have the Truth of God in this matter plainly deliver'd by him.* Vol. 4. p. 36. *when he teacheth, that our Obedience is a comfortable evidence of our being in Chriſt; and on that, as well as on many accounts, neceſſary.*

'The difference between him and other good men, ſeems to lie not ſo much *in the things*, which the one or other of them believe, as about *their order* and *reference to one another*; where 'tis true, there may be very *material difference*: but we reckon, That notwithſtanding what is more controverſible in theſe Writings, there are much more *material things*, wherein they cannot but agree, and would have come much nearer each other, even in theſe things, if they did take ſome words or terms which come into uſe on the one or the other hand, *in the ſame ſenſe*; but when one uſes a word in *one ſenſe*, another uſes the ſame word (or underſtands it, being uſed) in quite *another ſenſe*, here ſeems a vaſt diſagreement, which proves at length to be verbal only, and really none at all: As let by *Condition*, be meant a *deſerving Cauſe*, (in which Caſe 'tis well known *Civilians* are not wont to take it) and the one ſide would never uſe it, concerning any good Act that can be done by us, or good Habit that is wrought in us, in order to our preſent acceptance with God, or final Salvation. Let be meant by it, ſomewhat, that by the conſtitution of the Goſpel-Covenant, and in the nature of the thing is *requiſite* to our preſent and eternal well-being, without the leaſt notion of deſert, but utmoſt abhorrence of any ſuch notion in this caſe, and the other ſide would as little refuſe it. But what need is there for contending at all about a *Law-Term*, about the proper or preſent uſe whereof, there is ſo little agreement between *them it ſeems beſt to ſerve*, and *them it offends*. Let it go, and they will well enough underſtand one another. Again, Let *Juſtification* be taken for that which is compleat, entire, and full, as it reſults at laſt from all its Cauſes and Concurrents, and on the one hand it would never be denied, that Chriſt's Righteouſneſs juſtifies us at the Bar of God in the Day of Judgment, *as the only deſerving Cauſe*; or affirmed, that our Faith, Repentance, Sincerity, do juſtifie us there, *as any Cauſe at all*. Let Juſtification be meant only of being juſtified in *this or that particular reſpect*; as for inſtance againſt *this particular Accuſation*, of never having been a Believer: and the honeſt miſtaken *Prefacer* would never have ſaid, O horrid! upon its being ſaid, Chriſt's Righteouſneſs doth not juſtifie us in this Caſe: For he very well knows Chriſt's Righteouſneſs will juſtifie no man that *never was a Believer*; but that which muſt immediately juſtifie him *againſt this particular Accuſation*, muſt be

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'proving, that he did ſincerely believe, which 'ſhews his intereſt in Chriſt's Righteouſneſs, which 'then is the only deſerving Cauſe of his full entire Juſtification.

'There is an Expreſſion in *Vol.* I. *p.* 46. *That Salvation is not the end of any good work we do*, which is like that of another; *we are to act from Life, not for Life*. Neither of which are to be *rigidly taken*, as 'tis likely they were never *meant* in the ſtrict ſenſe. For the former, this Reverend Author gives us himſelf the handle, for a gentle interpretation, in what he preſently ſubjoins, where he makes the *end of our good works to be the manifeſtation of our Obedience and Subjection; the ſetting forth the praiſe of the glory of the Grace of God*; which ſeems to imply, that he meant the foregoing negation in a comparative, not in an abſolute ſenſe; underſtanding the glory of God to be *more principal*; and ſo that by *End* he meant the very *ultimate end*: ſo for the other 'tis likely it was meant, that we ſhould not act or work *for* life *only*, without aiming and endeavouring, that we might come to work *from* life *alſo*.

'For it is not with any tolerable Charity ſuppoſable, that one would *deliberately ſay* the *one* or the *other* of theſe in the rigid ſenſe of the words; or that he would not, upon conſideration, preſently unſay it, being calmly reaſoned with. For it were in effect to *abandon Humane Nature*, and to ſin againſt a very Fundamental Law of our Creation, not to intend our own felicity; it were to make our firſt and moſt deeply Fundamental Duty, in one great eſſential branch of it, our ſin, *viz.* To *take the Lord for our God*: For *to take him for our God* moſt *eſſentially* includes our taking him for our *ſupream good*; which we all know is included in the notion of the *laſt end*; it were to make it unlawful to ſtrive againſt all Sin, and particularly againſt ſinful Averſion from God; wherein lies the very death of the Soul, or the ſum of its miſery; or to ſtrive after perfect conformity to God in holineſs, and the full fruition of him, wherein its final bleſſedneſs doth principally conſiſt.

'It were to teach us to violate the great Precepts of the Goſpel; *Repent, that your ſins may be blotted out---Strive to enter in at the Strait Gate---Work out your Salvation with fear and trembling*: To obliterate the Paterns and Precedents ſet before us in the Goſpel. *We have believed in Jeſus Chriſt, that we might be juſtified---I beat down my body, leſt I ſhould be a caſt-away---That thou mayeſt ſave thy ſelf, and them that hear thee.*

'It were to ſuppoſe one bound to do more for 'the Salvation of others, than our own Salvation. 'We are required to ſave others with Fear plucking them out of the Fire. Nay, we were not (by this rule ſtrictly underſtood) ſo much as to pray for our own Salvation; (which is a doing of ſomewhat) when no doubt, we are to pray for the ſucceſs of the Goſpel, to this purpoſe, on behalf of other men.

'Twere to make all the Threatnings of Eternal Death, and Promiſes of Eternal Life, we find in the Goſpel of our Bleſſed Lord uſeleſs, unleſs, as motives to ſhun the one, and obtain the other: For they can be motives no way but as the eſcaping of the former, and the attainment of the other have with us the place and conſideration of an end.

'It makes what is mentioned in the Scripture, as the Character and Commendation of the moſt eminent Saints, a fault; as of *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, &c. That *they ſought the better and Heavenly Country*; *and declared plainly* that they did ſo: which neceſſarily implies their making it their end.

'But let none be ſo harſh as to think of any good man, that he intended any thing of all this; if every paſſage that falls from us be ſtretch'd and tortur'd with utmoſt ſeverity, we ſhall find little to do beſides accuſing others, and defending our ſelves as long as we live.

A Spirit of Meekneſs and Love, will do more to our Common Peace, than all the Diſputations in the World.

Upon the whole, we are ſo well aſſured of the peaceful healing temper of the preſent Author of theſe Treatiſes, that we are perſuaded he deſigned ſuch a courſe of managing the Controverſies wherein he hath concerned himſelf, as not on the one hand to injure the memory of the Dead; and on the other to prevent hurt or danger to the Living.

Nor do we ſay thus much of him as if he ſought, or did need any Letters of Recommendation from us; but as counting this Teſtimony to Truth, and this expreſſion of reſpect to him a Debt; to the ſpontaneous payment whereof, nothing more was requiſite beſides ſuch a fair occaſion as the Providence of God hath now laid before us, inviting us hereunto.

John Howe, *Vin. Alſop*, *Nath. Mather*, *Increaſe Mather*, *John Turner*, *Rich. Bures*, *Tho. Powel.*

An Epiſtle to the Reader.

Candid Reader,

CEnſure not this Treatiſe of Errors, as an Error in my Prudentials, in ſending it forth at ſuch an improper time as this. I ſhould never ſpontaneouſly have awakened ſleeping Controverſies, after God's ſevere caſtigation of his people for them, and in the moſt proper and hopeful Seaſon for their Redintegration.

And beſide what I have formerly ſaid, I think fit here to add, That if the attaque had been general, and not ſo immediately and particularly upon that Poſt *or* Quarter *I was ſet to defend, I ſhould with* Elihu *have modeſtly waited till ſome abler and more skilful hand had undertaken the defence of this Cauſe.*

If ever I felt a temptation to envy the happineſs of my Brethren, it hath been whilſt I ſaw them quietly feeding their Flocks, and my ſelf forced to ſpend ſome part of my precious and moſt uſeful time (devoted to the ſame Service) in combating with unquiet and erring Brethren: But I ſee I muſt not be my own chuſer. Notwithſtanding, I hope, and am in ſome meaſure perſuaded, that publick benefit will redound to the Church from this irkſome Labour of mine. And that this ſtrife will ſpread no further, but the Malady *be cured by an* Antidote *growing in the very place where it began: And that the Chriſtian* Camp *will not take a general* Alarm *from ſuch a ſingle* Duel.

The Book now in thy Hands consisteth of Four parts, viz. 1. *A general Discourse of* the Causes and Cures of Errors, *very necessary at all times (especially at this time) for the reduction and establishment of seduced and staggering Christians; and nothing of that nature having occurred to my observation among the manifold Polemical Tracts that are extant, I thought it might be of some use to the Churches of Christ in such a vertiginous Age as we live in; and the blessing of the Lord go forth with it for benefit and establishment.*

2. *Next, thou hast here the Controversies moved by my Antagonist*, first *about the* Mosaick Law *complexly taken, which he boldly pronounces to be an* Adam's Covenant *of Works and* secondly *about* God's Covenant with Abraham, *Gen.* 17, *which he also makes the same with that God made with* Adam *in* Paradise: *and affirms Circumcision (expresly called a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith) to be the Seal of the said Covenant of Works first made with* Adam.

3. *Finding my Adversary in the pursuit of his design, running into many* Antinomian delirations, *to the reproach and damage of the Cause he contends for, I thought it necessary to take the principal Errors of* Antinomianism *into examination, especially at such a time as this, when they seem to spring afresh, to the hazard of God's Truth, and the Churches Peace; wherein I have dealt with becoming modesty and plainness, if haply I might be any way instrumental in my plain and home way of Argumentation, to detect the falsity and dangerous Nature of those notions which some good men have vented; and preserve the sounder part of the Church from so dangerous a contagion.*

4. *In the next place I think it necessary to advertise the Reader, That whereas in my first* Appendix *under that head of the* Conditionality *of the* New Covenant, *I have asserted Faith to be the Condition of it, and do acknowledge*, p. 246. *that the word* Condition *is variously used among* Jurists; *yet I do not use it in any sense, which implies or insinuates, that there is any such Condition in the New Covenant, as that in* Adam's *Covenant was, consisting in perfect, personal, and perpetual Obedience; or any thing in its own Nature meritorious of the benefits promised, or capable to be performed by us in our own strength; but plainly, that it be an act of ours (tho' done in God's strength) which must be necessarily done before we can be actually justified or saved; and so there is found in it the true suspending nature of a* Condition; *which is the thing I contend for, when I affirm, Faith is the condition of the New Covenant.*

How many senses soever may be given of this word Condition, *this is the determinate sense in which I use it throughout this Controversie. And whosoever denies the suspending Nature of Faith, with respect to actual Justification, pleads according to my understanding) for the actual Justification of Infidels. And thus I find a Condition defined by* Navar. Johan. Baptist. Petrus de Perus. *&c.* Conditio est Suspensio alicujus dispositionis tantisper dum aliquid futurum fiat. *And again,* Conditio est quidam futurus eventus, in quem dispositio suspenditur.

Once more, My Reader possibly may be stumbled at my calling Faith sometimes the Instrument, *and sometimes the* Condition *of our Justification, when there is so great a Controversie depending among Learned Men, with respect to the use of both those terms. I therefore desire the Reader to take notice, That I* dive *not into that Controversy here, much less presume to* determine *it; but finding both those Notions equally opposed by our* Antinomians, *who reject our actual Justification by Faith either way, and allow to Faith no other use in our actual Justification, but only to manifest to us what was done from Eternity; I do therefore use both those terms,* viz. *the* Conditionality *and* Instrumentality *of Faith, with respect unto our Justification, and shew in what sense those terms are useful in this Controversy, and are accommodate enough to the design and purpose for which I use them, how repugnant soever they are in that particular, wherein the Learned contend about the Use and Application of them.*

To be plain, when I say, Faith justifieth us as an Organ *or* Instrument; *my only meaning is, that it receives, or apprehends the Righteousness of Christ, by which we are justified; and so speaking to the* Quomodo, *or manner of our Justification, I say with the general Suffrage of Divines, we are justified instrumentally by Faith.*

But in our Controversy with the Antinomians, *where another different Question is moved about the* Quando, *or time of our actual Justification; there I affirm, that we are actually justified at the time of our believing, and not before; and this being the Act upon which our Justification is suspended, I call Faith the* Condition *of our Justification.*

This, I desire, may be observed lest in my use of both those terms, my Reader should think, either that I am not aware of the Controversy depending about those terms; or, that I do herein manifest the vacillancy of my Judgment, as if I leaned sometime to one side, and sometime to another. I speak not here, ad idem, *as they do in that Contest; but when I call it a* Condition *of Justification, my meaning is, that no Man is justified until he believe. And when I call it an* Instrument, *my meaning is, that it is the Righteousness of Christ apprehended by Faith, which doth justifie us when we believe. And so I find the Generality of our Divines calling Faith sometimes a Condition, and sometimes an Instrument of our Justification, as here I do.*

And if there be any Expression my Reader shall meet with, which is less accurate, and may be capable of another sense: I crave that Candor from him, that he interpret it according to this my declared Intention.

5. Lastly, *I have added to the former, a short, plain practical Sermon, to promote the Peace and Unity of the Churches of Christ, and to prevent their Relapse into past Follies.*

In all the Parts of this Discourse, I have sincerely aimed at the Purity and Peace of the Church of God; and he greatly mistakes, that takes me for a Man of Contention. 'Tis true, I am here contending with my Brethren, but pure necessity brought me in; and an unpleasing irksomness hath attended me through it, and an hearty desire, and serious motion for Peace amongst all the professed Members of Christ, shall close and finish it. Let all Litigations of this nature (at least in this Critical Juncture) be suspended by common Consent, since they waste our time, hinder our Communion, imbitter our Spirits, impoverish practical Godliness, grieve the Spirit of God, and good Men, make sport for our common Enemies, who warm their own Fingers at the Fire of our Contentions; and place more Trust in our dividing Lusts, than they do in their own feeble Arguments or castrated Penal Laws, to effect our Ruin.

It is my grief (the Lord knows) to see the delightful Communion the Saints once enjoyed, whilst they walked together under the same Ordinances of God, now dissolved in such a sad and scandalous Degree, by the Impressions of erroneous Opinions, made both upon their Heads and Hearts. I do therefore heartily join with Budæus *in his pious Wish,* * *That God would give his People as much Constancy in retaining the Truths they once received, as they had Joy and Comfort at their first Reception of them. I must on this occasion declare my just Jealousy, that the Non-improvement of our Baptismal*

* Utinam tam consertis manibus compertam comprehensamque veritatem semel retinere possemus quàm protinùs agnitam festivis oculis hilares exosculamur. Cove-

Covenant unto the great and ſolemn Ends thereof in our Mortification, Vivification, and regular Communion with the Church of Chriſt, into which Society we were matriculated by it, is at this day puniſhed upon Profeſſors in thoſe fiery Heats, and fierce Oppoſitions unto which God ſeemeth to have penally delivered us at this day.

For my own part, it is my fixed Reſolution to provoke no good Man if I can help it. But if their own intemperate Zeal ſhall provoke them, in purſuit of their Errors, to deſtroy the very Nature of God's Covenant of Grace with Abraham *and his Seed, and I have a plain call (as here I had) at once to defend God's Truths and Peoples Soul againſt them, I will earneſtly contend in the Cauſe of Truth, whilſt I can move my Tongue, or make uſe of the Pen of the Scribe.*

Reader, I ſhall appeal to thee, if thou be wiſe and impartial, Whether any man that underſtands the Covenant of God renewed with Abraham *(which is the grand Charter, by which we and our Children hold and enjoy the moſt invaluable Privileges) can endure to ſee it diſſolved and utterly deſtroyed, by making it an aboliſhing* Adam's *Covenant of Works; and ſtand by as an unconcerned Spectator, when challenged and provoked to ſpeak in defence there of.*

Is there any thing found in God's Covenant with Abraham, Gen. 17. *to make it an aboliſhed Covenant of Works, which doth not as injuriouſly bear upon, and ſtrike at the very life of the Covenant of Grace in the laſt and beſt Edition of it, under which the whole Church of God now ſtands? What is that thing (I would fain know) in God's Covenant with* Abraham? *It is the Promiſſory part of it,* I will be a God unto thee, and to thy Seed after thee, Gen. 17. 7. *God forbid: for the eſſential and ſweeteſt part of the New Covenant is contained in that Promiſe,* Jer. 31. 33. Heb. 8. 10. *Yet thou wilt find my* Antagoniſt *here forced to aſſert, God may become a Peoples God in a ſpecial manner by virtue of the aboliſhed Covenant of Works; and ſuch he makes this Covenant to be.*

Or does the Reſtipulation Abraham *and his were here required to make unto God, even* to walk before him, and be perfect; *doth this make it an* Adam's *Covevenant of Works? Surely no. For as God there requires perfection of* Abraham, *ſo Chriſt requires the ſame perfection of all New covenant Fœderates now,* Matth. 5. 48. Be ye perfect, as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect; *which is altogether as much as ever God required of* Abraham *and his, in* Gen. 17. 1. *Take perfection in what ſenſe you will, either for a* poſitive *Perfection, conſiſting in truth and ſincerity; or a* comparative *Perfection conſiſting in the growth and more eminent degrees of Grace; or a* ſuperlative *Perfection, which all New-covenant Fœderates ſtrive after here,* Phil. 3. 12, 13. *and ſhall certainly attain in Heaven,* Heb. 12. 23. *In this alſo the Covenant with* Abraham, *and with us are duly and ſubſtantially one and the ſame.*

Or doth my miſtaken Friend imagine, that God required this Perfection of Abraham, *and his, as in the Firſt Covenant he required it from* Adam *and all his?* viz. *to be performed and maintained in his own ſtrength, under penalty of the Curſe; but now though Chriſt command perfection, yet what duty lies in any command, anſwerable ſtrength for it lies in the Promiſe? Very well, and was it not ſo then? compare the Command,* Deut. 10. 16. Circumciſe therefore the fore-skins of your hearts, *with the anſwerable gracious Promiſe to enable them ſo to do,* Deut. 30. 6. The Lord thy God will circumciſe thy heart, and the heart of thy Seed, to love the Lord thy God.

Or laſtly, Did Circumciſion, the Sign and Seal added to Abraham's *Covenant, make it an* Adam's *Covenant of Works? That's equally impoſſible with the former: for no man, but ſuch a daring man as I am concerned with, will dare to ſay, that a* Seal of the Righteouſneſs of Faith (*as Circumciſion was,* Rom. 4. 11.) *can make the Covenant, to which it is affixed (and which I have ſhewn in all the other ſubſtantial parts, the very ſame with that we are now under) to become an* Adam's *Covenant of Works.*

Theſe things I have here ſuperadded, to leave as little as is poſſible behind me to be an occaſion of further trouble and contention. Let all ſtrife therefore in ſo plain a caſe be ended: Contentious Spirits are not the moſt excellent Spirits among Chriſtians. Fire (and ſo Contention) is more apt to catch in low built thatcht Cottages, than in high built Caſtles and Princely Palaces: the higher we go, ſtill the more peace. The higheſt Region is moſt ſedate and calm. Stars have the ſtrongeſt influence, when in conjunction. Angels (th' Legions) have no wars among them; and as willingly go down, as up the Ladder, without juſtling each other. And the Moſt High God is the God of Peace; let us alſo be the Children of Peace. And I do aſſure the Perſons with whom I contend, That whilſt they hold the head, and are tender of the Churches Peace, I can live in Charity with them here, and hope to live in glory with them hereafter.

I remain, Reader, thine and
the Truth's Friend,
John Flavell.

The INTRODUCTION.

FInding by ſad Experience, what I before juſtly feared, that *Errors* would be apt to ſpring up with Liberty (though the reſtraint of juſt Liberty, being a practical Error in Rulers, can never be the cure of *Mental Errors* in the Subjects;) I judged it neceſſary at this Seaſon to give a Succinct Account of the Riſe, Cauſes, and Remedies of ſeveral Miſtakes and Errors, under which even the Reformed Churches among us, as well as others, do groan at this Day.

I will not ſtay my Reader long upon the Etymology and Derivations of the Word. We all know that Etymologies are no Definitions: Yet becauſe they caſt ſome light upon the Nature of the thing we enquire after, it will not be loſt labour to obſerve, that this word *E R R O R* derives it ſelf from three Roots in the *Hebrew* Language.

(1.) The firſt word primitively ſignifies to deviate or decline from the true Scope or Path, as Unskilful Marks-Men, or Ignorant and Inadvertent Travellers uſe to do. The leaſt variation or turning aſide from the true Rule and Line, tho' it be but an Hairs breadth, preſently becomes an Error. We read, *Judg.* 20. 16. of 700 *Benjamites*, who could every one ſling Stones at an Hairs Breadth, and not miſs, לא יחטא *Heb.* and not err. This by a *Metaphor* is applied to the Mind or Judgment of Man; and denotes the warpings thereof from the ſtraight, perfect, divine Law or Rule, and is uſually tranſlated by the Word *Sin*.

חטא Chatta, a Scopo aberravit.

(2.) It is derived from another Word alſo, which ſignifies to wander in variable and uncertain Moti-

ons: You find it in the Title of the 7th *Pſalm*, *Shiggaion* of *David*, a wandring Song, or a Song of variable Notes and Tunes, higher and lower, ſharper and flatter. In both the former Derivations it ſeems to note ſimple Error, thro' meer Weakneſs and Ignorance. But then,

שגה Shaga.

(3.) In its Derivation from a third Root, it ſignifies not only to Err, but to cauſe others to Err alſo; and ſo ſignifies a Seducer or one that is active in leading others into a wrong way; and is applied in that ſenſe to the *Prophets* in *Iſrael*, who ſeduced the People, *Ezek.* 13. 10. The *Greek Verb* πλανάω takes in both theſe ſenſes, both to go aſtray, and when put Tranſitively, to lead or cauſe others to go aſtray with us. Hence is the word πλανήτης, *Planets* or wandring Stars; the Title given by the Apoſtle, *Jude ver.* 13. to the falſe Teachers and Seducers of his Time.

תעה Tagna in Hiph.

An Error then is any departure or deviation in our Opinions or Judgments from the perfect Rule of the Divine Law: And to this all Men by Nature are not only liable but inclinable. Indeed Man by Nature can do nothing elſe but Err, *Pſal.* 58. 3. *He goeth aſtray as ſoon as born*; makes not one true ſtep till renewed by Grace, and many falſe ones after his Renovation. The Life of the Holieſt Man is a *Book* with many *Errata*'s; but the whole *Edition* of a wicked Man's Life is but one continued Error; he that thinkshe cannot Err, manifeſtly Errs in ſo thinking. The *Pope*'s ſuppoſed and pretended *Infallibility* hath made him the great Deceiver of the World. A good Man may Err, but is willing to know his Error, and will not obſtinately maintain it, when he once plainly diſcerns it.

Error and Hereſy among other things differ in this; Hereſy is accompanied with pertinacy; and therefore the Heretick is αὐτοκατάκριτος, ſelf-condemned; his own Conſcience condemns him, whilſt Men labour in vain to convince him. He doth not formally and in terms condemn himſelf, but he doth ſo equivalently, whilſt he continues to own and maintain Doctrines and Opinions which he finds himſelf unable to defend againſt the evidence of Truth. Humane frailty may lead a Man into the firſt, but Deviliſh Pride fixes him in the laſt.

The Word of God, which is our Rule, muſt therefore be the only Teſt and Touchſtone to try and diſcover Errors; for *Regula eſt index ſui & obliqui*. 'Tis not enough to convince a Man of Error, that his Judgment differs from other Mens; you muſt bring it to the Word, and try how it agrees or diſagrees therewith; elſe he that charges another with Error, may be found in as great or greater an Error himſelf. None are more diſpoſed eaſily to receive and tenaciouſly to defend Errors, than thoſe who are the *Anteſignani*, Heads or Leaders of Erroneous Sects, eſpecially after they have fought in Defence of bad Cauſes, and deeply engaged their Reputation.

The following Diſcourſe juſtly entitles it ſelf, *A BLOW AT THE ROOT*: And tho' you will here find the Roots of many Errors laid bare and open; which comparatively are of far different degrees of Danger and Malignity; which I here mention together, many of them ſpringing from the ſame Root: Yet I am far from cenſuring them alike, nor would I have any that are concerned in leſſer Errors be exaſperated, becauſe their leſſer Miſtakes are mentioned with greater and more pernicious ones; this Candor I not only intreat, but juſtly challenge from my Reader.

And becauſe there are many general and very uſeful *Obſervations* about Errors, which will not ſo conveniently come under the Laws of that Method which governs the main part of this Diſcourſe, *viz.* the *CAUSES* and *CURES* of *Error*: I have therefore ſorted them by themſelves, and premiſed them to the following Part in Twenty *Obſervations* next enſuing.

Twenty General OBSERVATIONS *about the Riſe and Increaſe of the* Errors *of the Times.*

Firſt Obſervation.

TRuth is the proper Object, the natural and pleaſant Food of the Underſtanding, *Job* 12. 11. *Doth not the Ear* (that is, the Underſtanding by the Ear) *try words, as the Mouth taſteth Meat?* Knowledge is the Aſſimilation of the Underſtanding to the Truths received by it. Nothing is more natural to Man, than a deſire to know: Knowledge never cloys the Mind, as Food doth the natural Appetite; but as the one increaſeth, the other is proportionably ſharpened and provoked. The Minds of all (that are not wholly immers'd in Senſuality) ſpend their Strength in the laborious ſearch and purſuit of Truth. Sometimes climbing up from the Effects to the Cauſes, and then deſcending again from the Cauſes to the Effects; and all to diſcover Truth. Fervent Prayer, ſedulous Study, fixed Meditations, are the labours of inquiſitive Souls after Truth. All the Objections and Counter-Arguments the Mind meets in its way, are but the Pauſes and Heſitations of a bivious Soul, not able to determine whether Truth lies upon this ſide, or upon that.

Anſwerable to the ſharpneſs of the Mind's Appetite, is the fine Edge of Pleaſure and Delight it feels in the Diſcovery and Acquiſition of Truth. When it hath rack'd and tortured it ſelf upon knotty *Problems*, and at laſt diſcovered the Truth it ſought for; with what Joy doth the Soul dilate it ſelf, and run (as it were with open Arms) to claſp and welcome it?

The Underſtanding of Man at firſt was perſpicacious and clear, all Truths lay obvious in their comely order and raviſhing beauty before it: *God made Man upright*, Eccl. 7. 29. this Rectitude of his Mind conſiſted in Light and Knowledge, as appears by the preſcribed Method of his Recovery, *Col.* 3. 10. *Renewed in Knowledge, after the Image of him that created him.* Truth in the Mind, or the Minds union with Truth, being part of the Divine Image in Man, diſcovers to us the Sin and Miſchief of Error, which is a defacing (ſo far as it prevails) of the Image of God.

No ſooner was Man created, but by the exerciſe of Knowledge he ſoon diſcovered God's Image in

in him; and by his Ambition after more, loſt what he had. So that now there is an hazineſs or cloud ſpread over Truth by Ignorance and Error, the ſad effects of the Fall.

Second Obſervation. Of Knowledge there are divers ſorts and kinds; ſome is *Humane*, and ſome *Divine*; ſome *Speculative*, and ſome *Practical*; ſome *Ingrafted*, as the Notions of *Morality*, and ſome *Acquired* by painful ſearch and ſtudy: But of all Knowledge none like that Divine and Supernatural Knowledge of ſaving Truths revealed by Chriſt in the Scriptures; from whence ariſeth the different degrees both of the ſinfulneſs and danger of *Errors*; thoſe Errors being always the worſt, which are committed againſt the moſt important Truths revealed in the Goſpel.

Theſe Truths lie infolded either in the plain words, or evident and neceſſary Conſequences from the words of the Holy Scriptures; Scripture-Conſequences are of great uſe for the Refutation of Errors; it was by a Scripture-Conſequence, that Chriſt ſucceſsfully proved the *Reſurrection* againſt the *Sadduces*, *Matth.* 22. The *Arrians* and other *Hereticks* rejected conſequential Proofs, and required the expreſs words of Scripture only, hoping that way to defend and ſecure their Errors againſt the Arguments and Aſſaults of the *Orthodox*.

Some think that reaſon and natural light is abundantly ſufficient for the direction of Life; but certainly nothing is more neceſſary to us for that end, than the written Word; for though the remains of natural Light have their place and uſe, in directing us about natural and earthly things; yet they are utterly inſufficient to guide us in ſpiritual and heavenly things, 1 Cor 2. 14. *The natural Man receiveth not the things of God*, &c. Eph. 5. 8. *Once were ye darkneſs, νῦν δὲ φῶς ἐν κυρίῳ, now are ye light in the Lord*, i. e. by a beam of heavenly light ſhining from the Spirit of Chriſt, through the written Word, into your Minds or Underſtandings.

'Tis the written word which ſhines upon the path of our Duty, *Pſal.* 119. 105. the Scriptures of the *Old* and *New Teſtament* do jointly make the ſolid Foundation of a Chriſtian's Faith. Hence, *Eph.* 2. 20. we are ſaid to be built upon the Foundation of the *Apoſtles* and *Prophets*. We are bound therefore to honour *Old Teſtament* Scriptures, as well as *New*, they being part of the Divine Canon; and muſt not ſcruple to admit them as ſufficient and authentick Proofs, for the confirmation of Truths, and refutation of Errors. Chriſt referr'd the People to them, *John* 5. 39. and *Paul* Preached and Diſputed from them, *Acts* 26. 22.

Third Obſervation. *Unto the Attainment of Divine Knowledge out of the Scriptures, ſome things are naturally, yet leſs principally requiſite in the Subject; and ſomething abſolutely and principally neceſſary.*

The natural Qualifications deſirable in the Subject, are clearneſs of Apprehenſion, ſolidity of Judgment, and fidelity of Retention. Theſe are deſirable requiſites to make the Underſtanding ſuſceptible of Knowledge; but the irradiation of the Mind, by the Spirit of God, is principally neceſſary, *John* 16. 13. *He ſhall guide you into all Truth*: The cleareſt and moſt comfortable light he giveth to Men, is in the way of Sanctification, called the teachings of the Anointing, 1 *John* 2. 27.

When this ſpiritual ſanctifying light ſhines upon a Mind, naturally enriched and qualified with the three forementioned requiſites, that Mind excels others in the riches of knowledge. And yet the teachings of the Spirit in the way of Sanctification, do very much ſupply and recompence the defects and weakneſſes of the forementioned qualifications. Whence two things are highly remarkable:

1. That men of great abilities of Nature, clear apprehenſions in natural things, ſtrong Judgments, and tenacious Memories, do not only frequently fall into groſs Errors and damnable *Hereſies* themſelves; but become *Hereſiarchs*, or Heads of erroneous Factions, drawing multitudes into the ſame Sin and Miſery with themſelves; as *Arrius*, *Socinus*, *Pelagius*, *Bellarmin*, and multitudes of others have done.

And Secondly, It is no leſs remarkable, that men of weaker parts, but Babes in compariſon, through the Sanctification and Direction of the Spirit, for which they have humbly waited at his feet in Prayer, have not only been directed and guided by him into the Truth, but ſo confirmed and fixed therein, that they have been kept ſound in their Judgments in times of abounding Errors, and firm in their adherence to it in days of fierceſt Perſecution. How men of excellent natural Parts have been blinded, and men of weak natural Parts illuminated; ſee 1 *Cor.* 1. 26, 27. *Matth.* 11. 25.

Fourth Obſervation. *Among the manifold impediments to the obtaining of true Knowledge, and ſetling the mind in the Truth and Faith of the Goſpel, theſe Three are of ſpecial remark and conſideration*, viz. *Ignorance*, *Curioſity*, *and Error*.

Ignorance ſlights it, or deſpairs of attaining it. Truth falls into contempt among the ignorant, from ſluggiſhneſs and apprehenſion of the difficulties that lie in the way to it, *Prov.* 24. 7. *Wiſdom is too high for a fool*. *Curioſity* runs beſide or beyond it. This Pride and Wantonneſs of the mind puffs it up with a vain conceit, that it is not only able to penetrate the deepeſt Myſteries revealed in the Scripture, but even unrevealed ſecrets alſo, *Col.* 2. 18. *intruding into thoſe things which he hath not ſeen, vainly puffed up by his fleſhly mind.* But *Error* militates directly againſt it, contradicts and oppoſeth Truth, eſpecially when an Error is maintained by Pride againſt inward convictions, or means of better information. 'Tis bad to maintain an Error for want of light; but abundantly worſe to maintain it againſt light. This is ſuch an affront to the Spirit of God, as he uſually puniſhes with Penal Ignorance, and gives them up to a Spirit of Error.

Fifth Obſervation. *Error is binding upon the Conſcience, as well as Truth; and altogether as much, and ſometimes more influential upon the Affections and Paſſions, as Truth is.*

For it preſents not it ſelf to the Soul in its own name and nature, as *Error*; but in the name and dreſs of *Truth*; and under that notion binds the Conſcience, and vigorouſly influences the paſſions and affections; and then being more indulgent to Luſt than Truth is, it is for that ſo much the more embraced and hugg'd by the deceived Soul, *Acts* 22. 4, 5. The heat that Error puts the Soul into, differs from Religious Zeal, as a *Feveriſh* doth from a *Natural* heat, which is not indeed ſo benign and agreeable, but much more fervent and ſcorching. A mind under the power of Error, is reſtleſs and impatient to propagate its Errors to others, and theſe heats prey upon, and eat up the vital Spirits and Powers of Religion.

Sixth

Sixth Obſervation. *'Tis exceeding difficult to get out Error, when once it is imbib'd, and hath rooted it ſelf by an open profeſſion.*

Errors, like ſome ſorts of Weeds, having once ſeeded in a Field or Garden, 'tis ſcarce poſſible to ſubdue and deſtroy them, eſpecially if they be hereditary Errors, or have grown up with us from our youth; *à teneris aſſueſcere multum eſt*, ſaith *Seneca*; 'tis a great advantage to Truth or Error, to have an early and long poſſeſſion of the mind. The *Phariſees* held many erroneous opinions about the *Law*, as appears by their corruptive *Commentaries* upon it, refuted by Chriſt, *Matth.* 5. but did he root them out of their Heads and Hearts thereby? No, no; they ſooner rid him out of the World. The *Sadduces* held a moſt dangerous Error about the *Reſurrection*; Chriſt diſputed with them to the admiration of others; and proved it clearly againſt them; and yet we find the Error remaining long after Chriſt's Death, 2 *Tim.* 2. 18. The *Apoſtles* themſelves had their minds tinctured with this Error, That Chriſt ſhould be outwardly great and magnificent in the World, and raiſe his Followers to great Honours and Preferments amongſt men: Chriſt plainly told them it was their Miſtake and Error; for the Son of man came not to be miniſtred unto, but to miniſter; yet this did not rid their minds of the Error; it ſtuck faſt in them, even till his Aſcenſion to Heaven. O how hard is it to clear the heart of a good man once leaven'd with Error! and much more hard to ſeparate it from a wicked man. *

* *I am perſuaded* (ſaith Mr. Gurnal) *ſome men take more pains to furniſh themſelves with Arguments to defend ſome Error they have taken up, than they do for the moſt ſaving Truths in the Bible.* Auſtin *ſaid, when he was a* Manichæan, Non Tu eras, ſed Error meus erat Deus meus; *Thou, O Lord, wert not, but my Error was my God.* Gurnal's Chriſtian Armour, *part* 1. *page* 36.

Some have choſe rather to die, than to part with their darling Errors, and Soul-damning Hereſies. I have read (ſaith Mr. *Bridges*) of a great *Atheiſt*, that was burnt at *Paris* for blaſpheming Chriſt, held faſt his Atheiſtical Opinions till he came to the very Stake; boaſted to the *Prieſts* and *Fryars* that followed him, how much more confidently he went to ſacrifice his Life in the ſtrength of reaſon, under which he ſuffered, than Chriſt himſelf did; but when he began to feel Torments indeed, then he roared and raged to the purpoſe. *Vidi ego hominem*, ſaith the *Author*; in his Life he was Looſe; in his Impriſonments, Sullen; and at his Death, Mad with the Horrors of Conſcience.

Some indeed have recovered the ſoundneſs of their Judgments, after deep corruptions by dangerous Errors. *Auſtin* was a *Manichee*, and fully recovered from it. So have many more; and yet multitudes hold them faſt even to death, and nothing but the Fire can reveal their Work, and diſcover what is Gold, and what is Straw and Stubble.

Seventh Obſervation. It deſerves a Remark, *That Men are not ſo circumſpect and jealous of the corruption of their Minds by Errors, as they are of their Bodies in times of Contagion; or of their Lives with reſpect to groſs Immoralities.*

Spiritual dangers affect us leſs than corporeal; and intellectual evils leſs than moral. Whether this be the effect of *Hypocriſie*, the Errors of the Mind being more-ſecret and inviſible than thoſe of the Converſation, God only knows, Man cannot poſitively determine.

Or whether it be the effect of *Ignorance*, that Men think there is leſs ſin and danger in the one than in the other; not conſidering, that an *Apoplexy* ſeizing the Head, is every way as mortal as a *Sword* piercing the Body: And that a *Vertigo* will as much unfit a Man for ſervice, as an *Ague* or *Fever*: The Apoſtle in 1 *Pet.* 2. 1. calls them αἱρέσεις ἀπωλείας, damnable Hereſies, or Hereſies of Deſtruction. An Error in the Mind may be as damning and deſtructive to the Soul, as an Error of Immorality or Prophaneneſs in the Life.

Or whether it may come to paſs from ſome remains of fear and tenderneſs in the Conſcience, which forbids Men to reduce their erroneous Principles into Practice; there lying under many confident Errors in the Mind a ſecret Jealouſie, which we call *formido oppoſiti*, which will not ſuffer them to act to the full height of their profeſſed Opinions. *Auſtin* gives this Character even of *Pelagius* himſelf, *Retract. lib.* 2. *cap.* 33. *Nomen Pelagii non ſine laude aliqua poſui, quia vita ejus a multis prædicabatur*: I have not mentioned (*ſaith he*) the name of that Man, without ſome praiſe, becauſe his Life was famed by many. And of *Swinkfeldius* it is ſaid, *Caput regulatum illi defuit, cor bonum non defuit*: His Heart was much more regular than his Head. Yet this falls out but rarely in the World; for looſe Principles naturally run into looſe Practices; and the Errors of the Head into the Immoralities of Life.

Eighth Obſervation. *It is a great Judgment of God, to be given over to an erroneous Mind.*

For the Underſtanding being the leading Faculty, as that guides, the other Powers and Affections of the Soul follow, as *Horſes* in a *Team* follow the *Fore-horſe*. Now how ſad and dangerous a thing is this, for *Satan* to ride the *Fore-horſe*, and guide that that is to guide the Life of Man? That's a dreadful, ſpiritual, judicial ſtroke of God, which we read of, *Rom.* 1. 26. παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ Θεὸς εἰς πάθη ἀτιμίας; God by a penal Tradition ſuffered them to run into the Dregs of Immorality, and pollutions of Life; and that becauſe they abuſed their Light, and became vain in their Imaginations, *ver.* 21.

Wild whimſies and fancies in the Head, uſually miſlead Men into the puddle and mire of Prophaneneſs, and then 'tis commonly obſerved God ſets ſome viſible Mark of his Diſpleaſure upon them; eſpecially the *Hereſiarchs*, or Ring-leaders in Error. *Neſtorius* his Tongue was conſumed by Worms. *Cerinthus* his Brains knock'd out by the Fall of an Houſe. *Montanus* hang'd himſelf: It were eaſie to inſtance in multitudes of others, whom the viſible hand of God hath marked for a warning to others; but uſually the ſpiritual Errors of the Mind are followed with a conſumption and decay of Religion in the Soul. If Grace be in the Heart, where Error ſways its Scepter in the Head, yet uſually there it languiſhes and withers. They may miſtake their *Dropſie* for growth and flouriſhing, and think themſelves to be more ſpiritual, becauſe more airy and notional; but if Men would judge themſelves impartially, they will certainly find that the Seeds of Grace thrive not in the Heart, when ſhaded and over-dropt by an erroneous Head.

Ninth Obſervation. *'Tis a pernicious Evil, to advance a meer Opinion into the place and ſeat of an Article of Faith; and to lay as great a ſtreſs upon it, as they ought to do upon the moſt clear and fundamental Point.* To be as much concerned for a *Tile* upon the Roof, as for the *Corner-ſtone*, which unites the Walls, and ſuſtains the Building. Opinion

Opinion (as one truly ſaith) is but Reaſon's Projector, and the Spy of Truth: It makes in its fulleſt diſcovery no more than the dawning and twilight of Knowledge; and yet I know not how it comes to paſs, but ſo it is, that this Idol of the Mind holds ſuch a ſway and empire over all we hold, as if it were all the day we had. Matters of meer Opinion, are every where cried up by ſome *Erroriſts*, for *Mathematical* Demonſtration, and Articles of Faith, written with a Sun-beam; worſhipping the Fancies and Creatures of their own Minds, more than God; and putting more truſt in their ill-founded Opinions, than in the ſurer word of Prophecy. Much like that *Humoriſt* that would not truſt day-light, but kept his *Candle* ſtill burning by him; becauſe (ſaid he) this is not as ſubject to *Eclipſes*, as the Sun is.

And what more frequent, when Controverſies grow fervent, than for thoſe that maintain the Error, to boaſt every ſilly Argument to be a *Demonſtration*; to upbraid and pity the blindneſs and dulneſs of their Oppoſers, as Men that ſhut their Eyes againſt Sun-beams; yea, ſometimes to draw their preſumptuous Cenſures thro' the very Hearts of their Oppoſers, and to inſinuate, that they muſt needs hold the Truths of God in Unrighteouſneſs, ſin againſt their Knowledge, and that nothing keeps them from coming over to them, but Pride, Shame, or ſome worldly Intereſt? What a complicated Evil is here! Here's a proud exalting of our own Opinions, and an immodeſt impoſing on the Minds of others, more clear and ſound than our own, and a dangerous Uſurpation of God's Prerogative in judging the Hearts and Ends of our Brethren.

Tenth Obſervation. *Error being conſcious to its ſelf of its own weakneſs, and the ſtrong aſſaults that will be made upon it, evermore labours to defend and ſecure it ſelf under the wings of Antiquity, Reaſon, Scripture, and high Pretenſions to Reformation and Piety.*

Antiquity is a venerable word, but ill uſed, when made a cloak for Error. Truth muſt needs be elder than Error, as the Rule muſt neceſſarily be, before the aberration from it. The gray Hairs of Opinions are then only Beauty, and a Crown, when found in the way of Righteouſneſs. *Copper* (ſaith Learned *Du Moulin*) will never become Gold by Age. A Lye will be a Lye, let it be never ſo ancient. We diſpute not by Years, but by Reaſons drawn from Scripture. That which is now call'd an Ancient Opinion, if it be not a true Opinion, was once but a new Error. When you can tell us, how many Years are required to turn an Error into Truth, then we will give more heed to *Antiquity*, when preſs'd in the Service of Error, than we now think due to it.

If *Antiquity* will not do, *Reaſon* ſhall be preſs'd to ſerve Error's turn at a dead lift; and indeed the *Pencil* of Reaſon can lay curious Colours upon rotten *Timber*, and varniſh over erroneous Principles, with fair and plauſible Pretences. What expert Artiſts have the *Socinians* proved themſelves in this matter? But becauſe Men are bound to ſubmit human Authority and reaſon to Divine Revelation, both muſt give way and ſtrike ſail to the Written Word.

Hence it comes to paſs, that the great *Patrons* and *Factors* for Error, do above all things labour to gain Countenance to their Errors from the Written Word; and to this end they manifeſtly wreſt and rack the Scriptures to make them ſubſervient to their Opinions; not impartially ſtudying the Scriptures firſt, and forming their Notions and Opinions according to them; but they bring their erroneous Opinions to the Scriptures, and then with all imaginable Art and Sophiſtry wire-draw and force the Scriptures to countenance and legitimate their Opinions. †

† Cum unaquæque *Hæreſis* ſui commenti parentem habeat Diabolum, ac pudore tàm exoſi nominis tenetur; pulcherrimum, & quod ſuper omnia eſt, nomen Salvatoris profitetur, Scripturarumque dictionibus amicitur, *Athanaſ. contra Arian.*

But becauſe Pretences of *Piety* and * *Reformation* are the ſtrokes that give life to the Face of this Idol, and give it the neareſt reſemblance unto Truth, theſe therefore never fail to be made uſe of, and zealouſly profeſſed in the favour of Error, though there be little of either many times to be found in their Perſons, and nothing at all in the Doctrines that lay claim to it.

* *Take heed* (ſaith one) *that when Zeal for Reformation knocks at the Door, ſome new Errors ſtep not in with it, which will as much need an after Reformation.*

Eleventh Obſervation: *God in all Ages in his tender care for his Churches and Truths, hath ſtill qualified and excited his Servants for the defence of his precious Truths, againſt the Errors and Hereſies that have ſucceſſively aſſaulted them.*

As Providence is obſerved in every *Climate* and *Iſland* of the World to have provided *Antidotes* againſt the poiſonous *Plants* and *Animals* of the Country; and the one is never far from the other: So is the care of his Providence much more conſpicuous in the caſe now before us. When, or whereſoever venomous *Errors* and deadly *Hereſies* do ariſe, he hath his Servants at hand with *Antidotes* againſt them.

When *Arius*, that cunning and deadly Enemy to the Deity of Chriſt, ſtruck at the very Heart of our Religion, Faith, and Comfort; a Man of ſubtil Parts and blameleſs Life, which made his Hereſie much the more ſpreading and taking; the Lord had his well-furniſhed *Athanaſius* in a readineſs to reſiſt and confound him. And as he had his *Athanaſius* to defend the Deity of *Chriſt*; ſo he wanted not his *Baſil* to defend the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit againſt *Macedonius*.

So when *Pelagius* was buſily advancing *Free-will* into the Throne of *Free-grace*, Providence wanted not its Mallet in Learned and Ingenious *Auguſtin*, to break him and his Idol to pieces: And it is highly remarkable (as the Learned Dr. *Hill* obſerves) that *Auguſtin* was born in *Africa* the ſame Day that *Pelagius* was born in *Britain*.

When *Goteſchalchus* publiſhed his dangerous Doctrine about *Predeſtination*, the Lord drew forth *Hincmarus* to detect and confure that Error, by evincing clearly, that God's Predeſtination forces no Man to Sin.

So from the beginning and firſt riſe of *Popery*, that center and ſink of Errors, we have a large Catalogue of the Learned and Famous Witneſſes, which in all Ages have faithfully reſiſted and oppoſed it; and when notwithſtanding all, it had even over-run *Europe* like a rapid Torrent, or rather Inundation of the *Ocean*: And *Germany* was brought to that paſs, that if the *Pope* had but commanded it, they would have eaten Graſs or Hay *more pecudum*. Then did the Lord bring forth invincible *Luther*, and with him a Troop of Learned Champions, into the Field againſt him; ſince which time the Cauſe of *Popery* is become deſperate.

Thus

Thus the care of Providence in all Ages hath been as much diſplayed in protecting the Church againſt the dangers that aroſe from falſe Brethren within it, as from avowed perſecuting Enemies without it; and had it not been ſo, the rank Weeds of Hereſies and Errors had long ſince overtopt and choaked the Corn, and made the Church a barren Field.

Twelfth Obſervation. *The want of a modeſt Suſpicion, and juſt reflection, gives both confidence and growth to Erroneous Principles.*

If Matters of meer Opinion were kept in their proper place, under the careful guard of Suſpicion; they would not make that buſtle and confuſion in the Churches, they have done, and do at this Day.

'Tis confeſſed, that all Truths are not Matters of meer Opinion; neither are all Opinions of equal weight and value; and therefore not to be left hanging in an *equipondious Sceptiſciſm*: And yet it is as true, that Matters of Opinion ought carefully to be ſorted from Matters of Faith, and to be kept in their own Rank and claſs, as things doubtful, *quibus poteſt ſubeſſe falſum*; whilſt Matters of Faith clearly revealed, are to ſtand upon their own ſure and firm *Baſis*. The former, *viz.* Matters of meer Opinion, we are ſo to hold, as upon clearer light to be ready to part with them, and give them up into the Hands of Truth. The other, *viz.* Matters of Faith, we are to hold with Reſolutions to live and die by them.

What is Opinion, but the wavering of the underſtanding betwixt probable Arguments, for and againſt a point of Doctrine? So that it's rather an inclination, than an aſſertion, as being accompanied with Fear, Floating, and Inconſtancy. In ſuch caſes there ſhould be a due Conceſſion and Allowance of other Mens Opinions to them, and why not, whilſt they offer as fair for the Truth as we? And haply their Parts, Helps, and Induſtries, are not inferiour to ours, it may be beyond them, and we may diſcern in them as much tenderneſs of Conſcience, and fear of Sin as in our ſelves. In this caſe a little more modeſt Suſpicion in our Opinions, would do the Church a great deal of right; and that which ſhould prevail with all modeſt perſons to exerciſe it, is the juſt reflection they may make upon their own former confident miſtakes.

Thirteenth Obſervation. *There is a remarkable involution or concatenatiton of Errors, one linking in, and drawing another after.*

Amongſt all Erroneous *Sects*, there is ſtill ſome πρῶτον ψεῦδος, ſome *Helena*, for whoſe ſake the war againſt Truth is commenced; and the other leſſer Errors are preſs'd for the ſake and ſervice of this leading darling Error. As we ſee the whole * Troop of *Indulgences, Bulls, Maſſes, Pilgrimages, Purgatory*, with multitudes more, flow from, and are preſs'd into the Service of the *Pope*'s *Supremacy* and *Infallibility*. So in other *Sects*, men are forced to entertain many other Errors, which, in themſelves conſidered, they have no great kindneſs for; but they are neceſſitated to entertain them in defence of that great, leading darling Opinion they firſt eſpouſed.

* Πρώτου Ψεύδος R. Eccleſiæ ſubjicienda eſſe omnia ſummo judicio & tribunali Eccleſiæ, cui præeſt Papa, &c. indè conficitur immotas habendas eſſe traditiones omnes R. Eccleſiæ, dogmata omnia decreta ſeu Pontificum ſeu Conciliorum. *Fred. Spanhem. Elench. Controv.* p. 51.

Thoſe that cry up and trumpet abroad the Sovereign Power of *Free-will*, even without the preventing Grace of God, enabling Men to ſupernatural Works, as if the *Will* alone had eſcaped all damage by the Fall, and *Adam* had not ſinned in that noble Virgin-faculty. To defend this *Idol*, which is the πρῶτον ψεῦδος, they are forced to oppugn and deny ſeveral other great and weighty Truths, as particular eternal Election, the certainty of the Saints Perſeverance, the neceſſity of preventing Grace in Converſion; which Errors are but the Outworks raiſed in defence of that Idol.

So in the *Baptiſmal Controverſy*, Men would never have adventured to deny God's *Covenant* with *Abraham*, to be a *Covenant* of Grace; or to aſſert the *Ceremonial Law*, ſo full of Chriſt, to be an *Adam*'s *Covenant* of Works; and *Circumciſion*, expreſly called *the Seal of the Righteouſneſs of Faith*, to be the Condition of *Adam*'s *Covenant*. Much leſs would they place all the elect of God in *Iſrael*, at one and the ſame time, under the ſevereſt Curſe and Rigour of the *Law*, and under the pure *Covenant* of *Grace*, were they not forced into theſe Errors and Abſurdities by dint of Argument, in defence of their darling Opinion.

Fourteenth Obſervation. *Errors abound moſt, and ſpring faſteſt in the times of the Churches Peace, Liberty, and outward Proſperity under Indulgent Rulers.* * *Arrianiſm* ſprang up under *Conſtantine*'s mild Government.

* *Arrius Alexandrinus.* Hæreſin inſanam incepit Alexandriæ ſub annum Domini 324, ut *Euſebius* annotavit, Anno Impérii Conſtantini 15.

Chriſtian benevolent *Rulers* are choice Mercies and Bleſſings to the Church. Such as rule over men in the fear of God, are to the Church as well as Civil State, *like the light of the morning, when the Sun ariſeth, even a morning without Clouds, as the tender Graſs ſpringing out the Earth by clear ſhining after rain*, 2 Sam. 23. 4.

But this as well as other mercies, is liable to abuſe; and under the influences of indulgent Governours, Error as well as Truth, ſpring up Flowers, and Seeds. Perſecution gives check to the wantonneſs of Mens Opinions, and finds them other and better work to do. *Caterpillars* and *Locuſts* are ſwept away by the bitter *East-winds*, but ſwarm in *Halcyon* days, and fall upon every green thing. So that the Church rides in this reſpect more ſafely in the ſtormy *Sea*, than in the calm *Harbour*. Peace and Proſperity is apt to caſt its Watchmen into a ſleep, and whilſt they ſleep, the envious one ſoweth *Tares*, Matth. 13. 25.

'Twas under *Conſtantine*'s benign Government that Poiſon was poured out into the Churches. The abuſe of ſuch an excellent mercy provokes the Lord to cut it ſhort, and cauſe the Clouds to gather again after the Rain. We have found it ſo once again (alas! that I muſt ſay again,) in this wanton and fooliſh Nation. Profeſſors could live quietly together, Converſe, Faſt, and Pray in a Chriſtian manner together under common Calamities and Dangers; Differences in Opinion were ſuſpended by conſent. But no ſooner do we feel a warm Sun-blaſt of Liberty and Peace, but it revives and heats our dividing Luſts and Corruptions, inſtead of our Graces. The Sheep of Chriſt fight with each other, though their furious puſhing one at another is known to preſage a change of Weather.

Fifteenth

fteenth Obſervation. *Errors in the tender bud and firſt ſpring of them, are comparatively ſhy and modeſt, to what they prove afterwards, when they have ſpread and rooted themſelves into the Minds of Multitudes, and think it time to ſet up and juſtle for themſelves in the World* *.

* *Eunomius* hæreſin ſuam (communicato Conſilio cum Eudoxio) aliquandiù occultè & intricatè ac perplexè ſparſit; tandem animo ſumpto, quæ hæreticè ſentiret, in cœtibus publicis palam oſtendit. *Theodoret.* lib. 2. cap. 29.

They uſually begin in modeſt Scruples, conſcientious Doubts and Queries. But having once gotten many Abetters, and amongſt them ſome that have ſubtilty and ability to plead and diſpute their Cauſe, they ruffle it out at another rate; glory in their numbers, piety and ability of their Party; boaſt and glory in the conceited Victories they atchieved over their Oppoſers. The Maſque drops off its Face, and it appears with a brow of Braſs, becomes inſolent and turbulent both in Church and State. Of which it is eaſie to give many pregnant inſtances, in the *Arians* of old, and more recent Errors, which I ſhall not at preſent be concerned with, leſt I exaſperate, whilſt I ſeek to heal the Wound:

* *The* Donatiſts *in* Auguſtin's *time modeſtly moved, that men might not be compelled to live holy.* Coacta & invita pietas, *they mentioned it with diſlike; but when grown in power,* facti inſolentes vim Orthodoxis inferebant, *inſomuch that* Dulcitius *the Tribune was feign to defend the* Orthodox *againſt them with an Army.*

* Should a Man hear the Sermons or private Diſcourſes of *Erroriſts*, whilſt the Deſign is but forming and projecting, he ſhould meet with little to raiſe his jealouſie. They ſpeak in Generals, and guard their Diſcourſes with Politick Reſerves. You ſhall not ſee, tho' you ſeem to ſee, the tendency of their Diſcourſes. Hence the Apoſtle ſaith, 2 *Pet.* 2. 1. παρεισάξουσιν, *They ſhall privily* (or covertly) *bring in damnable Hereſies*: As the *Boy* in *Plutarch*, being asked by a Stranger, what is that you carry ſo cloſely under your Cloak? wittily anſwered, You may well know that I intend you ſhall not know it by my ſo carrying it.

Sixteenth Obſervation. *Nothing gives more countenance and increaſe to Error, than a weak and feeble defence of the Truth againſt it* *.

* Quidam verò non ſatis Cœleſtibus literis eruditi, cùm veritatis accuſatoribus reſpondere non poſſent, objicientibus, vel impoſſibile vel incongruens eſſe, ut Deus in uterum ſe mulieris includeret, &c. quæ omnia cùm neque ingenio, neque doctrinâ defendere ac refutare poſſent (nec enim vim rationémque penitùs pervidebant) depravati ſunt ab itinere recto, & cœleſtes literas corrupêrunt, & novam ſibi doctrinam ſine ullâ radice ac ſtabilitate componerent. *Lactan.* lib. 4. cap. 30. de Hæreſibus.

The ſtrength of Error lieth much in the weakneſs of the Advocates and Defendants of Truth. Every Friend of Truth is not fit to make a Champion for it. Many love it, and pray for it, that cannot defend and diſpute for it. *I can die for the Truth* (ſaid the *Martyr*) *but I cannot diſpute for it. Zuinglius* blamed *Caraloſtadius* for undertaking the Controverſie of that Age, becauſe (ſaid he) *non habuit ſatis humerorum, his Shoulders were too weak for the Burthen.*

It can be ſaid of few, as *Cicero* ſpeaks of one, *Nullum unquàm in diſputationibus rem defendit, quam non probarit; nullum oppugnavit, quem non everterit; He undertook no Cauſe in diſputation, which he could not defend; he oppoſed no Adverſary, but could otherthrow him.* Here is a rare and happy Diſputant, who can clear and carry every Point of Truth, of which he undertakes the Defence. 'Twere happy for the Church, if the abilities and prudence of all her Friends were commenſurate and equal to their love and zeal. Every little foyl, every weak or impertinent Anſwer of a Friend to Truth, is quickly turned into a weapon to wound it the deeper.

Seventeenth Obſervation. *Errors of Judgment are not cured by compulſion and external force, but by rational conviction, and proper ſpiritual Remedies.*

Bodily ſufferings rather ſpread than cure intellectual Errors, I deny not but fundamental Hereſies breaking forth into open Blaſphemies againſt God, and Seditions in the Civil State, ought to be reſtrained. 'Tis no way fit Men ſhould be permitted to go up and down the World with Plague-ſores running upon them. Nor do I underſtand why Men ſhould be more cautious to preſerve their Bodies than their Souls. But I ſpeak here of ſuch Errors as may conſiſt with the Foundations of the Chriſtian Faith, and are not deſtructive to Civil Government. They take the ready way to ſpread and perpetuate them, that think to root them out of the World by ſuch improper and unwarrantable means as external force and violence. The Wind never cauſes an *Earthquake*, 'till it be pent in, and reſtrained from motion.

We neither find, nor can imagine, that thoſe Church or State *Exorciſts* ſhould ever be able to effect their end, who think to confine all the Spirits of Error within the Circle of a ſevere Uniformity. Fires, Priſons, Pillories, Stigmatizings, Mutilations, Whippings, Baniſhments, *&c.* are the *Popiſh Topicks* to confute Errors. 'Tis highly remarkable that the World long ago conſented for the avoiding of diſſent in Judgment, to enſlave themſelves and their Poſterity to the moſt fatal and deſtructive Hereſie that ever it groaned under.

'Tis a rational and proper Obſervation long ſince made by *Lactantius*, *Quis mihi imponat neceſſitatem credendi, quod nolim, vel non credendi, quod velim? Who can force me to believe what I will not, or not to believe what I will?* The rational and gentle Spirit of the Goſpel is the only proper and effectual method to cure the Diſeaſes of the Mind.

Eighteenth Obſervation. *Erroneous Doctrines producing Diviſions and fierce Contentions amongſt Chriſtians, prove a fatal Stumbling-block to the World; fix their Prejudices, and obſtruct their Converſion to Chriſt* *.

* *Many Enemies to Chriſtianity flockt to the* Nicene *Synod*, odio Chriſtianorum, propter abolitam Gentilium ſuperſtitionem, ut haberent in quos illuderent, *ſay the Centuriſts.*

They diſſolve the lovely union of the Saints, and thereby ſcare off the World from coming into the Church. This is evidently implied in that Prayer of Chriſt, *John* 17. That all his People might be one, that the World might believe the Father had ſent him. There is indeed no juſt cauſe for any to take offence at the Chriſtian Reformed Religion, becauſe ſo many Errors and Hereſies ſpring up among the Profeſſors of it, and divide them into ſo many Sects and Parties; for in all this we find no more than what was predicted from the beginning, 1 *Cor.* 11. 18, 19. *I hear there be diviſions among you, and I partly believe it: for there muſt be alſo Hereſies among you,* &c. And again Acts 20. 30. *Alſo of your own ſelves ſhall Men ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe*

verſe things to draw away Diſciples after them *.

* Ante omnia, ſcire nos convenit, & ipſum, & legatos ejus prædixiſſe, quòd plurimæ Sectæ, & Hæreſes deberent exiſtere, quæ concordiam ſancti corporis rumperent: ac monuiſſe, ut ſummâ prudentiâ caveremus, ne quando in laqueos & fraudes illius adverſarii noſtri cum quo nos Deus luctari voluit, incideremus, *Lactan.* lib. 4. cap. 30.

The very ſame things ſtrongly confirm the Chriſtian Religion, which wicked Men improve to the reproach and prejudice of it. When *Celſus* objected to the Chriſtians the variety and contrariety of their Opinions; ſaying, *Were we willing to turn Chriſtians, we know not of what Party to be, ſeeing you all pretend to Chriſt, and yet differ ſo much from one another. Tertullian*, the Chriſtian *Apologiſt*, made him this wiſe and pertinent Reply, *Hæreſes non dolemus veniſſe, quia novimus eſſe Prædictas. We are not troubled that Hereſies are come, ſeeing it was predicted that they muſt come.* Theſe Things deſtroy not the credibility of the Chriſtian Religion, but increaſe and confirm it, by evidencing to the World the truth and certainty of Chriſt's Predictions (which were quite beyond all human foreſight) that as ſoon as his Doctrine ſhould be propagated, and a Church raiſed by it, Errors and Hereſies ſhould ſpring up among them, for the tryal of their Faith and Conſtancy.

Nevertheleſs, this no way excuſes the ſinfulneſs of Errors and Diviſions in the Church. Chriſt's Prediction neither infuſes, nor excuſes the Evil predicted by him: for what he elſwhere ſpeaks of Scandals, is as true in this caſe of Errors. *Theſe Things muſt come to paſs, but woe be to that Man by whom they come.*

Nineteenth Obſervation. *How ſpecious and taking ſoever the Pretences of Error be, and how long ſoever they maintain themſelves in eſteem among Men, they are ſure to end in the loſs and ſhame of their Authors and Abettors at laſt* *

* Poſt fœdum *Arii* obitum, quam plurimos ex iis, qui ab *Ario* priùs decepti fuerant, ad ſanitatem rediiſſe, ſcribit. *Athanaſius* ad Serapionem.

Truth is a Rock, that the Waves of Error daſh againſt, and evermore returnin froth and foam: yea, they foam out their own ſhame, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Jude* 13. What *Tacitus* ſpake of crafty Counſels. I may as truly apply to crafty Errors, *Conſilia callida primò ſpecie læta, tractatu dura, eventu triſtia. They are pleaſant in their beginnings, difficult in their management, and ſad in their event and iſſue.*

Suppoſe a Man have union with Chriſt, yet his Errors are but ſo much Hay, Wood, Straw, Subble built, or rather endeavoured to be built upon a foundation of Gold; this the fiery tryal burns up; the Author of them ſuffers loſs; and though himſelf may be ſaved, yet ſo as by fire, 1 *Cor.* 3. 12, 13, 14, 15. the meaning is, he makes a narrow eſcape. As a Man that leaps out of an Houſe on fire, from a Window or Battlement, with great Difficulty ſaves his Life; juſt ſo *Erroriſts* ſhall be glad to quit their Erroneous Opinions, which they have taken ſo much Pains to build, and draw others into: and then, oh what a ſhame muſt it be for a good Man to think, how many Days and Nights have I worſe than waſted, to defend and propagate an Error, which might have been employed in a cloſer ſtudy of Chriſt, and mine own Heart! *Keckerman* relates a Story of a *vocal Statue*, which was Thirty Years a making by a cunning *Artiſt*, which by the motion of its Tongue, with little Wheels, Wires, *&c.* could Articulate the Sound, and pronounce an entire Sentence. This *Statue* ſaluting *Aquinas*, ſurprized him, and at one ſtroke he utterly deſtroyed the curious *Machin*, which exceedingly troubled the fond Owner of it, and made him ſay with much concernment, *Uno ictu opus triginta annorum deſtruxiſti, Thou haſt at one ſtroke deſtroyed the ſtudy and labour of thirty Years.* *Keck. Phyſ.* p. 16 Albertus Magnus.

Beſide, what ſhame and trouble muſt it be to the zealous Promoters of Errors, not only to caſt away ſo vainly and unprofitably their own time and ſtrength, which is bad enough: but alſo to enſnare and allure the Souls of others into the ſame, or worſe Miſchief; for tho' God may ſave and recover you, thoſe that have been miſled by you may periſh.

Twentieth Obſervation. *If ever Errors be cured, and the Peace and Unity of the Church eſtabliſhed, Men muſt be convinced of, and acquainted with the Occaſions and Cauſes both within and without themſelves, from whence their Errors do proceed; and muſt both know and apply the proper Rules and Remedies for the Prevention or Cure of them.*

There is much Difference betwixt an *Occaſion*, and a proper *Cauſe*; theſe two are heedfully to be diſtinguiſh'd. Critical and exact *Hiſtorians*, as *Polybius* and *Tacitus*, diſtinguiſh betwixt the ἀρχὴ, and the αἰτία, the beginning *Occaſions*, and the real *Cauſes* of a *War*; and ſo we ought in this caſe of *Errors* carefully to diſtinguiſh them. The moſt excellent and innocent things in the World, ſuch as the Scriptures of Truth, the Liberty of Chriſtians, the Tranquility and Peace of the Church (as you will hear anon) may by the Subtilty of *Satan* working in conjunction with the Corruptions of Mens Hearts, become the Occaſions, but can never be the proper culpable *Cauſes* of *Errors*.

Accordingly having made theſe twenty *Remarks* upon the *Nature* and *Growth* of *Errors* (which cannot ſo well be brought within the following Rules of Method) I ſhall in the next place proceed in the Diſcovery both of the meer *Occaſion*, as alſo of the proper culpable *Cauſes* of *Errors*, together with the proper *Preventives* and moſt effectual *Remedies* placed together in the following Order.

The Occaſion DIVINE PERMISSION. The holy God, who is a God of Truth, *Deut.* 32. 4. and hateth *Errors*, *Rev.* 2. 6. the God of Order, and hates Confuſions and Schiſms in his Church, 1 *Cor.* 14. 33. is yet pleaſed to permit *Errors* and *Hereſies* to ariſe, without whoſe Permiſſion they could never ſpring. And this he doth for the Tryal of his Peoples Faith and Conſtancy, and for a ſpiritual Puniſhment upon ſome Men for the abuſe of his known Truths; and by the permiſſion of theſe Evils he advanceth his own Glory, and the good of his Church and People. *Auguſtine* anſwers that Queſtion, Why doth not God, ſince he hates *Errors*, ſweep them out of the World? becauſe (ſaith he) it is an act of greater Power to bring good out of evil, than not to ſuffer Evils to be at all.

Satan's Deſign in *Errors* is to cloud and darken God's Name and precious Truths; to deſtroy the Beauty, Strength, and Order of the Church. But God's Ends in permitting and ſending *Errors*, are (1.) to plague and puniſh Men for their Abuſe of Light, 2 *Theſſ.* 2. 11. *For this Cauſe God ſhall ſend*

them

them strong Deluſions, &c. (2.) To prove and try the Sincerity and Conſtancy of our Hearts, *Deut.* 13. 1, 3. 1 *Cor.* 11. 19. And, laſtly, By theſe things the Saints are awakened to a more diligent ſearch of the Scriptures, which are the more critically read and examined upon the tryal of Spirits and Doctrines by them, 1 *John* 4. 1. *Believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits*; And *Rev.* 2. 2. *Thou haſt tried them, that ſay they are Apoſtles*, &c.

The Prevention. Though *Hereſies* and *Errors* muſt (muſt for the Reaſons aſſigned) break forth into the World, and God will turn them eventually into his own Glory, and the Benefit of his Church: yet it is a dreadful Judgment to be delivered over to a ſpirit of Error, to be the Authors and Abettors of them; this is a judicial ſtroke of God: and as ever we hope to eſcape, and ſtand clear out of the way of it, let us carefully ſhun theſe three following Cauſes and Provocations thereof.

(1.) Want of Love to the Truth, which God hath made to ſhine *about* us in the means, or *into* us by actual illumination under the means of knowledge. 2 *Theſſ.* 2. 10, 11. Becauſe they received not the love of Truth, God gave them up to ſtrong Deluſions. They are juſtly plagued with Error that ſlight Truth. Falſe Doctrines are fit Plagues for falſe Hearts.

(2.) Beware of Pride and Wantonneſs of Mind. 'Tis not ſo much the *Weakneſs* as the *Wantonneſs* of the Mind, which provokes God to inflict this Judgment. None likelier to make *Seducers* than *Boaſters*, *Jude* 16. *Arrius* gloried, that God had revealed ſome things to him, which were hidden from the Apoſtles themſelves. *Simon Magus* boaſted himſelf to be the mighty Power of God. The erroneous *Phariſees* loved the praiſes of Men. When the *Papiſt* reproached *Luther* that he affected to have his Diſciples called *Lutherans*, he replyed, *Non ſic, ô fatue, non ſic; oro ut nomen meum taceatur*: he diſdain'd that the Children of Chriſt ſhould be called by ſo vile a name as his.

(3.) Beware you neglect not Prayer, to be kept ſound in your Judgments, and guided by the Spirit into all Truth, *Pſal.* 119. 10. *With my whole Heart have I ſought thee: O let me not wander*, or err, *from thy Commandments.* This do, and you are ſafe from ſuch a judicial Tradition.

The Firſt Cauſe. We ſhall next ſpeak of the Cauſes of Error found in the evil Diſpoſitions of the Subjects, which prepare and incline them to receive Erroneous Doctrine and Opinions, and even catch at the Occaſions and leaſt Sparkles of Temptation, as dry Tinder: and amongſt theſe is found,

(1.) A perverſe wrangling Humour at the pretended OBSCURITY of the Scriptures. The *Romiſh* Party ſnatch at this Occaſion, and make it the proper *Cauſe*, when indeed it is but a pickt *Occaſion* of the *Errors* and Miſtakes among Men. They tell us the Scriptures are ſo difficult, obſcure, and perplext, that if private Men will truſt to them as their only Guide, they will inevitably run into *Errors*, and their only relief is to give up their Souls to the conduct of their Church; whereas indeed the true *Cauſe* of *Error* is not ſo much in the Obſcurity of the Word, as in the Corruption of the Mind, 1 *Tim.* 6. 5. 2 *Tim.* 3. 8.

We do acknowledge there are in the Scriptures τινα δυσνόητα, καὶ τινα δυσπαρανόητα, ſome things hard to be underſtood, 2 *Pet.* 3. 16. the ſublime and myſterious nature of the matter rendring it ſo: and ſome things hard to be interpreted from the manner of Expreſſion; as indeed all myſtical parts of Scripture, and Prophetical Predictions are, and ought to be delivered. The Spirit of God this way deſignedly caſts a veil over them, 'till the proper ſeaſon of their revelation and accompliſhment be come. Beſides (as the Learned *Glaſſius* obſerves) in *Paul*'s ſtyle there are found ſome peculiar words and forms of Speech, which ordinary Rules of *Grammar* take no notice, nor give any parallel Examples of: as *to be buried with Chriſt*; *to be baptized into his death*; to which I may add, *to be circumciſed in him*, &c. There are alſo Multitudes of Words found in Scripture, of various and vaſtly different Significations: and accordingly there is a diverſity, and ſometimes a contrariety of Senſes given of them by *Expoſitors*; which to an *Humoriſt*, or quarrelſome Wit gives an Occaſion to vent his Errors with a plauſible appearance of Scripture-conſent. And indeed *Tertullian* ſaith, *Non periclitor dicere ipſas Scripturas ita diſpoſitas eſſe, ut materiam ſubminiſtrarent Hæreticis.* The Scriptures are ſo diſpoſed, that Hereticks may pick Occaſions; and thoſe that will not be ſatisfied, may be hardened. See *Mark* 4. 11, 12.

But all this notwithſtanding, the great and neceſſary things to our Salvation are ſo perſpicuouſly and plainly revealed in the Scriptures, that even Babes in Chriſt do apprehend and underſtand them, *Matth.* 11. 25. 1 *Cor.* 1. 27, 28, 29. And tho' there be difficulties in other points more remote from the foundation; yet the Spirit of God is not to be accuſed, but rather his Wiſdom to be admired herein. For (1.) this ſerves to excite our moſt intenſe ſtudy and diligence, which by this difficulty is made neceſſary, *Prov.* 2. 3, 4, 5. the very *Prophets*, yea the very *Angels* ſearch into theſe things, 1 *Pet.* 1. 11, 12. (2.) Hereby a ſtanding Miniſtry in the Church is made neceſſary, *Nehem.* 8. 8. *Eph.* 4. 11, 12, 13. So that to pretend *Obſcurity* of Scripture to be the culpable cauſe of *Error*, when indeed the fault is in our ſelves; this is too much like our Father *Adam*, who would implicitely accuſe God, to excuſe himſelf; he laid it upon the *Woman* which God gave him, and we upon the *Scriptures* which God hath given us.

The Remedies.

The proper *Remedies* and *Preventives* in this caſe are an heedful Attendance to, and Practice of theſe *Rules*.

Rule 1. Let all obſcure and difficult Texts of Scripture be conſtantly examined and expounded according to the Analogy or proportion of Faith, which is St. *Paul*'s own Rule, *Rom.* 12. 6. *Let him that propheſieth*, (*i. e.* expoundeth the Scriptures in the Church) *do it according to the proportion of Faith.* The Analogy or proportion of Faith, is what is taught plainly and uniformly in the whole Scriptures of Old and New *Teſtament*, as the Rule of our Faith and Obedience. Whilſt we carefully and ſincerely attend hereunto, we are ſecured from ſinful corrupting the word of God. Admit of no ſenſe which interfereth with this proportion of Faith. If Men have no regard to this but take Liberty to rend off a ſingle Text from the body of Truth to which it belongs, and put a peculiar interpretation upon it, which is abſonous and diſcordant to other Scriptures, what woful work will they quickly make?

Give but a *Papiſt* liberty to take that Scripture, *Jam.* 2. 24. out of the frame of Scripture, *A Man is juſtified by Works, and not by Faith only*; and expound it without Regard to the Tenor of the

Goſpel-Doctrine of *Juſtification* in *Paul's Epiſtles* to the *Romans* and *Galatians*, and a groſs Error ſtarts up immediately. Give but a *Socinian* the like liberty to practiſe upon *John* 14. 28. and a groſs Hereſy ſhall preſently look with an Orthodox Face.

Rule II. Never put a new Senſe upon Words of Scripture, in favour of your preconceived Notions and Opinions, nor wreſt it from its general and common uſe and ſenſe. This is not to interpret but to rack the Scriptures, as that Word στρέβλωσιν ſignifies, 2 *Pet.* 3. 16. *Interpretis officium eſt, non quid ipſe velit, ſed quid cenſeat ille, quem interpretatur, exponere*, as *Hieron.* againſt *Ruff.* ſpeaks. We are not to make the Sciptures ſpeak what we think, but what the *Prophet* or *Apoſtle* thought, whom we interpret. In 1 *Cor.* 7. 14. we meet with the word [*holy*] applied to the Children of Believers; that word is above 500 Times uſed for a ſtate of ſeparation to God: Therefore to make it ſignify in that place nothing but Legitimacy, is a bold and daring practiſing upon the Scripture.

Rule III. Whenever you meet with an obſcure place of Scripture, let the Context of that Scripture be diligently and throughly ſearched; for 'tis uſual with God to ſet up ſome light there to guide us through the Obſcurity of a particular Text. And there is much truth in the Obſervation of the *Rabbines*, *Nulla eſt objectio in Lege, quæ non habet ſolutionem in latere. There's no ſcruple or objection in the Law, but it hath a ſolution at the ſide of it.*

Rule IV. Let one Teſtament freely caſt its light upon the other; and let not Men undervalue or reject an *Old Teſtament* Text, as no way uſeful to clear and eſtabliſh a *New Teſtament* Point of Faith or Duty. Each *Teſtament* reflects light upon the other. The *Jews* reject the *New-Teſtament*, and many among us ſinfully ſlight the *Old*: But without the help of both, we can never underſtand the mind of God in either. 'Tis a good Rule in the *Civil Law*, *Turpe eſt de Lege judicare, tota lege nondum inſpectâ. We muſt inſpect the whole Law, to know the ſenſe of any particular Law.*

Rule V. Have a due regard to that ſenſe given of obſcure places of Scripture, which hath not only the current Senſe of Learned *Expoſitors*, but alſo naturally agrees with the ſcope of the place. A careleſs neglect and diſregard to this, is juſtly blamed by the Apoſtle, 1 *Tim.* 1. 7.

Cauſe II.

A Second evil Temper in the Subject, diſpoſing and inclining Men to receive and ſuck in erroneous Doctrines and Opinions, is the *ABUSE* of that juſt and due *CHRISTIAN LIBERTY* allowed by Chriſt to all his People to read, examine, and judge the ſenſe of Scriptures with a private Judgment of Diſcretion.

Controverſiæ Anabaptiſticæ exortæ ſunt ſuperiore ſæculo variis in *Europæ locis*, putá à *Montzero Saxone* cum Sociis Anno MDXXI. occaſione ſcripti *Lutheri* de Libertate Chriſtianâ. *Fred. Spanh. Elench. Contr.* p. 95.

This is a glorious acquiſition, and bleſſed fruit of Reformation, to vindicate and recover that juſt Right, and gracious Grant made to us by Chriſt and the Apoſtles, out of the injurious hands of our Popiſh Enemies, who had uſurped and invaded it. The exerciſe of this *Liberty*, is at once a Duty commanded by Chriſt, *John* 5. 39. *Search the Scriptures*, ſaith Chriſt to his People. 1 *Cor.* 10. 15. *I ſpeak as to wiſe men; judge you what I ſay.* And the exerciſe of this private judgment of diſcretion by the People, is highly commended by St. *Paul* in the *Bereans*, Acts 17. 11. *Theſe were more noble than thoſe in Theſſalonica, in that they received the word with all readineſs of mind, and ſearched the Scriptures daily whether thoſe things were ſo.* This *Liberty* is not allowed in that latitude in any Religion, as it is in the Chriſtian Religion, nor enjoyed in its Fulneſs, as it is in the Reformed Religion, whoſe Glory it is that it allows its Principles and Doctrines to be critically examined and tryed of all Men by the Rule of the Word, as well knowing, the more it is ſifted and ſearched by its Profeſſors, the more they will be ſtill confirmed and ſatisfied in the truth of it.

But yet this gracious and juſt liberty of Chriſtians, ſuffers a double abuſe: One from the *Popiſh* Enemies, who injuriouſly reſtrain and deny it to the People. Another, by Proteſtants themſelves, who ſinfully ſtretch and extend it beyond the juſt degree and meaſure in which Chriſt allows it to them.

The *Pope* injuriouſly reſtrains it, diſcerning the danger that muſt neceſſarily follow the conceſſion of ſuch a liberty to the People, to compare his ſuperſtitious and erroneous Doctrines with the Rule of the Word.

St. *Peter*, in 2 *Pet.* 1. 19. tells the People they have a more ſure Word of Prophecy, whereunto they do well that they take heed. Certainly the *Pope* forgot either that he was *Peter's* Succeſſor; or that ever St. *Peter* told the People they did well to make uſe of that liberty which he denies them. Mr. *Pool* tells us of a *Spaniard* that uſed this Expreſſion to an *Engliſh* Merchant, *You People of* England (ſaith he) *are happy, you have liberty to ſee with your own eyes, and to examine the Doctrines delivered to you, upon which your everlaſting Life depends; but we dare not ſay our Souls are our own, but are commanded to believe whatever our Teachers tell us, be it never ſo unreaſonable or ridiculous.* This is a moſt injurious and ſinful Reſtraint upon it on the one Side.

And then Secondly, 'Tis too frequently abuſed, by ſtretching it beyond Chriſt's allowance and intendment upon the other ſide; when every ignorant and confident Perſon ſhall, under pretence of liberty granted by Chriſt, rudely break in upon the Sacred Text, diſtort, violate, and abuſe the Scriptures at pleaſure, by putting ſuch ſtrange and foreign ſenſes upon them, as the Spirit of God never meant or intended[k].

[k] *Pro.* 8. 22. Quod dictum ſcribit Epiphanius, primam Ario præbuiſſe occaſionem, hæreſin contra filium Dei fingendi.

How often have I heard that Scripture, *Micah* 4. 10. *They ſhall be brought even to Babylon*, confidently interpreted for *almoſt*, but not full home to *Babylon*, againſt the very *Grammar* of the Text, and the Truth of the *Hiſtory*? And ſo again, that place, *Iſa.* 58. 8. *The glory of the Lord ſhall be thy rereward*, through ignorance of the word, read *re-reward*, that is a double reward to his People? But theſe are ſmall matters compared with thoſe groſſer abuſes of Scripture by the ignorant and unlearned, which prejudice Truth, and too much countenance Popiſh Reproaches.

The Remedies.

The proper Way to prevent and remedy this Miſchief, is not by depriving any Man of his juſt Liberty, either to read or judge for himſelf what God ſpeaks in his Word, and think that way to cure

cure Errors; that were the same thing as to cut off the Head to cure the Head-ach. Leave that sinful Policy with the false Religion. Let those only that do evil, be afraid of coming to the light. But the proper course of preventing the Mischiefs that come this way, is by labouring to bound and contain Christians within those *limits* Christ himself hath set unto this Liberty which he hath granted them. And these are such as follow:

Limitation I.

Tho' Christ hath indulged to the meanest and weakest Christian a Liberty to read and judge of the Scriptures for himself; yet he hath neither thereby, nor therewith granted him a liberty publickly to Expound and Preach the Word to others: That's quite another thing.

Every Man that can read the Scriptures, and judge of their sense, is not thereby presently made Christ's Commission-Officer, publickly and authoritatively to Preach and Inculcate the same to others: Two things are requisite to such an employment, *viz. Proper Qualifications*, 1 Tim. 3. *And a solemn Call or Designation*, Rom. 10. 14, 15. The Ministry is a distinct Office, *Acts* 20. 17, 28. 1 *Thes.* 5. 12. and none but qualified and ordained Persons can authoritatively preach the Word, 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. 1 *Tim.* 5. 22.

Christians may privately edify one another by reading the Scriptures, communicating their sense one to another of them, admonishing, counselling, reproving one another in a private fraternal way, at seasons wherein they interfere not with more publick Duties: But for every one that hath confidence enough (and the ignorant usually are best stock'd with it) to assume a Liberty without due Qualification or Call, to expound and give the sense of Scriptures, and pour forth his crude and unstudied Notions, as the pure sense and meaning of God's Spirit in the Scriptures; this is what Christ never allowed, and through this Flood-gate Errors have broken in, and overflowed the Church of God, to the great scandal of Religion, and Confirmation of Popish Enemies.

Limitation II. Though there be no part of Scripture shut up or restrained from the knowledge or use of any Christian; yet Jesus Christ hath recommended to Christians of different Abilities, the study of some parts of Scripture rather than others, as more proper and agreeable to their Age and Stature in Religion.

Christians are by the *Apostle* rank'd into three Classes, *Fathers*, *Young-men*, and *Little Children*, 1 *John* 2. 13. and accordingly the Wisdom of Christ hath directed to that sort of Food which is proper to either: For there is in the Word all sorts of Food suitable to all Ages in Christ; there's both *Milk* for *Babes*, and *strong Meat* for *grown Christians*, Heb. 5. 13, 14. Those that are unskilful in the word of Righteousness, should feed upon *Milk*, that is, the easie, plain, but most nutritive and pleasant practical Doctrines of the Gospel. But *strong Meat* (saith he) that is, the more abstruse, deep, and mysterious Truths, belongeth to them that are of full Age, even those who, by reason of use, have their Senses exercised to discern both good and evil; that is, *Truth* and *Error*. To the same purpose he speaks, 1 *Cor.* 3. 2. *I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it.*

Art thou a weak unstudied Christian? a Babe in Christ? Then the easier, and more nutritive Milk of plain Gospel-Doctrine is fitter for thee, and will do thee more good, than the stronger Meat of profound and more mysterious Points; or the Bones of Controversy, which are too hard for thee to deal with.

God hath blessed this Age with great Variety of sound and allowed *Expositors* in our own Language, by the diligent Study of which, and Prayer for the Illumination and Guidance of the Spirit, you may not only attain unto the true sense and meaning of the more plain and obvious; but also unto greater knowledge, and clearer insight into the more obscure and controverted parts of Scripture.

Cause III. There is also another evil disposition in the Subject, rendring it easily receptive of *Errors*, and that is spiritual *SLOTHFULNESS* and carelesness in a due and serious search of the whole Scripture, with a sedate and rational consideration of every part and particle therein, which may give us any, though the least light to understand the mind of God in those obscure and difficult Points we search after the knowledge of.

Truth lies deep, as the rich Veins of Gold do, *Prov.* 2. If we will get the Treasure, we must not only, *beg*, as he directs, *ver.* 3. but *dig* also, *ver.* 4. else as he speaks, *Prov.* 14. 23. *The talk of the lips tends only to poverty.* We are not to take up with that which lies uppermost, and next at hand upon the surface of the Text; but to search with the most sedate and considerative Minds into all parts of the written Word, examining every Text which hath any respect to the Truth we are searching for, heedfully to observe the Scope, Antecedents, and Consequents, and to value every *Apex*, *Tittle*, and *Iota*; for each of these are of Divine Authority, *Matt.* 5. 18. and sometimes greater weight is laid upon a small word, yea, upon the addition or change of a Letter in a word, as appears in the Names *Abram* and *Sarai*.

It will require some strength of Mind, and great sedulity, to lay all parts of Scripture before us, and to compare words with words, and things with things, as the Apostle speaks, 1 *Cor.* 2. 13. *comparing spiritual things with spiritual.* And though it be true that some important Doctrines, as that of *Justification* by *Faith*, are methodically disposed, and throughly cleared and settled in one and the same Context; yet it is as true, that very many other points of Faith and Duty are not so digested, but are delivered *sparsim*, here a little, and there a little, as he speaks, *Isa.* 28. 10. You must not think to find all that belongs to one Head or Point of Faith, or Duty, laid together in a *System*, or common place in Scripture; but scattered abroad in several Places, some in the *Old-Testament*, and some in the *New*, at a great distance one from another.

Now in our Searches and Inquiries after the full and satisfying Knowledge of the Will of God in such Points, it is necessary that the whole Word of God be throughly searched, and all those Parcels brought together to an Interview. *Ex. Gr.*

If a Man would see the entire discovery that was made of Christ, to the Fathers, under the *Old Testament*, he shall not find it laid together in any one Prophet; but shall find that one speaks to one part of it, and another to another.

Moses

Moſes gives the firſt general hint of it, *Gen.* 3. 15. *The ſeed of the Woman ſhall break the Serpent's head.* But then if you would know more particularly of whoſe Seed, according to the Fleſh, he ſhould come, you muſt turn to *Gen.* 22. 18. *In thy ſeed* (ſaith God to *Abraham*) *ſhall all Nations of the Earth be bleſſed.* And if you yet doubt what Seed God means there, you muſt go to the Apoſtle, *Gal.* 3. 16. *To thy ſeed*, which is *Chriſt.* If you would further know the place of his Nativity, the Prophet *Micah* muſt inform you of that, *Mic.* 5. 2. it ſhould be *Bethlehem Ephrata.* If you inquire of the quality of his Parents, another *Prophet* gives you that, *Iſa.* 7. 14. *Behold a Virgin ſhall conceive, and bear a Son, and call his Name Immanuel.* If the Time of his Birth be inquired after, *Moſes* and *Daniel* muſt inform you of that, *Gen.* 49. 10. *Dan.* 9. 24.

So under the *New-Teſtament*, If a Man inquire about the change of the *Sabbath*, he muſt not expect to find a formal repeal of the Seventh Day, and an expreſs inſtitution of the firſt Day in its room; but he is to conſider,

Firſt, What the *Evangeliſt* ſpeaks, *Mark* 2. 28. That Chriſt is Lord of the Sabbath, and ſo had Power, not only to diſpenſe with it, but to change it.

Secondly, That on the firſt Day of the Week Chriſt roſe from the dead, *Matt.* 28. 1, 2. And that this is that great Day, foretold to be the Day to be ſolemnized upon that Account, *Pſal.* 118. 24.

Thirdly, That accordingly the firſt Day of the Week is emphatically ſtiled the Lord's Day, *Rev.* 1. 10. where you find his own Name written upon it.

Fourthly, You ſhall find this was the Day on which the *Apoſtles* and Primitive Chriſtians aſſembled together for the ſtated and ſolemn performance of publick Worſhip, *John* 20. 19. and other publick Church-Acts and Duties, 1 *Cor.* 16. 1, 2. And ſo by putting together, and conſidering all theſe Particulars, we draw a juſt Concluſion, That it is the Will of God, that ſince the Reſurrection of Chriſt, the firſt Day of the Week ſhould be obſerved as the Chriſtian-Sabbath.

In like manner as for the Baptizing of Believers *Infants*; We are not to expect it in the expreſs words of a *New-Teſtament*-Inſtitution or Command, that *Infants* under the Goſpel ſhould be Baptized; but God hath left us to gather Satisfaction about his Will and our Duty in that point, by comparing and conſidering the ſeveral Scriptures of the *Old* and *New-Teſtament* which relate to that Matter; which if we be impartial and conſiderative, we may do,

Firſt, By conſidering, that by God's expreſs Command, *Gen.* 17. 9, 10. the Infant Seed of his People were taken into Covenant with their Parents, and the then Sign of that Covenant commanded to be applied to them.

Secondly, That though the Sign be altered, the Promiſe and Covenant is ſtill the ſame, and runs as it did before to Believers and their Children, *Acts* 2. 38, 39.

Thirdly, That the fœderal holineſs of our Children is plainly aſſerted under the *New-Teſtament*, 1 *Cor.* 7. 14. *Rom.* 11. 16.

Fourthly, We ſhall further find, that *Baptiſm* ſucceeds in the room of *Circumciſion*, and that by an Argument drawn from the compleatneſs of our Privileges under the *New-Teſtament*, no way inferiour, but rather more extenſive than thoſe of the *Jews*, *Col.* 2. 10, 11, 12.

Fifthly, We ſhall find that upon the Converſion of any *Maſter* or *Parent*, the whole Houſhold were Baptiz'd. By putting all theſe things, with ſome others, together, we may arrive to the deſired Satisfaction about the Will of God in this Matter.

But ſome Men want Abilities, and others are too ſluggiſh and lazy to gather together, compare and weigh all theſe and many more hints and diſcoveries of the mind of God, which would give much light unto this point; but they take an eaſier and cheaper way to ſatisfy themſelves with what lies uppermoſt upon the Surface of Scripture, and ſo, as it were by conſent, let go, and loſe their own, and their Childrens bleſſed and invaluable Privileges, for want of a little labour and patience to ſearch the Scriptures; a Folly which few would be guilty of, if but a ſmall earthly inheritance were concerned therein.

The Remedies.

To cure this Spiritual ſluggiſhneſs, and awaken us to the moſt ſerious and diligent ſearch after the Will of God in ſuch controverſial and doubtful Points, that we may not neglect the ſmalleſt hint given us about it, the following *Conſiderations* will be found of great uſe and weight.

Conſideration I. The moſt ſedate, impartial, and diligent Inquiries after the Will of God revealed in his Word, is a Duty expreſly enjoyned by his Sovereign Command, which immediately and indiſpenſably binds the Conſcience of every Chriſtian to the practice of it.

Remarkable is that Text to this purpoſe, *Rom.* 12. 2. *And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.* Here you find this Duty, not only aſſociated with, but made the very end of our Non-conformity to the World, and renovation of our Minds, the very things which conſtitute a Chriſtian.

And to ſweeten our pains in this Work, that Will of God, for the diſcovery whereof, we ſearch, is preſented to us under three illuſtrious and alluring Properties, *viz. Good*, *Acceptable*, and *Perfect*. *Good* it muſt needs be, becauſe the Will and Eſſence of God, the chief Good, are not two Things, but one and the ſame. And *Perfect* it muſt needs be, becauſe it is the Beam and Standard, by which the Actions of all reaſonable Creatures ought to be weighed and tryed, as to the moral good or evil of them. And being both good and perfect, how can it chuſe but, upon both accounts, be highly *Acceptable* and grateful to an upright Soul, as that *Epithete* εὐάρεστον there imports. *Search the Scriptures*, ſaith Chriſt, *Joh.* 5. 39. *To the Law and to the Teſtimony*, ſaith the Prophet, *Iſa.* 8. 20. This is not matter of meer Chriſtian Liberty, but a commanded Duty; and at our peril be it if we neglect it.

Conſideration II. No act of ours can be good and acceptable to the Lord, further than it is agreeable to his Will revealed in the Word.

No Man can be a Rule to himſelf. He can be no more his own *Rule* than his own *End*. One Man cannot be a Rule to another. The beſt of Men, and their Actions, and Examples, are only ſo far a Rule of imitation to us, as they themſelves are ruled by the Divine revealed Will, 1 *Cor.* 11. 1. uncommand-

1. uncommanded acts of Worship are abominable to God, and highly dangerous to our selves; they kindle the fire of his Jealousy to the Ruin and Destruction of the presumptuous Sinner, *Levit.* 10. 1, 2. So that if the Beauty and Excellency of the Will of God be not enough to allure us, the danger of acting without the knowledge of it may justly terrify us.

Consideration III. In this Duty we tread in the Footsteps of the wisest and holiest Men that ever went to Heaven before us.

It is not only the Characteristical Note of a good Man, *Psal.* 1. 2. but it has been the constant practice of the most eminent Believers in all Ages. The greatest *Prophets*, had this advantage of us, that they were the Organs or inspired instruments of discovering the Will of God to others, yet were not excused from, neither did they neglect to search it diligently themselves, 1 *Pet.* 1. 10, 11. *Daniel*, that great Favourite of Heaven, who had the Visions and Revelations of God; yet he himself diligently searched the written Word, in Order to the Discovery of the Mind of God, *Daniel* 9. 2.

Consideration IV. Every Discovery of the Will of God by fervent Prayer, diligent and impartial search of the Scriptures, and all other allowed helps, gives the highest pleasure the Mind of Man is capable of in this World.

If *Archimedes*, upon the Discovery of a Mathematical Truth, was so transported and ravished, that he cried out, ἕυρηκα, ἕυρηκα, *I have found it, I have found it*; what pleasure then must the investigation and discovery of a Divine Truth give to a sanctified Soul! *Thy words were fond of me* (saith *Jeremiah*) *and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart*, Jer. 15. 16. as pleasant Food to a famished Man; for now Conscience is quieted, comforted, and cheered in the way of Duty. A Man walks not at adventure with God, as that Word signifies, *Levit.* 26. 40, 41. but hath the pleasant directive Light of the Word and Will of God, shining sweetly upon the path of his Duty.

Consideration V. By this means you shall find your Faith greatly confirmed in the Truth of the Scriptures.

The sweet consent, and beautiful harmony of all the parts of the written Word, is a great Argument of its Divinity; and this you will clearly discern, when by a due search you shall find things that lie at the remotest distance, to conspire and consent in one, and one part casting light, as well as adding strength, to another. Thus you shall find *Vetus Testamentum in novo revelatum, & novum in vetere velatum*. The *New Testament* veiled in the *Old*, and the *Old* revealed in the *New*: And that such a consent of Things, so distant in Time and Place, can never be the project and invention of Man.

Consideration VI. The diligent and impartial search and inquiry after the Will of God, out of no other design than to please him in the whole course of our Duties, will turn to us for a Testimony of the integrity and sincerity of our hearts.

Thy word (said David) *have I hid in my heart; that I might not sin against thee:* And God will not hide his Will from those that thus seek to know it. If men would apply themselves to search the Word by fervent Prayer, and fixed Meditations, upon so pure a design, not bringing their prejudiced or prepossessed minds unto it; the Spirit of the Lord would guide them into all Truth, and keep them out of dangerous and destructive *Errors*.

Fourth Cause. Besides the Slothfulness of the Mind, there is found in many Persons another evil Disposition preparing them easily to receive Erroneous Impressions; namely, the *INSTABILITY* and Fickleness of the Judgment, and Unsetledness of Mind about the Truth of the Gospel.

Of this the Apostle warns us, *Eph.* 4. 14. *That we henceforth be no more Children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine, by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.* None are so constant and steddy in the profession of the Truth, as those that are fully convinced of, and well satisfied with the Grounds of it. Every Professor, like every Ship at Sea, should have an ἴδιον σήκυμον, a ballast and steddiness of his own, 2 *Pet.* 3. 17. ready and prepared to render a reason of the hope that is in him, 1 *Pet.* 3. 15. able upon all occasions to give an account of those inward Motives which constrained his assent to the Truth.

He that professeth a Truth ignorantly, cannot be rationally supposed to adhere to it constantly. He that is but half convinced of a Truth, when he engages in the Profession of it, must needs be δίψυχος ἀνὴρ, a double-minded Man, as the Apostle calls him, *Jam.* 1. 8. half the mind hangs one way, and half another, and so it is easily moveable this way or that, with the least breath of temptation. And hence it comes to pass they are so often at a loss about their duty and their Practice; for *Animi volutatio pendentem reddit vitam*. A doubtful Mind must needs make a staggering and uncertain Practice.

Erroneous Teachers are called wandring *Stars*, *Jude* 13. which keep no certain course as the fixed *Stars* do, but are sometimes nearer and sometimes remoter one from another. Thus *Errorists* first imbibe unsettling Opinions, and then discover them in their inconstant Practices. *Bertius* wrote a Book *de Apostasiâ Sanctorum*, and soon after turned *Papist*. The *Socinians* and *Libertines* teach, That a Man of any Perswasion in Religion may be saved, so that he walk not contrary to his own Light: Such Doctrine directly tends to *Scepticism* in Religion.

And this *Instability* of the Judgment proceeds either from *Hypocrisie* or *Weakness*. Sometimes from *Hypocrisie*; All Hypocrites are δίψυχοι, double-minded Men: *Jam.* 4. 8. *The double-minded man* (that is the *Hypocrite*) *is unstable in all his ways*. One of that number was not ashamed to say, *Se duas habere animas in eodem corpore, unam Deo dicatam, alteram unicuique illam vellet:* That he had two Souls in one Body, one for God, and another for whosoever would have it.

Sometimes *Instability* of the mind is the effect only of *Weakness* in the Judgment, proceeding meerly from want of age and growth in Christ, not having as yet attained Senses exercised to discern both good and evil, *Heb.* 5. 14. they are but Children in Christ, and Children are easie and credulous Creatures, *Eph.* 4. 14. presently taken with a new Toy, and as soon weary of it; such a wavering and unstable temper invites temptation, and falls an easie prey into its hands.

I confess some cases may happen, where the Pretences on both sides may be so fair, as to put a judicious Christian to a stand what to chuse; but then their deliberation will be answerable, and then they will not change their Opinions every

every Month, as *Scepticks* do. Whatever *Error* finds such a mutable disposition, its work is half done before it makes one assault. How many wavering Professors at this Day lie in Temptation's way? and how great a Harvest have *Errorists* and *Hereticks* had among them? There's not a *Mountebank* comes upon the Stage, but he shall find ten times more Customers for his *Druggs*, than the most Learned and Experienced *Physician*. The giddy-headed Multitude have more regard to Novelty, than Truth.

The Remedies.

How necessary and desirable are some effectual *Rules* and *Remedies* in this Case! O what a Mercy would it be to the Professors of these Days, to have their Minds fixed and their Judgments settled in the Truths of Christ! Happy is that man whose Judgment is so guarded, that no dangerous Error or Heresie can commit a *Rape* upon it. To this end I shall here commend the four following *Rules* to prevent this Vertiginous Malady in the Heads of Christians.

Rule I. Look warily to it that you get a real inward implantation into Christ, and lay the foundation deep and firm in a due and serious deliberation of Religion whenever you engage in the publick profession of it.

To this sense sound the Apostle's words, *Col.* 2. 6, 7. *As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the Faith, as you have been taught. Fertility and Stability* in Christ, a pair of inestimable Blessings, depend upon a good rooting of the Soul in him at first. He that thrusts a dead stick into the Ground, may easily pull it up again, but so he cannot do by a well-rooted Tree. A colour raised by violent Action, or a great Fire, soon dies away; but that which is natural or constitutional will hold. Every thing is as its foundation is 'Twas want of a good Root and due Depth of Earth which soon turned the green Corn into dry Stubble, *Matth.* 13. 21.

Rule II. Labour after an inward Experimental taste of all those Truths which you profess.

This will preserve your Minds from wavering and hesitation about the certainty and reality of them. We will not easily part with those Truths, which have sensibly shed down those sweet influences upon our Hearts, *Heb.* 10. 34. No Sophister can easily perswade a Man that hath tasted the sweetness of Honey, that it is a bitter and unpleasant thing; *Non est disputandum de gustu:* You cannot easily perswade a Man out of his Senses.

Rule III. Study hard and pray earnestly for Satisfaction in the present Truths; 2 *Pet.* 1. 12. *That you may be established* ἐν τῇ παρούσῃ ἀληθείᾳ, *in the Truth that now is under Opposition and Controversie.* Be not ignorant of the Truths that lie in present hazard.

Antiquated Opinions that are more abstracted from our present Interest, are no Tryals of the soundness of our Judgments, and integrity of our Hearts, as the controversies and conflicts of the present times are. Every Truth hath its time to come upon the Stage, and enter the Lists; some in one Age, and some in another; but Providence seems to have cast the Lot of your Nativity for the Honour and Defence of those Truths, with which Error is struggling and conflicting in your time.

Rule IV. Lastly, Be throughly sensible of the benefit and good of establishment, and of the Evil and Danger of a wavering Mind and Judgment.

Be not carried about with divers and strange Doctrines (saith the Apostle) *for it is a good thing that the heart be established, &c.* Heb. 13. 9. Established Souls are the Honour of Truth. It was the Honour of Religion in the primitive Days, that when the *Heathens* would proverbially express an impossibility, they used to say, *You may as soon turn a Christian from Christ, as do it.*

The Fickleness of Professors is a stumbling-block to the World. They'll say as *Cato* of the Civil Wars betwixt *Cæsar* and *Pompey*, *quem fugiam, video, quem sequar, non video*: They know whom to avoid, but not whom to follow. And as the honour of Truth, so the flourishing of your own Souls depend on it. A Tree often removed from one Soil to another, can never be expected to be fruitful, 'tis well if it make a shift to live.

Fifth Cause. Another inward *Cause* disposing men to receive erroneous Impressions, is an unreasonable *EAGERNESS* to snatch at any Doctrine or Opinion that promised Ease to an anxious Conscience.

Men that are under the frights and terrors of Conscience are willing to listen to any thing that offers present relief. Of all the Troubles in the World, those of the Mind and Conscience are most intolerable. And those that are in Pain are glad of Ease, and readily catch at any thing that seems to offer it.

This seems to be the thing which led those poor distressed Wretches, intimated *Micah* 6. 6. into their gross Mistakes and Errors about the Method of the Remission of their Sins. *Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow my self before the high God? shall I come before him with Burnt-offerings, with Calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousand of Rams, or with ten thousand of Rivers of Oyl? Shall I give my First-born for my Transgression, the Fruit of my Body for the Sin of my Soul?* They were ready to puchase inward Peace, and buy out their Pardon at any Rate. Nothing but the twinges of Conscience could have extorted these things from them. Great is th Efficacy and Torment of a guilty Conscience.

Satan, who feels more of this in himself than any other Creature in the World, and knows how ready poor ignorant, but distressed Sinners, are to catch at any thing that looks like ease or comfort, and being jealous what these Troubles of Conscience may issue into, prepares for them such Erroneous Doctrines and Opinions under the names of *Anodines* and quieting *Recipe*'s, by swallowing of which they feel some present ease; but their Disease is thereby made so much the more incurable.

* 'Tis upon this account he hath found such vent in the World for his *Penances*, *Pilgrimages*, and *Indulgences* among the *Papists*. But seeing this Ware will not go off among the Reformed and more enlightned Professors of Christianity, he changeth his hand and fitteth other Doses under other Names to quiet sick and distressed Souls, before ever their frights of Conscience come to settle into true Repentance and Faith in the Blood of Christ, by dressing up, and presenting to them such Opinions as these, *viz.*

That they may boldly apply to themselves all the Promises of Pardon and Peace, without any respect at all to Repentance or Faith in themselves; that it

* *Mr.* Gataker, *in his Book against* Saltmarsh, p. 27. *tells us of one that had taken ill Courses, and being under much trouble of mind, could not be quiet till he turned* Papist, *and had been shrieved and absolved by a Priest.*

it is not at all needful, nay, that it is illegal and sinful to have any respect to these things, forasmuch as their Sins were pardoned, and they justified from Eternity; and that the Covenant of Grace is in all Respects absolute, and is made to Sinners, as Sinners, without any Regard to their Faith or Repentance; and whatever Sins there be in them, God sees them not. *

* Saltmarsh, *in the Title-page of his Book called* Free-Grace, *shews you the Sovereign Virtue of* Antinomian *Principles, to quiet Troubles of Conscience of* 12 *Years Growth.*

To such a Charm of Troubles as this, how earnestly doth the Ear of a distressed Conscience listen! how greedily doth it suck in such pleasing words? Are all Sins that are pardoned, pardoned before they are committed? and does the Covenant of Grace require neither Repentance nor Faith antecedently to the Application of the Promises? how groundless then are all my Fears and Troubles? This, like a Dose of *Opium*, quiets, or rather stupifies the raging Conscience; for even an Error in Judgment, till it be detected and discovered to be so, quiets and comforts the Heart, as well as principles of Truth; but whenever the fallacy is detected, whether here or hereafter, the anguish of Conscience must be increased, or (which is worse) left desperate.

The Remedies.

To prevent and cure this Mistake and Error in the Soul, by which it is fitted and prepared to catch any Erroneous Principle (which is but plausible) for its present relief and ease, I shall desire my Reader seriously to ponder and consider the following *Queries* upon this Case.

Query I. Whether by the Vote of the whole Rational World, a good Trouble be not better than a false Peace? Present ease is desirable, but eternal safety is much more so: and if these two cannot consist under the present Circumstances of the Soul, Whether it be not better to endure for a time these painful pangs, than feel more acute and eternal ones, by quieting Conscience with false Remedies before the time?

'Tis bad to lie tossing a few Days under a laborious *Fever*; but far worse to have that Fever turned into a *Lethargy* or fatal *Apoplexy*. Erroneous Principles may rid the Soul of its present Pain, and eternal Hopes and Safety together. Acute Pains are better than a senseless stupidity. Tho' the present Rage of Conscience be not a right and kindly conviction, yet it may lead to it, and terminate in faith and union with Christ at last, if Satan do not this way practise upon it, and quench it before its time.

Query II. Bethink your selves seriously, Whether Troubles so quieted and laid asleep, will not revive and turn again upon thee with a double force, as soon as the Vertue of the Drug (I mean the Erroneous Principle) hath spent it self?

The Efficacy of Truth is eternal, and will maintain the peace it gives, for ever; but all delusions must vanish, and the Troubles which they damm'd up for a Time, break out with a greater force. Satan employs two sorts of *Witches*. Some to torment the Bodies of Men with grievous pain and anguish: but then he hath his *White-Witches* at hand to relieve and ease them. And have these poor Wretches any great Cause (think you) to boast of the Cure, who are eased of their Pains at the Price of their Souls?

Much like unto this, are the Cures of inward Troubles by Erroneous Principles. I lament the Case of blinded *Papists*, who by *Pilgrimages*, and and *Offerings* to the *Shrines* of Titular *Saints*, attempt the cure of a lesser Sin, by committing a greater. Is it because there is not a God in *Israel*, who is able in due season to pacify Conscience with proper and durable Gospel-Remedies, that we suffer our Troubles thus to precipitate us into the Snares of Satan for the Sake of present Ease?

Query III. Read the Scriptures, and inquire whether God's People, who have lain long under sharp inward Terrors, have not at last found settlement and inward Peace by those very Methods, which the Principles that quiet you, do utterly exclude?

If you will fetch your Peace from a groundless Notion, that your Sins were pardoned, and your Persons justified from all Eternity, and therefore you may apply boldly and confidently to your selves the choicest Promises and Privileges in the Gospel, without any regard to Faith or Repentance wrought by the Spirit in your souls: I am sure holy *David* took another course for the settlement of his Conscience, *Psal.* 51. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. And it hath been the constant practice of the *Saints* in all Ages, to clear their Title to the Righteousness of Christ wrought without them, by the Works of his Spirit wrought within them.

Sixth Cause. The next Evil Temper in the Subject, preparing and disposing it for Error, is an easie *CREDULITY*, or sequacious humour in Men, rendring them apt to receive things upon trust from others, without due and thorough examination of the Grounds and Reasons of them themselves.

This is a disposition fitted to receive any impression Seducers please to make upon them: they are said to deceive the Hearts of the simple, ἀκακῶν. *i. e.* credulous, but well-meaning People that suspect no harm. 'Tis said, *Prov.* 14. 15. *the simple believeth every word.* Through this Sluice or Flood-gate, what a multitude of *Errors* in *Popery* have overflowed the People! They are told, they are not able to judge for themselves, but must take the matters of their Salvation upon trust from their Spiritual Guides; and so the silly People are easily seduced, aad made easily receptive of the grossest absurdities their ignorant Leaders please to impose upon them.

And it were to be wished, That those two Points, *viz. Ministrorum muta officia, & populi cæca obsequia*, the dumb Services of their Ministers, and the blind Obedience of the People had stay'd within the *Popish* Confines. But alas, alas! how many simple *Protestants* be there, who may be said to carry their Brains in other Mens Heads? and like silly Sheep follow the next in the tract before them; especially if their Leaders have but wit and art enough to hide their *Errors* under specious and plausible Pretences. How many poisonous Drugs hath Satan put off under the gilded Titles of *Antiquity*; *Zeal for God, higher attainments in godliness, new Lights*? &c. How natural is it for Men to follow in the Tract, and be tenacious of the Principles and Practices of their Progenitors? Multitudes seem to hold their Opinions *Jure Hereditario*, by an Hereditary Right, as if their Faith descended to them the same way their Estates do.

The Emperor of *Morocco* told King *John*'s Ambassador, That he had read St. *Paul*'s Epistles; *And truly* (said he) *were I now to chuse my Religion,*

I would embrace Chriſtianity before any Religion in the World: but every Man ought to die in that Religion he received from his Anceſtors

Many honeſt, well-meaning, but weak Chriſtians, are alſo eaſily beguiled by ſpecious Pretences of new Light, and higher attainments in Reformation. This makes the weaker ſort of Chriſtians pliable to many dangerous *Errors* cunningly inſinuated under ſuch taking Titles. What are moſt of the Erroneous Opinions now vogued in the World, but old *Errors* under new Names and Titles?

The Remedies.

The *Remedies* and *Preventions* in this Caſe are ſuch as follow.

Remedy I. 'Tis beneath a Man to profeſs any Opinion to be his own, whilſt the grounds and reaſons of it are in other Mens keeping, and wholly unknown to himſelf.

If a Man may tell Gold after his Father, then ſure he may and ought to try and examine Doctrines and Points of Faith after him. We are commanded to be ready to give an account of the hope that is in us, and not to ſay, this or that is my Judgment or Opinion, but let others give an account of the ground and reaſon of it.

I confeſs, if he that leads me into an *Error* were alone expoſed to the hazard, and I quit and free, whatever become of him; it were quite another thing. But when our Saviour tells us, *Matth.* 15. 14. that *both* (that is, the Follower as well as the Leader) *fall into the ditch*; at my peril be it if I follow without Eyes of my own. That's but a weak building that is ſhored up by a prop from a Neighbour's Wall. How many Men have ruined their Eſtates by Suretiſhip for others? but of all Suretiſhip none ſo dangerous as ſpiritual Suretiſhip *We neither ought* (as a late Worthy ſpeaks) *to defy the Judgment of the weakeſt, nor yet on the other ſide to deify the Judgment of the ſtrongeſt Chriſtian.* He that pins his Faith upon another Man's Sleeve, knows not whither he will carry it.

Remedy II. As you ought not to abuſe your Chriſtian Privilege and Liberty to try all things, 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 21. ſo neither on the other ſide to undervalue or part with it. See the things that ſo much concern your eternal peace with your own Eyes.

I ſhewed you before, this Liberty is abuſed by extending too far; and under the notion of proving all thing, many embolden themſelves to innovate and entertain any thing. Yet beware of bartering ſuch a precious Privilege for the faireſt Promiſes others can make in lieu of it. I would not ſlight nor undervalue the Piety and Learning of others, nor yet put out my own Eyes to ſee by theirs.

Remedy III. Before you adventure to eſpouſe the Opinions of others, diligently obſerve and mark the fruits and conſequences of thoſe Opinions in the Lives of the zealous Abettors and Propagators of them: *By their fruits* (ſaith Chriſt) *ye ſhall know them.*

When the Opinion or Doctrine naturally tends to looſeneſs, or when it ſucks and draws away all a Man's Zeal to maintain and diffuſe it, and practical Religion thereby viſibly languiſhes in their Converſations, 'tis time for you to make a pauſe, before you advance one ſtep towards it.

Seventh Cauſe.

The next Evil Diſpoſition that I ſhall note in the Subject, is a vain *CURIOSITY* of Mind, or an itching deſire to pry into things unrevealed, at leaſt above our ability to ſearch out and diſcover.

'Tis an Obſervation as true as ancient, *Pruritus aurium ſcabies Eccleſiæ*, itching Ears come to a Scab upon the face of the Church. The *Itch* of *Novelty* produceth the *Scab* of *Error*. Of this Diſeaſe the *Apoſtle* warns us, 2 *Tim.* 4. 3. *For the time will come, when they will not endure ſound Doctrine; but after their own luſts ſhall they heap to themſelves Teachers, having itching Ears.* Nothing will pleaſe them but new Notions, and new modes of Language and Method, Tone and Geſture.

Sound Doctrine is the only ſubſtantial and ſolid Food that nouriſhes and ſtrengthens the Heart of the new Creature: but vain *Scepticks* nauſeate and deſpiſe this as trite, vulgar, cheap and low. Nothing humours them but Novelties and Rareties: their unſettled Brains muſt be wheel'd about, διδαχαῖς ποικίλαις καὶ ξέναις, with *divers and ſtrange Doctrines*, Heb. 13. 9. Novelty and Variety are the only Properties that commend Doctrines to wanton Palates. Hence it is they ſo boldly intrude into things they have not ſeen, *Col.* 2. 18. Theſe *Cyril* fitly calls τῶν τολμηρῶν πνεύματα, the domineerings, or darings of bold Spirits.

The *Schoolmen* have filled the World with a thouſand ungrounded Fancies, as the diſtinct Offices and Orders of *Angels*; and higher flights of fancy than theſe, which ſeem to be invented for no other end or uſe, but to pleaſe the itching Ears of the Curious.

There is not only a *veſana temeritas Genethliacorum*, a wild and daring raſhneſs of *Aſtrologers*, preſuming to foretell Futurities, and the *Fates* of *Kingdoms*, as well as particular Perſons, from the conjunctions and influences of the Stars; but there is alſo found as high a preſumption and boldneſs among Men in Matters of Religion.

Satan is well aware of this Humour in Men, and how exceeding ſerviceable it is to his Deſign; and therefore having the very knack of clawing and pleaſing itching Ears with taking Novelties, he is never wanting to feed their Minds with a pleaſing variety, and freſh ſucceſſion of them: new Opinions are ſtill invented and minted, in which the dangerous Hooks of *Error* are hid. If Men were once cured of this ſpiritual Itch, and their Minds reduced to that temper and ſobriety, as to be pleaſed with, and bleſs God for the plain revealed Truths of the Goſpel; *Satan* would drive but a poor Trade, and find but few Cuſtomers for his Erroneous Novelties.

The Remedies.

The proper *Remedies* to cure this itch after Novelty, or dangerous *Curioſity* of the Mind are

Remedy I. Due reflection upon the manifold Miſchiefs that have entred into the World this way.

It was this Curioſity and deſire to know, that overthrew our firſt Parents, *Gen.* 3. 6. *When the Woman ſaw that the Tree was good for food, and that it was pleaſant to the eyes, and a Tree to be deſired to make one wiſe; ſhe took of the fruit thereof.* The very ſame way by which he let in the firſt Error, he hath let thouſands into the World ſince that Day. Nothing is more common in the World, than for an old Error to obtain afreſh under the new light. Satan hath the very art of turning ſtale Errors after the mode of the preſent Times, and make them current and paſſable, as new Diſcoveries and rare Novelties.

Thus

Thus he puts off *Libertiniſm*, the old Sin of the World, under the Title of *Chriſtian Liberty*. What a troop of *Pagan* Idolatrous Rites were by this means introduced among the *Papiſts*? A great part of *Popery* is but *Ethniciſmus redivivus*, Heatheniſm reviv'd. The Pagans *Pontifex Maximus* was revived under the new Title of *Pope*. The *Gentiles Luſtrations* in the *Popiſh Holy-Water*. Their *Novendiale ſacrum*, or *Sacrifice* nine Days after the burial of the Party, in the *Popiſh Maſſes* for the dead. Their *Alvarium Fratrum*, in Cloyſters of *Monks* and *Fryars*. Their *Enchanters*, in *Popiſh Exorciſts*. Their *Aſyla*, in *Popiſh Sanctuaries*. With multitudes more of *Pagan* Rites quite out of Date in *Chriſtendum*, introduced again under new Names in Popery; as was intimated, *Rev.* 11. 2. and *Rev.* 13. 15.

Quid neſciatur ſine crimine, ne diſcutiatur cum diſcrimine.

Remedy II. Be ſatisfied that God hath not left his People to ſeek their Salvation, or ſpiritual Subſiſtence among curious, abſtruſe, and doubtful Notions; but in the great, ſolid, and plainly revealed Truths of the Goſpel, *John* 17. 3. *This is life eternal, that they may know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent. In facili & abſoluto ſtat æternitas*: the great concerns of our Salvation are plain and eaſie to be underſtood.

Remedy III. Vain *Curioſity* is a dangerous Snare of *Satan*. By ſuch Trifles as theſe, he devours our time, eats up our ſtrength, and diverts our minds from the neceſſary and moſt important buſineſs of Religion. Whilſt we immerſe our Thoughts in theſe pleaſing, but barren Contemplations, Heart-work, Cloſet-work, Family-work, lie by neglected. Whilſt we are employed in garniſhing the Diſh with Flowers, and curious Figures, the cunning Cheat takes away the Meat our Souls ſhould ſubſiſt by.

Eighth Cauſe.

Pride and *Arrogancy* of *HUMANE REASON*, is another Evil Diſpoſition, molding and preparing the Mind for *Errors*. When Men are once conceited of the ſtrength and perſpicacity of their own carnal Reaſons and Apprehenſions, nothing is more uſual than for ſuch Men to run mad with Reaſon into a thouſand Miſtakes and Errors. To this cauſe *Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtorians* aſcribe the Errors that infeſt the Church. *

* Deindè & humanæ rationis ſapientia quæ religioni plurimùm, ſemper nocuit, ſeu Philoſophia, non paucas ex ſeſe produxit hæreſes. Námque eo tempore Philoſophica ſtudia maximè vigebant; & ſuis argutiis, ſeu (ut ipſi putabant) demonſtrationibus, in ſuâ ſententiâ ità confirmati erant: ut nihil verum exiſtimarent, quod ab eorum conceptis jamdudum opinionibus diſcreparet. *Magdeb. in Cent. 2. cap. 5. pag.* 56.

Reaſon indeed is the higheſt natural excellency of Man: it exalts him above all Earthly Creatures, and in its primitive perfection almoſt equalized him with Angels, *Heb.* 2. 7. The Pleaſures which reſult from its Exerciſes and Experiments, tranſcend all the Delights and Pleaſures of Senſe. How common is it for Men to dote upon their own intellectual Beauty, and glory in their Victories over weaker Underſtandings? And though the reaſon of fallen Man is greatly wounded and weakened by Sin; yet it conceits it ſelf to be as ſtrong and clear as ever; and with *Sampſon*, when his Locks were ſhorn, goes forth as before time, being neither ſenſible of its own weakneſs, or of the myſterious and unſearchable Depths of Scripture.

Reaſon is our *Arbiter* and Guide by the Inſtitution and Law of Nature, in civil and natural Affairs: 'tis the beam and ſtandard at which we weigh them. It is an home-born Judge and King in the Soul: Faith comes in as a ſtranger to Nature, and ſo it is dealt with, even as an Intruder into Reaſon's Province, juſt as the *Sodomites* dealt with *Lot*: It refuſeth to be an Underling to Faith. Out of this Arrogancy of carnal *Reaſon*, as from *Pandora's Box*, ſwarms of *Errors* are flown abroad into the World.

By this Means *Socinianiſm* firſt ſtarted, and hath ſince propagated it ſelf. They look upon it as a ridiculous and unaccountable thing to Reaſon, that the *Son* ſhould be co-equal and co-eternal with the *Father*: that God ſhould forgive Sins freely, and yet forgive none but upon full Satisfaction. That Chriſt ſhould make that Satisfaction by his Sufferings, and yet be *pars læſa*, the Party offended, and ſo make Satisfaction to himſelf: with many more of the like Stamp.

Yea, *Atheiſm*, as well as *Socinianiſm*, are Births from this Womb. 'Tis proud and carnal Reaſon which quarrels at the Creation of the World, and ſeems to triumph in its incontrolable *Maxim*, *Ex nihilo nihil fit, out of nothing comes nothing*. It looks upon the Doctrine of the *Reſurrection* with a deriding ſmile, as a thing incredible. It thinks it hard and harſh that God ſhould command Men to turn themſelves to him, and threaten them with Damnation in caſe of Refuſal; and yet at the ſame time Man ſhould not have in himſelf a ſufficient Power, and a free will to do this, without the ſupernatural and preventing Grace of God. It thinks it a ridiculous thing for ſuch a great and ſolemn Ordinance of God as Baptiſm is, to paſs upon ſuch a Subject as an *Infant* of a Week old, which is not capable to underſtand the Ends and Uſes of it. Hence it is ſome over-heated Zealots have not ſtuck to ſay, That we have as good warrant and reaſon to baptize *Cats*, *Dogs*, and *Horſes*, as we have to baptize Infants. Oh the madneſs of carnal Reaſon!

Mr. *Samuel Clark's* Golden Apples. *p.* 149.

The Remedies.

To take down the Arrogance, and prevent the miſchief of carnal Reaſonings, let us be convinced,

Remedy I. That it is the Will of God, that *Reaſon* in all Believers ſhould reſign to *Faith*, and all *Ratiocination* ſubmit to *Revelation*.

Reaſon is no better than an Uſurper, when it preſumes to arbitrate matters belonging to Faith and Revelation. † *Reaſon's* proper place is to ſit at the Feet of Faith, and inſtead of ſearching the ſecret grounds and reaſons, to adore and admire the great and unſearchable Myſteries of the Goſpel. None of God's Works are *unreaſonable*, but many of them are *above Reaſon*. It was as truly, as ingeniouſly ſaid by one; *Never doth Reaſon ſhew it ſelf more reaſonable, than when it ceaſeth to reaſon about things that are above Reaſon. Where is the Wiſe? Where is the Scribe? Where is the Diſputer of this World? Hath not God made fooliſh the wiſdom of this World? For after that, in the wiſdom of God, the World by wiſdom knew not God, it pleaſed God by the fooliſhneſs of preaching to ſave them that believe*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 20, 21. 'Tis not Reaſon but Faith that muſt ſave us.

† *Man having ſinned by Pride, the Wiſdom of God humbles him at the very root of the Tree of Knowledge, and makes him deny his own Underſtanding, and ſubmit to Faith; or elſe for ever to loſe his deſired Felicity.* Laud *againſt* Fiſher, *p.* 5.

The Wiſdom of God in the Goſpel, is Wiſdom in a Myſtery, even hidden Wiſdom, which God ordained before the World unto our Glory, 1 *Cor.* 2. 7. Such Wiſdom as the moſt Eagle-eyed *Rationaliſts* and famed *Philoſophers* of the World understood not. *Eye hath not ſeen, nor Ear heard, neither have entred into the Heart of Man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit*, ibid. *ver.* 9, 10.

Remedy II. Be convinced of the weakneſs and deep Corruption of natural Reaſon, and this will reſtrain its Arrogance, and make it modeſt and wary.

A convinced and renewed Soul is conſcious to it ſelf of its own weakneſs and blindneſs, and therefore dares not pry audaciouſly into the *Arcana Cœli*, nor ſummon the great God to its Bar. It finds it ſelf poſed by the Myſteries of Nature, and therefore concludes it ſelf an incompetent Judge of the Myſteries of Faith.

The Arrogancy of *Reaſon* is the reigning Sin of the Unregenerate, though it be a Diſeaſe with which the Regenerate themſelves are infected. When Conviction ſhall do its work upon the Soul, the Plumes of ſpiritual Pride quickly fall; and it ſaith with *Job*: *Once have I ſpoken, but I will ſpeak no more; yea, twice, but I will proceed no further.* q. d. I have done, Father, I have done; *I have uttered things that I underſtood not*, Job 42. 3. Spiritual Illumination cures this Ambition.

Remedy III. Conſider the manifold Miſchiefs and Evils flowing from the Pride of *Reaſon*.

It doth not only fill the World with Errors and Diſtractions; but it alſo invades the Rights of Heaven, and caſts a vile Reflection upon the *Wiſdom*, *Sovereignty*, and *Veracity* of God. If lifts up it ſelf againſt his *Wiſdom*, not conſidering that *the fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer than Men*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 25. It ſpurns at his glorious *Sovereignty*, not conſidering that *he giveth no account of his Matters*, Job 33. 13. It queſtions his *Veracity*, in ſaying with *Nicodemus*, *How can theſe things be?* John 3. 9.

Cauſe IX. The laſt evil Diſpoſition I ſhall here take notice of in the *Subject*, is raſh and ignorant *ZEAL*; a Temper preparing the Mind both to propagate furiouſly, and receive eaſily Erroneous Doctrines and Opinions.

When there is in the Soul more Heat than light; when a fervent Spirit is governed by a weak Head, ſuch a Temper of Spirit *Satan* deſires, and ſingles out as fitteſt for his Purpoſe, eſpecially when the Heart is graceleſs, as well as the Underſtanding weak. A blind Horſe of an high Mettle will carry the Rider into any Pit, and venture over the moſt dangerous Precipices.

Such were the ſuperſtitious *Jewiſh Zealots*: they had a Zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. This κακοζηλία *blind Zeal*, St. *Paul* charges juſtly upon the *Jewiſh Bigots*, *Rom.* 10. 2. as the proper Cauſe of their dangerous Errors about the great Point of *Juſtification*: and ſurely no Man underſtood the evil of it more than he, who in his unregenerate ſtate was tranſported by it to the moſt ſerious perſecution of the *Saints*, *Acts* 26. 11. and even to dotage, and extream fondneſs upon the Erroneous Traditions of his Fathers, *Gal.* 1. 14.

Blind *Zeal* is a Sword in a Mad-Man's Hand. No Perſecutor to a conſcientious one, whoſe erroneous Conſcience offers up the blood of the Saints to the glory of God, *John* 16. 2. The blind, but zealous *Phariſees* would compaſs Sea and Land to make one Proſelyte, *Matth.* 23. 15. as our *Modern Phariſees*, the *Jeſuits*, have ſince done, who have mingled themſelves with the remoteſt and moſt barbarous *Nations*, to draw them to the *Romiſh Error*. Of the ſame temper were the falſe Teachers taxed by the Apoſtle, *Gal.* 4. 17. they zealouſly affect you, but not well: yea, they would exclude you (*viz.* from our Society and Ordinances) that you might affect them.

And as it is the great Inſtrument by which *Satan* propagates *Errors*, ſo it makes a fit Temper in the Souls of the People to receive them. For by this means *Error* gains the poſſeſſion of the Affections, without paſſing a previous and due teſt by the Underſtanding, and ſo gains the Soul by the Advantage of a Surprize. Every thing, by how much the more weak and ignoble it is, by ſo much the more it watcheth upon Surpriſals and Advantages. *Error* cares not to endure the due Examination and Teſt of Reaſon; and therefore ſeeks to gain by ſurpriſal, what it deſpairs of ever gaining by a plain and fair Tryal.

There be few *Erroriſts* in the World of *Alexander's* Mind, who would *rather loſe the day, than ſteal the Victory*. Hence it comes to paſs that the greateſt number of thoſe they lead Captives are ſilly *Women*, as the *Apoſtle* ſpeaks, who are the moſt affectionate, but leaſt judicious *Sex*.

From this *blind Zeal* it is, that they cunningly wind their Erroneous Opinions into all their Diſcourſes, where they have any hope to prevail. A rational and modeſt Contradiction puts them into a Flame, it breaks the neareſt bonds of Friendſhip and Society.

Rabſhekah in 2 *Kings* 18. would not treat with *Hezekiah's Counſellors* of State, but with the common People upon the Wall: And Error cares not to treat with ſound Reaſon, able to ſift it through the Scripture-ſearce, but with the Affections; as well knowing, it is in vain to make War in Reaſons Territories without firſt gaining a Party among the Affections.

The Remedies.

The beſt *Defenſatives* againſt Erroneous Contagions in this caſe, are to be found in the following Particulars.

Defenſative I. Reflect ſeriouſly and ſadly upon the manifold Miſchiefs occaſioned every-where, and in all Ages of the World, by raſh Zeal.

Revolve Church-Hiſtories, and you ſhall find, that ſcarce any cruel Perſecution hath flamed in the World, which hath not been kindled by blind Zeal. Turn over all the Records, both of *Pagan* and *Popiſh* Perſecutions, and you ſhall ſtill find theſe two Obſervations confirmed and verified.

Firſt, That ignorant Zeal hath kindled the Fires of Perſecution; and *Secondly*, That the more zealous any have been for the ways of *Error* and Falſhood, ſtill the more implacably fierce and cruel they have been to the ſincere Servants of God. None like a Superſtitious *Devoto* to manage the Devil's work of Perſecution throughly and to purpoſe. They'll ruſh violently and head-long into the blood of their deareſt Relations, or moſt eminent Saints, to whoſe ſides the Devil ſets this ſharp Spur. Superſtitious Zeal draws all the Strength and Power of the Soul into that one Deſign; and woe to him that ſtands in the way of ſuch a Man, if God interpoſe not betwixt him and the Stroak. It was a rational Wiſh of him that ſaid, *Liberet me Deus ab Homine unius tantum negotii*, God deliver me from a Man of one only Now

Deſign.

Now conſider, Reader, if thy judgment be *weak*, and thy affections *warm*, how much thou lieſt expoſed, not only to *Errors* which may ruin thy ſelf, but alſo to Tongue and Hand-perſecution, wherein *Satan* may manage thy Zeal for the Injury or Ruine of thoſe that are better than thy ſelf: And withal conſider, how many dreadful threatnings are found in Scripture againſt the Inſtruments of Perſecution, ſo employed and managed by Satan.

Certainly, Reader, it were better for thee to ſtand with thy naked Breaſt before the mouth of a diſcharging *Canon*, than that thy Soul ſhould ſtand under this guilt, before ſuch a Scripture-threatning as that, *Pſal.* 7. 13. *He hath alſo prepared for him the inſtruments of death; he ordaineth his Arrows againſt the Perſecutors.* And none more likely to become ſuch, than thoſe of thine own temper and complexion; eſpecially if Grace be wanting in the heart, whilſt Zeal for erroneous Principles eats up the Affections.

Second Defenſative. Conſider what Miſchief zeal for an *Error* will do thine own Soul, as well as others.

It will wholly ingroſs thy Time, Thoughts, and Strength; ſo that if there be any gracious Principle in thee, it ſhall not be able to thrive and proſper: For look, as a *Fever* takes off the natural Appetite from Food, ſo will erroneous Zeal take off thy Spiritual Appetite from Meditation, Prayer, Heart-examination, and all other the moſt neceſſary and nouriſhing Duties of Religion, by reaſon whereof thy Grace muſt languiſh.

When thy Soul, with *David's*, ſhould be filled and feaſted, as with Marrow and Fatneſs, by delightful Meditations of God upon thy Bed, thou wilt be rolling in thy Mind thy barren and inſipid Notions, which yield no Food or Spiritual Strength to thy Soul; thou wilt lie muſing how to diſſolve the Arguments and Objections againſt thine Errors, when thou ſhouldeſt rather be employed in ſolving the juſt and weighty Objections that lie againſt thy ſincerity and intereſt in Chriſt, which were time far better improved.

Third Defenſative. Conſider how baneful this inordinate Zeal hath been to Chriſtian Society, lamentably defacing, and almoſt diſſolving it every where, to the unſpeakable Detriment of the Churches.

We read, *Mal.* 3. 16. of a bleſſed time, when they that feared the Lord ſpake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a Book of Remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord, and thought upon his Name. Oh happy time! *Halcion* days! I, my ſelf, remember the time, when the Zeal of the Saints ſpent it ſelf in provoking one another to Love and Good Works, in joint and fervent Prayer, in inward, experimental, and edifying Communion; my Soul hath them ſtill in remembrance, and is caſt down within me: For alas! alas! how do I ſee every where Chriſtian Communion turned into vain janglings? Churches and Families into meer Cock-pits? Mens Diſcourſings falling as naturally into Contentions about Trifles, as they were wont to do into Heavenly and Experimental Subjects, to the unſpeakable diſgrace and damage of Religion.

Fourth Defenſative. That Opinion is juſtly to be ſuſpected for erroneous, which comes in at the Poſtern-door of the Affections; and not openly and fairly at the right Gate of an enlightned and well ſatisfied Judgment. 'Tis a Thief that cometh in at the Back-door, at leaſt ſtrongly to be ſuſpected for one. *Truth* courts the *Miſtreſs*, makes its firſt and faireſt Addreſſes to the Underſtanding. *Error* bribes the *Handmaid*, and labours firſt to win the Affections, that by their influence it may corrupt the Judgment.

And thus you ſee, beſides the innocent *Occaſion*, viz. *God's Permiſſion* of *Errors* in the World, for the Tryal of his People, Nine proper *Cauſes* of *Errors* found in the evil Diſpoſitions of the Minds of Men, which prepare them to receive erroneous Doctrines and Impreſſions, *viz.*

1. A wrangling humour at the pretended *Obſcurity* of Scripture.
2. The Abuſe of that *Chriſtian Liberty* purchaſed by Chriſt.
3. *Slothfulneſs* in ſearching the whole Word of God.
4. *Fickleneſs* and *Inſtability* of Judgment.
5. *Eagerneſs* after *Anodines* to eaſe a diſtreſſed *Conſcience.*
6. An eaſy *Credulity* in following the Judgments and Examples of others.
7. Vain *Curioſity*, and prying into unrevealed Secrets.
8. The *Pride* and *Arrogancy* of *Human Reaſon.*
9. *Blind Zeal*, which ſpurs on the Soul, and runs it upon dangerous Precipices.

We next come to conſider the principal Impulſive *Cauſe*, by which *Errors* are propagated and diſſeminated in the World.

Cauſe X. Come we next in the proper order to conſider the Principal *Impulſive Cauſe* of *Errors*; which is *SATAN* working upon the prediſpoſed Matter he finds in the corrupt Nature of Man. * The Centuriſts ſpeaking of the ſtrange and ſudden growth of Errors and Hereſies, immediately after the planting of the Goſpel by Chriſt, and the Apoſtles, aſcribe it to Satan.

* Quæ quidem res abundè docet diram eſſe Diaboli malitiam: qui victus, atque proſtratus à Chriſto, nihilominus auſus eſt ejus Verbum ac totam religionis formam, tetris opinionibus ac blaſphemiis conſpurcare, lacerare, & propemodum evertere. Ut autem portenta hujus maligni ſpiritus in conſpectu ſint & quaſi primæ ſcaturigines plurimarum hæreſium, quæ poſtea, veluti aliis in ſe receptis rivis mirum in modum excreverunt, &c. *Hiſt. Magdeb. Gent.* 1. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 5. *p.* 368.

Satan was a Liar from the beginning, and abode not in the Truth: He hates it with a deadly hatred, and all the Children and Friends of Truth. And this hatred he manifeſteth ſometimes by raiſing furious Storms of Perſecution againſt the ſincere Profeſſors of it, *Rev.* 3. 10. and ſometimes by Clouds of *Hereſies* and *Errors*, with deſign to darken it. In the former he acts as a roaring *Lyon*; in the latter as a ſubtile *Serpent*, 2 *Cor.* 11. 5. *I fear leſt as the Serpent beguiled Eve through his Subtilty; ſo your minds ſhould be corrupted from the ſimplicity that is in Chriſt.*

When Swinkfeld *ſent his Books to* Luther, *he told the Meſſenger, the Devil was the Author of them; and the Lord rebuke thee Satan, was the Anſwer he returned to them.*

He is exceeding skilful and dexterous in citing and wreſting the Scriptures to ſerve his vile Deſigns and Purpoſes; and as impudently daring, as he is crafty and cunning; as appears in the Hiſtory of Chriſt's temptation in the Deſart, *Matt.* 4. 6. where

where he cites one part of that Promiſe, *Pſal.* 91. 11. and ſuppreſſeth the reſt; ſhews the encouragement, *viz. He ſhall give his Angels charge over thee*; but clips off the limitation of it, *viz. to keep thee in all thy ways: In viis, non in præcipitiis*, In our lawful ways, not in raſh and dangerous Precipices; as *Bernard* well gloſſeth.

And 'tis worth obſervation, that he introduceth multitudes of Errors into the World, under the unſuſpected notions of admirable *Prophylacticks*, and approved Preſervatives from all Miſchiefs and Dangers from himſelf. Under this Notion, he hath neatly and covertly ſlided into the World, *Holy-water*, *Croſſings*, *Reliques* of *Saints*, and almoſt innumerable other ſuperſtitious Rites.

Erroneous Teachers are the Miniſters of Satan, however they transform themſelves into Miniſters of Righteouſneſs, 2 *Cor.* 11. 15, and the ſubtle dangerous Errors they broach, are fitly ſtiled by the Spirit of God, τὰ βάθη τοῦ Σατανᾶ, *the Depths of Satan*, Rev. 2. 24. The corrupt Teachers, the *Gnoſticks*, &c. called them Depths, *i. e.* great Myſteries, high and marvellous attainments in Knowledge; but the Spirit of God fits a very proper *Epithete* to them. They are Satanical Depths, and Myſteries of Iniquity. Now the level and deſign of Satan herein is double.

Firſt, He aims at the Ruin and Damnation of thoſe that vent and propagate them; upon which account the Apoſtle calls them αἱρέσεις ἀπωλείας, 2 *Pet.* 2. 1. deſtructive or (as we render it) damnable Hereſies. And becauſe God will preſerve the Souls of his own from this mortal Contagion, therefore,

Secondly, He endeavours by leſſer Errors to buſy the Minds, and check the growth of Grace in the Souls of the Saints, by employing them about Things ſo foreign to true Godlineſs, and the power thereof, *Heb.* 13. 9.

The Remedies.

The *Rules* for prevention and recovery are theſe that follow:

Rule I. Pray earneſtly for a thorough change of the ſtate and temper of thy Soul, by ſound *Converſion* and *Regeneration*.

Converſion turns us from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan to God, *Acts* 26. 18. They are his own ſlaves and vaſſals that are taken captive by him at his will, 2 *Tim.* 2. 16. A Sanctified Heart is a Sovereign defenſative againſt Erroneous Doctrines; it furniſhes the Soul with ſpiritual Eyes, judicious Ears, and a diſtinguiſhing Taſte, by which it may diſcern both Good and Evil, Truth and Error, *Heb.* 5. 14. yea, it puts the Soul at once under the conduct of the Spirit, and Protection of the Promiſe, *John* 16. 13. and though this doth not ſecure a Man from all leſſer Miſtakes, yet it effectually ſecures him from greater ones, which are inconſiſtent with Chriſt and Salvation.

Rule II. Acquaint your ſelves with the *wiles* and *methods* of Satan, and be not ignorant of his *devices*, 2 *Cor.* 2. 11.

When once you underſtand the waſh and paint with which he ſets off the ugly face of Error, you will not eaſily be enamoured with it. Pretences of Devotion upon one ſide, and of Purity, Zeal, and Reformation upon the other; though they be pleaſant ſounds to both Ears, yet the wary Soul will examine, before it receive and admit Doctrinal Points under theſe gilded Titles. Thoſe that have made their Obſervations upon the ſtratagems of Satan, will heedfully obſerve both the tendency of Doctrines, and the Lives of their Teachers; and if they find looſeneſs, pride, wantonneſs in them, it is not a glorious Title, or magnificent name that ſhall charm them. They know Satan can transform himſelf into an Angel of Light; and no wonder if his Miniſters alſo be transformed into Miniſters of Righteouſneſs, 2 *Cor.* 11. 14, 15.

Rule III. Reſign your Minds and Judgments in fervent Prayer to the Government of Chriſt, and Conduct of the Spirit; and in all your addreſſes to God, pray that he would keep them chaſte and pure, and not ſuffer Satan to commit a Rape upon them, Plead with God that part of Chriſt's Prayer, *John* 17. 17. *Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*

Rule IV. Live in the conſcientious and conſtant practice of all thoſe Truths and Duties God hath already manifeſted to you.

This will bring you under that bleſſed Promiſe of Chriſt, *John* 7. 17. *If any Man will do his will, he ſhall know of the Doctrine, whether it be of God.* Satan's greateſt Succeſſes are among idle, notional, and vain Profeſſors; not humble, ſerious, and practical Chriſtians.

Cauſe XI. Having conſidered and diſpatched the ſeveral internal *Cauſes* of Error, found in the evil diſpoſitions of the ſeduced, as alſo the *Impulſive Cauſe*, viz. *Satan*, who ſets ſuitable Baits to all theſe ſinful Humours and evil Tempers of the Heart; we come next to conſider the *Inſtrumental Cauſe* employed by Satan in this work, *viz.* the *FALSE TEACHER*, whom Satan makes uſe of as his Seeds-man, to diſſeminate and ſcatter Erroneous Doctrines and Principles into the Minds of Men, ploughed up, and prepared by thoſe evil Tempers forementioned, as a fit Soil to receive them.

The choice of Inſtruments is a principal part of Satan's Policy. Every one is not fit to be employed in ſuch a Service as this. All are not fit to be of the Council of War, who yet take their places in the Field. A *Ruſtick* carried out of the Field, on Board a Ship at Sea, though he never learned his Compaſs, nor ſaw a Ship before, can by another's Direction, tug luſtily at a Rope; but he had need be an expert *Artiſt*, that ſits at the *Helm*, and ſteers the courſe. The worſt Cauſes need the ſmootheſt *Orators*; and bad *Ware* a cunning *Merchant* to put it off *.

* Subtiles & aſtutas fuiſſe Montani fraudes, & quæ blandâ ſpecie quibuſvis imponere facilè potuerint; indè liquet quòd totam propemodùm Scripturam ſuſcepit; ac de Deo Patre, Filio, & Spiritu ſancto (ut *Epiphanius* ſcribit) eadem docuit quæ Eccleſia Chriſti, *Magdeb. Cent.* 2. *Chap.* 5. *p.* 72. De Hæreſibus ſub *Commodo*.

Deep pated Men are coveted by Satan to manage this Deſign. None like an eloquent *Tertullus* to confront a *Paul*, *Acts* 24. 1. A ſubtil *Eccius* to enter the Liſt in defence of the Popiſh Cauſe, againſt the Learned and Zealous Reformers. When the Duke of *Buckingham* undertook to plead the bad Cauſe of *Richard* the Third, the *Londoners* ſaid, *They never thought it had been poſſible for any Man to deliver ſo much bad matter, in ſuch good Words and quaint Phraſes.* *Continuation of* Daniel's *Hiſtory*, p. 233.

The firſt Inſtrument choſen by Satan to deceive Man, was the Serpent; becauſe that Creature was more ſubtil than any Beaſt of the Field. There is not a Man of eminent Parts, but *Satan* ſollicites him for this Service. St. *Auſtin* told an ingeni-

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ous, but unſanctified *Scholar*, *Cupit abs te ornari Diabolus*, The Devil covets thy Parts to adorn his Cauſe. He ſurveys the World, and wherever he finds more than ordinary Strength of Reaſon, Pregnancy of Wit, Depth of Learning, and Elegancy of Language, that is the Man he looketh for.

Theſe are the Men that can almoſt indiſcernably ſprinkle their Errors among many precious Truths, and wrap up their poiſonous Drugs in Leaf-Gold or Sugar. *Mareſius* notes of *Crellius* and his Accomplices, That by the power of their Eloquence, and ſophiſtry of their Arguments, they were able artificially to cloath horrible Blaſphemies to allure the ſimple.

* Teſtorio fucatæ eloquentiæ, argutiiſq; Sophiſticis è Scripturâ perniciosè detortâ, ac fallaci fallentéq; ratione horrendæ blaſphemiæ artificiosè circumveſtiuntur ad ineſcandos ſimpliciores. *Præfatio ad Hyd. Socin.*

And like the *Hyæna*, they can counterfeit the Voices of the Shepherds, to deceive and deſtroy the Sheep. There is (ſaith a late * Worthy) an *erudita nequitia*, a learned kind of wickedneſs, a ſubtil art of deceiving the Minds of others. Upon which account the Spirit of God ſometimes compares them, 2 *Pet.* 2. 3. to cunning and cheating *Tradeſmen* who have the very Art to ſet a gloſs upon their bad Wares with fine Words, πλαστοῖς λόγοις ὑμᾶς ἐμπορεύσονται, they buy and ſell the People with their ensnaring and feigned words. And ſometimes he compares them to cunning *Gameſters*, that have the art and ſlight of hand to Cog the *Die*, to deceive the unskilful and win their Game, *Eph.* 4. 14. ἐν τῇ κυβείᾳ, &c.

* *Mr.* W. Gurnal, *Chriſtian Armour*, *Part* 2. *p.* 33.

Sunt quidam vaniloqui, & mentis ſeductores non Chriſtiani, ſed Chriſtum mercantes & cauponantes verbum Evangelii, qui venenum Erroris commiſcentes dulci blandimento ſicut œnomeli ut qui biberit illius potus guſtabilem ſenſum, dulcedine captus, inobſervanter morti addicatur. *Ignatius Epiſt. ad Trallianos*, *p.* 68.

And ſometimes the Spirit of God compares them to *Witches* themſelves, *Gal.* 3. 1. τίς ὑμᾶς ἐβάσκανε; *fooliſh Galatians, who hath bewitched you?* How many ſtrange feats have been done upon the Bodies of Men and Women by *Witchcraft?* But far more and ſtranger upon the Souls of Men by the *Magick* of *Error*. *Jannes* and *Jambres* performed wonderful things in the ſight of *Pharaoh*, by which they deceived and hardened him; and unto theſe, falſe Teachers are compared.

Such a Man was *Elymas* the Sorcerer, who laboured to ſeduce the Deputy, *Sergius Paulus*, tho' a prudent Man, *Acts* 13. 7, 8, 9, 10. *Oh full of all Subtilty, and all Miſchief, thou Child of the Devil!* ſaid *Paul* unto him. The Art of ſeduction from the ways of Truth and Holineſs, diſcovers a Man to be both the *Child* and *Scholar* of the Devil.

But as the wiſe and painful Miniſters of Chriſt, who turn many to Righteouſneſs, ſhall have double Glory in Heaven; ſo theſe ſubtil and moſt active Agents for the Devil, who turn many from the ways of Righteouſneſs, will have a double portion of Miſery in Hell.

The Remedies.

The proper *Remedies* in this Caſe are principally Two.

Remedy I. Pray fervently, and labour diligently in the uſe of all God's appointed means, to get more ſolidity of Judgment, and ſtrength of Grace to eſtabliſh you in the Truth, and ſecure your Souls againſt the cunning craftineſs of Men that lie in wait to deceive.

'Tis the ignorance and weakneſs of the People, which makes the Factors for Error ſo ſucceſsful as they are. Conſult the Scriptures, and you ſhall find theſe cunning Merchants drive the quickeſt and gainfulleſt trade among the weak and injudicious. So ſpeaks the Apoſtle, *With good Words and fair ſpeeches, they deceive the hearts of the ſimple*; ἀκάκων, harmleſs, weak, eaſie Souls, who have a deſire to do well, but want wiſdom to diſcern the ſubtilties of them that mean ill; who are void both of fraud in themſelves, and ſuſpicion of others. Oh! what ſucceſs have the Deceivers, χρηστολογία καὶ εὐλογία, their fair words and ſugared ſpeeches, ſweet and taking expreſſions, among ſuch innocent ones!

And who are they among whom Satan's cunning Gameſters commonly win the Game, and ſweep the Stakes, but weak Chriſtians, credulous Souls, whom for that reaſon the Apoſtle calls νήπιοι, Children. The word properly ſignifies an Infant, when 'tis referred to the Age; but unskilful and unlearned, when referred (as it is here) to the Mind. So again, 2 *Pet.* 2. 14. They (that is, the Falſe Teachers there ſpoken of) beguile ψυχὰς ἀστηρίκτους, unſtable Souls, Souls that are not confirmed and grounded in the Principles of Religion. Whence by the way, take notice of the unſpeakable advantage and neceſſity of being well Catechized in our Youth: the more judicious, the more ſecure.

Remedy II. Labour to acquaint your ſelves with the ſleights and artifices Satan's Factors and Inſtruments generally make uſe of, to ſeduce and draw Men from the Truth. The knowledge of them is a good Defenſative againſt them. Now there are two common Artifices of Seducers, which it is not ſafe for Chriſtians to be ignorant of.

Firſt, They uſually ſeek to diſgrace and blaſt the Reputations of thoſe Truths and Miniſters ſet for their Defence, which they deſign afterwards to Overthrow and Ruin; and to beget Credit and Reputation to thoſe Errors which they have a mind to introduce. How many precious Truths of God are this Day, and with this Deſign, defamed as legal and carnal Doctrines; and thoſe that defend them, as Men of an *Old Teſtament* Spirit?

Humiliation for Sin, Contrition of Spirit, *&c.* fall under diſgrace with many, and indeed all Qualifications and Pre-Requiſites unto coming to Chriſt, as things not only needleſs, but pernicious unto the Souls of Men, although they have not the leaſt Dependance upon them: Yea, Faith it ſelf, as a Pre-Requiſite unto Juſtification, as no better than a Condition pertaining to *Adam*'s *Covenant*.

And ſo for the Perſons of Orthodox Miniſters; you ſee into what Contempt the falſe Teachers would have brought both the Perſon and Preaching of *Paul* himſelf, 2 *Cor.* 10. 10. *His bodily preſence* (ſay they) *is weak, and his ſpeech contemptible.*

Secondly, Their other common Artifice is, to inſinuate their falſe Doctrines among many acknowledged and precious Truths, which only ſerve for a convenient Vehicle to them; and beſides that, to make their Errors as palatable and guſtful as they can to the vitiated Appetite of corrupt Nature. The forementioned Mr. W. G. Worthy hath judiciouſly obſerved

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how artificially *Satan* hath blended his baneful Dotes, to please the Palate of *Carnal Reason*, *Spiritual Pride*, and the desire of *Fleshly Liberty*.

Carnal Reason is that great Idol, which the more intelligent part of the carnal World worships. And are not the *Socinian* Heresies as pleasant to it, as a well-mixt *Julep* to a *Feverish Stomach*.

Spiritual Pride is another *Diana*, which obtains greatly in the World; and no Doctrine like the *Pelagian* and *Semipelagian* Errors, to gratify it. A Doctrine that sets fallen Nature upon its Legs again, and persuades it, it can go alone to Christ; at least, with a little external help of moral suasion, without any preventing or creating work in the Soul. This goes down glib and gratefully.

And then for *Fleshly Liberty*, How do those that are fond of it rejoice in that Doctrine or Opinion, which looses Nature from the Yoke of Restraint? How does the poor deluded *Papist* hug himself, to think he hath Liberty by his Religion, to let loose the reins of his Lust to all Sensualities, and quit himself from all that Guilt, by Auricular Confession to the Priest once a Year? How doth the *Familist* smile upon that Principle of his, which tells him, the Gospel allows more Liberty than severe Legal Teachers think fit to tell them of: They press Repentance and Faith; but Christ hath done all this to thy Hands.

Cause XII. Having considered the several *Causes* of *Errors*, found in the evil dispositions of the seduced, as also the *impulsive* and *instrumental Causes*, namely, *Satan*, and *false Teachers* employed by him; I shall next proceed to discover some special and most successful Methods frequently used by them, to draw the Minds of Men from the Truth. Amongst which, that which comes first to Consideration, is the great skill they have in representing the *Abuses* of the Ordinances of God, and Duties of Religion, by wicked Men, to scare tender and weak Consciences from the due use of them, and all further attendance upon them.

The abuse of Christ's holy Appointments are so cunningly improved to serve this Design, that the Minds of many well-meaning Persons receive such deep disgust at them, that they are scarce ever to be reconciled to them again. A strong prejudice is apt to drive Men from one extream upon another, as thinking they can never get far enough off from that which hath been so scaringly represented to them. Thus making good the old Observation, *Dum vitant stulti vitia, in contraria currunt*; they run from the troublesome smoak of Superstition, into the fire of an irreligious contempt of God's Ordinances, split themselves upon *Charybdis* to avoid *Scylla*. *Ex. gra*

The *Papists* having deeply abused the Ordinance of *Baptism*, by their corruptive mixtures and additions of the superstitious *Cross*, *Chrism*, &c. part whereof is not sufficiently purged to this Day by the Reformation; and finding also multitudes of carnal *Protestants* dangerously resting upon their supposed baptismal Regeneration, to the great hazard of their Salvation; which Mistake is but too much countenanced by some of its Administrators: They take from hence such deep offence at the Administration of it to any Infants at all (though the Seed of God's Covenanted People) that they think they can never be sharp enough in their Invectives against it; nor have they Patience to hear the most rational Defences of that Practice.

So, for that scriptural heavenly Duty of *Singing*: What more commonly alledged against it, than the abuse and ill effects of that precious Ordinance? How often is the Nonsense and Error of the common Translation, the rudeness and dulness of the Metre of some *Psalms*, as *Psal.* 7. 13. as also the cold formality, with which that Ordinance is performed by many who do but Parrotize? I say, How often are these things buzz'd into the Ears of the People, to alienate their Hearts from so sweet and beneficial a Duty?

And very often we find it urged to the same end, how unwarrantable and dangerous a thing it is for carnal and unregenerated Persons to appropriate to themselves in singing those Praises and Experiences which are peculiar to the Saints; not understanding or considering, that the singing of *Psalms* is an Ordinance of Christ, appointed for teaching and admonition, as well as praising, *Col.* 3. 16. *Teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and Hymns*, &c. * Thus *Antinomianism* took, if not its Rise, yet its Encouragement from the too rigorous pressing of the Law upon convinced Sinners.

* *The Divinity of former Ages, saith* Mr. Saltmarsh *put but a grain or Drachm of Gospel to a Pound of Law, in their Receipts for distemper'd Souls.* Vide Saltmarsh *of Free-grace, p.* 40.

If Satan can prevail first with wicked Men, to corrupt and abuse God's Ordinances by the superstitious mixtures and additions; and then with good Men, to renounce and slight them for the sake of those abuses; he fully obtains his Design, and gives Christ a double wound at once; one by the hand of his avowed Enemies, the other by the hands of his Friends, no less grievous than the first. First, wicked Men corrupt Christ's Ordinances; and then good Men nauseate them.

The Remedies.

The proper Remedies against *Errors*, insinuated by the abuses of Duties and Ordinances, are such as follow:

Remedy I. Let Men consider, that there is nothing in Religion so great, so sacred and excellent, but some or other have greatly corrupted or vilely abused them.

What is there in the whole World more precious and excellent than the Free-grace of God? and yet you read, *Jude* 4. of some that turned the Grace of our Lord into Lasciviousness. What more desirable to Christians, than the glorious Liberty Christ hath purchased for them by his Blood, and settled upon them in the Gospel-Charter? A Liberty from Satan, Sin, and the rigour and curse of the Law; and yet you read, 1 *Pet.* 2. 16. of them that used this Liberty for a Cloak of maliciousness. 'Tis true, Christ came to be a Sacrifice for Sin, but not a Cloak for Sin; to set us at Liberty from the Bondage of our Lusts, not from the Ties and Duties of our Obedience. Under the pretence of this Liberty it was, that the *Gnosticks*, *Carpocratians*, and the *Menandrians* of old, did not only connive at, but openly taught and practised all manner of lewdness and uncleanness.

St. *Augustin*, in his Book of *Heresy*, makes this sad complaint, *The* Menandrians (saith he) *do willingly embrace all uncleanness as the fruit of the Grace of God towards Men.* And not only the Liberty purchased by Christ, but the very Person and Gospel of Christ are liable to abuses; and oftentimes through the corruptions of Mens Hearts become Stones of stumbling, and

Menandriani omnem turpitudinem libenter amplexi sunt, tanquam gratiæ Dei erga homines fructum. *August.* Lib. *de Hær.*

Rocks

Rocks of offence. What then? Shall we renounce the Grace of God, our Chriſtian Liberty, the very Goſpel, yea, and Perſon of Chriſt himſelf, becauſe each of them have been thus vilely abuſed by wicked wretches? At the peril of our eternal damnation be it, if we do ſo. *Bleſſed is he* (ſaith our Lord) *that is not offended in me.* Beware, leſt by this means Satan at once wound the Lord Jeſus Chriſt by ſcandal, and thy Soul by prejudice.

Remedy II. Conſider alſo, that it is the nature and temper of a gracious Soul, to raiſe his eſteem, and heighten his love to thoſe Ordinances which are moſt abuſed and diſgraced by Men.

The more they are abuſed and oppoſed by others, the higher they ſhould be valued and honoured by us; *Pſal.* 119. 126, 127. *It is time for thee, Lord, to work; for they have made void thy Law; therefore I love thy Commandments above gold, yea, above fine gold, q. d.* The more they are diſgraced and abuſed by wicked Men, the more do I honour and prize them. A like Spirit, with *David*'s was found in *Elijah*, 1 Kings 19. 14. *I have been very jealous for the Lord God of Hoſts; becauſe the Children of Iſrael have forſaken thy Covenant, thrown down thine Altars, and ſlain thy Prophets with the Sword.*

A good Man will ſtrive to honour and ſecure thoſe Truths and Duties moſt, which he finds under moſt diſgrace or danger. He loves the Truth ſincerely, who cleaves to it, and ſtands by it under all oppoſition. This is a good Trial of the ſoundneſs of thy Heart and purity of thine ends in Religion: Such a proof, as the Honour and Reputation of Religion in the World can never give thee.

In *Solomon*'s time the *Jews* were very cautious how they admitted and received *Proſelytes*, ſuſpecting that by-ends and worldly reſpects may draw men to it; but they were not ſo cautelous in times of Diſgrace and Perſecution.

Remedy III. Before you part with any Ordinance or Practice in Religion, bethink your ſelves whether you never found any Spiritual Bleſſings or Advantages in that Path which you are now tempted to forſake.

Had you never any Spiritual Meltings of your Hearts and Affections in that Heavenly Ordinance of *Singing*? And may there not be now Thouſands of ſolemn Mercies in your poſſeſſion in conſequence to, and as the Fruit of your Dedication to God in *Baptiſm* by your Covenanted Parents? For my own part, I do heartily and ſolemnly bleſs God for it upon this account; and ſo I hope Thouſands beſides my ſelf have cauſe to do. However, ſuch a Practice may by no means be deſerted by you, becauſe abuſed by others.

Cauſe XIII.

Another Method and Artifice, by which *falſe Teachers* draw multitudes of Diſciples after them, is, by granting to their Ignorant and Ambitious Followers the *LIBERTY of PROPHESYING*; flattering them into a conceit of their excellent Gifts and Attainments, when God knows they had more need to be Catechized, and taught the Principles of Chriſtianity, than undertake to expound and apply thoſe profound Myſteries unto others.

Satan hath filled the Church and World with Errors and Troubles this way. * When ignorant and unexperienced Perſons begin to think it a low and dull thing to ſit from year to year under other mens teachings, and to fanſie that they are wiſer than their Teachers; their Pride will quickly tempt them to ſhew their Ignorance, and that miſchievous Ignorance will prove dangerous to the Truth, and troubleſome to the Church. The Apoſtle forbids the Ordination of a *Novice*, leſt he be puffed up, and fall into the condemnation of the Devil: and in 1 *Tim.* 1. 7. he ſhews us the reaſon why ſome ſwerved and turned aſide unto vain jangling; and it was this, That *they deſired to be Teachers of the Law, neither underſtanding what they ſaid, nor whereof they affirmed.* That is, They affected to be Preachers, though not able to ſpeak congruouſly, with tolerable ſenſe and reaſon.

I do not here cenſure and condemn the uſe and exerciſe of the Gifts of all private Chriſtians. There are to be found amongſt them ſome Perſons of raiſed Parts, and anſwerable Modeſty and Humility, who may be very uſeful, when called to Service, in extraordinary Caſes, by the voice of Providence; or exerciſe their Gifts in a probationary way, or in due ſubordination unto Chriſt's publick Officers and Ordinances, by, and with the conſent of the *Paſtor*, and Congregation.

But when unqualified and uncalled Perſons undertake ſuch a work out of the Conceit and Pride of their own Hearts, or are allured to it by the crafty Deſigns of Erroneous Teachers, partly to overthrow a publick, regular, and ſtanding Miniſtry in the Church, to which end the Scriptures are manifeſtly abuſed, ſuch as *Jer.* 31. 34. *Rom.* 12. 6. 1 *Cor.* 14. 1 *Pet.* 4. 10. with many others; this is the practice I here cenſure, which like a *Trojan Horſe*, hath ſent forth multitudes of Erroneous Perſons into the City of God to infeſt and defile it.

I cannot doubt but many a ſincere Chriſtian may be drawn into ſuch employment which puts him into a capacity of honouring God in a more eminent way, which is a thing deſirable to an honeſt and zealous Heart: And that the temptation may be greatly ſtrengthened upon them by the plauſible ſuggeſtions of cunning Seducers, who tell them, That thoſe *Miniſters* who oppoſe and condemn this practice, do it as Men concerned for their own Intereſt, as deſirous to monopolize the work to themſelves, and as envying the Lord's People: And that Chriſt hath given them a greater Liberty in this caſe, than thoſe Men will allow them. By this means they draw many after them, and fix them in their erroneous ways.

I have no mind at all here to expoſe the Follies and Miſchiefs introduced this way, as neither being willing to grieve the Hearts of the Sincere on one ſide, nor gratify ſcoffing *Atheiſts*, and prophane Enemies to Religion, upon the other ſide: only this I will, and muſt ſay, That by this means the Sacred Scriptures are moſt injuriouſly wreſted, the Peace and Order of the Church diſturbed, and a great many Miſtakes and Errors introduced.

The Remedies.

The prevention and cure of Errors this way introduced, or likely to be introduced into the Church, is by pondering and applying the following *Conſiderations.*

Conſideration I. Let all that encourage others, or undertake by others encouragement ſuch a Work as this, for which they are not competently qualified, and unto which they are not regularly called, con-

* Stultiſſimi atque impiiſſimi homines, non intelligentes nihil contrarium in rebus iiſdem ab eodem dictum fuiſſe, verbis tantùm inhærentes. Cauſas ipſas dictorum reliquêrunt. Et diverſa quidem Scripturæ dicta videntes, ad impietatem reciderunt, divinorum dictorum incapaces. *Hilarius*, Lib. 1. de Trinit.

conſider ſeriouſly with themſelves what danger they caſt their own and other mens Souls upon.

The Apoſtle tells us, 2 *Pet.* 3. 16. *That the unlearned and unſtable do wreſt the Scriptures to their own deſtruction.* Danger enough, one would think, to ſcare them from it, did not the ſame Sin of Ignorance, which makes them wreſt the Scriptures, cauſe them alſo to ſlight and overlook the danger of ſo doing. *

* *Athanaſius* indicat Scripturas malitioſè intellectas & detortas, errores parere. *Athanaſius* contra *Apollinar.*

Certainly, my Friends, it is a great deal ſafer and more excuſable, to put an ignorant *Ruſtick* into an *Apothecary's Shop* to compound a Medicine of Drugs and Spirits, which he underſtands not, and confidently adminiſter the ſame to the Bodies of Men; than for ſuch Perſons as are led by ignorance and confidence, to intermeddle with the Miniſterial Employment: The one, perhaps, by miſtake, may poiſon men's Bodies; but the other their Souls. An ignorant *Maſter*, or *Pilot*, that never learned the *Compaſs*, are rather to be truſted among Rocks and Quick-ſands, than a proud ignorant *Perſon* with the conduct of *Souls*.

Conſideration II. What daring Preſumption is it to intrude our ſelves into ſo great and weighty an Employment without any Call or Warrant of Chriſt! *Rom.* 10. 14. *How ſhall they call upon him of whom they have not heard? and how ſhall they hear without a Preacher? and how ſhall they preach except they be ſent?*

Theſe Myſteries muſt be committed to faithful Men, who ſhall be able to teach others. Thoſe Abilities muſt be examined, 1 *Tim.* 3. 10. and the Exerciſe of them warranted by a due and orderly appointment thereunto, 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. elſe (as one well obſerves) *In tàm præpoſterâ diſciplinæ ruinâ tot eſſent ſenſus, quot capita; tot diſſenſus, quot ſenſus*; we ſhall have as many ſenſes of Scripture, as we have Preachers, *&c.*

If every *Phaeton*, that thinks himſelf able, ſhall undertake to drive the *Chariot* of the *Sun*, no wonder if the World be ſet on Fire. Gifts and Abilities of Mind are not of themſelves ſufficient to make a *Preacher*. Some *Lawyers* at the *Bar* may be as skilful as the *Judge* upon the *Bench*, but without a Commiſſion they dare not ſit there.

Conſideration III. The Honour you affect, to vent your unſound Notions with liberty, is in Scripture-account your greateſt diſhonour.

The Scripture reckons falſe Teachers among the baſeſt of the People: *The Prophet that teacheth lyes, he is the Tail*, i. e. the baſeſt Part of the whole Body of the People, *Iſ.* 9. 15. And ſo far is due Goſpel-Liberty from countenancing ſuch dangerous Irregularities, that we find in a clear Prophecy of Goſpel-times, what ſhame God will pour upon them, *Zech.* 13. 4, 5. *They ſhall be brought with ſhame enough to confeſs, I am no Prophet, I am an Husbandman; or man taught to keep Cattle from my youth.*

Conſideration IV. How much more ſafe, regular, and advantageous were it for ſuch as you, to fill your own proper Places under able and faithful Goſpel-Miniſters, and to ſuck the Breaſts of fruitful Ordinances, than to conſume and pine away by ſucking your own Breaſts? I mean, living upon your own weak and inſufficient Gifts, in the ſinful neglect of Chriſt's Appointments?

Cauſe XIV. Falſe Teachers alſo propagate their Errors by a Spirit of *ENTHUSIASM*, the uſual comitant of Erroneous Doctrine; and draw away multitudes after them, by pretending to extraordinary Revelations, Viſions, and Voices from Heaven, which ſeem to give great credit to their Way and Party. *

* Nonnulli autem falſorum Prophetarum vaticinio illecti, de quibus & veri Prophetæ, & ipſe prædixerat, exciderunt à Doctrinâ Dei, & traditionem veram reliquerunt. Sed illi omnes dæmoniacis fraudibus irretiti, quas proſpicere & cavere debuerant, divinum nomen & cultum per imprudentiam perdiderunt. *Lact.* lib. 4. cap. 30. *de Hæreſibus.*

This was an old trick and practice of Deceivers, *Deut.* 13. 1. to give Signs and Wonders in confirmation of their Way, which Signs the Lord may permit to fall out to prove his People, *verſ.* 2. 3. tho', for the moſt part, they are confuted by their unanſwerable Events.

In the beginning of our *Reformation* by *Luther*, *Calvin*, &c. there ſprung up a Generation of Men, called *Swenkfeldians*, great Pretenders to Revelations and Viſions, who were always ſpeaking of *Deifications*; and an higher ſtrain of Language they commonly uſed among themſelves, than other ſerious Chriſtians underſtood, and therefore ſcornfully entitled Orthodox and humble Chriſtians, who ſtuck to the Scripture-phraſe, and wholſome form of ſound words, *Grammatiſts*, *Vocabuliſts*, *Literaliſts*, &c. Theſe Men (as * *Sculletus* in his *Annals*, *ad annum* 1525. obſerves of them) were ſo entangled in certain Enthuſiaſtick Snares, that they thought it the higheſt impiety to renounce them: And they had befooled multitudes with their magnificent words of *Illumination*, *Revelation*, *Deification.*

* Irretiti ſuis quibuſdam Enthuſiaſticis laqueis, unde ſe extricari ſummam putantimpietatem: dementabant multos magnificis iſtis verbis, *Illuminatio*, *Revelatio*, *Deificatio*, &c.

Much of the ſame Spirit was *Thomas Muntzer*, *John* of *Leyden*, *David George*, *Jacob Behmen*, &c. whoſe cloudy Nonſence, ænigmatical Expreſſions, and wilful Obſcurity, drew many into a ſtrange admiration of them: They all pretend to an higher knowledge of Myſteries than what the Goſpel is acquainted with; and yet give us (as Mr. *Baxter* well obſerves) neither *Reaſons* with *Ariſtotle*, nor *Miracles* with Chriſt and his Apoſtles, to cauſe us to believe any of their new Revelations. *Vide* Baxter *of the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, p. 148.

Of the ſame Bran were our late *Familiſts* in *England*, of whom *Henry Nichols* was the chief Leader, who decried the written Word as a dead Letter; and ſet up their own fond Conceits and Fancies under the notion of the Spirit, againſt whom that Heavenly and Learned Man, Mr. *Samuel Rutherford*, ſeaſonably and ſucceſsfully appeared. *Hacket*, *Copinger* and *Arthington*, were of the ſame Tribe; who lived a-while wrapt up in *Antinomian* Fancies, which at laſt brake forth into the higheſt and moſt horrid Blaſphemies.

Another Art they make uſe of to ſeduce the Credulous, is a pretence unto the Spirit of Prophecy; and great ſucceſs they promiſe themſelves this way among the weak, but curious Vulgar. And to this end Satan hath inſpired and employed ſome cunninger Heads to invent very pleaſing Predictions and Prophecies, in favour of that Party whom he deſigns to deceive. And how catching and bewitching theſe things are, gaining more reſpect among theſe vain Spirits, than the divine unqueſtionable Prophecies of Scripture, this Age hath had full and ſad experience.

Now the Deſign of Satan in theſe things, is to gain Credit to thoſe *Sects*, as People peculiarly favoured

favoured and beloved of God above others; as if they were the particular Favourites of Heaven, as *Daniel* was; and ſo to draw the Multitude to admire their Perſons, and eſpouſe their Errors.

The Remedies.

Now the *Remedies* in this Caſe are ſuch as follow.

Remedy I. Whatever Doctrine or Practice ſeeks credit to it ſelf this way, falls juſtly thereby under ſuſpicion, that it wants a ſolid Scripture-foundation.

God hath not left his People to ſeek ſatisfaction in ſuch uncertain ways as theſe; but hath given them a ſurer word of Prophecy, to which they do well to take heed, 2 *Pet.* 1. 19. He hath tyed us to the ſtanding Rule of the Word; forbidding us to give heed to any other Voice, or Spirit, leading us another way, *Iſa.* 8. 19. 2 *Theſſ.* 2. 1, 2. *Gal.* 1. 8. Scripture-light is a ſafe and ſure Light, a pleaſant and ſufficient Light.

The Scripture (ſaith *Luther*) is ſo full, that as for Viſions and Revelations, *Nec curo, nec deſidero*, I neither regard, nor deſire them. And when he himſelf had a Viſion of Chriſt, after a day of Faſting and Prayer, he cried out, *Avoid Satan, I know no Image of Chriſt, but the Scripture.* An hankering Mind after theſe things, ſpeaks a ſickly and diſtempered ſtate of Soul, as longing after Traſh in young diſtempered Perſons, doth a diſtempered ſtate, or ill habit of Body.

Mr. *William Bridges* ſomewhere tells us of a Religious *Lady* of the *Empreſſes* Bed-chamber, whoſe Name was *Gregoria*, who being greatly troubled about her Salvation, wrote to *Gregory*, That ſhe would never ceaſe importuning him, till he had ſent her word, that he had obtained a Revelation from Heaven, that ſhe ſhould be ſaved: to whom he returned this Anſwer; *Rem difficilem poſtulas & inutilem*, Thou requireſt of me that which is difficult to me, and unprofitable for thee.

Remedy II. Conſider how often the World hath been abuſed by the Tricks and Cheats of that officious Spirit, the Devil, in ſuch ways as theſe.

What hath propagated Idolatry among *Heathens* and *Chriſtians* more than this? *Hinc fluxerunt multæ peregrinationes, Monaſteria, delubra, dies feſti & alia*, ſaith *Lavater*, in *Job* 33. *Pilgrimages, Monaſteries, Shrines* of *Saints, Holydays*, &c. have been introduced by this Trick. 'Twere endleſs to give Inſtances of it in the Hiſtories of former Ages. *

* *Of the Prophecies, Viſions and pretended Inſpirations of* Storke, Pfeiffer, Becold, Warendorp, *&c. with the efficacy of them on the deluded People, and fatal conſequences of them both to the Deceived, and Deceivers. See Mr.* Samuel Rutherford's *Survey of the Spiritual Antichriſt*, p. 7, 8, 9, 16, 11.

We have a notable late Account of it among our ſelves, in a *Book*, entitled, [*A Diſcovery of the notorious Falſehood and Diſſimulation contained in a Book, ſtiled*, The Goſpel-way confirmed by Miracles] Licenſed and publiſhed 1649. wherein is laid open to the World, the free Confeſſion of *Ann Wells, Matthew Hall*, &c. deluding the People of *Whatfield* in *Suffolk* with ſuch pretended Voices, Viſions, Prophecies and Revelations; the like have ſcarcely been heard of in *England* ſince the Reformation. Multitudes of People were deluded by them.

At length the Lord extorted from this Woman a full Confeſſion of the notorious falſeneſs of theſe things, by a terrible Viſion of Hell: her Partizans laboured four days to ſuppreſs and ſtifle it, but to no purpoſe: for the Horrors of Conſcience prevailed with her to confeſs the notorious Diſſimulations contained in that Book, before the People of *Whatfield*, and a Juſtice of the Peace. And thus the Lord out-ſhot Satan in his own Bow.

Remedy III. Conſider how difficult, yea, and impoſſible it is for a Man to determine, that ſuch a Voice, Viſion or Revelation is of God; and that Satan cannot feign or counterfeit it; ſeeing he hath left no certain Marks by which we may diſtinguiſh one Spirit from another: *an albus? an ater?*

Sure we are, Satan can transform himſelf into an Angel of Light; and therefore abandoning all thoſe unſafe and uncertain ways, whereby ſwarms of Errors have been conveyed into the World, let us cleave inſeparably to the ſure word of Prophecy, the Rule and Standard of our Faith and Duty.

Cauſe XV. Another way in which Falſe Teachers diſcover their Subtilty with great ſucceſs is, in *TIMING* their Aſſaults, and nicking the proper Seaſon, when the Minds of Men are moſt apt and eaſie to be drawn away by their fair and ſpecious Pretences.

Such a Seaſon as this, they find about the time of Mens firſt Converſion, or ſoon after their Implantation into Chriſt. Now it is that their Affections are moſt lively and vigorous, though their Judgments be but weak. They have now ſuch ſtrong and deep apprehenſions of the Grace and Love of Chriſt, and ſuch tranſcendent zeal for him, that they eaſily embrace any thing whereby they conceive he may be honoured and exalted. They have alſo ſuch deep Apprehenſions and powerful Averſations as to Sin, that they are in danger to fly even from Truth and Duty it ſelf, when it ſhall be artificially repreſented to them as Sin. For not only that which is *malum per ſe*, Sin indeed; but that which is *malè coloratum*, painted with Sin's Colours, is apt to ſcare and fright them.

Beſides, Theſe young Converts or Novices have not had time to confirm and root themſelves in the Truth; and Trees newly planted are much more eaſily drawn up, than thoſe that have ſpread and faſtened their Roots in the Earth. 'Tis obſervable what a ſwarm of falſe Teachers troubled the Churches of *Corinth*, *Galatia*, and *Philippi*, at, and newly after their firſt planting: and what danger theſe young Chriſtians were in, abundantly appears in the Apoſtle's frequent Cautions, and holy Jealouſy over them: he bids them *beware of Dogs, beware of Evil Workers, beware of the Conciſion*, Phil. 3. 2. *I fear leſt by any means as the Serpent beguiled Eve through his ſubtilty, ſo your minds be corrupted from the ſimplicity that is in Chriſt*, 2 Cor. 11. 3. he was afraid of the *Galatians*, leſt he had beſtowed upon them labour in vain, *Gal.* 4. 11. he would not give place to falſe Brethren, no not for an hour, *Gal.* 2. 5. charges the *Romans* to receive them that were weak in the Faith, but not to doubtful Diſputations, *Rom.* 14. 1. All which, and many more Expreſſions, diſcover his grounded Jealouſy, and their extraordinary danger of ſeduction at their firſt plantation. A Novice in Chriſtianity is the Perſon Satan ſeeks for: ſtrong Believers are not in ſuch apparent danger as little ones in Chriſt, 1 *John* 5. 21. *Little Children, keep your ſelves from Idols.*

And the Reaſon is, becauſe keen Affections, match'd with weak Judgments, give a mighty advantage to Seducers. Children are apt to be taken with beautiful Appearances and fine Shews; and erroneous Teachers have the very knack to ſet a

gloſs of extraordinary ſanctity upon their dangerous Opinions. Hence thoſe Perſons that promoted the Sect of the *Nicolaitans*, made uſe of a cunning Woman, who for her skill in painting Errors with the Colours of Truth, got the Name of *Jezabel*, Rev. 2. 20. That *Queen* was famous for the Art of Painting, 1 *Kings* 16. and ſo was this falſe *Propheteſs*: indeed there was ſcarce any eminent *Sect* of Errorists or Hereticks mentioned in Chruch-Hiſtory, but ſome curious feminine Artiſt hath been employed to lay the beautiful Colours upon it. So we find *Simon Magus* had his *Helena*. *Carpocrates* his *Marcellina*. *Montanus* his *Priſcilla* and *Maximilla*. And the curious Colours of Holineſs, Zeal, and Free-grace, artificially laid upon the face of Error, how wrinkled and ugly ſoever in it ſelf, ſets it off temptingly and takingly to weak and injudicious Minds.

Moreover, Erroneous Teachers are great Boaſters: They uſually give out to the World, what extraordinary Comforts they meet with in their way, which proves a ſtrong Temptation to young Converts, who have been ſo lately in the Depths of ſpiritual Trouble, to try at leaſt, if not to embrace it, for the expected Comforts Sake.

Ah, how many pious Miniſters in *England*, upon ſuch Grounds and Pretences as theſe, have had their ſpiritual Children rent from them as ſoon as born! they have travelled as in birth for them; and no ſooner did they begin to take comfort in the ſucceſs of their Labours, but to the great grief and diſcouragement of their Hearts, they have been this way bereaved of them. Thoſe that have owned them as their ſpiritual Fathers one Month, would ſcarce vouchſafe to own them, when they have met them in the Streets, another Month. Many ſad Inſtances I could give of this, and ſome as remarkable as they are freſh and recent: but I ſilence Particulars. Oh, ſee the Advantage Satan and his Inſtruments gain by nicking ſuch a critical Seaſon as this is.

The Cure, or Remedy.

The *Remedies* in this caſe, are twofold: the firſt reſpects the ſpiritual Fathers; and the ſecond the ſpiritual Children: both are concerned in the danger, and the Lord help both to attend to their duty.

Remedy I. Let all thoſe whoſe Miniſtry God bleſſes with the deſirable fruits of Converſion, look carefully after the Souls of young Converts.

No *Nurſe* ſhould be more tender and careful of her Charge, than a Miniſter ſhould be: and unto the care of a tender *Nurſe*, *Paul* compareth his care over the young Converts in *Theſſalonica*, 1 *Theſſ.* 2. 7. for alas, they lie expoſed to all dangers, they are credulous, and Seducers cunning; they want Judgment to diſcern Truth from Error; have not yet attained unto Senſes exerciſed, and Age in Chriſt to diſcern Good from Evil: when Errors are made palatable, Children will be hankering after them, and Seducers have the very art to make them ſo.

> ——*Veluti pueris abſynthia tetra medentes*
> *Cum dare conantur, prius oras pocula circum*
> *Contingunt dulci Mellis, flavóque liquore.*

Shepherds look to your flocks; imitate the great Shepherd of the Sheep, who gathereth the Lambs with his Arms, and carries them in his Boſom; viſit them frequently, exhort and warn them diligently, and uſe all means to eſtabliſh them in the preſent Truths.

Remedy II. Let young Converts and weak Chriſtians look carefully to themſelves by an heedful attendance unto the following Truths.

Firſt, It is not ſafe to try, nor upon trial likely that you ſhould find Chriſt in one way, and comfort in another. God doth not uſually bleſs thoſe ways to Mens comfort and edification, into which they turn aſide from that good way wherein they firſt met with Chriſt and Converſion. The ſame Miniſtry and Ordinances which are appointed and bleſſed for the one, are likewiſe appointed, and commonly bleſſed for the other, *Eph.* 4. 11, 12, 13.

Secondly, 'Tis a manifeſt Snare of the Devil (and you may eaſily diſcern it) to take you off from the great Work you are newly engaged in, by entangling your Minds in Notions that are foreign to it. Your hearts are now warm with God, Satan labours this way to cool and quench them: the cunning Cheat labours to ſteal away the ſweet and nutritive Food which is before you, and lay the hard and dry Bones of barren Controverſies and inſipid Notions in their room. Your buſineſs is not to frame *Syllogiſms*, or ſtudy Solutions to cunning Arguments about lower and leſſer Matters, ſo much as it is by Prayer and Self-examination, to clear your Intereſt in Chriſt, and to ſolve thoſe doubts that lie with weight upon your Spirits, with reference to that great Concern.

Thirdly, 'Tis a ſad thing to grieve the Hearts of thoſe faithful Miniſters that have travelled in pain for us, and rejoyced in our Converſion as the Seal of their Miniſtry. Oh, ſerve not your godly Miniſters, as the *Hen* is ſometimes ſerved, that hath long brooded, brought forth, and with much care and ſelf-denial nouriſhed up young Partridges, which, as ſoon as fledged, take the wing, and return no more to her.

Cauſe XVI. There is yet another Artifice of falſe Teachers to draw Men into Errors, and that is, by preſſing the Conſciences of thoſe they have made ſome impreſſions upon, unto all *HASTE* and *SPEED*, openly to declare their new Opinions, and avow and own them before the World; as knowing that this will rivet and fix them to all Intents and Purpoſes.

When they find Men under half Convictions, and ſtrong Inclinations to their way, they are ſure then to ply them with a thick ſucceſſion of Motives and Arguments, to joyn themſelves by a free and open Profeſſion, to that erroneous Party which are headed by themſelves.

And the Arguments uſually preſſed to this purpoſe are,

1. The danger of delay.
2. The comfort of declaring themſelves.

1. They preſs them with the danger of the leaſt delay, by telling them, That now they muſt live every Day and Hour in known Sin, and hold the Truth of God in Unrighteouſneſs, the evil whereof they skilfully aggravate; and the more tender and ſenſible the Conſcience is, the deeper Impreſſions ſuch Diſcourſes make, although the Caſe, indeed, will not bear the weight they lay upon it, as having not that due allowance God gives of time and means of full information in matters of this nature; yea, poſſibly driving them into as great a Snare by Precipitation, and too haſty Engagements under a doubting Conſcience.

2dly, They preſs them to a quick Reſolution, with the Expectations of abundance of Comfort, inward Peace and Joy, which will reſult from a full

full engagement of themſelves, and open declaration of their Judgment; proſelyting to a Party, being the main deſign they drive at.

This was the very Art and Method by which Satan prevailed with *Eve* to ſwallow the bait, *Gen.* 3. 5. *For God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes ſhall be opened, and ye ſhall be as Gods, knowing good and evil, q. d.* The ſooner thou taſteſt, the better; for the firſt taſte will give thee a God-like knowledge, and marvellous advancement of thy underſtanding: Didſt thou but know the benefit that would accrue to thee thereby, thou would'ſt not delay one moment. And thus by ſetting before her the ſpeedy and immediate benefits of eating, he prevailed, and drew her into the fatal Snare.

In this the Miniſters of Satan imitate the Miniſters of Chriſt: As theſe preſs Men to make haſte to Chriſt, leſt by conſulting with Fleſh and Blood, and liſtening to the Temptations of Satan, hopeful Inclinations ſhould be blaſted in the bud; ſo the others puſh Men on to haſty Reſolutions, leſt by hearkening to the Voice of God's holy Spirit, and their own Conſciences, the deſign they have ſo far advanced ſhould be loſt and diſappointed. The Miniſters of Chriſt urge Men to a ſpeedy change of their Company, and to aſſociate themſelves with ſpiritual and profitable Chriſtians, as well knowing of what great uſe this will be to confirm and ſtrengthen them in the ways of God. So Erroriſts in like manner vehemently urge them to aſſociate with their Party, as knowing how one wedges in and fixes another in the ways of Error; for ſuch Cauſes Satan puſhes on half-convictions into haſty reſolutions, quick diſpatch being his great Advantage. This the Apoſtle intimates, *Gal.* 1. 6. *I marvel* (ſaith he) *that ye are ſo ſoon removed*, &c. ὅτω ταχέως, what ſo ſoon! yes, if it had not been ſo ſoon, it might never have been at all; for *Errors* (as one ingeniouſly obſerves) like Fiſh, muſt be eaten freſh and new, or they'll quickly ſtink.

The Cure, or Remedy.

The *Remedies* and *Preventives* in this Caſe, are ſuch as follow:

Remedy I. Conſider, that haſty Engagements in weighty diſputable Matters have coſt many Souls dear.

As haſty Marriages have produced long and late Repentance; ſo hath the clapping up of an haſty Match betwixt the Mind and Error. By entertaining ſtrange Perſons, Men ſometimes entertain *Angels* unaware; but by entertaining of ſtrange Doctrines, many have entertained Devils unawares. 'Tis not ſafe to open the door of the Soul to let in Strangers in the Night; let them wait 'till a clear Day-light of Information ſhew you what they are.

Remedy II. Weighty Actions require anſwerable Deliberations. It was the worthy ſaying of *Auguſtus Cæſar* †, *That's ſoon enough, that's well enough.* There be many things to be conſidered, and throughly weighed, before a Man change his Judgment, and embrace a new Doctrine or Opinion. *Luther* in his Epiſtle to the Miniſters of *Norimberg*, cites an excellent paſſage out of *Baſil* *, He that is about to ſeparate himſelf from the Society of his Brethren, had need to conſider many things even unto anxiety; to beg of God the Demonſtration of Truth with many Tears, and to paſs many ſolitary Nights with waking Eyes, before he attempt, or put ſuch a matter in execution. By the vote of the whole rational World, Time and Conſideration ought to be proportionate to the Weight of an Undertakement.

† Satis celeritèr fieri quicquid commodè geritur.

* Multa anxiè conſiderare eum oportet & multas noctes abſumere inſomnes, & cum multis lacrymis petere à Deo veritatis demonſtrationem, qui ſe à fratribus ſeparari vult.

Remedy III. The only ſeaſon Men have to weigh things judiciouſly and impartially, is before their Affections be too far engaged, and their Credit and Reputation too much concerned.

Men are better able to weigh Doctrines and Opinions, whilſt they are other Mens, than when they have eſpouſed them and made them their own. Before an Opinion be eſpouſed, the Affections do not blind and pervert the Judgment, as they do afterward. Self-love pulls down the balance at that end which is next us. If therefore by haſty reſolution, you loſe this only proper and advantageous ſeaſon of deliberation, you are not like to find ſuch another.

Perit omne judicium, cum res tranſit in affectum.

Remedy IV. Truſt not to the clearneſs of your own unaſſiſted Eyes, nor to the ſtrength of your ſingle reaſon; but conſult in ſuch caſes, with others that are pious and judicious, eſpecially your godly and faithful Miniſters; and hearken to the Counſels they give you. *Paul* juſtly wondered that the *Galatians* were ſo ſoon removed; and well he might: For had they not a *Paul* to conſult with, before they gave their conſent to falſe Teachers? Or if he was at a diſtance from them about the work of the Lord in remote places, had they no godly and judicious Friends near them, whoſe Prayers and Aſſiſtances they might call in, as *Daniel* did? *Dan.* 2. 17. Woe unto him that is alone in the time of temptation, except the Lord be with him by extraordinary Aſſiſtance and Direction.

Remedy V. *Laſtly*, Suſpect that Opinion (as juſtly you may) for erroneous, that's too importunate and preſſing upon you, and will not allow you due time of conſideration, and means of information. That which is a truth to day, will be a truth to morrow: But that which looks like a truth to day, may be detected, and look like it ſelf, an odious Error to morrow. And this is the reaſon of that poſt-haſte that Satan and his Factors make to gain our preſent conſent, leſt a ſpeedy detection fruſtrate the ſuit, and ſpoil the deſign. The *Uſes* follow in ſix *Conſectaries*.

Conſectary I. From all that hath been ſaid about *Errors*, we ſee in the firſt place, the great uſefulneſs and plain neceſſity of an able, faithful, ſtanding *Miniſtry* in the Church.

One ſpecial end of the Miniſtry, is the eſtabliſhment of the Peoples Souls againſt the Errors of the Times, *Eph.* 4. 11, 14. *He gave ſome Apoſtles*, &c. *that we henceforth be no more children toſſed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the ſleight of Men*, &c. Miniſters are Shepherds, and without a Shepherd, how ſoon will the Flock go aſtray? *Moſes* was abſent but a few Days from the *Iſraelites*, and at his return found them all run into the ſnares of Idolatry. A Sheep is *animal ſequax*, a Creature that follows a Leader. One Straggler may miſlead a whole Flock. A Miniſter's work is not only to feed, but to defend the Flock. I am ſet (ſaith *Paul*) for the defence of the Goſpel, *Phil.* 1. 17. An Orthodox and Faithful Miniſter, is a double

double Bleſſing to the People; but woe to that People, whoſe Miniſters, inſtead of ſecuring them againſt Errors, do cauſe them to err, *Iſa.* 9. 16. they are the Dogs of the Flock. Some in Scripture are called dumb Dogs, who, inſtead of barking at the Thief, bite the Children: But faithful Miniſters give warning of ſpiritual dangers. So did the worthy Miniſters of *London*, *Worceſter-ſhire*, *Devon*, &c. in their Teſtimonies againſt Errors.

Conſectary II. This Diſcourſe ſhews us alſo how little Quietneſs and Peace the Church may expect, 'till a greater degree of light and unity be poured out upon it; what by Perſecutions from without it, and Troubles from within, little Tranquility is to be expected. 'Tis a Note of St. *Bernard*'s, that the Church hath ſometimes had *Pacem a Paganis, ſed rarò aut nunquam à filiis*, Peace ſometimes from *Pagan* Perſecutors, but ſeldom or never any Peace from her own Children.

We read, *Zech.* 14. 7. the whole ſtate of the Chriſtian Church, from the primitive Days, to the end of the World, ſet forth under the notion of one Day, and that a ſtrange Day too, the light of it ſhall *neither be clear, nor dark, nor day nor night, but at evening time it ſhall be light*; *i. e.* a Day full of interchangable and alternate Providences. Sometimes Perſecutions Hereſies, and Errors prevail, and theſe make that part of the Day dark and gloomy; and then Truth and Peace break forth again, and clear up the Day. Thus it hath been, and thus it will be untill the evening of it, and at even-time it ſhall be light; then light and love ſhall get the aſcendant of Error and Diviſions. Moſt of our Scuffles and Contentions are for want of greater meaſures of both theſe.

Conſectary III. From the manifold Cauſes and Miſchiefs of Errors before-mentioned, we may alſo ſee what a choice Mercy it is to be kept ſound in Judgment, ſtedfaſt and unmoveable in the Truths and Ways of Chriſt. A ſound and ſtedfaſt Chriſtian is a bleſſing in his Generation, and a glory to his Profeſſion. 'Twas an high *Encomium* of *Athanaſius*, *Sedem maluit mutare, quam ſyllabam*: He would rather loſe his Seat, that a Syllable of God's Truth. Soundneſs of Judgment muſt needs be a choice Bleſſing; becauſe the Underſtanding is the τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν, that leading faculty which directs the Will and Conſcience of Man, and they his whole Life and Practice. How often and how earneſtly doth Chriſt pray for his People, that they may be kept in the Truth? 'Tis true, Orthodoxy in it ſelf is not ſufficient to any Man's Salvation; but the conjunction of an Orthodox Head, with an honeſt ſincere Heart, does always conſtitute an excellent Chriſtian, *Phil.* 1. 10. Happy is the Man that hath an Head ſo hearted, and an Heart ſo headed.

Conſectary IV. By this Diſcourſe we may further diſcover one great and ſpecial Cauſe and reaſon of the lamentable decay of the Spirit and Power of Religion, amongſt the Profeſſors of the preſent Age.

'Tis a complaint more juſt than common. That *we do all fade as a leaf.* And what may be the Cauſe? Nothing more probable than the waſting of our Time and Spirits in vain Janglings, and fruitleſs Controverſies, which the Apoſtle tells us, *Heb.* 13. 9. have not profited, *i. e.* they have greatly damnified and injured them that have been occupied therein. Many Controverſies of theſe Times grow up about Religion, as Suckers from the Root and Limbs of a Fruit-Tree, which ſpend the vital Sap that ſhould make it fruitful.

* 'Tis a great and ſad Obſervation made upon the ſtate of *England* by ſome judicious Perſons, That after the greateſt increaſe of Religion, both intenſively in the power of it, and extenſively in the number of Converts, what a remarkable decay it ſuffered both ways, when about the Year Forty-four, Controverſies and Diſputations grew fervent among Profeſſors. Since that Time our Strength and Glory very much abated.

* Anglia 4. annis facta eſt colluvies, & lerna omnium errorum, & ſectarum nulla à condito orbe provincia tam parvo ſpatio tot monſtroſas hæreſes protulit atque hæc. *Honor. Reg.* de Statu Eccleſ. Britan. p. 1.

Conſectary V. From this Diſcourſe we may alſo gather, the true Grounds and Reaſon of thoſe frequent Perſecutions which God lets in upon his Churches and People: Theſe rank Weeds call for Snowy and Froſty Weather to ſubdue and kill them.

I know the Enemies of God's People aim at ſomething elſe; They ſtrike at Profeſſion, yea, at Religion it ſelf; and according to their wicked Intention, without timely Repentance, will their Reward be. But whatever the Intention of the Agents be, the iſſues of Perſecution are upon this account greatly beneficial to the Church; the Wiſdom of God makes them excellently uſeful, both to prevent and cure the Miſchiefs and Dangers of Errors. If Enemies were not, Friends and Brethren would be injurious to each other. Perſecution, if it kills not, yet at leaſt it gives check to the Riſe and Growth of Errors: And if it do not perfectly redintegrate and unite the Hearts of Chriſtians, yet to be ſure it cools and allays their ſinful Heats; and that two ways: (1.) By cutting out for them far better and more neceſſary work. Now, inſtead of racking their Brains about unneceſſary Controverſies, they find it high time to be ſearching their Hearts, and examining the foundations of their Faith and Hope, with reſpect to the other World. (2.) Moreover, ſuch Times and Streights, diſcover the Sincerity, Zeal, and Conſtancy of them we were jealous of, or prejudiced againſt before, becauſe they followed not us.

Conſectary VI. *Laſtly*, Let us learn hence, both the Duty and Neceſſity of Charity and mutual Forbearance; We have all our Miſtakes and Errors one way or other, and therefore muſt maintain mutual Charity under diſſents in Judgment.

I do not ſay, but an erring Brother muſt be reduced if poſſible, and that by ſharp Rebukes too, if gentler Eſſays be ineffectual, *Tit.* 1. 13. and the wounds of a Friend have more faithful love in them, than the kiſſes of an Enemy; And if God make us inſtrumental by that or any other Method, to recover a Brother from the Error of his way, he will have great cauſe, both to bleſs God, and thank the Inſtrument, who thereby ſaves a Soul from Death, and hides a multitude of ſins, *Jam.* 5. 20. 'Tis our Duty, if we meet an Enemy's Ox or Aſs going aſtray, to bring him back again; *Exod.* 23. 4. much more the Soul of a Friend. Indeed, we muſt not make thoſe Errors that are none, nor ſtretch every innocent Expreſſion to that purpoſe; nor yet be too haſty in medling with Contention, 'till we cannot be both ſilent and innocent; and then whatever the Expence be, Truth will repay it.

A N

An APPENDIX: Containing a full and modeſt Reply to Mr. *Philip Cary*'s Rejoinder to my *Vindiciæ Legis & Fœderis.*

Manifeſting the Badneſs of his Cauſe, in the Feebleneſs and Impertinency of his Defence. And adding farther Light and Strength to the Arguments, formerly produced in Defence of God's Gracious Covenant *with* Abraham, Gen. 17. *and the Right of Believers Infants to* Baptiſm, *grounded thereupon.*

SIR,

NEXT to the not deſerving a Reproof, is the due reception and improvement of it. You deſerve a ſharper reprehenſion for your Temerity and Obſtinacy, than I am willing to give you from the *Preſs*. Yet in love to the Truth, and your own Soul, reprove you I muſt, and I hope God will enable me to be both mild in the manner, and convincingly clear in the matter and cauſe thereof. 'Tis better to loſe the *Smiles*, than the *Souls* of Men. I dare not neglect the Duty of a Friend, for fear of incurring the ſuſpicion of an Enemy. Several learned and eminent Divines who have ſeen what hath publickly paſſed betwixt you and me, have returned me their Thanks, and think you ought to thank me too for the pains I have taken to ſet you right, hoping you will evidence your ſelf-denial and repentance by an ingenuous Retraction of your Errors.

But how will you deceive their Expectations, and unbecome the Character given you by your Friends, when they ſhall find the true meaſure both of your Ability and Humility drawn by your own Pen in the following Rejoinder?

I have throughly conſidered your Reply in the Manuſcript you ſent me, which I hear is now in the *Preſs*; and in the following Sheets have given a full, and (I think) a final Anſwer to whatſoever is material therein. And, it ſo falling out, that my Diſcourſe of *Errors* was juſt going under the *Preſs*, whilſt your Rejoinder was there alſo, I thought it not convenient to delay my Reply any longer, but to have my Antidote in as great readineſs as might be to meet it.

One Inconvenience I eaſily foreſee, that the Pages of your Manuſcript, which I follow, may not throughout exactly anſwer to the Print: But every intelligent Reader will eaſily diſcern and rectify That, if my Bookſeller ſave him not that trouble, as I have deſired him to do.

As to the Controverſy about the Right of Believers Infant-ſeed to *Baptiſm*, you have altogether adventured it the ſecond time with the conſent of your Partizans, upon the three *Hypotheſes*, which (if I miſtake not) I have fully confuted and baffled in my firſt Anſwer. But if my Brevity occaſioned any Obſcurity in that, I hope you ſhall find it ſufficiently done here. Mean time you have given, and I accordingly take it for granted, that our Arguments for *Infants Baptiſm* ſtand in their full ſtrength againſt you, 'till you can better diſcharge and free your dangerous Aſſertions from the Errors and Abſurdities in which they are now more involved and intricated than before.

The weaker any thing is, the more querulous it is. If Scripture-Argument, and clear Reaſon, will not ſupport the Cauſe I undertake, I am reſolved never to call in paſſionate Invectives and weak Evaſions for my Auxiliaries, as you have here done. The Lord give us all clearer Light, tenderer Conſciences, exemplary Humility and Ingenuity.

Vindiciarum Vindex:

Or, A REFUTATION of the Weak and Impertinent Rejoinder of Mr. *Philip Cary*: Wherein he vainly attempts the Defence of his Abſurd *Theſis*, to the great Abuſe and Injury of the Laws and Covenants of GOD.

AND muſt I be dipt once more in the Water-Controverſy? 'tis time for me to think of undreſſing my ſelf, and making ready for my approaching Reſt, and employ thoſe few Minutes I have to ſpend, in more practical and beneficial Studies, for my own, and the Churches greater Advantage. And 'tis time for Mr. *C.* to reflect upon his paſt Follies, which have conſumed too much of his own, and others time, without any Advantage; yea, to the apparent loſs and injury of the Cauſe he undertakes to defend.

When I received theſe Sheets from him, in vindication of his *Solemn Call*, I was at a ſtand in my own Reſolutions, whether to let it paſs (without any Animadverſions upon it) as a paſſionate Clamour for a deſperate Cauſe; or give a ſhort and full Anſwer to his confuſed and impertinent Rejoinder. But conſidering that I had under-hand at the ſame time the fore-going *Treatiſe* of *the Cauſes and Cures of Mental Errors*; and that though my honeſt Neighbour diſcovers much weakneſs in his way of Argumentation, yet it was like to meet with ſome intereſted Readers, to whom, for that reaſon, it would be the more ſuitable; and how apt ſuch Perſons are to glory in the laſt Word; but eſpecially conſidering that a little time and pains would ſuffice (as the Caſe ſtands) to end the unſeaſonable Controverſy betwixt us, and both clear

and

and confirm many great and weighty Points of Religion: I was upon these Considerations prevailed with, against my own Inclination, to cast in these few Sheets as a *Mantissa* to the former seasonable and necessary Discourse of *Errors*, resolving to fill them with what should be worth the Reader's Time and Pains.

As for the rude Insults, uncomely Reflections, and passionate Expressions of my discontented Friend, I shall not throw back the Dirt upon him, when I wipe it off from my self: I can easily forgive and forget them too. The best Men have their Passions, *Jam.* 5. 17. even *Sweet-Briers* and *Holy-Thistles* have their offensive Prickles. I consider my honest Neighbour under the strength of a Temptation. It disquiets him to see the Labours of many Years, and the raised Expectations of so great a Conquest and Triumph over Men of Renown, all frustrated by his Friend and Neighbour, who had done his utmost to prevent it; and often foretold him of the Folly and Vanity of his Attempt. Every thing will live as long as it can, and *natura vexata prodit seipsum*. But certainly it had been more for Truth's Honour, and Mr. C's Comfort, to have confessed his Follies humbly to God, and have laid his Hand upon his Mouth.

The Things in Controversy betwixt us, are great and weighty, *viz.* The true Nature of the *Sinai Laws*, in their complex Body; the Quality of God's *Covenant* with *Abraham*; and the Dispensation of the New *Covenant* we are now under. These are Things of great weight in themselves; and their due Resolutions are at this Time somewhat the more weighty, because my *Antagonist* hath adventured the whole Controversy of Infants Baptism upon them.

I have in my *Vindiciæ Legis, &c.* stated the several Questions clearly and distinctly. Shewn Mr. *C.* what is no part of the Controversy, and what is the very hinge upon which it turns; desired him, if he made any Reply, to keep close to the just and necessary Rules of Disputation, by distinguishing, limiting, or denying any of my Propositions; that the Matters in Controversy might be put to a fair and speedy Issue. But instead of that, I meet with a Flood of Words rolling sometimes to this part, and then to another part of my Answer, and so back again, without the steddy direction of Art or Reason. There may, for ought I know, be some things of weight in Mr. *Cary*'s Reply, if a Man could see them for words: but, without scoff or vanity I must say of the rational part of it, as the *Poet* said of the over-dressed Woman, —— *Pars minima est ipsa Puella sui*, 'tis the least part of it. To follow him in his irregular and extravagant way of writing, were to make my self guilty of the same folly I blame him for. I am therefore necessitated to perstringe them, and reduce all I have to say, under three general Heads.

I. I shall clearly evince to the World, That Mr. *Cary* hath not been able to discharge and free his own *Thesis* from the horrid Consequents, and gross Absurdities which I laid to their Charge in my first Reply; but instead thereof, in this feeble and unsuccessful Attempt to free the former, he hath entangled himself in more and greater ones.

II. That he hath left my *Arguments* standing in their full strength against him.

III. And then I shall confirm and strengthen my three *Positions*, which destroy the Cause he manages, by some further Additions of Scripture, Reason, and Authorities, which I hope will fully end this Matter betwixt us.

But before I touch the Particulars, two things must be premised for the Reader's due Information.

1. That the Controversie about the true Nature of the *Sinai Laws*, both moral and ceremonial, complexly considered, is not that very Hinge upon which the Right of Believers Infants to Baptism depends: that stands as it did before, be the *Sinai Laws* what they will. We do not derive the Right of Infants from any other Law or Covenant, but that gracious Covenant which God made with *Abraham*, which was in being 430 Years before *Moses* his Law; and was no way injured, much less disannulled, by the Addition of it. If *Abraham*'s Covenant be the same Covenant of Grace we are now under, the Right of Believers Infants to Baptism, is secured, whatever the *Sinai* Covenant prove to be. Which I speak not out of the least jealousie that Mr. *Cary* hath, or ever shall be able to prove it to be a pure *Adam*'s Covenant of Works; but to prevent Mistakes in the Reader, Gal. 3. 17.

2. It must be heedfully observed also, that how free, gracious, and absolute soever the New Covenant be, (for God forbid that I should go about to eclipse the Glory of Free-grace, on which my Soul depends for Salvation) yet that will never prove *Abraham*'s Covenant to be an abolished *Adam*'s Covenant of Works, unless two things more be proved, which I never expect to see, *viz.*

First, That *Abraham* and his believing Posterity, were bound by the very Nature and Act of Circumcision to keep the whole Law in their own Persons, in order to their Justification and Salvation, as perfectly and perpetually, and under the same Penalty for the least failure, as *Adam* was to keep the Law in *Paradise*.

Secondly, It must be further proved, That *Abraham*, and all his believing Offspring, who stood with him under that Covenant, whereof Circumcision was the initiating Sign, were all saved in a different way from that in which Believers are now saved under the Gospel: For so it must be, if the Addition of Circumcision made it unto them an *Adam*'s Covenant of Works. But this would be a direct Contradiction to the Words of the *Apostle*, speaking of them who were under the Covenant of Circumcision, *Acts* 15. 11. *But we believe, that through the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved even as they.* If he say, they stood indeed under that Covenant, as a pure Covenant of Works, but were saved by another Covenant; and so for many Ages the Church of God stood absolutely under the Covenant of Works, and at the same time under the pure Covenant of Grace; the one altogether absolute and free, the other wholly conditional: And though these two be in their own Natures inconsistent and destructive of each other, yet so it was, that all the Saints for many Ages were absolutely under the one, and yet purely under the other: shall I be then censured for saying he speaks pure Contradiction?

Possibly my Reader will be tempted to think I abuse him, and that no Man of common sense can be guilty of such an horrid Absurdity. I must, whatever respect I have for Mr. C. once more tell him before the World, that this is not only his own Doctrine, but that very Doctrine upon which he hath adventured the whole Cause and Controversy of

of Infant's Baptiſm, which I therefore ſay is hereby become a deſperate Cauſe.

And this brings me to my firſt general Head, *viz.*

I. Firſt, *That Mr.* Cary *hath not been able to free his Theſis from this horrid Abſurdity; but by ſtruggling to do it, hath (according to the Nature of Errors) entangled himſelf in more and greater ones.*

Mr. *Cary*, in *p.* 174, 175. of his *Solemn Call*, was by me reduced to this Abſurdity, which he there owns in expreſs Words, "*That* Moſes *and the* "*whole body of the People of* Iſrael, *were abſolutely* "*under (without the exception of any) the ſevereſt Penal-*"*ties of a dreadful Curſe; and that the* Sinai *Covenant* "*could be no other than a Covenant of Works, a Mi-*"*niſtration of Death and Condemnation; and yet at* "*the ſame time, both* Moſes, *and all the Elect, were* "*under a pure Covenant of Goſpel-grace: And if theſe* "*were two contrary Covenants in themſelves, and juſt* "*oppoſite the one to the other, as indeed they were, we* "*have nothing to ſay, but with the Apoſtle,* Oh the "Depth, *&c.*

This, Reader, is the Poſition which muſt be made good for Mr. *Cary*, or his Cauſe is loſt. Deformed Iſſues do not look as if they had beautiful Truth for their Mother. No falſe or abſurd Concluſion can regularly follow from true Premiſſes: But hence naturally and neceſſarily follows this

Abſurdity I. That *Abraham*, *Moſes*, and all the Believers under the *Old Teſtament*, by ſtanding abſolutely under *Adam*'s Covenant of Works, as a Miniſtration of Death and Condemnation; and at the ſame time purely under the Covenant of Grace (as Mr. *C.* affirms they did) muſt neceſſarily, during their Lives, hang midway betwixt Life and Death, Juſtification and Condemnation; and after Death, midway betwixt Heaven and Hell. During life, they could neither be juſtified nor condemned. Juſtified they could not be, for Juſtification is the Soul's paſſing from Death to Life, 1 *John* 3. 14. *John* 5. 24. Upon a Man's Juſtification his Covenant and State are changed; but the Covenant and State of no Man can be ſo changed as long as he remains abſolutely under the ſevereſt Penalties and Condemnation of the Law, as Mr. *C.* affirms they did.

Again, Condemned they could not be, ſeeing all that are under the pure Covenant of Grace (as he ſaith they were at the ſame time) are certainly in Chriſt, and to ſuch there is no Condemnation, *Rom.* 8. 1. nor ever ſhall be: *John* 5. 24. *He that believeth, ſhall not come into condemnation, but is paſſed from death unto life.* What remains then, but that during Life, they could neither be perfectly juſtified, nor perfectly condemned; and yet being abſolutely under the ſevereſt Penalties of *Adam*'s Covenant, they were perfectly condemned; and again, being under the pure Covenant of Grace, they muſt be perfectly juſtified?

And then after Death, they muſt neither go to Heaven, nor Hell; but either be annihilated, or ſtick mid-way in *Limbo Patrum* (as the *Papiſts* fanſie) betwixt both. No condemned Perſon goes to Heaven, nor any juſtified Perſon to Hell. His *Poſition* therefore, which neceſſarily infers this groſs Abſurdity, is juſtly renounced and deteſted by Learned and Orthodox Divines.

Turret. pars 2da pag. 290.

The Learned and Acute *Turrettine*, the late famous Profeſſor of Divinity, at *Geneva*, proving that the *Sinai* Law could not be a pure Covenant of Works, brings this very *Medium* to prove it, as a known Truth, allowed by all Men. "The *Iſraelites* (ſaith he) with whom "God covenanted, were already under *Abraham*'s "Covenant, which was a Covenant of Grace; "and were ſaved in Chriſt by it; therefore they "could not be under the legal Covenant. *Nemo* "*enim ſimul poteſt duobus fœderibus totâ ſpecie diſtinctis* "*ſubeſſe*; becauſe no Man can be under two Co-"venants ſpecifically different at the ſame time, "as theſe two are.

Mr. Strong *on the Covenant*, p. 66, 67.

That great and renowned Divine Mr. *William Strong*, gives four irrefragable Arguments to prove, that no Man can ſtand under both theſe Covenants at the ſame time, which in co-ordination actually deſtroy and make void each other. "If the firſt Covenant ſtand, there is no "place for the ſecond; and if the ſecond ſtand, "the firſt is made void. And this (ſaith he) will "fully appear, if we conſider the direct contra-"riety in the Terms of thoſe two Covenants. "For (1.) the Righteouſneſs of the firſt Covenant "is in our ſelves; but the Righteouſneſs of the "ſecond is the Righteouſneſs of another, 1 *John* "5. 11, 12. (2.) In the Covenant of Works, ac-"ceptation is firſt of the Works, and afterwards "of the Perſon; *Gen.* 4. 7. but in the Covenant "of Grace, the acceptation is firſt of the Perſon "and then of the Work, *Gen.* 4. 4. (3.) The firſt "Covenant was a Covenant without a *Prieſt*, but "the ſecond is a Covenant with a *Prieſt*. (4.) In "the firſt Covenant there is matter of glorying, "but in the ſecond there is none, *Rom.* 3. 27. So "that theſe two can never conſiſt, except you can "compound, or reconcile theſe four Oppoſites in "the juſtification of the ſame Perſon.

Bolton's *Bounds*, p. 133.

To the ſame purpoſe, ſaith that excellent Mr. *Samuel Bolton*, "If the "Law were a Covenant of Works, then "were the *Jews* under a different Co-"venant from us, and ſo none of them were ſaved, "which the Apoſtle gainſays, *Acts* 15. 11. or "elſe they were both under a Covenant of Works, "and a Covenant of Grace. But that they could "not be; they are utterly inconſiſtent. *Ergo.* And thus all ſound Divines ſpeak. I may therefore ſay of Mr. *Cary*'s *Poſition*, as *Ruveus* before me did, *omnem abſurditatem excedere videtur*, it ſeemeth to exceed all Abſurdities. A Man may more rationally ſuppoſe two Natures and eſſential Forms in one Body, and place the ſame thing under divers *Species* in the *predicament* of *ſubſtance*: yea, 'twere more tolerable to affirm, That *ex duobus entibus per ſe fit unum ens per ſe*, than to place any (as Mr. *C.* places all) of God's People under two oppoſite Covenants. If Mr. *C.* were abſolutely under the condemnation of the Law, would he not be purely juſtified, think you? Yet he places *Abraham*, *Moſes*, and all Believers with them, abſolutely under the ſevereſt condemnation of the Law, and the pure Goſpel Covenant at once.

But to cover the ſhame and nakedneſs of his Aſſertion, which places Believers abſolutely under *Adam*'s Covenant, he is fain to make uſe of two *Fig-leaves*, as *Adam* did.

(1.) And the firſt attempt he now makes, *p.* 4, 5, 6, 7. of his *Reply*, is by way of Retortion, by telling us, "*That the ſame pretended Abſurdities do* "*fall as heavily, and a great deal more, on our Do-*"*ctrine, who affirm the* Sinai *Law (complexly taken)* "*to be a Covenant of Faith, or Grace, than upon his* "*who makes them two eſſentially different Covenants:*

" *becauſe we are forced to comprize perfect doing, with*
" *the curſe for non-performance, under the ſame Cove-*
" *nant with believing: and that it cannot be denied,*
" *but that all the People of God were abſolutely under*
" *the* Sinai *Covenant*, Gal 3. 23 *and* Gal. 4. 4, 5.
" *and conſequently under the curſe*, Gal. 3. 10. This is the ſum and ſubſtance of his firſt Anſwer.

Reply. I will not be tempted to expoſe my Neighbour to deriſion for his ſtrange Anſwer; but rather propound two ſober *Queries* to him, and the Reader, *viz.* (1.) What Orthodox Divines he ever met with, and what are their Names, who are forced to comprize perfect doing, with the curſe for non-performance, under the ſame Covenant with believing: and ſo make the two oppoſite Covenants to be ſpecifically one and the ſame? Name your Men, with their Books and Pages; or retract with ſhame and ſorrow, what you have here abuſively affirmed of them. *Cameron* indeed makes it a ſubſervient Covenant; the moſt a true, though obſcure Covenant of Grace; but none comprize *Adam*'s Covenant with its Curſe, in the New Covenant. (2.) Whether it be imaginable, That the ſame Abſurdity can follow from their Doctrine, that make the whole complex body of the *Sinai Law* a Covenant of Grace, though more obſcure, and ſo place all the People of God in thoſe Ages under it; as does neceſſarily follow his Doctrine, who makes it a pure *Adam*'s Covenant of Works, and places the Church of God abſolutely under the curſe of it, and alſo under the pure Covenant of Grace at the ſame time? If Grace and Grace (how different ſoever in degrees of Manifeſtation) be as oppoſite and repugnant, as Grace and Works, as Juſtification and Condemnation are, 'tis time for me to lay down my Pen; for I have certainly loſt my Underſtanding to guide it any further.

But Mr. *Cary* will ſay, If you do not, yet Mr. *Roberts* doth comprize both in one Covenant. I ſay, you abuſe Mr. *Roberts* in ſo affirming: for he ſaith in that very place you refer to, * That believing in Chriſt, was ultimately and chiefly intended in the *Sinai* Covenant; and perfect doing was only urged upon *Iſrael* in ſubordination and tendency to that believing. And upon that ground it is he affirms that Covenant to be a Covenant of Faith, and ſo denominates it from the chief ſcope and intent of it. He ſets not *doing* and *believing* in co-ordination, or places the Church under two oppoſite Covenants, as you do; but places the Law, where it ought to be placed, in ſubordination to Faith and Chriſt, and therefore you have abuſed that good Man, as well as me, and your ſelf moſt of all in this your firſt impertinent and ſilly Anſwer.

* Roberts *on the Covenant*, pag. 775, 776, 777.

(2.) But you have one Evaſion more, *p.* 7. where
" you ſay *That how harſh and dreadful ſoever the Terms*
" *or Conditions of the Legal Covenant were to thoſe that*
" *were under it, as* Moſes, *and the whole body of the*
" Iſraelites; *then were; yet the grace of the Goſpel-*
" *Covenant far ſuperſeded, and was by far more victo-*
" *rious, powerful, and efficacious*, Rom. 5. 17, 20.

Reply. Worſe and worſe. Your Diſcourſe mends like ſowre *Ale* in *Summer*. Here you fanſie the two Covenants (under which you place the whole Church of God) to be in a conflict one with the other; Condemnation and Juſtification ſtruggling one with another, as I told you before they would: but however, the Grace of the New Covenant prevails at laſt, and gets the victory over the Covenant of Works. Very good; but then pray, Sir, if you pleaſe, anſwer me a plain Queſtion or two at your leiſure.

Firſt, How far did the Covenant of Grace prevail againſt the Covenant of Works? Was it ſo far prevalent and victorious, as utterly to vanquiſh and diſannul it, as a Covenant of Works to them? or was it not? Was the Victory you ſpeak of, a compleat, or a partial one? If you ſay it was incompleat and partial, then you leave them (as I told you before you muſt) partly under the Promiſe, and partly under the Curſe; juſtified in part, and condemned in part. But if you ſay it was a compleat and perfect Victory, then it utterly diſſolved its Obligation as a Covenant of Works; then they did not remain under two oppoſite Covenants, as you affirmed they did; but on their believing, changed their ſtate with their Covenant, as we affirm they did.

Secondly. If you ſay, it did not totally free them from the Curſe of the Covenant of Works, but however prevailed ſo far that they were not actually damned by vertue of the Curſe; then be pleaſed to anſwer me one Queſtion more, *How it was poſſible for them to be abſolutely under the Curſe of the Law (as you affirmed they were) and yet that Curſe to be ſo ſuperſeded by the Covenant of Grace, as here you ſpeak?*

To ſuperſede the Curſe (though it be a Phraſe I never met with before) if it ſignify any thing, it muſt ſignify this; That the Covenant of Grace cauſed the Law to omit, forbear, or give over to curſe that People any more. But did, or can the Law forbear or ceaſe to curſe thoſe that are abſolutely under it as a miniſtration of death and condemnation? Pray conſult, *Rom.* 3. 19. and *Gal.* 3. 10. Are you aware what you ſay, when you place Believers abſolutely under the Curſe of the Law, and then talk of the New Covenant's Victory over it; and after all this, leave them as you do, abſolutely under the curſing power of the one; and ſtill under the victorious Grace of the other? For ſhame, my Friend, give up your abſurd Notion, and repent of this Folly. I would not willingly ſhame you before the World; I did all that lay in me to prevent it. But however, *Pudor eſt medicina pudoris*, the only way you have left me to prevent your glorying in your ſhame, is this way to make you aſhamed of your Vain-glory. As for that Scripture you alledge to countenance your Fancy, *Rom.* 5. 17, 20. you might to as good purpoſe have opened your Bible, and have taken the firſt Scripture that came to hand, and it would have done your *Poſition* leſs harm. For the Apoſtle's ſcope there, is to demonſtrate the perfection of the abounding Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, for the full diſcharge of Believers from the Guilt of Sin, and curſe of *Adam*'s Covenant; and cuts the Throat of your *Poſition*, which it is alledged to prove.

I have ſtood the longer upon the clearing of this firſt Point; becauſe this being fully cleared, it runs through and clears the whole Controverſy betwixt us. For now it will be evident to all, That neither *Abraham*'s, nor *Moſes* his Covenant (complexly taken, as Mr. *Cary* takes it) could poſſibly be for this reaſon an *Adam*'s Covenant of Works; and if not a Covenant of Works, then how dark or legal ſoever the Diſpenſations of them were, they muſt needs be the ſame Covenant of Grace, for ſubſtance, under which we are, and ſo the main Controverſy betwixt us is hereby at an end.

I know not how many Covenants of Works, or how many of Grace, Mr. C. fanſies there are; but

but Orthodox Divines constantly affirm, * That as there never were but two ways of Life to Mankind, the one before the Fall, by perfect doing; the other after the Fall, by sincere believing: So answerably there can be but two Covenants betwixt God and Mankind, *viz.* the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace. The last of which hath, indeed, been more obscurely Administred, and in that respect is called the Old Covenant; yet that and the New are essentially but one Covenant: And the Church of God, which for many Ages stood under that Old Covenant, did not stand under it as an *Adam*'s Covenant, or the First Covenant of Works, for the undeniable Reasons above given. And therefore *Abraham*'s Covenant, from whence we derive our Children's Title to Baptism, must of necessity be the very same Covenant for substance with this New Covenant, which all *Abraham*'s believing off-spring, and their Infant-seed, are now under. And in proving this one point, I sufficiently confute both Mr. C's *Solemn Call*, and this his feeble vindication of it together.

* *Vide* Bolton's *Bounds*, p. 148.

But lest he should take this for the only Absurdity proved upon him, tho' it be tiresome to me, and must be ungrateful to him, give me leave to touch one more, among many; and that the rather, because I make great use of it in this Controversy, and Mr. *Cary* both yields and denies it. If his own words be the Messengers of his meaning, either he or I, must mistake their Errand.

I had in my *Prolegomena*, distinguished of the Law, as strictly taken for the *Ten Commandments*; and more largely and complexly, taken, as including the *Ceremonial* Law. The former I considered according to God's Intention and Design in the promulgation of it, which was to add it as an *Appendix* to the Promise, *Gal.* 3. 19. And the carnal *Jews* mistaking and perverting the end of the Law, and making it to themselves a Covenant of Works, by making it the very Rule and Reason of their Justification before God, *Rom.* 9. 32, 33. *Rom.* 10. 3. I told him, That the Controversie depended upon this double sense of the Law, for that it ought not to be denominated from the abused and mistaken End of it; but from God's chief scope and design in the promulgation of it, which was to add it as an *Appendix* to the Promise, as the word παρεισηλθεν there imports; and so must be published with Evangelical purposes. Let us now hear Mr. C's sense of this matter.

In his *Call*, p. 131. he yields the distinction proving the Law to be in these words.

The Jews were right enough in reference to the true nature of the Law, That it was a Covenant of Works, &c. though they were out in respect of its proper use and intention, which was not, that any should attain unto Life and Righteousness thereby; but to shew them the nature of Sin, and the Holiness and Righteousness of God; to convince them of their Sin and Misery without Christ, and their necessity of a Saviour;

In his *Reply*, p. 43. a Covenant of Works, from *Rom.* 10. 15. he saith,

This was the nature of the Law, and of it in the first sanction of it, as the fruit of God's special designation and appointment; and that it is the greatest violation and perverting of Scripture that can lightly be met with, to affirm, that this is uttered and declared by Paul, *&c. only because the* Jews *had perverted it, and reduced it (as they thought) to its primitive intention.* And again, p. 44. he saith, he hath *proved that it was the same with* Adam's *Cove-*

ousness which was of the Law, and refusing to submit themselves unto the Righteousness of God, &c. stumbled at that stumbling stone, and were accordingly broken, snared, and taken, Rom. 9. 31, 32, 33. Rom. 10. 3. *And this* (saith he) *was the true ground of dispute between the* Apostle *and them.* This was Orthodoxly spoken, and would end the Controversy, would he stand to it. But

vant in both respects, that is intentionally, as well as materially considered. And once more, *p.* 20. he expressly denies that the Law was added as an *Appendix* to the *Promise*; calls that a crude assertion of mine; and asks me, *Why it might not be added as an Appendix rather to the first Covenant of Works, to reinforce that?* And after all, gushes out many slighting and opprobrious terms upon me, which I will not throw back again, but rather leave him to reconcile himself with himself.

I shall only ask Mr. *Cary* a sober Question or two, instead of Recriminations, and rendring reviling for reviling.

First, How the *Jews* were *right enough* in reference to the nature of the Law, as it was a Covenant of Works, and yet *out* in respect of its proper use and intention, which was not, that any should attain unto Life and Righteousness by it, but to convince them of Sin, and of the necessity of a Saviour; and yet the Law be a Covenant of Works, *intentionally*, as well as *materially* considered; and that in respect of God's special designation and appointment? If God designed and appointed it in his *Sinai* dispensation, to be to them an *Adam*'s Covenant of Works, then certainly they were not out (as you say they were) when they sought Righteousness by the works of it; nor could that mistake of theirs be the ground of the Controversy betwixt the *Apostle* and them: For it seems it was no mistake, being by God's Intention, as well as its own primitive Nature, promulged at *Sinai*, as a true *Adam*'s Covenant.

Secondly, You deny the Law was added to the Promise, and ask me why it might not be added to the first Covenant to reinforce that? I answer, Because the scope of the Place will not bear it, nor any good Expositor countenance such a fancy. You make the *Sinai* Law to be the same with that first Covenant, and by so expounding the Apostle, you make him say, either that the same Thing was added to it self, (which must in your own Phrase, be by a *Correspondency of Identity*) or else that there are two distinct Covenants of Works (when indeed there is but one) and that the latter was added to the former. This is your way of Expounding Scripture, when driven to a streight by dint of Argument. Nothing beside such a pure necessity, could drive you upon such an Absurdity.

Παρεισηλθεν posita, pro apposita, hoc est, Promissioni adjecta. *Beza.*

It was added to the promise (saith Dr. *Reynolds*) by way of subserviency and attendance, the better to advance and make effectual the Covenant it self. Mr. *Strong* upon the two Covenants, saith, the Apostle's meaning is, that the Law was added as an *Appendix* to the Promise. But it may rather bear Dr. *Crisp*'s Exposition * than his; for you say, had it been added to the Promise, it would have given Life. The *Doctor* will at once give you the true sense of the Text, and with it

Vide *Dr.* Reynold's *Use of the Law*, p. 378. *full up to my sense, and* p. 371.

* *Dr.* Crisp, *Lib.* 4. *Serm.* 9.

a full anſwer to your Objection. "*Though Life* "(ſaith he) *be not the end of the Law, yet there are* "*other ſufficient uſes of it requiring the promulgation* "*thereof: It was publiſhed to be an Appendix to the* "*Goſpel*, Gal. 3. 19. *And this ſuppoſes*, (1.) *The* "*priority of the Goſpel to the Law.* (2.) *The princi-* "*pality of the Promiſe of Life by Chriſt, above the* "*Law.* (3.) *The Conſiſtence of the Law and Go-* "*ſpel. They may well ſtand one by another, as an* "*Houſe, and the addition to it may.* That it was with ſuch an intention added to the Promiſe, I have met with no Man that had front enough to deny or ſcruple it before you. And that the *Jews* did miſtake its chief ſcope and uſe, from whence we denominate it a Covenant of Grace, the generality of Godly and Learned Divines conſtantly affirm. See Mr. *Anth. Burgeſs de Lege*, p. 227. *Bolton's Bounds*, p. 160, 161. Mr. *Samuel Mather* on the *Types*, p. 11. with multitudes more, whoſe citations would even weary the Reader. And what you urge from Mr. *Pool's Annotations*, on 2 *Cor.* 3. 6, 7. It makes nothing at all to your purpoſe: For it is manifeſt the *Annotator* there, takes the Moral Law in it ſelf, ſtrictly taken, and as ſet in oppoſition to the Goſpel, which it never was ſince the Fall, but by the Ignorance and Infidelity of unregenerate Men.

You alſo labour to ſhelter your erroneous fancy under the Authority of Dr. *Owen*; but you manifeſtly abuſe him in your Citation; for in that very place you refer to, he ſpeaks ſtrictly of the Covenant of Works made with *Adam* in *Paradiſe*; and plainly diſtinguiſhes it from the *Sinai* Covenant, which ſufficiently ſhews his judgment in this point. For theſe are his own words, which you ſuppreſſed in the Citation, "*As to* "*the* Sinai *Covenant and the New Teſta-* "*ment, with their Privileges thence e-* "*merging, they belong not to our preſent* "*Argument.* This Paragraph you wilfully omit, that you might include that which his words plainly exclude. In the ſame place he tells you that *David* and *Abraham's* Covenant, was for eſſence the Covenant of Grace, notwithſtanding the variations made in it: But you take and leave, as beſt ſuits your Deſign. †

Dr. Owen of Juſtification, p. 396, 397. *Vindicated from Mr. C's groſs Miſrepreſentation.*

† *But if you will ſee the Doctor's judgment, in concurrence with all his Brethren, you have it in theſe very words:* "*Although this Covenant hath been vari-* "*ouſly adminiſtred in reſpect of Ordinances and Inſtitutions in the* "*time of the Law, and ſince the coming of Chriſt in the fleſh; yet* "*for the ſubſtance and efficacy of it, to all its ſpiritual and ſaving* "*ends, it is one and the ſame; upon the account of which various* "*Diſpenſations it is called the* Old *and* New Teſtament. *Vide* Declaration of the Faith and Order of the Congregational Churches in *England* p. 15. at the *Savoy*, *Octob.* 12. 1658.

Once more in *p.* 16, 17, *&c.* of my *Vindiciæ Legis*, you find your ſelf pinched with another *Dilemma*, from *Lev.* 26. 40, 41, 46. whence I plainly proved, That there is a Promiſe of Pardon found in the *Sinai* diſpenſation, to penitent Sinners. That this Promiſe was given at *Mount Sinai* by the hand of *Moſes*, is undeniable from *verſ.* 46. That it contained the Relief of a gracious Remiſſion to penitent Sinners, is as undeniable from *verſ.* 40, 41. If you ſay, this Promiſe belongs to *Moſes* his diſpenſation (as *verſ.* 46. tells you it did) then there is remiſſion of Sins found in the *Sinai* Laws. If you ſay it only refers to *Abraham's* Covenant of Grace; then that Covenant of Grace appears to be conditional, which you utterly deny.

Now what is your Reply to this? (1.) You object my own words in *the Method of Grace*, *p.* 326. as if you had never read the juſt and fair Vindication I had before given you of them, *p.* 134, 135. of my firſt Reply to you. At this rate Men may continue Controverſies to the World's end. Sir, there are many Witneſſes, that you are very well acquainted with my *Method of Grace.* (2.) You ſay, *p.* 31 of your Reply, That that Covenant could not be conditional, *becauſe a Condition implies merit either of congruity or condignity.* This is a further Diſcovery of your Ignorance of the nature of *Conditions* as well as *Covenants*: But that point belonging to the laſt Head of Controverſy between us, I ſhall refer it thither.

It were eaſie for me to inſtance in many more Abſurdities which Mr. C. cannot eluctate, and to prove them upon him as eaſily as to name them. But I will not preſs him too far; what hath been named and proved already, is more than enough to convince the Reader, that my firſt Argument is left ſtanding in its full force and ſtrength againſt him, *viz.*

Argument I. That Propoſition can never be true, which neceſſarily draws many horrid and groſs Abſurdities after it by juſt conſequence. But ſo doth this: *Ergo.*

Argument II. My next *Argument*, *Vindiciæ*, *&c.* *p.* 27. is as ſecure as the firſt. It was this. If *Adam's* Covenant had one end, namely, the Happineſs and Juſtification of Men by their own Obedience, and the Law at *Sinai* had quite another end, namely to bring Sinners to Chriſt by Faith for their Righteouſneſs; the one to keep him within himſelf, the other to take him quite out of himſelf; then the *Sinai* Law cannot poſſibly be the ſame with *Adam's* Covenant of Works in *Paradiſe.*

But ſo ſtands the Caſe, *Rom.* 10. 4. *Chriſt is the End of the Law for Righteouſneſs to every one that believeth.*

Therefore they cannot be the ſame, but two different Covenants.

All that touches this *Argument*, is but three Lines in the 49th page of your Reply; where you ſay you have ſufficiently anſwered and cleared this in *p.* 169, 172. of your former Diſcourſe, from the corrupt interpretation by me faſtened thereon.

Now, if the Reader will give himſelf the Trouble to examine thoſe Pages, he ſhall find that Mr. C. there allows that very interpretation which he here calls corrupt; and ſaith it comes all to one reckoning with his own. If this will overthrow my ſecond *Argument*, it is gone.

Argument III. My third *Argument* was drawn from *Acts* 7. 38. in this Form:

If Chriſt himſelf were the *Angel* by whom the Laws were delivered to *Moſes*, which are there called *the lively Oracles of God*; then the Law cannot be a pure *Adam's* Covenant of Works: For it is never to be imagined that ever Jeſus Chriſt himſelf ſhould deliver to *Moſes* ſuch a Covenant directly oppoſite to all the ends of his future Incarnation.

But it is more than probable from that Text, that it was Chriſt which delivered the Law to *Moſes* on the *Mount*. *Ergo.*

To this *Argument* he ſaith not one word in *p.* 49. of his *Reply*, where he cites a part of it, nibling a little at that expreſſion [*The lively Oracles of God*,] thinking it unimaginable the *Sinai* Law ſhould be ſuch; when as the Apoſtle *Paul*, *Rom.* 7. 10. found

ound the Commandment to be unto death; and the Apoſtle 2 *Cor.* 3. 6, 7. calls it a *Miniſtration of Death.* I muſt therefore leave Mr. *C.* to reconcile thoſe two Scriptures. And withal, I muſt tell him, that *Spanhemius* gives the ſame ſenſe I do of *Acts* 7. 38. as the current judgment of Chriſtians againſt the *Jews*, That it was not a created *Angel*, but Chriſt himſelf.

Fr. Spanhem. Elench. Controv. p. 552.

Argument IV. The laſt *Argument* I urged, was from *Rom.* 9. 4. and thus it may run.

No ſuch Covenant as by the Fall had utterly loſt all its Promiſes, Privileges, and Bleſſings, and could retain nothing but Curſes and Puniſhments, could poſſibly be numbred among the chief Privileges in which God's *Iſrael* gloried.

But the Law given at *Sinai* was numbred among their chief Privileges, *Rom.* 9. 4. *Ergo.*

To this he only ſaith, *p.* 57. of his Reply, 'That the Law even as it was a Covenant of Works, 'was a privilege ineſtimable, beyond what all 'others enjoyed; becauſe the very Curſes and 'Puniſhments annexed thereunto, in caſe of the 'leaſt failure, were of excellent uſe to convince 'them of their ſin and miſery without Chriſt, 'and their neceſſity therefore of a Saviour; which 'was the proper work of the Law, as a Cove-'nant of Works; which advantage all other 'Nations wanting, it might well be numbred 'among the chief Privileges they were inveſted 'with.

But (1.) If the Law were intended by God, to be an *Adam's* Covenant to them (as Mr. *C.* ſaith it was) where then is the Privilege of God's *Iſrael* above other Nations? (2.) If their Privilege conſiſted in the ſubſerviency of that Law to Chriſt (as he here intimates it did) then he yields the Thing I contend for. For this being its chief Scope and End, we do hence juſtly denominate it a Covenant of Grace, though more obſcure and legally adminiſtred. And in this Judgment moſt of our ſolid Divines concurr. Mr. *Charnock* on the *Attributes*, *p.* 390. is clear and judicious in the point. Mr. *Samuel Bolton*, in that excellent Book called, *The Bounds of Chriſtian Liberty*, gives nine ſolid Arguments to prove the Law was not ſet up at *Sinai* as a Covenant of Works. Mr. *Anth. Burgeſs* gives us ſix Arguments to prove the ſame Concluſion. Mr. *Greenhill* on *Ezek.* 16. gives us demonſtration from that Context, That ſince it was a Marriage Covenant, as it appears to be *v.* 8. it cannot poſſibly be a diſtinct Covenant from the Covenant of Grace. The incomparable *Turrettine* learnedly and judiciouſly ſtates this Controverſy; and both poſitively aſſerts, and by many Arguments fully proves, That the *Sinai* Law cannot be a pure Covenant of Works, or a Covenant ſpecifically diſtinct from the Covenant of Grace. It were eaſie to fill Pages with Allegations of this kind; but I hope what hath been ſaid, may ſuffice for this Point.

Bolton's Bounds, *p.* 130, &c.

Burgeſs, de Lege, *p.* 225.

Greenhill, in Loc.

Turrettine *part* 2. *p.* 288, 289.

But ſtill Mr. *Cary* complains, that I have all this while but threatned his *Arguments* to prove them fallacious, or to have four Terms in them; and therefore he hath drawn out ſome ſelect *Arguments*, as he calls them, *p.* 37. to try my ſkill upon. I will neither tire my Reader in a fooliſh chaſe of ſuch weak and impertinent *Arguments* as he there produceth, nor yet wholly neglect them, leſt he glory in them as unanſwerable. And therefore to ſhew him the fate of the reſt, I will only touch his firſt Argument, which being his *Argumentum Palmarium*, deſervedly leads the Van to all the reſt. And thus it runs upon all four.

That Covenant that is not of Faith, muſt needs be a Covenant of Works, yea, the very ſame for Subſtance with that made with *Adam.*

But the Scripture is expreſs, That the *Law* is not of Faith, *Gal.* 3. 12. *Ergo.*

The *Law* is conſidered two ways in Scripture. (1.) Largely, for the whole *Moſaical Oeconomy*, comprehenſive of the Ceremonial as well as Moral Precepts; and that Law is of Faith, as the Learned *Turrettine* hath proved by four Scripture *Arguments*, Pars ſecunda, *p.* 292, 293. * Becauſe it contained Chriſt the Object of Faith, *&c.* Becauſe it impelled Men to ſeek Chriſt by Faith. Becauſe it required that God be worſhipped, which he cannot rightly be without Faith. And becauſe *Paul* deſcribes the Righteouſneſs of Faith in thoſe very words whereby *Moſes* had declared the Precepts of the Law, *Deut.* 30. 11, 12, 13. Again, the Law in Scripture is taken *ſtrictly* for the *Moral Law* only, conſidered abſtractly from the Promiſes of Grace, as the Legal *Juſticiaries* underſtood it. Theſe are two far different ſenſes and acceptations of the Law. Your *Major Propoſition* takes the Law in its large complex body, as appears by your 3*d.* Page. Your *Minor Propoſition*, which you would confirm by *Gal.* 3. 12. takes the Law ſtrictly and abſtractly, as it is ſet diſjunctly from, yea in oppoſition to Faith and the Promiſes, and ſo there are two ſorts of *Law* in your *Argument*, and conſequently your *Argument* is fallacious, as all its fellows be, and *runs* (as I told you before) *upon all four.*

* Lex dicitur non eſſe ex fide, *Gal.* 3. 12. non ut latè ſumitur prout notat Oeconomiam Moſaicam; ſed ſtrictè, quum ſumitur pro Lege Morali abſtracte, & ſeorſim à promiſſionibus gratiæ, quomodo illam intelligebant Juſticiarii, qui vitam ex eâ quærebant. Nam fidem etiam in fœdere Sinaitico præceptam fuiſſe evincitur, *&c.*

I hope this may ſuffice with reſpect to the *Sinai* Covenant controverted betwixt me and my Neighbour, to evince that it cannot be what he aſſerts it to be, even an *Adam's* Covenant of Works: And that I have diſcharged what I undertook to prove with reſpect to this Covenant, namely, That Mr. *C.* cannot free his *Poſition* from the groſs Abſurdities with which I loaded it, but endeavouring to do that, hath incurred many more: that his *Reply* hath left my Arguments ſtanding in their full ſtrength againſt him, and that the *Poſition* I have ſet up againſt him, is well founded in Scripture; and hath the general concurrence and conſent of Learned, Holy, and Orthodox Divines.

To conclude, Let the Grave and Learned Dr. *Edw. Reynolds*, in his excellent *Treatiſe of the Uſe of the Law*, determine this Controverſy betwixt us, *p.* 371, *&c.* where deſignedly handling this Doctrine from *Rom.* 7. 13. 'That *the Law was revived* 'and promulgated anew on Mount Sinai *by the Miniſtry* 'of Moſes, *with no other than evangelical and merciful* 'purpoſes, he abundantly confirms my Senſe and *Arguments*, and ſaves me the labour of refuting the principal, and moſt of yours: where carrying before him the whole Context of *Gal.* 3. from the 15*th* to the 23*d*, he clearly carries his Doctrine with it, proving from *ver.* 15. 'That God's Co-'venant with *Abraham* was perpetual and immu-'table, and therefore all other ſubſequent Acts of

'God

'God (such as the giving of the Law was) do 'some way or other refer unto it. P. 376. '(2.) From *ver.* 16. he further proves, 'That as God's Covenant with *Abra-* 'ham is most constant in regard of the wisdom 'and unvariableness of him that made it; so it 'can never expire for want of a Seed to whom 'it is made. (3.) From *ver.* 17. he P. 377. 'proves, that if another Law be 'made after the Promise, which *prima* 'specie, and in strict construction, doth imply a 'contradiction to the terms and nature of the for- 'mer Law; then it is certain, that this latter Law 'must be understood in some other sense, and ad- 'mit of some other subordinate use, which may 'well consist with the being and force of the former 'Covenant. (4.) From *ver.* 18. he proves, that 'the coming of the Law hath not voided the Pro- 'mise, and that the Law is not of Force (as you 'vainly dream) towards the Seed to whom the 'Promise is made; and therefore if it be not to 'stand in a contradiction, it follows that it must 'stand in subordination to the Gospel; and so to 'tend to Evangelical Purposes. (5.) He further proves his conclusion from *ver.* 19. which shews for what end the Law was added, προσετέθη. 'It was 'not (saith he) set up alone, as a thing in gross 'by it self; as an adequate, compleat, solid Rule 'of Righteousness, as it was given to *Adam* in 'Paradise: much less was it published to void and 'disannul any precedent Covenant; but so far 'was it from abrogating, that it was *added to the* 'Promise by way of subserviency, and attendance; 'the better to advance and make effectual the Co- 'venant it self; and that untill the Seed should 'come, which whether it respect Christ personal, 'or mystical, in either sense (saith he) it confirms 'the point we are upon, *viz. That the Law hath* 'Evangelical Purposes. If the Seed be understood 'of the Person of Christ, then this shews, that 'the Law was put to the Promise, the beter to 'raise and stir up in Men the Expectations of 'Christ, the promised Seed. But if we understand 'by Seed, the *Faithful* (which I rather approve;) 'then the Apostle's Meaning is this; P. 379. 'That as long as any are either to 'come into the unity of Christ's Bo- 'dy, and have the Covenant of Grace applied to 'them, &c. so long there will be use of the Law, 'both to the Unregenerate, to make them fly to 'Christ, and those that are already called, that 'they may learn, to cast all their Faith, Hope, 'and Expectation of Righteousness upon him still. 'This then manifestly shews, that P. 380. 'there was no other intention in pub- 'lishing the Law, but with reference 'to the Seed: that is, with Evangelical Purposes 'to shew Mercy: not with reference to those 'that perish, who would have had condemnation 'enough without the Law. And further streng- thens his Conclusion from the last words of *ver.* 19. 'That it was ordained by *Angels* in the Hands of 'a *Mediator*. This (saith he) evidently declares, 'That the Law was published in Mercy and Pa- 'cification, not in Fury or Revenge; (for the 'work of a *Mediator* is to negotiate Peace, and 'treat of Reconcilement between Parties offend- 'ed) whereas, if the Lord had intended Death 'in the publishing of the Law, he would not 'have proclaimed it in the hand of a *Mediator*, 'but of an *Executioner*. (6.) From P. 381, 'ver. 20. Those Words (saith he) 'shew why the Law was published in 'the hand of a *Mediator*, *viz.* that they should not 'despair and sink under the fear of his Wrath. 'For as he made a Covenant of Promise to *Abra-* 'ham, and his Seed; so he is the same *God* still, 'one in his Grace and Mercy towards Sinners. '*God is one*, *i. e.* in sending this *Mediator*, he doth 'declare to Mankind, that he is at peace and 'unity with them again. *Moses* was the Repre- 'sentative, and Christ the substantial and real 'Mediator. *God is one*, *i. e.* he carries P. 382. 'the same Purpose and Intention both 'in the Law and in the Gospel; P. 384. 'namely, benevolence, and desire of 'Reconcilement with Men. (7.) To sum up all 'that hath been spoken touching the use of the 'Law in a plain similitude; Suppose we a '*Prince* should proclaim a Pardon to all *Traitors*, 'if they would come in and plead it; and after 'this, should send forth his Officers to attack, 'imprison, examine, convince, arraign, threaten, 'and condemn them: Is he now contrary to him- 'self? Hath he repented of his Mercy? No, but 'he is unwilling to lose his Mercy, desirous to 'have the Honour of his Mercy acknowledged 'unto him. The same is the Case between God 'and us. To *Abraham* he made a Promise of 'Mercy and Blessedness to all that would plead 'interest in it, for the Remission of their Sins; 'but Men were secure and heedless of their Estate, '&c. Hereupon the Lord published 'by *Moses* a severe and terrible Law; P. 385. 'yet in all this, God doth but pursue 'his first purpose of Mercy, and take a course to 'make his Gospel accounted worthy of all accep- 'tation; which clears the general Point, *That* 'God in the publication of the Law by Moses, on Mount 'Sinai, *had none but Merciful and Evangelical Inten-* 'tions. And once more, The Law was not pub- 'lished by *Moses* on *Mount Sinai*, as it was given to 'Adam in *Paradise*, to justify or to save 'Men. And *p.* 385. it is not given, P. 386. '*ex primariâ intentione*, to condemn 'Men. In consequence to all which he saith, '*p.* 388, 389. that to preach the Law alone by it 'self, is to pervert the use of it; neither have we 'any power or commission so to do. It was pub- 'lished as an *Appendant* to the Gospel, and so must 'it be preached. It was published in the hand of 'a *Mediator*, and must be preached in the hand of 'a *Mediator*. It was published Evangelically, and 'it must be so preached.

See how this agrees now with *p.* 173. of your *Call*, and how the several parts of the Discourse of this sound and eminent *Doctor* (which I have been forced to sum up and contract) do abundantly confute your vain Notions of the Law, and cut the very Nerves of your best Arguments, if they had any Nerves in them: for indeed it is *moles absque nervis*.

It were easy for me to represent the Sense of many other eminent Divines in perfect harmony with the Doctrine of this great and excellent Divine, who hath substantially proved the Point I defend against you: but 'tis enough.

II. Let us next examine what Execution his *Reply* hath done upon my second *Position*, set up in direct Opposition to him; namely, *That God's Covenant with* Abraham, Gen. 17. *unto which Circumcision was annexed, is, for its substance, the self-same Covenant of Grace with that which Gentile-believers and their Infant-seed are now under.*

Abraham's *Covenant*, Gen. 17. *the Covenant of Grace.*

Here

Here I have abundant cauſe again to complain, that Mr. C. hath ſo formed his Anſwers, as if he had never read the Book he undertakes a Reply to. And I do verily believe, the greateſt part of his Reply was made at random, before ever my printed Book was in his hands: For he hath not at all conſidered the ſtate of the Queſtion, as I there gave it him; nor kept himſelf to the juſt and neceſſary Rules of Diſputation, as I earneſtly deſired he would. However, 'tis not Complaints, but Confirmation and Vindication of my Arguments, which is my proper Work. I ſhall therefore recite them briefly, and vindicate and confirm them ſtrongly; contracting all into as few Words as can expreſs the Senſe and Argument of the Point before me.

Argument. I. If Circumciſion be a part of the ceremonial Law, and the ceremonial Law was dedicated by Blood; and whatſoever is ſo dedicated, is by you confeſſed to be no part of the Covenant of Works: then Circumciſion can be no part of the Covenant of Works, even by your own Confeſſion. But it is ſo. *Ergo.*

Vindiciæ Legis, &c. p. 42.

Reply. To this Mr. *Cary* returns a *Tragical Complaint* inſtead of a *Rational Anſwer. Inſinuates my falſe and groſs abuſe of him. Appeals to his Reader. Tells him, I have taken a liberty to ſay what I pleaſe, as if there were no future Judgment to be regarded. And that I can expect no comfort another day without Repentance now. For thoſe things that have thus paſſed betwixt him and me, ſhall again be reviſed, and ſet in order before me. That he is weary of noting my Miſcarriages of this kind. That there is hardly a* Page *or* Paragraph *in my whole* Reply, *but abounds with Tranſgreſſions of this Nature. He begs the Lord to forgive me; and wiſhes he could ſay,* Father, forgive him, for he knows not what he doth; *as if my Sin were greater than the Sin of thoſe that ſtoned* Stephen, *or crucified* Chriſt.

P. 68.

Reply. Either I am *guilty* or *innocent* in the Matters here charged upon me by Mr. C. If *guilty*, I promiſe him an ingenuous Acknowledgment. If *innocent*, (as both my Conſcience, and his own Book will prove me to be) then I ſhall only ſay, *He knoweth not what Spirit he is of.* The caſe muſt be tried by his own Book, and it will quickly be decided. Theſe are the very Words in his *Solemn Call*, p. 148. 'He (that is Mr. *Sedgwick*) *makes* 'no diſtinction betwixt the ceremonial Covenant that was 'dedicated with Blood, and the Law written in Stones 'that was not ſo dedicated. How ſtrangely doth he con'found and obſcure the word and truth of God, which 'ought to have been cleared and diſtinctly declared to 'thoſe he had preached or written to?' With much more, p. 149, 150, 151. where he ſaith, 'It's plain, that 'the Law written in Stones, and the Book wherein the 'Statutes and Judgments were contained, were two di'ſtinct Covenants, and delivered at diſtinct Seaſons, 'and in a diſtinct Method; the one with, the other 'without a Mediator; the one dedicated with blood and 'ſprinkling, the other (that we read of) not ſo dedi'cated.

Now let the Reader judge whether I have deſerved ſuch Tragical Complaints and dreadful Charges for inferring from theſe Words, That the ceremonial Law being by him pronounced a diſtinct Covenant from the Moral Law, which he makes all one with *Adam*'s Covenant; delivered at a diſtinct Seaſon, and in a diſtinct Method; the ceremonial Law with a *Mediator*, the moral Law without a *Mediator*; the ceremonial Law dedicated with blood and ſprinkling, the moral Law not ſo dedicated: let him judge (I ſay) whether I have wronged him in ſaying, that by his own confeſſion, Circumciſion being a part of this ceremonial Law, it can therefore be no part of the Covenant of Works?

Exception. But Mr. *Cary* hath two things to ſay for himſelf. (1.) That in the ſame place he makes the ceremonial Law no other than a *Covenant of Works:* And the wrong I have done him, is by not diſtinguiſhing (as he did) betwixt *A Covenant of Works*, and *The Covenant of Works.* Here it ſeems lies my Guilt upon which this dreadful Out-cry againſt me is made.

Reply. But if I ſhould chance to prove, that there never was, is, or can be any more than one Covenant of Works; and that any other Covenant which is diſtinguiſhed from it (as he confeſſes the ceremonial Law was) by a Mediator, and the blood of ſprinkling, can be no part of that Covenant of Works: what then will become of Mr. C's diſtinction of *A Covenant of Works*, and *The Covenant of Works?* Now the matter is plain and evident, That as there never were, are, or can be more than two common Heads appointed by God, namely, *Adam* and *Chriſt*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 45, 46, 47, 48. *Rom.* 5. 15, 17, 18, 19. ſo it is impoſſible there ſhould be more than two Covenants, under which Mankind ſtands, under theſe two common Heads. And the firſt Covenant once broken, it is utterly impoſſible that fallen Man ſhould ever attain Life that way, or that ever God ſhould ſet it up again with ſuch an intention and ſcope, *unleſs* (as Mr. *Charnock* ſpeaks) *he had reduced Man's Body to the Duſt, and his Soul to nothing, and framed another Man to have governed him by a Covenant of Works; but that had not been the ſame Man that had revolted, and upon his revolt was ſtained and diſabled.* If Mr. C. therefore be not able to prove more Covenants of Works with Mankind than one, let him rather bluſh at his ſilly diſtinction betwixt *a* Covenant of Works, and *the* Covenant of Works. For indeed he makes at leaſt four diſtinct Covenants of Works, one with *Adam*, two with *Moſes*; one moral the other ceremonial; and a fourth with *Abraham* at the Inſtitution of Circumciſion, *Gen.* 17.

Charnock *on the Attributes*, p. 390.

(2.) If it appear (as it clearly doth) that as there never was, is, or can be any more than one Covenant of Works, ſo whatſoever Covenant is diſtinguiſhed from it by a Mediator, and dedication by the ſprinkling of Blood (as he ſaith the Ceremonial Law was) cannot poſſibly, for the Reaſons he gives, be any Part or Member of *Adam*'s Covenant of Works; then, I hope, I have done Mr. C. no wrong in my Aſſumption from his own Words, for which he ſo reviles and abuſes me. But this will appear as plain as the Noon-day-light: For a Covenant with a Mediator, and dedicated by ſprinkling of Blood, doth, and neceſſarily muſt eſſentially difference ſuch a Covenant from that Covenant that had no Mediator, nor dedication of Blood. To deny this, were to confound Law and Goſpel, *Adam*'s and Chriſt's Covenant; but the Diſtinction betwixt them is his own, therefore my Aſſumption was juſt. That this Blood was typically the Blood of Chriſt, and that the Holy Ghoſt ſignified the one by the other, is plain from *Heb.* 9 7, 8. And I never met with that Man that ſcrupled it before Mr. *Cary*. So then my firſt *Argument* to prove *Abraham*'s Covenant of Circumciſion to be the Covenant of Grace, and not an *Adam*'s Covenant, or any Part thereof, ſtands firm

after

after Mr. C's passionate *Reply*, which I hope the Lord will pardon to him, though he had scarce Charity enough left to desire a pardon for his Friend, who had neither wronged the Truth, nor him.

Argument II. My second *Argument* was this. If Circumcision was the seal of the Righteousness of Faith, it did not pertain to the Covenant of Works; for the Righteousness of Faith and Works are opposite.

But Circumcision was the Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, *Rom.* 4. 11. *Ergo.*

The sum of what he answers to this, *p.* 72, 73, *&c.* (as far as I can pick his true sense out of a multitude of needless words) in this. 'He *confesses this Argument seems very plausible; but however*, Abraham, 'was a Believer before Circumcision; and though indeed 'it sealed the Righteousness of Faith to him, yet it sealed 'it to him only as the Father of Believers, and denies 'that ever Jacob, or Isaac, or any others enrolled in 'that Covenant, were sealed by it; but to all the rest, 'beside Abraham, it was rather a token of servitude 'and bondage'. This is the sum and substance of his Reply.

Reply. But, Sir, let me ask you two or three plain *Questions.* (1.) What is the reason you silently slide over the *Question* I asked you, *p.* 41. of my *Vindiciæ, &c.*? Did you find it an hot *Iron* which you durst not touch? 'Tis like you did. My Question was this. *Had* Adam's *Covenant a seal of the Righteousness of Faith annexed to it, as this had,* Rom. 4. 11.? *The Righteousness of Faith is Evangelical Righteousness, and this* Circumcision *sealed. Say not it was to* Abraham *only that it sealed it, for 'tis an injurious Restriction put upon the Seal of a Covenant which extended to the Fathers as well as to* Abraham: *however, you admit that it sealed Evangelical Righteousness to* Abraham: *but I hope you will not say, that a Seal of the Covenant of Works (for so you make Circumcision to be) ever did, or could seal Evangelical Righteousness to any individual Person in the World.*

I find you a Man of great confidence, but certainly here it failed you: not one word in Reply to this. (2.) 'I told you your distinction was invented by *Bellarmine*, and shew'd you where it was 'confuted by Dr. *Ames*: but not a word to that. (3.) I shew'd, 'That the extending of that Seal 'to all Believers, as well as *Abraham*, is most 'agreeable to the drift and scope of the Apostle's 'Argument, which is to prove, that both *Jews* 'and *Gentiles* are justified by Faith, as *Abraham* 'was: and that the Ground of Justification is 'common to both: and that how great soever 'Abraham was, yet in this case he hath found no-'thing whereof to glory. And is not your Ex-'position a notable one, to prove the community 'of the privilege of Justification, because the 'Seal of it was peculiar to *Abraham alone?* p. '47, 48.

Sir, You have spent Words enough upon this Head to tire your Reader. But why can I not meet with one Word among them, that fairly advances to grapple with my *Argument*? or answer the important *Questions* before you, upon which the matter depends? If this be all you have to say, I must tell you, you are but a weak manager of a bad Cause, which is the less hazard to Truth.

Argument III. In the Covenant of Circumcision, *Gen.* 17. God makes over himself to *Abraham*, and his Seed, *to be their God*, or gives them a special interest in himself.

But in the Covenant of Works, God doth not since the Fall, make over himself to any to be their God by way of special Interest.

Therefore the Covenant of Circumcision cannot be the Covenant of Works.

The sum of your Reply in *p.* 76. is under two Heads.

(1). "You boldly tell me, That *God doth, in* "*in the Covenant of Works make over himself to Sin-*"*ners to be their God by way of special Interest: but* "*it being upon such hard terms, that it's utterly im-*"*possible for Sinners that way to attain unto Life, he* "*hath therefore been pleased to abolish that, and make* "*a new Covenant:* and bring *Exod.* 20. 2. to prove it.

Reply. This is new and strange Divinity with me. (1.) That God should become a People's God by way of special Interest, by vertue of the broken Covenant of Works. This wholly alters the nature of that Covenant; for then it was a Law that could give Life, contrary to *Gal.* 3. 21. unless you can suppose a Soul that's totally dead in Sin, to have a special Interest in God, as his God. (2.) This Answer of yours yields the Controversy about the nature of the *Sinai Law:* for this very Concession of yours, is the *Medium* by which our Divines prove it to be a Covenant of Grace. (3.) This Concession of yours confounds the two Covenants, by communicating the essential property and prime privilege of the Covenant of Grace, to *Adam*'s Covenant of Works. Either therefore expunge *Jer.* 31. 33. as a Covenant of Grace, *I will be their God, and they shall be my People*; or allow that in *Gen.* 17. 7. to be specifically the same; and that *Exod.* 20. though more obscurely delivered. (4.) "You assert, *That God* "*may actually become a Peoples God by way of special* "*interest, and yet the Salvation of that People be sus-*"*pended upon impossible terms.* You sent them before to *Purgatory*, but by this you must send them directly to *Hell*; For if the Salvation of God's peculiar People be upon impossible terms, 'tis certain they cannot be saved. And lastly, it is an horrid reflection upon the Wisdom and Goodness of God, who never did, or will make any Covenant, wherein he takes fallen Men to be his peculiar People, and make over himself to be their God; and yet not make Provision for their Salvation in the same Covenant, but leave their Salvation for many Ages upon hard and impossible terms, (*i. e.*) leave them under Damnation.

(2.) I told you in my *Vindiciæ, &c.* p. 49. that you were fain to cut *Abraham*'s Covenant, *Gen.* 17. into two parts; and make the first to be the pure Covenant of Grace, which is the promissory part to the *9th. verse*; and the Restipulation (as you call it, *p.* 205.) to be as pure a Covenant of Works. Which I truly said was *a bold Action*; and in so calling it, I gave it a softer name than the nature of it deserved.

The sum of what you reply to this, is, (1.) By denying the matter of Fact, and charging me with misrepresentation; and in the next page confessing the whole Charge, saying, Though the Promise and the Restipulation, mentioned *vers.* 7, 8, 9 make but one and the same Covenant of Circumcision; yet there are two Covenants mentioned in that Context, the first between God and *Abraham* himself, *vers.* 2. 4. the other between God and *Abraham*, and his natural Posterity also, *vers.* 7, 8, 9, 10. The former you call a Covenant of Grace, the

M. C's Defence, p. 79.

the latter a Covenant of Works. And *p.* 81. you affirm, That after God had entred the Covenant of Grace with *Abraham*, Verſe 2, 4. that *Abraham* himſelf was required to be circumciſed by the Command of God, as a Token of the Covenant of Works. And then (after ſome unbecoming Scoffs for miſplacing, *verſ.* 7, 8. where *v.* 9, 10. ſhould be; as alſo of *Gen.* 12. for *Gen.* 17. (whether by the *Scribe*, my *Self*, or *Preſs*, I cannot ſay; but in each place ſufficient light is given to ſet you right in the ſcope and Argument of my Diſcourſe) you tell us, That *how harſh and unlikely ſoever it may ſeem to Man's carnal reaſon, that the latter, to wit, the Covenant of Works made with* Abraham, *verſ.* 9, 10. *muſt needs make void the Covenant of Grace made with him*, v. 2. 4. *yet the Apoſtle gives a quite contrary reſolution of it*, Gal. 3. 17. And after all, *p.* 79. in return to my *Argument*, That the Circumciſion of *Abraham*, and his Seed, *verſ.* 9, 10. could not poſſibly be a condition of *Adam*'s Covenant of Works ☜ from the nature of the act: becauſe *Paul* himſelf circumciſed *Timothy* *Acts* 16. 1, 2, 3. and aſſerts it to be a part of his Liberty, *Gal.* 2. 3, 4. which could never be, if in the very nature of the Act it had bound *Timothy* to keep the Law for juſtification; and had been contrary to the whole ſcope of the Apoſtle's Doctrine: but it became an obligation only from the intention of the Agent. All that you ſay to this, *p.* 95. is, "That as for *Paul's compliance with* "*the Jews, however the caſe ſtood in that reſpect, this* "*is certain, That the bleſſed Apoſtle would never have* "*expreſſed himſelf with that vehemency he doth*, Gal. "5. 2, 3. *if this had been only the ſenſe of the Jewiſh* "*Teachers, or that Circumciſion in it's own nature did* "*not oblige to the keeping of the whole Law; and that* "*this is only my corrupt gloſs upon the Text.*

Page 81.

Reply. If there be but one Covenant made betwixt God and *Abraham* in that 17th of *Geneſis*, and you make two, not only *numerically*, but *ſpecifically* diſtinct, yea, oppoſite Covenants of it; then you boldly cut God's Covenant with *Abraham* in two, and are guilty of an inſufferable abuſe of the Covenant of God. But the former is true: therefore ſo is the latter. You ſay, *p.* 223, 224. of your Call, "That at the *ſecond* and *fourth Verſes* God "made a Covenant with *Abraham* himſelf alone; "but at *verſ* 7. he makes the Covenant of Circumciſion betwixt himſelf and *Abraham*, and his "natural Seed alſo; and ſaith *verſ.* 7. *And*, or "(according to the old Tranſlation) *Moreover*; as "proceeding to ſpeak of another Covenant than "what he had been before inſiſting on.

Now I would ſoberly ask, (1.) What Vouchers you have amongſt Expoſitors for this your raſh and daring Aſſertion? I find not a Man that hath trod this path before you, and I hope none will be hardy enough to follow. You certainly ſtand alone, and 'tis pity but you ſhould. (2.) Where do you find the juſt parts of the New Covenant in the *2d & 4th ver.* Is it not altogether promiſory on God's part, without any reſtipulation on *Abraham*'s? for you have excluded, *v.* 1, 9, 10. from that which you call God's Covenant of Grace with him. And then for your Covenant of Works, *ver.* 7, 8, 9, 10. you make this to be the Promiſory part of that Covenant, *to be a God unto thee, and to thy Seed after thee*; and again, *ver.* 8. *I will be their God.* Was ever ſuch a Promiſe as this, found in a Covenant of Works? Tell me what-ever God ſaid more in the New Covenant, than he ſaith here? Oh bleſſed Covenant of Works, if this be ſuch! (3.) Tell me whether you can ſatisfy your own Conſcience with the Anſwers you have given to my firſt Argument againſt your paradoxical, yea, heterodoxical Expoſition? I told you, That if *verſ.* 7, 8, 9, 10. contain another Covenant, *viz.* of Works, entred by God with *Abraham* and his Seed, it muſt needs make void the former Covenant, *v.* 2, 4. for where-ever the Covenant of Works takes place, the Covenant of Grace gives place, they cannot conſiſt, as I have abundantly proved before. Do you verily think thoſe words of the Apoſtle, *Gal.* 3. 17. which you bring as a foundation to ſupport your ſingular and ſinful Expoſition, *viz. And this I ſay, That the Covenant that was confirmed before of God in Chriſt, the Law, which was four hundred and thirty Years after, cannot diſannul that it ſhould make the Promiſe of none effect*; do you think (I ſay) that in that, or any other Text, the Apoſtle oppoſes the two Covenants made (as you fanſie) with *Abraham*, Gen. 17? or doth he not there ſpeak of God's Covenant with *Abraham*, as diſtinguiſhed from the Law made 430 Years afterward? (4.) Have you ſatisfied your own Judgment and Conſcience in the Reply you make to that unanſwerable Objection from *Paul*'s circumciſing of *Timothy*, Acts 16. 2, 3. where you have the plain matter of Fact before you, that he was circumciſed by *Paul*; and this Fact of his juſtified as a part of the Liberty he had in Chriſt, *Gal.* 2, 3, 4. from whence it evidently appears, That Circumciſion in its own nature did not ſimply and abſolutely oblige Men to the keeping of *Moſes* his Law for Righteouſneſs, but only from the Intention or Opinion of the Perſon. And though you call this my corrupt gloſs upon the Text, therein you groſly abuſe me. The gloſs is neither corrupt, nor my own; but the unanimous Judgment of all ſound Expoſitors of the Text, as you might ſee, were you capable of ſeeing it, in a Collection of their Judgments upon that Text, *Gal.* 5. 2, 3. in Mr. *Poole's Synopſis*. And tho' *Eſtius* thinks the Act of Circumciſion might be obligatory to the *Gentiles*, to whom the Law was not given; yet it was not ſo to the *Jews* that believed, and ſuch was *Timothy*. But why do I refer you to the Judgment of *Commentators*? the very reaſon of it may convince you: For,

Tenetur non ſimpliciter & abſolutè ex genere operis, ſed ex intentione operantis, & ſuppoſitâ tali opinione, &c. *Poole in loc.*

If the very Act of Circumciſion did in its own nature oblige all on whom it paſſed, to keep the whole Law for their Righteouſneſs, then *Paul* ſo obliged *Timothy*, and all others on whom he paſſed it, to keep the Law for their Righteouſneſs.

But *Paul* did not oblige *Timothy*, or any other on whom he paſſed it, by the very Act of Circumciſion ſo to keep the Law.

Therefore the very Act of Circumciſion in its own nature did not oblige all on whom it paſſed, to keep the whole Law for Righteouſneſs.

You may ponder this *Argument* at your leiſure, and not think to refute it at ſo cheap a rate, as by calling it a corrupt gloſs of my own. And thus I hope I have ſufficiently fortified and confirmed my Third Argument, to prove *Abraham*'s Covenant to be a Covenant of Grace. My Fourth was this.

Argument IV. That which in its direct and primary end teacheth Man the corruption of his Nature by Sin, and the mortification of Sin by the Spirit of Chriſt, cannot be a condition of the Covenant of Works.

But ſo did Circumciſion in the very direct and primary end of it. Therefore, *&c.*

Your Reply to this is, 'That *when I have ſubſtantially proved that the* Sinai *Covenant, as it contained the Paſſover, Sacrifices, Types, and Appendages, under which were veiled many ſpiritual Myſteries relating to Chriſt, and Mortification of Sin by his Grace and Spirit, to be no Covenant of Works, but a Goſpel-covenant; you will then grant with me, that the preſent Argument is convincing*; p. 96, 97. of your *Reply*.

Reply. Sir, I take you for an honeſt Man; and every honeſt Man will be as good as his word. Either I have fully proved againſt you, that the *Sinai* Law (taken in that latitude you here expreſs it) is not an *Adam*'s Covenant of Works, or I have not. If I have not, doubtleſs you have reſerved your more pertinent and ſtrong Replies in your own Breaſt, and truſt not to thoſe weak and ſilly ones which you ſee here baffled, and have only ſerved to involve you in greater Abſurdities than before. But if you have brought forth all your ſtrength (as in ſuch a deſperate ſtrait no Man can imagine but you would) then I have fully proved the Point againſt you. And if I have, I expect you to be ingenuous and candid in making good your word, That you will then grant with me, that this *Argument* is convincing to the end for which it was deſigned. And ſo I hope we have fully iſſued the Controverſy between us, relating to God's Covenant with *Abraham*. You have indeed four *Arguments*, p. 59, 60, 61, 62. of your *Reply*, to prove *Abraham*'s Covenant a Covenant of Works, of the ſame nature with *Adam*'s Covenant.

(1.) Becauſe as Life was implicitly promiſed to *Adam* upon his Obedience, and Death explicitly threatned in caſe of his Diſobedience, which made that properly a Covenant of Works; ſo it was in the Covenant of Circumciſion, *Gen.* 17. 7, 8. compared with *ver.* 10, 14.

Reply. This Argument or Reaſon can never conclude: becauſe as God never required of *Abraham*, and his Children, perſonal, perfect, and perpetual Obedience to the whole Law for Life, as he did of *Adam*; ſo the Death, or cutting off, ſpoken of here, ſeems to be another thing from that threatned to *Adam*. Circumciſion (as I told you before) was appointed to be the diſcriminating Sign betwixt *Abraham*'s Seed, and the Heathen World: and the wilful neglect thereof is here threatned with cutting off by Civil or Eccleſiaſtical Excommunication from the Commonwealth, and Church of *Iſrael*, as *Luther*, *Calvin*, *Paræus*, *Muſculus*, &c. expound; not by death of Body and Soul, as was threatned to *Adam*, without place for Repentance, or hope of Mercy.

(2.) You ſay *Abraham*'s Covenant could not be a Covenant of Faith, becauſe Faith was not reckoned to *Abraham* for Righteouſneſs in Circumciſion, but in Uncircumciſion, *Rom.* 4. 9, 10.

Reply. This is weak reaſoning. Circumciſion could not belong to a Goſpel-Covenant, becauſe *Abraham* was a Believer before he was Circumciſed. You may as well deny the *Lord's-Supper* to be the Seal of a Goſpel-Covenant, becauſe the Partakers of it are Believers before they partake of it. Beſide, you cannot deny but it ſealed the Righteouſneſs of Faith to *Abraham*; And I deſired you before, to prove that a Seal of the Covenant of Works is capable of being applied to ſuch an uſe and ſervice, which you have not done, nor ever will be able to do; but politickly ſlided by it.

(3.) You ſay it cannot be a Covenant of Grace, becauſe it is contra-diſtinguiſhed to the Righteouſneſs of Faith, *Rom.* 4. 13.

Reply. The Law in that place is put ſtrictly for the pure Law of Nature, and *Metaleptically* ſignifies the Works of the Law, which is a far different thing from the Law taken in that latitude wherein you take it. And is not this a pretty Argument, that becauſe the Promiſe to *Abraham*, and his Seed, was not through the Law, but through the Righteouſneſs of Faith; therefore the Covenant of God made with *Abraham*, and his Seed, *Gen.* 17. cannot be a gracious, but a legal Covenant? This Promiſe mentioned, *Rom.* 4. 13. was made to *Abraham* long before the Law was given by *Moſes*: and Free-grace, not *Abraham*'s legal Righteouſneſs, was the impulſive cauſe moving God to make that Promiſe to *Abraham*, and to his Seed: and their enjoyment of the Mercies promiſed, was not to be through the Law, but through the Righteouſneſs of Faith. By what Rule of Art this Scripture is alledged to prove God's Covenant with *Abraham*, *Gen.* 17. to be a Covenant of Works, I am utterly to ſeek. If it be only becauſe *Circumciſion* was added to it, that's anſwered over and over before; and you neither have nor can reply to it.

(4.) Laſtly, It cannot (ſay you) be a Covenant of Grace, becauſe it's repreſented to us in Scripture as a Bondage-Covenant, *Acts* 15. 10, *&c.* *Gal.* 5. 1.

Reply. 'Tis time, I ſee, to make an end. Your Diſcourſe runs low and dreggy. Do you think it is one and the ſame thing to ſay, That the Ceremonial Law was a yoke of Bondage to them that were under it, and to ſay it was an *Adam*'s Covenant? Are theſe two parallel diſtinctions in your *Logick*? Alas! Sir, there is a wide difference. The difficulty, variety, and chargeableneſs of thoſe Ceremonies, made them indeed burthenſome and tireſome to that People; but they did not make the Covenant, to which they were annexed, to become an *Adam*'s Covenant of Works: for in the very next breath, *verſ.* 11. the Apoſtle will tell you, *they were ſaved*; yea, and tells us, that *we ſhall be ſaved even as they*. So that either they that were under this Yoke, were ſaved by Faith in the way of Free-grace, as we now are; or we muſt be ſaved in the way of legal Obedience, as they were. Take which you pleaſe, for one of them you muſt take. *We ſhall be ſaved, even as they*, Acts 15. 10, 11.

If you can make no ſtronger oppoſition to my *Arguments*, than ſuch as you have here made, your Cauſe is loſt; though your confidence and obſtinacy remain. It were eaſy for me to fill more Paper than I have written on this Subject, with Names of principal Note in the Church of God, who with one Voice decry your groundleſs *Poſition*, and conſtantly affirm, That the Law in the complex ſenſe you take it, as it comprehends the Ceremonial Rites and Ordinances whereunto Circumciſion pertains, is, and can be no other than the Covenant of Grace, though more obſcurely adminiſtred. But becauſe *Latin* Authors are of little uſe to you, and among *Engliſh* ones, the Judgment of Dr. *Criſp*, I ſuppoſe, will be *inſtar omnium* with you: I will recite it faithfully out of his *Sermon* upon the two Covenants, where he makes the Old and New Covenant to be indeed two diſtinct Covenants of Grace, (for which I ſee no reaſon at all) but proves the former to be ſo in theſe words. Vol. 2. Serm. 2. pag. 247, 248, 250.

'It is granted of all Men, That in the Covenant of Works there is no *remiſſion of Sin*, there is

'is no notice of Chriſt; but the whole buſineſs or 'imployment of the Prieſts of the old Law, was 'altogether about *remiſſion of Sins*, and the exhi-'biting and holding forth of Chriſt in their faſhi-'on unto the People. In the 15th of *Numbers*, 'verſ. 28. (I will give you but one Inſtance) 'there you ſhall plainly ſee, That the adminiſtra-'tion of that Prieſtly Office had remiſſion of Sins 'as the main end of that adminiſtration. *If a 'Soul ſin through Ignorance, he ſhall bring a She-goat 'unto the Prieſt, and he ſhall make an atonement for the 'Soul that ſinneth ignorantly, and it ſhall be forgiven 'him*: See, the main end is adminiſtring forgive-'neſs of Sins.

'And that Chriſt was the main Subject of that 'their Miniſtry, is plain, becauſe the Apoſtle 'ſaith in the Verſe before my Text, That all that 'Adminiſtration was but a Shadow of Chriſt, 'and a Figure for the preſent to repreſent him, 'as he doth expreſs in the 9th Chapter of this '*Epiſtle*. And the truth is, the uſual general 'Goſpel that all the *Jews* had, was in their Sacri-'fices and Prieſtly Obſervations. ——

'So that it's plain, the adminiſtration of their 'Covenant, was an adminiſtration of Grace, 'and abſolutely diſtinct from the adminiſtration of 'theCovenant of Works.And what canbe ſaid more abſolutely and directly contradictory to your*Poſition*. than this is? And yet again, *p.* 250. ſpeaking to that Scripture, *Heb.* 8. 8. 'where the Apoſtle 'diſtinguiſhes of a *better* and a *faulty*, of *Firſt* and '*Second*; he ſaith, (finding fault with them) *The 'days come, when I will make a new Covenant 'with the Houſe of* Iſrael, *and with the Houſe of* Judah, *not according to the Covenant I made with 'their Fathers, when I took them by the hand to lead 'them out of the Land of* Egypt; and (as *Jeremiah* adds it, for the Apoſtle takes all this out of '*Jer.* 31. 31.) *although I was an Husband to them*; and in the cloſe of all, *Your Sins and Iniquities 'will I remember no more.*—— Here are two Covenants, a *new Covenant*, and the *Covenant he made with their Fathers*. Some may think it was the Covenant of Works at the promulgation of the Moral Law; but mark well that Expreſ-ſion of *Jeremiah*, and you ſhall ſee it was the Co-venant of Grace. *For* (ſaith he) *not according to the Covenant I made with their Fathers, although I was an Husband unto them. How can God be conſi-dered as Husband to a People under the Covenant of Works, which was broken by Man in innocency, and ſo became diſannulled or impoſſible by the breach of it? The Covenant of Works runs thus: Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the Book of the Law*; and, *In the day thou ſinneſt, thou ſhalt die the death. Man had ſinned before God took him by the hand to lead him out of the Land of* Egypt, *and Sin had ſeparated Man from God: How then can God be called an Husband in the Covenant of Works? The Covenant therefore was not a Covenant of Works, but ſuch a Covenant as the Lord became an Husband in, and that muſt be a Covenant of Grace*, &c.

How the Doctor makes good his two diſtinct Covenants of Grace, I ſee not, nor expect ever to ſee proved, and is not my preſent concernment to enquire; but once it is evident by what he hath here ſaid, That the Ceremonial Law, whereof Circumciſion is a branch, can be no other than the Covenant of Grace. And nothing is more common among our Divines, than to prove not only the *Sinai* Law, but God's Covenant with *Abraham*, *Gen.* 17. to be the Covenant of Grace, by this *Medium*, *That God having entred into a Co-venant of Grace with* Abraham *before, would never bring him under a Covenant of Works afterwards, which muſt nullify and void the former*. And beſide, ſuch a Covenant of Works as you make this, was never heard of in the World, wherein God pro-miſes to be a God to *Abraham*, and hisSeed, in their Generations, upon the rigorous and impoſſi-ble Terms of *Adam*'s Covenant.

By this time, I preſume, you muſt feel the force of thoſe Arguments produced againſt your vain and groundleſs Notion; and how little you are able to do to deliver your *Theſis* from them, but the more you ſtruggle, the more ſtill you are intangled. Go which way you will, your Ab-ſurdities follow you as your Shadow. —— *hæ-ret lateri lethalis arundo*. Leaving therefore all your Abſurdities upon you, till God ſhall give you more Illumination and Ingenuity to diſcern and ac-knowledge them; I ſhall paſs on to the Examina-tion of your *third Poſition*, which led you into theſe other groſs Miſtakes; and if God ſhall con-vince you of your Error in this Point, I hope it may prove a Means of recovering you out of the reſt: which in Love to your Soul, I hearti-ly deſire.

III. Your third *Poſition* is, *That God's Covenant with* Abraham, Gen. 17. *can be no other than the Covenant of Works, becauſe Circumciſion was the Con-dition of it: For* (ſay you) *the new Covenant is alto-gether abſolute and unconditional.*

Of the Conditionality of the New Covenant.

This Queſtion, Whether the Covenant of Grace be Conditionate or Abſolute, was moved (as a Learned Man obſerves) in the former Age, by occaſion of the Controverſy about Juſtification, betwixt the *Proteſtants* and *Papiſts*. Among the *Proteſtants*, ſome denied, and others affirmed the Conditionality of the Goſpel-Covenant. Thoſe that denied it, did ſo for fear of mingling Law and Goſpel, Chriſt's Righteouſneſs and Man's, as the *Papiſts* had wickedly done before. Thoſe that affirmed it, did ſo out of fear alſo; leſt the Neceſ-ſity of Faith and Holineſs being relaxed, *Libertiniſm* ſhould be that way introduced. But if the Queſtion were duly ſtated and the ſenſe of its Terms agreed upon, the Goſpel-Covenant may be affirmed to be conditional, to ſecure the People of God from *Libertiniſm*, without the leaſt dimi-nution of the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, or cloud-ing the Free-Grace of God.

I did in my firſt Anſwer to your *Call* endeavour to prevent the needleſs Trouble you have here given your ſelf, by a ſuccinct ſtate of the Queſti-on; telling you the Controverſy betwixt us, is not, (1.) Whether the Goſpel Covenant requires no Duties at all of them that are under it? nor (2.) Whether it requires any ſuch Conditions as were in *Adam*'s Covenant, namely, perfect, per-ſonal, and perpetual Obedience under the Penalty of the Curſe, and admitting no place of Repen-tance? nor (3.) Whether any Condition required by it on our part, have any Thing in its own na-ture meritorious of the Benefits promiſed? nor (4) Whether we be able in our own ſtrength, and by the power of our Free-will, without the *preventing*, as well as the *aſſiſting* Grace of God, to perform any ſuch work or duty as we call a Condition? Theſe things I told you were to be excluded out of this Controverſy. But the only Queſtion betwixt us, is, *Queſtion p.* 4.; *Whether in the*

New Covenant, ſome act of ours (though it have no merit in it, nor can be done in our own ſingle ſtrength) be not required to be performed by us antecedently to a bleſſing or privilege conſequent by vertue of a Promiſe: And whether ſuch an act or duty, being of a ſuſpending nature to the Bleſſing promiſed, it have not the true and proper Nature of a Goſpel-Condition?

In your *Reply* (contrary to all rule and reaſon) you include and chiefly argue againſt the very Particulars by me there excluded; and ſcarcely (if at all) touch the true Queſtion as it was ſtated, and by you ought accordingly to have been conſidered. I might therefore juſtly think my ſelf diſcharged from any further concernment with you about it: for if you will include what I plainly exclude, you argue not againſt mine, but another Man's *Poſition*, which I am not concerned to defend. You here diſpute againſt meritorious Conditions which I explode and abhor as much as your ſelf. You ſay, *p.* 34. of your *Reply*, that a Condition plainly implies ſomething of Merit, by way of *condignity* or *congruity*; which is falſe, and turns the Queſtion from me to the *Papiſts*. And were it not more for the clearing up of ſo great a Point for the Inſtruction and Satisfaction of others, than any hope you give me of convincing you, I ſhould not have touched this Queſtion again, unleſs I had found your Replies more diſtinct and pertinent. But finding the Point in Controverſy of great weight, I will once more tell you,

1. What the word [*Condition*] ſignifies.
2. In what ſenſe it is by us uſed in this Controverſy.
3. Eſtabliſh my *Arguments* for the Conditionality of the New Covenant.

(1.) And firſt we grant, That neither our word [*Condition*] nor your Term [*Abſolute*] are either of them found in Scripture, with reſpect to God's covenanting of Man; ſo that we contend not about the ſignification of a Scripture term. But though the word *Conditional* be not there, yet the thing being found there, That brings the word *Conditional* into uſe in this Controverſy. For we know not how to expreſs thoſe ſacred *Particles*, εἰ, ὅτι ἐὰν, ἐὰν μὴ, μόνον, εἰ οὐ ἔχ, &c. *If, If not, Unleſs, But if, Except, Only*, and the like, which are frequently uſed to limit and reſtrain the Grants and Privileges of the New Covenant, *Rom.* 10. 9. *Mat.* 18. 3. *Mark* 5. 36. *Mark* 11. 26. *Rom.* 4. 24. I ſay, we know not how to expreſs the true ſenſe and force of theſe *Particles* in this Controverſy, by any other word ſo fit and full as the word *Conditional* is. Now this word *Condition* being a Law-term, is variouſly uſed among *Juriſts*; and the various uſe of the word, occaſions that confuſion which is found in this Controverſy. He therefore that ſhall clearly diſtinguiſh the various ſenſes and uſes of the word, is moſt likely to labour with Succeſs in this Controverſy. I ſhall therefore briefly note the principal Senſes and uſes of the Term, and ſhew in what ſenſe we here take it. Of *Conditions* there be two ſorts.

1. Antecedent
2. Conſequent

} Conditions.

As to the latter, namely, *conſequent Conditions*, you your ſelf acknowledge, *p.* 100. 'That in 'the Covenant, many Things are required of us 'in order unto the Participation or Enjoyment 'of the full end of the Covenant in Glory.

So then the Covenant is acknowledged to be conſequentially conditional, which is no more than to ſay with the Apoſtle, *Without holineſs no man ſhall ſee God*; or, that *if any man draw back, his Soul ſhall have no pleaſure in him*, &c. Our Controverſy therefore is not about *conſequent Conditions*, laid by God upon Believers, after they are in Chriſt and the Covenant; the Covenant ſo conſidered, *a poſteriori*, will not be denied to be Conditional. The only Queſtion is about *Antecedent Conditions*; and of theſe we are here to conſider,

1. Such as reſpect the firſt Sanction of the Covenant in Chriſt.
2. Such as Reſpect the Application of the Benefits of the Covenant unto Men. *.

Si promiſſiones fœderis intelligantur de fine, nemo negare poteſt eſſe conditionales; quià fiunt ſemper ſub conditione fidei, & pœnitentiæ. *Turrettine.*

* Si fœdus ſpectetur ratione ſanctionis primæ in Chriſto, nullam habet conditionem præviam; ſed ſolâ gratia Dei, & Chriſti merito nititur. Sed ſi attendatur ratione acceptationis & applicationis in fideli, conditionem habet *Fidem*, quæ hominem unit Chriſto, & ſic in communionem fœderis mittit. *Turret. vol.* 2. *p.* 203.

As to the firſt Sanction of the Covenant in Chriſt, we freely acknowledge it hath no previous Condition on Man's part; but depends purely and only upon the Grace of God and Merit of Chriſt. So that our Queſtion proceeds about ſuch *Antecedent Conditions* only as reſpect the Application of the Benefits of the Covenant unto Men. And of theſe *Antecedent Conditions* there are likewiſe two ſorts, which muſt be carefully diſtinguiſhed.

1. Such Antecedent Conditions which have the force of a meritorious and impulſive Cauſe, which being performed by the proper ſtrength of Nature, or at moſt by the help of common aſſiſting Grace, do give a Man a right to the Reward or Bleſſings of the Covenant. And in this Senſe we utterly diſclaim antecedent Conditions, as I plainly told you, *p.* 61. of my *Vindiciæ, &c.* Or,
2. An Antecedent Condition ſignifying no more than an act of ours, which though it be neither perfect in every degree, nor in the leaſt meritorious of the Benefit conferred; nor performed in our own natural ſtrength; yet according to the conſtitution of the Covenant, is required of us in order to the Bleſſings conſequent thereupon by Virtue of the Promiſe: and conſequently the Benefits and Mercies granted in the Promiſe in this order are, and muſt be ſuſpended by the Donor or Diſpoſer of them, until it be performed. Such a Condition we affirm *Faith* to be. But here again, Faith in this Senſe, the Condition of the New Covenant is conſidered,

{ 1. Eſſentially. Or,
{ 2. Organically and Inſtrumentally.

In the firſt conſideration of *Faith*, according to its Eſſence, it is contained under *Obedience*, and in that reſpect we exclude it from juſtifying our Perſons, or entitling us to the ſaving-mercies of the New Covenant, as it is a work of ours; and ſo I excluded it, *p.* 133. of my *Method of Grace*, which you ignorantly or wilfully miſtake, when in your *Reply*, *p.* 88, 89. you object againſt me: Faith conſidered in this ſenſe, is not the Condition of the Covenant, nor can pretend to be ſo, more than any other Grace. But

We

We conſider it *Organically*, Relatively, and (as moſt ſpeak) Inſtrumentally, as it receives Chriſt, *Joh.* 1. 12. and ſo gives us power to become the Sons of God; it being impoſſible for any Man to partake of the ſaving Benefits of the Covenant, but as he is united to Chriſt. *For all the Promiſes of God in him are yea, and in him, Amen,* 2 Cor. 1. 20. And united to Chriſt no Man can be, before he be a Believer; for Chriſt dwelleth in our Hearts by Faith, *Eph.* 3. 17. Upon which Scriptural Grounds and Reaſons it is, that we affirm Faith to be an Antecedent Condition, or, *Cauſa ſine quâ non*, to the ſaving Benefits of the New Covenant; and that it muſt go before them, at leaſt in order of Nature, which is that we mean, when we ſay Faith is the Antecedent Condition of the New Covenant. And thoſe that deny it to be ſo, as the *Antinomians* do, who talk of actual and perſonal Juſtification from Eternity, or at leaſt from the death of Chriſt, muſt conſequently aſſert the actual Juſtification of *Infidels*; and not only diſturb, but deſtroy the whole order of the Goſpel, and open the Sluces and Flood-gates to all manner of licentiouſneſs.

Moſes's Self-denial, p. 188.

And thus our Pious and Learned Divines generally affirm Faith to be the condition of the Covenant. 'So 'Mr. *Jeremiah Burroughs*, Faith (ſaith he) hath the 'great Honour above all other Graces, to be the 'Condition of the ſecond Covenant; therefore 'certainly it is ſome great matter that Faith ena-'bles us to do. Whatſoever keeps covenant with 'God, brings ſtrength, though it ſelf be never ſo 'weak; as *Sampſon*'s Hair: What is weaker than 'a little Hair? Yet becauſe the keeping that, 'was keeping Covenant with God; therefore 'even a little Hair was ſo great ſtrength to *Samp-'ſon*. Faith then, that is the condition of the 'Covenant, in which all Grace and Mercy is con-'tained, if it be kept, it will cauſe ſtrength indeed 'to do great things.

And as this excellent Man, Mr. *Burroughs*, is in this ſenſe for the conditionality of the new Covenant; ſo are the moſt learned and eminent of our own Divines. Dr. *Edward Reynold*'s aſſigning the differences betwixt the two Covenants, gives this for one: 'They differ in the Condi-

Dr. Reynold's his Life of Chriſt. p. 512.

'tion (ſaith he;) there Legal Obedi-'ence, here only Faith; and the cer-'tain conſequent thereof, Repen-'tance. There is difference likewiſe in the man-'ner of performing theſe conditions: For now 'God himſelf begins firſt to work upon us, and 'in us, before we move or ſtir towards him. He 'doth not only command us, and leave us to our 'created ſtrength to obey the command; but he 'furniſheth us with his own Grace and Spirit to 'obey the command.

Dr. Owen's Treatiſe of Redemption. Book 3. Chap. 1. p. 103, 104. And in his Tract of Juſtification, p. 299. &c.

Of the ſame judgment is Dr. *Owen*. 'Are we able (ſaith he) of our 'ſelves to fulfil the condition of the 'New Covenant? Is it not as eaſie 'for a Man by his own ſtrength to 'fulfil the whole Law, as to repent, 'and believe the promiſe of the Go-'ſpel? This then is one main diffe-'rence of theſe two Covenants, That 'the Lord did in the Old only require the Condi-'tion; now in the New, he alſo affects it in all 'the Fœderates to whom the Covenant is extend-'ed. This is the Man you pretend to be againſt 'Conditions.

Mr. *William Pemble* opening the Nature of the two Covenants, ſaith, 'The Law 'offers Life unto Man upon Condi-'on of perfect Obedience; the Go-'ſpel offers Life unto Man upon ano-'ther Condition, to wit, of Repen-'tance, and Faith in Chriſt. And 'after his Proofs for it, ſaith, From whence we 'conclude firmly, That the difference between 'the Law and the Goſpel, aſſigned by our Di-'vines, is moſt certain and agreeable to the Scrip-'tures, *viz.* That the Law gives Life unto the 'Juſt, upon condition of perfect Obedience in 'all things; the Goſpel gives Life unto Sinners, 'upon condition they repent and believe in Chriſt 'Jeſus.

Pemble, of Juſtif. Sect. 4. Chap. 1. p. 214, 215, 216, 217.

Learned and judicious Mr. *William Perkins* thus, 'The Covenant of 'Grace is that whereby God freely 'promiſing Chriſt and his Benefits, 'exacts again of Man, that he would 'by Faith receive Chriſt. And again, in the 'Covenant of Grace two things muſt be conſider-'ed, the *Subſtance* thereof, and the *Condition*. The '*Subſtance* of the Covenant is, That 'Righteouſneſs and Life Everlaſting, 'is given to God's Church and People 'by Chriſt. The *Condition* is, That 'we for our Parts are by Faith to receive the 'foreſaid Benefits; and this *Condition* is by Grace, 'as well as the *Subſtance*.

Perkins, Order of Cauſes. Chap. 31. p. 17.

Reformed Catholick of Juſtif. p. 570.

That learned, humble, and painful Miniſter of Chriſt Mr. *John Ball*, ſtating the difference betwixt the two Covenants, ſhews, that in the Covenant at *Sinai*, in the Covenant with *Abraham*, and that with *David*, that in all theſe Covenant-expreſſures, there are for ſubſtance the ſame Evangelical Conditions of Faith and Sincerity.

Mr. J. Ball of the Covenant of Grace, Chap. 1. Of the New Covenant, p. 198.

Dr. *Davenant* thus: 'In the Cove-'nant of the Goſpel it is otherwiſe; 'for in this Covenant, to the obtain-'ment of Reconciliation, Juſtifica-'tion, and Life Eternal, there is no other condi-'tion required than of true and lively Faith, '*John* 3. 16. Therefore Juſtification, and the 'right to Eternal Life, doth depend on the con-'dition of Faith alone.

Davenant De Juſtif. Act. Cap. 30.

Dr. *Downame* harmonizeth with the reſt in theſe words: 'That which is 'the only condition of the Covenant 'of Grace, by that alone we are 'juſtified: But Faith is the condi-'tion of the Covenant of Grace, 'which is therefore called *Lex Fidei*. Our Writers (ſaith he) diſtinguiſheth the two Covenants of 'God, that is, the Law and the Goſpel, whereof 'one is the Covenant of Works, the other the 'Covenant of Grace, do teach, That the Law 'of Works is that which to Juſtification requireth 'Works as the condition thereof: The Law of 'Faith that, which to Juſtification requireth Faith 'as the condition thereof. The former ſaith, *Do 'this, and thou ſhalt live*; the latter, *Believe in 'Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved.*

Tract. 1. of Juſtif. Lib. 6. Cap. 8. Sect. 10. and Lib. 7. Cap. 2. Sect. 6.

But what ſtand I upon particular, though renowned Names? You may ſee a whole Conſtellation of our ſound and famous Divines in the Aſſembly, thus expreſſing themſelves about this Point. 'The Grace of God (ſay they) is manifeſted in 'the ſecond Covenant, in that he freely provideth,

and

Larger Catech. 4to. London 1648. *p.* 8.

'and offereth to Sinners a Mediator, & 'Life and Salvation by him, and requiring Faith as the condition to interest them in him, promiseth and giveth his holy Spirit to all his Elect, to 'work in them that Faith, with all other saving 'Graces, and to enable them to all holy Obedience, as the Evidence of the Truth of their 'Faith, *&c.*

I could even tire the Reader with the Testimonies of eminent foreign Divines, as *Cameron de triplici fœdere, Thes.* 82. *Ursinus & Paræus explicatio Catech. Quæst.* 18. *de fœdere. Wendeline, Christian Theology, Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 19. *Thes.* 9. *Poliander, Rivet, Wallæus* and *Thysius*, the four learned Professors at *Leyden, Synops. Disp.* 23. *Sect.* 27, &c. And as for those ancient and modern Divines, whom the *Antinomians* have corrupted and misrepresented, the Reader may see them all vindicated, and their concurrence with those I have named, evidenced by that learned and pious Mr. *John Graile*, in his *Modest Vindication of the Doctrine of Conditions in the Covenant of Grace*, from *p.* 58. onward; a Man whose Name and Memory is precious with me, not only upon the account of that excellent Sermon he preached, and those fervent Prayers he poured out many Years since at my Ordination, but for that learned and judicious *Treatise* of his against Mr. *Eyre*, wherein he hath cast great light upon this Controversy, as excellent Mr. *Baxter*, and Mr. *Woodbridge* have also done. But alas, what Evidence is sufficient to satisfy ignorant and obstinate Men!

Sir, It pities me to see the lamentable confusion you are in. You are forced, by the Evidence of Truth to yield and own the Substance of what I contend for. You have yielded the Covenant to be consequently conditional in *p.* 84. of your *Reply*. You have also as plainly yielded that *the Application of Pardoning Mercy unto our Souls, is in order of nature consequent unto believing*; *p.* 31. of your *Reply*. From both which concessions in your own words recited, this conclusion is evident and unavoidable, *viz.*

That no adult Person, notwithstanding God's Eternal Election, and Christ's meritorious Death and Satisfaction, according to the Constitution and Order of the New Covenant, can either be justified in this World, or saved in the World to come, unless he first believe.

For if the Application of pardoning Mercy unto our Souls, is in order of Nature consequent unto believing (as you truly affirm it to be) then according to the Constitution and Order of the new Covenant, no Application of Pardoning Mercy can be made to our Souls before we believe. And if it be evident (as you say it is, *p.* 84.) *that unto a full and compleat Enjoyment of all the Promises of the Covenant, Faith on our Part is required*; then as no Man can be actually justified in this World, so neither can he be saved before, or without Faith in the World to come. And if you did but see the true suspending Nature of Faith, which you plainly yield in these two Concessions; you would quickly grant the conditional Nature of it: For what is the proper Nature and true Notion of a Condition, but to suspend the Benefits and Grants of that Covenant in which it is so inserted? And thus the Controversy betwixt us is fairly issued. But I doubt you understand not what you have here written, or are troubled with a very bad Memory: Because I find you in a far different Note from this in *p.* 103. of your *Reply*, where you say, 'That if Jesus Christ 'fulfilled the Law, and purchased Heaven and Happi'ness for Men (as all true Protestants hitherto have 'taught) then nothing can remain, but to declare this to 'them, to incline them to believe and accept it; and to 'prescribe in what way, and by what Means they shall 'finally come to inherit Eternal Life. To affirm there'fore, that Faith and Repentance are the Conditions of 'the New Covenant required of us in Point of Duty, 'antecedent to the Benefit of the Promise, doth neces'sarily suppose, that Christ hath not done all for us, nor 'purchased a Right to Life for any; but only made way 'that they may have it upon certain Terms, or (as some 'say) he hath merited that we might merit: But the Con'ditions of the Covenant are not to be performed by the 'Head and Members both, Gal. 4. 4. Christ therefore 'having in our stead performed the Conditions of Life, 'there remains nothing but a Promise, and the Obedience 'of Children, as the Fruit and Effect thereof to them 'that believe in him, together with Means of obtaining 'the full Possession, which here we want.

Reply. Either these Passages I have here cited and compared, were fetched at a great distance of time, out of Authors differing as much in Judgment as you and I do; and so the Dissonancy of them is the meer Effect of Oblivion and Incogitancy: Or else your Intellectuals are more confused and weak than I am willing to suspect them to be. For if the Application of Pardoning Mercy to our Souls, is in order of Nature consequent to Believing (as you truly say it was;) then certainly, notwithstanding Christ's fulfilling the Law, and purchasing Heaven and Happiness for Men, something else must remain to be done, besides declaring this to them, to incline them to believe and accept it, or prescribing to them in what way they shall finally come to inherit Eternal Life. For besides those Declarations and Prescriptions you talk of, Faith it self must be wrought in the Souls of Men, or else Pardoning Mercy is not in order of Nature consequent unto Believing, as you said it was: For all the external Declarations and Prescriptions in the World, are not Faith it self, but only the means to beget it; which may, or may not become effectual to that end.

Secondly, Whereas you say, that this (senseless Notion) is consequent upon the Doctrine of all true *Protestants*, you therein grosly abuse them, and make all the true *Protestants* in the World guilty of worse than *Arminian* or *Antinomian* Dotage. The *Antinomian* indeed makes our actual Justification to be nothing else but the Manifestation or Declaration of our Justification from Eternity, or the Time of Christ's Death. And the *Arminian* tells us, That the Declaration of the Gospel to Men, is sufficient to bring them to Faith by the assisting Grace of the Spirit. But your Notion is worse than the very Dregs of both, and yet you tack it as a just consequent to the Doctrine of all true *Protestants*.

Reply. Thirdly, You say, *That to affirm Faith and Repentance to be the Conditions of the New Covenant required of us in Point of Duty, antecedent to the Benefit of the Promise, doth necessarily suppose that Christ hath not done all for us, nor purchased a right to Life for any; but only made way that they may have it upon certain Terms, or merited that we might merit.* Here, Sir, you vilely abuse all those worthy Divines before-mentioned, who have made Faith the Condition of the New Covenant, pinning upon them both *Popery* and *Judaism*. *Popery*, yea, the Dregs of *Popery*, in supposing their Doctrine necessarily implies that *Christ hath merited* P. 104.

that

that we might merit. And *Judaism* to the height, in saying, *their Doctrine necessarily supposes that Christ hath not purchased a right of Life to any.* What can a *Jew* say more? Ah, Mr. C. can you read the words I have recited out of blessed *Burroughs*, *Owen*, *Pemble*, *Perkins*, *Davenant*, *Downame*, yea, the whole Assembly of Reverend and Holy Divines, with multitudes more (who have all with one Mouth assested Faith to be the Condition of the New Covenant required on Man's part, in point of Duty; and that Men must believe before they can be justified; which is the very same thing with what I say, That it is antecedent to the benefit of the Promise) and not tremble to think of the direful charges you here draw against them? The Lord forgive your rash presumption.

Fourthly, Whereas you say, Christ hath in our stead performed the Conditions of Life, and that there remains nothing but a Promise, *&c.* you therein speak at the highest Dialect of *Antinomianism*; hath not Christ by his Life and Death performed the Conditions of Life in our stead? yet you your self confess, that pardoning Mercy is in order of Nature consequent to our believing, certainly then there is something more to be done beside the mere making, or being of a Promise: there must be the effect of the Promise in our Hearts; yea, the effects of those absolute Promises of the first Grace, *Ezek.* 36. *Jer.* 32. Or else notwithstanding Christ's performance of Redemption on his part, we can neither be justified nor saved. For I don't think you intend to lay the Conditions of Repentance or believing upon Christ, who in the New Covenant hath laid them upon us, tho' in the same Covenant he graciously undertakes to work them in us: and yet your words sound in that wild *Antinomian* Note.

Saltmarsh, *of Free-grace*, p. 126, 127.

Objection. But, I suppose, you take my Notion to be as self-repugnant as your own, when I say Faith is an antecedent Condition to Justification: because I also say, this Grace is also supernaturally wrought in us, and is not of our selves. This staggers you, and is the very Stone you stumble at all along this Controversie: for in your sense, *p.* 34. every Condition is meritorious by condignity or congruity.

Reply. First, What do I say more in all this, than what those Worthies before-mentioned do expresly affirm? Doth not Dr. *Owen* (the Man whom you deservedly value) make Conditions both in *Adam*'s Covenant and the New, with this difference, that *Adam*'s Covenant required them, but the New Covenant effects them in all the Fœderates? Sir, We take it for no contradiction to assert, That the planting of the Principle, and the assisting and exciting of the Acts of Faith, are the proper Works of the Spirit of God, and are also contained in the absolute Promises of the New Covenant, *Ezek.* 36. 26, 27. *Jer.* 32. 39, 40. And yet Faith, notwithstanding this, is truly and properly our Work and Duty; and that upon our believing, or not believing, we have, or have not, an actual Interest in Christ, Righteousness, and Life. For though the Author of Faith be the Spirit of God, yet believing is properly our Act, and an Act required of us by a plain Command, 1 *John* 3. 23. *This is the Command of God, That ye believe.* And if its being wrought in God's strength makes it cease to be our Work, I would fain know what Exposition you would give of that place, *Phil.* 2. 12, 13. *Work out your own Salvation, &c. for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do.* And as this Faith is truly and properly our work, though wrought in God's strength (for it is not God, but we that do believe) so it is wrought in us by him (by your own confession) before the application of pardoning Mercy, which is consequent in order of nature thereunto: and therefore hath the true nature of an antecedent Condition, which is that I contend for; and did you but understand your own words, you would not contend against.

Object. 2. Oh, but say you *p.* 34. every Condition is meritorious, either by way of *congruity* or *condignity.*

Reply. This is your ignorance of the nature of a Condition, with which I find you as unacquainted as with the nature of a Covenant. A Condition, whilst unperformed, only suspends the Act of the Law or Testament: it being the Will of the *Testator*, *Legislator*, or *Donor*, that his Law or Testament should act or effect, when the Condition is performed, and not before: but it is not essential to a Condition, to be a meritorious or impulsive cause moving him to bestow the benefit for the sake thereof. A Man freely gives another out of his love and bounty such an Estate or Sum of Money, which he shall enjoy if he live to such a Year, or Day; and not before: is this *quando dies veniet*, this appointed time the meritorious or impulsive cause of the gift? surely no Man will say it: but that it is a *causa sine quâ non*, or a Condition suspending the enjoyment of the Gift, no Man will deny that knows what the nature of a Condition is. An Act meritorious by way of *Congruity*, is that to which a Reward is not due out of strict Justice, but out of Decency, or some kind of Meetness. Merit of *condignity* is a voluntary Action, for which a Reward is due to a Man out of Justice, and cannot be denied him without Injustice. Our Faith is truly the Condition of the New Covenant, and yet we detest the meritoriousness of it in either sense.

Object. 3. But you object my words to me in my *Method of Grace*, where I assert the impossibility of believing without the efficacy of supernatural Grace, *p.* 102, 103.

Reply. Sir, I own the words you quote, and am bold to challenge the most envious Eye that shall read those Lines, to shew me the least repugnancy betwixt what I said there, and what I have said in my *Vindiciæ Legis*, &c. *p.* 9. of the *Prolegomena*, and *p.* 61. of that Book. You shew your good-will to make an advantageous thrust; but your Weapon is too short, and can draw no Blood. But leaving these weak and impertinent cavils, let us come to your Solution of my *Arguments*, p. 98. by which I proved the Conditionality of the New Covenant. My first *Argument* was this.

Argument 1. If we cannot be justified or saved till we believe, and are justified when we believe; then Faith is the Condition on which those consequent Benefits are suspended, *&c.*

Answer. The sum of your Answer (without denying, distinguishing, or limiting one Proposition) is this, That, "here Faith is properly put in "to the room of perfect Obedience, and is to do "what perfect Obedience was to do under the "Law: whereas (say you) Faith is only appointed as an Instrument to receive and apply "the Righteousness of Christ, which is the alone "matter of our Justification before God; and Faith "it self is not our Righteousness, as it would be if "it were a Condition, *p.* 105, 106.

Reply.

Reply. Not to note the weakneſs and impertinence of this Anſwer, I ſhall only take notice of what you here allow, and grant, That *Faith is appointed as an Inſtrument to receive and apply the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, which is the alone matter of our Juſtification before God.* Whence I infer three Concluſions.

Firſt, That we cannot be juſtified before God till we believe, except you can prove, that the unaccepted and unapplied Righteouſneſs of Chriſt doth actually juſtify our Perſons before God.

Secondly, That the juſtification of our Perſons before God, is, and muſt be ſuſpended (as by a non-performed Condition) until we actually believe. Which two Concluſions yield up your Cauſe to my Argument, which you here ſeem to oppoſe.

Thirdly, That hereby you perfectly renounce and deſtroy your *Antinomian* Fancy before-mentioned, That *if Chriſt have fulfilled the Law, and purchaſed Heaven for Men, nothing can remain but to declare this to them*, &c. for it ſeems by this, they muſt receive and apply Chriſt's Righteouſneſs by Faith, or they cannot be juſtified (you ſay not *declaratively* in their own Conſciences, but) *before God.* And thus inſtead of anſwering, you have confirmed and yielded my firſt *Argument*, and only oppoſe your own Miſtakes, not the ſenſe or force of my *Arguments*, in all that you ſay to it, or the Scriptures produced to prove it.

Argument 2. To my ſecond *Argument*, recited, *p.* 94. where I argued from God's Covenant with *Abraham*, and proved it to be conditional; and yet by you acknowledged to be a pure Goſpel-Covenant: all that you ſay, is, That you have diſpatched that before, in your Diſcourſe about the *Covenant of Circumciſion*, and therefore will ſay nothing to it here.

Reply. In ſaying nothing to it here, you have ſaid as much as you did before in the place you refer to: and therefore finding nothing ſaid here or there, I conclude you can ſay nothing to it at all.

Argument. 3. My third *Argument* was this. If all the Promiſes of the Goſpel be abſolute and unconditional, then they do not properly belong to the New Covenant. That cannot properly and ſtrictly be a Covenant which is not a mutual Compact, and in which there is no Reſtipulation, nor Re-obligation: 'tis a naked Promiſe, not a Covenant.

To this you anſwer three things. In the firſt branch of your Anſwer you impudently beg the Queſtion, by ſaying, That ‘ *you have proved already in your Replies to my former Arguments, that the* ‘ *New Covenant is wholly free and abſolute.* Upon ‘ this abſurd *Petitio Principii* you make bold to in- ‘ vert my *Argument* thus in your ſecond Reply. *If* ‘ *all the Promiſes of the Goſpel be wholly abſolute and* ‘ *unconditional, they do properly and truly belong to the* ‘ *New Covenant: But ſo they are. Therefore*, &c. Oh ‘ rare Diſputant! In the laſt place, in oppoſition ‘ to the Sequel of my *Major Propoſition*, you tell ‘ me you will oppoſe the Judgment of Dr. *Owen*, ‘ on *Heb.* 8. 10. where he ſaith, That a Covenant ‘ properly is a Compact or Agreement on cer- ‘ tain Terms ſtipulated by two or more Parties, *&c.* and that the word Διαθήκη there uſed, ſignifies a Covenant improperly, *&c.*

Anſwer, *page* 113, 114.

Reply. If you call this an oppoſition to the Sequel of my *Major*, either your Brains or mine do want *Hellebore*. Doth he not ſay the very ſame thing I do, that there muſt be a Reſtipulation in a proper Covenant? And as for the word Διαθήκη, which (he ſaith) ſignifieth a Covenant improperly, but properly is a *Teſtamentary Diſpoſition*, I fully concur with him therein. But I hope a *Teſtamentary Diſpoſition* may have a Condition in it; to be ſure ſuch a one as I aſſert Faith here to be, which is the free Gift of God; and in this ſenſe I ſhewed you before where the *Doctor* yields Faith to be the Condition of the new Covenant.

Argument 4. My fourth *Argument* was this. If all the Promiſes of the New Covenant be abſolute and unconditional, and have no reſpect nor relation to any Grace wrought in us, or Duty done by us; then the trial of our Intereſt in Chriſt by Marks and Signs of Grace is not our Duty, nor can we take comfort in Sanctification as it is an evidence of our Juſtification, *&c.*

Your Anſwer is, That ‘ at this rate I ‘ may prove *quidlibet à quolibet*: for it ‘ doth not follow, that, becauſe the ‘ New Covenant is abſolute, therefore ‘ it hath no reſpect nor relation to any Grace ‘ wrought in us, nor Duty done by us, or that ‘ we may not juſtly take comfort in Sanctification ‘ as an evidence of our Juſtification.

Anſwer, *page* 120.

Reply. If I had a mind to learn the Art of proving *quidlibet à quolibet*, and make my ſelf ridiculous to others by ſuch fooliſh Attempts, I know no Book in the World fitter to inſtruct me therein, than yours. Certainly you have the knack of it, and gave us an Inſtance of it but now, in confuting the Sequel of my *Major*, by an Allegation out of Dr. *Owen*, which expreſly confirms and eſtabliſhes it. But to the Point, I would willingly know how it is poſſible for Sanctification to be a true and certain mark and ſign of Juſtification, when (according to the *Antinomian* Principle, which you here too much comprobate and eſpouſe) a Man may be juſtified before he believe, yea, before he is a Man, even from the time of Chriſt's Death, and (as others of them ſpeak) from Eternity. A true mark and ſign muſt be proper to, and inſeparable from that which it ſignifies. Now if that be true which you ſaid before, That *after Chriſt's fulfilling of the Law in his own Perſon*, &c. *nothing can remain but to declare this to Men to incline them to believe and accept it, and to preſcribe in what way they ſhall come to inherit eternal life.* If this be all that can remain to us, then nothing but the Declarations and Preſcriptions of the Goſpel, which are things without us, can remain to be marks and ſigns of Juſtification to us; and conſequently all thoſe to whom thoſe Declarations and Preſcriptions are made and given, have therein the marks and evidences of their Juſtification. But I am truly weary of ſuch ſtuff. I am ſure the Apoſtle places *Vocation* before *Juſtification*, Rom. 8. 30. *Whom he called, them he juſtified.* And without an immediate Teſtimony from Heaven, I know not how to evidence and prove my Juſtification, but from, and by my Faith, and other parts of Sanctification; whereby I apprehended and applied the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt: if you can prove it from the Declarations and Preſcriptions of the Goſpel, I cannot.

Argument V. My fifth and laſt *Argument* ran thus. If the Covenant of Grace be altogether abſolute and unconditional, requiring nothing to be done on our part, to entitle us to its Benefits; then it cannot be Man's Duty in entring Covenant with God, to deliberate the Terms, count the

the Coſt, or give his Conſent by Word or Writing, to the Terms of this Covenant: for where there are no Terms at all (as in abſolute Promiſes there are none) there can be none to deliberate. But I ſhewed you, this is Man's Duty, from clear and undeniable Scriptures, *&c.*

You ſay by way of anſwer hereunto, that, 'You muſt tell me, that 'the Scriptures do make a plain di- 'ſtinction betwixt the New and 'Everlaſting Covenant which God hath been 'pleaſed to make with Sinners in Jeſus Chriſt; 'and the Return of that ſincere and dutiful Obe- 'dience which he requires of us, by way of an- 'ſwer thereunto. (2.) You ſay, there are many 'things, which tho' promiſed in the Covenant, 'and wrought in us by the Grace of God; are 'yet Duties indiſpenſably required of us in order 'to the Participation of the full end of the Co- 'venant in Glory: and in reſpect hereof, we 'are indeed to deliberate the Terms, count the 'Coſt, and give up our ſelves ſolemnly to him 'with ſincere Reſolutions, *&c.* But then you 'thought I had underſtood there had been a vaſt 'Difference betwixt God's Covenant with us, 'and our Covenant with God, citing *Ezek.* 16. '59, 60, 61. where God promiſeth to *give them 'their Siſters for Daughters, but not by their Covenant.* 'And with this you compare *Pſal.* 89. *My Cove- 'nant will I not break*; where (you ſay) we find 'a plain Diſtinction betwixt God's Covenant with 'them, and their Duty to God. And laſtly, you 'ſay, *p.* 105. that the want of a due obſervation 'of this plain Scripture-diſtinction, betwixt God's 'free and abſolute Covenant made with Sinners 'in Chriſt, and our Covenants with God by way 'of Return thereunto; is the true reaſon of all 'our Miſtakes about the true Nature of the Go- 'ſpel-Covenant, whilſt we jumble and confound 'together that which the Scriptures do ſo plainly 'diſtinguiſh.

Anſwer *p.* 122, 123.

Reply. To your firſt Anſwer, I ſay: It is true, the Scriptures do diſtinguiſh betwixt *Covenant* and *Covenant*; that of Works, and that of Grace. It alſo diſtinguiſhes the ſame Covenant of Grace for Subſtance, according to its various adminiſtrations into the Old and New Covenant. It alſo diſtinguiſhes betwixt the *promiſſory* part of the ſame Covenant of Grace, and the *reſtipulatory* part; not as of two oppoſite Covenants, (as you diſtinguiſh them, *Gen.* 17.) but as the juſt and neceſſary parts of one and the ſame Covenant. It alſo diſtinguiſhes betwixt Vows made by Men to God in ſome particular Caſes, and the Covenant of Grace betwixt God and them. But what's all this to your purpoſe? Or in what point doth it touch my *Argument?* You deſire me to caſt mine Eye upon *Ezek.* 16. and *Pſal.* 89. I have done ſo, and that impartially; and do aſſure you, I admire why you produce them againſt my *Argument.* That in *Ezek.* ſpeaks of the Enlargement of the Church by the Acceſſion of the *Gentiles* to it; and the ſenſe of thoſe words ſeems to me to be this; That this Enlargement of the Church is a gracious Addition, or ſomething beyond what God had ever done in his former Diſpenſations of the Covenant to that People. And for *Pſal.* 89. I know not what you meant to produce it for, unleſs it be to prove, what I never denied, That notwithſtanding our failures in Duty towards God, God will ſtill keep his *Covenant* with us; though he will viſit the Iniquities of his *Covenant-People* with a Rod.

To your ſecond Anſwer, That we are to deliberate the Terms, and count the Coſt, with reſpect to thoſe Duties, which are in order to the Participation of the full end of the Covenant in Glory: by which, I ſuppoſe you mean ſelf-denial, Perſeverance, *&c.* I have no Controverſy with you about that. Our Queſtion is, Whether there be no deliberations required of, or to be performed by Men, who are not yet in Chriſt by juſtifying Faith, but under ſome preparatory Works towards Faith? And whether at the very time of their cloſing with Chriſt, there be not a conſent of the Will unto thoſe Terms required of them? If you ſay there be (as by the Places I alledged it evidently appears there are) then you yield the Point I contend for. If you ſay they are not before, or at the Time of believing, to conſider any Terms, or give their conſent to them by Word or Writing; ſuch an Anſwer would fly in the very Face of thoſe Scriptures I produced: for then a Man may be in Covenant without his own Conſent; he that deliberates not, conſents not; *non conſentit, qui non ſentit.* And therefore you durſt not ſpeak it out (for which Modeſty I commend you) and ſo leave me with half an Anſwer, not touching that part, *viz.* Antecedent deliberations which were concerned in this *Argument.* And now let your moſt partial Friends judge, Whether from this performance of yours, you have any juſt ground for that vain Boaſt which concludes your Anſwer, *viz.* '*That the 'Covenants themſelves, which thoſe Privileges are 'bottomed on, are now repealed, and that there is no 'room left for any other Argument to infer the Bap- 'tiſm of Infants:* at leaſt, I ſhall willingly commit it to the judgment of all intelligent and impartial Readers, Whether Mr. *Cary* hath any real ground in this Performance of his, for ſuch a Thraſonical Concluſion, ſuch a vain and fulſom boaſt?

I find that with like Confidence he hath alſo attempted a Reply to Mr. *Joſeph Whiſton*, a Reverend, Learned, and Aged Divine, who hath accurately and ſucceſsfully defended God's Covenant with *Abraham*, againſt Mr. *Cox*, and doubt not, if Mr. *Cary*, and his Party have but Confidence enough to expoſe it to the publick view, and to adventure the Cauſe of Infant-baptiſm upon it, the World will quickly ſee an end of this long-continued and unhappy Controverſy, which hath vexed the Church of God, and alienated the Affections of good Men; and that the Wiſdom of Providence hath permitted and over-ruled this laſt Attempt, to the ſingular advantage of the Truths of God, and Tranquility of good Men, whoſe concernment (at this time eſpecially) is rather to ſtrengthen their Faith, and heighten their Encouragements from God's gracious Covenant, than to undermine it, when all things beſide it are ſhaking and tottering round about them.

And now, Sir, for a *Coronis* to all thoſe things that have been controverted betwixt us about the Covenants of God, and the right of Believers Infants to Baptiſm, reſulting from one of them, which I have aſſerted and argued againſt you in my firſt *Anſwer*, and you have ſilently and wholly paſs'd over in your *Reply*, hoping to deſtroy them all at once, by proving God's Covenant with *Abraham*, *Gen.* 17. to be a pure *Adam's* Covenant of Works; I judge it neceſſary, as Matters now lie between us, to give the Reader the Grounds and Reaſons of my Faith and Practice with Reſpect unto the Ordinance of Infant Baptiſm, and

that as succinctly and clearly as I can, in the following *Theses*; which being laid together by an unprejudiced and considerative Reader, will, I think amount to more than a strong probability, That *it is the will of God, that the Infant-seed of Believers ought now to be baptized.*

But here I must remind the Reader, and beg him to review what I have said before in the third *Cause of Errors*, That to arrive to Satisfaction in this Point, requires a due and serious search of the whole Word of God; with a sedate, rational and impartial Mind; comparing one Thing with another, though they lie scattered at a distance in the Scriptures; some in the *Old Testament* and some in the *New*. Bring but these Things to an Interview, as we do in discovering the Change of the Sabbath, and we may arrive unto a due Satisfaction of the Will of God herein. This, I confess, calls for strength of Mind, great Sedulity, Attention, and Impartiality; and yet what Man would think all this too much, if it were but to clear his Children's Title unto a small Earthly Inheritance? I intend not to give the Reader here an Account of all the Arguments drawn from several Scripture *Topicks* by the strenuous Defenders of Infants Baptism; but to keep only to the Arguments drawn from God's Covenant with *Abraham*, *Gen.* 17. which is the Scripture mainly controverted betwixt us: You affirming boldly and dangerously, that Covenant to be no other than an *Adam*'s Covenant of Works; and I justly denying and abhorring your Position upon the Grounds and Reasons before given, which you neither have, nor ever will be able to destroy. Now that the Reader, who hath neither Time nor Ability to read the Larger, and more Elaborate Treatises on this Subject, may ὡς ἐν πίνακι, in one short view, see the deduction of Believers Infants right to Baptism from this Gospel Covenant of God with *Abraham*, I shall gather the Substance of what I contend for, and lay it as clearly as I can before the Eyes of my Reader in the following *Theses*; which being distinctly considered as to the evident Truth of each, and then rationally compared one with the other, he will see how each fortifies other, and how all together do strongly confirm this conclusion, That the Infants of Believers under the Gospel, as they naturally descend from *Abraham*'s Spiritual Seed, are therefore Partakers at least of the External Privileges of the visible Church, and therefore ought now to be Baptized.

P. 61, 62.

Thesis I. *It hath pleased God, in all Ages of the World, since Man was created, to deal with his Church and People, by way of Covenant, and in the same way he will still deal with them unto the end of the World.*

God might have dealt with us in a supream way of meer Sovereignty and Dominion, commanding what Duties he pleased, and establishing his Commands by what Penalties he had pleased, and never have brought himself under the Tye and Obligation of a Covenant to his own Creatures: but he chuses to deal familiarly with his People, the way of Covenanting being a familiar Way, 2 *Sam.* 7. 19. *Is this the manner of Men*, O Lord God! or (as *Junius* renders it) *and that after the manner of me, O Lord God!* 'Tis a way full of condescending Grace and Goodness: he is willing hereby his People should know what they may certainly expect from their God, as well as what their God requires of them. Hereby also he will furnish them with mighty Pleas and Arguments in Prayer, succour their Faith against Temptations; strengthen their Hands in Duties of Obedience, sweeten their Obedience to them, and discriminate his own People from the World.

As soon therefore as Man was created and placed in Paradise, being made upright, and throughly furnished with Abilities perfectly and compleatly to obey all the Commands of his Maker; the Lord immediately entred into the *Covenant of Works* with him, and with all his natural Posterity in him: and in this Covenant his standing or falling was according to the perfection and constancy of his personal Obedience, *Gen.* 2. 17. *Gal.* 3. 10. But in this First Covenant of Works no provision at all was made for his recovery (in case of the least Failure) by his Repentance or better Obedience; but the Curse immediately seized both Soul and Body: and Sin by the Fall entring into Man's Nature, totally disabled him to the perfect performance of any one Duty, as that Covenant required it to be done, *Rom.* 8. 3. nor would God accept any Repentance, or after-endeavours, in lieu of that perfect Obedience due by Law. So that from the Fall of *Adam*, to the end of the World, this Covenant ceaseth as a Covenant of Life, or a Covenant able to give Righteousness and Life unto all Mankind for evermore, Rom. 3. 28. *Therefore by the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight.* Gal. 2. 16. *By the Works of the Law shall no Flesh be justified.* Gal. 3. 11. *But that no Man is justified by the Law in the sight of God, is evident.* And it being so evident, that Righteousness and Life being for ever impossible to be obtained upon the Terms of *Adam*'s Covenant; it must therefore be a self-evident Truth, That *since the Fall, God never did, and to the end of the World he never will open that way or door to Life (thus block'd up by an absolute impossibility) for the Justification and Salvation of any Man.*

Thesis II. *Soon after the violation and Cessation of this first Covenant, as a Covenant of Life, it pleased the Lord to open and publish the second Covenant of Grace by Jesus Christ, the first dawning whereof we find in* Gen. 3. 15. *where the Seed is promised which shall bruise the Serpent's head.* And though this be but a very short, and somewhat obscure Discovery of Man's Remedy and Salvation by Christ; yet was it a joyful Sound to the Ears of God's People, it was even Life from the dead to the Believers of those Times. For we may rationally conclude, That that Space of Time betwixt the breaking of the first, and making of the second Covenant, was the most dismal Period of Time that ever the World did, or shall see. This Covenant of Grace now took Place of the Covenant of Works, comprehended all Believers in the bosom of it. The Covenant of Works took Place from the Time it was made until the Fall of *Adam*, and then was abolished as a Life-giving Covenant. The second Covenant took place from the Time it was made soon after the Fall, and is to continue to the end of the World. And these only are the two Covenants God hath made with Men; the latter succeeding the former, and commencing from its expiration; but both cannot possibly be in force together at the same Time, and upon the same Persons, as co-ordinate Covenants of Life and Salvation. For in co-ordination they expel and destroy each other, *Gal.* 5. 4. *Whosoever of you are justified by the Law, ye are fallen from Grace.* The first Covenant was a Covenant without a Mediator;

tor; the second is a Covenant with a Mediator. Place a Believer under both at once, or put these two Covenants in co-ordination, and that which results will be a pure Contradiction, *viz.* That a Man is saved without a Mediator, and yet by a Mediator. Moreover, if there be a way to Life without a Mediator, there was no need to make a Covenant in and with a Mediator; or can those Words of Christ be true, *Joh.* 4. 6. *I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no Man cometh to the Father but by me.*

The Righteousness of the first Covenant was within Man himself; the Righteousness of the second Covenant is without Man in Christ. Put these two in co-ordination, and that which Results is as pure a Contradiction as the former, *viz.* That a Man is justified by a Righteousness within him and yet is justified by a Righteousness without him; expresly contrary to the Apostle's conclusion, *Rom.* 3. 20. *Therefore by the Deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight.* It is therefore an intolerable Absurdity to place Believers under both these Covenants at the same time; under the Curse of the first, and Blessing of the Second. For whensoever the state of any Person is changed by Justification, his Covenant is changed with his State, *Col.* 1. 13. 'Tis as unimaginable that a Believer should thus stand under both Covenants, as it is to imagine a Man may be born of two Mothers, *Gal.* 4. 22, 23, 24, 25. or a Woman lawfully married to two Husbands, *Rom.* 7. 1, 2, 3, 4. and more absurd (if it be possible any thing can be more absurd) to attribute the most glorious privilege of the Covenant of Grace. (viz. *I will be a God to thee, and to thy Seed after thee,* Gen 17. 7.) to the impotent and abolished Covenant of Works; both which Absurdities are asserted in Defence of *Antipædo-Baptism.*

And though it be true, that after the first Edition of the Covenant of Grace, the matter of the first Covenant was represented to the *Israelites* in the moral Law: yet that Representation was intended and designed to be subservient, and added to the Promise, *Gal.* 1. 19. and so (as an acute and learned Divine * speaks the very *Decalogue* or *moral Law* it self pertained to the Covenant of Grace; yea, in some sort flowed out of this Covenant, as it was promulged by the Counsel of God to be serviceable to it; both *antecedently* to lead Men by the conviction of Sin, fear of Wrath, and Self-despair, to the Covenant of Grace; and also consequently as it is a Pattern of Obedience and Rule of Holiness. For had it been published as a Covenant designed intentionally to its primitive use and end, it had totally frustrated the Covenant of Grace.

* Turrettini Pars 2da loc. 12. p. 248.

Thesis III. *Though the primordial Light or first Glimmerings of this Covenant of Grace, were comparatively weak and obscure; yet from the first Publication of it to* Adam, *God in all Ages hath been amplifying the Privileges, and heightning the Glory of this second Covenant in all the after Expressures and Editions of it unto this Day, and will more and more amplify and illustrate it to the End of the World.*

That first Promise, *Gen.* 3. 15. is like the first small Spring or Head of a great River, which the farther it runs, the bigger it grows by the Accession of more Waters to it. Or like the Sun in the Heavens, which the higher it mounts, the more bright and glorious the Day still grows.

In that Period of time, betwixt *Adam* and *Abraham*, we find no Token of God's Covenant ordered therein to be applied to the Infant Seed of Believers. But in that second Edition of the Covenant to *Abraham*, the Privileges of the Covenant were amplified, and his Infant-Seed, not only taken into the Covenant (as they were before) but also added to the visible Church, by receiving the Token of the Covenant, which then was Circumcision: and so here is a great Addition made to the visible Church, even the whole Infant Off-spring of adult Believers.

From that Period, untill the coming of the *Messiah* in the Flesh, the *Jewish* Church, and their Infant-Seed, except only some few Proselytes out of the Gentile Nations, made up the visible Church of God, and the poor Gentiles were without Christ, being Aliens from the Common-wealth of *Israel*, and Strangers from the Covenant of Promise, having no hope, and without God in the World, *Ephes.* 2. 12. but in this glorious third Period, the Covenant again enlarges it self more than before, and the Privileges of it are no longer limited and restrained to the *Jewish* Believers and their Infant-Seed; but the *Gentiles* also are taken into the Covenant, and the Door of Faith was opened unto them, *Acts* 14 27. the partition-wall was now broken down, which separated the Church from the *Gentile* World, *Eph.* 2. 14. This was a glorious Enlargement of the Covenant, and many glorious Prophecies and Promises were fulfilled in it; such as those, *Isa.* 11. 10. and 42. 1, 6. 49. 22. 54. 3. 60. 3, 5, 11, 16. 62. 2, *&c.*

And though the Covenant, as to its external part, seems to have lost ground in the breaking off of the *Jewish* Nation from the Church; yet like the Sea, what it loses in one place, it gains with Advantage upon another; the Addition of many *Gentile* Nations to the Church, more than recompences for the present breaking off of that one Nation of the *Jews.* And indeed they are broken off but for a time; for God shall graff them in again, *Rom.* 11. 23. This therefore being the Design of God, and steddy Course of his Covenant of Grace, more and more to enlarge it self in all Ages; nothing can be more opposite to the Nature of this Covenant, than to narrow and contract its Privileges in its farther Progress, and cut off a whole *Species* from it, which it formerly took in.

Thesis IV. It is past all doubt and contradiction, that the Infant-Seed of *Abraham*, under the second Edition of the Covenant of Grace, were taken with their believing Parents into God's gracious Covenant, had the Seal of that Covenant applied to them, and were thereby added to the visible Church, *Gen.* 17. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. which was a gracious Privilege of the Covenant superadded to all the former, and such as sweeps away all the frivolous and groundless Cavils and Exceptions of those that object the incapacity of Infants to enter into Covenant with God, or receive Benefit from the external Privileges of the visible Church. Nor can the subtilest Enemy to Infants Baptism, give us a convincing reason why the Infants of *Gentile* Believers are not equally capable of the same benefits that the Infants of *Jewish* Believers were, if they still stand under the same Covenant that the former stood under; and God hath no where repealed the gracious Grant formerly made to the Infant-Seed of his Covenant-People.

Theſis V. It is to me clear beyond all contradiction, from *Rom.* 11. 17. *If ſome of the Branches be broken off, and thou being a wild Olive-Tree, wert grafted in amongſt them, and with them partakeſt of the root and fatneſs of the Olive-Tree:* I ſay, I can ſcarcely deſire a clearer Scripture-light than this Text gives, to ſatisfy my Underſtanding in this caſe, That when God brake off the unbelieving *Jews* from the Church, both Parents and Children together; the Believing *Gentiles*, which are as truly *Abraham*'s Seed as they were, *Gal.* 3. 29. yea, the more excellent Seed of *Abraham*, were implanted or ingrafted in their room, and do as amply enjoy the Privileges of that Covenant, both internal and external, for themſelves, and for their Infant-Seed, as ever any Members of the *Jewiſh* Church did or could do.

Our Adverſaries in this Controverſy do pitifully and apparently ſhuffle here, and invent many ſtrange and unintelligible Diſtinctions to be-cloud the light of this famous Text. What they are, and how they are baffled, the Reader will eaſily diſcern from what hath already paſs'd betwixt my Antagoniſt and me, in *p.* 108, *&c.* of my *Vindiciæ Legis & Fœderis*. It is plain, that *Abraham* is the Root, the Olive-Tree, the viſible Church; the Sap and Farneſs of the Olive, are Church Ordinances and Covenant-Privileges; the *Gentile* Believers, who are *Abraham*'s Seed according to Promiſe, are the ingrafted Branches ſtanding in the place of the natural Branches, and with them, or in like manner as they did, partaking of the Root and Fatneſs of the Olive-Tree, that is as really and amply enjoying all the Immunities, Benefits, and Privileges of the Church and Covenant (amongſt which the initiating Sign was one, and a chief one too) as ever the natural Branches that were broken off, that is the *Jewiſh* Parents and their Children, did or might have done. And to deny this (as before was noted) is to ſtraiten Covenant-Privileges in their farther Progreſs.

Theſis VI. Suitably hereunto we find, that no ſooner was the Chriſtian Church conſtituted, and the Believing *Gentiles* by Faith added to it; but the Children of ſuch Believing Parents are declared to be fœderally Holy, 1 *Cor.* 7. 14. and the unbelieving *Jews*, who were ſuperſtitiouſly fond of *Circumciſion*, and prejudiced againſt Baptiſm, as an injurious Innovation, are by the *Apoſtle* perſwaded to ſubmit themſelves to it, *Acts* 2. 38, 39. aſſuring them that the ſame Promiſe, *viz. I will be a God to thee, and to thy ſeed after thee*, is now as effectually ſealed to them and their Children by Baptiſm, as it was in the former Age by Circumciſion: And that the *Gentiles*, which are yet afar off, whenever God ſhall call them, ſhall equally enjoy the ſame Privilege, both for themſelves and for their Children alſo.

We alſo find a Commiſſion given by Chriſt to the Diſciples, *Matt.* 28. 19, 20. *To diſciple all Nations, baptizing them*, &c. from which Diſcipleſhip, Infants ought not to be excluded, *Acts* 15. 10. Yea, we find, that as at the Inſtitution of *Circumciſion*, *Abraham*, the Father and Maſter of the Family, was firſt circumciſed in his own Perſon, and then his whole Houſhold, *Gen.* 17. 23, 24. Anſwerably as ſoon as any Perſon by Converſion, or publick Profeſſion of Faith became a viſible Child of *Abraham*, that Perſon was firſt Baptized, and the whole Houſhold with him or her, *Acts* 16. 33. 15. 'Tis unreaſonable to put us upon the Proof, that there were Infants in thoſe Houſes; it being more than probable, that in ſuch frequent Baptizing of Houſholds belonging to Believers, there were ſome Infants; but if there were none, 'tis enough for us to prove from their fœderal Holineſs, 1 *Cor.* 7. 14. and the extent of God's Promiſe to them, *Acts* 2. 38, 39. if there had never been ſo many Infants in thoſe Houſholds, they might and ought to have been Baptized. How the true ſenſe and ſcope of the two laſt mentioned Scriptures are maintained and vindicated againſt Mr. *Cary*'s corrupt Gloſſes and Interpretations, ſee my *Vindiciæ Legis & Fœderis*, *p.* 90, 91. We do not lay the ſtreſs of Infants Baptiſm upon ſuch *ſtrictures* as the Baptizings of the Houſholds of Believers, or Chriſt's taking up in his Arms, and bleſſing the little ones that were brought to him. Theſe and many other ſuch Things found in the Hiſtory of *Chriſt*, and *Acts of the Apoſtles*, have their Uſe and Service to fortify that Doctrine. But if we can produce no Example of any Believer's Infant Baptized, the merit of the Cauſe lies not in the Matter of Fact, but Covenant-right. For our Advarſaries themſelves, if we go to Matter of Fact, will be hard put to it to produce us one Inſtance out of the *New Teſtament* of any Child of a Believing Chriſtian whoſe Baptiſm was deferred, or by Chriſt or his Apoſtles ordered to be deferred, until he attained to Years of Maturity, and made a perſonal Profeſſion of Faith himſelf.

Theſis VII. *The Change of the Token and Seal of the Covenant from Circumciſion to Baptiſm, will by no means infer the Change or Diverſity of the Covenants, eſpecially when the latter comes into the Place and ſerves to the ſame Uſe and End with the former, as it is manifeſt Baptiſm doth, from* Col. 2. 11, 12. *as hath been, I think, ſufficiently argued againſt Mr.* Cary's *Gloſſes and Exceptions*, pag. 100, 101. *of my* Vindiciæ Legis & Fœderis. The Covenant is ſtill the ſame *Covenant of Grace*, though the external initiating Sign be changed. For what is the ſubſtantial part of the Covenant of Grace now, but the ſame it was to *Abraham* and his Seed before? Is not this our *Covenant of Grace*, Heb. 8. 10. *I will be to them a God, and they ſhall be to me a People?* And in what Words was *Abraham*'s Covenant expreſſed, *Gen.* 17. 7. *I will eſtabliſh my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee in their Generations for an everlaſting Covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy Seed after thee.* This makes *Abraham*'s Covenant, ſealed to him and his Seed, as truly and properly the *Covenant of Grace*, as that which Baptiſm now ſeals to Believers and their Seed. The raſh Ignorance of thoſe that affirm, God may become a People's God in the Way of a ſpecial Intereſt, by virtue of the broken and aboliſhed *Covenant of Works*, rather deſerves ſharp Reprehenſion, and ſad Lamentation, than a Confutation; which, nevertheleſs out of reſpect to my Friend Mr. *Cary*, I have given it in its proper place in this Rejoinder.

I hope by this time I have made it evident, That the Defenders of Infants Baptiſm, as it is eſtabliſhed upon God's Covenant with *Abraham*, Gen. 17. have not ſo miſtaken their Ground, as Mr. *Cary* hath, by his endeavours to carry that Covenant, as an *Adam*'s *Covenant of Works*, through ſuch a multitude of other Errors and Abſurdities, as he draws along with it in his way of reaſoning.

A POST-

A POSTSCRIPT *to Mr.* Cary.

SIR,

I Reſolved not to diſturb my Mind with your paſſionate provoking Language, at leaſt whil'ſt I was buſily employed in ſearching for Reaſon and Argument (two ſcarce Commodities) amongſt heaps of vain and fulſome Words. Nor will I now imitate your folly and rudeneſs, leſt I become an *Offender*, whilſt I am to act the part of a *Reprover*. When I read your Title, *A Juſt and Sober Reply*, and preſently fell in among rude inſults, ſilly evaſions, and ſuch inartificial diſcourſes as follow in your Book, I began to challenge you in my Thoughts for matching ſuch bad ſtuff with ſo fair and lovely a *Title:* But a ſecond Thought quickly corrected the former; for I conſidered no Man living could juſtly forbid the Marriage betwixt your Book and its Title, ſince there is not the leaſt kindred or relation between them.

Had your Anſwers been *juſt*, you would have obſerved the Rules of a *Reſpondent*, which you have not done: And if they had been *ſober*, you had never been ſo free in your Reproaches, and ſparing in your Arguments as you have been. Is this the Man, of whom it is ſaid in the *Epiſtle* to his *Solemn Call*, That *his Lines are free from reflection and reproach towards thoſe of the perſwaſion he contends with?* Is this my old friendly Neighbour? It calls to my mind the *Italian* Proverb, *God keep us from our Friends, and we will do what we can to keep our ſelves from our Enemies.* And though you act the part of an Enemy, you ſhall be my Friend whether you will or no. If you will not be my Friend out of Love, I will make you ſo by a good improvement of your Hatred.

I have been muſing with my ſelf, what might be the true cauſe of all your rage againſt my Book; one while I thought it proceeded from want of *Diſcretion*, that you were not able to diſtinguiſh betwixt an Adverſary in a *Controverſie*, and an Adverſary to the *Perſon*; but thought every Blow that was given to your Error, muſt needs be a mortal wound to your Reputation. But, Sir, how cloſe and ſmart ſoever my Diſcourſes againſt your Errors be, I'm ſure they are more full of civility and reſpect to you, than ſuch a *Reply* as you have made deſerves: And if in expoſing your Errors, your Reputation be expos'd, you muſt blame them for occaſioning it, and not me.

Sometimes I thought it an effect of your *Policy*, that when followed cloſe, and hard put to it, you endeavoured an eſcape this way. *Camero* ſpeaking of this kind of ſubtilty in his Adverſaries, ſaith, *Faciunt quod quarundam ferarum ingenium eſt, ut fœtore & graveolentia, defectæ jam viribus, ac fractæ venatorem abigunt.* Some cunning Animals, as Foxes, *&c.* when purſued at the heels, drive away both Dogs and Huntſmen with their intolerable ſtench. And *Hierom* long ago told *Helvidius*, his Adverſary, *Arbitror te veritate convictum, ad maledicta converti*; being vanquiſhed by Truth, he betook himſelf to ill Language. After the ſame manner you act here, being no longer able to defend your ſelf by ſolid and ſober ratiocination, you truſt to your faculty in crimination. Bad Cauſes only drive Men into ſuch Refuges.

In a word, I am ſatisfied nothing but your extravagant zeal for your Idolized Opinion, could have thrown you into ſuch diſingenuous Methods and Artifices as theſe. The *Epheſians* were quiet enough till their *Diana* began to totter. Your paſſionate Outcries ſignifie to me, ſomething is touched to the quick, which you are more fondly in love with than you ought. When one told *Luther* what hideous Out-cries his Enemies made againſt him, and how they revil'd him in their Books: *I know by their roaring* (ſaid he) *that I have hit them right.*

You tell me in your *Reply*, p. 24. That you perceive *I have a mighty itch to find out your Abſurdities.* I wiſh, Sir, you were no more troubled with the itch after them, than I am after the diſcovery of them. Had I affected ſuch Employments, I could eaſily have gathered three to one out of your Book, more than I did: And have repreſented thoſe I gather'd, much more odiouſly (and yet juſtly) than I did. But Friendſhip conſtrain'd me to handle them (becauſe yours) as gently as I could.

I might have juſtly charg'd you from what you ſay, *p.* 174, 175. of your *Solemn Call*, where you place all the Believers on Earth, without exception of any, under the Covenant of Works, as a miniſtration of Death and Condemnation, and the ſevereſt Penalties of a dreadful Curſe: I might thereupon have juſtly charg'd you for preſenting to the World ſuch a monſtrous Sight as was never ſeen before ſince the Creation, *viz.* A whole Church of condemned and curſed Believers. This I might as well have charged upon your Poſition, and done it no wrong.

I could tell you from what you ſay, *p.* 76. of your Reply, *That God doth indeed in the Covenant of Works make over himſelf to Sinners, to be their God in a way of ſpecial Intereſt; but it being upon ſuch hard terms, that it is utterly impoſſible that way to attain unto life*, &c. I could juſtly have told you, That theſe Paſſages of yours, drop pure nonſenſe upon the Reader's Underſtanding: as if Salvation were impoſſible to be attain'd by the ſame Covenant wherein God becomes our God, and makes over himſelf by way of ſpecial Intereſt to us.

Had I had an itch to expoſe the Burleſque and ridiculous Stuff, which lies obvious enough in your Book; I ſhould then have told your Reader, That according to your Doctrine, how oppoſite and inconſiſtent ſoever the two Covenants of Works and Grace be, yet the ſame Subjects, *viz.* Believers, may at once, not only ſtand under them both, but that the ſame common Seal, *viz.* Circumciſion, equally ratifies and confirms them both; for you allow in your *Call*, p. 205. *That it ſealed the Covenant of Grace to believing* Abraham, *and yet was a ſeal of the Covenant of Works*, yea, the very condition of that Covenant, as you frequently affirm it to be, *Vide* p. 81. of your *Reply* and *Paſſim.*

I could as eaſily and juſtly have told you, That the moſt malicious *Papiſt* could ſcarcely have invented a more horrid Reproach againſt our famous Orthodox Proteſtant Divines, than you (I dare not ſay maliciouſly, but) ignorantly have done, when you charge ſuch Men as Mr. *Francis Roberts*, Mr. *Obadiah Sedgwick*; and indeed all that aſſert the Law, complexly taken, to be an obſcurer Covenant of Grace; that they comprize perfect doing with the conſequent Curſe for nonperformance; and believing in Chriſt unto Life and Salvation in one and the ſame Covenant. This is an intolerable abuſe of yours, *p.* 5. of your *Reply.* They generally aſſert the Law, in that complex ſenſe and latitude you take it, to be a true Covenant

venant of Grace, though more obſcurely adminiſtred; and that the diſtinction of the Covenants into Old and New, is no parallel diſtinction with that of Works and Grace, or *Chriſt's* and *Adam's* Covenant. Your publick recantation of the Injury you have done the very Proteſtant Cauſe herein, is your unqueſtionable Duty, yet ſcarce a due reparation of the Injury.

In a word, I cannot but look upon it as a diſcovery of your great weakneſs, That when you meet with ſuch a difficulty as poſes your Underſtanding, and you cannot poſſibly reconcile with your Notion; as that of *Paul's* circumciſing *Timothy*, and you affirming that the very act of Circumciſion did in its own nature oblige all on whom it paſs'd, to the perfect obſervation of the Law for Righteouſneſs, You will rather chuſe to leave the bleſſed *Apoſtle* in a contradiction to his own Doctrine, than to your vain Notion; For what do you ſay, *p.* 95. of your *Reply*? *That however the caſe ſtood in that reſpect, this is certain*, &c. It alſo argues weakneſs in you to inſiſt upon, aggravate, jeer, and reproach at that rate you do, *p.* 83. of your *Reply*, for the miſtake, and miſplacing of one Figure, *viz. Gen.* 12. for *Gen.* 17. as if the merit of the whole Cauſe depended on it. The like I may ſay of your charging me with Nonſenſe, for putting *Gen.* 17. 7, 8. for *Gen.* 17, 9, 10. when yet you your ſelf, *p.* 205. of your *Call*, tell us, That Circumciſion was appointed as a Sign or Token of the Covenant, *Gen.* 17. 7, 8, 9. What pitiful Trifles are theſe to raiſe ſuch a mighty triumph upon? When *Dureus* accuſed our famous *Whitaker* for one or two trivial verbal Miſtakes, *Whitaker* return'd him the ſame Anſwer I ſhall give you, *Benè habet, his in rebus non vertuntur fortunæ Eccleſiæ.* 'Tis well the Caſe of the Church depends not upon ſuch Trifles.

For a Concluſion; I do ſeriouſly warn all Men to beware of receiving Doctrines ſo deſtructive to the great Truths of the Goſpel as theſe are. And I do ſolemnly profeſs, I have not deſignedly ſtrained them, to caſt reproach upon him that publiſh'd them; but the matters are ſo plain, that if Mr. *Cary* will maintain his Poſitions, not only my ſelf, but every intelligent Reader will be eaſily able to faſten all thoſe odious Conſequents upon him, after all his Apologies.

Sir, in a word, I dare not ſay, but you are a good Man; but ſince I read your two Books, you have made me think more than once of what one ſaid of *Jonah* after he had read his Hiſtory, that he was a ſtrange Man of a good Man; yet as ſtrange a good Man as you are, I hope to meet you with a ſounder Head, and better Spirit, in Heaven.

The Second APPENDIX: *Giving a brief Account of the Riſe and Growth of* ANTINOMIANISM; *the Deduction of the principal Errors of that Sect: With modeſt and ſeaſonable Reflections upon them.*

THE Deſign of the following Sheets, caſt in as a *Mantiſſa* to the foregoing Diſcourſe of *Errors*, is principally to diſcharge and free the Free Grace of God from thoſe dangerous Errors, which fight againſt it under its own Colours; partly to prevent the ſeduction of ſome that ſtagger; and laſtly, (though leaſt of all) to vindicate my own Doctrine, the ſcope and current whereof hath always been, and ſhall ever be, to exalt the Free Grace of God in Chriſt, to draw the vileſt of Sinners to him, and relieve the diſtreſſed Conſciences of Sin-burthened Chriſtians.

But notwithſtanding my utmoſt care and caution, ſome have been apt to cenſure it, as if in ſome things it had a tang of *Antinomianiſm*: But if my publick or private Diſcourſes be the faithful Meſſengers of my Judgment and Heart, (as I hope they are) nothing can be found in any of them caſting a friendly aſpect upon any of their Principles, which I here juſtly cenſure as erroneous.

Three things I principally aim at in this ſhort *Appendix*.

1. To give the Reader the moſt probable Riſe of *Antinomianiſm*.
2. An Account of the principal Errors of that Sect.
3. To confirm and eſtabliſh Chriſtians againſt them, by ſound Reaſons back'd with Scripture-Authority. And

I. *Of the Riſe of Antinomianiſm.*

The Scriptures foreſeeing there would ariſe ſuch a ſort of Men in the Church as would wax wanton againſt Chriſt, and turn his Grace into laſciviouſneſs; hath not only precautioned us in general to beware of ſuch Opinions as corrupt the Doctrine of Free Grace, *Rom.* 6. 1, 2. *Shall we continue in ſin that grace may abound? God forbid:* but hath particularly indigitated and marked thoſe very Opinions by which it would be abuſed, and made abundant proviſion againſt them; as namely,

1. All ſlighting and viliſying Opinions or Expreſſions of the Holy Law of God, *Rom.* 7. 7, 12.
2. All Opinions and Principles inclining Men to a careleſs diſregard and neglect of the Duties of Obedience, under pretence of Free Grace and Liberty by Chriſt, *Jam.* 2. *Matth.* 25.
3. All Opinions neglecting or ſlighting Sanctification as the evidence of our Juſtification, and rendring it needleſs or ſinful to try the ſtate of our Souls by the Graces of the Spirit wrought in us, which is the principal ſcope of the Firſt *Epiſtle* of *John*.

Notwithſtanding, ſuch is the wickedneſs of ſome, and weakneſs of others, that in all Ages (eſpecially the laſt paſt, and preſent) Men have audaciouſly broken in upon the Doctrine of Free Grace; and notoriouſly violated and corrupted it, to the great reproach of Chriſt, ſcandal of the World, and hardning of the Enemies of Reformation. *Behold* (ſaith *Contzen* the Jeſuit, on *Matth.* 24.) *the fruit of Proteſtantiſm, and their Goſpel-preaching*.

Nothing is more oppoſite to looſeneſs than the Free Grace of God, which teacheth us, *That denying all ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent world.* Nor can it, without manifeſt violence, be made pliable to ſuch wicked purpoſes. And therefore the Apoſtle tells us, *Jud.* 4. That this is done by *turning* the Grace of our Lord into laſciviouſneſs: μεταθέντες, transferring it, ſcil. *fœdâ interpretatione*, by

by a corrupt abusive Interpretation, to such Uses and Purposes as it abhors. No such wanton, licentious Conclusions can be infer'd from the Gospel Doctrines of Grace and Liberty, but by wresting them against their true scope and intent, by the wicked Arts and Practices of Deceivers upon them.

The Gospel makes Sin more odious than ever the Law did, and discovers the punishment of it in a more severe and dreadful manner, than ever it was discovered before, *Heb.* 2. 2, 3. *For if the word spoken by Angels were stedfast, and every Transgression and Disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation?* It shews our Obligations to Duty, to be stronger than ever; and our Encouragements to Holiness greater than ever; 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. and yet corrupt Nature will be still tempting Men to corrupt and abuse it. The more luscious the Food is, the more Men are apt to surfeit upon it.

This Perversion and Abuse of Free-grace and Christian-liberty, is justly chargeable (though upon different accounts) both upon wicked and good Men. Wicked Men corrupt it designedly, that by entitling God to their Sins, they might sin the more quietly and securely. So the Devil instigated the *Heathens* to sin against the Light and Law of Nature, by representing their Gods to them as drunken and lascivious Deities. So the *Nicolaitans*, and School of *Simon*, and after them the *Gnosticks*, and other *Hereticks*, in the very dawning of Gospel Light and Liberty, began presently to loose the Bond of Restraint from their Lusts under Pretence of Grace and Liberty. The *Etiani* blushed not to teach, *That Sin, and Perseverance in Sin, could hurt the Salvation of none so that they would embrace their Principles.*

Augustin. de Hæres. *Tom.* 6. *Hæres.* 54.

How vile and abominable Inferences the *Manichæans*, *Valentinians*, and *Cerdonites*, drew from the Grace and Liberty of the Gospel in the following Ages, I had rather mourn over, than recite. And if we come down to the *15th Century*, we shall find the *Libertines* of those days as deep drenched in this Sin, as most that went before them. *Calvin* mournfully observes, That under Pretence of Christian-liberty, they trampled all Godliness under Foot. The vile Courses their loose Opinions soon carried them into, plainly discovered for what Intents and Purposes they were projected and calculated: and he that reads the Preface to that Grave and Learned Mr. *Thomas Gataker*'s Book, Entituled, *God's Eye upon Israel*, will find, That some *Antinomians* of our Days are not much behind the worst and vilest of them. One of them cries out, *Away with the Law, away with the Law, it cuts off a Man's Legs, and then bids him walk.* Another saith, *'Tis as possible for Christ himself to sin, as for a Child of God to sin. That if a Man by the Spirit know himself to be in the state of Grace, though he be drunk, or commit murther, God sees no sin in him*: with much more of the same Bran, which I will not transcribe.

Calv. *adversus Libert. ch.* 2.

But others there be, whose Judgments are unhappily tainted and leavened with these loose Doctrines; yet being in the main godly Persons, they dare not take Liberty to sin, or live in the neglect of known Duties, though their Principles too much incline that Way. But though they dare not, others will, who imbibe corrupt Notions from them; and the renowned Piety of the Authors will be no Antidote against the Danger, but make the Poison operate the more powerfully, by receiving it in such a Vehicle. Now it is highly probable such Men as these might be charmed into such dangerous Opinions upon such accounts as these.

(1.) 'Tis like some of them might have felt in themselves the anguish of a perplexed Conscience under Sin; and not being able to live with these Terrors of the Law, and dismal Fears of Conscience, might too hastily snatch at those Doctrines which promise them relief and ease, as I noted before in the 5th *Cause* of my *Treatise* of *Errors*. And that this is not a guess at random, will appear from the very Title-page of Mr. *Saltmarsh*'s Book of Free-grace, where (as an Inducement to the Reader to swallow his *Antinomian* Doctrine) he shews him this curious Bait.

It is (saith he) *an Experiment of Jesus Christ upon one who hath been in the bondage of a troubled Conscience at times for the space of about twelve Years 'till now upon a clearer Discovery of Jesus Christ in the Gospel*, &c.

(2.) Others have been induced to espouse these Opinions from the excess of their Zeal against the Errors of the *Papists*, who have notoriously corrupted the Doctrine of Justification by Free-grace; decried *imputed*, and exalted *inherent* Righteousness above it. The *Papists* have designedly and industriously sealed up the Scriptures from the People, lest they should there discover those sovereign and effectual Remedies which God hath provided for their distressed Consciences, in the Riches of his own Grace, and the meritorious Death of Christ; and so all their *Masses*, *Pilgrimages*, *Auricular Confessions*, with all their dear *Indulgences*, should lie upon their Hands as stale and cheap Commodities. *Oh*, (said *Stephen Gardiner*) *let not this Gap of Free-grace be opened to the People.*

But as soon as the Light of Reformation had discovered the Free-grace of God to Sinners, (which is indeed the only effectual Remedy of distressed Consciences) and by the same Light the horrid Cheats of the Man of Sin were discovered; all good Men, who were enlightned by the Reformation, justly and deeply abhorred *Popery*, as the Enemy of the Grace of God, and true Peace of Conscience, and fixed themselves upon the sound and comfortable Doctrines of Justification by Faith through the alone Righteousness of Christ. Mean while thankfully acknowledging, that they which believe, ought also to maintain good Works. But others there were, transported by an indiscreet Zeal, who have almost bended the Grace of God as far too much the other way, and have both spoken and written many things very unbecoming the Grace of God, and tending to looseness and neglect of Duty.

(3.) 'Tis manifest that others of them have been ingulphed, and suckt into those dangerous Quicksands of *Antinomian* Errors, by separating the Spirit from the written Word; if once a Man pretend the Spirit without the Scriptures to be his Rule, whither will not his own deluding Fancies carry him under a vain and sinful Pretence of the Spirit!

In the Year 1528. when *Helsar*, *Traier*, and *Seckler*, were confuted by *Hallerus*; and their Errors about Oaths, Magistrates, and Pædo-Baptism were detected by him, and by *Colveus* at *Bern*, that which they had to say for themselves was, That *the Spirit taught them otherwise than the letter of the Scriptures speaks.* So dangerous it is to separate what God hath conjoined, and father our own Fancies upon the Holy Spirit.

(4.) And

(4.) And it is not unlike, but a comparative weakneſs and injudiciouſneſs of mind meeting with a fervent Zeal for Chriſt, and his Glory may induce others to eſpouſe ſuch taking and plauſible, though pernicious, Doctrines. They are not aware of the dangerous Conſequences of the Opinions they embrace, and what looſeneſs may be occaſioned by them. I ſpeak not of Occaſions taken, but given, by ſuch Opinions and Expreſſions. A good Man will draw excellent Inferences of Duty from the very ſame Doctrine. Inſtance that of the ſhortneſs of time, from whence the Apoſtle infers abſtinence, ſtrictneſs and diligence, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29. but the *Epicure* infers all manner of diſſolute and licentious Practices, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we ſhall die*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 22. The beſt Doctrines are this way liable to abuſe.

But let all good men beware of ſuch Opinions and Expreſſions as give an handle to wicked Men to abuſe the Grace of God, which haply the Author himſelf dare not do, and may ſtrongly hope others may not do: but if the Principle will yield it, 'tis in vain to think corrupt Nature will not catch at it, and make a vile uſe and dangerous Improvement of it.

For example; If ſuch a Principle as this be aſſerted for a Truth before the World, *Then men need not fear that any, or all the Sins they commit, ſhall do them any hurt*; let the Author, or any Man in the World warn, and caution Readers (as the *Antinomian* Author of that Expreſſion hath done) not to abuſe this Doctrine, 'tis to purpoſe. The Doctrine it ſelf is full of dangerous Conſequents, and wicked Men have the beſt skill to infer and draw them forth to cheriſh and countenance their Luſts: That which the Author might deſign for the relief of the diſtreſſed, quickly turns it ſelf into Poiſon in the Bowels of the wicked; nor can we excuſe it by ſaying any Goſpel-Truth may be thus abuſed: for this is none of that number; but a Principle that gives offence to the Godly, and encouragement to the Ungodly. And ſo much as to the Riſe and Occaſion of *Antinomian Errors*.

II. In the next Place, let us view ſome of the chief Doctrines commonly called *Antinomian*, amongſt which there will be found a Πρῶτον ψεῦδος, the radical and moſt prolifique Error, from which moſt of the reſt are ſpawned and procreated.

Error I. I ſhall begin with the dangerous miſtake of the *Antinomians* in the Doctrine of *Juſtification*. The Article of Juſtification is deſervedly ſtiled by our Divines, *Articulus ſtantis, vel cadentis Religionis*, the very Pillar of the Chriſtian Religion.

In two things however I muſt do the *Antinomians* right. (1.) In acknowledging, that though their Errors about Juſtification be great and dangerous, yet they are not ſo much about the *Subſtance*, as about the *mode* of a Sinner's Juſtification: An Error far inferiour to that of the *Papiſts*, who depreſs the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and exalt their own inherent Righteouſneſs in the buſineſs of Juſtification. (2.) I am bound in Charity to believe, that ſome among them do hold thoſe Errors but ſpeculatively, whilſt the Truth lies nearer their Hearts, and will not ſuffer them to reduce their own Opinions into Practice. Now as to their Errors about Juſtification, the moſt that I have

Error I. read do make *Juſtification to be an immanent and eternal Act of God; and do affirm, the Elect were juſtified before themſelves, or the World, had a Being.* Others come lower, and affirm, *the Elect were juſtified at the time of Chriſt's death.* With theſe Dr. *Criſp* harmonizes.

Error II. That Juſtification by Faith is no more but a Manifeſtation to us of what was really done before we had a Being. Hence Mr. *Saltmarſh* thus defines Faith, *It is* (ſaith he) *a being perſwaded more or leſs of Chriſt's Love to us*; ſo that when we believe, that which was hid before, doth then appear. *God* (ſaith another) *cannot charge one Sin upon that Man, who believes this Truth; That God laid his Iniquities upon Chriſt.*

Error. III. That Men ought not to doubt of their Faith, or queſtion, Whether they believe or no. Nay, That we ought no more to queſtion our Faith, than to queſtion Chriſt. *Saltm. Of Free-Grace*, p. 92, 95.

Error. IV. That Believers are not bound to confeſs Sin, mourn for it, or pray for the forgiveneſs of it; becauſe it was pardoned before it was committed; and pardoned Sin is no Sin. *See* Eaton's *Honycomb*, p. 446, 447.

Error V. They ſay, that God ſees no Sin in Believers, whatſoever Sins they commit. Some of them, as Mr. *Town*, and Mr. *Eaton*, ſpeak out, and tell us, That God can ſee no Adultery, no Lying, no Blaſphemy, no Cozening in Believers: For though Believers do fall into ſuch Enormities; yet all their Sins being pardoned from Eternity, they are no Sins in them. *Town's Aſſertions*, 96, 97, 98. *Eaton's Honey-comb*, c. 7. p. 136, 137. with others of a more pernicious Character than they.

Error VI. That God is not angry with the Elect, nor doth he ſmite them for their Sins; and to ſay that he doth ſo, is an injurious Reflection upon the Juſtice of God. This is avouched generally in all their Writings.

Error VII. They tell us, That by God's laying our Iniquities upon Chriſt, he became as compleatly ſinful as we, and we as compleatly righteous as Chriſt. *Vide* Dr. *Criſp*, p. 270.

Error VIII. Upon the ſame ground it is that they affirm, That Believers need not fear either their own Sins, or the Sins of others; for that neither their own, nor any other Mens Sins, can do them any hurt, nor muſt they do any Duty for their own Salvation.

Error. IX. They will not allow the New Covenant to be made properly with us, but with Chriſt for us; and that this Covenant is all of it a Promiſe, having no Condition on our part. They do not abſolutely deny that Faith, Repentance, and Obedience, are Conditions in the New Covenant; but ſay, They are not Conditions on our part, but Chriſt's; and that he repented, believed, and obeyed, for us. *Saltmarſh* of Free-grace, p. 126, 127.

Error X. They ſpeak very ſlightingly of trying our ſelves by marks and ſigns of Grace. *Saltmarſh* often calls it a weak, low, carnal way; but the *New-England Antinomians*, or *Libertines*, call it a fundamental Error, to make Sanctification an Evidence of Juſtification; that it is to light a Candle to the Sun; that it darkens our Juſtification; and that the darker our Sanctification is, the brighter our Juſtification is. *See their Book, entituled*, Riſe, Reign, *Error* 72.

In this breviate, or ſummary Account of *Antinomian* Doctrines, I have only ſingled out, and touched ſome of their principal Miſtakes and Errors, into which ſome of them run much farther than others. But I look upon ſuch Doctrines to be in themſelves of a very dangerous Nature, and the

the Malignity and Contagion would certainly ſpread much farther into the World than it doth, had not God provided two powerful Antidotes to reſiſt the Malignity, *viz.*

1. The ſcope and current of Scripture.
2. The Experience and Practice of the Saints.

(1.) Theſe Doctrines run croſs to the ſcope and current of the Scriptures, which conſtantly ſpeak of all unregenerate Perſons (without Exception of the very Elect themſelves, during that ſtate) as Children of Wrath, even as others, without Chriſt, and under Condemnation.

They frequently diſcover God's Anger, and tell us his caſtigatory Rods of Affliction are laid upon them for their Sins.

They repreſent Sin as the greateſt Evil; moſt oppoſite to the Glory of God, and good of the Saints; and are therefore filled with Cautions and Threatnings to prevent their ſinning.

They call the Saints frequently and earneſtly, not only to mourn for their Sins before the Lord; but to pray for the Pardon or Remiſſion of them in the Blood of Chriſt.

They give us a far different account of ſaving Faith, and do not place it in a perſwaſion more or leſs of Chriſt's Love to us, or a manifeſtation in our Conſciences of the actual Remiſſion of our Sins before we had a Being; but in our receiving Chriſt, as the Goſpel offers him, for righteouſneſs and life.

They frequently call the People of God to the Examination and Trial of their Intereſt in Chriſt by Marks and Signs: and acordingly furniſh them with variety of ſuch Marks from the divers parts or branches of Sanctification in themſelves.

They earneſtly, and every where, preſs Believers to ſtrictneſs and conſtancy in the Duties of Religion, as the way wherein God would have them to walk. They infer Duties from Privileges; and therefore the *Antinomian* Dialect is a wild Note, which the generality of ſerious Chriſtians do eaſily diſtinguiſh from the Scripture-ſtile and Language.

(2.) The Experience and Practice of the Saints recorded in Scripture, as well as our contemporaries, or thoſe whoſe Lives are recorded for our Imitation, do greatly ſecure us from the ſpreading malignity of *Antinomianiſm*. Converſe with the living or read the Hiſtories of dead Saints, and you ſhall find, That in their Addreſſes to God, they ſtill bleſs and praiſe him for that great and wonderful change of State which was made upon them when they firſt believed in Chriſt, and on their believing paſſed from Death to Life; freely acknowledging before God, they were before their Converſion equal in Sin and Miſery with the vileſt Wretches in the World: They heartily mourn for their daily Sins; fear nothing more than Sin; no Afflictions in the World go ſo near their Heart as Sin doth. They mourn for the Hardneſs of their Hearts, that they can mourn no more for Sin. They acknowledge the Rods of God that are upon them, are not only the Evidences of his Diſpleaſure againſt them for their Sins; but the fruits of their uneven walking with him. And that the greateſt of their Afflictions is leſs than the leaſt of their Iniquities deſerve. They fall at their Father's Feet as oft as they fall into ſin, humbly and earneſtly ſuing for Pardon through the Blood of Chriſt. They are not only ſenſible that God ſees Sin in them; but that he ſeeth ſuch, and ſo great evils in them, as makes them admire at his Patience, that they are not conſumed in their Iniquities. They find cauſe enough to ſuſpect their own Sincerity: doubt the Truth of their Faith, and of their Graces: and are therefore frequent and ſerious in the Trial and Examination of their own States by Scripture Marks and Signs. They urge the Commands and Threatnings, as well as the Promiſes, upon their own Hearts, to promote Sanctification. Excite themſelves to Duty and Watchfulneſs againſt Sin. They alſo encourage themſelves by the Rewards of Obedience, knowing their Labour is not in vain in the Lord. And all this while they look not for that in themſelves, which is only to be found in Chriſt: nor for that in the Law, which is only to be found in the Goſpel: nor for that on Earth, which is only to be found in Heaven: This is the way that they take. And he that ſhall tell them, their Sins can do them no hurt, or their Duties do them no good, ſpeaks to them, not only as a *Barbarian*, in a Language they underſtand not, but in ſuch a Language as their Souls deteſt and abhor.

Moreover, the Zeal and Love of Chriſt, and his Glory, being kindled in their Souls, they have not Patience to hear ſuch Doctrines as ſo greatly derogate from his Glory, under a Pretence of honouring and exalting him. It wounds and grieves their very Hearts to ſee the World hardned in their Prejudices againſt Reformation, and a gap opened to all Licentiouſneſs.

But notwithſtanding this double Antidote and Security, we find by daily Experience ſuch Doctrines too much obtaining in the profeſſing World. For my own part, He that ſearches my Heart and Reins is witneſs, I would rather chuſe to have my right Hand wither, and my Tongue rot within my Mouth, than to ſpeak one Word, or write one Line to cloud or diminiſh the Free-grace of God. Let it ariſe and ſhine in its Meridian Glory. None owes more to it, or expects more from it, than I do. And what I ſhall write in this Controverſy, is to vindicate it from thoſe Doctrines and Opinions, which under pretence of exalting it, do really militate againſt it. To begin therefore with the firſt and leading *Error*.

Error I. *That the Juſtification of Sinners is an immanent and eternal Act of God, not only preceding all Acts of Sin; but the very Exiſtence of the Sinner himſelf, and ſo perfectly aboliſhing Sin in our Perſons, that we are as clean from Sin as Chriſt himſelf,* ἀναμάρτητοι, as ſome of them have ſpoken. To ſtop the Progreſs of this Error, I ſhall,

1. Lay down the Sentence of the Orthodox about it.
2. Offer ſome Reaſons for the Refutation of it.

(1.) That which I take to be the Truth agreed upon, and aſſerted by ſound reformed Divines touching Goſpel-Juſtification, is by them made clear to the World in theſe following Scriptural Diſtinctions of it.

Juſtification may be conſidered under a twofold Reſpect or Habitude.

1. According to God's Eternal Decree: Or,
2. According to the Execution thereof in Time.

(1.) According to God's Eternal Decree and Purpoſe; and in this Reſpect Grace is ſaid to be given us in Chriſt before the World began, 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. And we are ſaid to be predeſtinated to the

Adoption of Children by Jesus Christ, *Eph.* 1. 5.

(2.) According to the Execution thereof in Time; So they again distinguish it, by considering it two ways:

1. In its Impetration by Christ.
2. In its Application to us.

That very Mercy or Privilege of Justification which God from all Eternity, purely out of his benevolent Love, purposed and decreed for his Elect, was also in Time purchased for them by the Death of Christ, *Rom.* 5. 9, 10. where we are said to be justified by his Blood; and he is said to have made Peace through the Blood of his Cross, to reconcile all Things to himself, *Col.* 1. 20. to be delivered for our Offences, and raised again for our Justification, *Rom.* 4. 25. Once more, *That God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses,* 2 Cor. 5. 19. God the Father had in the Death of Christ a Foundation of Reconciliation, whereby he became propitious to his Elect, that he might absolve and justify them. Again,

(2.) It must be considered in its Application to us, which Application is made in this Life at the Time of our effectual Calling. When an elect Sinner is united to Christ by Faith, and so passeth from Death to Life, from a state of Condemnation, into a state of Absolution and Favour; this is our actual Justification, *Rom.* 5. 1, *Acts* 13. 39. *John* 5. 24. which actual Justification is again considered two ways:

1. Universally, and in General, as to the State of the Person.
2. Specially, and Particularly, as to the Acts of Sin.

As soon as we are received into Communion with Christ, and his Righteousness is imputed by God, and received by Faith, immediately we pass from a state of Death and Condemnation, to a state of Life and Justification, and all Sins already committed, are remitted without Exception or Revocation; and not only so, but a Remedy is given us in the Righteousness of Christ against Sins to come; and though these special and particular Sins we afterward fall into, do need particular Pardons; yet, by renewed Acts of Faith and Repentance, the Believer applies to himself the Righteousness of Christ, and they are pardoned.

Again, they carefully distinguish betwixt,

1. It's Application by God to our Persons. And
2. It's Declaration or Manifestation in us and to us.

Which Manifestation or Declaration, is either,

1. Private in the Conscience of a Believer. Or,
2. Publick, at the Bar of Judgment.

And thus Justification is many ways distinguished: And notwithstanding all this, it is still *actus individuus*, an undivided Act; not on our part, for it is iterated in many Acts; but on God's part, who at once decreed it; and on Christ's part, who by one Offering purchased it, and at the Time of our Vocation universally applied it, as to the state of the Person justified; and that so effectually, as no future Sin shall bring that Person any more under Condemnation.

In this Sentence or Judgment, the generality of Reformed Orthodox Divines are agreed; and the want of distinguishing, (as they according to Scripture have distinguished) hath led the *Antinomians* into this first Error about Justification, and that Error hath led them into most of the other Errors. That this Doctrine of theirs, (which teaches that Men are justified actually and completly, before they have a Being) is an Error, and hath no solid Foundation to support it, may be evidenced by these three Reasons.

1. Because it is Irrational.
2. Because it is Unscriptural.
3. Because it is Injurious to Christ, and the Souls of Men.

Reason 1. It is Irrational to imagine that Men are actually justified, before thay have a Being, by an immanent Act or Decree of God. Many things have been urged upon this Account to confute and destroy this Fancy, and much more may be rationally urged against it. Let the following Particulars be weighed in the Balance of Reason.

1. Can we rationally suppose, that Pardon and Acceptance can be affirmed, or predicated of that which is not? Reason tells us, *Non entis nulla sunt accidentia*; That which is not, can neither be condemned nor justified: But before the Creation, or before a Man's particular Conception, he was not, and therefore could not in his own Person be the Subject of Justification. Where there is no Law, there is no Sin: Where there is no Sin, there is no Punishment: Where there is neither Sin nor Punishment, there can be no Guilt (for Guilt is an Obligation to Punishment.) And where there's neither Law, nor Sin, nor Obligation to Punishment, there can be no Justification. He that is not capable of a Charge, is not capable of a Discharge. What remains then, but that either the Elect must exist from Eternity, or be justified in time? 'Tis true, future Beings may be considered, as in the purpose and decree of God from Eternity; or as in the Intention of Christ, who died intentionally for the Sins of the Elect, and rose again for their Justification. But neither the Decree of God, nor the Death of Christ, takes place upon any Man for his actual Justification, until he personally exist. For the Object of Justification is a Sinner actually ungodly, *Rom.* 4. 5. but so no Man is, or can be from Eternity. In Election, Men are considered without respect to Good or Evil done by them, *Rom.* 9. 11. not so in actual Justification.

2. In Justification there is a Change made upon the state of the Person, *Rom.* 5. 8, 9. 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10, 11. By Justification Men pass from a State of Death to a State of Life, *John* 5. 24. But the Decree or Purpose of God in it self makes no such actual Change upon the State of any Person. It hath indeed the Nature of an universal Cause; but an universal Cause produceth nothing without Particulars. If our State be changed, it is not by an immanent Act of God: Hence no such thing doth *transire*. A mere *velle non punire*, or intention to justify us in due time and order, makes no change on our State, 'till that time come, and the particular Causes have wrought. A *Prince* may have a Purpose or Intention to pardon a Law-condemned *Traitor*, and free him from that Condemnation in due time; but whilst the Law that condemned him stands in its full force and power against him, he is not justified or acquitted, notwithstanding that gracious intention, but stands still condemned. So is it with us, 'till by Faith we are implanted into Christ. 'Tis true, Christ is a surety for all his, and hath satisfied the Debt. He is a common Head to all his, as *Adam* was to all his Children, *Rom.* 5. 19. But as the Sin of *Adam* condemns none, but those

those that are in him; so the Righteousness of Christ actually justifies none but those that are in him; and none are actually in him, but Believers. Therefore till we believe, no actual change passeth, or can pass upon our State. So that this *Hypothesis* is contrary to *Reason.*

Reason 2. As this Opinion is Irrational, so it is Unscriptural. For (1.) The Scripture frequently speaks of Remission or Justification as a future Act, and therefore not from Eternity, *Rom.* 4. 23, 24. *Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe in him,* &c. And *Gal.* 3. 8. *The Scriptures foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen through Faith, preached before the Gospel unto* Abraham. The Gospel was preached many Years before the *Gentiles* were justified: but if they were justified from Eternity, how was the Gospel preached before their Justification?

(2.) The Scripture leaves all Unbelievers, without distinction, under condemnation and wrath. The Curse of the Law lies upon them 'till they believe, *John* 3. 18. *He that believeth on him, is not condemned; but he that believeth not, is condemned already.* And *Eph.* 2. 3, 12, 13. The very Elect themselves were by Nature the Children of Wrath, even as others. They were at that time, or during that state of Nature (which takes in all that whole space betwixt their Conception and Conversion) without Christ, without Hope, without God in the World. But if this Opinion be true, that the Elect were justified from Eternity, or from the time of Christ's Death; then it cannot be true, that the Elect by Nature are Children of Wrath, without Christ, without Hope, without God in the World; except these two may consist together (which is absolutely impossible) that Children of Wrath, without God, Christ, or Hope, are actually discharged from their Sins and Dangers, by a free and gracious Act of Justification.

Object. But doth not the Scripture say, *Rom.* 8. 33. *Who shall lay any thing to the Charge of God's Elect?* If none can charge the Elect, then God hath discharged them.

Sol. God hath not actually discharged them as they are Elect, but as they are justified Elect: for so runs that Text, and clears it self in the very next Words, *It is God that justifieth.* When God hath actually justified an Elect Person, none can charge him.

(3.) 'Tis cross to the Scripture-order of Justification; which places it not only after Christ's Death in the place last cited, *Rom.* 8. 33. but also after our actual vocation; as is plain, *ver.* 30. *Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.* Is it absurd to place Vocation before Predestination, or Glorification before Justification? sure then it must be absurd also to place Justification before Vocation: the one as well as the other confounds and breaks the Scripture-order. You may as well say, Men shall be glorified, that were never justified; as say they may be justified before they believed or existed. So that you see the Notion of Justification from Eternity, or before our actual Existence, and effectual Vocation, is a Notion as repugnant to Sacred Scripture, as it is to sound Reason.

Reason 3. And as it is found repugnant to Reason and Scripture, so it is highly injurious to Jesus Christ, and the Souls of Men.

(1.) It greatly injures the Lord Jesus Christ, and robs him of the glory of being our Saviour. For if the Elect be justified from Eternity, Christ cannot be the Saviour of the Elect, as most assuredly he is; for if Christ save them, he must save them as Persons subject to perishing, either *de facto* or *de jure.* But if the Elect were justified from Eternity, they could in neither respect be subject to perishing: for he that was eternally justified, was never condemned, nor capable of Condemnation; and he that never was, or could be condemned, could never be subject to perishing; and he that never was, nor could be subject to perishing, can never truly and properly be said to be saved.

If it be said, the Elect were not justified till the Death of Christ: I demand then what became of all them that died before the Death of Christ? If they were not justified, they could not be glorified: for this is sure from *Rom* 8. 30. That the whole Number of the glorified in Heaven is made up of such as were justified on Earth: Let Men take heed therefore, lest under pretence of exalting Christ, they bereave him of the glory of being the Saviour of his Elect.

(2.) It bereaves him of another glorious Royalty. The Scripture every where makes our Justification the result and fruit of the meritorious death of Christ; *Rom.* 3. 24, 25. *Rom.* 8. 3, 4. 2 *Cor.* 5. 19, 20. *Gal.* 3. 13, 14 *Eph.* 1. 17. But if Men were justified from Eternity, how is their Justification the fruit and result of the blood of the Cross? as it plainly appears from these Scriptures to be. Nay,

(3.) This Opinion leaves no place for the satisfaction of Justice by the Blood of Christ for our Sins. He did not die, according to this Opinion, to pay our Debts. And here *Antinomianism* and *Socinianism* meet, and congratulate each other. For if there were no Debts owing to the Justice of God from Eternity, Christ could not die to pay them; and 'tis manifest there were no Debts due to God's Justice from Eternity on the account of his Elect, if the Elect were from Eternity justified; unless you will say, a Person may be justified, and yet his Debts not paid: for all Justification dissolves the Obligation to Punishment.

If there were any Debts for Christ to Pay by his Blood, they must either be his own Debts, or Elect's. To say they were his own, is a blasphemous Reproach to him: and according to this Opinion we cannot say they were the Elect's; for if they were justified from Eternity, their Debts were discharged, and their Bonds cancell'd from Eternity. So that this Opinion leaves nothing to the Blood of Christ to discharge or make Satisfaction for.

(2.) And as it hath been proved to be highly injurious to the Lord Jesus, so it is greatly injurious to the Souls of Men, as it naturally leads them into all those wild and licentious Opinions which naturally flow from it, as from the radical prolifique Error, whence most of the rest derive themselves, as will immediately appear in the

II. Error. *That Justification by Faith is no more but the Manifestation to us of what was really and actually done before. Or a being perswaded more or less of Christ's love to us. And that when Persons do believe, that which was hid before, doth then only appear to them.*

Refutation. As the former Error dangerously corrupts the Doctrine of Justification, so this corrupts the Doctrine of Faith; and therefore deserves to be exploded by all Christians.

That there is a manifeſtation and diſcovery of the ſpecial love of God, and our own ſaving concernment in the death of Chriſt to ſome Chriſtians at ſome times, cannot be denied. St. *Paul* could ſay, *Gal.* 2. 20, 21. Chriſt loved him, and gave himſelf for him: but to ſay that this is the juſtifying Act of Faith, whereby a Sinner paſſes from Condemnation and Death, into the ſtate of Righteouſneſs and Life; this I muſt look upon as a great Error, and that for theſe following Reaſons.

Reaſon I. Becauſe there be Multitudes of believing and juſtified Perſons in the World, who have no ſuch Manifeſtation, Evidence, or Aſſurance, that God laid their Iniquities upon Chriſt, and that he died to put away their Sins; but daily conflict with ſtrong Fears and Doubts, whether it be ſo or no. There are but few among Believers that attain ſuch a Perſwaſion and Manifeſtation, as *Antinomians* make to be all that is meant in Scripture by Juſtification through Faith. Many thouſand new-born Chriſtians live as the new-born Babe, which neither knows its own Eſtate, or Inheritance, to which it is born,

Vivit, & eſt vitæ neſcius ipſe ſuæ.

A Soul may be in Chriſt, and a juſtified ſtate, without any ſuch Perſwaſion or Manifeſtation, as they here ſpeak of, *Iſa.* 50. 10. And if any ſhall aſſert the contrary, he will condemn the greateſt part of the Generation of God's Children. Now that cannot be the ſaving and juſtifying Act of Faith, which is not to be found in multitudes of believing and juſtified Perſons.

But Manifeſtation, or a perſonal Perſwaſion of the love of God to a Man's Soul, or that Chriſt died for him, and all his Iniquities are thereby forgiven him, is not to be found in multitudes of believing and juſtified Souls.

Therefore ſuch a Perſwaſion or Manifeſtation is not that ſaving, juſtifying Faith, which the Scripture ſpeaks of.

That Faith which only juſtifies the Perſon of a Sinner before God, muſt neceſſarily be found in all juſtified Believers, or elſe a Man may be juſtified without the leaſt degree of juſtifying Faith, and conſequently it is not Faith alone, by which a Man is juſtified before God.

Reaſon II. That cannot be the juſtifying Act of Faith, which is not conſtant and abiding with the juſtified Perſon, but comes and goes, is frequently loſt and recovered, the State of the Perſon ſtill remaining the ſame. And ſuch contingent things are theſe Perſwaſions and Manifeſtations; they come and go, are won and loſt, the ſtate of the Perſon ſtill remaining the ſame. *Job* was as much a juſtified Believer when he complained that God was his Enemy, as when he could ſay, *I know that my Redeemer liveth.* The ſame may be ſaid of *David*, *Heman*, *Aſaph*, and the greateſt Number of juſtified Believers recorded in the Scripture. There be two things belonging to a juſtified State, (1.) That which is eſſential and inſeparable, to wit, Faith uniting the Soul to Chriſt. (2.) That which is contingent and ſeparable, to wit, Evidence and Perſwaſion of our Intereſt in him. Thoſe Believers that walk in darkneſs, and have no light, have yet a real ſpecial Intereſt in God as their God, *Iſa.* 50. 10. Here then you find Believers without Perſwaſion or Manifeſtation of God's love to them; which could never be, if juſtifying Faith conſiſted in a perſonal Perſwaſion, Manifeſtation or Evidence of the love of God, and pardon of Sin to a Man's Soul. That cannot be the juſtifying Faith ſpoken of in Scripture, which a juſtified Perſon may live in Chriſt without, and be as much in a State of Pardon and Acceptation with God, when he wants it, as when he hath it. But ſuch is Perſwaſion, Evidence, or Manifeſtation of a Man's particular Intereſt in the love of God, or the pardon of his Sins. Therefore this is not the juſtifying Faith the Scripture ſpeaks of.

Reaſon III. That only is juſtifying, ſaving Faith, which gives the Soul Right and Title to Chriſt, and the ſaving benefits which come by Chriſt upon all the Children of God. Now it is not Perſwaſion that Chriſt is ours, but Acceptance of him, that gives us intereſt in Chriſt, and the ſaving benefits and privileges of the Children of God, *John* 1. 12. *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God; even to them that believe on his Name.* So that unleſs the *Antinomians* can prove, that receiving of Chriſt, and perſonal Perſwaſion of Pardon, be one and the ſame thing; and conſequently, that all Believers in the World are perſwaded or aſſured that their Sins are pardoned; and reject from the Number of Believers all tempted, deſerted, dark, and doubting Chriſtians; this Perſwaſion they ſpeak of, is not, nor can it be the Act of Faith, which juſtifies the perſon of a Sinner before God. That which I think led our *Antinomians* into this Error, was an unſound and unwary *definition* of Faith, which in their Youth they had imbibed from their *Catechiſms*, and other *Syſtems*, paſſing without Contradiction or Scruple in thoſe days, which though it were a miſtake, and hath abundantly been proved ſo in latter Days; yet our *Antinomians* will not part with a Notion ſo ſerviceable to the ſupport of the darling Opinion of Eternal Juſtification.

Reaſon IV. A Man may be ſtrongly perſwaded of the Love of God to his Soul, and of the pardon of his Sin, and yet have no intereſt in Chriſt, nor be in a pardoned State. This was the Caſe of the *Phariſees* and others, *Luke* 18. 9. *Rev.* 3. 17. Therefore this Perſwaſion cannot be juſtifying Faith. If a Perſwaſion be that that juſtifies the perſwaded Perſon, then the *Pharaſees* and *Laodiceans* were juſtified. Oh! how common and eaſie is it for the worſt of Men to be ſtrongly perſwaded of their good Condition; whilſt humble ſerious Chriſtians doubt and ſtagger? I know not what ſuch Doctrine as this is uſeful for, but to beget and ſtrengthen that Sin of Preſumption, which ſends down Multitudes to Hell, out of the profeſſing World: For what is more common amongſt the moſt carnal and unſanctified part of the World, not only ſuch as are meerly Moral, but even the moſt flagitious and prophane, than to ſupport themſelves by falſe Perſwaſions of their good Eſtate? When they are asked, in order to their Conviction, what hopes of Salvation they have, and how they are founded? Their common anſwer is, Chriſt died for Sinners, and that they are perſwaded, that whatever he hath done for any other, he hath done it for them, as well as others: But ſuch a Perſwaſion cometh not of him that called them, and is of dangerous Conſequence.

Reaſon V. This Doctrine is certainly unſound, becauſe it confounds the Diſtinction betwixt Dogmatical, and Saving Faith; and makes it all one, to believe an *Axiom* or Propoſition, and to believe ſavingly in Chriſt to Eternal Life. What is it to believe, that God laid our Iniquities upon Chriſt, more than the meer aſſent of the underſtanding to a Scripture *Axiom* or Propoſition, without any conſent

ſent of the Will to receive Jeſus Chriſt as the Goſpel offers him? And this is no more than what any unregenerated Perſon may do; yea, the very Devils themſelves aſſent to the Truth of Scripture Axioms and Propoſitions as well as Men, *Jam.* 2: 19. *Thou believeſt there is one God, thou doſt well: the Devils alſo believe and tremble.* What is more than a Scripture Axiom or Propoſition, *God lay'd the iniquity of us all upon Chriſt*, Iſa. 53. 6? And yet (ſaith Dr. *Criſp*, p. 296.) God cannot charge one Sin upon that Man that believes this Truth, *That God lay'd his iniquities upon Chriſt.* The aſſent of the underſtanding may be, and often is given to a Scriptural Propoſition, whilſt the Heart and Will remain carnal, and utterly averſe to Jeſus Chriſt. I may believe Dogmatically, that the Iniquities of Men were lay'd upon Chriſt, and perſuade my ſelf preſumptively, that mine, as well as other Mens, were lay'd upon him, and yet remain a perfect Stranger to all ſaving Union and Communion with him.

Reaſon VI. This Opinion cannot be true, becauſe it takes away the only Support that bears up the Soul of a Believer in Times of Temptation and Deſertion.

For how will you comfort ſuch a diſtreſſed Soul that ſaith, and ſaith truly, I have no Perſwaſion that Chriſt is mine, or that my ſins are pardoned; but I am heartily willing to caſt my poor ſin-burthened Soul upon him, that he may be mine; I do not certainly know that he died intentionally for me, but I lie at his Feet, cleave to him, wait at the door of Hope; I ſtay and truſt upon him. though I walk in Darkneſs, and have no Light. Now let ſuch Doctrine as this be preached to a Soul in this Condition, (and we may be ſure 'tis the Condition of many thouſands belonging to Chriſt) I ſay, bring this Doctrine to them, and tell them, That unleſs they be perſuaded of the Love of God, and that God lay'd their Iniquities on Chriſt, except they have ſome Manifeſtation that their Perſons were juſtified from Eternity, their accepting of Chriſt, conſent of their Wills, waiting at his Feet, *&c.* ſignifies nothing; if we believe not that their particular Sins were lay'd upon Chriſt, and are pardoned to them by him, they are ſtill unbelievers, and have no part or portion in him. Whatever Pretences of Spiritual Comfort and Relief the *Antinomian* Doctrine makes, you ſee by this it really deprives a very great, if not the greateſt number of God's People of their beſt and ſweeteſt Relief in days of Darkneſs and ſpiritual Diſtreſs. So that this Doctrine, which makes Manifeſtation and Aſſurance the very Eſſence of juſtifying Faith, appears hereby to be both a falſe and very dangerous Doctrine. And yet there is as much or more danger to the Souls of Men in their

III. Error. *That Men ought not to doubt of their Faith, or queſtion whether they believe or no. Nay, That they ought no more to queſtion their Faith, than to queſtion Chriſt.*

Refutation. What an eaſy way to Heaven is the *Antinomian* way? Were it but as true and ſafe to the Soul, as it is eaſie and pleaſing to the Fleſh, who would not embrace it? What a Charm of the Devil is prepared in theſe two Propoſitions? Be but perſuaded more or leſs of Chriſt's Love to thy Soul (ſaith Mr. *Saltmarſh*) and that's juſtifying Faith. Here's a Snare of the Devil lay'd for the Souls of Men. And then (2.) to make it faſt and ſure upon the Soul, and effectually to prevent the Diſcovery of their Error, tell them they need no more to doubt or queſtion their Faith, than to queſtion Chriſt, and the Work is done to all Intents.

Now that this is an Error, and a very dangerous one, will appear by the following Reaſons.

Reaſon I. The queſtioning and examining of our Faith, is a commanded Scripture-duty, 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. *Examine your ſelves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own ſelves*, &c. And 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. *Give diligence to make your calling and election ſure. Let him that thinketh he ſtandeth, take heed leſt he fall*, 1 Cor. 10. 12. *The ſecond Epiſtle of* John, *verſe* 8. *Look to your Selves, That we loſe not the things which we have wrought*: With multitude of other Scriptures, recommending holy Jealouſy, ſerious Self-trial and Examination of our Faith, as the unqueſtionable Duties of the People of God. But if we ought to queſtion our Faith no more than we ought to queſtion Chriſt, away then with all Self-Examination, and Diligence to make our Calling and Election ſure; for where there is no Doubt nor Danger, there's no Place nor Room for Examination, or further Endeavours to make it ſurer than it is. How do you like this Doctrine, Chriſtians? How many be there among you, that find no more Cauſe to queſtion your own Faith or Intereſt in Chriſt, than you do to queſtion whether there be a Chriſt, or whether he ſhed his Blood for the Remiſſion of any Man's Sins?

Reaſon II. This is a very dangerous Error, and it is the more dangerous, becauſe it leaves no way to recover a preſumptuous Sinner out of his dangerous Miſtakes; but confirms and fixes him in them, to the great hazard of his eternal ruin. It cuts off all means of Conviction or better Information, and nails them faſt to the carnal ſtate in which they are. According to this Doctrine 'tis impoſſible for a Man to think himſelf ſomething, when he is nothing; or to be guilty of ſuch a Paralogiſm and Cheat, put by himſelf upon his own Soul, *Jam.* 1. 22. this in effect bids a Man keep on right or wrong; he is ſure enough of Heaven, if he be but ſtrongly perſuaded that Chriſt died for him, and he ſhall come thither at laſt. Certainly this was not the Counſel Chriſt gave to the ſelf-deceived *Laodiceans*, *Rev.* 3. 17, 18. but inſtead of diſſuading them from ſelf-jealouſy and ſuſpicion of their Condition, whether their Faith and State were ſafe or not, he rather counſels them to buy Eye-ſalve, that is to labour after better information of the true ſtate and condition they were in, and not caſt away their Souls by falſe perſwaſions and vain confidences.

Reaſon III. This Doctrine cannot be true, becauſe it ſuppoſes every Perſuaſion, or ſtrong conceit of a Man's own Heart, to be as infallibly ſure and certain, as the very fundamental Doctrine of Chriſtianity. No truth in the World can be ſurer than this, That Jeſus Chriſt died for Sinners. *This is a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation*, 1 Tim. 1. 15. This is a foundation Stone, a tried, precious Corner Stone, a ſure Foundation laid by God himſelf, *Iſa.* 28. 16. and ſhall the ſtrong Conceits and Confidences of Men's Hearts vye and compare in point of certainty with it? As well may probable and meerly conjectural Propoſitions compare with Axioms that are ſelf-evident, or demonſtrative Arguments, that leave no Doubts behind them. Know we not, that the Heart is deceitful above all things, the moſt notorious Cheat and Impoſtor in the World, *Jer.* 17. 9?

17. 9? Does it not deceive all the formal Hypocrites in the World in this very point? And shall every strong conceit and presumptuous confidence, begotten by Satan upon a deceitful Heart, and nursed up by Self-love, pass without any examination or suspicion for as infallible and assured a Truth, as that Jesus Christ came into the World to save Sinners? The Lord sweep that Doctrine out of the World by Reformation, which is like to sweep so many Thousand Souls into Hell by a remedilesss Self-deception.

Error IV. The fourth *Antinomian* Error beforementioned, was this, *That Believers are not bound to confess their Sins, or pray for the pardon of them; because their Sins were pardoned before they were committed; and pardoned sin is no sin.*

Refutation. If this be true Doctrine, then it will justify and make good such Conclusions and Inferences as these which necessarily flow from it: *viz.*

1. That there is no Sin in Believers.
2. Or if there be, the evil is very inconsiderable. Or,
3. Whatever evil is in it, it is not the Will of God that they should either confess it, mourn over it, or pray for the remission of it; Whatever he requires of others, yet they need take no notice of it, so as to afflict their Hearts for it; God hath exempted them from such Concernments: There's nothing but Joy to a Believer, saith Mr. *Eaton*. But neither of these conclusions are either true or tolerable; therefore neither is the Principle so which yields them.

(1.) It is not true or tolerable to affirm, that there is no Sin in a Believer, 1 *Joh.* 1. 8. *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive our selves, and the truth is not in us. There's not a just Man upon Earth, that doeth good and sinneth not,* Eccles. 7. 20. *In many things we offend all,* James 3. 2. The Scriptures plainly affirm it, and the universal experience of all the Saints sadly confirms it. 'Tis true, the Blood of Christ hath taken away the guilt of Sin, so that it shall not condemn Believers; and the Spirit of Sanctification hath taken away the Dominion of Sin, so that it doth not reign over Believers; but nothing, except Glorification, utterly destroys the Existence of Sin in Believers. The acts of Sin are our acts, and not Christ's; and the Stain and Pollution of those sinful Acts, are the Burthens and Infelicities of Believers, even in their justified State. Dr *Crisp* indeed *p.* 270, 271. calls that objection (I suppose he means distinction betwixt the Guilt of Sin and Sin it self) a simple Objection, and tells us, the very Sin it self, as well as the guilt of it, passed off from us, and was lay'd upon Christ: So that speaking of the Sins of Blasphemy, Murther, Theft, Adultery, Lying, *&c.* From that time (saith he) that they were lay'd upon Christ, thou ceasest to be a Transgressor. If thou hast Part in the Lord Christ, all these Transgressions of thine become actually the Transgressions of Christ. So that now thou art not an Idolater, or Persecutor, a Thief, a Murtherer, and an Adulterer, thou art not a sinful Person; Christ is made that very sinfulness before God, *&c.* Such Expressions justly offend and grieve the Hearts of Christians, and expose Christianity to Scorn and Contempt. Was it not enough that the Guilt of our Sin was lay'd on him, but we must imagine also, that the thing it self, Sin, with all the Deformity and Pollution should be essentially transferred from us to Christ? No, no. After we are justified, Sin dwelleth in us *Rom.* 7. 17. warreth in us, and brings us into captivity, *ver.* 23. Burthens and oppresses our very Souls, *ver.* 24. Methinks I need not stand to prove what I should think no sound experienced Christian dares to deny, that there is much Sin still remaining in the Persons of the justified. He that dares to deny it, hath little Acquaintance with the Nature of Sin, and of his own Heart.

(2) It is neither true nor tolerable to say, there is no considerable evil in the sins of Believers, deserving a mournful confession or petition for Pardon. The desert of Sin is Hell; 'tis an artifice of Satan to draw Men to Sin by persuading them there is no great evil in it; but none except Fools will believe it. Fools, indeed, make a mock of Sin; but all that understand either the intrinsick evil of it, or the sad and dismal effects produced by it, are far from thinking it a light or inconsiderable evil. The Sins, even of Believers, greatly wrong and offend their God, *Psal.* 51. 4. and is that a light thing with us? They interrupt and clog our Communion with God, *Rom.* 7. 21. They grieve the good Spirit of God, *Ephes.* 4. 30. Certainly these are no inconsiderable Mischiefs.

(3.) Now if there be Sin in Believers, and so much evil in their Sins (neither of which any sober Christian will deny) then undoubtedly it is their Duty to confess it freely, mourn for it bitterly, and pray for the pardon of it earnestly, unless God have any where discharged them from those Duties, and told them these are none of their Concernments, and that he expects not these Things from justified Persons; but that these are Duties properly and only belonging to other Men. But on the contrary, you find the whole current of Scripture running strongly and constantly in direct opposition to such idle and sinful Notions. For first,

(1.) He hath plainly declared it to be his Will, that his People should confess their Sins before him, and strongly connected their Confessions with their Pardons, 1 *John* 1. 9. and frequently suspends from them the comfortable sense of forgiveness, till their Hearts be brought to this Duty, *Psal.* 32. 5. compared with *verse* 3. 4. the more to engage them to this Duty, by the sensible ease and comfort attending and following it.

(2.) He also enjoyns it upon them, That they mourn for their Sins, *Isa.* 22. 12. expresses his great Delight in Contrition and Brokenness of Spirit for Sin, *Isa.* 66. 2. *To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite Spirit.* Christ himself pronounces a Blessing upon them that mourn, *Matt.* 5. 4. Justified *Paul* mournfully confesses his former Blasphemies, Persecutions, and Injuries done against Christ, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13. So did *Ezra*, *Daniel*, and other eximous Saints.

Object. Yes, say some, they did indeed confess their sins committed before their Justification, but not their after-sins.

Reply. According to *Antinomian* Principles, I would demand, If all the Elect were justified from Eternity, what sins any of them could confess which they had committed before their Justification? Or if they were justified from the time of Christ's Death, what were the sins any of us have to confess who had not a Being, and therefore had not actually sinned long after the Death of Christ?

But

But I hope none will deny, that the mournful Complaints the Apostle makes for Sin, *Rom.* 7. 23, 24 were after he was a sanctified and justified Person.

(3.) It is not the Will of Christ to exempt any justified Person upon Earth, from the Duty of Praying frequently and fervently for the Remission of his Sins. This the most eminent Saints upon Earth have done. The greatest Favourites of Heaven have freely confessed and heartily prayed for the Remission of Sin, *Dan.* 9. 4, 19. And that the Gospel gives us no Exemption from this Duty, appears by Christ's Injunction of it upon all his People, *Matt.* 6. 12.

Error V. To give countenance to the former Error, they say, *That God sees no sin in Believers, whatsoever Sins they commit*; and seek a covert for this Error from *Numb.* 23. 21. and *Jer.* 50. 20. In the former place it is said by *Balaam*, *He hath not beheld Iniquity in Jacob, nor seen Perverseness in Israel*. And in the other place it is said, *In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them, whom I reserve.*

Refutation. Now that this Opinion of our *Antinomians* is Erroneous, will appear four ways.

1. By its repugnancy to God's Omniscience.
2. By its inconsistency with his Dispensations.
3. By its want of a Scripture-foundation.
4. By its contradictoriness to their other Principles.

'Tis true, and we thankfully acknowledge it, that God sees no sin in Believers, as a Judge sees Guilt in a Malefactor, to condemn him for it; that's a sure and comfortable Truth for us: but to say he sees no Sin in his Children, as a displeased Father to correct and chasten them for it, is an Assertion repugnant to Scripture, and very injurious to God. For,

(1.) 'Tis injurious to God's *Omniscience*, Psal. 139. 2. *Thou* (saith holy *David*) *knowest my down-sitting, and my up-rising, and understandest my thoughts afar off, and art acquainted with all my ways.* Job 28. 24. *He looketh to the ends of the Earth, and seeth under the whole Heavens.* Prov. 15. 3. *The Eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.* Psal. 33. 14, 15. *From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the Inhabitants of the Earth; he fashioneth their hearts alike, he considereth all their works.* He that denies that God seeth his most secret Sins, therein consequentially denies him to be God.

(2.) This Assertion is inconsistent with God's Providential Dispensations to his People. When *David*, a justified Believer, had sinned against him in the matter of *Uriah*, it is said, 2 *Sam.* 11. 27. *The thing that* David *had done, displeased the Lord*: and as the effect of that displeasure, it's said, *Chap.* 12. 15. *The Lord struck the Child that* Uriah's *Wife bare unto* David, *and it was very sick.* Among the *Corinthians* some that should not be condemned with the World, were judged and chastened of the Lord for their undue Approaches to his Table, 1 *Cor.* 11. 32. Now I would ask the *Antinomians* these two Questions. (1 *Quest.*) Whether it can be denied, that *David* under the Old Testament, and these *Corinthians* under the New, were justified Persons; and yet the former stricken by God in his Child, with its sickness and death; and the latter in like manner smitten by God in their own Persons; and both for their respective Sins committed against God; and yet God saw no sin in them? Did God smite them for sin, and yet behold no sin in them? Beware lest in ascribing such strokes to God, you strike at once both at his Omniscience and Justice. (2. *Quest.*) How God upon confession and repentance can be said to put away his People's sins (as *Nathan* there assures *David* he had done) when in the mean time he saw no sin in him, either to chastise him for, or to pardon in him? Do you think that God's Afflictions or Pardons are blind-fold Acts, done at random? how inconsistent is this with Divine Dispensations.

(3.) This Opinion is altogether destitute of a Scripture-foundation; 'tis evident it hath none in the only places alledged for it. It hath no footing at all in *Numb.* 23. 21. Grave and learned *Gataker* hath learnedly and industriously vindicated that Scripture from this Abuse of it by *Antinomians*, in his Treatise upon that Text, entitled *God's Eye upon his* Israel; where, after a learned and critical search of the Text, he telleth us, it soundeth word for word thus from the Original; *He hath not beheld wrong against* Jacob, *nor hath he seen grievance against* Israel; So that the meaning is not, That God did not see sin in *Israel*, but that he beheld not with Approbation the Wrongs and Injuries done by others against his *Israel*; and shews at large by divers solid Reasons, why the *Antinomian* sense cannot be the proper sense of that place, it being cross to the main tenour of the Story, and truth of God's Word, which shews, that God often complained of their Sins, often threatned to avenge them; yea, did actually avenge them by destroying them in the Wilderness; nay, *Balaam* himself, who uttered these words unto *Balak*, did not so understand them, as appears by the Advice he gave to *Balak*, to draw them into Sin, that thereby God might be provoked to withdraw his Protection from them.

And for *Jer.* 50. 20. it makes nothing to their purpose. Many expound the Sin there sought after, and not found, to be the Sin of Idolatry, which *Israel* should be purged from by their Captivity, according to *Isa.* 27. 9. But the generality of sound Expositors are agreed, That by the not finding of *Israel*'s and *Judah*'s Sin, is meant no more, but his not finding those Bonds or Obligations against them to eternal Punishment, which their Sins had put them under.

(4.) In a word, This Opinion clashes with their other Principles. For they say, That though there was pardon and remission under the Old Covenant (which they allowed to be a Covenant of Grace) yet it was but *gradatim* and successively, as they offered Sacrifices. If a Man had sinned ignorantly, until he brought a Sacrifice, his Sin lay upon him, it may be a Week, a Month's distance between, before they could have their Pardon. *Vide* Dr. *Crisp* of the two Covenants, *p.* 256, 257. Now I demand, If this were the state and case of all God's *Israel* under the Old Testament, Why do these Men affirm, that God can see no sin in a Believer? and why do they expound the words of *Balaam* so contradictory to this their other Opinion? For they will not deny but God sees unpardoned Sins in all; and here is a Week, or Month, or more Time, allowed between the Commission and Remission of their sin. And so much of the fifth *Antinomian* Error.

Error VI. *That God is not angry with the Elect, nor doth he smite them for their Sins; and to say that he doth so, is an injurious Reflection upon the Justice of God, who hath received full satisfaction for all their Sins from the Hand of Christ.* There

There are ſeveral Miſtakes and Errors in theſe Aſſertions; and I ſuppoſe our *Antinomians* were led into them, (1.) By their abhorrence of the Popiſh Doctrine, which errs more dangerouſly in the other Extream: For they wickedly aſſert our Sufferings to be ſatisfactory for our Sins, which is the ground of Popiſh Penances, and voluntary Self-caſtigations. (2.) From a groundleſs apprehenſion, That God's Corrections of us for our ſins, are inconſiſtent with the fulneſs of Chriſt's Satisfaction for them. Chriſt having paid all our Debts, and diſſolved our Obligations to all Puniſhment, it cannot conſiſt with the Juſtice of God to lay any Rod upon us for our Sins, after Chriſt hath born all that our Sins deſerved.

This miſtake of the end of Chriſt's death, occaſions them to ſtumble into the other Miſtakes: they imagine that Chriſt's Satisfaction aboliſhed God's hatred of Sin in Believers. But this cannot be; God's Antipathy to Sin, can never be taken away by the Satisfaction of Chriſt, though his hatred to the Perſons of the redeemed be: for the hatred of Sin is founded in the unchangable Nature of God; and he can as ſoon ceaſe to be holy, as ceaſe to hate Sin, *Hab.* 1. 13. Nor was Chriſt's death ever deſigned to this end: though Chriſt hath ſatisfied for the Sins of Believers, God ſtill hates Sin in Believers. His hatred to their Sins, and love to their Perſons, are not inconſiſtent. As a Man may love his Leg or Arm, as they are Members of his own Body, and notwithſtanding that Love, hate the Gangrene which hath taken them; and lance or uſe painful Corroſives for the cure of them.

Neither do our *Antinomians* diſtinguiſh as they ought, betwixt vindictive Puniſhments from God, the pure Iſſues and Effects of his Juſtice and Wrath againſt the Wicked; and his Paternal Caſtigations, the pure Iſſues of the Care and Love of a diſpleaſed Father. Great and manifold are the differences betwixt his vindictive Wrath upon his Enemies, and the rebukes of the Rod upon his Children. Thoſe are Legal, theſe Evangelical. Thoſe out of Wrath and Hatred, theſe out of Love. Thoſe unſanctified, but theſe bleſſed and ſanctified to happy ends and purpoſes to his People. Thoſe for Deſtruction, theſe for Salvation.

To narrow the matter in Controverſy as much as we can, I ſhall lay down three Conceſſions about God's Corrections of his People.

Conceſſion I. We chearfully and thankfully acknowledge the perfection and fulneſs of the ſatisfaction of Chriſt for all the Sins of Believers: and with thankfulneſs do own, that if God ſhould caſt all, or any of them, into an Ocean of temporal Troubles and Diſtreſſes; in all that Sea of Sorrow, there would not be found one drop of vindictive Wrath. Chriſt hath drunk the laſt drop of that Cup, and left nothing for Believers to ſuffer by way of Satisfaction.

Conceſſion II. We grant alſo. That all the Sufferings of Believers in this World, are not for their Sins; but ſome of them are for the prevention of Sin, 2 *Cor.* 12. 7. ſome for the tryal of their Graces, *Jam.* 1. 2, 3. ſome for a confirming Teſtimony to his Truths, *Acts* 5. 41. Such Sufferings as theſe have much heavenly Comfort concomitant with them.

Conceſſion III. We do not ſay, That God's diſpleaſure with his People for Sin, evidenced againſt them in the ſmarteſt Rebukes of the Rod, is any Argument that God's Love is turned into Hatred againſt their Perſons: No, no, his Love to his People is unchangeable. Having loved his own, he loved them to the end, *John* 13. 1. yet notwithſtanding all this, three things are undeniably clear, and being throughly apprehended, will end this Controverſy.

1. That God lays his correcting Rod in this World on the Perſons of Believers.
2. That this Rod of God is ſometimes laid on them for their Sins.
3. That theſe Fatherly Corrections of them for their Sins, are reconcileable to, and fully conſiſtent with his Juſtice, compleatly ſatisfied by the Blood of Chriſt for all their Sins.

1. That God lays his correcting Rod in this World upon the Perſons of Believers, This no Man can have the Face to deny that believes the Scriptures to be the Word of God, or that the Troubles of good Men in this Life fall not out by Caſualty, but by the Counſel and Direction of Divine Providence. He that denies the hand of God to be upon the Perſons of Believers in this Life in the way of painful Chaſtiſements and Sufferings, muſt either ignorantly, or wilfully, overlook that Scripture, *Heb.* 7. 8. *What Son is he whom the Father chaſteneth not? but if ye be without Chaſtiſement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye Baſtards and not Sons.* Nor will any ſober Chriſtian deny theſe Troubles of Believers to be the effects of God's Governing Providence in the World, or once imagine or affirm them to be mere Caſualties and Contingences: for *affliction cometh not forth of the duſt, neither doth trouble ſpring out of the ground*, Job 5. 6. In what *Eutopia* doth that good Man live upon Earth, that feels not the painful Rod of God upon himſelf, nor hears the ſad laments and moans of other Chriſtians under it! This ſure is undeniable, that the Rod of God is every-where upon the Perſons and Tabernacles of the Righteous; and if any doubt it, his own ſenſe and feeling may in a little time give him a painfull demonſtration of it.

2. And for the ſecond, That this Rod of God is ſometimes laid upon Believers for their Sins, methinks no ſober modeſt Chriſtian in the World ſhould doubt or deny it, when he conſiders, That,

1. God himſelf hath ſo declared it.
2. The Saints in all Ages have freely confeſſed it to be ſo.

1. God himſelf hath fully and plainly declared it to be ſo, 2 *Sam.* 12. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. *Wherefore haſt thou deſpiſed the Commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his ſight? now therefore the Sword ſhall never depart from thy Houſe*, &c. Here's the Sword a terrible and painful Evil, upon *David*'s Houſe, a man after God's own Heart, and that expreſly for his Sin in the matter of *Uriah*. So *Moſes*, one of the greateſt Favourites of Heaven, for his ſinful ſhifting of the Lord's Work, *Exod.* 4. 13, 14. *The anger of the Lord was kindled againſt* Moſes. *For the multitude of thine Iniquities, becauſe thy ſins were encreaſed, I have done theſe things unto thee*, ſaith God to his own *Iſrael*, *Jer.* 30. 15. To inſtance in all the Declarations made by God himſelf in this caſe, were to tranſcribe a great part of both Teſtaments.

2. And as God hath declared the Sins of his People to be the provoking cauſes of his Rods upon them; ſo they have freely and ingenuouſly confeſſed and acknowledged the ſame, *Lam.* 3. 39, 40. *Wherefore doth the living man complain? a man for the puniſhment of his Sins? Let us ſearch and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord.* This was

ſpoken

poken by *Jeremy* in the name of the whole captive Church. So *Pſal.* 38. 3. 5. *There is no ſoundneſs in my fleſh* (ſaith *David*) *becauſe of thine Anger; neither is there any reſt in my bones, becauſe of my Sin. My wounds ſtink, and are corrupt, becauſe of my fooliſhneſs.* And were it not an hideous and unaccountable Thing to hear any Child of God, under his Rod, to ſtand upon his own Juſtification, and ſay, Lord, my Sins have not deſerved this at thy Hand, nor is it juſtice in thee thus to chaſtiſe me after thou haſt received ſatisfaction for all my Sins from the Hand of Chriſt. Would it not look like an horrid Blaſphemy, to hear the beſt Man in the World diſputing and denying the Juſtice of God in the Troubles he lays him under? For my own part, let the Lord lay on as ſmartly as he will upon me, I deſire to follow the holy Patterns and Precedents recorded in Scripture for my imitation, and to ſay with the People of God, *Ezr.* 9. 13. *Thou haſt puniſhed me leſs than mine Iniquities deſerve.* And *Micah* 7. 9. *I will bear the Indignation of the Lord becauſe I have ſinned againſt him.* And he that refuſes ſo to do, gives little Evidence of the Spirit of Adoption in him, but a very clear evidence of the Pride and Ignorance of his own Heart. *Job* indeed ſtiffly ſtood upon his own Vindication; but that was when he had to do with Men, who falſly charged him, laying thoſe Sins as the Cauſes of his Troubles which he was innocent of, *Job* 23. 5, 6. But when he had to do with God he diſputes no more, but ſaith, *Behold, I am vile, what ſhall I anſwer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth. q. d.* I have done, Father, I have done; Whether theſe Chaſtiſements be for my Sins or no, ſure I am, my Sin not only deſerves all this, but Hell it ſelf; Thou art holy, but I am vile.

3. Nor can it at all be doubted, but that theſe Fatherly Corrections of the Saints for their Sins, are reconcileable to, and fully conſiſtent with his Juſtice, ſatisfied by the Blood of Chriſt for all their Sins. For (1.) If it were not ſo, the juſt and righteous God would never have inſerted ſuch a Clauſe of Reſervation in his gracious Covenant with his People, to chaſten them as he ſaw need after he had taken them into the Covenant, *Pſal.* 89. 30, 31, 32, 33. *If they trangreſs, he will viſit their Tranſgreſſions with a Rod, and their Iniquity with ſtripes*; *neverthleſs* (ſaith he) *my loving-kindneſs will I not take away.* That [*Neverthleſs*] clearly proves the conſiſtency of his Stripes for Sin, with his loving-kindneſs to his People, and with Chriſt's Satisfaction for their Sins. (2.) If this were not conſiſtent with the Juſtice of God, to be ſure he would never ſingle them out to ſpend his Rods upon, rather than others. 'Tis moſt certain the holieſt Men have moſt laſhes in this Life. *Aſaph* ſaid, *Pſal.* 73. 12, 14. *The ungodly proſper in the World, but he was chaſtned every morning.* And *verſ.* 5. *The Wicked are not in trouble as other men.* 1 Pet. 4. 17. *Judgment muſt begin at the Houſe of God*; and if Piety would give men an exemption from all Troubles, Pains, and Chaſtiſements, then men might diſcern Love or Hatred by the Things that are before them, contrary to *Eccl.* 9. 1, 2. Neither could thoſe that are in Chriſt ſuffer the painful Agonies of Death becauſe of Sin, expreſly contrary to *Paul, Rom.* 8. 10. *And if Chriſt be in you, the Body is dead becauſe of Sin.* (3.) In a word, As Chriſt never ſhed his Blood to extinguiſh or aboliſh God's Diſpleaſure againſt Sin in whomſoever it be found, ſo he never ſhed it to deprive his People of the manifold Bleſſings and Advantages that accrue to them by the Rods of God upon them. It was never his Intent to put us into a Condition on Earth, that would have been ſo much to our Loſs. So then, if the Hand of God be upon his People for Sin, and conſiſtently enough with his Juſtice, it muſt be an error to ſay God ſmites not Believers for their Sins, and it would be Injuſtice in him ſo to do: which is their ſixth Error.

Error VII. *They tell us, That by God's laying our Iniquities upon Chriſt, he became as compleatly ſinful as we, and we as compleatly righteous as Chriſt. That not only the Guilt and Puniſhment of Sin was laid upon Chriſt; but ſimply the very faults that men commit, the tranſgreſſion it ſelf became the tranſgreſſion of Chriſt: Iniquity it ſelf, not in any figure, but plainly ſin it ſelf, was laid on Chriſt: and that Chriſt himſelf was not more righteous, than this Perſon is, and this Perſon is not more ſinful than Chriſt was.*

Refutation. Theſe two Propoſitions will never go down with ſound and Orthodox Chriſtians. The firſt ſinks and debaſes Chriſt too low, the other exalts the ſinful Creature too high. The one repreſents the pure and ſpotleſs Lord Jeſus as ſinful: the other repreſents the ſinful Creature as pure and perfect: and both theſe Propoſitions ſeem evidently to be built upon theſe two Hypotheſes. (1.) *That the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt is ſubjectively and inherently in us, in the ſame fulneſs and perfection it is in Chriſt*: grant that, and then it will follow indeed, That Chriſt himſelf is not more righteous than the Believer is. (2.) *That not only the guilt and puniſhment of Sin was laid on Chriſt by way of imputation; but Sin it ſelf, the very tranſgreſſion, or ſinfulneſs it ſelf, was transferr'd from the Elect to Chriſt: and that by God's laying it on him, the ſinfulneſs or fault it ſelf was eſſentially transfuſed into him; and ſo Sin it ſelf did* tranſire à ſubjecto in ſubjectum. Grant but this, and it can never be denied but Chriſt became as compleatly ſinful as we.

But both theſe Hypotheſes are not only notoriouſly falſe, but utterly impoſſible, as will be manifeſted by and by; But before I come to the Refutation of them, it will be neceſſary to lay down ſome Conceſſions to clear the Orthodox Doctrine in this Controverſie, and narrow the matter under Debate, as much as may be.

(1.) And firſt we thankfully acknowledge the Lord Jeſus Chriſt to be the *Surety* of the New Teſtament, *Heb.* 7. 22. and that as ſuch, all the Guilt and Puniſhment of our Sins, was laid upon him, *Iſa.* 53. 5, 6. That is, God imputed, and he bare it in our room and ſtead. God the Father, as Supreme Law-giver, and Judge of all, upon the Tranſgreſſion of the Law, admitted the Sponſion or Suretiſhip of Chriſt, to anſwer for the Sins of Men, *Heb.* 10. 5, 6, 7. And for this very end he was made under the Law, *Gal.* 4. 4, 5. And that Chriſt voluntarily took it upon him to anſwer as our *Surety*, whatſoever the Law could lay to our charge; whence it became juſt and righteous that he ſhould ſuffer.

(2.) We ſay, That God by laying upon, or imputing the guilt of our Sins to Chriſt, thereby our Sins became legally his; as the Debt is legally the Sureties Debt, tho' he never borrowed one Farthing of it: Thus God laid, and Chriſt took our Sins upon him, though in him was no Sin, 2 Cor. 5. 21. *He hath made him to be ſin for us, who knew no ſin.* (i. e.) who was clean and altogether void of Sin.

(3.) We thankfully acknowledge, that Chriſt hath ſo fully ſatisfied the Law for the Sins of all that are his, that the Debts of Believers are fully diſcharged, and the very laſt Mite paid by Chriſt. His payment is full, and ſo therefore is our Diſcharge and Acquittance, *Rom.* 8. 1, 31. And that by Vertue hereof the Guilt of Believers is ſo perfectly aboliſhed, that it ſhall never more bring them under Condemnation, *John* 5. 24. And ſo in Chriſt they are without Fault before God.

(4.) We likewiſe grant, That as the Guilt of our Sins was by God's Imputation laid upon Chriſt, ſo the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt is by God imputed to Believers by Virtue of their Union with Chriſt; and becomes thereby as truly and fully *theirs*, for the Juſtification of their particular Perſons before God, as if they themſelves had in their own Perſons fulfilled all that the Law requires, or ſuffered all that it threatned: No inherent Righteouſneſs in our own Perſons, is, or can be more truly our own for this end and Purpoſe, than Chriſt's imputed Righteouſneſs is our own. He is the Lord *our Righteouſneſs*, Jer 23. 6. *We are made the Righteouſneſs of God in him*, 1 Cor. 5. 21. *Yea, the Righteouſneſs of the Law is fulfilled in them that believe*, Rom. 8. 4.

But notwithſtanding all this, we cannot ſay, (1.) That Chriſt became as compleatly ſinful as we. Or (2) That we are as compleatly righteous as Chriſt; and that over and above the Guilt and Puniſhment of Sin, (which we grant was laid upon Chriſt) Sin it ſelf ſimply conſidered, or the very Tranſgreſſion it ſelf, became the Sin or Tranſgreſſion of Chriſt; and conſequently that we are as compleatly Righteous as Chriſt, and Chriſt as compleatly Sinful as we are.

1. We dare not ſay, That Sin ſimply conſider'd, as the very Tranſgreſſion of the Law it ſelf, as well as the Guilt and Puniſhment, became the very Sin and Tranſgreſſion of Chriſt: For two things are diſtinctly to be conſidered and differenced, with reſpect to the Law, and unto Sin. As to the Law, we are to conſider in it,

1. Its Preceptive Part.
2. Its Sanction.

(1.) The preceptive part of the Law, which gives Sin its formal Nature, 1 *Joh.* 3. 4. *For ſin is the tranſgreſſion of the Law*. All Tranſgreſſion ariſes from the preceptive part of the Law of God: He that tranſgreſſeth the Precepts ſinneth; and under this conſideration ſin can never be communicated from one to another: The Perſonal ſin of one cannot be in this reſpect the Perſonal ſin of another: There is no Phyſical Tranſfuſion of the Tranſgreſſion of the Precept from one ſubject into another: This is utterly impoſſible; even *Adam*'s perſonal ſins conſider'd in his ſingle private Capacity, are not communicable to his Poſterity.

(2.) Beſides the Tranſgreſſion of the preceptive part of the Law, there is an obnoxiouſneſs unto Puniſhment, ariſing from the Sanction of the Law which we call the Guilt of Sin; and this (as Judicious Dr. *Owen* obſerves) is ſeparable from Sin: And if it were not ſeparable from the former, no ſinner in the World could either be pardoned or ſaved; Guilt may be made anothers by Imputation, and yet that other not rendred formally a ſinner thereby: Upon this ground we ſay, the Guilt and Puniſhment of our Sin, was that only which was imputed unto Chriſt; but the very Tranſgreſſion of the Law it ſelf, or Sin formally and eſſentially conſidered, could never be communicated or transfuſed from us into him. I know but two ways in the World by which one Man's ſins can be imagined to become anothers, *viz.* Either by *Imputation*, which is Legal, and what we affirm; or by *Eſſential Tranſfuſion* from ſubject to ſubject (as our Adverſaries fanſie) which is utterly impoſſible; and we have as good Ground to believe the abſurd Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation, as this wild Notion of the Eſſential Tranſfuſion of Sin. Guilt ariſing from the Sanction of the Law, may and did paſs from us to Chriſt by Legal Imputation; but ſin it ſelf, the very Tranſgreſſion it ſelf, ariſing from the very Preceptive part of the Law, cannot ſo paſs from us to Chriſt: For if we ſhould once imagine, that the very acts and habits of Sin, with the odious Deformity thereof, ſhould paſs from our Perſons to Chriſt, and ſubjectively to inhere in him, as they do in us; then it would follow,

Firſt, That our Salvation would thereby be rendred utterly impoſſible. For ſuch an inheſion of Sin in the Perſon of Chriſt, is abſolutely inconſiſtent with the *Hypoſtatical Union*, which Union is the very Foundation of his Satisfaction, and our Salvation. Tho' the Divine Nature can, and doth dwell in Union with the pure and Sinleſs human Nature of Chriſt, yet it cannot dwell in Union with Sin.

Secondly, This Suppoſition would render the Blood of the Croſs altogether unable to ſatisfie for us. He could not have been the Lamb of God to take away the Sins of the World, if he had not been perfectly pure and ſpotleſs, 1 *Pet.* 1. 19.

Thirdly, Had our Sins thus been eſſentially transfus'd into Chriſt, the Law had had a juſt and valid Exception againſt him; for it accepts of nothing but what is abſolutely pure and perfect. I admire, therefore how any good Man dares to call our Doctrine, which teaches the Imputation of our Guilt and Puniſhment to Chriſt, a ſimple Doctrine; and aſſert, that the Tranſgreſſion it ſelf became Chriſt's; and that thereby Chriſt became as compleatly ſinful as we. And,

Fourthly, If the way of making our Sins Chriſt's by Imputation, be thus rejected and derided; and Chriſt aſſerted by ſome other way to become as compleatly ſinful as we; then I cannot ſee which way to avoid it, but that the very ſame Acts and Habits of Sin of Sin muſt inhere, both in Chriſt, and in Believers alſo. For, I ſuppoſe our Adverſaries will not deny, that notwithſtanding God's laying the Sins of Believers upon Chriſt, there remain in all Believers after their Juſtification, ſinful Inclinations and Averſations; a Law of Sin in their Members, a Body of Sin and Death. Did theſe Things paſs from them to Chriſt, and yet do they ſtill inhere in them? Why do they complain and groan of in-dwelling Sin? as *Rom.* 7. If Sin it ſelf be ſo transferr'd from them to Chriſt? Sure, unleſs Men will dare to ſay, the ſame Acts and Habits of Sin which they feel in themſelves, are as truly in Chriſt as in themſelves, they have no ground to ſay, that by God's laying their Iniquities upon Chriſt, he became as compleatly ſinful as they are; and if they ſhould ſo affirm, that Affirmation would undermine the very Foundation of their own Salvation.

Owen of Juſtification, p. 285.

I therefore heartily subscribe to that sound and holy Sentence, of a clear and learned Divine, *Nothing is more absolutely true, nothing more sacredly and assuredly believ'd by us, than that nothing which Christ did or suffer'd, nothing that he undertook, or underwent, did, or could constitute him subjectively, inherently, and thereupon personally a Sinner, or guilty of any Sin of his own. To bear the Guilt or Blame of other Mens Faults to be* alienæ culpæ reus, *makes no Man a Sinner, unless he did unwisely or irregularly undertake it.* So, then this Proposition, that by God's laying our Sins upon Christ (in some other way, than by Imputation of Guilt and Punishment) he became as compleatly sinful as we, will not, ought not to be receiv'd as the sound Doctrine of the Gospel. Nor yet this.

Owen, of Justification, *p.* 283.

Second Proposition. *That we are as compleatly Righteous as Christ is; or, that Christ is not more Righteous than a Believer.*

I cannot imagine what should induce any Man so to express himself, unless it be a groundless conceit and fancy, that there is an essential Transfusion of Christ's justifying Righteousness into Believers, whereby it becomes theirs by way of subjective inhesion, and is in them in the very same manner it is in him: And so every individual Believer becomes as compleatly righteous as Christ. And this conceit they would fain establish upon that Text, 1 *Joh.* 3. 7. *He that doth righteousness, is righteous, even as he is righteous.*

But neither this expression, nor any other like it in the Scriptures, gives the least countenance to such a general and unwary Position. It is far from the mind of this Scripture, That the Righteousness of Christ is formally and inherently ours, as it is his. Indeed it is ours *relatively*, not *formally* and *inherently*; not the same with his for *quantity*, though it be the same for *verity*. His Righteousness is not ours in its *universal value*, though it be ours, as to our *particular use and necessity*. Nor is it made ours to make us so many *causes* of Salvation to others; but it is imputed to us as to the *Subjects*, that are to be saved by it our selves.

'Tis true, we are justified and saved by the very Righteousness of Christ, and no other; but that Righteousness is *formally inherent* in him only, and is only *materially* imputed to us. It was *actively* his, but *passively* ours. He wrought it, though we wear it. It was wrought in the Person of God-Man for the whole Church, and is imputed (not transfused) to every single Believer for his own concernment only. For,

(1.) It is most absurd to imagine, that the Righteousness of Christ should formally inhere in the Person of all, or any Believer, as it doth in the Person of the Mediator. The impossibility hereof appears plainly from the incapacity of the Subject. The Righteousness of Christ is an infinite Righteousness, because it is the Righteousness of God-Man, and can therefore be subjected in no other Person beside him. It is capable of being imputed to a finite Creature, and therefore in the way of imputation we are said *to be made the righteousness of God in him*: but though it may be imputed to a finite Creature, it inheres only in the Person of the Son of God, as in its proper Subject. And indeed,

(2.) If it should be inherent in us, it could not be imputed to us as it is, *Rom.* 4. 6, 23. Nor need we go out of our selves for Justification, as now we must, *Phil.* 3. 9. but may justify our selves by our own inherent Righteousness. And

(3*dly*,) What should hinder, if this infinite Righteousness of Christ were infused into us, and should make us as compleatly Righteous as Christ; but that we might justify others also, as Christ doth: and so we might be the Saviours of the Elect, as Christ is? Which is most absurd to imagine. And

(4*thly*,) According to *Antinomian* Principles, What need was there that we should be justified at all? Or, What place is left for the Justification of any Sinner in the World? For according to their Opinion, the Justification of the Elect is an immanent Act of God before the World was; and that Eternal Act of Justification, making the Elect as compleatly Righteous as Christ himself, there could not possibly be any the least guilt in the Elect to be pardoned; and consequently no place, or room could be left for any Justification in time. And then it must follow, that seeing Christ died in time for Sin, according to the Scriptures; it must be for his own Sins that he died, and not for the Sins of the Elect; Diametrically opposite to *Rom.* 4. 25. and the whole current of Scripture, and Faith of Christians.

'Tis therefore very unbecoming and unworthy of a justified Person, after Christ hath taken all his Guilt upon himself, and suffer'd all the Punishment due thereunto in his place and room: Instead of an humble and thankful Admiration of his unparallel'd Grace therein, to throw more than the Guilt and Punishment of his Sins upon Christ, even the Transgression it self: and comparing his own Righteousness with Christ's, to say he is as compleatly Righteous as Christ himself. This is as if a company of Bankrupt Debtors Arrested for their own Debts, ready to be cast into Prison, and not having one Farthing to satisfy, after their Debts have been freely and fully discharg'd by another, out of his immense Treasure; should now compare with him, yea, and think they honour'd him, by telling him, that now they are as compleatly rich as himself.

I am well assur'd no good Man would embrace an Opinion so derogatory to Christ's Honour as this is; did he but see the odious consequences of it, doubtless he would abhor them as much as we. And as for those now in Heaven, who fell into such Mistakes in the Way thither, were they now acquainted with what is transacted here below, they would exceedingly rejoyce in the detection of those Mistakes, and bless God for the Refutation of them.

Error VIII. *They affirm, That Believers need not fear their own Sins, nor the Sins of others; for as much as neither their own, or others Sins can do them any hurt, nor must they do any duty for their own good or salvation, or for eternal rewards.*

That we need fear no hurt from Sin, or may not aim at our own good in Duty, are two Propositions that sound harsh in the Ears of Believers: I shall consider them severally, and refute them as briefly as I can.

Proposition I. *Believers need not fear their own sins, or the sins of others; because neither our own, or others sins can do us any hurt.*

They seem to be induced into this Error, by misunderstanding the Apostle, in *Rom.* 8. 28. as if the scope of that Text were to assert the Benefits of Sin to justified Persons; whereas he speaks there of Adversities and Afflictions befalling the Saints in this Life. *Universalis restringenda est ad materiam subjectam, loquitur enim de afflictionibus piorum.* The

ſubject Matter (ſaith *Pareus* on the place) reſtrains the univerſal Expreſſion of the Apoſtle: For when he there ſaith, *All things ſhall work together for good*; he principally intends the Afflictions of the Godly, of which he treats there in that Context. It may be extended alſo to all providential Events; *Omnia quæcunque eis accedunt forinſecus, tam adverſa, quàm proſpera*: All adverſe and proſperous Events of things without us, as *Eſtius* upon the place notes. Nothing is ſpoken of Sin in this Text. And the Apoſtle diſtributing this General into Particulars, *v.* 38. plainly ſhews, what are the things he intended by his univerſal Expreſſion, *verſe* 28. as alſo in what reſpect no Creature can do the Saints any hurt, namely, that they ſhall never *be able to ſeparate them from the love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.* And in this reſpect it is true that the Sins of the Elect ſhall not hurt them, by fruſtrating the Purpoſe of God concerning their eternal Salvation; or totally and finally to ſeparate them from his Love. This we grant, and yet we think it a very unwary and unſound Expreſſion, *That Believers need not fear their own Sins, becauſe they can do them no hurt*: 'Tis too general and unguarded a Propoſition to be received for Truth. What if their Sins cannot do them that hurt, to fruſtrate the Purpoſe of God, and damn them to Eternity in the World to come? Can it therefore do them no hurt at all in their preſent ſtate of conflict with it in this World? For my part, I think the greateſt fear of Caution is due to Sin, the greateſt Evil; and that *Chryſoſtome* ſpake more like a Chriſtian, when he ſaid, *Nil niſi peccatum timeo*, I fear nothing but Sin. Though Sin cannot finally ruine the Believer, yet it can many ways hurt and injure the Believer; and therefore ought not to be miſrepreſented as ſuch an innocent and harmleſs thing to them. In vain are ſo many terrible Threatnings in the Scriptures againſt it, if it can do us no hurt; and it is certain nothing can do us good, but that which makes us better, and more holy: But Sin can never pretend to that, of all things in the World. But to come to an Iſſue, Sin may be conſider'd three ways.

1. Formally. 2. Effectively. 3. Reductively.

Firſt, Formally, as a Tranſgreſſion of the Preceptive Part of the Law of God, and under that Conſideration it is the moſt formidable Evil in the whole World. The Evil of Evils, at which every gracious Heart trembles, and ought rather to chuſe Baniſhment, Priſon, and Death it ſelf in the moſt terrible form, than Sin, or that which is moſt tempting in Sin, the Pleaſures of it; as *Moſes* did, *Heb.* 11. 25.

Secondly, Sin may be conſider'd *Effectively*, with reſpect to the manifold Miſchiefs and Calamities it produceth in the World, and the ſpiritual and corporeal Evils it infers upon Believers themſelves: Though it cannot damn their Souls, yet it makes War againſt their Souls, and brings them into miſerable Bondage and Captivity, *Rom.* 7. 23. It wounds their Souls, under which wounds they are feeble and ſore broken; yea, they roar by reaſon of the Diſquietneſs of their Hearts, *Pſ.* 38. 5, 8. Is War, Captivity, feſtering, painful Wounds, cauſing them to roar, no hurt to Believers? It breaks their very Bones, *Pſ.* 51. 8. And is that no hurt? It draws off their Minds from God, interrupts their Prayers and Meditations, *Rom.* 7. 18, 19, 20, 21. And is there no hurt in that? It cauſeth their Graces to decline, wither, and languiſh to that degree, that the things which are in them are ready to die, *Rev.* 3. 1. and *Rev.* 2. 4. And is the Loſs of Grace and Spiritual Strength, no hurt to a Believer? It hides the Face of God from them, *Iſa* 59. 2. And is there no hurt in ſpiritual Withdrawments of God from their Souls? Why then do deſerted Saints ſo bitterly lament and bemoan it? It provokes innumerable Afflictions and Miſeries, which fall upon our Bodies, Relations, Eſtates; and if Sin be the cauſe of all theſe inward and outward Miſeries to the People of God, ſure then there is ſome hurt in Sin, for which the Saints ought to be afraid of it.

Thirdly, Sin may be conſider'd *Reductively*, as it is over-ruled, reduced, and finally iſſued by the Covenant of Grace. Under this Conſideration of Sin, which rather reſpects the future, than preſent ſtate, the *Antinomians* only reſpect the hurt or evil of it; over-looking both the former Conſiderations of Sin, which concern the preſent ſtate of Believers, and ſo raſhly pronounce, Sin can do Believers no hurt. An Aſſertion tending to a great deal of Looſeneſs and Licentiouſneſs. A Man drinks deadly Poiſon, and is after many Months recover'd by the Skill of an excellent Phyſician; ſhall we ſay, there was no hurt in it, becauſe the Man died not of it: ſure thoſe fearful Twinges he felt, his Loſs of ſtrength and ſtomach, were hurtful to him, though he eſcaped with Life, and got this advantage by it, to be more wary for ever after. *Tantum Religio potuit ſuadere malorum.*

And then for other Men's Sins, (which they ſay we need not fear) 'tis an aſſertion againſt all the Laws of Charity. For the Sins of wicked Men eternally damn them: Diſturb the Peace and Order of the World: Draw down National Judgments upon the whole Community: Cauſe Wars, Plagues, Perſecutions, *&c.* Which Conſiderations of the Sins of others, opened fountains of Tears in *David*'s Eyes, *Pſ.* 119. 136. cauſed horror to take hold upon him, *v.* 53. And yet if you will believe the *Antinomian* Doctrine, Believers have no need to fear, much leſs be in horror (which is the extremity of fear) for other Mens Sins. How is Satan gratified, and temptations to Sin ſtrengthned upon the Souls of Men, by ſuch indiſtinct, unwary, and dangerous Expreſſions as theſe are? A good Intention can be no ſufficient ſalve for ſuch Aſſertions as theſe.

Secondly, 'They tell us, That as the Saints 'need fear no Sin for any *hurt* it can do them, 'ſo they muſt do no duty for their own *good*; or 'with an eye to their own Salvation, or Eternal 'Rewards in Heaven.

Refutation. This, as the former, is too generally and indiſtinctly deliver'd. He that diſtinguiſheth well, teacheth well. The confounding of things which ought to be diſtinguiſh'd, eaſily runs Men into the bogs of Errors. Two things ought to have been diſtinguiſh'd here:

1. Ends } in Duties.
2. Self-ends }

Firſt, *Ends in Duty*; There are two Ends in Duties, one *ſupream* and *ultimate*, viz. the glorifying of God, which muſt, and ought to take the firſt place of all other ends. Another *ſecondary* and *ſubordinate*, viz. the good and benefit of our ſelves. To invert theſe, and place our own good in the room of God's Glory, is ſinful and unjuſtifiable; and he that aims only at himſelf in Religion, is juſtly cenſured as a mercenary Servant, eſpecially if it be any external good he aims at; but ſpiritual good, eſpecially the enjoyment of God, is ſo involv'd in the other, *viz.* the Glory of God, that no

no Man can rightly take the Lord for his God, but he must take him for his supream Good, and consequently therein may, and must have a due respect to his own Happiness

Secondly, *Self-ends* must also be distinguished into

1. Corrupt, or carnal Self-ends.
2. Pure and spiritual Self-ends.

As to carnal and corrupt Self-ends, inviting and moving Men to the Performance of Religious Duties: when these are the only Ends Men aim at, they bewray the *Hypocrisy* of the Heart: and accordingly God charges *Hypocrisy* upon such Persons, *Hos.* 7. 14. *They have not cried unto me with their Heart, when they howled upon their Beds: they assemble themselves for Corn and Wine*, &c. God reckons not the most solemn Duties animated by such Ends, to be done unto him, *Zech.* 7. 5. *Did ye at all fast to me?*

But beside these, Man hath a *best self*, a *spiritual self*, to regard in Duty, *viz.* The conformity of his Soul to God in holiness, and the perfect fruition of God in Glory. Such holy self-ends as these, are often commended, but no where condemned in Scripture. 'Twas the Encomium of *Moses*, That *he had Respect unto the Recompence of Reward*, Heb. 11. 26. These ordinate respects to our spiritual best self, are so far from being our sin, that God both appoints and allows them for great uses and advantages to his People in their way to Glory. They are (1.) Singular Encouragements to the Saints under Persecution, Streights and Distresses, *Heb.* 10. 34. And to that end *Christ* proposes them, *Luke* 12. 32. And so the best of Saints have made use of them, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17, 18. (2.) They are Motives and Incentives to Praise and Thankfulness, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3, 4. 1 *Col.* 12. (3.) They stir up the Saints to chearful and vigorous Industry for God, *Col.* 3. 23, 24. 1 *Cor.* 15. 58.

Now to cut off from Religion all these spiritual and excellent Self-respects, and to make them our sins, and marks of our *Hypocrisy*, is an Error very injurious to the Gospel, and to the Souls of Men. For (1.) it crosses the strain of the Gospel, which commands us to strive for our Salvation, *Luke* 13. 24, 25. *Phil.* 2. 12. 1 *Tim.* 4. 16. (2.) It blames that in the Saints as sinful, which the Scripture notes as their excellency, and records to their Praise, *Heb.* 11. 26. (3.) It makes the Laws of Christianity to thwart and cross the very fundamental Law of our *Creation*, which inclines and obliges all Men to intend their own Felicity. And on this Account not only our *Antinomians* are blame-worthy, but others also, who are far enough from their Opinion, who urge Humiliation for Sin beyond the Staple: teaching Men, they are not humbled enough till they be content to be damned. (4.) It unreasonably supposes a Christian may not do that for his own *Soul*, which he daily doth, and is bound to do for other Mens Souls, *viz.* to *pray*, *preach*, *exhort*, and *reprove* for their *Salvation*.

Error IX. ‘ *They will not allow the* ‘ *New Covenant to be properly made with* ‘ *us, but with Christ for us.* And some of them affirm, *That this Covenant is* ‘ *all of it a Promise, having no Condition* ‘ *upon our part. They acknowledge indeed* ‘ *Faith, Repentance and Obedience, to be Conditions,* ‘ *but say they are not Conditions on our part, but on* ‘ *Christ's; and consequently affirm, That he repented,* ‘ *believed, and obeyed for us.*

Vide *Saltmarsh* of *Free-grace*, pag. 126, 127.

Refutation. (1.) The confounding of distinct Covenants, leads them into this Error; we acknowledge there was a Covenant properly made with Christ alone, which we call the *Covenant of Redemption*. This Covenant indeed, though it were made *for* us, yet was it not made *with* us. It had its Condition, and that Condition was laid only upon Christ: *viz.* That he should assume our Nature, and pour out his Soul unto Death, which Condition he was solely concerned to perform; but besides this, there is a *Covenant of Grace* made with him, and with all Believers in him: with him *primarily* as the Head, with them as the Members, who personally come into this Covenant, when they come into Union with him by Faith. This Covenant of Grace is not made with Christ alone, personally consider'd, but with Christ, and all that are his, mystically considered, and is properly made with all Believers in Christ; and therefore it is called their Covenant, *Zech.* 9. 11. *As for thee also, by the Blood of thy Covenant I have sent forth thy Prisoners out of the Pit wherein is no water.* So when God entred into the Covenant of Grace with *Abraham*, Gen. 17. 7. *I will establish my Covenant* (saith he) *between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee.* So when he took the People of *Israel* into this Covenant, *Ezek.* 16. 8. *I sware unto thee* (saith he) *and entred into a Covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine.*

This Covenant of Grace made with Believers in Christ, is not the same, nor must it be confounded with the Covenant of *Redemption* made with Christ before the World began. They are Two distinct Covenants; for in the Covenant of Grace, into which Believers are taken, there is a *Mediator*, and this Mediator is Christ himself; but in the other *Covenant of Redemption* there neither was, nor could be any *Mediator*, which manifestly distinguishes them. Besides, In the Covenant of Grace Christ bequeaths manifold and rich Legacies, as he is the Testator; but no Man gives a Legacy to himself. This Covenant is really and properly made with every Believer as he is a Member of Jesus Christ the Head; and they are truly and properly fœderates with God: the Covenant binds them to their Duties, and encourages them therein by promises of Strength to be deriv'd from Christ to enable them thereunto.

(2.) We thankfully acknowledge, That the Glory of the New Covenant is chiefly discovered in the Promises thereof: upon the best Promises it is established. And all the Promises are reducible to the Covenant. They meet, and center in it as the Rivers in the Sea, or Beams in the Sun. But yet we cannot say, that nothing but Promises is contain'd in this Covenant: for there are Duties required by it, as well as Mercies promised in it.

Nor may we say, That those Duties required by it, are required only to be performed by Christ, and not by us; but they are required to be performed by us in his Strength. Nor is it Christ that repents and believes for us, but we our selves are to believe and repent in the Strength of his Grace. And 'till we do so actually in our own Persons, we have no part or portion in the Blessings and Mercies of this Covenant. If Christ by believing for us, give us an actual Right and Title to the Promises and Blessings of the New Covenant, then it will unavoidably follow,

(1.) That Men, who never repented for one Sin in all their Lives, may be, nay, certainly are pardoned

doned as much as the greateſt Penitents in the World; becauſe though they never repented themſelves, yet Chriſt repented for them: expreſly contrary to his own Words, *Luke* 13. 3. *Except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.* And contrary to his own eſtabliſhed Order, *Luke* 29. 47. *Acts* 3. 19.

(2.) It will alſo follow, That Unbelievers, who never had Union with Chriſt by one vital Act of Faith in all their Lives, may be, nay certainly ſhall be ſaved, as well as thoſe that are actual Believers: becauſe though they be Unbelievers in themſelves, yet Chriſt believed for them: expreſly contrary to *Mark* 16. 16. *He that believeth not, ſhall be damned.* John 3. 36. *He that believes not the Son, ſhall not ſee Life; but the Wrath of God abideth on him.* And Luke 12. 46. *He will cut him in ſunder, and will appoint him his portion with Unbelievers.*

(3.) It will alſo follow from hence, That Men may continue in a ſtate of Diſobedience all their Days, and yet may be ſav'd as well as the moſt obedient Souls in the World: expreſly contrary to *Eph.* 5. 6. *Let no Man deceive you with vain Words; for becauſe of theſe things, cometh the Wrath of God upon the Children of Diſobedience.* And *Rom.* 2. 8. *But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the Truth, but obey Unrighteouſneſs, Indignation and Wrath.* And 1 *Pet.* 4. 17. *What ſhall the End of them be that obey not the Goſpel of God!*

This Language ſounds ſtrange and harſh to the Ears of Chriſtians; a repenting Chriſt ſaving the impenitent Sinner: A believing Chriſt ſaving Unbelievers: An obeying Chriſt ſaving obſtinate and diſobedient Wretches. Whither doth ſuch Doctrine tend, but to encourage and fix Men in their Impenitence, Unbelief, and Diſobedience? But the Lord grant no poor Sinner in the World may truſt to this, or build his Hopes of Eternal Life upon ſuch a looſe ſandy Foundation as this is. Reader, All that Chriſt hath done without thee, will not, cannot be effectual to thy Salvation, unleſs Repentance, Faith, and Obedience be wrought by the Spirit in thy Soul. 'Tis *Chriſt in thee that is the Hope of Glory, Col.* 1. 27. Beware therefore in what Ground thou buildeſt for Eternity.

Error X. '*They deny Sanctification to be the Evidence* '*of Juſtification; and deridingly tell us, This is to light* '*a Candle to the Sun; and the darker our Sanctification* '*is, the brighter our Juſtification is.*

Refutation. I am not at all ſurprized at this ſtrange and abſonous Language. 'Tis a falſe and dangerous Concluſion, yet ſuch as naturally reſults from, and by a kind of neceſſity follows out of their other Errors. For if the Elect be all juſtified from Eternity and that neither Repentance, Faith, or Obedience be required of us in the Covenant of Grace; but were all required of, and performed by Chriſt, who repented, believed, and obeyed for us; then indeed I cannot underſtand what Relation our Sanctification hath to our Juſtification; or how it ſhould be an Evidence, Mark, or Sign thereof: or what regard is due from Chriſtians to any Grace or Work of the Spirit wrought in them, to clear up their Intereſt in Chriſt to them. For we being in Chriſt, and in a ſtate of Juſtification, before we were naturally born, we muſt neceſſarily be ſo before we be regenerated, or new-born; and conſequently, no work of Grace wrought in us, or holy Duties performed by us, can be evidential of that which from Eternity was done before them, and without them.

(1.) I grant indeed, That many vain Profeſſors do cheat and deceive themſelves by falſe unſcriptural Signs and Evidences, as well as by true ones miſapplied.

(2.) I grant alſo, That by reaſon of the Deceitfulneſs of the Heart, Inſtability of the Thoughts, ſimilar Works of common Grace in Hypocrites, Diſtractions of the World, Wiles of Satan, Weakneſs of Grace, and Prevalency of Corruptions: The clearing up of our Juſtification by our Sanctification, is a Work that meets with great and manifold Difficulties, which are the things that moſt Chriſtians complain of.

(3.) I alſo grant, That the Evidence of our Sanctification in this, or any other Method, is not eſſential, and abſolutely neceſſary to the Being of a Chriſtian. A Man may live in Chriſt, and yet not know his Intereſt in him, or Relation to him, *Iſa.* 50. 10. Some Chriſtians, like Children in the Cradle, live, but underſtand not that they live: are born to a great Inheritance, but have no knowledge of it, or preſent Comfort in it.

(4.) I will further grant, That the Eye of a Chriſtian may be too intently fixed upon his own gracious Qualification; and being wholly taken up in the reflex Acts of Faith, may too much neglect the direct Acts of Faith upon Chriſt, to the great Detriment of his Soul.

But all this notwithſtanding, The examination of our Juſtification by our Sanctification, is not only a lawful, and poſſible, but a very excellent and neceſſary Work and Duty. 'Tis the courſe that Chriſtians have taken in all Ages. And that which God hath abundantly bleſſed to the joy and encouragement of their Souls.

He hath furniſhed our Souls to this end with noble ſelf-reflecting Powers and Abilities. He hath anſwerably furniſhed his Word with variety of Marks and Signs for the ſame End and Uſe. Some of theſe Marks are *excluſive* to detect and bar bold preſumptuous Pretenders, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9. *Rev.* 21. 8, 27. Some are *incluſive Marks*, to meaſure the ſtrength and growth of Grace by, *Rom.* 4. 20. And others are *poſitive Signs*, flowing out of the very eſſence of Grace, or the New-Creature. 1 *John* 4. 13. *Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, becauſe he hath given us of his Spirit.*

He hath expreſly commanded us to examine and prove our ſelves: upbraided the Neglecters of that Duty, and enforced their Duty upon them by a thundring Argument, 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. *Examine your ſelves whether ye be in the Faith, prove your own ſelves; know ye not your own ſelves, how that Jeſus Chriſt is in you, except ye be Reprobates.* In a Word, For this End and Purpoſe, amongſt others, were the Scriptures written, 1 *John* 5. 13. *Theſe things have I written to you, that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal Life.* And therefore to neglect this Duty, is exceeding dangerous; but to deny, and deride it, intolerable. It may juſtly be feared, ſuch Men will be drown'd in Perdition, who fall into the Waters, by making a Bridge over them with their own Shadows

For my own part, I verily believe that the ſweeteſt Hours Chriſtians enjoy in this World, is, when they retire into their Cloſets, and ſit there concealed from all Eyes, but him that made them; looking now into the *Bible*, then into their own *Hearts*, and then up to *God*; cloſely following the grand Debate about their Intereſt in Chriſt, 'till they have brought it to the happy deſired Iſſue.

And

And now, Reader for a cloſe of all, I call the Searcher of Hearts to witneſs, That I have not intermedled with theſe Controverſies of *Antipædo-Baptiſm*, and *Antinomianiſm*, out of any Delight I take in Polemical Studies, or an unpeaceable contradicting Humour, but out of pure zeal for the Glory and Truths of God; for the Vindication and Defence whereof, I have been neceſſarily engaged therein. And having diſcharged my Duty thus far, I now reſolve to return (if God will permit me) to my much ſweeter and more agreeable Studies; ſtill maintaining my Chriſtian Charity for thoſe whom I oppoſe; not doubting but I ſhall meet thoſe in Heaven, from whom I am forced in leſſer things to diſſent and differ upon Earth.

Goſpel-Unity recommended to the Churches of Chriſt.

In a SERMON Preached by *J. F.* Author of the foregoing Diſcourſe.

From 1 Cor. I. 10. *Now I beſeech you, Brethren, by the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, That ye all ſpeak the ſame thing; and that there be no Diviſions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the ſame mind, and in the ſame Judgment.*

WHEN I conſider this Healing and Uniting Text, and the ſcandalous Diviſions of the Congregations to which I recommend it, I could chuſe rather to comment thereon with Tears, than Words. 'Tis juſt matter of Lamentation, to think what feeble influences ſuch Divine and Pathetical Exhortations have upon the Minds and Hearts of profeſſed Chriſtians. But it is not Lamentations, but proper Counſels, and Convictions obey'd muſt do the Work.

The Primitive and Pureſt Churches of Chriſt conſiſted of imperfect Members, who notwithſtanding they were knit together by the ſame internal Bond of the Spirit, and the ſame external Bonds of common Profeſſion, and common Danger, and enjoyed extraordinary Helps for uniting in the Preſence and Doctrine of the Apoſtles among them; yet quickly diſcover'd a Schiſmatical Spirit, dividing both in Judgment and Affection, to the great Injury of Religion, and Grief of the Apoſtles Spirits. To check and heal this growing-Evil in the Church at *Corinth*, the Apoſtle addreſſes his Pathetical Exhortation to them, and to all future Churches of Chriſt, whom it equally concerns in the Words of my Text. *Now I beſeech you, Brethren*, &c. Where note,

1. The Duty exhorted to.
2. The Arguments enforcing the Duty.

1. The Duty exhorted to; namely, Unity; the Beauty, Strength, and Glory, as well as the Duty of a Church. This Unity he deſcribes two ways; 1. As it is excluſive of its Oppoſite, Schiſm or Diviſion. All Rents, and raſh Separations, are contrary to it, and deſtructive of it: *I beſeech you, brethren that there be no Diviſions* [or Schiſms] *among you.* 2. As it is incluſive of all that belongs to it; namely, the Harmony and Agreement of their Judgments, Hearts, and Language. (1.) That ye all ſpeak the ſame Thing. (2.) That ye be perfectly joyned together in one Mind. And (3.) In the ſame Judgment. This threefold Union in Judgment, Affection, and Language, includes all that belongs to Chriſtian Concord, makes the Saints Σύμψυχοι, Men of one Heart and Soul, the lovelieſt Sight this World affords, *Acts* 2. 46, 47.

(2.) The Arguments enforcing this Duty upon them, come next under conſideration. And theſe are three. (1.) *I beſeech you.* (2.) I beſeech you, *Brethren.* (3.) I beſeech you, Brethren, *by the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Theſe Arguments are not of equal force and efficacy. The firſt is great: The ſecond greater; The laſt the moſt efficacious and irreſiſtible of all the reſt: But all together ſhould come with ſuch Power, and irreſiſtible Efficacy upon the Judgments, Conſciences, and Hearts of Chriſtians, as ſhould perfectly knit them together, and defeat all the Deſigns of Satan and his Agents without them, or of their own Corruptions within them, to rend aſunder their Affections or Communion.

Arg. 1. And firſt, he enforces the Duty of Unity by a ſolemn Apoſtolical Obſecration and Adjuration; *I beſeech* you, ſaith he; he had Power to command them to this Duty, and threaten them for the neglect of it: He had in readineſs to revenge all Diſobedience, and might have ſhaken that Rod over them; but he chuſeth rather to intreat and beſeech them: Now I *beſeech* you, Brethren; Here you have, as it were, the great Apoſtle upon his Knees before them, meekly and Pathetically entreating them to be at perfect Unity among themſelves. 'Tis the Entreaty of their Spiritual Father, that had begotten them to Chriſt. Now [I] beſeech you, Brethren: *I*, who was the Inſtrument in Chriſt's Hand of your Converſion to him: *I*, that have planted you a Goſpel Church, and aſſiduouſly watered you: I beſeech you by all the Spiritual Ties and Endearments betwixt me and you, that there be no diviſions among you. This is the firſt Argument, wrapt up in a ſolemn Obſecration.

Next, he enforces the Duty of Unity, by the nearneſs of their Relation; I beſeech you, *Brethren:* Brotherhood is an endearing thing, and naturally draws Affection and Unity with it, 1 Pet. 3. 8. *Be ye all of one Mind; having Compaſſion one of another; love as Brethren; be pitiful, be courteous; ye are the Children of one Father, Joint-heirs of one and the ſame Inheritance.* To ſee an *Egyptian* ſmiting an *Iſraelite*, is no ſtrange ſight; but to ſee one *Iſraelite* quarrelling with another, is moſt unnatural and uncomely: The nearer the Relation, the ſtronger the Affection; *How good and how pleaſant is it*, (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *for Brethren to dwell together in Unity!* Pſal. 133. 1.

But the greateſt Argument of all is the laſt, *viz. In the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* In this Name he beſeeches and entreats them to be at perfect Unity among themſelves. In the former he ſweetly inſinuated the Duty by a loving *Compellation*, but here he ſets it home by a ſolemn *Adjuration*; I beſeech you, Brethren, *by the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*: That is to ſay, (1.) For Chriſt's Sake, or for the Love of Chriſt; by all that Chriſt hath done, ſuffered, or purchaſed for you; and as Chriſt is dear and precious to you, let there be no Diviſions. If you have any Love for Chriſt, don't grieve him, and obſtruct his great Deſign in the World, by your ſcandalous Schiſms. Mr. *John Fox* never denied a Beggar that asked an Alms of him, for Chriſt Jeſus Sake.

2. *In*

2. *In the Name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; that is in the Authority of Chriſt; for ſo his Name alſo ſignifies, 1 *Cor.* 5. 4. and it is as if he had ſaid, If you reverence the Supreme Authority and Sovereignty of Chriſt, which is the Fountain out of which ſo many ſolemn Commands of Unity do flow; then ſee, as you will anſwer it to him at the Great Day, that ye be perfectly joined together in one Mind, and in one Judgment. The Point will be this;

Doct. *Unity amongſt Believers, eſpecially in particular Church-Relation, is as deſirable a Mercy, as it is a neceſſary and indiſpenſable Duty.*

How deſirable a Mercy it is, and how neceſſary a Duty, let the ſame Apoſtle, who preſſeth it upon the *Corinthians* in my Text, be heard again, enforcing the ſame Duty with the ſame Warmth, upon the Church at *Philippi*, chap. 2. v. 1, 2. *If there be therefore any Conſolation in Chriſt, if any Comfort of Love, if any Fellowſhip of the Spirit, if any Bowels of Mercies, fulfil ye my Joy, that ye be like minded, having the ſame Love, being of one Accord, of one Mind.* In handling this Point, I will ſhew,

1. What Unity among Believers is.
2. How the neceſſity and deſirableneſs of it may be evinced.
3. And then lay down the Motives and Directions about it.

(1.) What Unity amongſt Believers is, and more particularly ſuch Believers as ſtand in particular Church-Relation to each other.

There is a twofold Union, one *Myſtical*, betwixt Chriſt and Believers; another *Moral*, betwixt Believers themſelves; Faith knits them all to Chriſt, and then Love knits them one to another. Their common Relation to Chriſt their Head, endears them to each other as Fellow-Members in the ſame Body. Hence they become *Sanguine Chriſti conglutinati*; Glued together by the Blood of Chriſt. Union with Chriſt is fundamental to all Union among the Saints. Perfect Union would flow from this their common Union with Chriſt their Head, were they not here in an imperfect State, where their Corruptions diſturb and hinder it; and as ſoon as they ſhall attain unto compleat Sanctification, they ſhall alſo attain unto perfect Unity. How their Unity with one another comes by way of neceſſary Reſultancy from their Union with Chriſt; and how this Unity among themſelves ſhall at laſt ariſe to its juſt Perfection, that one Text plainly diſcovers, *John* 17. 23. *I in them, and thou in me; that they may be made perfect in one*, &c.

Unity amongſt thoſe that hold not the Head, is rather a Conſpiracy than a Goſpel-unity. Believers and Unbelievers may have a Political or Civil Union; but there's no Spiritual-unity, but what flows from joint-membership in Chriſt. I will not deny, but in particular Churches there may be, and ſtill are ſome Hypocrites, who hold Communion with the Saints, and pretend to belong unto Chriſt, the ſame Head with them; but as they have no real Union with Chriſt, ſo neither have they any ſincere Affection to the Saints; and theſe, for the moſt part, are they that raiſe Tumults and Diviſions in the Church, as diſloyal Subjects do in the Commonwealth. Of theſe the *Apoſtle* ſpeaks, 1 *Joh.* 2. 19. *They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that it might be made manifeſt that they were not all of us.*

Sincere Chriſtianity holds faſt the Soul by a firm Bond of Life to the truly Chriſtian Community, wherein they reap thoſe ſpiritual Pleaſures and Advantages which aſſure their Continuance therein to a great Degree: but thoſe that joyn with the Church upon carnal and external Inducements, make little conſcience of rending from it; and God permits their Schiſmatical Spirits thus to act, for the diſcovering of their Hypocriſy, or (as the Text ſpeaks) *that it might be made manifeſt they were not of us*; as alſo that they which are approv'd, may by their Conſtancy be alſo made manifeſt, 1 *Cor.* 11. 19.

It hath indeed been ſaid, That it's never better with the Church, than when there are moſt Hypocrites in it; but then you muſt underſtand it only with reſpect to the external tranquility and proſperity of the Church; for as to its real, ſpiritual Advantage, they add nothing: And therefore it behoves Church-Officers and Members to be exceeding careful (eſpecially in Times of Liberty and Proſperity) how they admit Members, as the *Jews* in *Solomon*'s time were of admitting Proſelytes. 'Tis ſaid, *Amos* 3. 3. *How can two walk together except they be agreed?* I deny not but Perſons that differ in ſome leſſer Points, as to their Judgment, may, and ought to be one in Affection: But of this I am ſure, that when Sanctified Perſons, agreed in Judgments and Principles, do walk together under pious and judicious Church Officers, in tender Affection, and the exerciſe of all Duties tending to mutual Edification, glorifying God with one Mouth, *Rom.* 15. 6. and cleaving together with oneneſs of Heart, *Acts* 2. 42. This is ſuch a Church-unity as anſwers Chriſt's end in the Inſtitution of particular Churches, and greatly tends to their own Comfort, and the Propagation of Chriſtianity in the World. Tongue-unity flows from Heart-unity; Heart-unity, in a great meaſure from Head-unity; and all three from Union with the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. The Diviſions of our Tongues come moſtly from the Diviſions of our Hearts: Were Hearts agreed, Tongues would quickly be agreed; and then what bleſſed times might be expected? And ſo much briefly for the nature of Unity. Next

(2.) Let us evince both the neceſſity and deſirableneſs of this Unity among Believers; and this will appear in a threefold reſpect: *viz.*

1. With reſpect to the Glory of God.
2. The Comfort and Benefit of our own Souls.
3. The Converſion and Salvation of the World.

(1) With reſpect to the Glory of God. The manifeſtative Glory of God (which is all the Glory we are capable of giving him, is the very end of our Being, and ſhould be dearer to us than our Lives) is exceedingly advanced by the Unity of his People. Hence is the Apoſtle's Prayer, *Rom.* 15. 5, 6. *Now the God of Patience and Conſolation grant you to be like minded one towards another, according to Chriſt Jeſus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorifie God.* 'Tis highly remarkable, That the Apoſtle in this Petition for the Unity of the Saints, doth not only deſcribe that Unity he prays for, one Mouth and one Mind, and ſhews how much God would be glorified by ſuch an Union; but he alſo addreſſes himſelf to God for it, under theſe two remarkable Titles, the *God of Patience and Conſolation*; thereby intimating two Things; (1.) How great need and exerciſe there is of Patience in maintaining Unity among the Saints; They muſt bear one another's Burthens; they muſt give allowance for mutual Infirmities; for the Church

Church here is not an Aſſembly of Spirits of juſt Men made perfect. The Unity of the Saints therefore greatly depends upon the exerciſe of *Patience* one towards another; and this he begs *the God of Patience* to give them. And to endear this Grace of Patience to them, He (2.) joyns with it another Title of God, *viz.* the *God of Conſolation*, wherein he points them to that abundant Comfort which would reſult unto themſelves from ſuch a bleſſed Unity continued and maintained by the mutual Exerciſes of Patience and Forbearance one towards another. And to ſet home all, he lays before them the Pattern and Example of Chriſt: *The God of Patience and Conſolation grant you to be like minded according to Chriſt.* How many thouſand Infirmities and Failures in Duty, doth Chriſt find in all his People? Notwithſtanding which, he maintaineth Union and Communion with them; and if they, after his Example, ſhall do ſo likewiſe with one another, God will be eminently glorified therein. This will evidence both the Truth and Excellency of the Chriſtian Religion, which ſo firmly knits the Hearts of its Profeſſors together.

(2.) *Secondly*, The Neceſſity and Deſirableneſs of this Unity farther appears, by the deep Intereſt that the Comfort and Benefit of our Souls have in it. A great Example hereof we have in *Acts* 2. 46, 47. Oh! what Cheerineſs, Strength and Pleaſure, did the Primitive Chriſtians reap from the Unity of their Hearts in the Ways and Worſhip of God? Next unto the Pleaſure and Delight of immediate Communion with God himſelf, and the ſhedding abroad of his Love into our Hearts by the Holy Ghoſt; none like that which ariſeth from the harmonious Exerciſes of the Graces of the Saints in their mutual Duties and Communions one with another. How are their Spirits dilated and refreſhed by it? What a lively Emblem is here of Heaven! the Courts of Princes afford no ſuch Delights. Whereas on the other ſide, when Schiſms have rent Churches a-ſunder, they go away from each other exaſperated, grieved, and wounded, crying out, Oh, that I had a Cottage in the Wilderneſs! or, Oh, that I had the Wings of a Dove, that I might flee away, and be at reſt.

3. *Laſtly*, The Neceſſity and Deſirableneſs of this Union further appears with reſpect unto the World, who are allured to Chriſt by it, and ſcared off from Religion by the Feuds and Diviſions of Profeſſors. To this the Prayer of Chriſt hath reſpect, *John* 17. 23. *That they may be made perfect in one, that the World may know that thou haſt ſent me, q. d.* This, O Father, will be a convincing Evidence to the World, of the Divinity both of my Perſon and Doctrine, and a great Ordinance for their Converſion to me, when they ſhall ſee my People cleaving inſeparably unto me by Faith, and to one another by Love. And on the other ſide, it will be a fatal Stumbling-block in the way of their Converſion, to obſerve my Followers biting and devouring, rending and tearing one another.

Mr. Joh. Cotton. A Learned and Judicious Divine Commenting upon thoſe Words, *Cant.* 2. 7. *I charge you, O ye Daughters of Jeruſalem, by the Roes, and by the Hinds of the Field, that ye ſtir not up, nor awake my Love till he pleaſe*; gives the ſenſe thus; By Roes and Hinds of the Field (ſaith he) underſtand weak Comers on towards Chriſt. Perſons under ſome preparatory Works towards Converſion, who are as ſhy and as timorous as *Roes* and *Hinds* of the Field; and as they will be ſcared by the Yelp of a Dog, or Sound of a Gun; ſo will theſe at any offenſive Miſcarriages in the Churches of Chriſt.

Alexander Severus, finding two Chriſtians contending with one another, commanded them that they ſhould not preſume to take the Name of Chriſt upon them any longer; for (ſaith he) you greatly diſhonour your Maſter, whoſe Diſciples you profeſs your ſelves to be. And thus briefly of the Nature of Church-unity, and the neceſſity and deſireableneſs thereof among all that ſtand in that Relation.

Uſe. The only Improvement I ſhall make of this Point, ſhall be for,

1. Exhortation to Unity.
2. Directions for the maintaining of it.

The firſt Uſe for Exhortation.

Uſe 1. And firſt, having briefly diſcourſed the Nature, Neceſſity, and Deſirableneſs of Unity among all Chriſtians, and eſpecially of thoſe in particular Church-relation, I do in the Bowels of Chriſt, and in the Words of his Apoſtle, *Phil.* 2. 1, 2. earneſtly and humbly intreat all my Brethren, *That if there be any Conſolation in Chriſt, if any Comfort of Love, if any Fellowſhip of the Spirit, if any Bowels of Mercies, fulfil ye my Joy; that ye be like-minded, having the ſame love, being of one accord, of one mind.* He ſpeaketh not as one *doubting*, but as one *diſputing*, when he ſaith, *If there be any Conſolation in Chriſt*: And 'tis as if he had ſaid, I paſſionately and earneſtly intreat you by all that comfort and joy you have found in your mutual Communion from Chriſt, and his Ordinances, wherein you have comfortably walked together, by all that comfort reſulting from the mutual exerciſes and fruits of chriſtian Love; by the unſpeakable joys and delights the Spirit of God hath ſhed down upon you, whilſt you walked in Unity, in the ways of your Duty; by all the bowels of compaſſion and mercy you have for your ſelves, for your Brethren, or for the poor carnal World, who are in hazard of being deſtroyed by your Diviſions: Or for me, your Miniſter, whoſe joy and comfort is bound up in your Unity and Stability; *That ye be like-minded, having the ſame love, being of one accord, of one mind.* What Heart that hath one ſpark of the Love of Chriſt in it, yields not to ſuch an Exhortation as this, enforced by *the Conſolation of Chriſt, Comfort of Love, Fellowſhip of the Spirit, and Bowels of Mercy*? More particularly, ſuffer ye this Word of *Exhortation* from the Conſideration of the following Arguments or Motives, what diſtances ſoever your are at from one another.

Motive I. Reflect upon the late long and continued troubles you have been under, as the juſt rebukes of *God* for your former Contentions and Follies.

I need not tell you, you are but lately pluck'd as Brands out of the burning, and that the ſmell of Fire is yet upon you. The time lately was, when you gat your Bread with the peril of your lives; when God handed it to you behind your Enemies backs; when your Eyes did not, could not behold your former Teachers, except in Corners or Priſons, when your Souls were ſorrowful for the ſolemn Aſſemblies; when you mournfully confeſſed before the Lord, that theſe were the juſt and deſerved Puniſhments for your Wantonneſs, Barrenneſs, and provoking Animoſities. Theſe Things were not only the matter of your humble Confeſſions; but the Reformation of thoſe Evils was what you ſolemnly promiſed the Lord, when he ſhould

again reſtore you to your Liberty. What! And is the Rod no ſooner off your Backs, but you will to the old Work again? read *Ezra* 9. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. and view the Face of this Sin in that Glaſs. Have we been ſo many Years in the Furnace, and our Droſs not purged? Such ſharp and long-continued Afflictions produce no better Effects? It may be ſaid of our Troubles, as of the Siege of *Tyrus*, Ezek. 29. 18. *Every Head was made bald, and every Shoulder peeled.* Some of us went young Men into Perſecution and Trouble, and are come forth old; and which is worſt of all, we bring our old Corruptions forth with us. Either we did confeſs and bewail theſe Sins in the days of our Affliction, or we did not. If we did not, we were incorrigible, and defeated the Deſign of the Rod. If we did, our Confeſſions and Sorrow were either ſincere or hypocritical: If ſincere, certainly they would effectually caution us, that we return not again to folly, *Ezra* 9. 13, 14. *After all that is come upon us for our evil Deeds, and for our great treſpaſs, ſeeing that thou, our God, haſt puniſhed us leſs than our iniquities deſerve; and haſt given us ſuch a deliverance as this; Should we again break thy Commandment?*

Motive II. Conſider the common imminent danger that now threatens us, both from Enemies upon our Borders, and within our own Bowels. The *Canaanites* are in the Land, let there be no Strife therefore betwixt Brethren; our natural, civil, and ſpiritual Comforts are all ſhaking and trembling about us. If wanton Children fall out and quarrel at a full Table, our Enemies ſtand ready to take away the Cloth. They are not ſo far from us, and out of Sight, but God can call them in a few Hours to end the Strife amongſt us. We act not only beneath the Rules of Religion but of Reaſon alſo. Brute Creatures will depoſe their very Antipathies in a common Danger. Mr. *Tho. Fuller* in his *Hiſtory of the Worthies of* England, tells us, That when the *Severn*-Sea overflowed the lower Grounds of *Somerſetſhire*, it was obſerved that Dogs, and Hares, and Cats, and Rats, ſwimming to the Burroughs and Hills to preſerve their Lives, ſtood quiet during the Flood; not offering the leaſt Injury one to another. 'Tis pity that Senſe ſhould do more with Beaſts, than Reaſon and Religion with Men.

Motive III. Reflect upon the Scandal your Diviſions give to the World; how it hardens and prejudices them againſt Religion and Reformation. And thus the Souls of Men are eternally hazarded by the Follies of Profeſſors: They are ready enough to take Occaſions againſt Religion, where none are given, and much more to improve them where Occaſions are given. *Woe unto the World* (ſaith Chriſt) *becauſe of Offences: for it muſt needs be that Offences come; but woe to that Man by whom the Offence cometh,* Mat. 18. 7. The Woe is not only denounced againſt the Taker, but the Giver of the Offence. It fixes ſuch Prejudices in the Hearts of carnal Men, that ſome of them will never have good Thoughts of Religion any more: but utterly diſtaſt and nauſeate thoſe Aſſemblies and Ordinances from which their Converſion may with greateſt Probability be expected.

How long and how anxiouſly have we prayed, and waited for ſuch a Day of Goſpel-liberty as we now enjoy? It hath been one of the ſoreſt Afflictions we have grapled with in the Days of our Reſtraint, that we could not ſpeak unto the carnal World. If we had Opportunity to ſpeak at all, it was for the moſt part to ſuch as ſtood in need of Edification more than of Converſion. God hath now, beyond Thoughts of moſt Hearts, opened to us a Door of Liberty to Preach, and for all that will, to hear. Some Fruits we have already ſeen, and more we expect. The Children are as it were coming to the Birth, and will you obſtruct it? Will you give the Goſpel a miſcarrying Womb? Be Inſtruments at once, by your Contentions, to deſtroy the Souls of Men, and break the very Hearts of your Miniſters, whoſe greateſt Comfort is bound up in the Succeſs of their Labours? Brethren, I beſeech you read theſe Words as if they were delivered to you upon my bended Knees; I beſeech you for the Lord Jeſus Chriſt's Sake, and for the Hopes Sake of ſaving the precious immortal Souls of Men; and for your poor Miniſters Sake, who have ſcarce any Thing beſides the Fruits of their Labours, to recompence their long-continued and grievous Sufferings, depoſe your Animoſities, maintain the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace; help us, but don't hinder us in our hard Labours. What good will our Lives do us, if we muſt labour in vain, and ſpend our Strength for nought? We find it difficult enough to perſwade Sinners to come unto Chriſt, when no ſuch Stumbling-blocks are laid in the Way; the Counter-pleas of Satan, the Unbelief and Senſualities of unſanctified Nature, are Difficulties too great for us to grapple with; but if to theſe muſt be added Prejudices againſt Religion, from your dividing Luſts, and ſcandalous Breaches, what Hope then remains? If you have no Pity for your ſelves, pity periſhing Souls, and pity your poor diſcouraged Miniſters; have a Care you make us not to groan to God againſt you; or if that be a ſmall thing in your Eyes, have a Care leſt the Blood of Souls be charged to your Account in the Great Day. Are there none in the Towns or Neighbourhoods where you live? Are you ſure there are none that have hopeful Inclinations towards Religion? Deſires and Purpoſes to attend on the ſame Means of Grace you ſit under, who will charge the Occaſion of their Damnation upon you at the Bar of Chriſt, and ſay, Lord, we had ſome weak Convictions upon our Conſciences, that we needed a rouzing and ſearching Miniſter; we were convinced that the profane and carnal World, among whom we had our Converſation, were not in the right Path that leadeth to Salvation! We felt in our ſelves Inclinations to caſt off our old Companions, and aſſociate with thoſe that profeſſed more Strictneſs and Holineſs, and place our ſelves under the moſt fruitful and advantageous Miniſtry, and accordingly improved Opportunities to get acquaintance with them; but when we came nearer to them, we found ſuch Wrath and Envy, ſuch Wranglings and Diviſions, ſuch undermining and ſupplanting each others Reputation; ſuch Whiſperings and Tale-bearings, ſuch malicious Aggravations and Improvements of common Failings and Infirmities, ſuch Covetouſneſs and Wordlineſs, ſuch Pride and Vanity, as gave us ſuch a Diſguſt and Offence at the Ways of Reformation, that we could never more be reconciled to them. Beware, I ſay, how you incurr the Guilt of ſuch a dreadful Charge as this, by giving Liberty to ſuch Luſts and Paſſions under a Profeſſion of Religion, and Pretence to Reformation.

Motive IV. Conſider the Contrariety of ſuch Practices to that ſolemn and fervent Prayer of Jeſus Chriſt, recorded in *John* 17. 'Tis highly remarkable, how in that Prayer, which he poured out a little before his Death with ſuch a mighty *Pathos*, and fervency of Spirit, he inſiſts upon nothing more than Unity among his People. He returns upon his Father again and again, for the obtaining of this one thing: Four times doth he beg for Unity among them, and every time he ſeems to riſe higher and higher, beſeeching his Father, (1.) That they may be one. (2.) That they may be one in us. (3.) That they may be one as thou and I are one. And Laſtly, That they may be made perfect in one: By all this ſhewing how intent his Spirit was upon this one thing.

Brethren, If you would ſtudy how to fruſtrate the Deſign, and grieve the Heart of your Lord Jeſus Chriſt (to whom you profeſs Love and Obedience) you cannot take a readier way to do it, than by breaking the Bonds of Unity among your ſelves. I beſeech you therefore in the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath ſo earneſtly prayed for the Unity of his People, *That ye be perfectly joined together in one Heart, and in one Mind,* as the Text ſpeaks.

Motive V. Conſider how directly your Diviſions croſs and fruſtrate the Deſign and End of Church-Fellowſhip which is inſtituted for the Improvement of each others Graces, and helping on the Mortification of each others Corruptions.

God hath diſtributed variety of Gifts and Graces in different Degrees amongſt his People; the Improvement of theſe Gifts and Graces to the Glory of God, and our mutual Edification, is the very Scope and End of particular Church-fellowſhip and Communion: every Man hath his proper Gift of God, and (as a late Worthy Notes) the Gifts and Graces of all, are this Way made uſeful and beneficial. *Job* was exemplary for Plainneſs and Patience: *Moſes* for Faithfulneſs and Meekneſs: *Joſiah* for Tenderneſs and a melting Spirit: *Athanaſius* was Prudent and Active: *Baſil* Heavenly and of a ſweet Spirit: *Chryſoſtom* Laborious, and without Affectation: *Ambroſe* Reſolved and Grave. One hath Quickneſs of

Torſhell's help to Chriſtian-Fellowſhip, *p.* 6, 7.

of Parts; but not ſo ſolid a Judgment: Another is Solid, but not Ready and Preſential. One hath a good Wit, another a better Memory, a third excells them both in Utterance. One is Zealous, but Ungrounded: Another Well-principled, but Timorous. One is Wary and Prudent; another Open and Plain-hearted. One is Trembling and Melting; another Chearful, and full of Comfort. Now the End and Uſe of Church-Fellowſhip is to make a rich Improvement unto all by a regular Uſe and Exerciſe of the Gifts and Graces found in every one. One muſt impart his Light, and another his Warmth. The Eye (*viz.* the knowing Man) cannot ſay to the Hand (*viz.* the active Man) I have no need of thee. Unſpeakable are the Benefits reſulting from ſpiritual and orderly Communion; but whatever the Benefits be, they are all cut off by Schiſms and Diſſentions; for as Faith is the Grace by which we receive all from God; ſo Love is the Grace by which we ſhare and divide the Comfort of all among our ſelves. The excellent Things of the Spirit are lodg'd in Earthen Veſſels, which Death will ſhortly break, and then we can have no more Benefit by them; but theſe Jars and Diviſions render Saints, as it were, dead one to another, whilſt they are alive. Ah, how lovely, how ſweet and deſirable it is to live in the Communion of ſuch Saints as are deſcribed! *Mal.* 3. 16. To hear them freely, and humbly to open their Hearts and Experiences to one another! After this Manner, ſome ſay, the Art of Medicine was found out: As any one met with an Herb, and diſcovered the Virtue of it by any Accident, he was to poſt it up, and ſo the Phyſician's Skill was perfected by a Collection of thoſe poſted Experiments. But woe to us! we are ready to poſt up each others Failings and Infirmities to the Shame and Reproach of Religion, and to furniſh our common Enemies with Matter of Contempt and Scorn againſt us all.

Motive VI. In a Word, Theſe Schiſms and Diſſentions in the Churches of Chriſt are ominous Preſages, and foreboding Signs of ſome ſweeping Judgment, and common Calamity near approaching us. 'Tis a common Obſervation with Shepherds, That when the Sheep puſh one another, a Storm ſpeedily enſues. I am ſure 'tis ſo here, if God turn not our Hearts one towards another, he will come and ſmite the Earth with a Curſe, *Mal.* 4. 6. I believe it, Sirs, you will have other Work to do ſhortly. There be thoſe coming, (if God prevent not) that will part the Fray.

USE II. *for Direction.*

Uſe 2. In the laſt place therefore give me leave to lay before you ſome neceſſary and proper Directions and Counſels for the Prevention and Healing of Schiſms and Diviſions amongſt the Churches of Chriſt: for it is not Complaints and Lamentations, but proper Counſels and Directions, and thoſe not only preſcribed but obeyed, that muſt do the Work. When *Joſhua* lay upon his Face before the Lord, *Joſhua* 7. 8, 9, 10. bewailing the Sins and Miſeries of *Iſrael*; *Up* (ſaith God) *ſanctifie the People; wherefore lieſt thou upon thy Face?* As if he ſhould ſay, Thy Moans and Lamentations are good and neceſſary in their place; but ſpeedy Action and vigorous Endeavours muſt be alſo uſed, or *Iſrael* will periſh. So ſay I, up, up, fall ſpeedily to your Duties as Men in earneſt; and for your Guidance in the Paths of Duty, I will lay before you the following plain and neceſſary Directions.

Direction I. The orderly gathering, and filling of particular Churches, is of great Influence unto the Peace and Tranquillty of thoſe Churches; and therefore it greatly concerns all that are intereſted therein, eſpecially ſuch as are veſted with Office-Power, to beware whom they receive inro their Communion.

The Scriptures do plainly diſcover to us, That Church-Members ought to be viſible Saints, 1 *Cor.* 1. 2. 2 *Cor.* 1. 1, 2. *Acts* 2. 41, to the End. *Epheſ.* 2. 7. 1 *Theſſ.* 1. 2, 3. *Rom.* 1. 7, *Col.* 1. 2. Hence particular Churches are called the Churches of the Saints, 1 *Cor.* 14. 33. If Admiſſions be lax and negligent, ſo much heterogeneous Matter fills the Church, that it can never be quiet. Chriſtians and Chriſtians may live together harmoniouſly and coaleſce in one orderly and comfortable Society, as having one and the ſame Head, one Spirit, the ſame general Deſign and End: but Godly and Ungodly, Spiritual and Carnal are acted by contrary Principles, purſue oppoſite Deſigns, and can never heartily coaleſce. There is a Spirit of Diſcerning, a Judgment of Diſcretion in the Saints, and it is eſpecially deſirable in a more eminent Degree in thoſe that have Office-Power in the Church, to judge of Mens fit Qualifications for Church-Communion. We all allow, that groſs Ignorance and Prophaneneſs are juſt Bars to Mens Admiſſion: And to deny this, were to take all Power from the Church, to preſerve the Purity of God's Ordinances, or to caſt out notorious Offenders. None ought to be admitted into Church Communion, but ſuch as do appear to the Judgment of Charity (comparing their Profeſſions and Converſations) to be Chriſtians indeed, that is, Men fearing God, and working Righteouſneſs.

And I make no Doubt, but ſome Opinions as well as Practices, render Men unmeet for Church-Communion, *Tit.* 3. 10. 2 *John* 10. All Opinions which overthrow Doctrines neceſſary to be believed, which the Apoſtle comprehends under the Name of Faith; and all ſuch Opinions as are inconſiſtent with an holy Life, and overthrow the Power of Godlineſs, which the Apoſtle comprehends under the Name of a good Conſcience, 1 *Tim.* 1. 19, 20. whoſoever ſhall hold or maintain any ſuch Opinions as theſe, he is either to be kept out, if not admitted; or caſt out, if he be in Church-Fellowſhip. In receiving ſuch, you receive but Spies and Incendiaries among you. What a Fire-brand did *Arius* prove, not only in the Church of *Conſtantinople*, but even to the whole World? Men of graceleſs Hearts and erroneous Heads, will give a continual Exerciſe to the Patience of ſober Chriſtians. I deny not but out of the pureſt Churches Men may ariſe ſpeaking perverſe Things; and yet the Officers and Members of thoſe Churches be blameleſs in their Admiſſion: But if they can be diſcerned before they be admitted, a little preventive Care would be of ſingular and ſeaſonable Uſe to the Tranquility of Church Societies.

Direction II. Let all Officers and Members of the Church ſtudy their Duties, and keep themſelves within the Bounds of their proper Places. Ordinate Motions are quiet Motions, 1 *Theſſ.* 4. 11. *Study to be quiet, and do your own Buſineſs, and work with your own Hands, as we commanded you.* In which Words he condemns two Vices, which diſturb and diſtract the Churches of Chriſt, *viz.* Curioſity in Matters which pertain not to us, and Idleneſs in the Duties of our particular Callings. Two Things I will drop by way of Caution:

A Doctore glorioſo, à paſtore contentioſo & inutilibus Quæſtionibus liberet Eccleſiam Deus. *Luther's* Prayer.

(1.) Let it be for Caution to Miniſters, that they mind their proper Work, ſtudy the Peace of the Church, impartially diſpenſe their Reſpects to the Saints committed to their Charge, not ſiding with a Party. There be few Schiſms in Churches, in which Miniſters have not ſome Hand. *Jerome* upon thoſe Words, *Hoſea* 9. 8. hath this memorable Note; *Veteres ſcrutans hiſtorias, invenire non poſſum ſcidiſſe Eccleſiam, præter eos qui Sacerdotes à Deo poſiti fuerunt.* Searching the ancient Hiſtories (ſaith he) I can find none that hath more rent the Church of God, than thoſe that ſuſtain the Office of Miniſters. This is a ſad Charge, and 'tis too juſtly laid upon many of that Order: Oh what a Bleſſing is a Prudent, Patient, Peaceable Miniſter, to the Flock over which he watches!

(2.) Let the People keep their Places, and ſtudy their proper Duties. There be in moſt Congregations, ſome idle People, who having little to do at Home, are employed upon Satan's Errands to run from Houſe to Houſe, carrying Tales to exaſperate one Chriſtian againſt another. Theſe the Apoſtle particularly marks, and warns the Churches of 1 *Tim.* 5. 13. *And withal they learn to be idle, wandring about from Houſe to Houſe; and not only Idle, but Tatlers alſo, and Buſie-Bodies, ſpeaking Things which they ought not.* If that one Rule of Chriſt, *Matth.* 18. 15, 16. were conſcientiouſly and ſtrictly attended to, to tell a treſpaſſing Brother his Fault privately, then with one or two more, if obſtinacy make it neceſſary, and not to expoſe him to the whole Church, and much leſs to the whole World, without a plain Neceſſity; How many thouſand Ruptures would be prevented in Chriſtian Societies? But inſtead of regularly admoniſhing and reproving thoſe irregular and idle Tatlers (as the Apoſtle calls them) who make it their Buſineſs to ſow Jealouſies, to make and widen Breaches amongſt Brethren.

Direction

Direction III Let all Chriſtians govern their Tongues, and keep them under the Command of the Law of Kindneſs in their mutual Converſes with one another. *A ſoft Anſwer* (ſaith *Solomon*) Prov. 15. 1. *turneth away Wrath; but grievous Words ſtir up Anger:* Hard to hard will never do well: How eaſy did *Abigail* diſarm angry *David* by a gentle Apology? What more boiſterous than the Wind? Yet a gentle Rain will allay it. It may be ſtrongly preſumed that a meek and gentle Anſwer will more eaſily allay the Paſſions of a Godly Man, than of one that is both ungodly and full of Enmity towards us; and yet ſometimes it hath done the latter. A Company of vain wicked Men having inflamed their Blood in a Tavern at *Boſton* in *New-England*, and ſeeing that Reverend, Meek, and Holy Miniſter of Chriſt, Mr. *Cotton* coming along the Street, one of them tells his Companions, *I'll go* (ſaith he) *and put a Trick upon the old* Cotton; down he goes, and croſſing his way, whiſpers theſe Words into his Ear, *Cotton* (ſaid he) *Thou art an old Fool:* Mr. Cotton replied, *I confeſs I am ſo; the Lord make both me and thee wiſer than we are, even wiſe to Salvation:* He relates this Paſſage to his wicked Companions, which caſt a great Damp upon their Spirits in the Midſt of a Frolick: What peaceful Societies ſhould we have, if our Lips tranſgreſſed not the Laws of Love and Kindneſs.

Direction IV. Reſpectful Deportments to thoſe that are beneath us in Gifts or Eſtates, is an excellent Conſervative of Church-Peace. Lofty and contemptuous Carriages towards thoſe that are beneath us in either Reſpect, is a frequent Occaſion of bitter Jars and Animoſities. The Apoſtle chargeth it upon the *Corinthians, That no one be puffed up for one againſt another; for who maketh thee to differ from another?* 1 Cor. 4. 6, 7. What reſpectful Language did Holy Mr. *Brewen* give to his own godly Servants? Remember, Chriſtians, that there is neither Rich nor Poor, Bond nor Free, but all are one in Chriſt Jeſus. This indeed deſtroys not the civil Differences God hath made between one and another. Grace will teach the godly Servant to give double Honour to a Religious Maſter or Miſtreſs, the private Chriſtian to a godly Magiſtrate or Miniſter. It will teach the People to know them which labour among them, and are over them in the Lord, and admoniſh them, and to eſteem them very highly in love for their Works Sake, and to be at Peace among themſelves, 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 12, 13. and it will alſo teach Superiors to condeſcend to Men of low Degree, and not to think of themſelves above what they ought, but *with all Lowlineſs, Meekneſs, and Long-Suffering to forbear one another in love, keeping* (this way) *the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, Eph.* 4. 2, 3.

Direction V. This gentle Language and reſpectful Deportment, would naturally and conſtantly flow from the uniting Grace of Wiſdom, Humility, and Love, were they more exalted in the Hearts of Chriſtians.

Wiſdom would allay theſe unchriſtian Heats, *Prov.* 17. 27. a Man of Underſtanding is of an excellent Spirit, ſo we render it; but the *Hebrew* ſignifies a cool Spirit; *the Wiſdom that is from above is gentle and eaſie to be entreated,* James 3. 17.

Humility takes away the Fewel from the Fire of Contention; only from Pride cometh Contention, *Prov.* 13. 10. How dearly hath Pride, eſpecially Spiritual Pride, coſt the Churches of Chriſt?

Love is the very Cement of Societies, the Fountain of Peace and Unity; it thinketh no Evil, 1 *Cor.* 13. puts the faireſt ſenſe upon doubtful Words and Actions, it beareth all things. *Love me* (ſaith *Auſtin*) *and reprove me as thou pleaſeſt:* 'Tis a radical Grace, bearing the Fruits of Peace and Unity upon it.

Direction VI. Be of a Chriſt-like forgiving Spirit one towards another, *Eph.* 4. 31, 32. *Let all Bitterneſs and Wrath, and Anger, and Clamour, and Evil-ſpeaking be put away from you, with all Malice, and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God for Chriſt's Sake hath forgiven you.* Hath thy Brother offended thee? How apt art thou alſo to offend thy Brother? And which is infinitely more, how often doſt thou every Day grieve and offend Jeſus Chriſt, who yet freely forgives all thy Offences? Remember Friend, that an unforgiving is a ſad Sign of an unforgiven Perſon. They that have found Mercy, Pity, and Forgiveneſs, ſhould of all Men in the World be moſt ready to ſhew it.

Direction VII. Be deeply affected with the miſchievous Effects and Conſequents of Schiſms and Diviſions in the Societies of the Saints, and let nothing beneath a plain Neceſſity divide you from Communion one with another; hold it faſt till you can hold it no longer without Sin. As the Fire of your Contentions your Enemies warm their Hands, and ſay, Aha, ſo would we have it: Your Prayers are obſtructed, *Mat.* 5. 24. *Firſt be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy Gift.* Edification is hindred: Feveriſh Bodies thrive not, *Eph.* 4. 15. *God is provoked* to remove his gracious Preſence from among you. Be of one Mind (ſaith the Apoſtle) *live in Peace, and the God of Peace ſhall be with you,* 1 *Cor.* 13. 11. implying that their Contentions would deprive them of his bleſſed Company with them. The Glory of your Society is clouded; *if ye have bitter Envyings and Strife in your Hearts, glory not,* 3. 14. Glory not in your Church Privileges, perſonal Gifts and Attainments; whatever you think of your ſelves you are not ſuch Chriſtians as you vogue your ſelves for, living in a Sin ſo directly contrary to Chriſtianity. The Name of Chriſt is diſhonoured. You are taken out of the World, to be a People for his Name, that is, for his Honour; but there's little Credit to the Name of Chriſt from a dividing, wrangling People. The alluring Beauty of Chriſtianity, by which the Church gains upon the World, *Acts* 2. 46, 47. is ſullied and defaced, and thereby (as I noted before) Converſion hindred, and a new Stone, as it were, rolled over the Graves of poor Sinners, to keep them down in their impenitency: Tremble therefore at the Thoughts of Diviſions and Separations. St. *Auguſtine* notes three Sins ſeverely puniſhed in Scripture. The Golden Calf, with the Sword; *Jehoiakim's* cutting the Sacred Roll, with a dreadful Captivity; but the Schiſm of *Korah*, and his Accomplices, with the Earth's opening her Mouth and ſwallowing them up quick.

Direction VII. Let all Church-Members ſee that they have Union with Chriſt, evidencing it ſelf in daily ſweet Communion with him. Lines drawn from a Circumference come neareſt to one another in the Center. When God intends to make the Hearts of Men one, he firſt makes them new, *Ezek.* 11. 91. *I will give them one Heart, and I will put a new Spirit within you.* And the more any renewed Heart taſtes the ſweetneſs of Communion with God, by ſo much it is diſpoſed for Unity and Peace with his People. Our Frowardneſs and Peeviſhneſs plainly diſcovers all is not well betwixt God and us. Nothing ſo oppoſite to, or abhorred by a Soul that enjoys ſweet Peace and Communion with Chriſt, than to live in ſinful Jars and Contentions with his People. Return therefore to the Primitive Spirit of Love and Unity; forbear one another; forgive one another; mortifie your dividing Luſts; cheriſh your uniting Graces; *mark them which cauſe Diviſions and Offences, contrary to the Doctrine ye have learned, and avoid them,* Rom. 16. 17. In a Word, and that the Word of the Apoſtle in the Text, *I beſeech you, Brethren, by the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that ye all ſpeak the ſame thing, and that there be no Diviſions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the ſame Mind, and in the ſame Judgment.*

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