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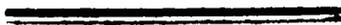


BY JOHN WESLEY, M.A.

LATE FELLOW OF LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD.



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THE
C O N T E N T S.



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BY HERBERT PALMER, B. D.

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MEMORIALS

OF

GODLINESS AND CHRISTIANITY.



BY HERBERT PALMER, B. D.

Master of Queen's College, Cambridge.

VOL. XII.

B

TO

THE READER.

CHRISTIAN READER,

THIS ensuing Meditation upon making Religion one's Business, having first affected my own heart, and afterward some friends to whom it had been communicated; I have been made to believe, that by God's blessing it may be some advancement to the business of religion, now in this season when religion hath retainers enough, but not servants enough. I have no doubt that sundry passages in them will meet with some scoffs and cavils, as being over-nice and precise, and I shall meet with some reproaches, as not answering my own strict rules. But in hopes there will yet be found those that will both be glad to see such a piece of a pattern for their hearts and lives, and also strive to make it their own in affection and practice; I have resolved to adventure the one and the other. And I trust also that, by God's grace, it will help to make me the more watchful over my own self and my behaviour, that I may not only not shame

myself and my public professions, but also may set a real copy in some proportion suitable to this verbal one, for thy double benefit. Herein if thou wilt help me still with thy prayers (as I am confident thou wilt if thou reap any benefit by it), I again tell thee, thou mayst be the better for it thyself, while I am thereby, through God's mercy to us both, helped to do thee yet some further spiritual service, which, while I live, I must now alway profess myself ambitious of, as being ever

Thine and the church's servant,

In Christ altogether,

HERBERT PALMER.

MEMORIALS

OF

GODLINESS AND CHRISTIANITY.

Of making Religion one's Business.

My true friend, it hath been an usual saying with me, (would God I could ever have the feeling of it in myself) that the character of a godly man, is to make religion his business. I will now a little descant upon it, so as to set down what I should and would do in this kind. I shall set a copy, at least to teach myself, and provide a remembrancer to quicken my frequent dulnesses.

1. I desire to have my affections moulded by religion, and towards it; my thoughts, and words, and deeds, to be all exercises of religion, and my very cessation from works commanded by religion, and limited and circumstantiated by religion. My eating, drinking, sleeping, journeying, visiting, entertaining of friends, to be all directed by religion: and that, above all, I may be serious and busy in the acts of religion, about the word, prayer, praises, singing, sacraments, not only that the duties in each kind be performed, but religiously performed, with life and vigour, with faith, humility, and charity.

2. To these ends, I desire my heart may be possessed with these two fundamental principles : 1st. " That religion is the end of my creation," and of all the benefits, not only spiritual, but temporal, which God bestows upon me. 2dly. " That religion is my felicity," even for the present ; though derived from that eternal felicity which is now laid up for me, and to be hereafter possessed by me in heaven : so glorious is that felicity, that, from the first moment of our interest in it, it casts a gladsome brightness upon the soul, even many years sometimes before the enjoyment of the fulness of it : like the sun shedding forth his fore-running beams to enlighten all our part of the world, many minutes before his full light offers itself to the eye.

3. When I speak thus of religion to be felicity, I mean it of God and Christ, the object of religion : without whom religion is but an empty name, a pernicious error. But as religion is to know God, and him whom he hath sent, Jesus Christ, it is eternal life begun here below : but never to end in any time or place.

4. " I wish these thoughts may meet me first in the morning," as worldly-minded men's business do them : that I may count all things but interruptions till my mind be settled in its course for that day, and that my mind be so settled and habituated in these purposes, that it may be readily in order ordinarily, and only need time for solemn performance of religious duties, and for extraordinary projects.

5. Specially I wish, as I am bound by millions of eternal obligations, " that I may love the Lord my God, Christ Jesus my Redeemer, with all my mind, with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my strength," to the utmost extent of all these phrases. And that to make my mind more apprehensive of them, I may not profane any of them, by using to say in slight matters, " I love such a thing with all my heart," or I will do such a thing " with all my heart : " it may seem a nicety to check such a phrase ; but I read this morning, Prov. vii. 2, " Keep

my commandments and live, and my law as the apple of thine eye." (Which sentence, by God's blessing, hath occasioned this whole meditation.) The apple of the eye is the tenderest thing in the world of natural things, the law of God no less, (infinitely more,) in spirituals. As I therefore like not the word *infinite*, but when we speak of God; so those fore-named phrases seem to be God's peculiar: and that one main cause, why common men so readily say, "They love God with all their heart," (I mean, why they so easily deceive themselves in so saying) is, because they have adulterated the phrase "with all my heart," and prostituted it to every base trifle. Say if it be not so. And then as St. James blames for not saying, "If the Lord will," &c. though every one will grant such words necessary, and pretend to suppose them, so is it not blame-worthy to say in petty matters, what should make a sacred sound in our ears, and to our spirits?

6. "I wish I could lose myself in a holy trance of meditation, every time I think of God and Christ," as the author, fountain, life, substance of all my happiness; all-sufficient, only sufficient for my soul, and all comfort and good. Nothing wanting in God and Christ to eternity. No need of any creature: no accession by any creature: no one creature, not all of them comparable to him, or any thing without him. Time lost, happiness lost, while I converse with any creature, further than according to his ordinance; as his instruments and servants.

7. "I wish I could forget all respects to myself, carnal, natural, while I have any service to perform to God," (as I have every moment, though I cannot ever think so,) that I might shew I love God with strength, "my God with all my strength," and never be weary: of his immediate services specially: or if naturally, yet not spiritually. Lusts are vigorous, when the body languishes. Oh why is not grace more strong?

8. I wish my heart may never recoil upon me, with

saying, "Thou mightest now, or such a time, have done thy God, thy Saviour, more service than thou didst; even when thou didst somewhat, thy body and spirits would have held out longer, and endured a greater stress of zeal." And much less, didst thou wholly lose such an opportunity of doing or receiving good, (though scarce any one does good, who receives not some present payment, at least in soul, the enlargement of grace and holy affections,) and least of all, "Thou didst wholly employ thy strength to sin, or, thou hast weakened thy strength by intemperance or some other foolish or sinful practice."

9. I wish that every day among my first thoughts, one may be, "What special business have I within doors?" Within my soul, "what sin to mortify?" Whether lately raging, and even but last day or night prevailing over me? Or which I have had (at least some late) victories over? That I may allot time to pursue it, and by no means forget it in my prayer, and arm myself against the encounter, if there be any possibility of my being assaulted that day. "And what grace to strengthen?" wherein I have been exceeding feeble of late? or even begun to obtain some vigour? which may easily be lost, and will be, if not with all care and means, and prayers, fomented and cherished; that so I may prepare for it. "These are a Christian's main business within himself always."

10. Withal, "I wish to die daily." I mean not, that I daily wish for death; but that I may foresee it more than possible, and may prepare for it, resolvedly, contentedly. That I may look at it, as at a mean of happiness, and take such order as it may not cut me off from any main necessary employment: but each hour and minute to despatch the substantial of my business, and refer circumstances and events to the all-wise, powerful, and gracious providence of the great Ruler and King of the whole world, and of every creature.

11. "I wish to improve every relation I stand in towards any of mankind, to the advancement of religion:" that glory may redound to Christ, by my being

a child to one, a brother to another, a neighbour to a third, a kinsman, a friend, an acquaintance to any one : that as well for the credit of religion (which commands to give to all their due honour, and to love them as myself) as for the propagation of religion : I may be ambitious to approve myself the best child, or subject, or friend, &c. in the world : and careful also to insinuate myself, as much as may be, into the favour of every one I converse with in the world : of superiors, by submission and diligence ; of equals, by courtesy and freedom ; of inferiors, by affability mixed with gravity, and gentleness with necessary strictness. And that I may not fail to entitle God to whatever ground I gain upon the affections of any, that is, to engage them thereby the more forwardly in his service, in their own persons, and towards all others, and that I myself also may reap some spiritual benefit by them, that so I may bless God for them, and they him for me, and others for them and me together.

12. Particularly, “ I wish, that toward inferiors I may never put less, but rather more weight upon God's commandments than mine own,” and upon religious than civil observances : and that because the best are not angels, I may bear with more patience failings in mere worldly, than spiritual matters.

13. I wish never to be one of those that feed themselves without fear ; but that “ whenever I eat or drink, I may do all to the glory of my God,” that is, seasonably, sparingly, and with choice, for health and strength : not gluttony, drunkenness, or riotous curiosity. That I may daily remember my business not to be, to live to eat, but eat to live, that I may follow my business, that is, Christianity : that I may not forget, how slippery a place the throat is, and how easily that glides down which after works disease : that because the craving of the sensual appetite, seeming but reasonable, being but for one's self, is oft the betraying of reason itself, besides the quelling of grace : both grace and reason may combine together in the practice of this difficultest piece of self-

denial : and that I may ever consider, not only what a shame, what an unthankfulness it is in the least degree to disable myself for the service of him, who allows me liberally so much as can be fit for me, how much soever that be ; but also what piety to waste good creatures to so vile a purpose, as to weaken my body, or over-charge my spirits, with what was meant to strengthen and quicken them. That from the observation of the untowardness of my mind, when it is in the best temper, I may tremble at the thoughts of the least intemperance, which if it fetter not my body, so as it cannot do its duty, will at least hamper my wits, and many times take away from me the will to go about it aright. That therefore I may count all inordination or immoderation in meat or drink, poison at least to my soul, and in a degree also to my body, as is confessed by all, some meats and drinks to be in themselves, to some, and others, if taken to such a quantity.

14. " I wish to be watchful over myself always, that I may be thus sober ;" and sober, that I may be watchful ; and watchful, that I may withstand enemies, and have time and spirits to do all the works my heavenly Master sets me about.

15. " I wish to redeem all time I can from sleep," and so to order my sleep, as I may redeem most time. " To redeem all time I can from sports," and so to order my employments, as that the variety of them may be recreation enough, without using any sports at all.

16. " I wish to redeem all time from vain thoughts and unprofitable musings : " upon my bed, night or morning, in my walking or riding upon the way, in my attendances where neither my eye nor my tongue can be profitably set on work ; and to take those advantages greedily to advance the businesses of God and my soul. My thoughts are her eldest and noblest offspring ; and so too worthy to be cast away upon base objects.

17. " I wish to redeem all time from idle words and frivolous discourses ;" to avoid what I can the hearing of

such prattlings ; to shun all light and frothy books. My tongue is my glory, and my best instrument to advance the glory of God and religion towards others ; it were pity to profane it with such words as to be upon my contrary score at the day of accounts ; and so much I have to learn of God and of religion, as without slighting them, I can find no leisure to give heed to trifles, besides the danger of poison to be conveyed in these. If I were confined to the society of pagans, I might from thence expect some profitable discourse, and even towards them I were bound to offer, at least sometimes, mention of God ; how much more among such as call themselves Christians ! specially, who profess Christianity to be their business as well as mine.

18. " I desire to redeem all time I can from curiosity in dressing my body," as that, which besides the vanity and unprofitableness, endangers the leaving off the best clothing, humility, and so doubly sets my business back.

19. " I wish to redeem what time I can, even from worldly businesses," whatever they are ; so as at least I may never want room to exercise myself unto godliness ; to perform my daily solemn services to God, both personal and domestic, and for extraordinary projects to the honour of God.

20. " I desire to take no journey, and make no visit which falls not into the road of religion." Courtesy [which to allow, and in a sort, even command, is religious honour,] will carry me a little way, sometimes : but especially purposes, accompanied with hopes, of making all my correspondences pay tribute to religion, whilst in the mean time, I am careful to lose no opportunity of trafficking for religion's gain, and resolute to stay no longer time any where than while I may do myself or others more good there than in another place.

21. " I wish specially to make all my meddling in worldly businesses serviceable to religion ;" whilst I employ whatever talent I have received, and do receive, to strengthen, encourage, and secure myself, family, friends,

neighbours, and all fellow-christians, in the ways of godliness ; and to exercise and demonstrate faith, humility, patience, contentedness, liberality, justice, heavenly-mindedness in the midst of worldly employments, and thereby to draw even strangers to approve of that religion which teaches and effectually persuades to much good.

22. Particularly, " I wish that I may never grasp so much of the world as to distract my head with cares, or engage my heart in sins," and that in the rust that cleaves to my fingers in telling of money, though each piece seem clean enough, I may see the emblem of the defilement, gotten insensibly by the use even of lawful things, that therefore I may constantly afterwards wash my heart by prayers and meditations.

23. " I wish to account nothing a cross to me, but what crosses religion," in respect either to my own soul or others, to reckon by that rule my losses and gains, my thrivings and goings back ; and for this reason, to esteem scandal the worst of evils ; and to give, or do, or suffer any thing to prevent or take them away. And next to these the want of God's ordinances.

24. " I wish to have my heart and conversation always in heaven," as counting my treasure to be laid up there ; and though I must trade with worldly commodities, yet to reckon grace my chief stock ; and that as fore-seeing losses, I may trade much in the assurance-office, and study daily the art of Christian alchymy, which can extract advantage out of losses, gold out of every thing, even dung itself ; that is, grace not only out of every gracious act of God's Providence within sight or hearing ; but even out of afflictions and very sins.

25. Particularly, " I wish to improve the time of sickness," which disables from most worldly businesses, to set forward greatly the business of God and my soul ; and wholly to bestow that leisure upon them, further than the necessity of my body calls me to attend it. And that because I am debarred from public means of thriving, I may beg of every visitant to help me somewhat ; which

yet will not impoverish, but help to enrich them also, by mutual trading in spiritual matters. And to count this covetousness only lawful, "never to think I have enough of grace," but the less time I have to live, the more greedy to be to heap up of these riches.

26. "I desire to count the sabbath, the Lord's day, mine; made for me, for mine advantage, the market-day for my soul, a spiritual harvest-day, wherein I may all day long make provision, and lay up in store for afterwards, and to bless God continually for it, as without which my soul might be in danger to starve, either through want of public provisions, or leisure to provide for myself what might be had; and therefore by no means to let slip the opportunity, even for my own sake, besides the commandment; and to take the utmost minute that I can for my spiritual liberty to serve God and get grace, not allowing any thing by my good-will to interrupt me therein.

27. "I desire to account the sacrament of the Lord's supper a singular fair," wherein the bread that came down from heaven, the water of life, spiritual wine and milk, and whatsoever else is nourishing and comfortable to the soul, is freely offered, and to be had "without money and without price." That therefore I may be sure not to miss, when I may go to it; and yet, because all that come thither may not make so happy a bargain, but rather purchase to themselves wrath and judgment, I may be careful to prepare myself so by examination, that my soul may not be sent away fasting, or what is worse, poisoned, while my body is entertained.

28. "I desire to account all other ordinances of God, (in their degree and manner likewise,) the means of my soul's enriching, nourishing physic." So that if I should slight or trifle away these blessed opportunities, I could not but die a beggar, die and starve, die a miserable diseased leper, die and perish eternally. That therefore I may not be so much a fool, as to have these put as prices into my hand to get wisdom withal, and I to have no heart to them; or that pretending no other errand to the

place where they are, nor other business at that time but to receive them, I should be so wickedly mad as to sleep away the offers of grace then tendered unto me, or suffer my mind to be diverted by any other thing, or to look that God should hear me, where I scarce hear myself in my prayers, or refuse to hear him in his word.

29. "I desire to account those my best friends that most help me in my business of Christianity;" and to esteem a watchful consideration and faithful admonitions the best expressions of friendship, and best helps to my feeble and frail mind.

30. "I desire, if ever I marry, to account that one of the greatest businesses of religion," that I can undertake any time in my whole life; which if I speed well in, will incomparably advance my spiritual projects and advantages; and contrarily disappoint and overthrow them if I make an ill match; that therefore, being sensible of my own natural sinful inclination, which may betray me as soon as any other, into some one at least of those many untoward courses, which persons of all qualities and conditions usually take on this occasion; as also apprehensive of God's punishing no sin more frequently or sharply in this world; I may from the first moment of my entertaining any such thoughts make my most ardent prayers keep pace with them, first to implore to be directed in a perfect way, and then to be blessed with a true helper every way meet for me.

31. Particularly, "I desire that the phrases of marrying in the Lord, and not being unequally yoked, (not corrupted by the world's false glosses, but truly interpreted by a serious conscience) may ever have an absolute negative voice in all propositions;" that is, that I may never marry with any whom I have reason to judge not to be truly religious; whilst yet I conclude, "That religion alone is not sufficient to make any match." That I may never dare to cross the rules of nature in too much disparity of age, or in robbing parents of their right, at least of appro-

bation and consent ; nor those of civility, by aspiring too eminently above my degree, or debasing myself too much below it ; withal, counting it a necessary qualification in one, whom I may match myself unto, to have no predominant humour which I cannot bear, but to be able to bear any infirmity of mine, and to be at least some help to my spirit in those things wherein I specially need help.

32. " I desire (for my security in all these resolutions) that I may never be in haste," but make a leisureable and sufficient inquiry by myself and friends, answerable to the necessity which the world's deceitfulness enforces in a business of such lasting importance ; but specially that I may never be in love with the estate or comeliness of the person, which would hinder any full inquiry and stop my ears to any, though never so true an information, and blind my eyes from a right discerning, " Whether there be indeed that which in others I was wont to make the character of piety." And even in a visible observation of defects, make me wickedly run to God's decree for my excuse, and say marriages are made in heaven ; or presumptuously promise myself that I shall make them better when once married, and headlong run on, notwithstanding all the contrary advice of friends, or even the commands of parents, and be in danger to have my heart broke with discontent, if the providence of God shall any way break the match ; which last consideration forbids also too much engagement of affection upon the most worthy and fit person in the world, while there remains any possibility of dissolving the treaty.

33. " I desire to enforce the undervaluing of wealth and beauty upon my spirit," from the scarcity of these who have all the other more necessary qualifications ; and that remembering among all the ends of marriage mentioned in scripture, none of them to be to make one rich ; I may never consent to sell my liberty, my comfort, myself, for so long a term as during life, to make never so great a

purchase of worldly estate. And also, though I must never match myself to any till I can love her person, I may yet count it a sin to refuse one otherwise every way fit for me, upon the mere exception that I cannot love, when there is no remarkable deformity to breed a loathing; and to reckon it a duty to pray earnestly to God to rectify such untowardness of my mind, as makes me, without just cause, reject a gracious offer of his providence toward me. And that to prevent the mischief of an unexpected continual jar all our lives long, I may be willing to be inquired into myself, as well as to inquire after others, and may not disguise for a fit, that which will afterwards come certainly to be known; expecting "that love cannot be firm whose foundation is laid upon a lie." But that I may, by myself or friends, fully and freely, before engagement be past, express what I expect, both for piety and all other matters, of habitation, manner of living, order of family, and the like; and what may be expected from me in each respect; not fearing that this faithfulness to myself and them should make a breach; but resolving that if this would break the match, being unconcluded, there would be no less danger that it should break the peace afterward, when the unfaithfulness should be discovered. And that that breaking of the match were so much to be preferred before this breach of the peace, by how much a cross is to be preferred before a sin; and I cannot be a Christian if I believe not that God can provide better for me, and will, if I yield up my will and all my affections wholly to him.

34. "I desire to let no day pass without once, at least, solemnly casting up my accounts," how my soul hath sped the day, and my business gone forward or backward; and to allot special times for a more full reckoning of many days, and summing up my whole stock of grace: so shall I be sure never to become a bankrupt, but compound for my debts in time, before I be sued, pursued to extremity.

Lastly, "I desire to account my Surety's satisfaction my best riches; and to treasure up charily in my heart my acquittances sealed with his blood; and to fetch from his store all needful grace from time to time, his all-sufficiency alone on all occasions must furnish me with wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption; he is and must be "all in all to me." To Him, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all glory, and love, and faith, and obedience rendered for ever! Amen.

AN
APPENDIX,

APPLIED TO

THE CALLING OF A MINISTER.

“I desire specially to improve my calling of a minister to the advancement of religion,” both in my own and other’s hearts. Whatever calling I had, I should be bound so to direct it ; but this was erected to that purpose immediately, and to no other—to found men in religion, and build them up in it. As therefore I must first account, that of me is required a greater forwardness in religion, and higher degree of heavenly-mindedness, and being to the glory of Christ, than of ordinary Christians ; because while their calling oft distracts and disturbs them from thinking of God and Christ, mine leads me directly to it ; and those notions which they through ignorance or disuse are strangers to, I am happily necessitated to make familiar to me ; so though I may yet have imperfection, I pretend religion in vain, if I allow myself in carelessness or unprofitableness in that profession of mine, the very exercise whereof is among the main businesses of religion, and which therefore in the preparations for it, and exercise of it, challenges all my strength of affections and spirits. If God should have given me my choice of all the employments the world knows, I could not wish any other, to do at once most good to my soul ; and express what good I get, to do other’s souls good also, and most shew my love to Christ and Christians, in thankful-

ness for all that good I have and look for, both to my soul and body.

2. "I desire therefore to esteem it among the highest favours," among the greatest honours, so to be set on work, especially with success; and to make it appear that I do so esteem it, by putting forth all my abilities, that there may be no want in me, if success follow not towards others. All the time my Saviour lived in his first life upon earth, after his baptism (till he was to prepare himself for the sacrifice of his death), he undertook no other calling than this, and after his resurrection again practised it, so long as he conversed with men here below. O let my heart therefore be so possess with his spirit, that though my body must needs have its natural supplies in due season, yet I may ever, as he did, count it my meat and drink to fulfil and finish this work; and my recreation to go about doing good. And therefore though his sabbath, the Lord's day, be according to nature, the day of my greatest toil; yet because that day I most advance the business of his kingdom, and my own soul together, I may, with more affection than others can, call the sabbath a delight, and triumph in it, not only as a day of liberty, but of victory.

3. "I desire to extend the labours of my function, beyond the expectation of those to whom they are to be directed;" I mean not for length but frequency; to be instant in season and out of season. And to rejoice, therefore, and only therefore, in the multitude of hearers, because among many, there is more hope of doing good, whilst yet I never suffer myself to be discouraged by their paucity, since God's grace is not tied to expect the help of a crowd; and one soul gained or confirmed, is worth an age of pains.

4. "I desire in all the public exercises of my ministry, to suit my matter, method, and phrase, and all other circumstances, so as I may be best understood and remembered, and may best convince and persuade every man's conscience," and not to own one tittle or syllable that might hinder this in any: remembering herein my

'business to be, not to traffic for my own credit, but to deliver the messages of him, who is no respecter of persons, but esteems the meanest soul worth shedding his blood for, as well as the greatest.

5. "I desire, therefore, no more to neglect the instruction of the poorest child, or the visiting of the most contemptible creature within my charge, than of the richest and noblest;" rather those of the more eminent sort may better spare me; because they may for themselves and theirs, have more means and comforts than others can.

6. "Specially, I desire not to omit the advantage of any one's being sick;" because, 1. Then they may have more leisure to ponder on any good counsel than the world, at other times, will give them leave. 2. Then, also, perhaps they may be straight going out of the world, and I may never again have any more opportunity of offering them good; and then too, probably, they may be more sensible of the reality of those things which concern another world, when they see nothing in this world will do them good, or keep them here; and when I come to any, never to omit the mention of death, which will neither stay our leisure, nor be hastened by talking of it; and herein to regard the good of a soul, rather than the pleasing of any one's fancy.

7. "I desire in all things, men should rather be pleased with what I must do, than for me to do any thing merely to please men," unless in things otherwise indifferent; and in them, indeed, to be willing to please all men in all things; taking counsel, in things of that sort, of men's infirmities, but in substantials only of God's word; except that even such men's weakness or waywardness may sometimes so vary the case, as that one while they may necessitate a present enforcement of a doctrine, and another time the forbearance for that season. And, because the determination of this is oftentimes a business of importance, I may bend all strength of my prayers and wits about it; and where I can, call also for the help of

other men, more experienced in the Divine mystery of gaining and feeding souls ; being ready also to lend my best help to others as well, as being all fellow-workmen in the same spiritual husbandry and building, though our lots lie in several quarters.

8. “ I desire ever to have a special care of laying the foundation aright ;” first, by constant catechising of all, from children to the eldest that will admit it ; misdoubting still the ignorance of the common sort, when I come to visit them. And however, they only call for comfort, yet to be most large in urging those things which they appear to be most defective in ; as in the knowledge of sin, and the nature of repentance, and even of faith itself.

9. “ I desire, by all just means possible, to prevent all quarrels” between me and any others ; and so all prejudices, as that which would much hinder my work ; and to be willing to redeem their good opinion with any thing which is my own, that I can well spare.

10. “ I desire to reserve my heat, my anger, to encounter sin ;” and yet so to temper it with the meekness of wisdom, as it may appear I mean no hurt, but altogether good to the sinner, and not to be wearied either out of my zeal and meekness, either with the stupidity or fierceness of any.

11. “ I desire to acquaint myself so with the temper and spirit of every one, as I may speak most directly to their consciences,” without any decyphering of their persons ; yet not to forbear the public reproof of any sin, because the impudence of any person hath made their guilt notorious.

12. “ I desire to account the commandment of not suffering sin to lie upon my neighbour, to lie principally upon me ;” and therefore, if public reproof of all, in the presence of the offender, will not affect him, to reckon a wise and particular reproof in private, to be a debt of love I owe him, and to defer the payment of it no longer, than till the Providence of God, by some special act of giving or taking away somewhat of worth or esteem, hath

made him fit to receive it ; but specially not to let slip the season of sickness or remorse for sin upon any other ground, because then he hath both more need of it, and it is like to do him most good.

13. "I desire in all places, companies, and intercourses, to remember my calling," and not only to take heed that my example (or any one's that dependeth upon me) pull not down at any time what my work is to build, or build what I am to pull down ; but also to know myself authorized, wherever I come, to profess myself a projector, an architect for my heavenly Master; and therefore not only to be ready to undertake the edification of any soul that calls for my help, but likewise where I shall neither take any other man's work out of his hand, nor hinder that which is more properly mine own work ; to be forward, and offer myself upon the least probability of doing good.

14. "I desire to renew my commission from my great Lord and Master, every time I go about any of his work, by supplicating his grace to go forth with me to the end," and to look with contentedness and patience of faith for my reward from him alone ; even the more, rather than the less, when being not guilty in myself of any willing fault to disappoint it, I see not the work prosper in my hands, because he proportions his reward according to our work, which is endeavour not success, which is his work ; and we have wrought most hard, toiled most many times, when we have least success, the want of it greatly increasing our toil ; besides that, for the most part, it is not merely negative but positive, through the opposition of those we would do good to, but cannot ; and this to endure, is persecution ; to which is promised a great recompence of reward : but all, only, from his grace alone, who first "works in us mightily," to make us do and suffer all things for him, and then rewards us mercifully and bountifully, through Jesus Christ. To whom, therefore, be all service, and thanksgiving, and glory for ever. *Amen.*

AN

E X T R A C T

FROM THE

W H O L E D U T Y O F M A N .



First printed in the Year 1657.

TO

THE READER.

WHOEVER reads the following Treatise, should consider the time wherein it was wrote. Never was there more talk of faith in Christ, of justification by faith, and of the fruits of the Spirit. And scarce ever was there less practice of plain, moral duties, of justice, mercy, and truth. At such a time it was peculiarly needful to inculcate what was so generally neglected. And this is well done in the ensuing tract, (particularly with regard to the extracts of religion,) which far better deserves its title than that miserable thing which has lately usurped the name.

I do not apprehend that any one page herein contradicts that fundamental principle, “By grace ye are saved through faith, being justified freely through the redemption which is in Jesus.” Nor am I afraid that any who have read the preceding volumes should be induced by any part of this, to build again the things

which they had thrown down, to seek salvation by their own righteousness. But I trust many, who have already experienced the free grace of God in Christ Jesus, may hereby be more fully instructed to walk in him, and more thoroughly furnished for every good word and work.

J. WESLEY.

A
P R E F A C E,
SHEWING
THE NECESSITY
OF
CARING FOR THE SOUL.



1. THE only intent of this ensuing Treatise is to be a short and plain direction to the very meanest readers, to behave themselves so in this world, that they may be happy for ever in the next. But because it is in vain to tell men their duty till they be persuaded of the necessity of performing it, I shall, before I proceed to the particulars required of every Christian, endeavour to win them to the practice of one general duty, preparatory to all the rest; and that is, the consideration and care of their own souls.

2. Man, we know, is made up of two parts, a body and a soul: the body, only the husk or shell of the soul, subject to many diseases and pains while it lives, and at last to death itself; and then it is so far from being valued, that it is not to be endured above-ground, but laid to rot in the earth. Yet to this viler part of us we perform a great deal of care; but the more precious part,

the soul, is little thought of, no care taken how it fares ; but as if it were a thing that nothing concerned us, is left quite neglected.

3. This carelessness of the soul is the root of all the sin we commit ; and therefore, whosoever intends to set upon a Christian course, must in the first place amend that. To the doing whereof there needs no deep learning ; the simplest man living hath understanding enough for it, if he will but act in this by the same rules of common reason whereby he proceeds in his worldly business. I will therefore briefly set down some of those motives which use to stir up our care of any thing, and then apply them to the soul.

4. There be four things especially which use to awake our care ; the first is the worth of the thing ; the second, the usefulness of it to us, when we cannot part with it without great damage : the third, the great danger of it ; and the fourth, the likelihood that our care will not be in vain.

5. For the first, we know our care of any worldly thing is answerable to the worth of it ; what is of greatest price, we are most watchful to preserve, and most fearful to lose : no man locks up dung in his chest, but his money, or what he counts precious. Now, in this respect, the soul deserves more care than all the things in the world besides, for it is of infinitely more worth ; first, in that it is made after the image of God. Now the more any thing is like him, the more it is to be valued. But it is sure, that no creature upon earth is at all like God but the soul of man ; and therefore nothing ought to have so much of our care. Secondly, the soul never dies. We use to prize things according to their durableness ; what is most lasting is most worth. Now the soul is a thing that will last for ever ; when wealth, beauty, strength, nay, our very bodies themselves fade away, the soul still continues. Therefore, in that respect, also, the soul is of the greatest worth, and then what strange madness is it for us to neglect it as we do ? We can spend days, and weeks,

and months, and years, nay, our whole lives, in hunting after a little wealth, which is of no continuance ; and in the mean time, let this great durable treasure, our souls, be stolen from us by the devil.

6. A second motive to our care of any thing is the usefulness of it to us, or the great mischief we shall have by the loss of it. Common reason teaches us this in all things of this life. If our hairs fall, we do not much regard, because we can be well enough without them. But if we are in danger to lose our eyes or limbs, we think all the care we can take little enough to prevent it, because we know it will be a great misery. But certainly there is no misery to be compared to that misery that follows the loss of the soul. It is true, we cannot lose our souls so that they shall cease to be ; but we may lose that happy estate to which they were created, and plunge them into the extremest misery. In a word, we may lose them in hell, whence there is no fetching them back, and so they are lost for ever. Nay, in this consideration, our very bodies are concerned, those darlings of ours, for which all our care is laid out ; for they must certainly, after death, be raised again, and be joined again to the soul, and take part with it in whatever state. If then our care for the body take up all our time and thoughts, and leave us none to bestow on the poor soul, it is sure the soul will, for want of that care, be made for ever miserable. But it is as sure, that that very body must be so too. And therefore, if you have any true kindness to your body, shew it, by taking care for your souls. Think with yourselves, how you will be able to endure “ everlasting burnings.” If a small spark of fire, lighting on the least part of the body, be so intolerable, what will it be to have the whole cast into the hottest flames, and that not for some few hours or days, but for ever ? So that when you have spent many thousands of years in that unspeakable torment, you shall be no nearer coming out of it than you were the first day you went in. Think of this, I say, and think this withal, that this will certainly

be the end of neglecting the soul; and therefore afford it some care, if it be but in pity to the body, that must bear a part in its miseries.

7. The third motive to the care of any thing is, its being in danger. Now a thing may be in danger two ways: first, by enemies from without. This is the case of the sheep, which is still in danger of being devoured by wolves; and we know that makes the shepherd so much the more watchful over it. Thus it is with the soul, which is in a great deal of danger, in respect of its enemies; those we know are the world, the flesh, and the devil, which are all such enemies to it, that the very first act we do, in behalf of our souls, is to vow a continual war against them. But that we may the better understand what danger the soul is in, let us a little consider the quality of those enemies.

8. In a war, you know, there are divers things that make an enemy terrible: the first is subtilty and cunning, by which alone many victories have been won; and, in this respect, the devil is a dangerous adversary: he long since gave sufficient proof of his subtilty in beguiling our first parents, who yet were much wiser than we are; and therefore no wonder if he deceive us. Secondly, the watchfulness and diligence of an enemy makes him the more to be feared; and here the devil exceeds: it is his business to destroy us, and he is no loiterer at it; "he goes up and down, seeking whom he may devour," 1 Pet. v. 8. He watches all opportunities of advantage against us with such diligence, that he will be sure never to let any slip him. Thirdly, an enemy near us is more to be feared than any one at a distance; for if he be far off, we may have time to prepare ourselves against him; but if he be near, he may steal on us unawares. And of this sort is the flesh: it is an enemy at our doors, shall I say? Nay, in our bosoms; it is always near us, to take occasion of doing mischief. Fourthly, the baser and falser an enemy is, the more dangerous. He that hides his malice, under the shew of friendship, will be able to

do a great deal the more hurt : and this again is the flesh, which, like Joab to Abner, 2 Sam. iii. 27, pretends to speak peaceably to us, but wounds us to death. Fifthly, the number of enemies makes them more terrible ; and the world is a vast army against us. There is no state or condition in it, nay, scarce a creature which doth not, at some time or other, fight against the soul. The honours of the world seek to wound us by pride ; the wealth by covetousness ; the prosperity of it tempts us to forget God, the adversities to murmur at him ; our very table becomes a snare to us ; our meat draws us to gluttony, our drink to drunkenness ; our company, nay, our nearest friends, often bear a part in this war against us, whilst either, by their example or persuasion, they entice us to sin.

9. Consider all this, and then tell me, whether a soul thus beset hath leisure to sleep ; even Dalilah could tell Sampson it was time to awake, when the Philistines were upon him. And Christ tells us, “ If the good man of the house had known in what hour the thief would have come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken up,” Matt. xxiv. 43. But we live in the midst of thieves, and therefore must look for them every hour ; and yet who is there among us, that hath that care of his soul which he hath for his house ; or, indeed, the meanest thing that belongs to him ? I fear our souls may say to us, as Christ to his disciples, Matt. xxvi. 40, “ What ! could ye not watch with me one hour ? ” For I doubt it would pose many of us to tell when we bestowed one hour on them, though we know them to be continually beset with most dangerous enemies. And then, alas ! what is like to be the case of these poor souls, when their adversaries bestow so much care and diligence to destroy them, and we will afford none to preserve them ? Surely the same as of a besieged town, where no watch is kept, which is certain to fall a prey to the enemy. Consider “ this, ye that forget God,” nay, ye that forget yourselves,

“lest he pluck you away, and there be none to deliver you,” Psal. l. 22.

10. But I told you there was a second way, whereby a thing may be in danger, and that is from some disorder within itself. This is often the case of our bodies; they are not only liable to outward violence, but they are, within themselves, sick and diseased. And then we can be sensible enough that they are in danger, and need not to be taught to seek for means to recover them. But this is also the case of the soul; we reckon those parts of the body diseased, that do not rightly perform their office; we account it a sick palate that tastes not aright, a sick stomach that digests not. And thus it is with the soul, when its parts do not rightly perform their offices.

11. The parts of the soul are especially these three: the *understanding*, the *will*, and the *affections*. And that these are disordered, there needs little proof; let any man look seriously into his own heart, and consider how little it is he knows of spiritual things, and then tell me whether his understanding be not dark? How much apter is he to will evil than good? And then tell me, whether his will be not crooked? And how strong desires he hath after the pleasures of sin, and what cold and faint ones towards God? And then tell me, whether his affections be not disordered, and rebellious even against the voice of his own reason? Now, as in bodily diseases, the first step to the cure is to know the cause of the sickness; so likewise here it is very necessary for us to know how the soul first fell into this diseased condition, and that I shall now briefly tell you.

12. God created the first man, Adam, without sin, and endued his soul with the full knowledge of his duty; and with such a strength, that he might, if he would, perform all that was required of him. Having thus created him, he makes a covenant or agreement with him, that if he continued in obedience to God, without committing sin; then first, that strength of soul, which

he then had, should still be continued to him ; and secondly, that he should never die, but be taken up into heaven, there to be happy for ever. But, on the other side, if he committed sin, and disobeyed God, then both he, and all his children after him, should lose that knowledge, and that perfect strength, which enabled him to do all that God required of him ; and, secondly, should be subject to death ; and not only so, but to eternal damnation in hell.

13. This was the agreement made with Adam, and all mankind, in him (which we usually call the first covenant,) upon which God gave Adam a particular commandment, which was no more but this : that he should not eat of one only tree of that garden wherein he had placed him. But he, by the persuasion of the devil, eats of that tree, and so brings that curse upon himself, and all his posterity. And so, by that one sin, he lost both the full knowledge of his duty, and the power of performing it. And we being born after his image, did so likewise ; and so are become both ignorant in discerning what we ought to do, and weak and unable to do it, having a backwardness to all good, and a readiness to all evil, like a sick stomach, which loaths all wholesome food, and longs after such trash as may nourish the disease.

14. And now you see where we got this sickness of soul, and likewise that it is like to prove a deadly one ; and therefore I presume I need say no more to assure you our souls are in danger. It is more likely you will, from this description, think them hopeless. But that you may not, from that conceit, excuse your neglect of them, I shew you the contrary, by proceeding to the fourth motive of care.

15. That fourth motive is the likelihood that our care will not be in vain, but that it will be a means to preserve the thing cared for ; where this is wanting, it disheartens our care. A physician leaves his patient when he sees him past hope ; but, on the contrary, when he sees hope

of recovery, he plies him with medicines. Now in this very respect, we have a great deal of reason to take care of our souls; for they are not so far gone but they may be recovered; nay, it is certain they will, if we do our parts towards it.

16. For though, by that sin of Adam, all mankind were under the sentence of eternal condemnation, yet it pleased God so far to pity our misery as to give us his Son, and in him to make a new covenant with us.

17. This second covenant was made with Adam, and us in him, presently after his fall, and is briefly contained Gen. iii. 15, where God declares, that *the Seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head*. And this was made up as the first was, of some mercies to be afforded by God, and some duties to be performed by us.

18. God therein promises to send his only Son, who is God equal with himself, to earth, to become "man, like unto us in all things, sin only excepted," and to do for us these several things :

19. First, to make known to us the whole will of his Father; in the performance whereof we shall be sure to be accepted and rewarded by him. And this was one great part of his business, which he performed in those sermons and precepts we find set down in the gospel. And herein he is our Prophet, it being the work of a prophet of old not only to foretell, but to teach. Our duty, in this particular, is to hearken diligently to him, to be ready to learn that will of God, which he came from heaven to reveal to us.

20. The second thing he was to do for us, was to satisfy God for our sins; not only that one of Adam, but all the sins of all mankind, that truly repent and believe; and by this means to obtain for us forgiveness of sins, the favour of God, and so to redeem us from hell and eternal damnation, which was the punishment due to our sin. All this he did for us by his death. He offered up himself a sacrifice for the sins of all those who heartily bewail and forsake them. And in this he is our Priest, it being

the priest's office to "offer sacrifice for the sins of the people." Our duty in this particular is, first, truly to repent of our sins, without which they will never be forgiven us, though Christ has died. Secondly, steadfastly to believe, that if we do that, we shall have the benefits of that sacrifice of his; all our sins, how many and great soever, shall be forgiven us, and we saved from those eternal punishments which were due unto us for them. Another part of the priest's office was blessing and praying for the people; and this also Christ performs to us. It was his special commission from his Father to bless us, as St. Peter tells us, Acts iii. 26, "God sent his Son to bless you;" and the following words shew wherein that blessing consists, in "turning away every one of you from his iniquity:" those means which he has used for the turning us from our sins, are to be reckoned, of all other, the greatest blessings; and for the other part, that of praying, that he not only performed on earth, but continues still to do it in heaven, "He sits on the right hand of God, and makes request for us," Rom. viii. 34. Our duty herein is, not to resist this unspeakable blessing of his, but to be willing to be thus blest in being "turned from our sins," and not to make void all his prayers and intercessions for us, which will never prevail for us whilst we continue in them.

21. The third thing that Christ was to do for us was to enable us, or give us strength to do what God requires of us. This he doth by sending his Holy Spirit into our hearts, to give us strength to overcome temptations to sin, and to do all that he now, under the gospel, requires of us. And in this he is our King, it being the office of a king to govern and rule, and to subdue enemies. Our duty in this particular, is to give up ourselves obedient subjects of his, to be governed by him, to obey all his laws, nor to take part with any rebel; that is, not to cherish any sin, but diligently to pray for his grace to enable us to subdue all, and then carefully to make use of it to that purpose.

22. Lastly, he has purchased for all that faithfully obey him, an eternal glorious inheritance, the kingdom of heaven, whither he is gone before to take possession for us. Our duty herein, is to be exceeding careful that we forfeit not our parts in it, which we shall certainly do, if we continue impenitent in any sin. Secondly, not to fasten our affections on this world, but to raise them according to the apostle, Col. iii. 2, "Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth;" continually longing to come to the possession of that blessed inheritance, in comparison whereof all things here should seem vile and mean to us.

23. This is the sum of that second covenant we are now under, wherein you see what Christ hath done; how he executes those three great offices of King, Priest, and Prophet; as also, what is required of us; without our faithful performance of which, all that he hath done shall never stand us in any stead; for he will never be a Priest to save any who take him not as well for their Prophet to teach, and their King to rule them: nay, if we neglect our part of this covenant, our condition will be yet worse than if it had never been made; for we shall then be to answer, not for the breach of law only, as in the first, but for the abuse of mercy, which is of all sins the most provoking. On the other side, if we faithfully perform it, it is then most certain that all the benefits of Christ belong to us.

24. And now you see how little reason you have to cast off the care of your souls, upon a conceit they are past cure, for it is plain they are not; nay, certainly they are in that very condition which of all others makes them fittest for our care. If they had not been thus redeemed by Christ, that care would have been in vain. On the other side, if his redemption had been such that all men should have been saved by it, though they lived as they listed, we should have thought it needless to take care for them, because they were safe without it. But it hath pleased God so to order it, that our care must be the

means by which they must receive the good even of all that Christ hath done for them.

25. And now, if after all that God hath done to save these souls of ours, we will not bestow a little care on them ourselves, we deserve to perish. If a physician should undertake a patient that was in some desperate disease, and by his skill bring him so far out of it, that he were sure to recover, if he would but take care of himself, and observe those rules the physician set him; would you not think that man weary of his life, that would refuse to do that? So certainly that man is weary of his soul, wilfully casts it away, that will not consent to those easy conditions, by which he may save it.

26. You see how great kindness God hath to these souls of ours, the whole Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost have all done their parts for them. The Father gave his only Son; the Son gave himself; left his glory, and endured the bitter death of the cross, merely to keep our souls from perishing. The Holy Ghost is become, as it were, our attendant; waits upon us with continual offers of his grace, to enable us to do that which may preserve them; nay, he is so desirous we should accept those offers of his, that he is said to be grieved when we refuse them, Eph. iv. 30. Now what greater affront can we put upon God, than to despise what he thus values? That those souls of ours, which Christ thought worth every drop of his blood, we should not think worth any part of our care? We use, in things of the world, to rate them according to the opinion of those who are best skilled in them: now certainly God who made our souls, best knows the worth of them; and since he prizes them so highly, let us (if it be but in reverence to him) be ashamed to neglect them; especially now that they are in so hopeful a condition, that nothing but our own carelessness can destroy them.

27. I have now briefly gone over those four motives of care I at first proposed, which are each of them such as never misses to stir up men's minds towards the things of this

world; and I have also shewed you how much more reasonable it is they should do the like for the soul. And now what can I say more, but conclude in the words of Isaiah, xlvi. 8, "Remember this, and shew yourselves men:" that is, deal with your souls, as your reason teaches you to do with all other things that concern you. And sure this common justice binds you to; for the soul is that which furnishes you with that reason, which you exercise in all your worldly business; and shall the soul itself receive no benefit from that reason which it affords you? This is, as if a master of a family, who provides food for his servants, should be kept from eating any himself, and so remain the only starved creature in his house.

28. And as justice ties you to this, so mercy doth likewise; you know the poor soul will fall into endless and unspeakable miseries, if you continue to neglect it, and then it will be too late to consider it. The last refuge you can hope for is God's mercy; but that you have despised and abused. And with what face can you, in your greatest need, beg for his mercy to your souls, when you would not afford them your own?

29. Lay this to your hearts, and as ever you hope for God's pity, when you most want it, be sure, in time, to pity yourselves, by taking that due care of your precious souls which belongs to them.

30. If what hath been said have persuaded you to this so necessary a duty, my next work will be, to tell you how this care must be employed; and that, in a word, is in the doing of all those things which tend to the making the soul happy, which is the end of our care; and what those are, I come now to shew you.

AN
E X T R A C T
FROM THE
W H O L E D U T Y O F M A N .

CHAP. I.

I. *Of the duty of man by the light of nature.* II. *By the light of Scripture.* III. *The three great branches of man's duty, to God, to ourselves, our neighbours.* IV. *Our duty to God.* V. *Of faith.* VI. *The promises.* VII. *Of hope.* VIII. *Of love.* IX. *Of fear.* X. *Of trust.*

THE benefits purchased for us by Christ, are such as will undoubtedly make the soul happy; for eternal happiness is one of them. But because these benefits belong not to us till we perform the condition required of us; whoever desires the happiness of his soul, must set himself to the performing of that condition. What that is, I have already mentioned in general, the obeying the whole will of God. But then that will of God containing many particulars, it is necessary we should also know what those are; that is, what are the several things that God requires of us, our performance whereof will bring us to everlasting happiness, and the neglect to endless misery.

I. Of the Light of Nature.

2. Of these things there are some which God hath so stamped upon our souls, that we should have known them to be our duty, though we had never been told so by the Scripture. That this is so, we may see by the heathens, who having never heard of either the Old or New Testament, yet acknowledge themselves bound to some general duties, as to worship God, to be just, to honour their parents, and the like; and as St. Paul saith, Rom. ii. 15, "Their consciences do in those things accuse or excuse them;" that is, tell them whether they have done what they should do in those particulars or not.

3. Now though Christ hath brought greater light into the world, yet he never meant by it to put out that natural light which God hath set up in our souls. Therefore let me here, by the way, advise you not to walk contrary even to this lesser light; I mean, not to venture on any of those acts which mere natural conscience will tell you are sins.

4. It is just matter of sadness to any Christian, to see some who profess much religion, and yet live in such sins as a mere heathen would abhor; men that, pretending to higher degrees of light and holiness than their brethren, yet practise contrary to all the rules of common honesty, and make it part of their Christian liberty so to do: of whose seducement it concerns all that love their souls to beware; and for that purpose let this be laid as a foundation, That that religion or opinion cannot be of God, which allows men in any wickedness.

5. But though we must not put out this light which God hath put into our souls, yet this is not the only way whereby God hath revealed his will; and therefore we are not to rest here, but proceed to the knowledge of those other things which God hath by other means revealed.

II. *The Light of Scripture.*

6. The way for us to know them is by the Scriptures, wherein are set down those several commands of God which he hath given to be the rule of our duty.

7. Of those, some were given before Christ came into the world, such are those precepts we find scattered throughout the Old Testament, but especially contained in the ten commandments; others were given by Christ, and those you find in the New Testament: in the several precepts given by him and his apostles, but especially in that Divine sermon on the mount, set down in the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of St. Matthew's gospel.

8. All these would be severally spoken to, but because that would make the discourse very long, I choose to proceed in another manner, by summing up all these together, and so, as plainly as I can, to lay down what is the duty of every Christian.

III. *The three great Branches of Man's Duty.*

9. This I find briefly contained in the words of the apostle, Tit. ii. 12, "That we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world;" where the word *soberly* contains our duty to ourselves; *righteously*, our duty to our neighbour; and *godly*, our duty to God. These therefore shall be the heads of my discourse, our duty to God, ourselves, and our neighbour. I begin with that to God, that being the ground-work whereon to build both the others.

IV. *Our Duty to God.*

10. There are many parts of our duty to God, the two chief are these: First, to acknowledge him to be God: Secondly, to have no other. Under these are contained all those particulars, which make up our whole duty to God, which shall be shewed in their order.

11. To acknowledge him to be God, is to believe him to be an infinite glorious Spirit, that was from everlasting, without beginning, and shall be to everlasting, without end. That he is our Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God, blessed for ever. That he is unchangeable ; that he is no bodily substance, such as our eyes may behold, but spiritual and invisible, whom “ no man hath seen, nor can see ;” that he is infinitely great and excellent, beyond all that we can imagine ; that he hath received his being from none, and gives being to all things.

12. All this we are to believe of him in regard of his being : but besides this, he is set forth to us in the Scripture by several excellencies, as that he is of infinite goodness and mercy, truth, justice, wisdom, power, all-sufficiency, majesty ; that he disposes and governs all things by his providence ; that he knows all things, and is present in all places ; these are called the attributes of God, and all these we must firmly believe to be in God, and that in the greatest degree, and so that they can never cease to be in him, he can never be other than infinitely good, merciful, true, &c.

13. But the acknowledging him for our God signifies yet more than this ; it means that we should perform to him all those several parts of duty which belong from a creature to his God ; what those are I am now to tell you.

V. *Of Faith.*

14. The first is faith, the believing, most firmly, that all that he saith is perfectly true. This necessarily rises from his truth, it being natural for us to believe whatsoever is said by one of whose truth we are confident. Now the Holy Scriptures being the word of God, we are therefore to conclude, that all that is contained in them is most true.

15. The things contained in them are of these four sorts : First, affirmations, such are all the stories of the

bible, when it is said, such and such things came so and so to pass : Christ was born of a virgin, was laid in a manger, &c. And such also are many points of doctrine, as that there are three Persons in the Godhead, that Christ is the Son of God, and the like. All things of this sort thus delivered in Scripture we are to believe most true. And not only so, but because they are all written for our instruction, we are to consider them for that purpose, that is, by them to lay the foundation of Christian knowledge, on which we may build a Christian life.

16. The second sort of things contained in the Scripture, are the commands, that is, the several things enjoined us by God to perform ; these we are to believe to come from him, and to be most just and fit for him to command. But then this belief must bring forth obedience, that what we believe thus fit to be done, be indeed done by us ; otherwise our belief that they come from him, serves but to make us more inexcusable.

17. Thirdly, the Scripture contains threatenings ; many texts there are which threaten to them that go on in their sins, the wrath of God, and under that are contained all the punishments and miseries of this life, and everlasting destruction. Now we are most steadfastly to believe, that these are God's threats, and that they will certainly be performed to every impenitent sinner. But then the use we are to make of this belief, is to keep from those sins to which this destruction is threatened ; otherwise our belief adds to our guilt, that will willingly go on in spite of those threatenings.

18. Fourthly, the Scripture contains promises, and those both to our bodies and our souls ; for our bodies, there are many promises that God will provide for them what he sees necessary. To the soul, there are many and high promises ; as, first, That of present ease, Matt. xi. 29, " Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, and ye shall find rest to your souls : " but here it is apparent, that before this rest belongs to us, we must have taken on us Christ's yoke, become his servants and disciples.

Finally, there are promises to the soul even of all the benefits of Christ; but yet those only to such as perform the conditions required; that is, pardon of sins to those that repent and believe, increase of grace to those that diligently make use of what they have already, and humbly pray for more; and eternal salvation to those that continue to their lives' end in hearty obedience to his commands.

19. The belief of the promises must therefore stir us up to perform the condition; for us to look for the benefit of them on other terms, is the same mad presumption that it would be in a servant to challenge his master to give him a reward for having done nothing of his work, to which alone the reward was promised. Nay, further it is sure, God hath given these promises to no other end but to invite us to holiness; yea, he gave his Son, in whom all its promises are as it were summed up for this end. We usually look so much at Christ's coming to satisfy for us, that we forget this other part of his errand. But there is nothing surer, than that the main purpose of his coming into the world was to plant goodness among men.

20. Now we know Christ is the foundation of all the promises; "In him all the promises of God are yea and amen," 2 Cor. i. 20. And therefore if God gave Christ to this end, certainly the promises are to the same also. And then how great an abuse of them is it to make them serve for purposes quite contrary to what they were intended, viz. to the encouraging us in sins, which they will certainly do, if we persuade ourselves they belong to us, how wickedly soever we live. The apostle teaches us another use of them, 2 Cor. vii. 1, "Having therefore these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." When we do thus, we may justly apply the promises to ourselves. But until then, though these promises be of certain truth, yet we can reap no benefit from them, because we are not the persons to whom they are made;

that is, we perform not the condition required to give us right to them.

21. This is the faith or belief required of us towards the things God hath revealed to us in the Scripture, to wit, such as may answer the end for which they were revealed; that is, the bringing us to good lives; the bare believing the truth of them; without this, is no more than the devils do; as St. James tells us, chap. ii. 19. Only they are not so unreasonable as some of us are, for they will tremble, as knowing well this faith will never do them any good. But many of us go on confidently, and doubt not the sufficiency of our faith, though we have not the least fruit of obedience to approve it by; let such hear St. James's judgment, chap. ii. 26, "As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith, if it have not works, is dead also."

VI. *Of Hope.*

22. A second duty to God is hope, that is, a comfortable expectation of these good things he hath promised. But this, as I told you before of faith, must be such as agrees to the nature of the promises, which being such as requires a condition on our part, we can hope no further than we make that good, or if we do, we are so far from performing by it this duty of hope, that we commit the great sin of presumption, which is nothing else but hoping where God hath given us no ground to hope. This every man doth, that hopes for pardon of sins and eternal life, without that repentance and obedience to which alone they are promised; the true hope is that which purifies us, St. John saith, 1 Epist. iii. 3, "Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure;" that is, it makes him leave his sins, and earnestly endeavour to be holy as Christ is, and that which doth not so, how confident soever it be, may well be concluded to be but that hope of the hypocrite, which Job assures us shall perish.

23. But there is another way of transgressing this duty, besides that of presumption, and that is by despair, by which I mean not that which is ordinarily so called, viz. the despairing of mercy, so long as we continue in our sins, for that is but just for us to do. But I mean such a despair as makes us give over endeavour; that is, when a man that sees he is not at the present such a one as the promises belong to, concludes he can never become such, and therefore neglects all duty, and goes on in his sins. This is indeed the sinful despair, and that which if it be continued in, must end in destruction.

24. Now the work of hope is to prevent this, by setting before us the promises, that they belong to all that will but perform the condition. And therefore though a man have not hitherto performed it, and so hath yet no right to them, yet hope will tell him, that that right may yet be gained, if he will now set heartily about it. It is therefore strange folly for any man, be he never so sinful, to give up himself for lost, when if he will but change his course, he shall be as certain to partake of the promises of mercy, as if he had never gone on in those former sins.

VII. *Of Love.*

25. A third duty to God is love; there are two common motives of love among men. The one the goodness and excellency of the person, the other his particular kindness and love to us; and both these are in the highest degree in God.

26. First, he is of infinite goodness and excellency in himself; this you were before taught to believe of him, and no man can doubt it that considers but this one thing, that there is nothing good in the world, but what hath received all its goodness from God. His goodness is as the sea, and the goodness of all creatures but as some small streams flowing from the sea. Now you would certainly think him a madman, that should say the sea

was not greater than some little brook. And certainly it is no less folly to suppose that the goodness of God doth not as much (nay, infinitely more,) exceed that of all creatures. Besides, the goodness of the creature is imperfect and mixed with much evil; but his is pure and entire without any such mixture. He is perfectly holy, and cannot be tainted with the least impurity, neither can he be the author of any to us; for though he be the cause of all the goodness in us, he is the cause of none of our sins. This St. James expressly tells us, chap. i. 23, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man."

27. But, secondly, God is not only thus good in himself, but he is also wonderfully good, kind, and merciful to us; we are made up of two parts, a soul and a body, and to each of these God hath expressed infinite mercy and tenderness. Do but consider what was before told you of the second covenant, and the mercies therein offered, even Christ himself and all his benefits, and also that he offers them so sincerely and heartily, that no man can miss of enjoying them but by his own default. For he doth most really and affectionately desire we should embrace them and live; as appears by that solemn oath of his, Ezek. xxxiii. 11, "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live:" whereto he adds this passionate expression, "Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die?" Consider this, and then surely you cannot but say, he hath great kindness to our souls. Nay, let every man but remember with himself the many calls he hath had to repentance; sometimes outward by the word, sometimes inward by the secret whispers of God's Spirit in his heart, which were only to woo and entreat him to avoid eternal misery, and to accept of eternal happiness; let him, I say, remember these, together with those many other means

God hath used toward him for the same end, and he will have reason to confess God's kindness, not only to men's souls in general, but to his own in particular.

28. Neither hath he been wanting to our bodies. All the good things they enjoy; as health, strength, food, raiment, and whatever else concerns them, are merely his gifts; so that indeed it is impossible we should be ignorant of his mercies to them, all those outward comforts and refreshments we daily enjoy being continual witnesses of it; and though some enjoy more of these than others, yet there is no person but enjoys so much, in one kind or other, as abundantly shews God's mercy and kindness to him in respect of his body.

29. And now surely you will think it but reasonable we should love him, who is in all respects thus lovely. Indeed this is a duty so generally acknowledged, that if you should ask any man the question, whether he loved God or not; he would think you did him great wrong to doubt of it; yet for all this, it is too plain that there are very few that do indeed love him; and this will soon be proved to you by examining a little what are the common effects of love which we bear to men like ourselves, and then trying whether we can shew any such fruits of our love to God.

30. I will name but two. The first is a desire of pleasing, the second a desire of enjoying. These are constantly the fruits of love. For the first, it is known by all, that he that loves any person is very desirous to do whatsoever he thinks will be pleasing to him; and, according to the degree of love, so is this desire more or less; where we love earnestly, we are very earnest and careful to please. Now if we indeed love God, it will bring forth this fruit, we shall be careful to please him in all things. Therefore, as you judge of the tree by its fruits, so may you judge of your love of God by this fruit of it; nay, indeed, this is the way of trial, which Christ himself hath given us, John xiv. 15, "If ye love me,

keep my commandments.” And where this proof is wanting, it will be impossible to testify our love to God.

31. It must be farther considered, that this love of God must not be in a low degree; for besides that the motives to it, his excellency and his kindness, are in the highest, the same commandment which bids us love God, bids us “love him with all our heart, and with all our strength.” And therefore, to the fulfilling of this commandment, it is necessary that we love him in that degree; and if we do so, then certainly we shall have not only some faint endeavours of pleasing, but such as are most diligent and earnest, such as will put us upon the most painful and costly duties, make us willing to forsake our own ease, goods, friends, yea, life itself, when we cannot keep them without disobeying God.

32. Now examine thyself by this: hast thou this fruit of love to shew? Dost thou make it thy constant and greatest care to keep God’s commandments? To obey him in all things? Earnestly labouring to please him to the utmost of thy power, even to the forsaking of what is dearest to thee in this world? If thou dost, thou mayest then truly say thou lovest God. But, on the contrary, if thou wilfully continuest in the breach of any one command of his, never deceive thyself, for the love of God abides not in thee.

33. A second fruit of love is desire of enjoying. This is constantly seen in our love to one another. If you have a friend whom you entirely love, you wish to be always in his company: and thus will it be also in our love to God, if that be as great and hearty as this.

34. There is a two-fold enjoying of God, the one imperfect in this life, the other perfect in the life to come. That in this life we have with God in his ordinances, in praying, in meditating, in hearing his word, in receiving the sacrament, which are all intended to bring us into an intimacy and familiarity with God, by speaking to him, and hearing him speak to us.

35. Now if we do indeed love God, we shall hugely

value and desire these ways of conversing with him; it will make us, with David, esteem "one day in God's courts better than a thousand." We shall be glad to have these opportunities of approaching to him as often as it is possible, and be careful to use them diligently, to that end of uniting us still more to him; yea, we shall come to these spiritual exercises with the same cheerfulness we should go to our dearest friend. And if indeed we do thus, it is a good proof of our love.

36. But I fear there are not many have this to shew for it, as appears by the common backwardness of men to come to these, and their negligence and heartlessness when they are at them. And can we think that God will ever own us for lovers of him, whilst we have such dislike to his company, that we will never come into it but when we are dragged by fear, or shame of men, or some worldly motive? It is sure you would not think that man loved you, whom you perceived to shun your company, and to be loath to come into your sight. And therefore be not so unreasonable as to say, you love God, when yet you desire to keep as far from him as you can.

37. But, besides this, there is another enjoyment of God, which is perfect, and that is our perpetual enjoying of him in heaven, where we shall be for ever united to him, and enjoy him not now and then only, but continually without interruption. And certainly, if we love God, this cannot but be most earnestly desired by us, so much, that we shall think no labour too great to compass it. The seven years that Jacob served for Rachel, Gen. xxix. 20, "seemed to him but a few days, for the love that he had to her." And surely, if we have love to God, we shall not think the service of our whole lives too dear a price for this full enjoyment of him, nor esteem all the enjoyments of the world worth the looking on in comparison thereof.

38. If we do thus long for this enjoyment of God, we may believe we love him. But I fear there are but few that can thus approve their love. For if we look into men's

lives, we shall see they are not so fond of this enjoyment, as to be at any pains to purchase it. Nay, it is to be doubted there are many who, if it were put to their choice whether they would live here always, or go to heaven to enjoy God, would, like the children of Gad and Reuben, set up their rest on this side Jordan, and never desire that heavenly Canaan; so close do their affections cleave to things below: which shews clearly they have not made God their treasure; for then, according to our Saviour's rule, Matt. vi. 21, their heart would be with him.

VIII. *Of Fear.*

39. A fourth duty to God is fear. This arises from the consideration both of his justice and his power. His justice is such that he will not clear the wicked, and his power such, that he is able to inflict the sorest punishments upon them; and that this is a reasonable cause of fear, Christ himself tells us, Matt. x. 28, "Fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

40. Now this fear is nothing else, but such an awful regard of God, as may keep us from offending him. Thus the wise man tells us, "The fear of the Lord is to depart from evil." So that none can be said truly to fear God that is not thereby withheld from sin.

IX. *Of Trust.*

41. A fifth duty to God is that of trusting in him; first, in all dangers; secondly, in all wants. We are to rest on him in all our dangers, both spiritual and temporal. Of the first sort are all those temptations, by which we are in danger to be drawn to sin: and in this respect he hath promised, that if we "resist the devil he shall flee from us," James iv. 7. Therefore our duty is, first, to pray earnestly for God's grace to enable us to overcome the temptation; and, secondly, to set ourselves manfully to combat with it, not yielding or giving con

sent to it in the least degree ; and whilst we do thus, we are confidently to rest upon God, that his grace will be sufficient for us, that he will either remove the temptation, or strengthen us to withstand it.

42. Secondly, In all outward dangers we are to rest upon him, as knowing that he is able to deliver us ; and that he will do so if he see it best for us, and if we be such to whom he hath promised his protection, that is, such as truly fear him. To this purpose we have many promises in Scripture, Psalm xxxiv. 7, “The angel of the Lord tarrieth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them :” and Psalm xxxiv. 22, “The Lord delivereth the souls of his saints, and all that put their trust in him shall not be destitute.” Also we have many examples, as that of the three children in the furnace, that of Daniel in the lion’s den, and many others ; all which serve to teach us, that if we go on in performing our duty, we need not be dismayed for any thing that can befall us, for the God whom we serve is able to deliver us.

43. Therefore, in all dangers, we are first humbly to pray for his aid, and then to rest ourselves cheerfully on him, assuring ourselves that he will give such an issue as shall be most for our good. But, above all things, we must be sure to fix our dependance wholly on him, and not to rely on the creatures for help ; much less must we seek to deliver ourselves by any unlawful means, that is, by the committing any sin ; for that is like Saul, 1 Sam. xxviii. 7, to go to the witch, that is, to the devil for help ; such courses commonly deceive our hopes at the present, and instead of delivering us out of our straits, plunge us in greater, and those much more uncomfortable ones, because then we want that which is the only support, God’s favour and aid, which we certainly forfeit, when we thus seek to rescue ourselves by any sinful means. But supposing we could by such a way free ourselves from the present danger ; yet, alas ! we are far from having gained safety by it ; we have only removed the

danger from that which was less considerable, and brought it upon the most precious part of us, our souls; like an unskilful physician, that, to remove a pain from the finger, strikes it to the heart. We are therefore grossly mistaken when we think we have played the good husband in saving our liberties or estates, or lives themselves, by a sin; we have not saved them, but madly over-bought them, laid out our very souls on them: and Christ tells us how little we shall gain by such bargains; “What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?”

Let us therefore resolve never to value any thing we possess in this world at so high a rate, as to keep it at the price of the least sin; but whenever things are driven to such an issue, that we must either part with some, perhaps all our worldly possessions, nay, life itself, or else commit sin, let us remember that this is the season for us to perform that excellent duty of taking up the cross, which we can never so properly do as in this case; for the bearing of that which we have no way of avoiding, can at most be said to be but the carrying the cross: then only can we be said to take it up, when, having a means of escaping it by sin, we rather choose to endure the cross than commit the sin; for then is it not laid on us by any unavoidable necessity, but we willingly choose it: and this is highly acceptable with God, yea, withal so strictly required by him, that if we fail of performing it, we are not to be accounted followers of Christ, for so himself hath expressly told us, Matt. xvi. 24, “If any man come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.” It were therefore a good point of spiritual wisdom for us, by some lower degrees of self-denial, to fit ourselves for this greater, when we shall be called to it. We know, he that expects to run a race will be often breathing himself, that he may not be foiled when he comes to run for the prize; in like manner, it will be fit for us to abridge ourselves of our lawful pleasure, or ease, or

profit, that we may get such a mastery over ourselves, as to be able to renounce all when God requires it.

44. And as we are thus to trust on God for deliverance from danger, so are we likewise for the supply of our wants; and those again are either spiritual or temporal: our spiritual want is that of his grace, to enable us to serve him, without which we can do nothing; and for this we are to depend on him, provided we neglect not the means, which are prayer, and a careful using of what he hath already bestowed on us: for then we have his promise for it, "He will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask it," Luke xi. 13; and "unto him that hath, shall be given," Matt. xxv. 29, that is, to him that hath made a good use of that grace he hath already, God will give more. We are not, therefore, to affright ourselves with the difficulty of those things God requires of us, but remember he commands nothing which he will not enable us to perform, if we be not wanting to ourselves. And therefore let us sincerely do our parts, and confidently assure ourselves God will not fail of his.

45. But we have, also, temporal and bodily wants; and for the supply of them, we are likewise to rely on him. And for this, also, we want no promises, supposing us to be of the number of them to whom they are made, that is, God's faithful servants: "They that fear the Lord, lack nothing," Psalm xxxiv. 9, 10, "They that seek the Lord, shall want no manner of thing that is good:" again, Psalm xxxiii. 18, 19, "Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy, to deliver their souls from death, and to feed them in time of famine."

46. We are therefore to look up to him for the provision of all things necessary for us, according to that of the Psalmist, "The eyes of all wait upon thee, O Lord, and thou givest them their meat in due season." And our Saviour hath taught us to pray for our daily bread; thereby teaching us, that we are to live in continual dependance upon God for it. Yet I mean not, by this, that we should so expect it from God, as to give up ourselves

to idleness, and expect to be fed by miracle. No, our honest industry and labour is the means by which God ordinarily gives us the necessaries of this life ; and therefore, we must by no means neglect that. “He that will not labour, let him not eat,” says the apostle, 2 Thess. iii. 10. And we may believe God will pronounce the same sentence, and suffer the slothful person to want even necessary food. But when we have faithfully used our own endeavour, then we must look up to God for his blessing on it, without which it can never prosper. And having done thus, we may comfortably rest ourselves on his Providence for such a measure of these outward things as he sees fittest for us.

47. But if our condition be such, that we are not able to labour, and have no other means of bringing in the necessaries of life to ourselves, yet even then we are cheerfully to rest upon God, believing that he who feeds the ravens, will, by some means or other, though we know not what, provide for us, so long as he pleases we shall continue in this world ; and never, in any case, torment ourselves with carking and distrustful thoughts, but “cast all our care on him, who careth for us.”

CHAP. II.

I. *Of humility.* II. *Of submission to God's will, in respect of obedience.* III. *Of patience in all sorts of sufferings.* IV. *Of honour due to God in several ways; in his house, possessions, his day, word, sacraments.*

I. *Of Humility.*

A SIXTH duty to God is humility ; that is, such a sense of our own meanness and his excellency as may work in us unfeigned submission to him. This submission is two-fold : first, to his will ; secondly, to his wisdom.

II. *Of Submission to God's Will in Respect of Obedience.*

2. The submission to his will is also of two sorts, the submission either of obedience or patience. That of obedience is our ready yielding ourselves up to do his will, when God hath, by his command, made known to us what his pleasure is, cheerfully and readily to set about it. To enable us to this, humility is exceeding necessary; for a proud person is, of all others, the unaptest to obey; and we see men never pay an obedience but where they acknowledge the person commanding, to be some way above them, and so it is here. If we be not thoroughly persuaded that God is infinitely above us, that we are vileness, and nothing in comparison of him, we shall never pay our due obedience.

3. Therefore, if ever you mean to obey entirely (as you must, if ever you mean to be saved,) get your hearts possessed with the sense of that great unspeakable distance that is between God and you. Consider him, as he is a God of infinite majesty and glory, and we, poor worms of the earth; he infinite in power, able to do all things, and we able to do nothing, not so much as to make one hair white or black, as our Saviour speaks, Matt. v. 36. He of infinite purity and holiness, and we polluted and defiled, wallowing in all kind of sins and uncleanness; he unchangeable and constant, and we subject to change every minute of our lives. He eternal and immortal, and we frail mortals, that whenever "he taketh away our breath, we die, and are turned again to our dust," Psalm civ. 29. Consider this, I say, and you cannot but acknowledge a wide difference between God and man, and therefore may well cry out with Job, after he had approached so near to God, as to discern somewhat of his excellency, Job xlii. 5, 6, "Now mine eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

4. And even when this humility hath brought us to

obedience, it is not then to be cast off, as if we had no further use of it; for there is still great use, nay, necessity of it, to keep us from any high conceits of our performances, which if we once entertain, it will blast the best of them, and make them utterly unacceptable to God. The best of our works are so full of pollution, that if we compare them with that purity which is in God, we may truly say with the prophet, "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags," Isaiah lxiv. 6. And therefore, to pride ourselves in them is the same madness that it would be in a beggar to brag of his apparel, when it is nothing but vile rags and tatters. Our Saviour's precept, in this matter, must always be remembered, Luke xvii. 10. "When you have done all those things which are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants." If when we have done all, we must give ourselves no better a title, what are we then to esteem ourselves, that are so far from doing any considerable part of what we are commanded? Surely that worse name of slothful and wicked servant, we have no reason to think too bad for us.

III. *Of Submission in Respect of Patience.*

5. A second sort of submission to his will, is that of patience. This stands in suffering his will, as that of obedience did in acting it; and is nothing else but a willing and quiet yielding to whatever afflictions it pleases God to lay upon us. This the fore-mentioned humility will make easy to us; for when our hearts are thoroughly possessed with that reverence of God, it will be impossible for us to murmur at whatever he does. We see an instance of it in old Eli, 1 Sam iii. who after he had heard the threatenings of God against him, of the destruction of his family, the loss of the priesthood, the cutting off both his sons in one day, which were all of them afflictions of the heaviest kind; yet this one consideration, that it was the Lord enabled him, calmly and quietly, to yield to them,

saying, "Let him do what seemeth him good," verse 18. The same effect it had on David, in his suffering, Psalm xxxix. 9, "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it." God's doing it, silenced all murmurings in him. And so it must do in us, in all our afflictions, if we will, indeed, approve our humility to God.

6. Our heavenly Father is not like our earthly ones, who sometimes correct their children only to satisfy their own angry humour, not to do them good. "He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men," Lam. iii. 33. They are our sins, which do not only give him just cause, but even force him to punish us. He carries to us the affections of the tenderest father. Now, when a father sees his child running on in a course that will undo him, what greater act of kindness can he do, than correct him, to see if, by that means, he may amend him? Nay, indeed, he could not be said to have true kindness to him, if he did not. And thus it is with God when he sees us run on in sin, either he must leave off to love us, and so leave us to ourselves to take our own course, and that is the heaviest curse that can befall any man; or else, if he continue to love us, he must correct and punish us to bring us to amendment. Therefore, whenever he strikes, we are, in all reason, not only patiently to lie under his rod, but be thankful to him that he is pleased not to "give us over to our own heart's lusts," but still continue his care of us, and send afflictions as so many messengers to call us home to himself. You see then how gross a folly it is to murmur at those stripes which are meant so graciously; it is like that of a froward patient, who reviles the physician that comes to cure him; and if such a one be left to die of his disease, every one knows whom he is to thank for it.

7. But it is not only quietness, no, nor thankfulness neither, under afflictions, that is the full of our duty in this matter; we must have fruitfulness also, or all the rest will stand us in no stead. By fruitfulness I mean the bringing forth that which the afflictions were sent to work

in us, viz. amendment. To which purpose, in time of affliction, it is very necessary for us to examine our hearts and lives, and search diligently what sins lie upon us, which provoked God thus to smite us: and whatsoever we find ourselves guilty of, humbly to confess to God, and immediately to forsake.

8. All I shall add concerning this duty of patience is, that we are as much bound to it in one sort of sufferings as another, whether our suffering be immediately from God's hand, as sickness, or the like; or whether it be such wherein men are the instruments of afflicting us. For it is most sure, when any man doth hurt us, he could not do it without God's permission; and God may as well make them the instruments of punishing us, as do it more directly by himself; and it is but a counterfeit patience that pretends to submit to God, and yet can bear nothing from men. We see holy Job, who is set forth to us as a pattern of patience, made no such difference in his afflictions: he took the loss of his cattle, which the Chaldeans and Sabeans robbed him of, with the very same meekness with which he did that which was consumed by fire from heaven. When therefore we suffer any thing from men, be it never so unjustly in respect of them, we are yet to confess it is most just in respect of God; and therefore, instead of looking upon them with revenge, we are to look up to God, acknowledge his justice in the affliction, begging his pardon for those sins which have provoked him to send it, and patiently and thankfully bear it, till he shall see fit to remove it; still saying, with Job, "Blessed be the name of the Lord!"

9. But I told you, humility contained in it a submission not only to his will, but also to his wisdom; that is, to acknowledge him infinitely wise, and therefore that whatever he doth is best and fittest to be done. And this we are to confess, both in his commands and in his disposing of things. First, whatsoever he commands us either to believe or do, we are to submit to his wisdom in

both ; to believe whatsoever he bids us believe, how impossible soever it seems to our shallow understandings, and to do whatever he commands us to do, how contrary soever it be to our fleshly reason or humour ; and in both to conclude, that his commands are most fit and reasonable, however they appear to us.

10. Secondly, we are to submit to his wisdom in respect of his disposal of things ; to acknowledge he disposes all things wisely, and that not only in what concerns the world in general ; but also in what concerns every one of us in particular : so that in what condition soever he puts us, we are to assure ourselves it is that which is best for us, since he chooses it who cannot err. And therefore never to have impatient desires of any thing, but to leave it to God to fit us with such a condition as he sees best for us, and there let us quietly and contentedly rest ; yea, though it be such as, of all others, we should least have wished for ourselves. And this surely cannot but appear very reasonable to any that hath humility. For that having taught him, that God is infinitely wise, and he very foolish, he can never doubt that it is much more for his good that God should choose for him than he for himself. Thus many times we wish for wealth, and honour, and beauty, when, if we had them, they would only prove snares to us. And this God, who knows all things, sees, though we do not, and therefore often denies us those things which he sees will tend to our mischief, and it is his abundant mercy that he doth so. Let us therefore, whenever we are disappointed of any of our aims and wishes, not only patiently but joyfully submit to it, as knowing it is certainly best for us, being chosen by the unerring wisdom of our heavenly Father.

IV. *Of Honour.*

11. A seventh duty to God is honour ; that is, the paying him such reverence as belongs to so great a

Majesty: and this is either inward or outward. The inward is the exalting him in our hearts, having the most excellent esteem of him. The outward is the shewing forth that inward regard in the whole course of our lives, the living like men that do indeed carry that high esteem of God. Now you know, if we bear any special reverence to a man, we will be careful not to do any base thing in his presence. And so, if we do indeed honour God, we shall abhor to do any unworthy thing in his sight. But God sees all things, and therefore there is no way to shun the doing it in his sight, if we do it at all: therefore, if we do thus reverence him, we must never do any sinful thing.

12. But, besides this general way of honouring God, there are many particular acts by which we may honour him; and these acts are divers, according to the several particulars about which they are exercised: for we are to pay this honour not only immediately to himself, but also to all those things that nearly relate to him. Those are especially six; first, his house; secondly, his revenue or income; (as I may say;) thirdly, his day; fourthly, his Word; fifthly, his sacraments; and sixthly, his name; and every one of these is to have some degree of our reverence and esteem.

13. First, his house, that is, the church; which being the place set apart for his publick worship, we are to look on it, though not as holy in respect of itself, yet in respect of its use, and therefore must not profane it, by applying it to uses of our own. This Christ hath taught us by that act of his, Matt. xxi. 13, in driving the buyers and sellers out of the temple, saying, "My house is called the house of prayer." And again, John ii. 16, "Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise." By which it is clear, churches are to be used only for the services of God; and we are to make that the only end of our coming thither, and not to come to church as to a market, to make bargains or despatch businesses with our neighbours, as is too common among many. But whenever

thou enterest the church, remember that it is the house of God, a place where he is in an especial manner present; and therefore take the counsel of the wise man, Eccl. v. 1, and “keep thy foot when thou goest into the house of God:” that is, behave thyself with that godly awe and reverence which belongs to that Majesty thou art before. Remember, thy business there is to converse with God, and therefore shut out all thoughts of the world, even of thy lawful business, which, though they be allowable at another time, are here sinful. How fearful a guilt is it then to entertain any such thoughts as are in themselves wicked? It is like the treason of Judas, who pretended to kiss his Master, but brought with him a band of soldiers to apprehend him.

14. The second thing to which respect belongs, is his revenue or income; that is, whatsoever is his peculiar possession, set apart for the maintenance of those that attend his service; those were the priests in time of the law, and ministers of the gospel now. And whatever is thus set apart, we must look on with such respect as not to dare to turn it to any other use. Of this sort, some are the free-will offerings of men, who have sometimes of their own accord given some of their goods or land to this holy use; and whatsoever is given, can neither, by the person that gave, nor any other, be taken away without sacrilege.

15. But besides these, there was among the Jews, and hath always been in all Christian nations, something allotted for the support of those that attend the service of God. And it is but just it should be so, that those, who by undertaking that calling are taken off from the ways of gaining a livelihood in the world, should be provided for by them whose souls they watch over. And therefore it is most reasonable, which the apostle urges in this manner, 1 Cor. ix. 11, “If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?” That is, it is most unreasonable for men to grudge a few carnal things, the outward necessities of

this life, on them from whom they receive spiritual things, even instruction and assistance towards the obtaining eternal life.

16. A third thing wherein we are to express our reverence to God, is the hallowing of the times set apart for his service. He who hath given all our time, requires some part of it to be paid back again, as a rent or tribute of the whole. Thus the Jews kept holy the seventh day, and we Christians the Sunday, or Lord's-day. The Jews were, in their sabbath, especially to remember the creation of the world; and we, in ours, the resurrection of Christ, by which a way is made for us into that better world we expect hereafter. Now this day, thus set apart, is to be employed in the worship of God, and that first more publickly in the congregation, from which no man must absent himself without a just cause; and, secondly, privately at home, in praying with and instructing our families, or else in the yet more private duties of the closet.

And that we may be at leisure for these, a rest from all worldly business is commanded; therefore, let no man think that a bare rest from labour is all that is required of him on the Lord's-day; but the time which he saves from the works of his calling he is to lay out on those spiritual duties. For the Lord's-day was never ordained to give us a pretence for idleness, but only to change our employment from worldly to heavenly; much less was it meant, that by our rest from our callings, we should have more time free to bestow upon our sins, as too many do who are more constant on that day at the alehouse than the church. But this rest was commanded, first, to shadow out to us that rest from sin which we are bound to all the days of our lives. And, secondly, to take us off from our worldly business, and to give us time to attend the service of God, and the needs of our souls.

17. And surely, if we rightly consider it, it is a very great benefit to us that there is such a set time thus

weekly returning for that purpose. We are very intent upon the world, and if there were not some such time appointed, it is to be doubted we should hardly allot any ourselves; and then what a starved condition must these poor souls of ours be in? Whereas now there is a constant diet provided for them; every Sunday, if we will conscionably employ it, may be a festival-day to them; may bring them in such spiritual food as may nourish them to eternal life. We are not to look on this day with grudging, like those in Amos, viii. 5, who ask, "When will the sabbath be gone, that we may set forth wheat;" as if that time were lost, which was taken from our worldly business. But we are to consider it as the gainfullest, as the joyfullest day of the week; a day of harvest, wherein we are to lay up in store for the whole week, nay, for our whole lives.

18. But besides this of the weekly Lord's day, there are other times which the church hath set apart for the remembrance of some special mercies of God, such as the birth and resurrection of Christ, the descent of the Holy Ghost, and the like; and these days we are to keep in that manner which the church hath ordered, to wit, in the solemn worship of God, and in particular thanksgiving for that special blessing we then remember. And surely whoever is truly thankful for those rich mercies, cannot think it too much to set apart some few days in a year for that purpose.

But then we are to look that our feasts be truly spiritual, by employing the day thus holily, and not make it an occasion of intemperance, as too many, who consider nothing in Christmas, and other solemn times, but the good cheer and jollity of them; for that is doing despite, instead of honour, to Christ, who came to bring all purity and soberness into the world, and therefore must not have that coming of his remembered in any other manner.

19. Other days there are also set apart in memory of the apostles and other saints, wherein we are to give hearty thanks to God for his graces in them; particularly

that they were made instruments of revealing to us Christ Jesus, and the way of salvation, as you know the apostles were, by their preaching throughout the world: and then farther, we are to meditate on those examples of holy life they have given us, and stir up ourselves to the imitation thereof. And whoever does uprightly set himself to make these uses of these several holy days, will have cause, by the benefit he shall find from them, to thank, and not to blame the church for ordering them.

20. Another sort of days there are, which we are likewise to observe, and those are days of fasting and humiliation; and whatever of this kind the church enjoins, whether constantly at set times of the year, or upon any special and more sudden occasion, we are to observe in such manner as she directs, that is, not only a bare abstaining from meat, but in afflicting our souls, humbling them deeply before God, in a hearty confessing and bewailing our own and the nation's sins, and earnest prayer for forgiveness, and for the turning away of those judgments which those sins have called for; but, above all, in "turning ourselves from our sins, loosing the bands of wickedness," as Isaiah speaks, chap. lviii. 6, and exercising ourselves in works of mercy.

21. Fourthly, we are to express our reverence to God, by honouring his word, and this we must certainly do, if we indeed honour him, there being no surer sign of our despising any person than the setting light by what he says to us; as, on the contrary, if we value one, every word he speaks will be of weight with us. Now this word of God is expressly contained in the holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, where he speaks to us, to show us his will and our duty. And therefore this word of his we are to look upon as the rule by which we must frame all the actions of our life. And to that end to study it much, to read it as often as we can; if it may be, never to let a day pass without reading or hearing some part of it.

22. But that is not all. We must not only read, but

mark what we read, we must diligently observe what duties there are which God commands us to perform; what faults they are which God there charges us not to commit, together with the rewards promised to the one, and the punishment threatened to the other. When we have thus marked, we must lay them up in our memory; not so loosely and carelessly that they shall presently drop out again; but we must so fasten them there by often meditating on them, that we may have them ready for our use. Now that use is the directing our lives; and therefore whenever we are tempted to commit any evil, we are then to call to mind, this is the thing which is forbidden by God, and all his vengeance threatened against it; and so when any opportunity is offered us of doing good, to remember, this is the duty which I was exhorted to in such a scripture, and such glorious rewards promised to the doing of it; and by these considerations strengthen ourselves for resistance of the evil, and performance of the good.

23. Besides this, it hath pleased God to provide yet farther for our instruction by his ministers, whose office it is to teach us God's will, not by saying any thing contrary to the written word, (for whatsoever is so can never be God's will) but by explaining, and then applying it to our particular occasions, and exhorting and stirring us up to the practice of it; all which is the end at which first their catechizing and then their preaching aimeth.

24. Fifthly, we are to express our honouring of God by reverencing his sacraments: those are two, baptism, and the supper of the Lord. And this we are to do, first, by our high esteem of them: secondly, by our reverent usage of them. We are first to prize them at a high rate, looking on them as the instruments of bringing to us the greatest blessings we can receive. The first of them, baptism, that enters us into covenant with God, makes us members of Christ, and so gives us right to all those precious benefits that flow from him, to wit, pardon of sins, sanctifying grace, and heaven itself, on condition

we perform our parts of the covenant. And as for the Lord's supper, that is not only a sign and remembrance of Christ and his death; but it is actually the giving Christ, and all the fruits of his death, to every worthy receiver; and therefore there is a most high estimation and value due to each of them.

✚ The chapter concerning the Lord's Supper is omitted, being abundantly supplied by Bishop Patrick's Christian Sacrifice.

CHAP. III.

I. *Honour due to God's name.* II. *Sins against it; blasphemy; swearing; assertory, promissory, unlawful oaths.* III. *Of perjury, vain oaths, and the sin of them.*

I. *Honour due to God's Name.*

THE last thing wherein we are to express our reverence to him, is the honouring of his name. Now what this honouring of his name is, we shall best understand by considering what are the things by which it is dishonoured, the avoiding of which will be our way of honouring it.

Sins against it.

The first is, all blasphemies, or speaking any evil thing of God, the highest degree wherof is cursing him; or if we do not speak it with our mouths, yet if we do it in our hearts by thinking any unworthy thing of him, it is looked on by God, who sees the heart, as the vilest dishonour.

A second way of dishonouring God's name is by swearing, and that is of two sorts, either by false oaths, or else

by rash and light ones. A false oath may also be of two kinds, as, first, that by which I affirm somewhat; or secondly, that by which I promise. The first is, when I say such or such a thing was done so or so, and confirm this saying with an oath; if then I know there be not perfect truth in what I say, this is a flat perjury. Nay, if I swear to the truth of that whereof I am only doubtful, though the thing should happen to be true, yet it brings upon me the guilt of perjury; for I swear at a venture, and the thing might, for aught I knew, be as well false as true; whereas I ought never to swear any thing, the truth of which I do not certainly know.

2. But besides this sort of oaths, by which I affirm any thing, there is the other sort, that by which I promise somewhat. And that promise may be either to God or man. When it is to God, we call it a vow. I shall now only speak of that to man, and this may become a false oath, either at, or after the time of taking it. At the time of taking, it is false, if either I have then no real purpose of making it good, or else take it in a sense different from that which I know he to whom I make the promise understands it; for the use of oaths being to assure the person to whom they are made, they must be taken in their sense. But if I were never so sincere at the taking the oath, if afterwards I do not perform it, I am perjured.

3. The nature of an oath being thus binding, it nearly concerns us to look that the matter of our oaths be lawful, for else we run ourselves into a woful snare. For example, suppose I swear to kill a man, if I perform my oath, I am guilty of murder; if I break it, of perjury, and I am under a necessity of sinning one way or other. It may perhaps be asked, What a person that hath already brought himself into such a condition shall do? I answer, he must first heartily repent of the great sin of taking the unlawful oath, and then stick only to the lawful thing.

4. Having said this concerning the kinds of perjury, I

shall only add a few words to shew you how greatly God's name is dishonoured by it. In all oaths, you know, God is solemnly called to witness the truth of that which is spoken; now if the thing be false, it is the basest affront and dishonour that can possibly be done to God. For it is in reason to signify one of these two things, either that we believe he knows not whether we say true or not; (and that is to make him no God, to suppose him to be as deceivable as one of our ignorant neighbours) or else that he is willing to countenance our lies; the former robs him of that great attribute of his, his knowing all things, and is surely a great dishonouring of him, it being, even amongst men, accounted one of the greatest disgraces, to account a man fit to have cheats put upon him; yet even so we deal with God, if we venture to forswear upon a hope that God discerns it not. But the other is yet worse; for the supposing him willing to countenance our lies, is the making him a party in them; and is not only the making him no God, (it being impossible that God should either lie himself, or approve it in another,) but is the making him like the very devil. For he it is that is "a liar, and the father of it," John viii. 44. And surely I need not say more to prove that this is the highest degree of dishonouring God's name.

5. But besides this of forswearing, I told you there was another sort of oaths by which God's name is dishonoured: those are the vain and light oaths, such as are so usual in our common discourse, and are expressly forbidden by Christ, Matt. v. 34, 35, "But I say unto you, swear not at all, neither by heaven, for it is God's throne, nor by the earth, for it is his footstool." Where you see we are not allowed to swear even by mere creatures, because of the relation they have to God. How great a wickedness is it then to profane his holy name by rash and vain oaths? This is a sin that is (by I know not what charm of satan's,) grown into fashion among us; and now, its being so, draws daily more men into it. But

it is to be remembered, that when we shall appear before God's judgment-seat to answer for those profanations of his name, it will be no excuse to say, it was the fashion to do so ; it will rather be an increase of our guilt, that we have, by our own practice, helped to confirm that wicked custom, which we ought to have beat down and discountenanced.

6. And sure this is a sin of a very high nature. For besides that it is a direct breach of the precept of Christ, it shews, first, a very low esteem of God. Every oath we swear is the appealing to God to judge the truth of what we speak, and therefore being of such greatness and majesty, requires that the matter concerning which we thus appeal to him should be of great moment. But when we swear in common discourse, it is far otherwise ; and the lightest thing serves for the matter of an oath ; nay, often men swear to such vain and foolish things, as a considering person would be ashamed barely to speak. And is it not a great despising of God to call him solemnly to judge in such childish, such wretched matters ?

7. Secondly, this common swearing is a sin which leads directly to the former of forswearing ; for he that by the use of swearing hath made oaths so familiar to him, will be likely to take the dreadfulest oath without much consideration. Nay, further, he that swears commonly, is not only prepared to forswear when a solemn oath is tendered him, but in all probability does actually forswear himself often in these sudden oaths ; for, supposing them to come from a man ere he is aware, (which is the best that can be said of them) what assurance can any man have who swears ere he is aware, that he shall not lie so too ; and if he doth both together, he must necessarily be forsworn.

8. Thirdly, this is a sin to which there is no temptation, there is nothing either of pleasure or profit got by it : most other sins offer us somewhat either of the one or the other, but this is utterly empty of both. So that

in this sin the devil does not play the merchant for our souls, as in others he does; he doth not so much as cheapen them, but we give them freely into his hands, without any thing in exchange.

CHAP. IV.

OF WORSHIP DUE TO GOD'S NAME.

I. Of prayer, and its several parts. II. Of publick prayers in the church. III. In the family. IV. Of private prayer. V. Of fasting.

I. Of Prayer and its several Parts.

THE eighth duty we owe to God is worship; this is that great duty by which especially we acknowledge his Godhead, worship being proper only to God, and therefore it is to be looked on as a most weighty duty. This is to be performed, first, by our souls; secondly, by our bodies: the soul's part is praying. Now prayer is a speaking to God, and there are divers parts of it, according to the different things about which we speak.

2. As first, there is confession, that is, the acknowledging our sins to God. And this may be either general or particular; the general is when we only confess in gross that we are sinful; the particular, when we mention the several sorts and acts of our sins. The former is necessary to be always a part of our solemn prayers, whether publick or private. The latter is proper for private prayer, and there the oftener it is used the better; yea, even in our daily private prayer, it will be fit constantly to remember some of our greatest and foulest sins, though never so long since past: for such we should never think sufficiently confessed and bewailed. And this bewailing must always go along with confession; we must

be heartily sorry for the sins we confess, and from our souls acknowledge our own great unworthiness in having committed them. For our confession is not intended to instruct God, who knows our sins much better than ourselves do, but it is to humble ourselves, and therefore we must not think to have confessed aright till that be done.

3. The second part of prayer is petition, that is, the begging of God whatsoever we want, either for our souls or bodies. For our souls, we must first beg pardon of sins, and that for the sake of Jesus Christ, who shed his blood to obtain it. Then we must beg the assistance of God's Spirit, to enable us to forsake our sins, and to walk in obedience to him. And herein it will be needful, particularly to beg all the several virtues, as faith, love, zeal, purity, but especially those which thou most wantest. And in all these things that concern thy soul, be very earnest and importunate; take no denial from God, nor give over, though thou do not presently obtain what thou suest for. But if thou hast never so long prayed for a grace, and yet findest it not, do not grow weary of praying, but rather search what the cause may be which makes thy prayers ineffectual; see if thou do not thyself hinder them. Perhaps thou prayest to God to enable thee to conquer some sin, and yet never goest about to fight against it, never makest any resistance, but yieldest to it as often as it comes, nay, puttest thyself in its way, in the road of temptations. If it be thus, no wonder though thy prayers avail not, for thou wilt not let them. Therefore amend this: set to the doing of thy part, and then thou needest not fear but God will do his.

4. Secondly, we are to petition also for our bodies, that is, we are to ask of God such things as are needful to us while we live here. But these only in such a degree as his wisdom sees best for us. We must not presume to be our own carvers, and pray for all that wealth or greatness which our own vain hearts may desire, but only

for such a condition as he sees may most tend to those great ends of living, the glorifying him, and the saving our own souls.

5. A third part of prayer is deprecation, that is, when we pray to God to turn away some evil from us. Now the evil may be either the evil of sin, or the evil of punishment. The evil of sin is that we are especially to pray against, most earnestly begging of God that he will by the power of his grace preserve us from falling into sin. And whatever sins they are, to which thou knowest thyself most inclined, there be particularly earnest with God to preserve thee. This is to be done daily, but then more especially when we are under any present temptation, in which case we have reason to cry out, as Peter did when he found himself sinking, "Save, Lord, or I perish!" humbly beseeching him either to withdraw the temptation, or strengthen us to withstand it.

6. Secondly, we are likewise to pray against the evil of punishment, but principally against spiritual punishments, as the anger of God, the withdrawing his grace, and eternal damnation. Against these we can never pray with too much earnestness. But we may also pray against temporal punishments, that is, any outward affliction; but this with submission to God's will, according to the example of Christ, Matt. xxvi. 39, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt."

7. A fourth part of prayer is intercession, that is, praying for others. This in general we are to do for all mankind, as well strangers as acquaintance, but more particularly those to whom we have any special relation; either publick, as our governors both in church and state; or private, as parents, husbands, wife, children, friends. We are also to pray for all that are in affliction, and such particular persons as we discern especially to be so. Yea, we are to pray for those that have done us injury, those "that despitefully use us and persecute us." For all these sorts of persons we are to pray, and that for the very same good things we beg of God for ourselves, that

God would give them, in their several places and callings, all spiritual and temporal blessings, which he sees wanting to them, and turn away from them all evil, whether of sin or punishment.

8. The fifth part of prayer is thanksgiving ; that is, the praising God for his mercies, whether to our persons, and those that immediately relate to us, or to the church and nation whereof we are members, or yet more general, to all mankind ; and this for all his mercies, both spiritual and temporal. In the spiritual, first, for those wherein we are all in common concerned, as the giving of his Son, the sending of his Spirit, and all those means he hath used to bring sinful men unto himself. Secondly, for those mercies we have in our own particulars received ; such are the having been born within the church, and so brought up in the Christian religion, by which we have been partakers of those precious advantages of the word and sacraments, and have had the means of eternal life put into our hands. But besides these, there is none of us but have received other spiritual mercies from God.

9. As first, God's patience and long-suffering, waiting for our repentance, and not cutting us off in our sins. Secondly, his calls and invitations of us to repentance, not only outward in the ministry of the word, but also inward, by the motions of his Spirit. But then if thou be one that hast, by the help of God's grace, been wrought upon by these calls, and brought from a profane or worldly, to a Christian course of life, thou art in the highest degree tied to praise his goodness, as having received from him the greatest of mercies.

10. We are likewise to give thanks for temporal blessings, whether such as concern the publick, as the prosperity of the church or nation, and all remarkable deliverances afforded to either ; or else such as concern our particular ; such are all the good things of this life which we enjoy ; as health, friends, food, raiment ; also for those minute preservations whereby we are by God's gracious providence kept from danger, and the especial

deliverances which God hath given us in time of the greatest perils. It will be impossible to set down the several mercies which every man receives from God, because they differ in kind and degree between one man and another. But it is sure that he which receives least, hath yet enough to employ his whole life in praises to God. And it will be very fit for every man to consider the several passages of his life, and the mercies he hath in each received, and to gather a kind of catalogue of them, at least the principal, which he may always have in his memory, and often with a thankful heart repeat before God.

II. *Of publick Prayers in the Church.*

11. These are the several parts of prayer, and all of them to be used both publickly and privately. The publick use of them is, first, that the church, where all meet to join in those prayers wherein they are in common concerned. And in this (where the prayers are such as they ought to be,) we should be very constant, there being an especial blessing promised to the joint requests of the faithful; and he that without a necessary cause absents himself from publick prayers, cuts himself off from the church, which hath always been thought so unhappy a thing, that it is the greatest punishment the governors of the church can lay upon the worst offender; and therefore it is a strange madness for men to inflict it upon themselves.

III. *Of family Prayer.*

12. A second sort of publick prayer is that in a family, where all that are members of it join in their common supplication; and this also ought to be very carefully attended to, first by the master of the family, who is to look that there be such prayers, it being as much his part thus to provide for the souls of his children and servants, as to provide food for their bodies. Therefore

there is none, even the meanest householder, but ought to take this care. What choice soever they make of prayers, let them be sure to have some; and let no man that professes himself a Christian, keep so heathenish a family, as not to see God be daily worshipped in it. But when the master of a family hath done his duty in this providing, it is the duty of every member of it to make use of that provision, by being constant and diligent at those family prayers.

IV. *Of private Prayer.*

13. Private or secret prayer is that which is used by man alone, apart from all others, wherein we are to be more particular, according to our particular needs, than in publick it is fit to be. And private prayer is a duty which will not be excused by the performance of publick. They are both required, and one must not be taken in exchange for the other. And whoever is diligent in publick prayers, and yet negligent in private, it is much to be feared he rather seeks to approve himself to men than to God; contrary to the command of our Saviour, Matt. vi. who enjoins this private prayer, this “praying to our Father in secret,” from whom alone we are to expect our reward, and not from the vain praises of men.

14. Now this duty of prayer is to be often performed, by none seldomer than evening and morning, it being most necessary that we should thus begin and end all our works with God, and that not only in respect of ourselves, who can never be either prosperous or safe, but by committing ourselves to him; and therefore should tremble to venture on the perils of day or night without his safeguard. How much oftener this duty is to be performed, must be judged according to the business or leisure men have. Where by business, I mean not such business as men unprofitably make to themselves, but the necessary business of a man's calling, which with

some will not afford them much time for set and solemn prayer. But even these men may often in a day lift up their hearts to God, in short prayers, even whilst they are at their work. As for those that have more leisure, they are in all reason to bestow more time upon this duty. And let no man, that can find time to bestow upon his vanities, nay, perhaps, his sins, say he wants leisure for prayer; but let him now endeavour to redeem what he hath mis-spent, by employing more of that leisure in this duty for the future.

15. But we are not only to consider how often, but how well we perform it. Now to do it well, we are to respect, first, the matter of our prayers, to look that we ask nothing that is unlawful, as revenge upon our enemies, or the like. Secondly, the manner; and that must be first in faith. We must believe, that if we ask as we ought, God will either give us the thing we ask for, or else something which he sees better for us. And, secondly, in humility; we must acknowledge ourselves utterly unworthy of any of those good things we beg for, and therefore sue for them only for Christ's sake. Thirdly, with attention; we must mind what we are about, and not suffer ourselves to be carried away to the thought of other things. I told you, at first, that prayer was the business of the soul; but if our minds be wandering, it is the work, only, of the tongue and lips, which make it, in God's account, no better than vain babbling, and so will never bring a blessing on us. Nay, as Jacob said to his mother, Gen. xxvii. 12, it will be more likely to bring a curse on us than a blessing; for it is a profaning one of the most solemn parts of God's service; it is a piece of hypocrisy, the "drawing near to him with our lips, when our hearts are far from him," and a great slighting and despising that dreadful Majesty we come before. It is just as if a malefactor, that comes to sue for his life to the king, should, in the midst of his supplication, happen to espy a butterfly, and should leave his suit: and run after that butterfly, would you not

think it pity a pardon should be cast away upon so careless a creature? And sure it will be as unreasonable to expect that God should attend and grant those suits of ours, which we do not consider ourselves.

16. This wandering in prayer is a thing we are much concerned to arm ourselves against; it being that to which we are naturally wonderfully prone. To that end it will be necessary, first, to possess our hearts at our coming to prayers with the greatness of that Majesty we are to approach, that so we may dread to be vain and trifling in his presence. Secondly, we are to consider the great concernment of the things we are to ask, some whereof are such, that if we should not be heard, we were of all creatures the most miserable; and yet this wandering is the way to keep us from being heard. Thirdly, we are to beg God's aid in this particular: and therefore, when thou settest to prayer, let thy first petition be for this grace of attention.

17. Lastly, be as watchful as is possible, over thy heart in time of prayer, to keep out all wandering thoughts; or if any have gotten in, let them not find entertainment; but as soon as ever thou discernest them, suffer them not to abide one moment, but cast them out with indignation, and beg God's pardon for them.

18. In the fourth place, we must look our prayers be with zeal and earnestness; it is not enough that we so far attend to them, as barely to know what it is we say, but we must put forth all the affections of our souls, according to the several parts of prayer before mentioned. It is not the cold faint request that will ever obtain from God; we see it will not from ourselves; for if a beggar should ask relief from us, and do it in such a manner that he seemed indifferent whether he had it or not, we should think he had either little want, or great pride, and so have no heart to give him. Therefore be careful when thou drawest nigh to God in prayer, to raise up thy soul to the highest pitch of zeal and earnestness thou art able. And, because of thyself alone thou art not able to

do any thing, beseech God that he will inflame thy heart with this heavenly fire of devotion ; and when thou hast obtained it, beware that thou neither quench it by any wilful sin, nor let it go out again for want of stirring it up.

19. Fifthly, we must pray with purity, I mean, we must purge our hearts from all affections to sin. This is surely the meaning of the apostle, 1 Tim. ii. 8, when he commands men to “ lift up holy hands in prayer.” He that cherishes any sin in his heart, his prayers, be they never so many or earnest, will little avail him. The Psalmist will tell him he shall not be heard, Psalm lxvi. 18, “ If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.” Nay, Solomon will tell him yet worse, that his prayers are not only vain, but abominable, Prov. xv. 8, “ The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord.” And thus to have our prayers turned into sin, is one of the heaviest things that can befall any man. Therefore, let us not be so cruel to ourselves, as to pull it upon our own heads.

20. In the last place, we must direct our prayers to right ends ; and that either in respect of the prayer itself, or the things we pray for. First, We must pray, not to gain the praise of men, only for company or fashion-sake, but we must do it first as an act of worship to God : Secondly, As an acknowledgment that he is that great spring from whence alone we expect all good things : and, Thirdly, To gain a supply of our own, or others’ needs. Our end in all must be God’s glory first ; and next that our own and others’ salvation ; and all other things must be taken in only as they tend to those. I have now done with that first part of worship, that of the soul.

21. The other is that of the body ; and that is such humble and reverent gestures in our approaches to God as may both express the inward reverence of our souls, and also pay him some tribute for our very bodies, with which the apostle commands us to glorify God, as well as with our souls ; and good reason, since he hath created

and redeemed the one as well as the other : whensoever, therefore, thou offerest thy prayers unto God, let it be with all lowliness, as well of body as of mind.

Of Fasting.

22. To prayer, fasting is very proper to be annexed. The Scripture usually joins them together. So Anna, Luke ii. 37, “served God with fasting and prayer.” And the Christians of the first times were generally very frequent in the practice of it. Now, though fasting be especially proper to a time of humiliation, yet it is not so restrained to it but it may be seasonable whensoever we have any extraordinary thing to request from God. Thus, when Esther was to endeavour the deliverance of her people from destruction, she and all the Jews kept a solemn fast, Esther iv. 16. And thus when Paul and Barnabas were to be ordained apostles, there was fasting joined to prayer, Acts xiii. 3. And so it will be very fit for us whensoever we have need of any extraordinary directions, or assistance from God, whether concerning our temporal or spiritual concerns, thus to quicken our prayers by fasting.

23. How often this duty of fasting is to be performed, we have no direction in Scripture. That must be allotted by men’s own piety, according as their health, or other considerations, will allow. But as it is in humiliation, the frequenter returns we have of set times for it the better ; so it is likewise in fasting, the oftener the better, so it be not hurtful either to our healths, or to some other duty required of us. Nay, perhaps fasting may help some men to more times for humiliation than they would otherwise gain. For there are some who cannot, without a manifest hinderance to their calling, allow a whole day to that work ; yet such a one may at least afford that time he would otherwise spend in eating : and so fasting will be doubly useful to such a man, both by helping him in duty, and gaining him time for it.

24. I have now gone through the first branch of our duty to God, to wit, the acknowledging him for our God. The second is, the having no other; of which I need say little, as it is a forbidding of that grosser sort of heathenish idolatry, the worshipping of idols, which, though it were once common in the world, yet is now so rare, that it is not likely any that read this will be concerned in it. Only I must say, that to pay Divine worship to any creature, be it saint or angel, yea, or the image of Christ himself, is a transgression of the second branch of our duty to God, being the imparting that to a creature, which is due only to God, and therefore is strictly to be abstained from.

25. But there is another sort of idolatry, of which we are generally guilty, and that is, when we pay those affections of love, fear, trust, and the like, to any creature, in a higher degree than we do to God; for that is the setting up that thing, whatsoever it is, for our God. And this inward kind of idolatry is that which provokes God to jealousy, as well as the outward, of worshipping an idol.

CHAP. V.

I. *Duty to ourselves; of sobriety.* II. *Of humility.*
 III. *The great sin of pride.* IV. *Of vain-glory, the danger, folly, and the means to prevent it.* V. *Of meekness.*

I. *Our Duty to ourselves; of Sobriety.*

THIS duty to ourselves is, by St. Paul, in the fore-mentioned text, Titus ii. 12, summed up in this one word, soberly. Now by soberly is meant our keeping within those due bounds which God hath set us. My business will therefore be to tell you what are the particulars of this sobriety: and that, I. In respect of the

soul; 2. In respect of the body. The sobriety of the soul stands in right governing its passions and affections, and to that are many virtues required. I shall give you the particulars of them.

II. *Of Humility.*

2. The first of them is humility. This being the foundation on which all others must be built. And he that hopes to gain them without this, will prove but like that foolish builder Christ speaks of, Luke vi. 49, "who built his house on the sand." Of the humility towards God, I have already spoken; I am now to speak of humility as it concerns ourselves.

3. This humility is of two sorts; the first is, the having a mean opinion of ourselves; the second is, the being content that others should have so of us. The first of these is contrary to pride, the other to vain glory. And that both these are absolutely necessary to Christians, I am now to shew you; which will, I conceive, best be done by laying before you, first, the sin; secondly, the danger; thirdly, the contrary virtues.

III. *The great Sin of Pride.*

4. And first, for pride; the sin of it is so great, that it cast the angels out of heaven, and therefore, if we may judge of sin by the punishment, it was not only the first, but the greatest sin that ever the devil himself hath been guilty of: but we need no better proof of the heinousness of it, than the extreme hatefulness of it to God; which besides that instance of his punishing the devil, we may frequently find in the Scriptures, Prov. xvi 5, "Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord." So Jam. iv. 6, "God resisteth the proud;" and divers other texts there are to the same purpose. Now, since it is certain, God, who is all goodness, hates nothing but as it is evil, it must needs follow, that where God hates

in so great a degree, there must be a great degree of evil.

5. But, secondly, pride is not only very sinful, but very dangerous; and that, in respect of drawing us to other sins; secondly, of betraying us to punishments. First, pride draws us to other sins, wherein it shews itself to be directly contrary to humility; for as that is the root of all virtue, so is this of all vice. For he that is proud sets himself up as his own God, and so can never submit to any other rules than what he makes to himself. “The ungodly,” says the Psalmist, “is so proud that he careth not for God.” Where you see it is his pride that makes him despise God. And when a man is once come to that, he is prepared for the commission of all sins. I might instance in a multitude of particular sins that naturally flow from this of pride; as, first, anger, which the wise man sets as the effect of pride, Prov. xxi. 24, calling it proud wrath; secondly, strife and contention; which he again notes to be the offspring of pride, Prov. xiii. 10, “Only by pride cometh contention.” And both these are indeed natural effects of pride: for he that thinks highly of himself, expects much submission and observance from others, and therefore cannot but quarrel when he thinks it not sufficiently paid. It would be infinite to mention all the fruits of this bitter root: I shall name but one more, and that is, that pride not only betrays us to many sins, but also makes them incurable, for it hinders the working of all remedies.

6. Those remedies must either come from God or man; if from God they must be either in the way of meekness and gentleness, or else of sharpness and punishment. Now if God by his goodness essay to lead a proud man to repentance, he quite mistakes God’s meaning, and thinks all the mercies he receives are but the reward of his own desert; and so long it is sure he will never think he needs repentance. But if, on the other side, God use him more sharply, and lay afflictions and punishments upon him, those in a proud heart work

nothing but murmurings and hating of God, as if he did him injury in those punishments. As for the remedies that can be used by man, they again must be either by way of correction or exhortation. Corrections from man will never work more on a proud heart, than those from God; for he that can think God unjust in them, will much rather believe it of man. And exhortations will do as little. For let a proud man be admonished, though never so mildly, he looks on it as a disgrace. And therefore, instead of confessing or amending the fault, he falls to reproaching his reprove, and for that precious act of kindness, looks on him as his enemy. Now one that thus stubbornly resists all means of cure, must be concluded in a most dangerous state.

7. But besides this danger of sin, I told you there was another, that of punishment; and of this there will need little proof, when it is considered, that God is the proud man's professed enemy, that he hates and resists him, as appeared in the text fore-cited: and then there can be little doubt, that he which hath so mighty an adversary shall be sure to smart for it. "For pride goes before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall. Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord; though hand join in hand, yet they shall not be unpunished." The decree, it seems, is unalterable, and whatever endeavours are used to preserve the proud man, they are but vain, for "he shall not go unpunished."

8. In the third place I am to shew you the great folly of this sin; and to do that, it will be necessary to consider the several things whereof men use to be proud; they are of three sorts, either those which we call the goods of nature, or the goods of fortune, or the goods of grace.

9. By the goods of nature I mean beauty, strength, wit, and the like; and the being proud of any of these is a huge folly. For, first, we are apt to mistake, and think ourselves handsome or witty when we are not; and then there cannot be a more ridiculous folly than to be proud

of what we have not ; and such every one esteems it in another man, though he never supposes it his own case. And therefore there is nothing more despicable amongst all men, than a proud fool ; yet no man that entertains high opinions of his own wit, but is in danger to be thus deceived, a man's own judgment of himself being of all others the least to be trusted. But, secondly, suppose we be not out in judging, yet what is there in any of these endowments which is worth the being proud of, there being scarce any of them which some creature or other hath not in a greater degree than man ? How much does the whiteness of the lily, and the redness of the rose, exceed the white and red of the fairest face ? What a multitude of creatures is there, that far surpass man in strength and swiftness ? And divers others there are, which, as far as concerns any useful end of theirs, act much more wisely than most of us ; and are therefore in scripture often proposed to us by way of example. It is therefore surely great unreasonableness for us to think highly of ourselves for such things as are common to us with beasts and plants. But, thirdly, if they were as excellent as we fancy them, yet they are not durable, they are impaired and lost by sundry means ; a phrenzy will destroy the rarest wit ; a sickness decay the freshest beauty, the greatest strength ; or, however, old age will be sure to do all. But, lastly, whatever they are, we gave them not to ourselves. No man can think he did any thing towards the procuring his beauty or wit, and so can with no reason value himself for them.

10. In the second place, the folly is as great to be proud of the goods of fortune. By them I mean wealth and honour, and the like ; for it is sure they add nothing of true worth to the man ; somewhat of outward pomp they may help him to, but that makes no change in the person. You may load an ass with money, or deck him with rich trappings, yet still you will not make him a whit the nobler kind of beast. Secondly, these are things we have no hold of, they vanish many times e'er we are aware he

that is rich to-day may be poor to-morrow, and then he will be the less pitied by all in his poverty, the prouder he was when he was rich. Thirdly, we have them all, but as stewards, to lay out for our Master's use, and therefore should rather think how to make our accounts, than pride ourselves in our receipts. Lastly, whatever of these we have, they, as well as the former, are not owing to ourselves. If they be lawfully gotten, we owe them only to God, whose blessing it is that maketh rich, Prov. x. 22. If unlawfully, we have them upon such terms, that we have very little reason to brag of them. And thus you see in these several respects, the folly of this second part of pride.

11. The third is that of the goods of grace ; that is, any virtue a man hath. And here I cannot say but the things are very valuable, being infinitely more precious than all the world, yet nevertheless this is of all the rest the greatest folly ; and that not only in the foregoing respect, that we help not ourselves to it, grace being above all things most immediately God's work in us, but especially in this, that the being proud of grace is the sure way to lose it. God, who gives grace to the humble, will take it from the proud ; and as he will lose the grace for the future, so he will lose all the reward of it for the time past. For let a man have done never so many good acts, yet if he be proud of them, that pride shall be charged on him to his destruction, but the good shall never be remembered to his reward. And this proves it to be a most wretched folly to be proud of grace. It is like that of children, that pull those things in piecés they are most fond of ; but yet much worse than that of theirs, for we not only lose the thing, (and that the most precious that can be imagined,) but we must also be eternally punished for doing so, there being nothing that shall be so sadly reckoned for in the next world as the abuse of grace. And certainly there can be no greater abuse of it, than to make it serve for an end so directly contrary to that for which it was given ; it being given to make us humble, not proud ; to magnify God, not ourselves.

12 The second contrary to humility I told you was vain-glory ; that is, a thirst after the praise of men. And first, that this is a sin, I need prove no otherwise than by the words of our Saviour, John v. 44, “ How can ye believe, that receive honour of one another ? ” Where it appears that it is not only a sin, but such an one as hinders the receiving Christ into the heart, for so believing there signifies. This, in the second place, shews you the great danger of this sin ; for if it be that which keeps Christ out of the heart, it is sure it brings infinite danger, since all our safety, all our hope of escaping the wrath to come, stands in receiving him. But, besides, experience shews that wherever this sin hath possession, it endangers men to fall into any other. For he that so considers the praise of men, whenever the greatest sins come to be in fashion and credit, will be sure to commit them rather than run the disgrace of being singular and precise. I doubt there are many consciences can witness the truth of this, so that I need say no more to prove the danger of this sin.

13. The third thing I am to shew, is the folly of it ; and that will appear, first, by considering what it is we thus hunt after ; nothing but a little air, a blast, the breath of men, it brings us in nothing of real advantage, for I am never made the wiser nor the better for a man’s saying I am wise and good. Besides, if I am commended, it must be either before my face, or behind my back. If the former, it is very often flattery, and so the greatest abuse that can be offered, and then I must be very much a fool to be pleased with it. But if it be behind my back, I have not then so much as the pleasure of knowing it, and therefore it is a strange folly thus to pursue what is so utterly gainless. But, secondly, it is not only gainless, but painful and uneasy also ; he that seeks praise is not at all master of himself, but must suit all his actions to that end, and instead of doing what his own reason or conscience (nay, perhaps his worldly convenience) directs him to, he must take care to do what will bring him in commendations, and so enslave himself to every one that hath but

a tongue to commend him. Nay, there is yet a farther uneasiness in it; and that is, when such a man fails of his aim, when he misses the praise, and perhaps meets with the contrary—reproach, (which is no man's lot more often than that of the vain-glorious) then what disturbances and disquiets, and even torment of mind is he under? And sure this painfulness that attends this sin, is sufficient proof of the folly of it. Yet this is not all, it is further very hurtful; for if this vain-glory be concerning any Christian action, it destroys all the fruit of it; he that prays or gives alms to be seen of men, (Matt. vi. 2,) must take that as his reward; they must expect none from God, but the portion of those hypocrites, that "love the praise of men more than the praise of God." And this is a miserable folly to make such an exchange; but if the vain-glory be not concerning any virtuous action, but only some indifferent thing, yet even then it is very hurtful; for vain-glory is a thing that, wheresoever it is placed, endangers our eternal estate, which is the greatest of all mischiefs. And even for the present it is observable, that of all other sins it stands most in its own light. For there are very few that thus hunt after praise but they are discerned to do so, and that is sure to eclipse whatever praise-worthy thing they do, and bring scorn upon them instead of reputation. And then certainly we may justly condemn this sin of folly, which is so ill a manager, even of its own design.

IV. *Of Meekness.*

14. A second virtue is meekness; that is, a calmness and quietness of spirit, contrary to the impatience of anger. This virtue may be exercised either in respect of God or our neighbour. That towards God I have already spoken of under the head of Humility, and that towards our neighbour I shall hereafter. All I have here to say of it is, how it becomes a duty to ourselves; that it does, in respect of the great advantage we reap by it; "Blessed are the meek," and not only in the next world, but even in this

too, " they shall inherit the earth." Indeed none but the meek person hath the true enjoyment of any thing in the world, for the angry and impatient are like sick people, who cannot enjoy the greatest prosperities. For let things be never so fair without, they will raise storms within their own breasts; and surely whoever hath, either in himself or others, observed the great uneasiness of this passion of anger, cannot choose but think meekness a most pleasant thing.

V. *Of Consideration.*

15. The third virtue is consideration; and this in a most special manner we owe to our souls, for without it we shall, as rash unadvised people use to do, rush into infinite perils. Now this consideration is either of our state or of our actions; by our state I mean, what our condition is to God-ward; whether it be such, that we may reasonably conclude ourselves in his favour. This it much concerns us to consider and examine, and that not by those easy rules men are apt to frame to themselves, as, whether they believe that Christ died for their sins, that they are of the number of the elect, and shall certainly be saved. If these and the like were all that were required to put us into God's favour, none but some melancholy person could ever be out of it; for we are apt enough generally to believe comfortably of ourselves. But the rules God hath given us in his word are those by which we must be tried at the last day, and therefore are certainly the only safe ones by which to try ourselves now. And the sum of those are, that whosoever continues in any one wilful sin, is not in his favour; nor can, if he do so die, hope for mercy at his hand.

16. The second thing we are to consider is our actions, and those either before or after the doing of them. In the first place we are to consider before we act, and not to do any thing rashly or headily; but first to advise with our consciences, whether this be lawful to be done. For

he that follows his own inclination, and does every thing which that moves him to, shall be sure to fall into a multitude of sins. Therefore consider soberly, and be assured of the lawfulness of the thing before thou venture to do it.

17. Secondly, we are to consider the actions when they are past also; that is, we are to examine whether they have been such as are allowable by the laws of Christ. This is very necessary, whether they be good or bad; if they be good, the recalling them helpeth us to the comfort of a good conscience, and that comfort again encourageth us to go on in the like; and besides, it stirs us up to thankfulness to God, by whose grace alone we are enabled to do them. But if they be bad, then it is especially necessary that we thus examine them, for without this it is impossible we should ever come to amendment; for unless we observe them to have been amiss, we can never think it needful to mend, but shall still run on from one wickedness to another, which is the greatest curse any man can lie under.

CHAP. VI.

I. *Of contentedness and the contraries to it, murmuring, ambition, covetousness, envy.* II. *Helps to contentedness.* III. *Of duties which concern our bodies.* IV. *Of chastity; helps to it.* V. *Of temperance.*

I. *Of Contentedness.*

THE fourth virtue is contentedness; and this surely is a duty we owe to ourselves, it being that without which it is impossible to be happy. This contentedness is a well-pleasèdness with that condition, whatever it is, that God hath placed us in; not murmuring and repining at our lot, but cheerfully welcoming whatever God sends. How great and pleasant a virtue this is, may appear by the contrariety it hath to several great and painful vices;

so that where this is rooted in the heart, it subdues not only some such single sin, but a cluster of them together.

2. And first, it is contrary to all murmuring in general, which is a sin most hateful to God, as may appear by his sharp punishments of it on the Israelites in the wilderness. And surely it is also very painful and uneasy to a man's self; for if, as the Psalmist saith, it be a "joyful and pleasant thing to be thankful," we may conclude it is a sad and unpleasant thing to be murmuring; and every man's own experience will confirm the truth of it.

3. Secondly, it is contrary to ambition; the ambitious man is always disliking his present condition, and that makes him so greedily seek a higher; whereas he that is content with his own, lies quite out of the road of this temptation. Now ambition is not only a great sin in itself, but it puts men upon many other. There is nothing so horrid which a man that eagerly seeks greatness, will stick at; and the uneasiness of it is answerable to the sin. This none can doubt of, that considers what a multitude of fears and jealousies, cares and distractions, there are that attend ambition in its progress, besides the great and public ruins that usually befall it in the end. And therefore sure contentedness is, in this respect, as well a happiness as a virtue.

4. Thirdly, it is contrary to covetousness; this the apostle witnesseth, Heb. xiii. 5, "Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have;" where you see contentedness is set as the direct contrary to covetousness. But of this there needs no other proof than common experience; for we see the covetous man never thinks he hath enough, and therefore can never be content; for no man can be said to be so that thirsts after any thing he hath not. Now, that you may see how excellent and necessary a virtue this is that secures against covetousness, it will not be amiss a little to consider the nature of that sin.

5. That it is a very great crime, is most certain, for it is contrary to the very foundation of all good life; I mean

those three great duties, to God, to ourselves, and to our neighbours. First, it is so contrary to our duty to God, that Christ himself tells us, Luke xvi. 13, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." He that sets his heart upon wealth, must necessarily take it off from God.

6. Secondly, it is contrary to the duty we owe ourselves, and that both in respect of our souls and bodies. The covetous man despises his soul, sells that to eternal destruction for a little pelf. Nor doth he only offend against his soul, but his body too; for he often denies it those necessary refreshments it wants, and for which his wealth (as far as it concerns himself,) was given him. This is so constantly the custom of rich misers, that I need not prove it to you.

7. In the third place, covetousness is contrary to the duty we owe to our neighbours; and that in both the parts of it, justice and charity. He that loves money will not care whom he cheats and defrauds, so he may bring in gain to himself: and from thence spring those many tricks of deceit so common in the world. As for charity, that is never to be hoped for from a covetous man, who dreads the lessening of his own heaps more than the starving of his poor brother. And it is not much less uneasy than wicked; for between the care of getting, and the fear of losing, the covetous man enjoys no quiet hour. Therefore every man is deeply concerned, as he tenders his happiness, either in this world or the next, to guard himself against this sin, which he can no way do but by contentedness.

8. In the fourth place, it is contrary to envy; for he that is content with his own condition, hath no temptation to envy another's. How unchristian a sin envy is, shall hereafter be shewed: at the present, I need say no more, but that it is a very uneasy one; it frets and gnaws the very heart of him that harbours it. But the worse this sin is, the more excellent is this grace of contentedness that frees us from it. I suppose I have said enough to make you think this a very desirable virtue.

9. A fifth duty is *diligence*: this is made up of two parts, watchfulness and industry; and both these we owe to our souls.

10. First, *watchfulness*, in observing all the dangers that threaten them. Now, since nothing can endanger our souls but sin; this watchfulness is principally to be employed against that; and as in a besieged city, where there is any weak part, there it is necessary to keep the strongest guard; so it is here, wherever thou findest thy inclinations such as are likely to betray thee to sin, there it concerns thee to be especially watchful. Observe, therefore, carefully to what sins either thy natural temper, thy company, or thy course of life incline thee, and watch thyself very narrowly in those.

11. The second part of diligence is industry or labour, and this also we owe to our souls, for without it they will as little prosper as the vineyard of the sluggard: for there is a husbandry of the soul, as well as of the estate, and the end of the one, as of the other, is the increasing and improving its riches. Now the riches of the soul are either natural or Divine. By the natural, I mean its faculties or reason, wit, memory, and the like; by the Divine, I mean the graces of God, which are given immediately by God; and both these, we are to take care to improve, they being talents intrusted to us for that purpose.

12. Of grace we must be especially careful to husband and improve it. This is a duty expressly commanded, 2 Pet. iii. 18, "Grow in grace." And again, in the first chapter of that Epistle, ver. 5, "Give all diligence to add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge," &c. Now the special means of improving grace is by employing it, by doing those things for the enabling of us whereunto it was given us. This is a sure means, as it hath the promise of God, "That to him that hath," (that is, hath made use of what he hath,) "shall be given, and he shall have abundance." He that diligently and faithfully employs the first beginnings of grace, shall yet have more;

and he that in like manner husbands that more, shall yet have a greater degree; so that what Solomon saith of temporal riches, is also true of spiritual, "The hand of the diligent maketh rich."

13. Therefore, whenever thou findest any good motions in thy heart, remember *that* is the season for this spiritual husbandry: if thou hast but a check of conscience against any sin, drive that on till it come to a hatred; and then that hatred till it come to a resolution; then from that resolution proceed to endeavours. Do this faithfully and sincerely, and thou shalt certainly find the grace of God assisting thee, not only in every of these steps, but also enabling thee to advance still higher, till thou come to victory. Yet to this industry thou must not fail to add thy prayers, there being a promise that God "will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask it."

I have now done with those virtues which respect our souls: I come now to those which concern our bodies.

II. *Of Chastity.*

14. The first of which is chastity, which may well be set in the front of the duties we owe to our bodies, since the apostle, 1 Cor. vi. 18, sets the contrary as the especial sin against them: "He that committeth fornication, sinneth against his own body."

15. Now chastity consists in a perfect abstaining from all kinds of uncleanness, not only that of adultery and fornication, but all other sorts of it, committed either upon ourselves, or with any other. In a word, all acts of that kind are utterly against chastity, save only in lawful marriage. And even there, men are not to think themselves let loose to please their brutish appetites, but are to keep themselves within such rules of moderation as agree to the ends of marriage; which being these two, the begetting of children, and the avoiding of fornication, nothing must be done which may hinder the first of these ends; and the second aiming only at the subduing of lust,

it is very contrary to that end to make marriage an occasion of heightening and inflaming it.

16. But this virtue of chastity reacheth not only to the restraining of the grosser act, but to all lower degrees. It sets a guard upon our eyes, and upon our hands; so also upon our tongues, that they speak no immodest or filthy words: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth." Nay, upon our very thoughts and fancies, we must not entertain any filthy desires; not so much as the imagination of any such thing. Therefore he that forbears the gross act, and yet allows himself in any of these, it is to be suspected that it is rather some outward restraint that keeps him from it, than conscience. For if it were that, it would keep him from these too, these being sins also, and very great ones, in God's sight.

17. Besides the natural fruits of this sin, it is attended with heavy judgments from God. The most extraordinary judgment that ever befel any place, fire and brimstone from heaven upon Sodom and Gomorrah, was for this sin of uncleanness: and many examples likewise of God's vengeance may be observed on particular persons for this sin. The incest of Amnon cost him his life. Zimri and Cozbi were slain in the very act. And no person that commits the like, hath any assurance it shall not be his own case. For how secretly soever it is committed, it cannot be hid from God, who is the sure avenger of all such wickedness.

18. Lastly, this sin shuts us out from the kingdom of heaven, whercin no impure thing can enter. And we never find any list of those sins which bar men thence, but this of uncleanness hath a special place in it. If we will thus pollute ourselves, we are fit company only for those black spirits, the devil and his angels, and therefore with them we must expect our portion, where our flames of lust will end in flames of fire.

19. All this laid together may surely recommend the virtue of chastity to us; for the preserving of which we

must be very careful, first, to check the beginnings of the temptation, to cast away the very first fancy of lust with indignation ; for if you once fall to parly with it, it gains still more upon you, and then it will be harder to resist : therefore your way in this temptation is to flee, rather than fight. This is very necessary, not only that we may avoid the danger of proceeding to act the sin, but also in respect of the present fault of entertaining such fancies, which of themselves, though they should never proceed further, are a great abomination before God. Secondly, have a special care to flee idleness, which is the proper soil for these filthy weeds to grow in, and keep thyself always busied in some innocent or virtuous employment. Thirdly, never suffer thyself to recall any unclean passages of thy former life with delight, for that is to act over the sin again, and will be so reckoned by God ; nay, perhaps thus deliberately to think of it may be a greater guilt than a rash acting of it. Fourthly, forbear the company of such light and wanton persons as either by the filthiness of their discourse, or any other means, may be a snare to thee. Fifthly, pray earnestly that God would give thee the spirit of purity, especially at the time of any present temptation. Bring the unclean devil to Christ to be cast out, as did the man in the gospel ; and if it will not be cast out with prayer alone, add fasting to it ; but be sure thou do not keep up the flame by any high or immoderate feeding. The last remedy, when the former proves vain, is marriage, which becomes a duty to him that cannot live innocently without it. But even here, there must be care taken, lest this, which should be for his good, become an occasion of falling, for want of sobriety in the use of marriage.

III. *Of Temperance.*

20. The second virtue that concerns our bodies is temperance ; and the exercises of that are divers : as, first, temperance in eating ; secondly, in drinking ; thirdly, in

sleep ; fourthly, in apparel. I shall speak of them severally ; and first, of temperance in eating. This temperance is observed when our eating is agreeable to those ends to which eating is by God and nature designed ; those are first, the being ; secondly, the well-being of our bodies.

21. Man is of such a frame, that eating becomes necessary to him for the preserving his life ; hunger being a natural disease, which will prove deadly, if not prevented, and the only physic for it is eating, which is therefore a necessary means of keeping us alive : and that is the first end of eating. And as men use not to take physic for pleasure, but remedy, so neither should they eat.

22. But, secondly, God hath been so bountiful, as to provide not only for the being, but the well-being of our bodies ; and therefore we are not tied to such strictness that we may eat no more than will just keep us from starving, but we may also eat whatsoever, either for kind or quantity, most tends to the health and welfare of them. Now, that eating which is agreeable to these ends, is within the bounds of temperance ; as, on the contrary, whatsoever is contrary to them is a transgression against it. He therefore that sets up to himself other ends of eating, as either the pleasing of his taste, or (what is yet worse,) the pampering of his body, that he may the better serve his lust, he directly thwarts and crosses those ends of God ; for he that hath those aims, doth that which is contrary to health ; yea, to life itself, as appears by the many diseases and untimely deaths which surfeiting and uncleanness daily bring on men.

23. He therefore that will practise this virtue of temperance, must neither eat so much, nor of any such sorts of meat, (provided he can have other,) as may be hurtful to his health. What the sorts or quantities should be, is impossible to set down, for that differs according to the several constitutions of men. Some men may, with temperance, eat a great deal, because their stomachs require it ; when another may be guilty of intemperance

in eating but half so much, because it is more than is useful to him. And so also for the sorts of meat, it may be niceness and luxury for some to be curious in them, when yet some degree of it may be necessary to a weak stomach, which, not but of wantonness, but disease, cannot eat the coarser meats. But I think it may in general be said, that, to healthful bodies, the plainest meats are generally the most wholesome, but every man in this must be left to judge for himself; and that he may do it aright, he must be careful that he never suffer himself to be enslaved to his palate.

24. The second is temperance in drinking; and the ends of eating and drinking being much the same, I can give no other direct rules in this, than what were given in the former, to wit, that we drink neither of such sorts of liquor, nor in such quantities, as may not agree with the right ends of drinking, the preserving our lives and healths. Only in this there will be need of one caution; for our understandings being in more danger to be hurt by drinking than meat, we must take care to keep that safe, and rather not drink what we might safely, in respect of our health, if it be in danger to distemper our reason. Some men's brains may be so weak, that their heads cannot bear that quantity of drink which would do their bodies no harm; and whoever is of this temper must strictly abstain from that degree of drink, or that sort of it, which he finds hath that effect; yea, though it do in other respects appear not only safe, but useful to his health. For though we are to preserve our healths, yet we are not to do it by a sin.

25. But, alas! of those multitudes of drunkards we have in the world, this is the case of very few, most of them going far beyond what their health requires, even to the utter destruction thereof. And therefore, as it is plain men have set up to themselves some other ends of drinking than those allowable ones fore-mentioned, it may not be amiss a little to explain what they are, and withal to shew the unreasonableness of them.

26. The first is that which they call good fellowship ; one man drinks to keep another company. But I would ask such a one, whether, if that man were drinking poison, he would pledge him for company ? If he would not, by the very same, nay, far greater reason, he is not to do this : for immoderate drinking is poison ; perhaps it doth not always work death immediate, (yet there want not many instances of its having done even that,) but that the custom of it does usually bring men to their ends, is past doubt : and therefore though the poison work slowly, yet it is still poison. But, however, it doth at the present work that which a wise man would more abhor than death ; it works madness and frenzy, turns the man into a beast, by drowning that reason which would difference him from one. Certainly the effects of drink are such, that had being drunk been first enjoined as a punishment, we should have thought him a more than ordinary tyrant that had invented it.

27. A second end of drinking is said to be the maintaining of friendship and kindness amongst men. But this is strange that men should do that towards the maintaining of friendship, which is really the greatest mischief that can be done to any man. Did ever any think to befriend a man by helping him to destroy his estate, his credit, his life ? Yet he that thus drinks with a man, does this, and much more ; he ruins his reason, yea, his soul, and yet this must be called the way of preserving of friendship. This is so ridiculous, that one would think none could own it, but when he was actually drunk. But besides, alas ! experience shews us, that this is fitter to beget quarrels than preserve kindness, as the many drunken brawls we every day see, with the wounds, and sometimes murders, that accompany them, witness.

28. A third end is said to be the cheering of their spirits, making them merry. But sure if the mirth be such, that reason must be turned out of doors before it begin, it will be very little worth ; one may say with

Solomon, that "the laughter of such fools is madness." And sure they that will be drunk to put themselves in this temper, must by the same reason be glad of a frenzy, if they could but be sure it would be of the merry sort. But little do these merry folks think what sadness they are all this while heaping up to themselves often in this world, when by some mad pranks they play in their jollity, they bring mischief upon themselves; but however certainly in another, where this mirth will be sadly reckoned for.

29. A fourth end is said to be the putting away of cares: but I shall ask what those cares are? Be they such as should be put away? Perhaps they are some checks of conscience which must be thus charmed. And I doubt this hath proved too effectual with many to the laying them asleep. But this is the wickedest folly in the world; for if thou thinkest not these checks to have something considerable in them, why do they trouble thee? But if thou do, it is impossible thou canst hope this can long secure thee from them. Thou mayest thus stop their mouths for awhile, but they will one day cry the louder for it. Suppose a thief or a murderer knew he was pursued to be brought to justice, would he, think you, to put away the fear of being hanged, fall to drinking, and in the mean time take no care for his escape? Yet this is the very case here, thy conscience tells thee of thy danger, that thou must ere long be brought before God's judgment-seat; and is it not madness for thee, instead of endeavouring to get thy pardon, to drink away the thoughts of thy danger? But, in the second place, suppose these cares be some worldly ones, and such as are fit to be put away; then for shame do not disgrace thy reason, thy Christianity, as not to let them be as forcible to that end as a little drink. Thy reason will tell thee, it is in vain to care where care will bring no advantage; and thy Christianity will direct thee to one, on whom thou mayest safely "cast all thy cares, for he careth for thee," 1 Pet. v. 7. And therefore, unless thou

meanest to renounce being both a man and a Christian, never betake thee to this pitiful shift, to rid thee of thy cares. But besides, this will not do the deed neither, for though it may at the present keep thee from the sense of thy cares, yet when that is over, they will return again with greater violence; and if thou hast any conscience, bring a new care with them, even that which ariseth from the guilt of so foul a sin.

30. A fifth end is said to be the passing away time. This, though it be as unreasonable as any of the former; yet, by the way, it serves to reproach idleness, which is, it seems, so burdensome a thing, that even this vilest employment is preferred before it. But this is in many a very false plea. For they often spend time at the pot, not only when they have nothing else to do, but even to the neglect of their most necessary business. However, it is in all a most unreasonable one, for there is no man but he may find somewhat or other to employ himself in. If he have little worldly business of his own, he may do somewhat to the benefit of others; but, however, there is no man but hath a soul, and if he will look carefully to that, he need not complain for want of business, where there are so many corruptions to mortify, so many inclinations to watch over, so many temptations (whereof this of drunkenness is not the least,) to resist, the graces of God to improve, and former neglects of all these to lament, sure there can never want employment; for all these require time, and so men at their deaths find. For those that have all their lives made it their business to give away their time, would then give all the world to redeem it. And sure where there is much leisure from worldly affairs, God expects to have the more time employed in spiritual exercises.

31. A sixth end is said to be the preventing that reproach which is cast on those that will be stricter than their neighbours. But in answer to this, I shall first ask, what is the harm of such reproach? Sure it cannot equal the least of those mischiefs drunkenness betrays us

to. Nay, if we will take our Saviour's word, it is a happiness. "Blessed," saith he, "are ye when men shall revile you, and say all manner of evil against you for my sake," Matt. v. 11. And St. Peter tells us, 1 Pet. iv. 14, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye." And sure, to be reproached for obedience to any command of Christ's, is to be reproached for his name. Secondly, Consider the heavy doom Christ hath pronounced on those that are ashamed of him, and so are all those that for fear of reproach shall shrink from their obedience to him, Mark viii. 38, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of the Father with the holy angels." There is none but will at that day desire to be owned by Christ : but whoever will not here own him, that is, cleave close to his commands, notwithstanding all the scorns, nay, persecutions of the world, shall then certainly be cast off by him.

32. There is a seventh end, which though every man thinks too base to own, yet it is too plain it prevails with many ; and that is the bare pleasure of the drink : but to these I confess it will not be fit to say much ; for he that is come into this lamentable degree of sottishness is not likely to receive benefit by any thing that can be said. Yet let me tell even this man, that he of all others hath the most means of discerning his fault ; for this being such a ground of drinking as nobody will own, he is condemned of himself, yea, and all his fellow-drunkards too ; for their denying it is a plain sign they acknowledge it a most abominable thing. And if Esau were called a profane person, Heb. xii. 16, for "selling his birth-right for a mess of pottage," and that too when he had the necessity of hunger upon him ; what name of reproach can be bad enough for him who sells his health, his reason, his God, his soul, for a cup of drink, and that when he is so far from needing it, that perhaps he hath more already than he can keep ?

33. I suppose I have now shewed you the unreasonableness of those motives, which are ordinarily brought in excuse of this sin. I am farther to tell you, that it is not only that degree of drunkenness which makes men able neither to go nor speak, which is to be looked on as a sin, but all lower degrees which at all work upon the understanding, whether by dulling it and making it less fit for any employment, or by making it too light and airy, or inflaming men to rage and fury. These, or whatever else make any change in the man, are to be reckoned into this sin of drunkenness. Nay, farther, the drinking beyond the natural ends of drinking, that is, beyond moderate refreshment, is a sin, though by the strength of a man's brain it makes not the least change in him; and therefore those, that are not actually drunk, yet can spend whole days, or any considerable part of them, in drinking, are so far from being innocent, that that greater woe belongs to them which is pronounced, Isa. v. 22, against those that are mighty to drink.

34. Nay, this man is guilty of the greatest waste: first, of the good creatures of God: that drink which is by God's providence intended for the refreshing and relieving of us is abused and mis-spent, when it is drunk beyond that measure which those ends require. But, in the second place, this is a waste of that which is much more precious, our time, which is allowed us by God to work out our salvation, and must be strictly reckoned for, and therefore ought every minute of it to be most thriftily husbanded to that end; but when it is thus laid out, it tends to the direct contrary, even to the working out our damnation. Besides, he that thus drinks, though he escape being drunk himself, is guilty of all the drunkenness that any of his company fall under; for he gives them encouragement to drink on by his example.

35. Therefore, Christian reader, let me now entreat, nay, conjure thee, by all that love thou oughtest to have to the honour of God, the credit of thy Christian profession, the eternal welfare of thine own soul, the prosperity

of the church and nation whereof thou art a member ; nay, by that love which certainly thou hast to thy own temporal welfare, to think sadly of what hath been spoken, and then judge whether there be any pleasure in this sin which can be any tolerable recompence for all those mischiefs it brings with it. I am confident no man in his wits can think there is ; and if there be not, then be ashamed to be any longer that fool which shall make so wretched a bargain, but begin at this instant a firm and a faithful resolution, never once more to be guilty of this swinish sin, and in the fear of God betake thee to a strict temperance ; which when thou hast done, thou wilt find thou hast made, not only a gainful, but a pleasant exchange ; for there is no man that hath tried both courses, but his own heart will tell him there is infinitely more present comfort and pleasure in sobriety and temperance, than ever all his drunken revellings afforded him.

Of Temperance in Sleep.

36. The third part of temperance concerns sleep. And temperance in that also must be measured by the end for which sleep was ordained by God, which was only the refreshing and supporting our bodies, which being of such a temper that continual labour wearies them out, sleep comes as a medicine to that weariness, as a repairer of that decay, that so we may be enabled to such labours as the duties of religion, or works of our calling require of us. Sleep was intended to make us more profitable, not more idle ; as we give rest to our beasts, not that we are pleased with their doing nothing, but that they may do us the better service.

37. By this therefore you may judge what is temperate sleeping ; that which tends to the refreshing and making us more lively and fit for action, and to that end a moderate degree serves best. It will be impossible to set down just how many hours is that moderate degree,

because as in eating, so in sleep, some constitutions require more than others. Every man's own experience must in this judge for him; but then let him judge uprightly, and not consult with his sloth in the case; for that will still cry, "A little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little more folding of the hands to sleep," Prov. xxiv. 33. But take only so much as he really finds to tend to the end afore-mentioned.

38. He that does not thus limit himself, falls into several sins under this general one of sloth. As first, he wastes his time, that precious talent which was committed to him by God to improve, which he that sleeps away, doth like him in the gospel, Matt. xxv. 18, "hide it in the earth," when he should be trading with it; and you know what was the doom of that unprofitable servant, "Cast ye him into outer darkness:" he that gives himself to darkness of sleep here, shall there have darkness without sleep, but with "weeping and gnashing of teeth." Secondly, he injures his body: immoderate sleep fills that full of diseases, makes it a very sink of humours, as daily experience shews. Thirdly, he injures his soul, and that not only in robbing it of the service of the body, but in dulling its faculties, making them unfit for those employments to which God hath designed them; of all which ill husbandry the poor soul must one day give account. Nay, lastly, he affronts and despises God himself in it, by crossing the very end of his creation, which was to serve God in an active obedience; but he that sleeps away his life, directly thwarts that, and when God saith, "Man is born to labour," his practice saith the direct contrary. Take heed therefore of giving thyself to immoderate sleep, which is the committing so many sins in one.

39. But besides the sin of it, it is very hurtful in other respects; it is the sure bane of thy outward estate, wherein the sluggish person shall never thrive, according to that observation of the wise man, Prov. xxiii. 21, "Drowsiness shall cover a man with rags;" nay, indeed it can scarce be said that the sluggard lives. Sleep, you

know, is a kind of death, and he that gives himself up to it, what doth he but die before his time? Therefore if untimely death be a curse, it must needs be a strange folly to choose that from our own sloth, which we dread so much from God's hand.

40. The last part of temperance is that of apparel, which we are to measure by the ends for which clothing should be used. Those are especially these three: first, the hiding of nakedness. This was the first occasion of apparel. From this end we are likewise engaged to have our apparel modest, such as may answer this end of covering our shame: and therefore all immodest fashions, which may either argue the wantonness of the wearer, or provoke that of the beholder, are to be avoided.

41. A second end of apparel is the fencing the body from cold, to preserve the health thereof. And this end we must likewise observe in our clothing; we must wear such kind of habits as may keep us in convenient warmth. And this is transgressed, when, out of the vanity of being in fashion, we put ourselves in such clothing as either will not defend us from cold, or is some other way so uneasy, that it is rather a hurt than a benefit to our bodies. This is a most ridiculous folly, and yet that which people that take a pride in their clothes are usually guilty of.

42. A third end of apparel is the distinguishing of persons; and that first, in respect of sex; secondly, in respect of qualities. First, clothes are to make difference of sex; this hath been observed by all nations, the habits of men and women have always been divers. And God himself expressly provided for it among the Jews, by commanding the man should not wear the apparel of the woman, nor the woman of the man. But then, secondly, there is also a distinction of qualities: God hath placed some in a higher condition than others, and in proportion to their condition it befits their clothing to be. "Gorgeous apparel," our Saviour tells us "is for kings' courts," Luke vii. 25. Now this end of apparel should also be observed. Men and women should content themselves with that sort of clothing which agrees with their sex and condition,

not striving to equal that of a higher rank, not yet making it matter of envy among those of their own estate, vying who shall be finest; but let every man clothe himself in such sober attire as befits his place and calling, and not think himself disparaged if his neighbours have better than he.

43. And let all remember, that clothes are things which add no true worth to any, and therefore it is an intolerable vanity to spend any considerable part either of their thoughts, time, or wealth upon them, or to value themselves ever the more for them, or despise their poor brethren that want them. But if they desire to adorn themselves, let it be, as St. Peter adviseth the women of his time, 1 Pet. iii. 4, “in the hidden man of the heart, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit.” Let them clothe themselves as richly as is possible, with all Christian virtues, and that is the raiment that will set them out lovely in God’s eyes, yea, and in men’s too, who, unless they be fools and idiots, will more value thee for being good than fine; and sure one plain coat thou puttest upon a poor man’s back, will better become thee than twenty rich ones thou shalt put upon thine own.

CHAP. VII.

OF DUTIES TO OUR NEIGHBOUR.

- I. *Of justice, negative, positive.* II. *Of the sin of murder; the heinousness of it, the punishments of it, and the strange discoveries thereof.*

Of Duties to our Neighbour.

I COME now to the third part of duties, those to our neighbour, which are by the apostle summed up in the word [righteousness,] by which is meant not only bare justice, but all kind of charity also, for that is now by the law of Christ become a debt to our neighbour, and it is a piece of unrighteousness to defraud him of it. I

shall therefore build all the particular duties we owe to our neighbour, on those two general ones, justice and charity.

I. *Of Justice.*

2. I begin with justice, whereof there are two parts, the one negative, the other positive. The negative justice is to do no wrong to any. The positive justice is to do right to all; that is, to yield them whatsoever is due unto them. I shall first speak of the negative justice, the not wronging any. This first part of justice extends itself into several branches. A man may be injured either in his soul, his body, his possessions, or credit; and therefore this duty of negative justice lays a restraint on us in every of these; that we do no wrong to any man, in respect either of his soul, his body, his possessions, or his credit.

3. First, This justice ties us to do no hurt to his soul. And here my first work must be to examine what harm it is that the soul can receive. It is, we know, an invisible substance, which we cannot reach with our eye, much less with our swords; yet for all that, it is capable of being hurt and wounded, and that even to death.

4. The mind of a man may be wounded with grief or sadness, as Solomon saith, Prov. xv. 13, "By sorrow of heart the spirit is broken." Therefore whoever doth causelessly afflict or grieve his neighbour, he transgresseth this part of justice, and wrongs his soul. This sort of injury spiteful men are very often guilty of, they will do things by which themselves reap no good, only that they may vex and grieve another. This is a most savage humour, thus to take pleasure in the sadness of others; and whoever harbours it in his heart, may truly be said to be possessed with the devil; for it is the nature only of those accursed spirits to delight in the miseries of men; and, till that be cast out, they are fit only to dwell, as the possessed person did, Mark v. 3, among graves

and tombs, where there are none capable of receiving affliction by them.

5. It is a still greater wrong to the soul, to draw a man to sin. Sin is the disease and wound of the soul, as being the direct contrary to grace, which is the health and soundness of it. Now this wound we give to every soul, whom we do by any means whatsoever draw into sin.

6. The ways of doing that are divers: I shall mention some of them, whereof though some are more direct than others, yet all tend to the same end. Of the more direct ones there is, first, the commanding of sin, that is, when a person that hath power over another shall require him to do something which is unlawful; an example of this we have in Nebuchadnezzar's commanding the worship of the golden image, Dan. iii. 4, and his copy is imitated by any parent or master, who shall require his child or servant to do any unlawful act. Secondly, there is counselling of sin, when men advise and persuade others to any wickedness. Thirdly, there is enticing and alluring to sin, by setting before men the pleasures or profits they shall reap by it. Fourthly, there is assistance in sin, that is, when men aid and help others either in contriving or acting a sin. All these are direct means of bringing this great evil of sin upon our brethren.

7. There are also others, which, though more indirect, may yet be as effectual towards that ill end. As first, example in sin; he that sets others an ill pattern, does his part to make them imitate it, and too often it hath that effect; there being generally nothing more forcible to bring men into any sinful practice, than the seeing it used by others, as might be instanced in many sins, to which there is no other temptation but their being in fashion. Secondly, there is encouragement in sin, when either by approving, or, at least, by not shewing a dislike, we give others confidence to go on in their wickedness. A third means is by justifying and defending any sinful act of another's, for by that we do not only confirm him in his evil, but endanger the drawing others to the

like, who may be the more inclinable to it, when they shall hear it so pleaded for. Lastly, the bringing up any reproach upon strict living, as those do who have the ways of God in derision. This is worse than all the former, not only in respect of the man who is guilty of it, (as it is an evidence of the great profaneness of his own heart) but also in regard of others, it having a more general ill effect than any of the former can have; it being the betraying men, not only to some single acts of disobedience to Christ, but even to the casting off all subjection to him; by all these means we may draw on ourselves this great guilt of wounding the souls of our brethren.

8. It would be too long to instance in all the sins, in which it is usual for men to ensnare others, as drunkenness, uncleanness, rebellion, and a multitude more. But it will concern every man, for his own particular, to consider sadly what mischiefs of this kind he hath done to any, by all, or any of these means, and to weigh well the greatness of the injury. Men are apt to boast of their innocency towards their neighbours, that they have done wrong to no man; but God knows, many that thus brag are of all others the most injurious persons: perhaps they have not maimed his body, nor stolen his goods; but, alas! the body is but the case and cover of the man, and the goods some appurtenances to that; it is the soul is the man, and that they can wound without remorse, and yet, with the adulteress, Prov. xxx. 20, "say, they have done no wickedness;" but glory of their friendly behaviour to those whom they thus betray to eternal ruin. For whomsoever thou hast drawn to any sin, thou hast done thy part to insure to those endless flames. And then think with thyself how base a treachery this is. Thou wouldst call him a treacherous villain, that should, while he pretends to embrace a man, secretly stab him. But this of thine is far beyond that, as the soul is of more value than the body. And remember yet farther, that besides the cruelty of it to thy poor brother, it is also most dangerous

to thyself, it being that against which Christ hath pronounced a woe : Matt. xviii. 7, and ver. 6, he tells us, that “ whoever shall offend (that is, draw into sin) any of these little ones, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.” Thou mayest plunge thy poor brother into perdition, but thou art like to bear him company to that place of torment.

9. Let therefore thy own and his danger beget in thee a sense of the greatness of this sin, this horrid piece of injustice to the precious soul of thy neighbour. Bethink thyself seriously to whom thou hast been thus cruel ; whom thou hast enticed to drinking, allured to lust, stirred up to rage, whom thou hast encouraged in any ill course, or discouraged by thy scoffings at piety in general, or at any strict walking of his in particular ; and then draw up a bill of indictment, accuse and condemn thyself as a Cain, a murderer of thy brother, heartily and deeply bewail all thy guilt of this kind, and resolve never once more to be a stumbling-block in thy brother’s way.

10. But this is not all, there must be some fruits of this repentance brought forth. Now in all sins of injustice, restitution is a necessary fruit of repentance, and so it is here ; thou hast committed an act (perhaps many) of high injustice to the soul of thy brother ; thou hast robbed it of its innocency, of its title to heaven ; thou must now endeavour to restore all this to it again, by being more earnest and industrious to win him to repentance than ever thou wast to draw him to sin. Use now as much art to convince him of the danger, as ever thou didst to flatter him with the pleasure of his vice. In a word, countertermine thyself by using all those means to recover him that thou didst to destroy him, and be more diligent and zealous in it ; for it is necessary thou shouldst, both in regard of him and thyself. First, in respect of him, because there is in man’s nature so much a greater readiness to evil than to good, that there will need much more pains to instil the one into him than the other. Besides, the man is

supposed to be already accustomed to the contrary, which will add much to the difficulty of the work. Then in respect of thyself, if thou be a true penitent, thou wilt think thyself obliged, as St. Paul did, to “labour more abundantly,” and wilt be ashamed that when thou art trading for God, bringing back a soul to him, thou shouldst not pursue it with more earnestness than when thou wast an agent of satan’s; besides, the remembrance that thou wast a means of bringing this poor soul into this snare, must quicken thy diligence to get him out of it. So much for the first part of negative justice, in respect of the souls of our brethren.

II. *Of Murder.*

11. The second concerns the bodies, and to those also this justice binds thee to do no wrong. Now of wrongs to the body there may be several degrees, the highest of them is killing, taking away the life; this is forbid in the very letter of the sixth commandment; “Thou shalt do no murder.” Besides the direct ways of killing, there is another, and that is, when by our persuasions we draw a man to do that which tends to the shortening of his life; he that makes his neighbour drunk, if by that drunkenness the man comes to any mortal hurt, he that made him drunk is not clear of his death. If drinking cast him into a disease, and that disease kill him, I know not how he that drew him to that excess can acquit himself of his murder in the eyes of God. I wish those who make it their business to draw in customers to that trade of debauchery, would consider it. There is yet another way of bringing this guilt upon ourselves; and that is, by stirring up others to it, or to that degree of anger and revenge which produce it; and he that sets two persons at variance, or seeing them already so, blows the coals; if murder ensue, certainly hath his share in the guilt.

12. Now for the heinousness of murder, I suppose none can be ignorant that it is of the deepest die. This we

may see in the first act of this kind that ever was committed: Abel's blood crieth from the earth, as God tells Cain; yea, the guilt of this sin is such, that it leaves a stain even upon the land where it is committed, such as is not to be washed out, but by the blood of the murderer, as appears, Deut. xix. 12, 13. The land cannot be purged of blood, but by the blood of him that shed it; and therefore, though in other cases, the fleeing to the altar secured a man, yet in this, of wilful murder, no such refuge was allowed; but such a one was to be taken even thence, and delivered up to justice, Exod. xxi. 14, "Thou shalt take him from my altar, that he may die." This sin is not only an injury to our brother, but the highest despite towards God himself; for it is the defacing of his image, which he hath stamped upon man. Nay, yet further, it is the usurping God's proper right and authority. For it is God alone that hath right to dispose of the life of man; it was he alone that gave it, and he alone hath power to take it away; but he that murders a man, does, as it were, wrest this power out of God's hand, which is the highest pitch of rebellious presumption.

13. And as the sin is great, so likewise is the punishment; we see it frequently very great, and remarkable even in this world, (besides those most fearful effects of it in the next) blood not only cries, but it cries for vengeance; and the great God of recompences, as he styles himself, will not fail to hear it. Very many examples the Scriptures give us of this; Ahab and Jezebel, that murdered innocent Naboth, for greediness of his vineyard, were themselves slain, and the dogs licked their blood, in the place where they had shed his. Many more instances might be given of this, out of the sacred story; and many also out of human, there having been no age but hath yielded multitudes of examples of this kind; so that every man may furnish himself out of the observations of his own time.

14. And it is worth our notice, what strange, and even

miraculous means it hath often pleased God to use, for the discovery of this sin ; the very brute creatures have often been made instruments of it ; nay, often the horror of a man's own conscience hath made him betray himself ; so that it is not any closeness a man uses in the acting of this sin, that can secure him from the vengeance of it ; for he can never shut out his own conscience, that will in spite of him be privy to the fact, and that very often proves the means of discovering it to the world ; or if it should not do that, yet it will sure act revenge on him, it will be such a hell within him, as will be worse than death. This we have seen in many, who, after the commission of this sin, have never been able to enjoy a minute's rest, but have had that intolerable anguish of mind, that they have chosen to be their own murderers, rather than live in it. These are the usual effects of this sin, even in this world ; but those in another are yet more dreadful, where surely the highest degrees of torment belong to this high pitch of wickedness : for if, as our Saviour tells us, Matt. v. 22, hell-fire be the portion of him that shall but call his brother, fool ; what greater degree of those burnings can we think proportionable to this so much greater injury ?

15. The consideration of all this ought to possess us with the greatest horror and abomination of this sin, and to make us extremely watchful of ourselves, that we never fall into it ; and to that end, to prevent all those occasions which may insensibly draw us into this pit. If, therefore, thou wilt be sure never to kill a man in thy rage, be sure never to be in that rage ; for if thou permittest thyself to that, thou canst have no security against the other ; anger being a madness that suffers us not to consider, or know what we do, when it has once possessed us. Therefore, when thou findest thyself to be once inflamed, think betimes whither this may lead thee, if thou lettest loose to it, and immediately put the bridle upon this head-strong passion. So again, if thou wilt be sure thy malice shall not draw thee to it, be sure never to harbour one malicious thought.

Be therefore careful, at the very first approach of this treacherous guest, to shut the doors against it. So also, if thou wilt be sure thy covetousness, thy ambition, thy lust, or any other sinful desire, shall not betray thee to it, be sure thou never permit any of them to enter in; for if they be once entertained in the heart, they will be past thy control, and hurry thee to this or any other sin, that may serve their ends. In the like manner, if thou wouldst not be guilty of any of the mortal effects of thy neighbour's drunkenness, be sure not to entice him to it, nor accompany him at it; and to that purpose do not allow thyself in the same practice, for if thou do, thou wilt be labouring to get company at it. Lastly, if thou wilt not be guilty of the murder committed by another, take heed thou never give any encouragement to it, or contribute any thing to that hatred or contention that may be the cause of it. For when thou hast either kindled or blowed the fire, what knowest thou whom it may consume? Bring always as much water as thou canst to quench, but never bring one drop of oil to increase the flame. The like may be said of all other occasions of this sin; and this careful preserving ourselves from these, is the only sure way to keep us from this sin: therefore, as ever thou wouldst keep thyself innocent from the great offence, guard thee, warily, from all steps and approaches towards it.

16. But although murder be the greatest, yet it is not the only injury that may be done to the body of our neighbour; there are others which are also of a very high nature. The next in degree to this, is maiming him, depriving him of any member, or at least of the use of it; and this is a very great wrong to him, as we may discern by the judgment of God himself, in the case of the bond-servant, who should, by his master's means, lose a member, Exod. xxi. 26, the freedom of his whole life was thought but a reasonable recompence for it; "He shall let him go free," saith the text, "for his eye;" nay, though it were a less considerable part, if it were but a tooth,

which of all others may be lost with the least damage, yet the same amends was to be made him. If the person be poor, one that must labour for his living, the injury is yet greater ; it is such as may, in effect, amount to the former sin of murder ; for, as the wise man says, Eccl. xxxiv. 22, “ The poor man’s bread is his life, and he that deprives him thereof, is a blood-shedder.” And therefore he that deprives him of the means of getting his bread, by disabling him from labour, is surely no less guilty.

17. And though unprofitable revenge be not now allowed to us Christians, yet sure it is the part of every one who hath done this injury, to make what satisfaction lies in his power. It is true, he cannot restore a limb again, (which, by the way, should make men wary how they do those mischiefs which it is impossible for them to repair) but yet he may satisfy for some of the ill effects of that loss. If that have brought the man to want, he may, nay, he must, if he have but the least ability, relieve and support him ; yea, though it be by his own extraordinary labour. For if it be a duty of us all to be eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, much more must we be so to them whom ourselves have made blind and lame. Therefore whoever hath done this injury to any of his poor brethren, let him know he is bound to do all that is possible towards the repairing of it ; if he do not, every new suffering that the poor man’s wants bring upon him, becomes a new accusation against him at the tribunal of the just Judge.

18. There are yet other degrees of injury to the body of our neighbour. I shall mention only two more, wounds and stripes ; a man may wound another, which, though it finally cause loss neither of life nor limb, is yet an endangering of both ; and the like may be said of stripes ; both of which, however, are painful at the present, nay, perhaps, long after : and pain, of all temporal evils, is to be accounted the greatest ; for it is not only an evil in itself, but it is such an one that permits us not, whilst we are under it, to enjoy any good, a man in pain

having no taste of any of the greatest delights. If any man despise these as light injuries, let him ask himself how he would like it, to have his own body slashed and bruised, and put to pass under those painful means of cure, which are many times necessary in such cases? I presume there is no man would willingly undergo this from another; and why, then, shouldst thou offer it to him?

19. This savageness and cruelty of mind is so unbecoming a man, that he is not allowed to use it, even to his beast. How intolerable is it, then, towards those that are of the same nature, and which is more, are heirs of the same eternal hopes with us? They that shall thus transgress against their neighbours, in any of the foregoing particulars, or whatever else is hurtful to the body, are unjust persons, want even this lower sort of justice, the negative, to their neighbours, in respect of their bodies.

20. Neither can any man excuse himself by saying, what he has done was only in return of some injury offered him; for suppose it be so, that he have indeed received wrong, yet cannot he be his own revenger, without injury to that man, who is not, by being thine enemy, become thy slave, to do with him what thou listest; thou hast never the more right of dominion over him, because he hath done thee wrong; and therefore if thou hadst no power over him before, it is certain thou hast none now; and therefore thou art not only uncharitable, (which yet were sin enough to damn thee) but unjust, in every act of violence thou dost to him. Nay, this injustice ascends higher, even to God himself, who hath reserved vengeance as his own peculiar right, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord," Rom. xii. 19. And then he that will act revenge for himself, what does he but encroach upon the special right and prerogative of God, snatch the sword, as it were, out of his hand, as if he knew better how to wield it? Which is at once a robbery and contempt of the Divine Majesty.

CHAP. VIII.

- I. *Of justice about the possessions of our neighbour; against injuring him, as concerns his wife, his goods.*
 II. *Of oppression, theft, paying debts, &c.*

1. The third part of negative justice concerns the possessions of our neighbour; which are his wife as well as his goods.

2. The peculiar right that every man hath in his wife is so well known, that it were vain to say any thing in proof of it. The corrupting a man's wife, is acknowledged by all to be the worst sort of theft, infinitely beyond that of the goods.

3. Indeed, there is in this one a heap of the greatest injustices together, some towards the woman, and some towards the man. Towards the woman there are the greatest imaginable; it is that injustice to her soul, which was before mentioned as the highest of all others; it is the robbing her of her innocency, and setting her in a course of the norridest wickedness; (no less than lust and perjury together) from which it is probable she may never return, and then it proves the damning of her eternally.

4. But besides those, there are to him many and high injustices; for it is first, the robbing him of that, which of all other things he accounts most precious—the love and faithfulness of his wife; and that also wherein he hath such an incommunicable right, that himself cannot, if he would, make it over to any other; and therefore, sure it cannot, without the most injustice, be torn from him by any.

5. All this put together, will surely make this the greatest injury that can be done a man, and (which heightens it yet the more) it is that for which a man can never make reparation. To this purpose it is observable in the Jewish law, that the thief was appointed to restore four-fold, and that freed him; but the adulterer, having no possibility of

making any restitution and satisfaction, he must pay his life for his offence, Lev. xx. 10.

6. The second thing to which negative justice to our neighbour's possessions reacheth, is his goods; under which general word is contained all those things, as house, land, cattle, money, in which he hath a right and property; these we are to suffer him to enjoy, without seeking either to work him damage in any of them, or to get any of them to ourselves. I make a difference between these two, because there may be two several motives of this injustice; the one malice, the other covetousness.

7. The malicious man desires to work his neighbour's mischief, though he get nothing by it himself. It is frequently seen that men will spoil the goods of one to whom they bear a grudge, though they never design to get any thing by it, but only the pleasure of doing a spite to the other. This is a most hellish humour, directly answerable to that of the devil, who bestows all his pains and industry, not to bring in any good to himself, but only to undo others; and how contrary it is to all rules of justice, you may see by the precept given by God to the Jews concerning the goods of an enemy; where they were so far from being allowed a liberty of spoil and destruction, that they are expressly bound to prevent it, Exod. xxiii. 4, 5. "If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again; if thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldst forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him."

8. But on the other side, let not the covetous defrauder judge his sin light, because there is another that in some one respect outweighs it; for perhaps in others his may cast the scales. Certainly it does in this; he that is unjust for greediness of gain, is like to multiply more acts of this sin than he that is so out of malice; for it is impossible any man should have so many objects of his malice, as he may have of his covetousness. Let us descend now to the several branches of covetous injustice; it is

true they may all bear the name of robbery or theft ; yet for method's sake, it will not be amiss to distinguish them into these three, oppression, theft, and deceit.

II. *Of Oppression, &c.*

9. By oppression, I mean that open and bare-faced robbery of seizing upon the possessions of others, and avowing the doing so. For the doing of this there are several instruments ; at first, that of power, by which many nations and princes have been turned out of their rights, and many private men out of their estates. Sometimes, again, law is made the instrument of it ; he that covets his neighbour's lands or goods, pretends a claim to them, and then, by corrupting of justice, by bribes and gifts, or else over-ruling it by greatness and authority, gets judgment on his side. This is a high oppression, and of the worst sort, thus to make the law, which was intended for the defence of men's rights, to be the means of overthrowing them ; and it is a very heavy guilt, that lies both on him that procures, and on him that pronounces such a sentence, yea, and on the lawyer too, that pleads such a cause ; for, by so doing, he assists in the oppression. Sometimes again, the very necessities of the oppressed are the means of his oppression. Thus it is in the case of extortion and griping usury ; a man is in extreme want of money, and this gives opportunity to the extortioner to wrest unconscionably from him, to which the poor man is forced to yield, to supply his present wants. And thus it is often with exacting landlords, when their poor tenants know not how to provide themselves elsewhere, rack and skrew them beyond the worth of a thing. All these and the many like are but several ways of acting this one sin of oppression, which becomes yet the more heinous by how much the more helpless the person is that is thus oppressed. Therefore the oppression of the widow and fatherless is in scripture mentioned as the height of this sin.

10. The second sort of this injustice is theft, and of that also there are two kinds ; the one the with-holding what we should pay, and the other taking from our neighbour what is already in his possession.

11. Of the first sort is the not paying of debts, whether such as we have borrowed, or such as by our promise are become our debts, for they are equally due to him that can lay either of these claims to them. And therefore the with-holding of either of them is a theft, a keeping from my neighbour that which is his ; yet the former of them is rather the more injurious, for by that I take from him that which once he actually had, (be it money or whatever else) and so make him worse than I found him. This is so great injustice, that I see not how a man can look upon any thing he possesses as his own right, whilst he thus denies another his. It is the duty of every man in debt rather to strip himself of all, and cast himself naked upon God's providence, than thus to feather his nest with the spoils of his neighbour. The sure way for a man to secure himself from this injustice, is never to borrow more than he knows he hath means to repay ; unless it be of one who knowing his disability, is willing to run the hazard. Otherwise he commits this sin at the very time of borrowing ; for he takes that upon promise of paying, which he knows he is never likely to restore, which is a flat robbery.

As for the other sort of debt, that which is brought upon a man by his own voluntary promise, that also cannot without great injustice be with-holden ; for it is now the man's right, and then it is no matter by what means it came to be so. Therefore we see David makes it a part of the description of a just man, Psalm xv. 4. that he keeps his promises, yea, though they were to his own disadvantage. And surely he is utterly unfit to ascend to that holy hill, that does not punctually observe this part of justice. To this sort of debt may be reduced the wages of the servant, the hire of the labourer ; and the with-holding of these is a great sin, and the complaints of those

that are thus injured ascend up to God. "Behold (saith St. James) the hire of the labourers which have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth, and the cries of them that have reaped are entered into the ear of the Lord of sabaoth." Deut. xxiv. 14, 15, we find a strict command in this matter; "Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, at his day thou shalt give him his hire; neither shall the sun go down upon it, for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it, lest he cry against thee to the Lord, and it be a sin unto thee." This is one of those loud clamorous sins, which will not cease crying till it brings down God's vengeance; and therefore, though thou hast no justice to thy poor brother, yet have at least so much mercy to thyself, as not to pull down judgments on thee by thus wronging him.

12. The second part of theft is, the taking from our neighbour that which is already in his possession; and this may be done, either more openly or more closely; the first is, the manner of those that rob on the way, or plunder houses; the other is the way of the pilfering thief, that takes away a man's goods unknown to him: I shall not dispute which of these is worst, it is enough that they are both such acts of injustice as make men odious to God, unfit for human society, and betray the actors to the greatest mischiefs, even in this world, death itself being by law appointed the reward of it.

Under this head of theft may be ranked the receivers of stolen goods, whether those that take them as partners in the theft, or those that buy them, when they know or believe they are stolen. This many that pretend much to abhor theft are guilty of, when they can buy the thing a little cheaper than the common rate. And here also comes in the concealing of any goods a man finds of his neighbour's, which whosoever restores not, if he know or can learn out the owner, is no better than a thief.

The third part of injustice is deceit, and in that there may be as many acts as there are dealings between man and man.

It were impossible to name them all, but I think they will be contained under these two general deceits in matters of trust, and in matters of traffick or bargaining.

1. He that deceives a man in any trust that is committed to him, is guilty of a great injustice, and that of the most treacherous sort. It is the joining two great sins in one, defrauding and promise-breaking; for in all trusts there is a promise implied, if not expressed; for the very accepting of the trust contains under it a promise of fidelity; these trusts are broken sometimes to the living, sometimes to the dead; to the living there are many ways of doing it, according to the several kinds of trust: sometimes a trust is more general, like that of Potiphar to Joseph, Gen. xxxix. 4; a man commits to another all that he hath, and thus guardians of children and sometimes stewards are intrusted. Sometimes again it is restrained to one special thing; a man intrusts another to bargain or deal for him in such a particular, or he puts some one thing into his hands to manage and dispose of. Thus among servants, it is usual for one to be intrusted with one part of the master's goods, and another with another part of them. Now in all these cases, whosoever acts not for him that intrusts him with the same faithfulness that he would for himself, but shall either carelessly lose, or prodigally embezzle the things committed to him, or else convert them to his own use, he is guilty of this great sin of betraying a trust to the living. In like manner, he that, being intrusted with the execution of a dead man's testament, acts not according to the known intention of the dead man, is guilty of this sin in respect of the dead, which is so much the greater, by how much the dead hath no means of redress, as the living may have. It is a kind of robbing of graves, which is a theft of which men naturally have such a horror, that he must be a very hardened thief that can attempt it.

2. The second sort of fraud is in matters of traffick and bargain, wherein there may be deceit both in the seller and buyer; that of the seller, either in concealing the faults of the commodity, or else in over-rating it.

3. The ways of concealing its fault are ordinarily these, either first denying that it hath any such fault, nay, perhaps commending it for the contrary quality ; and this is downright lying, and so adds that sin to the other : and if that lie be confirmed with an oath, as it is too usually, then the yet greater guilt of perjury comes in also. And then what a heap of sins is here gathered together ! abundantly enough to sink a poor soul to destruction ; and all this only to screw a little more money out of his neighbour's pocket, and that sometimes so very little, that it is a miracle that any man that thinks he has a soul, can set it at so miserable a price. A second means of concealing is by using some art to the thing, to make it look fair, and to hide the faults of it ; and this is acting a lie, though it be not speaking one, which amounts to the same thing. A third means is the picking out ignorant chapmen. This is an art too well known among tradesmen, who will not bring out their faulty wares to men of skill, but keep them to put off to such whose unskilfulness may make them passable with them. And this is still the same deceit with the former ; for it all tends to the same end, the cozening and defrauding of the chapman, and then it is not much odds whether I make use of my own art or his weakness for the purpose. This is certain, he that will do justly, must let his chapman know what he buys ; and if his own skill enable him not to judge, (nay, if he do not actually find out the fault) thou art bound to tell it him, otherwise thou makest him pay for somewhat which is not there, he presuming there is that good quality in it, which thou knowest is not ; and therefore thou mayest as honestly take his money for some goods of another man's which thou knowest thou canst never put into his possession, which I suppose no man will deny to be an arrant cheat. To this head may be referred that deceit of false weights and measures, for that is the concealing from the buyer a defect in the quantity, as the other was in the quality of the commodity, and is again the making him pay for what he hath not. This sort of fraud is pointed at

particularly by Solomon, Prov. xi. 1, with this note upon it, that it "is an abomination to the Lord."

4. The second part of fraud in the seller, lies in over-rating the commodity; though he have not disguised or concealed the faults of it, and so have dealt falsely in that respect, yet if he set an unreasonable price upon it, he defrauds the buyer. I call that an unreasonable price which exceeds the true worth of the thing, considered with those moderate gains which all tradesmen are presumed to be allowed in the sale. Whatever is beyond this, must in all likelihood be fetched in by some of these ways; at first, by taking advantage of the buyer's ignorance of the value of the thing, which is the same as doing it in the goodness, which hath already been shewed to be a deceit; or secondly, by taking advantage of his necessity: thou findest a man hath urgent need of such a thing, and therefore takest this opportunity; but this is that very sin of extortion and oppression spoken of before; for it is sure nothing can justly raise the price of any thing, but either its becoming dearer to thee, or its being some way better in itself; but the necessity of thy brother causes neither of these, his nakedness doth not make the clothes thou sellest him stand thee in ever the more stead, neither doth it make them any way better; and therefore to rate them ever the higher, is to change the way of trading, and sell even the wants and necessities of thy neighbour, which sure is a very unlawful vocation. Or, thirdly, it may be by taking advantage of the indiscretion of the chapman. A man perhaps earnestly fancies such a thing; and then suffers that fancy so to over-rule his reason, that he resolves to have it upon any terms. If thou findest this in him, and thereupon raisest thy rate, this is to make him buy his folly; which is of all others the dearest purchase; it is sure his fancy adds nothing to the real value, no more than his necessity did in the former case, and therefore should not add to the price. He therefore that will deal justly in selling, must not catch at all advantages which the temper of his chapman may give, but consider soberly

what the thing is worth, and what he will afford it for to another, of whom he had no such advantage, and accordingly rate it to him at no higher a price.

5. On the buyer's part, there are not ordinarily so many opportunities of fraud ; yet it is possible a man may happen to sell somewhat, the worth whereof he is not acquainted with, and then it will be as unjust for the buyer to make gain by his ignorance, as in the other case it was for the seller ; but that which often falls out, is the case of necessity, which may as probably fall on the seller's side as the buyer's. A man's wants compel him to sell, and permit him not to stay to make the best bargain, but force him to take the first offer ; and here for the buyer to grate upon upon him, because he sees him in that strait, is the same fault as in the seller.

6. In this whole business of traffic, there are so many opportunities of deceit, that a man had need fence himself with a very firm resolution, or he will be in danger to fall under temptation ; for as the wise man speaks, *Ecclus. xxvii. 2*, " As a nail sticks fast between the joining of the stones, so doth sin stick close between buying and selling." It is so interwoven with all trades, so mixed with the very first principles of them, that it is taught together with them, and so becomes a part of the art ; so that he is now scarce thought fit to manage a trade that wants it ; while he that hath most of this black art of defrauding, applauds himself, nay, perhaps boasts to others how he hath overreached his neighbours. But God knows all the while there is another over-reaching thee, and cheating thee of what is infinitely more precious, even thy soul ; the devil herein deals with thee as fishers use to do ; those that will catch a great fish, will bait the hook with a less, and so the great one coming with greediness to devour that, is himself taken. So thou that art gaping to swallow up thy brother, art thyself made a prey to that great devourer. And, alas ! what will it ease thee in hell, that thou hast left wealth behind thee upon earth, when thou shalt there want that which the meanest beggar here enjoys, even a

drop of water to cool thy tongue? Consider this, and henceforth resolve to employ all that diligence thou hast used to deceive others, in rescuing thyself from the frauds of the grand deceiver.

7. To this purpose it is absolutely necessary that thou make restitution to all whom thou hast wronged ; for as long as thou keepest any thing of the unjust gain, it is as it were an earnest-penny from the devil, which gives him full right to thy soul. But perhaps it may be said, it will not in all cases be possible to make restitution to the wronged party, peradventure he may be dead ; in that case then make it to his heirs, to whom his right descends. But it may be further objected, that he that hath long gone on in a course of fraud may have injured many that he cannot now remember, and many that he hath no means of finding out ; in this case all I can advise is this ; first, to be as diligent as is possible, both in recalling to mind who they were, and in endeavouring to find them out : and when, after all thy care, that proves impossible, let thy restitutions be made to the poor ; and that they may not be made by halves, be as careful as thou canst to reckon every the least mite of unjust gain ; but when that cannot be exactly done, yet even here let them take some general measures, whereby to proportion their restitution. As for example, a tradesman that cannot remember how much he hath cheated in every single parcel, yet may possibly guess in the gross, whether he have usually over-reached to the value of a third or a fourth part of the wares ; and then, what proportion soever he thinks he has so defrauded, the same proportion let him now give out of that estate he hath raised by his trade ; but herein it concerns every man to deal uprightly, as in the presence of God, and not to make advantage of his own forgetfulness, to the cutting short of the restitution, but go on the other hand, and be sure rather to give too much than too little. If he happen to give somewhat over, he need not grudge the charge of such a sin-offering, and it is sure he will not, if he heartily desire an atonement.

CHAP. IX.

- I. *Of false reports.* II. *Of false witness.* III. *Slanders.*
 IV. *Whisperings.* V. *Of scoffing for infirmities, calamities, sins.* VI. *Of positive justice, truth.* VII. *Of lying.* VIII. *Of envy and detraction, of gratitude.*

I. *Of False Reports.*

THE fourth branch of negative justice, concerns the credit of our neighbours, which we are not to impair by any means, particularly not by false reports. Of false reports there may be two sorts; the one is, when a man says something of his neighbour which he knows to be false. The other, when possibly he has some slight surmise of the thing, but that upon such weak grounds, that it is as likely to be false as true. In either of these cases there is a great guilt lies upon the reporter. That there doth so in the first of them, no body will doubt, every one acknowledging, that it is the greatest baseness to invent a lie of another; but there is little reason to question the other; for he that reports a thing as a truth, which is uncertain, is a liar also; or if he do not report it as a certainty, but only as a probability, yet then, though he be not guilty of the lie, yet he is of the injustice of robbing his neighbour of his credit; for there is such an aptness in men to believe ill of others, that any, the lightest jealousy, will, if once it be spread abroad, serve for that purpose; and sure it is a most horrible injustice, upon every slight surmise, to hazard the bringing so great an evil upon another; especially when it is considered, that those surmises commonly spring rather from censoriousness, peevishness, or malice in the surmiser, than from any real fault in the person suspected.

II. *Of False Witness.*

2. The manner of spreading these false reports, of both kinds, is not always the same; sometimes it is more open,
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sometimes more private; the open is many times, by false witness, before the courts of justice: and this not only hurts a man in his credit, but in other respects also; it is the delivering him up to the punishment of the law, and according to the nature of the crime pretended, does him more or less mischief. I am now to consider it only as it touches the credit; and to that it is a most grievous wound, thus to have a crime publicly witnessed against one, and such as is scarce curable by any thing that can afterwards be done to clear him; and therefore, whoever is guilty of this, doth a most outrageous injustice to his neighbour. This is that which is expressly forbidden in the ninth commandment, and was by God appointed to be punished by the inflicting the very same suffering upon him which his false testimony aimed to bring upon the other. Deut. xix. 16. &c.

III. *Of Public Slanders.*

3. The second open way of spreading these reports is by a public declaring of them, though not before the magistrate, yet before such as are likely to carry it farther; and this is usually done with railings and reproaches, it being an ordinary art of slanderers to revile those whom they slander; that so by the sharpness of the accusation, they may have the greater impression on the minds of the hearers. This, both in respect of the slander and the railing, is a high injury, and both of them are such as debar the committers from heaven. Thus, *Psalm xv.* where the upright man is described, that shall have his part there, this is one special thing, ver. 3, "that he slandereth not his neighbour." And for railing, the apostle in several places reckons it amongst those works of the flesh which are to shut men out both from the church here, and from the kingdom of God hereafter.

IV. *Whisperings.*

4. The other more private way of spreading such reports is that of the whisperer; he that goes about from one to

another, and privately vents his slanders. This sort of slanderer is of all others the most dangerous, for he works in the dark; so that whereas in the more public accusations, the party may have some means of clearing himself, and detecting his accuser, here he shall have no possibility of that: the slander, like a secret poison, works incurable effects before ever the man discern it. This sin of whispering is by St. Paul mentioned among those great crimes which are the effects of a reprobate mind, *Rom. i. 29*. It is indeed one of the most incurable wounds of this sword of the tongue, the very bane and pest of human society, and that which not only robs single persons of good names, but oftentimes whole families, nay, public societies of men, of their peace. What ruins, what confusions, hath this one sin wrought in the world! It is Solomon's observation, *Prov. xvi. 28*, that a "whisperer separateth chief friends;" and sure one may truly say of tongues thus employed, that they are "set on fire of hell."

5. This is such a guilt, that we are to beware of all approach to it, of which there are several steps. The first is the giving ear to those that come with slanders, for they that entertain and receive them encourage them in the practice; for, as our common proverb says, if there were no receivers there would be no thief; so if there were none that would give an ear to tales, there would be no tale-bearers. A second step is, the giving too easy credit to them, for this helps them to attain part of their end; they desire to get a general ill opinion of such a man, but the way of doing it must be by causing it first, in particular men: and if thou suffer them to do it in thee, they have so far prospered in their aim. A third step is the reporting to others what is thus told thee; by which thou makest thyself directly a party in the slander; and after thou hast unjustly withdrawn from thy neighbour thy good opinion, endeavourest to rob him also of that of others. This is very little below the guilt of the first whisperer, and tends as much to the ruin of our neighbour's credit. And these several degrees have so close a dependance one upon

another, that it will be very hard for him that allows himself the first, to escape the other. He therefore that will preserve his innocence in this matter, must never, in the least degree, cherish or countenance any that bring these false reports.

V. Of despising and scoffing.

6. But besides this gross way of slandering, there is another, whereby we may impair the credit of our neighbour, and that is by contempt and despising; one common effect whereof is scoffing and deriding him. This is very injurious to a man's reputation; for the generality of men rather take up opinions upon trust than judgment; and therefore, if they see a man despised and scorned, they will be apt to do the like. But besides this effect of it, there is a present injustice in the very act of despising others. There are, ordinarily, but three things which are made the occasions of it: First, the infirmities; Secondly, the calamities; Thirdly, the sins of a man; and each of these is very far from being ground of our triumphing over him.

7. First, for infirmities, be they either of body or mind, the deformity of the one, or the weakness and folly of the other, they are things out of his power to help; they are not his faults, but the wise dispensations of the great Creator, who bestows the excellencies of body and mind as he pleases; and therefore to scorn a man because he hath them not, is, in effect, to reproach God, who gave them not to him.

8. So also for the calamities that befall a man, be it want or sickness, or whatever else; these also come by the providence of God, who raiseth up and pulleth down, as seems good to him; and it belongs not to us to judge what are the motives to him to do so, as many do, who, upon any affliction that befalls another, are presently concluding, that sure it is some extraordinary guilt which pulls this upon him; whereas it is not our business to

judge them, but ourselves, and by repentance to prevent what our own sins have deserved. But to reproach and revile any that are in affliction, is that barbarous cruelty taken notice of by the Psalmist, as the height of wickedness, *Psalm lxi. 26*, "They persecute him whom thou hast smitten, and they talk to the grief of them whom thou hast wounded." In all the miseries of others, compassion becomes a debt to them; how unjust are they then, that, instead of paying them that debt, afflict them with scorn and reproach.

9. Nay, the very sins of men, though, as they have more of their wills in them, they may seem more to deserve reproach, yet certainly oblige us to compassion, and that in the highest degree, as being the things which, of all others, make a man the most miserable. In all these cases, if we consider how subject we are to the like ourselves, and that it is only God's mercy to us by which we are preserved from the worst that any man else is under, it will better become us to look up to him with thankfulness, than down on them with contempt. Thus you see the direct injustice of scorning and contemning our brethren; to which, when that other is added, which naturally follows, as a consequent of this, to wit, the begetting the like contempt in others, there can be no doubt of its being a great and horrible injustice to our neighbour in respect of his credit.

10. Now how great the injury of destroying a man's credit is, may be measured by these two things: first, the value of the thing he is robbed of; and, secondly, the difficulty of making reparations. For the first, it is commonly known that a man's good name is a thing he holds most precious. And to some sort of men, such especially as subsist by dealings in the world, it is so necessary, that it may well be reckoned the means of their livelihood; and then sure, it is no slight matter to rob a man of what is thus valuable to him.

11. Secondly, the difficulty of making reparations increaseth the injury, and that is such in this case, that I

may rather call it an impossibility than a difficulty. For when men are possessed of an ill opinion of a person, it is no easy matter to work it out. Nay, suppose men were generally as willing to lay down ill conceits of their neighbours, as they are to take them up, yet how is it possible for him that makes even the most publick recantation of his slander, to be sure that every man that hath come to the hearing of the one, shall do so of the other also? And if there be but one person that doth not, then is the reparation still short of the injury.

12. This consideration should make men afraid of doing this wrong to their neighbours; but let it not be made use of to excuse those that have already done the wrong, from endeavouring to make the best reparation they can; for though it is odds it will not equal the injury, yet let them, however, do what they are able towards it. And this is so necessary towards the obtaining pardon of the sin, that none must expect the one, that do not perform the other. Whosoever therefore sets himself to repent of his faults of this kind, must, by all prudent means, endeavour to restore his neighbour to that degree of credit he hath deprived him of; and if that be not to be done without bringing the shame upon himself of confessing publickly the slander, he must rather submit to that, than be wanting to this necessary part of justice, which he owes to the wronged party.

13. Thus have I gone through these four branches of negative justice; wherein we must yet further observe, that this justice binds us, not only in respect of our words and actions, but of our very thoughts and affections also; we are not only forbid to hurt, but to hate; not only restrained from bringing any of these evils upon him, but we must not so much as wish them before, nor delight in them after they are befallen him; we must take no pleasure either in the sin of his soul, or hurt of his body; we must not envy him any good thing he enjoys, nor so much as wish to possess ourselves of it. Neither will it suffice us, that we so bridle our

tongues that we neither slander nor revile, if we have that malice in our hearts which makes us wish his discredit, or rejoice when we find it procured, though we have no hand in procuring it. This is the peculiar property of God's laws, that they reach to the heart, whereas men's can extend only to the words and actions; and the reason is clear, because he is the only law-giver that can see what is in the heart: therefore if there were perfect innocency in our tongue and hands, yet if there be not purity of heart, it will never acquit us before him. The counsel, therefore, of Solomon is excellent, *Prov. iv. 23*, "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." Let us strictly guard that, so that no malicious or unjust thought enter there; and that not only as it may be the means of betraying us to the grosser act, but also as it is in itself such a pollution in God's sight as will unfit us for the blessed vision of God.

VI. *Of positive Justice.*

14. I come now to speak of the positive part of justice, which is the yielding to every man that which by any kind of right he may challenge from us. Of these dues there are some that are general to all mankind, others that are restrained within some certain conditions.

15. Of the first sort, that is, those that are due to all men, we may reckon, first, the speaking truth, which is a common debt we owe to all mankind. Speech is given us as the instrument of intercourse one with another, the means of discovering the mind, which otherwise lies concealed; so that, were it not for this, our conversations would be but the same as of beasts. Now this being intended for the good of mankind, it is a due to it that it be used to that purpose; but he that lies, is so far from paying that debt, that, on the contrary, he makes his speech the means of injuring and deceiving him he speaks to.

VII. *Of Lying.*

16. There might be much said to shew the several obligations we lie under to speak truth to all men ; but I need not insist upon any other than the commands we have of it in Scripture ; thus, *Eph.* iv. 25, the Apostle commands that “ putting away lying, they speak every man truth with his neighbour :” and again, *Col.* iii. 9, “ Lie not one to another :” and *Prov.* vi. 17, a lying tongue is mentioned as one of those things that are abominations to the Lord. Yea, so much doth he hate a lie, that it is not the most religious end that can reconcile him to it ; the man that lies, though in a zeal to God’s glory, shall yet be judged as a sinner, *Rom.* iii. 7. What shall then become of those multitudes of men that lie for quite other ends ? Some out of malice, to do mischief to others ; some out of covetousness, to defraud their neighbours ; some out of pride, to set themselves out ; and some out of fear, to avoid danger, or hide a fault. But of a yet stranger sort than all these, are those that do it without any discernible temptation, that will tell lies by way of story, taking pleasure in telling incredible things, from which themselves reap nothing, but the reputation of being impertinent liars.

But all liars are in the number of those that are shut out of the new Jerusalem ; and not only so, but have their “ part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone.” If therefore thou be not like that unjust judge, who neither feared God, nor regarded man, thou must resolve on this part of justice, the putting away lying, which is abhorred by both.

17. A second thing we owe to all is humanity and courtesy of behaviour. There is so much respect due to the very nature of mankind, that no accidental advantage of wealth or honour, which one man hath above another, can acquit him from that debt to it, even in the person

of the meanest ; and therefore harsh behaviour to any that bears but the form of a man, is an injustice to that nature he partakes of. And when we consider how much that nature is dignified by the Son of God taking it upon him, the obligation to reverence it is yet greater, and consequently the sin of thus contemning it.

18. A third thing we owe to all is meekness ; that is, such a patience and gentleness towards all, as may bridle that anger, which is not only uneasy to ourselves, but also mischievous to our neighbours. This duty of meekness is to be extended to all men ; for the Apostle in express words commands it, *1 Thess. v. 14*, “ Be patient towards all men ;” and that in spite of all provocation, to the contrary, for the very next words are, “ See that none render evil for evil, or railing for railing ;” and Timothy is commanded to exercise this meekness, even towards them who oppose themselves against the doctrine of the gospel, *2 Tim. ii. 25*, which was a case wherein some heat would probably have been allowed, if it might have been in any.

19. This virtue of meekness is so necessary to preserve the peace of the world, that it is no wonder CHRIST, who came to plant peace among men, should enjoin meekness to all. I am sure the contrary effects of rage and anger are every where discernible ; it breeds disquiet in kingdoms, in neighbourhoods, in families, and even between the nearest relations ; it is such a humour, that Solomon warns us never to enter a friendship with a man that is of it, *Prov. xxii. 24*, “ Make no friendship with an angry man, and with a furious man thou shalt not go.” It makes a man unfit to be either a friend or companion, and indeed makes one insufferable to all that have to do with him, as we are again taught by Solomon, *Prov. xxi. 19*, where he prefers the “ dwelling in a wilderness, rather than with a contentious and angry woman.”

20. Having spoken thus far of those common dues wherein all men are concerned, and have a right, I am

now to proceed to those other sort of dues which belong to particular persons, by virtue of some special qualifications. These qualifications may be of three kinds; that of excellency, that of want, and that of relation.

21. By that of Excellency, I mean any extraordinary gifts, or endowments of a person; such as wisdom, learning, and the like; but especially grace. These being the singular gifts of God, have a great respect due to them, wheresoever they are to be found; and this we must readily pay by a glad acknowledgment of those his gifts in any he has bestowed them on, and by bearing them a respect answerable thereunto.

VIII. *Of Envy and Dissimulation.*

22. Also we must not envy or grudge that they have those gifts; for that is not only an injustice to them, but injurious also to God who gave them, as is at large set forth in the parable of the labourers, *Matt. xx.* where he asks them who grumbled at the master's bounty to others, "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own? Is thine eye evil, because mine is good?"

23. Neither must we detract from the excellencies of others; we must not seek to eclipse or darken them by denying either the kinds or degrees of them. This is a great injustice, and directly contrary to that duty we owe, of acknowledging and reverencing the gifts of God in our brethren.

24. What hath been said of the respect due to those excellencies of the mind, may in a lower degree be applied to the outward advantages of honour, greatness, and the like. These, though they are not of equal value with the former, (and such for which no man is to prize himself,) yet in regard that these distinctions of men are, by God's wise providence, disposed for the better ordering of the world, there is such a respect due to those to whom God hath dispensed them, as may best preserve that order for which they were intended.

Therefore all inferiors are to behave themselves to their superiors with modesty and respect, and not by a rude boldness confound that order which it hath pleased God to set in the world, but according as our Church Catechism teaches, "Order themselves lowly and reverently to all their betters." And here the former caution against envy comes in most seasonably; these outward advantages being things for which generally men have more taste than for the other, and therefore will be more apt to envy and repine to see others exceed them therein.

25. The second qualification is that of Want. Whoever is in distress for any thing, wherewith I can supply him, that distress of his makes it a duty in me to supply him; and this in all kinds of wants. Now the ground of its being a duty is, that God hath given men abilities, not only for their own use, but for the benefit of others; and therefore what is thus given for their use, becomes a debt to them, whenever their need requires it. Thus he that is ignorant and wants knowledge, is to be instructed by him that hath it, and this is one special end why that knowledge is given him, "The tongue of the learned is given to speak a word in season," *Isa.* l. 4. He that is in sadness and affliction is to be comforted by him that is himself in cheerfulness. He that is in any course of sin, and wants reprehension and counsel, must have that want supplied to him by those who have such abilities and opportunities, as may make it likely to do good. That this is a justice we owe to our neighbour appears plainly by that text, *Lev.* xix. 17, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart, thou shalt in any wise reprove him, and not suffer sin upon him;" where we are under the same obligation to reprove him, that we are not to hate him. He that lies under any slander, or unjust defamation, is to be defended and cleared by him that knows his innocence, or else he makes himself guilty of the slander, because he neglects to do that which may remove it; and how great an injustice that of slandering our neighbour is, I have already shewed.

26. Lastly, he that is in poverty and need, must be relieved by him that is in plenty; and he is bound to it, not only in charity, but even in justice. Solomon calls it a due, *Prov. iii. 27*, “With-hold not good from him to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it:” and what that good is he explains in the very next verse: “Say not to thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and to morrow I will give, when thou hast it by thee.” It seems, it is the with-holding a due, so much as to defer giving to our poor neighbours. And then, what is it but arrant robbery, to bestow that upon our vanities, nay, our sins, which should be their portion?

27. In all the foregoing cases, he that hath ability is to look upon himself as God’s steward, who hath put it into his hands to distribute to them that want, and therefore not to do it, is the same injustice and fraud that it would be in any steward to purse up that money for his private benefit, which was intrusted to him for the maintenance of the family; and he that shall do thus, hath just reason to expect the doom of the unjust steward, *Luke xvi.* to be “put out of his stewardship,” to have those abilities taken from him, which he hath so unfaithfully employed. And as for all the rest, so particularly for that of wealth, it is commonly withdrawn from those that thus defraud the poor of their parts, the griping miser coming often by strange undiscernible ways to poverty; and no wonder, he having no title to God’s blessing on his heap, who does not consecrate a part to him in his poor members.

28. The third qualification is that of Relation, and of that there may be divers sorts. There is, first, relation of a debtor to a creditor; and he that stands in that relation to any, whether by virtue of bargain, loan, or promise, it is his duty to pay justly what he owes, if he be able; as, on the other side, if he be not, it is the creditor’s to deal charitably, and not to exact of him beyond his ability.

29. There is also a relation of an obliged person to his

benefactor ; that is, one that hath done him good, of what kind soever, whether spiritual or corporal ; and the duty of that person is, first, thankfulness, that is, a ready acknowledgment of the courtesy received ; secondly, prayer for God's blessings and rewards upon him ; and, thirdly, an endeavour, as opportunity serves, to make returns of kindness, by doing good turns again.

CHAP. X.

OF DUTY TO MAGISTRATES, PASTORS, &C.

I. *Of children's duty unto parents.* II. *Of the duty of parents to Children.*

I. *Of Children's Duty unto Parents.*

THE first nearer sort of relations is that of a parent ; and here it will be necessary to consider the several sorts of parents, according to which the duty of them is to be measured. These are three ; the civil, the spiritual, the natural.

2. The Civil Parent is he whom God hath established as the supreme magistrate, who, by a just right, possesses the throne in a nation. This is the common father of all those that are under his authority. The duty we owe to this parent is, first, honour and reverence ; looking on him as upon one on whom God hath stamped much of his own power and authority ; and therefore paying him all honour and esteem, never daring, upon any pretence whatsoever, to "speak evil of the ruler of our people," *Acts* xxiii. 5.

3. Secondly, paying tribute : this is expressly commanded by the apostle, *Rom.* xiii. 6, "Pay ye tribute, also, for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing." God has set them apart as ministers for the common good of the people, and therefore

it is all justice they should be supported by them. And indeed, when it is considered what are the cares and troubles of that high calling, how many thorns are plaited in every crown, we have very little reason to envy them these dues; and it may be truly said, there is none of their poor labouring subjects that earn their living so hardly.

4. Thirdly, we are to pray for them: this is also expressly commanded by the apostle, *1 Tim. ii. 2*, to be done for “kings, and for all that are in authority.” The businesses of that calling are so weighty, the hazards so great, that they, of all others, need prayers for God’s direction, assistance, and blessing; and the prayers that are thus poured out for them will return into our own bosoms, for the blessings they receive from God tend to the good of the people, to their “living a quiet and peaceable life.”

5. Fourthly, we are to pay them obedience. This is likewise strictly charged by the apostle, *1 Pet. ii. 13*, “Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake, whether it be to the king, as supreme, or unto governors, as those that are sent by him.” We owe such an obedience to the supreme power, that whoever is authorized by him we are to submit to; and St. Paul, likewise, is most full to this purpose, *Rom. xiii. 1*, “Let every soul be subject to the higher powers:” And again, verse 2, “Whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God.” And it is observable, that these precepts were given at a time when those powers were heathens, and cruel persecutors of Christianity, to shew us, that no pretence of the wickedness of our rulers can free us of this duty. And obedience we must pay, either active or passive; the active, in the case of all lawful commands; that is, whenever the magistrate commands something which is not contrary to some command of God, we are then bound to act according to that command of the magistrate, to do the thing he requires. But when he enjoins any thing contrary to what God hath

commanded, we are not then to pay him this active obedience : we are in that case to “obey God, rather than man.” But even this is a season for the passive obedience ; we must patiently suffer what he inflicts on us for such refusal, and not, to secure ourselves, rise up against him.

6. The second sort of Parents are the Spiritual ; the ministers of the Word, whether such as be governors in the church, or others under them, who are to perform the same office to our souls that our natural parents do to our bodies. Thus St. Paul tells the Corinthians, that in “Christ Jesus he had begotten them through the gospel,” *1 Cor.* iv. 15. And the Galatians, *chap.* iv. 19, that he “travails in birth of them till Christ be formed in them :” and again, *1 Cor.* iii. 2, “He had fed them with milk ;” that is, such doctrines as were agreeable to that infant state of Christianity they were then in ; but he had “stronger meat for them of full age,” *Heb.* v. 14. All these are the offices of a parent ; and therefore they that perform them to us may well be accounted as such.

7. Our duty to these is, first, to love them, to bear them that kindness which belongs to those who do us the greatest benefits. This is required by St. Paul, *1 Thess.* v. 12, 13, “I beseech you, brethren, mark them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake.” The work is such as ought to procure them love, it being of the highest advantage to us.

8. Secondly, it is our duty to esteem them, as we see in the text now mentioned ; and surely this is most reasonable, if we consider either the nature of their work, or who it is that employs them. The nature of their work is, of all others, the most excellent. We use to value other professions proportionably to the worth of the things they deal in. Now surely there is no merchandise of equal worth with the soul ; and this is their traffick, rescuing precious souls from perdition. And if we con-

sider further who it is that employs them, it yet adds to the reverence due to them. They are “ambassadors for Christ,” *2 Cor. v. 20*; and ambassadors are, by the laws of all nations, to be used with a respect answerable to the quality of those that send them. Therefore CHRIST tells his disciples, when he sends them out to preach, “He that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me,” *Luke x. 16*. It seems there is more depends on the despising of ministers than men ordinarily consider; it is the despising both of GOD and CHRIST.

9. Thirdly, we owe to them maintenance: but of this I have spoken already.

Fourthly, we owe them obedience. “Obey them,” saith the Apostle, “that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls,”—*Heb. xiii. 17*. This obedience is to be paid to them in spiritual things; that is, whatsoever they, out of God’s Word, shall declare to us to be God’s commands, these we are diligently to obey, remembering that it is not they, but God requires it, according to that of CHRIST, “He that heareth you heareth me,” *Luke x. 16*: and this, whether it be delivered by the way of publick preaching, or of private exhortation, for in both, so long as they keep to the rule, which is God’s Word, they are the “messengers of the Lord of Hosts,” *Mal. ii. 7*. This obedience the apostle enforceth from a double motive; one taken from their ministry, another from themselves. “They watch,” says he, “for your souls, as they that must give an account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief.” The people are, by their obedience, to enable their pastors to give a comfortable account of their souls; and it is a most unkind return of all their care and labours, to be put to grieve for the ill success of them. But then, in the second place, it is their own concernment also; they may put their ministers to the discomfort of seeing all their pains cast away, but themselves are like to get little by it; that (says the

Apostle, *Heb.* xiii. 17,) “will be unprofitable for you;” it is yourselves that will finally prove the losers by it; you lose all those glorious rewards which are here offered as the crown of this obedience; you get nothing but an addition to your sin and punishment.

10. Lastly, we are to pray for them: this St. Paul every where requires of his spiritual children. And this remains still a duty to these spiritual fathers, to pray for such assistances of God’s Spirit to them, as may enable them rightly to discharge that holy calling.

11. The third sort of Parents are the Natural, and to these we owe several duties; as, first, we owe them Reverence. We must behave ourselves towards them with all humility and observance, and must not, upon any pretence of infirmity in them, despise them, either in outward behaviour, or so much as in our hearts. If they have infirmities, it must be our business to cover them; like Shem and Japheth, who, while cursed Cham published and “disclosed the nakedness of their father, covered it,” *Gen.* ix. 23, and that in such a manner too as even themselves might not behold it.

12. A second duty we owe to them is Love; we are to bear them a real kindness, such as may make us heartily desire all manner of good to them, and abhor to do any thing that may grieve them. This will appear but common gratitude, when it is remembered what our parents have done for us; how they were not only the instruments of bringing us into the world, but also of sustaining us afterwards; and certainly they that rightly weigh the cares and fears that go to the bringing up of a child, will judge the love of that child to be but a moderate return for them. This love is to be expressed in several ways: first, in all kindness of behaviour, carrying ourselves not only with awe and respect, but with kindness and affection; and therefore most readily doing those things which may bring comfort to them, and carefully avoiding whatever may grieve them. Secondly, this love is to be expressed in praying for them. The debt a child

owes to a parent is so great, that he can never hope himself to discharge it ; he is therefore to call in God's aid, and to beg of him that he will reward all the good his parents have done for him, by multiplying his blessings upon them.

13. The third duty we owe to them is Obedience. This is not only contained in the fifth commandment, but expressly enjoined in other places of Scripture ; *Eph.* vi. 1, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right : " and again, *Col.* iii. 20, "Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord." We owe them obedience in all things, unless where their commands are contrary to the commands of God ; for in that case our duty to God must be preferred ; and therefore, if any parent shall be so wicked as to require his child to steal, to lie, or to do any unlawful thing, the child then offends not against his duty, though he disobey that command ; nay, he must disobey, or else he offends against a higher duty, even that which he owes to God, his heavenly Father. Yet when it is thus necessary to refuse obedience, he should take care to do it in such a modest and respectful manner, that it may appear it is conscience only, and not stubbornness, which moves him to it. But in the case of all lawful commands, that is, when the thing commanded hath nothing in it contrary to our duty to God, there the child is bound to obey, be the command in a weightier or lighter matter. And how few are there that obey purely upon conscience of duty ? This sin of disobedience to parents was by the law of Moses punishable with death, as you may read, *Deut.* xxi. 18, &c. But if parents now a-days should proceed so with their children, many might soon make themselves childless.

14. Of all the acts of disobedience, that of marrying against the consent of a parent, is one of the highest. Children are so much the goods, the possessions, of their parents, that they cannot, without a kind of theft, give away themselves, without the allowance of those that have the right in them : and therefore we see under the law, the maid " that had made any vow was not suffered

to perform it, without the consent of the parent." *Num.* xxx. 5. The right of the parent was thought of force enough to make void the obligation even of a vow; and therefore surely it ought to be so much considered by us, as to keep us from making any such, whereby that right is infringed.

15. A fourth duty to the parent, is to assist them in all their wants of what kind soever, whether weakness and sickness of body, decayedness of understanding, or poverty and lowness in estate; in all these, the child is bound, according to his ability, to assist them. For the two former, weakness of body, and infirmity of mind, none can doubt of the duty, when they remember how every child did, in his infancy, receive the same benefit from the parents. The child had then no strength to support, no understanding to guide itself; the care of the parents was necessary to supply both these; and therefore in common gratitude, whenever either of these becomes the parent's case, as sometimes by great age, or some accident, both do, the child is to perform the same offices again to them. As for that of relieving their poverty, there is the same obligation, it being but just to sustain thy parent, who has formerly sustained thee. But besides this, CHRIST himself teacheth us, that this is contained within the precept of honouring our parents; for when (Mark vii. 13,) he accuses the Pharisees of rejecting the commandment of God, to cleave to their own traditions, he instances in this particular, concerning the relieving of parents; whereby it is manifest, that this is a part of that duty which is enjoined in the fifth commandment, as you may see at large in the text; and such a duty it is, that no pretence can acquit us of it.

16. To this that hath been said of the duty of children to their parents, I shall add only this, that no unkindness, no fault of the parent, can acquit the child of this duty; but as St. Peter tells servants, that they "must be subject not only to the good and gentle masters, but also to the froward," so certainly it belongs to children to per-

form duty, not only to the kind and virtuous, but even to the harshest and wickedest parent. For though the gratitude due to a kind parent be a forcible motive to make the child pay his duty, yet that is not the only nor the chief ground of it; for *that* is laid in the command of God, who requires us to honour our parents. And therefore, though we should suppose a parent so unnatural, as never to have done any thing to oblige the child, (which can hardly be imagined,) yet still the command of God continues in force; and we are bound, in conscience, to perform that duty to our parents, though none of the other tie of gratitude should lie on us.

Duty of Parents to Children:

But as this is due from the child to the parents, so there are other things also due from the parents to the child, and that throughout the several states and ages of it.

17. First; there is the care of nourishing and sustaining it, which begins from the birth, and continues to be a duty from the parent, till the child be able to perform it for himself. This is a duty which nature teaches; even the savage beasts have a great care and tenderness in nourishing their young, and therefore may serve to reproach and condemn all parents, who are so unnatural as to neglect this.

18. Secondly; the parents must provide for the education of the child; they must, as Solomon speaks, *Prov. xxii. 6*, "Train up the child in the way he should go." As soon, therefore, as children come to the use of reason, they are to be instructed; and that first in those things which concern their their eternal well-being. They are by little and little to be taught all those things which God hath commanded them to perform; as also what glorious rewards he hath provided for them, if they do it, and what grievous punishment if they do it not. These things ought, as early as possible, to be instilled into the minds of children, which (like new vessels) usually

Keep the savour of that which is first put into them ; and therefore it nearly concerns all parents to look that they be at first seasoned with religion. This, surely, is above all things the duty of parents to look after ; and the neglect of it is a horrible cruelty. We justly look upon those parents, as most unnatural wretches, that take away the life of their child ; but alas ! that is mercy compared to the sin of neglecting his education ; for by this, they ruin his soul, and make him miserable eternally : and whoever they are, that thus neglect this great duty, let them know, that it is not only a fearful misery they bring upon their poor children, but also a horrible guilt upon themselves : for as God says to the careless watchman, *Ezek. iii. 18*, that if any soul perish, by his negligence, “ that soul shall be required at his hands,” so surely will it fare with all parents, who have this office of watchmen entrusted to them by God over their own children.—But a second part of education is the bringing them up to some employment ; busying them in some honest exercise, whereby they may avoid that great snare of the devil, idleness, and also be taught some useful art or trade, so that, when they come to age, they may become profitable for the commonwealth, and able to get an honest living for themselves.

19. To this great duty of educating children, there are required as means, first, encouragement ; secondly, correction. Encouragement is first to be tried ; we should endeavour to make children in love with duty, by offering them rewards and invitations, and whenever they do well, encourage them to go on. It is an ill course which some parents hold, who think they must never appear to their children but with a face of sourness ; this seems to be that of which St. Paul forewarns parents, when he bids fathers not to “ provoke their children to wrath,” *Col. iii. 21*. To be as harsh and unkind to them, when they do well, as if they do ill, is the way to provoke them. The second means is correction ; and this becomes seasonable, when the former will do no good ; when all fair

means prevail not, then there is a necessity of using sharper ; and let that be first tried in words, I mean not by railing and foul language, but in sober, yet sharp reproof ; but if that fail too, then proceed to blows ; and in this case, as Solomon says, “ He that spareth his rod hateth his son.” It is a cruel fondness, that to spare a few stripes at present, will adventure him to those sad mischiefs, which commonly befall the child that is left to himself. But then this correction must be given in such a manner as may be most likely to do good ; to which purpose it must be given timely, the child must not be suffered to run on in any ill, till it hath got a habit, and a stubbornness too. This is a great error in many parents ; they will let their children alone for divers years, to do what they list, without ever so much as rebuking them ; nay, perhaps please themselves to see the witty shifts of the child, and think it matters not what they do, while they are little ; but alas ! all that while the vice gets root, and that many times so deep an one, that all they can do afterwards, whether by words or blows, can never pluck it up. Secondly, correction must be moderate, not exceeding the quality of the fault, nor the tenderness of the child. Thirdly, it must not be given in anger ; if it be, it will not only be in danger of being immoderate, but it will lose its effects upon the child, who will think he is corrected, not because he has done a fault, but because his parent is angry ; whereas on the contrary, care should be taken to make the child as sensible of the fault as of the smart, without which he will never be thoroughly amended.

20. Thirdly, after children are grown up, there are yet other offices for the parent to perform to them. The parent is still to watch over them, in respect of their souls, to observe how they practise those precepts which are given them, and accordingly to exhort, encourage, or reprove, as they find occasion.

21. So also for their outward estate, they are to put them into some course of living in the world. If God hath

blessed the parent with wealth, according to what he hath, he must distribute to his children, remembering that since he was the instrument of bringing them into the world, he is, according to his ability, to provide for their comfortable living in it. But in this business of providing for children, there is yet another thing to be heeded, and that is, that the parent get that wealth honestly, which he makes their portion; else it is very far from being a provision. There is such a curse goes along with an ill-gotten estate, that he that leaves such a one to his child, doth but cheat and deceive him, makes him believe he has left him wealth, but has withal put such a canker in the bowels of it, that it is sure to eat it out. Let all parents therefore satisfy themselves with such provision for their children, as God shall enable them honestly to make, assuring themselves, how little soever it be, it is a better portion than the greatest wealth unjustly gotten; according to that of Solomon, *Prov.* xvi. 8, "Better is a little with righteousness, than great revenue without right."

22. A fourth thing which the parent owes to the child is good example; he is not only to set him rules of virtue, but must himself give him a pattern. We see the force of example is infinitely beyond that of precept, especially where the person is one to whom we bear reverence, or with whom we have continual conversation; both which usually meet in a parent. It is therefore a most necessary care in all parents, to behave themselves so before their children, that their example may be a means of winning them to virtue. This consideration lays a most strict tie upon all parents to live christianly, for otherwise they do not only hazard their own souls, but those of their children, and, as it were, purchase an estate of inheritance in hell.

23. A fifth duty of parents is blessing their children. The way of doing that is double: first, by their prayers; they are by daily and earnest prayers to commend them to God's protection and blessing, both for their spiri-

tual and temporal estate: and secondly, by their piety; they are to be such persons themselves as that a blessing may descend from them upon their posterity.

24. Sixthly, parents must take heed, that they use their power over their children with equity and moderation; not to oppress them with unreasonable commands, only to exercise their own authority, but in all things of weight to consider the real good of their children, and press them to nothing which may not consist with that. This is a rule whereof parents may often have use, but in none greater than in the business of marrying their children, wherein many that otherwise are good parents have been to blame, when, out of an eagerness of bestowing them wealthily, they have forced them to marry utterly against their own inclinations, which is a great tyranny, and frequently betrays them to a multitude of mischiefs. There are two things which parents ought especially to consider in matching their children; the first, how they may live christianly, and to that purpose choose pious persons to link with them; the second is, how they may live cheerfully and comfortably in this world; and to that end, though a competency of estate may be necessary, yet surely abundance is no way requisite. That which much more tends to the happiness of that state, is the mutual kindness of the parties, without which marriage is of all others the most uncomfortable condition; and therefore no parent ought to thrust a child into it.

CHAP. XI.

I. *Of duty to our brethren and relations.* II. *Duty of wives.* III. *Of husbands.* IV. *Of friends.* V. *Of servants.* VI. *Of masters.*

I. *Of Duty to our Brethren.*

THE second sort of relation is that of a brother. Now brotherhood may be twofold, either natural or spiritual.

I now speak of that natural brotherhood that is between those that are the children of the same immediate parent ; and the duty of these is to have united hearts and affections. This nature points out to them ; they partaking in a more especial manner of each other's substance, ought therefore to have the greatest tenderness and kindness each to other.

2. The second kind of brotherhood is spiritual ; that contains all those who profess the same faith with us. The church, in our baptism, becomes a mother to each baptised person ; and then surely they that have the relation of children to her, must have also the relation of brethren to each other ; and to this sort of brethren also we owe a great deal of tenderness and affection ; for the spiritual bond of religion should, of all others, the most closely unite our hearts. This is the brotherhood which St. Peter exhorts us to love, 1 *Pet.* ii. 17. And to it we are in an especial manner bound to do all good offices ; “ Do good,” saith the apostle, “ to all, but especially to them that are of the household of faith,” *Gal.* vi. 10.

3. We are also to bear with the infirmities of our Christian brethren, according to the advice of St. Paul, *Rom.* xv. 1, “ We that are strong out to bear the infirmities of the weak.” If one that holds all necessary Christian truths, happen to be in some error, we are not, for this, either to forsake his communion, or despise his person. This St. Paul teaches in the case of that weak brother, who made a causeless scruple about meats, *Rom.* xiv, where he bids the stronger Christians, that is, those who being better instructed discerned him to be in an error, to receive him nevertheless, and not to despise him ; as on the other side, he bids that weak one not to judge the stronger. The lesser differences in opinion must be borne with on both sides, and must not in the least abate our brotherly charity towards each other.

4. We are likewise to endeavour the restoration of any fallen brother, that is, to bring him to repentance, after he hath fallen into any sin. Thus St. Paul commands the

Galatians, that they should “ restore him that was overtaken in a fault, considering themselves, lest they also should be tempted.” We are not to look on him as a cast-away, or to give him over as desperate; neither are we to triumph over him in respect of our own innocence, but meekly to endeavour his recovery, remembering that our own frailty is such that we are not secure from the like falls.

5. We are to have a sympathy and fellow-feeling with these brethren, to be nearly touched with whatsoever befalls them, either as they are considered in society or as single persons. In society first, and so they make up a church; and that either the universal, which is made up of all believers through the world, or any particular church, which is made up of all the believers in that particular nation; and whatever happens to either of these, either the church in general, or any single part of it, especially that whereof ourselves are members, we are to be much affected with it, to rejoice in all the prosperities, and to mourn for all the breaches and desolations thereof, and daily and earnestly to pray with David, *Psal.* li. 18, “ O be favourable and gracious unto Sion, build thou the walls of Jerusalem;” and that especially when we see her in distress and persecution.

Secondly, we are to have this fellow-feeling with our brethren, considered as single persons; we are to account ourselves concerned in every particular Christian, so as to partake with him in all his occasions either of joy or sorrow. Thus the apostle exhorts, *Rom.* xii. 15, “ Rejoice with them that rejoice, weep with them that weep.” All these effects of love we owe to these spiritual brethren. And this love is that which Christ hath made the badge of his disciples, *John* xiii. 35, “ By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another:” so that, if we mean not to cast off discipleship to Christ, we must not forsake this love of the brethren.

II. *Of the Duty of Wives.*

6. The third relation is that between husband and wife. This is much nearer than any of the former, as appears by that text, *Eph. v. 31*, “A man shall leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.” Several duties there are owing from one of these persons to the other. And first, for the Wife, she owes Obedience. This is commanded by the Apostle, *Col. iii. 18*, “Wives submit yourselves to your own husbands, as is fit in the Lord.” They are to render obedience to their husbands in the Lord, that is, in all lawful commands; for otherwise it is here as in the case of all other superiors, God must be obeyed rather than man, and the wife must not, upon her husband’s command, do any thing which is forbidden by God. But in all things which do not cross some command of God, this precept is of force, and will serve to condemn the peevish stubbornness of many wives, who resist the lawful commands of their husbands, only because they are impatient of this duty of subjection, which God himself requires of them. But it may here be asked, what if the husband command something, which though it be not unlawful, is yet very inconvenient and imprudent, must the wife submit to such a command? To this I answer, that it will be her duty calmly and mildly to shew him the inconveniences thereof, and to persuade him to retract that command. But in case she cannot win him to it by fair entreaties, she must neither try sharp language, nor yet finally refuse to obey; nothing but the unlawfulness of the command being sufficient warrant for that.

7. Secondly, the wife owes Fidelity to the husband, and that of two sorts: first, that of the bed; she must keep herself pure from all strange embraces, and therefore must not so much as give an ear to any that would allure her: secondly, she owes him likewise fidelity in the managing of those worldly affairs he commits to her;

she must order them so as may be most to her husband's advantage, and not employ his goods to such uses as he allows not of.

8. Thirdly, she owes him Love, and together with that, all friendliness and kindness of conversation. She is to endeavour to bring him as much assistance and comfort of life as is possible, that so she may answer that special end of the woman's creation, the being "a help to her husband," *Gen. ii. 18*; and this in all conditions, whether health or sickness, wealth or poverty; whatsoever estate God by his providence shall cast him into, she must be as much comfort to him as she can. To this all sullenness and harshness, all brawling and unquietness, are directly contrary; for these make the wife the burden and plague of the man, instead of a help and comfort. And sure if it be a fault to behave one's self so to any person, how great must it be to do so to him to whom the greatest kindness is owing?

9. Nor let such wives think that any faults or provocations of the husband can justify their frowardness; for they cannot, either in respect of religion or discretion: not in religion, for where God has absolutely commanded a duty, it is not any unworthiness of the person can excuse from it; nor in discretion, for the worse a husband is, the more need there is for the wife to carry herself with gentleness and sweetness. This is the advice St. Peter gave to the wives of his time, *1 Pet. iii. 1*, "Likewise ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands, that if any obey not the word, they may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives."

III. *Of the Duty of Husbands.*

10. There are also on the husband's part several duties. There is first, Love, which St. Paul requires to be very tender towards the wife, as appears by the similitudes he useth in that matter, *Eph. v.* The one is, that of the love which a man bears to his natural body. "No man," says he,

ver. 29, “ever hateth his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it.” The other is that of the love which Christ bears to his church, which is far greater, *verse* 25, “Husbands love your wives, even as Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it.” Both these he sets as patterns of this love of husbands towards their wives. This utterly forbids all harshness and roughness to them. Men are to use them as parts of themselves, to love them as their own bodies, and therefore to do nothing that may be grievous to them, no more than they could cut their own flesh.

11. A second duty of the husband is Faithfulness to the bed. This is by God as well required of the husband as the wife; and though the world look on the breach of this duty with less abhorrence in the husband, yet surely, before that just Judge, the offence will appear no less on the man’s side than the woman’s.

12. A third part of the husband’s duty is, to provide for the wife. He is to let her partake with him in those outward good things wherewith God hath blessed him, and neither by niggardliness debar her of what is fit for her, nor yet by unthriftiness waste his goods, so that he shall be unable to support her. Yet this is not so to be understood as to excuse the wife from her part of labour and industry, when that is requisite; it being unreasonable that the husband should toil to maintain the wife in idleness.

13. Fourthly, the husband is to instruct the wife in the things that concern her eternal welfare. Thus St. Paul bids the “wives learn of their husbands at home,” 1 *Cor.* xiv. 35, which supposes that the husband is to teach her. Indeed it belongs to every master of a family, to endeavour that all under his charge be taught all necessary things, and more especially his wife, who is so much dearer to him than all the rest. This should make men careful to get knowledge themselves, that so they may be able to perform this duty to others.

14. Lastly, husbands and wives are to pray for and with each other, to beg all blessings from God, both spiritual

and temporal, and to endeavour all they can to do good to one another, especially to each other's soul, by stirring up to the performance of duty, and dissuading from all sin, and by being like true yoke-fellows, helpful to each other in doing all sorts of good, both to their own family, and to all others within their reach.

15. It should therefore be the care of all that mean to enter upon that state, to consider advisedly beforehand, and choose such a person with whom they may have this spiritual friendship, that is, such a one as truly fears God. There are many false ends of marriage; some marry for wealth, others for beauty, and generally they are only worldly respects that are considered; but certainly he that would marry as he ought, should contrive to make his marriage useful to those better ends of serving God, and saving his own soul; and to that purpose the virtue of the person chosen is more conducive than all the wealth in the world.

III. *Of Duty to Friends.*

16. The next relation is that between friends; and this, if it be rightly founded, is of great nearness and usefulness: but there is none more generally mistaken in the world. Men usually call them their friends with whom they have an intimacy, though that intimacy be nothing but an agreement in sin. The drunkard thinks him his friend that will keep him company; the deceitful person, him that will aid him in his cheats; the proud man, him that will flatter him: and so generally in all vices they are looked on as friends that advance and further us in them. But God knows this is far from friendship; such a friend as this the devil himself is, in the highest degree, who is never backward in such offices. The true friendship is a concurrence in virtue, not in vice. The general duty of a friend then must be, the industrious pursuit of his friend's real advantage, in which there are several particulars contained.

17. As, first, Faithfulness in all trusts committed to him by his friend, whether that of goods or secrets ; he that betrays the trust of a friend in either, is by all men looked upon with abhorrence, it being one of the highest falsenesses and treacheries ; and for such treacherous wounds, the Wise man tells us, “ every friend will depart.”

18. Secondly, it is the duty of a friend to assist his friend in all his outward needs ; to counsel him when he wants advice ; to cheer him when he needs comfort ; to give him when he wants relief ; and to endeavour his rescue out of any trouble or danger.

19. The third and highest duty of a friend is to assist the soul of his friend, to endeavour to advance that in piety by all means within his power, by exhortations and encouragement to all virtue, by earnest dissuasions from all sin ; and not only thus in general, but by applying to his particular wants, especially by plain and friendly reproofs, where he knows or reasonably believes there is any fault committed. This is of all others the peculiar duty of a friend, it being that which none else is so qualified for. Such unwillingness there is in most men to hear of their faults, that those that undertake that work had need have a great prepossession of their hearts. It is the expression of God himself, “ Thy friend, which is as thine own soul,” *Deut. xiii. 6*. And surely we should in this respect account our friends as our own souls, by having the same jealous tenderness and watchfulness over their souls, which we ought to have of our own. It will therefore be very fit for all that have entered into any strict friendship, to make this one special article in the agreement, that they shall admonish and reprove each other ; by which means it will become such an avowed part of their friendship, that it can never be mistaken by the reprobated party for censoriousness or unkindness.

20. Fourthly, to these several parts of kindness must be added that of Prayer ; we must not only assist our friends, ourselves, in what we can, but we must call in the Almighty's aid to them, recommending them earnestly to God for all his blessings, both temporal and spiritual.

21. Lastly, we must be constant in our friendships, and not out of a lightness of humour grow weary of a friend, only because we have had him long. This is great injustice to him, who, if he have behaved himself well, ought the more to be valued, by how much the longer he has continued to do so; and it is great folly in ourselves, for it is the casting away the greatest treasure of human life, for such certainly is a tried friend.

Nay, farther, it is not every light offence of a friend that should make thee renounce his friendship; there must be some allowance made to the infirmities of men, and if thou hast occasion to pardon him somewhat to-day, perhaps thou mayest give him opportunity to requite thee to-morrow; therefore nothing but unfaithfulness, or incorrigible vice, should break this band.

V. *Of the Duty of Servants.*

22. The last relation is that between masters and servants, both which owe duty to each other. That of the Servant is, first, Obedience to all lawful commands. This is expressly required by the Apostle, *Eph. vi. 5*, "Servants obey in all things your masters," &c. And this obedience must not be a grumbling and unwilling one, but ready and cheerful, as he there proceeds to exhort, *verse 7*, "with good-will doing service;" and to help them herein, they are to consider that it is "to the Lord, and not unto men." God has commanded servants thus to obey their masters; and therefore the obedience they thus pay is to God, which may well make them do it cheerfully, how harsh or unworthy soever the master may be.

23. The second duty of the servant, is Faithfulness, and that may be of two sorts; one is opposed to eye-service, the other to purloining or defrauding. The first part of faithfulness is the doing all true service to his master, not only when his eye is over him, but at all times, even when his master is not likely to discern his failing; and that servant that doth not make conscience of this, is far from

being a faithful servant ; this eye-service being by the Apostle set opposite to that singleness of heart, which he requires of servants, *Eph.* vi. 5. The second sort of faithfulness consists in the honest management of all things entrusted to him by his master ; the not wasting his goods, whether by careless embezzling of them, or by converting any of them to his own use, without the allowance of his master. This latter is that purloining, of which the apostle warns servants, *Titus* ii. 10, and is indeed no better than arrant theft ; of this kind are all those ways that the servant hath of gaining to himself, by the damage of his master, as the being bribed to make ill bargains for him, and the like. Nay, indeed, this sort of unfaithfulness is worse than common theft, by how much there is a greater trust reposed, the betraying whereof adds to the crime. As for the other sort of unfaithfulness, that of wasting, though without gain to themselves, it differs not much in effect from this ; the master may lose as much by one as the other, and then what odds is it to him, whether he be robbed by the covetousness or negligence of his servant ? And it is the same breach of trust, for every master is supposed to entrust his affairs, as well to the care, as the honesty of his servant.

24. A third duty of a servant is Patience and meekness under the reproofs of his master ; “ not answering again,” as the Apostle exhorts, *Titus* ii. 9 ; that is, not making such replies as may increase the master’s displeasure, a thing too frequent among servants, even in the justest reprehensions ; whereas, St. Peter directs them patiently to suffer even undeserved correction, when they “ do well and suffer for it,” *1 Peter* ii. 20. But the patient suffering of rebuke, is not all that is required of servants ; they must also mend the fault they are rebuked for, and not think they have done enough, when they have (though never so dutifully) given the master the hearing.

25. A fourth duty of a servant is Diligence ; he must constantly attend to all those things which are the duties of his place, and not give himself to idleness and sloth, nor

yet to company-keeping, or any other course which may take him off from his master's business.

VI. *Of the Duty of Masters.*

26. There are some things, also, owing from the Masters to their servants ; as first, the master is bound to be just to them, in performing those conditions on which they were hired ; such are commonly the giving them food and wages ; and that master that with-holds these, is an oppressor.

27. Secondly, the master is to admonish and reprove the servant in case of fault ; and that not only in faults against them, wherein few masters are backward, but more especially in faults against God, whereat every master ought to be more troubled than at those which tend only to his own loss ; the dishonour of God, and the hazard of the meanest man's soul, being infinitely more worthy of our disquiet, than any thing of the other kind can be.

28. But as it is the duty of masters to admonish and reprove their servants, so they must also look to do it in a due manner ; that is, so as may be most likely to do good ; not in passion, which can never work the servant to any thing but the despising or hating him, but with such sober and grave speeches as may convince him of his fault, and may also assure him that it is a kind desire of his amendment, which makes the master thus to rebuke him.

29. A third duty of the master is to set a good example to his servants ; without which, not all the exhortations or reproofs he can use, will ever do good : for else he pulls down more with his example, than it is possible for him to build with the other ; and it is madness for a drunken or profane master to expect a sober and godly family.

30. Fourthly, the master is to provide that his servants may not want means of being instructed in their duty, as

also that they may daily have constant time of worshipping God publickly, by having prayers in the family; but of this I have spoken before.

31. Fifthly, the master, in all affairs of his own, is to give reasonable and moderate commands, not laying greater burdens on his servants than they are able to bear; particularly not requiring so much work, that they shall have no time to bestow on their souls; as on the other side, he is not to permit them to live so idly, as may make them useless to him, or betray themselves to any ill.

32. Sixthly, the master is to give his servants encouragement in well-doing, by using them with that kindness, which their faithfulness, and diligence, and piety deserve; and finally, in all his dealing with them, he is to remember that himself hath, as the Apostle saith, *Eph. vi. 9*, “A master in heaven,” to whom he must give an account of the usage of his meanest servant on earth.—Thus have I briefly run through those several relations to which we owe particular duty, and so have done with that first branch of duty to our neighbours, that of justice.

CHAP. XII.

OTHER BRANCHES OF OUR DUTY TO OUR NEIGHBOUR.

Of Charity to Men's Souls, Bodies, Goods, and Credit.

1. THE second branch of duty to our neighbours, is Charity, or Love. This is the great gospel-duty so often enjoined by CHRIST; the new commandment, as himself calls it, *John xiii. 34*, “that ye love one another;” and the first epistle of St. John is almost wholly spent in the persuasion of this one duty.

2. This charity may be considered, first, in respect of the affections; secondly, of the actions. Charity in the affections is a sincere kindness, which disposes us to wish all good to others, and that in all their capacities. In the

same manner that justice obligeth us to wish no hurt to any man, in respect either of his soul, his body, his goods, or his credit ; so this first part of charity binds us to wish all good to them in all these.

3. And first for the Soul. If we have the least spark of charity, we cannot but wish all good to men's souls ; those precious things, which Christ thought worth the ransoming with his own blood, may surely well challenge our kindness and good wishes : and therefore if we do not thus love one another, we are far from obeying that command of loving as he hath loved ; for it was the souls of men which he loved so tenderly, and both did and suffered so much for. Of this love of his to souls there are two special effects ; the first, the purifying them here by his grace ; the second, the making them everlastingly happy in his glory ; and both these we are so far to copy out in our kindness, as to be earnestly desirous that all men should arrive at that holiness here, which may make them capable of eternal happiness hereafter.

4. Secondly, we are to wish all good to the Bodies of men. We are generally tender enough of our own bodies, and dread the least pain or ill that can befall them. Now charity extends this tenderness to all others ; and whatever we apprehend as grievous to ourselves, we must be unwilling should befall another.—The like is to be said of Goods and Credit, that as we wish our own thriving and reputation, so we should likewise those of others, or else we can never be said to love our neighbour as ourselves.

5. This charity, if it be sincere, will certainly have these effects, which are so inseparable from it, that they are often in scripture accounted as parts of the duty. First, it will keep the mind in a peaceable and meek temper towards others, so far from seeking occasion of contentions, that no provocation shall draw us to it ; for where we have kindness we shall be unapt to quarrel, it being one of the special qualities of charity that it is not provoked. And therefore whoever is unpeaceable, shews his heart is destitute of charity. Secondly, it will breed compassion

towards all the miseries of others; every mishap that befalls where we wish well, is a kind of disaster to ourselves; and therefore if we wish well to all, we shall be thus concerned in the calamities of all, and have a real grief to see any in misery, and that according to the proportion of the suffering. Thirdly, It will give us joy in the prosperity of others; Solomon observes, *Prov.* xiii. 19, that “the desire accomplished is sweet to the soul:” and then whoever hath this real desire of his neighbour’s welfare, his desire is accomplished in their prosperity, and therefore he cannot but have satisfaction in it. Both these are together commanded by St. Paul, *Rom.* xii. 15, “Rejoice with them that rejoice, weep with them that weep.” Fourthly, it will stir up our prayers for others; we are of ourselves feeble creatures, unable to bestow blessings where we most wish them; therefore if we do indeed desire the good of others, we must seek it on their behalf at his hands, from whom every good and perfect gift cometh. This is so necessary a part of charity, that without it our kindness is but an insignificant thing, a kind of empty compliment. For how can he be believed to wish well in earnest, who will not thus put life and efficacy into his wishes, by forming them into prayers? These are so naturally the fruits of this charity, that it is a deceit for any man to persuade himself he hath it, who cannot produce those fruits to evidence it by.

6. But there is yet a farther excellency of this grace; it guards the mind, and secures it from several great and dangerous vices. As first, from envy; for “charity envieth not:” and indeed common reason may confirm this to us, for envy is a sorrow at the prosperity of another, and therefore must needs be directly contrary to that desire of it which is the effect of love.

7. Secondly, it keeps down pride and haughtiness; “Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up;” and accordingly we find, that where this virtue of love is commanded, there humility is joined with it. Thus, *Col.* iii. 12, “Put on therefore bowels of mercies, kindness, humble-

ness of mind.” And *Rom.* xii. 20, “Be kindly affectioned one towards another with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another.”

8. Thirdly, it casts out censoriousness and rash judging: “Charity” (as the Apostle saith, *1 Cor.* xiii. 5,) “thinketh no evil;” is not apt to entertain ill conceits of others, but, on the contrary, “believeth all things, hopeth all things;” that is, it is forward to believe and hope the best of all men; and surely our own experience tells us the same, for where we love we are usually unapt to discern faults, be they never so gross, (witness the great blindness we generally have towards our own,) and therefore shall certainly not be like to create them where they are not, or to aggravate them beyond their true size and degree.

9. Fourthly, it casts out dissembling: where real love is, that counterfeit one flies before it. And this is the love we are commanded to have, such as is “without dissimulation,” *Rom.* xii. 9. Indeed, where this is rooted in the heart, there can be no possible use of dissimulation; because this is all that the false one would seem to be, and so is as far beyond it as nature is beyond art.

10. Fifthly, it casts out all mercenariness and self-seeking: it is of so noble and generous a temper, that it despises all gain or advantage; “Love seeketh not her own,” *1 Cor.* xiii. 5. And therefore that huckstering kind of love, so much used in the world, which places itself only there where it may fetch in some benefit, is very far from this charity.

11. Lastly, it turns out of the heart all malice and desire of revenge, which are so utterly contrary to it, that it is impossible they should both dwell in the same breast. It is the property of love to “bear all things;” to endure the greatest injuries without thought of making any other return than prayers and blessings; and therefore the malicious, revengeful person is, of all others, the greatest stranger to charity.

It is true, if this virtue were to be exercised but to-

wards some sorts of persons, it might consist with malice to others: but we are to take notice that this charity must not be so confined, but must extend to all men in the world, particularly to enemies, or else it is not that charity commended to us by Christ. The loving of friends is so low a pitch, that the very publicans and sinners were able to attain it; and therefore it is not counted rewardable in a disciple of Christ; no, he expects we should soar higher, and therefore hath set us this more excellent precept, "I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you;" and whosoever does not thus, will never be owned by him for a disciple. Thus, *Eph. iv. 23*, "Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another." And again, *Col. iii. 13*, "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any, even as CHRIST forgave you, so also do ye." So also *1 Pet. iii. 9*, "Not rendering evil for evil, nor railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing."

A whole volume of texts might be brought to this purpose, but these are certainly enough to convince a man that this is strictly required of us by Christ; and indeed I think there are few that ever heard the gospel but know it is so. The more prodigiously strange it is that men, who call themselves Christians, should give no degree of obedience to it; nay, not only so, but even publicly avow and profess the contrary, as we daily see they do, it being ordinary to have men resolve and declare that they will not forgive such or such a man, and no consideration of Christ's command can at all move them from their purpose. Certainly, these men understand not what is meant by the very word Christian, which signifies a servant and disciple of Christ; and this charity is the very badge of the one, and lesson of the other. And therefore it is the greatest absurdity and contradiction to profess themselves Christians, and yet at the same time to resist this so express command of that CHRIST

whom they own as their master. “If I be a master,” saith God, “where is my fear?” *Mal. i. 6.* Obedience and reverence are so much the duties of servants, that no man is thought to look on him as a master to whom he pays them not. “Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things I say?” saith CHRIST.

12. I proceed now to charity of the actions; and this indeed it is, whereby the former must be approved. We may pretend great charity within, but if none break forth in the actions, we may say of that love, as St. James doth of the faith he speaks of, that it is dead, *James ii. 20.* It is the loving in deed that must “approve our hearts before God,” I *John iii. 18.* Now this love in the actions may likewise fitly be distributed as the former was, in relation to the capacities of our brethren, their souls, their bodies, their goods, and their credit.

13. As the Soul signifies the mind of man, we are to endeavour the comfort and refreshment of our brethren, to give them all true cause of joy and cheerfulness, especially when we see any under sadness or heaviness. Then we are to labour, by all Christian means, to cheer the troubled spirits of our brethren, “to comfort them that are in any heaviness,” as the Apostle speaks.

But the soul, in the spiritual sense, is yet of greater concernment, and the securing of that is a matter of much greater moment than the refreshing of the mind only, in as much as the eternal sorrows of hell exceed the deepest sorrows of this life; and therefore though we must not omit the former, yet on this we are to employ our most zealous charities; wherein we are not to content ourselves with a bare wishing well to the souls of our brethren; this alone is a sluggish sort of kindness, unworthy of those who are to imitate the great Redeemer of souls, who did and suffered so much in that purchase. No, we must add also our endeavours, and propound to ourselves, in all our conversings with others, that one great design of doing of good to their souls. If this purpose were fixed in our minds, we should then discern

many opportunities which now we overlook. The ignorance of one would call upon thee to endeavour his instruction; the sin of another, to reprehend and admonish him; the faint and weak virtue of another, to confirm and encourage him. Every spiritual want of thy brother may give thee occasion of exercising some charity: or if thy circumstances be such, that upon sober judging thou think it vain to attempt any thing thyself, as if either thy meanness or thy unacquaintedness be like to render thy exhortations fruitless, yet if thou art industrious in thy charity, thou mayest probably find out some other instrument, by whom to do it more successfully. But if, after all our endeavours, the obstinacy of men do not suffer us, or themselves rather, to reap any fruit from them,—if all our wooings and entreatings of men to have mercy on their own souls, will not work on them, yet be sure to continue to exhort by thy example. Let thy great care of thy own soul preach to them the value of theirs, and give not over thy compassions to them, but, with the prophet, *Jer.* xiii. 17, let “thy soul weep in secret for them;” and, with the Psalmist, let “rivers of water run down thine eyes, because they keep not God’s law,” *Psal.* cxix. 136. And when no importunities with them will work, yet even then cease not to importune God for them, that he will draw them to himself. Nor shall we need to fear that our prayers shall be quite lost, for if they prevail not for them, yet they will return into our own bosom.

14. In the second place, we are to exercise this active charity towards the Bodies of our neighbours; we are not only to compassionate their pains and miseries, but also to do what we can for their ease and relief. This relieving the bodily wants of our brethren is a thing so strictly required of us, that we find it set down, *Matt.* xxv. as the especial thing we shall be tried by at the last day; on the omission whereof is grounded that dreadful sentence, *ver.* 41, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” The particular acts of this kind which we are to perform are these;

“the giving meat to the hungry, and drink to the thirsty; harbouring the stranger, clothing the naked, and visiting the sick and imprisoned.” By which visiting is meant, not a bare coming to see them, but so coming as to comfort and relieve them. But besides these, there may sometimes, by God’s especial providence, fall into our hands occasions of doing other good offices to the bodies of our neighbours. We may sometimes find a wounded man, with the Samaritan, and then it is our duty to do as he did. We may sometimes find an innocent person condemned to death, as Susanna was, and then are, with Daniel, to use all possible means for his deliverance. This case Solomon seems to refer to, *Prov. xxiv. 11*, “If thou forbear to deliver him that is drawn unto death, and them that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold, we know it not, doth not he that pondereth the heart consider? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? Shall not he render to every man according to his deeds?” We are not lightly to put off the matter with vain excuse, but to remember that God, who knows our most secret thoughts, will severely examine whether we have willingly omitted the performance of such a charity?

15. It is impossible to set down all the acts of this corporal charity, because there may sometimes happen such opportunities as none can foresee; we are therefore always to carry about us a serious resolution of doing whatever good we shall discern occasion for, and then whenever that occasion is offered, we are to look on it as a call from heaven to put that resolution in practice.

16. The third way of expressing this charity is towards the Goods of our neighbour; we are to endeavour his prosperity in these outward things; and to that end, assist him in all honest ways of improving or preserving them. Opportunities of this do many times fall out. A man may sometimes, by his power or persuasion, deliver his neighbour’s goods out of the hands of a thief or oppressor; by his advice he may set him in a way of thriving, or turn him from some ruinous course; and

many other occasions there may be of doing good turns to another, without any damage to ourselves: and then we are to do them even to our rich neighbours, those that are as wealthy (perhaps much more so) as ourselves; for though charity do not bind us to give to those that want less than ourselves, yet whenever we can further their profit without lessening our own, it requires it of us: nay, if the damage be but light to us, in comparison of the advantage to him, it will become us rather to hazard that light damage, than lose him that greater advantage.

17. But towards our poor brother, charity ties us to much more; we are there only to consider the supplying of his wants, and not to stick at parting with what is our own to relieve him, but, as far as we are able, give freely what is necessary to him.

18. This is called, *Heb.* xiii. 16, “A sacrifice where-with God is well pleased; and again, *Phil.* iv. 18, “A sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God.” But because even sacrifices themselves were often made unacceptable, by being maimed and diminished, it will be necessary to inquire, what are the due qualifications of this sacrifice.

19. Of these, there are some that respect the motive, some the manner of giving.

The Motive may be threefold; respecting God, our neighbour, and ourselves.

That which respects God, is obedience and thankfulness to him: he has commanded we should give alms; and therefore one special end of our doing so must be the obeying that precept of his. It is from his bounty alone that we receive all our plenty, and this is the properest way of expressing our thankfulness for it. That tribute which we desire to pay out of our estates, we cannot pay to his person. It is the poor that are, as it were, his proxy and receivers; and therefore whatever we should, by way of thankfulness, give back to God, our alms is the way of doing it. Secondly, in respect of our neighbour, the motive must be true love, a tender fellow-

feeling of his wants, and desire of his comfort and relief. Thirdly, in respect of ourselves, the motive is to be the hope of that eternal reward graciously promised to this performance. This Christ points out to us, when he bids us “lay up our treasure in heaven,” *Matt. vi. 20.* And to “make us friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that they may receive us into everlasting habitations.” This is the harvest we must expect of what we sow in these works of mercy, which will be so rich as would abundantly recompence us, though we should “bestow all our goods to feed the poor.”

20. In the second place, we must take care of our alms-giving, in respect of the Manner. And first, we must give cheerfully: men usually value a small thing that is given cheerfully, more than a much greater that is wrung from a man with unwillingness; and God is of the same mind: he loves a cheerful giver.

21. Secondly, we must give seasonably. It is true, there are some so poor, that an alms can never come unseasonably; yet even to them there may be some special seasons of doing it to their greater advantage; for sometimes an alms may not only deliver a poor man from some present extremity, but by the right timing of it, may set him in some way of a more comfortable subsistence afterwards. And for the most part, it is a good rule, to dispense what we intend to any as soon as may be, for delays are hurtful often, both to them and ourselves; first, as to them, it is sure the longer we delay, the longer they groan under the present want; and after we have designed them a relief, it is in some degree a cruelty to defer bestowing it, for so long we prolong their sufferings. Secondly, in respect of ourselves, it is ill to defer; for thereby we give advantage to the temptations either of Satan, or our own covetous humour, to dissuade us from it. Thus it fares too often with many duties; for want of a speedy execution, our purposes cool, and never come to acts.

22. Thirdly, we should take care to give prudently,

that is, to give most where it is most needed; and in such a manner as may do the receiver most good. Charities often miscarry for want of this care; for if we give to all that seem to want, we may give more to those whose sloth is the cause of their want, than to those who best deserve it. Yet I doubt not such may be the present wants even of the most unworthy, that we are to relieve them; but where no such pressing need is, we shall do best to choose out the fittest objects of charity, such as are those who either are not able to labour, or have a greater charge than their labour can maintain; and to those our alms should be given also in such a manner as may be most likely to do them good. The manner of which may differ, according to the circumstances of their conditions; it may to some be best, perhaps, to give them by little and little; to others the giving it all at once may tend more to their benefit; and sometimes a seasonable loan may do as well as a gift, and that may be in the power of those who are able to give but little. But when we thus lend our charity, we must lend freely without use, and also with a purpose that if the person assisted should prove unable to pay, we will forgive so much of the principal as our abilities will permit.

23. Fourthly, we should give liberally; we must not be strait-handed in our alms. John the Baptist, who was but the fore-runner of Christ, makes it a special part of his doctrine, that "he that hath two coats should impart to him that hath none," *Luke* iii. 11. He says not, he that hath a great wardrobe, but even he that hath but two coats, must part with one of them; from whence we may gather, that whatsoever is above (not our vanity, but) our need, should thus be disposed of, when our brethren's necessity requires it.

24. A multitude of arguments might be brought to recommend this bounty to all that profess Christianity; I shall mention only two, which I find used by St. Paul to the Corinthians. The first is the example of CHRIST, *2 Cor.* viii. 9, "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,

who though he was rich, yet for your sakes became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." CHRIST emptied himself of all that glory he enjoyed in heaven, and submitted himself to a life of meanness and poverty, only to enrich us. And therefore, for shame, let us not grudge to empty our coffers, to lessen somewhat of our heaps, in order to relieve his poor members. The second is the expectation of reward, which will be more or less, according to the degrees of our alms, *2 Cor. ix. 6*, "He that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly, and he that soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully." What is the proportion which may be called a liberal giving, I shall not undertake to set down. Every man must herein judge for himself. We see the Apostle, though he earnestly presses the Corinthians to bounty, yet prescribes not to them how much they shall give, but leaves that to their own breasts, *2 Cor. ix. 7*, "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let them give." But let us still remember, that the more we give, (provided we do not thereby fail in the support of those that most immediately depend on us,) the more acceptable it will be to God, and the more rewardable by him.

25. The fourth exercise of our charity is towards the Credit of our neighbour. And of this we may have many occasions; sometimes towards the innocent, and sometimes also towards the guilty. If one, whom we know to be innocent, be slandered, charity binds us to do what we may for the declaring his innocency, and that not only by witnessing when we are called to it, but by a voluntary offering our testimony on his behalf; or if the accusation be not before a court of justice, and so there be no place for that our more solemn testimony, but that it be only a slander tossed from one to another, yet even there we are to do what we can to clear him, by taking all occasions publickly to declare what we know of his innocency. But even to the guilty there is some charity of this kind to be performed; sometimes, by concealing

the fault, if it be such that no other part of charity to others make it necessary to discover it. The wounds of reputation are of all others the most incurable, and therefore it may well become Christian charity to prevent them, even where they have been deserved; and perhaps such a tenderness in hiding the fault may sooner bring the offender to repentance, if it be seconded, as it ought to be, with all earnestness of private admonition. But if the fault be such, that it be not to be concealed, yet still there may be place for this charity, in lessening it, as far as the circumstances will bear: as if it were done suddenly and rashly, charity will allow some abatement of the censure; and so proportionably in other circumstances. But the most frequent exercises of this charity happen towards those, of whose innocency or guilt we have no knowledge, but are by some doubtful actions brought to entertain suspicion. And here we must remember, that it is the property of love not to think evil, to judge the best; and therefore we are both to abstain from uncharitable conclusions ourselves, and, as much as lies in us, to keep others from them; and so endeavour to preserve the credit of our neighbour, which is often as much shaken by unjust suspicions, as it would be by the truest accusations.

26. To help us in all acts of charity, there will be no better means, than to keep before our eyes that grand rule of loving our neighbours as ourselves: this the apostle makes the sum of our whole duty to our neighbours, *Rom. xiii. 9*. Let this therefore be the standard, whereby to measure all our actions, which relate to others. Whenever any necessity of thy neighbour's presents itself to thee, ask thyself, whether, if thou wert in the like case, thy love to thyself would not make thee industrious for relief, and then let thy love to thy neighbour have the same effect for him. This is that royal law, as St. James calls it, *chap. ii. 8*, which all that profess themselves subjects to Christ, must be ruled by;

and whosoever is so, will not fail of performing all charities to others, because it is sure he would, upon the like occasions, have all such performed to himself.

27. There is yet one act of charity behind, which does not properly fall under any one of the former heads ; and that is, the making peace among others ; by doing whereof we may much benefit both the souls, bodies, goods, and credit of our brethren ; for all these are in danger by strife and contention. The reconciling of enemies is a most blessed work, and brings a blessing on the actors : we have Christ's word for it, " Blessed are the peacemakers," *Matt. v. 9* ; and therefore we may be encouraged diligently to lay hold of all opportunities of doing this, and to use all our art and endeavour to make up all quarrels we discern among others. Neither must we only labour to restore peace where it is lost, but to preserve it where it is : First, generally, by striving to beget in the hearts of all we converse with a true value of that most precious jewel, peace : Secondly, particularly, by a timely prevention of those jars and unkindnesses which we see likely to fall out. It may at many times be in the power of a discreet friend or neighbour, to cure those mistakes which are the first beginnings of quarrels ; and it will be both more easy and more profitable, thus to prevent, than to pacify strifes. It is sure it is more easy ; for when a quarrel is once broken out, it is like a violent flame, which cannot so soon be quenched. And then it is also more profitable ; for it prevents many sins, which, in the progress of an open contention, are almost sure to be committed.

28. There is one point of peaccableness which seems to be little regarded among men, and that is in the case of legal trespasses. Men think it nothing to go to law about every trifle, and as long as they have but law on their side, never think they are to blame : but surely, had we that true peaccableness of spirit which we ought to have, we should be unwilling for such light matters to disquiet our neighbours. Not that all going to law is utterly

unchristian, but such kinds of suits as are upon contentiousness and stoutness of humour to defend an inconsiderable right, or, which is yet worse, to avenge such a trespass. And, even in great matters, he that shall part with somewhat of his right for love of peace, does surely act most agreeably to the advice of the Apostle, *1 Cor. vi. 7*, “Rather to take wrong, and suffer ourselves to be defrauded.” But if the damage be so insupportable, that it is necessary for us to go to law, yet even then we must take care of preserving peace; first, by carrying still a friendly and Christian temper towards the party, not suffering our hearts to be at all estranged from him; secondly, by being willing to yield to any reasonable terms of agreement, whenever they shall be offered.

29. All that remains to be touched on, concerning this charity of the actions, is the extent of it, which must be as large as the former of the affections, even to the taking in, not only strangers, but our bitterest enemies. And indeed this is the way by which we must try the sincerity of our forgiveness. It is easy to say, I forgive such a man, but if when an opportunity of doing him good is offered, thou declinest it, it is apparent there yet lurks the old malice in thy heart. Where there is a thorough forgiveness, there will be as great a readiness to benefit an enemy as a friend; nay, perhaps in some respects a greater, a truly charitable person looking upon it as an especial prize, when he has an opportunity of evidencing the truth of his reconciliation, and obeying the precept of his Saviour, by “doing good to them that hate him.” Thus we may “heap coals of fire on their heads,” not coals to burn, but to melt them into love; and this were indeed the most complete way of imitating Christ’s example, who, in all he did and suffered for us, designed the reconciling us to himself.

30. I have now shewed you the several parts of our duty to our neighbour, towards the performance whereof I know nothing more necessary than the turning out of our hearts that self-love which so often possesses

them; and that so wholly, that it leaves no room for charity, nay, nor even for justice to our neighbour. By this self-love I mean not that true love of ourselves which is the love and care of our souls, (for that would certainly help, not hinder us in this duty,) but I mean that immoderate love of our own worldly interests and advantages, which is apparently the root of all injustice and uncharitableness towards others. We find this sin of self-love set by the apostle in the head of a whole troop of sins, *2 Tim. iii. 2*, as if it were some principal officer in satan's camp; and certainly, not without reason, for it never goes without an accursed train of many other sins, which, like the dragon's tail, *Rev. xii. 4*, sweeps away all care of duty to others. We are by it made so vehement and intent upon the pleasing ourselves, that we have no regard to any body else, contrary to the direction of St. Paul, *Rom. xv. 2*, which is, not to please ourselves, "but let every man please his neighbour for his good to edification;" which he backs with the example of CHRIST, *verse 3*, "For even CHRIST pleased not himself." If, therefore, we have any sincere desire to have the virtue of charity rooted in our hearts, we must be careful to weed out this sin of self-love, for it is impossible that they can prosper together.

31. I have now passed through those several branches which I at first proposed, and shewed you what is our duty to God, ourselves, and our neighbour. And surely it is no impossible task to perform this in such a measure as God will graciously accept; for he requires nothing of us which he is not ready, by his grace, to enable us to perform, if we be not wanting to ourselves, either in asking it by prayer, or in using it by diligence. And as it is not impossible, so neither is it such a melaucholy task as men are apt to think it. It is a special policy of Satan, to do as the spies did, *Num. xiii. 32*, "to bring up an ill report upon this good land," thereby to discourage us from entering into it; but let us not thus be cheated; let us take the courage to try, and we shall indeed find

it a Canaan, “a land flowing with milk and honey.” God is not in this respect to his people “a wilderness, a land of darkness,” *Jer.* ii. 31. His service does not bereave men of any true joy, but helps them to a great deal. CHRIST’S yoke is an easy, and a pleasant yoke; his burden a light and a gracious burden.

32. But it will perhaps be said, that some parts of piety will be very apt to expose us to persecutions and sufferings in the world, and that these are not joyous, but grievous.

I answer, that even in these there is matter of joy. We see the Apostles thought so; “They rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for CHRIST’S name,” *Acts* v. 41. And St. Peter tells us, that “if any suffer as a Christian, he is to glorify God for it,” *1 Pet.* iv. 16. There is such a force and virtue in the testimony of a good conscience, as is able to change the greatest suffering into the greatest triumph; and that testimony we can never have more clear and lively, than when we suffer for righteousness sake; so that you see Christianity is very amiable, even in its saddest dress; the inward comforts of it far surpass all the outward tribulations that attend it, and that even in the instant while we are in the state of warfare upon earth. But then, if we look forward to the crown of our victories, the eternal rewards of heaven, we can never think those tasks sad, though we had nothing at present to sweeten them, that have such recompences awaiting them at the end. Let us therefore, whenever we meet with any discouragements in our course, fix our eye on this rich prize, and then “run with patience the race which is set before us,” *Heb.* xii. 1. Let us follow the Captain of our salvation through the greatest sufferings, yea, even through the same Red-sea of blood through which he waded, whenever our obedience to him shall require it: for though our fidelity to him should bring us to death itself, we are sure to be no losers by it, since to such he hath promised a crown of life, the very expectation whereof is able to

keep a Christian more cheerful in fetters and a dungeon, than a worldling can be in the midst of his greatest prosperities.

33. All that remains for me farther to add, is earnestly to intreat the reader, that, without delay, he put himself into this so pleasant and gainful a course, by setting himself sincerely to the practice of all those things which he discerns to be his duty; and the further he hath formerly gone out of his way, the more haste it concerns him to make to get into it, and to use the more diligence in walking in it. He that hath a long journey to go, and finds he hath lost a great part of his day in a wrong way, will not need much intreaty, either to turn into the right, or to quicken his pace in it. And this is the case of all those that have lived in any course of sin; they are in a wrong road, which will never bring them to the place they aim at; nay, which will certainly bring them to the place they must abhor. Most of their day is spent; how much will be left to finish their journey in, none knows; perhaps the next hour, the next minute, the night of death may overtake them. What a madness is it then for them to defer, for one moment, to turn out of that path which leads to certain destruction, and to put themselves in that which will bring them to bliss and glory? Follow then the seasonable counsel given by the Wise man, *Ecclus. v. 7*, "Make no tarrying to turn to the Lord, and put not off from day to day."

PRIVATE

D E V O T I O N S

FOR

SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

PRIVATE DEVOTIONS

FOR

SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE MORNING.

☞ *As soon as ever thou awakest, lift up thy heart to GOD in this or the like short Prayer.*

LORD, as thou hast awaked my body from sleep, so by thy grace awaken my soul from sin, and make me so to walk before thee this day, and all the rest of my life, that when the last trumpet shall awake me out of my grave, I may rise to the life immortal, through JESUS CHRIST.

☞ *When thou hast thus begun, suffer not (without some urgent necessity) any worldly thoughts to fill thy mind, till thou hast also paid thy more solemn devotions to Almighty GOD; and therefore, during the time thou art dresing thyself, which should be no longer than common decency requires, exercise thy mind in some spiritual thoughts; as for example, consider to what temptations*

thy business or company that day are like to lay thee open, and arm thyself with resolutions against them; or consider what occasions of doing service to GOD, or good to thy neighbour, are that day most likely to present themselves, and resolve to embrace them; and also contrive how thou mayest improve them to the uttermost. But especially it will be fit for thee to examine whether there have any sin escaped thee since thy last night's examination. If, after these considerations, any further leisure remain, thou mayest profitably employ it in meditating on the general resurrection, (whereof our rising from our beds is a representation,) and on that dreadful judgment which shall follow it; and then think with thyself in what preparation thou art for it, and resolve to husband carefully every minute of thy time towards the fitting thee for that great account. As soon as thou art ready, retire to some private place, and there offer up to God thy morning sacrifice of praise and prayer.



PRAYERS FOR THE MORNING.

☞ At thy first kneeling down, say,

O HOLY, blessed, and glorious Trinity, Three Persons and one GOD, have mercy upon me a miserable sinner.

Lord, I know not what to pray for as I ought; O let thy Spirit help my infirmities, and enable me to offer up a spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to thee by JESUS CHRIST.

A Thanksgiving.

O gracious LORD, whose mercies endure for ever, I thy unworthy servant desire to render thee the tribute of my humblest praises for them. In thee, O Lord, I live, and

move, and have my being. Thou first madest me to be ; and then, that I might not be miserable, thou sentest thy Son out of thy bosom, to redeem me from the power of my sins by his grace, and from the punishment of them by his blood, and by both to bring me to his glory. Thou hast, by thy mercy, caused me to be born within thy church, where I was early consecrated to thee in baptism, and have been partaker of all those spiritual helps which might aid me to perform the vow I there made to thee ; and when by my own negligence I have failed to do it, yet thou in thy manifold mercies hast not forsaken me, but hast graciously invited me to repentance, afforded me all means for it, and with much patience hast waited, and not cut me off in those many damning sins which I have committed. It is, O Lord, thy restraining grace alone by which I have been kept back from the greatest sins, and it is thy inclining and assisting grace alone by which I have been enabled to do any the least good ; therefore not unto me, not unto me, but unto thy name be the praise. For these and all other thy spiritual blessings, my soul doth magnify the Lord, and all that is within me doth praise his holy name. I likewise praise thee for the many outward blessings which I enjoy ; for health, friends, food, and raiment ; for the comforts as well as the necessities of this life ; for thy continual protection by which I and mine are kept from dangers, and those gracious deliverances which thou hast often afforded ; for that mercy of thine whereby thou has sweetened and allayed those troubles which thou hast not seen fit wholly to remove ; for thy particular preservation of me this night, and for all other tokens of thy goodness towards me. Lord, grant that I may render thee not only the fruit of my lips, but the obedience of my life, so that these blessings may be an earnest of those richer blessings which thou hast prepared for those that love thee, for his sake whom thou hast made the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him, even JESUS CHRIST.

A Confession.

O righteous LORD, who hatest iniquity, I thy sinful creature cast myself at thy feet, acknowledging that I most justly deserve to be utterly forsaken by thee. For I have drunk iniquity like water, gone on in a continued course of rebellion against thee, daily committing those things thou forbiddest, and leaving undone those things thou commandest. Mine heart, which should be an habitation for thy Spirit, is a cage of unclean birds, of foul and disordered affections; and out of this abundance of the heart my mouth speaketh, my hands act; so that in thought, word, and deed, I continually transgress against thee. [*Here mention the greatest of thy sins.*] Nay, O Lord, I have despised that goodness of thine which should lead me to repentance, hardening my heart against all those means which thou hast used for my amendment. And now, Lord, what can I expect from thee but judgment and fiery indignation, which are indeed the due reward of my sins? But, O Lord, there is mercy with thee that thou mayest be feared. O fit me for that mercy, by giving me a hearty repentance; and then, according to thy goodness, let thine anger be turned away from me. Look upon me in thy Son, my blessed Saviour, and for the merit of his sufferings, pardon all my sins: and I beseech thee, by the power of thy grace, so to renew and purify my heart, that I may become a new creature, utterly forsaking every evil way, and living in constant, sincere, and universal obedience to thee all the rest of my days, that behaving myself as a true and faithful servant, I may by thy mercy at the last be received into the joy of my Lord. Grant this for JESUS CHRIST'S sake.

A Prayer for Grace.

O most gracious God, from whom every good and perfect gift cometh, I, a wretched creature, that am not able

of myself so much as to think a good thought, beseech thee to work in me both to will and do according to thy good pleasure. Enlighten my mind that I may know thee, and let me not be barren or unfruitful in that knowledge. Lord, work in my heart a true faith, a purifying hope, and an unfeigned love : give me a full trust on thee, zeal for thee, reverence of all things that relate to thee : make me fearful to offend thee, thankful for thy mercies, humble under thy corrections, devout in thy service : and grant that in all things I may behave myself so as befits a creature to his Creator, a servant to his lord. Enable me likewise to perform that duty which I owe to myself. Give me that meekness, humility, and contentedness, whereby I may always possess my soul in patience and thankfulness : make me diligent in all duties, watchful against all temptations, perfectly pure and temperate, and so moderate in my most lawful enjoyments, that they may never become a snare to me. Make me also, O Lord, so affected towards my neighbour, that I may never transgress that royal law, which commands me to love him as myself ; grant me exactly to perform all parts of justice, yielding to all whatever is their due ; and give me such bowels of mercy, that I may never fail to do all acts of charity to all men, whether friends or enemies, according to thy command and example. Finally, I beseech thee, O Lord, to sanctify me throughout, that my whole spirit, and soul, and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, to whom, with thee and the HOLY GHOST, be all honour and glory, for ever. Amen.

Intercession.

O blessed LORD, whose mercy is over all thy works, I beseech thee to have mercy upon all men ; and grant that the precious ransom which was paid by thy Son for all, may be effectual to the saving of all. Give thy enlightening grace to those that are in darkness, and thy converting

grace to those that are in sin. Look with thy tenderest compassions upon the universal church. O be favourable and gracious unto Sion; build thou the walls of Jerusalem. Unite all that profess thy name, to thee by purity and holiness, and to each other by brotherly love. Have mercy on this desolate church and sinful nation: thou hast moved the land and divided it; heal the sores thereof, for it shaketh. Make us so truly to repent of those sins which have provoked thy judgments, that thou mayest also turn and repent, and leave a blessing behind thee. Bless those whom thou hast appointed our governors, whether in church or state; so rule their hearts, and strength their hands, that they may neither want will nor power to punish wickedness and vice, and to maintain true religion and virtue. Have pity, O Lord, on all that are in affliction: be a father to the fatherless, and plead the cause of the widow: comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, heal the sick, relieve the needy, defend the oppressed, and administer to every one according to their several necessities. Let thy blessings rest upon all that are near and dear to me, and grant them whatsoever thou seest necessary, either to their bodies or their souls. [*Here mention thy nearest relations.*] Remember all those that have done me good, and pardon all those that have done or wished me evil; and work in them and me all that good which may make us acceptable in thy sight, through JESUS CHRIST.

A Prayer for Preservation.

O merciful God, by whose bounty alone it is, that this day is added to my life, I beseech thee so to guide me in it by thy grace, that I may do nothing which may dishonour thee, or wound my own soul, but that I may diligently apply myself to all such good works as thou hast prepared for me to walk in; and, Lord, I beseech thee, give thy angels charge over me, to keep me in all

my ways, that I and mine may be safe under thy gracious protection, through JESUS CHRIST.

O LORD, pardon the wanderings and coldness of these petitions ; and deal with me, not according to my prayers or deserts, but according to my needs and thine own rich mercies in JESUS CHRIST, in whose blessed name and words I conclude my imperfect prayers, saying, *Our Father, &c.*

DIRECTIONS FOR NIGHT.

At night, when it draws towards the time of rest, bethink thyself how thou hast passed the day ; examine thine own heart, what sin, either of thought, word, or deed, thou hast committed, and what opportunity of doing good thou hast omitted ; and whatsoever thou findest to accuse thyself of, confess humbly to God, renew thy purposes of amendment, and beg his pardon in Christ ; and this not slightly, but with all devout earnestness, as thou wouldst do if thou wert sure thy death were as near approaching as thy sleep, which for ought thou knowest may be, and therefore thou shouldst no more venture to sleep unreconciled to God, than thou wouldst dare to die so. In the next place, consider what special mercies thou hast that day received, or if thou hast had any great deliverance, either from some dangerous temptations, or from any great and apparent peril, and offer to God thy hearty praise for the same ; or if nothing extraordinary have happened, and thou hast been kept even from the approach of danger, thou hast not the less, but the greater cause to magnify God, who hath so guarded thee, that not so much as the fear of evil hath assaulted thee. And therefore omit not to pay him the tribute of humble thankfulness, as well for his daily preservations as his more extraordinary deliverances. And above all,

endeavour still, by the consideration of his mercies, to have thy heart more closely knit to him, remembering that every favour received is a new obligation upon thee to love and obey him.



PRAYERS FOR NIGHT.

O HOLY, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three persons and one God, have mercy upon me a miserable sinner.

LORD, I know not what to pray for as I ought: O let thy Spirit help my infirmities, and enable me to offer up a spiritual sacrifice, acceptable unto thee by JESUS CHRIST.

A Confession.

O most holy Lord God, who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, how shall I dare to appear before thee, who am nothing but pollution? I am defiled in my very nature, having a backwardness to all good, and a readiness to all evil; but I have also defiled myself by my own actual sins. I have transgressed my duty to thee, my neighbour, and myself, and that in thought, in word, and in deed, by doing those things which thou hast forbidden, and by neglecting to do those things which thou hast commanded; and this, not only through ignorance and frailty, but knowingly, and wilfully, against the motions of thy Spirit, and the checks of my own conscience. And to make all these sins beyond measure sinful, I have gone on in a daily course of repeating these provocations against thee, notwithstanding all thy calls to, and my own purposes and vows of, amendment; yea, this very day I have not ceased to add new sins to my former guilt. [*Here name the particulars.*] And now, O Lord, what shall I say, seeing I have done these things? I know that the wages of sin is death: but O thou who willest not the death of a sinner, have mercy upon me; work in me, I beseech thee, a sincere contrition,

and a perfect hatred of my sins ; let me not daily confess, and yet daily renew them ; but grant, O Lord, that from this instant I may give a bill of divorce to all my most beloved lusts, and then be thou pleased to marry me to thyself in truth, in righteousness, and in holiness. For all my sins, O Lord, accept of that ransom which thy blessed Son hath paid for me, and for his sake pardon all my offences, and receive me to thy favour. And when thou hast thus spoken peace to my soul, Lord keep me that I turn not any more to folly ; and so establish me with thy grace, that no temptation of the world, the devil, or my own flesh, may ever draw me to offend thee ; that being made free from sin, and become a servant unto God, I may have my fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life, through JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD.

A Thanksgiving.

O thou Father of Mercies, who art kind even to the unthankful, I acknowledge myself to have abundantly experienced that gracious property of thine ; for notwithstanding my daily provocations against thee, thou still heapest loving-kindness upon me. All my contempt of thy favours has not yet made thee withdraw them, but in the riches of thy goodness, thou still continuest to me the offers of grace and life in thy Son. The sins of this day thou hast not repaid, as justly thou mightest, by sweeping me away with a swift destruction, but hast spared and preserved me according to the greatness of thy mercy. [*Here mention the particular mercies of that day.*] What shall I render unto the Lord for all these benefits which he hath done unto me ? Lord, let this goodness of thine lead me to repentance, and grant that I may not only offer thee thanks and praise, but may also order my conversation aright, that so I may at the last see the salvation of God, through JESUS CHRIST.

A Prayer for Preservation.

O blessed LORD, the keeper of Israel, that neither slumberest nor sleepest, be pleased in thy mercy to watch over me this night. Keep me by thy grace from all works of darkness, and defend me by thy power from all dangers. Grant me moderate and refreshing sleep, such as may fit me for the duties of the day following : And Lord, make me ever mindful of that time when I shall lie down in the dust ; and because I know neither the day nor the hour of my Master's coming, grant that I may be always ready, that I may never live in such a state as I shall fear to die in ; but that whether I live, I may live unto the Lord, or whether I die, I may die unto the Lord, so that living and dying I may be thine, through Jesus Christ.



☞ *As thou art putting off thy clothes, think with thyself that the time approaches when thou must put off thy body also, and then thy soul must appear naked before God's judgment-seat ; and therefore thou hadst need be careful that it may be made clean and pure, so that He who will not look on iniquity may graciously behold and accept it.*

☞ *Let thy bed put thee in mind of thy grave ; and when thou liest down, say,*

O blessed SAVIOUR, who by thy precious death and burial didst take away the sting of death, and the power of the grave, grant me the joyful fruits of that thy victory, and be thou gain to me, in life and death.

I will lay me down in peace and take my rest, for it is thou, Lord, only that makest me to dwell in safety.

Into thy hands I commend my spirit ; for thou hast redeemed it, O Lord, thou GOD of truth.

COLLECTS

FOR

SEVERAL GRACES.

For Faith.

O BLESSED Lord, whom without faith it is impossible to please, let thy Spirit, I beseech thee, work in me such a faith as may be acceptable in thy sight, even such as worketh by love. O let me not rest in a dead faith, but grant it may be that victorious faith, which may enable me to overcome the world, and conform me to the image of that CHRIST on whom I believe; that so at the last I may receive the end of my faith, even the salvation of my soul, by the same JESUS CHRIST.

For Hope.

O LORD, who art the hope of all the ends of the earth, let me never be destitute of a well-grounded hope, nor yet possessed with a vain presumption. Suffer me not to think that thou wilt either be reconciled to my sins, or reject my repentance; but give me, I beseech thee, such a hope as may be answerable to thy promises, and such as may both encourage and enable me to purify myself from all filthiness, both of flesh and spirit; that so it may indeed become to me an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, entering within the veil, whither the Fore-runner is for me entered, even JESUS CHRIST, my High-Priest and blessed Redeemer.

For the Love of God.

O holy and gracious LORD, who art infinitely excellent in thyself, and infinitely bountiful towards me, I beseech thee, suffer not my heart to be so hardened, through the deceitfulness of sin, as to resist such charms of love, but let them make deep and lasting impressions on my soul. LORD, thou art pleased to require my heart, and thou only hast a right to it. O let me not alienate any part of it, but enable me to render it up whole and entire to thee. Take this unworthy heart of mine as thine own spoil; and refine it with the purifying fire of thy love, that it may be a fit habitation for thy Spirit. LORD, if thou seest it fit, be pleased to let me taste of those joys, those ravishments of thy love, wherewith thy saints have been so transported. But if in this I know not what I ask, if I may not choose my place in thy kingdom, yet, O LORD, deny me not to drink of thy cup; let me have such a degree of love as may make me endure any thing for thy sake, such a perfect love as may cast out all fear and sloth too; so that nothing may seem to me too grievous to suffer, or too difficult to do, in obedience to thee; and that thus expressing my love by keeping thy commandments, I may, by thy mercy, at last obtain that crown of life, which thou hast promised to those that love thee, through JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD.

For Sincerity.

O holy LORD, who requirest truth in the inward parts, I humbly beseech thee to purge me from all hypocrisy. The heart, O LORD, is deceitful above all things; and my heart is deceitful above all hearts. O Thou, who searchest the heart and reins, try me, and seek the ground of my heart, and suffer not any accursed thing to lurk within me, but purify me even with fire, so thou consume my dross. O LORD, I cannot deceive thee, but I may easily deceive myself. I beseech thee, let me not rest in any

such deceit, but bring me to a sight and hatred of my most hidden corruptions, that I may not cherish any darling lust, but make an utter destruction of every *Amalekite*. O suffer me not to speak peace to myself, when there is no peace; but grant that I may judge of myself as thou judgest of me, so that I may never be at peace with myself, till I am at perfect peace with thee, and by purity of heart qualified to see thee in thy kingdom, through JESUS CHRIST.

For Devotion in Prayer.

O gracious LORD GOD, who not only permittest, but invitest, us miserable and needy creatures to present our petitions to thee; grant, I beseech thee, that the frequency of my prayer may be somewhat proportionable to those continual needs I have of thy mercy. LORD, I confess it is the greatest honour and greatest advantage thus to be allowed access to thee; yet so stupid is my heart, that it shuns or frustrates the opportunities of it. My soul, O LORD, is possessed with a spirit of infirmity; it is bowed together, and can in no wise lift up itself to thee. O be thou pleased to cure this miserable disease, to enspirit and enliven this earthly and drossy heart, that it may freely mount towards thee; so that I may set a true value on this most valuable privilege, and take delight in approaching to thee; that my approaches may be with a reverence in some degree answerable to that awful Majesty before whom I come, with an importunity answerable to those pressing wants I have to be supplied, and with such a fixedness and attention of mind as no wandering thoughts may interrupt; that I may no more incur the guilt of drawing near to thee with my lips, when my heart is far from thee, but may so ask, that I may receive, seek, that I may find, and knock, that it may be opened unto me; and that from praying to thee here, I may be translated to the work of praising thee eternally in thy glory, through the merits and intercession of JESUS CHRIST.

For Humility.

O thou high and lofty ONE, that inhabitest eternity, yet art pleased to dwell with the humble spirit; pour into my heart, I beseech thee, that excellent grace of humility. LORD, convince me powerfully of my own wretchedness; make me to see that I am miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked; that so in all thy dispensations, I may lay my hand upon my mouth, and heartily acknowledge that I am less than the least of thy mercies, and deserving of greater punishment than the greatest of thy judgments. And, O LORD, grant me not only to walk humbly with my God, but with men also, that I may not only submit myself to thy rebukes, but even to those of my fellow-Christians, and with meekness receive and obey their admonitions; and make me so to behave myself towards all, that I may never do any thing through strife or vain-glory. And to that end, grant that, in lowliness of mind, I may esteem every other man better than myself, and be willing that others should esteem them so also; that I may neither nourish any high opinion of myself, nor covet it among others, but that, despising the praise of men, I may seek that praise which cometh from thee only. May I employ all my care to approve myself to thee, who resistest the proud, and givest grace to the humble. Grant this, O LORD, for his sake who humbled himself unto the death of the cross, JESUS CHRIST.

For Trust on God.

O Almighty LORD, who never failest them that trust on thee; give me grace, I beseech thee, in all my difficulties and distresses, to have recourse to thee, to rest and depend on thee. Thou shalt keep him, O LORD, in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee. O let me always rest on this firm pillar, and never exchange it for the broken reeds of worldly succours; suffer not my heart to be over-charged with the cares of this life; but grant that

having, by honest labour and industry, done my part, I may cheerfully commit myself to thy providence; casting all my care upon thee, and being careful for nothing, but to be of the number of those whom thou ownest and carest for, even such as keep thy testimonies, and think upon thy commandments to do them. Seeking first thy kingdom and righteousness, may all these outward things be added unto me, in such a measure as thy wisdom knows best for me. Grant this, O LORD, for JESUS CHRIST'S sake.

For Contrition.

O holy LORD, who art a merciful embracer of true penitents, but yet a consuming fire towards obstinate sinners; be thou pleased to soften and melt this hard heart, that I may bewail the iniquities of my life. Strike this rock, O LORD, that the waters may flow out. My drowsy soul hath too long slept in sin: LORD, awaken it, though it be with thunder; and let me rather feel thy terrors, than not feel my sin. Thou sentest thy blessed Son to heal the broken-hearted; but, LORD, what will that avail me, if my heart be whole? O break it, that it may be capable of this healing virtue; and grant, I beseech thee, that having once tasted the bitterness of sin, I may flee from it as from the face of a serpent, and bring forth fruits of repentance, to the glory of thy grace, in JESUS CHRIST, our blessed Redeemer.

For Chastity.

O holy JESUS, whose first descent was into the Virgin's womb, and who dost still love to dwell only in pure and virgin hearts, I beseech thee, send thy Spirit of purity to cleanse me from all filthiness, both of flesh and spirit. My body, O LORD, is the temple of the HOLY GHOST: O let me never pollute that temple with any uncleanness. And because out of the heart proceed the

things that defile the man, LORD, grant me grace to keep my heart with all diligence, that no impure thoughts may be harboured there; and enable me to keep both body and soul pure and undefiled, that so I may glorify thee here, both in body and spirit, and be glorified in both with thee hereafter.

For Contentedness.

O merciful GOD, thy wisdom is infinite to choose, and thy love forward to dispense good things to us; O let me always entirely resign myself to thy disposal, and have no desires of my own, but a perfect satisfaction in thy choice for me; that so in whatsoever estate I am, I may be therein content. LORD, grant that I may never look with murmuring on my own condition, nor with envy on other men's. And to that end, I beseech thee, purge my heart of all covetous affections, that all my care may be to be rich towards GOD, to lay up my treasure in heaven, and to set my affections on things above; so that when CHRIST, who is my life, shall appear, I may also appear with him in glory. Grant this, O LORD, for the merits of the same JESUS CHRIST.

For Charity.

O merciful LORD, who hast made of one blood, and redeemed by one ransom, all nations of men, let me never harden my bowels against any that partake of the same nature and redemption with me, but grant me charity towards all men. Give me, O thou Father of compassions, such a tenderness and meltingness of heart, that I may be deeply affected with all the miseries of my brethren, and diligently employ all my abilities for their succour and relief. O let not an unchristian self-love possess my heart, but drive out that accursed spirit, and let thy Spirit of love euter and dwell there, and make me seek, not to please myself, but my neighbour, for his good to edifica-

tion, even as CHRIST pleased not himself. LORD, make me a faithful steward of all those talents which thou hast committed to me, that so when thou shalt call me to give an account of my stewardship, I may do it with joy, and not with grief. Grant this, merciful LORD, for JESUS CHRIST'S sake.

For Perseverance.

O eternal and unchangeable LORD GOD, who art the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; be thou pleased to communicate some small ray of that excellence, some degree of that stability, to me thy wretched creature, who am light and inconstant, turned about with every blast. My understanding is very deceivable; O establish it in thy truth, and keep it from the snares of seducing spirits, that I may not be led away with the error of the wicked, and fall from my own steadfastness. My will, O LORD, is irresolute and wavering, and doth not cleave steadfastly unto GOD; my goodness is but as the morning cloud, and as the early dew it passeth away. O strengthen me; and whatever good work thou hast wrought in me, be pleased to accomplish and perform it until the day of CHRIST LORD, thou seest my weakness, and thou knowest the number and strength of those temptations I have to struggle with: O leave me not to myself, but cover thou my head in the day of battle, and in all spiritual combats make me more than conqueror, through him that loved me. O let no terrors or flatteries, either of the world or my own flesh, ever draw me from my obedience to thee; but grant that I may continue steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the LORD, and by patient continuing in well-doing, seek, and at last obtain, glory, and honour, and immortality, and eternal life, through JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD.

P R A Y E R S

BEFORE RECEIVING

T H E L O R D ' S S U P P E R .

O MOST merciful God, who hast in thy great goodness prepared this spiritual feast for sick and famished souls, make my desires and gasping after it answerable to my need of it. I have, with the prodigal, wasted that portion of grace thou bestowedst upon me, and therefore do infinitely want a supply out of thy treasury: but, O LORD, how shall such a wretch as I dare to approach this holy table? I am a dog, how shall I presume to take the children's bread? Or how shall this spiritual manna, this food of angels, be given to one who hath chosen to feed on husks with swine? O LORD, my guiltiness makes me tremble to come, and yet makes me not dare to keep away; for where shall my polluted soul be washed, if not in the fountain which thou hast opened for sin and for uncleanness? Hither therefore I come; and thou hast promised, that him that cometh to thee thou wilt in no wise cast out. This is, O LORD, the blood of the new testament; grant me so to receive it, that it may be to me for remission of sins; and though I have so often and so wretchedly broken my part of that covenant whereof this is a seal, yet be thou graciously pleased to make good thine. Be merciful to my unrighteousness, and remember my sins and my iniquities no more. Put thy laws into my heart, and write them in my mind, and by the power of thy grace

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dispose my soul to such a sincere and constant obedience, that I may never again provoke thee. LORD, grant that in these holy mysteries I may not only commemorate, but effectually receive, my blessed Saviour, and all the benefits of his passion; and to that end, give me such a preparation of soul as may qualify me for it. Give me a deep sense of my sins and unworthiness, that being weary and heavy laden, I may be capable of his refreshings. Raise up my dull and earthly mind from grovelling here below, and inspire it with a holy zeal, that I may with spiritual affection approach this spiritual feast; and let the infinite love of CHRIST, in dying for so wretched a sinner, inflame my frozen soul, and kindle in me a sacred fire of love to him, so vehement that no waters may quench, no floods drown it; such as may burn up all my dross, and not leave one unmortified lust in my soul; and such as may also extend itself to all whom thou hast given me command and example to love, even enemies as well as friends. Finally, O LORD, I beseech thee to clothe me in the wedding-garment, and make me, though of myself most unworthy, yet by thy mercy an acceptable guest at this holy table, that I may not eat and drink my own condemnation, but may have my pardon sealed, my weakness repaired, my corruptions subdued, and my soul so inseparably united unto thee, that no temptations may ever be able to dissolve the union, but that being begun here in grace, it may be consummated in glory. Grant this, O LORD, for thy dear Son's sake, JESUS CHRIST.

Another.

O blessed JESUS, who once offeredst up thyself for me upon the cross, and now offerest thyself to me in this sacrament; let not, I beseech thee, my impenitence and unworthiness frustrate these so inestimable mercies, but qualify me by thy grace to receive the full benefit of them. O LORD, I have abundant need of thee, but am so holden with the cords of my sins, that I am not able to

move towards thee. O loose me from this band wherewith Satan and my own lusts have bound me, and draw me, that I may run after thee. O merciful JESUS, thy blood is my only refuge; O let this make my atonement, or I perish. Wherefore didst thou shed it, but to save sinners? Neither can the merit of it be overwhelmed either by the greatness or number of sins. I am a sinner, a great one; O let me find its saving efficacy. Be merciful unto me, O LORD, be merciful unto me, for my soul trusteth in thee, and in the clefts of thy wounds shall be my refuge, until thy Father's indignation be overpast. O thou, who hast, as my high-priest, offered sacrifice for me, intercede for me also, and plead thy meritorious sufferings on my behalf; and suffer not, O my Redeemer, the price of thy blood to be utterly lost. And grant, O LORD, that as the sins I have to be forgiven are many, so I may love much. LORD, thou seest what faint, what cold affections I have towards thee; O warm and enliven them; and as in this sacrament that transcendent love of thine in dying for me is set forth, so I beseech thee let it convey such grace unto me, as may enable me to make some returns of love. O let this divine fire descend from heaven into my soul, and let my sins be the burnt-offering for it to consume, that there may not any corrupt affection, any cursed thing, be sheltered in my heart, and that I may never again defile that place which thou hast chosen for thy temple. Thou diedst, O JESUS, to redeem me from all iniquity, O let me not again work wickedness; but grant that I may approach thee at this time with most sincere and fixed resolutions of an entire reformation, and let me receive such grace from thee, as may enable me faithfully to perform them. LORD, there are many diseases which my soul groans under. [*Here mention thy most prevailing corruptions.*] And though I lie ever so long at the pool of *Bethesda*, or come ever so often to thy table, yet unless thou be pleased to pour forth thy healing virtue, they will still remain uncured. O thou blessed Physician of souls, heal me, and grant that I may so touch thee, that every one

of these loathsome maladies may immediately cease, and that these sicknesses may not be unto death, but unto the glory of thy mercy in pardoning, and unto the glory of thy grace in purifying, so polluted a wretch. O CHRIST, hear me, and grant that I may now approach thee with such humility and contrition, such love and devotion, that thou mayest vouchsafe to come unto me, and abide with me, communicating to me thyself, and all the merits of thy passion. And then, O LORD, let no accusations of Satan, or of my own conscience, amaze and distract me; but having peace with thee, let me also have peace in myself, that this wine may make glad, and that this bread of life may strengthen my heart, and enable me cheerfully to run the way of thy commandments. Grant this, merciful Saviour, for thine own bowels' and compassion's sake.

EJACULATIONS

TO BE USED AT

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

LORD, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof.

I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men!

[Here recollect some of thy greatest sins.]

If thou, LORD, shouldest be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O LORD, who may abide it?

But with the LORD there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.

Behold, O LORD, thy beloved Son, in whom t
well pleased.

Hearken to the cry of his blood, which speaketh better
things than that of *Abel*.

By his agony and bloody sweat, by his cross and pas-
sion, good LORD, deliver me.

O Lamb of GOD, who takest away the sins of the
world, grant me thy peace.

O Lamb of GOD, who takest away the sins of the
world, have mercy upon me.

Immediately before Receiving.

Thou hast said, that he that eateth thy flesh, and
drinketh thy blood, hath eternal life.

Behold the servant of the LORD, be it unto me according
to thy word.

At the Receiving of the Bread.

By thy crucified body deliver me from this body of
death.

At the Receiving of the Cup.

O let this blood of thine purge my conscience from
dead works to serve the living GOD.

LORD, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

O touch me, and say, "I will, be thou clean."

After Receiving.

What shall I render unto the LORD for all the benefits
he hath done unto me?

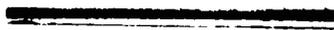
I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name
of the LORD.

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

Therefore, blessing, honour, glory, and power, be to him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever. Amen.

I have sworn, and am steadfastly purposed, to keep thy righteous judgments.

O hold thou up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.



A

THANKSGIVING

AFTER THE SACRAMENT.



O THOU Fountain of all goodness, from whom every good and perfect gift cometh, and to whom all honour and glory should be returned, I desire with the most fervent and inflamed affections of a grateful heart, to bless and praise thee for these inestimable mercies. LORD, what is man that thou shouldst so regard him, as to send thy beloved Son to suffer such bitter things for him? But, LORD, what am I, the worst of men, that I should have any part in this atonement, who have so often despised him and his sufferings? O the heighth and depth of this mercy of thine, who art pleased to admit me to the renewing of that covenant with thee, which I have so often and perversely broken! That I, who am not worthy of the daily bread that sustains the body, should be made partaker of this bread of life, which nourisheth the

soul, and that the God of all purity should vouchsafe to unite himself to so polluted a wretch! O my God, suffer me no more to turn thy grace into wantonness, or to make thy mercy an occasion of sinful security; but let this unspeakable love constrain me to obedience, that since my blessed LORD hath died for me, I may no longer live unto myself, but unto him. O LORD, I know there is no concord between CHRIST and *Belial*; therefore, since he hath now been pleased to enter my heart, let me never permit any lust to chase him thence; but let him that hath so dearly bought me, still keep possession of me, and let nothing ever take me out of his hand. To this end, be thou graciously pleased to watch over me, and defend me from all assaults of my spiritual enemies; but especially deliver me from myself, from the treachery of my own heart, which is too willing to yield itself a prey. Where thou seest that I am either by nature or custom most weak, there do thou magnify thy power in my preservation. [*Here mention thy most dangerous temptations.*] And, LORD, let my Saviour's sufferings for my sins, and the vows I have now made against them, never depart from my mind; but let the remembrance of the one enable me to perform the other. May I never make truce with those lusts which nailed his hands, pierced his side, and made his soul heavy to the death; but having now anew enlisted myself under his banner, may I fight manfully, and follow the Captain of my salvation, even if called to pass through a sea of blood. LORD, lift up my hands that hang down, and my feeble knees, that I faint not in this warfare; O be thou my strength, for I am not able of myself to struggle with the slightest temptations. How often have I turned my back in the day of battle! How many vows have I violated! And, LORD, I have still the same deceitful heart to betray me into the breach of this. O thou, who art yea and amen, in whom there is no shadow of change, communicate to me such a stability of mind, that I may no more start aside like a broken bow; but that having my heart whole with thee, I may

continue steadfast in thy covenant, and that those good purposes, which thy Spirit hath raised in me this day, may not vanish, but bring forth fruit unto life eternal. Grant this, O merciful Father, through the merits and mediation of my crucified Saviour.

A PRAYER

IN TIMES OF PERSECUTION.

O BLESSED SAVIOUR, who hast made the cross the badge of thy disciples, enable me willingly and cheerfully to embrace it. Thou seest, O LORD, that I am fallen into days, wherein he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey; O make me so readily to expose all my outward concerns, when my obedience to thee requireth it, that what falls as a prey to men, may by thee be accepted as a sacrifice to God. LORD, preserve me so by thy grace, that I may never suffer as an evil-doer; and then, if it be my lot to suffer as a Christian, let me not be ashamed, but rejoice that I am counted worthy to suffer for thy name. O thou who for my sake enduredst the cross, and despisedst the shame, let the example of that love and patience prevail against all the tremblings of my corrupt heart, that no terrors may ever be able to shake my constancy, but that how long soever thou shalt permit the rod of the wicked to lie on my back, I may never put my hand unto wickedness. LORD, thou knowest whereof I am made, thou rememberest that I am but flesh; and flesh shrinks at the approach of any thing grievous. It is thy Spirit alone that can uphold me: O establish me with thy free Spirit, that I be not weary or faint in my mind.

And the greater thou discernest my weakness to be, the more do thou shew forth thy power in me ; and make me, O LORD, in all temptations steadfastly to look to thee, the author and finisher of my faith, that so I may run the race which is set before me, and resist even unto blood, striving against sin. O JĒSUS, hear me, and though Satan desire to have me, that he may winnow me as wheat, yet do thou, O blessed Mediator, pray for me that my faith fail not, but that, though it be tried with fire, it may be found unto praise and glory and honour, at thy appearing. And, O LORD, I beseech thee, grant that I may preserve not only constancy towards God, but charity also towards men, even towards those whom thou shalt permit to be the instruments of my sufferings. LORD, let me not fail to imitate that admirable meekness of thine, in loving and praying for my greatest persecutors ; and do thou overcome all their evil with thy infinite goodness, turn their hearts, and draw them powerfully to thyself, and at last receive both me and mine enemies into those mansions of peace and rest, where thou reignest with the FATHER and the HOLY GHOST, one God for ever.

A PRAYER

IN TIME OF AFFLICTION.

—◆—

O JUST and holy LORD, who with rebukes dost chasten man for sin, I desire unfeignedly to humble myself under thy mighty hand. I heartily acknowledge, O LORD, that all I do suffer, or can suffer, is but the due reward of my deeds, and therefore in thy severest inflictions I must still

say, Righteous art thou, O LORD, and upright are thy judgments. But, O LORD, in judgment remember mercy; and though my sins have forced thee to strike, yet consider my weakness, and let not thy stripes be more heavy or more lasting, than thou seest profitable for my soul. Correct me, but with the chastisement of a father, not with the wounds of an enemy; and though thou take not off thy rod, yet take away thine anger. LORD, do not abhor my soul, nor cast thy servant away in displeasure; but pardon my sins, I beseech thee, and if yet in thy fatherly wisdom thou see fit to prolong thy corrections, thy blessed will be done. I cast myself, O LORD, at thy feet; do with me what thou pleasest. Try me as silver is tried, so thou bring me out purified. And LORD, make even my flesh to subscribe to this resignation; that there may be nothing in me that may rebel against thy hand, but that having perfectly suppressed all repining thoughts, I may cheerfully drink of this cup. And how bitter soever thou shalt please to make it, LORD, let it prove medicinal, and cure all the diseases of my soul, that it may bring forth in me the peaceable fruit of righteousness: that so these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, may work for me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, through JESUS CHRIST.

A THANKSGIVING

FOR

DELIVERANCE FROM AFFLICTION.

—◆—

O BLESSED LORD, who art gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil, I thankfully acknowledge before thee, that thou hast not dealt with me after my sins, nor rewarded me

according to my iniquities. My rebellions, O LORD, deserved to be scourged with scorpions, and thou hast corrected them only with a gentle and fatherly rod; neither hast thou suffered me to lie long under that, but hast given me a timely and a gracious issue out of my distresses. O LORD, I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy, for thou hast considered my trouble, and hast known my soul in adversity. Thou hast smitten, and thou hast healed me. O let these various methods of thine have their proper effects upon my soul; that I who have felt the smart of thy chastisements, may stand in awe and not sin;—that I, who have likewise felt the sweet refreshings of thy mercy, may have my heart ravished with it, and knit to thee in the firmest bands of love;—and that by both, I may be preserved in a constant and entire obedience to thee all my days, through JESUS CHRIST.

DIRECTIONS

FOR THE

TIME OF SICKNESS.



☞ *When thou findest thyself visited with sickness, thou art immediately to remember that it is GOD, who with rebukes doth chasten man for sin. And therefore let thy first care be, to find out what it is that provokes him to smite thee, and to that purpose examine thine own heart, search diligently what guilt lies there, confess it humbly to GOD, and for the greater security renew thy repentance for all the old sins of thy former life, beg most earnestly his mercy and pardon in CHRIST JESUS, and put on sincere and zealous resolutions of forsaking every evil way for the rest of that time which GOD shall spare thee. And that thy own heart deceive thee not in this weighty business, it will be wisdom to send for some godly divine, not only to assist thee with his prayers, but with his counsel also. And to that purpose open thy heart freely to him, that he may be able to judge of thy repentance. And when thou hast thus provided for thy better part, then consider thy body also, and as the wise man saith, Eccles. xxxviii. 12, "Give place to the physician, for the LORD hath created him." Use such means as may be most likely to recover thy health, but always remember that the success of them must come from GOD; and beware of Asa's sin, who "sought to the physicians, and not to the LORD," 2 Chron. xvi. 12. Dispose also betimes of thy temporal affairs, by making thy will, and setting all things in such order as thou meanest*

finally to leave them in, and defer it not till thy sickness grow more violent : for then perhaps thou shalt not have such use of thy reason ; or if thou have, it will be then much more seasonable to employ thy thoughts on higher things, on the world thou art going to, rather than that thou art about to leave ; we cannot carry the things of this world with us when we go hence, and it is not fit we should carry the thoughts of them. Therefore let those be early dispatched, that they may not disturb thee at last.

A PRAYER for a Sick Person.

O MERCIFUL and righteous LORD, the GOD of health and of sickness, of life and of death ; I most unfeignedly acknowledge that my great abuse of those many days of strength which thou hast afforded me, hath justly deserved thy present visitation. I desire, O LORD, humbly to accept of this punishment, and to bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him. And, O thou merciful Father, who designest not the ruin, but the amendment of those whom thou scourgest, I beseech thee by thy grace so to sanctify this correction, that this sickness of my body may be a means of health to my soul : make me diligent to search my heart ; and do thou, O LORD, enable me to discover every accursed thing, how closely soever concealed, that by the removal thereof, I may make way for the removal of this punishment. Heal my soul, O LORD, which hath sinned against thee ; and then, if it be thy blessed will, heal my body also : restore the voice of joy and health unto my dwelling, that I may live to praise thee, and to bring forth fruits of repentance. But if in thy wisdom thou hast otherwise disposed, if thou hast determined that this sickness shall be unto death, I beseech thee to prepare me for it. Give me that sincere repentance, and faith in CHRIST, to which thou hast promised mercy and pardon ; wean my heart from the

world, and all its fading vanities ; and make me to pant after those more excellent joys, which are at thy right hand for ever. LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me ; in all the pains of my body, in all the agonies of my spirit, let thy comforts refresh my soul, and enable me patiently to wait till my change come. And grant, O LORD, that when my earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, I may have a building of GOD, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, for his sake who by his precious blood hath purchased it for me, even JESUS CHRIST.

A THANKSGIVING for Recovery.

O GRACIOUS LORD, the GOD of the spirits of all flesh, in whose hand my time is, I praise and magnify thee, that thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption, and restored me to health again. It is thou alone, O LORD, that hast preserved my life from destruction ; thou hast chastened and corrected me, but thou hast not given me over unto death. O let this life which thou hast thus graciously spared, be wholly consecrated to thee. Behold, O LORD, I am by thy mercy made whole ; O make me strictly careful to sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto me. Let not this reprieve make me secure, as thinking that my Lord delayeth his coming ; but grant me, I beseech thee, to make a right use of this long-suffering of thine, and so to employ every minute of that time thou shalt allow me, that when thou shalt appear, I may have confidence, and not be ashamed before thee at thy coming. LORD, I have found by this approach towards death, how dreadful a thing it would be to be taken unprepared ; O let it be a perpetual admonition to me to watch for my Master's coming : and when the pleasures of sin shall present themselves, make me to remember how bitter they will be at the last. O LORD, hear me, and as thou hast in much mercy afforded me time, so

grant me grace to work out my own salvation, and to provide oil in my lamp, that when the Bridegroom cometh, I may go in with him to the marriage. Grant this, I beseech thee, for thy dear Son's sake.

A PRAYER at the Approach of Death.

O ETERNAL and ever-living GOD, who first breathedst into man the breath of life, and when thou takest away that breath he dies and is turned again to his dust; look with compassion on me thy poor creature who am now drawing near to the gates of death. LORD, save now, or I perish eternally. O thou who willest not that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, bring me, I beseech thee, to a sincere repentance, such as thou wilt approve who triest the heart. Create in me, O GOD, a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me. LORD, one day is with thee as a thousand years; O let thy mighty Spirit work in me now, in this my last day, whatsoever thou seest wanting to fit me for thy final acceptance. Give me a perfect hatred of my sins; enable me to present to thee that sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart, which thou hast promised not to despise; and let me have an interest in that atonement which thy dear Son hath made for all repenting sinners. He is the propitiation for our sins, he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was on him; O heal me by his stripes, and let the cry of his blood drown the clamour of my sins. I am indeed by nature a child of wrath, but he is the Son of thy love; for his sake spare me, O LORD, spare thy creature, whom he hath redeemed with his most precious blood, and be not angry with me for ever. In his wounds, O LORD, I take sanctuary, O let not thy vengeance pursue me to this city of refuge: my soul hangeth upon him, O let me not perish with a *Jesus*, a Saviour, in my arms. But by his agony and

bloody sweat, by his cross and passion, by all that he did and suffered for sinners, good LORD deliver me ; deliver me from the wages of my sins, thy wrath and everlasting damnation, in this time of my tribulation, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, and do not now repay my former neglects of thy calls, by refusing to answer me in my greatest need. LORD, there is but a step between me and death, O let not my sun go down upon thy wrath, but seal my pardon before I go hence and be no more seen. Thy loving-kindness is better than life itself ; O let me have that in exchange, and I shall most gladly lay down this mortal life. LORD, thou knowest all my desire, and my groaning is not hid from thee ; deal thou with me according to thy name, for sweet is thy mercy ; take away the sting of death, the guilt of my sins ; and then, though I walk through the valley of death, I will fear no evil. I will lay me down in peace, and, LORD, when I awake up, let me be satisfied with thy presence in thy glory. Grant this, merciful GOD, for his sake, who is both the Redeemer and Mediator of sinners, even JESUS CHRIST.

EJACULATIONS.

O LORD, of whom may I seek for succour but of thee, who for my sins art justly displeas'd ; yet, O LORD GOD most holy, O LORD most mighty, O holy and most merciful Saviour, deliver me not unto the bitter pains of eternal death.

Thou knowest, LORD, the secrets of my heart, shut not up thy merciful ears to my prayer, but hear me, O LORD most holy, O GOD most mighty, O holy and merciful Saviour, thou most worthy Judge eternal, suffer me not, at my last hour, for any pains of death to fall from thee.

Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am not worthy to be called thy child : yet, O LORD, do not thou cast off the bowels and compassions of a

father ; but even as a father pitieth his own children, so be thou merciful unto me.

LORD, the prince of this world cometh ; O let him have nothing in me, but as he accuseth do thou absolve: he lays many and grievous things to my charge, and I have nothing to say for myself; do thou answer for me, O **LORD** my **GOD**.

Behold, O **GOD**, the Devil is coming towards me, having great wrath, because he knoweth he hath but a short time. O save and deliver me, lest he devour my soul like a lion, and tear it in pieces while there is none to help.

O my **GOD**, I know that no unclean thing can enter into thy Kingdom, and I am nothing but pollution, my very righteousnesses are as filthy rags. O wash me and make me white in the blood of the Lamb, that so I may be fit to stand before thy throne.

LORD, the snares of death compass me round about, O let not the pains of hell also take hold upon me : but though I find trouble and heaviness, yet O **LORD**, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.

O **JESUS**, who hast bought me with the price of thine own blood, challenge now thy purchase, and let not the malice of hell pluck me out of thy hand.

O blessed High Priest, who art able to save them to the utmost who come unto **GOD** by thee, save me, I beseech thee, who have no hope, but in thy merits and intercession.

O **JESUS**, I have, by my many and grievous sins, crucified thee afresh ; yet do thou, who prayedst for thy persecutors, intercede for me also, and suffer not, O my Redeemer, my soul, the price of thy blood, to perish.

O **SPIRIT** of grace, I have done despite to thee ; yet, O blessed Comforter, though I have often grieved thee, be thou pleased to succour and relieve me, and say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.

Mine eyes look unto thee, O **LORD**, in thee is my trust, O cast not out my soul.

O LORD, in thee have I trusted, let me never be confounded.

O blessed LORD, who scourgest every son whom thou receivest, let me not be weary of thy correction, but give me such a perfect subjection to thee, the Father of spirits, that this chastisement may be for my profit, and that I may be partaker of thy holiness.

O thou Captain of my salvation, who wert made perfect by sufferings, sanctify to me all the pains of body, all the terrors of mind, which thou shalt permit to fall upon me.

LORD, my sins have deserved eternal torments, make me cheerfully bear my present pains ; chasten me as thou pleasest here, that I may not be condemned with the world.

LORD, the waters are come in unto my soul. O let thy Spirit move upon these waters, and make them like the pool of *Bethesda*, that they may be instrumental in curing whatsoever spiritual disease thou discernest in me.

O CHRIST, who first sufferedst many and grievous things, and then enteredst into thy glory, make me to suffer with thee, that I may also be glorified with thee.

When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers.

I believe that thou shalt come to be my Judge.

I pray thee, therefore, to help thy servant, whom thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood.

Make me to be numbered with thy saints in glory everlasting.

Thou art the resurrection and the life ; he that believeth in thee, though he were dead, yet shall he live : LORD, I believe, help thou my unbelief.

My flesh and heart faileth ; but GOD is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

I desire to be dissolved, and to be with CHRIST, which it far better : LORD, I groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with that house from heaven.

I desire to put off this my tabernacle : O be pleased to receive me into everlasting habitations.

Bring my soul out of prison, that I may give thanks unto thy name.

LORD, I have here to wrestle, not only with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness. O take me from these tents of *Kedar*, into the heavenly *Jerusalem*, where Satan shall be utterly trodden under my feet.

I cannot here attend one minute to thy service without distraction; O take me up to stand before thy throne, where I shall serve thee day and night.

I am here in heaviness, through many tribulations; O receive me into that place of rest, where all tears shall be wiped from my eyes; where there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor pain.

I am here in a state of banishment and absence from the LORD; O take me where I shall ever behold thy face, and follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.

O blessed JESUS, who hast loved me, and washed me from my sins in thine own blood, receive my soul.

Into thy hands I commend my spirit, for thou hast redeemed me, O LORD, thou GOD of truth. Come, LORD JESUS, come quickly.

A PRAYER

FOR THEIR USE WHO MOURN IN SECRET FOR THE
PUBLICK CALAMITIES.

O GOD, what balm is there in *Gilead* that can cure us, who, when thou wouldst heal us, will not be healed? We know thou hast pronounced, that there is no peace to the wicked; and how shall we then pray for peace that still retain our wickedness? This, this, O LORD, is our sorest disease; O give us medicines to heal this sickness; heal our souls, and then we know thou canst soon heal our land. LORD, thou hast long spoken, by thy word to our ears, and by thy judgments even to all our senses; but unless thou speak by thy Spirit to our hearts, all other calls will be ineffectual. O send out this voice, and let it be a mighty voice, such as may awaken us out of this lethargy: thou that didst call Lazarus out of the grave, be pleased to call us who are dead in trespasses and sins, and make us to awake to righteousness. And though, O LORD, our frequent resistances, even of those inward calls, have justly provoked thee to give us up to the lusts of our own heart, yet, O thou boundless ocean of mercy, who art good, not only beyond what we can desire, but beyond what we can wish, do not withdraw the influence of thy grace, and take not thy Holy Spirit from us. Thou wert found of those that sought thee not: O let that act of mercy be repeated to us, who are so desperately, yet so insensibly sick, that we cannot so much as look after the physician; and by how much our case is the more dangerous, so much the more sovereign remedies do thou apply. LORD, help us, and consider not so much our unworthiness of thy aid, as our irremediable ruin, if we want it; save Lord, or we perish eternally. To this end, dispense to us in our temporal

interest, what thou seest may best secure our spiritual; if a greater degree of outward misery will tend to the cure of our inward evil, LORD, spare not thy rod, but strike yet more sharply. Cast out this devil, though with ever so much foaming and tearing. But if thou see'st that mercy may be most likely to melt us, O be pleased so far to condescend to our wretchedness as to afford us that; and whether by thy sharper or thy gentler methods, bring us home to thyself. And then, O LORD, we know thy hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; but when thou hast delivered us from our sins, thou canst and wilt deliver us from our troubles. O shew us thy mercy, and grant us thy salvation, that being redeemed both in our bodies and spirits, we may glorify thee in both, in a cheerful obedience, and praise the name of our GOD, that hath dealt wonderfully with us, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

A
COLLECTION
OF
PRAYERS FOR FAMILIES.

A
COLLECTION
OF
PRAYERS FOR FAMILIES.



SUNDAY MORNING.

ALMIGHTY and eternal God, we desire to praise thy holy name, for so graciously raising us up, in soundness of body and mind, to see the light of this day.

We bless thee in behalf of all thy creatures ; for “the eyes of all look unto thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season.” But above all we acknowledge thine inestimable benefits bestowed upon mankind in CHRIST JESUS. We thank thee for his miraculous birth, his most holy life, his bitter agony, his bloody death, his glorious resurrection on this day, his ascension into heaven, his triumph over all the powers of darkness, and his sitting at thy right hand for evermore.

O GOD, how great was thy love to the sinful sons of men, to give thy “only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life !” How great was that love, which hath committed our souls to one so “mighty to save ;” and which hath chosen us to be thy sons, and heirs together with CHRIST

JESUS, and set such an High-Priest over thy house and family to make intercession for us, to pour thy blessings upon us, and to send forth his angels to “minister unto them who shall be heirs of salvation!” O the riches of thy grace, in sending the HOLY GHOST, to make us abound in hope that we shall one day rise from the dead, and, after our short labours here, rest with thee in thy eternal glory.

O that we may begin it this day, in devout meditations, in joy unspeakable, and in blessing and praising thee, who hast given us such good hope, and everlasting consolation! Lift up our minds above all these little things below, which are apt to distract our thoughts; and keep them above, till our hearts are fully bent to seek thee every day, in the way wherein JESUS hath gone before us, though it should be with the loss of all we here possess.

We are ashamed, O LORD, to think that ever we have disobeyed thee, who hast redeemed us by the precious blood of thine own Son. O that we may agree with thy will in all things for the time to come; and that all the powers of our souls and bodies may be wholly dedicated to thy service! We desire unfeignedly that all the thoughts and designs of our minds, all the affections and tempers of our hearts, and all the actions of our life, may be pure, holy, and unreprouable in thy sight.

“Search us, O LORD, and prove us; try our reins and our heart. Look well if there be any way of wickedness in us, and lead us in the way everlasting.” Let thy favour be better to us than life itself; that so in all things we may assure our hearts before thee, and feel the sense of thy acceptance of us, and that joy which the world cannot give.

Make it our delight to praise thee, to call to mind thy loving-kindness, and to offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving. Help us to “take heed to ourselves, lest at any time our hearts be overcharged with surfeiting or drunkenness, or the cares of this life; to have our conversation

without covetousness, and content with such things as we have. Enable us to possess our bodies in sanctification and honour; to love our neighbour as ourselves, and as we would that others should do to us, to do even so to them; to live peaceably, as much as lieth in us, with all men; to put on the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit; to take those who have spoken in the name of the LORD, for an example of suffering affliction and of patience; and when we suffer as Christians, not to be ashamed, but to glorify thee our God on this behalf."

And accept, good LORD, of all the praises of all thy people met together this day. O that "thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations;" and that all Christian Kings, especially, may be filled with thy HOLY SPIRIT, and be faithful subjects of the LORD JESUS, "the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords." O that "thy priests may be clothed with righteousness, and thy saints rejoice and sing;" and that all who are in distress may trust in thee, the "help of their countenance and their God." O LORD, hear us, and make thy face to shine upon thy servants, that we may "enter into thy gates with thanksgiving, and into thy courts with praise; that we may be thankful unto thee and bless thy name." Amen, for JESUS CHRIST's sake, in whose words we conclude our imperfect prayers, saying, "*Our Father,*" &c.

SUNDAY EVENING.

O thou "high and Holy ONE that inhabitest eternity," thou art to be feared and loved by all thy servants. All thy works praise thee, O GOD; and we especially give thanks unto thee, for thy marvellous love in CHRIST JESUS, by whom thou hast reconciled the world to thyself. Thou hast "given us exceeding great and precious promises." Thou hast sealed them with his blood; thou hast confirmed them by his resurrection and ascension, and by the coming of the HOLY GHOST. We thank thee that

thou hast given us so many happy opportunities of knowing "the truth as it is in Jesus," even "the mystery which was hid from ages and generations," but is now revealed to them that believe. Blessed be thy goodness for the assistance of thy HOLY SPIRIT. Blessed be thy goodness, that we have felt it so often in our hearts, inspiring us with holy thoughts, filling us with love, and joy, and comfortable expectations of "the glory that shall be revealed." We thank thee that thou hast suffered us this day to attend on thee in thy public service; and that we have begun, in any measure, that eternal "rest which remaineth for the people of God."

We offer up again our souls and bodies to thee, to be governed, not by our will, but by thine. O let it be ever the ease and joy of our hearts, to be under the conduct of thy unerring wisdom, to follow thy counsels, and to be ruled in all things by thy holy will. And let us never distrust thy abundant kindness and tender care over us; whatsoever it is that thou wouldst have us to do or to suffer in this world.

O God, purify our hearts, that we may entirely love thee, and rejoice in being beloved of thee; that we may confide in thee, and abundantly resign ourselves to thee, and be filled with constant devotion toward thee. O that we may never sink into a base love of any thing here below, nor be oppressed with the cares of this life; but assist us to abhor that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good. Let us "use this world as not abusing it." Give us true humility of spirit, that we may not "think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think." Keep us from being "wise in our own conceits." "Let our moderation be known to all men." Make us to be "kindly affectioned one to another;" to delight in doing good; to "shew all meekness to all men;" to "render to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour;" and to "owe no man any thing, but to love one another." Make us so happy, that we may be

able to “love our enemies, to bless those that curse us, to do good to them that hate us; to rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.” Compose our spirits to a quiet and steady dependance on thy good providence, that we may “take no thought for our life, nor be careful for any thing, but by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, still make known our requests to thee our God. And help us to “pray always and not faint; in every thing to give thanks, and offer up the sacrifice of praise continually; to rejoice in hope of thy glory; to possess our souls in patience; and to learn, in whatever state we are, therewith to be content.” Make us to know both how to be abased, and how to abound:” every where, and in all things, instruct us both to abound and to suffer want, being enabled to “do all things through Christ which strengtheneth us.”

O that the light of all Christians did so shine before men, that others might glorify thee our Father which art in heaven! Send forth thy light and thy truth into all the dark corners of the earth; that “all kings may fall down before thee, and all nations do thee service!” Bless these kingdoms, and give us grace at length to “bring forth fruits meet for repentance.” O Lord, save the King, and “establish his throne in righteousness.” Prosper the endeavours of all those who faithfully feed thy people, and increase the number of them. O that the seed which hath been sown this day may take deep root in all our hearts, that being “not forgetful hearers, but doers of the word, we may be blessed in our deed.” Help us in all the week following to “set a watch before our mouth, and keep the door of our lips.” And let not our heart incline to any evil thing, or to practice wicked works with men that work iniquity. But “as we have received how we ought to walk and to please thee, so may we abound more and more.”

Protect us, we beseech thee, and all our friends every where, this night, and awaken in the morning these good

thoughts in our hearts, that the words of our Saviour may abide in us, and we in him; who hath taught us when we pray to say, *Our Father, &c.*



MONDAY MORNING.

WE humble ourselves, O Lord of heaven and earth, before thy glorious majesty. We acknowledge thy eternal power, wisdom, goodness, and truth; and desire to render thee unfeigned thanks for all the benefits thou pourest upon us, but above all, for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord JESUS CHRIST.

We implore thy tender mercies in the forgiveness of all our sins, whereby we have offended either in thought, word, or deed. We desire to be truly sorry for all our mis-doings, and utterly to renounce whatsoever is contrary to thy will. We desire to devote our whole man, body, soul, and spirit, to thee. And as thou dost inspire us with these desires, so accompany them always with thy grace, that we may every day, with our whole hearts, give ourselves up to thy service.

We desire to be holy and undefiled, as our blessed Master was. And we trust thou wilt fulfil all the gracious promises which he hath made to us. Let them be dearer to us than thousands of gold and silver; let them be the comfort and joy of our hearts. We ask nothing, but that it may be unto thy servants according to thy word.

Thou hast mercifully kept us the last night; blessed be thy continued goodness. Receive us likewise into thy protection this day. Guide and assist us in all our thoughts, words, and actions. Make us willing to do and suffer what thou pleasest; waiting for the mercy of our Lord, CHRIST JESUS, unto eternal life.

Blessed be thy goodness, which hath not suffered us to

wander without instruction after foolish desires of our own hearts, but hath clearly shewn us where our happiness lies. O may we receive with all thankfulness those holy words, which teach us the blessedness of poverty of spirit, of mourning after thee, of meekness and gentleness, of hungering and thirsting after righteousness, of mercifulness and purity of heart, of doing good unto all, and of patient suffering for doing the will of our Lord CHRIST.

O may we always be in the number of those blessed souls! May we ever feel ourselves happy in having the kingdom of GOD within us, in the comforts of the Holy One, in being made the children of the Highest, and, above all, in seeing thee our GOD. Let us abound in thy love more and more, and in continual prayers and praises to thee, the Father of mercies and GOD of all consolation, in JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

And we desire, thou knowest, the good of all mankind, especially of all Christian people; that they may all walk worthy of the gospel, and live together in unity and Christian love. For which end we pray, that all Christian kings, princes, and governors, may be wise, pious, just, and merciful, endeavouring that all their subjects may lead peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty; and more particularly, that our sovereign, KING GEORGE, may be blessed with a religious, quiet, long, and prosperous reign, and that all in authority under him may seek, in their several stations, to right the oppressed, to comfort the afflicted, to provide for the poor and needy, and to relieve all those that are in any misery. Bless all those that watch over our souls; succeed their labours; and give us grace to follow their godly admonitions, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. The same blessings we crave for our friends, relations, and acquaintance, that we may all live in perfect love and peace, and rejoice together at the great day of the Lord JESUS; in whose holy words we sum up all our wants: *Our Father, &c.*

MONDAY EVENING.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, in whom we live, move, and have our being ; to whose tender compassions we owe our safety in the day past, together with all the comforts of this life, and the hopes of that which is to come : We praise thee, O LORD, we bow ourselves before thee, acknowledging that we have nothing but what we receive from thee. Unto thee do we give thanks, O God, who daily pourest thy benefits upon us.

Blessed be thy goodness for our health, for our food and raiment, for our peace and safety, for the love of our friends, for all blessings in this life, and for our desire to attain that life which is immortal. Blessed be thy love, that we feel in our hearts any motion towards thee. Behold, O LORD, we present ourselves before thee, to be inspired with such a vigorous sense of thy love, as may put us forward with greater earnestness, zeal, and diligence in all our duty. Renew in us, we beseech thee, a lively image of thee, in all righteousness, purity, mercy, faithfulness, and truth. O that JESUS, the hope of glory, may be formed in us, in all humility, meekness, and patience, and in an absolute surrender of our souls and bodies to thy holy will ; so that “ we may not live, but Christ may live in us ; ” and that every one of us may say, “ The life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. ”

Let the remembrance of his love, who made himself an offering for our sins, be ever dear and precious to us. Let it continually move us to offer up ourselves to thee, to do thy will, as our blessed Master did. May we place an entire confidence in thee, and still trust ourselves with thee, who hast not spared thine own Son, but freely given him up for us all. May we humbly accept of whatsoever thou sendest us, and in every thing give thanks. Surely thou wilt never leave us nor forsake us. O guide us safely

through all the changes of this life, in an unchangeable love to thee, and a lively sense of thy love to us, till we come to live with thee and enjoy thee for ever.

And now that we are going to lay ourselves down to sleep, take us into thy gracious protection, and settle our spirits in such quiet and delightful thoughts of the glory where our Lord JESUS lives, that we may desire to be dissolved and to go to him who died for us; so that whether we wake or sleep, we may live together with him.

To thy blessing we commend all mankind, high and low, rich and poor, that they may all faithfully serve thee, and contentedly enjoy whatsoever is needful for them. And especially we beseech thee, that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by thy governance, that thy church may joyfully serve thee in all godly quietness. We leave all we have with thee, especially our friends, and those who are dear unto us; desiring that when we are dead and gone, they may lift up their souls in this manner unto thee, and teach those that come after, to praise, love, and obey thee. And if we awake in the morning, may we praise thee again with joyful lips, and still offer ourselves a more acceptable sacrifice to thee, through JESUS CHRIST; in whose words we beseech thee to hear us, according to the full sense and meaning thereof; *Our Father, &c.*



TUESDAY MORNING.

O most great and mighty LORD, the possessor of heaven and earth, all the angels rejoice in blessing and praising thee, the Father of spirits; for "thou hast created all things, and in wisdom hast thou made them all," and hast spread thy tender mercies over all thy works. We desire thankfully to acknowledge thy bounty to us, among the

rest of thy creatures, and thy particular grace and favour to us, in JESUS CHRIST, our merciful Redeemer. O give us a deep sense of that love which gave him to die for us, that he might be "the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him."

And hast thou not said, that thou wilt give thy HOLY SPIRIT to them that ask it? O Father of mercies, let it be unto us according to thy word. Cherish whatever thou hast already given us, which is acceptable in thy sight. And since at the best we are unprofitable servants, and can do no more than it is our duty to do, enable us to do every thing thou hast commanded us, heartily, with good will, and true love to thy service.

O that we may ever approach thee with delight, and feel it the joy of our hearts to think of thee, to praise thee, to give thee thanks, and to offer ourselves with absolute resignation to thee. O that mercy may always please us, as it pleaseth thee; and that we may be strictly just and righteous, may cheerfully pass by injuries, freely deny ourselves whatever is not for thy glory, willingly submit to thy fatherly corrections, and perform the duties of our several relations with singleness of heart. Render us so mindful of the great love of our LORD, that we may be zealously concerned for his glory, and use our utmost diligence to promote his religion in the world; delighting to commemorate his death and passion, making a joyful sacrifice of our souls and bodies to him, and earnestly desiring that his kingdom may come over all the earth.

Fulfil, most merciful LORD, all our petitions; and as thou hast graciously protected us this night, so accompany us all this day with thy blessing, that we may please thee in body and soul, and be safe under thy defence, who art ever nigh unto all those that call upon thee.

And O that all men may be awakened to a lively and thankful sense of all thy benefits. Stir up especially the minds of all Christian people to follow the truth as it is in Jesus, and exercise themselves "to have a conscience

void of offence toward GOD and toward man." Bless these kingdoms, and endue our Sovereign with such excellent wisdom and holy zeal, that we may see many good days under his government. O that true religion, justice, mercy, brotherly-kindness, and all things else that are praise-worthy, may so flourish among us, that we may enjoy the blessings of peace and plenty, and that there may be no complaining in our streets.

We recommend to thee all our friends and neighbours, all the poor, the sick, and the afflicted; desiring those mercies for them which we should ask for ourselves, were we in their condition. O GOD, whose never-failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth, keep them and us, we beseech thee, from all hurtful things, and give us those things which are profitable for us, according to thine abundant mercy in our LORD JESUS; in whose words we conclude our supplications unto thee, saying, *Our Father, &c.*

TUESDAY EVENING.

Almighty and everlasting GOD, the sovereign Lord of all creatures in heaven and earth, we acknowledge that our being, and all the comforts of it, depend on thee, the fountain of all good. We have nothing but what is owing entirely to thy free and bounteous love, O most blessed Creator, and to the riches of thy grace, O most blessed Redeemer.

To thee, therefore, be given by us, and by all creatures whom thou hast made to know how great and good thou art, all honour and praise, all love and obedience, as long as we have any being. It is but meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O LORD, and devoutly resign both soul and body to thee, to be absolutely governed and ruled according to thy holy will.

We pray thee to increase every good desire which

we feel already in our hearts ; and let us always live as becomes thy creatures, as becomes the disciples of JESUS CHRIST. Incline us to be more and more in love with thy laws, till they are written upon our hearts. Stir up our wills to love them exceedingly, and to cleave unto them as our very life.

O that we may heartily surrender our wills to thine, and that we may unchangeably cleave unto it, with the greatest and most entire affection to all thy commands. O that there may abide for ever in us, such a strong and powerful sense of thy mighty love towards us in CHRIST JESUS, as may constrain us freely and willingly to please thee, in the constant exercise of righteousness and mercy, temperance and charity, meekness and patience, truth and fidelity ; together with such an humble, contented, and peaceable spirit, as may adorn the religion of our Lord and Master. Yea, let it ever be the joy of our hearts to be righteous as thou art righteous ; to be merciful as thou, our heavenly Father, art merciful ; to be holy, as thou who hast called us art holy, in all manner of conversation ; to be endued with thy divine wisdom ; and to resemble thee in faithfulness and truth. O that the example of our blessed Saviour may be always dear unto us, that we may cheerfully follow him in every holy temper, and in delight to do thy will, O GOD. Let these desires, which thou hast given us, never die or languish in our hearts, but be kept always alive, always in vigour and force, by the perpetual inspirations of the HOLY GHOST.

Accept likewise of our thanks for thy merciful preservation of us during this day. We are bold again to commit ourselves unto thee this night. Defend us from all the powers of darkness ; and raise up our spirits, together with our bodies, in the morning, to such a vigorous sense of thy continued goodness, as may provoke us, all the day long, to an unwearied diligence in well-doing.

And the same mercies that we beg for ourselves, we desire for the rest of mankind ; especially for those who

are called by the name of CHRIST. O that every one of these may do his duty with all fidelity; that kings may be tender-hearted, as the fathers of their countries, and all their subjects dutiful and obedient to them, as their children; that the pastors of thy church may feed their flocks with true wisdom and understanding, and all the people submit unto them, and follow their godly counsels; that the rich and mighty may have compassion on the poor and miserable, and all such distressed people bless the rich, and rejoice in the prosperity of those that are above them. Give to husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, the grace so to behave themselves in their several relations, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, and may receive of him a crown of glory; in whose holy name and words we continue to beseech thy grace and mercy towards us, and towards all thy people every where, saying, *Our Father, &c.*



WEDNESDAY MORNING.

O God, blessed for ever, we thank and praise thee for all thy benefits, for the comforts of this life, and for our hopes of everlasting salvation in the life to come. We desire to have a lively sense of thy love always possessing our hearts, such as may still constrain us to love thee, to obey thee, to trust in thee, to be content with the portion which thy love allots unto us, and to rejoice even in the midst of all the troubles of this life.

Thou "hast delivered up thine own Son for us all. How shalt thou not with him also freely give us all things?" We depend upon thee especially for the grace of thy HOLY SPIRIT. O that we may feel it perpetually bearing us up, by the strength of our most holy faith, above all

the temptations that may at any time assault us ; so that we may keep ourselves unspotted from the world, and may still cleave to thee in righteousness, in lowliness, in purity of heart, yea, in the whole mind that was in CHRIST.

Let thy mighty power enable us to do our duty towards thee, and towards all men, with care, and diligence, and zeal, and perseverance unto the end. Help us to be meek and gentle in our conversation, prudent and discreet in ordering our affairs, observant of thy fatherly providence in every thing that befalls us, thankful for thy benefits, patient under thy chastisements, and readily disposed for every good word and work. Preserve in us a constant remembrance of thy all-seeing eye, of thy inestimable love in JESUS CHRIST, whereof thou hast given us so many pledges, and of the great account we must give to him at the day of his appearing ; that so we may continue steadfast and unmoveable, and be abundant in the work of the LORD, knowing that our labour shall not be in vain in the LORD.

Deliver us, we beseech thee, from wordly cares and foolish desires, from vain hopes and causeless fears ; and so dispose our hearts, that death itself may not be dreadful to us, but that we may welcome it with a cheerful countenance, whenever and howsoever it shall approach.

O that our hearts may be so firmly established in grace, that nothing may affright us, or shake our constancy, but that we may rather choose to die than to dishonour him who died for us ! We resign ourselves to thy wisdom and goodness, who knowest what is best for us ; believing that thou “ wilt never suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, and wilt with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it.”

We commend unto thee all mankind ; especially thy church, and more particularly these kingdoms, that we may all believe in our Lord JESUS CHRIST, and be zealous of good works. Bless our Sovereign, his counsellors, his ministers, and all employed in public business, whether spiritual or civil, that whatsoever they do may be for thy

glory, and the public good. Be gracious to all that are near and dear to us, and keep us all in thy fear and love. Guide us, good LORD, and govern us by the same SPIRIT, that we may be so united to thee here, as not to be divided when thou art pleased to call us hence, but together enter into thy glory, to dwell with thee in love and joy that shall never die, through JESUS CHRIST our blessed Lord and Saviour, who hath taught us, when we pray, to say, *Our Father, &c.*

WEDNESDAY EVENING.

“O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all. The day is thine, the night also is thine; thou hast prepared the light and the sun.” We render thee thanks for all the benefits which thou hast bestowed on the whole world; and especially on us, whom thou hast called to the knowledge of thy grace in CHRIST JESUS. It is a marvellous love wherewith thou hast loved us. Thou hast not dealt so with all people: and as for thy great and precious promises, they have not known them.

Accept, O merciful Father, the good resolutions with which thou hast inspired us by thy SPIRIT. Strengthen them, we beseech thee, with thy continued grace, that no sudden desires, vehement inclinations, ineffectual purposes, nor even partial performances, may lead us into a false opinion of ourselves; but that we may bring forth actually, and with a constant spirit, all the fruits of righteousness which are by CHRIST JESUS.

Deny not, O LORD, the desires of those souls, who would offer up themselves entirely to thy service; but preserve us always in seriousness of spirit. Let the sense of our weakness make us watchful and diligent; let the sense of our former negligence excite us to be fervent in spirit; and may the goodness of thy commands render us fruitful and

abundant in the work of the LORD. O that all our pious affections may be turned into actions of piety and holiness: and may all our actions be so spirited with zeal, and all our zeal so regulated with prudence, and our prudence so void of all guile, and joined with perfect integrity of heart, that adorning our most holy faith here, by an upright, charitable, and discreet conversation, we may receive praise in the day of the LORD, and be numbered with thy saints in glory everlasting.

O lift up our affections to things above, that we may have perfect contentment in well-doing and patient suffering, and that the good hope we have of being eternally beloved by thee may make us rejoice evermore. Free us from the cares of the world, from all distrust of thy good providence, and from repining at any thing that befalls us; and enable us in every thing to give thanks, believing that all things are ordered wisely, and shall work together for good.

Into thy hands we commend both our souls and bodies, which thou hast mercifully preserved this day. We trust in thy watchful providence, who "givest thy angels charge over us," who "art about our beds, and about our paths, and spiest out all our thoughts." O continue these holy thoughts and desires in us till we fall asleep, that we may receive the light of the morning, if thou prolongest our lives, with a new joy in thee, and with thankful affection to thee.

We desire likewise, O God, the good of the whole world. Pity the follies of mankind; deliver them from their miseries; and forgive thou all their sins. Hear the groans of every part of the creation, that is yet "subject to bondage," and bring all "into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." Hear the daily prayers of the catholic church; free her from all foul and dividing errors; let the truth, as it is in Jesus, prevail, and "peace be in all her borders." O that all Christian governors may "seek peace and ensue it!" Make thy ministers the messengers of peace, and dispose all who

are called Christians to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Enlighten the minds of all Jews, Turks, and Infidels. Strengthen all thy faithful servants. Bring back them that wander out of the way; raise up those that are fallen; confirm those that stand, and grant them steadily to persevere in faith, love, and obedience. Relieve and comfort all that are in distress. Let the earth bring forth her fruit in due season; and let all honest and industrious people be blessed in their labours.

Remember all those who have done good unto us, and reward them seven-fold into their bosom. Grant forgiveness and charity to all our enemies; and continue goodwill amongst all our neighbours. Support the sick with faith and patience; assist those who are leaving this world; receive the souls which thou hast redeemed with thy Son's precious blood, and sanctified by the HOLY GHOST; and give us all a glorious resurrection and eternal life. *Our Father, &c.*



THURSDAY MORNING.

O LORD, the God of our salvation, "thou art the hope of all the ends of the earth." Upon thee the eyes of all do wait, for thou givest unto all life, and breath, and all things. Thou still watchest over us for good; thou daily renewest to us our lives and thy mercies; and thou hast given us the assurance of thy Word, that if we commit our affairs to thee, if we acknowledge thee in all our ways, thou wilt direct our paths. We desire, O LORD, to be still under thy gracious conduct and fatherly protection. We beg the guidance and help of thy good SPIRIT, to choose our inheritance for us, and to dispose of us, and all that concerns us, to the glory of thy name.

O LORD, withdraw not thy tender mercies from us, nor

the comforts of thy presence! Never punish our past sins, by giving us over to the power of our sins; but pardon all our sins, and save us from all our iniquities. And grant us, O good God, the continual sense of thy gracious acceptance of us in the Son of thy love, that our souls may bless thee, and "all that is within us praise thy holy name."

And O that we may find the joy of the LORD to be our strength, to defend us from all our sins, and to make us more zealous of every good work: that herein we may "exercise ourselves to have a conscience void of offence towards God and towards men." O help "us to walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise," carefully redeeming the time," and improving all those seasons and means of grace which thou art pleased to put into our hands. Sanctify to us all our employments in the world, our crosses, our comforts, all the estates we go through, and all the events that befall us, till, through the merits of thy Son, and the multitude of thy mercies, we are conducted in safety to be "ever with the LORD."

Thou "hast laid help for us upon one that is mighty;" one who is "able to save unto the uttermost all those who come unto God through him." Through him thou hast encouraged us to come boldly, that we "may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Help us, we beseech thee, to demean ourselves as becomes the children of God, the redeemed of the LORD, the members of CHRIST. Put thy SPIRIT within us, causing us to walk in thy statutes, to keep thy judgments, and to do them. Yea, let it be our meat and drink to do thy will, and to run the way of thy commandments.

O gracious Father, keep us, we pray thee, this day, in thy fear and favour; and teach us, in all our thoughts, words, and works, to live to thy glory. If thou guide us not, we go astray; if thou uphold us not, we fall. O let thy good providence be our defence, and thy good SPIRIT our guide, and counsellor, and supporter in all our ways. And grant that we may do always what is acceptable in

thy sight, through JESUS CHRIST our Lord; in whose holy name and words we close these our imperfect prayers :
Our Father, &c.

Let thy grace, O LORD JESUS, thy love, O heavenly FATHER, and thy comfortable fellowship, O blessed SPIRIT, be with us, and with all that desire our prayers, this day and for evermore.

THURSDAY EVENING.

O LORD our God, thy glory is above all our thoughts, and thy mercy is over all thy works. We are still living monuments of thy mercy; for thou hast not cut us off in our sins, but still givest us a good hope, and strong consolation through grace. Thou hast sent thy only Son into the world, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish in his sins, but have everlasting life. O LORD, we believe, help our unbelief; and give us the true “repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord JESUS CHRIST,” that we may be in the number of those who do indeed repent and “believe to the saving of the soul. Being justified by faith,” let us “have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ;” let us “rejoice in him, through whom we have now redemption in his blood;” and let “the love of God be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us.”

And as we pray that thou wilt be to us a Father of mercies, and a God of consolation, so we beg that thou wilt make us “followers of God, as dear children,” ever jealous over our hearts, and watchful over our ways, continually fearing to offend, and endeavouring to please thee. Thou knowest, O LORD, all our temptations, and the sin that doth so easily beset us. Thou knowest the devices of the enemy, and the deceitfulness of our own hearts. We pray thee, good LORD, that thou wilt arm us with the whole armour of God. Uphold us with thy free SPIRIT, and watch over us for good evermore.

Let our supplications also ascend before thee for the whole race of mankind. Send thy Word unto all the ends of the earth, and let it be the savour of life unto all that hear it. Be gracious to this our native land. O do thou rule all our rulers, counsel all our counsellors, teach all our teachers, and order all public affairs to thy glory. Turn from us the judgments which we feel or fear; continue thy blessings to our souls and bodies; and notwithstanding all our provocations, be thou still our God, and let us be thy people. Have compassion on all the children of affliction, and sanctify thy fatherly corrections to them. Be gracious to all our friends and neighbours. Reward our benefactors. Bless our relations with the best of thy blessings, with thy fear and love. Preserve us from our enemies, and reconcile them both to us and to thyself. O that all the habitations of Christians may be houses of prayer! And be thou especially kind to the several families where thy blessed name is called upon. Let thy blessing rest upon us of this family. Bless all our present estates to us; and fit us all for whatsoever thou shalt be pleased to call us to. O teach us "how to want and how to abound." In every condition secure our hearts to thyself; and make us ever to approve ourselves sincere and faithful in thy service.

And now, O Father of Mercies, be pleased to accept our evening sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. O that thou wouldst imprint and preserve upon our hearts a lively sense of all thy kindness to us; that our souls may bless thee, and all that is within us praise thy holy name. Yea, let us give thee thanks from the ground of the heart, and praise our God while we have our being. For all thy patience with us, thy care over us, and thy continual mercy to us, blessed be thy name, O LORD GOD, our heavenly Father! And unto thee, with the SON of thy love, and the SPIRIT of grace, be all thanks and praise, now and for evermore.

FRIDAY MORNING.

O LORD GOD, “merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth;” thou “keepest mercy for thousands; thou pardonest iniquity, and transgression, and sin. How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! The children of men shall put their trust under the shadow of thy wings!” And therefore do we still look up to that bountiful hand from whence we have received all our good things. O LORD our GOD, be favourable unto us, as thou usest to be unto those that love thy name! O look not upon the sin of our nature, nor upon the sins of our hearts and lives, which are more than we can remember, and greater than we can express. It is of the LORD’s mercies that we are not consumed, because thy compassions fail not. But thou lookest upon the face of thine Anointed, who was manifested to take away our sins, and by whom it is that we have access unto the Majesty on high.

O GOD, be merciful to us miserable sinners, for his sake whom “thou hast exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance” unto thy people, “and forgiveness of sins.” Be merciful, O GOD, be merciful unto our souls, which have greatly sinned against thee. O heal our backslidings; renew us to repentance; confirm our hearts in thy fear and love; and establish our goings in thy way, that our footsteps slip not. Let us waver no more; let us never more be weary or faint in our minds. Let us not revolt from thee, or turn to folly again, after thou hast spoken peace to our souls; but may we go on, conquering all the enemies of our souls, and all the hindrances of our salvation, till thou hast bruised Satan under our feet.

Seeing there is in CHRIST JESUS an infinite fulness of all that we can want or wish, O that we may all receive of his fulness grace upon grace;—grace to pardon our sins, and to subdue our iniquities; to justify our persons, to

sanctify our souls, and to complete that holy change, that renewal of our hearts, whereby we may be transformed into that blessed image wherein thou didst create us. O make us all meet to be partakers of the inheritance of thy saints in light.

And teach us, O GOD, to use this world without abusing it, and to receive the things needful for the body, without losing our part in thy love, which is better than life itself. Whatever we have of this world, O may we have the same with thy leave and love, sanctified to us by the Word of GOD and by prayer, and by the right improvement thereof to thy glory. And whatever we want of worldly things, leave us not destitute of the "things that accompany salvation," but adorn our souls with all such graces of thy HOLY SPIRIT, that we may adorn the doctrine of GOD our Saviour in all things.

And now that thou hast renewed our lives and thy mercies to us this morning, help us to renew our desires and resolutions and endeavours to live in obedience to thy holy will. O restrain us from the sins into which we are most prone to fall, and quicken us to the duties we are most averse to perform. And grant that we may think, and speak, and will, and do, the things becoming the children of our heavenly Father; and so find the strong consolation of thy gracious acceptance in JESUS CHRIST our Saviour, who, when we pray, hath taught us to say, *Our Father*, &c.

FRIDAY EVENING.

O LORD, thou wast before all, thou art above all, and thy years shall not fail. Thou art the Searcher of our hearts. Thou knowest the dulness and hardness, the vanity and deceitfulness of them. We were born sinners, and so have we lived. We have added sin to sin. We have abused thy great and manifold mercies, tempted thy patience, and despised thy goodness; and justly mightest

thou have cast us into outer darkness, where is wailing and gnashing of teeth.

But of thy loving-kindnesses there is no number. Thou still callest us to return to thee; and “whosoever cometh to thee, thou wilt in no wise cast out.” O meet us with thy heavenly grace, that we may be able to come to thee. Be thou graciously pleased to stretch forth thy hand, and loose the chains wherewith our souls are entangled. O free us from every weight of sin, from every yoke of bondage. O help us to feel, and bewail, and forsake, all our sins; and let us never want the comfortable assurance of thy forgiveness of them, thy acceptance of us, and thy love to us, in the blessed Son of thy eternal love.

Thou art never weary, O LORD, of doing us good. Let us never be weary of doing thee service; but as thou hast pleasure in the prosperity of thy servants, so let us take pleasure in the service of our Lord, and abound in thy work, and in thy love and praise, evermore. O fill up all that is wanting; reform whatever is amiss in us; and perfect the thing that concerneth us. Let the witness of thy pardoning love ever abide in all our hearts. O speak into every one of our souls the peace which passeth all understanding; and let us always look upon thee as our Father, reconciled to us in JESUS CHRIST.

In his great name we cry unto thee in the behalf of the whole race of mankind. O that all the ends of the earth may see the salvation of our GOD. Continue thy mercies to this sinful land; teach us at length to know thy will concerning us; and oh! turn thou all our hearts unto thee, as the heart of one man. Bless the King: O Lord, prolong his days, and prosper his government; make him always a “terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well.” And grant unto all magistrates, and ministers of thy word, a continual supply of all the needful gifts and graces of thy HOLY SPIRIT. Be thou a father to the fatherless, a husband to the widow, a refuge to the oppressed, a physician to the sick, a helper of the

friendless, a GOD of consolation to the sorrowful and distressed. Bless to us whatsoever thou art pleased to allot to us, and every thing that befalls us. Make all work for our good, to build us up in thy grace, and to help us on to thy glory.

Continue thy fatherly care over us this night. O preserve and defend, and bless and keep us, that no evil may befall us, nor any plague come nigh our dwelling. Give us comfortable sleep to strengthen us for thy service. And whenever thou callest us to the sleep of death, let us cheerfully resign our spirits into thy hands, through the riches of thy grace, and the worthiness of thy Son, in whose merits and mediation alone we put our trust. And for all that he hath done and suffered for us, to thy name, O blessed GOD of our salvation, be the praise and honour and glory given, by us and all thy people, now and for evermore. *Our Father, &c.*



SATURDAY MORNING.

We present ourselves before thee, O LORD our GOD, to pay our tribute of prayer and thanksgiving; desiring thee mercifully to accept us and our services, at the hands of JESUS CHRIST. In his great name we come to beg thy pardon and peace, the increase of thy grace, and the tokens of thy love; for we are not worthy of the least of thy mercies. But worthy is the Lamb that was slain to take away the sin of the world, for whose sake thou wilt give us all things. For he hath fulfilled those holy laws which we had broken, and perfectly satisfied for our offences. And in him thou art a GOD gracious and merciful to those who deserve nothing but punishment.

O merciful Father, regard not what we have done

against thee, but what our blessed Saviour hath done for us. Regard not what we have made ourselves; but what he is made unto us of thee, our GOD. O that CHRIST may be to every one of our souls, “wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption;” that his precious blood may cleanse us from all our sins; and that thy HOLY SPIRIT may renew and sanctify our souls. May he crucify our flesh with its affections and lusts, and mortify all our members which are upon earth. O let not “sin reign in our mortal bodies, that we should obey it in the lusts thereof;” but “being made free from sin, let us be the servants of righteousness.” Let us approve our hearts to thee, and let all our ways be pleasing in thy sight.

O teach us to know thee, our GOD, and JESUS CHRIST whom thou hast sent; and enable us to do thy will on earth, as it is done in heaven. Give us to fear thee and to love thee, to trust and delight in thee, and to cleave to thee with full purpose of heart; so that no temptations may draw us or drive us from thee, but that all thy dispensations to us, and thy dealings with us, may be the messengers of thy love to our souls. Quicken us, O LORD, in our dulness, that we may not serve thee in a lifeless and listless manner, but may abound in thy work, and be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. And make us faithful in our intercourse with our neighbour, that we may be ready to do good, and to bear evil; that we may be just and kind, merciful and meek, peaceable and patient, sober and temperate, humble and self-denying, inoffensive and useful in the world; and that so glorifying thee here, we may be glorified with thee in thy heavenly kingdom.

Day by day we magnify thee, O LORD, who makest every day an addition to thy mercies. We bless thee for preserving us during the night past, and for the rest thou gavest us therein. O cause us to hear thy loving-kindness in the morning, for in thee do we trust. Cause us to know the way whercin we shall go, for we lift our souls unto

thee. O take not thy HOLY SPIRIT from us ; but direct all our ways to please thee, our GOD. Help us to see thy power, to own thy presence, to admire thy wisdom, and to love thy goodness, in all thy creatures ; and by all, draw our hearts still nearer to thee. This thy mercy and grace we beg for ourselves, and for all ours and thine every where, in our great Mediator's blessed words, *Our Father, &c.*

SATURDAY EVENING.

O LORD, our GOD, thou art infinitely good, and thou hast shewed us what is good. Thou sendest out thy light and thy truth, that they may guide us, and makest plain thy way before our face. Thou givest us many opportunities and advantages, to quicken and further us in thy service. We have "line upon line, and precept upon precept;" thy messengers early and late, to open and apply thy word, to call and warn, to direct and exhort us with all long-suffering. But how little have we improved all the precious talents, which thou hast put into our hands! O LORD, thou mightest justly take away the gospel of thy kingdom from us, and give it unto another people, who would bring forth the fruits thereof. Because thou hast called, and we refused, thou hast stretched forth thy hands, and we have not regarded, thou mightest leave us to our own perverseness and impenitence, till our iniquities became our ruin.

But, O LORD GOD, enter not thus into judgment with thy servants. Pardon all our contempt of thy word, and our not profiting thereby. And help us for the time to come, better to improve the blessed opportunities set before us. "As the rain descends from heaven, and returns not thither, but waters the earth, and makes it fruitful ; so let not thy word return unto thee void, but prosper in the work whereunto thou sendest it." O make it effectual to build us all up in the true fear and love of

GOD, and in the right knowledge and faith of our Lord **JESUS CHRIST**.

O gracious **GOD**, may thy **SPIRIT** cause thy word to work thoroughly and successfully in all our hearts. And as we daily receive, how we ought to walk and to please thee our God, so help us to “walk worthy of the Lord, unto all well-pleasing ;” increasing in the knowledge and love of thee, and abounding more and more in every good work which is pleasing in thy sight, through **JESUS CHRIST**.

At his hands, O **LORD** our **GOD**, we beg thy gracious acceptance of our humble praise and thanksgiving for all thy blessings, spiritual and temporal, so freely conferred upon us. We praise thee for all the comforts and conveniences of this life, and for all the means and hopes of a better ; particularly, for what we have received this day, the food of our souls set before us, the word of salvation sounding in our ears, and the **SPIRIT** of **GOD** striving with our hearts. O withdraw not thy tender mercies from us, but still continue thy accustomed goodness, increase thy grace and heavenly blessings upon us, and rejoice over us to do us good.

In mercy pass by all which thy most pure and holy eyes have seen amiss in us this day. Forgive the iniquities of our holy things. Overlook all our sins and failings, through our great Mediator and Redeemer, who ever lives at thy right hand to make intercession for us. And for **JESUS CHRIST**, and all which thou art pleased to give us together with him, not unto us, O **LORD**, but unto thy name, be all the praise and honour and glory humbly ascribed, by us and all thy church, now and for evermore.
Our Father, &c.

DIRECTIONS

FOR

MARRIED PERSONS:

DESCRIBING

**THE DUTIES COMMON TO BOTH, AND PECULIAR
TO EACH OF THEM.**



BY WILLIAM WHATELEY.

TO

THE READER.

THE following Tract did not come into my hands soon enough to be inserted in its proper place, namely, between BISHOP HALL's and MR. BOLTON's works, with whom the author of it was cotemporary. But it can never be unseasonable nor unacceptable, to those who love plain, sound, practical religion. I have seen nothing on the subject in any either ancient or modern tongue, which is in any degree comparable to it ;—it is so full, so deep, so closely, so strongly written, and yet with the most exquisite decency, even where the author touches on points of the most delicate nature that are to be found within the whole compass of divinity. I cannot therefore but earnestly recommend it to the most serious and attentive consideration of all those married persons, who desire to have a conscience void of offence, and to adorn the gospel of GOD our SAVIOUR.

JOHN WESLEY.

London, Jan. 6, 1753.

THE
AUTHOR'S ADDRESS
TO THE
CHRISTIAN READER.



CHRISTIAN READER,

MARRIAGE hath scarcely more that use it than that accuse it. Most men enter into this estate, and being entered, complain thereof. 'They should rather complain of themselves. It is an unjust thing, and a fruit of ignorant pride, to cast the blame of our grievances upon God's ordinances. I had been happy, saith one, had I not been married. Then wast thou foolish both before and since thy marriage. Use it well, and it shall add to thine happiness. We make bitter sauce, and cry out that the meat is bitter. Thou livest in matrimony, not after God's direction, but the rules (crooked rules they be,) of thine own lusts, and thou sayest, Oh that I had never married! Oh that I were unmarried! For shame keep silence! thy crying shows thy disease. Thou art indeed married to an ill companion, (thy wicked flesh, that old husband,) and art pestered with its brood, and neither seekest a divorce from this tyrant, nor endeavourest to

crucify the wicked offspring thereof. Hence are thy woes; not thy husband, not thy wife, but thy pride, thy passion, cause all this annoyance, all this discontentment.

I labour, in this little treatise, to plead the cause of marriage; not so much in speech as in deed, by directing the married to the knowledge and practice of their duties, which would mend all. These, whatsoever man or woman endeavour to follow, if they prove not marriage a solace to their souls, and a refreshing to their other griefs, let me never but grieve.

These things I commend to thine understanding, to thy life. Use them, and then say how thou speedest. I intended them at first for a few, and now communicate them to many. It is no uncharitable (I am sure,) I hope, no unprofitable deed. I desire that thou shouldst make some use of them, therefore I make them public: if not, be ignorant, and complain still. I mean them not for the learned, that can find out better directions for themselves; but for those whose place is not too good to learn of the meanest teacher, even for men of the same rank, as they for the most part were, to whom I spake them. If this work profit, I am glad; then I know it shall please. However, thou hast it, Reader, and better shouldst have had, if my store afforded any better. So I commend thee to the LORD.

Thine in the LORD,

W. W.

DIRECTIONS

FOR

MARRIED PERSONS.

CHAP. I.

*Shewing the first Principal Duty of the Married, viz.
Chastity.*

I MUST rank these duties under their several heads, for the better help of mine own and your memories. They are all of two sorts ; some principal, and some less principal. The principal I term those which are of the very essence of matrimony ; the less principal, those which are necessary to its well-being. The breach of the former dissolveth the bond, the breach of the latter only disturbs the society ; if those be violated, the obligation is void ; if those be observed, (notwithstanding other imperfections,) the bond remaineth entire, though not without a world of unhappiness. These main duties are only two, Chastity, and due Benevolence ; the restraining of themselves from all other persons, and the communicating themselves each to the other.

For the first of these two : The covenant that passeth between yoke-fellows doth make it utterly unlawful for them upon any occasion, or at any time, (whilst the cove-

nant remaineth in force,) to give their bodies to any other. This duty of chastity is so manifest, that no man can pretend ignorance of it. The law of God, the law of nature, the laws of all well-ordered societies, do enjoin it. It is written in every man's breast, and none can help reading it in his own conscience, if long continuance in wilful sinning have not put his eyes quite out. The violation of it doth so far untie the knot of marriage, and annihilate the covenant first made, that the party wronged may be freed from the law of his or her husband or wife, and left at his or her own choice, whether he or she will accept again of such a perfidious yoke-fellow. For our Saviour himself, who utterly disalloweth other divorces, doth yet allow divorce in case of adultery. But if it be demanded, whether the party wronged may lawfully admit the wrongdoer again, after the offence known? I answer, that in case the offender (having been overtaken through temptation, or perhaps having presumptuously offended,) shall, by apparent signs, make known a true design of amendment, and purpose of reformation, then it is very convenient, that this offence also be pardoned by the yoke-fellow. For the greatest love should bury the greatest wrongs, so far as God forbiddeth not to bury them; and we read not of any commandment, enjoining the wronged person to make a final separation. But if such delinquents persist in their transgression, and declare themselves to be persons irreformable, then the parties wronged are bound in conscience, if they can convict it, both to complain of the sin, and to withdraw from the sinner.

That married persons ought to live chastely in marriage, all will yield; only some may perhaps plead weakness, and say, that they would, but are not able. To such I say, if indeed they be willing, it shall not be hard to get power. No directions can reform the wilful sinner; but to him that desireth not to sin, a way may be shewed of attaining his desire; and chastity may be gotten, if men will carefully labour for it. And for an introduction unto those directions which we have to give in this point, let

this one thing be observed, that there are some men and women that bring their bodies undefiled unto marriage. To these it will prove more easy to remain pure in it. Others have polluted themselves before their entrance into this estate ; and these shall find, that marriage will more hardly make them honest : for marriage is like salt, that will preserve sweet meat from tainting, but cannot restore tainted meat to its former sweetness. Wherefore those that have been stained with uncleanness before, must heartily bewail before God their former lewd behaviour ; else marriage will never prevail to contain their desires within compass.

But now to the matter we were about to speak of : A man that hath either come clean unto marriage, or else unfeignedly repented of his former uncleanness, shall be strengthened against adultery, by the practice of these things following : *First*, a constant and conscientious care in performing PRIVATE RELIGIOUS EXERCISES (viz. reading, praying, meditating, and the like) will so purify the heart, that by means of them, a Christian man shall become conqueror over those sins, which seem most unconquerable whilst a man is negligent in them, or omits them altogether. Prayer and meditation will breed wisdom ; and wisdom, entering into the soul, will preserve a man from the stranger that flatters with her lips. The word of God, digested by prayer and meditation, will be as a sword in the hand of a valiant man, to cut off the neck of these lusts, as fast as they make head against the soul. Especially, a man given to this sin must often read and think of those portions of Scripture, that condemn, disgrace, and threaten it, and must often and seriously muse of the danger of it, and make his peculiar petitions to God for power against it ; and thus arming himself most strongly, where he finds himself soonest wounded, he shall be sure to escape these wounds.

Secondly, Painfulness in one's calling must divert the mind from all inflaming fancies, and find both the soul and body so much employment, in things of a lawful and

useful nature, that there may be no leisure for such unlawful conceits. It is certain, an idle person, if occasion and his bodily constitution serve, will at last prove adulterous ; but the diligent hand, joined with hearty prayer to GOD, will preserve a man pure and undefiled. Wherefore let every man, that longeth to be free from this offence, shun idleness, and embrace business. Let him choose a calling wherein to walk, and give diligent attendance upon his calling ; let his hand or head, or both, be still set at work in something that belongs to his vocation ; and when his calling (I mean his particular calling) ceaseth to require or need his presence, let the works of his general calling (especially those acts of religion formerly mentioned) take up his mind and thoughts, so shall he be sure to save himself from the danger of this wickedness.

Thirdly, Temperance in diet must be called in to the aid of chastity. It is easy to put out the fire by withdrawing fuel, or at least to keep the flame within the chimney. When the blood and spirits are inflamed with meat and drink, not only the body is apter to entertain the impressions of desire, but the soul also is unable to consider any good thing that should repel such motions. But a body kept from fulness yields itself to the soul with more ease. Let him, therefore, be duly sparing in his food, that desireth to be chaste in his marriage.

Fourthly, he that would be free from adultery must shun the corner of the harlot's house, and not come near the place (if he can choose) where such an one dwelleth, as might cause him to offend. He must resolutely debar himself of the society of such, and keep himself from places, times, and companies that may solicit ; and to that end he must resist by prayer the first motions of this wickedness. When SOLOMON had said, that he is void of understanding that commits adultery, he adds further, " he shall not be innocent that toucheth her." Dalliance will breed whoredom unavoidably ; and unseasonable company and place will almost enforce to dalliance.

Wherefore a man must preserve his innocency from the gross act of evil, by shunning all manner of dallying ; and that he may keep himself from touching her, he must flee from her, and be far away from the pit-side that might devour him. Shun, therefore, with all diligence, all opportunities of this wickedness ; especially shun (as a rock) the company of a person apt to tempt, or to be tempted ; and consider, that even cold water will become hot, if it be set too near the fire. And these directions are such, as agree to all equally, married and unmarried.

There remaineth another help, peculiar to married persons ; and that is, the due and lawful enjoyment of marriage. The ordinances of God fail not to effect the things for which he appointed them, if our abuse of them do not hinder their efficacy. Now God hath ordained matrimony to prevent whoredom. Wherefore let marriage be used as it ought, and the married shall not miss of this effect thereof.—Of Chastity, one chief duty of the married, so much. Let us go forward to the second, which is due Benevolence ; entreating you to take notice, that what shall be there spoken, will be exceeding helpful to this first duty also. We must teach you the lawful fruition of marriage, that you may attain to purity, one special end of marriage.

CHAP. II.

Treating of the second Principal Duty of the Married, due Benevolence.

THE married are bound in conscience to afford to each other a mutual enjoyment of each other, according as either of their needs shall require. The Scripture is as plain this way as may be : “ Let the man give unto the wife due benevolence, and also the wife unto the husband.” The word signifieth *indebted benevolence*. It is a debt, you hear, and all debts must be paid when they be

required. "Those whom God hath joined (saith our Saviour,) let no man put asunder." And again, "Man shall cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh." And again the Apostle, "Let them not defraud each other." And yet again, "The wife hath not power over her own body, but the husband; neither hath the husband power over his own body, but the wife." It is not left in the power of either of them, whether or not they will live each with the other; but they are bound in conscience to do it, and cannot without grievous sin deny it. Marriage is frustrated, if this duty be not performed; and the ordinance of God is made void, unless those that live in it carry themselves according to his appointment this way. I deny not but that there may be a time of separation for some good space together, either for the public service of the country, or for needful private affairs, so that it be with consent, and upon good grounds: but it is not lawful for a man or a woman to leave each other, totally or finally, with a mind of not returning again to the former society.

But let us consider a little, what rules they must follow in this their society. Four things must be regarded about it, viz. that it be sanctified, seasonable, temperate, and willing.

First and chiefly, the society of the married must be sanctified; that is, made holy and lawful unto them by the word of God and prayer. They must be both informed by the Scriptures of the lawfulness of that their conjunction. For God hath said, "Let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband." And again, "Marriage is honourable amongst all men, and the bed undefiled." So that there wanteth not sufficient warrant, in most express words, to authorise the conscience of any man to take to himself the benefit of this ordinance. And besides this due information of the lawfulness of marriage, it is requisite that they solemnly crave the good leave of God for the enjoyment of this his ordinance, and also his special blessing

upon it, not forgetting to return him particular thanks for his infinite goodness, in providing this necessary means of man's increase and comfort. This point is not to be denied of any, that will not deny the authority of St. PAUL; for he doth expressly affirm, that marriage, as well as meat and drink, is sanctified by prayer and thanksgiving. As therefore it were a brutish profaneness, for any man to sit down to his table, as a horse to the manger, and cram himself with viands, without craving the blessing of GOD first, and to return again thence, as a fox from his prey, without returning any praise to the hand that gave him food and appetite; so it is likewise a great licentiousness for married people, as it were brute beasts, carried forward with the tide of their unruly appetites, to come together in marriage, forgetting or neglecting to receive the LORD's blessing, and to give him due praises for that his necessary and beneficial ordinance. Doth not every man's private welfare, and the public also, for the most part, depend upon the success of this society? The hope of posterity, the stay of old age, the comfort of weakness, the support of every man's house, together with the flourishing estate of every church and commonwealth, doth hang upon the fruit of matrimony. For if GOD send barrenness, or give either monstrous or wicked children, how great is the discontent in the former case, the vexation and torment in the latter? And if many families (as it were seminaries) be either empty of plants altogether, or pestered with ill plants, how shall the orchards of the church and commonwealth be stored with good and wholesome trees? How then can any man esteem it more than is needful to crave GOD's blessing in a thing wherein it so nearly concerneth him to attain it? Surely we should but provoke his curse against us, when we either forget it as needless, or contemn it as ridiculous, to make our petitions unto him for his blessing on his own institution. Yea, whereas marriage is instituted in part for the subduing of inordinate desires, it cannot be available for that purpose, unless the LORD give it that

efficacy ; and how can we expect that he should give it, if we scorn to beg it, or to be thankful for it ? Yea, certainly, the men that use marriage in a brutish manner, not seeing God in it, nor sanctifying it by these means unto themselves, shall become thereby more licentious than ever they were before marriage : for what would be profitable to the soul in the holy and orderly use of it, in the abuse will ever prove as hurtful. Wherefore let no man scoff at a duty plainly commanded by God ; but know, that thou hast no reason to expect any blessing from God, unless thou prayest to God for it, and returnest to him the tribute of thanks for that which so nearly toucheth thee, as the hope of posterity, and him, as the increase of his kingdom. And if you will be Christians, be so in good earnest, and use all things in a christian and sanctified manner, and learn to know the force and fruit of prayer even in all things. And so much for the first rule of due benevolence,—it must be sanctified ; without which, the chief ends thereof will either not be obtained at all, or not with comfort.

It must further be temperate, I mean sparing. Men and women are reasonable creatures, and therefore must remember, that God hath ordained matrimony, not for pleasure's sake chiefly, but for the increase of mankind ; and not to kindle such desires, but to quench them. We must, I confess, take great heed of laying snares upon men's consciences in matters of this nature ; and must be very careful not to bind them, where God himself hath not bound them. Now the Scriptures do not set to men any particular limits in this matter, but only, in general, commend unto us sobriety and moderation, and acquaint us with the true ends of matrimony. And this is a certain and universal rule, that the quantity of every thing must, as near as we can, be fitted to the end. Health, and strength, and comfort, are the ends of food ; therefore so much must be eaten, and no more, as will serve to the procuring of health, and strength, and comfort. The same rule must be applied to matrimony. The mar-

ried must not provoke desires for pleasure's sake, but allay desires when they provoke themselves. They must not strive by words and gestures to inflame their passions, when they are cool. But when such passions are of themselves moved, then must they take the benefit of their estate to assuage them, that they may not be troublesome to them in the duties of religion and of their callings. In a word, marriage must be used as seldom and sparingly as may stand with the need of the persons married; for excess in this way doth weaken the body, and shorten life; but a sparing enjoyment would preserve the body from divers diseases in some constitutions. Excess inflameth passion, and disposeth the persons so offending to adultery: moderation kills passion, and is a great furtherance to purity. Excess breeds satiety, and makes them weary of each other, and desirous of strangers: moderation endeareth them each to the other, and breeds contentment in themselves. Excess disables them, without much unquietness, to endure separation, upon just causes: moderation makes it easy to abstain, when need requireth. To conclude, excess hinders fruitfulness; but moderation is an help to it. Wherefore the former general rule must be carefully observed, and the married must no oftener come together, than for the extinguishing of this passion engrafted in the body, when it would otherwise become troublesome to them. If imagination and corruption provoke desires, the body not needing nor enforcing them, not marriage, but prayer and humiliation must heal this disease; but when the motions arise from the bodily temper or fulness, the marriage-bed was ordained for a remedy. Here, therefore, is great need of Christian prudence, that they who strive for the mastery may be temperate in all things, and that although all things are lawful to them, yet they may not be brought under the power of any. But to satisfy the natural desires, when, though unprovoked, they tend to unruliness, this is a duty betwixt yoke-fellows, and this is the temperate enjoyment of God's ordinance, as it is for a man to

drink, when labour or other occasion hath made him thirsty. Now the sanctified use of marriage will also procure it to be temperate; but they seldom fail to exceed their bounds, who regard not to make their society holy by prayer and thanksgivings.

But this society must have a third rule; it must be seasonable, that is, with a due distinguishing of the times of separation from the times allowed for that purpose; then must they not take the same liberty as at other times; they are for that season debarred from their mutual benevolence in this kind. There are seasons when GOD and nature separate the man and wife in this respect. Now in any of these times it is forbidden to the husband to converse with his wife. This is plain in the law, *Lev. xv. 19, 25*; also in *chap. xviii. 19*, and *chap. xx. 18*; of all which places married people should take due notice. This is one of the sins condemned by the prophet EZEKIEL, *chap. xxii. 18*. It is also one of those faults for which the Canaanites did suffer their fearful destruction. And the LORD, in making this constitution, doth seem to have aimed at the good of posterity chiefly: for if it should fall out, that upon such unseasonable conversation any issue should follow, the child must needs inherit numerous diseases.

But a fourth direction must be given to the married in this point; cheerfulness and willingness must ever accompany their meetings; neither must they deny themselves each to the other at convenient times, nor yet yield themselves with grudging and frowardness, but readily, and with all demonstrations of hearty affection. The Scripture testifieth so much plainly, when it entitleth this duty by the name of good-will, and good-will that is owing. Now no man can call that good-will which is churlishly and discontentedly granted; and it is doubtless a part of great injustice to pay debts with grudgings and delays. This would alienate the heart of the yoke-fellow, and work in him or her a suspicion of estrangement of affection in the other party.

CHAP. III.

Of the Love of Married People.

THERE are also, besides these, certain other duties of an inferior nature, which serve to make the lives of married people comfortable ; and which, though they be not so essential to marriage as the former, are yet of so necessary observation, that without them matrimony shall be nothing else but the mother of unseasonable repentance. These are likewise of two sorts, some common to both, some proper to each of them. The common are also of two kinds, some in regard of themselves, some in regard of their families. Now the covenant of matrimony doth bind those that enter upon it unto all these duties as well as to the former, but not under the same forfeiture. Failing in them doth break God's commandment very much, but it doth not break the bond of matrimony. It forfeiteth their mutual peace, comfort, and happiness ; but it doth not forfeit their mutual right and power over each other's bodies. Indeed such is the impenitency of man's nature, that soon will he conceit to himself a liberty where God gives him none at all. Most men and women are apt to think, that they have due cause not to endure the burden of living with such yoke-fellows, as have no care to perform the duties that shall be named. But it is a very dangerous thing for us to account ourselves freed from our duty, by that which does not free us. We must therefore cross the desires of our own hearts, and know that we are still bound to our yoke-fellows, notwithstanding their hard usage in other things, so long as in the main matters we be not wronged. Thou art no whit less bound to continue an husband or wife, because thy yoke-fellow is utterly careless of such duties as shall be named. Arm thyself, therefore, with patience to bear the want of them, and take knowledge of them, not to make thyself falsely conceited of liberty, because thou dost not find

them, but to make thyself careful to do that which pertaineth to thee, though thy care be slenderly required.

Now let us lay open the special points of duty : and in general, for the common duties, let this be delivered as a never-failing rule, That whatsoever thing the common bonds of humanity and Christianity tie every man to perform unto another, *that* married persons are bound to perform each to the other in a far higher degree; for the nearer bond of matrimony is so far from weakening, that it adds force to the more general bonds of humanity and religion : so that what the law of love and piety doth command thee to perform to any person as a man or a Christian, that it binds thee to perform unto thy yoke-fellow much more plentifully and diligently. And yet this also must be marked, that in these mutual duties, the husband is bound to be more abundant and careful, because his place is more excellent.—These common duties look in part to themselves, in part unto their families. What they jointly owe to themselves, comes all under two heads, Love, and the chief Effects of love.—As to Love, first, their hearts must be united as well as their bodies, else their union will prove more troublesome than can be imagined. Love is the life and soul of marriage, without which, it differs as much from itself, as a carcase from a living body; yea verily, it is a most uncomfortable society, and no better than a living death. This makes all things easy; the want of it makes all things hard. Love seasons and sweetens all estates; love composeth all controversies; love over-ruleth all passions; it squareth all actions; it is, in a word, the king of the heart, which, in whom it prevaieth, to them marriage is what it should be, viz. a pleasing combination of two persons into one home, one purse, one heart, and one flesh. Two things are necessary about this point : first, to shew what properties this Love must have; next to shew by what means it may be attained.

Now the Love of man and wife must have these two properties, with and above many other : first, it must be spiritual; secondly, matrimonial.

It must be spiritual in its ground, and in its working. Love must be built principally upon the commandment of God, the only sure foundation of it. The God of heaven, the maker of affections, must also be their commander. From whom we have received the power of loving, from him we must also receive directions for the right use of that power. A Christian man must love his wife not only because she is beautiful, witty, dutiful, and loving, but chiefly, because the Lord of heaven and earth hath said, "Husbands love you wives." The wife also must love her husband, not only, or chiefly, because he is a comely man, of good means and parentage, kind to her, and of good carriage, but because he is her husband, and because God, the Sovereign of all souls, hath told women, that they ought to be lovers of their husbands. Not the face, portion, beauty, dowry, or good parts of the married, must be the principal causes of their loving each other, but the will of God, who hath plainly manifested his pleasure in this matter. That affection, which is grounded upon this stable foundation, will be lasting, as is the cause that procures it; for the commandment of God in this matter can never receive an alteration. But that affection which standeth upon other considerations, will be subject to changes every hour: for how can the building stand fast, if the foundation be rotten and slippery? Either some storm of contention will overthrow that ill-grounded natural love; or of its own accord it will fall down through age; or else it will degenerate into jealousy, the devouring canker-worm, that eats up the heart of married persons, and consumes or mars the sweet fruit of matrimony. But he that loves his wife, because she is his wife, and God's pleasure is, that such a person should be loved, whom himself hath united to him in so near a contract, shall so long continue to love her, whatever she prove in other respects, as she continues to be his wife. If thou love thy wife because she is fair, well-spoken, courteous, this is well; but what will become of thy love, if all these fail, as all may, and

most must fail? Thou lovest thine husband, because he is an handsome man, hath an active body, is of good wit, and of good behaviour, and useth thee well; but where shall we find thy love, if these things should alter, as all earthly things may alter? You see, then, there is no firmness in that love, which is procured only by these motives. But if thou love thy wife or husband, because God hath so bidden thee, and the Maker of all things hath enjoined it, then shalt thou find thy love constant and perpetual, as God's law continues for ever the same.

Now the knowledge of this property of Love, that it must be spiritual, built upon the rock of God's commandment, doth meet all objections, which many perhaps will make against it in their own cases. Who (saith some husband) can love such a wife? And what wife can affect such a husband? (saith some woman.) I answer you both. That husband who hath learned to give to God's Word a sovereignty in his heart, who hath made reason, rectified by Scripture, the guide of his affections, who hath subdued his passions to his judgment, and his judgment to his God, and hath learned to think it reason for the creature to follow the Creator's will in all things, seem they otherwise never so much against reason,—in a word, that man who hath his affections spiritual,—can bestow them even on such a wife. And so shall that woman also, who hath attained such spiritualness of love, find it not impossible to continue her love to such an husband.

And as the ground of the married couple's Love must be spiritual, so must also the working thereof. It must bring forth spiritual effects, seeking the spiritual good of the party loved, by doing, with all readiness, all such things whereby that good (the best of all goods) may be attained. Their affections must provoke them to endeavour after the eternal welfare each of the other; and to labour that they may with more ease and assurance attain everlasting salvation. For that love which hath no higher aim than present wealth, peace, and happiness, deserveth no better name than a natural and a carnal love. And surely those

that love each other because GOD bids them, will likewise love each other in such sort as GOD bids them, even with such a love as will make them careful of each other's souls, as well as of their bodies and estates. Love cannot be separated from an earnest desire of the good of the party loved; and therefore spiritual love must be desirous of the spiritual good. But, alas! how exceedingly faileth the love of most married people, yea, of most who make some shews of goodness! Many husbands and wives hold the bodies of their yoke-fellows so dear, that they cannot endure to think of their disgrace, poverty, sickness, death; but what becometh of their souls, whether they be sanctified or unsanctified, in a state of salvation or damnation, these are in the number of those things wherewith they are little moved. But are we bound to marry in the LORD, and shall not our marriage be seasoned with love in the LORD? Thou art kind to thy wife or husband, and he or she is so near to thy soul, that it goes to thine heart to think that any thing should be wanting for their good: it is well. But so may a Pagan do, and so may a Turk, as well as thyself, if the good thou meanest consist only in being healthy and rich, in living at peace, and enjoying all the benefits of nature. Dost thou desire to make thy yoke-fellow a fellow-heir of CHRIST's kingdom? Dost thou seek to help thy yoke-fellow to heavenly benefits, as well as to these earthly? If so, this is to love spiritually: this love beseems a Christian husband and a Christian wife. If otherwise, thy love is to be discommended, not because it is not good so to love, but not good enough for a Christian, who is commanded to have a more holy and heavenly disposition than that which may be found amongst those that know not CHRIST. Be not therefore carnal in your loves, walking as men, but spiritual, as becometh the sons and daughters of God.

Take notice further, that your Love must be matrimonial, as well as spiritual. Spiritualness is a property of that love that is due to all men; we must therefore

find out something in the love of yoke-fellows, that may be peculiar to it, and serve to distinguish it from all other loves. For a man must love his parents, his brethren, his friends, yea, and his utter enemies ; and love them also, because GOD bids him, and love their souls as well as their bodies. But the love of husband and wife to each other should differ from all other loves in two respects, in regard of which I call it matrimonial: first, in the quantity of it ; secondly, in the effect. For the first, a man must love his wife above all the creatures in the world ; so must the woman her husband. Next to the living GOD, and our LORD JESUS CHRIST, the wife is to have the highest room in the husband's heart, and he in hers. No neighbour, no kinsman, no friend, no parent, no child, should be so near and dear unto the husband as his wife, nor to her as her husband. Did not ELKANAH say to HANNAH, " Am I not better to thee than ten sons ? " Surely then he ought to be loved better. Their loves must exceed that of children to parents ; and therefore it must know no superior affection but that which is due to the GOD of heaven. So much love doth one yoke-fellow owe to the other, as either of them owes unto him or herself. They are one body, and must love each other as each other's self ; not alone in that common respect, wherein every Christian is bound to love every neighbour as himself, but in this special respect, because of the special nearness that is betwixt them. Man and wife are tied together in the closest of all unions ; wherefore their mutual affection must be most large and abundant ; which, if it be not, never will it serve to bear thee out in the other duties of matrimony. A man and woman must do more, and suffer more, for each other, than for any other in all the world : they must bear with more faults each in the other, than in any other ; and be ready to take more pains each for the other, seeing all estates are common betwixt them. Wherefore they must love each other more ; for more of every virtue is required to be in every one, by how much more large effects of it are required. And

therefore the mutual affection of CHRIST and his Church is used to express the nature of this nuptial love, that we might know it to be such as should come as near to the largeness of that love as may be possible. But it must also, for effect, be of a binding and tying nature; it must so knit them to each other, that they may receive full satisfaction in each other. The love of the married must be a single love; causing a man to account his wife the only woman in the world, and not so much as to yield to the least inclination of having another; and so must be the wife's love towards him. Their persons should be to each other the most precious of all persons; and thus love must limit passion, and keep desire within compass. If any man think this impossible, unless every man and woman might find in their own yoke-fellows as amiable qualities as are to be found in others; I answer, that the point formerly delivered about the spiritualness of affections, will satisfy this objection: for not the good qualities of either, but the good pleasure of GOD, is to be the ground of their mutual dearness. Good conditions help, indeed, to make this duty more easy; but it is such, as must upon other motives be performed, though good conditions be away. And again I answer, that as a man who seeth more wit and beauty in his neighbour's son or daughter, than in his own, yea, whose own child is deformed, crooked, and dull, or untowardly and rebellious, while his neighbour's child is not only comely and quick-witted, but also gentle, dutiful, and obsequious, doth yet love his own child above his neighbour's; even so should it be betwixt husband and wife. A man may lawfully think another woman to be a better woman than his own wife, but not love the person of another more virtuous woman above the person of his own less virtuous; and so likewise may I say of the wife towards the husband. This is matrimonial love; when in its degree it is most strong and fervent, withal settling their hearts upon each other's persons above all in the world besides; which we see that few husbands and wives so much as labour to perform.

Most persons are still upbraiding each other with what matches they might have had; and many could almost prefer any other before their own. These may smile in the faces of each other, but they cannot be said to love each other with a nuptial love. Marriage-love admits of none equal in affection, but placeth the yoke-fellow next of all to the soul of the party in whom it is. Marriage-love will not bear the desire of change, but links the hearts of the married so closely together, that they only are dear to each other in this respect. O how far are most from loving their yoke-fellows as they ought, who yet have thought themselves to have loved each other as well as needs to be! But now you may see how much most persons deceive themselves, and how far short they are of perfection in those duties, wherein they account themselves most perfect. We go forward to the second point, (having shewn what that Love is, which we require of the married,) to shew them the means of attaining it.

CHAP. IV.

Shewing the Means of attaining Love.

IF any man, finding a want of such love, desire to know how he may get and increase it, let him understand, that love will become such as hath been spoken, if some natural means be used to confirm it, and some spiritual. The natural means is cohabitation: let them have one house, one table, one chamber, one bed; so shall they with most ease have also one heart and one soul. This was the cause for which the LORD ordained in the law, that no Israelite should be drawn from home the first year after his marriage, upon occasion of publick services in war; but should for that space, at least, abide at home with his wife; that so long a time of nearness and familiarity might make their loves for ever after firm and indissoluble.

Besides this natural means of procuring love, they must take notice of two, more spiritual: the one is, to take special notice of God's gracious providence for good in their match. They must often put themselves in mind of that which our Saviour affirmeth, that God hath joined them together, for their mutual benefit. We know, that a mean gift is much respected for the giver's sake. If men and women observe the providence of God, in bringing them together, then shall they take each other as love-tokens from God, and so shall be made very dear to each other. He that striveth to love God above all, cannot but love all his blessings for his sake. Wherefore do thou resolve, that God in great goodness (for crosses also, to God's people, come in goodness) hath bestowed this husband or wife upon thee, and thou shalt dearly affect thy yoke-fellow, though somewhat perhaps sullied with frowardness and ill conditions; for the dearness of the Giver will countervail the defects of the gift. And if thy match be fallen out somewhat cross unto thee, yet know that the Lord did aim at thy good, and will procure it by this cross, (causing, that though thy life here be less pleasant, yet thy soul shall have a large recompense, if thou accept it with patience and thankfulness,) and then the yoke-fellow's distempers may prove unto thee matters of grief, but shall not be able to alienate thine affections. But such as want wisdom to behold the hand of God in their union, shall soon cease to love, because their loves are not perfected and strengthened with the love of God, the only strengthener and perfecter of all virtues.

There is another means of cementing the souls of the married, which will both help the former, and, being joined with it, make it infallibly effectual; and that is, to join together constantly in the performance of exercises of piety to God, chiefly betwixt themselves. Let man and wife pray together; let them confer with each other of their heavenly country; let them sing together; so shall their hearts be knit firm to God first. These are the best

means of confirmation to their loves. These will nourish the spirit of holiness in them; and that enkindles love wherever it cometh. These will increase their faith in God, and faith will work by love. In these they shall feel themselves to have been spiritually profitable each to the other; and to receive a spiritual benefit, cannot but procure a spiritual affection. Here they shall perceive themselves strangers of one country, servants of one family, children of one Parent, and members of one body; and this must needs increase their good will to each other. Religion will knit the hearts of strangers fast in one. How much more effectual will it be, to fasten together the souls of them, that enjoy so many and so perpetual bands besides? It is satiety that most times choketh the love of the married; they grow weary of each other by long fruition, and then they care not one for another; but if they season their natural communion with this spiritual communion, the comfort and power of this will prevent all satiety, and make them grow in dearness to each other. Jars and contentions are the greatest hinderances of their love; but the joining together in these exercises will cause, that they shall far more seldom jar, and that their sudden jars shall not fester and rankle, to breed hard conceits of each other, which would be the bane of love. Prayer will prevent most discontentments, and compose all; for when they shall appear before God in prayer, instead of each blaming the other only or chiefly, (which is the evil humour of pride, that makes these sores to rankle,) they shall each blame themselves, and take the greatest fault upon themselves; which being once done, all contentions will cease, and all quarrels will come to an end. The sight of God, in his ordinances, will quell the pride of their hearts, and make each to see and feel the greatness of his or her own sins; and then the faults of the yoke-fellow will seem little, and the matter of strife will be quite cut off. Yea, if they come before the LORD in prayer, they shall be so truly grieved and ashamed for their jarring, that it will make

them far more watchful over themselves, and far more able to prevent the like occasions for the time to come. The land-flood of youthful affections will quickly be dried up; but those lively fountains of spiritual affection, which the joining together in holy exercises shall have digged up for them, will yield a quiet and constant stream of good-will. Those waves, indeed, make most noise, but this spring doth best service. That vehement ardour, which sometimes goes before marriage, is more boisterous; but this moderate and sober affection, that is gotten by serving GOD together afterwards, is ten times more useful. The former, without the latter, will never make one's life happy; but this, without that, will abundantly suffice to a most cheerful living in marriage. Fond they may be, who pray not among themselves, but loving they cannot be. Wherefore I pray you all, that are or shall be married, to mark diligently this direction, and not to fail in practising it. What will it profit you to hear good directions from the mouth of GOD's ministers, if you do not follow them? Above all other directions, follow this: Call upon the name of GOD together, peruse his Scriptures together, sing praise unto him together, and talk together of his word and works. Lose not the time you spend alone, either in worldly communication, or in fault-finding, or in merriment, or in sporting with each other; but be careful to redeem time for those holy duties, which as they are in all respects gainful, so are they worth all the time they shall occupy, for the sake of this very fruit, the growth of your loves, which will follow. And verily there is none, that hath any spark of godly wisdom, but shall be forced to confess, if he consult with himself in good earnest, that the true cause of the defects of love in the married, is the seldom coming together before the LORD. Either they love little, or love carnally: and why is this, but because they pray but little each with other? But if you would maintain love against all breaches, and keep it from all decays, and make it always ardent, always lively, and always working,

if you would make it religious, holy, and godly, savouring of piety and the Divine nature, then follow this that hath been told you : for if holy duties do not knit and rivet your hearts together, they will soon be severed. If piety to God do not thus feed your love, it shall be but feeble, or carnal, or both. But then some man or woman may say, Alas ! how shall I do, that have such an husband or wife, as neither can nor will join with me in the services of God ? To such an one I answer : Pray for that yoke-fellow, that will not pray with thee ; entreat God so much the more often in behalf of thine husband or wife, by how much they are less able or willing to entreat for themselves ; so shall God in goodness turn their hearts to thee, or at least, thy soul shall be warmed with heavenly love to them ; for it is impossible that any should not love that person much and earnestly, for whom they pray much and earnestly. And this also is very sure, though few perhaps will believe it, that to love one's yoke-fellow spiritually and fervently, though one be not so beloved in return, is much more content to the soul, and comfort to the life, than to be beloved by them, without so loving.

CHAP. V.

Shewing the first Effect of Love, viz. Pleasingness.

THE Effects of this nuptial Love are three : Pleasingness, Faithfulness, Helpfulness.

The first, which must mix itself with all the rest, I call pleasingness. It is a disposition of the will, and earnest desire of the heart, to give all content to each other, so far as they may possibly do it without sinning against God. The Apostle tells us, that the married man careth for the things of this life, how he may please his wife, and the wife also, how she may please her husband. This he mentioneth not as a matter in either condemnable, but

praise-worthy in both, and that whereof (in all worldly businesses) they should be most regardful. For though it be a matter of some difficulty, yet it is of exceeding great fruit, and of absolute necessity to the well-being of the family. The Apostle tells us, that he did seek in all things to please all; meaning so far as he could without sin: this duty is therefore a general duty towards all men, and shall it not be much more needful betwixt them that are so nearly united? Wherefore the husband must do, or leave undone, any thing he can, that he may give satisfaction to the wife; and so must the wife, for the husband's ease, cross her own desires to satisfy his. In diet, attire, in choice of company, in all other affairs, they must frame themselves to afford each other such an absolute fulfilling of desires, as may be without the transgression of God's law. That which will make this duty possible, is resolution and practice; begin, and the proceeding will prove pleasanter than the beginning. That which will make it easy and comfortable, is the mutual labouring for it on both sides. For if the wife would apply herself to please her husband, he should find it an easy matter to please her; and if the husband would seek his wife's contentment, she might with much facility content him. Endeavour to please produces a willingness to be pleased; and it cannot be difficult to satisfy one who desires as well to give as to take satisfaction. But some married people may perhaps imagine, that their case admits not of this advice, because they have yoke-fellows so froward and discontented, that nothing will content them. I answer, it is not in men's power to make a froward person take things well, but it is in their power to do their best to satisfy such a one, and to strive so much the more painfully, by how much the other's disposition is more averse from it. God looks that one should, not *effect*, but *endeavour* the satisfaction of the yoke-fellow; and if the one be not behind-hand, in giving all just cause of being pleased, the other shall bear the whole blame, before God, of that peevishness which

would not suffer him or her to be pleased. It will be objected here, that it will be very hard to continue striving against the stream; and so indeed it will; but good duties must not be omitted, because they are hard. The scholar that hath an hard lesson, must settle more hard to his book, and not cast it away in sullenness, and say, he cannot learn it: so the husband that hath a perverse wife, or wife that hath a perverse husband, must give more diligence to give content to such husband or wife, and not carelessly cast off all, by saying, they are so cross that nothing will please them. Verily this is a painful work, but withal it is a possible work. It cannot be that there should remain so great passionateness in the breast of any man or woman, but that they will be kept in better terms by a yoke-fellow striving to content them, than if no care at all be used in that way. Let therefore the hardness make each more diligent: for if the husband or wife will be unquiet, do what the other yoke-fellow can, how much more if there be no pains taken to make them quiet. Encourage thyself in this tedious labour, by remembering, that if thou canst not please thy yoke-fellow as thou desirest, yet thou shalt not fail to please God. Here thou must be put in mind of that worthy counsel, which SOLOMON'S grave counsellors gave to his young son; "If thou please this people, and speak to their hearts, they will be thy servants for ever." So say I to thee now, if thou speak to the heart of thine husband or wife, and seek to please him or her, by yielding to them, even in things perhaps that are somewhat unreasonable; this, if any thing, will change their bitterness into gentleness, and their rebelliousness into subjection. Wherefore let all yoke-fellows meditate thus with themselves:—I cannot please God, if I strive not to please my yoke-fellow. He loves not an house full of brawls; discord drives him with his blessing out of doors; and there can be no peace where there is no striving by mutual pleasingness to nourish and settle peace. The harder this proveth, the more commendable it is in me, and the

better the LORD will take it at my hands, and the more will he reward it at the last. Wherefore I will cross mine own desires, rather than mine husband's, or my wife's, and so carry myself that they may receive contentment in all things, if any thing but sin and wickedness will content them.—Brethren, let thwarting and crossing each other be far from your houses. To cross one's self is a matter of great praise; to cross another, especially one so near, is a point of as great folly as can be; neither can any thing in the world less become married people, and be more reproachful unto them, than to intend the vexing of each other. *I will do it, if it be but to vex thee*, is a speech so odious in the mouth of husband or wife, that scarcely any thing can be more so. The husband might almost as well tell his wife, that he will be an whore-master, and she him, that she will be an harlot. Doubtless this thwarting humour, that will do a thing to vex the other, is in the family like the cramp in the body, which pulls and racks the sinews, and makes the body full of torment. This kills all the comfort of society. It is the most contrary to love of any thing: it hinders the going forward of all thrift, and of all duty. Wherefore, let none of you hereafter bear that absurd thought of vexing his wife, or her husband, but, next to pleasing GOD, make it your business to please each other. Indeed this caution, "next to pleasing GOD," must needs be put in, for else it is a wicked thing, to provoke GOD by seeking to please a creature. If any thing but the breach of GOD's law will satisfy thy yoke-fellow, thou must do it, be it never so troublesome, so opposite to thine own desires, and contrary to thine own will; for every one of us, saith St. PAUL, must please his neighbour, much more his husband or wife, in that which is good for edification. But if thou canst not fulfil the desires of a man, without breaking the law of GOD, then say, it is better to offend a mortal creature than the immortal GOD; for as GOD must be loved above all, so must he be pleased above all; and as yoke-fellows must be

loved next to God, so must they also be pleased next to him. Only consider, that this point is delivered unto you amongst the duties that are *mutual*. Most husbands look for it from their wives, but esteem not themselves bound to do it towards their wives: but look, what force obedience hath to tie the wife unto it, the same hath love to tie the husband. And so much be spoken of the first effect of love,—pleasingness. There are two more of special use.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Faithfulness and Helpfulness of the Married.

HUSBAND and Wife must be to each other faithful and helpful; these two must ever be joined, and therefore we speak of them together. This was one principal thing which the LORD did aim at, in making the woman, and joining her unto her husband: for “it is not good” (saith He,) “for man to be alone; I will make him an helpmeet for him.” And doubtless the man was to give help, as well as to receive it, and to do more good, by how much he was endowed with more strength.

Now this helpful fidelity consisteth in their mutual care of abstaining from, and preventing, so much as may be, all such things as might hurt or grieve each other; and of doing themselves, and procuring from others to be done, all such things as may make for the comfort and benefit of each other. Then are they faithfully helpful to each other, when they will never do themselves, nor suffer, if they can hinder, others to do, any thing that may harm each other; and when they are diligent to do themselves, and cause others to do, so far as lies in their power, whatsoever may be good one to another.

This duty must extend to the souls, bodies, names, and estates of each other. First, to the *souls*, by provoking each other to all piety and holiness of living, as occasion

serveth. The husband must not hinder, but further, the wife in goodness, nor she him; for the wife also hath liberty to exhort and stir up her husband to well-doing, and to prevail by entreaty and fair means. Their nearness of society gives them many and great occasions of swaying each other either way. They must therefore beware of becoming the Devil's instruments to allure each other to sin: for there cannot be a greater mischievousness in the world, than for a man and wife to abuse that power, which they have either in other, in order, as it were, to poison each other; but they must be ready with special diligence, as they have special opportunity, to consider one another, and to provoke unto love and to good works. If the wife perceive the husband slack in matters of religion, or mercy, she must ever be commending these things unto him, and putting him in mind of the excellency of these virtues, and the great reward which God will give to them that practise them, and sweetly drawing him to a more frequent practice of them, always remembering to be mild and gentle in her speeches this way, as one that would allure, and not force. The husband likewise must, with the most familiar and kind speeches that may be, stir up his wife's dulness, if he perceive her dull, and remind her of those motives that may encourage and quicken her in all well-doing. O how sweet a society would this of man and wife be, if they could in this manner be watchful of all opportunities to further each other in godliness.

Again, because they have continual occasion of intimately conversing with each other, therefore they may discover in each other divers corruptions and imperfections. Now they must not turn these infirmities into matter of hatred and contempt, but of compassion, and care of procuring each other's reformation. They must not upbraid each other with their sins, nor seek to provoke the corruptions which they find apt to be provoked; but rather give all heed to cut off all such occasions as they find will give advantage to such corruptions of their yoke-fellows, and

make them break forth to their hurt; and they must, by all good counsel, fortify each other's souls against the common enemy. They must both observe the temper and constitution of each other's souls, till they perceive what infirmities they are either of them chiefly inclined unto; and having found them, they must diligently abstain from all things that may provoke those evils, and prove occasions of making them overshoot themselves therein: and further, they must apply all means to weaken such corruptions, and to stop their overflowing, that they may not proceed to any extremity, if they have begun to offend in some degree. Their acquaintance with the diseases of each other must not be made a cause of their vilifying each other, by casting in each other's teeth such imperfections, but rather of helping each other, by avoiding all such words and actions as would increase and incense them, and adopting such gestures and speeches as are fittest to heal and mitigate them. For example; if the husband perceive the wife apt to be angry, and that such and such things will easily put her out of patience, he must pity her weakness, and carefully abstain from such things; so must she deal with him; and so must they carry themselves to each other, in regard of all other frailties, as well as anger. Yea, if either of them be given to any such high degree of wickedness, as that their own words alone, after all labour to draw them out of it, will not work amendment, then must they not fear to seek the help of some more wise and able friend, who may perhaps effect that cure which themselves have failed of. And in case they find little fruit of such endeavours, and the yoke-fellow will hearken to no admonition, yet they must continue to wait and pray, referring the matter to GOD, the only physician of the soul, who is able in due season to redress all. But those deserve to be condemned as most treacherous to each other, who, for their own ease, will permit their yoke-fellows to sleep in sin. Let them even swear, or break the sabbath, still many yoke-fellows, for fear of a storm, can

keep silence in such cases. This is to betray one another to the Devil, and to give each other leave to go to hell without check. Wouldst thou suffer thine husband to poison himself, for fear of enduring his anger if thou shouldst snatch the poison out of his hand? Wouldst thou let thy wife cut her own throat, for fear she should chafe and scold, because thou tookest the knife from her? Doubtless to let them kill each other's souls, and say nothing, for fear of passion or hard usage, is no less sinful and hurtful perfidiousness, than to give way, for quietness-sake, to their hurting of each other's bodies. And they also are to be blamed as unhelpful, yea very mischievous, that are ready to spy out the faults of each other with an evil eye, and to make them worse, and not better; that look out the faults of each other, as enemies do the weak places of a city, to make them weaker, and as evil surgeons handle a sore, to make it sorer. Wo unto such husbands or wives! Sorry help is it which they afford to their companions, and miserable helpers are they; and God shall one day reckon with them for having done so little good, where he appointed them to do all good.—So much for the faithful helpfulness of men and women to each other's *souls*, in seeking to plant and water virtues, and to pull up the roots of vices in each other's minds.

They must farther practice the same virtues toward the *bodies* of each other, by shunning all things that may cause diseases or sickness to each other, and by readily undergoing any pain or cost (according to their power) to procure diet, physic, attendance, or other necessities for keeping or recovering health. Yea, they must comfort each other in the days of sorrow, that worldly sorrow may not breed death. The wife must be health to her husband in his sickness, and he to her. She must support his weakness with her strength, and he hers. They must most willingly devote all pains, and undergo all cost that is in this way needful, for the ease and content of each other. To neglect one so many

ways endeared, as a husband or wife, partaker of all estates,—this is a notorious hard-heartedness, and should cover their faces with blushing that have offended in it. Sickness and weakness are things of themselves sufficiently tedious; there needeth not the addition of the husband's or wife's unkindness, to make the burden heavier. This is to add adversity to adversity, and to load one more, that is already sinking under his load; a most barbarous and cruel unkindness! When the body fainteth, to make the heart faint also,—when the limbs and joints are weak, to fill the soul with weakness, by causing grief at the other's niggardliness and churlishness, (grievous things when practised from one so near, and who owes quite the contrary,)—this is murder in a high degree. Wherefore let every husband or wife avoid or mend this fault, and look to their demeanour towards their yoke-fellows, especially in times of weakness, grief, and sickness. When the wife is great, and full of anguish with the labour of breeding and bearing; when she is in travail, or begins to recover the strength which pains in travail had diminished; then comfort her with loving speeches; then cheer her with an affable countenance; (for that is a time when pure good-will should be most wakeful and working;) then see that she want no attention, no good usage, that thou canst help her to. This is to be helpful to her body. So when thine husband is sick and feeble, when he languisheth upon his bed of pain and weakness, when his bones ache, when his eyes refuse sleep, when all things are distasteful to him, then stay him with comfortable speeches, then revive him with diligent attendance; do all thou canst, and spend all thou canst, to the recovering of his strength, or easing of his torment; let thy love and care be his physic, and thyself his physician; and let the comfort of thine helpful carriage so content his soul, that his body may more easily be strengthened. This is to be a good wife to thine husband's body, and to cherish him in sickness, as thy promise binds thee to do.

In the third place, man and wife must be faithfully

helpful to each other's *names*; and that in a double respect, in maintaining thereof between themselves, and also amongst others. First then, every married couple must uphold in their hearts a good opinion of each other, so far as may possibly stand with truth. The husband must think well of his wife, she of her husband. Yea, for a man and wife to have in some degree an over-good opinion of each other; for him to think her not only more beautiful, but also more loving, more dutiful, more submissive, more trusty, than perhaps she is, (making her virtues carry a greater shew to his eye, by looking upon them through the spectacles of love;) or for her to account him not only more comely and well-favoured, but also more kind, more careful of her good, and more true to her, than it may be he is indeed, (by interpreting things with that largeness of good interpretations, which much love will put upon them;) is a thing so far from blame, that it deserveth rather commendation. Certainly, then, they should be peremptorily resolved to give no credit to ungrounded, unwarranted surmises; they should by no means suffer their hearts to grow mistrustful of each other's honesty and fidelity. She must never think that he doth affect other women, unless the matter be more than manifest. She must never imagine that he doth waste or consume their estate, unless the fault be palpably and notoriously plain. He must never persuade himself that she is wanton, or given to strangers, or that she robs him, and purloins from him, unless he can make good these matters with such clearness of proof, as will not admit of any reasonable defence. All jealousies, all rash, hasty, light, ill-built surmises, must be far from the society of matrimony. For if once their souls be infected with such mistaken conceits of each other, love will go out at the same door at which suspicion comes in. He or she that hath a jealous head (an head, I mean, apt to misconceive and suspect) never had, truly, a loving heart. Such might have a natural passion; they might be fond; but an holy and virtuous

and spiritual affection, they never had, nor can possibly have, if they give way to these evil surmises. And therefore, of all the domestic make-bates that be, and of all those things which are apt to set quarrels betwixt the married couple, nothing in the world is more pestilently effectual to these bad results, than jealousy. Having leavened the heart, it makes the speeches sharp and tart, the countenance sour, and the whole behaviour keen and untasteful. No good words, no good looks, no good gestures, no good actions, can proceed out of a jealous man or woman's heart. Jealousy will make a man suck mischievous things out of his own fingers' ends, and vex himself, and blame his yoke-fellow, as much where no fault hath deserved it, as if there were a fault. This evil weed must not be suffered to grow up in the garden of matrimony; for if it do, no good herb will prosper near it; it will over-run all that is commendable, and suffer no praise-worthy thing to flourish. And therefore let all that have knit themselves together in this covenant, loathe and detest any motion or fancy that may arise within them of any unchastity, any unfaithfulness, any evil meaning, of their yoke-fellows; let their hearts (I say) rise against these motions, and let them disdain to give the least credit unto them, unless the proofs be more than manifest. Away with this make-bate, jealousy, this quarreller, suspicion, this breeder of brawls, this mother and nurse of contention, this secret underminer of love, of thrift, of good husbandry, and good housewifery, and of all things that should be profitable to an household. Away with it (I say) out of thine heart; chase it far off from thy breast, and from thine house. It is better to receive ten wrongs without suspecting, than to suspect one without having received it. Aptness to suspect another grows from the evil root of a bad nature, whereby one is apt himself to offend. Wherefore, as thou wouldst stand for the good name of thy yoke-fellow against the tongue of a slanderer, so stand for it against the slanderous dreams of thine own heart,

and take heed of believing thine own fancies, or other reports, without most pregnant proofs. And if any wicked person, a maker of division betwixt the head and body, will suffer his lips to be so ill employed, as to become Satan's bellows to blow these coals betwixt you, by telling thee this and that; rebuke such a person, reject his words with detestation, fly from his society, and let not thine ears and heart be defiled with giving gentle audience to a whisperer and tale-bearer. In one word, wouldst thou love, or be loved? Wouldst thou live otherwise in marriage, than in a prison or a dungeon? Wouldst thou give or have any quiet or content? Strengthen thine heart in a firm and unalterable and unconquerable good opinion of thy yoke-fellow, and rather be any thing than jealous. And thus must the married preserve their credit at home, in the breast of each other.

They must be tender also of their good reputation abroad, and beware of casting mire in the faces of each other. This mutual saving of each other's credit requireth two things: first, that they labour to conceal the weaknesses, each of the other, from all others, as much as is possible. The husband must use his best endeavour, that none may know of his wife's faults but God and himself, neither must he be willing to lay them open any where, but to the ear of heaven, where he may crave pardon of them; and the woman must do her best, to keep her husband's evils from the knowledge of all the world. All blabbing and loud accusing must be far removed from them that have so near an interest each in the other. They must account their credit, as well as their bodies, to be in a manner all one. The publishing of each other's sins and imperfections is a monstrous treachery, and a thing than which nothing can worse become them, in the judgment of the wise. To backbite an enemy is a sin; how much more to backbite one's own yoke-fellow? Whose faults can one cover, if not his wife's; that is to say, his own? Or who can be

free from reproach, if one so near him as his wife, seek to deface his good name? It is almost impossible, but that a man and wife shall sooner or later discover their weaknesses to each other; and for them to be playing the tell-tale each against the other, what soul doth not loath the thought of it? Unwise man or woman, will thy husband or wife be the better for thy lavish reporting of their faults? Will thy tattling about their vices mend them? If not, why dost thou disgrace thyself, in seeking to disgrace thy yoke-fellow? Why dost thou publish thine own untrustiness, uncharitableness, and indiscretion, in publishing the frailties of thine husband or wife, and make all wise men take thee for a passionate, open-mouthed backbiter, by telling abroad what thou findest amiss at home? Wherefore, if any have given leave to themselves to be so sinfully talkative heretofore, now let very shame cause them to lay their hands upon their mouths, that they may not more and more incur the name of fools, by making their tongues to spread abroad folly. I deny not, but that a regard to the yoke-fellow's soul may make either of them seek a counsellor and admonisher for the other: but it is one thing to acquaint with the fault of one's husband or wife some one friend, (for more than one in this case should not easily be trusted,) and that in secret, another thing to throw it open before company. Such a friend will so seek to heal the soul, as that he may not wound the credit; and will be tender as well of the name, as of the conscience of his friend. But the greater number seek only to deface the credit, without regarding the recovery of the soul. The former discovery cannot hurt at all, the latter can do no good at all. Wherefore to utter to one, privately, for the sake of the soul's health, the sin or sins of the yoke-fellow, may proceed from love, because it tendeth to good; but to ease one's stomach against him or her, by pouring forth their faults, is as rottenness in the bones. Know, therefore, and practise this duty, O husbands and wives; disclose not each other's faults, but conceal, hide,

bury, and cover them, as much as truth and equity will bear.

And besides this, you yoke-fellows must, for each other's credit and comfort, keep the secrets of each other faithfully. There may fall out an occasion for a man to acquaint his wife with some such thing, as it much concerneth him to have kept close from others; and the woman may likewise have cause for thus opening herself to her husband. In such cases, they must use all secrecy. But if in such cases they prove unseasonably open, and the wife find that her husband hath revealed that, which she would have had reserved to his own only knowledge; or if he find that his wife hath vented that to another, which he desired should dwell with herself alone, this will breed betwixt them such an estrangement, such a distrust in each other, as it will not be an easy labour to remove. For how should that person be trusted with any thing who cannot keep counsel? Wherefore, let husbands and wives always mind this: if he lay up any thing in her breast, let him find it safe there, as in a chest which cannot be opened with any pick-lock: if she commit a thing to his safe keeping, let it be safely imprisoned in his bosom; otherwise no man can help being strange towards such an one, whom experience hath convicted of blabbing. And it is a most infallible truth, that there is no comfortable living in marriage, where the practice of trustiness and concealment is not found.—So you have heard what care married people must have of each other's good name.

The last part of faithfulness to each other, is that which concerneth their *goods* or estates, wherein they are bound to be mutually helpful by all good means. And to this purpose it is requisite, first, that they practice community in their estates; next, that they practise good husbandry. For the first: betwixt man and wife, all things ought to be common, goods as well as persons; for if they may not make a division in the greater, shall it not be a gross absurdity to make it in the lesser? They must have *com*

house, and one purse; they are but one, and their estate must be but one. I confess, that GOD hath made him the head and chief disposer; but without all question, she that hath a part in himself cannot want right unto that which is his, for honest purposes. How can any man, with a good conscience, forget that part of his public and solemn covenant, wherein he endowed her with all his worldly goods?—And having thus united their estates, let them, secondly, play the good husband and the good housewife therein. In husband and wife, the next points to godliness and honesty are good husbandry and good housewifery. This good husbandry standeth in three things; labour, thrift, forecast. Painfulness in getting, discretion in saving, providence in fore-seeing, these three make up good husbandry; and if any of these be wanting, so much is wanting from the perfection of it, and so much shall be wanting from their comfort and prosperity. First then, they must both employ themselves in such honest courses of getting and maintaining themselves, as GOD shall call them to. Neither must he live like a drone, and make a drudge of her; neither must she give herself to ease, and cast all the labour upon him; but both must apply themselves to their vocations painfully, and both be ready to dispatch those businesses, for which themselves and families will fare the better. He without doors, she within, he in such things as befit his sex, she in those that become hers, must be content to unite their pains for their profit, and to undergo the labour of getting their living in the sweat of their brows. Secondly, what they have painfully gotten, they must likewise thriftily save from needless expences. They must not pinch from mercy and justice, but withhold from prodigality and lavishness. A sweet tooth, and a fine back, are pick-purses; they must banish these out of their houses. He must not lavish it out abroad, neither must she lay it out at home; neither must they both join in needless expences, but rather in practising those virtues, by which both shall find comfort in their

estates, and praise with God. Thirdly, they must both be provident; laying their heads together, to consider what good things are requisite for their estates, that they may procure them; and what hurtful things would come upon them, that they may prevent the same. Forecast is as good as labour; and the work of the head is no less available than the work of the hands. Two eyes see more than one, and two hands dispatch more business than one; she is his helper, and he must not refuse her help in this case, for it seldom falleth out, but that a man too reserved from his wife doth plunge himself and her into divers unnecessary crosses. Thus doing, they shall procure sufficiency to their estates; and their hands, by God's blessing, shall find abundance. But the idle person walketh upon a thorn-hedge that will surely prick his feet. The careless person shall put his foot into a snare that will entangle him, and God himself will cast upon them vexation and sorrow. But one caution must be given in this matter; namely, that they be both moderate in these their worldly affairs; for if they fall to carking, and pinching, and desiring riches, heaven and earth cannot keep a family, diseased with this dropsy, from many troublesome and deadly pangs.

CHAP. VII.

Shewing the Duties of the Married to their Families.

WE have treated of those duties which man and wife jointly owe to each other. There follow some which they must practise in regard of their Families. For a man and a woman, who before were members of another family, therefore join together, that they may become the roots of a new family, and begetting children, and training them up, together with servants, according to their place, may provide plants for the church, God's own vineyard. Wherefore, they have not thoroughly dis-

charged their duties, by the performance of all these things to each other, unless they carefully regard their household also. Herein indeed the husband must be acknowledged as the head; but the wife is to take the next place, and, as subordinate to her husband, must become an helper and a furtherer. The things themselves, which I shall name, belong to them as governors of an house, in relation to Children and Servants; but the joining together therein is that which must be pressed as a part of their marriage-duty.

Now this their Family they must both maintain and govern, keep and guide.—First, they must join in making Provision of all necessaries for their children and servants. He is worse than an infidel, saith the Apostle, that provideth not for his own, especially for them of his family. They must not carry themselves in such sort, as infidels would disdain to do. But this duty is co-incident with that I spake of before, Faithfulness in their Estates; for by joining their hands and heads in labour, thrift, and providence, they shall cause that no good thing be wanting to their children or servants. And verily it is a great commendation to the governors, when their carefulness doth save all about them from want. Herein they imitate the living God, the Father of this great family, the world, who fills every creature with good things fit for it. Wherefore let them practise those directions which were before set down, and so do two good things at once, even profit themselves, and all that pertain to them.

But a family must be governed as well as maintained, and how should it be governed but by them? Wherefore they must also be good Rulers at home, and join in guiding their people under God. The man must be taken for God's immediate officer in the house, and as it were the king in the family; the woman must account herself his deputy, an officer substituted to him, not as equal, but as subordinate. And in this order they must govern; he, by the authority derived unto him from God

immediately, she, by authority derived to her from her husband.

Now this their Government looketh to matters of **God**, and matters of the world.—Their first care must be, that the living **God** be truly worshipped in their house, and that the knowledge and fear of him be planted in the hearts of their children and servants. To this end they must read the Scriptures, and call upon the name of **God** amongst them, and catechize them in the principles of true Religion, that none under their roof may be ignorant of the fundamental truths of godliness. To this end also they must look, that the Sabbath of the **LORD** be sanctified by their people, and must carefully and constantly bring them to the public assemblies, and examine them afterwards as to their profiting thereby. Thus the main care of all good and Christian governors should be, that religion may flourish in their houses. Why hath **God** given the name of Churches to Christian families, but because of those holy services which are to be done publicly in the family, whereby they are all sanctified, and become even houses for **God** to dwell in? If this care be wanting, they shall also want **God's** blessing on all their other cares; yea, their family shall but be a nursery for hell, their children and servants remaining still children and servants of the devil, because they neglect those means by which they should be made the children and servants of **God**. Were it not better, in regard of themselves, to have kept no family, than such a family, whereof the members are brought up to nothing but damnation? Wherefore nothing in Scripture is more evidently required, than that fathers bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the **LORD**, and that they continually whet the Law of **God** upon them, and be talking of it to them, whilst they sit in their houses. And lest we should think that this care appertaineth to the parent alone, and not unto the master also, **ABRAHAM** is commended, for that he would command his servants to fear the **LORD**, that it might go well with

him and them both. And JOSHUA undertaketh, for himself and family, that they will serve GOD. And when GOD enjoineth the master to look to his whole family that they break not the Sabbath, must not the negative here, as well as in other commandments, include the affirmative? And how shall he see that they sanctify God's Sabbath, if he take no pains to bring them to the knowledge of GOD and of his service? Wherefore let man and wife be principally helpful to each other in this business. When the husband is present, let him read and pray with his family, and teach them the fear of the LORD. In his absence, let the wife do these duties, or at least take care to see them done; and let them both provide convenient time and leisure for the same, and each quicken the slackness of other, if either begin to grow slack. Seeing they desire to be called GOD's servants, let them deserve that name, and be careful to do him service in their little commonwealth. How can they look for prosperous success in any thing, if the homage due unto the chief Lord be neglected? Why should he be accounted worse than an infidel, who provideth not food and clothing for his family; and he that lets their souls go naked, for want of that which is both food and clothing unto them, I mean instruction in the things that pertain to life and godliness, deserve a less disgraceful name? Here therefore let man and wife be ever ready to stir up each other out of that sloth and negligence, which will be ever ready to seize upon them. But how seldom this is done, lamentable experience may teach us. Sometimes the husband would have GOD served in the family, and then the wife hangs off, and counts it loss of time. Sometimes again the wife would fain have the worship of GOD take place under their roof, and he, like a profane beast, calls it preciseness, and will not have an hour spent so idly. Sometimes both conspire in negligence and omission: but how seldom do their desires and endeavours meet in this most needful point? How seldom do they provoke and encourage each other in so profitable works?

Now therefore, I say again, let all husbands and wives that fear **God** be of one mind in the **LORD**, and let them not fail in using all good means to plant and water piety in their people's hearts, by establishing the exercises of religion in their houses.—And thus for the matters of **God** must they govern well.

Now as to the matters of the World also, they must oversee the ways of their families.—Of this oversight these are the parts: First, they must appoint their inferiors such works and services, as are fit for them to do, and follow them, and look after them, that they may perform their duty accordingly: for had not the **LORD** seen, that inferiors would stand in need of such following, he would never have made this difference in the family. If servants and children would of themselves be painful in their business, what need the master or mistress do any thing in the house? But **God** saw well, that the best servants in the world would need help in this way, and therefore ordained governors in a family; yea, even two governors, one chief, the other subordinate, that the absence of one might be supplied by the presence of another.

Secondly, They must mark the carriage of their inferiors, and take notice what disorders are ready sometimes to creep in secretly, sometimes violently to break in; that such evils may be either prevented or resisted speedily. Idleness, tattling, discord, and many more imperfections, are apt to steal upon the best servants and children in the world, which the **LORD** well knowing, made rulers in the house, to keep all in good order. And if it seem unto us, as it is, a cumbersome thing thus to rule and guide an household, we must remember, that **God** did not make man to live at ease, and take his pleasure, but to do service. And though this care be troublesome, yet the mischiefs that will follow upon the want of it are much more troublesome: for if the eyes of the master and mistress stand not open to see and oppose the faults of those that are under them, they will grow bold and licentious, and full of wickedness, be the

governors otherwise never so godly; but by their mutual care, this duty may be easy to both, and much peace will follow in the house.

Lastly, they must join in admonishing, encouraging, reproving, and, if need be, correcting their inferiors. Both must discountenance those that carry themselves ill, and both must commend them of good behaviour, that so they may both maintain each other's authority to the full. If one think fit, by some little kindness, to encourage any in the family, the other must not grudge; if the one will reprove, the other must not defend; if he will correct the children, she must not grow angry and save them; neither must he save them out of her hands, when she seeth cause to give chastisement. Suppose that either of them exceed in this way, in correcting either without cause or above measure, the other must not make a brawl of it before the face of the inferiors; but they must quietly debate the matter each with the other alone, and keep their disagreements of this kind from appearing in the family. For if he do, and she undo, or if she chide, and he defend, (besides the heart-burnings which will grow betwixt themselves,) they shall also so lessen each other's power in the family, that both at last shall grow into contempt. They must therefore so join hands in these works, that their dissension may not blast the fruit of all their endeavours. It is harmful to nourish as it were a domestic faction in this little commonwealth. What one likes or dislikes, let the other (at least by silence for the present) seem also to like or dislike, and let them never disagree, in admonishing, or correcting, or commending; so shall their discreet concord preserve their authority among their people, increase their love of each other, and procure amendment in their inferiors.—And so much be spoken of the joint duties of husband and wife, both towards themselves and towards their families, both for maintenance and for government. We come now to speak of such duties as are peculiar to either of them, wherein we will first inform the husband, and afterwards the wife.

CHAP. VIII.

Of a Man's keeping his Authority.

THE husband's special duties are referred to two heads ; he must govern his wife, and maintain her ; and as our LORD JESUS is to his church, so must he be to his wife, an Head and Saviour. As for Government, two things also are required of him ; one, that he keep his Authority ; the other, that he use it.—First then, every man is bound to maintain himself in that place in which his Maker hath set him, and to hold fast that reverence and precedency which both GOD and nature have assigned to him. Nature hath framed the lineaments of his body to superiority, and set the print of government in his very face, which is more stern and less delicate than the woman's ; and he must not suffer this order of nature to be inverted. The LORD, in his Word, hath entitled him the Head ; wherefore he must not stand lower than the shoulders ; if he do, doubtless it makes a great deformity in the family. And without question it is a sin for a man to come lower than GOD hath set him. It is not humility, but baseness, to be ruled by her, whom he should rule. No general would thank a captain for surrendering his place to some common soldier, nor will GOD an husband, for suffering his wife to bear the sway. It is dishonourable to the prince, if subordinate officers yield the honour of their places to meaner subjects ; and the contempt redounds upon GOD, which a man is willing to take upon himself, by making his wife his master. GOD's authority invested in his person he must not permit to be trodden down and despised : for this St. PAUL hath given us a rule, saying, " Let every man abide in the place wherein he is called." It must be understood as well of the place for order and government, as for condition of life. But here perhaps some weak-spirited man may say, The thing is reasonable, if a man could do it ; but experience shews, it is sooner said than done : For himself, he hath met with a virago, that will be governor,

or will overturn all; and against such a froward and sturdy-spirited dame, who can preserve his authority? To such an objector I answer, That most men cast the blame of losing their authority upon their wives, when in truth it is wholly due unto themselves; for it is not extorted from them by the wife's violence, but cast away by their own indiscretion. It is not indeed in any man's power, to restrain a violent woman from assailing his authority, but it is, from winning it. Whether she shall break forth into contempt, he cannot choose; but whether he will prostitute himself unto contempt, that he may and must choose. Many a city is fiercely assaulted, and not taken. Many a woman strives to break the yoke, but is not able. So long as the husband's behaviour is such, that the wife's soul (after that she hath recovered herself out of the drunkenness of passion) is forced to blame her own rebelliousness, and in her conscience to acknowledge him worthy the better place, so long hath he duly preserved his authority against all her rude and disloyal resistance. Know ye, therefore, all ye husbands, that the way to maintain authority is, not to use violence, but skill. Not by main force must an husband hold his own right against his wife's undutifulness, but by a more mild, gentle, and wise proceeding. We wish not any man to use big looks, great words, and a fierce behaviour, but we advise you to a more easy and certain course. Let the husband endeavour to gain all commendable virtues, and to exceed his wife as much in goodness as he doth in place. Let his wife see in him such humility, such godliness, such wisdom, as may cause her heart to confess, that there is in him something that deserveth to be stooped to. Let him walk uprightly, christianly, soberly, religiously, in his family, and give a good example to all in the household; then shall the wife willingly give him the better place, when she cannot but see him to be the better person. No inferior can avoid stooping in his soul to that superior, in whom grace and God's image do appear according to his place. A virtuous man shall be regarded in the conscience of the worst woman, yea, in

the behaviour also of any that is not monstrous. It is no burden to any to yield themselves to such an one as is apparently better than themselves. It is true, that (in a mad fit) the wife of the best husband may be undutiful; but when she is returned to herself, she shall condemn herself, and justify him; and so, instead of losing his authority, he recovers his own with advantage. Be you therefore all assured, that you shall find virtuous carriage the best preservative of esteem. Take pains then to make thyself good, for that is the most compendious way to make thyself revered.

But as, in general, we prescribe a good conversation as the best preserver of a man's authority in the family, so especially must all husbands be counselled to shun evils which make every man to seem vile in the eyes of those that see him so disordered.

The first of these is Bitterness, as the Apostle PAUL terms it, in giving all husbands warning of it, saying, "Be not bitter to your wives." Sharp, tart carriage, consisting of reviling, striking, and other furious words and gestures, he fitly calleth bitterness, because it is as offensive to the mind, as gall and wormwood to the palate. This bitterness shews folly, and works hatred, and therefore must needs be a great underminer of authority. "They will hate whom they fear," saith one well, of a tyrant. A tyrannical husband, as well as a tyrannical prince, shall thrust himself besides his place. Such demeanour betrayeth great impotency of affection, and want of wisdom, whence will ensue want of reverence.

Secondly, he that would retain the pre-eminence of his place, must avoid Unthriftiness, another great enemy to reverence. Drunkenness, gaming, ill company, are the three parts, as I may call them, of unthriftiness; the first drowneth wit, the second consumeth wealth, the third eats out the heart of all good conditions: and he that hath neither wit in his head, nor money in his purse, nor good qualities in his person, how can he be but loathed and despised. Wherefore away with drinking, gaming,

and following ill companions, if thou wouldst not be cast at once out of the hearts of all thy family, and all thy neighbours, and of thy wife also, both for love and reverence.

Thirdly, Lightness must be avoided by husbands; foolish, childish tricks, that have no impression of gravity or discretion upon them, but savour of a kind of boyishness. Such contemptible things must needs expose a man to contempt. If the husband put a fool's coat upon his back, can he blame his wife though she laugh at him? The bitter man is like a frantic head, very troublesome; the unthrifty man as a scald head, very offensive; the light man, the jester, like a giddy head, very ridiculous. Such men will soon displace themselves, though no man strive to undermine them. But let every godly man cast from him all these base evils, and strive for holiness and gravity of conversation, that he may be indeed a governor, and that his superiority, supported by such pillars, may stand upright and unshaken.

CHAP. IX.

Of the Parts and Ends of a Man's Authority.

BUT Authority must be exercised as well as preserved; yea verily, it cannot be kept, unless it be used, being like a sword, that will rust if it lie still in the scabbard without using. Now that men may understand how to use this precious thing, (for Authority is one of the richest jewels in the world, it is a model of God's sovereignty, and the very life and soul of all societies,) it is necessary for us to direct them herein, by dwelling upon three points: first, the Parts of authority; secondly, the End; and thirdly, the Manner of using it.

Of the Parts of authority I shall speak first. I mean by Authority, a power of exercising government over another; and this hath two parts, to guide and to recom-

pense, to direct and to requite. Direction consists in the enjoining of lawful things to be done, and in the forbidding of things at least indifferent. Recompence is also double; of good and obedient carriage, by commendation and rewards; of evil and disobedient, by reproofs and punishments. These are the parts of government, I mean those things which a governor by virtue of his place both may and must take upon him to do, and which are so appropriated to the place of a governor, that none other may venture to do them all, unless he will exceed his vocation, sin against God, and wrong the person over whom he usurpeth. Now, concerning all these,—commanding, forbidding, commending, rewarding, reproofing,—it is on all hands granted, that it is lawful for an husband to exercise them all upon his wife; yea, and as to some kind of punishment also, by withdrawing from her the plentiful demonstrations of kindness, and fruits of his liberality, and by abridging her of her liberty, and the enjoyment of many things delightful, an husband may inflict the same.

We must next shew the End, whereto he must direct all and each of these Parts; and that is, the good of his wife; the increase of virtue in her, and reformation of vice; the making her better, and helping her to comfort here, and salvation hereafter. So all governors have their power from God, rather for the benefit of them whom they govern, than for their own ease, pleasure, or profit. In like sort the husband hath this his domestic sovereignty, in order that God, the Governor of all, may receive more glory by the comfortable fruit of his own ordinance to them that yield unto it. The aiming at this end would be as great a furtherance as any could be to the well-being of a family, and would keep out almost all the mischiefs wherewith now divers households are little less than rent in pieces; for most men never dream of this End, but serve themselves wholly in governing, and regard not their wives at all. The not knowing why they govern, makes husbands govern amiss, and so become burdens to

themselves and their wives. He that shoots at a wrong mark, cannot but shoot awry ; and he must needs take a wrong way, that mistakes the town to which he should travel. Wherefore an husband should often demand of himself, saying, Why am I the chief in this household ? and why lieth the government on my shoulders ? Is it that I should live at more ease than any in the family ? that I should fulfil mine own wishes, and have what I would ; and that every one should care for me, and I for none ? No ; for the Head in the body was not created for its own sake ; and I would count him an evil Magistrate and Minister, that should betray such a conceit in his place. But here I am the chief, that all may fare the better for me ; that by my using more wisdom, and taking more pains, and shewing more virtues than any of the family, all the family, and especially my wife, may live more orderly and comfortably, may enjoy more quiet, and get more grace, than could be attained if I were away. The fruit of my ruling my wife must be her comfort and happiness ; neither must I account any happiness to myself, wherein she hath not her portion.—So by often informing himself to what purpose he ruleth, he shall exceedingly help himself to rule well.

CHAP. X.

Of Justice in the Husband's Government.

BUT to shoot at the mark is not much praise-worthy, unless a man hit it ; so for a man to intend his wife's good, unless he effect it also, is not much to his commendation. Now the only way of attaining the End of any business, is to do it in a right manner. Wherefore we will direct husbands how they shall rule, so as to weaken every corruption and strengthen every virtue in their wives, and to make their lives ten times more holy and happy than else they could be, and give them just

cause (which is the most desirable thing that can be ~~in~~ government) heartily to praise the name of God for their meeting together in marriage. At least, if the husband follow these directions, he shall be blameless if he miss his end, because he doth not miss it through his own default, but by means of something that lies not in his power to prevent. To the point, then: a man, in governing his wife, must govern himself according to the rules of the three principal virtues which are of most use, as in all places of Government, so likewise in this domestic Kingdom; for so it is, and so it may most properly be called. These virtues are Justice, Wisdom, Mildness; with the practice of which he must temper the exercise of his authority, and then shall he bring glory to God, and good to his wife, and to himself, in governing. Justice is the life and soul of government, without which, it is no better than a dead carcass. Wisdom is the eye of government, without which, it is like a strong soldier stark blind. Mildness is the health and good constitution of government, without which, it is like a large body full of diseases. Unjust government is tyranny; unwise government is folly; unmild government is cruelty; but just, wise, and mild government is government indeed, causing the husband to be, as it were, God in the family, a resemblance of the sovereignty and goodness of him that instituted matrimony. Let us begin with Justice, the soul of government; the absence whereof doth make it degenerate into odious tyranny.

By Justice, I mean that which is commonly called distributive Justice, which consists in fitting the usage of persons under authority, both to the superior's limits, and to the inferior's deservings. This must be practised both in Directing and Recompencing. For the first; he must learn so to command, not as the chief and absolute commander, but as one who himself stands under a superior power, to which he doth more owe subjection, than his wife to him. Wherefore he must in no sort abuse

his authority, to force his wife to things that are sinful. What God commandeth, he must not forbid; what God forbiddeth, he must not command. What the wife cannot either perform or omit, without sinning against God and her own soul, (because either the Lord himself, or some superior powers, have interposed their authority,) that it is extreme injustice for the husband to require or to prohibit. This is to thrust her into the fire of hell, so much as in him lieth; out of which if she be not drawn by a strong hand, she must be damned for yielding, he for enjoining. Wherefore in such absurd and sinful commands, he shall violate the laws of wisdom and justice both at once; and shew himself, in the same action, both a fool towards her, and a rebel against God. For it is the highest degree both of unrighteousness and of folly, for the subordinate governor to set himself above the sovereign. Let no husband, therefore, forget, that the Lord in heaven, and the public Magistrate on earth, are above both him and his wife, and that they both ought equally to be subject to these; and therefore, let him never set his private authority against these authorities that are stronger than his, nor make his wife undutiful to either of these, by a false claim of duty to himself. It is a tyranny and usurpation for any governor to be ignorant of, or to transgress, the bounds of his own place. For a man to command his wife to lie for his advantage, to break the Sabbath for his gain, to participate in his fraud, or the like, nothing is more abhorrent from equity. Where Princes have commanded their subjects to worship images, or commit other iniquities, they have brought upon themselves the odious name of tyrants; and the not yielding to their sinful commandments has been a high praise unto their subjects. Doubtless a husband cannot, but with still less shew of reason, challenge power to appoint such things; and so, to forbid his wife to pray unto God, to come to the word and sacraments, or to shew mercy to the distressed with discretion, this is against right in the highest degree. When DARIUS com-

manded that no man should invoke the name of God for thirty days, the prophet DANIEL would not condescend to such a command; why then should a wife hearken to her husband in the like case, to the apparent transgression of her Maker's law? Nay, why should any man be so exorbitant in his ruling, as to call for obedience in such things? See then, all ye husbands, that your words to your wives hold agreement with the laws of God; else you govern not, but tyrannize; and to disobey you, is the best obedience; or rather, to withdraw one's self from following your ill-ordered directions, is not to deny subjection to your place, power, and persons, but to your sins, lusts, and corruptions, yea, to the Devil himself, who ruleth in you, and abuseth your tongues as his instruments in such a case. If ADAM were guilty for hearkening to the voice of his wife, contrary to God's voice, doubtless she deserved punishment also, for hearkening to his voice against God's.

But this rule of Justice must be extended yet a little further. Not alone in things that are unlawful, but also in things that to the wife's erring conscience seem unlawful, must the husband forbear to urge his authority. What she doth account a sin, that the husband ought not to force her to. The Conscience is God's immediate officer, and commanding by virtue of its commission, (the will of God revealed in the Scriptures,) though it err in construction of that commission, must yet be obeyed, and over-weigh the authority of all other commanders, till with due reasons, manifesting such mistake, it be better informed, and duly satisfied. For whosoever accustometh himself to go against conscience in things, which though they be not, yet are judged to be sins, will at length so blot out all conscience, as to go against it in things that are really faults. Whoso will make bold with an erroneous conscience, shall procure to himself either a dead and seared, or else a perplexed conscience: so a man, in offering violence to his wife's conscience, shall

quickly drive her either to utter carelessness, or utter uncomfortableness ; for in crossing the sentence of her own soul, either she shall put it quite to silence, or make it so terribly clamorous, that the noise of terrors shall be always found in her ears, and her life shall be unto her as tedious as if she were ever upon the rack, through the fierce and inward accusations of her own Accuser and Judge. Wherefore, in cases of this nature, when a woman, through weakness of judgment, believeth a thing indifferent to be sinful, the husband must not, by vehemence, compel his wife's practice against her conscience, but with pity and gentleness seek to free her soul from the entanglement of such error, by better information ; still remembering, that conscience is the supreme commander of man, next under God, and hath the most sovereign authority over men's actions. The truth is, yet, that if she pretend conscience, when it is but wilfulness, he must a while wait for the healing of this stiffness : but if fair persuasions will not reclaim her, he must at length use the authority bestowed upon him by God, and expressly enjoin her to change her obstinacy into subjection. You will, perhaps, demand, how a man shall know, whether his wife be wilful or scrupulous ? I answer, these two may easily be distinguished. For first, scruple of Conscience is grounded upon the Word of God, and taketh occasion of doubting from some text of Scripture, that carrieth at least an appearance of condemning that, whereof it makes question. But obstinacy is ever pleading conscience, when yet it is backed with no part of God's Word, that can in any probability be thought to induce to a fear of doing or omitting, what it refuseth to do or omit. Where wilful error, without conscience, hinders yielding, no heed must be taken to it : when an erroneous conscience hindereth, it must be tenderly handled. Therefore if a woman can produce some Word of God that maketh her doubt of the lawfulness of a thing, though it be perhaps misinterpreted by her, she must be resolved, not compelled : but if she stand upon

terms of conscience, without God's Word, she may be compelled, because there is no other way of resolving her ; for not every scruple of heart doth make a thing sin to a man in whom it is, but that alone which is grounded upon the Scriptures ; in which case, conscience (though mis-informed) retains its own authority, and so to force a woman to act against it, were to force her to sin. Again, it may be thought the mistake of conscience, when things indifferent are deemed either sinful or needful ; and in such things, it is a point of justice to be tender towards a weak conscience. But if one will seem to make a conscience of not doing that (and so refuse to do it) which God hath commanded plainly, this is surely wilfulness in error, not infirmity of conscience ; and therefore here the wife is not to be borne with, but after good means used to discover her error, if she persist in wilfulness, the husband may justly be so much the more urgent, by how much she is more backward. But be not so unrighteous towards thy wife, as to urge her either to displease God or her conscience in a thing indifferent, leaning on the Word of God : for none is Lord of conscience, but only God, the Lord of heaven and earth. And thus much for Justice in the matter of Directing.

It must be exercised also in requiting either the bad or good carriage of the wife. Bad behaviour may be requited with reproofs and corrections, (as we said above,) only so that Justice be observed herein. And to this end, two rules must be given ; one in regard of the thing for which, another in regard of the measure wherein, one reproveth or correcteth.

First ; no reproof or correction must be given without a fault ; where no sin hath gone before to deserve such hardness, it cannot without much injustice be practised against her. No good chirurgeon will lay a plaister upon a sound place ; that were always a needless labour, and at most times dangerous, for some medicines will make the sound flesh sore ; so neither must an husband find

fault, where no fault is, for fear of making a fault where none else would be.

Here we must also observe, that a fault reformed must go in the account as no fault: and therefore a woman must never be upbraided with it: for an upbraiding is a reproof, and a sin amended is, after a sort, annihilated. Indeed former faults may justly be alleged, to aggravate the same offence reiterated: but if the wife do not repeat her sin in committing, the husband shall deal exceedingly unjustly, if he repeat it in reproof. Wherefore chafe not against thy wife for no fault; reprove not her when she dishonours not God, neither let passion ever make thee repeat those things which she hath reformed; so shall thy ways be conformable to Justice, in this point of reproof or punishing, as to the Cause of doing.

But the Measure of doing is in every thing almost of as needful observation as the cause; for Justice is to proportion the reproof or punishment to the fault. But to come a little nearer to this point: the husband must know that, as to punishing his wife, he must come exceedingly slowly to it, and be very seldom in it, never proceeding unto it till compelled, because other means have been frustrated. For a man to estrange his countenance and behaviour towards his wife, to withdraw the testimonies of his love, or to cease to trust her and speak familiarly and cheerfully to her; these are such things as deserve the name of chastisements. The wife that hath not forgotten all good affection to her husband, cannot but smart and bleed under these stripes, as I may call them. They are therefore to be of rare use, and not applied at all, till the grossness of much misdemeanour shall compel. And all things of this kind, whether reproofs or chastisements, must still be more or less sharp, as the fault is greater or lesser, being suitable not to the passion, or loss, or hurt of the reprover, but to the sin or offence of the reprovèd.

Another part of Justice in Recompensing is, that good deeds go not unrecompensed. Rewards and com-

commendations must be given, to increase the good things that are in the wife, as well as reproofs to diminish the evil. SOLOMON saith, that the husband of the good wife “ shall praise her :” and again he saith, “ Give her of the labour of her hands.” A man must give his wife to understand, by words of comfortable approbation, what content he takes in her good and dutiful behaviour. He must animate and encourage her to a perpetuity of pleasing and loyal carriage, by some special courtesies, in which she will most delight. For the cheerful countenance, amiableness, affability, and liberality of the husband, are to the good wife the causes of as great content as any thing in the world, next to the favour of God. Wherefore, if ever thou wilt live happily in matrimony, feed virtue, nourish obedience, confirm all good qualities, water and refresh the tender buds of thrift, dutifulness, and other graces, which begin to appear. Let thy wife see, that thou dost much more willingly look upon the best things, and more often remember them, and that thou hadst much rather be telling of her good, than of her evil, and be making much of her, than reprehending her: for doubtless, when all is done, experience shall prove, that the sweet herbs grow fairest and safest in the sunshine; and many a wife had been very good, if the husband could have seen and fostered a little goodness at the first.

CHAP. XI.

Of Wisdom.

THE next virtue of the Husband is Wisdom, the Eye of Government, which must help Justice in her place: for virtues are knit together in a near band; one will draw on another. This Wisdom is the Stern of Authority, which must guide it in an even and steady course, that it may neither dash upon slavish Fear, as a rock on the left hand, nor upon Contempt, as a dangerous quicksand on

the right hand. The principal use of Wisdom is to behave one's self so uprightly, that Love and Reverence may not interfere, and the one cut and destroy the other. It is hard, in the case of an inferior so familiar, to be loved and yet not slighted, if one's carriage be kind and familiar; harder, if one's behaviour be more reserved, to be revered, and yet not slavishly feared. Prudence therefore must so manage all things, that it may keep these two affections in their due temper, free from excess, and free from defect, that a man may do good according to the dignity of his place; for affections will easily fall foul each upon the other, and wound one the other, to the overthrow of both. Love will turn fear into a slender respect, fear will turn love into hatred and despite; but discretion must so serve the turn of both in due time and season, that both may be preserved in their due measure. More particularly, Wisdom must give rules for the right ordering of authority, first, in general, and then of each part of it.

FIRST then in general, it is a main part of Wisdom in an Husband, to conform the use of his authority to the disposition of his Wife, to which purpose he must labour much to become thoroughly acquainted with the temper of his wife's mind. There is great difference of women's natures. Some are more stiff, some more pliant; some will be more easily ruled, some with more difficulty; some require more sharpness, others will be better wrought upon with gentleness; and the master-piece of Wisdom is, fitly to frame all commandments, reproofs, and rewards, to the conditions of the party. Some will be sooner persuaded than compelled, and some contrarily; which diversity of dispositions if a man mark not, he shall create to himself and to his wife a great deal of unnecessary labour. A soft, tender, and gentle woman must be dealt with more tenderly; a rough high-spirited woman with more sternness and severity, whether a man command or reprove, or whatsoever else he doth or speaketh. And in this case an husband must not follow his own inclination, but bow himself to the temper of his wife. Physicians

give not the same physic to all bodies ; they prescribe not such drugs as they have nearest at hand, but as are best befitting the patient's body. Those also that deal in metals, give not the same heat to every metal ; lead will be sooner and with more ease melted ; iron must have more coals and more blowing. The husband must diligently observe by his wife's actions, whether she be lead or iron. A governor should know the constitution of those that are under his government, and behave himself towards them differently, according as they differ. As they are more given to grieve or chafe, to be dejected or to be careless, so must a man measure out his actions, and the manner of them, that he may most heal, and least provoke, those passions wherewith the woman is most apt to be overcome. Neither will this prove impossible to attain, considering that continual occasion of conversing together will afford means of informing a man's self in this point, if he take but any reasonable heed thereof, and pray the LORD of heaven to furnish him with discretion. St. PETER points all men to this part of discretion, when he saith, that Woman is the weaker vessel, meaning, that she is subject to more natural imperfections than the man ; and the proportion of that precept holds also in regard of the difference of the natures of women amongst themselves, some being weaker than others. Wherefore, in this matter, the husband must shew himself a man of knowledge in dwelling with his wife.

The example of our Saviour CHRIST's Government may become our precedent : for he doth well consider, both the nature of all the members of his mystical body, (for they are all but dust, and full of frailties,) and the particular nature of each of them, by which it comes to pass, that some are fuller of infirmities than others. CHRIST's Wisdom therefore shews itself in mixing a fit cup of consolation or affliction for every soul. Every husband must carefully imitate his example ; for if some women should be reproved so often and sharply as others, they would be

quite disheartened ; and some, if they should receive so great kindness and commendations as others, would be quite puffed up with pride. Now the art of government must moderate all things according to the nature of the governed. And this it is that maketh it so hard to govern well : but, as I said before, the LORD, the giver of wisdom, will not deny it to them that crave this gift at his hands. Wherefore, all ye husbands, know for a certainty, that it sufficeth you not to be just, unless you also be discreet. Thy commandments may perhaps be not unlawful in themselves, but unfit for thy wife ; and then, though thou mayest not be charged with unrighteousness, yet thou canst not escape the imputation of folly. Some man thinks, that his wife should do and take all, as he sees such and such a man's wife ; and he accordingly carries himself towards her, and looks to find at her hands, not considering that one last will not serve every shoe. And in this case, while most men will do as their neighbours do, and look that their wives should do as their neighbours' wives, they fill their houses full of contention ; yea many, whilst they follow their own passions, utterly overthrow the peace of their families, because they will not do and speak what is fittest for their wives, but what holdeth most agreement to their own humours. Now be advertised, (for the prevention of many evils,) that you must live with your wives, not alone as men of righteousness, but as men of knowledge also. And this is one rule of prudence in general, to know and observe the Wife's Disposition.

Another rule is to chuse fit Circumstances for commandments, reproofs, rewards, and all the acts of power or authority, viz. first, a fit Time, then a fit Place ; for these are the most notable circumstances of all actions, and such as require our most heedful observation.

For Time ; there is first a time fit for reproofing, commanding, commending, and all other actions ; and again, a time which is very unseasonable for some, or for any of them ; and to set down particular directions for that

which admits of almost infinite variety, is a task altogether impossible. Wherefore in general, two rules must here be observed, which will easily keep out all notorious inconveniences in regard of time. The rules, I confess, are most necessary to be observed in the matter of Reproof; that being a thing wherein most wariness should be used, because it is most apt to be taken in ill part, and because as it is most needful, and if it speed well does very much good, so a little thing will hinder the fruit of it, and make it prove very dangerous. Wherefore in administering it, most discretion had need to be used, that it poison not instead of healing. But yet in all the other parts of governing, the same rules are so universally necessary, that much mischief will grow in a family for want of observing them. A commandment untimely given, may do as much hurt as a blow; and an unseasonable precept may prove as pernicious as an unseasonable reproof. But let us shew what times prudence must choose for the doing of any act of government. Now as in this case there are two persons to whom this authority hath relation, namely, the person that exerciseth it, and the person towards whom it is exercised; so a time of reproving or commanding must be chosen agreeable to the disposition of both, and it must be then used, when he is fit to use it well, and she to take it well.—First then, when a man's self is quiet, in tune, and free from perturbation, then may he wisely command, reprove, or do any other like thing, as occasion shall offer; that being a season when in all likelihood he shall do it well. But when anger boileth within, then is he to take great pains to bring himself into due temper again, and till that be done, to forbear the exercise of any part of his authority; unless he will disgrace himself through that faultiness which cannot but flow from such passions. Wherefore if thou art an husband, take this advice: Authority cannot be well managed but by the hand of wisdom, therefore undertake not to exercise it when wisdom is banished: Go not about such a work but when thy heart is quiet, thy judg-

ment clear, thy mind settled, and when thou art thyself: Then shew thy wife her duty, then say what thou wouldst have, then tell her of her faults, else never shalt thou make her see her duty, or mend her faults. In a word, never go about to judge of colours, when a mote is in thy eye. And thus must a good Husband keep time in regard of himself.—He must likewise observe due seasons in regard of his Wife, those, namely, wherein she is capable of receiving information or reproof. If she be not fit to hear, as well as himself to utter wholesome words, the labour of uttering them must be lost. When she is quiet, cheerful, well-pleased, and free from excessive grief, anger, pain, sickness, (which dispose the soul to passion,) or other like vexations, then is the fit time to tell her of a fault, and wish her to do or forbear what a man would have done or forborne, else her passions will make her as unable to take any thing well, as his would make him unable to do it well. Let the mind be calm, the judgment clear, the soul quiet; and then cast in good words, as good seed into the ground that is plowed and manured, and well fitted for the seed. And he that cannot moderate himself in this way towards his wife, shall often make three or four faults in speaking of one; and make a breach by giving that commandment which at another time would be quietly accepted.

Another Circumstance of moment is that of Place, about which wisdom directs that these rules be observed: First, that what parts of government carry with them any difficulty and distaste shall be exercised in private betwixt them two, viz. reprovng, and commanding of things that in all likelihood may be against the mind of the wife; Secondly, that what parts are pleasing to her, or in no way contrary to the good-liking of nature, as the giving of commendations, rewards, or easy commandments, shall be done, as occasion serveth, in the presence of others. For hard commandments and reprehensions, the most secret place is the most convenient; because, if the wife should, at first hearing, receive them passionately, no one

will be acquainted with her passionateness, and because she will not have the least occasion of taking up the conceit (which would blast the fruit of all good admonitions) that he speaks so as to put her to disgrace. Wherefore if any thing be amiss, whereof thou wouldst admonish thy wife, take her aside, and let her hear it from thee, when she is well assured that no ear shall be privy to thy words but her own. If thou wouldst have her do or forbear any thing, which thou thinkest will be displeasing to her to hear, shew thy mind in private; and there persuade, where thou mayest with more freedom speak all that is fit to be spoken, and where (if some little heat should arise betwixt you) it may not be published to the hurt of your names. It may be objected, That some women will not fear to offend in public, before the servants and children, and strangers; and if the husband then forbear to speak to her, and let her go away with it so, would not this prove infectious to the beholders, and make them apt to follow the same trade of evil doing? I answer, if such public faults fall out, a man may shew his dislike in a patient manner of speaking, and make it appear that he doth not wink at his wife's faults. But I answer again, that in such a case he must express grief rather than anger, and must defer the lawful sharpness, and (as I may call it) wholesome lancing, by a reproof, till his wife and himself be together alone; and by that time she will remember how she overshot herself, if he give her not the advantage of replying, by being carried into some absurdity with her for company. Neither need a man fear the infection of servants or children by faults thus healed in secrecy; for his present grief, dislike, and patience, will work more upon them (considering the person) than if he should fall into chiding; and there will be time enough after, in her absence, to give them warning of the sin. There will be time also to chide her for having given so bad an example. And they may know that a man hath reproved, though they hear him not reprove; and this will well enough prevent the infection that might come

from her offence. Wherefore in no sort is their rashness to be allowed, (yea, it is most sharply to be condemned,) that must needs out with it, whoever stands by, even before children and servants, and perhaps also strangers, not having the wit nor power to refrain till a fit place of privacy may be gotten. These are the rules of Wisdom that concern the exercise of authority in general. Those follow next, which particularly concern the matter of Direction; and these must look partly to the Things commanded or forbidden, partly to the Frequency of commanding.

For the first; a man must not abase his authority to two sorts of things that are not worthy of the same; namely, Things trifling, and Things ridiculous.

First then, Let it be regarded in commanding, that the man's authority descend not unto too mean and trivial things. The husband must not be bidding and intermeddling by commandments in the small businesses of the family; he must leave some things in the family to the discretion of his wife, that his authority may not be undervalued, because of the triflingness of those matters about which it is employed. In these things he should permit his wife to rule under him, and give her leave to know more than himself, who hath weightier matters, and more nearly touching the welfare of his household, to exercise his knowledge in. And if in any of these matters, he shall meet with any disorder, it were a part of wisdom in him to advise and counsel, rather than to charge and command. See therefore that the matter be so much worth, before thou lay a charge concerning it; for he that for every light thing will be drawing out his commandment, shall, to his grief, perceive at length, that it will be not much esteemed in any thing.

Secondly, Let him never command senseless and unreasonable things, such as are grounded merely upon his will, and upon no good reason besides. Such commandments will make her take him for an heady fool, and not a wise head; and that conceit can never arise, but with

the utter ruin of her reverence, and so of his authority. For a man to force his wife, by the power of his authority, to take up a feather, to wag a straw, or the like, because forsooth he will have it so, and shew that he is her master, exposeth him to contempt; and in making it appear that he is master over her body, he ceaseth to be master over her heart. I confess that the woman should be so perfectly subject, as to cast her eyes only upon the lawfulness or unlawfulness of the thing commanded; but the husband should consider further, and look that what he gives in charge be commodious, useful, and needful to be done. He that without reason enjoins his wife to do any thing, doth all one as if he should ride without a bridle. If such a man's horse be not exceedingly gentle and well-broken, he cannot do otherwise than either run out of the way, or stumble and cast the rider: so the wife of such a foolish man must be of extraordinary meekness and patience, or else she will either rebel against him, or contemn him, or both. For the reasons wherewith the commandment of any superior comes backed, are, as it were, a bridle in the inferior's judgment, by which one may check and hold in the violence of unruly passions: but if reason be wanting, even a gentle-natured woman is apt to prove refractory. Look therefore that thou never bid thy wife do any thing which Reason (and not only Will) hath not first bidden thee.—These are the rules of prudence, in regard of the Subject of authority, or matters wherein it should give directions.

As to the Frequency of exercising authority, let this part of power be but rarely used. It should be laid up as one's best attire, to be worn alone upon high-days. A garment that comes upon a man's back every day will soon be thread-bare; so will a man's authority be worn out with over-much use. Wherefore let it be kept in, till due occasions of using it call it forth. It hath been delivered as a means of a prince's preserving his reverence amongst his subjects, that he be not too often seen amongst them. Men are apt to set light by those

things which they see every day ; even things at first wondered at, are, by little and little, slenderly regarded if they be of common use. Take heed therefore that thou layest thine authority upon things but seldom ; lest thy wife, receiving many commandments, break some, and so catch a custom of neglecting thy power. A man who is much in commanding, will hardly avoid slipping into some trivial and unnecessary commandments ; and one of these will lighten his authority more than twenty of better use will grace it again. The wife is indeed an inferior, but very near, and very familiar ; wherefore she will count it a burden to be ever pressed with authority ; and you know that nature teacheth us to seek ease in shaking off burdens. Much reproving will make a reproof of no force ; and much more will much commanding make commandments of no efficacy.—And thus have you the rules of Wisdom, which must keep Authority, as it were, upon the wheels, that it may go forward more cheerfully, both for the husband's and the wife's comfort.

CHAP. XII.

Of Mildness.

THE next virtue of the Husband is Mildness, a very necessary virtue in this society, which, because it comes nearest to equality, doth therefore allow of familiarity betwixt the parties governing and governed, and therefore must needs also require more lenity. No woman can endure her husband's government with comfort, if gentleness do not temper it. The abundant love that a wife doth and may look for, causeth that she looks also for much tenderness of behaviour from her husband ; in which expectation if she be crossed, she cannot obey heartily, because not lovingly, nor lovingly, because she cannot think herself loved. The LORD JESUS CHRIST is the most gentle and meek governor in the world ; and when he

requireth us to take his yoke upon us, he commends himself as gentle and meek, and his yoke as easy and light. This is the best precedent that husbands can follow, the most worthy copy for them to write after. The Apostle telleth us, that the minister must be gentle, even towards those that are froward: surely then the husband must be gentle to his wife, though she shew herself to be of a froward disposition. Yea, we are commanded to shew all meekness to all men; and therefore much more each man to his own wife. But this virtue must shew itself in both the parts of authority, directing and recompencing: in directing, two ways; first, as to the Matter of it, or the things about which it is exercised; secondly, as to the Manner of exercising it.

In the Matter of directing, this virtue must manifest itself in two ways; first, by not using it too often, and too much; secondly, by not using it (unless upon necessity) about things that will prove difficult and tedious.—For the first of these; the husband must beware of extending the use of his commanding power too far; it must suffice him to know, that God hath given him the right of appointing in every thing that is not sinful; but in the exercise of it, he must shew himself of a kind and free nature, not rigorously taking upon him to command all he may, but willingly gratifying his wife in some, in many, in most things, that she may with more cheerfulness be subject to him in others. Obedience would be allured and enticed, by yielding it to its own disposition in almost every thing of an inferior nature, that it may more dutifully yield itself to be disposed of when greater necessity requireth.—But especially, let husbands shew mildness in the second point, viz. in forbearing hard and difficult commandments, so much as they possibly may. Beware of crossing your wives, and forcing them to things against their natural disposition. All men find in themselves a kind of inbred averseness from such or such things, and a delight in some other things; so that the one of them it is a great burden for them to do, the other to forbear. Yea, some things there are of their own nature hard and

painful to be done. Now it is a great point of gentleness in the husband, to forbear the requiring of obedience at his wife's hands, in things of this nature, unless a kind of necessity lie upon him to require it. The school-master that over-taxeth his scholars shall never make them learn well. The king that over-tasketh his subjects shall make them poor, and himself hated; so shall the husband weary his wife, and disgrace himself, by laying too heavy commandments upon her. Wherefore let every good husband put away this rigorousness; and by moderation in his commandments, make his authority easy to be borne, and his wife cheerful in subjection.—This is Gentleness in the Matter of direction.

The same virtue must be used in the Manner of commanding. When need requireth that some commandment be given, it must not be imperiously prescribed, in the extremity of enforcing words, but with a sweet kindness, (as the head doth move the members of the body,) with loving persuasions, and with familiar requests. Indeed, if the wife will needs try masteries, and strive to cast off the yoke of obedience, such a distemper makes it needful for the husband (with good words) to stand for his authority, even somewhat stiffly and peremptorily professing, that he will have his will in things lawful. But this course should be seldom used, and that only in matters of importance, which may be worth so much earnestness; in most cases, the quieter way is the more comfortable, and the more husband-like. The way, then, to prevail, with least burden to the inferior, and least toil to the superior, is with mild words to wish this or that, rather than with imperious phrases to enjoin it; for most natures are much more easily persuaded than compelled. Our Saviour CHRIST himself doth mostly beseech his Church, though with most right he might command it. Let the husband imitate that best husband, and beware of “Do it or you had best;” and “you shall, whether you will or no;” and “I will have it so, if it be but to cross you.” O no! much more comely for an husband's mouth are these

words ; “ I pray you, let it be so ; do me the kindness to do this or this.”—And so much for the practice of mildness in directing, the first part of government.

It must be likewise exercised in recompensing both good and bad actions.—For the good : When a Reward is given, it must be gently given ; and in bestowing any gift upon a man’s wife, he must do it in a kind fashion ; so that the manner may grace the matter, and make it more pleasing.—But chiefly gentleness must shew itself, when need requireth that bad deeds be requited with Reproof or Correction ; for there it is so much the more needful, by how much the actions themselves are less pleasant in themselves, and therefore will less bear the mixture of any bitterness with them. As to Reproofs, Mildness must shew itself in regard of the Matter of reproving, and also the Manner.—For the Matter, it should be exercised in not finding fault with every trifle that one sees amiss, nor chiding for every infirmity. Whatsoever fault is not either of a nature somewhat gross, or else done in a manner somewhat presumptuous, may be passed by in silence, either with none, or with half a word. That happy effect of love, which consisteth in passing by defects and weaknesses, is exceedingly necessary towards strangers, but much more towards those of the household, and most of all betwixt the nearest couple of the household. Be not, therefore, extreme nor rigorous in this matter ; but as a mother’s tenderness of love doth cause, that she takes no notice of divers little deformities in her own child, so stand thou affected to thine own wife. Pray to God against all her faults ; see and commend all her virtues : but petty defects and natural ordinary weaknesses, never take notice of, never reprove. Let her closely perceive that thou dost (but wilt not) know them : thine unwillingness to see and reprove, shall make her more willing to see and reform. But an ever-lowering and ever-chiding husband will make more faults than would be, and compel his wife to be far worse than her own disposition would work her to. Wherefore be

not always chiding, unless thou wouldst have thy wife always naught ; for over-frequent reproofs can bring forth nothing but disdain and sullenness.—Again, for the Manner of reproving ; when it is most needful, it must be very gentle. The words and gestures, used to press a fault upon the wife's conscience, must be mild and amiable, such as breathe out love and pity at once. A reproof must be applied as a plaister, not with scolding, but with moaning. It can hardly be avoided, even in the best, but that this medicine shall be necessary ; yet the husband must ever remember, to use no more roughness than is fit to his own flesh. Reproofs of themselves (as it were a potion) go enough against the stomach ; we need not by our bitterness make them more loathsome, (as it were) by a foul and unsightly cup. No patient was ever yet so desirous of health, that he could be persuaded to drink a potion scalding hot. That which burns the lips will never find admittance into the stomach, be it ever so wholesome a drink otherwise. It is just so with a reproof : if it scald the ear (as I may say) with upbraiding and disgraceful terms, with vilifying and railing words, with a fiery look, and a sparkling eye, it will never gain passage to the heart. Compassion, kindness, the declaration of one's sorrow for the fault of the person reprov'd, desire of his good, and care of his amendment ; these are the things that dispose the will to accept of an admonition, and much help the kindly working thereof. I am not against the wholesome earnestness of reproving, and that sharpness of rebuking, which in some cases the LORD himself commands : but this may well be without bitterness, without violence of words, and without fierceness. An admonition is then healthfully sharp and earnest, when a man in much plainness of speech, and strength of reason, lays open the greatness, absurdity, and danger of the sin ; enforcing the consideration of these points upon the party's conscience vehemently, but yet pitifully, with a declaration of more sorrow than anger, and of grief for his fault and danger, rather than displeasure against his person. Such ear-

nestness, husbands must be allowed to use ; for coldness will hinder the working of medicines. In one word, let a man make his reproofs somewhat warm, but not boiling hot. This is mildness in reproofs.

And thus you see, in what things an husband's Mildness must be exercised : and so also you have a sufficient direction for him in the matter of Governing, the first part of his duty. We must now descend unto the second part, which is the maintaining of his wife.

CHAP. XIII.

Of Maintaining one's Wife.

AS OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, the Husband of his Church, hath been in nothing wanting to her spiritual welfare, but doth clothe her with the pure and white linen of his own righteousness, and with the rich and precious graces of his good SPIRIT, whereby she is all glorious within ; so must every good husband afford his wife allowance of all necessary comforts for this life, that she may live a cheerful and a well-contented life with him. Before a man allure a woman into co-partnership of life with him, he should consider of means to maintain both himself and her ; for how it should consist with love, to pull so near a companion into the troublesome fellowship of misery and want, I cannot conceive. Doubtless, it is a man's wanton passion that spurs him forward to run blindfold into this estate, and not the good hand of God leading and calling him unto it, unless he be furnished, in some measure, with things fit to maintain a wife and family. When the LORD, by his good allowance, goes before us, and wishes us to follow him into any estate, he gives us wisdom to look before-hand, that we have, in some degree, all things necessary to perform the duties of this estate ; but when our own passions thrust us forward into any course, they make us run headlong after our own appetite, not troubling ourselves with any such wise and serious

considerations. I think, therefore, I may say, that the LORD is author to no man, of wedding a wife to misery and distress. Before he call him to marry, he will let it appear unto him, how (at least by the diligent painfulness of his hand) he may yield his wife a comfortable living. Not but that a poor man also may have both need of marriage, and also allowance to marry; for GOD forbid, that violence should be offered to the consciences of those of meaner estate, by laying such a snare upon them, as if they might not lawfully enter into matrimony. But this we say still, that they must have some honest calling, and will and ability to walk in the same faithfully, so that reason may tell them that, through GOD's blessing, there shall be something gotten to maintain a wife, though not richly, yet sufficiently, and according to that rank. For it was never GOD's meaning that all should be rich, neither yet would he have any to be habitual beggars. Let not any man, through distrust of GOD's providence, deny himself the benefit of GOD's ordinance, when his need requireth it, for the subduing of otherwise unsubduable passions; neither yet let any man so easily condescend to the desires of his own heart, as hastily to adventure on matrimony, till he have used all other due means of repressing such passions, (watchfulness, abstinence, praying, fasting, and all earnest oppositions,) when in reason he can give no sufficient answer to this demand, "How shall we do to live, when we are married?" I know that the over-covetous desire of elder people doth at many times stand too much on such matters, and hesitates not to thrust the younger upon miserable inconveniences, through an unbelieving distrust and fear of poverty. And I see, on the other hand, that the younger, for want of duly considering such matters, are apt to cast themselves upon such rocks, as to make shipwreck of peace and quietness, and of a good conscience too. Wherefore let a middle course be followed here. Thou mayest please GOD in a poor estate, and mayest afford a wife comfort in a meaner condition; but still somewhat there must be to live on, some calling,

some trade, something that may promise that, which God promiseth to the diligent, namely, that you shall be satisfied with bread. So this duty must take up part of a man's thoughts before he be married; and after the contract of marriage, he must still continue these thoughts, often looking to it that his wife may want nothing needful for her. Wherefore, let each husband be convinced, that it is his duty to allow his wife convenient maintenance, and not to think himself so absolutely lord of all, but that his wife must also enjoy the comfortable use of all. But we must also direct the husband in this part of his duty, by shewing him three necessary things: first, the Measure; secondly the Manner; thirdly, the Times and Seasons of this his Allowance.

For the first; two things must measure out her expenses, as well as his own; and those are his Place and his Means. So far as his Calling requireth, and his Ability will bear, and no further, must he extend his cost in attire and other necessaries for his wife: and not one only of these, but both, must be advised with; for sometimes a man's Place, or function in the commonwealth, would bear more than his decayed Estate will well suffer.

You see in what Quantity the wife's Allowance must be given. Consider, also, in what Manner; and that must be most willingly, cheerfully, readily; before she asketh he must answer, and offer before she request. The greatest commendation of a gift is the giver's cheerfulness; and the surest signs of cheerfulness are speed and expedition. Do to her, as God to his Saints; and willingly and abundantly give her all things to enjoy. And this do, both whilst you live together, and at thy decease also, if it fall out that thyself depart from this world first. For so (which is the third thing I intended to speak of) there are two Seasons, in which the husband's bounty should declare itself; the first, during life; the second, after it.

The love of an husband must not die before himself, no, nor with him, but the effects of it must survive him;

and when he is departed, his bounty must be present with her, even after death. When a man is to leave this world, he must not leave the care of his wife, but remember, in the disposal of his goods, to bequeath so full a part to her as may make it appear, that he thinks not himself wholly dead, so long as she (the one half of him) is alive. Let thy wife, even after thy death, enjoy such a part of thy substance, as that she need not stand beholden to her children, who in all reason should be beholden to her. Neither let thy wife's insinuations make thee more sparing to thy children than is fit; nor let thy fondness of thy children make thee more regardless of thy wife than is fit; but be sure, as thine estate is, to let them have wherewithal they may live, she like a mother, they like children: for doubtless, the wife is wronged, if her husband do not so provide for her, that the children shall not have occasion to despise her in her old age.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the Wife's peculiar Duties.

THE Wife's special Duty may fitly be referred to two heads: first, she must acknowledge her inferiority; secondly, she must carry herself as an inferior.

First, then, every good woman must suffer herself to be convinced in judgment, that she is not her husband's equal; without which, it is not possible that there should be any contentment, either in her heart or in her house. Where the woman stands upon terms of equality with her husband, (and much more if she will needs account herself his Better,) the very root of all good carriage is withered, and the fountain thereof dried up: out of place, out of peace. Whoever, therefore, doth desire or purpose to be a good wife, or to live comfortably, let her set down this conclusion within her soul:—Mine Husband is my Superior, my Better; he hath authority or rule over

me; nature hath given it to him, having framed our bodies to tenderness, men's to more hardness; God hath given it to him, saying to our first mother, "Thy desire shall be subject to thine husband, and he shall rule over thee;" his will I see to be made by God the tie, not of mine actions alone, but of my desires and wishes also; I will not strive against God and nature; though sin has made my place tedious, yet will I confess the truth; mine Husband is my Superior, my Better.—Unless the wife learns this lesson perfectly, if she have it not without book, and at her fingers' ends, (as we speak,) if her very heart do not inwardly and thoroughly condescend unto it, there will be nothing but wrangling, repining, striving, and a continual vying to be equal with him, or above him; and so shall their life be nothing else but a very battle, or a trying for masteries. Let us grant, that in gifts thou art his better, having more wit and understanding, more readiness of speech, more dexterity in managing affairs, and whatsoever other good quality may be incident to a woman; yet understand, that so may thy servant exceed thee as much as thou dost him. Hath not many a servant more wit and understanding, and often more grace too, than master and mistress put together? Yet loth would the wife be, that the servant should deny both to her husband and herself the name of Betters. Know, then, that a man may be superior in place to one to whom he is inferior in gifts; and know also, that thou dost abuse the good parts which God hath given thee, in seeking thence to infringe thine husband's superiority. Better were it for a woman to be of mean capacity, (so that she can put upon her the spirit of subjection,) than to be adorned with all the good qualities of nature, (for those of grace she cannot have, so long as her pride is so predominant,) and thereby be made self-conceited against her husband. Wherefore, O thou wife, let thy best understanding be to understand, that thine husband is by God made thy governor and ruler; and thou his inferior, to be ruled by him. Though he be of

meaner birth, and of less wit; though he were of no wealth nor account in the world, before thou didst marry him, yet after this, GOD will have thee subject; and thou must put upon thyself a willingness to confess thyself so to be. This duty so much more needs to be pressed, because, though it be so plain that it cannot be denied, yet it is withal so hard, that it can hardly be yielded to. Unless the judgment be truly informed and soundly convinced on this point, the will and affections will never be kept in good order. Set it down, therefore, as a conclusion, not so much as once to be called into question, “My Husband is my Better.”

Secondly, the wife being resolved that her place is the lower, must carry herself as an inferior; for it signifies little to confess his authority in word, if she frame not herself to submission in deed. Now she will testify her inferiority in a Christian manner, if she practise the duties of Reverence and Subjection.

First, for Reverence: the wife owes as much of that to her husband, as the children or servants do to her, yea, as they do to him; only it is allowed, that to her it should be sweetened with more love and more familiarity. All inferiors owe reverence; neither must the wife conceit, as if she were less bound to reverence her husband, than are the rest of the family. This alone is the difference: she may be more familiar, though not more rude, as being more dear, though not less subject than they. And this reverence of her's must be both inward and outward. First, the Heart of the wife must be held under, inwardly, with a dutiful respect of her husband. She must regard him as GOD's Deputy; not looking to his Person, but to his Place, nor thinking so much who and what an one he is, as whose Officer. This the Apostle strictly enjoineth, saying, “Let the wife see that she reverence her husband:” as if he had said; Of all things let her most carefully labour not to fail in this point of duty; for if she do, her whole carriage must needs be unbecoming. The Apostle's meaning is to prescribe a fear, not slavish, but

loving, such as may well consist with the nearest union of hearts, and such as is to be seen between CHRIST and his Church. This Fear of the wife is shewn, when, in consideration of his place, she doth abhor and shun it, as the greatest evil that can befall her, next to the breach of GOD's commandments, to displease and offend her husband. We stand in due awe of GOD's majesty, when we loathe the breach of his commandments, and the grieving of his SPIRIT, as the greatest of all evils. And the wife doth duly fear her husband, when, next to the former evil, she shuns the disobeying, grieving, and displeasing of her husband, who is, next to GOD, above her. Such regard must her heart have of her head, that it may keep her hand, and tongue, and all, from disorder. I know this is not customary among the greater number of women; yea, they scarcely esteem it a seemly or a needful thing that it should be so, but care as little for their husbands, as their husbands for them. But if thou wilt ever prove a virtuous wife, take much pains with thine heart, to make it stand in awe of thine husband; and know, that GOD hath not, for nought, given the above-mentioned caveat unto women. As a woman grows in this inward respect, so may she look to get the better of all other infirmities; as she is careless herein, so shall she be pestered with all other enormities. But how shall a woman bring her heart to this respectful disposition? I answer, by looking through her husband to GOD, the Author of Marriage, and putting herself often in mind, not of his deserts, but of GOD's Ordinance. If one consider an inferior Officer in himself, he cannot sometimes but disdain him for his meanness; but if he consider him as the KING's officer, entrusted with a part of his royal authority, his reverence to his Prince will produce some reverence to his Officer for his sake. The husband is to the wife the image and glory of GOD. The power that is given to him is GOD's originally, and his by GOD's appointment. Look not, therefore, on the qualities of thine husband, but upon his place; and know, that thou canst not neglect or despise

him, but the contempt redoundeth unto GOD's dishonour, who hath ordained him to be thine Head; so that if religion have seasoned thine heart with the fear of GOD, thou shalt fear thine husband also at his commandment.—But as the wife's Heart must be affected with this loving fear, so must her outward Carriage shew it, and that in two special things: first, in her Words; secondly, in her Behaviour.—Her Words are either to himself, of him behind his back, or to others before him: and all must have a taste of reverence.—Her speeches to himself must neither be sharp, sullen, or passionate, nor yet rude, careless, or contemptuous, but such as carry the stamp of fear upon them, testifying that she well considers who herself is, and to whom she speaketh. The wife's tongue towards her husband must neither be keen nor loose, neither such as argues anger nor neglect, but savouring of all lowliness and quietness of affection; so that if another should stand by and hear them, he might perceive (though he knew not otherwise,) that these are the words of an inferior to her better. Look what kind of words thyself wouldst dislike from thy servant or child, those must not thou give to thine husband; for the same duty of fear is, in the same words, and in the same plainness, commanded to thee, that is unto them. Forbear then all speeches savouring of passion; but beware also of words that may betray contempt. I told you before, that it is the privilege of a wife, (because of her dearness,) that she may be familiar: but yet I have observed an excess of familiarity that deserveth to be blamed. Why should a woman bear herself so over-bold of her husband's kindness, as to nick-name him with those nick-names of familiarity, *Tom, Dick, Ned, Will, Jack*, or the like; as I have heard good wives do, but (I confess) with a distaste of their rudeness: for could a woman speak otherwise to her child or servant, than in such kind of abbreviated names as these? Certainly the woman's love must be tempered with fear; and those speeches of hers, which would shew kindness, must also have a print of reverence

upon them, or else they are not allowable. Wherefore let wives be taught (in speaking to their husbands,) to learn of her, who called her husband by an honourable name. Leave *Tom* and *Dick* as names for thy boy; and call thine husband, *Husband*, or some other name of equal dignity. And thus must a woman's tongue be ordered towards her husband, when she speaks to him.—She must also look to her speeches directed to others in his presence, that they be such as may witness a due regard of him. His company must make her more careful of her behaviour to any other before him, than otherwise she need to be. Her words to children and servants, in his sight and hearing, ought not to be loud and snappish. If she perceive a fault in them, she must yet remember, that her better stands by, and therefore must not speak but upon necessity, and then utter that reproof in a more still and mild manner than in his absence she might. No woman of government will allow her children and servants to be loud and brawling before her; and shall she herself be so before her husband?—The woman's speeches of her husband behind his back, also, must be dutiful and respectful. She must not talk of him with a kind of carelessness or slightness of speech, much less in reproachful terms. Herein, the godly fact of SARAH is commended to our imitation, and must be put in practice; when she but thought of her husband, in the absence of all company, she did reverently entitle him by the name of *my Lord*. Who would bear a child speaking disgracefully and murmuringly against his own father, though behind his back? And shall it be thought sufferable in a wife? He that allows not an evil thought of the Prince, will not allow evil speeches of the Husband. Thus must a woman's Words be ordered towards her husband.—Something also must be spoken of her Gestures and Countenance, which, as well as her words, must be mixed with Reverence, and have a taste of fear. Both good and bad dispositions have more ways of uttering themselves than by the tongue. SOLOMON speaketh of an “Eye that despiseth the Mother.”

Surely then the Eye of the Wife also may be a despising Eye, and her whole behaviour and gestures may proclaim contempt, though her tongue be altogether silent. Now these also must be looked unto, that they may not discover a base esteem of the husband. Rude and contemptuous behaviour is no less uncomely in an inferior, and does no less displease a superior, than the most fierce and outrageous speeches would do. Wherefore as she will condemn these in her children towards herself, so let her by no means allow them in herself against her husband, towards whom the LORD hath bound her to practise reverence and fear, as much as any of her inferiors are bound unto her. For still it must be pressed upon the hearts of wives, that familiarity is allowed to them, but no rudeness.

The Second special Duty of a Wife is Subjection. Now that also hath two parts; the first is, Obedience to her husband's Commandments; the second is, Submission to his Reproofs.—For the first, the Apostle doth plainly give it in charge to women, saying, “Let the wife be subject to her husband in all things.” What need we further proof? Why is she his wife, if she will not obey him? And how can she in his name require obedience of the children and servants, if she refuse to yield it unto him? For doubtless she can expect it none otherwise than as his deputy, and a substitute under him. But the thing itself will not be so much questioned as the measure; not whether a wife must obey, but how far her obedience must extend. To this doubt the Apostle hath yielded us a plain resolution, saying, “In all things in the LORD.” Obedience, you see, must be general; only, so that it be in the LORD. In whatever matter a woman's yielding to her husband will not prove a rebellion against her Maker, in that matter she is bound in conscience to yield unto him, without any further question. Neither yet sufficeth it, that her obedience reach to all lawful things, unless it be also performed willingly, readily, quietly, cheerfully; without brawling, contending, thwarting, or

sourness. And thus you have heard the first part of subjection, obedience; a duty which, I doubt not, seemeth hard enough to woman-kind.—But the second part of subjection is yet more hard, and withal equally, if not more needful, that is, Submission in receiving Reproofs from an husband. As she must willingly obey all his lawful commandments, so must she patiently suffer all his reprehensions. Is not this duty plainly required in those words? “As the Church is subject to CHRIST, so must also wives be to their own husbands in every thing.” Doubtless, to bear reproofs is a necessary part of the Church’s subjection unto CHRIST; neither shall it discharge its duty in striving to obey, unless, where it faileth, it be content to be chided. Wherefore it is impossible for women to loose their consciences from the bond of this subjection, unless they could shew (which they shall never be able to shew,) some other text of Scripture limiting and abridging this.

CHAP. XV.

Containing some Application of the whole Subject.

AND first, this subject ministers good instruction to Young and Unmarried people, that they do not unadvisedly rush into this estate. A thing of such difficulty should not be slightly undertaken. They will have their hands full of duty; and if they get not their hearts full of grace, and their heads full of wisdom, they shall find an house full of trouble, and a life full of woe; meeting with gall instead of honey, and gravel instead of nourishing morsels. Wouldst thou be married? See what wisdom, what patience, what grace, fit to govern, or fit to obey, thou findest in thyself. Get these before thou be called to use them, or else marriage will not yield thee such contentment as thine imagination promiseth. Vain youths grow wanton, and must marry before they have any power

to practise, any understanding to know, their duties. He that leaps over a broad ditch with a short staff shall fall into the midst; and he that enters upon matrimony without great grace, shall be mired in disquietude and vexation. Let unmarried people think of this, and be wise.

Secondly, I must advise all Married Persons to become acquainted with these duties, and to mark their failings in the same. But mistake me not: I would that the wife should know hers, the husband his; and both, the common duties. I desire that they should observe each their own, not so much each other's failings. Indeed it may be feared, that divers hearers now will be worse for hearing, because they heard amiss. The husband may perhaps ring his wife a peal of her duty when he comes home, and tell her how her faults were described, and yet never consider his own duties or faults. The wife also may probably tell him of his own at home, when she hath little or nothing to say to herself. Thus both shall be worse, when they seek to upbraid each other, not to amend each one. Thou, Husband, didst listen attentively when the Woman's duties were handled; and saidst, "There he condemned my wife:" "at such a time she shewed little reverence, less obedience." Thou, Wife, hadst the like thoughts concerning thy husband: "There he told him plainly of his duty:" "It is not long since he shewed himself neither wise nor gentle:" "I wish he would see cause to amend." Unwise Man, unwise Woman; why hadst thou not most care of thine own soul? Couldst thou mark what was good for another's disease, and not what for thine own? Wilt thou grow skilful concerning another's way, and not know one foot of that wherein thyself should travel? Brethren, Sisters, let this be altered in us. If thou be a Christian Husband, have more care to know that, and be more frequent in considering that, for which thine own soul must answer, than what lies to the account of another. So do thou that art a Christian Wife. And that man or woman who sees not

more faults and failings in him or herself, than in the yoke-fellow, betrays wonderful pride and ignorance, if he or she be not matched with one too notorious. If the heart were well touched, its own sins would appear more grievous, the husband's or wife's less. Contend, therefore, not how short thy yoke-fellow comes, but not to come short thyself. Pass by the other's failings more easily, be more censorious towards thine own. This were to deal as a Christian, even to judge thyself. He never yet learnt to work well in any work, that would cast his eyes more upon his neighbour's fingers than his own : neither was he ever a good scholar, that would con his fellow's lesson, and not regard the task imposed upon himself. And this makes husbands and wives such ill pay-masters one to another, because they look often what is owing to them, not what they owe. I doubt not but experience will back my speech, if I pronounce, that they are not the best husbands and wives, who are heard to complain much of their yoke-fellow's defects in duty, little of their own. And yet is not this ordinary ? Every man would be a good husband, if his wife were not so bad ; and she a good wife, were not he so excessively faulty. All the accusations, all the judgings, are darted at each other. What folly is this ? Understand, idle Man or Woman, that it is not the requiring or receiving of duty from others, but the knowing and performing of what pertains to thyself, that will make thee a Christian, comfort thee in temptation, rejoice thee in death, and stand for thee in judgment. And yet thou art so loud and frequent in calling for duty, so dumb and ignorant in yielding it !

To conclude ; know thine own duty best, and mark most thine own transgressions of duty. Then shalt thou be free from brawls with thy yoke-fellow, if thou be taken up with pains about thyself ; and there is no better means of peace in families, than that every one should learn and ply his own work, and see and labour to amend his own faults. Have you then both, or either, been unchaste, unloving, unfaithful ? Repent both ; and strain

not courtesy, who shall begin; but let each set the other a copy of goodness. And if you will needs strive, let it be, which shall be best, which shall mend first. Hast thou been a foolish, passionate, unjust Husband, full of bitter words, perhaps also (which is monstrous) of blows given causelessly, and in anger, not regarding thy wife's good, so thou mightest go away with thine own will? Dive not into her faults; cry not out, she hath been thus and thus to me: but repent of thy bitterness, unthriftiness, and folly of all sorts; confess it to God; and beseech him to make thee a better Husband, that thy Wife may be better. Hast thou been a disdainful, contemptuous, brawling, impatient, discontented, or disobedient Wife? Ask thine heart before God; and dissemble not. If it be so, clamour not against thine Husband's folly; exclaim not of his rashness and hardness; but condemn thyself before God, and call upon him, to make thee reverence and obey thine Husband, as a commander under him. Entreat him in mercy to make thee better, that thy Husband also may be better. Follow the proverb, "Let every one of you mend one," I mean himself, and then contention will cease. Pray for each one's self first, then for each other. Where you have offended, labour to see it; confess, bewail, and call for power to reform; and be not skilful to cast the fault upon another, but to cast it out of thyself. So shall your loves be sure, your hearts comfortable, your example commendable, your houses peaceful, yourselves joyful, your lives cheerful, your deaths blessed, and your memories happy for ever.

EXTRACTS
FROM
THE WORKS
OF
ROBERT SANDERSON, D. D.
Some time Bishop of Lincoln.



TO WHICH IS PREFIXED
SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE.

THE
L I F E
OF
B I S H O P S A N D E R S O N .

ROBERT SANDERSON was born on the 19th day of September, 1587. The place of his birth was Rotherham, in the county of York.

He was the second and youngest son of ROBERT SANDERSON, Esq. of Gilthwait-hall, in the said county, by ELIZABETH, one of the daughters of RICHARD CARR, Gent. of Butterthwait-hall, in the same county.

He, like JOSIAH, began in his youth to make the laws of GOD the rules of his life; seeming, even then, to dedicate himself and all his studies to piety and virtue.

As he was inclined to this by that goodness with which the wise Disposer of all hearts had endowed him, so this calm, quiet, and happy temper of mind made the whole course of his life easy and grateful, both to himself and others. And this was improved by his prudent father's good example; and also by his frequent conversations with him, in which he was wont to scatter short and virtuous sentences, with little pleasant stories, and to make useful applications of them.

The foundation of his learning was laid in the Grammar-School of Rotherham; where he was observed to use an

unwearied diligence to attain learning. He continued at that school till about the thirteenth year of his age ; at which time his father designed to improve his grammar-learning at one of the more noted schools of Eton or Westminster, and, after a year, to remove him to Oxford. But, as he went with him, he called on an old friend, a minister of noted learning, who, after putting many questions to his son, assured the father that he was so perfect a grammarian, that he had laid a good foundation to build any or all the arts upon ; and therefore advised him to shorten his journey, and leave him at Oxford.

His father left him there, in the care of Dr. KILIBIE, then Rector of Lincoln College, who, after trial of his manners and learning, thought fit to enter him of that College, and not long after to matriculate him in the University, which he did in July, 1603 ; but he was not chosen Fellow till May, 1606, at which time he had taken his degree of Bachelor of Arts.

In July, 1608, Mr. SANDERSON took the degree of Master of Arts ; in the November following, he was made Reader of Logic, and in the year 1613, he was chosen Sub-Rector of the College, and the like for 1614, and 1616 ;—in all which time and employments his abilities and behaviour were such as procured him both love and reverence from the whole Society ; there being no exception against him for any faults, but only sorrow for the infirmities of his being too timorous and bashful, both which were so co-natural that they never left him.

In the year 1614, at the desire of the Rector and Society, he offered himself to be elected one of the Proctors for the University. They persuaded him that his merits were so generally known, and that he was so well beloved, that he had but to appear, and he would infallibly carry it, and would by that means recover the reputation of his College. When he understood that he had lost the election, he professed seriously to his friends, “ That if he were troubled for the disappointment, it was for their sake, not for his own ; for he was far from any desire of such an employment.”

In the year following, at the earnest request of DR. KILBIE and others, he printed his Lectures on Logic.

His book on Logic purchased for him such a belief of his learning and prudence, and his behaviour at the former election had got for him so great and so general a love, that his former opposers repented what they had done; and therefore his friends persuaded him to stand a second time, and accordingly, in April, 1616, he was chosen Senior Proctor for the following year.

An example of his discretion and diligence in this office may seem worth noting. If, in his night walk, he met with irregular scholars absent from their colleges at unseasonable hours, or disordered by drink, or in scandalous company, he did not use his power of punishing to an extremity, but did usually take their names, and make them promise to appear before him the next morning: and when they did, he convinced them with such obligingness, and reason added to it, that they parted from him with such resolutions as the man after GOD's own heart was possessed with, when he said to GOD, "There is mercy with thee, and therefore thou shalt be feared."

After his Proctorship was ended, with an uncommon cheerfulness he said to a friend: "I look back upon my late employment with great thankfulness to Almighty GOD, that he hath made me of a temper not apt to provoke, or be provoked by the meanest of mankind; and in this employment I have had many occasions for both. And though I cannot say with DAVID, that 'therefore his praise shall always be in my mouth,' yet I hope that, by his grace, it shall never be blotted out of my memory."

This busy employment being ended, he took his degree of Batchelor in Divinity in the May following, having been ordained Deacon and Priest in 1611; and in this year, being about the twenty-ninth of his age, he took from the University a licence to preach.

In 1618, he was presented to the Rectory of Wibberton, in the County of Lincoln; but it lay so low and

wet, that, for his health's sake, he was obliged to resign it.

In the year following, he was presented to the Rectory of Boothby-Pagnel, in the same County; about which time he resigned his Fellowship of Lincoln College. Not long after he was made Prebend of the Collegiate Church of Southwell, and shortly after of Lincoln.

And being now resolved to rest in a quiet privacy at Boothby-Pagnel, he married Anne, the daughter of HENRY NELSON, then Rector of Haugham, in the County of Lincoln; and the Giver of all good things was so good to him, as to give him such a wife as was suitable to his own desires.

He troubled not his parishioners by preaching high and useless notions, but such plain truths only, as were necessary in order to their own salvation. Nor did he think his duty discharged in performing only what the law enjoins, but did what his conscience told him was his duty, in reconciling differences and preventing lawsuits, both in his parish and in the neighbourhood; to which may be added, his frequent visitation of sick and disconsolate families, to whom he gave not only his advice but his alms, if there were any so poor as to need both. Of this the following narrative may be an example.—He met with a poor dejected neighbour, who complained that he had taken a meadow, the rent of which was nine pounds per annum, and when the hay was ready, a sudden flood had carried all away, and his rich landlord would abate him no rent; and that unless he had half abated, he and seven children were utterly undone. The Doctor spake comfortably to the man, bade him go home and pray, and he would go to his landlord. To the landlord he went the next day, and represented the sad condition of his poor tenant, and urged his reasons with so compassionate an earnestness, that the landlord forgave the whole rent.

In this contented obscurity he continued, doing good daily, and as often as any occasion offered, till, in 1631,

he was, at Archbishop LAUD's desire, made Chaplain in ordinary to King CHARLES I. The King was never absent from his sermons, and would usually say, "I carry my Ears to hear other preachers, but I carry my Conscience to hear MR. SANDERSON."

In 1636, he attended the King to Oxford, and was created Doctor of Divinity: and in 1642, he was named to be *Professor Regius of Divinity* in Oxford; but his mean opinion of his own abilities kept him from entering on the office till 1646.

He continued, for about a year, to read his lectures, which were first *De juramento*, a point at that time very dangerous to be handled as it ought to be. But as he was eminently furnished with abilities to satisfy the consciences of men on that important subject, so he wanted not courage to assert the true obligation of it.

Thus he continued, till the Parliament at Westminster sent the *Covenant* to Oxford, to be taken by the Doctor of the Chair, and the rest of the University; and then he, and many others, were expelled for not complying.

From Oxford he retired to Boothby-Pagnel; but there also he was much molested in doing his duty. To a friend, who came to condole with him on that account, he made this reply: "GOD hath restored me to my desired privacy, with my wife and children, where I hoped to have met with quietness, and it proves not so; but I desire to be pleased, because GOD, on whom I depend, sees it is not fit for me to be quiet. I praise him that he hath, by his grace, prevented me from making shipwreck of a good conscience, to maintain myself in a place of great reputation and profit: and though my condition be such that I need the last, yet I submit; for GOD did not send me into this world to do my own will, but his, and I will obey it."

Not long after he was carried prisoner to Lincoln, then a garrison of the Parliament, on the following account.—There was one MR. CLARK, Minister of Allington, near Boothby-Pagnel, who was made a prisoner of war in

Newark, then a garrison of the King ; a man so active and useful to his party, that, for his enlargement, the Committee of Lincoln sent a troop of horse to bring DR. SANDERSON a prisoner to that garrison. After some time, the exchange was made on these conditions : that DR. SANDERSON and MR. CLARK should live undisturbed at their own parishes ; and if either were injured by the soldiers of the contrary party, the other should procure redress. Nevertheless DR. SANDERSON could neither live safely nor quietly, being several times plundered, and once wounded in three places ; but he possessed his soul in patience, without the least repining. And though he could not enjoy the safety he expected by this exchange, yet by His Providence who can bring good out of evil, it turned so much to his advantage, that, whereas his Living had been sequestered from 1644, he, by the articles of war in this exchange, procured his sequestration to be recalled, and, by that means, enjoyed a poor but more comfortable subsistence for himself and family.

In this time of his privacy, he applied himself wholly to resolving perplexed Cases of Conscience, and would often praise God for that ability ; and that “ God had inclined his heart to do it for the meanest of any of those poor, but precious souls, for whom his Saviour vouchsafed to be crucified.”

He lamented much the dangerous mistakes of the nation ; and besought God to remove them, and restore us to that humility, sincerity, and single-heartedness, with which this nation was formerly blessed.

All repining and ambitious thoughts, and with them all other unruly passions, were so conquered in him, that if the accidents of the day proved to his danger or damage, yet he both began and ended it with an even and undisturbed quietness, always praising God, that he had not withdrawn food and raiment from him and his poor family, nor suffered him, in the times of trial, to violate his conscience, for the sake of safety and a more plentiful condition.

At the King's Restoration, he was one of those recommended by DR. SHELDON, Archbishop of Canterbury, to supply the vacant Bishoprics; on which account he would often say, "That he had not led himself, but his friend would now lead him into a temptation, which he had daily prayed against; and he besought God, if he did undertake it, so to assist him with his grace, that the example of his life, his cares, and his endeavours, might promote his glory, and help forward the salvation of others." He was consecrated Bishop of Lincoln, October 1660.

In this busy and weighty employment he behaved with great condescension and obligingness to the meanest of his clergy; and indeed he practised the like to all men, of what degree soever, especially his old parishioners of Boothby-Pagnel, who prayed for him, and he for them, with an unfeigned affection.

The King having, by an injunction, commended to the care of the Bishops the repair of the Cathedrals and their Houses, and an augmentation of the revenue of small Vicarages; he undertook the two last with so great care and charge, that a friend took the liberty to remind him, "that he was old, and had a wife and children that were but meanly provided for;" to whom he answered, "that it would not become a Christian Bishop to suffer the houses, built by his predecessors, to be ruined for want of repair; and still less to suffer any of those poor Vicars, that were called to so high an office as to sacrifice at God's altar, to eat the bread of sorrow, when he had a power to turn it into the bread of cheerfulness; and he wished that it were also in his power to make all mankind happy, for he desired nothing more: and as for his wife and children, he hoped to leave them a competence; and they were in the hands of a God, who would provide for all who kept innocence, and trusted in his protection, which he had always found enough to make and keep him happy."

About three weeks before his death, finding his strength decay, by reason of his constant infirmity, he retired to

his chamber, where his time was wholly spent in devotion, and longing for his dissolution; and when any prayed for his recovery, he seemed to be displeased, saying, "that his friends said their prayers backward for him; and that it was not his desire to live a useless life, and by filling up a place, keep another out of it, who might do God and his Church more service."

The day before he took to his bed, he received the Lord's Supper from the hands of his Chaplain, after which he spake to this purpose; "I have now, to the great joy of my soul, tasted of the sacrifice of my Saviour's death and passion, and with it received a spiritual assurance, that my sins past are pardoned, and that my God is at peace with me; and that I shall never have a will, or a power, to do any thing that may separate my soul from the love of my dear Saviour. Thou, LORD, hast neither forsaken me now that I am become grey-headed, nor suffered me to forsake thee in the days of temptation. O! may I die remembering this, and praising thee, my merciful God."—He often said, "LORD, forsake me not, now that my strength faileth; but continue thy mercy, and let my mouth be ever filled with thy praise."—He continued, during the last night and day, very patient, and thankful for any of the little offices that were performed about him; and often recited to himself the 103d Psalm, and used these words; "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed, where true joy is to be found." And now his thoughts seemed to be wholly of death. He often said, that he was prepared, and longed for it: and this desire left him not, till his soul ascended to the region of Blessed Spirits.

He was of a stature moderately tall; his behaviour had in it much of a plain comeliness, and very little, yet enough, of ceremony; his looks and motions manifested an endearing affability and mildness; and yet he had with these, a calm and matchless fortitude. His learning was methodical and exact; his wisdom useful; his integrity visible; and his whole life unspotted.

FOUR SERMONS.



I. ON 1 COR. vii. 24.
II. ON 1 TIM. iv. 4.

III. ON GEN. xx. 6.
IV. ON ROM. xiv. 23.

BY BISHOP SANDERSON.

A
S E R M O N

PREACHED IN

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, LONDON,

NOVEMBER 4, 1621.



I COR. vii. 24.

Brethren, let every Man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God.

IF flesh and blood be suffered to make the comment, it is able to corrupt a right good text. It easily turneth the doctrine of God's grace into wantonness; and, as easily, the doctrine of Christian liberty into licentiousness. These Corinthsians, being yet but carnal, on the point of liberty consulted (it seemeth) too much with this cursed gloss, which taught them to interpret their calling to the Christian faith as an exemption from the duties of all other callings; as if their spiritual freedom in CHRIST had cancelled all former obligations, whether of nature or civility. The husband would put away his wife, the servant disrespect his master, every man break the bonds of relation to every other man; and all upon this ground, that CHRIST had made them free. In this passage, the Apostle occasionally correcteth this error; principally indeed, as the present argument led him, in

the particular of Marriage, but with a farther and more universal extent to all outward states and conditions of life. The sum of his doctrine is this: he that is yoked with a wife, must not put her away, but count her worthy of all love; he that is bound to a master, must not despise him, but count him worthy of all honour; every man that is tied in any relation to any other man, must not neglect him, but count him worthy of all good offices and civil respects, suitable to his place and person; though she, or he, or that other, be unbelievers. The Christian calling doth not at all prejudice, much less overthrow, nay, it rather establisheth, those interests that arise from natural relations, or from voluntary contracts (either domestic or civil) betwixt man and man. This general rule he expresseth in the form of an exhortation; that every man (notwithstanding his calling unto liberty in CHRIST) should abide in that station wherein GOD hath placed him, contain himself within the bound thereof, and cheerfully and contentedly undergo the duties that belong thereto; (ver. 17,) “As GOD hath distributed to every man, as the LORD hath called every one, so let him walk.” And lest this exhortation should be slenderly regarded, the more fully to commend it to their consideration and practice, he repeateth it once again, (ver. 20,) “Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called;”—and now again once more, concluding therewith the whole discourse into which he had digressed, “Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with GOD.”

From these words, I shall take occasion to treat at this time of a very needful argument, viz. concerning the Necessity, Choice, and Use of Particular Callings:—of which three in their order; and first, of the Necessity of a Calling.

The Scriptures speak of two kinds of Callings; the General and the Particular Calling.—The General Calling is that wherewith GOD calleth us, either outwardly in the ministry of his word, or inwardly by the efficacy of his

SPiRIT, or jointly by both, to the faith and obedience of the Gospel, and to the embracing of the covenant of grace, and of mercy and salvation by JESUS CHRIST. This is termed the General Calling, not for that it is of larger extent than the other, but because the thing whereunto we are thus called is common to all that are called. They all have the same duties, and the same promises, and in every way the same conditions.—Our Particular Calling is that wherewith GOD enableth and directeth us to some special course and condition of life wherein to employ ourselves, and to exercise the gifts he hath bestowed upon us, for his glory, and for the benefit of ourselves and others. And it is termed a Particular Calling, not as if it concerned not all in general, but because the thing whereunto men are thus called is not one and the same to all, but different according to the quality of particular persons.—Of both these callings, the General and Particular, there is not any where in Scripture mention made so expressly and together, as in this passage, especially at the 20th verse; “Let every man abide in the same calling wherewith he was called.” As if the Apostle had said, Let every man abide in the same Particular Calling wherein he stood at the time of his General Calling. And the same, and no other, is the meaning of the words of my text.

Hence it appeareth, that the Calling which my text implieth, and wherein every man is here exhorted to abide, is to be understood of the Particular, and not of the General Calling. And of this Particular Calling it is that we now intend to speak, and that in the more restrained signification of it, as it importeth some settled course of life, with reference to business, office, and employment; as we say, a man is called to be a Minister, to be a Lawyer, to be a Tradesman.

By Calling, then, I understand, a special, settled course of life, wherein to employ a man's gifts and time, for his own and the common good. And the Necessity of this we are now to prove.

And that appears first, from the obedience we owe to every one of GOD's ordinances, and the account we must render for every one of GOD's gifts. Amongst those Ordinances, this is one, and one of the first; that in the sweat of our faces, every man of us should eat our bread, *Gen. iii.* The force of this precept let none think to avoid, by saying, that it was laid upon ADAM rather as a curse which he must endure, than as a duty which he should perform. For first, as some of GOD's curses (such is his goodness) are promises as well as curses, as is that of the enmity between the Woman's Seed and the Serpent's; so some of GOD's curses (such is his justice) are precepts as well as curses, as is that of the Woman's subjection to the Man. This text, concerning eating our bread in the sweat of our face, is all the three: it is a curse, it is a promise, it is a precept. It is a curse, in that GOD will not suffer the earth to afford us bread, without our sweat; it is a promise, in that GOD assureth us, that we shall have bread for our sweat; and it is a precept, too, in that GOD enjoineth us, if we will have bread, to sweat for it. Secondly, although it may not be gainsayed, but that the injunction to ADAM was given as a curse, yet the substance of the injunction was not the thing wherein the curse did consist. Herein was the curse; that whereas before the fall, the task which GOD appointed man was with pleasure of body and content of mind, now, after the fall, he was to toil and fore-cast for his living, with care of mind and travail of body. But as for the substance of the injunction, which is, that every man should have somewhat to do, wherein to bestow himself, and his time, and his gifts, and whereby to earn his bread,—by this circumstance it appeareth not to have been a curse, but a precept of divine institution, namely, that ADAM, in the time and state of innocency, before he had deserved a curse, was yet enjoined his task, “to dress and to keep the garden.” And as ADAM lived himself, so he bred up his children. His two first-born, though Heirs-Apparent of all the world, had yet their peculiar employments; the one in

tillage, the other in pasturage. And as many since, as have walked orderly, have observed God's ordinance herein, "working with their hands, the thing that is good," in some kind or other. Those that have set themselves in no such good way our Apostle elsewhere blames, as disorderly walkers. And how can such disorderly ones hope to find approval in the sight of our God, who is a God of order? He commandeth us to live in a calling; and woe to us, if we neglect it.

But suppose that there were no such express command for it, yet the very distribution of God's gifts were enough to lay upon us this Necessity. Where God bestoweth, he bindeth; and to whom any thing is given, of him something shall be required. The inference is stronger than most are aware of, from the ability to the duty, from the gift to the work, from the fitting to the calling. Observe how this Apostle knitteth them together at the 17th verse: "As God hath distributed to every man, as the LORD hath called every one, so let him walk." God hath distributed to every man some proper gift or other; and therefore every man must glorify God in some peculiar calling or other. And in *Eph. iv.*, having alleged that passage of the Psalm, "He gave gifts unto men," immediately he inferreth, "He gave some Apostles, some Prophets," &c.; giving us to understand, that for no other end God did bestow upon some apostolical, upon others propheticall, upon others gifts in other kinds, but that men should employ them, some in the apostolical, some in the propheticall, some in offices and callings of other kinds. And if we confess that nature doth not, we may not think that the God of nature doth, bestow abilities whereof he intendeth not the use; for that were to bestow them in vain. Since then he bestoweth gifts and graces, upon every man some or other, and none in vain, let every man take heed, that he receive them not in vain; let every man beware of laying up in a napkin the talent, which was delivered to him to trade withal; let all, "as every one hath received the gift, even so minister the same one

to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." The manifestation of the SPIRIT being given to every man to profit withal, he that liveth unprofitably with it, and without a calling, abuseth the intent of the giver, and must answer for his abuse.

Secondly, the Necessity of a Calling is great, in regard of a man's self; and that in more ways than one. For man being by nature active, so that he cannot be long but he must be doing, he that hath no honest vocation, that hath nothing of his own to do, must needs, from doing nothing, proceed to doing naughtily. That saying of CATO was subscribed by the wiser heathens as an oracle, *Nihil agendo male agere disces*. "Idleness teacheth much evil," saith the wise SON of SIRACH; nay, all kind of evil, as some copies have it. It hath an ear open to every extravagant motion; it giveth entertainment to a thousand sinful fancies; it exposeth the soul to all the assaults of her ghostly enemies; and whereas the Devil's greatest business is to tempt other men, the idle man tempts the Devil. It was St. HIEROM's advice to his friend; "Be always doing something, that the Devil may never find thee at leisure." There is no exorcism so powerful to drive away the fiend, as faithful labour in some honest calling.

Thirdly, Life must be preserved, Families maintained, the Poor relieved. This cannot be done without bread; and bread cannot be gotten, or not honestly, but in a lawful calling, which whoever neglecteth, is indeed no better than a thief; for the bread he eateth, he cannot call his own. "We hear," saith St. PAUL, writing to the *Thessalonians*, "that there are some among you that walk disorderly, and work not at all, but are busy-bodies; them, therefore, that are such, we command and exhort by our LORD JESUS CHRIST, that they work with quietness, and eat their own bread;"—as if it were not their own bread, if not gotten with the work of their own hands. And again, writing to the *Ephesians*, he saith, "Let him that stole, steal no more; but rather let him

labour ;” if he will not steal, he must labour ; and if he do not labour, he doth steal ; steal from himself, steal from his family, steal from the poor.

He stealeth from himself. Spend he must : and if there be no gettings to repair what is spent, the stock will waste, and beggary will be the end. God hath ordained labour as a proper means whereby to obtain the good things of this life ; without which as there is no promise, so ordinarily there is no performance of those blessings of plenty and sufficiency. God hath a bountiful hand : “ He openeth it, and filleth all things with plenteousness ;” but unless we have a diligent hand, wherewith to receive it, we may starve.

He stealeth also from his family, which should eat the fruit of his labours. The painful housewife ; see in what a happy case her husband is, and her children, and her servants, and all that belong to her. They are not afraid of hunger or cold, or any such thing ; they are well fed, and well clad, and carefully looked unto. “ Her husband praiseth her ;” and her servants and children, when they have kneeled down and asked her blessing, “ arise up, and call her blessed.” But the idle man, who for want of a course to live in, impoverisheth himself and his family, whom he is bound to maintain, is a burden to his friends, an eye-sore to his kindred, the shame of his name, the ruin of his house, and the bane of his posterity. “ If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is” in that respect even “ worse than an infidel,” 1 *Tim.* v. 8. The very infidels know themselves bound to this care. Let not him that professeth the faith of CHRIST, by his supine carelessness in this way, justify the infidel, and deny the faith.

He stealeth also (which is the basest theft of all) from the poor, in robbing them of that relief which he should minister to them out of his honest gettings, the overplus whercof is their proper revenue. The good housewife (of whom we heard something already out of the 31st

chapter of the *Proverbs*) “ seeketh wool and flax ; she layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.” But to what end, and for whose sake, is all this. Not only for herself, or only for her household, but withal that she might have somewhat in her hands “ to reach out to the poor and needy ;” like another DORCAS, making coats and garments for them, that their loins might bless her. So every man should be painful and careful to get some of the things of this earth by his faithful labour not as a foolish worldling, to make a *Mammon* of it, but as a wise steward, to make friends with it. Lay all this together, and say if you know a more real thief than the idle person, that stealeth from himself, and so is a foolish thief ; stealeth from his family and friends, and so is an unnatural thief ; stealeth from the poor, and so is a base thief.

Fourthly, a Calling is necessary in regard of the Public GOD hath made us sociable creatures, made us fellow members of one body, and every one another’s member. As therefore we are not born, so neither must we live, to and for ourselves alone ; but our parents, and friends and acquaintances, nay, every man, hath a kind of interest in every other man of us, and our country and the commonwealth in us all. And as in the artificial body of a clock, one wheel moveth another, and each part giveth and receiveth help to and from other ; and as in the natural body of a man, consisting of many members, as the members have not the same office, (for that would make a confusion,) yet there is no member of the body so mean or small but hath its proper faculty, function and use, whereby it becometh useful to the whole body and helpful to its fellow members ; so should it be in the civil body of the state, and in the mystical body of the church. Every man should put to his helping hand to advance the common good, and employ himself in some way or other so as that he may be serviceable to the whole body.

What then shall we say of many thousands in the

world, *quibus anima pro sale*, who like swine live in such an unprofitable sort, that we might well doubt whether they had any living souls in their bodies, were it not for this one argument, that their bodies are a degree sweeter than carrion? I mean, all such, of what rank and condition soever they be, as for want of a Calling, mis-spend their precious time, bury their master's talent, waste God's good creatures, and wear away themselves in idleness, without doing good to themselves, to their friends, or to human society. Infinite is the number of such unprofitable burdens of the earth; but there are three sorts of them especially, whereof the world ringeth. It is no matter how you rank them, for there is never a better of the three. And therefore take them as they come; they are, Monks, Gallants, and Rogues.

First, those evil beasts, slow bellies, stall-fed monks and friars, who live mewed up in their cells and cloisters, like boars in a frank, pining themselves into lard, and beating down their bodies till their girdles crack. I quarrel not so much with the first institution of this kind of men. Those, by their fastings, and watchings, and charity, and learning, and industry, and temperance, and unaffected strictness of life, won from many of the ancient Fathers ample and large testimonies of their virtue and piety. Whereas these of later times,—by their affected, absurd habits, and gestures, and rules, by their gross and dull ignorance, by their insufferable pride, though pretending humility, and their more than pharisaical over-looking of others, by their insatiable avarice, and palpable arts of getting into their hands the fattest of the earth, and that under colour of religion and pretences of poverty, by their sensual wallowing in all ease, and idleness, and fulness of bread, and (the fruits of these) in abominable and prodigious filthiness and luxury,—became as proverbs and by-words in the mouths and pens of men of all sorts.

But let them go. The next we meet with are those, either with whose birth, or breeding, or estate, it agrees

not (as they think) to be tied to labour in any vocation. It is the sin of many of the Gentry, whom God hath furnished with means and abilities to do much good, to spend their whole days and lives in an unprofitable course of doing either nothing, or as good as nothing, or worse than nothing. I cannot be either so stupid as not to apprehend, or rigorous as not to allow, a difference in the manner of employment, and in other circumstances, between those that are nobly or generously born and bred, and those of the meaner rank. Manual and servile and mechanic trades and arts are for men of a lower condition. But yet no man is born, no man should be bred, to idleness. There are generous and ingenious and liberal employments, suitable to the greatest births and educations. For a man whom God hath blessed with power and authority in his country, with large revenues, with a numerous family of servants, retainers, and tenants, it may be a sufficient Calling, and enough to take up his whole time, even to keep hospitality, and to order and overlook his family, and to dispose of his lands and rents, and to make peace, and preserve love and neighbourhood, among them that live near or under him. He that doth but this, as he ought to do, must be acknowledged to be a worthy member of the commonwealth; and his course of life is a Calling (although perhaps not so toilsome, yet) in its kind as necessary and profitable as that of the husbandman, merchant, or any other.

But for our *mere gentlemen*, who live in no settled course of life, but spend half the day in sleeping, half the night in gaming, and the rest of their time in other pleasures and vanities, to as little purpose as they can devise, as if they were born for nothing else but to eat and drink, and snort and sport; who are spruce and trim, as the lilies, as "SOLOMON in all his glory," yet neither sow nor reap, nor carry into the barn;—who neither labour nor spin, nor do any thing else for the good of human society;—let them know, that there is not the poorest or most contemptible creature, that crieth oysters and

kitchen-stuff in the streets, but deserveth his bread better than they, and his course of life is of better esteem with God, and every sober man, than theirs. A horse that is neither good for the way, nor the cart, nor the wars, nor any other service, let him be of ever so good a breed, or ever so well marked and shaped, yet he is but a jade; his master thinketh his meat ill bestowed on him; every man will say, "Better knock him on the head than keep him;" his skin, though not worth much, is yet worth more than the whole beast besides.

Consider this, you that are of noble or generous birth. "Look unto the rock whence you were hewn, and to the pit whence you were digged." Search your pedigrees; collect the scattered monuments and histories of your ancestors; and observe by what steps your worthy progenitors raised their houses to the height of gentry, or of nobility. Scarcely shall you find a man of them that brought any noted eminency to his house, but either by serving in the camp, or sweating at the bar, or waiting at the court, or adventuring on the seas, or in some other way industriously bestirring himself in some settled Calling. You usurp their arms, if you inherit not their virtues; and those ensigns of honour, which they by industry achieved, sit no otherwise upon your shoulders, than as rich trappings upon asses' backs. If you, by brutish sensuality, stain the colours, and embase the metals, of those badges of your gentry and nobility, which you claim by descent, know that the titles, which we in courtesy give you, we bestow upon the memories of them whose degenerate offspring you are; and they do no more belong to you, than the reverence which the man paid to *Isis* belonged to the ass that carried her image.

The third sort of those that live unprofitably and without a calling, are our idle sturdy beggars, the very filth and vermin of the commonwealth. I mean such as have health, and strength, and limbs, and are in some measure able to work, and to take pains for their living, yet rather choose to wander through the country, and to spend their

days in a most base and ungodly course of life, and, which is yet more lamentable, by I know not what connivance, contrary to all conscience, equity, and law, are suffered so to do. All Christian commonwealths should be the *Israels* of God; and in his *Israel*, God, as he promised there should be some always poor, on whom to exercise charity, so he ordained there should be no beggar, to make a trade and profession of begging.

You have seen the Necessity of a Calling;—without it, we despise God's ordinance, and smother his gifts; we expose ourselves to sinful temptations; we deprive ourselves, our families, and the poor, of due maintenance; we withdraw our bounden service from the commonwealth. It is not the pretence of devotion that can exempt the lazy monk,—not that of birth, the riotous gallant,—nor that of want, the able beggar,—nor that of any other thing, any other man,—from this common necessity. And that is the sum of our first point, viz. the Necessity of a Calling. Proceed we now to the second, the Choice of a Calling.

Concerning this, it behoveth every man to have an especial care; because much of a man's comfort in life dependeth thereon, it being scarcely possible that that man's life should be comfortable to him, who liveth in a calling for which neither he is fit, nor the calling fit for him. Neither will the consideration hereof be useful only for such as are yet free to choose, but even for those also who have already made their choice. For since the very same rules, which are to direct us in the choice of our callings, are to help us also for the trial of our callings, it can be no loss to the best of us to give heed to those rules; thereby either to rectify our choice, or to quicken our alacrity in what we have chosen, by warranting our courses to our own souls, and silencing many unnecessary scruples, which are wont frequently to arise, concerning this matter, in the consciences of men.

And first, we are to lay this as a firm ground,—that is every man's proper calling whereto God calleth him; for

he is the author; as of our general, so of our particular callings: "As the LORD hath called every one," *verse 20*. When therefore we speak of the Choice of a Calling, you are not so understand it, as if it were left for us to make our choice as we list. The choice that is left to us is no other but a conscientious inquiry which way God calleth us, and a conscientious care to take that way: so that if it once appear that God calleth us this way or that, all we have to do is to obey. Away with all excuses, pretences, and delays; when God calleth, submit thy will, subdue thy reason, answer his call, as SAMUEL did, "Speak, LORD, for thy servant heareth."

But how shall we know what God calls us to? By consulting his written Word. And the rules drawn thence may be reduced to three heads, according as the inquiries we are to make are of three sorts: for they either concern the course itself; or else ourselves, that should use it; or else, thirdly, those that have right and power over us in it. If there be a failure in any of these, as if either the course itself be not lawful, or we are not competently fit for it, or our superiors will not allow of us, or it; we may well think that God hath not called us thither. God is just, and will not call any man to that which is not honest and good: God is all-sufficient, and will not call any man to that which is above the proportion of his strength: God is wonderful in his Providence, and will not call any man to that, whereto he will not open him a fair and orderly passage. Somewhat must be said of each of these.

And first, of the Course we intend; wherein let these be our inquiries; first, whether the thing be in itself lawful. The ground of this rule is plain and evident; for it cannot be that God, who forbiddeth every sin in every man, should call any man to the practice of any sin. Let this first rule be remembered by us in every choice and trial of our callings; "No unlawful thing can be a lawful calling."

The second rule is, Resolve not upon that course for

thy calling, whatsoever pretences or reasons thou mayest have for the lawfulness of it otherwise, which is rather hurtful than profitable for the commonwealth. The public good is one of those main respects which enforce the Necessity of a Calling: The same respect then must of necessity enforce such a calling as may at least be consistent with the public good. "The manifestation of the SPIRIT is given to every man," saith the Apostle, "to profit withal." That very word preferreth the public good before the private, and scarcely alloweth the private, otherwise than as it is interwoven in the public. Now things themselves lawful, and at some times useful, may at other times be hurtful to the commonwealth; and herein such due consideration should be had in the choice and exercise of our callings, as ever to have one eye upon the common good, and not wholly to look after our own private gain,

Our next care in our Choice must be, to inquire into ourselves, what Calling is most fit for us, and we for it; wherein our inquiry must rest especially upon three things; our Inclination, our Gifts, and our Education. Concerning which, let this be the first rule: Where these three concur in one and the same calling, our consciences may rest assured that calling is fit for us, and we ought, so far as lieth in our power, to follow it. This rule, if well observed, is of singular use for the settling of their consciences, who are scrupulous concerning their inward calling to any employment. Divines teach it commonly, that every man should have an inward calling from God for his particular course of life; but because that inward calling is a thing not so distinctly declared generally as it should be, it often falleth out, that men are distressed with scruples in this case, whilst they desire to be assured of their inward calling, and know not how. We are to know, therefore, that to this inward calling there is not *of necessity* required any inward, secret, sensible testimony of God's blessed Sanctifying SPIRIT to a man's soul, for then an unsanctified man could not be called; neither yet any strong working of the Spirit of Illumination, for

then a mere heathen man could not be rightly called ; both which consequents are false : for many heathens have been called to several employments, wherein they have also laboured with much profit to their own and succeeding times, who, in all probability, never had any other inward motion than what might arise from some or all of these three things,—the inclination of their nature, their personal abilities, and the care of education. If it shall please God to afford any of us any farther gracious assurance than these can give us, by some extraordinary work of his Spirit within us, we are to embrace it with joy and thankfulness ; but we are not to suspend our resolutions for the choice of a course, in expectation of that extraordinary assurance, since we may receive comfortable satisfaction to our souls without it, by these ordinary means now mentioned. For who need be scrupulous where all these concur ? Thy parents have, from thy childhood, destined thee to some special course, and been at the care and charge to breed thee up in learning, to make thee in some measure fit for it ; when thou art grown to years of discretion, thou findest in thyself a desire to be doing something in that way, and withal some measure of knowledge and discretion, in such competency, as that thou mayest reasonably persuade thyself thou mightest thereby be able, with his blessing, to do some good. In this concurrence of propension, abilities, and education, make no farther inquiry ; up and be doing ; for the LORD hath called thee, and no doubt the LORD will be with thee.*



* The reasoning of the learned Author in this Paragraph appears to be generally sound, if understood in reference to those Callings only which are *secular* in their nature. But it must not be applied, without modification, to the most sacred of all Callings, the work of the CHRISTIAN MINISTRY. For to justify an individual in solemnly devoting himself to *that* Calling, it does appear essential that he should be, according to the emphatical language of the *Ordination-Service* of the CHURCH of ENGLAND, “ inwardly moved by the Holy

But suppose these three do not concur, as often they do not. A man may be destined by his friends, and accordingly bred, out of some covetous respect, to some calling, wherefrom he may be altogether averse, and altogether unfit for it. Again, a man may have good sufficiency in him for a calling, and yet out of a desire of ease and liberty, if it seem painful, or of eminency and reputation, if it seem base and contemptible, or from some other secret corruption, cannot set his mind that way. And divers other occurrences there may be, and are, to hinder this happy conjuncture of nature, skill, and education. Now in such cases, where our education bendeth us one way, our inclination another way, and it may be our gifts and abilities a third, what are we to do? what calling to pitch upon?—In point of conscience, there can no more be given general rules, to meet all cases, than in point of law there can be general resolutions given, or provisions made, to prevent all inconveniencies. Particulars are infinite and various; but rules are not, must not, cannot be so. He whose case it is, if he be not able to direct himself, will do well to take advice of his learned counsel. This we can readily do in matters of law, for the quieting of our estates: why should we not do it at least as readily in matter of conscience, for the quieting of our souls? But yet, for some light, what if thou shouldst proceed thus?—

First, have an eye to thy education; and if it be possible to bring the rest that way, do so, rather than forsake it. For besides that it would be some grief to thy parents.

.....

Ghost to take upon him this office and ministry.” The work is specially and peculiarly *God's work*; and the workman must be *a man whom God shall specially choose and call to do it*. And of that special choice and call, we are not to judge merely by those outward circumstances which are mentioned by the Author, though they may be taken into the account. They do not constitute of themselves a Call to the Ministry, but are at most only helps to assist us in ascertaining the reality and genuineness of a supposed Call.—EDITOR.

to whom thou shouldst be a comfort, to have thrown away so much charge, and some dishonour to them withal, whom thou art bound to honour, to have their judgments slighted, and their choice so little regarded by their child; —the very consideration of so much precious time, as hath been spent in fitting thee to that course, which would be almost all lost in case of thy change, should prevail with thee to try all possible means rather than forego it. It were a thing indeed much to be wished, that parents, and friends, and guardians, and all those that have the education of young ones committed to them, would, out of the observation of their natural inclinations, and of their particular abilities and defects, frame them from the beginning to courses wherein they are likeliest to go on with cheerfulness and profit. This were to be wished; but this is not always done. If it hath not been so done to thee, the fault is theirs that should have done it, and not thine; and thou art not able now to remedy it. But for the future, if thy parents have not done their part, yet do not thou forget thy duty; if they have committed one fault in making a bad choice, do not thou add another in making a worse change. Disparage not their judgments by mis-liking, nor gainsay their wills by forsaking, their choice, upon every small incongruity with thine own judgment or will. If thine inclination draw thee another way, labour to subdue thy nature therein; suspect thine own corruption; think this backwardness proceedeth not from true judgment in thee, but rather from the root of some carnal affection. Consider thy years are green, thy affections strong, thy judgment unsettled: hope that this backwardness will grow off, as years and stayedness grow on: pray and endeavour that thou mayest daily more and more wean thy affections from thine own bent, and take a liking to that course whereunto thou hast been so long in framing. Thus possibly thou mayest in time make that cheerful and delightful unto thee, which now is grievous and irksome. And as for thy insufficiency, if that dishearten thee, do thus:—impute thy former non-

proficiency to thine own negligence: think, if after so long time spent in this course, thou hast attained to no greater perfection in it, how long it would be ere thou shouldst come to a tolerable perfection in another: resolve not to lose all that precious time past, by beginning the world anew; but rather save as much of it as is redeemable, by adding to thy diligence: doubt not, but that by God's blessing upon thy faithful industry, thou wilt attain in time, if not so much perfection as thou desirest; yet to such a competent sufficiency, as may render thy endeavours acceptable to God, comfortable to thyself; and serviceable to the community. If by these and the like considerations, and the use of other good means, thou canst bring thy affections to some indifferent liking of; and thy abilities to some indifferent fitness for, that course which education hath opened unto thee, thou hast no more to do; there is thy course, that is thy calling, that is the work whereunto God hath appointed thee:

But if after long striving, and pains, and trial, thou canst neither bring thy mind to it, nor do any good upon it, so that thou must needs leave the course of thy Education; or, which is another case, if thy education hath left thee free; then consider thy Gifts and Abilities, and take direction from them, rather than from thine inclination. And this rule I take to be very sound, not only from the Apostle's intimation, *ver.* 17, "As God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one,"—where he seemeth to make the choice of men's callings to depend upon the distribution of God's gifts,—but withal for two good reasons. One is, because our gifts and abilities, whether of body or mind, are at a better certainty than our inclinations. Now it is meet, in this choice, that we should follow the surer guide; and therefore rather be led by our gifts than by our inclinations. The other reason is, because our inclinations cannot so well produce abilities as these can draw on them. Abilities can produce inclinations, and make them where they find them not. As we see every other natural thing is

inclinable to the exercise of those natural faculties that are in it; so certainly would every man have strongest inclinations to those things whereto he hath strongest abilities, if wicked and untoward affections did not often corrupt our inclinations, and hinder them from moving their proper way. It is best then to begin the choice of our callings from our abilities, which will induce inclinations, and not from our inclinations, which, without abilities, will not serve the turn.

Concerning Gifts or Abilities, what they are, and how to frame the choice of our callings from them, to speak fully, would require a large discourse. I can but touch on some few points. First, by Gifts and Abilities we are to understand not only those of the mind, such as judgment, invention, memory, fancy,—and those of the body, such as health, strength, activity,—but also those that are without, such as birth, wealth, authority, reputation, kindred,—and generally, any thing that may be of use or advantage unto us for any employment. Secondly, as our abilities on the one side, so on the other side, all our defects, which might disable us more or less for any employment, are to be considered, and the one laid against the other, that we may know how to make a just estimate of our sufficiency. Thirdly, it is the safer way to under-value than to over-prize ourselves, lest we affect a calling above our strength. We may be sure of this, if God hath not gifted us for it, he hath not called us to it. Fourthly, in judging of our abilities, we should have a regard to outward circumstances. Those gifts which would have made a sufficient Priest in the beginning of the Reformation, would now be little enough for a parish-clerk. Fifthly, something should be yielded to the judgments of other men concerning our abilities. It is either secret pride, or faintness of heart, or sloth, and not true modesty, if being gifted for some weighty employment in every other man's judgment, we yet withdraw ourselves from it, under pretence of insufficiency. Sixthly and lastly, let us resolve on that course, *cæteris paribus*, not only for which

we are competently fit, but for which we are absolutely fittest. A good actor, it may be, could sufficiently act any part; but yet if he be excellent in some part rather than another, he would not willingly be put from that part to act another. *Ergo histrio hoc videbit in scenâ, quod non videbit sapiens in vitâ?* We should be ashamed to let these men be wiser in their generations, than we in ours. And thus much for Abilities.

There is yet a doubt remaineth concerning a man's Inclination. In case we have examined our gifts, and find them in a good measure fit for such a course, and yet remain averse from it, and cannot by any possible means work our affections to any tolerable liking of it; in such a case what is to be done, what Calling is fittest for us to take, that to which our Abilities lead us, or that to which our Inclinations draw us? I conceive that in such a case, first, if our inclinations cannot be won to that course for which our abilities are fittest, we are to take a second survey of our abilities, to see if they be competently fit for that to which our inclination swayeth us; and if we find that they are, we may then follow the sway of our inclinations. The reason is this: A man's inclination cannot be forced: if it can be fairly won over, well and good; but violence it cannot endure. And therefore if we cannot make it yield to us in reason, there is no remedy; we must in wisdom yield to it, provided that it be honest, or else all is lost. Whatever our sufficiencies be, there is no good to be done against the hair.

But then, secondly, if upon search we find ourselves altogether unfit for that Calling whereunto our inclination is violently carried, we are to oppose that inclination with a greater violence, and to set upon some other calling, for which we are fit, speedily and resolvedly, and leave the success to Almighty God. The reason is this: It being certain that God never calleth any man but to that for which he hath in some competent measure enabled him; we are to hold that for a pernicious and unnatural inclination, if not rather for a diabolical suggestion, which

so stiffly exciteth us to a function whereto we may be assured God never called us.

But yet, thirdly, (and I would commend this unto you as a principal good rule,) deal with these mutinous thoughts, as wise Statesmen do when they have to deal with men divided in opinions and factions ; they bethink themselves of a middle course, to reduce the several opinions to a kind of temper, so as that no side may be satisfied fully, and yet every side in part. So here, if our Educations, Abilities, and Inclinations look several ways, and the inclination be peremptory, and will not condescend to either of the other two, it will be a point of wisdom if we can bethink ourselves of some such temper as may in part give satisfaction to our inclinations, and yet not leave our gifts and educations wholly unsatisfied. And that is easily done, by proposing the full latitude of our educations and abilities, as the utmost bounds of our choice, and then leaving it to our inclinations to determine our particular choice within those bounds. One instance shall serve to illustrate this rule. A man designed by his parents for the Ministry, and to that end brought up in the University, furnisheth himself with general knowledge, which may prepare him, as for the work of the Ministry, so for the exercise of any other profession that hath to do with learning ; so that not only the calling of the Ministry, but that of the Lawyer too, and of the Physician, and of the Tutor and Schoolmaster, come within the latitude of his education and abilities. Certainly, if his mind would stand thereto, no course would be so proper for such a man as the one which he was intended for, that of the ministry. But he proveth obstinately averse from it, and cannot be drawn by any persuasion to embrace it. It is not meet to force his inclination ; and yet it is pity that his abilities and education should be cast away. This middle course therefore is to be held ; to leave it free for him to make his choice of law, or physic, or any other profession that belongeth to a Scholar, which of them soever he have the strongest incli-

nation to.* And the like course we are to hold in other cases of like nature; by which means our inclinations, which cannot be driven to the centre, may yet be drawn within the circumference, of our educations and abilities. He that observeth these rules, with respect to his Education, Abilities, and Inclination, and dealeth therein faithfully, and in the fear of God, may rest secure in his conscience of his Inward Calling.

But there must be an Outward Calling too, else all is not yet right. The general rule, "Let all things be done decently, and in order," enforceth it. There are some callings, which duly discharged, require great pains and care; but yet the profits come in, whether the duties be duly discharged or not. Our calling of the Ministry is such; and such are all those offices which have annexed unto them a certain standing revenue. Now into such callings as these, every unworthy fellow that wanteth maintenance, and loveth ease, would be intruding, and there would be no order kept herein, if there were not left in some others a power to keep back insufficient men. There are, again, divers callings necessary for the Public, which yet bring in either no profits at all, or profits not proportionable to the pains and dangers men must undergo in them; such as are the callings of a Justice of the Peace, the High-Sheriff of a County, a Constable, a Church-Warden, or a Soldier. Now from these Callings, men of sufficiency, to avoid trouble, would withdraw themselves; and so the King and country would be served either not at all, or by unworthy ones. Here likewise would be no order, if there were not left in some others a power to impose those offices upon sufficient men. It may be, that those in whom either power resideth, may some times, yea often, abuse it; keeping back sufficient

* It appears to me, that this whole Paragraph, as far as it respects the Ministry, needs to be very materially qualified, according to the principle stated in the *Note* on Page 365.—EDITOR.

men, and admitting insufficient, into callings of the former; sparing sufficient men, and imposing upon insufficient, offices of the latter kind. This is not well. But yet what wise man knoweth not, that there could not be avoided a necessity of general inconveniences, if there should not be left a possibility of particular mischiefs? And therefore it is needful that there should be this power of admitting and refusing, of sparing and imposing, in church and commonwealth, though it may happen to be thus abused, rather than that, for want of this power, a multitude of insufferable inconveniences (as needs there must) should ensue. And from this warrant must every man have his warrant for his Outward Calling to any office or employment in church or commonwealth.

The third point remains; the Use of a man's Calling. Let him "walk" in it, *ver.* 17: let him "abide in it," *ver.* 20: let him "abide therein with God." Let us see what duties our Apostle here requireth of us, under these phrases of Abiding in our Callings, and Abiding therein with God.

It may seem, that he would have us stick to a course; and when we are in a calling, not to forsake it, no not for a better, no not upon any terms. Perhaps some have taken it so; but certainly the Apostle never meant it so. For taking the word "Calling" in that extent wherein he treateth of it in this chapter, if that were his meaning, he would consequently teach that no single man might marry, nor any servant become free; which are apparently contrary, both to common reason, and to the very purpose of the Chapter. But taking the word as we have hitherto spoken of it, for some settled station and course of life, is it lawful for a man to change it, or is he bound to abide in it for ever? I answer; It is lawful to change it, so it be done with due caution. It is lawful, first, in subordinate callings: for where a man cannot warrantably climb to an higher, but by the steps of an inferior calling, there must needs be supposed a lawfulness of relinquish-

ing the inferior. How should we do for Generals for the wars, if Colonels, and Lieutenants, and Captains, and common Soldiers might not relinquish their charges? And how for Bishops in the church, if beneficed men were rivetted in their cures? It is lawful, secondly, yea necessary, when the very calling itself, though in itself good and lawful, doth yet by some accident become unlawful or useless; as when some manufacture is prohibited by the state, or when some later invention hath made the old unprofitable. It is lawful, thirdly, where there is a want of sufficient men, or not a sufficient number of them in some callings, for the necessities of the state. In such cases, authority may interpose, and cull out men from other callings, such as are fit to serve in those. Not to branch out too many particulars, it is lawful generally, where either absolute necessity enforceth it, or lawful authority enjoineth it, or a concurrence of weighty circumstances, faithfully and discreetly laid together, requires it.

But then it must be done with due cautions; as first, not out of Lightness. Some men are ever restless, as if they had windmills in their heads: every new crotchet putteth them into a new course. But these rolling-stones carry their curse with them; they seldom gather moss. If thou art well, keep thyself well; lest thinking to meet with better, thou find worse. Nor must it be, secondly, out of Covetousness or Ambition. Profit and credit are things to be considered, both in the choice and change, but not principally, and certainly not wholly. Thirdly, it must not be out of Sullenness, or discontentedness with thy present condition. Content groweth from the mind, not from the condition; and therefore change of the calling, if the mind be unchanged, will either not afford content, or not long. Much less, fourthly, must it be out of an evil eye against thy neighbour. There is not a baser sin than Envy; nor a fouler mark of envy, than to forsake thy trading, in order to justle thy neighbour out of his. Nor, fifthly, must it be out of Faint-heartedness. That man

would soon dare to be evil, that dareth not long to be good. And he that flincheth from his calling at the first frown, who can say he will not flinch from his conscience at the next? In an upright course, fear not the "face of man;" neither "leave thy place, though the spirit of a Ruler rise up against thee." But, sixthly, be sure thou change not, if thy calling be of that nature that it may not be changed. Some degrees of Magistracy seem to be of that nature: and therefore some have noted it rather as an act of impotency in CHARLES the Fifth, than a fruit either of humility, or wisdom, or devotion, that he resigned his crown, to betake himself to a cloister. But our Calling of the Ministry is certainly such. There may be a change of the station or degree in the ministry, upon good cause, and with due circumstances; but yet still so as that the main calling itself remain unchanged. This calling hath in it something that is sacred and singular, and different from other callings. As, therefore, things once dedicated, and hallowed to religious services, were no more to return to common uses; so persons, once set apart for the holy work of the Ministry, and invested into their calling with solemn collation of the HOLY GHOST, in a special manner, if any more they return to be of that lump from which they are separated, they do, as it were, return the blessed breath of Christ back into his own face, and renounce their part in the HOLY GHOST. Bethink thyself well, therefore, before-hand, and consider what thou art doing, when thou beginnest to reach forth thine hand towards this spiritual plough. Know, when it is once there, it may not be pulled back again.

This then, that we should persevere in our callings until death, and not leave or change them upon any consideration whatsoever, is not the thing our Apostle meaneth, by abiding in our Callings. The word importeth divers other Christian duties, concerning the Use of our callings. I will but touch on them. The first is Contentedness; that we neither repine at the meanness of our own, nor envy the eminence of another's calling.

“Art thou called being a servant? care not for it,” saith this Apostle. All men cannot have rich, or easy, or honourable callings: the necessity of the whole requireth that some should drudge in baser and meaner offices. Grudge not, then, at thine own lot; for the meanest calling hath a promise of God’s blessing: neither envy another’s lot; for the greatest calling is attended with worldly vexations. Whatsoever thy calling is, therein abide: be content with it.

The second is, Faithfulness or Industry. What is here called “abiding in it,” is at *ver.* 17, called “walking in it;” and in *Rom.* xii. “waiting on it.”—“Let him that hath an office, wait on his office.”—“It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful;” and every man, in his calling, is “a steward.” He that professeth a calling, and doth nothing in it, doth no more abide in it, than he that leaveth it, or he that never had it. Whatsoever calling thou hast undertaken, “therein abide:” be *painful* in it.

The third is Sobriety, by which we keep ourselves within the proper bounds and limits of our callings. For how doth he abide in his calling, that is ever and anon flying out of it, or starting beyond it; like an extravagant soldier, that is always breaking rank? Let the Church of Rome allow Vicars to dispose of Crowns, and Women of Sacraments. As for thee, whatsoever thy calling be, “therein abide:” keep within the bounds of it.

But yet “abide with God.” That clause was not added for nothing; it also teacheth thee some duties; as, first, so to demean thyself in thy particular calling, that thou do nothing but what may consist with thy general calling. Magistrate, or Minister, or Lawyer, or Merchant, or Artificer, or whatsoever thou art, remember thou art a Christian. Pretend not the necessities of thy particular calling to any breach of the least of those laws of God, which must rule thy general calling. God is the author of both callings; of thy General Calling, and of thy Particular Calling too. Do not think that he hath called thee to

justice in the one, and to fraud in the other; to simplicity in the one, and to dissimulation in the other; to holiness in the one, and to profaneness in the other; in a word, to an entire and universal obedience in the one, and to any kind or degree of disobedience in the other.

It teacheth thee, secondly, not to ingulf thyself so in the businesses of thy particular calling, as to abridge thyself of convenient opportunities for the exercise of those religious duties, which thou art bound to perform by virtue of thy general calling; as prayer, thanksgiving, and meditation. God alloweth thee to serve thyself; but he commandeth thee to serve him too. Be not thou so all for thyself, as to forget him; but as thou art ready to embrace that liberty, which he hath given thee, to serve thyself, so make a conscience to perform those duties which he hath required of thee for his service. Work, and spare not; but yet pray too, or else work not. Prayer is the means to procure a blessing upon thy labours from his hands, who never faileth to serve them that never fail to serve him. Did ever any man “serve God for nought?” A man cannot have so comfortable assurance, that he shall prosper in the affairs he taketh in hand, by any other means, as by making God the *alpha* and *omega* of his endeavours; by beginning them in his name, and directing them to his glory. Neither is this a point of duty only, in regard of God’s command; or a point of wisdom only, to make our labours successful; but it is a point of justice too, as due by way of restitution. We make bold with his day, and dispense with some of that time, which he hath sanctified unto his service, for our own necessities: it is but equal, that we should allow him at least as much of ours, as we borrow of his, though it be for our necessities or lawful comforts. But if we rob him of some of his time, (as too often we do,) employing it in our own businesses, without the warrant of a just necessity, we are to know that it is theft;—yea, theft in the highest degree, sacrilege;—and that therefore we are bound at least as far as petty thieves were in the

law, that is, to a four-fold restitution. Abide in thy calling, by doing thine own part, and labouring faithfully; but yet so, as that GOD's part may not be forgotten, in serving him daily.

It teacheth thee, thirdly, to watch over the special sins of thy particular calling; sins, I mean, not that cleave necessarily to the calling, for then the calling itself would be unlawful; but sins, to the temptations whereof thy calling layeth thee open, more than it doth unto other sins, or more than some other callings would do unto the same sins, and wherewith, whilst thou are stirring about the businesses of thy calling, thou mayest be soonest overtaken, if thou dost not heedfully watch over thyself and them;—the magistrate's sins, partiality and injustice; the minister's sins, sloth and flattery; the lawyer's sins, maintenance and collusion; the merchant's sins, lying and deceitfulness; the courtier's sins, ambition and dissimulation; the great man's sins, pride and oppression; the gentleman's sins, riot and prodigality; the officer's sins, bribery and extortion; the countryman's sins, envy and discontent; the servant's sins, tale-bearing and purloining. In every state of life, there is a kind of opportunity to some special sin; wherein if our watchfulness be not the greater, we cannot "abide therein with God.

GOD grant that every one of us may remember so much of what hath been taught, as is needful for each of us; and faithfully apply it unto our own souls and consciences, and make a profitable and seasonable use of it in the whole course of our lives; even for JESUS CHRIST's sake, his blessed Son, and our only Saviour!

A
S E R M O N

PREACHED AT

ST. PAUL'S CROSS, LONDON,

NOVEMBER 21, 1624.



I TIM. IV. 4.

For every creature of God is good ; and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving.

OF that great and universal apostasy, which should be in the church, through the tyranny and fraud of *Antichrist*, there are elsewhere in the Scriptures more full, but scarcely any where more plain predictions, than in this passage of St. PAUL, whereof my text is a part. The quality of the doctrines is foretold, *verse 1*,—contrary to the faith, erroneous, devilish: “ Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.” The quality of the doctors is foretold, *ver. 2*:—liars, hypocritical, unconscionable: “ Speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their consciences seared with a hot iron.” But lest these generalities should seem not sufficiently distinctive, each side charging other (as commonly it happeneth, where differences are about religion,) with

apostasy, error, falsehood, and hypocrisy; the Apostle thought it needful to point out those antichristian doctors more distinctly, by specifying some particulars of their devilish doctrines. For this purpose, he giveth instance in two of their doctrines; whereof he maketh choice, not simply as being worse than all the rest, though bad enough, but as being more easily discernible than most of the rest, viz. a prohibition of marriage, and an injunction of abstinence from certain meats. These particulars, being so agreeable to the present tenets of the *Romish* synagogue, do give, even by themselves alone, a strong suspicion, that there is the seat of *Antichrist*. But joined unto the other prophecies of St. PAUL, and St. JOHN, in other places, they make it so unquestionable, that those who will needs think that the Pope is not *Antichrist*, may at the least wonder by what strange chance it fell out that these Apostles should draw the picture of *Antichrist*, in every point and limb, so just like the Pope, and yet never think of him.

The words of the text are the ground of a confutation, properly, of the latter of these two errors, concerning abstinence from certain meats, but yet such as strongly overthroweth the other too, concerning marriage, and in general, all other superstitious precepts or prohibitions of like nature; marriage being the holy ordinance of God, as meats are the good creatures of God; and neither marriage, nor meats, nor any other creature or ordinance, being to be refused as upon tie of conscience, provided they be received with such thankfulness, and such other requisite conditions, as become Christian men. “For every creature of God is good; and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving.”

These words give us occasion to consider three points, according to the number and order of the several clauses in this verse: First, the Quality of God’s creatures, as they come from him, and are given to us: “Every creature of God is good.” Secondly, the Use of God’s creatures, consisting in their lawfulness, and our liberty:

“And nothing to be refused.” Thirdly, the Condition necessary on our parts, lest the creatures, otherwise good and lawful, should become unto us evil and hurtful; and that is thankfulness; “If it be received with thanksgiving.” The two first set out the bounty of God towards us, who hath made a world of creatures, and all good, and hath not envied us the use of any of them; and the third containeth our duty unto God in regard thereof, namely, to return unto him, for the free use of all his good creatures, the tribute of our thanks. Of these three points, it is my purpose, by God’s grace, to speak; and first of the First, “Every creature of God is good.”

By Creature understand, not only such as are appointed for nourishment, but all kind of created beings, the heaven and the earth, and all things therein, visible and invisible, with all their several properties. Of all and each of these the Apostle’s assertion is true; “Every creature of God is good.” Every creature which God hath made is good; good absolutely and in itself, as a thing; good in that it setteth forth the glory of him that made it, as a creature; good as a part of the world, for the service which it doth to man and to other creatures.

Hereof we need no other testimony than God’s own approbation, registered in the story of the Creation; where we may see God’s allowance stamped, both upon the several creatures of each day, that they were good, and upon the whole frame of the creatures, when the work was finished, that behold they were exceeding good. In this goodly fabric of nature, that which is beyond all is the harmony of the parts, exceeding in goodness, beauty, and perfection, yet so as that no one part is superfluous or unprofitable, or, if considered singly, destitute of its proper goodness and usefulness. As in the natural body of a man, there is not the least member, or string, or sinew, but hath its proper office in the body; and as in the artificial body of a clock, there is not the least wheel or pin but hath its proper work and use in the engine; so God hath given to every thing he hath made

that number, weight, and measure of goodness which he saw fittest for it unto those ends for which he made it. "Every creature of God is good."

Even those creatures which are apparently hurtful, as serpents, and wild beasts, and sundry poisonous plants, but above all, the Devils and cursed Angels, even these also are good, as the creatures of God, and the workmanship of his hands. It is only through sin that they are evil; either in themselves, as the Devils, or to us, as the rest. These, now wicked Angels, were glorious creatures at the first; by their own voluntary transgression it is that they are now the worst and the basest. And as for all the other creatures of God, made to do us service, they were at first, and still are, good in themselves; if there cleaveth to them any evil, whereby they become hurtful to us, that is by accident, and we have to thank none but ourselves for that. For who, or what, could have harmed us, if we had been followers of that which was good? It was not of their own accord, but through our sinfulness, that the creatures became subject unto vanity, and capable either of doing or of suffering ill. They had been still harmless, if we had been still faultless: it was our sin that at once forfeited both our innocency and theirs. If then we see any ill in them, or find any ill by them, let us not lay the blame upon them; let us rather bestow our blame where it is most due, upon ourselves. When we suffer, we blame the creatures; we say that this weather, that flood, or such a storm, hath blasted our fruits, sanded our grounds, shipwrecked our wares, and undone us; when, alas! these have neither heart nor strength against us, but what ourselves put into them by our sins. Every sense of evil, therefore, in or from the creatures, should work in us a sense of our disobedience to God, should increase in us a detestation of the sins we have committed against God, should teach us, by condemning ourselves, to acquit the good creatures of God, which, as they are good in themselves, so would they have been ever good to us, if we

had been true to ourselves, and continued good and faithful servants to God. They are all good; do not thou accuse any of them, and say they are evil; do not thou abuse any of them, and make them evil.

Hitherto we have spoken of the first point, the Goodness of the Creatures; the second is their Use, consisting in their Lawfulness and our Liberty; “Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused;”—*nothing*; that is, (agreeably to the former verse,) nothing fit for food; but more generally, and so I rather think the Apostle intendeth it, *no creature of God*, whereof we have use or service in any kind whatsoever;—*nothing*, which may yield us any content for the support of this life, in point of health, ease, profit, delight, or otherwise;—with due sobriety, and other requisite conditions, “nothing is to be refused.” By “refusal” the Apostle meaneth not a bare forbearance of the things, for we both may, and in many cases ought, so to refuse some of the creatures; but the thing which he forbiddeth is, the forbearance of the creature as upon an immediate tie of conscience; namely, either out of a superstitious opinion of the unlawfulness of any creature, or of some supposed natural or legal uncleanness in it,—or out of a like superstitious opinion of some extraordinary perfection or holiness in such refusal. All the creatures of God are lawful for us to use. It is against Christian liberty, either to charge the use of them with sin, or to place holiness in abstaining from them.

Now the ground of this our right or liberty to use the creatures is double; the one, God’s Ordinance at the first creation; the other, CHRIST’S Purchase in the work of redemption. At the creation, God made all things for man’s use, as he did man for his own service; and as he reserved to himself his absolute sovereignty over man, so he gave unto man a kind of limited sovereignty over the creatures. “He hath put all things in subjection under our feet,” saith DAVID, *Psal.* viii.

And if by sin we lost that first title to the creature, yet

GOD the FATHER hath granted to us, and GOD the SON hath acquired for us, and GOD the HOLY GHOST hath sealed for us, a new patent. By it, whatsoever defect is in our old evidence is supplied; and by virtue of it we may renew our claim to the creatures. The blessed SON of GOD, “having made peace through the blood of his cross,” hath reconciled us to his FATHER, and therein also reconciled the creatures both to us and him; “reconciling by him,” saith the Apostle, *Col. i. 20*, “all things” (not men only) “unto himself.” For GOD having given us his SON, “the heir of all things,” hath he not “with him given us all things” else? Hath he not permitted to us the free use of his creatures in as ample right as ever? And as verily as “CHRIST is GOD’s,” so verily, if we be CHRIST’s, “all things are ours.”

Let us here inquire a little what is the just Extent of our Christian Liberty respecting the Creatures, and what Restraints it may admit;—a point very needful to be known, for the resolution of many doubts in conscience, and for the cutting off of many questions and disputes in the Church. Since I cannot allow to this inquiry so large a discourse as it deserveth, I shall desire you to consider these positions following.

The first is, That our Christian liberty extendeth to all the creatures of GOD. This ariseth clearly from what hath been already delivered; and the testimonies of Scripture for it are express. “All things are pure;” “all things are lawful;” “all are yours;” and “nothing is to be refused.”

The second position is, That our Christian liberty equally respecteth the using, and the not using, of any of GOD’s creatures. There is no creature but what a Christian, by virtue of his liberty, may use upon just occasion, and may also upon just cause refuse. “All things are lawful for me,” saith St. PAUL, “but I will not be brought under the power of any.” Here he establisheth this liberty in both the parts of it; liberty to use the creatures, for else they had not all been lawful for him,—and yet

liberty not to use them, for else he had been under the power of some of them. Hence it followeth, that all the creatures of GOD stand, in the nature of things, indifferent; that is, they may indifferently be either used or not used, according as the rules of discretion, and circumstances duly considered, shall direct.

The third position is, That our Christian liberty, in using or not using the creature, may without prejudice admit of some restraint in the practice of it. A Christian must never do unlawful, nor yet always do lawful things. St. PAUL had liberty to eat flesh, and he used that liberty; yet he knew there might be some cases wherein he ought to abridge himself of the use of that liberty, so as not to eat flesh whilst the world standeth. That we may the better understand what those restraints are, let us go on to

The fourth position, which is, That Sobriety may and ought to restrain us in the outward practice of our Christian liberty. For our diet, all fish, flesh, fowl, and fruits, are lawful for us, as well as bread and herbs; but may we therefore fare deliciously and sumptuously every day, under pretence of Christian liberty? And in all other things of similar nature, in our buildings, in our furniture, in our marriages, and in the like cases, we ought as well to consider what in Christian sobriety is meet for us to do, as what in Christian liberty may be done. Scarcely is there any one thing wherein the Devil putteth lurs upon us more frequently, yea, and more dangerously so, because unsuspected, than in this very thing, in making us take the uttermost of our freedom in the use of indifferent things. It therefore concerneth us so much the more to keep a sober watch over ourselves in the use of GOD's good creatures, lest otherwise, under the fair title of Christian liberty, we yield ourselves to a carnal licentiousness.

The fifth position is, That as sobriety, so Charity also, may and ought to restrain us in the outward exercise of our Christian liberty; Charity, I say, both to ourselves

and others.—First, Charity to ourselves. If we are to cut off the right hand, and to pluck out the right eye, and to cast them from us, when they offend us, much more ought we to deny ourselves the use of such outward lawful things, as by experience we have found, or have otherwise cause to suspect, to be hurtful either to our bodies or souls. So a man may, and should, refrain from meats which may endanger his bodily health; but how much more, from every thing that may endanger the health of his soul? If thou findest thyself tempted to covetousness, pride, uncleanness, superstition, cruelty, or any other sin, by reason of any of the creatures, it is better for thee to make a covenant with thine eyes, and ears, and hands, and senses, not to have any thing to do with such things, than by gratifying them therein to cast both thyself and them into hell. It is better, by our voluntary abstinence, to part with some of our liberty to use the creatures, than by our voluntary transgression to forfeit all, and become the Devil's captives.—But charity reacheth to our brethren also, for whom we are to have a due regard in our use of the creatures. This is an argument on which St. PAUL often enlargeth. The resolution every where is, that “all things should be done to edification;” that things lawful become inexpedient, when they offend rather than edify; that though “all things indeed are pure, yet it is evil for that man which useth them with offence;” that although flesh, and wine, and other things, be lawful, yet “it is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor to do any thing whereby a man stumbleth, is offended, or made weak;” and, in general, that in case of scandal, for our weak brother's sake we may, and sometimes ought, to abridge ourselves of some part of our lawful liberty.

The sixth position is, That the determination of Superiors may and ought to restrain us in the outward exercise of our Christian liberty. We must “submit ourselves to every ordinance of man,” saith St. PETER, 1 *Pet.* ii. 13; and it is necessary we should do so, for “so is the will

of God," *ver.* 15. Neither is it against Christian liberty if we do so, for we are still as free as before; rather, if we do not so, we "abuse our liberty for a cloak of maliciousness," as it followeth there, *ver.* 16. And St. PAUL telleth us, we "must needs be subject, not only for fear," because the magistrate "carrieth not the sword in vain," "but also for conscience' sake," because "the powers that be are ordained of God." This duty, so fully and so uniformly pressed by these two great Apostles, is most apparent in private societies. In a family, the master, who is a kind of petty monarch there, hath authority to prescribe to his children and servants concerning the use of those indifferent things; whereto they as Christians, nevertheless, have as much liberty as he. The servant, though he be the LORD's freeman, is yet limited in his diet, lodging, and many other things, by his master; and he is to submit himself to his master's appointment in these things, though perhaps, in his private affection, he had rather his master had appointed otherwise, and perhaps withal, in his private judgment, he doth verily think it fitter his master should appoint otherwise. Now what power the master hath over his servants, for the ordering of his family, the same hath the Supreme Magistrate over his subjects, for the peaceable ordering of the commonwealth. We must not, then, interpret the determinations of Magistrates, on the use of the creatures, to be contrary to the liberty of a Christian; or under that colour exempt inferiors from their obedience to such determinations.

The seventh position is, That in the use of the creatures, and in all indifferant things, we ought to bear a greater regard to our public Governors, than to our private brethren; and be more careful to obey them, than to satisfy these, if the same course will not satisfy both. Say what can be said, in the behalf of a brother, all the same, and more, may be said for a governor. For a governor is a brother too, and something more; and duty to him is charity too, and something more. If I

may not offend my brother, then certainly not my governor, because he is my brother too, as well as the other; and the same charity, that bindeth me to satisfy another brother, equally bindeth me to satisfy this. When the scales hang thus even, shall not the accession of Magistracy to common brotherhood in him, and of duty to common charity in me, be enough to cast it clearly in favour of the magistrate? Shall a servant in a family, rather than offend his fellow-servant, disobey his master? And is not a double scandal against both charity and duty, (for duty implieth charity,) greater than a single scandal against charity alone? If private men will be offended at our obedience to public governors, we can but be sorry for it: we may not prevent their offence by our disobedience.

Our eighth and last position is, That no respect whatsoever can or ought to diminish the inward freedom of the conscience as to any of the creatures: and in this inward freedom it is that our Christian liberty, as to the creature, especially consisteth. Now this liberty implies a certain resolution of judgment, and a certain persuasion of conscience arising thence, that all the creatures of God are in themselves lawful, and free for us either to use or refuse, as we shall see expedient for us; and that neither the use nor the forbearance of them doth of itself either commend or discommend us unto God, or in any way either please him as a part of his worship, or offend him as a transgression of his law.

But this inward freedom being once established in our hearts, and our consciences fully persuaded thereof, let us thenceforth make no scruple to admit of such just restraints in the outward exercise of it, as Christian Sobriety, Charity, and Duty shall require. For we must know, that the liberty of a Christian is not in eating, and wearing, and doing, what and when, and where and how, he may list; but in being assured that it is all one before God, (in the things themselves barely considered,) whether he eat or eat not, wear or wear not, do or do not, this or

that ; and that therefore, as he may upon just cause eat, and wear, and do, so he may upon just cause, also, refuse to eat, or wear, or do, this thing or that. Indeed otherwise, if we well consider it, it were but the empty name of liberty, without the thing : for how is it liberty, if a man be determinately bound one way, and not left indifferent and equal to either ? If then the regards of Sobriety, Charity, and Duty, do not require forbearance, thou knowest “ every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused.” Thou hast thy liberty, therefore, and mayest, according to that liberty, freely use that creature. But if any of those respects require that thou shouldst forbear, thou knowest that the creature still is good, and, as not to be refused, so not to be imposed : thou hast thy liberty, therefore, here, as before ; and oughtest, according to that liberty, freely to abstain from that creature. Both in using and refusing, the conscience is still free ; the use as well as the refusal, and the refusal as well as the use, equally belong to the true liberty of a Christian.

We have seen now, what liberty God hath allowed us ; and therein we may see, also, his great goodness towards us, in making such a world of creatures, and all of them good, and not envying us the free use of those good creatures. But where is our duty answerable to this bounty ? Where is our thankfulness proportionable to such receipts ? Let us not rejoice too much in the creature's goodness, nor glory too much in our freedom. Unless there be in us, withal, a due care to perform the Condition, which God requireth in lieu thereof, neither can their goodness do us good, nor our freedom exempt us from evil. And that Condition is, the duty of Thanksgiving, expressed in the last clause of the verse, “ If it be received with thanksgiving.” Forget this, and we undo all that we have hitherto done, and destroy all that we have already established, concerning both the goodness of the creature, and our liberty in the use thereof ; for without thanksgiving, neither can we partake of their

goodness, nor use our own liberty, with comfort. Of this, therefore, I shall speak in the third place.

And, first, we are to know, that by Thanksgiving, in my text, is not meant only that subsequent act, whereby we render unto God praise and thanks for the creature, after we have received it; but we are to extend the word farther, even to those precedent acts of Prayer, whereby we beseech God to give his blessing to the creature. For what, in this verse, is called Thanksgiving, is, in the next verse, comprehended under the name of Prayer. And we shall accordingly find in the Scriptures elsewhere the words *ευλογία* and *ευχαριστια*, the one whereof signifieth properly *blessing*, the other *thanksgiving*, used often promiscuously, the one for the other. Both these, then, a sacrifice of Prayer before we use any of the good creatures of God, and a sacrifice of Praise after we have used them,—the blessing wherewith we bless the creature in the name of God, and the blessing wherewith we bless the name of God for the creature,—both these, I say, together make up the just extent of that Thanksgiving, whereof my text speaketh.

Concerning Meats and Drinks, unto which our Apostle hath special reference in this whole passage, this duty of Thanksgiving hath been established in the common practice of Christians; who are wont, not only with inward thankfulness of heart to recount and acknowledge God's goodness to them therein, but also outwardly to express the same in a solemn Form of Blessing or Thanksgiving. These very phrases, by which such forms are described, as it seemeth to me, have sanction from those words of our Apostle, 1 *Cor.* x. "For if I by *grace* be a partaker, why am I evil-spoken of for that, for which I give *thanks*." But howsoever this be, the duty hath sufficient ground from the examples of CHRIST, and of his holy Apostles; from whom the custom of giving thanks at meals seemeth to have been derived, throughout all succeeding ages. Of CHRIST himself we read, that he blessed and gave

thanks in the name of himself and the people, before meat. And St. LUKE relateth of St. PAUL, *Acts* xxvii. that when he and his company in the ship were about to refresh themselves after a long fast, he took bread, first “gave thanks to GOD in the presence of them all,” and then “brake it, and began to eat.” Yea, St. PAUL himself so speaketh of it, *Rom.* xiv. as of the known practice of the church, among Christians of all sorts, weak and strong. He that was “strong in the faith,” and knew the liberty which he had in CHRIST, to eat indifferently of all kinds of meats, did eat of all, and gave GOD thanks for all. The weak Christian too, who had scruples about some kinds of meats, and contented himself with herbs, and such like things, yet gave GOD thanks for his herbs, and for whatsoever he durst eat. “He that eateth, eateth to the LORD,” (saith he there, at *verse* 6,) “for he giveth GOD thanks; and he that eateth not, to the LORD he eateth not, and giveth GOD thanks” too. Notwithstanding that they differed concerning the lawful or unlawful use of some meats, yet they consented both in their judgment and practice, as to the performance of this religious service of Thanksgiving.

And not only meats and drinks, but every other good creature of GOD, ought to be received with Thankfulness. And if, in these things also, we make some outward expression of the thankfulness of our hearts, we shall therein do service acceptable to GOD, and comfortable to our own souls. For this cause, GOD instituted of old solemn feasts and sacrifices, together with the sanctification of the first-fruits and of the first-born, and divers other ordinances of that nature, as to be fit remembrancers unto men of their duty of thankfulness, so to be testimonies and expressions of their performance of that duty.

But if there cannot always be the outward manifestation thereof, yet GOD ever expecteth, at least, true and inward thankfulness for the use of his good creatures. “Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the LORD JESUS, giving thanks unto GOD and the

FATHER by him ;” *Col.* iii. “ Be careful for nothing ; but in every thing, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your request be made known unto GOD ;” *Phil.* iv. “ Bless the LORD, O my soul,” (saith DAVID in *Psal.* ciii.) “ and all that is within me, praise his holy name : bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.”—Forget not *all* his benefits ; which is as much as to say, by an ordinary Hebraism, forget not *any of all* his benefits. He summoneth all that is in him to bless GOD for all he hath from him : he thought it was necessary for him, not to receive any of the good creatures of GOD without thanksgiving.

This Thanksgiving sanctifieth unto us the use of the good creatures of GOD, which is the very reason St. PAUL giveth for this direction ; “ Every creature of GOD is good,” saith he, “ and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving ; for it is sanctified by the Word of GOD and prayer.” I understand not, by “ the Word of GOD” there, his written Word, but rather the word of his power and providence, whereby he ordereth and commandeth his creatures, in their several kinds, to afford us such service and comforts as he hath thought good. This sanctifying of the creatures by the Word of GOD implieth two things ; the one, respecting the creatures, that they do their kindly office to us ; the other, respecting us, that we reap holy comfort from them. For the plainer understanding of both these, instance shall be given in the creatures appointed for our nourishment ; and what is said of them, we may apply to every other creature, in the proper kind thereof.

First then, the creatures appointed for food are sanctified by the Word of GOD, when, together with the creatures, he giveth his blessing to go along with it ;—by his powerful word commanding it, and by that command enabling it, to feed us. This is the true meaning of that speech in *Deut.* vii. alleged by our Saviour against the tempter ; “ Man liveth not by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of GOD.”—Alas !

what is bread to nourish us, without his word? Unless he say the word, and command the bread to do it, there is no more strength in bread than in stones. If sanctified with GOD's word of blessing, a little pulse and water shall feed DANIEL, and make him as fresh and fair as the King's dainties did his companions; and a cake and a cruse of water shall yield to ELIJAH nourishment enough to "walk in the strength thereof forty days and nights." But if GOD's word and blessing be wanting, the lean kine may eat up the fat, and be as thin and hollow and ill-liking as before; and we may, as the prophet HAGGAI speaketh, "eat much and not have enough, and drink our fill and not be filled."

This first degree of the creature's sanctification by the word of GOD is a common blessing upon the creatures, whereof, as of the light and dew of heaven, the wicked partake as well as the godly. But there is a second degree beyond this, which is proper and peculiar to the godly; and that is, when GOD not only by the word of his power bestoweth a blessing upon the creature, but also causeth the echo of that word to sound in our hearts by the voice of his HOLY SPIRIT, and giveth us a sensible taste of his goodness therein, filling our hearts not only with that joy and gladness which arise from the refreshing of our natural strength, but also with joy and gladness more spiritual than those, arising from the contemplation of the favour of GOD towards us in the face of his SON, which DAVID calleth "the light of his countenance." And this duty of thanksgiving is appointed by GOD, as the necessary means and proper instrument to procure that word of blessing from him. When we have performed this sincerely and faithfully, our hearts may then say, with a most cheerful yet humble confidence, "Amen, so be it;" in full assurance that GOD will crown our *Amen* by blessing his creatures unto us, when we bless him for them, and by sanctifying their use to our comfort, when we magnify his goodness for the receipt.

The first inference from hence may be, shall I say, for

trial; or may I not rather say, for conviction? since we shall learn thereby not so much to examine our thankfulness, how true it is, as to discover our unthankfulness, how foul it is. And how should that discovery cast us down to a deep condemnation of ourselves for so much both of Injustice and Profaneness, when we shall find ourselves guilty of so many failings in the performance of such a necessary duty?—But we cannot abide to hear this: *We* unthankful to God! far be that from us: we scarcely ever speak of any thing we have, or have done and suffered, but we send this clause after it, “I thank God for it:” and how are we unthankful, seeing we do thus?—It is a true saying, which one saith, “Thanking God is a thing which all men do, and which yet none do as they should.” *I thank God for it* is, as many use it, rather a bye-word than a thanksgiving. So far from being an acceptable service to God, it is rather a taking of his holy name in vain. But if we will consider duly, not so much how near we draw to God with our lips, as how far our hearts are from him when we say so, we shall see what small reason we have, upon such a slender lip-labour, to think ourselves discharged from the sin of unthankfulness. Though we say, “I thank God,” a thousand and a thousand times over, yet if in our deeds we betray a foul unthankfulness, we do thereby but make ourselves greater and deeper liars.

Three things are required in order to true thankfulness; recognition, estimation, and retribution. He that hath received a benefit from another ought, first, faithfully to acknowledge it; secondly, to value it worthily; thirdly, to endeavour really to requite it: and whoso faileth in any of these, is unthankful, more or less. Let us a little consider how we behave ourselves in each of these respects, in every one of which we will instance but in two kinds, and so we shall have six degrees of ingratitude; still holding ourselves as close as we can to the present point, concerning our thankfulness or unthankfulness, as it respecteth the use we have of the good creatures of God.

And first, we fail in our Recognition, and in the due acknowledgment of God's blessings. And this is the first degree of our unthankfulness, the letting so many blessings slip by us, without any regard; whereas knowledge must ever go before acknowledgment, and apprehension before confession. There is a twofold confession to be made to God, the one of our sins, the other of his goodness —that belongeth to repentance, this to thankfulness. Both of them consist in an acknowledgment; in both, the acknowledgment is most faithful when it is most punctual; and in both we make default for want of taking such particular information as we ought and might. In our repentance, we content ourselves commonly with a general confession of our sins, or, at the most, of a few grosser falls; and if we do that, we think we have made an excellent confession. So in our thanksgivings, we ordinarily content ourselves with a general acknowledgment of God's goodness and mercies to us, or sometimes possibly recount eminent favours, and this is all we do. But we do indeed in both these deal unfaithfully with God, and with our own souls. If we desired to shew ourselves truly penitent, we should take knowledge, so far as possibly we could, of all our sins, small and great, and bring them all before God in the confession of repentance: and if we desired to shew ourselves truly thankful, we should take notice, so far as possibly we could, of all God's blessings, small and great, and bring them all before him in the confession of praise. We should even gather up the broken meats, and let nothing be lost, not even those small blessings, as we account them. If we acted thus, how many baskets-full might be taken up, which we daily suffer to fall to the ground and be lost? Every crumb which we put into our mouths, every drop wherewith we cool our tongues, the very air which we continually breathe, and a thousand other such things, whereof the very commonness taketh away the observation, we receive from his fulness. Many of these are renewed every morning, and some of them every minute;

and yet how seldom do we so much as take notice of many of these things? How justly might that complaint, which GOD maketh against the unthankful Israelites, be taken up against us, "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider!"

The second degree of our unthankfulness to GOD, and that also for want of faithful acknowledgment, is, the ascribing of those good things which he hath given us to our own deserts or endeavours, or to any thing, either in part or in whole, but to him. Such things indeed we have; but "we bestirred ourselves for them; we beat our brains; we may thank our good friends, or we may thank our good selves for them." Thus do we "sacrifice to our own nets, and burn incense to our drag," as if by them our "portion were fat, and our meat plenteous." This kind of unthankfulness GOD both foresaw and forbade in his own people, *Deut. viii.*, warning them to "take heed, (verse 17,) lest when they abounded" in all plenty and prosperity, "they should forget the LORD, and say in their hearts, my power, and the might of my hands, hath gotten me this wealth." The very saying or thinking this was forgetting GOD. "But," saith MOSES, "thou shalt remember the LORD thy GOD: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth." The whole chapter is none other but a warning against unthankfulness. All glorying in ourselves, all boasting of the gifts of GOD, or bearing ourselves high upon any of his blessings, argueth a reluctance to make a free acknowledgment of the Giver's bounty, and so is tainted with unthankfulness.

The third degree, then, of our ingratitude to GOD, is the forgetfulness of his benefits. When we so easily forget them, it is a sign we set light by them. Every man readily remembereth those things of which he maketh any reckoning, insomuch that although old age is naturally forgetful, yet TULLY saith, "he never knew any man so old, as to forget where he had hid his gold,

or to whom he had lent his money." We all condemn PHAROAH's butler for unthankfulness to JOSEPH, in that having received comfort from JOSEPH, when they were fellow-prisoners, he yet forgat him when he had power and opportunity to requite him. How inexcusable are we that so condemn him, seeing wherein we judge him we condemn ourselves: for we do the same things, and much worse; he forgat JOSEPH, who was but a man like himself; we forget GOD. He had received but one good turn; we many. It is likely that he had none about him to put him in mind of JOSEPH, for as for JOSEPH himself, he could have no access; we have GOD himself daily refreshing our memories, both by his word and ministers, and also by new and fresh benefits. He, as soon as a fair occasion presented, confessed his fault, and remembered JOSEPH, thereby shewing his former forgetfulness to have proceeded rather from negligence than wilfulness; we continue in a kind of wilful and confirmed resolution still to forget.

A fourth degree of unthankfulness is, the undervaluing of GOD's blessings, and depreciation of their worth. Of this fault the murmuring Israelites were often guilty; who, although they were brought into "a good land, flowing with milk and honey," yet, as it is said in *Psal. cvi.* "they thought scorn of that pleasant land," and were upon every light occasion repining against GOD and against MOSES, always receiving good things from GOD, and yet always discontent at something or other. And where is there a man among us that can wash his hands in innocency, and discharge himself altogether from the guilt of unthankfulness in this kind? Where is there a man so constantly content with his portion, that he hath not sometimes either complained of the leanness of his own, or envied the fatness of another's lot? This grudging and repining at our portions, so frequent among us, argue but too much the unthankfulness of our hearts.

The last thing required to Thankfulness, after a faithful Acknowledgment of the receipt, and a just Valuation of

the thing received, is Retribution or Requitall. Now this must be real, if it be possible; but at least, it must be in desire and endeavour. And herein also, as in both the former, there may be a double failure; if, having received a benefit, we requite it, either not at all, or ill. Not to have any care at all of requital, is the fifth degree of unthankfulness. To a requital justice bindeth us, either to the party himself that did us the good, if it may be, or at the least to them who are his. DAVID retained such a memory of JONATHAN'S friendship, that when he was dead, he enquired after some of his friends, that he might requite JONATHAN'S love by some kindness to them: "Is there yet any left of the house of SAUL, that I may shew him kindness for JONATHAN'S sake?" And surely, he would be a very unthankful wretch, that, having been beholden to the father as much as his life is worth, would suffer the son of so well-deserving a father to perish for want of his help. Indeed to GOD we can render nothing that is worthy the name of requital; we must not so much as think of that. But yet somewhat we must do, to express the thankfulness of our hearts, which, though it be nothing less, yet it pleaseth him to interpret as a requital. This we must do, both to him and his; to him, by seeking his glory; to his, by the fruits of our Christian charity. Are we not then foully ungrateful to GOD, to whose goodness we owe all we have or are, if for the advancement of his glory, and the maintenance of his truth, we scruple to spend the best and most precious things we have, yea, though it be our dearest heart-blood? But how much more ungrateful, if we think it much for his sake to forego liberty, lands, living, houses, goods, offices, honours, or any of these smaller things? Can there be greater unthankfulness, than to grudge him a little, who hath given us all? In these yet peaceable times of our church and state, GOD be thanked, we are not much put to it; but who knoweth how soon a heavy day of trial may come? We all know it cannot come sooner or heavier than our sins have

deserved, wherein woe, woe to our unthankfulness, if we do not freely render to GOD, of those things which he hath given us, whatsoever he shall require of us. But yet even in these peaceable times, there want not opportunities wherein to exercise our thankfulness, and to manifest our desires of requital, though not to him, yet to his; to his servants and children in their afflictions, to his poor distressed members in their manifold necessities. These opportunities we never did, we never shall want, according to our Saviour's prediction, or rather promise, "The poor ye shall have always with you," as my deputy-receivers, "but me," in person, "ye shall not have always." And what we do, or do not, to these whom he has thus constituted his deputies, he taketh as done or not done unto himself. If when GOD hath given us prosperity, we suffer these to be distressed, and comfort them not; or victuals, to perish, and feed them not; or clothing, to starve, and cover them not; or power, to be oppressed, and rescue them not; or ability in any kind, to want it, and relieve them not; let us make what shew we will, let us make what profession we will of our thankfulness to GOD,—what we deny to these, we deny to him, and as we deal with these, if his case were theirs, (as he is pleased to make their case his,) we should so deal with him. And what is to be unthankful, if this be not?

And yet behold unthankfulness greater than this; unthankfulness in the sixth, and last, and highest degree: we requite him Evil for good. In that other case, we were unjust, not to requite him at all; but are injurious also in this, to requite him with ill. It sticketh upon King JOASH as a brand of infamy for ever, that he slew ZACHARY, the son of JEHOIADA the high priest, who had been true and faithful to him, both in getting the kingdom and in the administration of it; 2 *Chron.* xxiv. "Thus JOASH the king remembered not the kindness which JEHOIADA the father had done him, but slew his son: and when he died, he said, The LORD look upon it, and

require it." And it was not long before the LORD did indeed look upon it, and require it. The very next verse beginneth to lay down the vengeance that GOD brought upon him for it: and yet, compared with ours, the ingratitude of JOASH was nothing. JEHOIADA was bound, as a subject, to assist the right heir; GOD is not bound to us, for he is a debtor to none. JOASH had right to the crown before JEHOIADA set it on his head: we have no right at all to the creature but by GOD's gift. JOASH, though he dealt not well with the son, yet ever esteemed the father so long as he lived, and was advised by him in the affairs of his kingdom: we rebel even against GOD himself, and cast all his counsels behind our backs. JOASH slew the son; but he was a mortal man, and his subject, and had given him, at least as he apprehended it, some affront and provocation: we, by our sins and disobedience, crucify the SON of GOD, the LORD and giver of life, by whom, and in whom, and from whom we enjoy all blessings, and of whom we are not able to say that ever he dealt unkindly with us. If, when GOD giveth us wit, wealth, power, authority, health, strength, liberty, and every other good thing, instead of using these things for his glory, and for the comfortable relief of his servants, we abuse them, some or all, to the service of those idols which we have erected to ourselves in our hearts;—to the maintenance of our pride and pomp, making Lucifer our GOD; of our pelf and profits, making Mammon our GOD; of our pleasures and sensuality, making our belly our GOD;—are we not as deep in the bill as those Israelites were? as unjust as they? as profane as they? as unthankful in every way as they? Flatter we not ourselves: obedience to GOD's commandments, and a sober and charitable use of his creatures, are the surest evidences of our thankfulness to GOD, and the fairest requital we can make for them. If we withdraw our obedience, and fall into open rebellion against GOD, if we abuse them, in making them either the occasions or instruments of sin, to the dishonour of GOD, and the damage of his servants; we

repay him ill for the good we have received, and are guilty of unthankfulness in this foulest and highest degree.

Dealing thus with him, let us not now marvel if God begin to deal otherwise than he was wont with us; if he deny us his creatures when we want them; if he take them from us when we have them; if he withhold his blessing from them, that it shall not attend them; if we find small comfort in them when we use them; if they do not answer our expectations, when we have been at some pains and cost with them; if, as the Prophet speaketh, “we sow much and bring in little, we eat and have not enough, we drink and are not filled, we clothe us and are not warm, and the wages we earn we put into a bag with holes.” If any of these things befall us, let us cease to wonder thereat: ourselves are the causers of all. It is our great unthankfulness that blasteth all our endeavours, that leaveneth with sourness whatsoever is sweet, and turneth into poison whatsoever is wholesome, in the good creatures of God. It is the word of God and prayer that sanctify them to our use, and they are then good, when they are received with thanksgiving; so long as we continue unthankful, we are vain, if we look for any sanctification in them, if we expect any good from them.

But what are the principal Causes of our so great Unthankfulness? They are especially, as I conceive, these five, namely, (1.) Pride and Self-love (2.) Envy and Discontent. (3.) Riotousness. (4.) Carefulness. (5.) Carnal Security. I know not how to prescribe any better remedies against unthankfulness, than faithfully to strive for the casting out of these sins.

I place Pride where it would be, the foremost, because it is above all others the principal impediment of thankfulness. Certainly there is no one thing in the world, so much as pride, that maketh men unthankful. He that would be truly thankful, must have one eye upon the gift, and the other upon the giver; and this the proud man never hath. * Either through self-love he is stark blind,

and seeeth neither, or else, through partiality, he winketh with one eye, and will not look at both. Sometimes he seeeth the gift but too much, and boasteth of it, but then he forgetteth the giver; “he boasteth as if he had not received it,” 1 *Cof.* iv. 7. Sometimes again he overlooketh the gift, as not good enough for him, and so repineth at the giver, as if he had not given him according to his worth. Either he undervalueth the gift, or else he overvalueth himself, as if he were himself the giver, or at least the deserver, and is in both unthankful. To remove this impediment, whoever desireth to be thankful, let him humble himself, nay, empty himself, nay, deny himself, and all his deserts; confess himself, with JACOB, “less than the least of GOD’S mercies;” and condemn his own heart of much sinful sacrilege, if it dare but think the least thought tending to rob GOD of the least part of his honour.

Envy followeth pride, the daughter the mother, and is a second great impediment of thankfulness. The fault is, that men not content to look upon their own things, and the present, but comparing these with the things of other men, or other times, instead of giving thanks for what they have, repine that others have more or better; or for what they now have, complain that it is not with them as it hath been. These thoughts are enemies to the tranquillity of the mind, breeding many discontents, and much unthankfulness, whilst our eyes are evil because GOD is good to others, or hath been so to us. To remove this impediment, whoever desireth to be truly thankful, let him look upon his own things, and not on the things of other men; and therein consider not so much what he wanteth, as what he hath. Let him think, that what GOD hath given him came from his free bounty,—he owed it not; and what he hath denied him, he withholdeth it either in his justice for his former sins, or in his mercy for his farther good. GOD giveth to no man all the desire of his heart in these outward things, in order to teach him not to look for absolute contentment in this life, and

least of all in these things. If he will look upon other men's things, let him compare himself rather with them that have less, than with those that have more; and therein, withal, consider, not so much what himself wanteth, which some others have, as what he hath which many others want. If a few, who enjoy God's blessings in these outward things in a greater measure than he, be an eye-sore to him; let those many others, who have a scantier portion, make him acknowledge that God hath dealt bountifully with him.

The third impediment of thankfulness, is Riot. This the Prophet reckoneth in the catalogue of *Sodom's* sins, "fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness."—"When thou hast eaten, and art full, then beware lest thou forget the LORD thy God," *Deut. viii.*—It much argueth, that we make small account of the good creatures of God, if we will not so much as take a little pains to get them; but much more, if lavishly, and like prodigal fools, we make waste and havock of them. He that hath received some token from a dear friend, though perhaps of little value, if he retain any grateful memory of his friend, will value it the more, and be the more careful to preserve it, for his friend's sake. And if he should make it away causelessly, and the rather because it came so easily, every man would interpret it as an evidence of his unfriendly and unthankful heart. But riot is not only a sign, it is also a cause, of unthankfulness; in as much as it maketh us value the good things of God at too low a rate. For we usually value the worth of things proportionably to their use; judging them more or less good, according to the good they do to us. And how then can the prodigal or riotous epicure, that consumeth the good creatures of God to so little purpose, set a just price upon them, seeing he reapeth so little good from them? To remedy this, whoever would be truly thankful, let him live in some honest vocation, and therein occupy himself faithfully and painfully; binding himself to a sober, discreet, and moderate use of God's creatures. Remember

that CHRIST would not have the very fragments lost. Think that if for every word idly spoken, then by the same proportion for every penny idly spent, we shall be accountable to GOD at the day of judgment.

Immoderate Care or Solitude for outward things is another impediment of thankfulness. Under this title I comprehend covetousness especially, but not exclusively. Ambition also, and voluptuousness, and every other vice, that consisteth in a desire and expectation of something for the future, are included. Such desire and expectation, if inordinate, must needs in the end terminate in unthankfulness. For the true reason why we desire things inordinately is, because we promise to ourselves more comfort from them than they are able to give; this being ever our error, when we have any thing in chase, to sever the good for which we hope by it from the inconveniences that go therewith. But having obtained the thing we desired, we find the one as well as the other, and then the inconveniences, which we never thought of before, abate much of the price we formerly set thereon. Thus it cometh to pass, that by how much we overvalued it in the pursuit, by so much we undervalue it in the possession; and so, instead of giving thanks to GOD for the good we have received, we complain of the inconveniences that adhere thereto, and so much under-prize it, as it falleth short of our expectation. Now as far as we under-prize it, so far are we unthankful for it. To remove this impediment, whoever would be thankful, let him moderate his desires after these outward things; anticipate as well the inconveniences that follow them, as the commodities they bring with them; lay the one against the other; and prepare as well to digest the one, as to enjoy the other.

The last impediment of thankfulness is Carnal Security, joined ever with delays and procrastinations. When we receive any thing from GOD, we know we should give him thanks for it, and it may be, we think of doing so; but we think withal another day will serve the turn, and so

we put it off from time to time, till in the end we have quite forgotten both his benefit and our own duty. To remove this impediment, consider how in every thing delays are hurtful and dangerous; how our affections are best at the first, and do in process of time insensibly deaden, and at last die, if we do not take the opportunity; how, if pretensions of other businesses may serve the turn to put off the rendering of our thanks to God, the Devil will be sure to suggest enough of these, so that we shall seldom or never be at leisure to serve God, and to give him thanks.

Let us remember these five impediments, and beware of them, Pride, Envy, Epicurism, worldly Carefulness, and Delay; all which are best remedied by their contraries. Good helps therefore unto thankfulness are, first, Humility and self-denial: secondly, Contentedness: thirdly, Painfulness and Sobriety: fourthly, the Moderation of our desires after earthly things: fifthly, Speed and Maturity. And if we be thus bound to give God thanks for these outward blessings, how much more ought we to abound in all thankfulness for his manifold spiritual blessings in heavenly things in CHRIST; for grace, for mercy and redemption, for faith and justification, for sanctification and obedience, for hope and glorification. If we ought to pray, and to give thanks, for our daily bread, which nourisheth but our bodies, and then is cast into the draught, and both it and our bodies perish; how much more for that "bread of life which came down from heaven," and feedeth our souls unto eternal life. If we must say for that, "Give us this day our daily bread," shall we not much more say for this, "LORD, evermore give us this bread?" Beseech we now almighty God to guide us all with such holy discretion in the free use of his good creatures, that keeping ourselves within the due bounds of Sobriety, Charity, and Duty, we may in all things glorify God, and above all things, and for all things, "give thanks always unto God and the FATHER in the name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST."

TO WHICH LORD JESUS CHRIST, the blessed SON OF GOD, together with the FATHER, and the HOLY SPIRIT, three persons, and one only-wise, gracious, and ever-living GOD, be ascribed, as is most due, by us and his whole church, the KINGDOM, the power, and the glory, both now and for evermore.

A
S E R M O N

PREACHED AT

ST. PAUL'S CROSS, LONDON,

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GEN. XX. 6.

And GOD said unto him in a Dream ; Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thine heart : For I also with-held thee from sinning against me ; therefore suffered I thee not to touch her.

FOR our more profitable understanding of these words, it is needful that we should have in remembrance the whole story of this Chapter. ABRAHAM cometh, with SARAH his wife, and their family, as a stranger, to sojourn among the *Philistines* in *Gerar* ; and covenanteth with her before-hand, thinking thereby to provide for his own safety, because she was beautiful, that they should not know that they were any more than brother and sister. ABIMELECH, King of the place, heareth of their coming, and of her beauty ; sendeth for them both ; inquireth whence and who they were ; heareth no more from them, but that she was his sister ; and dismissing him, taketh her into his house. Hereupon GOD plagueth him and his with a strange visitation ; threateneth him also with death ; and giveth him to understand, that all this was for taking another man's wife. He answereth for himself ; GOD replieth. The answer is in the two former verses ; the reply in this and the following verse.

His answer is by way of apology: he pleadeth first ignorance, and then his innocence; "And he said, LORD, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation? Said he not unto me, She is my sister? And she, even she herself, said, He is my brother: In the integrity of my heart, and innocency of my hands, have I done this." God fitteth it with a reply most convenient for such an answer; admitting his plea, so far as he alleged it, that what he had done, in taking ABRAHAM'S wife, he had done it simply out of ignorance,—"Yea, I know thou didst this in the integrity of thine heart;" and withal supplying that which ABIMELECH had omitted, as to what he had not done, in not touching her, by assigning the true cause thereof, namely, his powerful restraint; "For I also withheld thee from sinning against me, therefore suffered I thee not to touch her."

By occasion of those first words of the text, "And God said unto him in a Dream," if we should enter into some inquiries concerning the nature and use of divine revelations in general, and in particular of Dreams, the discourse would not be wholly unprofitable. Concerning those points, these several conclusions might be easily made good: First, That God revealed himself and his will frequently, in old times, in sundry manners, as by Visions, Prophecies, Extacies, Oracles, and other supernatural means, and among the rest by Dreams. Secondly, That although God have now tied us to his holy written Word, as unto a perpetual and infallible rule, against which we may not admit any other direction as from God; yet he hath no where abridged himself of the power and liberty, even still, to intimate unto the sons of men the knowledge of his will, and the glory of his might, by Dreams, Miracles, and other like supernatural Manifestations, if at any time, either in the want of the ordinary means of the Word, Sacraments, and Ministry, or for the present necessities of his church, or of some part thereof, or for some other just cause, perhaps unknown to us, he shall see it expedient so to do. He hath prescribed to us,

but he hath not limited himself. Thirdly, That because the Devil and wicked spirits may suggest dreams, and work many strange effects in nature, which, because they are out of the sphere of our comprehension, may, to our view, have fair appearances of divine revelations or miracles; it is not safe for us to give easy credit to Dreams, Prophecies, or Miracles, as divine, until upon due trial there shall appear, both in the end, to which they point us, a direct tendency to the advancement of God's glory, and in the means also which they propose to us, a conformity unto the revealed will of God in his written Word. Lastly, That there is yet to be made a lawful, yea and a very profitable use, even of our ordinary dreams, and of the observance thereof, and that both in physic and divinity; not at all by foretelling particulars of things to come, but by taking from them reasonable conjectures of the present estate both of our bodies and souls. As to our bodies, first; our ordinary dreams may be a good help to discover, both in time of health, what our natural constitution is; and in times of sickness, from which of the humours the malady springeth. And as of our bodies, so of our souls too: for since our dreams, for the most part, look the same way to which our freest thoughts incline, (as the voluptuous dreameth most of pleasures, the covetous most of profits, and the proud or ambitious most of praises, preferments, or revenge,) the observing of our ordinary dreams may be of good use to discover which of these three is our Master-Sin; for unto one of the three every other sin is reduced, "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, or the pride of life."

But concerning Revelations and Dreams, it shall suffice to have only proposed these few conclusions. We proceed to the substance of God's reply; and therein begin with the former part, in which is God's admission of ABIMELECH's plea. God alloweth the allegation, and acknowledgeth his integrity; "Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart."

From GOD'S approval of ABIMELECH'S answer, and acknowledgment of the integrity of his heart, we learn, that some ignorance hath the weight of a just excuse; for we noted before, that ignorance was the ground of his plea. He had indeed taken SARAH into his house, who was another man's wife; but he hopeth that shall not be imputed to him as a fault, because he knew not that she was a married woman, the parties themselves, upon inquiry, having informed him otherwise. And therefore he appealeth to GOD himself, the trier and judge of men's hearts, whether he were not innocent in this matter; and GOD giveth sentence for him; "Yea, I know that thou didst it in the integrity of thy heart." Here you see his ignorance is allowed to be a sufficient excuse.

I proceed to the remaining words: "For I also withheld thee from sinning against me; therefore suffered I thee not to touch her." The word $\tau\omega\tau\omega$ signifieth properly to *hold in*, or to *keep back*; *retinui*, or *cohibui*, or as the *Latin* hath it, *custodivi te*, implying ABIMELECH'S forwardness to that sin; into which he certainly had fallen, if GOD had not kept him in, and held him back. The *Greek* rendereth it, $\kappa\alpha\iota \epsilon\phi\epsilon\iota\sigma\alpha\mu\epsilon\lambda\eta\nu \sigma\theta$, *I spared thee*. And indeed GOD spareth us much more, when he maketh us to forbear to sin, than when having sinned he forbeareth to punish; and as much cause have we to acknowledge his mercy, and to rejoice in it, when he holdeth our hands that we sin not, as when he holdeth his own hands that he strike not.—"For I also withheld thee from sinning against me." How? Did not ABIMELECH sin in taking SARAH, or was not that, as every other sin is, a "sin against GOD?" Certainly, if ABIMELECH had not sinned in so doing, and that against GOD, GOD would not have so plagued him as he did. The meaning then is, not that GOD withheld him wholly from sinning, but that GOD withheld him wholly from sinning against him in that foul kind, and in that high degree, which but for GOD'S restraint he had done.—"Therefore suffered I thee not;" $\epsilon\kappa \alpha\phi\eta\kappa\alpha$; *non dimisi te*; that is, I did not let thee go; I

did not leave thee to thyself; or most agreeably to the letter of the text in the *Hebrew*, I did not deliver, or give. That may be, I did not give thee leave; and so giving is sometimes used for suffering, as *Psal. xvi. Non dabis sanctum tuum*, “thou wilt not suffer:”—Or I gave thee not to thyself; for a man cannot be put more desperately into the hands of any enemy, than when he is delivered into his own hands, and given over to the lust of his own heart:—Or as it is here translated, “I suffered thee not.” We should not draw in God as a party, when we commit any sin, as if he joined with us in it, or lent his helping hand for it: We do it so alone, without his help, that we never do it but when he letteth us alone, and leaveth us destitute of his help. As to the kind, and manner, and measure, and circumstances of sin, God so over-ruleth them by his almighty power and providence, as to make them serviceable to his most wise, most just, most holy purposes: but as for the very sin itself, God is (to make the most of it) but a sufferer.—“Therefore suffered I thee not to touch her;”—signifying that God had so restrained ABIMELECH from the accomplishment of his wicked purposes, that SARAH was preserved free by his good providence, not only from adultery, but from all wantonness also with ABIMELECH.

It was God’s great mercy to all the three parties, that he did not suffer this evil to be done; for by this means he graciously preserved ABIMELECH from the sin, ABRAHAM from the wrong, and SARAH from both. And it is to be acknowledged as the great mercy of God, when at any time he doth, by his gracious and powerful restraint, withhold any man from running into those extremities of sin and mischief to which his own corruption would carry him headlong, especially when it is impelled by the cunning persuasions of SATAN, and the manifold temptations that are in the world.—The points then which arise from my text are these: 1. Men do not always commit those evils to which their own desires or outward temptations prompt them. 2. That they do it not, is from

God's restraint. 3. When **God** restraineth them, it is of his own gracious goodness.—The subject of all these three points being one, namely, **God's** Restraint of Man's Sin, we will therefore wrap them up together in this one entire Observation: **God** in his Mercy often restraineth men from committing those evils which, if that restraint were not exercised, they would have committed.

This Restraint, whether we consider the Measure, or the Means, which **God** useth therein, is of great variety.—As to the Measure: **God** sometimes restraineth men from the whole sin to which they are tempted; as he did **Joseph** from consenting to the persuasions of his mistress: sometimes he restraineth them in part, and that more or less, as in his infinite wisdom he seeth expedient; suffering them perhaps only to desire the evil, perhaps to resolve upon it, perhaps to prepare for it, perhaps to begin to act it, perhaps to proceed far in it, and yet keeping them back from falling into the extremity of the sin, or accomplishing their whole desire.—And as for the Means whereby **God** withholdeth men from sinning, they are also of wonderful variety. Sometimes he taketh them off, by diverting the course of the corruption, and turning the affections another way: sometimes he awakeneth conscience: sometimes he affrighteth them with apprehensions of outward evils; as shame, charge, envy, loss of a friend, danger of human laws, and sundry other discouragements: sometimes he cooleth their resolutions, by presenting to their thoughts the terrors of the law, the strictness of the last account, and the torments of hell-fire: sometimes, when all things are ripe for execution, he denieth them opportunity, or casteth some unexpected impediment in the way: sometimes he disableth them, and weakeneth the arm of flesh wherein they trusted, so that they want power to their will: and sundry other ways he hath, more than we are able to search into, whereby he layeth a restraint upon men, and keepeth them back from many sins, to which otherwise nature and temptation would carry them. Not to speak of that

sweet and most blessed Restraint, which is wrought in us by the Spirit of Sanctification, renewing the soul, and subduing the corruption that is in the flesh unto the obedience of the Spirit.

In all these instances, wherein, when there was intended before-hand so much evil to be done, and when there was in the parties a forward desire and preparation to have done it, yet, when all came to all, so little or nothing was done of what was intended, but rather the contrary; it cannot, first, be imagined that such a stop should be made, but by the powerful restraint of some over-ruling hand; neither may we doubt, in the second place, that every such restraint, by what secondary and subordinate means soever it be furthered, is yet the proper work of God, as proceeding from and guided by his almighty providence. It was GOD that turned BALAAM'S curse into a blessing; it was the same GOD that turned LABAN'S revengeful thoughts into a friendly expostulation; and it was the same GOD that turned ESAU'S inveterate malice into a brotherly congratulation. He that hath set "bounds to the sea," which, "though the waves thereof rage horribly, they cannot pass," who commanded the waters of the *Red Sea* to stay their course, and stand up as in heaps, and who by his power could force the waters of the river *Jordan* to run quite against the current up the channel; he hath in his hands, and at his command, the hearts of all the sons of men, yea though they be the greatest Kings and Monarchs in the world, as the rivers of waters, and can turn them at his pleasure, inclining them which way soever he will. "The fierceness of men shall turn to thy praise," (saith DAVID in *Psal.* lxxvi. 10,) "and the fierceness of them shalt thou restrain." The latter clause of the verse is very significant in the Original, and cometh home to our purpose; as if we should translate it, "Thou shalt *gird* the remainder of their wrath," or "of their fierceness." The meaning is this: suppose a man's heart to be never so full fraught with envy, hatred, malice, wrath, and revenge, let him be as fierce and

furious as possible, God may indeed suffer him, and he will suffer him, to exercise so much of his corruption, and proceed so far in his fierceness, as he seeth expedient and useful for the forwarding of his other secret and just and holy appointments, and will so order the sinful fierceness of man by his wonderful providence, as to make it serviceable to his ends, and to turn it to his glory: but look, whatsoever wrath and fierceness there are in the heart of a man, over and above so much as will serve for those his purposes, all that overplus and remainder, whatsoever it be, he will *gird*; he will so bind, and hamper, and restrain him, that he shall not be able to go an inch beyond his tether. “The fierceness of man shall turn to thy praise,” so much of it as he doth execute; “and the remainder of his fierceness thou shalt restrain,” that he execute it not. Be he ever so great a prince, or have he ever so great a spirit, all is one, he must come under. There is no difference with God, in this, betwixt him that sitteth on the throne, and her that grindeth at the mill: “He shall restrain the spirit of Princes, and is wonderful among the Kings of the earth.”

This Restraint, as it is from God, so it is from the Mercy of God. Hence it is that Divines usually bestow upon it the name of Grace; distinguishing between a two-fold grace, Renewing Grace, and Restraining Grace. Even this is Grace: for first, in respect of God, every Restraint from sin may be called Grace; in as much as it proceedeth from the mere good-will and pleasure of God, without any cause, motive, or inducement, in the man that is so restrained. For take a man in the state of corrupt nature, and leave him to himself; and think, how it is possible for him to forbear any sin, whereunto he is tempted. There is no power in nature to work a restraint; nay, there is not so much as any proneness in nature to desire a restraint; much less, then, is there any worth in nature to deserve a restraint. Issuing therefore, not at all from the powers of nature, but from the free pleasure of God, as a beam of his merciful pro-

vidence, this Restraint may well be called Grace. And so it may be, secondly, in respect of the persons themselves ; because, if it be not available to them for their everlasting salvation, yet it is some favour to them, more than they have deserved, that by this means, their sins are so much less than otherwise they would have been ; whereby also their account shall be so much the easier, and their stripes so many the fewer. St. CHRYSOSTOM often observeth it, as an effect of the mercy of GOD upon them, when he cutteth off great offenders betimes with some speedy destruction : and he doth it out of this very consideration, that they are thereby prevented from committing many sins, which, if GOD should have lent them a longer time, they would have committed. If his observation be sound, it may then well pass for a double mercy of GOD to a sinner, if he both respite his destruction, and withal restrain him from sin ; for by the one, he giveth him so much longer time for repentance, which is one mercy ; and by the other, he preventeth so much of the increase of his sin, which is another mercy. Thirdly, it may be called Grace, in respect of other men : for in restraining men from doing evil, GOD intendeth, as principally his own glory, so withal, subordinately, the good of mankind, especially of his church, in the preservation of human society ; which could not subsist an hour, if every man should be left to the wildness of his own nature, to do whatever mischief the Devil and his own heart would put him upon. So that the restraining of men's corrupt purposes and affections proceedeth from that love of GOD to mankind, whereby he willeth their preservation ; and it might therefore, in that respect, bear the name of Grace, though there should be no good at all intended thereby to the person so restrained. GOD here restrained ABIMELECH, as on other occasions he did LABAN, and ESAU, and BALAAM, and others, not so much for their own sakes, though that also, as for the sakes of those whom they would have injured by their sins.

The inferences, which we may draw from hence, are

of two sorts; resulting from the consideration of God's Restraining Grace, either as it may lie upon other men or as it may lie upon ourselves.

First, from the consideration of God's Restraint upon others, the children and servants of God may learn to whom they owe their preservation, even to the power and goodness of their God, restraining the fury of his and their enemies. We live as sheep in the midst of wolves; and they that hate us without a cause are more in number than the hairs of our heads: and yet as many and as malicious as they are, still by the mercy of God, we live. Are any thanks due to them? None at all. The "seed of the serpent" beareth a natural and an immortal hatred against God, and all good men; and if they had power answerable to their wills, we should not breathe a minute. Are any thanks due to ourselves? None: we have neither number to match them, nor policy to defeat them, nor strength to resist them; weak, silly, "little flock," as we are. To whom then owe we thanks? As if a little flock of sheep escape, when a multitude of ravening wolves watch to devour them, it cannot be ascribed, in whole or in part, either to the sheep in whom there is no help, or to the wolf in whom there is no mercy, but it must be imputed wholly to the care of the shepherd, in safely guarding his sheep, and keeping off the wolf; so for our safety and preservation, in the midst and in spite of so many enemies, "not unto us, O LORD, not unto us," whose greatest strength is but weakness,—much less unto them, whose tenderest mercies are cruel,—"but unto thy name be the glory," O thou "Shepherd of Israel," who out of thine abundant love to us, the sheep of thy hands, hast made thy power glorious, in curbing and restraining their malice against us. "O that men would therefore praise the LORD for his goodness, and declare the wonders that he doth for the children of men!" Wonders we may well call them; indeed they are miracles, if things strange, and above and against the ordinary course of nature, may be called miracles. When we

read the stories in the Scriptures, of DANIEL cast into the den amongst the lions, and not touched ; of the Three Children walking in the midst of the fiery furnace, and not scorched ; of a viper fastening upon PAUL's hand, and no harm following ; we are stricken with some amazement, at the consideration of these strange and supernatural accidents, and these we all confess to be miraculous. Yet such miracles as these, and such escapes, GOD worketh daily in our preservation ; notwithstanding that we live encompassed by so many fire-brands of hell, such herds of ravening wolves and lions, and such numerous generations of vipers ; I mean, wicked and ungodly men, who have it from their father, to thirst after the destruction of the saints and servants of GOD, and to whom it is as natural so to do, as for the fire to burn, or for a lion to devour. " O that men would therefore praise the LORD for" this " his goodness," and declare these his great wonders, which he daily " doth for the children of men."

Secondly, since this Restraint of wicked men is only from GOD, so that nothing which either they or we, or any creature in the world, can do, can withhold them from doing us mischief, unless GOD lay his restraint upon them ; it should teach us to take heed how we trust them. It is best for us, as in all other things, so in this, to keep the mean, that we be neither too timorous, nor too credulous. If wicked men then threaten and plot against thee, fear them not ; GOD can restrain them if he think good, and then, assure thyself, they shall not harm thee. If, on the other side, they shew much kindness to thee, yet trust them not ; GOD may suffer them to take their own way, and not restrain them ; and then, assure thyself, they will not spare thee. Thou mayest think, perhaps, of one or other of these, that sure his own good nature will hold him in ; or thou hast had trial of him heretofore, and found him faithful ; or thou hast some such tie upon him by kindred, neighbourhood, acquaintance, covenant, oath, benefits, or other natural or civil obligation, as will keep him off, at least from falling upon

thee all at once. Deceive not thyself; these are but slender assurances. Good nature! alas, where is it? Since ADAM fell, there was never any such thing in mere nature. If there be any good thing in any man, it is all from grace. Nature is all naught, even that which seemeth to have the pre-eminence in nature. We may talk of this and that; of good-natured men, and I know not what! But the very truth is, set grace aside, (I mean all grace, both renewing and restraining grace,) and there is no more good-nature in any man, than there was in CAIN and in JUDAS. That thing, which we use to call good-nature, is indeed but a subordinate mean or instrument, whereby GOD restraineth some men, more than others, from their birth, from sundry outrageous exorbitances; and so it is a branch of this Restraining Grace whereof we now speak. And as for thy past experience, that can give thee little security: thou knowest not what fetters GOD laid upon him then, nor how he was pleased with those fetters. GOD might, against his will, not only restrain him from doing thee hurt, but also constrain him to do thee good; as once he commanded the raven to feed ELIJAH,—a bird so unnatural to her young ones, that they might famish for her, if GOD did not otherwise provide for them; and therefore, it is noted in the Scripture, as a special argument of GOD's providence, that he feedeth the "young ravens" that call upon him. But as nothing that is constrained is durable, but every thing, when it is constrained against its natural inclination, if it be let alone, will at length return to its own kind; so a natural man is a natural man still, howsoever over-ruled for the present; and if GOD, as he hath hitherto by his restraint withheld him, shall but another while withhold his restraint from him, he will soon discover the inbred hatred of his heart against good things and good men, and make thee bewail thy folly in trusting him. And therefore, if he hath done thee seven courtesies, and promise fair for the eighth, yet trust him not, for there are seven abominations in his heart. And as for whatsoever other tie

thou mayest think thou hast over him, be it ever so strong, unless God manacle him with his powerful restraint, he can as easily unfetter himself from them all, as SAMPSON did from the green withs and cords, wherewith the *Philistines* bound him. All those fore-mentioned relations came in since; whereas the hatred of the wicked against goodness is of an ancient date; it hath its root in corrupt nature, and is therefore of such force, that it maketh void all obligations, whether civil, domestic, or any others, that have grown up by virtue of any succeeding contract. It is a ruled case, that a man's enemies may be they of his own house. Let not any man, then, that hath either religion or honesty, have any thing to do with, at least let him not trust, more than he needs must, him who is an enemy either to religion or honesty. So far as common humanity and our lawful occasions and callings require, we may have to do with such persons, and rest upon the good providence of God for the success of our affairs, even in their hands; not doubting but that God will both restrain them from doing us harm, and dispose them to do us good, so far as he shall see expedient for us: But then, this is not to trust them, but to trust God with them. But for us to put ourselves needlessly into their hands, and to hazard our safety upon their faithfulness, by way of trust,—there is neither wisdom in it, nor warrant for it. Although God may do it, yet we have no reason to presume that he will restrain them for our sakes, when we might have prevented the danger ourselves, and would not: And this we are sure of, that nothing can preserve us from receiving mischief from them, unless God restrain them; therefore, trust them not.

Thirdly, if at any time we see wickedness set on high, if bad men grow great, or great men shew themselves bad, sinning with an high hand, and God seemeth to strengthen their hand by adding to their greatness, and increasing their power; if we see the wicked devouring the man that is more righteous than he, and "God hold

his tongue ;” if we see the ungodly course up and down at pleasure, without controul, like a wild untamed colt in a spacious field, GOD (as it were) laying the reins on the neck, and letting them run ;—in a word, if we see the whole world out of frame and order,—we may yet frame ourselves to a godly patience, and sustain our hearts amidst all these evils, with this consideration, that still GOD keepeth the reins in his own hands ; and when he seeth his time, and so far as he seeth it good, he both can and will check and controul and restrain them at his pleasure. What then if GOD suffer those that hate him to prosper for a time, and in their prosperity, to lord it over his heritage ! What if princes should “ sit and speak against us without a cause,” as was sometimes DAVID’S case ! Let us not fret at the injuries, nor envy the greatness of any : let us rather betake us to DAVID’S refuge, which was to be occupied in the statutes of GOD, and to meditate in his holy Word. In that holy Word we are taught, that the hearts even of Kings, how much more than those of inferior persons, are in his rule and governance, and that he doth dispose and turn them, as seemeth best to his godly wisdom ; that he can restrain the spirit of princes, binding kings in chains, and nobles in links of iron ; and though they rage furiously at it, and lay their heads together, in consultation how to break his bands and cast away his cords from them, yet they imagine but a vain thing. Whilst they strive against him on earth, he laugheth them to scorn in heaven, and maugre all opposition will establish the kingdom of his CHRIST, and protect his people. Say then that the great ones of the world exercise their power over us, and lay what restraints they can upon us ; our comfort is, that they have not greater power over us than GOD hath over them ; nor can they so much restrain the meanest of us, as GOD can restrain the greatest of them. Say that they who hate us are more in number than the hairs of our head ; our comfort is, that the very hairs of our head are numbered by him, and without his sufferance, not the least

hair of our heads shall perish. Say (to imagine the worst) that our enemies prevail against us, and they that hate us are lords over us for a time; our comfort is, that he who loveth us is LORD over them, and can bring them under us again. In all our fears, in all our dangers, in all our distresses, our comfort is, that GOD can do all this for us: our care should be, by our holy obedience, to strengthen our interest in his protection, and not to make him a stranger from us, yea, an enemy unto us, by our sins, that so we may have yet more comfort, in a cheerful confidence that GOD will do all this for us. He that is, indeed, the great king over all the children of pride, who hath better title to the style of "most catholic king," than any that ever yet bare it, and whose territories are large as the earth, and spacious as the air, I mean the Devil, the Prince of this World, even he is so fettered with the chain of GOD's power and providence, that he is not able, with all his might and malice, to do us any harm in our souls, in our bodies, in our children, in our friends, in our goods, without the special leave and sufferance of our good GOD.

Fourthly, since this Restraint is an act of GOD's mercy, whom we should strive to resemble in nothing more than in shewing mercy; let every one of us, in imitation of our heavenly Father, and in compassion to the souls of our brethren, endeavour faithfully to do the best we can in order to restrain and keep back others from sinning. The Magistrate, the Minister, the Householder, and every other man in his place and calling, should do their best by rewards, punishments, rebukes, encouragements, admonitions, persuasions, and good example, to suppress vice, and restrain disorders, in those that may in any way come within their charge. Our first desire should be, and for that we should bend our utmost endeavours, that their hearts may be seasoned with grace, and the true fear of GOD. But where we cannot attain to the full of our first aims, we may take some contentment in it, as some fruit of our labours, if we can but wean them from gross dis-

orders. Our first aim is, to make you good : yet some rejoicing it is to us, if we can but make you *less evil* men; we are glad, if of dissolute, we can but make you good moral men. If instead of the power of godliness in the reformation of the inner man, we can but bring you to some tolerable stayedness in the conformity of the outward man;—if we can do but this, our labour is not altogether vain in the LORD. Do you then that are Magistrates, let us that are Ministers, let Fathers, Masters, and all others whatsoever, by wholesome severity (if fairer courses will not reclaim them) deter audacious persons from offending, break those that are under our charge of their wills, restrain them from licentious practices and company, and not suffer sin upon them for want of reproving them in due and seasonable sort, but snatch them out of the fire, and bring them, as far as we can, out of the snare of the devil, towards GOD; and then let us leave the rest to him. Possibly, when we have faithfully done our part, to the utmost of our power, he may graciously do his part, in their perfect conversion. If by our good care they may be made to forbear swearing, and cursing, and blaspheming, they may in time, by his good grace, be brought to fear an oath : if we restrain them from gross profanations of his holy day, they may come at length to think his sabbath a delight : and so it may be said of other sins and duties. I could willingly enlarge, but that there are sundry other uses to be made of this Restraining Grace of GOD ; and therefore I now pass on to them.

First, there is a root of pride in us all, whereby we are apt to think better of ourselves than there is cause to do ; and every infirmity in our brother serveth, as fuel, to nourish this vanity. Now, if at any time, when we see any of our brethren fall into some sin, from which by the good hand of GOD we have been hitherto preserved, we feel this swelling begin to rise in us, the point already delivered may stand us in good stead. We may consider, that this our forbearance of evil, wherein we seem to

excel our brother, is not from nature, but from grace, not from ourselves, but from GOD. And here a little let me close with thee, whosoever thou art, that pleasest thyself with the thoughts that thou art neither extortioner, nor adulterer, nor drunkard, nor swearer, nor thief, nor slanderer, nor murderer, as such and such are. It may be thou art none of these; but I can tell thee what thou art, and that is as odious in the sight of GOD as any of these; thou art a proud Pharisee. To let thee see thou art a Pharisee, do but give me a direct answer to that question of St. PAUL, "Who hath made thee to differ from another?" Was it GOD, or thyself, or both together? If thou sayest, it was GOD; thou art a dissembler, and thy boasting hath already confuted thee: for what hast thou to do to glory in that which is not thine? "If thou hast received it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" If thou sayest, it was from thyself; what Pharisee could have assumed more? All the shift thou hast left is, to say it was GOD indeed that made the difference, but he saw something in thee for which he made thee to differ: thou acknowledgest his Restraint in part, but thine own *good nature* did something. If this be all, thou art a very Pharisee still, without all escape. The Pharisee of old never denied GOD a part, no nor the chief part neither; he began his vaunting prayer with an acknowledgment of GOD's work; "I thank thee, O GOD, that I am not as other men are." It was not the denial of all unto GOD, but the assuming of any thing unto himself, that made him a downright Pharisee; go thy way then; and if thou wilt do GOD and thyself right, deny thyself altogether, and give to GOD the whole glory of it, if thou hast been preserved from any evil. And from thy brother's fall, besides compassionating our forlorn nature in him, draw a quite contrary use unto thyself; even to humble thyself thereby, with such thoughts as these,—“considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted,”—Am I better than he? of better mould than he? or better-tempered than he? Am not I a child of the same ADAM,

a vessel of the same clay? Why then should I be high-minded, when I see him fallen before me? Why should I not rather fear, lest my foot slip, as his hath done? I have much cause, with all thankfulness, to bless God for his good providence over me, in not suffering me to fall into this sin hitherto, and with all humility to implore the continuance of his gracious assistance for the future, without which I am not able to avoid this, or any other evil.

Secondly, since all restraints from sin, by what means soever they are conveyed unto us, or forwarded, are from the merciful Providence of God; whensoever we observe that God hath vouchsafed to us, or doth offer to us, any means of such gracious restraint, it is our duty joyfully to embrace those means, and carefully to cherish them, and with all due thankfulness to bless the name of God for them. O how often have we contrived a course for the expediting of our perhaps ambitious, perhaps covetous, perhaps malicious, perhaps voluptuous designs, and by the providence of God some unexpected accident hath marred the curious frame of all our projects. How often have we been resolved to sin, and prepared to sin, and even at the pit's brink, ready to cast ourselves into hell, when he hath plucked us away, as he plucked Lot out of *Sodom*, by alarms of conscience, by apprehensions of danger, by taking away the opportunities, by ministering impediments, by shortening our power, and by sundry other means! Have we now blessed the name of God, for affording us these gracious means of prevention and restraint? Nay, have we not rather been enraged thereat, and taken it with much impatience that we should be so crossed in the pursuit of our vain and sinful desires and purposes? And as wayward children cry, when the nurse snatcheth a knife from them, wherewith they might perhaps cut themselves, so we are offended with those who reprove us, and impatient under those crosses which disable us. Yea, we fret and turn again at the powerful application of the holy word of God, when

it endeavoureth to reform us, or to restrain us from those evils wherein we delight. Let us henceforth mend this fault, and cheerfully submit ourselves to the discipline of the Almighty.

Thirdly, since we owe our standing to the hand of God, who holdeth us up, and without whose restraint we should fall at every turn, and into every temptation, we cannot but see what need we have to seek to him, daily and hourly, to with-hold us from falling into those sins, into which our corrupt nature would lead us, or outward occasions would draw us. No man, though he be ever so good, hath any assurance, upon his own strength, though it be ever so great, that he shall be able to avoid any sin, though it be ever so foul. When a heathen prayed unto *Jupiter* to save him from his enemies, one that over-heard him would mend it with a more needful prayer, that *Jupiter* would save him from his friends. He thought they might do him more hurt, because he trusted them; but as for his enemies he could guard himself well enough from receiving harm from them. We that are Christians had need pray unto the God of heaven, that he will not give us up into the hands of our professed enemies; and to pray unto him also, that he will not deliver us into the hands of our false-hearted friends: but there is another prayer, yet more needful than either, that God will save us from ourselves, and not give us up into our own hands; for then we are utterly cast away. Alas! we do not think what a man is given over to, who is given over to himself: he is given over to vile affections; he is given over to a reprobate sense; he is given over to commit all manner of wickedness with greediness. It is the last and most fearful of all other judgments, and is not usually brought upon men, but when they have obstinately refused to hear the voice of God in whatsoever other way he has spoken unto them, then to leave them to themselves, and to their own counsels; "My people would not hear my voice, and *Israel* would none of me: so I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust, and let

them follow their own imaginations." Let us therefore pray faithfully and fervently unto GOD, as CHRIST himself hath taught us, that he will not, by leaving us unto ourselves, "lead us into temptation," but, by his gracious and powerful support, deliver us from all those evils from which we have no power at all to deliver ourselves.

Lastly, since this restraint can give us no solid comfort, if it be but a bare restraint, and no more, though we ought to be thankful for it, because we have not deserved it, yet we should not rest, till we are possessed of an higher grace, even the grace of Sanctification. We may deceive ourselves, (and thousands do so,) if, upon our mere abstinence from sins from which GOD withholdeth us, we presently conclude ourselves to be in the state of grace, and to have the power of godliness and the spirit of sanctification. For, between this Restraining Grace, and that Renewing Grace, there are sundry wide differences. They differ, first, in their Extent, both of Subject and Object. For the Subject, Restraining Grace may bind one part or faculty of a man, as the hand or tongue, and leave another free, as the heart or ear: Renewing Grace worketh upon all faculties, and, in some measure, sanctifieth the whole man, body and soul, with all the parts and faculties of each. For the Object, Restraining Grace may withhold a man from one sin, and give him scope to another: Renewing Grace produceth an equal respect to all GOD's Commandments.—They differ, secondly, in their Effects. Renewing Grace mortifieth the corruption, and subdueth it, and diminisheth it, as water quenqueth fire, by abating the heat; but Restraining Grace only inhibiteth the exercise of the corruption, for the time, without any real diminution of it either in substance or quality; as the fire, wherein the Three Children walked, had as much heat in it at that very instant, as it had before and after, although by the greater power of GOD the natural power of it was then suspended from working upon them. The lions that spared DANIEL were lions still, and had their ravenous disposition still, although

GOD “stopped their mouths” for that time, that they should not hurt him; but that there was no change made in their natural disposition appeareth by their entertainment of their next guests, whom they devoured with all greediness, “breaking their bones” before they came to the ground. Whereas the renewing and sanctifying grace of God, by a real change, out of a lion maketh a lamb; altereth the natural disposition of the soul; begetteth a new heart, a new spirit, new habits, new qualities, new dispositions, new thoughts, new desires; and maketh a new man in every part and faculty. Content not thyself then with a bare forbearance of sin, so long as thy heart is not changed, nor thy will changed, nor thy affections changed; but strive to become a new man, to be “transformed by the renewing of thy mind,” to hate sin, to love God, to wrestle against thy secret corruptions, to take delight in holy duties, to subdue thine understanding and will and affections to the obedience of faith. So shalt thou not only be restrained from sinning against God, as **ABIMELECH** here was, but also be enabled, as faithful **ABRAHAM** was, to please God; and consequently, with all the faithful children of **ABRAHAM**, be “preserved by the” almighty “power of God through faith unto salvation.” This grace, and faith, and salvation, may the same Almighty God, the God of power and of peace, bestow upon us all, here assembled, “with all that in every place call upon the name of **JESUS CHRIST** our Lord, both theirs and ours;” even for the same our Lord **JESUS CHRIST**’s sake, his most dear Son, and our blessed Saviour and Redeemer: to which blessed **FATHER**, and blessed **SON**, with the blessed **SPIRIT**, “most holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity,” be ascribed by us, and the whole church, “the kingdom, the power, and the glory,” from this time forth and for ever! Amen.

A
S E R M O N

PREACHED AT

A VISITATION

AT GRANTHAM IN LINCOLNSHIRE,

AUGUST 22, 1634.



ROM. xiv. 23.

——— *For whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*

ONE remarkable difference, among many other, between good and evil, is this; that there must be a concurrence of all requisite conditions to make a thing good, whereas to make a thing evil, a single defect in any one condition will suffice. If we propose not to ourselves a right end; or if we pitch not upon proper means for attaining that end; or if we pursue not these means in a due manner; or if we observe not every material circumstance in the whole pursuit; if we fail but in any one point, the action, though it should be in every other respect such as it ought to be, by that one defect becometh wholly sinful. Nay more, not only a real, but even an imaginary defect,—the bare opinion of unlawfulness,—is able to vitiate the most justifiable act, and to turn it into sin. “I know there is nothing unclean of itself; but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.” Nay yet more, not only

a settled Opinion that the thing we do is unlawful, but the very Doubt whether we may lawfully do it or no, maketh it sometimes unlawful to be done by us, and, if we do it, sinful. “He that” but “doubteth is damned, if he eat; because he eateth not of faith.” The ground of this the Apostle delivereth in the words of the Text; “For whatsoever is not of faith, is sin.”

Many excellent instructions there are scattered throughout the whole chapter, most of them concerning the right use of that liberty which we possess as to things of an indifferent nature. But this last rule alone will find us work enough: and therefore, omitting the rest, we will (by GOD’S assistance) at present treat of this, first, in the Explication, and then in the Application of it. For by how much it is of more profitable and universal use for the regulation of the common offices of life,—by so much is the mischief greater, if it be either misunderstood or misapplied. In the Explication there would be little difficulty, had not the ambiguity of the word *Faith* left a way open to some misapprehensions. I find three senses of the word especially looked at, by those who have had to do with this text; each of which we shall examine in their order.

First, and most commonly, especially in the Apostolical Writings, the word Faith is used to signify that gracious habit, whereby we embrace the LORD JESUS CHRIST, as the only-begotten Son of GOD, and only Saviour of the world, casting ourselves wholly upon the mercy of GOD, through his merits, for remission of sins, and everlasting salvation. “It is that which is commonly called a Justifying Faith, wherunto are ascribed, in Holy Writ, the glorious effects of Adoption, Justification, Life, Joy, Peace, Purification of Heart, and Salvation. Of these it is not the proper and primary cause, but the instrument, whereby we apply CHRIST, whose Merits and SPIRIT are the causes of all those blessed effects.” And in this notion many of our later divines seem to understand it in our present text; whilst they allege it for the

confirmation of this position, that “all the Works,” even the best works, “of Unbelievers are Sins.”

But, I think, that conclusion, what truth soever it may have in itself, hath yet no direct foundation in this text. The verb πιστευω, *to believe*, and the noun πιστις, *faith* or *belief*, are both of them found sundry times in this chapter; yet they seem not to signify, in any place thereof, either the act or the habit of this saving or justifying faith, but, being opposed every where to doubtfulness of judgment concerning the lawfulness of some indifferent things, must necessarily, therefore, be understood of such a persuasion of judgment concerning such lawfulness, as is opposite to such doubting. This kind of faith may be found in a mere heathen, who, never having heard of the mystery of salvation by CHRIST, may yet be assured, that many of the things which he doeth are such as he may and ought to do. And as it may be found in a mere heathen, so it may be wanting in a true believer, who steadfastly resting upon the blood of CHRIST for his eternal redemption, may yet, through the strength of temptation, the sway of passion, or other distemper incident to human frailty, do some particular act or acts, of the lawfulness whereof he is not sufficiently persuaded. The Apostle, then, here speaking of such a faith as may be found in an unbeliever, and may be wanting in a true believer, it appeareth that by Faith he meaneth not that Justifying Faith which maketh a true believer to differ from an unbeliever; but the word must be understood in some other notion.

There is a second acceptance of the word Faith; either for the whole system of that Truth which GOD hath been pleased to reveal in the Scriptures, or some part thereof, or else for the Assent of the mind thereunto. In which signification some conceiving the words of this text to be meant, do hence infer a false and dangerous conclusion, namely, that men are bound in every particular action which they do to have direction and warrant from the written Word of GOD, or else they sin in doing it: For, they say,

Faith must be grounded upon the Word of God. Where there is no Word then, there can be no faith; and then, by the Apostle's doctrine, that which is done without the word to warrant it, must needs be sin, for "whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

I know not any piece of counterfeit doctrine that hath passed so currently in the world, with so little suspicion of falsehood, and so little open contradiction, as this hath done. One chief cause of this I conjecture to be, that it seemeth to make for the honour and perfection of God's sacred law; the fulness and sufficiency whereof none in the Christian Church but Papists will deny. On this account, the very questioning of it now will perhaps seem a strange novelty to many: but as God himself, so the holy Word of God, is so full of all perfection, that it needeth not to beg honour from an untruth. I hold it very needful, therefore, for the arming of all my brethren, as well of the Clergy as of the Laity, against a common error, so that neither the former may teach it, nor the latter receive it, briefly and clearly to shew, that the aforesaid opinion, first, is utterly void of truth; secondly, draweth after it many dangerous consequences; and, thirdly, hath no good warrant from my text.

The opinion is, that to do any thing at all without direction from the Scripture is unlawful and sinful. If they would understand this only of the substantials of God's worship, and of the exercises of spiritual and supernatural graces, the assertion were true and sound; but as they extend it to all the actions of common life whatsoever, whether natural or civil, even so far as to the taking up of a straw, it is altogether false and indefensible. I marvel what warrant they who so teach have from the Scripture for that very doctrine, or where they are commanded so to believe or teach. One of their chief refuges is the text we now have in hand, but I shall anon drive them from this shelter. The other places usually alleged speak only, either of divine and spiritual truths to be believed, or else of works of grace or wor-

ship to be performed, as of necessity unto salvation, which are not to the point; for it is freely confessed, that in things of such a nature the Holy Scripture furnishes most absolute and sufficient direction. Upon this ground we heartily reject all human traditions, devised and intended as supplements to the doctrine of faith contained in the Bible. The question is wholly about things in their nature indifferent, such as are the use of our food, raiment, and the like; whether in the choice and use of such things we may not be sometimes sufficiently guided by the light of reason and the common rules of discretion, or whether we must be able, (and are so bound to do, or else we sin,) for every thing we do in such matters to deduce our warrant from some place or other of Scripture.

Before the Scriptures were written, it pleased God by visions and dreams, and other like revelations, immediately to make known his good pleasure to the Patriarchs and Prophets, and by them unto the people; which kind of revelations served them for all the same intents and purposes whereto the sacred Scriptures now serve us, namely, to instruct them what they should believe and do for their better service of God, and for the furtherance of their own salvation. Now, as it would be unreasonable for any to think that they either had, or did expect, an immediate revelation from God, every time they ate, or drank, or bought, or sold, or did any other of the common actions of life, for the warranting of each of those particular actions to their consciences; no less unreasonable it is to think, that we should now expect the like warrant from the Scriptures for the doing of the like actions. Without all doubt, the light of reason was the rule wherèby they were guided for the most part in such matters; which the wisdom of God would never have left in them or us, as a principal relick of his decayed image in us, if he had not meant that we should make use of it, for the direction of our lives and actions thereby.

You see then that those men are in a great error, who make the Holy Scripture the sole rule of all human actions; whatsoever; for the maintenance of which opinion there was never yet produced any argument, either from reason, or from authority of Holy Writ, which may not be clearly and abundantly answered, to the satisfaction of any rational man. They who think to salve the matter by this mitigation, That our actions ought to be framed according to those general rules, at least, which are found here and there in the Scriptures, (namely, that we should “do as we would be done to,” that “all things should be done decently and in order,” and “unto edification,”) speak somewhat indeed to the truth, but little to the purpose. For they consider not, that if men’s actions, done agreeably to those rules, are said to be of Faith, precisely for this reason, because the rules are contained in the Word; then it will follow, that before those particular Scriptures were written, wherein any of those rules are first delivered, every action done according to those rules was done without Faith, (there being as yet no Scripture for it,) and consequently was a sin. So that by this doctrine, it would have been a sin, before the writing of ST. MATTHEW’S Gospel, for any man to have done to others as he would they should do to him; and it would have been a sin, before the writing of the first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, for any man to have done any thing “decently and in order;” supposing these two rules to be only found in those two places first mentioned, because, this supposed, there could then have been no warrant brought from the Scriptures for so doing.

We see, then, that the former opinion will by no means hold, neither in the rigour of it, nor yet in the mitigation. We are therefore to beware of it, and that so much the more, because of the evil consequences that issue from it; to wit, a world of superstitions, uncharitable censures, bitter contentions, and perplexities of conscience. First, it filleth men’s heads with superstitious conceits, making them to cast impurity upon sundry things, which yet are

lawful to as many as use them lawfully. For the taking away of the indifferency of any thing, that is indifferent, is in truth superstition; in which soever of the two ways it be done, either by requiring it as necessary, or by forbidding it as unlawful. He that condemneth a thing as utterly unlawful, which indeed is indifferent, and so lawful, is guilty of superstition, as well as he that enjoineth a thing as absolutely necessary, which indeed is but indifferent, and so arbitrary. They of the Church of *Rome*, and some in our Church, as they go upon quite contrary grounds, yet both false, so they run into quite contrary errors, and both superstitious. The former decline too much on the left hand, denying to the Holy Scripture that perfection, which of right it ought to have allowed to it, of containing all things appertaining to that supernatural doctrine of faith and holiness which God hath revealed to his church for the attainment of everlasting salvation; whereupon they would impose upon Christian People, and that with an opinion of necessity, many things which the Scriptures require not; and that is a superstition. The latter go too much on the right hand, ascribing to the Holy Scripture such a kind of perfection as it cannot have, that of being the sole director of all human actions whatsoever; whereupon they forbid unto Christian People, and that under the name of sin, sundry things which the Holy Scripture condemneth not; and that is a superstition too.

From this superstition proceedeth, in the second place, uncharitable censuring; as evermore they that are the most superstitious are the most supercilious. There were no such severe censurers of our blessed Saviour's person and actions, as the superstitious Scribes and Pharisees were. In this chapter, the special fault which the Apostle blameth in the weak ones, (who were somewhat superstitiously affected,) was their rash and uncharitable judging of their brethren. And common experience among ourselves sheweth how freely some men spend their censures upon those of their brethren, who without

scruple do any of those things, which they upon false grounds have superstitiously condemned as utterly unlawful.

And then, thirdly, as unjust censures are commonly entertained with scorn, they who so liberally condemn their brethren for profaneness, are by them as freely censured for their preciseness; and so, whilst both parties please themselves in their own ways, they cease not mutually to provoke and scandalize and exasperate the one the other, pursuing their private spleens so far, till they break out into open contentions. Thus it stood in the *Roman Church*, when this Epistle was written. They judged one another, and despised one another, to the great disturbance of the church's peace. And how far the like censurings and despisings have embittered the spirits, and whetted both the tongues and pens, of learned men one against another in our own church, the stirs that have been long since raised, and are still upheld, will not suffer us to be ignorant. Most of these stirs, I verily persuade myself, had been long ere this either wholly buried in silence, or at least well quieted, if the weakness and danger of the error, whereof we now speak, had been more timely discovered, and more fully and frequently made known.

Lastly, the admitting this doctrine would cast upon men of weak judgments, but tender consciences, a snare from which they would never be able to disentangle themselves. Men's daily occasions for themselves or friends, and the necessities of common life, require the doing of a thousand things within the compass of a few days, for which it would puzzle the best text-man that liveth readily to bethink himself of a sentence in the Bible, clear enough to satisfy a scrupulous conscience of the lawfulness and expediency of what he is about to do; but for which, by hearkening to the rules of reason and discretion, he might receive easy and speedy resolution. In these cases, if he should be bound to suspend his resolution, and delay that which his own reason would tell him ought presently to be done, until he could haply call

to mind some precept of Scripture for his warrant, what stops would it make in the course of his whole life, and what languishings in the duties of his calling? How would it fill him with doubt and irresolution, lead him into a maze of uncertainties, entangle him in a world of woful perplexities, and (without the great mercy of God) plunge him irrecoverably into the gulf of despair? Since, then, the chief end of the publication of the Gospel is to comfort the hearts, and to revive and refresh the spirits, of God's people, with the glad tidings of liberty from the spirit of bondage and fear, and of gracious acceptance with their God,—to anoint them with the “oil of gladness,” giving them “beauty for ashes,” and, instead of “sackcloth,” girding them with “joy;” we may well suspect that doctrine not to be evangelical, which thus setteth the consciences of men upon the rack, tortureth them with continual fears and perplexities, and prepareth them thereby for hellish despair.

These are the grievous effects and pernicious consequences which will follow from the opinion of those who hold, That we must have warrant from Scripture for every thing we do; not only in spiritual things, (wherein it is absolutely true,) nor yet only in other matters of weight, though they be not spiritual, (for which perhaps there might be some colour,) but also in the common affairs of life, and even in the most slight and trivial things. Yet, since the patrons of this opinion build it as much upon the authority of this text, as upon any other passage of Scripture, we are therefore, in the next place, to clear the text from that mis-interpretation. The force of their inference standeth thus, (as you have heard already,) that Faith is ever grounded upon the Word of God, and that, therefore, whatsoever action is not grounded upon the Word, since it is not of Faith, must needs be a Sin. This inference could not be denied, if the word *Faith* were here taken in that sense which they imagine, namely, for the Doctrine of Divine Revelation, or for the Belief thereof; which doctrine we willingly

acknowledge to be completely contained in the Holy Scriptures alone, and therefore dare not admit, as a branch of Divine Truth, any thing not therein contained. But there is a third signification of the word *Faith*, which appeareth, both by the course of the whole chapter, and by the consent of the best interpreters, as well ancient as modern, to have been intended by our Apostle in this place; namely, that wherein it is put for a certain Persuasion of mind, that what we do may lawfully be done. So that whatsoever action is done by us, with reasonable assurance and persuasion of the lawfulness thereof, is so far an action of Faith; without any inquiry into the means whereby that persuasion was wrought in us, whether it were the light of our own Reason, or the Authority of some credible person, or the declaration of God's revealed will in his written Word. And on the other side, whatsoever action is done, either directly contrary to the judgment of our own consciences, or at least doubtingly, and before we are in some measure assured that we may lawfully do it, that is what St. PAUL here denieth to be of Faith, and what he pronounceth to be Sin.

Observe but the passages of this very chapter, and you will be satisfied as to the sense of the word *Faith*. In the second verse, the "one who believeth that he may eat all things," is one that is persuaded in his conscience that he may as lawfully eat flesh as herbs, any one kind of meat as any other.—Again, it is written in the twenty-second verse, "Hast thou faith, have it to thyself before God;" that is, Art thou in thy conscience persuaded that thou mayest lawfully partake of any of the good creatures of God? Let that persuasion suffice thee for the approving of thine own heart in the sight of God; but trouble not the church, nor offend thy weaker brother, by a needless and unseasonable ostentation of that thy knowledge.—Lastly, in the twenty-third verse, "He that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not in faith:" that is, He that is not yet fully persuaded in his

own mind that it is lawful for him to eat some kind of meats, and yet is drawn against his own judgment to eat thereof, because he seeth others so to do, or out of any other such poor consideration, such a man is cast and condemned by the judgment of his own heart as a transgressor, because he adventureth to do that which he doth not believe to be lawful. And then the Apostle reduceth that particular case into a general rule, in these words, "Whatsoever is not of Faith, is Sin." By the process of his discourse it may appear, that by Faith no other thing is here meant, than such a Persuasion of the mind and conscience as we have now declared, and that the true intent of these words is, Whosoever shall do any thing, which he verily believeth to be unlawful, or at least, of the lawfulness of which he is not persuaded, let the thing be in itself lawful or unlawful, indifferent or necessary, it matters not, to him it is a Sin.

This being the plain, evident, and undeniable purport of these words, I shall not need to spend any more time in the Explication of them, but may address myself rather to the Application. Wherein, because upon this great principle may depend the resolution of very many cases of conscience, which may trouble us in our christian and holy walking, it will not be unprofitable to resolve some of the most material doubts and questions which may occur on this occasion.

First, It may be demanded, what power the conscience hath to make a thing, which is otherwise good and lawful, become unlawful and sinful, and whence it hath that power? I answer, first, that it is not in the power of any man's judgment or conscience to alter the natural condition of any thing whatsoever, either in respect of quality or degree; but still every thing that was good remaineth good, and every thing that was evil remaineth evil, and that in the very same degree of good or evil as it was before, neither better nor worse, notwithstanding any man's particular judgment or opinion thereof. For the differences between good and evil,

and the several degrees of both, spring from such conditions as are intrinsical to the things themselves; which no outward respects, and much less men's opinions, can vary. He that esteemeth any creature unclean may defile himself, but he cannot bring impurity upon that creature by such estimation.—Yet, secondly, men's judgments may make that which is good in its own nature become evil to them in the use. This is our Apostle's own distinction in the fourteenth verse of this chapter; “Nothing is unclean of itself; but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.” But then we must know withal, that it holdeth not the other way. Men's judgments or opinions, although they may make that which is good in itself to become evil to them, cannot make that which is evil in itself to become good either in itself or to them. If a man were verily persuaded that it would be evil to ask his father's blessing, that mis-persuasion would make it become evil to him. But if the same man should be as verily persuaded that it would be good to curse his father, or to deny him relief, being an unbeliever, that mis-persuasion could not make either of them become good to him. Some who persecuted the Apostles were persuaded that they did God good service in it. It was St. PAUL's case before his conversion, who “verily thought in himself, that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of JESUS.” But those persuasions would not serve to justify their actions. St. PAUL confesseth himself to have been “a persecutor, and blasphemer, and injurious,” for so doing, although he followed the guidance of his conscience therein, and to have stood in need of mercy for the remission of those wicked acts, though he did them ignorantly, and out of zeal for the law.—Thirdly, the conscience hath this power over men's wills and actions, by virtue of that unchangeable law of God, which he established at our first creation, that the will of every man (which is the fountain whence all our actions immediately flow,) should conform itself to the judgment of the understanding or conscience, as to

its proper and immediate rule. So that if the understanding, through error, point out a wrong way, and the will follow it, the fault is chiefly in the understanding for misguiding the will. But if the understanding shew the right way, and the will take a wrong one, then the fault is merely in the will, for not following that guide which God hath set over it.

It may be demanded, Secondly, whether or not, in every particular thing we do, an actual consideration of the lawfulness thereof be so requisite, as that for want thereof we should sin in doing it? The reason of the doubt is, because if otherwise, how should it appear to be of Faith? and "whatsoever is not of Faith, is Sin." I answer, 1. That in matters of weight, and worthy of consultation, it is very necessary that the lawfulness and expediency of them be first diligently examined before they be undertaken. And, 2. That even in smaller matters, the like examination is needful when there is any apparent cause of doubting. But, 3. That in small and trivial matters, wherein no doubt ariseth to trouble us, an actual consideration of their lawfulness is so far from being requisite, that it would rather be troublesome. True it is, that all voluntary actions are done with some deliberation, more or less; because it is the nature of the will to consult with the understanding in every act, else it would be irrational and brutish. Yet there are many things which we daily do, wherein the sentence of the understanding is quick and present, because there is no difficulty in them, such as sitting down, and rising up; or asking the time of the day, or the name of the next town, as we travel by the way. Here an habitual knowledge of the nature and use of indifferent things is sufficient to warrant to the conscience the lawfulness of these common actions of life, so that they may be said to be of Faith, though there be no farther actual or particular disquisition used about them. A very needful thing it is, for Christian men, to endeavour to have a right judgment concerning indifferent things; without which it can scarcely be

avoided, but that both their consciences will be full of distracting scruples, and their conversations full of unbrotherly carriage towards others.

It may be demanded, thirdly, since “ whatsoever is not of Faith is Sin,” what measure of faith, or what degree of persuasion, is necessary for the warranting of our actions? I answer, This cannot be positively defined by any peremptory and immoveable rules. There is mostly a latitude in such things as these are, which may be straitened more or less, according to the exigence of present occasions, and as the different state or quality of particular businesses shall require. Nay, I say yet further, and I beseech you, brethren, to take notice of it as a matter of special use both for directing and quieting your consciences, that it is lawful for us to do all those things concerning which there can be nothing brought of moment to prove them unlawful; upon which ground alone if we do them, we do them upon such a Persuasion of Faith as is sufficient; provided that we have not neglected to inform our judgments in the best way we could for the time past, and that we are ever ready to yield ourselves to better information, whensoever it shall be tendered unto us, for the time to come.

It may be demanded, Fourthly, suppose a man would fain do something, of the lawfulness whereof he is not in his conscience sufficiently resolved, whether he may in any case do it, notwithstanding the reluctancy of his conscience? As they write of CYRUS, that to make a passage for his army, he cut the great river *Gyndes* into smaller chañnels, which in one entire stream was not passable; so to make a clear answer to this great question, I must divide it into some lesser ones. For there are sundry things considerable in it, whether we respect the conscience, or the person of the doer, or the action to be done;—as, in respect of the conscience, whether the reluctancy thereof proceed from a settled and steadfast resolution, or from some doubtfulness only, or but from some scruple;—in respect of the person, whether he be

his own master, and have power to dispose of himself at his own choice in the things questioned, or be under the command and at the appointment of another ;—and in respect of the action, whether it be a necessary thing, or an unlawful thing, or a thing indifferent ? Any of these circumstances may quite alter the case, and so beget new questions. But I shall reduce all to three questions ; whereof the first shall concern a resolved conscience, the second a doubtful conscience, and the third a scrupulous conscience.

The first question then is, if the conscience be firmly resolved that the thing proposed to be done is unlawful, whether it may be done or not ? Whereunto I answer in these two conclusions : first, if the conscience be firmly so resolved, and that upon a true ground, it may not, in any case, or for any respect in the world, be done. There cannot be imagined a higher contempt of God, than for a man to despise the power of his own conscience, which is the highest sovereignty under heaven, as being God's most immediate deputy. " To him that knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him it is sin." Neither maketh it any difference at all here, whether a man be otherwise his own master or not. For although there be a great respect due to the higher powers in doubtful cases, yet where the thing required is simply unlawful, and understood so to be, inferiors must absolutely resolve to disobey, whatsoever come of it.—Secondly, if a man be in his conscience fully persuaded that a thing is evil and unlawful, which yet in truth is not so ; the thing by him so judged unlawful, cannot by him be done without sin. Even an erroneous conscience bindeth thus far, that a man cannot go against it and be guiltless ; because his practice would then run contrary to his judgment, and so the thing done could not be of Faith. For if his reason judge it to be evil, and yet he will do it, it argueth manifestly, that he hath a will to do evil, and so becomes a transgressor of that general law, which bindeth all men to eschew all evil. Yet in this case we must

admit of some difference, according to the different nature of the things, and the different conditions of the persons. For if the things judged unlawful be in their own nature indifferent, so that they may either be done or left undone without sin, and if the person, withal, be his own master in respect of such things, no superior power having determined his liberty therein; then, although he may not do any of these things, by reason of the contrary persuasion of his conscience without sin, yet he may, without sin, leave them undone. For example: say that a man should hold it utterly unlawful to lay a wager: if it be in truth lawful to do so, yet he that is otherwise persuaded of it, cannot do it without sin. Yet supposing it a thing indifferent, he that judgeth it unlawful, may abstain from it without sin; and so indeed he is in conscience bound to do, so long as he continueth to be of that opinion. But on the other side, if the thing judged to be unlawful, be in any way necessary, either in respect of its own nature, or by the injunction of authority, then the person is, by that error, brought into such a strait, between two sins, that he can by no means avoid both, so long as he persisteth in that error. For if he do the thing, he goeth against the persuasion of his conscience, and that is a great sin; and if he do it not, either he omitteth a necessary duty, or else disobeyeth lawful authority, and either of these is a sin too; and since, out of this snare there is no way of escape but one, which is to rectify his judgment, it concerneth every man, who unfeignedly desireth to do his duty, and to keep a good conscience, to examine well the principles and grounds of his opinions. Mean time, this is most certain, that whosoever shall do any thing repugnant to the judgment of his own conscience, (be that judgment true, or be it false,) will commit a grievous sin in so doing; because it cannot be "of Faith;" and "whatsoever is not of Faith, is Sin."

This applies to cases, in which the Conscience apparently inclineth one way. But say that the scales hang even, so that a man cannot well resolve which way he should take.

This is what we call a doubting conscience. And the second question is, what a man ought to do in this case? Perfect directions here would require a large discourse; because there are so many considerable circumstances that may alter the case, especially in respect of the cause from which that doubtfulness may spring. Many times it ariseth from mere fickleness of mind, or weakness of judgment; as the lightest things are soonest driven out of their place by the wind. Sometimes it proceedeth from tenderness of conscience; which is indeed a very blessed and gracious thing, but yet (as tender things may soon miscarry, if they be not the more choicely handled,) very liable, through SATAN'S diligence and subtilty, to be wrought upon to dangerous inconveniences. Sometimes it may proceed from the probability of those reasons that seem to stand on either side, betwixt which, it is not easy to judge which are strongest; or from the different opinions of learned and godly men therein; and from many other causes. But for some general resolution of the question, What is to be done where the conscience is doubtful? I answer, First, that if the doubtfulness be not concerning the lawfulness of any of the things to be done, considered in themselves, but of the expediency of them, as they are compared one with another; (as when of two things proposed, whereof one must be done, I am sufficiently persuaded of the lawfulness of either, but am doubtful whether of the two rather to fix upon;)—in such a case, the party ought first to weigh the conveniences and inconveniences of both, as well as he can, by himself alone, and to do that which then shall appear to him to be subject to the fewer and lesser inconveniences. Or, if the reasons seem so equally strong on both sides, that he cannot of himself decide the doubt, then, secondly, if the matter be of weight, and worth the while, he should make his doubt known to some prudent and pious man, especially to his own spiritual pastor, if he be a man qualified for it; resolving to rest upon his judgment, and to follow his direction. Or, if the matter be of small

moment, he may then, thirdly, do that to which he hath most inclination ; (as the Apostle saith in one particular case, and it may be applied to many more, “ Let him do what he will, he sinneth not ;”) resting his conscience upon this persuasion, that so long as he is unfeignedly desirous to do for the best, and hath not been negligent in using all requisite diligence to inform himself aright, God will accept of his good intention therein, and pardon his error, if he shall be mistaken in his choice.—But secondly, if the question be concerning the thing itself, whether it may be lawfully done or not, and the conscience stand in doubt, because reasons seem to be probable both ways, and if there be learned men, as well of the one opinion as of the other ; in such a case, the person is certainly bound to forbear doing that thing, of the lawfulness whereof he doubteth, and, if he forbear it not, he sinneth. This is the very point which the Apostle, in this verse, intendeth to teach, and for the confirmation whereof he voucheth this rule : “ He that doubteth,” saith he, “ is damned if he eat ; he is *αυτοκατακριτ*Ⓞ, condemned of his own conscience ;” because he doth that willingly, whereof he doubteth, when he hath liberty to let it alone. And the reason why he ought rather to forbear, than to do that whereof he doubteth, is, because in doubtful cases, wisdom dictates that the safer part should be chosen. And that part is safer, which if we choose, we are sure we shall do well, than that, which if we choose, we know not but we may do ill.—But then, thirdly, if the liberty of the agent be determined by the command of some superior power, to whom he oweth obedience, this circumstance altereth the case ; and he is bound in conscience to do the thing commanded, notwithstanding his doubtfulness of mind. Whatsoever is commanded us, by those whom God hath set over us, either in Church, Commonwealth, or Family, which is not evidently contrary to the law and will of God, ought to be by us received and obeyed just as if God himself had commanded it ; because God himself hath commanded

us to “obey the higher powers,” and to “submit ourselves to their ordinances.”—But you will say, that in doubtful cases, the safer part is to be chosen. So say I too; and am content that this rule should decide the question; only let it be rightly applied. Thou thinkest it safer, where thou doubttest of the unlawfulness, to to forbear than to do; so should I think too, if thou wert left to thine own liberty. But if lawful authority direct thee to kneel, which, whether it be lawful for thee to do or not, thou doubttest; it cannot be but that thou must needs doubt also, whether thou mayest lawfully disobey, or not. Now then, here apply thine own rule, and see what will come of it. Judge, since thou canst not but doubt in both cases, whether it be not the safer of the two, to obey doubtingly, than to disobey doubtingly. Where there is a certainty, let the uncertainty go, and hold to that which is certain. Now the General Rule is certain, that thou art to obey the Magistrate in all things not contrary to the will of God; but the Particular is uncertain, whether the thing now commanded thee, by the Magistrate, be contrary to the will of God: (I say, uncertain *as to thee*, because thou doubttest of it.) Deal safely, therefore; hold thee to that which is certain, and obey.

There remaineth but one other question, and that of far smaller difficulty: What is to be done, when the conscience is scrupulous? I call that a scruple, when a man is reasonably well persuaded of the lawfulness of a thing, yet hath withal some jealousies, lest perhaps it should prove unlawful. Such scruples are most incident to men of melancholy dispositions, or of timorous spirits, especially if they have tender consciences withal; and they are much increased by the false suggestions of SATAN, and by sundry other means which I now mention not. As to such scruples, it behoveth every man, first, to be wary that he do not at all admit them, if he can help it; or, if he cannot wholly avoid them, that secondly, he endeavour, so far as may be, to eject them speedily out of his

thoughts, as SATAN'S snares, and things that may breed worse inconveniences; or, if he cannot so get rid of them, that then, thirdly, he resolve to go on according to the more profitable persuasion of his mind, and to despise those scruples: and this he may do with a good conscience, not only in things commanded him by lawful authority, but even in things indifferent and arbitrary, and wherein he is left to his own liberty.

Beseech we GOD, the FATHER of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, so to endue us all with the grace of his HOLY SPIRIT, that in our whole conversation we may unfeignedly endeavour to preserve a good conscience, and to yield all due obedience to Him first, and then to every Ordinance of Man for his sake.

NOW to this FATHER, SON, and blessed SPIRIT, Three Persons, and One Eternal GOD, be ascribed all the kingdom, the power, and the glory, both now and for evermore. *Amen.*

END OF VOL. XII.

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