

WHEREIN THE
STRENGTH OF
FAITH LIES

THE

THE CONQUEST
OF FAITH OVER
THIS WORLD

WORLD



CONQUERED

“ A BELIEVER'S VICTORY OVER THE WORLD ”

THIS IS THE VICTORY THAT OVERCOMETH
THE WORLD, EVEN OUR FAITH. - 1 JOHN 5:4

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The World Conquered

Or, A Believers Victory over the World.

Richard Alleine

This text has been initially updated from EEBO-TCP by Project Puritas,

Further revision and editing done by Monergism.

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Published by by Monergism Books

P.O. Box 491

West Linn Oregon 97068

www.monergism.com

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Editor's Note – During the EEBO-TCP Transcription Process, all the text was hand transcribed according to visual representation; and as such, sometimes the letters s, l, f & t are misconstrued with each other, these letters regularly being almost illegibly similar in the original facsimile script. Though it is rare for these errors to remain post-edit, unfortunately they may remain if uncaught. My apologies in advance where such errors occur. Also, the symbol <H&G>, when included, signifies omitted Hebrew & Greek. Lastly, some archaic words may be updated to more contemporary terminology; but changes have been kept to a bare minimum.

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CHAP. I – The Text Opened

1 JOHN 5:4.

This is the Victory that overcometh the world, even our Faith.

In this former part of the Chapter, we have a double description of them that are born of God.

1. *A Priori*, from that which is the *primum vivens*, the heart of the New Creature; that's faith, v. 1. Whosoever believeth is born of God.

2. *A Posteriori*, from one special fruit of the New Birth, Victory over the world, v. 3. Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world.

In this whole verse, wherein the Text lies, we have,

A Proposition, Its Exposition.

1. A Proposition. Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world. A Christian is a Conqueror, a great Conqueror; greater than he that for his Victories was surnamed Magnus, or The Great. He hath conquered all the world.

2. An Exposition of this Proposition. But what is this Conquest of a Christian! And how is it obtained? Why it is a spiritual Conquest, and

obtained by Faith. This is the Victory that overcometh the world, even our Faith.

For the opening of the words;

By the world, understand whatsoever is in the world, that hinders us in that Race which Christ hath set before us, and holds us short of our Crown. Those three things which the Apostle tells us, 1 Joh. 2:16, are in the world, the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. And also the objects of these lusts, as they are such; the pleasures, the profits, and the pomp's of the world; together with all worldly tribulations and afflictions.

By Faith understand, a living saving Faith, which unites to Christ, and thereby engages him in our Combat with us.

This is the Victory, even our Faith. Faith is said to be our Victory.

1. Formally. The world hinders and holds us back from Christ, Faith is our coming to Christ; our coming to Christ, is our Victory over all that which held us back.

2. Instrumentally. This is the Victory, that is, this is our arm, or our hand, this is the weapon of our warfare, that hath gotten for us the Victory.

Divers observations lie in the words;

Doct. 1. The world is a Christians Enemy. A Conquest supposes a Combat, and a Combat supposes an Enemy.

Doct. 2. A Believer hath his Enemies under his feet, even whilst he is in the fight. He is a Soldier as soon as he is a Believer, and he is a Conqueror as soon as ever he is a Soldier. His very taking up Arms is his Victory.

Doct. 3. A Christian overcomes the world by his Faith. In the prosecution of this third Doctrine, whereon I intend to bottom the following discourse, I shall show,

1. Wherein the enmity of the world against Souls stands.

2. Wherein the strength of the world lies, whereby it prevails against our Souls.

3. Wherein the strength of faith lies, whereby it overcomes the world.

4. The conflict of faith with this warring world; or the several ways in which faith so maintains the fight, that it obtains the victory.

5. The Conquest of Faith over the conflicting world; or wherein this victory stands.

1. Wherein the enmity of the world against souls stands, or discovers itself. The world is an Enemy (as before.) It pretends to be a friend, but its friendship is enmity; enmity against God, Jam. 4:4, and therefore against souls; its kindnesses are darts, its kisses are swords and arrows, its very peace is war against the soul.

But what is this Enmity, or wherein is it discovered?

For the better understanding of this, I shall premise these four things.

1. Every creature of God is good. The whole Creation, in their Original, were man's friends or servants; there was nothing hurtful that was made.

2. The enmity that is, came in by sin. Sin was the only Make-bate; as betwixt God and Man, so betwixt Man and the rest of the Creatures; all the Enemies which man hath, in Heaven or Earth, he may thank his sin for.

3. There is no malignity in the creature properly, against man in his lapsed state. They are yet all capable of being good and serviceable to him.

1 Tim. 4:4,5. Every creature of God is good, —it is sanctified by the Word of God, and Prayer. Riches are good, yea, and honors and pleasures may be good and useful to man.

4. It is by accident, and not from the nature of the things, that the creatures are become enemies to us. Sinful man is a distempered diseased creature, distempered in his mind; and hereupon he misapprehends and

mistakes the world; and looking for that good that is not in it, he loses that which is; making it his happiness, it becomes his undoing. He is distempered and diseased in his heart, yea and his whole man; And hereupon, as in bodily diseases, the best of creatures, which would be nourishment to the healthy, are to the sick the nourishment of their diseases; and as such are apt to lust after those things which are most noxious, so is it with diseased souls; our appetites are vitiated, and whilst we lust after, either that which we should not, or more then we should have, those very things which are good in themselves, become mischievous and hurtful to us, the maintaining and increasing our disease.

CHAP. II. – Wherein the enmity of the world against Souls stands or discovers itself.

WHEREIN THE ENMITY OF the world against Souls stands or discovers itself.

These things premised, I shall now show wherein the enmity of the world against our souls stands; and that is in these two things especially.

1. In withdrawing our souls from God. Particularly.

1. In withdrawing our affections from God as our Portion.

2. In withdrawing us from our Allegiance to God as our Sovereign.

1. In withdrawing our affections from God as our Portion. The world by the advantage of our distempered minds and appetites, sets up itself as our God; as our happiness or chiefest good; it proposes its self for a portion to us, and that both as a richer portion, and more suitable then God would be; it persuades us to take our portion in hand, and to take up with what's before us, as our happiness, and not to be so unwise as to make an adventure for an unknown happiness, with the hazard of that present felicity and contentment, which we taste and see to be so good.

God calls, Come unto me, and I will give thee rest, I will be thy portion and reward; come up to the other world, there's an Inheritance for thee. No, no, saith the world, stay with me, dwell here below; thou seest what thine entertainment is here, there thou knowest not what thou shalt find; here thou hast substance, here thou hast Sunshine, here thou hast hearts ease, here thou art full and aboundedst; thou hast thy house full, and thy hands full, and thy belly full, and thy heart full; thou knowest what thou hast, thou canst taste, thou canst see how good this world is; the Treasures of the other world, though they be called Treasures of Light, yet to thee they are but Treasures of Darkness, thou knowest not what they are; be content, dwell here below, where thou art well.

2. In withdrawing us from our Allegiance to God as our Sovereign. When it hath once drawn away the heart, it will with ease pull away the shoulder; if God's Crown be despised, his Yoke will quickly be shaken off; we break our faith with God when once we are fallen in love with the world; if it become our treasure, we yield ourselves to it for servants; the strength of its temptations lies in the esteem we have of it, and the affection we bear it. What will the Authority of the Lord do with us, when he hath lost our hearts, and we have chosen us another God! What cannot the world command us to, if we have once set it before us, as our Goal and Prize? If it be our end, it will appoint us our means and way; no unrighteousness but will be right in our eyes, that will serve our worldly designs; farewell faith, truth, mercy, honesty, and all conscience of sin, further then we can make a gain of godliness: And by withdrawing us from our love and obedience to God, to this I might add 3ly, It exposes us to his wrath and displeasure; when we will none of him, he will none of us; when he is forsaken by us, he sets himself against us; by despising the riches of his goodness, we fall

under his fury and fiery indignation. This is the state into which the world is leading us.

2. In withholding us from Christ. Christ comes to bring us back unto the Father, 1 Pet. 3:18, to reduce us to our duty, and restore us to our happiness: The world that withdraws us from God, withholds us from Christ. Particularly,

It holds us back from coming to Christ.

It holds us in from following of Christ.

1. It holds us back from coming to Christ. And this it doth by these four means: By,

Darkening our sight.

Deadening our sense.

Hanging upon our hearts, and about our necks.

Furnishing us with excuses.

1. By darkening the sight, that we cannot see, either the excellency, or the necessity of Christ; Christ draws on Souls to him by love and fear. First he frights us in, by presenting the danger and misery that is falling upon us, and we cannot escape if we stand out. Look to thyself Sinner, this world will betray thee to thy ruin: thy pleasures are thy traitors, thy carnal friends are thy traitors, thy estate is thy traitor; they are feasting thee and feeding thee, but tis for the day of slaughter: the butcher the butcher of souls is near thee, into whose hands they are betraying thee: they seek thy life, thou art but a dead man; death is already feeding upon thee, the curse of God doth already cleave to thee, and is ready to fall upon thee in its full weight; thou wilt be devoured, thou wilt be swallowed up ere thou art aware: come away, come to me and thou shalt be safe: this house is falling on thine head, escape for thy life; the avenger of blood is at thy heels, flee to the City of

refuge; I am thy City of refuge, come unto me. Thus he provokes by fear. And this is such an argument to drive Souls into Christ, as a clap of thunder, or a storm of hail is to the Traveler, to hasten him to shelter.

Then Christ draws by love; presents himself and his salvation to the Soul, displays all his beauty and excellencies before it; opens the Gospel, wherein his grace and his glory appear and shine forth: the Gospel is sent down full of Christ; there are all the treasures and unsearchable riches of Christ, and all held forth in open sight, to invite sinners unto him.

Now the world dashes all this, that it works nothing on the Soul; by blinding the eye that it cannot see what Christ sets before it: what is either beauty or blackness, to the blind soul? 2 Cor. 4:4. The God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. We are naturally born blind, and if our eyes begin a little to be opened, this earth is thrown as dust in our eyes, that we may not see what's before us. The things of this world as the Moon interposed, causeth an eclipse in our souls, that we cannot see the Sun, we cannot discern either light or darkness, either the light of the glorious Gospel, or the darkness of the Pitt; either our hopes or our dangers; this earth keeps both Heaven and Hell out of sight.

The things of the world should be a glass wherein we may behold the glory of the Lord; we may see God in every creature. The Heavens declare the glory of God, Psal. 19:1. And so doth the earth also, and all that is therein; but that which God made a glass in which we might see his glory, the Devil makes a cloud to take God out of sight; what God made a window to let in the light, the Devil makes a shut, to keep it out. Worldly men fix and terminate their eyes in worldly things; they can neither look besides

them nor through them. It is not with them according to the course of nature [The Sun dazzles men's eyes that they cannot see the Earth] but the quite contrary [The Earth dazzles their eyes that they cannot see the Sun] Men usually carry their eyes in their hearts, they will not look but where they love; or if they should look heavenward, yet they could not see, the earth hath dazzled their eyes.

Sinners, take heed of these riches, take heed of these pleasures; these substances and these shadows, which your hearts are set upon; they will not only be as clogs to keep you down from ascending heavenward, but as clouds to hinder you from looking thither. It may be they appear as bright clouds, but a bright cloud will hide the Sun out of sight, as well as a black.

2. By deadening the sense; they can neither see nor feel: they see not the excellency, nor can feel their need of Christ, who are drunken with these worldly vanities: they who altogether live by sense, are without sense of any but the present things: they can make a shift to [live] without Christ; the less of Christ the better for their turns. Christ and the things of Christ are the only things that stand in their way; are their way to poverty not to wealth, to reproach and shame not to honor: they can well enough want Christ while they live, but what need they may have of him after this life, that enters not into their hearts; they are so busy with what they find here, that they look not so far as the grave, much less beyond it.

'It is hard dealing with such hearts, but when you find them alone; retired and withdrawn from the world; and how long may we wait ere we meet with such a season? Find them in a crowd, among their carnal friends and companions, find them among their Sheep or Oxen, or at their pleasures, and the noise of these will so drown all that can be said, that its like to make as deep impression, as a shower upon a stone: cry out in their ears, fire, fire,

throw Death and Hell in their faces, it moves them not so much, as to draw forth such a question, What may I do to escape?

We never will come to Christ till we see we need him; and we never see our need of Christ, till being withdrawn from the hurries of this World, we have leisure to sit down and consider.

How seldom do carnal hearts ask, What use is there of Christ? Wherefore is he come? What want would there be of him if there were no Christ? If God that spared not his Son, but gave him a ransom for the world, had spared all this cost, it had been all one to them; they could have lived as merrily, and as plentifully here however, and that's all they mind or regard.

Or if they have any sense of their need of Christ at all, it is so little, that it will do nothing to the persuading them after him: the wound is not so deep, but the name of a Savior will skin it over. Seldom does it rise so high as to wring out such a serious question, What may I do that Christ may be mine?

How many Houses, and Markets, and Shops, and Companies may we come into, ere we hear any such question?

Go into the Field, where Men are busy a plowing and sowing or reaping, and there you may hear them enquiring, how may I keep off the Birds, or how may I keep out the Beasts from hurting my field! When will it be rain? Or when will it be like to be fair weather! Come into the Market, where men are buying and selling and trading, and there you may hear them asking, how goes the price of Corn, or of Cattle! Where are the best Commodities! Where is the best choice! Come into the houses where they are eating and drinking or working, and there you may hear them enquiring, what must we have for the next meal, what for tomorrow, &c. But oh how seldom do we hear amongst them all, any such questions, How is my Soul provided for! How, how doth my soul prosper! No, no, when the world is

gotten into the heart, there's no sense of Souls or the concernment of them: where the world is in the heart Death and Hell may be there too, and never regarded.

Could we once make men deeply sensible, how great their need of Christ is, what they are without Christ; in what slippery places they stand, in what jeopardy they go daily, what a dreadful gulf of woe and misery, the wind and tide of their worldly prosperity, are carrying them down into, and how suddenly they may be swallowed up in perdition and destruction, and what miserable comforts their past pleasures, and plenty will then be to them; were they sensible, that nothing but Christ, and a part in him would stand them in any stead, to save them from that gulf; that the casting anchor on that rock of ages, would alone secure them from splitting on those fatal rocks, from perishing by those tumbling waves and billows, that are hurrying them down to the lake beneath; were they sensible, that tis Christ only that can secure them from these dangers, their need would be argument enough to drive them to him. But being drunken with the pleasures of sin, whilst this wine is in, the wits are out, they will not consider, they do not perceive the danger they are in. When the Prodigal, Luk. 15, had spent all that he had in his riotous living, when his whole stock was wasted, and not a husk left, then he had time to consider, and bethink himself what a case he was in; and the pinching sense of his necessitous state, to which his folly had reduced him, this brings him to his wits again; he comes to himself, and then away he will to his father. If you had met him a little before; in his cups, and amongst his whores, if you had found him at his riotous table, and in the heat of his lust, and should there have preached to this Prodigal, Friend this life will not last always, twill be thy wisest course to consider in time what thou dost. Be sober be temperate, run from these Harlots, and

return to thy Father; how would he have laughed and scoffed at such a sermon; at least the next cup would have washed it off his heart: but when his hunger and thirst preach thus to him, Get thee home to thy Father, then away he goes.

3. It hangs upon our hearts, and about our necks: The world hath gotten hold of our hearts, and there it will keep its hold while it can. Its gotten so much within us, and hath so twisted and twined itself about our affections, that it will be very hard getting it off.

We cannot close with Christ, but we must break with the world; we must be divorced from this, ere we can be married to our second husband: worldlings see what work Christ makes, in those hearts where he gets possession; he whips out the buyers and sellers and their merchandise out of his Temple: he changes the customs, and pleasures, and business of the heart, Its dealings and its delights: Its love and its labor must be no longer bestowed, and consumed upon meat, and drink, and money, and mirth; he hath other delights for it, and other work to keep it doing.

These things must be minded in their place, and in their season, but they must keep their place: Stand off Farms and Oxen, stand off Lands and money, keep your distance, get you down and take the lower room, give this man place who is more honorable than you all. Christ and the world contend for the place, which shall sit uppermost, and go foremost in the soul: Christ will not come in to be an Underling, he will have the chief room, the chief respect and esteem; he will have the command of all that is in the house: herein stands Christianity, or our conversion to Christ, in surrendering up the Throne to Christ; 'tis not the question, whether thou canst find a corner in thine heart to entertain Christ in, but who sits in the Throne, who hath the government of thy soul, who hath the right hand

within thee; Canst thou say to the Lord Jesus, Sit thou on the right hand, let all thy foes be made thy footstool?

All sinful pleasures, all sinful gains, must depart, and come no more where Christ dwells; and those which are lawful must come under, and be brought into subjection to him; no more sensuality or carnal mirth, no more covetousness or oppression, no more pride or self-exalting, away with these, cast them out, and never take them in forever, if thou meanest that Christ shall take up his habitation in thee: And no more zeal for the lawful concernments of this life; no more pleading business against Religion, no more pleading safety against duty, no more pleading credit against conscience, no more pleading gain against godliness, preserve and improve thy estate, maintain thy credit, provide for thy safety, follow thy business, thou mayest, and thou must; but bring all under, make all to stand aside, and give place to Christianity and Conscience: Christ will be no underling, he resolves for the Throne, where ever he dwells.

And the world that hath already gotten the Throne, is loath to become the footstool; 'tis who shall be King, 'tis who shall be God, that the great Contest is about; and the world that hath King'd it so long, knows not how to be content to be a subject; it sees it must come down if Christ come in, there cannot be two Kings in one Kingdom, it must come down, this pride must come down, this credit, these pleasures, this carnal mirth, this covetousness must be laid in the dust, if Christ set footing here. And therefore it does all it can to resist Christ; stops the ears, blinds the eye, turns away the heart from hearkening to him.

Christ stands at the door and knocks; Christ cries and calls, Come unto me, open to me. Christ promises and offers, Come and I will receive you, open and I will come in unto you, and dwell with you.

If the soul begins to listen to the call of Christ, the world steps in, and objects, What dost thou mean simple soul? What art thou doing? Whither art thou going? Hearken to Christ, hearken to this Word, hearken to this Conscience, and what then shall become of me? What shall become of thy estate? What shall become of thy esteem? What shall become of thy liberty? What shall become of all thy love, and friendship, and pleasure thou hast in the world? Art willing to be poor? Art willing to be in bondage? Art willing to be in reproach and disgrace? Open that door once, let Christ in, have anything to do with Conscience, and thou art undone; all that ever thou hast, all that ever thou lovest in all the world, must thenceforth become strangers to thee. Hast thou not given [me] thy heart? Have not I lain in thy bosom? Hast thou not cherished me, and cared for me as thine own soul? And have not I deserved thy care, and respect? Have not I been thy food, and thy raiment, and thy joy, and all the comfort of thy life? What wilt thou be when I have left thee, when thy estate hath left thee, thy pleasures have left thee, thy friends have left thee?

I know thou lovest me; thou lovest to be rich, and to be great, and to be at thy ease, and thy liberty, as thou lovest thy life: I know I have thy heart, and thou art loath to leave me. I, but therefore consider, and take heed; if thou hearken to Christ once, if thou meddle too far with Religion, and wilt be dealing for another world once, then farewell this.

But canst thou find in thine heart to leave me? Have I been a Wilderness to thee, or a Land of darkness? Hath it not been well with thee? Hast thou wanted anything? Hast thou not been full and abounded? Hast thou not flourished and prospered? Hast thou not had thy belly full of meat, and thy belly full of mirth, and thy bones full of rest, and thy heart full of ease and content? What hast thou wanted whilst thou imbracedst my love? And canst

thou now find in thine heart to part? Look to thyself; what day thou strikest hands with Christ, thou must shake hands with all the world. Look for no more favor from me; thou dost not know when thou art well, when thou hast enough; but henceforth, if thou take this course, thou shalt have little enough? If Christ carry thee, he shall carry thee naked, thou shalt leave all thy good things behind thee; and look for it, I have not been so great a friend, but now I will be as great an enemy; I will persecute thee, and plague thee, and vex thee; and if I may no longer sleep in thy bosom, I will stick in thy sides; if I may no longer be the treasure of thine heart, I will be a dart in thy liver.

But consider, be advised foolish soul, let us not part thus; stay, stay with me, go not after thou knowest not what; forsake not an old friend for a new; believe it, the old is better; if thou wilt be wise, stay as thou art, and mind thy present commodity; lay by the thoughts of the other world, let hereafter take care for itself, never stand amusing thyself about thou knowest not what, I have not been so good to thee, but I will be better to thee then ever; come let's take our fill of love, eat, drink, and be merry; gather, keep, lay-up what's before thee, and cast away care: And thus it woos, and flatters, and bewitches it into a neglect of Christ so long, till it hath smitten the soul under the fifth rib, and stabbed it to death, and drowned it in perdition and destruction.

4. It will help men to excuses for their neglect of Christ. Men are ashamed to play the Fools, but they would have something to say for it, to stop mouths withal; to stop the mouth of Conscience, to stop the mouths of Men, to stop the mouth of their Judge, if it be possible, Luk. 14:18. Those that were invited to come to Christ, its said, they all began to make excuses; they were ashamed to say, they would not come, that had been too gross;

but they excuse themselves, we cannot come, Ruth 4:6. The Kinsman of Ruth, that had the offer of redeeming the Inheritance of his deceased Kinsman, answered no, I cannot redeem it, lest I mar mine own Inheritance. He would not say, I will not redeem it; no, an excuse must be found out, I cannot redeem it, I should mar mine own Inheritance, if I redeem my Brothers. So these here, they do not say I will not, but I cannot come. Why, what's the matter you cannot come to Christ? What excuse have you? Whence have you your excuse? Oh the world furnishes them with an excuse; I have a Farm, says one, I have Oxen to look to, says another; I have a Wife to mind, says a third, I pray thee have me excused, I cannot come.

Christians, have your hearts never made this use of the world, to make it your excuse for your neglecting Christ, and your souls? It hath hindered you many a time from coming to Christ, and then excused you for not coming. How many prayers hath it lost you? How many Sabbaths hath it lost you? The loss of these may be the loss of Christ, the loss of your souls: How much of these spiritual advantages hath the world lost you? And when they are lost, when you have lost a praying time, or hearing time, lost a Sabbath, or a Sermon, or a Sacrament, this must serve for an excuse, I was busy, and could not come.

An excuse is a pretense, or a shift that men find out, to save themselves from blame, for all their neglects of Christ, and their souls; as if they should say, its a shame for men to neglect Christ that have nothing else to mind in his stead; its a shame for men to neglect their souls, that have nothing else to look to; I have no mind to Christ, and his ways, this looking after my soul, and my Conscience, and the matters of the other world, are things that I like not, and list not to be meddling withal; but what shall I say for myself

if I neglect them? I am ashamed to say, I care not for Christ, I care not for my soul, I care not for heaven and everlasting glory, I care not though I perish and die, I dare not say thus; and yet these things that Christ calls to me, are so contrary to me, that I have no mind to meddle with them: But what shall I say for myself, if I do not? Some excuse or other I must have, what may be my excuse?

Why, hast thou never a Farm to look to, never a Wife nor Family to look after? Or hast thou not a house, or a horse, or a companion? Hast thou no sports, nor pleasures, no Hawks nor dogs to follow? Hast thou nothing to do? Hast thou nothing to say? Tell Christ, tell Conscience, thou hast other business to do; thou hast thy friends, or thy pleasures, that call thee another way; anything may serve, a bad excuse is better than none.

An excuse is a pretense to have reason for what we do: no man can have reason to neglect Christ, no man can have reason to continue in sin; and yet there are few cases, wherein men will not pretend to have reason for it, especially the worldling, whoever wants, he will be sure to find reason enough for his worldliness.

Though the Drunkard can hardly say, I have reason to be drunk; though the Adulterer can hardly say, I have reason to follow Harlots; though the Swearer can hardly say, I have reason to swear, or blaspheme; though the Prodigal can hardly say, I have reason to waste, and spend my Estate; yet the worldling will easily say, I have reason to get an Estate, to keep what I have; reason to be a good Husband, and to be provident; who shall keep me when I am old? Who shall take care of my Family? I have reason to take care for myself; who will take care for me, if I do not take care of myself?

And though this may be looked on as a miserable Plea for the neglect of Christ, I am following a Whore, and I cannot come; I must to the Alehouse,

or the Tavern, and I cannot come; yet this will pass for a fair excuse, I have a Wife, or a Family, or a Farm, and I cannot come.

I pray thee have me excused? For what? That thou dost not come to Christ, and hearken to, and follow him? That is, excuse me that I undo myself, that I stab, or drown, or hang myself, that I go to the Devil and damn my soul: If I go to hell, and there perish forever, I pray do not blame me for it, I have reason for what I do; I [must] take care of this world whatever becomes of me in the other world: as for those that have nothing else to do, but to mind Christ and Salvation, if they neglect it, let them answer for themselves, if they can; for my part I have reason enough to do as I do: Hast thou reason to go to hell? Reason to be damned? Go then and bear thy burden forever, till thy sense too late teach thee better reason.

Oh what wise men are the men of this world! What very fools are the worldly wise! They destroy their souls to please and provide for their carcasses; they count the world their happiness, and this their happiness must have the killing of them: some men's businesses must have the killing of them; some men's money must do it, some men's pleasures must do it, some men's friends must have the killing of their souls: some are too rich, some are too busy, some are too merry, some are too high, some are too civil and courtly, to come to Christ and save their souls. Behold the wisdom of this world!

Consider this Brethren, if some of you do not find it thus; how is it with your souls? In what case are your souls? Are you in Christ? Are you converted to God? Have you gotten any saving knowledge, or anything of the Grace of God in your hearts? Or are you not still without Christ, without Grace, without God in the world? What is it that hath hindered you, but your fleshly and worldly hearts, which have held you under the power of

these fleshly and worldly things? It may be you might have had grace in your hearts, if you had not had so much money in your purse, if you had not had so much to do in this world, you might have done more for the world to come: whilst you have been busy here and there, as the man in the Prophets Parable, 1 King. 20:40, your souls are lost, the Kingdom is lost: if you had not had so many sheep, and oxen, and trades to be looked after, it may be your souls had been better looked to; if you had not had so many carnal friends about you, it may be Christ had been entertained by you; these are they which you have taken in exchange for Christ, these are they for which you have sold the Gospel, these are they for which you have sold your souls to the devil.

You wonder at those poor miserable creatures, the Witches, who for a little money, or a few years pleasure, do by express bargain and sale, make over their souls to the devil, and yet will do the same things yourselves.

Where are your souls? In whose hands are they? Who hath the possession? Who hath the dominion of them? Are they with Christ? Doth he govern? Doth he rule them? Hath he taken possession of them? Do you think he hath indeed? Are the ignorant, the idle, the simple, the sensual, the earthly, the careless, the barren souls of the world, are these the possession of Christ? Would Christ have left you in such a carnal senseless state, if you had ever come into his hands? Do ye think he would? Who are they that are without Christ, if you are in Christ? Who are the sinners, if you are the Saints? Who are the children of this world, if you be the children of the Kingdom? Are you they whom God hath chosen out of this world, to be a peculiar people to himself? Are you they that have forsaken all for Christ, who have forsaken Christ for this world? Are you the Children of Light, Vessels of Honor, the Images of God, his mortified ones, his crucified ones,

his sanctified ones? Will Christ leave his chosen vessels to be such wooden, and iron, and earthen vessels, as your Souls are at this day? What a poor and low and miserable thing do you make of Christianity, if this be it, which you have attained to? Look to it, if you have any such thought, sure you have deceived yourselves to this day.

Are you not in Christ? What is it that hath hindered you? Christ hath invited you in; the Gospel of Christ hath been preached to you, the everlasting door hath been set open to you, the servants have been sent out among you, to call you and compel you to come in; but the world hath kept you back, your friends have hung about you, your business have lain upon you, your estates have called you another way, and would not suffer you to enter in.

And that these are they that have done it, it is apparent, since these are they that must serve you for an excuse. I have had so many encumbrances and entanglements and diversions every day, that I could not do for my Soul, as others may.

And oh how glad have you often been of an excuse! That you have had something to say for yourself, and to silence Conscience under the neglect of Christ? More glad of an hindrance than of an opportunity; there is such an ungratefulness and unpleasingness of Christ and his ways, to carnal hearts, that when Christ hath been dealing with them, and persuading and awakening them, to look after them, the world seems to do them a kindness in stepping in, and calling their hearts back and putting all out of mind.

When Christ calls to a duty, to an ordinance, to bring us near to him, that he might deal with us, and treat with us about the matters of eternity; whilst some rejoice to come in, to appear in his presence, to hear his voice, to pour out their Souls to him in prayer or fasting, &c. Others are glad that they

have something to say, that they could not be there; glad of a business or of a friend that kept them off, glad of a temptation; that the Devil laid a block in their way, that the world called them out another way; not considering what an eternal loss they may have hereby sustained.

Behold now the friend of sinners; the Idol, the god whom they serve, this present world: this is your beloved, this is your friend. But what is its friendship to you? What kindness hath this world for you? You love it and seek it and serve it, and work for it; it hath your time, and your strength, and your hearts, bestowed upon it; for this you live, and labor, and sweat, and toil out all your days; but when all is done, what kindness doth it show you? What reward have you? It feeds you, and clothes you; and pleases and pampers your flesh, but it kills your Souls: It blinds, it hardens, it holds you in a sottish, senseless, carnal state and course, keeps Christ and your hearts apart, holds your Souls in death, and shuts you out from the kingdom of God. This is your God whom you hug, and worship, and bless yourselves in, and busy yourselves for: this is your beloved, here is the kindness of your friend: and is not this friendship of the world enmity? What can the Devil do more, then keep you from Christ, and what doth the world do less? Hitherto it hath kept you off, and when do you think if you hearken to it, will it give you leave to go over to him? When will it say unto you, thou hast served me long enough; thou hast served thy pleasures, and thy estate, and thy friends long enough, now go thy way and serve thy God, now go to Christ and look after thy Soul; how long will it be ere the world will thus give thee leave? Or if it will not give thee leave, how long will it be ere thou take thy leave.

Be not deceived, that which hath hindered doth hinder, and will hinder thee from ever making a saving close with Christ, till thy Soul and it be

parted.

Depart, depart: depart from your worldly ways, depart from your worldly pleasures, and let a worldly heart depart from you, and then welcome Christ and his Gospel, then welcome Grace and Holiness, then welcome God and the everlasting kingdom.

2. The enmity of the world shows itself, in hindering the Soul from following of Christ. If it cannot quite keep us off from Christ, it will hold us back, that Christ shall have but little service of us, 2 Tim. 2:4. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a Soldier. Christ's servants are all Soldiers; and the world is one special enemy we are to fight against: there's like to be but heartless fighting, where we are in league with the enemy; whilst we should be charging it, we shall be like enough to be treating for peace, if not quite to forsake our colors, and run over to the enemies camp: Christ entertains none, but those that are free and disengaged persons; and by how much the more free, by so much the more fit for his service: no man that warreth [entangleth] himself: a Soldier that fights in fetters, fights thereafter: we must put off our fetters, if we will put on our armor.

[In the affairs of this life] the work that Christ hath to put his servants upon, lies in the affairs of the other life; he that is entangled in the affairs of this, will do little about the affairs of the other life.

[That he may please him who hath chosen him to be a Soldier] The servant must so serve his master, as to please him; he that is Christ's servant, must devote himself to the pleasing of his Lord; he must not please men, he must not please himself; his appetite, his pride, his covetousness; is this thy pleasing of Christ, to be serving his enemies? If you be Christ's indeed, you herein displease your selves, in being self-pleasers. He that is

not angry with himself for his flesh pleasing, he that can humor, and favor, and gratify his earthly and sensual heart, and be pleased with himself, and be patient with himself, for so doing, Christ hath little in that man; and if your pleasing yourself cannot stand with the pleasing of your Souls, which have devoted themselves to Christ, much less will it stand with the pleasing of your Lord, who hath chosen you for his Soldiers.

But more particularly, the world discovers its enmity here.

1. In cutting Christ short of that service and those fruits which he should reap from us.

2. In cutting us short of that service and peace that we might receive from him.

1. The world cuts Christ short of that service, and those fruits which he should reap from us, Hos. 10:1. Israel is an empty vine he bringeth forth fruit to himself. Israel is an empty vine; that is, to his Lord: tis but a poor vintage, little or no fruit he brings forth to God; he is his vine; he hath planted, he hath watered, and he hath fenced him, and he looks for grapes, but finds none; why what's the reason of it? Oh he hath brought forth all his fruits to himself; he hath store of fruit, but no such fruit as God looks for, he brought forth so much to his flesh, that there's none for his God.

Phil. 2:2. All seek their own, and not the things of Christ. Here's little seeking of Christ among you, saith the Apostle; the worship and service of Christ, the honor and interest of Christ is little regarded; there's a general neglect of him. None, that is, there are scarce any among you, none in comparison, that mind the things of Christ: but why is Christ so neglected? Why because every man is for himself; and all seek their own, that is, their outward and earthly things.

Their own things? Why are not the things of Christ so much thine own, as the things of the world? Are thy carnal friends more thine, then Christ is thine? Are thy earthly possessions, thy earthly pleasures, thy meat, and thy drink, and thy money, the things of thy body, more thine then thy Soul, and the concernments of it? Thou art a pitiful Christian, if the things of Christ be not more thine, then the things of this world; if the things of Christ and thine own things, be not the very same; but yet thus our fleshly hearts count, our carnal things are our own things; and the more we seek our own, the less the things of Christ: the most careful Worldling is the most careless Christian.

Brethren, how little is there done for Christ? How little is Christ served or sought? Judge ye everyone in your own selves: how little hath been done for Christ, or is now a doing! Look back, and sum up all that you have done, and gather together all, concerning which you can say, this hath been done for Christ: this day, or this hour was spent in seeking of Christ; and see into what a narrow room all will be brought: look into your hearts, and see how many shops and fields you may find there, to one sanctuary; how many Markets and Fairs have been kept there, to on Sabbath; how many servants hath Christ at work for him within you? All that is within you have the name of the servants of Christ; every faculty is his servant; your thoughts, affections, understandings consciences; every member; your hands, eyes tongues, have all the name of the servants of Christ: but are these at work for Christ? Are your understandings viewing Christ? Are your thoughts searching after Christ? Are your affections working up towards Christ? Are your consciences pleading for Christ? Are your tongues speaking for Christ? Are your hands laying up, or laying out for Christ? The Devil hath his servants busy a working for him; our carnal thoughts, our

fleshly lusts, our earthly affections, all our earthly members are hard at work for the Devil; to harden us against Christ, to entice us from Christ, to defile and destroy our Souls; but how little is done for Christ would make our hearts to tremble if we did consider how little; may be there may be divers of our souls, in which there hath not been one stroke of work done for Christ, since they had a being, and in whom there's anything done, oh how little is it?

What footing hath Christ gotten in your hearts? What faith, or love, or fear, or honor hath he in you? How goes his sanctifying work, his mortifying work on in you? How fares it with his enemies in you, your lusts, and passions, and carnal affections? Are not these still Lording it in his room? Oh how little is it that is yet done for Christ within us? How little power and authority hath he in us? How low is it with us both in point of grace and peace? How little is he minded, or loved, or praised, in us? How little pleasure or delight do we take in him? How little care take we for him? Any little good thing that he hath committed to us, how hath it been cherished, and nourished, and improved? Doth it not languish, and pine away? Whilst our faces shine, our flesh flourishes, our outward man thrives, in what a withering perishing case is our inner man?

Think with yourselves, are matters with you within as you could wish they were? Is it with your souls as Christ would have it? Do you think he will say to you, in the case you are in, well done, thou hast been a faithful servant, a good Steward of my manifold graces? How is it without you? What are your duties? What are your ways? What praying, or hearing, or walking? Oh what shuffling over duties, what halting in your goings? What do you more than others? Are you not carnal and vain as others? Are you not proud and froward as others? Are you not unsavory and unprofitable as

others? Of what use are you to those you walk amongst? What examples are you to them? Wherein are they the better for you? Does your light shine? Do ye provoke them to love and good works? What do you for your Relations, for your friends, for your families, or any of the members of Christ?

What mourning is there under the dishonor of Christ? What sense of the sufferings of Christ? Doth not Christ suffer much in the world, in his Ministers, in his Members, in his Worship, in his Sabbaths and Ordinances? How fares it abroad with Christ? How fares it with his Gospel, with his Saints? Is all well? Is it peace? Doth the Church prosper? Doth Religion flourish? Or doth it not suffer, and mourn, and bleed, and is even ready to vanish away? And yet who is there almost that cares for any of these things? How few are there that lay them to heart? Where are the hearts that tremble for the Ark of God? That ask, how fares it with the Israel of God? Oh Brethren, its lamentable to see how little upon any account whatsoever, the things of Christ are anywhere minded. But what's the reason? Why look abroad everywhere in the world, and you may see reason enough; what is there a doing everywhere? Go into one Town, go into another; go into one house, and another, and another, and what are they doing? How busy are we in buying, and selling, and building, and planting, ploughing, and sowing, marrying, and giving in marriage? This is it; we are so busy for this world, that Christ and the things of Christ are little regarded by us. 2. It holds us short of that grace, and true peace, which we might receive from him. The cares of this world choke the Word, that it cannot prosper in such souls, that it can neither quicken us, nor comfort us: Grace is a flower that will grow best in those Gardens where it hath least of earth: A worldly-minded Christian, a worldly-minded Professor, will never be but a Dwarf, will be

but an Infant in Religion, at forty years old. How many may we see among us, that have lived many years under the profession of Religion, and have had some hope towards God, and some confidence that Christ is in them of a truth; who if they should take an account of themselves, what increase have I made in the grace of God all this while? What hath been added to me; to my faith, or love, or zeal of God? To my knowledge of God, to my acquaintance with mine own heart? How much humility, spirituality, mortification? What power over my corruptions, my pride, my passion, my peevishness, my fleshliness have I obtained? What evidences have I gotten for heaven? What clearness, and grounded confidence and assurance am I grown up to now more then I was, seven, or ten, or twenty years ago? What have I gotten? How much, and wherein have I improved in all this time?

Oh how may most of us sadly answer, What have I gotten? How have I grown? Oh the Lord he merciful to me, have I not lost? Have I not sunk and decayed? Is it not worse with me now, then many years ago; my faith grown, my love grown, my holiness and my hope grown, my comfort and my confidence grown? The Lord help me, rather my fears, and my doubts, my darkness and my deadness, and my sins are grown upon me; I have less life, and less love, and less joy, and less peace, then when I first looked after Christ. Let worldly-minded Professors, prove and consider themselves narrowly, if this, such a lean, starveling, lifeless state of soul, be not all the kindness they are beholding to their worldliness for; it hath built you houses, and bought you Lands, and filled your purses, and fed your carcasses, and provided for your Families; but it hath starved your souls. O my leanness, my leanness, my dry and withered soul, my weak heart, my wasted Conscience; Oh how little truth or tenderness, how little love, or

life, or warmth, do I feel within me? Oh how much pride, and frowardness? Oh how much lust and liberty to sin, hath there grown upon me? I can fret, and vex, and chafe; I can be false, I can lie, and dissemble; all the Religion I have gotten into my soul, after so long a time of profession, is not enough to restrain these vile abominations: Oh my soul, how sad is it with thee? How low is it with thee to this day? How comes this to pass? Why, this is thy good husbandry, this is thy worldliness; thy laboring so much, thy hungering so much after the meat that perishes, or thy being given to thy pleasure, or thy ease; this is it that hath held thee in such a poor case, such an unfruitful and barren state, such a dark and uncomfortable state, as thou art in at this day: for all this unhappiness thou art beholding to the world, and thy worldliness.

Thus you have seen the enmity of the world against souls, it holds back from Christ, darkens the sight, that we cannot see the excellency or the need of Christ; deadens the sense, and hinders from following Christ, keeps Christ short, &c.

Let this, by the way, be an argument to dissuade from worldliness; are you Christians, or would you be so? Would you ever come to anything in Religion? Would you prosper in holiness? Would you have the comfort of Christianity? Then take heed and beware of a worldly heart, which will either hinder you from ever coming to Christ, or else be a Canker and a Moth, to devour and eat out the spirits of all that Christianity you have.

CHAP III. – Wherein the strength of the world lies, whereby it prevails upon so many souls.

WHEREIN THE STRENGTH OF the world lies, whereby it prevails upon so many souls.

It is a wonder it should ever prevail so as it does, that ever men of understanding, endued with immortal souls, should suffer themselves to be led up and down as they are, by such a pernicious and mortal Enemy; that when they have seen so many lost and undone by it, they should never take warning; that it should ever be trusted as it is, that it should ever be loved as it is, that it should ever be hearkened to as it is, especially considering how unreasonable its demands are, and how inconsiderable its rewards.

What does the world demand? What would it have? This is it, if it would speak out; Come sell me thy God, come sell me thy hopes that thou hast for the other world, come sell me thy soul, come give me thy heart, love me, and serve me.

But what shall be mine hire? What wilt thou give me then? If it would speak out, this is the reward it gives, Vanity and vexation, death and destruction; Hell shall be thine hire. But suppose it should give what it says

it will; all the good things on this side the grave; riches, honors, pleasures, ease, abundance of all these, and all manner of contentment in the enjoyment of them; yet what's all this thou shouldst gain, on this side the grave, to what thou shalt loose, and to what thou shalt suffer on the other side of the grave? What's Earth to Heaven? What's Time to Eternity?

Suppose it should say plainly, come take thy good things here, and thy evil things hereafter; take thy riches in this, and thy poverty in the other world; take thy pleasures here, and thy plagues beneath; be full or be merry, prosper, flourish, rejoice for a few hours, or for a few days, and be miserable, cry howl be in torments to Eternity.

If the World should speak out thus to Men (this it designs) if it should speak out thus, into what madness must those Souls be bewitched, that would hearken to it? And yet behold, though this be the design its driving on, and men might know it if they would but consider; yet behold how the whole world almost, are wondering after this beast, and busy in making bargains with it to be its captives and servants: yea not only suffering themselves to be persuaded, and beguiled in o this bondage, but also willingly offering themselves for servants. I pray thee take me into the number of thy servants: Take [my] Soul, world says one, take [my] God, says another, take my hopes, says another. Let me be but a rich man, let me be a great man, let me have so much money, or so much lands, or so much pleasure, or ease or honor; let but this Moon shine upon me, and take the Sunshine, whoever will; let me be this world's favorite, and I am content to be its servant; and so along they go after it, till they be lost forever.

What a wonder is this? And yet how many such prodigies are to be seen every day, and in every place? This is the case of every worldling; thou that wilt be rich, thou whose heart goes after thy covetousness, thou who art

given to thy pride, or thy pleasures, or thy ease, thou art boring thine ear to the threshold of thy mortal enemy; thou art doing away thy patrimony for husks, thou art doing away thy Soul, and its eternal inheritance to buy in thy life into an house, or parcel of Land; or for a bundle of crackling thorns, to make thee blaze, before which thou mayest dance and be merry for an hour or two, and then go down to everlasting darkness.

This being such a marvelous thing; that such an enemy, that is so known and confessed to be, by the very men that suffer themselves to be led Captive by it, (for what worldling is there that will not confess that this world is an Enemy) that such a known Enemy, should still so easily prevail in the world: (as the Apostle in another case, Gal. 3:1,3. O foolish Galatians who hath bewitched you? Are ye so foolish that having begun in the Spirit ye will be made perfect in the flesh? O foolish worldlings who hath bewitched you! Are ye so foolish that being born to things Spiritual and Eternal, you will be thus led captive by things Temporal and Fleshly?) this being such a marvelous thing, it will be worth our time to inquire, wherein the strength of the world lies, whereby it so strangely prevails.

And indeed it is a piece of the best policy, and that which gives great advantage against an enemy, to study and find out where his strength lieth, Judge. 16:6. &c. When Delilah attempted the delivering of Samson bound into the hands of the Philistines, she lies at him day by day, tell me where thy great strength lieth, tell me where thy great strength lieth: in vain did they assault him, in vain did she bind him; her Cords, and her Withs, and her webs could never hold him, till at length she found out where his strength lay; which when she had once found out, she quickly spoiled him of it, and delivered him a captive to his enemies: find out the strength of the

World, what it is, and wherein it lies, and then you will understand your way to the conquering of it.

But where lies this strength of the World? I answer, In,

The Spirit of the World within us, In the God of the World without us.

1. In the spirit of the world within: the world hath a strong party within man, which sides with it, 1 Cor. 2:12. We have received not the spirit of the world but the spirit which is of God [we] have not; we who have that spirit of God in us have not received the spirit of this world: but all others have no other spirit. In the whole generation of worldly men, there is the same spirit; as in the whole generation of the Saints there is the same divine spirit, the same spirit of grace, the same spirit of faith, the same spirit of love, the same holy spirit. So in all the men of this world there is the same worldly spirit.

The spirit of this world is an earthly Spirit, 1 Cor. 15:47, the first man is of the earth, earthy: in his creation he had an earthy body, and by sin he is come to have an earthy Soul. Sin was his fall from Heaven to Earth, as in his choice he made for himself: he chose an earthly inheritance; so in his temper, and disposition, and tendency; his very nature now inclines, and bends towards earthly things; his Soul as well as his Body, lusts after, and feeds upon dust.

The spirit of the World is a short-sighted spirit: it cannot see afar off, 2 Pet. 1:9. Heavenly things are too far distant to be discerned by it, it loves and gapes for, and grasps things present, things to come are far out of its sight.

The spirit of the world is a low and narrow spirit, these poor and beggarly things that this earth affords, are the highest of its ambition.

Seekest thou great things for thyself? Yes I do: what, worldly greatness? Are these the great things thou seekest? A great name, a great estate? Great possessions? Thou mistakest thyself man, these great things are but small things, below the spirit of a man, below a divine and immortal Soul: meat, and drink, and mirth, and money? Are these the best things thou findest for thy heart to be set upon? For thy soul to take pleasure in? Sure thou hast changed Souls with the bruits, that canst take up with such things as these.

The Spirit of the World is an homebred spirit: it hath never been abroad, but hath been born and bred in this worldly region: it hath never set foot, nor been acquainted in a better land: the spirit which is of God, carries up to the upper regions; the regions of light, and life, and glory and immortality; where it hath made discoveries of other manner of treasures, and joys, and glories, then are here to be found; but the spirit of the world hath ever dwelt at home; the souls of worldlings dwell in their houses of clay, and never travail farther; then they can, with the snail, carry their houses upon their heads: their Souls travail no farther than their carcasses.

This Spirit of the World, by what hath been hinted, of the make and temper of it, you see, hath a suitableness to worldly things; and this is the great advantage the World hath upon us, it tempts us to that we love and like: all that the World persuades us to, is to seek what we have a mind to, to do what we have a mind to, to follow our natures and dispositions, to find out what will best please us, and there to take our fill.

The difficulty of Christ's victory over Souls, lies in this, that he calls and commands them to things and to ways contrary to their natures; not to please, but to deny themselves; to kill their Flesh, to cross their appetites, to contradict their own mind; to pursue an happiness, which is so sublime and spiritual, and so unsuitable to their carnal natures, that it is altogether

unsavory to them; and hereupon he hath hard work to prevail, and tis but here and there one amongst many, that will be prevailed upon, to hearken to him: to how many houses may we come, to how many souls may we bring the everlasting Gospel, ere one will open and accept? How many are called to Christ, to one that comes? O brethren, you are witness, how hardly any of your souls were persuaded to come along with Christ; and may be, some of you stand off, and hang back, and will not be persuaded to come fully in, to this day: What's the reason of this? Oh carnal men think that Christ calls them to their loss, persuades them to their hurt, that they have a better being, whilst they are wallowing in their riches, and their pleasures, then ever they should find in following of Christ.

But now the advantage that the world hath on Souls, is, that it tempts them to things pleasing to them; their natures join with the world, and draw them the same way: Whilst Christ calls, if any man will be my disciple let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me, this is all the world requires, if any man will be my servant, let him seek himself and shift for himself, and please himself, and shun the cross, and follow his own heart; and what great difficulty is there, to persuade men to follow their own minds? When worldly temptations meet with worldly spirits, when temptations to pride, meet with proud hearts, when temptations to pleasure, meet with flesh-pleasing hearts, when temptations to vanity meet with vain hearts, when temptations to covetousness meet with covetous hearts, how mightily must they needs prevail? From this suitableness of the spirit to worldly things, it doth,

Readily take in of the World, Greedily make out after the World.

1. It doth readily take in of the World, the world never knocks but the heart opens, the world never offers, but the hand is ready to receive; yea

though the terms upon which we must have it be never so unreasonable; though for every draught of pleasure, they must after drink the double in wormwood, though with the gains of the world, they must drink in a curse, yet like men in a dropsy, though to drink will be death, their thirst must be quenched.

It may be when the world is a tempting the Soul, conscience stands by, and gives it warning, take heed of these pleasures there's poison in that cup, or there's wormwood at the bottom; take heed of these deceitful riches, there's a snare lies under, there's a curse cleaves to them; look to thyself Soul, the world is but a playing the Devil with thee; these pleasures and these riches it hath sent to fetch away thy Soul: it holds thee so busy about thine earthly affairs, that thou mayest the mean while loose the opportunity of making Christ thine, of making the other world sure to thee: look to it, thou wilt never have any part in Christ, thou wilt never have any hope towards God, if thou be tampering thus, and trading thus greedily for this present world: it may be Conscience doth thus stand by, and give warning to the worldly heart; but all's one for that, come what will come the heart is so set upon it, that it will not be warned.

2. Hence it is that they so greedily make out after the world, Oh what hast do they make to be rich? How do their Souls hunger after worldly greatness? They covet greedily all the day long, Prov. 21:26. They enlarge their desire as Hell and are as death and cannot be satisfied, as it was said of the Chaldean, Heb. 2:5, they enlarge their desire as Hell, of which tis said, he hath made it deep and large; they have deep desires, the bottom of their Soul comes up; they have large desires, they never have enough, Ezek. 33:31. Their heart goeth after their covetousness: that is, either after those earthly things, which are the objects of their covetousness; or after the

ductus or leading of their covetousness: their covetousness leads on and their heart follows: their heart goes, yea it runs after it: their heart out runs their feet, their heart out works their hands: when I awake I am still with thee, saith the Psalmist; and when the worlding awakes, where is his heart presently? In the field, in the shop, in the market; his heart is there, before his body can get there: it may be that must stay a time in the house after he awakes, and put on his clothes or take his breakfast, or may be to make a short prayer, for a fashion; but his heart goes presently abroad, as soon as ever he awakes, and leaves only his tongue behind to pray.

But whence is this eagerness this hungering and riding post after the world? Why tis his love to the world that makes him gape so wide after it; he loves to be rich, he loves [give ye.]

Christ is proposed and set before his eyes, the bread of life, the water of life, the windows of Heaven are opened, the fountains above are broken up; the durable riches, the everlasting pleasures, life and peace, and rest, and joy, and glory are set forth in open sight before the world: and as Psal. 14:2. God looks down to see if any would understand and seek God: to see who amongst all the world had a mind to his riches, to his treasures; who was for Christ, who was for Grace, who was for Heaven; but behold they are all running another way; there's none that understands, none that will seek God; every door is shut, every heart's asleep when God passeth by. If he should never give, till many ask, if he should stay till they seek him, how long might he stay? He must come and call, and knock and break open their doors, and pour into their mouths, and tis well if Heaven will down with any at last; whilst full tables, and full draughts of this world, will down and never stick, now and then a crumb, now and then a drop from above, is all

that will be taken in. Oh this agrees not with our stomach, tis the world that is our savory meat.

Oh what abundant proof is there brethren, of this difference of our appetites, to things spiritual and things carnal? Oh what thriving and what grown Christians had we been, had we been as hungry after grace, as after greatness in this world; had there been so much craving and catching after God, as after Mammon; had there been such good husbandry among us for things to come, as for things present?

What's the reason that our Souls are such dwarfs, and babes, and starvelings? Are they not so? Is it not very poor and very low with us? What treasures have you gotten? How little knowledge or Faith, or love, or power, or vigor of spirit, have you attained, how is death still feeding upon us? Death in our understandings, Death in our affections, Death in our Consciences, Death in our duties? We walk up and down more like the Ghosts of Christians; then like living Christians; pale and wan, and weak and cold; mere carcasses of Christianity, when the Soul and Spirit of religion is not. Look about, inquire among you and see, how many such dead carcasses there are, to one living lively Soul: how many empty casks that make a little sound, to one full vessel.

The Lord be merciful to us, though the name and shell of Religion be among us, and upon us, yet the spirit and kernel of it seems to be almost quite vanished out of the earth.

It was once said Rev. 3:4. Thou hast a few names even in Sardis, that have not defiled their garments: But oh may it not be said, thou hast [but] a few names, neither in Sardis, not Thyatira, nor Philadelphia, nor anywhere among all the Churches; thou hast but a few names anywhere, that have any more than a name that they live.

Brethren, how is it with us who are here before the Lord? Turn in everyone his eye upon his heart, go down and ask every one of you, Soul how fares it with thee? How art thou fed oh my Soul? How art thou clothed? What hast thou by thee? What grace, what peace, what hope to comfort thee? Who is there within thee? Is Christ there? Is the holy spirit there, quickening thee, and cleansing thee? Or is not the world there preying upon thee and consuming thee? Ask your Souls, art thou in health O my Soul? Dost thou live, and thrive, and hold up thy head, and hold on thy way, and thy work? Or art thou not sick? Head sick, and heart sick, and weak, and poor and blind and naked? Look in each one of you, step down, and take an account of your state. If you would do so, I doubt there are few of us, but would find all within, in a very pitiful and lamentable case.

What's the reason of all this? The Lord God hath offered to feed us, and nourish us, and nurse up these languishing Souls; the Lord God hath stood among us, with his baskets of bread and his bottles of wine; hath put such meat to our mouths, that would have nourished us up, from babes to be men from such weaklings to be strong in the Lord; but there is such an unsuitableness betwixt the things of God and our carnal hearts, that we have no appetite to them, and so they will not down; whereas the things of the world do find such a Spirit of the world in us, that of anything that it hath to offer us, nothing comes amiss; we not only readily take it in, but greedily hunger and make out after it.

By the way Christians learn, that if ever you would get victory over the world, you must first get you another spirit: in vain do you think to live other than a worldly life, whilst the spirit of the world lives in you: Oh have you been so long professors of Christianity, and have not yet gotten the Spirit of Christianity? Is this the Spirit of Christ, that leads you on in an

earthly course? Did God give you his Spirit, to teach you, how to be such drudges to the world? Did God give you his Spirit, to teach you how to plow, and sow, and buy, and sell, and hoard up treasures on earth? What are your thoughts, your designs, your courses, your ordinary talk and discourse? What is it but earth? Are these the thoughts, the ways, the language of the Spirit? Can any one that beholds our conversation, that in the general bent and tenor of it, is all about the world, and but now and then a cold wish, or a few heartless words, about the things of God; can any man that beholds us, say, I, these are the persons that are dead to the world; that are crucified, that are mortified to things below? These are they that have received the spirit of Christ indeed? These speak like Christians, and look like Christians, and live like Christians, like men of another world? Can it be said thus of us? Can we say thus of ourselves? My life is a spiritual life, my course is a heavenly course, my steps are all bending to another country? Can we say thus? Would not our daily course, our daily discourse, give us the lie if we should? Oh we are yet of an earthly sensual Spirit; the Spirit of this world is yet bearing rule in us; our very Soul is but a lump of earth and flesh; Oh for another Spirit, a new Soul, a more divine and celestial frame! O seek, O wait for this better Spirit, and then we should quickly see another life: once let the world be thrust out of the heart, and we shall quickly see more of Heaven breaking forth in the life,

2. The strength of the world lies in the God of this world, Satan gives strength to, and marshals its temptations so, as that the success of them depends much on him: this he doth.

1. By over rating the good things present, and underrating the good things to come.

2. By sharpening the edge of the evil things present, and blunting the edge of the evil things to come.

3. By an active stimulating, and provoking the Soul, on any terms whatsoever, to pursue the present good, and to escape the present evil.

1. By over rating the good things present, and under rating the good things to come: He that looks on the world through the Devils glass, shall see it double to what it is: he gives the same prospect to us, as he did to our Lord, Matth. 4:2, shows it in its Glory; every Comet Shines as the Sun; he makes the silver as gold, the brass as silver, stones as iron; everything hath a borrowed face, and looks better than it is. The Apple whereby he tempted our first parents, Gen. 3:5, he makes a deifying Apple. In the day that you eat your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God's, knowing good and evil. Satan's design is, to blind, and put out men's eyes; knowing, that they can never see the terrene glory, till their eyes be out; but his pretense is to open eyes; to make such discoveries of the hidden excellencies in these earthly treasures, as will transfigure Earth into a Heaven.

He presents the world, as that which hath substance, sufficiency, contentment, hearts ease, satisfaction in it: he says to his friends, as the Lord says to his, Prov. 8:17. &c. I love them that love me, and them that seek me early shall find me: riches and honors are with me, yea durable riches and righteousness; I will cause those that love, me to find substance, and I will fill their treasures: thus the Lord speaks to his, and the Devil gives the world a tongue, to speak at the same rate. I love them that love me, I have riches and honors, durable riches, and I will fill them with treasures.

And as the world speaks, so worldlings think, it cannot boast greater things of itself, then will be believed. Hos. 12:8. I am become rich, says

Ephraim I have found me out substance: the shadow is a substance in those eyes, that see no better things.

Hence these things are taken up by the men of this world, as their portion as their heritage, as their happiness and hope: thou givest them their portion in this life, Psal. 17, and they take them as their portion: and now Lord what wait I for, saith the Psalmist, my hope is in thee: and now world, what wait [I] for? What work I for? What live I for? Truly my hope is in thee: the worldling says, God is my portion; and in a sense he says true, for the world is his God.

And on the other side, as Satan over rates this, so he under rates the other world, 2 Cor. 4:4. The God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. The Gospel is a window, through which the light and glory of the other world breaks in, and shines down upon this: here the pretended opener of eyes, smites with blindness; by a veil of unbelief, he keeps the Gospel, and all the glory of it out of sight: unbelief gives the lie to all that the Gospel speaks; calls all into question, holds under uncertainties, whether there be any such thing or no; and what's doubtful and uncertain whether it be or no, will be valued thereafter.

What a low price do carnal hearts put upon the deep things of God, upon the great things of eternity? Glory and honor and immortality and eternal life, what cheap things are they accounted? Whilst soul, and conscience, and peace, and hopes, and life are so ordinarily sold, to purchase an earthly inheritance, (that's the bargain that everywhere is driving in this earth) how few are there that will deal for Heaven and Glory, though it may be bought without money, and without price? Though it may be had for the seeking for; though it be bought to their hands, yet they will not take it. Now what

advantage is this to worldly temptations, when the price of things to come is so beaten down, when the price of things present is so hoisted and raised, as if the one could hardly be over-bought, and the other were scarce worth the dealing for?

2. By sharpening the edge of present evils, and blunting the edge of evils to come. The afflictions of this life are made to cut deeper than the vengeance to come. The persecutions of men are more feared than the Plague of God: Satan makes his Vassals to think, there is no Heaven or Hell to those on Earth; Poverty looks more dismally than eternal Fire, Disgrace than Damnation, the Wrath of man than the Curse of God.

Let Death and Damnation be preached to the World, and this stirs them not, let the Devil preach of Tribulation and Persecution for righteousness sake, and how are they frightened? Let the Word declare unto them, with never so much plainness and power, He that believeth not shall be damned; If you live after the flesh you shall die; The Wrath of God shall be revealed from Heaven against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men; Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his Power: And how little is this regarded, who doth believe this report? How few are convinced? How few are awakened, so much as to consider how they may escape? How weak are all those Arguments, which are either fetched down from above, or fetched up from the deep, and how little will they work? On the other side, let men be told, He that departs from evil makes himself a prey; All those that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution; Ye shall be reproached, reviled, and cast out of men, made as the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things; Ye shall be as Sheep among Wolves, as Lilles among Thorns; The Devil shall cast you into Prison; You shall be as Signs and

Wonders in Israel; Many are the troubles of the Righteous, &c. Let the Devil take such Texts as these, and preach to them, and how deep does his word go? If this be the portion of Christians, if this be the wages of Righteousness, and the fruit of Holiness, let me take heed of Christ and his ways. A mocking Ishmael, a cursing Shimei, a railing Rabshakeh, will do more to fright them off from holiness, than the Worm, than the Fire, than all the Vipers, and Scorpions, and Stings, and Torments beneath will do, to drive them back from Sin: They dare not be Saints for fear of the barking of Dogs, but they dare be Sinners notwithstanding the roaring of Lions; The Devil hath made such fools of them, that a few grains laid on them at present, seem more heavy, than those Talents that the Almighty is casting down upon them.

3. By an active stimulating and pressing them on, whatever becomes of them hereafter, to pursue the present good things, and to prevent the present evil things. If the Devil can but make the Premises take with them, That the good things present are so good, that there's nothing better, That the evil things present are so evil, that there are none greater; then he'll easily gain the Conclusion; Therefore it's the best and wisest course, *per fas aut nefas*, to secure the one, and escape the other.

But more particularly, the Devil manages and quickens the temptations of the World,

By proposing of Objects.

By provoking the Appetite.

1. By proposing of Objects. He brings the World in sight. Sometimes he presents it immediately to the fancy; he raises great thoughts of heart about it; he calls the thoughts abroad with him, to take a view of the glory, and the riches, and the pleasures of his Kingdom; sets men a thinking on the pomp's

and fashions, or the sports and pleasures of the world; a rolling over in their minds, the gains and sweetness's of a worldly life.

Sometimes he presents it to the Eye. There is a quick passage from the eye to the heart: If the Devil can but turn the eyes to behold vanity, by the eye he will easily infect the heart. The Devil presents Objects to the eye, leading men up and down, where his baits and snares do lie, 2 Tim. 3:6. Sinners are said to be led about by divers [Lusts.] The Devil leads Lust, and Lust hath the leading of the Man. But whither do men's Lusts lead them? Why everywhere, up and down, where the Devil hath laid his baits to take them: Some men's Lusts lead them to their Companions, to their sports and pastimes, to the Ale-house, to the Tavern; other men's Lusts carry them into the City, or into the Field, over Sea and Land, to find them out wealth and substance; Some men's Lusts lead them to the Courts of Princes, to the Palaces of Nobles, to see fashions, to get favor, and to climb up into dignities and high places. Men need consider whither they go, and what their call is thither; the Devil hath oftener a hand in the leading us up and down, than we are aware of; and he that goes whither the Devil leads him, 'tis ten to one but he's in the Net before he returns: We are never more secure than when we keep aloof from temptations, when the Devils baits are out of sight. We are never in more danger, than when the hook is out of fight and the bait is in sight: that's Satan's course, as to hide the hook, so to show the bait. He turned Eve's eye to the Apple, Achan's eye to the wedge of Gold, Ahab's eye to Naboth's Vineyard, and then what work did he make with them.

2. By provoking the Appetite; And this he doth, not only by propounding of Objects at all adventures, but such objects as are most suitable and taking with those he has to deal: Satan is a skillful Philosopher; he understands our

natures and complexions, and the several inclinations that flow from them: Satan is a cunning Fisher, and knows at what baits every kind of Fish will bite; and accordingly angles for them: Some men he observes are naturally of a sensual heart, given to the pleasures of the flesh; for these he hath sports and pastimes, Mirth and Jollity, Wine, Beauty, &c. Look thee here saith the Devil, what a life thou mayest live if thou wilt; Arise, take, and eat, here's meat thou lovest, take thy fill, and make thee an happy man: if thou meddle too far with the Scriptures, or hearken to these Preachers, what a sad Soul wilt thou become? A sour unpleasant and morose spirit, thou wilt be even eaten up of thy melancholic dumps: thou must cross thyself, and be ever vexing thine heart, with intolerable severities, if thou wilt hearken to them: let them alone, let them Preach to whom they will, run not after them, hearken not to their words; believe thy senses, taste what I set before thee, taste if it be not good.

Others he observes to be of earthly minds, gaping after wealth and riches; tis not mirth, and jollity, and pleasures, and such like trash, and chaff, that will take with these; they must have substance; and for these he hath money, and lands, fields, and farms and oxen: Wilt thou be a rich man? Wilt thou be a wealthy man? Wilt thou increase thy stock and thy store? Wilt thou enlarge thy possession? Hearken to me, be a good husband; wast not thy time about impertinencies, reading hearing, praying, &c. Mind thy business, and thine interest, set thine heart upon thy work, let this be the one thing thou mindest. Nourish not needless scruples, this is a forbidden course, this ought not to be done; away with such fears; the more free thou art to venture on anything, the greater will thy gain be: let Men or Conscience clamor against thee, call thee Earth-worm, unjust, extortioner, oppressor; let them alone, thou shalt increase in substance, and that will

make thee amends for all; and for conscience, if that be sore or troublesome, a little repentance at last will heal that sore.

Others are of aerie Spirits, proud and ambitious; and for these he hath the breath of popular applause, respect and esteem in the world, honor and reputation.

Others are of a timorous and fearful heart; and with these he deals in thunder and storms; threatening's, persecutions, bonds and banishments reproaches and cruel mocking's. Look before thee foolish creature: what art thou a doing? What art thou preparing for thyself? See what rods I have in brine for thee; knowest thou not that I have power to make thee or to undo thee! Art thou able to stand against all the world? See how all my Armies are confederate against thee, and running upon thee to devour thee, and swallow thee up: consider the rage of their hearts, the fury in their faces, the violence of their hands; behold them already on their march against thee; they are many, they are terrible, they are potent, they are near that seek thy ruin. Awake from thy folly, be not accessory to thine own undoing: save thyself, go and make thy peace with them, cast in thy lot amongst them, join with the multitude, be as they are, let thy voice and thy way be as theirs; let go this pride and singularity, and be as others, and it shall be well with thee.

Thus subtly doth our adversary deal with us; with every man according to his humor, according to the several dispositions of their hearts; and in this subtlety, his strength lies, and thereon his success depends. What wonder, that the fearful are frightened? That the proud are lifted up, that the greedy gape so wide? That the full draughts of the worlds stolen waters, do so easily down with such, whose Souls are panting after them?

Christians let's learn wisdom of this Serpent; Doth he make advantage of our Tempers? Doth he observe our dispositions, and accordingly order his

temptations? Let us learn this wisdom, to know our own hearts, and to observe our own inclinations, and accordingly there to stand most constantly on our guard, where we find the adversaries most like to assault us; and to have a special eye to those enemies that are most like to make a breach upon us.

Art thou a person given to pleasure? Is a merry, jolly, frolic, wanton, luxurious life grateful to thee? Art thou given to appetite? To indulge thy throat, to study thy belly? Are meats and drinks, curiosities and varieties of them, the things thou mindest? Art thou given to pride? Is honor or applause, is the highest place, the finest clothes, the newest fashions, are these thine hearts delight? Is merry company, lightness, vain jesting, wanton or amorous books or discourses, are these the delight of thine heart? Whenever thou seest them before thee, tell thine heart, how pleasing soever these be to thee, these things I must never allow thee: Whenever thou seest such objects before thee and opportunities inviting thee to satisfy thy lust, when thou fallest into company that are of the same spirit, when sports and pastimes when delicates and dainties or any other voluptuous Objects are before thee, then say, Now I must look to myself; the Devil stands in the crowd, to steal away my soul: these are the flies with which he uses to bait his hook for me; he hath caught me with them many a time, and now he is come angling for me again: O my soul I know thou hast a lust to be nibbing: these are the things thou naturally lovest, here thy great danger lies, and I must look the more narrowly to thee here. A heart given to pleasure, should hold itself under a greater restraint, and allow itself less liberty, than others that are not thus inclined; that may be safe for them, which would prove fatal to thee.

Art thou an earthly minded person? And dost thou see substance before thee; a Field, or a House that may be gotten? Does the world come crowding and flowing in upon thee? Hast thou good trading, rich merchandise, gainful bargains before thee, and is thy soul in chase of them? Take heed to thyself, these are the things by which thou art like to be lost: thou art never in such danger of becoming poor, as by growing rich: When are Worldlings hearts so ready to take their leave of God, and Heaven, as when they are entertained with the flatteries of a smiling World? Their gains are usually their greatest loss, they never decline or go back so much, as when they have the best trading. How hardly shalt rich men enter into the Kingdom of God? When riches increase, how hard is it for such, not to set their hearts upon them?

How little are the Counsels or Promises of God regarded, whilst we have the World at will? How little is it regarded, that God Promises, I will be thine, Christ shall be thine, the Kingdom shall be thine; whilst the World stands by and says, I will be thine, Money says, I will be thine, Sheep and Oxen say, we will all be thine! The Lord is hereupon often put to it, to take away our money, to drive away our cattle, to burn down our houses, to turn our fruitful Land into a Wilderness, to bring us to wants and straits, ere he can be regarded, Hos. 2:14. I will bring her into the Wilderness, and there will I speak to her heart: speak to her anywhere else, and she will give me the hearing; in the Wilderness my Word will reach her heart.

Oh that men were sensible of this; that they are never so like to starve as upon their heaps, that their prosperous times are the Devils seasons to impoverish their souls; that the abundance that is set before them, are the Devils tokens, whereby he is enticing their hearts after him.

I am rich and have found me out substance, now I shall be happy? No, no, foolish soul, these riches are Satan's Millstones which he hangs about thy neck, to drown thee in perdition and destruction; if anything sink thee, 'tis this load upon thy back; thy Golden age is like to be thine Iron age: Satan knows thy mind, and what will please thee; he's trucking with thee for thy life: He knows thou hast a greedy heart, and that there's nothing so dear unto thee, but he can buy it for money, and that's the bargain he's driving with thee; Sell all that thou hast, thy God, thy Hopes, thy Soul, and come and follow me, and thou shalt have treasures on Earth.

Christians, stand ever upon your Watch, but especially when there's anything before you, that your carnal hearts like, and are apt to fall a lusting after, if ever you would fear the Devil, fear him then, when he is tickling your flesh: he never does us more mischief, than by doing us good turns: God seldom does us more good than by his frowns, and the Devil never does us more hurt than by his kindnesses. It never fares better with God's Children than when they are crossed, nor ever fares it worse with the Devils Children, than when they are cockered: never suspect the Devil more, than when he pretends to do you a courtesy; whatever it be, by which he usually pleasures you, dread that as Death and Hell: Mistake not God's chastisements, nor the Devils complements; be content that God should displease you, and be afraid when the Devil pleases you; be convinced that God's smiting's are a precious Balm, and the Devils stroking's are stabs at your heart; fear not his Thunder and Storms so much as his warm Sun.

Beware of this folly, Whatever pleases me is good for me. Beware of this madness, I [must] be pleased whatever comes of it, mine eye must be pleased, my humor must be pleased, mine appetite must be pleased, I must be pleased whatever it costs me: If you be for that, the Devil knows where

to have you: though God does not please you, though holiness does not please you, though Heaven does not please you, the Devil that knows your palate, will find something that will: If Money will do it, if Mirth will do it, if Meat, and Drink, and fine Clothes or merry Company will do it, this he offers you, and by this he holds you captive at his will.

CHAP IV. – Wherein the strength of faith lies, whereby it overcomes the world.

WHEREIN THE STRENGTH OF faith lies, whereby it overcomes the world.

What a mighty enemy is here? Who can stand before it? What is little David to Goliath? What is a sling and a pebble to a sword and a spear? To a helmet and greaves and a target of brass? The mighty Philistim comes blustering, and boasting, and fuming, and chafing, so that he made an earthquake in the Camp of Israel; and what could a poor stripling do to undertake this mighty Champion? What hope is there of victory over him? Little David tells us, 1 Sam. 17:45. Thou comest to me with a Sword, and a Spear, but I come unto thee in the Name of the Lord of Hosts: this day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and all this assembly shall know, that the Lord saveth not with Sword and Spear, the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands.

The strength of Israel is this David; the strength of David is his Faith, the strength of Faith is the Name of the Lord, Prov. 18:10, the Name of the Lord is a strong Tower, the righteous runneth into it and is safe.

But to come closer to the matter in hand, this general I shall dispatch in these two Particulars.

1. The strength of a Christian is his Faith.
2. The strength of Faith is Christ.

1. The strength of a Christian is his Faith, Mark 9:23, to him that believeth all things are possible; there's nothing impossible to Faith, because there's nothing impossible to God: The 11th chapter to the Hebrews is a short Chronicle of the mighty Acts and Atchievements of Faith. It spoiled Death of its prey; as in the case of Enoch, verse 5, his Faith carried him to Heaven another way, he was translated and did not see death: It made an Ark to save from a Flood; as in the case of Noah, verse 7. It caused a living issue to spring out of dead bodies; as in the case of Abraham and Sarah, verse 12. It received a living Child from the dead, by offering it up to death; as in the case of Abraham offering up his Son Isaac, v. 17,19. It foretold things to come, and conveyed down the Fathers blessing on his posterity; as in the case of Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, v. 20.

But more fully to our purpose, It overcame the world.

1. It despised and rejected the prosperity of the world, v. 15. They were not mindful of their earthly country, they had a better, a Heavenly country in their eye, and were content to be Pilgrims in this, in hope to be possessors of that better inheritance. v. 24. Moses by faith forsook the glory of Egypt, the Court of Pharaoh, the bosom of Pharaohs daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, then to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

2. It triumphed over the power, and wrath of the world, v. 33. It subdued Kingdoms, wrought righteousness, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword; out of weakness it made strong, turned to flight the

Armies of the Aliens; endured cruel mocking's and scourging's; yea moreover, bonds and imprisonments; endured stoning sawing asunder, wanderings about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, destitute, afflicted, and tormented. In all these things the servants of God were more than conquerors [through Faith] in him that loved them.

Christians, where is your faith? How is it that the world is still on horseback, riding on conquering and to conquer! Not only riding over our backs, but riding over our Faith, crowing over our consciences, triumphing over religion, and righteousness; as if Christ had lost the day, and conscience had run the field?

Oh how many Captives hath it taken from the mighty? What multitudes of prisoners hath it gotten? Some it hath in golden chains, fettered in riches and worldly gains, in honors and dignities. Some it holds with a Spiders web, which yet they cannot break; the fashions and fooleries of the world; its pomp's, pleasures and humors: others it hath laid fast in iron chains, manacled with fears, and dread of its fury and violence: they dare not be Saints any longer; their faith, and their love, and their zeal, are all thrown away; they dare not appear in their Armor, lest they should be known for Christ's disciples.

How many renegado's, and Apostates hath the world made; that have run from their colors, and have listed themselves under the Devil; under whose conduct they are fighting against that faith, and holiness, which once they professed? And those that are left behind, how weak and faint-hearted are they most become? Afraid not only of sufferings but of their duty. O how are we lost in our conflicts with temptations? Whither are our hearts run? Some into our fields, some into our shops, some into our gardens, some into

our beds of ease, where we may sleep in a whole skin. Some are gotten into sanctuary, turned aside to iniquity to escape affliction.

Oh how few hearts are there left behind with Christ, and those that are how cold and spiritless are they become! Tis woeful to observe with what a pale face Christianity looks at this day.

May we not sadly invert the words of the Text, This is the victory that hath overcome our Faith even this present world? Whilst the Apostle boasts that the believers of old, by their faith, subdued Kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of Lions, quenched the violence of Fire, &c. May we not now hear the world triumphing, that it hath, shaken the Kingdom of Christ, wrought wickedness, vacated promises, stopped the mouth of Conscience, quenched the heat of zeal, slain holiness with the edge of the sword, put to flight the hopes of the Saints, left for dead those whom God hath raised up to life, left the Church that living vineyard as a field of dead carcasses, their peace slain, their comforts slain, the Spirit of light and life within them vanished into dimness and deadness? And all this because our Faith hath so much failed: what are we become? To what a low ebb are we brought? O we of little faith? Well, but yet there is hope concerning this thing. This stump if there be but life in the root, will spring again and recover again: you that have but a little faith, blow up that living sparkle, and your sick, and spoiled and half dead Souls, will revive again; let your faith once out of weakness be made strong, and it will recover all you have lost.

Believe more, nourish and cherish and exercise Faith more; lean on the rock of ages, look unto Jesus, lay hold on the Covenant, live in the word of promise, hang upon the shoulders, feed upon the fullness of the Lord, and there let your Faith gather strength again, and this will be the strength of

your hearts; will renew your life, recover your love, enflame your zeal, set your holiness, and your hopes again upon the wing, and bring the world and its temptations again under your feet: the strength of a Christian is his Faith.

2. The strength of Faith is Christ. Christ is the mighty one: the mighty God, Isa. 9:6. The rock of ages, in whom is everlasting strength, Isa. 26, through Faith this mighty God is our God, this rock of ages is our rock, 1 Joh. 4:4. Ye are of God little children and have overcome them, because greater is he that is in you then he that is in the world: who is he that is in you? Tis Christ that is in you: who is he that is in the world? The Devil is in the world. Christ is greater than the enemy, and therefore you have overcome. He that is in the world is great, but he that is in you is greater, he that is in the world is strong, and subtle, but he that is in you is stronger and wiser than he [little] Children ye have overcome: what are a company of poor children to a mighty giant? But behold the children's Champion, and you will quickly see on which side the victory will go.

There are 2 things in Christ which are the strength of faith.

His Power, Victory.

1. His power: he is a mighty one as before: I have laid help on one that is mighty, Psal. 89:19, he hath power,

To prevent, To deaden Temptations.

To succor those that are tempted.

1. He hath power to prevent temptations, 1 Cor. 10:13, he will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able: You may conclude from the promise of Christ, to his power; he will not promise more then he can do; when he says he will not suffer us to be tempted, you may be sure he hath power to restrain the tempter. Christ hath all our tempters and temptations in his power; the Devil in his power, the World in his power, they must have

leave ere they can strike a stroke. If he say the word, the Assyrian shall not come against Jerusalem, nor dig a trench about them, nor shoot an arrow against them, he hath his hook in the nose, and his bridle in the Jaws of all his enemies. As the Devil could not tempt Christ, so neither any of his servants unless the Spirit lead them into the wilderness to be tempted: therefore he directs us to pray, Lead us not into temptation.

2. He hath power to deaden temptations; to take off the edge of them, that so though they come, yet they shall not enter: though Satan strikes, yet his arrows shall not stick, Gal. 6:14. By him the world is crucified to me and I am crucified to the world. Christ by his Cross hath slain the world; its now become to the Saints as a dead thing. Its beauty and glory is dead, dried up and withered. Christ by his cross hath discovered the glory of the other world; life and mortality are hung forth in open sight on the Cross of Christ; and that sunshine hath withered all the flowers here below; who will play at such small games, that sees the invisible Crown, which the Cross of Christ hath set before his eyes. And as the beauty and glory, so the power and wrath of the world is slain. Christ by his death killed all the powers of darkness: a Christian sees, that the world can now do him neither good nor hurt, it can neither befriend nor mischief him: who would be enticed by a dead Carrion, or affrighted by a dead Lyon?

[And I am crucified unto it] Christ hath slain the World without us, and our worldly Lusts within us: Our old man is crucified with Christ, Rom. 6:6, ye are dead, saith the Apostle, Col. 3:3, dead to this World: Set your affections on things above, for ye are dead to things below: I am crucified to the World; that is, worldly temptations are no more to me, than if I were a dead man: What are meat, and drink, and clothes, and pleasures, and honors to a dead man? If the Devil should go and preach among the tombs, and call

out to the dead, hearken to me, and I will feed you with delicacies, clothe you in scarlet, enrich you with silver and gold, exalt you to honor; what skull or bone would be moved? The same success will he have in his tempting crucified Saints: were they totally thus mortified, the highest temptations would move them nothing at all, no more than a Carcass in the grave; and according to the degree of that mortification, they have attained to, so far forth is the edge of temptation blunted.

3. He hath power to succor those that are tempted. Though the Tempter be let loose, and temptation come thick, and strike deep, as by reason of our imperfect mortification they may; our experiences sadly testify, how much the World is often too hard for us, how often we are entangled and led away by it; what breaches it makes on our peace, what wounds in our hearts, and what fears and misgivings hereupon arise in our souls, how we shall stand for the future; thus are we weary and distressed and hard bestead; but though it be thus with us, in the midst of all these there's this to support us, Heb. 2:18. In that he suffered being tempted, he is able also to succor those that are tempted.

2. His Victory over the world. Christ hath power over the World to restrain it from tempting, to deaden its temptations, to succor those that are tempted; yea more than that, he hath already overcome the World, and thereby secured our final victory, John 16:33. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be ye of good comfort, I have overcome the World. Why what comfort's that, that he hath overcome? Why, 1. It is some encouragement, that our enemy is not invincible; he that hath been beaten, may be beaten. 2. There's this farther comfort to us, that in his victory we have overcome: Who is it that hath overcome? Our Captain, our Champion hath overcome; he hath overcome, and overcome for us; he hath overcome,

and we in him; We are more than Conquerors through him that loved us, Rom. 8. Faith unites to Christ; and thereupon,

1. All the Power of Christ is engaged to our help and assistance; We are hereby interested in his Victory; Christ's Victory is our Victory; and also in his Power; he is now concerned to protect and help us: we are his own, the attempts that are made against us, are made against him; the spoil that is made upon us, is made upon him, as in all our afflictions he is afflicted, so in all our temptations he also is tempted; our enemies are his enemies, our sufferings are his sufferings, our temptations are his temptations: Is not Christ concerned to look to his own? Isa. 63:15,19. Look down from Heaven and behold from the habitation of thine holiness, and thy glory; where is thy Zeal and thy Strength? Why, what have you to do with me, or with my strength? O we are thine, say they, ver. 19. So are not our enemies, thou never barest rule over them, nor are they called by thy Name, Psal. 119:94. I am thine, save me: I am thy Child, saith the Believer, thy Servant, a Lamb of thy Flock; thou art my Shepherd, I have committed myself to thee, and thou hast undertaken for me: If Satan prevails upon me, he prevails upon thee; if the World steal away my heart, it robs thee of thy due: I am thine save me.

2. By virtue of this Union, there is a diffusion and shedding forth of the strength of Christ into the soul: strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man, Ephes. 3:16. Believers as they have the mighty hand of Christ over them, so they have the mighty Spirit of Christ in them, whereby they wax strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Christians, beware of excusing your falls, by pleading want of strength, as sometimes some do; I could not help it, I am not able to stand in the day of temptation; the cares of this life are too hard for me, either to bear, or to

deliver myself from: there's no man knows what a load they are to me, how they run upon me like a flood, which I am no way able to withstand. I [cannot] keep my heart free, I cannot mind my God and my Soul, as I would and desire to do; one business or other, one care, one trouble or other is still upon me, dividing, distracting me so, that I cannot do as I would; 'tis no comfort to me to live at the rate I do, but I can do no more than I can, I cannot help it.

Others, it may be, will make the same complaint, concerning the pleasures of this life; I know a severe and self-denying life would be much more comfortable to me, if I could bring my heart to it; I am troubled at myself, and angry with myself, that I am so often led aside to fleshly liberty; I find mischief enough and sorrow enough afterwards, that my vain mirth and my vain company bring upon me; I have many a sad night after my merry days; but yet there is such an unhappy proneness of my nature and disposition, to such a life, that whenever I have temptations before me, I have no power to forbear. It hath cost me something, I have prayed and hoped for more seriousness and circumspection, but still I am overcome, and how to help it I cannot tell.

But art thou a Christian? Where is thy Faith man? Hast thou Faith, and no Christ? Hast thou Christ and no strength? Is the world too hard for Christ? Is the flesh too strong for the Spirit? Hast thou the Spirit of the living God in thee, and yet canst thou say, I cannot help it to be thus earthly and thus fleshly? Mistake not thyself; thou hast reason to fear lest thy [cannot help it] be a [will not help it] or a [care not to help it] thou art too willing of this carking caring life; thou art too willing of this vain and looser life; and it may be art glad thou hast so much to say as [I cannot help it] thou art

inexcusable O man, who pleadest inability, when all the power of Christ is before thee, and he hath said to thee [if thou believest thou mayest]

CHAP V. – The conflict of Faith with the tempting world: or the ways and means by which faith over comes the world.

THE CONFLICT OF FAITH with the tempting world: or the ways and means by which faith over comes the world.

These are,

1. It gives a right Judgment of the world: It discovers its true value, what the world is worth. By faith we understand, Heb. 11:3, as whence the world was, we understand its original; so what the world is, we understand its worth and its power; what it can do for us or against us; what help there is in it, and what hurt it can do us: and we understand its end too, of what durance it is, as well as its beginning.

Faith takes its estimate of the world from the word, and gives its judgment of it according to the Scriptures. The word speaks of everything as it is; of God as he is, of Sin as it is, of the present World as it is, and of the world to come, as it is: what the word speaks, God speaks, and whatever Faith speaks, it hath it from the word.

What a poor and contemptible thing doth the Word make the World? A figure, a shadow, an image, a dream, vanity, a lie, things that are not, of no

consistency, or endurance.

When the word speaks of the world to come, how highly doth it speak? What a wonderful and glorious report doth it make, of the promised land, and the new Jerusalem, that state of blessedness prepared for the Saints? A Kingdom, a Crown, an eternal weight of glory, an inheritance incorruptible undefiled that fades not away. Riches rest joy pleasures, such as neither tongues can express, nor hearts conceive.

And how dreadfully doth it speak concerning the miseries of the other world! A prison a place of darkness, a bottomless pit, a lake of fire where is weeping and howling and gnashing of teeth.

Faith seals to the Judgment of the Scriptures, Joh, 3:33. He that believeth hath set to his seal that God is true: when the word speaks most highly of things to come, Faith saith it is even as it hath been told me of the Lord; and it cannot speak so contemptibly of things present, but Faith will believe its report.

Unbelievers will not be persuaded that the world is so poor a thing as it is, Hos. 12:7. He is a merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand: the unbeliever will not weigh things in the balance of the sanctuary, but in his own deceitful balances. Balances may be said to be balances of deceit in a double sense. There are balances where by men deceive others, as those false balances, which unrighteous men use for their own advantage, to buy or sell by; which may be those there meant; and there are false balances, whereby men deceive themselves. Ungodly men as they weigh their commodities they sell, in false balances, thereby to deceive others; so they weigh their gains that they get to themselves, in false balances, and thereby deceive themselves: their bargains that they make, they could never count them such good bargains, unless they weighed them on their deceitful

balances. If sense may be Judge, the world is a good bargain when dearest bought; though if faith may be Judge, when the world may be had cheapest, it is not over safe dealing for it.

Now when the worth of the world is understood, the Devils market is spoiled. No man will care to deal with such a peddler, whilst the Merchant stands by: who will sell his inheritance for counters, or his patrimony for dirt and dung? Who will spend his money for that which he knows is not bread, or his labor for that which profiteth not? The strength of the temptation is broken, when once we understand of how little value the things are, we are tempted by.

Christians, study the world more; search the Scriptures, and what these testify of it, believe the Scriptures, which have written upon all under the Sun, Vanity and vexation of spirit; understand what an insignificant cypher this figure of the world is. Believe your own words; you can sometimes speak contemptibly of the world yourselves. Who of you will not say, this world is but a shadow, and the fashion of it passeth away? Do ye think as you speak? Do not dissemble; either speak your minds plainly, that this earth is your substance, your treasure, your portion, and that its worth the venturing your Souls for it; or if you go on to say, this is not your rest, you have here no continuing City, there's no building on this sand, here's no contentment nor continuance here, if ye go on to speak thus, believe your own words, and then Judge how wisely you deal for yourselves, in venturing your eternity for such empty perishing things.

2. By Faith the soul pitches upon an eternal inheritance. Its our choosing the good part, Luke 10:42, our laying hold on eternal life. 1 Tim. 6:12, those believers Heb. 11:14, are said to seek a country; they were not mindful of this, they confessed themselves, and were content to be strangers and

pilgrims here, their country was on the other side Jordan, and thither they sent their hearts.

Faith descries a better country; it sees into the invisible world, Heb. 11:27, its the good spy that's sent out to search the land of Canaan; and finding it to be a good land, there the Soul pitches. It says unto the Lord, thou art my God, thou art my portion forever: this is my rest, here will I dwell. If I can bear through this weary land, and at last enter into that rest; however matters go with me here, I am not careful about that, if I can but attain to the resurrection of the dead, if I can but get to Heaven, that's all my desire and design.

Meet a believer where you will, and ask him, whether art thou bound? Oh for the Holy Land: whom seekest thou? Jesus of Nazareth: what runnest thou for? What waitest thou for? The incorruptible Crown.

Ask him again, will nothing less content thee? Look about through all the earth, canst thou find nothing worthy thy love? What is silver and gold, and houses, and lands, and honors, and pleasures, are these nothing with thee? May not these satisfy thee? No, no, these are not God, this is not Heaven; there's no rest here for the sole of my foot; my house, and my home is above, my hope, and my treasure is above, and my Soul is above, and cannot be content to dwell in the dust.

Ask him yet again, But how wilt thou get into that good Land? There are difficulties and dangers in the way; thou hast a wilderness to go through, a red Sea, and a Jordan to pass over; there are Lions in thy way, there are Giants in thy way; thou mayest be a prey to thine enemies, torn in pieces of wild Beasts, or swallowed up in the waters, or at least thou mayst wander in the wilderness, and loose thy way, and never come into thy rest at last.

Well, but however, I [must] venture, I am resolved for heaven, how difficult or dangerous soever the way may prove: I will venture all here; Heaven or nothing, Christ or nothing. Henceforth let no man trouble me with other business, for I bear in my heart the prints of the Lord Jesus, he is gotten within me, he is engraven upon my breast, and on my soul, and this heart can never be at rest till I be with him where he is: Lord be thou my God, and bring me into thine holy habitation; lift up the light of thy countenance upon me, and show me thy salvation; this one thing I desire, let this be granted me, and then my heart shall be glad, and my glory shall rejoice, my flesh also shall rest in hope. I have enough; thou wilt show me the path of life; In thy presence is fullness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.

And now world, where art thou, with all thy glory? This earth is trodden to dirt, when the heart is once in earnest for heaven.

Christians, come pitch your Tents here; where will you that your lot shall fall? You have two worlds before you, which will you choose? Hang not betwixt both. Will you get up to the Mountains, or will you dwell in this Plain? Come to a resolution; you will never get clear of this world, till you climb up to the other.

'It is only the milk and honey of Canaan, that will wean your souls from the Onions and Garlic of Egypt. The flowers of the field will be beautiful, till you see the Roses of the Garden. The fatness of the earth will be your delight, till you understand the sweetness of heaven: you will never be content to loose from this shore, till you see the banks of a better Land: you will not part with your present purchases, till you see where you may have a better bargain.

Its to no purpose to think to get off your hearts by common arguments; This world is vain, this world is troublesome, uncertain, fading, a barren Land; if that be all you can say, 'twill never do; your hearts will answer, A barren Land is better than none, a house of Clay is better than no habitation: If my soul may not dwell here, where shall I be better?

Where mayst thou be better? Come and see; lift up your eyes to the hills; look you towards Zion, the City of the great King; mark all her Bulwarks, tell all her Towers, behold her Foundations; Is it not a strong City? Walk through the midst of her, behold the Tree of Life, bearing all manner of fruits, of which whosoever eats shall live forever. Behold the River, those streams of everlasting pleasures, that run through the City of God; of which whosoever drinks, shall never die. Behold the Palms, and the Robes, and the Crowns, the rest, the joy, and the glory of the Inhabitants of this City; God is in the midst of her; the all-blessed, all-glorious, all-sufficient God, he is their light and their life; there shall be no Clouds, nor storms, no night nor darkness, no wants nor fears, no sorrow nor complaining in her street; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Look towards this holy City; live in the view and contemplation of the glory to come; and then look down, and see what a dark Mist will becloud the world's most glorious Sunshine.

And then demand; Now soul, which wilt thou choose? Where wilt thou pitch? Both Lands are before thee, which shall be thine Inheritance? Art thou for God or the world? For heaven or earth?

What shall I say? I wot not what I shall choose? Why is the choice so hard? Is it such a difficulty to determine whether light or darkness, joy or sorrow, life or death, be the better choice?

Well, *jacta est alea*; the lot is cast; God shall be my portion, and the lot of mine inheritance. O my God, wilt thou be mine? Shall my dwelling be with thee? The matter is ended; the lines are fallen to me in a pleasant place, and I have a goodly Heritage. Remember me, O Lord, with the favor thou bearest to thy children, and visit me with thy salvation; let me see the good of thy chosen, let me rejoice in the gladness of thy Nation, let me glory with thine Inheritance, and I have no more to ask.

Brethren, when once you have by Faith made this choice, there's an end of the Devils hopes. Look up therefore, look up to that blessed Country, cry unto God, Lord open mine eyes, and let me see, Lord reach down thine hand and help me up, take up this heart to thee, and there let it fix. Oh what clods of earth, what dead lumps of flesh are these hearts, that do not yet begin to rise; Lord let this flesh become Spirit, let our ashes flame and ascend to thee; once for all, let us come to thee, and never return to this dust again.

3. By Faith we understand that the good things present cannot further, and the evil things present cannot hinder our eternal happiness: We are apt either to be pleased or distasted, with the various objects and occurrences we meet withal, according as they serve or cross our end. He that hath made God his end, and Eternal Glory his end, doth value all things according to their tendency thitherward; as anything hinders or helps heavenward, so is it regarded: It is a sign thou hast made thy flesh thy end, when flesh-pleasing objects and courses are the taking things with thee, and everything is a cross that touches upon thy fleshly interest: what is a furtherance to thy soul, thou canst want it; what is an hindrance to thy soul, thou canst bear it, and find no trouble; but what serves or disserves thy flesh, these are the things that move thee: Let such souls never talk of making God their end. If God be

your end indeed, if you be for heaven in earnest, 'tis what will please God, and what leads heavenwards that are the only considerable things.

Now by Faith we understand that the things of the world, in themselves, make neither one way nor other as to our future happiness: The good things of the world cannot further our happiness; there's no man the nearer heaven for being rich or honorable; the Palaces of Princes are not the porch to glory: Believe it Christians, to be rich in this world, and to be rich towards God, are two things; the favor of Princes is no mark of divine honor, nor medium to it; the pleasures of the flesh are not of kin to the pleasures above, nor subservient to them. These things may undo us, our gold may sink us, we may break our necks from our high mountains; our temporal prosperities and advantages may shut us out from the everlasting Kingdom, Matth. 19, may be the death and damnation of souls, (and do they not often prove so) but never their salvation.

And so on the other side, The troubles and afflictions of this world cannot hinder or happiness. Faith sees as open and near a way to heaven, from the dunghill, as from the Pinnacle of the Temple; from the Prison, as from the Palace; from the Cross, as from the Crown: The gate of heaven shall never be shut against any, because he is poor or persecuted; 'tis not a Purple Robe, or a Gold Ring, that shall procure entrance, nor are they rags, or sores, or reproaches that shall shut the door. We read Jam. 2:2,3, that there was such a practice among men; If any one come into [your] assembly with a gold ring, or goodly apparel, or in a poor habit and vile raiment, they were entertained thereafter; they had their different respect, according to the pomp of the one, or the poverty of the other; But it will not be so in the great Assembly above.

'Twill never be demanded, when you knock for entrance into glory, what Estate have you gotten in the world? In what honor and grandeur did you live? Where are your Bags and your Barns, your Mansions and Manors, that you have gotten? Will the Lord, think you, ever say to him that comes and knocks, and calls, Lord, Lord, open to me; will he ever say, No friend, you are a poor man; here's no place for you? You were so greedy after grace and holiness, that you never minded the getting an estate in the world; you have wasted your time in reading, and praying, and fasting; you have wasted your Estate, in giving and lending, in feeding and clothing others; you are a poor man, away from me, here's no place for thee; will the Lord ever say thus at last?

Men covet, and labor, and hoard up these earthly things, as if this were the condition of everlasting blessedness, as if their souls and eternal life lay on them; men shift and shun affliction, as if these were the way to the Pit: But Faith sees, that these things will not be so: No man shall be disowned because he bears in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus. Well may the Cross be a Ladder by which we may ascend into glory, but it shall never be a clog to detain us from ascending.

These things being by Faith understood, the world loses a believer's heart; the good below he can spare, and the evil below he will not fear.

There's the same ground why believers sit so loose from the world, and the things thereof, as there is, why unbelievers sit so loose from God, and the things of God.

Carnal men can want the presence and favor of God; can spare Religion, and the duties and comforts thereof, and never find any miss of them; why so? Why, because these things do not at all serve their design; they can be as rich, and as great, and as merry, without minding God, or holiness, or any

such thing. And upon a like ground, a Believer can want his ease, or his pleasure, or any of his outward comforts; why so? Why, because these if he had them, would as little serve his design, as Religion will the Worldlings.

Hearken to me, saith Satan, and whatever the world doth afford shall be thine: Why, will this world stand me instead in reference to the world to come? Can my soul feed upon this earth and ashes? Shall I be ever the better man for being a rich man? Will these earthly things commend me to God? Is he a respecter of the rich above the poor, of the honorable above the despised? Is this following after riches or pleasures thou persuadest me to, Is this my way to life? Avoid Satan, thou comest but to mock me, and beguile me.

4. By Faith we understand, that the design of temptations is to deprive us of our Inheritance. A Believer knows, that the Devil owes him no good will, how fair soever he treats him; he sees that all his promises are cheats, that all his gifts are bribes, to corrupt us first, and then to destroy us: he marks him for his mortal Enemy, whose drift is to keep him out of the Paradise of God: he hath learned from the Scriptures, who 'twas that at first thrust him out thence. This Serpent was he, Gen. 3, and now he has him out, that his work is to keep him from ever recovering in. And he observes how his particular temptations do serve his general design, to destroy souls: whatever the voice is, this is the meaning of every temptation, Thou shalt never see God, thou shalt never get to heaven, if I can help it.

Faith understands what use the Devil [hath] made of the world; whither did the rich man's Purple, and fine linen, and delicious fare lead him? Luk. 16:19,23. If you had seen him in the state he was in, v. 19, in his gorgeous apparel, at his voluptuous Table, what carnal heart but would have blessed him? O this is a happy man! But where do you find him v. 23. Oh how

sadly is the Scene changed; Behold this brave Gallant in hell torments. A Believer would have seen him in hell in his first view; whilst in the midst of all his Gallantry and Gluttony.

Psa. 73:17. When I went into the Sanctuary, I saw the end of these men. How was it with them when he saw their end? Where were they? Why in the midst of all their prosperity, in the height of their pride, in the heat of their lust, in the heaps of their wealth; fat and flourishing, as full of mirth and jollity as their hearts could wish, and out of all fear of a fall; even then he sees their end, in their very noon-tide he espied their night: Where shall we have you a few hours hence?

But what end was it he saw these men would come to? V. 18. Thou hast set them in slippery places, thou castest them down to destruction; how are they brought to desolation in a moment? That's the end he saw was hastening upon them, Desolation and Destruction.

But how came he so soon to see their end? I went into the Sanctuary, there I understood their end. When I consulted with God about it, when I left consulting with Sense, and consulted with Faith about it, then I understood, how matters were like to go with them.

Believers, while they consult with flesh and blood, are too apt to be envious at the foolish, to fret themselves at the ungodly, whose way doth prosper, and to call the proud happy: yea and to murmur and think hardly of the Lord, who suffers his enemies to eat up the fat and drink the sweet, and feeds his people with hunger and thirst. I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

But when they come to understand themselves, what the meaning of all this plenty and prosperity of the ungodly is, and where it lays them at last, no more envy then; much good may do them with all their glory and

greatness; by that the fruit of all their doings comes up, they will pay for all their pleasure dearly enough.

Christians, do ye see the proud insulting oppressing ruffling world? Do you see the vile of the earth scrambling for wealth, climbing up to honor, dividing the spoils and sharing among themselves the preferments and pleasures of the world? Beware you envy them not. Look a little farther, and you will see no matter of envy but of pity and praise. Pity over them, who are but fattening for the slaughter; and praise on the behalf of your selves, that your Souls are not gathered with them. But this by the way.

Faith understands from those many instances it finds in Scripture what use the Devil hath made of the world; what mischiefs and ruins he hath hereby brought on Souls; and when this is understood, then sure its bewitching face notwithstanding all its paint, will not look so beautiful and amiable.

5. Faith makes experimental and fuller discoveries of the glory of that inheritance the Soul hath pitched upon. As I said before, there's no way possible to divide the heart from this world, till you can show it a better: that's the voice of every heart, which is said, Psal. 4:6, to be the voice of the worldling's heart, Who will show us any good? And whatsoever it finds and apprehends to be good, that it grasps, and will hold till a higher good come in sight.

This world is apprehended to be the worldlings good; and tis the best he knows; and he must be bought out of it, ere he will let it go; he must be bought out of his house, bought out of his livings and pleasures, by something that is, or is apprehended to be a valuable price at least, ere he will quit what he has. Its vain to persuade the rich to voluntary poverty, unless you can present him with a reward that will compensate his loss. All the arguments in the world, from the insufficiency, instability, vanity,

vexation in these earthly things, will be easily answered. But where shall I have better? Better half a loaf than no bread, a short meal is better than starving the heart will not let go this world but upon the discovery of a better.

And according to the degree of the manifestation of those better things above, so will there be more or less an abatement of our affection to things below. A little light from Heaven will make the world look dim; and as the Sun rises higher, all our stars creep into darkness: at the first entrance of God upon the Soul, the world loses the place, as was said before; and its thrust lower and lower still as God rises higher, till at length it be brought quite underfoot.

Its impossible that God and the world should be intensely loved together: that both should be our God, our end, and chiefest good, is a contradiction; Its irrational for any to conclude that they have any great respect for God, who are strongly affected to the world. Many professors of religion may be convinced, that their religion is vain, by this, that to what ever height it seems to be raised its still overtopped by their earthly mindedness. 1 Joh. 2:15. If any man love the world (intensely, chiefly) the love of the Father is not in him.

Never talk of Christianity till you cease to be worldlings, and never look to be less worldlings, till you understand better what Heaven is.

Faith in its first entrance into the Soul brings this tidings, that God is better than the world; and according as it grows higher so is its testimony to this truth, more clear and full. As the Apostle saith concerning the righteousness of God, Rom. 1:17, so is it true of his Goodness, kindness, mercy, all sufficiency; the goodness and kindness of God is revealed from faith to faith: that is, according as faith grows, so is God and all the

excellencies of his glorious name more known. Every cubit added to the stature of our faith, is a new beam of light sprung forth from the face of God: and God known is Heaven known; our blessedness, our inheritance known; God is our inheritance.

Faith, as was said before is the good Spy Num. 13, sent forth to view the land of promise. The two Generals, Christ and Satan, have each of them their Spy, which they send forth. Christ's Spy is Faith, the Devils Spy is Sense. The Devil will be sending forth his Spy; Sense must go and view the inheritance of the Saints. But this being shortsighted, and not able to travail far, must take up all its tidings upon hearsay; and finding no good report amongst all its acquaintance, (sensual men will never speak well of the things of God) it hereupon returns with an evil report; Its a dark land, and a dry and barren land; there's nothing of all that thou lovest to be found in it, and it is uncertain whether there be any such land or no: everlasting joy and rest are represented as fancies and conceits, to carnal hearts. Its better here, here are houses and lands and pleasures, we know there are, we see there are, but what there is in the other world, is altogether dark and uncertain to us.

Beloved, hath your sense never dealt thus by you? What apprehensions have you of the glory to come? Have not your blind senses disparaged and disgraced the things of the Kingdom of God to you. You take everything to be as sense Judgeth it; and what is the Judgment of sense, of these glorious things? It speaks highly of things temporal; this world is good, a land flowing with milk and honey; But what says it concerning things eternal? Are none of you the men and women, whose carnal hearts have told you, and you have believed them, that tis uncertain whether there be an Heaven or no; or if there be, yet the happiness of it is so much unknown, that if you

might, it would be more to your content, to live your eternity among these sheep and oxen, in these gardens and orchards, in the possession of your earthly delights and pleasures, then ever to be carried hence to that unknown world?

Your opinions of these higher things, we may guess at, by the care you take about them.

What care is there taken about the things of God? What is there a doing, in your houses, in your closets or anywhere about these matters? Have you taken up any design for Heaven? Are you taking any effectual course for eternal blessedness? Are you as hearty and serious in seeking God as in seeking this world? Whilst your hearts are so hot and so zealous and busy, in pursuing things temporal, is it not, upon the matter, indifferent to you whether you do anything or no, or how you do it, in seeking the Kingdom of God? Do you pray and labor and watch for your Souls, with as good a will as ever you did work for your living? Do you hunger and thirst after the knowledge and grace of God, after a part in Christ, after the pardon of your sins, as ever you do after your appointed food?

What enquiries do you make? How is it with me? What evidences have I for Heaven? Have I any right to the tree of life? Is there no fear I may fall short of the rest, and be shut out of the Kingdom of God? How may I know whether Christ be mine or no? Consider are there any such enquiries? No, no, your sense hath so much disparaged things to come, that they are to you, even as if they were hardly worth the inquiring after.

But now Faith is the good Spy, that makes a good report of that Holy Land: it makes more diligent search after the riches of it, and finds out its hidden treasures, and then speaks as it finds: faith hath a glass, wherein it can behold, and whereby it doth reveal to the Soul, the glory of God. The

gospel is its glass, 2 Cor. 3:18, the promises are its glass, those great and precious promises, 2 Pet. 1. The promises are the deeds and conveyances by which this inheritance is made over. Now as among men, in their Deeds, there is a recital of all the particulars made over by them: The houses, the lands, the gardens, the orchards, the rivers, the royalties and all the immunities belonging thereto; so is it here, the promises are a Map or Survey of Heaven; and Faith is often looking into these deeds, reading over the writings, and thence understands what a glorious purchase it hath.

Nay more, Faith brings down some of the fruits of this good land; this good Spy comes in laden with some clusters from Canaan.

A believer that walks with God, God lets fall to him now and then some handfuls of that harvest, some drops of that vintage, which is ripening for him above: what are those beams of divine light, that sense of divine love, those intimations of divine acceptance, those communications of the divine image, in the increases of holiness and righteousness, that joy of faith, and peace in believing, what are these, but a Specimen of Heaven, the first fruits of glory?

By Faith the Kingdom of Heaven is within us: there's God within us, and Christ within us, and glory within us. Those believers that live in the power of Faith and holiness, need not travail far in search for Heaven, tis but looking inward and there they may find it; say not who shall ascend, in search for Heaven, tis in thine heart. Sinners need not go down to the deep, to search for Hell, there's a Hell within them? The filth and stench of Hell, in their vile affections; the smoke and flames of Hell, in their reeking and burning lusts; the darkness of Hell, in their darkened and blinded minds; and sometimes the torments of Hell, in the anguish of their guilty and self-revenging consciences. And as sinners may find a hell, so believers a

heaven in the heart; a heaven of light, an heaven of love, and joy, and praise: Thus it is with some, and thus it might be with all, were we stronger in Faith.

Oh what do we lose by living thus by Sense, when we might live by Faith! How have our carnal hearts, by consuming and spinning out our days in sloth and idleness, sticking at the labor of duty, whining under difficulties, shrinking from sufferings, indulging to our ease, and our pleasure, and liberties; how have our carnal hearts robbed us of the life of God, the pleasures of Angels, the joys of the Upper Region, and left us little more of Christianity, than its wounds and bruises, its mourning's and complaining's, its sighs and sorrows! Oh foolish hearts, that consult so unwisely for ourselves; that choose rather to live in Brakes, among these briars and thorns, than among the Beds of Spices; that will rather laze it in a Wilderness, than get us up to the Garden of the Lord:

The life of Faith is a heavenly life. The life of God, Ephes. 4:18, though Faith shall never come into heaven, itself, yet thither it translates our hearts. It came down from heaven; it is the gift of God; and though it must not return thither ('tis love not Faith that shall dwell before the Throne of God) yet thither it raises those hearts in which it lives.

Though it may not dwell there hereafter (Faith shall then be lost in sight) yet now its travelling thither, going and returning every day and hour.

Phil. 3:20. Our conversation is in heaven; there's all our business: where should a Christian be? Where does he live, but where his business lies? A Believer that had heretofore so many things to do, dividing his heart and time, hath now cast all his business into one, hath brought all his business near his home; he hath nothing to do abroad in the Tents of wickedness, in the Camps of the Uncircumcised; he hath done with serving flesh and lusts,

and times, and tables, and carcasses; here his whole work did lie, but no more of these now, they must be all laid aside, or at least made to come and serve with him in his higher business: God and glory, the loving, and praising, and serving, and securing God to his soul, is all he hath to do, Phil. 3:13. This one thing I do, forgetting that which is behind, and reaching forth to that which is before: I press to the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God, in Christ Jesus our Lord. These lower things, his outward privileges, hopes and advantages, were once the things before him; but he's now gotten beyond, and hath left them all behind him; not only his Jewish privilege, whereof he had boasted, but much more all earthly things; he hath cast off these weights, and is now flying upon the wing of Faith, ascending in flames of love, winding up his soul by constant labor, above this dung and darkness, to the Regions of light and glory: This is his business.

And hence is his blessedness; heaven is his work and his meat, his labor and his hire; he will know nothing for a blessing, or a comfort, but what his Faith brings him down from above.

Why art thou cast down O my soul? Why art thou so disquieted within me? Bid him, Hope in God; tell him, thou shalt yet praise him, who is the light of thy countenance, and thy God; and this will comfort him.

Say to him while you will, Man be of good comfort, the fig-tree blossoms, the labor of the Olive will not fail; there is fruit in the Vines, there are Flocks in the Folds, there are Herds in the Stalls, comfort thine heart, what wouldst thou have more? And how little will this ease him?

Oh where is my God? How is it with my soul? What tidings from above? Have I a treasure there? Doth God smile? What tidings from within? Is it peace there? Doth my soul prosper? Is there grace there? Is truth in my

inward parts? This is good news; Come in thou blessed of the Lord, thou comest with good tidings; this shall comfort me.

This is the life of Faith; a conversation in heaven: Thus we should, and thus we might live more than we do; but I doubt I have been here in telling you a Mystery, whereof the most of us have but little experimental understanding.

Christians, what acquaintance have you with this life of God? Is this your business, heavenly work? Are these your comforts, heavenly supports? We are yet carnal, and walk as men: Oh this earth, earth, how doth it hang on our spirits; we live as if there were a middle Region betwixt heaven and earth; a middle state betwixt Faith and unbelief: Some little we have attained of this heavenly life, and blessed be the Lord for anything; but oh how little is it?

Friends, wonder not that you see no more of the Divine Glory, conclude not that there is no more to be seen; put it to the proof, live more with God, more purely, more closely, more constantly with him; live in the daily exercise of Faith, and you will get the sight of other manner of glorious things then can be told you.

What's the reason that unbelievers are so wholly in the dark, and can see nothing of God, no more than they can despise and laugh to scorn? O 'tis because they come not near where God is; they are alienated from the life of God; their whole business is in the heart of the earth; here they dwell, and here is their whole converse.

Speak ye unbelievers, where dwell ye? What is your Occupation? Where is your Conversation? Far enough from heaven sure, where ever it be.

Speak ye proud and haughty ones, where is your Conversation? Our Conversation is in the air, we feed on wind, live upon breath; honor and

applause is all we work for, and live upon.

Speak ye Covetous, where is your Conversation? Our Conversation is in the earth; we feed upon dust and ashes, and in these our business lies.

Speak ye contentious quarrelsome ones, where is your Conversation? Our Conversation is in the fire; in storms and tempests.

Speak ye voluptuous Sensualists, where is your Conversation? Our Conversation is in the mud and mire, in lasciviousness, wantonness, and all manner of filthy lusts.

Speak ye Ranters, Ruffians, Swearers, Cursers, Blasphemers, where is your Conversation? Our Conversation is in Hell, in the Alehouse, the Tavern, the Brothel-house; we live where Satan's Throne is, in the very Suburbs of Hell.

Oh what a difference hath Faith put betwixt Believers and all others in the world! Whilst they only live the life of God, all others live the life of Bruits or Devils.

Oh bless God for Faith; even ye of little Faith: at its first entrance it gives your soul a lift from heaven to earth. There it lists your names, no longer men of this world, but henceforth, Citizens with the Saints, and of the household of God; there it hath laid you up an Inheritance, and thence it brings you your maintenance: thither it turns your eyes and all your streams; it shows you what you have there, and by those beams it draws you up thither. Those to whom it shows the least of that glory, it shows enough to disgrace the glory of the world; and as this Sun-light grows, so doth all the beauty of the world fade, and vanish out of sight.

By Faith our conversation is in heaven. Now by how much the more our conversation is in heaven, by so much the more our hearts are there; by how

much the more our hearts are in heaven, by so much the less on earth; and when once the world hath lost our love, it hath lost its power over us.

1. By how much the more our conversation is in heaven, by so much the more our hearts and affections are there; we ordinarily love to be where we use to be. No such damp grows upon affection, as by distance and estrangement: when we lose our acquaintance, we lose our delight in God. Acquaint thyself with him, and be at peace, Joh 22:21. Acquaint thyself with him, and be in love; there wants nothing to fix our affections on heaven, but being better acquainted there. Intimacy begets dearness.

Do you not love God? 'Tis a sign you have had little to do with him. Is not your delight in Heaven? 'Tis a sign you are seldom there. Is prayer and holy meditation and exercising yourselves in the Scriptures and attendance on ordinances, a weariness and altogether unpleasant to you? Sure you have little known what the spirit of Prayer and Communion with God in his word and ordinances mean: those whose Souls dwell by the wells of salvation, and often let down the bucket, do taste that the waters thereof are sweet; they shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thine house, and thou shalt make them drink of the rivers of thy pleasures, for with thee is the fountain of life, Psal. 36.

Those that walking closely with God, do dwell in the secret of his presence, under the sweet dew and influences of his grace; the business of whose life, is to behold, and love, and serve the Lord, their hearts have found such rest there, that they can find no rest elsewhere.

2. By how much the more our hearts are in Heaven, by so much the less are they on earth: worldly professors have all their religion in their mouths, there's little within, whatever they talk. If any man love the world the love of the father is not in aim; If any man love the Father, the love of the world

ceases. Heaven and Hell may meet as well as Heaven and Earth, in the same heart: Set your affections on things above and not on the earth; on both you cannot: your bodies as easily as your Souls, may dwell in Heaven and Earth together. You use to say, I cannot be here and there too; no, sure enough you cannot; whilst your Souls are the inhabitants of this, they are exiles from the other world; and when they have their dwelling in Heaven, they are but strangers and Pilgrims on the Earth: this world hath lost your hearts when God hath gained them.

3. When once the world hath lost our hearts, it hath lost its power over us: who will be enticed by what he hates or slights? God and the world rule, both, by love. If God hath our love, he hath the command of all that ever we have: if we love the world, what can it not do with us? Whither can it not lead us? If the world hath lost our love, it were even as good lay down its weapons, and let us alone: let them follow God, let them be holy, let them to Heaven, their hearts are gone and there's no holding them back. It may still hang in their heels, and retard their motion Heavenward, but their hearts being gone, thither their main course will bend itself.

6. Faith gives assurance of this better inheritance. Heb. 11:1. Faith is the subsistence of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. It is an evidence, not only that there is another world, and a better world than this; and that this better state may be obtained; that there is an entrance into the everlasting Kingdom possible; that these mortals [may] be clothed with immortality; that these corruptibles may put on incorruption; and these poor worms, that creep on the dust, may get them wings, and fly away hence into everlasting bliss; but it is also an evidence, that all this [shall] be; that there shall be a performance of all those glorious things which God hath spoken

concerning his Saints. Blessed is he that hath believed for there shall be a performance of all that hath been told him. Luk. 1:45.

Faith hath taken bond for performance. The Almighty God hath bound himself to us; and lest through unbelief, we should stick at taking his single bond, he hath given security, hath brought in his Son and heir, the Lord Jesus Christ to stand bound with him. Faith hath taken this bond; and having itself sealed to the Articles or conditions on our parts, upon the performance whereof the inheritance stands sure to us, upon the greatest security that Heaven and Earth can give; it keeps it by it, and hath it ready to produce upon all occasions, to stop the clamors of unbelief. The Covenant of God, that's our security, The Almighty's bond and articles wherein he hath made over all that ever he hath, by an immutable and irrevocable deed to his Saints, Heb. 6:17,18.

Nay more, Faith will show a believer his own name in this deed.

If it can but show itself to us, can make it evident, that it is what it is, the Faith of God's elect; if it does but once appear that we do sincerely believe, it therein shows us our names in the promise of God. To say to any one that knows he believes, to say to him, He that believeth shall be saved, is fully as much, as if it had been said to him by name, Thou O man, even thou shalt be saved; thy name is written in the book of life.

Unbelief will be staggering at the promise, and will call in question all that the Lord God hath said. And when this world comes upon us and tempts us; opens its pack and shows us its wares, and offers us our choice of whatsoever will please us; Take it says unbelief, make sure of something; let not go such pennyworths, they may be the best thou art ever like to have. Mayst thou be rich? Mayest thou live in pleasure and in honor here? Be not such a fool as to neglect thyself for a conceit of some strange things (thou

knowest not what) thou mayst find hereafter. Who can tell what there is in another world? Whether there be any other state of blessedness then what our eyes do see? But grant there be such a happy state, what may this be to thee? God knows whether ever thou mayst be the better for it: when thou hast done all thou canst, and lost all thou hast, and left thyself a poor and miserable and forlorn wretch, an abject an exile from all thy comforts and contentment's; after all this, thou mayst never come to Heaven at last: foolish man lose not a certainty for an uncertainty, know when thou art well, and keep what thou hast; what thou hast thou art sure of; thine house is thine own, thy estate is thine own; thy friends and thy pleasures and thy liberties, do not thine eyes see them, dost thou not taste that they are good? Here thou hast something, but what thou mayst have hereafter who can tell?

And what can a poor Soul answer to such temptations, that's held under unbelief? I confess there's no great wisdom in losing certainties for uncertainties; I see I have something here, and if I were sure it should be so well with me hereafter, I could be content to venture all I have; to follow Christ naked, to follow holiness even to bonds imprisonment and death. But what if there should be no such thing as Heaven, or I should never come there?

But now Faith will reply, what are thy good things, thou countest so sure to thee? What, but vanity and vexation? But were they better than they are, and worth what thou countest them, what is the assurance thou hast of them? For how long are they thine? For how many years? For how many days? What thine eye sees today, where may it all be by tomorrow? Or suppose the most thou canst, thou canst have but a lease of life in them; when thou diest, thy estate dies, thy pleasures die, thy friends die to thee; and here's the assurance thou boastest of; at present thou hast something

that pleases thee, and may be, they may last for an hour or two longer, or for a few days more; but to be sure after a few years at utmost, they will be gone and thou must know them no more. This is thy assurance.

But is Heaven no more sure then this? Is that enduring substance, like these transient shadows? Can stability be removed, or eternity expire? Or if the doubt be, whether ever thou shalt obtain this blessed state, what hath God said? He that believeth shall be saved.

Is it uncertain whether God be true? Hath God helped me to believe, and therein told me I shall be saved, and shall I yet question whether I shall or no?

At least this is sure beyond all contradiction; Heaven [may] be had; thou shalt certainly be saved, if it be not thine own fault; if thou wilt thou mayst; The Gospel is a mockery, if this be not true; it apparently offers life to all that will, and therefore to thee amongst the rest. Rev. 22:17. The Spirit and the bride say come—and [whosoever will] let him take of the water of life freely: there is this only uncertainty now remaining, Its a question whether thou wilt or not; If thou wilt thou mayst.

Now when a Soul is brought to this, much more when a believer, understanding that he believes, can read his own name in the book of life, then let the world try its skill: what a hard task will it have before it? Come change thy God and thy glory for that which profiteth not; forsake the fountain of living waters for these broken Cisterns, purchase the pleasures of time with the loss of Eternity. Come let the other world go: what wilt thou give me then? Why whatever thine heart desires, of all that thine eyes do see. No, no, deceitful world, I have better things then these, and I will now use thine own words, I will not lose a certainty for uncertainties. God is mine, but after a few days whose shall these things be, that thou offerest

me? I mean not to be so put off, as to take mine Heaven on Earth. Let this earth be my prison, my purgatory, my Hell rather than my Heaven; my life is bought into that eternal inheritance reserved in Heaven for me and I will not sell mine inheritance.

CHAP VI. – The Conquest of Faith over this conflicting world.

THE CONQUEST OF FAITH over this conflicting world.

This I shall dispatch in showing,

1. How far forth, or in what sense every believer hath overcome the world.

2. Wherein the victory stands.

1. How far forth or in what sense, every believer hath overcome the world, this in 4 particulars.

1. He is actually interested in Christ's victory.

2. He is radically endued with Christ's conquering power.

3. He hath actually broken the head design of the world.

4. He is effectually marching on, in the pursuit of the victory.

1. He is actually interested in Christ's victory: he hath overcome *in capite*: a believer is in Christ, and as such, whatsoever Christ hath done, as redeemer of the world, is his and for him, Joh. 16:33, aforementioned; Be ye of good comfort, I have overcome the world. Christ's victory is a believer's security. [I have overcome, be ye of good comfort] why what

comfort is that to us? If an unbeliever had asked, what comfort is that to me? It must have been answered, none at all, whilst thou continuest in unbelief; thou hast no part in Christ, nor art like to reap any profit by him? While he is a conqueror thou art a captive still; its lusts fetter thee, its thorns choke thee, its pollutions cleave to thee; thou art at present, and thou mayst die a worldling, and from this temporal, it may carry thee down to an eternal bondage.

But if it be asked, what comfort is it to a believer, that Christ hath overcome? Its great comfort. In him thou hast overcome; his victory is thy victory; Christ says to thee, not only as Joh. 14:19, because I live ye [shall] live also; because I have overcome ye [shall] overcome; but because I have overcome ye [have] overcome. 1 Joh. 4:4, ye are of God little children and [have] overcome.

2. He is radically endued with Christ's conquering power: he hath overcome in causa: he hath that within him which will be the death of his enemies, he is not only interested in Christ, and what he hath done; but Christ is in him, the spirit of Christ, which is the power of the living God, is in him. He that hath not the Spirit of Christ is none of his. Rom. 8:9. The same power by which Christ overcame, is already communicated to the Soul of a believer: and thence may he be said, to have already conquered, because he hath received that spirit of power, which will certainly work for him the victory.

What can a living child, new born do? He is as weak as water; he cannot speak, he cannot stand, he cannot conquer a flea: but what may not this child do, when he is grown up? There is the spirit of a man in him, there's a Soul in him, which in time will do wondrous things: a dead child, neither

can do anything, neither is there hope that ever he should; but a living child hath a soul, hath that within him that in time will do much.

How small are the appearances of the Saints in the Infancy of their New-birth? How low are their hopes, that they should ever come to anything? 'Tis a weak Enemy indeed, and a weak assault, that is not too strong for them: a little wind may blow away a small twig; but despise not this day of small things, consider their Root, the Spirit of Christ that is in them, and thence you may expect great things.

Are there any of you that are grown Christians, strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might? That are able for service, and mighty for sufferings; that can stand against the temptations of Satan, and endure the contradictions of sinners, and not be weary and faint in your minds? Yet look back, and consider what you were in your original; time was when it was as low water with you as with others, when you were as weary and weak as the weakest: But behold what that mighty Spirit that was in you is at length grown up to, the same spirit is in every new-born Saint.

What contemptible things were Joshua, and Gideon, and Samson, and David, when they were children? But when they were grown, and the Spirit of the living God came upon them, what Victories did they obtain? The Sons of Anak, the Armies of the uncircumcised, the great Goliath, were then but children to them.

You that are yet little children; but of little time, and but of little strength, that are newly begotten by the Gospel, and brought forth into a tempestuous world; let not the greatness of your work, nor the potence of your enemies, nor those astonishing tempests that meet you at the threshold of Christianity, discourage or dismay you, as weak as you are, as many fears and fainting's as you are surprised by, as many doubts as arise in your

hearts, what shall I do? How shall I stand? How shall I go through? Yet comfort your hearts; greater is he that is in you, then he that is in the world: ye are of God little children, and [have] overcome them.

Mat. 13:31,32. The Kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of Mustard-seed, which is indeed the least among seeds, but when it is grown is the greatest among herbs. This greatest of herbs, is virtually in this smallest of seeds: Who knows what a little grace may grow to? What is there in that bitter root of sin? All those monstrous wickedness's, and prodigious villainies which infest this earth, and fill up hell; all the drunkenness's, adulteries, murders, rapines, and most barbarous inhumanities, which are the plague of this earth, and the fuel of that Furnace; they all lie in that little bitter root, Jam. 1:15. And so on the other side, all the beauty and glory of holiness, all the powers, victories and triumphs over sin, the world, and the devil, are seminally contained in the first grace begotten in the heart: The whole Harvest of Glory is in the least seed of grace: The least drop from the Fountain of Life, is a Well of water springing up to life eternal, Joh. 4:14.

Beloved, are you in Christ? Hath the day-spring from on high visited you? Is the Spirit of the living God within you? Then whatever your doubts, difficulties, hazards, temptations, or weaknesses are, the victory hath already passed on your side. Death where is thy sting? Sin, devil, world, where is thy victory? Here are thy Armies, here is thy power, here are thy policies, thy fury, thy fawning's, on every hand; before us, behind us, on the right hand, and on the left; here are thy Armies, but where is thy victory? Thanks be to God that hath given [us] the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ: Thanks be to God who maketh us always to triumph in Christ Jesus; from the first time, in the worst time, when we are hardliest bestead, hotliest pursued, nearest to a fall, yea even when we fall, (for though we fall we

shall rise again) thanks be to God, which causeth us always, even when we despair in ourselves, to triumph in Christ Jesus.

3. He hath broken the Head design of the world: this is, to keep Christ and the soul apart, to keep the soul from ever coming to Christ. Herein, as hath been said already, stands the deadly enmity of the world against souls, in holding them under its dominion, and thereby under the damnation of hell. When we are once come over to Christ, this great design is broken; when we are conquered, we are Conquerors. A soul subdued unto the Lord, is the world conquered to the soul: every Convert to Christ is a Captive set at liberty, a soul broken out of prison: that's the word that Christ hath to preach, Isa. 49:9. To say to the prisoners go forth, and to them that are in darkness, show yourselves. And that's the work that Christ hath to do, To bring forth the prisoners out of prison, Isa. 42:7. Every Convert to Christ is a prisoner broken loose.

It is a sufficient Conviction that thou art a worldling still, that thou art no Convert to Christ, and it is a sufficient Conviction that thou art no Convert, if thou be still a worldling: he that is come to Christ is come off from the world, Joh. 15:19, and he that is still under the world, is not come to Christ.

That's the great contest betwixt Christ and the World, who shall carry the heart: Come along with me, says Christ, give me thy heart, be my servant, be my Disciple: No, no, saith the World, stay with me, be my servant; or at least, if thou wilt not any longer be wholly mine, then it says as the Harlot, be neither his nor mine, but suffer thyself to be divided; let him take one half, and let the other half be for me; halt betwixt Christ and the world; keep both worlds; what hinders, but thou mayst have thy gains and thy pleasures here, and yet have Christ too?

When the heart is convinced; that there is no compounding betwixt Christ and the world, that Christ is the better Master, and that it cannot serve two Masters, but must necessarily take to the one, and let the other go, and hereupon yields itself to Christ: Lord I am thy servant, and will follow thee whatsoever become of the world; whether I sink or swim, want or abound, prosper or suffer; whatever my condition be here, thine I am, and thee will I love and serve; when the soul is come to this, there's conversion; there's the Head design of the world broken.

4. He is effectually marching on in the pursuit of his victory; he is overcoming: So the word in the Text, he overcometh the world; he hath already gotten the better, and he is pressing on after a total victory; he hath his foot on the neck, and his hand still in the fight.

He keeps his enemy in his eye, and stands upon his guard daily; he dispatches messengers, his prayers, his sighs, his tears, to fetch down fresh supplies from above: his prayers speak, his sighs cry, his tears have a tongue, and all go up with the same message, as the Gibeonites sent to Joshua, Josh. 10:6. Slack not thine hand from thy servant, come down to me quickly, save and help me.

He sets all his graces, his faith, his love, his hope, his patience, in battle array against it.

He is still making sure the party that the world hath within him; keeps lust under, keeps pride, and covetousness, and sensuality low; that is, more or less, according as he acts as a Believer.

He secures the strong hold; keeps his heart, keeps his Farms, and his oxen, and his pleasures, at the greatest distance he can from his heart: he sends his heart far enough away out of their reach, he conveys it into the other world, where it dwells, and builds, and plants, and sows, and gathers,

and lays up a better treasure; where it rejoices and recreates itself; where it hath better work, and better company, and better pleasures to wean it from these below; he lives in the view and contemplation of God, in the Society and Communion of Saints and Angels, and is so satisfied with the Fountain of Living Waters, that he be neither thirsty after the waters, nor choked with the mud of these broken cisterns.

He studies the world more, and comes to a better understanding of it; of its vanity, of its enmity, of its treachery, power and policy: and the more he knows it, the more he fears it: the more he knows of God, the more he loves and thirsts and longs after him; the more he knows of the world, the less he loves, and the more he fears it. He fears not so much its anger as its kindness: he fears his worldly pleasures, his carnal friends, his earthly businesses and his prospering in them: he carries a sense of the danger he is in by them, and a fear of the snare they may be to him, wherever he goes: whilst he is necessarily detained and busied here, he carries this fear as his guard to secure his Soul, whither ever he walks: to his table, to his bed, to his shop, in his journeys; he feeds with fear and works with fear, and travels with fear, and trades with fear, lest whilst he is thus necessarily conversant in the world, he be again entangled with its temptations.

And in this warfare he grows, and gathers strength daily; is more able to contemn the world, it becomes every day less and less to be a temptation to him. Time was when, whenever the world came enticing him after it, hearken to me, mind thy earthly concernments, and thou shalt be rich and prosper and abound; follow Christ and this holiness and twill be thine undoing; time was, when these were arguments of great weight with him; that could command his heart, control conscience, conjure his affections, and persuade him to anything; but now they come too late, they are scarce

temptations to him: his heart is so set upon the securing his eternal interest, and so transported with the sense of the importance of that great concernment; those higher things are so great in his eye, and so much upon his heart, that it seems but a very small thing to be possessor of all things here, and to make but a small difference upon his condition, whether he hath or wants.

2. Wherein this victory stands: which I shall answer,
Negatively, Positively.

1. Negatively, and this in 4 particulars.

1. A believer hath not so overcome the world, as to be above all need of the world: though man lives not by bread only, as Math. 4. Yet he must have bread, yea and must work for his bread, and therefore must diligently follow his calling, wherein he may provide things honest; provide him an honest livelihood.

2. Not so but that he is still free to use the world in his need: every creature of God is good, good for use, being sanctified by the word of God and Prayer. 1 Tim. 4:4. Both necessities and the abundance of the things of this life, are a blessing from God; and the free use of them, so far as to fit us for service, is not only lawful but a duty; that self-denial, that over-sparing use of the creatures, which impairs our strength, or dulls our Spirits, is not a virtue, but usually, is either the fruit of a melancholic distemper, or a temptation.

3. Not so, as to be forever freed from all noxious temptations of the world: This world is an enemy still, and this enemy will be still fighting against the Soul. A Christian will never be such a conqueror here, but he must still keep on his armor, and stand upon his guard; hereafter, when the victory shall be complete, he shall sit down. Rev. 3:21. To him that

overcometh will I give to [sit] with me in my throne: at present we must stand, Ephes. 6:13. And having done all to stand; stand upon our watch, stand to our arms; but hereafter we shall sit down: we are yet in our march with our Lord, in his Chariot of war; for our place in his triumphal Chariot, for sitting down with him in the throne, we must wait till hereafter.

4. Not so, as to be forever free from all surprises, and falls by these temptations. The world will assault us, and in these assaults too often gets the better of us: though it cannot command us quite back from Christ, yet it may turn us aside, and much hinder us in our following of him; though it cannot now destroy us, yet it may distract and disturb us; though it cannot recover its absolute dominion over us, yet it may lay our feet again in the Stocks. We may love it too much, and fear it too much, and mind it too much, and follow it too hard, and our souls may become great losers by it: God may be forgotten, Souls may be neglected, Conscience may be defiled, Duties omitted or shuffled over, and all sense of Eternity for a time, buried in a heap of worldly cares or delights. We have experience enough to give in evidence to this, and much more.

2. Positively; and thus our victory over the world stands, in our having attained,

1. A power to possess the things of the world, without placing our happiness in them.

2. A power to manage our worldly affairs, without the prejudice of our Souls.

3. A power to use this worlds good things, to their proper ends.

4. A power to want this worlds good things, and bear the worlds evil things; and to keep our hearts and our way, whether we prosper or suffer.

5. A willingness to be gone from this, and to take our flight to the other world.

1. Victory over the world stands in our having attained to a power to possess the things of the world, without placing our happiness in them. The Supremacy of the world is founded, in its apprehended sufficiency, to bless us and make us happy: Whilest we hold it our treasure, we resign ourselves to it as our Governor, Mat. 6:21. Where the treasure is, there the heart will be also. The heart will never dwell in, or serve this world, when it hath chosen another treasure; the world can never hold the dominion of a Lord, longer than it can hold the reputation of our God. The soul will not be governed or commanded by it, unless it be content to take it as its reward; when the heart hath said to the Lord, Thou art my portion, it can say to the world, Stand thou as my footstool: when we neither promise ourselves contentment in our expectations, nor feel ourselves at rest in our possessions of the world; when the heart is fixed on an higher good, and so strongly working upward, that it will not be detained from the pursuit of it, by anything it either hath or hopes for here, then the world is vanquished.

Now in this is included,

1. Our making God our happiness. Its vain for any man to say or think, the world is not, who cannot truly say, The Lord is my happiness and Heritage. Its natural to man to desire happiness, and to pitch somewhere or other, where he hopes 'tis to be had: what he apprehends to be the best of all he knows, most suitable and most satisfactory to his desire and appetite, there he fastens.

Worldly men, that know no better, promise to themselves a worldly happiness, and here they fix; and it is impossible for them to loosen hence, till they discover and close with some higher good; till God comes in, the

World will not out. The Psalmist could never but have envied, and Idolized the portion, and prosperity of the ungodly, had not God been his portion. First, he must say, Whom have I in heaven but thee? And then he can add, There's none in earth that I desire besides thee, Psal. 73.

2. The due limiting our desires after, and moderating our delights in the things of this world; and a subordination of them all to our great end. If the world be not our happiness, we shall love it and seek it thereafter. The world, if it be anything to us, it must be either our end, or our means; if God be our portion, he is our end; if God be our end, the world ceases to be such; two last ends no man can have, till he have two souls; if the world be not our end, it must be either our means, or nothing to us.

Our desires and delights are proportionable to our conceits of, and our expectations from the objects of them: that which is apprehended, and accepted as our end, is desired accordingly, hath the stream and strength of the soul running out after it; there it desires and loves without limit: that which is apprehended only as a means, is so far only amiable and desired, as it subserves our end. Whenever the world ceases to be accounted our happiness, it will necessarily be judged only as a means to it; and thence will follow this limiting our worldly desires, and moderating of our worldly delights; we shall desire them no farther, nor delight in them otherwise, then as they are conducive to God.

2. Victory over the world, stands in a power to manage our worldly affairs and businesses, without the prejudice of our souls. Psal. 112:5. He will guide his affairs with discretion: and his discretion herein appears:

1. That in the multitudes of the thoughts he hath in his heart, and the businesses he hath in his hand, he hath still an eye to the main. He's a discreet man that rightly understands, and duly minds his great

concernment: the world must be minded, the Plough must be followed, the seed must be sown, the Flocks must be kept, the Oxen and the Asses must be cared for; But what is the world to my soul? What is my food to my life? This must be chiefly looked to, that I perish not, that I run not upon an eternal undoing, that my soul may live, and it may be well with me hereafter; I must first seek the Kingdom of God, and then let other things be minded as they may. He that said, Be diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and to look well to thy herds, Prov. 27:23, said also with an Emphasis, Deut. 4:9. Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently; above all keeping keep thy heart, Prov. 4:23. And therefore to this he hath a most special eye; his eye looks most inwards; its well with me without, or whether it be or no, how is it within? How goes the work of Faith and Repentance on? How goes the work of Mortification and Sanctification on? Here he bestows his special labor, in working out his salvation, in laying up treasure in heaven. I shall never count myself to prosper, whilst my soul prospers not; I shall never count myself a good husband, whilst mine own Vineyard hath not been kept; and I shall never count myself poor, while I am growing rich unto God; I shall never count myself an ill husband, whilst I have been wise and busy for Eternity.

2. That to this end, he overcharges not; pulls no more of business upon him, then he can go through with, without neglecting his soul; though he must employ himself, yet he will not entangle himself in the affairs of this life, 2 Tim. 2:4.

His Lord hath given him fair warning, Luke 21:34. Take heed lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with the cares of this life; and he's willing to take the warning: He's wary how he undertakes more business then God calls him to; if God put him upon a more busy life, and lays on a greater

load of work or care upon him, he cheerfully sets his shoulders to it, knowing that where God sets him on work, he will be with him in the work, and help him out; but he would have no more to do, then God sets him about.

Christians, besides the Call of God, there are too often other Masters call us to work: 'tis not seldom, that men's lusts set them on work; as their lusts call them off from work, call them to play, or to sleep, or to be idle; so sometimes also men's lusts call them to work. Some men's pride sets them on work; many a hard days work they have, to get something to maintain it: Some men's prodigality sets them on work, that they may have to spend on their throats, their bellies or companions; but most of all, men's covetousness sets them on work; this is an hard and cruel Master; oh what a laborious weary life do such men live? Their life is a mere drudgery, rising early, going to bed late, eating the bread of carefulness. How many irons hath the covetous man in the fire? How many cares? How many projects is he ever loaden withal? He never rests, his hands are ever full, his thoughts are ever busy; whatever he hath done or gotten already, yet there's still more work coming in, more load laying on; tother house, or tother field is in his eye; tother groat, or tother penny more to be gotten: the Ephah is not yet full, his large heart, that daughter of the Horse-leech, is still a crying upon him; Get, get; Gather, gather.

But whilst thou hast been so busy here and there, what's done for thy soul? How does that work prosper? What trade has been driven for Eternity? O the Lord forgive me, I never thought of that; I had so many other things to do, that I had no time to mind it.

But who set thee on work about these other things? Who hath hired thee? Oh my necessities have hired me; my back, and my belly, and the

necessities of my family; God hath set me on work. I but consider, art thou not mistaken? It may be 'tis the Devil that hath set thee on work, thy pride, or thy covetousness, that hath put thee upon this busy life all the while.

But now a Christian resolves, I will hearken what the Lord God will speak; when he says go, I will go; when he says do this, I will do it; I will have nothing to do, but what I may answer for it; this is that which the Lord would have done: God says, Look diligently to thy soul, Deut. 4:9. God says, What will it profit a man to win the whole world, and to lose his own soul? Matth. 16:26. God says, Lay-up in store for thyself a good foundation against the time to come. Provide thee bags that wax not old, a treasure in heaven that faileth not. God says, Mat. 6:33. First seek the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto thee. God never said, first seek food and raiment, and the Kingdom of heaven shall be added to thee; Christ shall be added, righteousness shall be added, salvation shall be added to thee; but first make sure the principal, and the appurtenances shall be cast in.

And hereupon, a Christian will do accordingly, will look to the main, whatever become of anything else; and will not engage further in any other affairs, then will consist with the securing his great concernment: whatever business he hath, he must have room for duty; he must have his praying times, and reading times, and hearing times; he must have his daily seasons for special converse with God, for communing with his own heart; he must duly set his watch, and walk the rounds, through his thoughts, affections, conscience, and all the powers of his soul; and finding so much work, and of so great consequence of this kind, whatever wants, this must have his daily attendance.

I must have bread, I must have clothes, I must not starve? I, and I must have Christ, I must have grace: whether I have bread or no, clothes or no, whether I starve or no, I must not be damned; a praying time is more necessary then an eating, or drinking, or sleeping time, and therefore much more than a working time.

'It is not the least part of a Christians Victory over the world, to have the command of himself in his lawful affairs and businesses. *In licitis perimus omnes*. When he hath such power over himself, that he can assign to everything their proper places, measures and seasons, then he is Conqueror.

Christians, how sadly doth this speak concerning many of you? What say you, Conquerors or Captives? Let your care of duty speak. Do not your oppressed and curtailed duties cry out, We are beaten, we are beaten! We are beaten out of the field: we are not regarded when the world hath any work to be done: Is this your care of the main? Believe it Brethren, when business gets the upper hand of duty, the world hath gotten the upper hand of the soul.

Consider therefore, how is it with you? Do you allow duties their proper time and place? Do you first seek the Kingdom of God? Is the world made to give place to prayer, or is prayer ordinarily made to give place to the world?

Do you set your times for daily duty? And do you allow sufficient time? Do you not put the Lord off with short and hasty duties, and then tell him, Lord, this is all the time I can spare thee; Soul, this is all the time I can allow thee. Hasty duties are next to none. Do you allow your souls room to make the best of their suits? Room for enlargement and importunity, or are they not mostly forced to shuffle over and shut up, almost as soon as they have begun.

Is there not too great a fault among Professors, on this account? Do not their businesses borrow of their duties; borrow, but never pay? Conscience, I pray thee lend me this praying hour? Soul, I pray thee spare me this reading time: I want time to dispatch my business, hereafter I will pay it again? How little of your time must ordinarily serve the turn for your attendance on God; a short prayer, short meditations are all you will allow, and your souls ordinarily fare thereafter; you are too much in hast to speed well, God will be waited on, and wrestled with ere he will hear. We read, Gen. 34:26, when Jacob was wrestling with God, he held at it so long, that God said, Let me go; enough Jacob, let me go, for the day breaketh; but he resolved, I will not let thee go, unless thou bless me. But is it not with us the quite contrary? By that we have been at it a little while, Let me go Lord, I must be gone: Whether thou hear me or not, whether thou bless me or not, let me go, I am in hast, and must be gone, give me leave quietly to depart, and that shall serve for this time instead of a blessing.

Oh Brethren, if we would trace ourselves into our Closets, and observe our short stay there, the slight and hasty work we make before the Lord, and our quick returns we make to the world; sure methinks it should make us say, I am afraid this world is still too hard for me, I am afraid it hath me still under its dominion; it will not trust me to be long alone with my God, its presently calling me off; and when it calls once, I must presently take my leave, away I must. Consider this Brethren, do you allow your selves sufficient time for duty?

If you have appointed your set times, and sufficient time, do you keep your times? Does not the world ordinarily steal away your hours of prayer: when the time draws nigh for the worship of God, does not the world use to step in, But I must be first served, my Cattle must be first served, my

Customers must be first served, I have a friend that must be first waited on? And when one business is dispatched, another falls in, and another, and another, till it be too late and time to go to bed, and so God and the Soul must wait their time till tomorrow; and when tomorrow comes, that is as this day, and much more busy.

Judge Brethren, whether it be not too ordinarily thus with us, and then tell me, which do ye think hath the greater interest, God or the world?

Prayer is one of our weapons, wherewith we are to maintain the fight against the world, Ephes. 6:18. Exod. 17:11. When Moses hands are lift up, this Amalek falls: And can you think the world hath you not sure enough, when it can at pleasure command your weapons out of your hands: or if it leave them with you, can so blunt their edge, that they are good for nothing?

No man that is a Soldier will lay aside his weapons, but one of these, either a Conqueror, or a Captive, or a Fool. A Conqueror (whose victory is complete) needs his Arms no longer; the work is done, the Enemy is fallen, and shall no more be able to rise. A Captive (who is totally and irrecoverably lost) hath no further use of his Arms; they will now stand him in no stead; 'tis too late to fight, the field is lost. He that is yet in the fight, and will lay down his Arms, is a fool: in laying by his weapons, he gives his enemies the day: he is a fool, that thinks to stand in the fight, and will not stand to his Arms.

In heaven, when our warfare is accomplished, no more need of praying then; no more watching, no more fighting, no more exercises of faith and patience then; the Enemy is under our feet; the triumph is all that then remains; the Robes, and the Palms, and the Crowns, singing, and shouting, and rejoicing; no more need of praying and watching.

In Hell, when the captivity is irrecoverable, there's no more use of weapons; tis too late then, they will stand them in no stead: tis too late to pray, and watch, and wrestle; the day is lost. The shame the contempt, the prison, the mill, the dungeon, the torments of their captivity is all that there remains. Prayer, that men now make to give place to lust and vanity, to laughing or laboring; God will then make it to give place to cursing's, and ravings, and roaring's; to tearing of hairs, and gnawing of tongues, and gnashing of teeth: you that now count it a trouble and a cumbrance to attend on praying, and fasting, and such like duties; if you ever fall into that prison, you shall have your liberty from these burdens; you shall live an eternity of days and nights, and never be put to the trouble of one Prayer more, of one Sermon more, of one exercise of religion more: there's an everlasting end of Prayer in Heaven and Hell.

But now, though the perfect conqueror may, though the perfect captive must, lay by his weapons, have done with prayer forever; yet he that is yet in the fight, is a fool, if he stand not to his arms: either he triumphs before the victory, or else cares not on which side the victory goes. Thou art a fool with a witness, that either slightest such a potent enemy, or holdest thyself little concerned in the victory.

May all his cost and labor be spared? Canst thou stand in thine own strength? Needest thou not be beholding to the Lord for his help? Or is the help of the Lord so cheap, as to be had without seeking for: or will any slight seeking now and then serve? Serve thy governor so. Will the world give thee leave to take sufficient time for seeking God, if thou wilt not take whether it will or no?

Brethren, learn hence forth, not to put God off with the world's leavings, but let the world be content to take God's leavings: if time fall short for

anything, see that it be not for your Souls: let God have his daily due, and your Souls have theirs, whatever go without. Let not the world any longer say, give place Bible, stand aside Prayer, I have no leisure for you; but let your Souls daily say, stand aside world, business, trade, I must serve the Lord.

Never look to be other than worldlings, whilst anything below hath so much power with you, as to keep God and your Souls asunder; to hold you either under a total neglect, or ordinary remissness in your religious duties: whilst it can keep you either so busy, or so slothful, that you restrain prayer, it hath you sure enough: if the Devil can but keep you out of your closets, he will not fear to meet you in the field; he will not doubt your standing on your feet, if he can but keep you from falling on your knees.

Because there is so much depending on this, both as to the issue of our conflict, and the evidence of our victory over the world, give me leave to press you the closer to it, by giving you a short view, of the sum of what I have here suggested, in these following propositions and advice.

1. The death of the world will never be either compassed or witnessed, but by the life of religion.

2. The life of religion cannot be maintained, but by keeping up the life of duties: no prayer no holiness, little prayer and but little holiness. The vigor of grace is maintained from above; and nothing will come down unless we often look up.

3. The life of duty will not be kept up, unless there be set and sufficient time allotted to it: occasional duties will be but short and seldom.

4. Seldom recesses from the world, and sudden returns to it, short and hasty prayers the Devil will allow us, and the world will be no looser by them.

5. If business, or slothfulness ordinarily get the upper hand of duty, whatever time be allotted for it, little enough will be bestowed on it. If we never pray but when we have list or leisure, there will be but little done; the world will either fill us with work or weary us into sloth. Therefore,

6. Resolve whatever the countermands of the world or Devil, of your busy or weary Spirits are, to set and keep up your daily duties: if time fall short, yet let not your Souls fail of their due; be constant, be instant in prayer. If this counsel be not accepted, I look not that any other of the counsels of God should prosper with you. Are you worldlings? Are you in bondage to your carnal and earthly hearts? There I look to find you to your dying day, if constant and instant prayer do not fetch you off.

3. That in the multitude of his businesses he neglect not the Souls of his Relations: He that neglecteth his families Souls, sinneth against his own Soul.

Worldlings hold all they have in the same bondage with themselves; the sons of these bondmen are seldom suffered to be freemen: like the Scribes and Pharisees, Math. 23:13. They neither enter into the kingdom of God themselves, nor suffer those that would to enter in. Like Pharaohs taskmasters, Exod. 5:17. Ye are idle, ye are idle, is their word, when any of theirs will worship God: an hour spent in prayer or reading, by such as belong to them, is as great a crime, as so much time wasted in play or idleness: to your work to your work; any work that's done for God is counted lost to them.

He that fears God would have God served by all his, and never counts himself served, when God is neglected.

He sees that the education of those that are under him in the knowledge and worship of God is necessary work and excellent work: a godly family is

a nursery for Heaven: he counts it his best husbandry to be husbanding up such choice plants, as will afterwards be for trees to be here and there transplanted in the vineyard of the Lord: he would train up a new generation that may rise up in his room to bear the name of God in their generations; whereby the Lord may have a seed preserved to show forth his praises from generation to generation, Gen. 18:17. I know Abraham that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord. It may be written over the sayings of the seed of the righteous as Prov. 31:1. The words of King Lemuel, the prophecy which his mother taught him: over others it may be written, not the prophecies but the profaneness, the oaths the lies the scoffs that his mother taught him; the covetousness and the oppression that he hath learned of his Father.

What's the reason of that rudeness, and those debaucheries, that Ignorance, Atheism and Irreligion, that abounds in worldly families: tis all they have been bred up to; they have learned to be wicked, of Children: the iniquity of their Fathers covetousness would not allow them time, to teach them better things.

He whose own foot is escaped out of the snare, would not leave any of his in prison behind him. It is a vain argument for the Devil to use with such: thou wilt never thrive, if thou spendest so many thoughts and words and hours about such matters: thou wilt if thou takest this course bring thyself to a morsel of bread; and wilt teach all thine the way to the same poverty, and make them all as bad husbands as thyself: this would do something with earthly minds; but he that fears God, if it must be, had rather be undone then to preserve or increase his estate by the murder of Souls. This may be my way to increase my store; for what is labor without a blessing, and what

blessing where God is not known? This may be my best husbandry for [this] world, but whether it be or no, God must be served.

Oh what dark and dismal holes are the dwellings of worldlings: their habitations are full of violence; cruelty and blood lodges in them: they live by murder and rapine, the blood of Souls, is their meat and drink: the lives of their Children must be sacrifices to their lust; they buy them livings and raise them portions out of their own ruin; all the purchases they make for them, they may call the Potters field, for they are the price of blood: they will suffer them to run down to Hell, for fear they should leave them beggars on earth: they will make them too good husbands to be ever good Christians: they are bondmen themselves, and they sell all theirs for servants to the same master.

Christians, you that hope you are gotten free, prove that you are so by being zealous of getting that freedom entailed upon your posterity; leave them no longer at the brick kiln, but bring them away with you to serve the Lord.

1. Bring them with you before the Lord: lay them often at his feet: pray over them; Here be my blind (Lord) and my lame, my cripples and my captives. Lord open their eyes and bring forth these prisoners out of prison: behold the Souls which thou hast given me, here they are before thee, Oh that they might live in thy sight, let all mine be thine. Hast thou delivered thy servant? O let all these be as the Soul of thy servant: hast thou brought me out of bondage, O let me not leave a Child behind.

2. Bring the Lord to them, let these poor prisoners hear of a redeemer; make Christ known to them; and that they may accept of his redemption, make them first known to themselves? Instruct them often, make them to know their sin and their misery; the dreadful bondage that they are under at

present, and the dreadful pit they are hastening to; and then tell them of that redeemer that is come out of Zion.

3. Bring them over to the Lord: be an Ambassador for Christ to them; cease not to warn them to command, persuade beseech them in Christ's stead, till they consent and be reconciled to God.

Be industrious, be at pains with them: lie at them from day today; bethink not your time and labor. And if the world step in and reprove you; this is not the way to thrive, these hours spent in thy trade or calling would turn thee and them to more profit, then prove thyself to have broken its yoke from off thy neck, by turning away thine ear from its suggestions.

4. That in all his dealings in the world, he have respect to truth, righteousness, and mercy. He would not live by lying, he would not get by unrighteousness, nor save by unmercifulness.

The worlds vassals must stick at nothing that will serve their turns; must lie, defraud, oppress, extort, grind the faces, starve the bowels break the bones of their poor brethren, this is for their interest.

1 Tim. 6:10. The love of money is the root of all evil: whence is it that there is so little faith, or truth, or righteousness, or mercy among men? So little truth in their words, so little faith in their promises, so little righteousness in their dealings, no more bowels of compassion? We may be ashamed to think how little, we may fear and tremble to think how little; so much praying, and hearing, and professing, and yet so much falsehood and wrong? So much knowledge of God and yet so little conscience towards men? Such pretenses to faith, and yet so little exercise of charity? This is dreadful; but whence is all this? The love of money is the root of all evil: this is the liar, this is the oppressor this is the barbarian, the love of money: there had been more faith, and more truth, and more mercy, had there been

less of this love: where this root is dried up, where the world is no longer loved, it will be no longer served or obeyed; nothing of it will be regarded but what comes in, in a way of truth and righteousness.

He that loves truth above the best trading, righteousness above the greatest riches, that counts mercy the best good husbandry; he that had rather stand to a bad bargain, then break promise; make a bad market, then advance his gain by a lie; suffer bad wares to lie on his hands, then say they are good; he that had rather have no blessing in his hand, then no bowels to lay it out for God; He that however he hath this world about him, has an estate, houses, lands, money in greatest abundance; he that however he labors in all fair and innocent ways, to preserve and improve what he has; yet chooses rather to be poor then not to be honest, to have nothing then not to be a good steward of what he has; he that will not be tempted to be false, unrighteous, or unmerciful, for the getting or saving an estate, the world hath not much in the heart of that man.

Oh brethren, if this be to overcome the world, then how many more captives hath it still then the most are aware of? What trade is there driven almost anywhere in the world, wherein the trade of lying hath not a great stock going? Are there not even among men pretending to religion, too many found, who instead of using the Psalmists prayer, Keep me from the way of lying, will rather content themselves with the Syrians prayer, The Lord pardon me in this thing; the Lord forgive me, I know not how to help it. It's true that men of great dealings have great temptations to it, and is it not as true, that they are taking temptations?

But how can you then take yourselves to be any of Christ's disciples? Or how can you stand here praying with the same mouth, that it may be within a day or two, will be found in the market lying? Can the same fountain send

forth sweet water and bitter, Jam. 3:11. Deceive not yourselves, you do but lie unto God in your duties, that make it your practice to lie unto men in your dealings. If any man seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue (from lying as well as other ill language) that man's religion is in vain, Jam. 1:26.

And as little truth as there is in men's words, is there not as little righteousness in their ways? The lying tongue and the oppressing hand are animated from the same heart. How very few are there that weigh their actions on that unerring beam, Do unto others as you would they should do unto you? Wouldst thou be oppressed? Thou wouldst not: why then dost thou oppress? Wouldst thou not be defrauded? Why then dost thou defraud? Wouldst thou not over-buy nor undersell? Why dost thou then in the same kinds, go about to overreach thy brother?

Brethren you do not know your own generation you live in, if you do not understand, how commonly and how greedily men are everywhere heaping up to themselves the gains of unrighteousness, and for mercy there's little hope of finding that, where righteousness is departed.

And now Soul, where is thy victory over the world? Thou pretendest to Christ, takest thyself to be a believer, and hopest thou hast chosen God for thy portion, and renounced this present world; what and yet lie for a little worldly advantage? Be unrighteous that thou mayst be rich: sell thy conscience for a penny, and bless thyself in thy good bargain? Hath the world such power of thee, that for its sake thou wilt be thus false and deceitful and cruel, and yet hast thou overcome it?

Is this thy Faith? Is this your Christianity, to be disciples of Christ so far as it may be for your profit? Was there any such reserve in your engagement to be the Lord's, I will be thine so thou wilt abate me lying? I will serve thee

in anything, so thou wilt allow me, the gain of unrighteousness? I will profess thy name, and I'll pray and I'll hear, and I'll be godly in all things wherein my gain is not concerned? In these things the Lord pardon thy servant, in these things let me have the liberty to be as other men, and in anything else command me what thou wilt?

Brethren, be plain hearted throughout: be able to say with the Apostle, Heb. 13:18. We trust that we have a good conscience, willing to live honestly in all things: convince the world that you are none of theirs, but are come out from among them, and are of Christ indeed, by being in all things as he was in the world, who did no sin, neither was any guile found in his mouth.

3. Victory over the world stands, in a power to use our worldly goods to their proper ends. What is there on this side Hell, (sin only excepted) but being well used, will prove our blessing? Rom. 8:28. All things shall work together for good to them that love God. What is there on this side Heaven, (grace only excepted) but being ill used may degenerate into a curse? Psal. 69:22. Let their table be made a snare and that which was given to them for their wealth be an occasion of falling.

All things in the world, as they have their various particular uses, and intermediate ends, so they have but one common end, in which they all concenter. God who made man, hath made all things else also for himself: and man only of all these lower creatures, is made capable, both of understanding the end to which all things are, and of directing them to it, and accordingly is obliged so to do.

Then only may we be truly said to enjoy what we have, and are secured from the mischiefs of it, when we have so much power over it, as to use it aright: he that hath not an heart to use what he hath, and to use it well, is

rather possessed by it, then the possessor of it: upon this account are worldly men the worlds servants; servants of their estates rather than the masters of them: will you call him a master that is under the command of his servant? That cannot govern nor order nor dispose of himself, and what he has, but is always governed by it? When the world says go he must go, when this says come he must come, when it says work he must work, and till it says sit still, he must not rest; who must neither eat, nor drink, nor give, nor lend, but where the world gives him leave? Who is a slave if this be a freeman?

He that understanding his dominion of all that is in his hand, and his way to use it aright, accordingly exercises his dominion, this man is Lord and the world his servant.

Now (as I hinted but now) the proper end to which all we have should be lastly directed, is God. God made all things for himself; and he hath put us in possession that we may use them for him, for whom they are made. All we have are our talents entrusted in our hands by our Lord, with this charge, Occupy till I come, Luk. 19:13. Occupy till I come, as those that must give an account to me when I come; that I may receive mine own with advantage, v. 23, twill be but a lame account we shall give of what we have received, if we bring not in, every talent employed for God.

We must work for God, and get for God, and lay up for God, and lay out for God: he that works for bread or for clothes, or for money; he that works for wife or for children, and doth not therein work for God; he that bestows anything of what he has, on himself for food or raiment; he that bestows anything on his wife or his children, for their present provision, or their future portions, and doth not bestow it there for God, is an evil steward and unfaithful to his trust.

And as we must work for God, and bestow for God, so we must keep for God and save for God: A good steward must see there be no wastes made on his Lord's estate. He must not save anything from God; when God calls for a penny, or a pound, or all that he hath, he must let it go and keep nothing back.

He must consider, that God hath more mouths to feed, and more backs to clothe, then his own or his families. There's a poor neighbor by thee, that wants bread, go and feed him; there's a poor orphan by thee, go and take care of him, and what thou layest out, put it on account to me: he must consider, that God hath other ways to dispose of his estate, then on backs and bellies; There are a company of poor children by thee, that are like to be bred up for Hell; to be bred up in ignorance and profaneness; go and be at charges with them, put them to School, or help to the disposing of them, so that they may be bred up as Christians, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord: and other like ways has God for the bestowing what he has.

He that must save for God, and see that there be no waste made, that nothing be spent upon strangers, upon his pride upon his gluttonous appetite, upon his vain companions; he that must not be thus prodigal of his estate, to satisfy his own or others lusts and humors, must neither be a miser, and think to save anything from God: He that spends and not for God, and he that saves from God, will both prove but evil stewards. This saving will in the end prove the greatest wasting: as Christ saith, Math. 16:25. He that saveth his life shall lose it; so upon the same account, he that saveth his estate; he that saveth his bread or his money, shall lose it: there is not a shorter cut to beggary, then sinful parsimony: tis ill saving from God's poor: that bread thou savest from the mouth of the poor, whom God would

have thee feed, that bread will become an eater; that penny which should have gone for an alms, may rust out all thy pounds.

Thou thinkest thou art more provident then others, who are so free and liberal; and blessest thyself in thy better husbandry; when God calls for an alms thou shiftest him off with an answer, I have nothing for thee; when God calls for a liberal alms, some of thy pounds, thou putttest him off with a penny or a groat; and then pleasest thyself to think how well thou camest off, and what a good husband thou hast been; but boast not too soon.

On the other side, thou that art a prodigal of thy estate, that swillest it down thy throat, that spreadest thy table with it, or trimmest thy carcass or debauchest thy companions with it; thy costly fare, thy gorgeous apparel, thy riotous company, thy sumptuous buildings, must devour all thou hast; what answer wilt thou give to thy Lord, when he shall require thee, Give an account of thy talents? How will thy account be taken whereof this is the total sum, All spent in sin and vanity?

These things I have spoken, to give you a short account how we are to use our worldly comforts, namely all for God: and he that hath power thus to use the world; yea he that doth charge this on himself, and is heartily resolved on this course, making it his ordinary care thus to dispose of himself and what he has; though in many things he fall short, and too often transgress his rule, may without arrogance write himself, By the grace of God, crucified with Christ and conqueror over the world.

Christians, if these things were considered and well weighed, how much would our bill of expenses, on ourselves, and our flesh be shortened; and how greatly might it abound to our account?

O how many superfluities would be parred off, even from such of us, who have been the best stewards for God? How much is there daily wasted of

our Lord's talents? How much of what we have, doth our flesh totally consume, whereof the Lord hath no share at all? How much is there spent daily, concerning which we cannot have the face to say, this hath been spent for God? How much hath been lost to God by our full bellies and pampered flesh? Do we never eat to unwieldiness, drink, though not to drunkenness, yet to drowsiness? How many times have we been cheering ourselves into sottishness, recreating ourselves into uselessness, whilst we have pretended to be fitting ourselves for service? How many a prayer and praise hath the Lord lost by a feast? We have been feeding our wantonness, clothing our pride, nourishing up ourselves into mere frothiness and vanity, whilst we have professed to be refreshing and comforting our hearts for God.

Hath not the Lord had the less for his bounty to us? Should we not have been like to have served the Lord better in hunger and thirst, then we have sometimes done, in the abundance of all things?

Have we indeed used all for God? Our estates for God? Our liberties for God? Our interest and esteem in the world for God? Might not God have been often better served in a prison, then we have served him in our liberty? Might not God have been better served in our sickness and weakness, then we have served him in our health and strength? Hath not the Lord been often as it were forced to resolve concerning us, well I must even smite them with sickness, that they may serve me better, I must take away their talents that they may be better stewards!

What use hath been made of that esteem and respect we have had from men? Hath our care been, what the resolution of a worthy servant of Christ, now with God, once was? I would (said he) entitle God to every inch of Ground I get upon the opinions of men; I would make my advantage to be dealing for God with them, to be pleading for God with them, I would

improve all my interest with them so, that if it be possible, God may become of the acquaintance of all my friends.

Oh how very few of us are there, whose aim and care is, to live at the rate and in the way that God would have us live? Who resolve, Religion shall have the whole ordering of me; this shall choose my company and govern my whole behavior with them: this shall appoint me my habitation; this shall furnish my house and my table; shall appoint me the quality and limit the proportion of my daily food: this shall order me for my habit, both the cost and the fashion of my raiment: this shall direct me in the visiting and entertaining my friends: this shall set me my business, and allow me my recreations; this shall measure my days and my nights, and set me my times for my sleep, my watch, and my work: this shall dispose of my estate while I live, and make my will when I die. This shall give, myself mine allowance, my wife her dower, my children their portions, and God's children, his poor orphans theirs. I would so feed, and so clothe and so recreate myself, so work and so rest as God would have me. I would never spend nor save but for the Lord. I would visit whom God would have me visit, I would entertain as God would have me entertain; I would never visit a friend, but to whom God sends me, nor entertain but as God bids me; I would put it into the hands of the Lord to divide mine estate; no more to my children, and no less to his, then my conscience tells me he would have.

O how few are there who are thus resolved? And why is it not thus with us? Oh these worldly hearts hinder us; these put in for a share; they would carry all, but if that may not be, they will divide with God: something for thyself, something for thy flesh, something for thy friends, and let God take the rest: and as the heart would have it, so ordinarily it goes; insomuch that it often comes to pass, that by that everyone else is served, he to whom all

is due, hath little or nothing left; God shall be last served, and by that his turn comes the store is spent!

Oh these false and treacherous hearts! Is the Lord our God or not? To whom do we owe anything but to him? Is not all his? Is not he Lord of all? Is there anything in our hands, concerning which we can say, this is mine own, this is none of his. Do we not eat his bread and dwell in his houses, and wear his clothes, his wool and his flax? Is not the earth the Lord's and the fullness thereof? And may he not require of his own what he will?

And what doth the Lord require? Doth he not require all? Doth God reserve only a chief rent to himself, and let the rest go which way it will? Hath he allowed any part to be bestowed on his enemies? Would God, that the Devil and lust go sharers with him? Do we not know and these tongues confess, that all is his due and expectation? What then is this flesh, what are these lusts, that we should hearken to them, when they put in for a part?

O rebuke and repel these imperious beggars: you shall have a whip and a scourge, but no alms at my door; you are none of the beggars that God would have me feed and clothe. Did God ever allow me to clothe my pride or feed my covetousness or nourish this unruly and greedy appetite? Away, away, nothing is allowed you, but a cup of cold water to quench your flames. The Lord he is God, the Lord he is God, my sovereign and supreme proprietor? Of him and through him and to him are all things: his I am and to him I owe and devote whatever I am or have; my streams shall fall into no other channels but what will convey them into the Ocean: he is my Ocean who is my fountain, O my God my springs do all rise and rest in thee.

O what a strange change would this doctrine and the practice of it make upon us: then we should live like Christians indeed, and be able to say with

the Apostle Philip. 1:21. To me to live is Christ.

O what exemplary Christians should we be, had we nothing to do but to bring forth fruit unto God; how rich should we grow were all our business to lay up treasure in Heaven; how roundly would the work of our salvation go on, were all our works made to fall into this? What a tribute of praise and honor would be raised to the name of the Lord, if our united streams ran all upward, how glorious should the Lord be, if God should thus become all in all?

4. Victory over the world stands, in a power to want the worlds good things, and to suffer the worlds evil things, and to keep our hearts and our way, whether we prosper or suffer.

Philip. 4:12. I know both how to be abased and how to abound; everywhere and in all things I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, to abound and to suffer need. It is one thing to know [what] tis to abound, and what to want; and another thing to know [how] to do both: it may be, though the Apostle knew sufficiently [what] tis to want and to be hungry, yet he knew but little what tis to be full and to abound; but he had learned [how] to want and how to abound,

To know how to want and how to abound, is to know how to carry it as a Christian in both estates. Poverty and riches have each of them their temptations. Prov. 30:8. Lest I be full and deny thee, or lest I be poor and steal and take the name of my God in vain: both estates have their temptations, and he knew how to deal with either of them, so that neither the one nor the other should put him besides his duty, or draw him to anything unworthy of a Christian.

He is a Christian, that neither, beholding to the world for his religion (he hath other arguments to persuade him to be godly, then that godliness is

gain) and that will not be forced out of it, by all that the world can give or take away: he that is not beholding to the world for his religion, will be the more like to be religious in spite of the world: if the loaves were not they that drew him to Christ, neither will the want of bread drive him away; those that come to Christ in hopes of a temporal Kingdom, will when they see themselves disappointed, go back from him again: those that found nothing but Christ to draw them after him, will find nothing whilst Christ is Christ to draw them off.

A Christian counts Christ sufficient: a sufficient reward and a sufficient safeguard, enough to satisfy him and to secure him; and thereupon can be content in all his wants and patient in all he suffers: we seldom depart from God, but it is either from discontent or impatience; either we think it intolerable abiding with him, or at least, that we may have a better being elsewhere; our turning aside from God to the world, is in hopes some way or other to mend our condition; either to be better provided for or better pleased: when God is accepted as a sufficient portion, so that we need not the world to make us happy, when God is accounted our sure refuge, so that we fear not that the world can make us miserable, then twill be all one as to our godliness, whether the world be with us or against us.

He that can say God is my portion whether I want or abound; I have never so much but I have need of a God, I have never so little but a God will suffice; He that can say God is my refuge whether I be in safety or in danger; I am never in such hazards but in God I am secure, I am never so out of hazard but I need his security; how little is it that the world with all its glory on the one hand, or all its fury on the other, can do upon that Soul? Thou mayst then go on thy way rejoicing, thou mayst serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness all the days of thy life.

He that knows and feels what God is, can want or suffer whatever is in the world; in him he finds a supply of every vacuity, and a salve for every sore; He that knows what pinching want and piercing sufferings are, will understand that nothing but God can hold him up or bear him through. You are mistaken if you think, that natural hardiness and self-confidence will do, without divine supports in pressing cases. He that hath this power, hath gotten it from above; he that hath this power, may be whatever the Lord will have him.

Then are we more eminently endued with this power when we have attained to,

1. Self-denial under the greatest opportunities of self-seeking or self-satisfaction.

2. Contentment under the greatest straits.

3. Patience under the greatest pressures of affliction.

4. Humility in the height of honor.

5. Magnanimity in the depth of danger or difficulty.

6. Equanimity in the greatest turns and changes of our outward condition.

1. Self-denial under the greatest opportunities of self-seeking and self-satisfaction. Self-denial properly, is the neglecting the interest, and the crossing the inclinations of our flesh, in order to service or the preventing of sin. Then only self-denial is a virtue, or a duty, when our allowance of our flesh in its liberty, would be either a sin, or an occasion of sin, or a hindrance of duty; when it would be a preferring the advantages of the flesh above the service and honor of Christ.

Now by how much the greater our opportunity to please our flesh, by so much the greater virtue it is to deny it. He that might be full and yet for Christ's sake is content to be empty; he that might be rich and yet is content

to be poor; he that might live at ease or in honor, and yet for Christ's sake is content to be vile or in trouble? He that chooses rather to be serviceable than to be safe, to be holy than honorable, he that upon the account of Christ, flies from fleshly advantages when these fly after him, this is the man.

It is a virtue to be quiet when Providence denies us; to be content to be poor and in affliction, when it comes unavoidably upon us: tis something to be able to say, I cannot help it and therefore will be quiet. But when we can let Conscience deny us, let love to Christ, let zeal for God straiten us, when Providence allows us our liberty and our fill, this is something to purpose.

To neglect the world when the world neglects us or flies from us; not to seek great things for ourselves, when we have no hope of obtaining; not to mind the pleasing our pride or our appetite, when we have not wherewith to maintain them; to spare from our flesh when we have nothing to spend upon it; to fast when we have no bread, to put on sackcloth when we have no better raiment, not to contend for our wills when we see we cannot have our wills, there is not so very much in all this, though it be more than everyone hath attained to; But voluntarily to lay down all at the foot of Christ, to part with all for the sake of Christ, when we might have even what we would in a way of sin; to keep our flesh short when it is in our power to make it a larger allowance; this is a great testimony how high the interest of Christ is exalted, and how low the world is brought in us.

One great instance of this self-denial, you may read in Moses, Heb. 11:24,25. By faith Moses when he came to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaohs daughter choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

Observe it, fairer opportunities of flesh pleasing, of living in the splendor of worldly glory, and the Grandeur of a prime favorite in the court, few of the sons of men ever enjoyed; he was adopted the Son of Pharaohs daughter, nursed up upon her knee and in her heart, and upon this account, what his hopes and advantages might be, tis easy to imagine.

But at once he forsook all; he had a service to do for his God, and such an affection to the people of God, that away he goes, puts himself out of Pharaohs favor, and casts in his lot among his suffering brethren.

I shall consider divers circumstances, which all heighten this noble instance.

1. The circumstance of time,

[When he came to years] 'twas not a childish folly, done when he was so young, that he knew not what he did; but when he came to age, when he came to understand himself; whilst he was a child, he suffered himself to be dandled on the lap of these carnal pleasures, but when he came to age, and understood what these things were, and had gotten those higher things of the other world in his eye; when he came to age he put away these childish things: this world is a paradise only to children and fools; pictures, and babies, and rattles will please children, men must have manly delights; thou that art so taken with the embraces, and dalliances of this world, thou that makest thyself sport with images and rattles, when thou comest to have the understanding of a man, thou wilt wonder at thy childish folly.

2. When he was (upon the matter) newly come to age; a young man, in the prime and vigor of his time; when he had but begun to taste the sweet of his youthful pleasures; the pleasures of this life are most taking at the first tasting, the first draught is the sweetest; when they grow more common, and ordinary, they sour and become less savory.

Oh how rare a thing is it, to see young men, in their prime to disgust and despise the world: Old men, whose strength is gone, whose spirits are dead, who have been glutted and tired out with pleasure, have lost their appetite, 2 Sam. 19:35. I am this day fourscore years old, and can I discern between good and evil? Can thy servant taste what I eat or drink; can I hear anymore the voice of singing men, or singing women? Are these any longer a pleasure to me? The world ceases to be such a temptation to old men, it is a dead and a dry tree to them, in the winter of their age, which looked so green and so beautiful in the spring of their youth.

But behold Moses whilst he was a young man, whilst all looked fresh and green, yet even then he rejects it. Young men, you whose wanton and sprightly hearts cry in your ears, in the words of the Preacher, Eccl. 11:9. Rejoice O young man in thy youth, and let thine heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, walk in the way of thine own heart, and in the sight of thine own eyes; eat, drink, be merry, take thy pleasure, take thy liberty: Behold here's an instance that preaches another Doctrine to you; and what does it preach? The next Text you find after the former, Chap. 12:1. Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth. Remember my Creator? So I will in time, I intend it hereafter; 'tis for old men to be serious, the Grave will teach gravity; I cannot be old while I am young, time enough to think of the other world, when I am leaving this; I am but newly come into the world, I cannot receive my welcome, and my farewell together; I mean to think on God hereafter, but you must give me leave to mind myself, and please myself a while. No, no, 'tis another manner of Doctrine then this, Moses though dead, yet speaketh; Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth; make thy present choice, and let this be it, Choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, then to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Oh

that young men would set this Copy before their eyes; see what this young Moses did, and do likewise.

Give me leave to take the hint, and in a short digression, to speak a few words to young men, to persuade them to make Moses his choice betimes, to renounce the world, and to remember their Creator in the days of their youth, and to consecrate their first time to God. This I shall press to by the following arguments.

1. Otherwise this is like to be the worst time of their lives. Such is the heat and strength of their lusts, that nothing but a God will be a bridle to them, Jam. 3:3. Behold we put bits in the horse's mouths. What ruling a horse without a bridle? What bridle will hold these wild horses, but the memory of a God?

Some young men are so head-strong, that they catch the bit in their teeth, and run on their course with full career; though God be set before their eyes, and all the terrors of the Lord be put as a bridle in their jaws, yet all will not do to stop them, but on they run, as the horse rusheth into the battle.

Young men living without God, are as Esau, wild men; wild-headed and wild-hearted, they run a wild Race.

Young men will do more work for the Devil in a day, then afterwards is done in many days; and therefore Satan uses to hire his laborers in the first hour of the day; when they are but newly started out of the shell, he stands ready to press them for hell. And O what haste do they make on their way? Like swift Dromedaries, like the wild Ass, which none can tame, or turn her back.

Youth is the Devils seed time. All the tares that grow ripe in thine age, these were the seed of thy youth; all the Frogs and Toads of the Summer, were from the Spawn of the Spring.

O friends, this world hath been afore-hand with Christ, and is gotten first in, and there its busy in complementing your hearts, showing you its treasures, entertaining you with its carnal delights, insinuating into your affections, captivating and entangling your souls, building Forts and strong holds against Christ, that he be not suffered to enter, and filling you with all wickedness, that you may become a loathing and abomination to him.

O hearken, and open to the Lord, make room for the King of glory, who stands at the door and knocks: Will you say to him, Go away today, and come again tomorrow, let Christ stand a while longer? Let his Enemy be first served? Let me be wanton, and foolish, and fleshly a while longer? I am not vile enough yet, not wretched enough yet? A little more of this madness, let me be a fool and a beast a little longer, let this Lust and this Devil alone yet a while? Let me be laid faster in the Stocks, let my prison be double locked, let my soul, and my life, and the everlasting Kingdom, be brought to more desperate hazards? A few days more of bondage and misery, no Redemption yet, no Reconciliation yet, no pardon, nor grace, nor hope; no God nor Christ come here a while? Will you speak thus to the Lord?

O open to Christ, this day open; while sin is yet but a youngling, while the world is yet but a new Comer, before you be rivetted into such acquaintance and friendship with it, as may never be broken off.

2. Youth is the fittest time. Young men have many advantages which old men have lost, and will never recover; they have this threefold advantage.

1. Youth is more docile and tractable. Old men are more dull and hard to learn, more refractory and hard to be persuaded; therefore you know its the practice of men to put theirs to Schools, and to Trades, in their younger time. Prov. 20:6. Train up [a child] in the way that he shall go, and when he

is old he will not depart from it. What's the reason that old men are so tenacious of their customs and ways? O they were trained up in them of children.

That which is learned in youth, is easier gotten, and longer retained: Old men's capacities are dull, and their memories slippery; they are hard of hearing, and as hard to remember what they hear. Old men's hearts are preoccupied, the Devil (as before) hath been beforehand with them; they are so over-grown with tares, that the good seed comes too late, to be like to take any root in them.

And therefore the Lord charges Parents, Eph. 6:4. To [bring them up] in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. In the morning sow thy seed; our evening is usually the harvest of our morning seed; the lusts of youth are ripe in age, and the graces of the Aged, are ordinarily the fruits that are grown up out of the seed of their youth.

Hence is it, that 'tis such a blessing to be the children of godly Parents: they have not only the blessing of the Covenant, the promise entailed upon them: To Abraham and his seed was the promise made; and therefore it was a blessing to be a child of Abraham; but they have also the blessing of holy Education; I know Abraham, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, Gen. 18:19. Paul commends Timothy, or rather his Mother in him, that he had of a child known the Scriptures, 2 Tim. 3:15. David begun with Solomon, whilst he was a young man, 1 Chron. 28:9. And thou Solomon my Son, know thou the God of thy Fathers.

And as the Lord charges parents to give holy education, so is it the duty and the happiness of children to receive and submit to it: a towardly and tractable childhood promises a gracious and fruitful age. When he is old he

will not depart from it, that is, there's hopes he will not: tis true it does not always prove so; sometimes there's too much truth in that proverb, A young Saint and an old Devil. Some there are, whose youth is the winter that withers all the buds of their childhood, or at least their age is the grave, that buries all the flowers of their youth: who however it was with them, whilst they were under the influences of instruction, and the restraint of discipline; no sooner do they get their neck from under the yoke, and feel the reins of government loosened, but presently they grow wild and wanton; and fall to pulling down what hath been built, to rooting up what hath been planted, and razing out those holy principles they have sucked in, and so letting themselves loose to all manner of rudeness and debauchery: these are monsters; a degenerate brood; and of all persons in the world, most likely, after this first step from Saints to brutes, to take their next from brutes to Devils. O let all such tremble, whose youthful lusts have gotten the head of their religious education; the Devil hath broken into God's nursery, and snapped off those twigs, to engraft them in his own Orchard, among those trees that are only for the fire.

I say, thus it may happen; (and look to it, that this be the case of none of you) that those who have been trained up whilst children, in the good way of the Lord, depart from it when they are come to age; yet there is such a flexibleness in young ones, and such an aptness to receive and retain the impressions of their holy education, that there's great hope it may abide by them all their days. If it should wear out, its usually worse with such, then with those that have been born and bred up in the dark; but there's hope it will abide.

2. Youth is more vigorous and sprightly; of warm affection, and full of action; *quic quid agit valde agit*, there's life in its action: it is not clogged

with the infirmities, nor depressed with the weakness and unwieldiness that creeps on with age. In this morning the Soul is free and fresh, the spirits are quick and lively, the edge is sharp and keen, which in time grows more blunt and dull. We may now both act more for God, and taste more of God; there would be more service, and we should find more sweetness in it, did we begin betime, before our native warmth is cooled, and our edge turned.

What work do rude young men make in the world? How much service do they to the Devil in a little time? Laughing and mocking, drinking and gaming, rioting and reveling, giving themselves to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness? What haste do they make to undo themselves? How hot are they in their lusts, how heady in their ways, how swiftly and violently does the torrent run down towards the burning lake? In how little time are the plants and flowers rooted out, which had been setting and nursing up all their time, and how suddenly are their weeds sprung up, and how rank are they grown? What might not this heat and activity have brought forth to God, had it been but set right? How greatly might God have been honored, how much might Souls have been advanced, what a treasure might have been laid up in Heaven, had the stream in this spring-tide been running towards God, as it hath been towards Hell?

You that have thus foolishly lost your season, and run out the flower of your days, oh be ashamed and bewail your loss; you that have yet your day before you, be warned, let others folly make you wise: know in your season what a price you have in your hand.

O 'tis pity such a treasure should be lost and wasted: what is God, that he must have only the last and worst? Sin and the world must have the first and best, and only the lees and dregs left for him, to whom all is due; the Devil

must have our marrow, and if God will accept our dry and weary bones, that's all we ordinarily design for him.

Brethren, how many of our morning hours are already run out, and what hath the Lord had of them? How few early Christians are there of us? Who of us are there that came along into the vineyard, at the first hour of the day? We think the last hour the best, and enough for our work; soon enough to come into the vineyard, when we are going out of the world; we will not bear the burden and heat of the day, but choose rather to come in the cool of the evening. Unworthy Spirits; we'll first make ourselves good for nothing, and then we'll be the servants of God.

3. Young men have day before them: he that hath a long journey to go, had need set out early; he that hath much work to do had need be at it betimes: he that goes an Apprentice to a trade when he is old, is not like to do any great matter at it; either to get any great skill, or to make any great gain: they are never like to come to much, who are so long ere they come to anything: the journey of a Christian is long, *vita brevis iter longum*; the work of a Christian is great. Young men, if you would come to Christ this day, the youngest of you would find work enough, to hold him the longest day he has to live: these strong holds which have been so long a fortifying against Christ, will not be battered down in a day; your evil customs and evil habits which have been so long growing and rooting in you, will require time to be well changed and rooted out; grace and peace and assurance are ordinarily the fruits of many years labor and travail: when you have wrought yourselves out of work, then wish you had staid longer out of the vineyard.

3. The first time is the acceptable time. 2 Cor. 6:2. Behold now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation. The present season is the

blessed season. [the accepted time] that is the time wherein you may be accepted, and which God will take well at your hands, if you will accept. Now you may be accepted, for behold he calleth you; tis a question whether hereafter you may or no: if you will not accept today, it may be God will not accept tomorrow.

Its very acceptable to the Lord, he likes it, and takes it well at our hands that we give him a present answer: delays are as displeasing to him, as they are dangerous to us: Wilt thou say, when he calls thee, suffer me first to go and bid them farewell that are at my house? Yea wilt thou say, when he says come and be my servant, suffer me first to go and serve my belly and my appetite, and afterwards I will be thine? Suffer me first to get me an estate, to get more money or lands and then I will be for getting grace? How do ye think God will take such an answer?

The Lord loves to see a willing people; of a ready and forward mind; that will offer up their first fruits unto God. It is recorded to the perpetual honor of that good King Josiah 2 Chron. 34:3. That in the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his father. He was but 16 years old, when he began to look heavenward; and you may perceive how well the Lord took it, by his recording the very year.

O it is a pleasant thing to see the buds of grace putting forth in the morning of nature; to see men growing up in grace, as they grow up in stature; this is by so much the more beautiful, by how much the more rare and seldom found. A godly young man is a Jewel, that sparkles forth a luster, among all the gravel and pebbles of the earth: what a vast difference is there, betwixt a humble meek sober gracious young man or woman, and the rude proud wanton riotous brutish of that age? Old age is a crown, and

this crown will be much more glorious, if it be decked with the flowers of the spring.

4. If the Devil hath the first time, he will endanger to have the last too. It is seldom seen, that those that pass over their youth and their strength, in the service of sin, do ever become the servants of God at last: those that stand out against Christ, to their last day, do mostly stand it out in their last day. How seldom do we hear of an old overgrown sinner, ever prove a sincere Convert at last?

The experiences of the Ministers of the Gospel do testify, that the success of their Ministry is ordinarily most upon the younger sort; a twig is more easily bowed, or plucked up, than an old tree: if thy heart be too hard for the Word, whilst it is young and tender, how difficult will the case be, when its brawned and crusted by age?

Zophar in Job, speaking of an old sinner says, Job 20:11. His bones are full of the sin of his youth, which shall lie down with him in the dust. Observe here these two things.

1. That age doth often pay the scores of youth; the pains of age are often the reward of the pleasures of youth; the wantonness of youth is often revenged by the weakness and diseases of age; men's aged bones do remember them of their wasted marrow. Sinners, though you think you can never fill your bellies with your lusts, while you are young, yet God will fill your bones with them when you are old; and 'twill be but a sad meeting, when young sins and old bones meet together. O what a strange difference will there be betwixt feeling our aged aching bones, full of the duties of our youth, our praying's, watching's, fasting's, laboring's and sufferings, and having them filled with our youthful lusts and lewdness?

2. Where sin breaks its fast and dines, it often sups and lodges, it lies down with him in the dust. If timely repentance do not lay thy sin in the dust, when thou art young, vengeance is like to lay it down with thee in the dust when thou art old. [It shall lie down with him in the dust.] A dreadful word; the meaning is, it shall never be pardoned, or done away, he shall carry his sins out of the world with him, as he lived, so he dies.

'It is ill having sin thy bed-fellow; 'tis ill sleeping one night in unrepented sin; but O what will it be to have all thy wickedness's, thy companions in the grave? 'Tis a wretched thing to live in sin, but beware of dying in sin: whilst the Worms eat up thy flesh, these Vultures shall gnaw upon thy soul.

Young sinner, take heed of going on in the hardness of thine heart: If the Word of Life do not part thee and thy sins, death shall not part you, the grave shall not part you: Death shall part betwixt thy body and thy soul, betwixt thy sins and their pleasures, betwixt thy sins and their gains; but it shall never part betwixt thy sins and thy soul, they die with thee, and are buried with thee, and they shall rise with thee, and become the fuel of that fire that shall burn to the bottom of Eternity.

Well now at length what say you young men? When for God and the other world? When for wisdom, sobriety, chastity? When for Religion in earnest? Now, or not till hereafter? Will you yet be so unworthy as to give your marrow to the Devil, and reserve nothing but dry bones for the Lord? Will you offer up your first fruits to Bacchus and Venus? Will you burn out your Candle to light you on in your noisome lewdness, and never be sweet till you be consumed into a stinking snuff?

How few are there that will hearken? What wild creatures, wild Asses Colts are the most of the youth of the earth? What a wanton wasteful luxurious loose Age is this first Age? It cannot be said, as to Israel, Jer. 2:2.

I remember the kindness of thy youth, and the love of thine Espousals; but I remember the lusts of thy youth, the lewdness, and the madness, and the wantonness of thy youth; art thou willing it should be hereafter thus said to thee?

Remember now thy Creator, and see if that will not hold thee to another course. Dost thou not want a bridle in this unruly age? What bridle but the memory of a God?

Remember that there is a God. Thou runnest on thy course as the horse rusheth into the battle; thou art willful and obstinate in thy way, and wilt not be turned back; thou sayest in thine heart, my tongue is mine own, my time is mine own, my estate is mine own, who is Lord over me? But remember there is a God.

Thou committest thy wickedness it may be in secret, thy way is in the dark, thou makest thy advantage of the twilight, and emboldenest thyself with this, what eye shall see me? But remember there is a God.

Thou despisest wisdom as folly, thou hatest instruction, seriousness is thy scorn, sobriety thy derision; thou makest a mock of holiness, and laughest at the reproofs of thine iniquities: Bid thee be wise, and repent of thy wickedness, as good speak to the wind, or the stones of the earth; tell thee of Death, or of Judgment, as good tell thee a dream: Let a Parent advise thee, let a Minister or a Christian friend warn thee, and how are they either slighted or laughed out of countenance. But remember that there is a God.

Thou wilt know no other heaven but below; thou blessest thyself in the earth, in thy pleasures, in thy companions, and canst fancy no other happiness but thy fools Paradise; But remember that there is a God.

Remember that this God is thy Creator; and therefore thy Governor and Judge, to whom thou owest thyself, and thy time, and to whom thou must

give up thine account.

Remember and return to thy God; remember and repent; remember God, and then run on if thou darest, be a drunkard if thou darest, be a wanton if thou darest, be a worldling if thou darest. Remember thy God and repent.

Remember thy Creator [now in this day of thy youth.] If ever, why not now? Is not this the fittest time? Is not this the accepted time? May not this be the only time? How knowest thou but that this may be the Word of the Lord to thee, Now or never? Wilt thou never learn wisdom till thy loss teach thee it? Wilt thou never know thy day, till thy Sun be set? Young men, reckon not upon the evening, your Sun may be set at noon: Consider what thou art today; as one of the fools in Israel; a vile insipid useless thing, the filth, the refuse, the off-scouring of the earth; and if thou wouldst not be found thus at thy dying day, let not this night overtake thee, before thou hast run from thyself, and thy sins, unto thy God.

Such of you, Brethren, as have already returned to the Lord, and accepted of his Grace; as have had the grace to consecrate your youth to the Lord, Oh bless the name of God, bless him while you live and have any being. Who hath redeemed your life from death, and crowned you with loving kindness and tender mercies; who hath taken you out from among the dirt and rubbish, and made you polished stones for his Temple; who hath cured you of your madness, and made you the children of Wisdom; who hath separated the precious from the vile, fetched you out from the rude Rabble, and those Potsherds of the earth, wherein there is no pleasure, and marked you up for his Vessels of Honor: What day the Lord goes forth among the wild Herd, and takes out here and there one of the company, he saith, These shall be for me; this young man, or this young woman shall be mine; they shall be mine in the day wherein I make up my Jewels; and for the rest that

will not hearken, let them run, till death seize upon them, and the pit swallow them up.

Yet say, young man, of which number wilt thou be? Of the taken, or the left? Wilt thou along after thy Creator? Or wilt thou stay with thy companions? What wilt thou say to the Lord? Take me, or leave me? Let me be thine, or leave me to myself? Let me this day repent and be sober, or let me run mad still, till there be no place for repentance? Consider and be wise.

But to return to our matter in hand,

2. The circumstance of his education. He had been bred up from a child, in a gallant Princely way; he knew not what belonged to a low estate: those that never had much, forsake but little when they forsake all; 'tis but a short step from a little to nothing: he can take no great harm in a fall, who always sits on the ground; want will never much pinch those who never understood plenty; 'tis no such hard change, to be cast from the Cottage to the dunghill: we poor little ones, if we had hearts, might say we have not opportunities, to leave much for God; 'tis those who dwell on high, whose Mountains are exalted among the tops of the Mountains of the earth, and that have had their Nest among the Stars, 'tis these are like to feel it, when they must take up their dwelling in the dust; and this was Moses case, from the height to the depth, from the height of ease and honor, to the depth of affliction and hardship.

3. The circumstance of his Obligations. Pharaoh's Daughter had strangely obliged him, had saved his life, took him up an abject Infant, and adopted him for her Child, given him Princely breeding, and set her heart upon him as her own: and hereupon the ingenuity of his Nature could not but plead with him thus: Unworthy unthankful creature, what art thou meditating?

Whither art thou going? A running away from her, whose pity gave thee thy life? Who pitied thee, and loved thee? Who loved thee, and took thee in? Who took thee in, and bred thee up? What art thou? What hast thou, that she may not justly call her own? And wilt thou thus requite that pity, love, bounty, which thou canst never recompense? What a reproach wilt thou become, marked out for infamous, an unworthy, unthankful, disingenuous, ill-natured man? Whither wilt thou cause thy shame to go? Oh how would such suggestions gall and gravel an ingenuous spirit.

Well, but Moses breaks through all; let my fame be infamy, let me be accounted anything, unworthy, unkind, foolish, or anything that's worse; God is worthy, for whose sake I should bear all this; and away he goes.

'It is not the least of temptations which lies on some men's spirits, and which unhappily keeps them from Christ, that they shall discontent their friends, disoblige their dear Relations, seem to put a slight upon the love, and kindness, and dearest respects of those, whom they have loved as their own souls; if I take this course, if I fall into this uncouth discountenanced reproached way, what will they call me? How will they look on me? How shall I look my Father in the face, or my Husband, or my Wife in the face? What will become of the esteem, and affection, and dearness which now I have with all my intimates, and acquaintance? What shall I be accounted? With whom shall I be reckoned? How shall I bear up under those evil reflections, and those unworthy imputations, that I cannot but expect?

But now a resolved Christian will weigh the other side too: But how shall I look God in the face? How shall I look Christ in the face, if upon such grounds I refuse to hearken to him? Who hath been such a friend as God hath been to me? Who hath loved me as Christ hath loved me? Who hath done for me as he hath done for me? Who hath laid down his life for me?

Who must save my soul from death? How shall I look God in the face, if this be all I have to say, I would have followed thee Lord, I would have hearkened to thee, but my Father and Mother would have been angry then, my Husband or Wife would have taken it unkindly, I should have displeased my friends, they would have counted me a fool, or a mad man, or unkind, or unthankful, if I had hearkened to thee? Oh I remember what he hath said, Mat. 10:37. He that loves Father or Mother more than me, he that loves Son or Daughter more than me, is not worthy of me. He that forsakes not Father and Mother cannot be my Disciple; therefore I have no more to say, my Friends are dear, my Husband is dear, my Wife is dear to me, I rejoice in their love, and I would not their displeasure, I would not worthily be counted unworthy, or unkind, or disrespectful, or undutiful to any of them; but God is more then all.

My friends, if you will go along with me, if you will to Christ with me, if you will be for holiness with me, (and oh that you would) come along, let's along to Christ together, let me have your company to heaven; oh that I could pray you thither, oh that I could persuade you thither, I love you so well, that I am loath we should part companies; if you will go along with me, if I may be the Lord's, and yet be yours, I am much more yours then ever; but if this be the condition of your love, you will love me so I love not Christ, you will be my friends, so the Lord be not my friend; you will respect me, and esteem me, so I will despise and disrespect holiness; you will be for my company, so I be not for heaven, or so I will not go so far, or so fast that way; if this be the condition of your love, stay with us, do as we do, live as we live, be merry, be vain, take thy pleasure, take thy liberty as we do, and we will love thee; if you will not love me on other terms, then farewell to you all, and to all your love: I have learned what this meaneth,

he that loveth Father or Mother more than Christ, is not worthy of him; he that loveth favor or respect more than Christ, is not worthy of him; and till you can make it out, that you have obliged me, more than Christ hath obliged me; that your love will be better to me, then the love of Christ; that respect from men will be better to me, then acceptance with God, you must give me leave to run the hazard of losing such friends, whom I cannot keep without losing God, and my soul.

4. Circumstance. But when he went from Pharaohs Court, whither went he? When he left the bosom of Pharaohs Daughter, to whom did he join himself? Why to a company of poor bondmen, that were laboring at the brick Kilns; and not to be a Taskmaster, or Ruler among them; but to take his lot of suffering with them, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, &c.

Now lay all these circumstances together; Moses that had been bred up, and lived in the Equipage of a Prince, and might have so continued; when he came to age, and understood what the advantages of worldly greatness were; when he had his senses quick about him, and could make the highest experiment what the sweetness of worldly pleasures was, in the highest Spring-tide of worldly lusts and temptations; when 'twas high water without, and his youthful blood was most afloat within; when he had time before him, to make the most of the worlds favors; who had never known what an harder and lower condition meant; who had been so strangely obliged, by signal favors, and could not but be strongly prompted, from principles of ingenuity, not to slight such favors: in the midst of all these temptations, for the service of his God, and from his affection to his brethren, he voluntarily, not upon force but of choice, disrobed himself of

all his glory, and espoused the sufferings of his brethren; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, v. 27.

O brethren how may we be filled with wonder? And which of the two wonders are the greatest, Moses his self-denial, or our denial of Christ? Moses his coming off in so great a flood of temptations, or our being so ordinarily overcome in those little temptations which daily occur? How little is it that we do or can deny ourselves in for Christ? What have we forsaken, or what are we willing to forsake for Christ? Upon what inconsiderable terms have Christ and our Souls so often parted? What cheap duties will we not do? What cheap sins will we not abate? What small temptations are hearkened to, when Christ cannot be heard?

How often have we neglected to reprove a sin, for fear of losing a friend? How often have we neglected to speak of God, for fear of displeasing our company? How often have we denied conscience, that we might not deny our lusts? What sinful pleasures, that our hearts have been lusting after; what sinful gains, that our eyes have been set upon; what pleasant morsels, that our appetites have been craving, have we been able to deny them? How do we let conscience lie at the mercy of every lust? If lust will but crave, it must be granted whatever become of conscience.

If the name of Christ should prevail no more in Heaven, then it ordinarily doth on earth; if God should so ordinarily deny those prayers, we offer up in Christ's name, as we deny those precepts, which in the same name are sent down to us, we should have as little hopes towards Heaven, as the Lord hath honor on earth.

We grudge, we murmur, we quarrel with God, if he deny us in anything, cross us in anything, and yet how many denials must he bear from us, and be patient? 2 King. 5:13. If the Prophet had bid thee do some great thing,

wouldest thou not have done it? How much more when he saith, wash and be clean? If it had been some great thing the Lord had required of us; (that it is not) all we have is but a little: if it had been some great thing, it were a shame to deny it to God; but when such little things cannot be granted, not a word spoken sometimes, in a whole day together; not an alms given, not a vain pleasure abated, not a wanton fashion laid aside; not a proud look, or a froward tongue, or a wanton eye, or a greedy appetite restrained at his word; when we fail in such little things, what should we have done had we stood in Moses his stead?

Brethren, when we are led aside from a self-denying, to a flesh pleasing life, we are ready to say to those that reprove us for it, Oh you do not know my temptations; if you were in my circumstances, you might have done the like. But you do know Moses his temptations; and if you had had more of Moses heart, you would not have complained so much of great temptations.

Beloved, you that dwell in your ceiled houses, lodge in your warm, and easy beds, are clothed in your soft and costly raiment; fed at your full tables, cheered by the countenance and courtesies of your friends; compassed about with your accommodations of all sorts; when you can choose rather a poor cottage, an hard lodging, rough or ragged garments, hungry meals, hard usage, from friends and enemies; when you can choose all this, rather than sin against Christ; when upon a little sin, all your comforts might be continued to you, there's that self-denial, that will prove, that you can live without being beholding to the world for its good will, or without fear of its ill will.

2. Contentment in greatest straits, Phil. 4:11,12. I have learned in whatsoever estate I am, to be content.

[In whatever estate] whether I have little or much, something or nothing, still content: contentment is the heart at ease, our well pleasedness with our condition, without quarrelling at our lot, without murmuring against God, and without self-tormenting vexations. Those whose God is the world, cannot long be quiet: the world like the moon, waxes and wanes; the world like the Sea, ebbs and flows; and the heart of the worldly is like their God, Isa. 57:20. The wicked are as the troubled sea, that cannot be at rest: when tis full sea there's a little stand; but when the tide turns, away their rest swims down the stream.

The world is too little when at fullest, to fill the heart; this Sea is too narrow when at broadest, to extend itself parallel to our expatiating desires, Isa. 28:20. The bed is shorter then that a man can stretch himself on it, the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it. The wide Ocean to the heart of man, is but as the narrow Seas; he can drink it up and be thirsty still: when it hath spent its store upon him, that's the voice, what no more? Is this all. But what is the world to content a Soul, when tis low water? What rest can there be, whenever and anon the banks will be empty?

God is the same; enough and he changeth not: the manifestations of God are unequal; sometimes bright and sometimes dimmer; sometimes he is seen, and sometimes out of sight: and hereupon there is sometimes less quiet in the hearts of the Saints, then at other times; but whilst the heart feels that God is there, there's no want. Disquiets there may be, but tis not whither the world ebbs or flows, but whether God be present or absent that makes the change upon the Spirit: let God be with me, and then let the world be with whom it will: let me have a houseful or but a handful, tis all one as to my Soul contentment. A Christian is as little beholding to the world for his contentment, as he is for his godliness; and that sure is little

enough: as he will be godly, without asking leave of the world, so he will be contented, whether the world will or no: godliness and contentment grow both together; as much as you find of the one, so much of the other: if contentment be but small, godliness is not great; they grow both together, and the same root bears them both. Godliness comes down from Heaven, and never did contentment spring up out of the earth; they have the same fountain, both come from the Father of lights, Jam. 1:17.

You that are ordinarily male contents, look to it that you be not strangers from God; if there be anything, yet sure there's but little of God in you, that need so much of the world to keep you quiet: if this be it that can [only] still you, look to it, this is still your God. Oh what restless Spirits for the most part have you? Never well, never at rest: what's the matter? What is there wanting? What would quiet you? A better house? A greater estate? Better trading? Kinder neighbors? And can you not be content as you are? Content without all these? Must you be rich? Must you have all to your mind, or you will still be thus angry? Go serve the world then, and take it for your God, say no more the Lord is my portion, if he be not enough to content you.

Contentment in God will be one of the best evidences of your conquest over the world: he is a Christian of proof, that cannot be content with the world, and yet can be content without it: that cannot be contented with the world, when he hath most of it; and yet can be content when he hath the least of it, yea can be content without it, if God be his.

If the world can content you, to be sure it can command you; if you make it your pay-master it will be your task-master: whither will not men go, what will they not do for contentment?

Why run we so often from God, but for our contentment? What seek we in our fields, in our beds or among our companions, but our contentment?

Company to please us, pleasure to content our minds? We mistake the ground; contentment does not grow in any of these fields, but however, there we are digging for it; and we never bethink our labor for anything that will promise us, I will content thee for thy pains: this the world promises, I will content thee, I will content thee; and as long as we dare take its word, it has us sure enough for servants: once find your mistakes; hear riches say, 'tis not in me, hear pleasures saying, 'tis not in me, hear friends saying, God help thee to a contented mind, we cannot, hear the whole world saying, there's no such plant in all my gardens; thou mayst go from plant to plant, from flower to flower, till thou hast tried all my store, and never find contentment amongst them all; tis in another field, in the other world, the paradise of God; send thy heart thither for it, purchase that field, and there dwell and satisfy thy Soul. Once hear every creature, every condition telling thee thus, tis not in me to content thee, tis from within, tis from above that thy contentment must come; and then, when thou seest that all the world cannot content thee, what wants of anything the world hath will discontent thee? Whatever it be the fruition whereof cannot content, its want need not discontent us.

O what a constant calm and serenity should we feel in our spirits? What steadiness would appear in our lives? What triumph over the World, and all its changes, did we feel this truth in our hearts? In God alone my contentment lies.

Oh how much below the excellency and the sweetness of such a life do we live? How hard to be pleased? How soon out of patience? What a small matter will put our hearts upon the Rack? Some there are that are ever male-contented, there's no condition that can keep them quiet, if they be the greatest Candidates of Providence, they are still murmuring; they not only

know not how to want, or to be crossed, or to be in straits, but neither how to abound; they are never well full nor fasting, but will be still picking quarrels, even with their most plentiful and prosperous state; they will be vexing and fretting themselves for they know not what, though they can scarce tell what they would have more, or otherwise than they have, yet they are angry that 'tis thus; what pleases them today, they nauseate tomorrow; these are their own pests, the most miserable of men.

But when we are in straits indeed, when Providence does frown upon us, and keeps us low and short of what our minds desire, then how few of us can say, It is well?

Brethren, look not on discontent as a little evil; that we should count it but a small thing for God to save our souls, unless he will please our senses; that we should count it but a small thing, that God should give us our lives, unless he also give us our wills; as if nothing would please us, unless the Lord will set us on the Throne, and let us carve for ourselves, and be Governors of the world.

A discontented person says, 'It is but little that God hath done for me, 'tis but little that God hath given to me; he hath but given Christ to me, he hath but pardoned my sins, he hath given me nothing but Heaven and everlasting glory; what Blasphemy is here? Ah Wretch! Dost make a But of Christ, a But of Pardon and Salvation? Thou hast reason enough to fear, that Christ and Life is none of thine, who makest so little account thereof.

Think not that mischief little which discontent will bring forth; how great things will this little thing do? Whence are all our wanderings from God after sin, after vanity, but from a present discontent with our condition? Whence is envy? Whence is covetousness? Whence are frauds, oppressions, robberies, but from hence, that we are not content with our own? Whence is

that lusting and running out after fleshly liberty, after unlawful pleasures, after an easier and looser life, but from this, that we think to mend our condition, and to make ourselves happier than Religion allows us to be.

Is that little, which makes God little, and Christ little, and the everlasting Kingdom little, and sends us to the Devil to enlarge our quarters which God allows us?

To close up this, I shall give you a short and more distinct view.

1. Of the evils and mischiefs of discontent.
2. Of the excellencies and sweetness of contentment.

1. The evils and mischiefs of discontentment (as hath been already in part hinted) are these following.

1. It denies God's sufficiency; it says, In the fullness of [his] sufficiency I am in straits. Discontent argues want, or else,

2. It impeaches God's goodness and bounty. Whatever is with him in the house, yet there's no good house-keeping: If in my Fathers house there be bread enough, yet he keeps me short enough, I have but little, the Lord's hand hath been shortened to me.

As we go along, consider Brethren, whether you would not be ashamed thus to speak; and yet is not this the voice of your discontented hearts? If God should challenge us, as he did Israel, Jer. 2:5. What iniquity have ye found in me? Or as Micah 3:6. O my people what have I done to thee, wherein have I wearied thee? How have I used thee? Come forth, testify against me. Or as Pharaoh asked Hadad, 1 King. 11:22. What hast thou lacked with me, that thou wilt be gone? If the Lord should ask us thus, Discontent would answer, Yes I have lacked, thou hast been an hard Master to me, thou wilt not let me have my will; this I have lacked, and that I have lacked, I have been straitened in the Lord, he hath been a Wilderness, and a

Land of darkness to me. Though Conscience must say with David, The Lord is my Shepherd, I want nothing, yet this male-contented heart will still be complaining.

3. Hereupon it rebels, and will not stand to God's allowance: When God will not satisfy, we fall to sharking and shifting for ourselves: Discontent with our lot (as I said before) lies at the bottom of all our unlawful carving for ourselves; hence is covetousness, hence is fraud, oppression, &c. because we are not content with God's allowance.

4. It disgraces godliness. Whatsoever is boasted of it, that its ways are the ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace; that the merchandise thereof is better than silver, and its gain then gold; that its a tree of life; that length of days, riches and honors, attend upon it; as Prov. 3. Whatever the Scriptures speak, and men's mouths speak, of the excellencies, the sweetness, and satisfaction that a godly life brings in, a discontented heart denies all, and tells the World there's little in it: Peace, and joy, and gain, and satisfaction, where is it? There is not enough to keep the heart in any tolerable quiet; there is not enough to still the soul from murmuring and complaining: What do our discontents speak less in the ears of the World?

5. It is its own plague and punishment; it eats out and devours the good and the comfort of all we have: the want of Mordecai's Cap and Knee, made all the honor that Haman had in the Kings Court, to be as nothing to him. Ahab's whole Kingdom could not keep him in health while he wanted Naboth's Vineyard. Discontent is such a sickness of the heart, as makes it disrelish whatever else it hath to delight and please it.

Discontented persons are apt to think, that all their troubles are from without, one thing is wanting, and another thing is amiss; as he that hath a tender foot complains of his shoe, 'tis too strait, or too hard; or as a sick

man of his meat, or his drink, or his bed, his bed is hard, or not well made, his meat is not good, or not well dressed; but the fault all the while is in his foot, or his stomach, in his weakness and weariness; his tender foot makes his shoe wring, his sick stomach makes his meat unsavory, his weary bones make his bed uneasy; 'tis this evil sickness of thine heart that makes thee angry with thy state, and makes the very comforts of thy life uncomfortable to thee; this thou wantest, or that thou likest not, and that vexes thee; why if this want were supplied, and that vexation were removed, thy sickly heart would ever find something or other to torment thee; thou wilt never want a plague whilst thou carriest this evil heart about thee.

6. It Idolizeth the world, and argues captivity to it: What, could the World do, if thou hadst it, that which God cannot do without it? Could the World content thee? Or canst thou not find contentment when anything of that is wanting? Who then is thy God?

2. The excellencies and sweetness of contentment.

1. There is a cheerful submission in it; a resting in God's allowance, and a well-pleas'dness with our condition; let the Lord deal out to me, and keep back from me whatsoever he will; its the Lord, let him do whatsoever seems him good; God is pleas'd it should be thus, and therefore I am pleas'd. O what a sweet life were this? All the perturbations of our lives arise from the clashing of God's Will, and our wills; when ours is swallowed up in his Will, then there's rest: Nothing comes amiss to us, there's nothing to grieve or offend, when we like whatever God wills.

Brethren, this we pray for, Thy will be done: this we profess, Not my will, but thine; and when our hearts consent that our prayers should be heard, and will come in and subscribe our Petitions, how sweetly will all run on: When

we can heartily say, Not my will, but his be done, we shall be also able to say, Because his will, mine is done.

2. There is satisfaction in it; satisfaction with God, Prov. 14:14. A good man is satisfied; satisfied from himself, from within him: God is within him, and thence his satisfaction; there's no true contentment, but what's bottomed on God: Thou hast many wants, and many wishes, and many hopes; if these were once answered, then thou thinkest all would be well: No, no, it would not do; if thou hadst thy wish, and thy hopes, there would still be something wanting till thou comest to take up with thy God: When thy soul can dwell at ease in the midst of straits and wants, that's a sign thou hast taken God as thy sufficient portion.

3. Independence from the world; I mean wholly, as to matters of Religion and Conscience: thou canst now be happy with, or without the World, and he that can be happy with, or without it, can be holy which way soever the world goes; as long as thou canst be content, thou wilt dare to be conscientious. For,

4. Its an Antidote against temptations: 'tis the hungry Hound that follows his game, when he's full he will not hunt: When thou findest this self-sufficiency, thy soul will not bite at the Worlds baits.

5. It is its own reward: Its both our duty, and our comfort. Let us be content, this is one of those Commandments, [In] keeping whereof there is great reward: this is the sweet of thy life, contentment: this is the sauce of thy meat, the sugar of thy cup, the crop, the cream of all thy enjoyments.

Oh Christians, Would you be happy? Be content, and you are happy: Would you not be in want? Be content, and you have enough? Would you not be poor? Be content, and you are rich: Would you have your houses, and your businesses, and all your concernments, according to your mind?

Be content, and it is done: Would you be free from trouble, and passions, and perplexities of mind? Be content, and they all vanish: Would you live at hearts ease, and carry all things sweetly and smoothly on? Be content, and then soul take thine ease: Would you be content? I, there's the difficulty; this would heal all my sores: But how shall I be content? Seek not for it here, in anything below thee, or without thee, seek for it within, seek it from above, take up with God, and in him thou shalt find rest.

Only that you may find contentment in God;

1. Make God your own: Look not for content in the World, and look not for content in God, without a propriety in him: Look not for content, and dare not to be content without God: It is a shame not to be content with God, but it is a madness to be content without God, and an interest in him. May be some of you will say, I thank God I am none of these malecontents, I am of a sedate and quiet spirit, I am well pleased with my state; what, and yet a stranger from God? Is God none of thine, and yet content? Its well with thee today, but where mayst thou be tomorrow? Is it no matter where? Will these bubbles and shadows, will Death and Hell content thee? Art thou content to go down into the Pit, and perish everlastingly? God would not have thee to be patient of his wrath, much less to be contented. Oh Brethren, let your spirits boil up, while you will, into the highest extremities of impatience, under sin and wrath; how can you be quiet, whilst God is angry? Beware of having one good thought of your state, suffer not your hearts to have one hours rest, till God be yours: make God sure, and then be content with anything, but dread that contentment that is where God is not, Psal. 16. The Lord is my portion, —the Lord is at my right hand, therefore mine heart is glad, saith the Psalmist: But wilt thou

say, The World is my portion, the Lord is not my portion, yet my heart is glad?

2. Advance in godliness. What is God to the contenting of a soul without godliness? You can neither understand, nor taste of God, without godliness: Contentation arises from communion; and by how much the higher our communion with God, by so much the more full our contentment. Godliness is the proof of God, of his riches and satisfying excellencies, Rom. 12:2. Be ye not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, [that ye may prove] what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. You that are but young beginners in Christianity, you yet but little know what a treasure the Lord is; no man knows but he that hath it, and no man hath much of this treasure, but he that's rooted and grounded in the love of God, and raised and enlarged in the experimental exercises of godliness. 1 Tim. 6:6. Godliness with contentment is great gain. When godliness rises so high, as to bring in contentment, (a little will not do it) then you shall find it great gain. Never look to find the gain of godliness, but according to the proportion you find of contentment, and never look for great contentment, nor count that content you have any great virtue, where there is but little godliness.

3. Patience in the greatest distresses: Patience (as I have elsewhere noted) is the flesh mortified, and the flesh mortified is the world vanquished: the flesh, while it is alive, will quickly feel; and when it smarts, twill kick and fling, and put the whole Soul into a combustion: when the world with all its fury, either cannot make the flesh to smart, or not so, but that the Soul can bear it and still keep quiet, there's patience. When the world hath not only made some lighter onsets, by its volleys of reproaches and mocking's; but persecuted us to Bonds and Imprisonments, prepared for us its instruments

of death, and forced us to resist unto blood; when scourging, and stocking, and stoning, and starving, and sawing a sunder, as 'twas the case of those believers, Heb. 11, are all put to it and not pleased and cannot force a murmuring or repining thought against God, nor an unworthy reflection on those holy ways which have cost us so dear: but the Soul still keeps silence; and with our Lord, Isa. 53, we lie as lambs dumb before the shearer, yea before the butcher, when we are in such great patience in so great sufferings; when the world hath done its worst by us, and yet cannot have its will of us, there's the victory, shall I say? Nay there's the triumph of faith over the world.

4. Humility in the height of honor: When the world can neither depress nor sinfully exalt us, neither sink nor swell us; when it can neither beat us on the lower ground, nor on the pinnacle of the Temple.

Some Christians have been highly exalted in the world; have been raised from the dust to sit with the Princes among the people: have been numbered among the great and the honorable; and made to ride on the high places of the earth. Joseph from the Prison, is lifted up to be the second in the Kingdom; Mordecai, from the threshold of the Kings house, to be the man whom the King delights to honor; David from the sheepfold to the Throne.

Others have had the nobler advantages of inward worth and accomplishment. Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. Paul brought up at the feet, and furnished with the learning of Gamaliel; too great a disputant for the Philosophers of his age. Apollos an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures.

Others have been had in great renown for their noble acts and mighty works which they have done. How was it with David upon his slaughter of

the Philistine, with Daniel upon his interpretation of the Kings dream, with the Apostles sometimes upon the miracles that they wrought?

Such a state as this, a state of honor and renown, is a keen weapon in the hand of the world whereby it often stabs the Soul of all virtue and grace: those that are blown up to the top of the mountains, are often blown away by the winds of pride and popular applause.

Those who can keep humble in such heights, whose hearts still keep their dwelling on the lower ground, who are little ones in all their greatness; little in their own eyes, and willing to be little in the eyes of others; who can take their crowns, and their garlands that are set on their own heads, and translate them on the head of their Lord; who account it their honor to decrease to his increasing; here are the persons whose humility signifies something.

What is it to be humble, when we have nothing whereof to be proud? To be low when we cannot climb high? When the conscience of our poverty and penury, that we have no worth in ourselves and are of no value with others, checks every aspiring thought? What is it not to boast, when we have nothing nor have done anything whereof to boast? Some are so foolish, as to be proud of mere conceits; to dream themselves something, and then to be proud of their dreams; but those that are not thus madly proud, what great matter is it if they be not?

When there is store of fuel for this lust to feed upon, and the bellows of popular breath blowing it up, and yet it burns not, this is something. Dost thou not know thyself what thou art, and what thou hast, and how thou art esteemed? Everyone loves thee, and admires thee, and applauds and speaks well of thee, and thou hast merit enough in thee to deserve it all; why shouldst thou not accept of all this respect, and be of the same mind with all

that know thee? Why shouldst thou not think as well of thyself, and prize thine own worth, and know thine own place, as well as they? Then to have all checked and repelled with such thoughts as these; But who am I that I should lift up myself? What have I that I have not received? I have wisdom, I have strength I have riches, but whose are all these? Are they mine own? Of mine own getting? Have I done anything more than others, through whose strength was it? In whose name was it? This is humility indeed.

Act. 3:12. Why look ye on us so earnestly? The Apostles, Peter and John, had done a great cure upon the lame man, and the people were greatly taken with it; they ran together to see these men, and wondered at them, and the cure which they had done; These are strange men, God's rather than men, by whom such a mighty cure was wrought. But behold, they are not at all transported with the people's wonderment, nor will accept of their applause; Ye men of Israel why look ye so upon us, as though we by our own power had made this man to walk. You are mistaken in us, we are not the men you take us to be; we could no more have cured this man by our own power, then any of you could have done; wonder not at us, give glory to God, give glory to God; God hath magnified his Son Jesus; 'tis his name, and through faith in his name, by which this man is made whole.

4. Magnanimity in greatest difficulties and dangers, Magnanimity notes, Generosity, Fortitude.

1. Generosity, A Soul abstracted from the world is a generous Soul: *eximiae virtutis*, vigorous and sprightly: its a Soul restored to itself, grown up towards its original vigor, which was lost and choked in the mud of this world. It is for great action, for higher and more noble achievements, It is of the Berean extract, of whom 'twas said, Acts 17:11, they were more noble

then they of Thessalonica, more generous than they, such large Souls it will not satisfy, to have done some little and lower things.

The Spirit of this world is a poor and narrow Spirit, *ignavae animae quae ambire magna non norunt*; sluggish dull and heavy Souls; whom either a little action must suffice, or if there be more, it is about these little things: this world conquering Spirit is a Soul upon the wing, that being unclogged of earth flies high: pursues higher things, and by a swifter, and more vigorous motion, Math. 5:47, what singular thing do ye? God hath done great things for it, and this great mind is for great returns.

It wills great things, and it dares to attempt great things; It will not despond or be discouraged with difficulties; This is too much, or this too hard; Difficulties are the delight, and the proof of a generous mind.

What shall I do for him whom my Soul honors? What would I not do? What would I refuse for his sake! Oh what little things are my great things, even the greatest that I can do! How much have I received, how little have I to return? Oh for more work for God, for more strength for work? I can never do enough when I have done all, and therefore I will never say 'tis enough, whilst there is more to be done.

Oh how little must suffice a carnal heart, and how much is every little accounted? A magnanimous Spirit does much but thinks all but little; others do little, but over reckon. A little praying or praising, or speaking or thinking or working for God, must serve, and how much is that little reckoned?

How soon are we at our Lands end, and have even wrought ourselves out of work? Or else how quickly are we discouraged by the greatness of our work? The least straw is a stumbling block, the least Molehill a Mountain; every duty is a difficulty, and every difficulty an impossibility. How shall I

stand under so much work? Who would venture on so great difficulties? Am I God, and not man? Spirit, and not flesh? The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak: No, no, thy spirit is weak too, this spirit is but flesh: How weak is thine [heart] that it is so soon discouraged?

O Brethren, where is the victorious spirit? Where are the Heroes of Christianity, the Nobles that set their necks to the work of the Lord? What designs have you for advancing in holiness, for magnifying the grace of God in you, for exalting his name in a heavenly life? Where are the Trophies of your prowess? Bring forth the Captives you have taken: Can you show your lusts in Chains, your pride in Chains, your covetousness in Chains? Here are the prisoners I have taken, Behold houses, and honors, and dignities, and pleasures, behold my feet upon the necks of them all: This little I have done for God, Yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me: This little have I done for God, the weights are laid aside, and now will I run with patience the Race which is set before me: Now for a fruitful life, for laboring and abounding in the work of the Lord; for growing rich unto God, rich in good works; I cannot sit down by that little I have done; he is worthy, he is worthy, for whom I should do other manner of things then these, for whom I should live another manner of life then this: O were I all soul, all wing, all life, all action, how little would this my [all] be, to what I would it were: Rise up O my soul, shake off thy ashes, open thy sluices, let run all thy streams, what wilt thou do for thy good? I have done for my flesh, I have done for my family, I have done for my friends, what shall I do for my God? Read O my soul, in the Book of Records, as that King did, Esther 6:2, and search what the Lord hath done for thee, how he hath pardoned thee, and sanctified thee, and subdued thine enemies under thee; how he hath brought thee out of thine house of bondage, and redeemed thee

from the house of servants: And then ask, What honor hath been done the Lord for all this?

O Brethren, how are we straitened? We walk as if we were still in our fetters; if we were still Vassals to this earth, we could hardly be less active for heaven: Whilest we tell one another what the Lord hath done for our souls, how little have we to tell, what our souls have done for the Lord? Empty vines we are, that bring forth our fruit to ourselves, that sow for ourselves, and reap for ourselves, and thresh for ourselves, and live to ourselves, and how little to him?

And that little we do for God, how hardly are we brought to it? Am I bound to do this? Am I bound to do that? Bound to give so much to the poor? Bound to spend so much time in prayer? Bound to such constant care and labor? May not less suffice? Will not less be accepted? May I not be a Christian at a cheaper rate? And if our flesh can but make us believe, that less may serve, how glad are we to sit down and save our labor?

Brethren, is it not thus with the most of us? Must we not be dragged and driven on to duty? What do we more than bare necessity forces us to? If fear would let us alone, if Conscience would let us be quiet, how little is it that love to Christ would put us upon? Oh where are the large hearts to God, the flowing souls, that freely offer themselves to the Lord: Woe to us, this earth still sucks up our streams.

2. Fortitude. By this we stand against the fury of the world: That's a magnanimous spirit, that delights in difficulties, and despises danger; a bold soul; that not only loves to serve, but dares to suffer; that is not careful about this matter, Dan. 3. Whom none of all these things move, Act. 20:24, that is strong, and of good courage.

Victory attends the valiant, and makes more valiant; a little Conquest fleshes the faint. This Christian fortitude comprehends in it these three things.

A boldness With God, In God, For God.

1. A boldness with God. A free and confident access to God; a coming boldly before the Throne of Grace, Heb. 4:16. And this arises from a sense of Reconciliation with God, from an inward acquaintance with God, from a conscience of uprightness before the Lord, Heb. 10:19,22. Having therefore boldness by the blood of Jesus, —let us draw near with a true heart, —with a heart sprinkled from an evil conscience. There's no coming before God with a guilty or guileful heart; 'tis Innocence that gives boldness; the conscience of guilt or guile, makes us afraid and ashamed to appear before God. We are afraid of our Bibles, ashamed to look towards our Closets, when God hath a quarrel with us. We go into our Closets, as the Thief to the House of Correction: We sneak in ashamed and afraid, and shuffle over in haste, and are glad when we get out again: We cannot pray, we scarce dare to lift up our eyes to heaven, we blush before the Lord, and cannot be free and open-hearted with him: Guilt stops our mouths, or at least the heart keeps silence where this cries in its ears.

How can I go before the Lord? What am I like to hear if I speak to him? What will he answer me if I call upon him? Why criest thou to me? Go to the God's whom thou hast served, go to thy pleasures, go to thy companions, go to thy Mammon which thou hast served; thou art privy to thy treacheries, to the Whoredoms thou hast committed with thine other God's; why criest thou to me in thy distress? Go to the God's after which thou hast loved to wander: how will that heart hang down the head, and give itself the repulse that's conscious to such treachery?

When the soul can reply, I have no other God to go to; this Flesh is not my God, this World is not my God, my heart is with thee, my desire is to thee, and I have kept me by thee; thou knowest Lord, it hath been my care to keep me from the way, and from the lusts of this world, and to walk before thee in mine integrity, then will it lift up its face with confidence in his presence.

Now he that can thus be bold with God, that can with openness of heart make his appeal to God, as the witness of his integrity, and that can hereupon make his request to God, make known his want, and his straits and distresses, and be bold to leave it upon him to relieve and support him; he that can be thus bold with the Lord, will be bold with all the world.

Brethren, you that think you shall be bold for the Lord, whenever you are put to the trial, that have now a forward mind to own the worship and ways of God, and have hope that in nothing you shall be ashamed, but that at all times, and in all things, Christ shall be magnified in you, whether by life, or by death; let me ask you, Have you boldness with God? Is he your friend? Is it peace betwixt him and your souls? How came this peace in? Time was when there was no peace; you were Runaways and Rebels against God; your natural state was a state of enmity; are you reconciled by the Blood of Christ? Are you returned and become Converts to God? Hath the Lord been at work with your souls? Hath he convinced you, humbled you, broken you, slain the enmity, and brought you into a Covenant of peace with himself? Its dangerous to talk of being bold with God, till you are brought home unto God; 'tis for the stubble to be bold with the flames; 'tis to dash on the Rock, to sleep on the Waves, to take Sanctuary in wrath and fury, and to trust to indignation; as little succor and relief will the unconverted find with the Lord: Are you reconciled? Are you the friends of God?

Are you of the acquaintance of God? Friends may grow strangers, and strangers cannot be bold: Do you use to converse and walk with God? How often do you visit him? Is there constant intercourse and correspondence maintained betwixt the Lord and your souls?

Are you tender how you break your peace, and lose your acquaintance? Is it your care to walk before him in uprightness? Do you not ordinarily grieve, or offend, or carelessly neglect the Lord? Is there no allowed treachery or falsehood in your hearts to him? Do you not suffer new quarrels to arise betwixt the Lord and you? Or if there be, have you therein a quarrel against yourselves? When you offend him, do you offend your own hearts? Is every sin against God a wound to your own souls? Are you ever angry with yourselves but when God is at peace? Is it your constant care to keep all clear and fair betwixt the Lord and you? And hereupon, can you come boldly before the Throne of Grace, and make known your wants, and your grievances, and ease your hearts, by opening them, and emptying them into the bosom of your friend? Fear not, this your boldness with the Lord, will give you boldness on the behalf of God, how frightful soever the case may be.

Oh take heed that your confidence that you shall stand your ground in the day of trial, be not presumption. And certainly whatever your thoughts are at present, if you be not the real and inward friends of God now, if you have but the name and the face of his Disciples, if you follow him for fashion, or for company, or for novelty; if notwithstanding all the regards and respects you profess to have for God and his ways, there be still a Conscience of guile and deceit within; if notwithstanding all your heat and forwardness in his public worship, you are strangers to the love and life of God, and are still in league with his Enemies, serving your flesh and this world: And

hereupon whatever you do in public, yet you have no freedom in secret with God, no secret familiarity, no secret intercourse's of love and friendship, you cannot be bold and open-hearted when you have him alone; if you cannot be thus bold with the Lord, your promising yourselves that you shall be bold for him is your presumption, and will deceive you.

Only let me tell you (for fear of discouraging such who should not be discouraged) he that hath the ground of this holy boldness, that through the blood of Jesus hath peace with God, whose constant care is to please the Lord, and to walk before him in his uprightness; though by reason of the darkness and misgivings of his troubled trembling heart, he scarce dares to call God Father, and can hardly at any time look him in the face without fear and shame, and hereupon shakes at the fore-thoughts of the day of trial, this poor trembling soul may expect, when he is put to it, to be enabled to stand as Mount Zion that shall never be removed.

2. Boldness in God: We were bold in our God, 1 Thes. 2:2. This boldness stands in a firm dependence upon God, Job 13:15. Though he kill me, yet will I trust in him. A resolved Christian will depend upon God, for his counsel and conduct, Psal. 73:24. Thou wilt guide me with thy counsel: he will not lean to his own understanding; he is fearful enough to walk in his own counsels; he knows that 'tis not in man that walketh to order his own steps, but withal he knows he hath a better guide: he depends on God for his aid and assistance: His faith says the same which Christ says, Isa. 50:7. The Lord God will help me, therefore I shall not be confounded; therefore have I set my face as a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He will keep his way and adventure events and issues upon God: God will provide, is his encouragement in his most difficult cases: and hence he bears up under the most frightful aspect of his present case whatever it be, 1 Sam. 30:6. But

David encouraged himself in the Lord his God. He was in a great distress and in great danger, but yet he bears up. All is gone, and worse is coming: mine enemies have carried away all, and my friends are become mine enemies; my friends are against me, and I have none to stand with me; I am in great distress, what shall I do?

But where is the Lord? Who is the Lord but my God? O there's enough. Why art thou cast down O my Soul, and why art thou discouraged within me? Hope in God, be strong and of good courage.

3. Boldness for God: There is a boldness to which God is nominally entitled, which is not boldness for God, but for ourselves. The bold asserting our own conceits and opinions for divine truths; the bold imposing our own inventions as the will of God; the zealous pursuing matters of religion for our own advantage, and crying out over it zeal for God: the intemperate insisting on the controverted and questionable matters of religion: this our boldness we may call our weakness, and willfulness; our pride and selfishness. God will never thank you for such boldness; father not your follies or phrensies upon the most high; God will reward such boldness either with frowns or with fury.

Boldness for God stands, in a constant maintaining our fidelity and allegiance to God; in a resolved promoting the real interest and honor of his name and worship: a boldness to pray, as in the case of Daniel, Chap. 6:10. When the King forbad him: a boldness to preach, as in the case of the Apostles, Acts 5. When the Priests and Rulers forbad them: a boldness to be holy and upright and not to sin against God as in the case of Job, chap. 1. When the Devil afflicted him for it: a boldness to confess Christ before men; both in our ordinary conversation, and in special when called before rulers: bearing witness both by word and works against all the sins, the

profaneness, the Atheism, the Idolatries and Apostacies of the world; a boldness to suffer rather than sin against God.

This is Christian fortitude, and is then the clearer proof of our victory over the world,

1. When we follow God and keep his way, with the contempt of the [greatest] advantages on the one hand, and the [sharpest] sufferings on the other; when the highest price that the World can give, cannot entice us, and the greatest mischief that the World can do, cannot force us to unfaithfulness: when its best and worst are contemned, in comparison of a good conscience towards God.

Wilt thou mind and serve and follow me saith the World? Why what reward wilt thou give me? Thou shalt have wealth: what nothing else? Yes thou shalt have pleasure: what no more? Yes thou shalt have honors and preferments, thou shalt be a great man, and exalted in the earth, and what more canst thou desire?

And if thou wilt not hearken, if thou wilt forsake me; why what then? Look for all the mischiefs I can do thee: look for reproach and scorn; if that will not do, look for hunger and thirst; if yet it be not enough look for stripes, and bonds, and prisons, and torments and death: Well is this all that thou canst give? Is this the worst thou canst do? Away from me, I neither love nor fear thee, I will keep the Commandments of my God: there's a bold Soul, one of Christ's worthies.

2. When we choose the greatest of sufferings, rather than little sins. Maybe thou wouldst be afraid to run upon horrid sins; If these were the terms that were given thee, Curse God and live, Renounce thy part in Christ, forswear thy Lord, blaspheme and live; These horrid wickedness's have too ghastly a face, these look too much like Hell; thou darest not buy

thy liberty, or thy life, at so dear a rate. But mayst thou escape by Zoar, will some little sin secure thee? Some little sinful shift, a little compliance, or that which hath but the appearance of evil, what sayest thou now? If thou canst not drink down a full draught of the cup of fornication, canst thou not sip of the cup, or so much as put to it thy mouth, canst thou not kiss the cup? No, no, every drop is poison, and a drop of poison is deadly, every little sin is the price of blood; the very appearance of evil will be a blot on my holy profession. 1 Cor. 9:13. I had rather die than that any should make my glorying void: Not only what's unjust, or impure, or dishonest, but what's dishonorable, whatever hath an evil face, or an evil sound, my life shall go, rather than I will redeem it by any such unworthy way.

3. When we refuse the greatest advantages rather than neglect the least of duties: When we can resolve from love, what Balaam did for fear, Numb. 22:18. If Balak would give me a house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord; to do less or more. I will not willingly fail of a tittle of all that the Lord requires me. I will not be bought out of my duty: weigh me my price; whatever can be given, houses, or mountains of gold and silver, they will be contemned in comparison of faithfulness to God. I will not be hired, not only to a total neglect of God, but not to do less than he requires. I can make no abatements, I will not keep back part, there is unfaithfulness in the least, the whole World shall not hire me to be unfaithful. If God says, Keep thyself pure, keep thyself unspotted of the World; If God says, Be faithful, be circumspect, be zealous; If God says, Hold fast that which thou hast, Hold forth the word of life, be not ashamed to confess me before men, be harmless, be blameless, in the midst, and in the sight of a crooked generation; endure hardness, deny thyself, take up thy cross and follow me, without turning aside, either to the right hand or to the

left. As the Lord liveth, as I will not go beyond, so neither will I take up short of the word of the Lord, to do less or more.

It may be if the profane World say, let [all] alone, give up [all] thy religion; have done with this praying and hearing, yea and this professing of religion; scrape out all prints, and raze out all principles of righteousness and holiness, and prostitute thyself with us to all manner of licentiousness; possibly thou wilt not dare to do thus.

But if thy carnal friends say, at least be wise, be not righteous over much, be not fondly precise; remit of thy heat, abate of thy zeal, conceal thyself; Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself. Hast thou conscience? Have it to thyself. If thou wilt follow Christ still, yet walk no more openly with him? Thou mayst be a Disciple and nobody the wiser if thou wilt be a little more moderate and wary. What sayest thou to this? No if all the friends I have in the World should thus plead with me, even in this I cannot hearken.

What Christ saith is over much, shall be abated; when Christ saith be less precise, be not so zealous, keep thy religion to thyself, keep thy conscience to thyself, I will hearken. What Christ calls discretion and moderation, I will embrace; what Christ calls pride, and fondness, and nicety, I will avoid: where Christ says, be sober, be wary, hide thyself, I will obey; but beyond the word of the Lord I will not go, to do less or more; I will not be rash or heady, I will not be willful or obstinate; I will not be turbulent or contentious; I will not contend for anything as religion, which Christ hath not called so, nor for that which is, farther or otherwise, then he hath required me: Christian wisdom, and moderation, and meekness, and gentleness, and condescension, and peaceableness, I will embrace, and follow after with all men, for this is the will of my Lord.

But say no more to me, be less holy, be less zealous for righteousness and holiness; I cannot be righteous overmuch and I will not be wicked in a little.

If you ask further, what are the properties of this godly boldness, I answer, it is,

1. A humble boldness, that does not make a noise, that does not boast and bluster, nor show itself in uncomely heats and animosities; that hath firmness and undauntedness, but joined with lowliness and meekness.

2. A prudent boldness, that doth not espouse needless controversies, that is wary of mistaking matters or measures; that doth not rashly and headily run upon dangers which it might without sin avoid; that doth not unwarily create itself nor needlessly provoke enemies, but fears not to meet them in his way, nor will either turn aside or stand still to escape them.

Now put all these together; he that is bold with the Lord, who being reconciled by the blood of Christ, and walking before him in his integrity; can with an holy boldness approach, and make known his requests to the Lord, for grace and mercy and help in the time of need; He that is bold in the Lord, whose heart is fixed trusting in God; He that is in his name, bold for the Lord, bold to be faithful to God, bold to be holy and righteous; that will follow God and keep his way with the neglect of the highest worldly advantages on the one hand, and the sharpest sufferings on the other; that will choose the greatest of sufferings, rather than little sins; that will refuse the greatest advantages rather than neglect the least of duties; that is meek, and yet mighty through God; that trembles at the word, and yet stands against all the world; that is tender as a bruised reed, and yet stands against all the world; that is tender as a bruised reed, and yet not terrified at an army with banners; whom a child may lead and yet a giant cannot drive; an innocent dove with a serpents wisdom; a patient lamb, with a Lions heart;

who will not strive nor cry nor make a noise in the streets, and yet in the strength of the Lord brings forth judgment into victory; Here is the valiant Christian, that triumphs over thrones and Dominions; that in the name of Christ, hath spoiled principalities and powers, and hath led captivity captive. Here is a man clothed with the Sun, who hath the moon under his feet.

Christians, where is this mighty spirit of the Gospel? Behold, some who seem sufficiently high flown, are yet as weak as water: whose hopes and whose comforts lie at the mercy of every temptation; whose religion must strike sail, at the fight of every enemy, or tack about at every turn of the wind; who are nobody but in the sunshine and the calm: whose course must be steered by their commodity and safety: who are for duty, yet dare not pray to their loss; who protest against iniquity, yet will sin rather than suffer.

Is not this thy case? Wouldst thou not have been better if thou hadst dared? Thy conscience is for more praying, and hearing, and close walking with God, but thine heart will not serve thee, the times will not bear it, thy estate will be in hazard, thy liberty, yea and thy life too in danger: thou darest not turn Apostate from Christ, thou wouldst be one of the company still, though thou be but a midnight Disciple, and this must comfort thee under all thy disguised unfaithfulness: thou haltest betwixt Christ and the World, thou darest neither utterly to forsake him, nor resolvedly to own him; thou canst not tell what to be, nor where to find thyself: were it not for love of this World, what a Christian wouldst thou be? Were it not for fear, who should out-strip thee? But as Matters are, what to do thou knowest not, and whose thou art, who can tell? Today thou art with the Disciples, but who can tell where to find thee tomorrow? Weak Soul, hast thou good will

for Christ, why wilt thou not venture after him? Hast thou the name, where is the Spirit of a Christian? Arise shake off thy fear and be bold.

Be bold for God: Some are bold enough, but 'tis for themselves; God hath the name but self is the mark that's aimed at; beware that this be not it thou countest thy godly boldness. Some are bold upon God; upon the patience and forbearance of God; bold to slight and affront the Lord, bold to sin against him, to stand it out against him, against all his commands, threatening's and judgments; bold to continue unbelievers, impenitent, blasphemers, unclean livers, though God hath said that all such shall be damned: to be thus bold is to be desperate; they dare the Almighty to his face, to bring his Counsel to pass, and to perform all his words that he hath spoken against them. Be bold but see that it be for God not against him.

Be bold for God, but let it be also in the Lord. Be bold in the Lord, but that you be not more bold then welcome; look to it, that you be the friends of God; the boldness of strangers, is sauciness or presumption: The Lord upbraids his rebellious people with their confidence in him, Mic. 3, yet they will lean upon the Lord; they love me not, yet they will lean upon me. Its hard to say which is more dangerous, the trust of the ungodly, or their distrust: God will be no Rock to those, who will not that he be their Lord: He will not accept of a testimony from a devil; it disparages a good Cause to be pleaded by an evil mouth; and as he will not regard thy confession, so neither will he bear thee out in what it costs thee: If thou wilt not submit to God, confess him at thine own peril; depend on [me] for my help? Expect countenance or encouragement from me? Lay hold on [my] power? Lay claim to [my] all-sufficiency or faithfulness? How darest thou be so bold? What art thou to me? A stranger, and yet so bold? An enemy, and yet so bold? Away Confident, look to thyself, stand on thine own bottom, I have

nothing for thee: Art not thou he that wilt not be ruled by me, that wilt not accept of my love and peace, that dissemblest with me, that speakest me fair, but thine heart is not with me? Art not thou he that darest continue in thy sin, and to walk after the flesh, and in friendship with this world, whose heart goes after thy covetousness, and thy companions, and thy pride, and thy pleasures? And wilt [thou] lean on me, and strengthen thy self in me? I have offered to be reconciled to thee, and thou wilt not; I have offered to change thee, to change thy mind, and change thy way; to make thee a new soul, and a new life, and still thou refusest, and art the same man that ever thou wast: may be thou hast gotten thee a new face, and a new tongue, and I have thy company sometimes; thou drawest nigh to me, and comest in among my Saints; but behold the same heart still that ever thou hadst; thou wilt not be a Convert, thou wilt not be brought into a Covenant of peace with me, but are still in league with thy flesh, and this world; and how canst thou say I trust in God? I will be no sanctuary for sin?

Brethren, beware there be not any among you, who make your trusting in God, to serve you instead of turning to God; your outward forwardness in the cause of God, to serve instead of your hearty accepting the grace of God; the Lord needs not, nor will regard your good words, whilst your hearts are not with him; go and be reconciled to your adversary, (for such the Lord is yet to you) go and be reconciled to God, accept of his grace, resign to his Dominion, set him up as Lord and Ruler within you, let his Law and his love be in your hearts, and then you may be bold, both upon his acceptance of whatever service you do for his Name, and upon your security in it: Be the Lord's in truth, and then fear not to make the Lord your trust.

5. Equanimity in all the changes of his outward condition: An equal, steady, fixed frame, in all turns and changes. If prosperity alone, if afflictions alone, will not corrupt or discompose us, they are often made to take their turns, sometimes one, sometimes another, if that may do it.

Though all wet or all dry will not, yet sometimes wet, and sometimes dry, will rot the sturdy Oak. He is a strong man indeed, upon whom great and sudden changes of weather, air, diet, and his whole course and way of life, doth make no change. Those souls are often tossed with turns of fair weather and foul, which can ride at anchor in constant tempests; we can hardly be long the same, whilst matters go not with us after the same way.

As the Psalmist, Psa. 55:19. Because they have [no] changes; so sometimes may it not be said, Because they have [many] changes, therefore they fear not God; we may be so long emptied from vessel to vessel, till we have lost our savor.

He is a Christian indeed, whose soul is not tossed out of its peace, whose feet are not turned out of course, by all the tossing's and turnings of his outward state, whose heart is not moved within, when every day proves, that all he has without are moveable's.

Inward changes there are, and ought to be, according to the vicissitudes and varieties of providential occurrences; every providence should make impression upon our spirits, proportionable to it: a due and different sense there ought to be, of our outward mercies and crosses; a sad sense of paternal displeasure, is as necessary under corrections, as a cheerful sense of bounty and kindness, when all things prosper with us: We may not be as stocks or stones, upon whom the Summer or Winter makes no difference; God looks that worldly changes be seen and felt in hearts; we may and must

have our light and dark, our joys and sorrows, our hopes and fears, there's need, and use of all.

But now in all these outward, and their corresponding inward changes, a Christian as to the main changes not; his heart is fixed trusting in God; he is not out of frame, though he be in another frame today, then yesterday he was; both in his prosperity and in his patience, he possesseth his soul; he is the same to Godward, and towards sin; still in motion heavenward, and in defiance with iniquity.

As 'tis on the other side with the wicked, though they are as a troubled Sea, yet they are still at rest in their iniquity; whatever changes pass over them, their hearts, as to the main, are not changed; ever besides themselves, and yet ever themselves, wicked still; emptied from vessel to vessel, and yet their sent goes not forth out of them. Ungodly still, hardened still, for sin and the devil still; let their condition be what it will, let them be in health, let them be sick, let them be full, let them be empty, let their steps be washed with Butter, or sprung with Vinegar; let their way be strawed with Rosebuds, or hedged with Thorns; let them be merry, let them be sad, all's one, they are the same men, and holding the same course; wicked under mercies, wicked under judgments, wicked in their joys, wicked in their sorrows:

O how do we see the providences of God thrown away, and lost upon the ungodly world: Let the Lord do what he will with them, shine upon them, or thunder upon them, deal gently, or deal roughly with them; clothe them, or strip them, feed them, or famish them, it comes all to one, their hearts will not be broken, nor turned to the Lord.

Oh what strange changes hath the Lord of late made upon this wicked age? What turns and returns have we seen, smiting's and healings,

scatterings and gatherings, wars and peace, sickness and health; and yet behold the world still where they were, lying in wickedness.

So for the Saints, let the world do what they can upon them, let [them] shine or thunder upon them, deal gently, or deal roughly, feed or famish them, they are still where they were, their heart is fixed, trusting in God.

And he that by all this feels the [least] disturbance upon his spirit; he that sails most steadily in all winds and weathers, whose heart is not unhinged by all his turnings, who is not inordinately exalted nor depressed by his fair weather and foul, nor hurried out of himself by passionate and troublesome transports, on the one hand or the other; but holds his soul in such an even equal poise, that his moderation appears unto all men, there's another that rides in triumph over earth and hell.

Oh Brethren, how is it with us upon this account? If we have made over ourselves to the Lord, and have ceased to be numbered among the men of this World; if we no longer seek our treasure on earth, and have laid hold on that better treasure above, yet are we gotten so clear of things below, that they have not still too great a power upon us? Hath not this Moon a mighty influence upon our waterish spirits? Do not these ebb and flow, according as it waxes and wanes? Are we the same men, when things are not with us after the same manner? Are we the same in summer and winter? Can we keep our hearts and hold our course in all weathers? Is it come to be all one with us, as to our inward state, which way matters go with us without? Can we want and yet be quiet, can we be full and not be wanton? Can we be full and not forget God, and be hungry and not fret ourselves against him? Can we love God when he smites, and fear him when he smiles? Is it peace longer than there is plenty, have we sunshine in cloudy days? Do we keep

warm in the winter, and not sleep in the summer? How small a sunshine will steal off our garments, and how little a wind will blow us off our legs?

Consider brethren; it may be whilst the Lord hath prospered you, and matters outward have gone according to your hearts, then you could love and serve and praise and rejoice in the Lord; then you could be active, and lively and fruitful, and cheerfully go on your way; but the next cross providence hath been as water upon all your fire; a little storm that hath risen, hath put out all your light, turned you besides all your duties and comforts: turned you besides praying and rejoicing in God, to vexing and fretting and murmuring against him, and to questioning his love and goodness to you; all the flowers that your sunshine hath nursed up, how doth one frosty night wither away.

Or else, if your Souls have been prospering in the winter how hath the next summers day choked them up with weeds. Sometimes God hath brought thee into the house of mourning, girded thee with sackcloth, laid thee in ashes, proved thee in the furnace of affliction; and then how humble, and serious, and mortified! Then what praying, and repenting, and covenanting with God, and strengthening thine heart in him! Then dead to sin, crucified to the world, living by faith, walking in fear; nothing but God, and holiness, and glory in thy heart and in thy tongue; but no sooner hath he turned thy captivity, put off the garments of thy widowhood, brought thee out of darkness into light, and redeemed thy Soul out of trouble, but all is presently forgotten, and fleshliness vanity and security returns upon thee.

Oh how little is there yet done to what must be done, ere we shall come to any steadiness, whilst every worldly change does so rout and disorder us.

Christians, let us be like our God, holy and unchangeable; get you changed into his image, and then be unchangeable.

Oh that my Soul were in such a case, but how may I obtain? Why,

1. Seek earnestly after a more abundant diffusion of the establishing Spirit of grace. Let the Psalmists prayer be yours, Psal. 51:12. Uphold or establish me with thy free Spirit. The Spirit of this World, is as Reuben, Gen. 49:4. Unstable as water: the Spirit of grace is an establishing Spirit.

Hast thou received this Spirit? Hast thou a little grace? Open thy mouth yet wider, enlarge thy desire as Heaven. A double portion, a double portion of thy Spirit O Lord. Consider these two things,

1. The greater measures of grace are the portion of those that are the most importunate seekers of grace.

2. Those are the most established Souls to whom grace hath abounded.

1. The greater measures of grace are the portion of those that are the most importunate seekers of grace. To his Saints, the Lord giveth his Spirit by measure; to some a lesser, to some a fuller measure; they have all drank in the same Spirit, but not all a like draught: our Heavenly Father will give his Spirit to those that ask it of him, and every man hath according to his asking: 'tis not with this as with the Manna in the wilderness, He that gathered much had nothing over, he that gathered little had no lack; He that asketh much hath never the more, he that asketh little, hath never the less; 'tis not thus, but God gives to every man according to his asking. The reason why we go on from day today, from year to year, with our vessels so empty, with so little grace, is because our little suffices us, we are content and sit down by our little. If the Widow had brought more or larger vessels, she had had more oil, 2 King. 4:6. The largest hearts go away with the richest loading. Do ye see Souls, that ply at the bucket, that are often letting down into the well of salvation; that dwell at the throne of grace, whose very breath is prayer, that are every day and every night wrestling with the

Angel for a blessing, whom one blessing will not suffice, but are still for more and for more, these are the thriving Souls: full of prayer and full of the Spirit.

2. Those are the most established Souls, to whom grace hath abounded: 'tis not every little measure of true grace, that will bring the heart to a comfortable consistency: poor weakling Christians sadly prove, how even Disciples may be so tossed in the waves, that they know not where to find themselves: We are reeds shaken with the wind; Oh how are our hearts thrown up and down hither and thither, by a perplexing succession of hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, comforts and crosses, and scarce ever at rest: sometimes lifted up, sometimes depressed; sometimes all upon the wing, by and by in the dust; sometimes in a fever, anon in a cold ague; yea sometimes breathing out prayers and praises, and at the very next minute flaming out in passion and impatiencies: thus it is, and there is no hope it should be otherwise, whilst so low in grace; what wonder, if whilst we are such children, we be carried to and fro with every wind? Those that are grown up to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, these will have strength to sit still.

O be aspiring Christians; be making up to the highest form, and be not content here to take a lower room. Be filled with the Spirit, follow on, follow hard after the Lord, and look not to be long yourselves, till you be fuller of him.

Brethren, do not go about to excuse your sinful perturbations, when there is a way before you to cure them. You are ready to say, do not blame me for it, I cannot help it. I know 'tis very sad to be in a perpetual storm, but how can I mend it? You know not my trials, none knows where the shoe wrings but he that wears it.

Do not blame you for it? Why do not you blame yourself for it? Are you willing of such a troublesome life, and to be let alone in it? Is the ease of an excuse, all the cure you desire? Is there not a remedy for your disease? I cannot help it? What, would not more grace help it? Would not more faith, and more patience, and more mortification help it? You mistake yourself, you are yet carnal, your proud flesh, your fretful angry flesh is too hard for that little grace you have; get more grace, and the cure is done.

2. Let your hearts be more strongly intent upon God; By how much the more intensely God is minded, by so much the less impression will anything that occurs make upon our spirits; when the Scales are but just turned, every little dust falling in, will make them hover: A Bowl that runs strongly towards the mark, 'tis not every little rub that will turn it out of its course: When the soul is making a main heavenward, and intends all its powers, in the more vigorous pursuit of the Invisible Crown; when the heart is possessed, and much taken up with its more weighty and glorious concernments; when the thoughts, affections, resolutions, are all deeply engaged, and busily working towards God, the greatest occurrences of this life are past over as little things; 'tis because we are so weakly moving heavenward, that we are so moved with every trifle.

Thou complainest of the frequent distractions and fluctuations of thy mind, wave upon wave, billow upon billow come rolling in upon thee, and invincibly roll thy soul out of itself; wouldst thou be cured of this palpitation of thine heart? Mind thy God more, mind thy business more, set thine heart on thy home, and upon hasting on thy journey thitherward, and see if this will not keep thee in frame.

Put on more weight, Christians, and your wheels will run more even, and more constant; let the importance of your eternal state be much in your eye,

and upon your heart: Look often into the blessed eternity that is before you; steep your hearts in Divine Contemplation, and when you are transported into admiring's of that glory, then ask your hearts, what little things are the Sun-shine or the storms of this lower Region? Tell me not of pleasures, of plenty and prosperity here; tell me not of crosses or disappointments here; how shall I get to heaven: Oh may I come there once, no matter how it be here. Look also into the black and dreadful eternity; put your finger into the eternal fire; think, and think over and over of those flames, of the griping's and gnawing's of the Infernal Worm; think of these things, till you feel them to smart, and begin to scorch and burn in your hearts; and then say, What if this should be my place; if this fire, and this Worm; if these gnawing's, and this burning, should be my portion forever? May I but escape this death only, what is there else should trouble me?

Take a view thus of Eternity, and then set down, This is the work I have upon me, this is the business of my day, to make sure for Eternity. Let this sink into your hearts, hang on this poise, and see if it do not hold your souls in such constant and vigorous motion heavenward, that all the noises of this world, which now so amuse and confound you, will be but whispers that will be little regarded.

3. Reckon upon nothing but God: Make sure of God, and reckon upon nothing else: Reckon on no good thing but God, and reckon on all the troubles and miseries on this side hell: What you look for, and count upon, will work the less disturbance when it comes; count upon all losses but the loss of God; him (if you be his) you shall never loose: Count upon all woes, but the last woe, upon all sufferings but hell; God would never have thee count upon these, (if thou be his) these shall never come upon you; bless

God for that, so long 'tis well enough; anything else, the worst you can think of, may come, reckon upon it, and you will the better bear it.

4. Put your flesh upon the frequent trial of a voluntary restraint, and self-crossing. Restrain yourselves, and you will the better endure when God straitens you: He whose flesh is ordinarily curbed by his Christian prudence, will be less moved when crossed by Divine Providence: allow not thy flesh what it craves, though thou hast to satisfy it; think not opportunities of satisfying thy flesh to be a divine allowance; count it not thy Warrant to allow thyself whatever pleases thee, that thou hast wherewithal, opportunities are often but temptations: God sometimes does as a wise Master, who lays an apple, or a piece of money in the way, to try his child or servant. Use to give thy heart no more than God bids thee, and thou shalt find that God will never give it less then will content thee. Inure thyself to live daily at the allowance of Religion, and thou shalt never want thy allowance: When thou usest to have no more than thou shouldst have, thou wilt be like to be content with what thou shouldst have; and when thou art content with what thou shouldst have, thou wilt ever be content to have what thou hast: Though it be often said of some of the servants of men, yet it shall never be said of any of God's servants, that they have not what they should have. And he, who whatever falls, whatever his portion or condition be, in every turn or change that comes, can find his heart saying, still 'tis with me as it should be; yesterday it was so, this day it is so, tomorrow it shall be so; he whose heart says thus of every condition he is in, It is with me as it should be, will say, It is well; and so sit down quietly in his lot.

5. Lastly, Victory over the world, stands in a willingness to be gone from this, and to take our flight to the other world, in a willingness to die: Worldly men, if they could help it, would never die; they would rather live

among the dead, then die into a better life; they are dead while they are alive, dead in sin; and they would that this might be their eternal death: Oh might they be allowed an everlasting day to sin in, to drink, and swear, and whore, and curse, and covet in, what other heaven would they wish for? Were there a message brought down to the World, that their houses of Clay should stand forever; that this buying, and selling, and building, and planting, and getting wealth, and rolling themselves in pleasures, should be their everlasting employment; that all the noise and fear of graves, and tombs, and death, and mortality, should be forever silenced, what a Gospel would this be to them? How would the word then be changed, not the poor, but the rich receive the Gospel?

Worldlings, if Ministers were sent this day to preach to you, that you should never come to heaven, but that you should abide here in your houses, in your fields, in your pomp, and peace, and wealth eternally: O what a Jubilee would this day be unto you? What ringing's, and bonfires, and shoutings, and triumphs would there be at the news? Oh this would be the best Sermon that ever you heard in your lives, this would be the best tidings (in your account) that ever came into the world.

Death is a terror, the great dread of the world, the King of terrors, Job 18:14, the hopes of heaven would willingly be parted with, so the fears of death might be no more. How do the expectations and approach of death pale the faces, weaken the hands, shake the hearts, sour the pleasures, damp the jollities, cool and cow the spirits of the mighty ones of the earth?

If it should be said this day to any of the Worldlings among you, Set thine house in order, for thou must die; if you should see a Tekell written on these walls; thy day is finished, this night shall thy soul be taken from thee; thou hast eaten thy last morsel, hast drank thy last draught, thy last sand is

running out; were this my message to you this day, what a sad Funeral Sermon would this be to such?

But now a Christian is willing to be gone. Luke 2:29. Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Said old Simeon: I desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better, Said Paul the aged, Phil. 1:23. *Egredere O anima*, go forth O my soul, linger not, these fourscore years thou hast served the Lord, fear not now to go and receive thy wages.

Its true, there is even in the Saints a degree of unwillingness to die; but it is chiefly, because their Victory over the world is not perfect and complete.

There are three grounds of men's unwillingness to die;

1. From a natural abhorrence of death.
2. From a loathness to part with their treasure here.
3. From an uncertainty whither they shall go, when they go hence.

1. From that abhorrence of death which is implanted in the natures of all living: And upon this account there may be even in the best of Saints an unwillingness to die: Our Lord himself, who was without sin, discovers something of it, when he cried out, Matth. 26:39. Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me. Its true, in his case, there was more in it, there was wrath in the Cup, there was a curse in the Cup, there were all the sins of the World wrung in, to mingle him a bitter draught; but this was also something of it, there was death in the Cup. He that said a little before, Luke 12:50. I have a Baptism to be baptized with, (this Baptism of Blood was it) and how am I straitened till it be accomplished? I think long ere that day come; yet when it came, his Innocent Nature you see how it was put to it.

Christians, you that seem to have triumphed over the fears of death; that upon good grounds have said unto it in the words of the Apostle, 1 Cor.

15:55. Death where is thy sting? Grave where is thy victory? Yet when it comes to it in earnest, you know not how this flesh may shrink, and if it do, yet be not discouraged; possibly, this very instance of our Lord, may be left upon Record to this very end, to comfort his Saints when they shall be thus troubled.

It will be your wisdom, to whatever confidence you are arrived, that your death is already swallowed up in victory, that you shall entertain your dying day as the most joyful day of your life, though in this confidence, your hearts pant after the approach of that day, Make haste my beloved, come Lord Jesus; yet will it be your wisdom to buckle on all your armor, all your hopes, all your graces, all your evidences, all your experiences and comforts, and to expect that the conflict of that day may be such, as may need your utmost preparations for it.

2. From a loathness to part with their treasure here. What men have, they cannot carry it with them, and they are loath to leave it behind them. When men die, can they carry their money with them? Can they carry their houses or Lands with them? They covet, they purchase, they build, they lay up with so much care and zeal, as if they could ship over all they have, into the other world; but yet they know, that as they came naked in, so naked they must go out of this world, Job 1:21.

But now a Christian that hath Conquered the World, the World from thenceforth ceases to be his treasure: A Worldling, what he has here, 'tis his treasure, for 'tis all he has: God is a treasure, but he's none of his; Christ is a treasure, but he's none of his; heaven is a treasure, but man 'tis none of thine; this earth is all thou hast; a Christian hath another treasure; he hath not his hopes in his hand, that's to come.

But yet in regard we have hitherto conquered but in part, there may be some unwillingness, upon this account also, even in the Saints, to die-Woe to us, there are still such remains of the spirit of this world in us, our hearts are still carnal to such a degree, so suited to an earthly and fleshly life, taking such large allowances of our fleshly delights, and finding such pleasure in the enjoyment of them, that this makes us linger and hang back, when God calls away.

And indeed, such Christians who indulge themselves the pleasures of the flesh, and are overgrown with an earthly mind, (is not this the case of too many?) such Christians do but deceive themselves and others, while they say, they are willing to die. Thou sayest, if I were sure that Christ were mine, I would not care to live a day longer; I want assurance, and that's the only reason I would yet a while longer abide in this Tabernacle: No, no, there's something more in the matter, the world hath still such hold of thy heart, thou findest such pleasure in an earthly life; thy friends, and thy estate, and thy contentment thou hast herein, are so taking with thee, that yet thou canst not find in thine heart to part: Search Christians narrowly, if you find not the matter to be thus with you; I never look to be more willing to die, till I find mine heart more loose from the pleasure of an earthly life.

'It is the mortified Christian, he whose soul is already dead to this world, who is ready to die out of this world: Those who live most with God, whose souls being weaned from this milk and honey, can keep their distance from it, whose self-denying course hath made the pleasures of the flesh to lose their gratefulness to them; whom their communion with God, their converse with Eternity, their delightful fore-views of the pleasures above, have already carried up their hearts; these are the Christians that are ready to be

gone: I will believe such an one, that he is in earnest, when he says, Make hast my beloved.

3. From an uncertainty whither they shall go, when they go hence; what world they shall find, when they leave this: Upon this ground I cannot blame worldlings to be afraid to die: art thou afraid? Thou mayst well enough; for whither will thy death carry thee? O the Lord knows! I know not whither, nor where it will lay me; Dost thou not know whither death will carry thee? Thou mayst be sure into no good place, if it find thee thus: Captives to the world are Captives to the Devil, and whither will the Devil carry his prisoners?

Who would be willing to leave his Country, his habitation, and acquaintance, for an unknown Land, especially when he had a jealousy he should be sold for a Bondman? Is this thy case Worldling? I wonder not that thou sayest, Its better to abide here.

A Christian may know whither he is going when he goes hence, 2 Cor. 5:1. We know that if our earthly house of this Tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. And hence says the Apostle, v. 2. We groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. Whatever our dwelling be here, we know where we shall have a better when this fails; we groan not under the ruins of this, but in hopes of a better building, earnestly desiring that joyful day.

Its true, Christians may be at some uncertainty, through the weakness of their faith, and in doubts what their place and portion hereafter may be; and therefore also may fear to be gone.

But however, upon the whole, thus far forth every Believer is willing to die; though he still feel a natural dread of death, though by reason of the

remainders of flesh, he be too much taken with the pleasure of an earthly life, and being at some uncertainty, and under some doubts what his future estate after death may be, he may linger and hang back; yet were these doubts removed, and were he grown to an assurance, that whenever his soul looses from this body, it should immediately be received into the Paradise of God; he so much prefers a life with God, in perfect holiness and blessedness, above the most prosperous worldly life, that though his flesh could wish a longer stay, yet his spirit would be willing, whenever the Lord calls, to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.

And according as the mortification of his flesh, his Crucifixion to the world, and his assurance of salvation, grow more complete and clear, so is his willingness heightened into more earnest desires and longings: Come Lord Jesus, why doth my Lord delay his coming? When Lord? When shall this dust return to the earth, and this spirit to God that gave it? Make haste my beloved, and come away.

Oh Brethren, what an argument is here to press you to put hard for this Victory over the World? When the World is Conquered, death is Conquered, the fear of death ceases: Would you be delivered from this fear? Would you not count it a mercy better than life to be bold to die? Arise then and buckle on your armor, treat this world no longer as a friend, but deal with it as an enemy; watch against it, fight against it, and what day you prevail over it, you have both won the field of all your doubts and fears, (Victory over this world is a sure evidence for heaven) and got the Mastery of your carnal hearts, which alone make death formidable or unwelcome.

Brethren, death comes, you know, and it may be upon you on a sudden; do you not perceive its approaches? Do we not, some of us, already feel our Tabernacles to totter? Do not the walls molder? The windows grow dim?

Do not our pillars shake, and grow weak under us? You that are youngest and strongest, do you not know that death may be at the door? Do you know what a day or a night may bring forth? Are you ready to be gone? Are you bold to go forth, and meet this last Enemy? Or do you not shake and shrink at the very mention of it? Be mortified once, and then let death do its worst: Give the Word leave to kill this world, give the spirit leave to kill this flesh, and then you may give death leave to do its office.

Consider, whither ever you go you carry your life in your hand, and know not whether ever you shall bring it back. O think with yourselves, when you are going forth into the field, think with yourselves, I carry my life in my hand, and God knows whether ever I may return with it, whether ever I may come home alive; when you go into the house, think with thyself, God knows whether ever I may come abroad; when you arise in the morning, God knows whether my next lodging may not be in the dust; when you lie down in the evening, God knows where my soul may be before morning; I may awaken in another world, and what if I should awaken in flames, and feel this soul wrapped up in a winding sheet of fire? Is there no fear it may be so? Hath this world kept me from Christ all my life long, and will it let me to heaven at last? Hath it held me in Chains all my time here? How will it use me when it carries me hence?

Are you ready to die? How shall I die when this earth is still my treasure? Take away my God's, and what have I more? How shall I die, when my soul hangs in doubt? Whither must I when I go hence? Can I follow this grisly Messenger, when I know not whither he will lead me? Let mine Enemy die first, let sin and the World die; let mine Enemy be dead, and let him that liveth be my friend, let me cease from this earth, and let heaven be my treasure, and then I shall be willing to be gone.

Be it thus with you Friends, and then you will be ready to be offered up: Whatever Executioner be now sent to take away your life, if old age be sent, if a disease, a Fever or Consumption; if a distaste, a fall, or a fire, or any the like casualties; if a son of violence, a thief, or a murderer; whatever Executioner be sent to take away your life, and whenever he comes, whether in the first, second, or third Watch, you will say with the Apostle, The time of my departure is at hand, I am ready to be offered up; I desire to depart and to be with Christ: Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.

And now at length, Behold the man. Here is the Conqueror, and this is his Victory.

He that is come unto Christ, to whom the world hath ceased to be his treasure, and he hath accepted of God as his happiness and Heritage; the moderation of whose affections to things earthly, doth evidence that they are now only his means, not his end: He that can manage his worldly affairs without the prejudice of his soul; that whatever his hand finds to do, hath still an eye to the main; that overcharges not with business, but makes business leave room for duty; that so cares for the Oxen and the Asses, that he neglect not the souls of his sons or servants; that in all his dealings, hath a due respect to truth, righteousness, and mercy; that will be true, though to his own hindrance, that will be poor, rather than dishonest or unmerciful, whom the whole world cannot hire to lie, or be unrighteous: He that can use the world to its proper end, all for God; he that can want the worlds good things, or suffer the worlds evil things, and can keep his heart and his way, whether he prosper or suffer; that can deny his flesh when he hath to satisfy it; that can want, and be content; suffer, and be patient; that is humble in the height of honor, magnanimous in the depth of danger and difficulty, that

keeps in an even equal poise, sober, temperate, serious, in all the turns and changes of his life. He that can thus live in the world, and can die out of the world, that is willing to be gone; this is the Conqueror, and here is his victory.

CHAP VII. – Use 1: The application made of the whole.

THE APPLICATION THAT I shall make of the whole, shall be by way of Information and Conviction.

Direction and Exhortation.

1. By way of Information and Conviction. Learn from what hath been said,

1. That every Captive to the World is an unbeliever.

2. That where there is but little power over the World, there is but little Faith.

1. Every Captive to the World is an unbeliever; without Christ, and in the state of damnation: Oh think not light of your worldliness, 'tis a death token upon you, and such as marks you up with those that perish; that this is certainly so, that every worldling is an unbeliever and unconverted, I shall make evident by these infallible demonstrations.

1. Can that man be a believer, who is a lover of the world more than a lover of God? Art thou a believer who lovest not? Canst thou say thou lovest God, when the better part of thine heart is with the world? Will this

be accepted, when thou canst only say, Lord, I bring thee half mine heart, and but the least half neither; here 'tis divided, let the world I pray thee have the first choice, and take thou all that the world leaves? Give me leave first to mind my earthly things, and next to these, God shall be regarded? Speak Conscience, will God accept such a gift? Such a little piece of a soul, when the main is bestowed on another? Will God say, Surely this is my Child, surely this is my Servant, next to the world he loves me best of all? Do ye think he will? What saith the Scripture? Mat. 10:37. He that loveth Father or Mother more than me, is not worthy of me; he that loveth Son or Daughter more than me, is unworthy of me. Find, if you can, a more convincing argument of an unbeliever, then that of the Apostle, 2 Tim. 3:4. A lover of pleasure more than a lover of God.

He that loveth the world more than God, is none of his; that cannot be denied. And art thou not the man? Dost thou love God as thou lovest the world? Let thy life speak; what seekest thou? Whom servest thou? Where dost thou bestow thy self? In whom dost thou bless thyself? What is the chief pleasure and comfort of thy life? Is God he? Is it God whom thou seekest, and servest, and blessest thyself in? Does not thine heart know that thy Mammon is the God whom thou servest? That thou lovest to be rich, and to prosper in the world, more than ever thou lovedst to be holy and righteous before God.

Dost thou love God? Where are thy labors of love? What hast thou done for God ever since thou wert born? Where are thy fruits thou hast brought forth unto the Lord? Hast thou been serving God all thy days, and yet hast nothing to show of all that thou hast done? Thou hast something to show for thy serving the world; this house thou hast gotten, or that Farm, or these Sheep and Oxen, or this stock of money; something thou hast to show, to

prove thee a servant of the world; but hast thou been serving God all thy time, and hast nothing to show for it? Sure Brethren, worldly men are either very fools, or very false to themselves, if they do not condemn themselves here. I confess I have done little for God all my time; I have been busy for this world, but I confess I have but loitered, and neglected the things of the other world. I must never lie for the matter, mine own Conscience tells me 'tis thus.

Foolish soul, Hast thou served the world more than God, and canst thou yet make thyself believe, thou lovest God more than the world? To say thou lovest God above all, though thou hast but little sought or served him; is to say, I love him above all, but I care not much for him; if another man should have said so, would not thine own heart have laughed at him for a fool, or condemned him for a liar?

Tremble Worldling, and hear this first evidence against thee; thy whole life tells thee thou lovest the world more than thou lovest God; and God himself tells thee, that he that loveth the world more than God, is none of his.

2. Is he a believer that is not come to Christ? Coming to Christ, and believing in Christ are the same, Joh. 6:35. Art thou come unto Christ? Whence art thou come? From the world? What, and yet thine heart still in the world? Art thou come to Christ, who art still where thou wert, when thou wert without Christ? Canst thou be here and there too? Deceive not thyself, thou mayst as well be at once in heaven and hell, as thine heart be in Christ, and in the world.

Are Christ and the world friends? Are God and Mammon become but one Master? Are the two kingdoms united, and may the same persons at once be subjects of them both?

Hath Christ ever said, be mine, and then stay where thou art? List thy name under me for a Disciple, and then go and serve the world still? Be proud, be covetous, be sensual, be in all things as the men of this world are, only be my Disciple?

Is not the renouncing of the world, included in our coming to Christ? Doth not he that saith to thee, Come, first say, depart? And is not thy coming to Christ, in the very nature of it, a departing from the world, thy choosing of him, a refusing of it? When Christ and the world are offered to thy choice, canst thou choose both? Must thou not necessarily take to the one, and let the other go?

And hast thou renounced the world, who art still a worldling? What hast thou renounced of it? Or how far forth hast thou renounced it? Is it not thy treasure still? Is it not thy Lord still? Is not this it which thou still takest, as thy governor and reward.

Doest thou love it as thy God, and serve it as thy God, and hold it fast as thy God, and yet hast thou renounced it? Does everyone that knows thee point with the finger at thee, there goes an earthworm, there goes a Mammonist, there lives a true drudge to the world, and wilt thou yet say, I have done with the world?

Is thy lust, and thine appetite after more, as greedy, and insatiable as ever? Is thy love, and delight, and rest in what thou hast, as great as ever? Is it so hard to get anything out of thine hand for God, so that that little which comes, must be wrung as so many drops of blood from thine heart? Art thou so pinching and sparing, that scarce any without thine own belly is ever the better for thee, and hast thou yet renounced the world.

Art thou so crucified, and vexed, and tormented, when thou art crossed or miscarriest in any little of thy worldly interest, and canst thou yet say, I am

crucified to the world?

Can the world make thee lie, and dissemble, and play the knave, when tis for thy advantage; can it command thy conscience, and thy religion, and thy hopes, to do obeisance to it; can it keep thee out of thy closet, out of the Church; must prayers and sabbaths and sermons and Sacraments be neglected, when the world hath any business for thee, and hath it still so much business for thee, that thou canst scarce have one prayer or one Sabbath clear of its encroachment? Doth it follow thee into thy closet, and follow thee into the congregation, and so fill thine head and take away thine heart, that thou canst make nothing of thy religion? Or whatsoever transactions there have been sometimes betwixt the Lord and thy Soul, doth the World still meet thee at the door and make all void and null? Hath it held thee in such ignorance, and Atheism, that under all the means of knowledge and grace, thou still livest without God in the World, and canst thou yet say thou hast shaken off its yoke.

Stand worldling and hear this farther evidence; Thy greediness, thy penuriousness, thy lying and defrauding, thy neglected duties, thy neglected sabbaths thy neglected Soul and all upon the Worlds account, these will tell thee thou hast not renounced the World, and that will convict thee, that thou art not come unto Christ, nor hast be lieved on him.

3. Is he a believer who hath [absolutely] chosen this world, and hath only [conditionally] chosen Christ? Who will first seek his own things, and in the second place, the things of Christ? Who will model his Christianity into a consistency with his carnal interest? Is he a believer who will have both if it may be, Christ and this World too, but if he cannot have both, will let Christ go? Is he a Christian that says, I will serve Christ though it cost me nothing, I will be for him when I have nothing else to do, he shall have all my spare

hours, if that will content him? Is this to give Christ the preeminence, or is he a Christian, that will take in Christ to be an underling to the world?

What are the terms on which Christ is offered? Hath he given thee leave to make thine own terms? Or must thou not stand to his? What are Christ's terms, but that thou take him absolutely, that is purely on his own terms without putting in any of thine. Dost thou understand what his conditions are? Is it only, that he shall be second in the kingdom? That he shall be obeyed in all things provided the world do not contradict it? Is this Christianity, that the world should be suffered to give check to the authority and interest of Christ?

And is not this all thy Christianity? Thou sayest indeed, thou hast chosen Christ absolutely; God forbid that I should prefer anything before Christ, that I should mind anything more than Christ; I mind the World, tis true, and I ought so to do; but Christ hath my heart, and I had rather lose all that ever I have, then at last be found out of Christ.

But consider; thou mayst best judge of thine heart by thy life; as I said before, so I demand of thee again, whither does the course of thy life mainly bend? What art thou doing all the year round? What proportion hath Christ of thy daily care and labor? Speak truth; would not thine heart tell thee thou liest, if thou say, thou art more earnestly and more constantly caring for the things of Christ, then of the world?

Again, thou mayst best Judge of thy choice by observing thy critical hours. How is it ordinarily with thee, when Christ and the World stand in competition? When it comes to be a case, that one of the two must be neglected, which of the two then use to carry thee?

Thou knowest thou hast often neglected Christ for the world; thou knowest that thy businesses, or thy pleasures, or thy companions have often

lost thee a prayer, or a Sabbath, or a sermon; thou wouldst have prayed oftener, or heard oftener, but thou couldst not have leisure: thou knowest it hath been too often thus: and consider if it be not commonly thus. How seldom is it that thou canst remember, that thou hast carried thyself as a Christian, to thy loss; that thou hast followed Christ in any duties, when thou knewest it would have been more to thy profit, to have put Christ off to another time. Many a time have thy gains, or thy friends, or thy pleasures, lost thee thy conscience, but how often couldst thou ever say, My conscience hath lost me a friend, my conscience hath lost me a good bargain? Whatever Christ hath at any time called thee to, If thou couldst say, it is not for mine ease, it is not for my credit, it is not for my safety to hearken, hath not this been counted argument enough to hold thee back, and excuse sufficient to save thee from blame?

And wilt thou yet say, thou hast chosen Christ absolutely? Or canst thou think thyself a true believer, who hast chosen him only conditionally? Is this the Christianity on which thou wilt venture thy Soul, I will be for Christ as far as the world, and this flesh, or (which is all one) as far as the Devil will give me leave?

I have known some poor ignorant wretches, whom when I have been pressing to a serious minding of God, and their eternal concernment, they have answered me, why I do, as far as God will give me leave; No, no wretch, thou mistakest, tis only as far as the Devil will give thee leave; and this is the common case of Worldlings; thou that wilt be a Christian no farther than the World will give thee leave, wilt be such, no farther than the Devil will give thee leave; and sure thou that wilt be a Christian no farther than the Devil will give thee leave, when he will give thee leave, thou shalt to Heaven.

Wanton, when wilt thou be chaste? When my flesh will give me leave. Drunkard, when wilt thou be sober? When my companions will give me leave. Earthworm, when wilt thou to Christ? When the World will give me leave: how much of Christianity wilt thou take up? What the world will allow me: how much is that? As much as please the Devil. But when wilt thou to Heaven then? Why when the flesh and the World and the Devil are all agreed to send me thither.

Stand Worldling, this once more stand, and hear thy whole evidence; Thou art a lover of the world more than a lover of God; thou art not come unto Christ; or if thou seem to be come, thou hast accepted of him only on condition, that though thou be his Disciple, yet thou mayst still continue a servant to this world. Surely if the God of this world, who hath blinded thy mind, that thou believe not, had not so blinded thee, that thou canst not see thine unbelief, thine own heart would condemn thee, and thine own hand would subscribe thy sentence; and this is thy sentence, That thou art yet under the dominion, and therefore under the damnation of the world; Thy soul abideth in death, and the wrath of God abideth on thee.

Thou art a man of this world, thou hast taken thy portion in this life, and art like to have no better than thou hast chosen: If thy day run out thus, thy word at last will be that which was the rich man's, Luke 16. Son, remember thou hast received thy good things. Oh what's the meaning of that word? Why this is the meaning of it, thou hast all the good that thou art like to have forever; an end, an end is come upon all thy comforts, the Sun is set upon all thy good days, not one good day, not one merry hour more forever and ever; thou hast had thy day, henceforth nothing remains to thee, but an eternal night, the blackness of darkness forever; thy temporal joys are swallowed up of everlasting sorrows, thy honors are expired into

everlasting contempt, thy riches have taken wings, and now thy poverty is come upon thee as an armed man, which thou shalt not escape. All this is included in this word, which will be thy word, Thou hast received thy good things.

What eyes have ye, O ye sons of the earth, if you do not yet see? What hearts have you, if you do not yet tremble? The Lord be merciful to me, if these things be so, what's like to become of me? I have spun a fair thread; Oh I have coveted an evil covetousness, I have been busy in gathering dirt, and building my Nest, and providing for my young, but whither is my soul taking her flight? If the rest of my days be as the days that are past, (and God knows whether after so long an Apprentice I may ever go out free) if the rest of my days be as the days that are past, what remains but a fearful expectation of wrath and fiery indignation, which will devour me forever? I have kindled a fire, and compassed myself about with sparks, and after I have walked a while in the light of my fire, and of the sparks that I have kindled, this shall I have of the hand of the most High, I shall lie down in sorrow.

O ye worldlings, shake up out of your stupendous security; will you yet receive the Word of the Lord, and suffer yourselves to be convinced? Will you yet believe yourselves to be unbelievers? What say you? Do you not believe that Worldlings are unbelievers? Can you have any other thought but you are Worldlings?

Open your eyes upon all your ways, view the whole course of your life, what it hath been from your first time until now, and let Conscience speak freely.

If these two things might stick in your hearts, that you are Worldlings, and that Worldlings have no part in Christ, then there were hope, that you would

accept of those counsels which I shall give you from the Lord, in order to your escape, after I have first urged the second word of Conviction.

2. That where there is but little power over the world, there is but little Faith. As the first Conviction will overthrow the Faith of some, and prove it a mere nullity, so this will call in question the confidence of others, and at least take them some degrees lower.

There are some Professors who have a name among the first three of the Worthies of our Lord; have the site and the aspect of stars of the first magnitude, and are ranked among the chief of Saints; who have risen high in the easier and sweeter, but less significant parts of Religion; who have gotten the language, and tasted, as they imagine, of the milk and honey of Canaan, and learned much of the more pleasing manners of that good Land; who seem to be of the more intimate acquaintance of the sublimer spirit, and power of the Gospel, and to be much elevated in the spirituality of their notions and duties, above the attainments of vulgar Christians; and hence are grown up in their own and others apprehensions, to be as the Cedars of the Lord among the lower shrubs; whom yet if we inquire into, about those severer points, of mortification, self-denial, and crucifixion to the world, possibly they may be found in these things as low as the least of Saints: The faith of these, if it prove to be the faith of God's Elect at all, yet sure it will be found to be by many degrees less then it appears; and these *arietes gregis*, must yet for the real spirit of faith and holiness, come behind the littles ones of the flock? Where there is but little power over the world, there is but little faith.

In order to the managing, and carrying home this Conviction, consider, that,

1. According to the truth or falsehood of our faith, so are we either Conquerors, or Captives to the world.

2. According to the proportion of our faith, so will this victory over the world be more complete or imperfect.

1. According to the truth or falsehood of our faith, so are we either Conquerors, or Captives to the world. Every unbeliever is a Captive, every believer is a Conqueror of the world; both these have been already proved.

Faith is our choosing and laying hold on another portion; our resigning ourselves to the dominion of another Lord: the world is gone, when it may no longer be our Ruler or reward.

Faith changes the heart, Act. 15:9, it kills the Spirit of this World, and that other Spirit that rises up in its room, is this Spirit of faith. By faith Christ is formed upon the heart, the old Soul is made new, renewed after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness: this new Soul is suited to a new treasure; earthly things wax old, and old things pass away, when the soul is made new: 'tis argument enough that thou art an unbeliever, and an enemy to the Cross of Christ, that thou still mindest earthly things, Philip. 3:19.

2. According to the proportion of our faith, so will this victory over the world be more complete or imperfect. We may best take the height and degree of our faith, by observing the elevation of our spirits above the earth: a low and earthly spirit, whatever show it makes, is but of little faith: Faith hath a general influence upon every grace and lust; as to the nourishing of the one, so to the withering of the other; lust and the world run parallel; where one is, there you shall find the other, on the Throne, or at the footstool: Faith lays lust in the dirt, and the world ever falls with it: Faith is our arm, and according as this arm grows stronger, so is the blow it gives to our Enemy, more mortal. The power of God is revealed in us from faith to

faith; there is a more abundant communication, and a more vigorous exerting of this Divine Power where faith is grown; where we are but of little strength, its certain we are but weak in faith; and where our adversary is so strong, 'tis argument enough that we are weak.

Growth in grace is then proved to be most real, when 'tis most equal and universal; 'tis an imperfection in Nature where one member outgrows the rest; as grace and peace, so grace and grace have their due proportions each to other: great peace, and little grace, will make it questionable, whether that peace be peace; something of one grace, and nothing of another, will make it as doubtful, whether that grace be grace; high in knowledge, and low in love; strong in confidence, and loose in conscience; hot in affection, and cold in practice; in the solaces of the spirit, and yet walking in the flesh: Behold a Christian, like Nebuchadnezzar's Image, the head of gold, the feet of iron and clay; *desinit in piscem mulier formosa superne*.

It is strange to observe what contradictions some Professors of Christianity are; they are what they are not, they are not what they are: whilst they would be the great reconcilers of flesh and spirit, of earth and heaven, and make the serving of God and their own bellies, the same service, behold how they are divided from themselves; they love God, and love him not; they serve God, and serve him not; this they may do as well as love God, and this present world.

Oh how different are many of us from ourselves; our practices from our principles, our doings from our sayings; and yet how little differing from others: you pray as others do not, you hear as others do not, you swear not as others, you curse not as others; but do you not covet as others? Are you not carnal as others? Consider your ways, who more intent upon their present commodity, who more hot upon the chase of an earthly inheritance,

then some of those who profess to have laid up their treasure in heaven? Are there none to be sound, who pretend to the greatest confidence of Divine Love, to the highest pitch of Spirituality and Divine Communion; who seem to pant after the Lord, and breath out their souls in their warm and passionate duties, and yet are eaten out, and swallowed up of the cares of this life?

It is an amazing thing to consider, what a strange degree of earthliness is to be found among such; what insatiable hunger, what indefatigable labor after an increase of their estates? How little respect to soul or conscience, where their gain is concerned? How ordinarily dispensing with lying, promise breaking, and almost any unrighteousness, when 'tis for their advantage? How many grains must there be allowed them, e're charity itself can judge them honest?

And where is all bestowed that is thus gotten in? How little goes out for God, or any of his? How many hypocritical bemoaning's of the hard case of the poor, to one liberal alms? Some gather only that they may lay up, others that they may have to spend upon their lusts, to build them houses, and furnish their tables, to trim their carcasses, to please their eye, or their palates; and all this either justified and allowed, or at least made up with some such hypocritical complaints, Woe is me this world is too hard for me, O it eats up my time, O it steals away mine heart; how am I overcharged, how is my soul even choked within me, what shall I do to help it? And when the complaint is thus made, the matter is mended; now a good Christian, now ease, and joy, and confidence returns; and then on again the same course.

Brethren be serious; consider yourselves, feel your own pulses, view your own faces, and ways, observe your hearts, see where their daily walks are;

may you not find them ten times walking to and fro through the earth, to once or twice casting a look towards heaven?

What are their daily tasks? What is the work you every day put them upon? Instead of those higher and nobler Offices of Vessels of Honor, waiting before the Throne of God, standing in his Courts, bearing his Name, beholding his Face, setting forth his Praises; have not our hearts been made, hewers of wood, and drawers of water, carriers of burdens, servers of tables, purveyors for the flesh, caterers for the appetite, servants to the back and the belly, the great traders and merchants of the earth, to buy in provision for lust? Worthy employment for immortal Souls; as if the utensils of the Temple, the golden altar, the golden table, the candlesticks, the bowls and the basons, all of beaten gold, should have been fetched out and set up in a blind Inn or a dirty alehouse, for the service and the pleasure of every drunken companion,

Have not your Souls, none of you, been thus dealt withal? Are not these your heart-works? When anything is to be done for God, the body must do that; the body must to the closet, the tongue must pray, the ear must hear, the eye must read, but the Soul must stay abroad; when any thing is to be done for the other world, that must be but bodily exercise, but when this flesh must be served, that's the heart-work, that's work for the Soul. If these Souls could be seen with bodily eyes, a man that goes into the field, or into a fair, or to a feast, might see a hundred Souls more there than bodies; and he that went into the congregation of the Lord, if there were never so great a throng, may be, he might see but a few hearts in the company.

Christians consider, is this your faith? Is this your victory over the world? Is this to be mortified? Is this to be crucified with Christ? Or to have your

conversation in Heaven? Or can you think yourselves believers, especially of so high a form, when so earthly and carnal?

What think you of those Jews, of whom the Lord speaks, Ezek. 33:31. They come unto thee as the people cometh, they sit before thee as my people; they hear thy words, but they will not do them, with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goes after their covetousness. Are these the people of God, all whose religion is to come to hear, and to pray? To have a mouth full of God, a mouth full of love, and a heart full of covetousness?

Give me leave to interpose a word or two to the carrying on the former conviction, as to many professors of religion, in order whereto let us a little consider that Scripture, Philip. 3:18,19. Where the Apostle speaks of a sort of professors much of this earthly make, and he speaks with tears in his eyes. Many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ; whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things.

In the former part of the chapter you may observe how,

1. He gives an account of himself, and his own Christianity: and this in these particulars.

1. He set such a high rate on Christ, and an interest in his righteousness, that in comparison hereof, he counted all things else but loss and dung: let this gain be loss, this earth be dung, trodden underfoot as dung, cast out as dung, so I may win Christ and be found in him.

2. He unites interest in Christ, with conformity to Christ: they lie both together in the same heart, and his Soul is making out after both in the same breath. That I may win Christ and be found in him; and that I may know

him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death. He would not only rejoice in Christ, he would not only live in Christ, but be dead with Christ; and then be raised with Christ above these earthly things: he would have his interest in the death and resurrection of Christ, witnessed by fellowship with him in both, by the power of his death and resurrection, made manifest in him: he would that both the death of Jesus, and the life of Jesus, be made manifest in his mortal flesh.

3. He sets his face, and bends his whole course towards the obtaining of Christ: I follow after: I press towards the mark: and this not in his prayers only, but in his whole practice, this one thing I do: this one is all: whatever I am doing, this I am doing, I have nothing else to do, nothing else to do, nothing else to seek, but this interest and conformity to Christ.

4. He turns his back upon all things else: forgetting those things that are behind: that is, not only his pharisaical righteousness, and his external privileges, to which this especially refers, but much more, all carnal and earthly things, v. 8. Yea doubtless I count all things but loss: he leaves all behind; first he sets his feet upon them, and treads them into dung, and then he turns his back upon them, and leaves them all behind; and henceforth his whole conversation is heavenward, v. 20, our conversation is in Heaven. Lo this is the man who is bold to say of himself, Galat. 6:14. The World is crucified unto me, and I unto the World.

2. He proposes himself as a pattern to all believers, v. 15,17. Let us be thus minded: I have told you my mind, come let's be all of one mind, and be ye followers together of me: let your heart be as my heart, let your conversation be as my conversation: my conversation is in Heaven, come along and there let yours be also.

3. He points with the finger at some among them, who though they professed Christ with them, and worshiped God with them, and walked with them, yet they walked not after them: and sets this brand upon them, They are the enemies of the cross of Christ; whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, who mind earthly things.

Here are the men and their censure; here is their mark and their brand; their mark or description, whose God is their belly, who mind earthly things; their brand and their doom, the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction.

Professor, is thy face like the faces of these? Is thy heart, and thy way as the heart of these? So shall the judgment be: You say as the Apostle, v. 3. We are the circumcision, we are Christ's, we worship God in the Spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. But yet have you not fellowship with the flesh? Do you not walk after the flesh? Even whilst you pretend to rejoice in Christ Jesus, and to worship God in the Spirit?

Oh how many such marked and branded Disciples, may we find among us! Whom while their lusts have marked, for belly-gods and earthly minded, the word hath branded for enemies, and vessels of destruction: whilst the Devil hath branded, and the World hath branded the whole generation of the Saints, for a proud, deceitful, earthly, self-seeking generation, Christ hath set this brand on thee, earthly sensual devilish.

Oh brethren, if we could speak of these with the heart of the Apostle, we should with his tears also; we should speak weeping, that they are the enemies of the Cross of Christ; the wounds, and the sores, and the scabs, the shame and the reproach of the profession of the Gospel: good had it been for the Gospel, if never a good word of it had ever proceeded out of such

mouths; and better had it been for such souls, if they had never known, nor so much as heard of the Gospel of Christ.

Friends, if you do not yet fall a weeping for yourselves, for your hypocrisy, your carnality; for yourself-seeking, and self-deceiving, my soul weep thou in secret for them: Oh that mine head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for you, till either this earth be thrown out of your hearts, or the name of Christ out of your mouths: O for more of the Gospel, or for less; for more of the power, or nothing of the name; for more of its holiness, or less of its hopes, and boastings; come ye and be crucified to this world, or talk no more of the Cross of Christ.

Oh how many enemies hath the Cross of Christ made him! Oh how few friends have the severities of Christ left him? Are those the friends of Christ, who are the enemies of his Cross? Are you the friends of Christ, who are the intimates of the world? Will professing, and praying, and hearing, baptize such into the name of Disciples? If lying, and promise breaking, if serving of bellies and satiating of appetites, if pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness, or abundance of labor, a little tipped over with a silver tongue, be the marks of Disciples, we may find them walking on every side, whole Towns, whole Countries of them: if these may be reckoned for the seed, how great a herd would the little flock become? If those Swine that are rooting in the earth, or wallowing in the mire, must go all for Lambs; if these Sensualists, and earth-creepers must all be thrown into the number; if the wise of the world, Politicians and Projectors, must all pass under the same name, to what a bulk would the Body of Christ swell? But if all these, these speckled and spotted, must be set aside as none of the sheep, oh what a small parcel will there then be left: If of earth-

worms and Epicures it must be said, these are not they, the next word may almost be, where are they to be found?

But be not deceived, God is not mocked; as you sow, so shall you also reap; your sowing to the flesh, even while you boast of the spirit, is conviction enough whose you are, and what your end will be, whose end is destruction.

Ob. But I mean not for all this, to cast away my confidence; God forbid that I should think, that I have professed in vain, that I have heard, and prayed, and believed all this while in vain; I know whom I have believed, I feel that I love God, and I am persuaded that nothing shall separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord; whatever corruptions I have, yet the spirit witnesses with my spirit, that I am the Child of God, I am sealed by that holy spirit unto the day of Redemption, and I will not cast away my confidence.

Sol. The meaning of all these good words may be no more but this, you will hold your Opinion against the greatest evidence of Scripture and Reason: For what is that which thou callest the witness and the seal of the spirit, but an Opinion of thine own; a voice within thee, or a strong persuasion of thine own heart, that thou art of God? Which because it is attested by some gifts of the spirit, and some affectionate workings of thine heart, at times, heavenward; thou takest to be the voice of the Divine Spirit, though it be never so contradictory to the Word of God; and so wilt hold thy confidence, notwithstanding what the Word speaks to the contrary.

But that thou mayst no longer thus deceive thy self, know and consider,
That the Spirit witnesses and seals in this double way,
By being the mark of the Lord upon us.

By being the light of the Lord in us, whereby we come to discern the mark of the Lord upon us.

1. By being the mark of the Lord upon us, 1 Joh. 3:24, he that keepeth his commandments, dwelleth in him, and he in him, hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us. By the Spirit we are to understand, the graces of the Spirit; that holiness and heavenliness of mind, which the Spirit hath wrought upon us. The spirit of God forms us into his own likeness, and this image of the Spirit is God's mark upon us.

As men's, so Christ's sheep may be known whose they are, by their masters mark upon them: whose mark is an earthly mind? Is it of Christ, or is it not the mark of the God of this world? Holiness and spirituality is the mark of Christ, earthliness and sin is of the Devil. To whom does thy Soul belong? The Spirit, thou sayest, witnesseth that thou belongest to God; I but whose mark is it that is upon thee? Is this covetousness and greediness upon the world, is this lying and defrauding, this unrighteousness and unmercifulness, which the world can ordinarily command thee to, is this the mark of God or the Devil? The Devil is this thy master, for behold his mark still upon thee.

It's true Christ buys all his sheep out of the Devils flock; but whatever sheep he buys and brings home, he scrapes out the old, and claps on his own mark upon it: and though there be some prints of the old yet remaining, (till we have put off flesh some dirt will stick) yet the new mark which Christ hath set on, now carries it.

Say not thou art sealed with the Spirit, whatever thy comforts or confidences have been, unless thou seest his mark upon thee; say not thou art marked by the Spirit, whilst the Devils mark [an earthly mind] is the most visible and conspicuous upon thee.

2. By being the light of the Lord within us, whereby we are able to discern our Lord's mark upon us, 1 Cor. 2:12.

The Devil so amuses and deludes Souls, that they often know not what to make of themselves; but conclude themselves to be quite another thing then they are: and this he doth by this threefold device; by,

Counterfeiting Christ's mark, Palliating his own mark, Blurring and blinding the mark of Christ.

1. By counterfeiting Christ's mark, and setting it on his own sheep. Christ marks his sheep especially in the heart; that's the throne of the Spirit, that's the seat of Grace, the heart; the Devil can do something to the counterfeiting of this; he can make common grace look like saving grace, he can paint the face of a Saint upon the heart of a beast.

But he can more easily dissemble the outward marks of Christ. Christ hath his outward marks; his earmark, Joh. 10:27. My sheep, hear my voice. His mark in the forehead, the owning or confessing of Christ before men, Luk. 12:8. He that confesseth me before men him will I confess before my father which is in Heaven. His mark in the mouth; he circumcises their lip, and makes them a people of a pure language, Zeph. 3:9. All these the Devil can counterfeit with more ease: he can bring his sheep to hear Christ's preaching: he can bring them to own and confess Christ before men: he can teach his to pray, and to be expert in the language of Disciples: and when he hath done thus, then he tells them, see thou art one of Christ's; for behold thou prayest, and hearest and confessest Christ; and what are these but Christ's marks upon thee; when whatever is upon the tongue or the forehead, the image of the Devil is still upon the heart,

2. By palliating his own mark: Christ's mark upon thee? I but whose is that, this earthly mind, that stands above it? O he hath a device for that too:

he hath a cloak for covetousness: 'tis but providence, or good husbandry; nay this gain is godliness: all this carking and caring and drudging for the world, is but in obedience to the will of God, to provide things honest in the sight of all men. And in this the Devil is so damnably successful, that it is one of the hardest tasks, to help poor worldlings to the sight of what's under this cloak, though all that know thee, do see that thou art an earthworm, yet thou wilt not be brought to see thyself.

And as the Devil thus deceives his own, so he distresses the Saints,

3. By blurring Christ's mark that it cannot easily be seen, or known to be his. As he can make a mere paint look like sincerity, so he can make sincerity look like hypocrisy: as many carnal confidants bless themselves in the opinion of their uprightness; so many mortified, broken, upright hearts condemn themselves for hypocrites: though Christ be in them, and hath set his seal upon their hearts, yet the Devil raises up so many black mists, of melancholic thoughts and fears, that they cannot see what there is of Christ in them; and thereupon they judge very sadly of their case. I doubt I am a hypocrite, and none of Christ's, for what is there of the grace of Christ found in me?

But now the Spirit of the Lord; as it works grace in the heart, so it gives light to the eye: it brings men's persuasions and opinions to the word, and compares them with that; it searches the scriptures, and shows the Soul what Christ's mark is; it irradiates the heart, and shows the very same mark which is written in the word, stamped upon the Soul, and thereby establishes it in power; if there be no such mark found there, but the quite contrary to it, the peace that's spoken is not of the Spirit of God, but of the Devil.

Worldly professor, dost thou not see the scripture death-mark upon thee? Or if thou doest not, does not everyone that knows thee, behold it? Doth not this earthly mind, appear upon thy forehead, upon thy tongue, upon the palms of thine hands, and the prints of thy feet? May not thy love of the world be read in every look, in every word, in every line of thy life? And wilt thou yet say, it's the Spirit of the Lord that speaks peace to thee? Whose mark is this [they mind earthly things?] of them that are saved, or of them that perish? And is not this the most proper character that can be given of thee? See and take more perfect knowledge of thyself: canst thou not see? Hast thou received the Spirit, and yet not so much light, as to discern betwixt earth and Heaven?

Is the Lord divided; and become contrary to himself? Do not his hand and his seal agree? Does his word write this man no child, and is that his Spirit that calls thee, a child of God? Once again, see and compare the writings; that in the word, and that in thy heart; and if the voice within thee be not according, call it not the witness of the Spirit, but the false witness of the Devil.

If thou wilt yet understand thyself no better, (it's much to be feared, thou wilt not; there's too much dust in thine eye, for thee to see it,) If thou wilt not see it, yet there it stands written upon thee in most legible characters, a minder of earthly things, whose end is destruction.

But beloved, I am persuaded better things of you, to whom I am now speaking; even you of little faith; though it may be of a great name: yet with you also must I plead a while, and tell you from the Lord that I have somewhat against you: and oh were it but a little somewhat, that I have to speak, even against you: but sure, there is very much to be spoken, unless you will save me the labor, and speak against yourselves. So much may be

said, as if it be duly considered may take you down many rounds lower than you imagine yourselves to have ascended? How few of you that are risen with Christ, but are too often letting your affections run down again to this earth? Who though you have really counted this earth but dung, yet are too greedily gathering up this dung into your bosoms; that have your hands full and your mouths full of this dung and much more then you are aware of it is still in your hearts; that are not able to lose what you have accounted loss. In whom though Christ may be really formed, yet there appears little conformity, to his life or death. To whom though it hath been long since said, Lazarus come forth, yet to this day you have scarce gotten your heads above ground: whose bellies creep upon the dust, whilst your eyes and your hopes are in Heaven: in whom there is such a mixture of flesh and Spirit, that it's hard to discern, which hath the predominance: whose hearts seem still so divided betwixt Christ and the world, that no body that knows you can tell which hath the better part; whose time, and whose care, and whose labor, run out so much on things below, that without some great charity, it may be judged your hearts are there also: And yet, by some clearer insight into the mysteries of the Gospel; by some affectionate intercourses with God in your secret recesses and retirements from the world, by your serious heats and enlargements in your duties with others, by some tastes and relishes of the pleasure of ordinances, by some raptures of joy, and the seeming serenity and uncloudiness of your spirits, by not considering what abatement the carnality and earthliness of your course must necessarily make upon you, are grown to an hope and opinion that you are the highly favored of the Lord, and his greatly beloved.

But do you not blush then at your unworthiness? Are you not ashamed that such love, and such hopes, should no more wean your hearts from these

breasts of vanity, from which you suck nothing but filth or froth? That you should defile such a heavenly treasure, by lodging it in such earthen vessels; that you should so disgrace that divine portion which you count is yours, as that it should not be enough for you, but leave you as hungry as if you had no God, nor hope in him? That you should so disgrace your Fathers table, by your unnatural appetite after coals and dirt? Is your profession that God is your happiness, your treasure, your all, Is your none but Christ, come to more than this? Hath your covenanting with God, for renouncing the world, mortifying your flesh, denying yourself, brought forth no better fruits then these? Oh the impudence and disingenuity of our hearts, that can carry the conscience of such treachery before the Throne of Grace, without shame and consternation; how can you lift up your face before the Lord, without hanging down the head?

Nay, do you not fear that [your] hearts also have deceived you, and that matters may not be so well with you as you sometimes conclude? That your hopes are but delusory, that your joys are but dreams, and all your comforts are but the lying divinations and prophesies of your own deceived heart? Is it out of question with you, that you are risen with Christ, and ascended with Christ when these hearts are gotten no further up out of their graves?

Believe it Christians, the severities of Religion, will be a surer testimony to you, then all its suavities: an humble, patient, contented, self-denying, mortified Christian, under all his doubts and fears, under all his complaints of darkness and deadness, is fairer for heaven then you all.

Those are the joys of faith, which spring up out of the ruins of carnal joys; those are the genuine comforts, and delights of the Saints, that arise up out of the ashes of earthly delights; those are the confidences of true believers, which grow out of their contempt of the world; then will the world think

better of our Religion, and then may we hope better of ourselves, when the joy of the Lord is our strength, and the joys of the earth are strangers to us, and despised by us.

Oh Brethren, let us no longer dishonor our God, nor delude ourselves; let not the world any longer say in our reproach, these men are even as we: Let them see that our ways are not as their ways, that our joys are not as their joys, and then they will know, our hope is not as their hope, our Rock is not as their Rock.

Children of the Kingdom, (if I may be bold to call you so) where is the proof of your heavenly extract? Where is your Fathers Spirit? How can you be patient with yourselves, whilst you are such degenerate plants? How can you satisfy yourselves, that you are the genuine offspring of God, when so unlike your father? How can you without weeping, behold the glory of these later Temples, to fall so far short of those that were in the Ages before us? Where is the primitive spirituality, the mortification and self-denial of the primitive Christians? How have the stars changed their Orbs? From moving in the Celestial Spheres? How seem they now to be fixed in the earth, how can you count yourselves Stars, and not Comets, when your highest elevation is seldom above the middle Region, you hang betwixt heaven and earth?

We take up a general complaint one against another, 'tis in everyone's mouth, Oh how earthly are we become, our gold is mixed with dross, our wine with water; behold a second but sad Incarnation, our spirit is become flesh; everyone loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards; how hard are we driving after bags of earth? We assemble ourselves for corn and wine, and when riches increase, who is there almost that sets not his heart upon them? Who is there that labors to be holy as to be rich, to thrive in grace as in

purse? Though the Lord hath taken off our Chariot Wheels, yet still we drive on; though he hath been whipping us upward, yet behold still we are all below; though he hath burnt up our houses, and fired us out of our Nests, yet behold our hearts are still among the rubbish; though he hath mingled wormwood with our milk, and gall with our honey, yet we say 'tis sweet, and will not be weaned; though he hath testified against our pride, and testified against our covetousness, and made such stains upon our beauty, and such holes in the bottoms of our bags; though we see plainly and say, God is angry with us, and angry for the iniquity of our covetousness, yet who are they that have given off, and are gone back from their so eager pursuit of the world? Oh what's like to become of us? We are so set upon this Idol, that it's much to be feared desolation is determined upon us.

Do we not ordinarily hear and make such complaints? But if we should with our complaints, let fall a tear upon the guilty, may they not return upon us, weep not for us but for yourselves, for your own covetousness, for your own carnality: and what should we say for ourselves, if they do so? Oh the Lord help me I am one of the company, I even I also am guilty; this Idol hath a tabernacle in this heart also, though I considered it not.

But must our complaints suffice us? Is it enough to make all well, to confess 'tis so bad? Must this be all our heavenliness, to bewail our earthliness? Will God take our acknowledgments for amendments? Is this your redemption, to bewail your captivity? But when shall it be better? When shall it be said to these prisoners, Go forth? When for the other world? When for God alone, for nothing but the everlasting kingdom? Arise O captive, put off thy prison garments, get thee up out of this house of bondage; unclog unfetter thy Soul; get thy foot out of the snare, and away for the holy land: leave this earth to its heirs, let the men of this world take

to their portion, and be the only servants to it, but go thou and serve the Lord: let God and the world take their own; whilst worldlings will not be the servants of Christ, let it no longer be said, that Christians are the servants of the world.

Brethren, conclude upon it, that you have no more of Christianity then you have of spirituality: that this spot of earthliness will unavoidably be, a blot upon your evidences for Heaven. Have you assurance that you are the Lord's? How can that be when you are so much the worlds?

Whatever arguments you have, that seem to conclude well for you, yet how many objections are there also? Oh how many Buts are there against us. Such a one is a judicious understanding Christian, But, he's greedy upon the world: such a one is of a savory gracious behavior, But, he's unmerciful to the poor: such a one is much in prayer, and will pray singularly well, But there's no trust to his word: such a one is of a free and liberal Spirit, But he is proud. Shoot down these Butts if ever you would stand established in your confidence.

Have you not assurance? Is this yet to be gotten? Oh how can you so eagerly mind any other getting? Can you have such leisure for Earth when Heaven still hangs in doubt? Or do ye think that the same way does lead to both? That the same labor will serve for both? Will the same wind, and the same course carry you towards both the Poles? Can you at once be sailing Northward and Southward? Can you ascend and descend by the same motion? When you are proggng for your flesh, building your houses, enlarging your border, laying you up treasure on earth, and making it as sure as you can; Is this your laying up treasure in Heaven? Your giving diligence to make God sure, your calling and election sure? Once be bound

in good earnest for glory, and take the strait course thitherward, and then farewell World, thy kingdom is finished, thy dominion is at an end.

Brethren receive this word of conviction and submit to it; the sum whereof is, that where there is so much of the Spirit of this World, there is but little faith, and where there is but little faith, 'tis more than you can tell whether there be any at all. God is a convincing of us; if his word does not, his providences shall convince us, and lay us yet lower in our own eyes: what means his undoing and ruining providences, but to try us what spirit we are of and to teach us with his briars and thorns, to understand ourselves better, and to recover? Why is his face so against us? Why is his hand so heavy upon us? What do the ashes of our wasted treasures speak to us? If it do, not speak out this to us, Thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead, yet does it speak less than this, Thou hast but a little strength; thou hast but a few names, that have not defiled their garments, strengthen the things that remain that are ready to die? Is not this its word, seekest thou yet great things for thyself? When I am breaking down what I have built, when I am plucking up what I have planted, is this a time to seek great things for thyself? Yea or to think great things of thyself? Seek them not, no nor think anymore such great thoughts: lay thee down in the dust, be ashamed and confounded for what thou art and hast done, and climb no more up those trees that are hewing down under thee.

Brethren when do ye think the Lord will cause his fury towards us to cease? When will the flames be quenched, when will his repenting's be kindled? What hope is there that our conflagrations should be at an end, till our Idols be burnt up? 'Tis vain to think, that our prayers and fasting's and weeping before the Lord will put out the fire of his jealousy. Get thee up, wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned—they have

taken of the accursed thing—I will not be with you anymore, except ye destroy the accursed from among you. Josh. 7:10-12. The Lord hath broken us with a great breach, the Lord hath smitten us with a very grievous blow; and now we fall to fasting and praying and prostrating ourselves before him in hope that this may make up our breach and be the healing of our wound. But will this do? Get you up, get you up, why lie you thus upon your faces? Is there not an accursed thing among you? Think not that the Lord will be with you, till that be destroyed from among you: hope not for anything from those prayers or fasting's, that do no execution upon your accursed things. Do your prayers leave your pride alive, your covetousness alive, your wantonness alive? Yourselves are like to die notwithstanding all such prayers.

God is either upon refining or rejecting: he hath cast us into his furnace, kindled his fires, been blowing with his bellows; if our dross may yet be consumed. If that be not done, the next word we may hear, may be that of the Prophet, Jer. 6:29,30. The bellows are burnt, the lead is consumed by the fire, the founder melteth in vain, for [this dross] is not taken away, reprobate silver shall men call them, for the Lord hath rejected them.

CHAP VIII. – Use 2: Of Direction and Exhortation – Direction 1.

BRETHREN, HAVE I NOT yet said enough to fetch you off from your servitude? Will you go free, or have I spent my labor in vain? Must I leave you at the Brickkiln, or will you go over to Canaan? What are your thoughts? Is it good to continue in your servile state? Is the vassalage of unbelief better than the victory of faith? What are your resolutions? Have you sold yourselves for servants, and will you stand to the bargain? May you go free and will you not? Have you not understood enough of the world's enmity? Have you not felt enough of the world's tyranny? Have you not sinned enough, and suffered enough already by it? What say you, are you for liberty or bondage? For captivity or victory? Why what may we do to obtain the victory? Why will you hearken then? Are you willing of help? Will you take God's counsel when 'tis offered you? Well in hope that some of you will hearken, I shall yet farther adventure these few directions.

In the first place I shall mind you of what hath been already spoken, touching the ways by which faith overcometh the world, and shall turn them into these 6 counsels.

1. Get a right judgment of both worlds: study and get an understanding of Earth and Heaven; and give not off this study, till you be thoroughly convinced, of the unspeakable transcendencies of things to come, above things present.

2. Choose your lot in the best of the two: determine for Heaven, that infinitely better inheritance. Be unalterably at this point, I am for the everlasting blessedness, however it be with me here.

3. Be convinced, that the good things of this World cannot further, nor can the evil things of this world hinder your eternal blessedness, and esteem of all things temporal, according to the respect they bear to the things that are eternal.

4. Be convinced that the Design of all the temptations of this World is, to deprive you of your eternal inheritance.

5. By living more purely a life of faith, get clear apprehensions and a deeper sense of the blessedness to come.

6. Give diligence to make your calling and election sure: by turning your eyes back upon what hath been already said, you may make fuller improvement of these directions, upon which I forbear any farther enlargement.

To these I shall add this one general direction.

Make your advantage of all those means, by which your faith may gather strength, and in which it's strength is to be put forth and exercised.

Particularly,

1. Improve all your duties this way: Let all your seeking's of God be a wrestling with the World. Put this great affair into every prayer: put it into your daily confessions, put it into your daily petitions. Carry the sense of your sore bondage into the presence of God: let the misery and the danger it

hath subjected you to, be written upon your hearts, and go and spread the writing before the Lord. Let the throne of grace be a Judgment seat where this traitor may be daily arraigned and condemned. Take unto you words, confess unto God. Lord I have dealt very falsely with thee, and foolishly for myself. I have forsaken the Fountain of living waters for broken Cisterns, wherein is no water. I have taken the World into my bosom, and thrown the Lord at my heels. I have set the World on the Throne and trodden Christ under my feet; I have served mine enemy, and slighted the Rock of my Salvation. I have sold my soul for silver, and my hopes for handfuls of barley. I have followed vanity, and neglected all sufficiency. I have been a true drudge to this muck, a good husband for this flesh; but what have I been to the Lord? What an evil and slothful servant. If I should say I were not a worldling, or a sensualist, mine own soul would call me liar to my face; but though I see what a fool, and what a beast, and what a slave I am, this sottish heart will not yet be wise, it hath loved these Idols and will follow them still. Confess thus unto God, and if one days confession will not shame you out of your folly, to it again; the next day, and the next day, and every day as long as you live: Bring in new Indictments filled up with all the aggravations you can gather up, I have been often told of the evil of a worldly heart and life, of the danger of it, of the unworthiness of it; I have been counseled to take heed of it, and I have known it has been good counsel; I have been obliged against it, by commands, by kindnesses, by covenants, by interest, by experiences of the gall and the Wormwood it hath still proved in my belly, whatever it hath been in my mouth. My judgment and Conscience hath been against it; I have been offered a better service, and a better reward; and I have understood it was a good offer, and worth the accepting; I have been charged upon pain of death, and everlasting

damnation to take heed and beware of it, and yet still I am where I was. Counsels have been despised, commands have been broken, kindnesses have been slighted, covenants have been violated, reason and conscience have been baffled, yea, death and hell have been despised for the sake of this lust, and love of the world, so foolish am I and ignorant, and as a beast before thee. Thus quicken and sharpen your confessions with all the aggravations imaginable, till, if it be possible, thy folly may depart from thee, not being able to bear such an hot prosecution. Deal thus roughly and thus closely with your earthly hearts whenever you have them before the Lord, that they may not dare to meet you so there again.

Put it into your daily Petitions. Speak unto the Lord, let not thy soul keep silence till he hear. Let thine oppressed heart lift up its voice to the most high; tell him, Oh I have surfeited of this flesh, I am sick of this World, these briars and thorns, yea, and these Lilies and Roses are a grief of mind to me, I must have them out ere I can be at rest. Make these thorns to scratch me, these flowers to stink in my nostrils. Beg a new heart, beg a better spirit, that may neither find pleasure, nor so much as ease in such things as these. Oh for mortification! Oh for a more raised spirit! Where is the life of faith? Where is the power of the Spirit? Help Lord, help Lord, a renewed heart, a chaste spirit, when shall it once be? Let not my soul be held any longer an adulteress from thee; let not these husks be my meat, these ashes be my bread, this earth be my treasure while God stands by. Let not Christ and my soul be kept strangers, whilst I am the familiar of this flesh, and the servant of vanity.

Plead with the Lord for relief. Plead with him upon his own interest. Who is it O Lord that's most wronged? Whose right is it that's most invaded? Whose am I? Am I not thine Lord? Is not my love, and my labor, and my

strength, and my time, and my body, and my soul, is it not all thy right? Shall thine enemy command and carry away that which is thine? Recover, recover thy due. Take this heart and all that I have, take possession Lord, set thy name upon my door, and suffer not these strangers to enter or encroach upon thy right. Plead with him upon the blood of his Covenant. Whence is the Covenanted Redemption! Is it only from Hell? Is it not from lust also? Can it be from one, if it be not from both? A total redemption Lord, a universal redemption; from every Plague, from every enemy. I cannot escape the pit, if I be held in the snare; if I break not this outer; I shall fall also into the inner Prison; by the blood of the Covenant send forth thy Prisoner out of this Prison. What doth this blood speak! Doth it only say Deliver them from the pit, for thou hast found a ransom? Doth it not also say, Whilst thou keepest them in the World, keep them from the evil? And will not God hear the cry of such blood?

Cry unto the Lord. Be instant, be importunate with him. Try the strength of Prayer. Be uncessant, resolve against denials. Cry unto him day and night, avenge me of mine adversary. Rid my soul out of thralldom; whilst thou livest give not over, if thou wilt not, thou shalt not be denied.

Has thou gotten a little ground, take the same way to maintain what thou hast gotten. Does the Conquered World rally upon thee, and do thy affections begin to stoop to it? Pray them up again. Doth thine heart begin again to wander after it, Pray it in again. Do thy corruptions and temptations begin to get head again and to prevail? Pray them down again; meet them with a Prayer at every turn, The Lord rebuke thee false heart; The Lord rebuke thee deceitful World; The Lord uphold thee oppressed Soul.

Beloved, your Victory over the World can neither be gotten, nor maintained, but by power from above. It is God only that's able to give

battle to the flesh. In vain do you engage, unless he engage with you. Prayer will set faith on work, and faith will engage the promise, and the promise will engage Christ with you, and Christ will engage the Father to your help. If Heaven be too hard for earth, the World shall fall before a Praying soul.

Brethren will you take this counsel? Put it thus into every Prayer you make, and if you find this to be your Great enemy, Bend the main force of every Prayer against it, Fight neither against small nor great, in comparison, but against this King of Evils. This is the great Thief, Lord, that meets me at every turn, and is robbing me every day; that robs the Lord of his due, and my Soul of its peace: this is the Moth, that eats out all my Strength; this is the Murderer, that kills my Soul; O let this Strong be bowed down; this is the Heir, kill him, and the Inheritance shall be mine.

And whenever you have made your prayer, judge of the acceptance of it, by the success it hath on this Adversary: When at any time you have found your souls most melted and enlarged in prayer, and greatliest refreshed by sensible elapses and incomes from above; at such a time presently return into your heart, and demand; But how goes it now with the interest of the World in me? How stands my heart now affected to my carnal things? Am I weaned? Is my clog fallen off? What hath my flesh lost, by what my spirit seems to have gained? What hath my earthly-mindedness, my covetousness lost in this prayer? Can I now go away and be contented, and be patient in any condition? Hath this Divine warmth left a chill upon my fleshly appetite? Can I the better want the Quails, now I have tasted of the Manna? Am I less careful, and less concerned, which way the World goes with me? Or can I go down presently into my shop, or forth into my fields, and be as hungry and as much swallowed up of my earthly cares and delights, as if I had never tasted anything of God? Can I so? Oh this is not the Prayer I took

it to be; I may not sit down by this, I must to my knees again, to my God again, and again; while I live I will not give over thus; I will wrestle, I will wait, I will inquire; today, tomorrow, next day, after every prayer, Is it yet better? Yet more mortified? Yet more weaned? Yet more humble and contented? I can never, I will never satisfy myself with any praying, with any answer, whilst my flesh thus holds up its head.

This is the first Direction, the stress whereof I lay upon these two things; Bend the main force of every Prayer against this evil; level your Arrow against the face of this enemy: And then judge of the acceptableness of your prayer, by the success it hath upon it.

CHAP IX. – Direction 2: Improve Sabbaths this way.

THE SABBATH IS THE rest of God, Heb. 4. Our holy keeping of Sabbaths is our entering into his Rest; our recess from the World, and our retiring to the Lord, to take our Rest with him.

The end of the Sabbath is the preservation and propagation of Religion; it is for the continuing in memory the Redemption of Christ, for the more abundant diffusion, and shedding abroad of the Spirit of Christ, for the more solemn Celebration of his Worship, and so consequently for the maintaining the power of Holiness; all which the World would destroy and bury with him in his Grave, and roll itself as a stone upon it all, that it might never be remembered.

There are four special means, by which Religion is kept up in the World, and transmitted from Generation to Generation.

1. A fixed Rule or Standard of Religion: whereby the knowledge of God, his Will, Worship and Ways, is preserved and propagated; to wit, the holy Scriptures, Isa. 8:20, to the Law, and to the Testimonies, &c.

2. Fixed Officers: To interpret, expound, and give the sense of the Word, and to publish, and preach it to the World, Neh. 8:4,8. Mal. 2:7.

3. Fixed Ordinances: Wherein the Lord is to be solemnly worshiped: the Observing and keeping pure and entire whereof, is required as in many positive Precepts, so also in all those Scriptures, which forbid Idolatry, Superstition, and Will-worship.

4. A fixed time, for instruction in the Law of God, and for his more solemn Worship: This fixed time is the Sabbath day, Isa. 66:23. &c.

The Adversaries of Religion have attempted its destruction, by heaving at these Pillars upon which it is supported; and the opposition which hath been made against them, hath been carried on (some part of it at least) much after the same way. The Authority of the Scriptures hath been inundated, by pretenses to other rules besides, to be added to them; as unwritten Traditions, or enthusiastical Revelations. Ordinances have been assaulted by the addition of human Inventions, to Divine Institutions. The destruction of the Ministry hath been by some of its Adversaries attempted, by making all Teachers; and Sabbaths have been undermined by others, by pleading for an everyday Sabbath; First enclosing the six days to the Lord, and thereby at length laying the Sabbath in common to the World.

Upon these four pillars is Religion upheld; let these be removed, and what becomes of it! And the destruction of this one (this fixed time) how greatly will it endanger all the rest. An every-day Sabbath will soon bring us to no Sabbath; and from no Sabbath, we shall quickly come to no Ordinances, no Ministry; and from no Ministry, how long will it be ere we arrive at No Scriptures, no Religion, no God.

But whatever the adversaries of Religion, and their ways to supplant it be, that which makes them adversaries, and engages them in this wicked

design, are the lusts of this World. Religion levels at the flesh, its affections and interest; and these set themselves to make their batteries upon Religion, and all its supports and foundations.

Keep up Sabbaths, and you are like to keep up Scriptures, Ministry, Ordinances, Religion; keep up Religion and the World falls under you.

But the more immediate influence, the due sanctification of the Sabbath will have, upon the conquering the World, will appear if you consider, that this day is,

1. A day of separation for God.
2. A day for special communion with God.
3. A day of special provision for souls.

1. A day of separation for God. The people of God, as such, are a separated people, separated from the lusts of men, to the Law of their God, Neh. 10:28. Ezra 6:21. In their first day, their day of Grace, they separate themselves from the evils of the World; in this day they are to separate themselves from the affairs, yea and the thoughts of the World, Isa. 58:13. This day is an Hallowed day, sanctified by God, and to be sanctified by his Saints. God's sanctifying it, is his setting apart the day for a holy use; our sanctifying it is our setting ourselves apart thereon for his holy service. This day is a privileged day, nothing that's common or unclean may encroach upon it.

The day of the Lord, is as the house of the Lord, a kind of meeting betwixt heaven and earth; wherein God calls us up to the Mount, and comes down to give us a meeting. And as when he came down on Mount Sinai, he required that his people (who yet were to come no nearer him than the foot of the Mount) should, by washing their clothes, and separating themselves from their Wives, make ready against his coming down, Exod. 19:11,15. So

doth he here give us as strict a charge, [Remember] be ye also ready. Be ye washed, and be ye separate. Wash your hearts, empty your hands, come in from your fields, come out of your shops, lay by your work, leave this earth below, come up to mere your God.

There are two things that give to objects their greatest efficacy and advantage upon us. Their nearness to us, and the remoteness of their contraries. The World on this day loses both these advantages, wherein we are called to stand aloof from it, and to draw nigh to God.

We are then fairest for victory over the World, when we are farthest off it: 'tis ill fighting a Cock on his own Dung-hill: while the world is at our elbow there's little like to be done against it; whilst it is in our eye, or our hand, 'tis not easy to keep it out of our heart: when the Lord hath gotten our company alone, and the World hath nothing; not an Ox, nor an Ass, not a business, nor a pleasure to solicit our love, or labor; When we are gotten out of sight, and out of hearing of the wooing's of this Harlot, and its cries after us, then is it most like to lose its hold of us.

The reason why we ordinarily make no more advantage of Sabbaths this way is, because however we pretend to draw nigh unto God, yet we do not with-draw from the World: we come into the Sanctuary as Israel went out of Egypt; we carry, not our Wives, and our little ones only, but our Flocks and our Herds, and all our Substance; we carry all we have with us, when we come before the Lord. The lowing of the Oxen, the bleating of the Sheep, the sound of the Mill-stones is so still in our ears; the Butter and the Honey, the wine and the oil, the silver and the gold are so continually in our eye, that we cannot hearken what the Lord God doth speak, nor see his face.

Brethren, who is there with you at this hour? Here you are before the Lord, but who is there with you? Search every room, look into every corner;

Is there none within, that should not be there? Is there no messenger of Satan, hath the World no agitator now at work within you? O behold, whilst the Lord is a treating with our cares, what a mixed multitude are there within; cares, and thoughts, and lusts, and projects for this world; and what a stir do they all make that God may not be regarded? The Devil will be most busy in such a time; he doubts how matters might go with him if he now keep silence. Doubtless many a Soul more might have been gained over to Christ, had not Satan stood by and hindered, and had those ever near us, who forbid the match: use to be alone with God; out of the company, and out of the noise of these harlots, and then there's hope the Lord may gain your love.

What wonder that that seed dies and becomes unfruitful, that falls into a brake of thorns? Or amongst such birds as stand watching to catch it all away? What hope that the counsel of the Lord be accepted, of a mind prepossessed, and actually stuffed with the cares of this life? *Intus existens prohibet alienum.*

How canst thou ascend, with thy burden upon thy back? Unload, unload; lay aside every weight, and then go up and prosper.

Say to all thou hast, stay you here, whilst I go and pray before the Lord; let the night before each Sabbath, be as the grave betwixt the two worlds; there let thy dust be buried, and thy Spirit fly naked to thy God. Let that night which is the partition betwixt thine own days, and the Lord's, be thy Souls taking its leave of all thou hast; any [sinful] thoughts works or pleasures, thy lusts and thy evil ways, give them an eternal burial. Be gone, see my face no more forever: and for matters [lawful and honest] that concern this earth, charge them not to thrust in before the Lord: go you also your way for this time, and when I have a convenient season I will send for

you: and if from Sabbath to Sabbath thy feet stand thus on the mountain of the Lord, thou mayst find them all the week long, on the tops of the mountains of the earth.

Brethren, where is our Sabbath separation? Is there not a fault among us upon this account? Let him that heareth inquire, How it is with me? Am not I faulty? What are my Sabbath thoughts? What are my Sabbath discourses? If I be better employed in the house of God, what do I in mine own house? What are my morning and evening, and midday thoughts? What is my table talk, my chimney talk. If business, if bargains, or journeys be not admitted, are not visits or complements, or vain stories or impertinent news suffered to fill up the time? Is it thus or not with thee? Is it well that it is thus? O clear your Sabbaths of such worldly encroachments, or you will never clear your hearts: drive all the world into Patmos, into banishment, and be wholly in the spirit, on the Lord's Day. Be abstracted from earthly things and earthly thoughts bring them with you neither to the house, nor to the day of the Lord; let your own houses, and your own tables, be as the house and table of the Lord; have nothing to do from morning to evening but to wait on God.

2. It is a day for special Communion with God. The meeting of God with his people on that day, is like unto that meeting which is promised to Moses Exod. 25:22, before the mercy seat: There will I meet thee, and commune with thee: there will I show thee all my mind, and hear all thy requests.

It is a day of blessing: thither the tribes go up, to bless the Lord, and there he comes down to bless his people. It's said Gen. 2, and Exod. 20, that God blessed the Sabbath day: God's blessing the day, makes it a day of blessing, a good day to his Saints, he then comes unto them, in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel.

Those that question whether the first day of the week be the Christian Sabbath, let them consider which of all the days of the week the Lord hath, since the death of Christ, so exalted above the rest of the days, that they can with most confidence say, This is the day which the Lord hath blessed? On what day were the gates of death broken, the Lord Jesus declared to be the son of God with power, by his resurrection from the dead? On which day was the spirit of God most signally shed abroad on the Apostles and primitive Christians, in those extraordinary gifts, whereby they were made more capable of publishing the blessed Gospel to the ends of the earth, and in that special grace which seized three thousand Souls in one day? Act. 2. What day is it that hath been honored to be the birth day of the greatest number of Saints ever since? That hath been their feast day, wherein their Souls have been most sensibly nourished, and they have been increased with the increasing's of God? What meals have they had to their Lord's-day meals? What joys, to their Lord's-day joys Surely if this may determine the question, which day is the Sabbath of the Lord, the day that of all others, God hath blessed and made a good day, the experiences of Christians in all ages would bring in their vote for the first day. This is the day that God hath made we will rejoice and be glad in it: this by the way.

This day as is said before, is the rest of God: a little Heaven let down to us on earth: God calls us up hither, as he called Moses up to Pisgah, to give us a view of the promised land. The Sabbath is Heaven opened; we may give a guess at the glory to come, by those glimpses, and tastes, we have of it now.

It is the day of interview, betwixt the bridegroom and the bride; wherein he beholds our faces, and shows us his loves; wherein he comes down into his garden to eat his pleasant fruits, and we behold his goings, the goings of God in his Sanctuary.

The business of this day is to look into the Ark of the Covenant, to review and renew the Covenant transactions betwixt God and our Souls; to search out, contemplate and admire the mercies and lovingkindness of the Lord; to receive the overflowing of his goodness and to pour forth our Souls as an offering to him, in our prayers and praises: to give and receive mutual tokens and pledges of Love and faithfulness; to seal to our fidelity to him, and to receive farther assurances of his grace and good will to our Souls; to obtain help from God against our enemies, whereby we may execute upon them the vengeance written; and upon this mountain ordinarily is the victory obtained, there breaks he the arrows of the bow, the sword, the shield, and the battle.

Christians, have you ever experimented this Sabbath Communion? Hath the Lord God appeared thus unto you? Have there been such friendly and familiar intercourses betwixt him and your Souls? Oh how contemptibly hath the world looked in that day?

But oh what dark and cloudy days are our Sabbaths ordinarily to us; Sundays, per antiphrasin, the Sun not once appearing it may be, for many days together; no wonder our Souls are so earthed all the week, when they are so seldom in Heaven, on the day of the Lord: what dry feasts are our Sabbath feasts? Rather fasts then feasts: real Communion with God is a strange thing to us, even in the day of God: Heaven is opened but our eyes are shut; God comes down to meet us, and to bless us, but our hearts are not there: the breasts of consolation are full, but we have no skill, or no list to draw at the breasts: we come to the well, but we do not let down the bucket; we stand by the pool, where the Angel comes down, but our cripple Souls put not in to the waters: we stand without, in the outer court of the Lord's house; our Sabbaths are to us but figures of Sabbaths; the ordinances of

them are to us, as wells without water, lamps without Oil, mere shadows of good things: we go up from week to week, to meet one with another, but how seldom do we see God in the company? And hereupon Sabbaths come and go, and leave us still as we were: the Devil may well enough trust us with such Sabbaths, the world may give us leave to go thus before the Lord, and be no looser by it.

Brethren, get you into the inner court, which on these days especially was to be set open, Ezek. 46:1, there is an entry through the house of the Lord, that leads in to the heart of the most high; get you into that sanctum sanctorum and there let be your rest: as often as the morning of that blessed day looks forth upon you, get your vessels ready, and go you forth to meet the bridegroom: open your eyes with these thoughts, this is the day which the Lord hath made I will rejoice and be glad in it: climb up betimes, and let every duty be a stair by which you ascend to your Lord: let divine contemplation, let prayers and praises, &c. be the whole work; let the blessings of Divine Communion, be the whole expectation of that day: and when you find your hearts refreshed with his presence, and filled with the company of your God, and he sends you away laden with the tokens of his love, and with the impress of his face upon your hearts, and the relish of his goodness fresh upon your palates; when you thus go hot out of the presence of the Lord, then you will learn to despise that day of small things, with which the World entertains you: Shall I forsake my sweetness, saith the fig tree, shall I forsake my fatness saith the Olive, and become King over the trees? Let the bramble take that honor; farewell dignities and dominions, farewell pomp's and pleasures, farewell houses and lands, I have enough, I have seen the face of God.

3. It is a day of special provision for Souls; whereon the Lord brings forth out of his treasury, his spiritual provisions, to keep the Soul in heart. Hunger-starved soldiers are but poor fighters; they are the weak souls whom the World hath vanquished.

Sabbaths are the Souls Market days. Men have their Markets whence to be supplied with necessaries for their bodies; and on this day God keeps a Market for Souls: He hath his Milk and his Honey, his Wine and his Oil, his Bread and his Water of Life; and on this day in special, he makes Proclamation, Ho everyone that thirsteth, come to the Waters, and he that hath no money; Come ye buy and eat, yea buy Wine and Milk without money and without price.

The bread which comes down from Heaven, though it be to be had every day, (our Week-days may in their measure, be all Sabbaths) yet on this day it falls more plentifully. The Jews had their corporal Manna on the six days, and none on the Sabbath; but the hidden Manna falls more thin, and more sparsely on our other days, and on this day more abundantly. They were to gather double on the sixth day, that they might have to supply them on the Sabbath; but for the Spiritual Manna, all our other days are to be supplied from our Sabbath provision.

A Christian who is not fit to meet the Bridegroom, is neither fit to meet his adversary, without Oil in his Lamp. It is the great commodity that's set to sale in this Market, Oil for our vessels. Come bring your empty vessels, here's Oil to fill them. The Ordinances which are this day administered, are the pipes opened, those golden pipes by which the golden Oil is emptied forth, and conveyed down from the living Olive, Zech. 4.

It is no wonder that men hunger after this world, who know no better feeding. An Asses head, or a kab of Doves dung are of great price, when

there is no bread, 2 King. 6:25. It is for want of bread that worldlings can make such a feast of their Locusts and wild Honey. Those that have eaten of the hidden Manna, will not lust after Quails; the Worlds dainties will come out at their nostrils, whose bellies have been filled with this hid treasure. Those whom God hath fed in his green Pastures, those whom God hath led by his still waters, they cannot live in these salt Marishes or stubble fields. Those whose souls God hath made well-watered Gardens, will not need the Pools of the Wilderness.

Its no wonder that the World beats us, when we go for many days together without making one good meal. When our souls are famished into weakness, then are we our enemies prey; they are the hunger starved sheep, that are a prey to Crows and Kites. If Satan can but keep us low, if he can either keep the Manna from falling about our Camps, or keep us idle when we should be gathering, he may then lead us after his lure at pleasure. It is not a little strength that will suffice us against his great temptations, and tis not a little bread by which we are like to gather any great strength; we had need feed well if we will be strong, and we had need be strong or we shall never fight well.

A Soul that uses to come before the Lord with an appetite, that feeds hungrily, and is as the thirsty earth that drinks up the showers that come oft upon it; whom the Lord satisfies with the fatness of his house, you may turn him loose to the World, flesh, and Devil; the life of God within him maintained by influences from above, will much secure him against all their assaults.

Christians, know your Sabbath privileges; the advantages of Sabbath separation, Sabbath communion and Sabbath provision. Understand your advantage, and make your advantage of them.

Be ye separate. Remember your Creator, and rest from your works, as God did from his. Remember your Redeemer, and rise from your dust as Christ did from his. Let this day of his Resurrection, be the day of your Resurrection and Ascension. Let Sabbaths be Sabbaths indeed, holy to the Lord, and wholly his. Divide not the day betwixt flesh and Spirit, God and Mammon, but let it be entirely the Lord's Day.

Let every duty and Ordinance of this day be a Communion. Prepare to meet your God, and go up to meet him. Seek his face in hope to see his face; see and love, see and rejoice, see and admire and praise him in his excellent greatness. Hearken what the Lord God will speak, and let him hear your voice. Confirm your friendship, renew your acquaintance in Heaven; repeat your Covenant transactions. Have you chosen the Lord for your portion, tell him you stand to your choice; have you renounced your flesh and the World, promise him not to return to folly. Have you made the Lord your trust, put forth fresh acts of faith upon him. Look to him, lean on him for his righteousness and strength. Let such as these, let faith, and love, and hope, and prayers, and praises, which are the stairs to the other World, and your weapons against this, be your Sabbath-work and delight.

Let not finer clothes and better fare, let not idleness and ease, no nor filling up a place in the Congregation, be the only difference betwixt Sabbaths and other days, but this better work and meat for souls.

Provide against the days of scarcity, provide against the days of temptation. Let not the Manna fall besides your vessels. Let him that hath an ear hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches. Catch at every word, observe every look of your Lord upon you. And whatever you receive lay up, and ponder in your hearts. Have you received a check or reproof, lay up your reproof; have you received a word of counsel or instruction, lay up

your instructions. Hath he spoken peace to you, lay-up that word charily by you; whatever transactions have passed betwixt the Lord and your Souls, keep the records; and when you go forth, whither ever you go, carry all this upon your hearts, that whenever the World meets you again, and tempts you again, you may be thus well appointed, and thoroughly furnished against its assaults.

Brethren, put hard on every Sabbath, for such an undisturbed attendance on the Lord; single out the Lord for the object of your whole converse; knit your hearts thus to him, solace yourselves thus in him, get you thus elevated and raised in your spirits from earthly to heavenly; and every inch of ground you get of your adversary, maintain it carefully from Sabbath to Sabbath. If this were seriously designed, and more generally attempted by Christians, we should find both another face, and another power of Christianity in the earth; the children of the Kingdom would be more visibly differenced from the men of this World, and both the guilt and reproach of earthliness and sensuality, be wiped off from the Professors and Profession of the Gospel.

CHAP X. – Direction 3: Improve Sacraments this way.

THE ADVANTAGE THAT WE have in Sacraments against the World, lies in our,

Preparation, Participation.

1. In our preparation. One confessed preparatory duty is self-examination, 1 Cor. 11:28. A great security of this Idol is the secret of its tabernacle; Its covert in which it lurks unseen. Worldlings (many of them) if they knew what is within them, their Conscience would so prick, that they could have no rest or ease, till this thorn were pulled out; but they are not aware that the World is within them. Yet this enemy lies not so close but upon a privy search it may be discovered. Sacramental trial should be close and thorough, no corner within us should be left unransacked. The reverence of this great Ordinance and the dreadful consequence of coming so solemnly before the Lord with a Traitor in our bosoms (eating and drinking judgment) will cry in our ears, Make diligent search.

The evidence that this one thing [an earthly mind] carries in it of our treachery towards God, is so notorious, that he hath but little understanding

in the matters of God, that would not from this alone, conclude himself an unworthy guest at the Table of the Lord, were all things else never so specious and fair. Darest thou say, Surely the Lord will accept me, for he hath but this one thing against me, That I love the World more than I love God. I can own his name and ways, I join with the Assemblies of his people; I can pray, and hear, and fast; I am neither proud nor froward, nor envious, nor malicious, there is no evil but this covetousness, but I hope I can acquit myself of? Darest thou say thus? I am no drunkard, I am no Adulterer, I am no swearer, I am nothing but an Idolater? The Lord I hope will excuse me in this thing? Dost think he will indeed? And may it not be like enough, that upon this diligent search thou mayst find this to be thy case?

Friends, get the sense of these terrible truths upon your hearts, He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord; He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself; He that is an Idolater, eateth and drinketh unworthily, He that is covetous is an Idolater; Let these things sink into your hearts, and then see if you dare come without a narrow search; make a narrow search and then you will see how great your unworthiness and danger is. Certainly were there a due care taken of this duty, it were not possible that men could go on from Sacrament to Sacrament under the power of their earthly hearts, this would surely startle them. This Ordinance would either make them afraid of their worldliness, or this worldliness would make them afraid of Sacraments.

Worldly Professors, what care is there ordinarily taken of this duty? Do you examine? Do you make diligent search? Do you make particular search for this evil? It may be you inquire, Am I in the faith? Am I in charity? Do I

bear no malice? Hath no man a quarrel against me? Nay possibly you may go a little farther, and ask, Am I unjust? Am I an oppressor, an extortioner? Have I done wrong to no man? And if you can acquit yourself here, then an end. But do you further ask, Do I not love the world? Is not mine heart too much upon it? Am I not too busy for the world? Is not my time spent too much upon it? Are not duties neglected? Is not my soul, or my family's souls neglected for its sake? Am I not so bent upon growing rich in the world, that I mind not how poverty grows upon my soul? Do I honor the Lord with my substance? Am I merciful? Am I bountiful? Do I seek no more nor no otherwise then God would have me seek? Do I aim at God? Do I entitle God to all I have? Do I know how to abound? Can I want if the Lord will have it so? Is God enough if I have nothing? Is not all the world enough if God be a stranger? How can I bear crosses and disappointments in the world?

Speak friends, are any of these things inquired after? I doubt whether you be faithful in this matter; oh might I prevail with you to put upon this closer and severer trial, you know not what it might gain you: If you can but apprehend your Enemy at such a time as this, when you are making this solemn approach to the Lord, when it would be so dreadful to you to be found in league with it, at what an advantage would you then have it? Now is a time, when if ever, we are like to have you serious; loose not the season; beware of solemn trifling's; hide not now your eyes from seeing your disease; beware of palliating and mincing, be zealous to know the worst of your case; put Conscience close to it, what sayest thou, Guilty, or not guilty? If Conscience plead Guilty, then come before the Lord if thou darest without serious repentance and resolution to reform.

Another preparatory duty, (to name no more) is the renewing of our repentance. This is necessarily included in the renewing of our Covenant, which cannot be without repenting of our covenant breaches.

Repentance, if it be sincere, will be universal, of every known sin; If this evil we are now dealing against, be found upon thy score, this must be the matter of thy repentance: he that repents not of everything that's evil, truly repents of nothing.

Repentance hath respect, not only to the time to come, and so is Reformation or the amending of our ways, a ceasing to do evil, and a doing well, Isa. 1:16,17, but also to the time past, and so is a Retracting or undoing what hath been done: what hath been done cannot be undone properly, but in a sense it may; the hearty wishing it undone, is in God's acceptance, the undoing what hath been done: and this is essential to true repentance, an hearty wishing all the evil undone that hath been done. Can that man be said to repent he hath been a worldling, that would not for anything but he had been so? Hath he repented, that if he were to begin again, would take the same course? Now this, if it be well considered, will, in the present case, appear to be the hardest part of repentance: how difficult soever it be for him whose heart hath hitherto gone after his covetousness, to force it at length to a retreat, yet this hath much more difficulty in it, heartily to wish he had never been guilty of any covetous practices. Such an undoing of his sin would be his undoing in point of estate.

It may be his covetousness hath brought him in his whole living, and gotten him all the estate he has in the world; if he had not been an oppressor or a fraudulent dealer, or at least a zealot for this world, possibly he had been but a poor man at this day, and had never gotten anything; his house and his money and his lands are all, the income of his covetousness. To

wish he had been true, and honest, and moderate in the affairs of this life, may be the same as to wish himself in perpetual poverty.

It may be when thou considerest not what thou sayest, thou couldst wish thou hadst been honest, but when thou weighest what there is in that wish, Now I am full and abound, I eat and drink and wear and lodge and dwell in the fruit of my labor and care, but O that I had been empty and hungry and, naked, that I have been a bankrupt and beggar rather than grown as rich as I am upon such terms? Is this so easy a wish?

May be the drunkard will more easily wish, O that I had ever been sober, the adulterer will easily wish, O that I had never been unclean, the prodigal will easily wish, O that I had never thus foolishly wasted my estate, but will the covetous so easily wish, O that I had never gotten an estate thus? And yet this is essential to repentance. He that doth not wish his wickedness undone, doth certainly will to do it again, if he have the same opportunities and temptation.

This I say, is in the present case an hard piece of repentance; it is not so hard a trial for a rich man that hath now enough, to be required to covet no more, to be unjust no longer, never again to neglect his God or his Soul for his worldly interest; for if he be never so strict this way for the future, his flesh is not like to suffer so much by it, he hath enough by him already to feed and pamper it; but to wish his meat out of his mouth, his clothes off his back his money out of his purse, to wish himself back to that dunghill from which his covetousness raised him; yea so heartily to wish this, as to be ready to be refund and to make restitution of all his dishonest gains, he whose conscience is so awakened as to press this upon him, will sufficiently understand he has hard work before him. And he that perceives how hard this is and yet how necessary to repentance, will take heed how he goes on:

he that hath thus unraveled his former evil doings, is fenced against future; he will beware how he goes on to heap up such a treasure to himself, which he sees will cost him, either so much distress, or his Soul.

Brethren, dare you come to Sacraments without repentance? That is, dare you mock God to his face? Dare you say you have repented of all your sins, when you have not repented of your covetousness, when your hearts know, you would not for anything but you had been covetous? Can you say you wish you had not been dishonest, when you will not make restitution of your dishonest gains? When do we hear of any such thing as restitution? Is it enough that you do evil no more whilst you thus justify what you have done?

Surely friends, if you understand what repentance is, and dare not venture upon Sacraments in your impenitence, you would find all your sins, and this amongst the rest, to fall before that sacred Ordinance.

2. In our Participation.

There are many singular advantages that may hence be gotten against the world: for the understanding whereof consider, that there is in the Sacrament,

1. A lively representation of the blessings of the other World,
2. A sensible obligation against the lusts and temptations of this World,
3. An abundant communication or exhibition of the blessings of the other World.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is called, Luke 22:20. The New Testament; This cup is the New Testament in my blood.

The New Testament is Heaven opened, life and immortality brought to light by the Gospel. Its our Lord's last will wherein we may read, what rich and glorious legacies he hath bequeathed to his Saints.

The Sacrament may be said to be the New Testament in this threefold sense,

1. It is the New Testament signified.
2. It is the New Testament sealed.
3. It is the New Testament blessings exhibited.

1. The Sacrament is the New Testament signified: or a lively representation of the great blessings of the covenant; it is a visible Gospel, Christ crucified before our eyes.

It is a commemoration of Christ crucified; as sometimes you know dying friends bequeath unto their dear survivors, some token of their love, a ring or a Jewel or their picture to preserve their memory, with them, so did our dying Lord bequeath this signet, this picture of Christ crucified to his living Saints, with this charge, as often as you look on this think on me, Luk. 22:19. Do this in remembrance of me.

It is the showing forth Christ crucified in open sight, 1 Cor. 11:26. And in this Cross may be seen the Crown, as you may give a guess at the purchase by the price that's laid down for it. The pardons, the peace, the hopes, the robes, the mansions, the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, immarcescible, to which we are redeemed, we have a survey of them all in this price that was paid for them. The love of Christ, his kindnesses and compassions do all look forth upon us; His sweat, his stripes, his grief, his groans, his blood, do all speak, Behold how he loved us, behold what he hath laid up for those that love him.

Brethren, will not this price buy off your Souls from this Earth, which hath bought them from Hell? Will neither the price nor the purchase do it? Will not Heaven be taken in exchange for clay? You have been at the table

of the Lord, but sure you do not use to see Jesus there, if your Souls yet dwell in the dust.

Look ye to that tree, the cross of your Lord; that instrument of death, behold how it is become a tree of life; a tree of life hung with all manner of precious fruits: there are all the curses nailed and withered, there are all the flowers, and fruits of the Paradise of God growing up and flourishing; there is joy and glory, there is life and peace, Sursum Corda: What are these Souls? What, moles and batts? What, no eyes to see this glory? What see it and not desire it? What, still feeding with the worms? Let these moles get them eyes, let these worms get them wings; look till you can see, and see till you can love, and then ascend and be satisfied: When I am lifted up I will draw all men after me, Joh. 12:32. Is not the Son of Man lifted up? Dost thou not see him before thee? What is thine heart that doth not yet begin to ascend?

O what is Christ? What not worth the thirty pieces? Wilt thou again sell thy Lord for money? Once more look on him whom thou hast pierced and then say, O my Soul whom wilt thou? Jesus or Barabbas? This World is a robber? What do I here? Am I come to crucify the Son of God afresh? To set him at naught again, to sell him the second time? My money perish from me rather than it should again become the price of blood.

2. The Sacrament is the New Testament sealed: the use of a Seal is to secure and confirm; therefore Seals are affixed to writings, bonds or covenants, to give them their full force and ratification.

The writing to which this Seal is set is the Gospel; the great and precious promises, which are full of life and immortality, and all the riches of the promised land.

The Lord in giving us the Sacramental Elements, his Bread, and his Cup, doth therein deliver us the Covenant of Grace sealed, to assure us of the truth and certainty thereof; as if he should say, This shall be a sign betwixt me and thee, that if thou accept of my Gospel treasures upon Gospel terms, if thou wilt have no other God, but wilt forsake all and follow me, this shall be to assure thee, that I will be thy God, and all that I have is thine.

And as the Lord seals on his part, so we set our seal to our part of the Covenant; as the Covenant is mutual, so is the sealing; God's giving is his sealing, and our receiving is ours; our receiving the Elements from the hand of the Lord, our eating and drinking, is our seal, to witness our acceptance of God upon God's terms, let this be a sign betwixt me and thee that I accept Lord, I accept of thee according to the tenor and terms of thy Covenant.

Our acceptance of these Elements is as a Servants taking Covenant money, or a Soldiers taking Press money, which binds the one to his Master, the other to his Captain; and our sealing in this manner, doth in a sense ratify God's Seal, as to our particular interest in the promise; as upon a servants receiving his Covenant money, the Covenant is confirmed not only on his own part, but also on his Masters: His Master is now engaged to own him, provide for him, protect him, and reward him as his servant: Its true, God's Seal alone fully confirms the truth of the Covenant in general, but upon my sealing to the condition on my part, (provided it be sincere and unfeigned) hereupon God's Seal doth not only confirm the Covenant in general, (that he which believeth and obeyeth the Gospel shall certainly be saved) but it now makes it sure to me, and gives me a certain propriety in all the promises of God. There's not a man in the world that thus accepts and sets to his Seal, but the Seal of God stands good to him; he hath it under God's hand and seal that he shall be pardoned, he hath it under God's hand

and seal, that grace, and peace, and all things necessary unto life and salvation are his.

Only it must be understood and remembered (as before) our acceptance is not to be only of what God promises, a willingness to be pardoned and saved, but of what God requires, a willingness to serve him, and forsaking all others, to cleave only unto him; as a Soldier takes his Press money, not only in token that he accepts of his pay, or a servant his Covenant money in token that he accepts of his wages, but it is their taking pay upon terms to fight, and taking wages on terms to work.

Now hence arises a double advantage in our war against the world, an, Encouragement, Engagement.

1. God's Seal encourages us on. The Covenant of God assures, not only a Crown to the Conqueror, but assistance to the Combatant: He will be not only the rewarder, but the helper of all those that diligently seek him: He hath said, Heb. 13:5. I will never fail thee, nor forsake thee. And hereupon thou mayst boldly say, The Lord is my helper. He hath said, Ezek. 36:27. I will put my spirit within you; and ver. 26. I will give you a new heart. This flesh will never prevail, but what cannot the Spirit of the Lord do? This old heart and the world will never part, they were ever friends, and ever will be; but he will take away this, and give you another heart.

Fright not thyself with the difficulties thou seest before thee, from the strong party the world has within thee, thy carnal nature with all thine earthly members; from the Allies and Confederates it hath without thee, Satan with all his instruments and temptations; thou wilt be like to say, How can I turn this stream of nature? How can I stand against this flood of temptations? Can I create me a new spirit? Or can I conquer whilst this old spirit lives? Can I command my love, and my fear, and my hatred, as I

please? Can I love what I will, and hate what I will, and fear what I will? Can I fly from what my heart follows after, or fight against what I so love and desire?

How can I endure such hardness, as not only the fight, but the victory will bring upon me? Can I be poor? Can I be hungry, be naked, be destitute? Can I be in reproach, in disgrace and contempt? Will this heart ever bear the watching's, the fasting's, the labors, together with the distresses and afflictions of this warfare? I shall surely perish one day or other by the hand of this Enemy.

Discourage not thyself thus; what cannot God do? What will not God do, who hath said, who hath sealed to it, I will never fail thee, nor forsake thee? Behold his Seal; Is it not in thine hand, and in thy mouth? Trust in God; set to thy Seal that God is true, and then say, Though my flesh and my heart fail, God is the strength of mine heart, and my portion forever: I will go in the strength of the Lord, through him I shall do valiantly, he shall tread down mine enemies, and my difficulties.

2. Our Seal engages us on. Hast thou sealed to the Lord, and not bound thyself to him? Hast thou set thy seal to a blank? Hast thou engaged thy self to be the Lord's, and not therein to be no longer the world's? Canst thou serve these two Masters? Is not thy renouncing the world necessarily included in thy Covenant Obligation?

Brethren, that the tie may the more sensibly lie upon you, I advise, that as often as you come before the Lord in this Ordinance, you put this expressly into your engagement; Father, I am sensible of the plague of this earthly heart, and of the tyranny of these worldly lusts, how impetuously they set upon me, and how imperiously they lead me on after them, how false and unfaithful have they made me to my God, how ordinarily am I led away by

them against my Covenant, and my conscience: But I here bewail it, I detest it, it is my grief and my shame that ever I have been so false and unworthy: Behold now again, in thy fear, I open my mouth to the Lord, I take hold of thy word, I hang upon thy help, let the Lord my righteousness be my strength, and in his Name I again lift up mine hand to the most High, solemnly protesting before the Lord, that I so avouch thee to be my God, and so entirely and unreservedly make over myself unto thee, that through the grace of God with me, I will henceforth, and while I live, be the avowed enemy of a worldly heart and life; I will use all thy means for the overcoming of it; I will study, I will watch, I will pray against, I will rate, and check, and restrain, and resist all the motions, lusting's, and temptations by which I have been so often led aside and overcome; I give myself, my estate, my strength, my parts, my time, all that I have unto the Lord; Lord take me at my word, and all that I have for thy servants, I am thine save me. Thou that knowest all things, knowest that I would not lie unto God, but that I sincerely intend, in thy strength, to stand to this word, in testimony whereof I here take this holy Sacrament from thine hands. I have opened my mouth to the Lord, help me, and I will not go back.

And now, O my soul, look to thyself; Shall I again break my Covenant? Shall I wickedly repent, and alter the word that is gone out of my lips? Shall I any longer walk after the course, and in the lusts of this world, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of my mind? Shall mine heart still go after my covetousness? Shall I study and project, and plot and prog for this flesh at that rate, as if the world were still my God? Shall it climb up from the footstool to the Throne? Shall it again give Laws to my heart, and set limits to my Religion? Shall interest Lord it over Conscience, and carnal inclination bear down devotion? Shall I suffer this Robber to break in again

into the Sanctuary of the Lord? Shall it eat up my Sacrifices, steal away my Sabbaths, curtail my duties, and enervate Ordinances? Shall the Lord have no more of me then the world will spare him? Shall business be ever again pleaded against duty, or gain against godliness? Shall my soul take up its dwelling in my shop, or in my fields, and only give some short visits to heaven at its leisure?

But oh shall lying and promise breaking, shall fraud and oppression, shall unrighteousness or unmercifulness be nothing with me, or but excusable failings? Are these things according to the vows of God that are upon me? Look to thy self, O my soul, be not found a liar against God.

O Brethren, were there this solemn and express transaction betwixt our souls and the Lord at every Sacrament, and did we thus live in the conscience of this Obligation, and the dread of being found false to God, from Sacrament to Sacrament, what might it not bring forth? What a wound would be given to the head of this deadly Enemy?

3. The Sacrament is the New Testament blessings exhibited: The new wine broached; this Conduit runs with Gospel Wine: Our partaking in the Sacrament, is our coming into the Garden of our Lord, to eat his pleasant fruits.

We read, Cant. 2:3. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. I shall stay a while here, and shall gather a bundle of these fruits, and present them to your eye. I shall in short show,

1. What the special fruits of Christ are.
2. That these fruits are sweet and pleasant, and then I shall add,
3. That these fruits are exhibited in the Sacrament.
4. The advantages we hence have against the world.

1. What the special fruits of Christ are; which I shall reduce to these two heads.

The fruits of His Blood, His Spirit.

1. The fruits of his Blood. These are especially two, in which all others are comprised, Viz.

Righteousness, Peace.

1. Righteousness. He is therefore called the Lord our righteousness, Jer. 23:6. Joh. 16:8. He shall convince the world of righteousness; that is, of the righteousness of Christ; he shall evidence and make manifest unto the world, who all lie in wickedness, that in him there is righteousness; not only that he is righteous as an individual person, but as a public person; that he hath in the name and on the behalf of all those that believe on him, fulfilled all righteousness, and hath hereby a stock and treasure of righteousness to bestow, and wherewith to clothe all those that come unto God by him, to whom he is made wisdom, [righteousness] sanctification and redemption, 1 Cor. 1:30.

Beloved, are there any guilty souls among you, any unrighteous ones? Do you know what 'tis to be guilty? Do you know the dread and terror of the Lord? Do you consider what the face of a righteous incensed God will be to an unrighteous soul? Do you understand how naked you lie, and open before everlasting vengeance? How can you endure? Or how can you escape the wrath to come? Righteousness of your own you have none, and that which you seem to have, is not your righteousness: But behold here's righteousness for you, come to Christ, put in here, dip you in his blood, and then you are clean; though your iniquity be searched for, yet it shall not be found; this righteousness shall answer for you, for all your unrighteousness; this righteousness shall purchase for you the eternal inheritance, O methinks

we should hear you all crying out with those Jews, though with another heart, and in another sense, His blood be upon us, and upon our children.

2. Peace. That's another fruit of Christ's blood; he hath made peace by the blood of his Cross, Col. 1:20. He hath made peace, not only betwixt Jew and Gentile, reconciling them both into one body, but betwixt God and men, reconciling both Jew and Gentile in one body unto God, Rom. 5:1. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God.

This peace hath all blessings in it; love, good will, pardon, grace, life; as the wrath of God hath all woes in it, all the plagues and miseries, both of this world and that to come; you need say no more to mark out any person for an unhappy and lost person, but this, The wrath of God abideth on him; you have said enough, you need not smite him the second time; as the wrath of God hath all woes, so the peace of God hath all blessings in it.

2. The fruits of his spirit. The former fruits, righteousness and peace, which I call the fruits of the blood of Christ, are in a sense, the fruits also of the spirit; as also these latter which I call the fruits of the spirit, are in a sense, the fruits of his blood: the spirit convinces of righteousness, and preaches peace, Joh. 16:14. He shall take of mine, and show it unto you. The spirit first indeed takes of our own, and shows that unto us; that same Gospel spirit that brings life and immortality, brings first death and mortality to light; he that convinces of sin, is the same spirit that convinces of righteousness.

He shall take of our own, and show it unto us. Look thee here soul, what a vile and unclean thing thou art, what a wretched and unhappy thing thou art, what a Leper, what a Viper, what a devil in flesh thou hast made thyself, what an Egypt, what a Sodom, what an hell thou hast within thee, what a portion, what a treasure thou hast laid up for thyself; Serpents, and

Scorpions, and Dragons, Blood, and Wrath, and Fire, these must be the portion of thy cup. Secure sleepy soul, jolly merry soul, that art quiet and at ease, sporting thyself with thy pleasures, loading thyself with riches, decking thyself with ornaments, open thine eyes soul, look thee here, all that's thine I here set in order before thee: these sins, and this guilt, and these curses, and these plagues, these are all thou canst call thine own, these shall dwell with thee, these shall stick and cleave to thee, as thy flesh to thy bone, as thy body to thy soul: this sad and amazing sight the spirit shows us, takes of our own, and shows it unto us: But then says Christ, he shall take of mine, of my righteousness and peace, and show it unto you.

I say, even these fruits of the blood of Christ may be also called the fruits of the spirit.

But besides these, there are others that the Scripture expressly calls the fruits of the spirit; what these are you may read, Gal. 5:22,23. But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; all the graces and the comforts of the spirit issuing from them, these are the fruits of the spirit.

2. That these fruits of Christ are sweet, 1 Pet. 2:7. To them that believe he is precious: He and all his, root and branches, tree and fruit; he is pleasant to the eye, the thoughts of Christ are precious, Psa. 104:3. My meditation of him shall be sweet. It is a pleasant thing to behold this Sun; he is sweet to the ear, his words are sweet, sweeter then the honey and the honey comb, Psa. 19:10. His house and his dwelling is sweet, Psa. 84:1. How amiable are thy Tabernacles O Lord. How might I enlarge here! But more close to the matter in hand, because sense will give us the fullest proof of sweetness let me ask.

1. How sweet have you found the fruits of the blood of Christ? Ask the guilty if righteousness be not sweet, if pardon be not sweet, ask the prisoner if liberty be not sweet, ask the debtor how he would receive his discharge from all his debts. Dost thou know what blood guiltiness means, I need not commend to thee, the blood of atonement.

2. How sweet are the fruits of his Spirit? Would it not be a pleasure to you to be holy and humble and meek? Is not love sweet? Is not holy joy sweet? That is, is not sweetness sweet? Nay is not godly sorrow sweet? The mourning's and melting's for sin, have more sweetness in them then the sporting's and laughing's of sinners.

Is not the sense of integrity, clearness and uprightness, is not peace of conscience, the assurance of divine love, are not these sweet? Ask those that labor under the gripes and pangs of a wounded conscience, or are stung with the conscience of guile and treachery, how they would prize peace of conscience: ask those who have received the sentence of death in themselves, and lie roaring like bulls in a net, full of the fury of the Lord, how precious assurance of the love of God would be. Ask those whose souls do dwell at ease, who walk in the light of the Lord, and have tasted that the Lord is gracious, what they would take in exchange for those comforts, wherewith they feel themselves comforted of God.

I appeal to some of your experiences, whether ever you have had so much pleasure in all your lives, as when you have found your hearts ascending Heaven ward, in your flames of love, and receiving testimony from the Lord, that you are accepted with him: surely your souls have tasted how good the Lord is.

But here note that these fruits of the Spirit (some of them especially) are sweet only To the Souls.

Healthy, Hungry.

1. To the healthy Soul: that is, to the holy Soul, to the sick every pleasant thing is bitter: is grace unsavory? Is holiness harsh to thee, doest thou find no relish in it? Are thy gourds and thy husks thy locusts and wild honey, the pleasures of thy flesh only grateful to thy palate? O thou art a sickly Soul, there is no health in thee.

2. To the hungry Soul: The hungry he fills with good things, and the hungry will relish his good things, the full Soul loathes the honey comb: canst thou not taste the sweetness? O thou art a full Soul; Satan hath filled thine heart, thou hast an heart full of dirt and trash; the Devil hath made a very stable or barn, or dung pot of thine heart; meat and drink and money and mirth have choked up thy soul, and that's the reason that Christ is no more savory.

Are there any empty souls among you, hungering and thirsting after the bread and water of life? What if Christ should come down and meet you here, and feed you with these good things? Would you not say, O this is sweet feeding, O this is a sweet morning, O this is a pleasant meal?

If you could see all the blessed fruits of the gospel, spread upon this table; if you saw pardons sealed before you for every one of your souls; if grace and peace, if love and joy, if holiness and power, and everything your souls want or wish for, if you should see them here on the table; if you should hear a voice from Heaven calling unto you, Eat O friends, drink, yea drink abundantly O beloved, you that want a pardon, there 'tis for you; you that want holiness, humility, patience, power, assurance, here 'tis for you, take it; It may be the full souls among you would be nothing moved, it would better please them to hear, there's a penny for you, there's a sheep or an

house or a living for you, But every hungry soul would cry out, O this is sweet, its good to be here.

3. That these fruits of Christ are exhibited and given forth in the sacrament. The sacrament is a communion: the Communion of the body of Christ, the Communion of the blood of Christ, 1 Cor. 10:16, wherein we come not only to see, but to receive Christ crucified, to receive of his fullness grace for grace.

Isa. 12:3, we have a promise, with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation, here note,

1. That the Church of Christ hath her wells of salvation: without is death and destruction: sinners have their pits, and their pools, and their cisterns, but no wells. There is a fountain and a fountain opened Zech. 13:1, but 'tis to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: to the Israel of God not to his enemies; to these the fountains opened, is a fountain sealed, Christ shall profit them nothing; Christ is the Churches enclosure, no common for aliens.

If you ask what are those wells, I answer the word is a well, the ordinances are wells, in particular this ordinance, this sacrament to which we are come this day to draw, this is a well: it hath the depth of a well; this ordinance is a deep mystery, 'tis not every hand, no nor every eye that can reach the water. 2. It hath the spring of a well: wells have not a standing and underived fullness, but they have a spring that feeds them: Christ is the spring that fills this well. 3. It hath the fullness of a well, cisterns will hold little water, in the well there is store: all Christ is here, in whom all fullness dwells.

This well is the Churches, it belongs only to those that belong to God, 1 Cor. 3:22,23, whether Paul Apollos or Cephas, whether ministers or

ordinances, all are yours because you are Christ's and Christ is God's: Rom. 9:4, who are Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption and the glory and the covenants; to whom the adoption and the covenants belong, theirs are the seals.

The things that are without are yours sinners; sin is yours, guilt is yours, temptations snares woes, death is yours, because ye are none of Christ's; this well of life is none of yours. It will be demanded of you, as Math. 22:12, Friend how camest thou in hither? What hast thou to do to take my covenant or the blood of my covenant into thy mouth, since thou hatest instruction and castest my words behind thee, Psal. 50.

Such may not come to the well, or if they come, it may prove a well of damnation to them, not of salvation: and so the Apostle tells them it will prove 1 Cor. 11:29. This water of life may prove as the water of jealousy, that bitter water that will cause their belly to swell and their thigh to rot, may be a curse and not a blessing.

Look to it sinners, you may be drowned in this well when you come to drink; you may drink flames and fury instead of the water of life.

Oh how many have been drowned in these waters? Who rushing unpreparedly upon this dreadful ordinance, have drowned all that little good they seemed to have: something possibly they formerly had that was hopeful, but by the just judgment of God upon them for abusing such an ordinance they have lost all: at first they came it may be with some little tenderness and trembling of heart, but not being upright in the main, they have at length lost all their sense, and have been smitten with deadness and hardness.

O consider what you are, and how 'tis with you now you come here? Are you Christ's? Are you sincerely his? Are you resolvedly his? If you have not

assurance that you are his, what probable evidences have you that you are? Are your souls wishing for Christ, waiting for Christ, thirsting and panting and following after love to Christ, likeness to Christ, subjection to Christ, evidences that he is yours? Are you resolved, never while you live, to turn back and give over your pursuit of Christ nor to sit down by anything short of a universal conformity to his image and will?

Are you crucified with Christ? Is the world crucified to you, and you unto the world? Is the old man slain, and all your earthly members? Feel every limb of the old man, if there be not life still found in them; feel the heart of the old man, is there not self-will, self-love, and the love of this present world yet alive? Feel the head of the old man, is not pride and self-conceit alive? What plotting's and contrivances, what great designs are there carrying on for the flesh and the world? Feel the gall and the spleen of him, is not bitterness and wrath, envy and malice yet alive? Observe the eyes, and the ears, and the tongue, and the habit, and the way; doth not the old man live in all these? Are not the eyes pleased with beholding vanity, the ears itching after fleshly fooleries? Is not the sound of him upon the tongue, the show of him in the countenance, the habit, and whole way of life? Feel the pulses of the old man, his breathings and panting's, is it not after earth still?

Brethren, if there be any sad remains of this earth and flesh in you, as doubtless there are, yet is there an abatement of the power and vigor of them? If the old man be not quite dead, yet is he in a Consumption? Are the waters of lust fallen; yea, and still falling lower? Are you in good earnest [for] mortification, for the death of every lust? And are you impatient while they live? Are you come to this point, you will never be the friends of your flesh, you will never take its part again, against warnings, against reproofs,

you will never live in peace with it, but will wrestle, and fight, and wait for the victory as long as you live? This will give you good hope, that Christ is yours; and good evidence that he calls to you, Come unto the waters.

2. In this Well of Salvation there is water of life: Ye shall draw [water] that is, living water: In this water is comprehended all things belonging to life and godliness: Here is bread in this water; he that is the Rock springing in the earth, is the bread that came down from heaven, Joh. 6:48,50. Here is blood with the water; out of his side came water and blood. Here is wine and milk in this water, Isa. 55:1. Ho everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the [waters,] come buy wine and milk. Come to the waters, why what shall we get there? O there's wine and milk in the waters; come to the waters for wine and milk.

What case is there of any of the Saints, but here's that which is proper for it: Here's water for the filthy, here's blood for the guilty, here's bread for the strong, here's milk for the weak, here's wine for the sad; here's for meat, medicine, and delight; here's the flower of the wheat, the healing balm, the sweetness of the fig-tree, the fatness of the Olive, the Tree of Life, Christ is in these waters.

3. This water of life is [to be drawn] out of this Well of Salvation. Hence 'tis that we must come, every man with his Pitcher. Faith is our Pitcher, what need of a Pitcher if there were no water to be drawn? Unbelievers might then speed as well as believers.

4. Its a joy to the Saints to work at the Well. [With joy] shall ye draw, &c. We read, 1 Sam. 7:6, that the people of God once drew other waters, and out of another Well; they drew water, and poured it out before the Lord. The Wells were their repenting sorrow-bitten hearts, the waters were their tears, which they poured out before the Lord: these were bitter waters, and drawn

with sorrow; the waters you are now come to, are pleasant; faith, and love, and joy, and praise, are here to be both your work, and your waters; the three latter are the pleasures of the other world; the first [Faith] is your Pitcher to fetch them in, and your mouth to drink them down. God hath brought you hither to prove the sweetness of love, to taste what 'tis to love, and be beloved; God opens you a Spring of everlasting joy, thereby to dilate and enlarge your souls in admiring's and praises.

4. The advantages we hence get against the world; are amongst others, these following.

The precious things of Christ thus exhibited in the Sacrament, will,

1. Quench our thirst.
2. Renew our strength.
3. Sharpen our weapons.
4. Set the reward before our eye.

1. They will quench our thirst after the world. The world invites as Christ, Ho everyone [that thirsteth] come to my waters; If any man [thirst] let him come unto me and drink. God and the world are both for the empty souls; he that's empty of God, there's a man for the world; he that's empty of the world, there's a soul for God; he that is surfeited of the pleasures of sin, will nauseate the joys of Religion; he that is satiated with the pleasures of Religion, will slight the joys of the world.

John 4:14. Whosoever drinketh of the waters that I shall give him, shall never thirst; that is, either when he is come up to the Well head, and shall have drank his full draught, he shall thirst no more forever, he shall be satisfied forever; or else, he that shall drink of my waters here, that shall drink of the brook in the way, shall not be thirsty after other waters; he that hath drank of the upper springs, will better spare the nether springs.

Our intimate converses with Christ, and those gracious savors and divine impressions they leave upon our hearts, do naturally weaken and allay our fleshly appetites and inclinations: wisdom is not more necessarily expulsive of folly, light of darkness, holiness of sin, then the love and joy of the Lord, of the love and the lusts of this world.

Brethren, whatever divine touches, whatever peace and joy you seem to feel upon your hearts, if the world be not a loser by them, if it stand its ground, and maintain its interest and esteem in you, all that you seem to feel of God upon you, look to it, that it prove not a fallacy, and a dream: for my part, I shall ever suspect that intimacy my soul hath seemed to get in heaven, and all the pleasure of it, if I be not the more content to be a stranger in this earth: O my God wilt thou draw forth the breasts to me, let me suck, and be satisfied; let the Lord God be my satisfaction, and then let the world try the strength of its temptation.

2. They will renew our strength. This staff of bread will be the strength of our hearts, they are the weak souls whom the world conquers. But of this having spoken in a former direction, I pass it over here with the naming.

3. They will sharpen our weapon. We never are foiled, but when our faith fails: This is our victory— even our faith; this weapon of our warfare is mighty through God: By how much the more our faith is exercised on God, by so much the more vigorous; believe and you shall be established, believe, and you shall be strengthened, believe, and all that you see before you shall be meat for your faith to put it in heart.

But how shall I believe? Yea rather, how shouldst thou but believe? Whose Table is this to which thou art come? Whose word was it that said, This bread is my body which was given for you; This cup is the New Testament in my blood which was shed for you? This bread is the

communion of my body, this cup is the communion of my blood? What is this body, what is this blood, but virtually all the spirit and life of the Gospel? What is the meaning of those words, Take, and eat, and drink, but that its the will of God, if it be your will also, that all this shall be yours? Would Christ say, take, what he meant not to give? Would Christ say, eat, that which is not bread? Will he feed souls with common bread? Did he bring you hither to mock you? How should you but believe?

Believe, and you shall find his flesh to be meat indeed, his blood to be drink indeed; this bread to be Manna, this cup to come to you full of the spirits of the Gospel, which will so nourish and quicken your faith, that as a mighty man refreshed with wine, it will rejoice to run its course, and tread down your Enemy under you.

4. The reward is set before our eye. Rev. 2:17. To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden Manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written which no man knoweth but he that receiveth it. Chap. 3:21. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my Throne. There's the Conquerors reward, the hidden Manna, the white stone, the new name, the Throne: Now all these are here set before us, we taste of the Manna, we have a sight of the stone, and of the Throne; what encouragement is it to the heart to have the reward in the eye: It was said concerning our Lord, Heb. 12:2, that for the joy that was [set before him] he endured the Cross, and despised the shame. And we are exhorted in the foregoing words, Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, [looking to Jesus.]

Let us run, looking to Jesus, let us bear, looking to Jesus, let us watch, let us wrestle, let us fight, looking to Jesus; looking to Jesus who endured the Cross, and is set down on the Throne: This Cross is here presented to us,

and in the Cross the Throne; if we suffer with him, if we overcome with him, we shall also be glorified with him.

Lift up the hands that hang down, confirm the feeble knees; behold the Captain of your Salvation, whose reward is with him, and his work before him: Dost say 'tis hard to follow Christ, 'tis hard to forsake all for Christ? Canst thou [now] say so when he shows thee the treasure he hath for his followers? Open thine eyes, look again upon that treasure, and then see if all the labors, straits losses, sufferings of this life, be worthy to be compared to that glory which he hath revealed.

CHAP XI. – Direction 4: Improve worldly prosperity this way.

IMPROVE WORLDLY PROSPERITY THIS way; turn the world upon itself, beat it with its own weapons: As the Lord, Judge. 7:22, set Midian against Midian, every man's Sword against his fellow; so let Christians set the world against the world, let its own hand be against itself. The prosperities of the world are the keenest, and most deadly weapons in all its quivers; if these might be turned against its own breast, what a slaughter would be made?

But how may this be done? Hearken to me, and I will tell you how: Receive all the good things of the world, As,

Talents, Temptations.

1. Receive all the good things of the world as Talents, for which you must give an account: Consider yourselves as Stewards of all that you have; you have nothing under your hand, but what is your Masters, and for which you must be responsible: This is a truth written in nature, as well as in Scripture; you may as well reckon your selves your own Makers, as your own Lord's;

and you may as well reckon yourselves your own Lord's, as unaccountable for what you have.

If you have an estate, if you have friends, if you have great offices, honors and dignities; if you have a larger proportion of bodily health, better parts and endowments of mind, you have so much the more to reckon for; as your riches increase, as you are advanced higher in the world, so your work, and your care, and your Obligation thereto increases; the more you have committed to your trust, the harder will your task be to manage it well, and the more dreadful will be your doom if you miscarry: If the doom for one talent hid in a Napkin be so dreadful, Mat. 25:30. Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, what will thy judgment be for ten talents, all spent upon Harlots, or in riotous living?

The sense of this will both still your flesh, from craving what you have to be bestowed upon it, and kill your desires after more: Give what you will to it upon such terms, to use it all for God, and to be liable to a severe account for whatever is otherwise employed, and your very flesh will be ready to turn it back upon your hands.

Say to thy covetous heart, here's an opportunity for thee to be rich; work as hard as ever thou wilt, get as much as ever thou canst, but when thou hast done, know that whatever thou hast gotten, is none of thine; thou dost but get, that thou mayst have so much the more to use for God, or to lose for God; not an house, not a field, not one penny of all that thou hast labored for, must be spent upon thy flesh; thy pride, or thy appetite, or thy covetousness, shall have never the more for all thy store, but all must go another way; tell thy heart thus, that thy flesh must not have the spending of it, and then see how little pleasure 'twill have in gathering.

Tell thy slothful heart, here's an estate for thee, here are honors, here is the love, and good will, and good opinion of men for thee; if thou likest it, take it, but know, that this is all to set thee the harder on work; they are all thy Masters goods, which he gives thee with this charge, Occupy till I come. Hast thou an estate? Look to it, for he will look for it, that thou honor the Lord with thy substance; and the more thou hast, the more care will it cost thee, and the more labor to use it well. Hast thou dignities, and art thou set in authority? Take heed and see to it, that thou be good in thine office; woe to thee if thou neglect the charge of the Lord, and what wilt thou do to fulfill it? Hast thou the love and good will of men? This gives thee the fairer opportunity, and thereby imposes on thee the greater necessity, to deal roundly with them, in counseling, admonishing, and reprovng them, as occasion shall require; they will take that from thee, which they will not from another, and upon that account there's none in the world that owes them so much of that service, nor shall pay so dearly for his neglect as thou; and so whatever else thou hast, wisdom, learning, natural parts, bodily health, the more thou hast of them, the more work they will find thee: Tell thy slothful heart thus, and what thank will it give thee for such advancements whatever they be.

Tell thy voluptuous heart, here are pleasures for thee; here's meat, and drink, and fine clothes, and sports, and pastimes; here are Gardens and Orchards, Apes and Peacocks; but what wilt thou do with them, now thou hast them? So much as will help thee to be more useful, and serviceable to the ends of thy being; to glorify thy God, to promote the salvation of thy soul, so much thou mayst take, but take more at thy utmost peril; tell thy sensual heart, the more thou hast of these things, the more wilt thou be put to that hard duty of self-denial; thou must vex, and torment, and crucify thy

flesh the more, by how much the more thou hast to satisfy it; whatever thou hast before thee, and how much soever thou lustest after it, thou must not touch more than thy allowance; though thou hast it in thine hand, yet thou must rather put a knife to thy throat, then thine hand to thy mouth.

What, says the flesh, Is this all that I gain by having so much about me, only so much the more labor, and vexation at present, and the heavier account hereafter? May I have an estate, or honors, or pleasures, and when I have them, must they be none of mine? Shall I be never the better for them, never the richer for all my store, never the higher for all mine honor, never the merrier for all my pleasures? I had even as good go without them, as have them on such terms as these, even take them back again.

Any man of understanding would reason thus, why should I so eagerly wish for more than I have? Have I not trouble enough already, labor enough, and care enough already? Have I not enough to answer for already? Is it so hard to be faithful in my little, how then shall I do, if I be ruler over much? Is it so hard to deny my flesh when I have not to satisfy it, how shall I say it nay, when it lusts for what I have in mine hand? Will this be an advance to my contentment, to have, and not to enjoy, to see and not to eat; not to taste what is at my mouth, nor to look on what is before mine eyes? And yet must it be thus with me, and the more I have, the more thus? Well, the Lord who knows my frame, and what condition I am best able to use, proportion out to me, according to the good pleasure of his will: no more talents then he gives me power to use well; no more money, no more honors, no more love and respect from men, then will furnish me for the work of God, and further me in the way of life, and abound to my account another day: away with that load, though of gold or greatness, which is more than I can bear, without the neglect of God or my Soul; let me be

entrusted with nothing, but what I am able to steward well; and whatever I have, let me be such a good steward of it that I may give up mine account with joy and not with grief, which would be unprofitable for me.

O brethren if we did see Talent written upon every worldly comfort, and a *redde rationem*, to be the Motto upon every talent, our flesh would be suffered to make but short meals on what we have, and yet would be less hungry after a larger allowance.

What is it that makes prosperity so pleasant to carnal minds? O here's a feast for my flesh; eat drink be merry, here's enough for many years: belly, take thy fill, here's a full table before thee. Pride, spare not for charges; put on thy attire, deck thyself with ornaments, crown thyself with garlands, fear not, thou shalt not want to maintain thee. Soul take thy pleasure, arise choose what will delight thee, withhold not thyself from any joy; the sun shines upon thy tabernacle, put away sorrow from thee: see the store thou hast about thee; varieties of all that thou lovest, go feed thy self on whatever best likes thee, squeeze out the juice of all thy fruits, fill thy cup and be merry.

But what shall I do in the day of reckoning? Give an account of thy stewardship; how will that word sound? Oh that will be such an ill looked lace on every garment, such sour sauce to every dish, such a stinging spice to every cup, that the flesh would rather have no garment, meat, or cup; then thus laced, sauced, or spiced.

If the rich men and mighty, if the greedy horseleeches, the oppressing extortioners; if the riotous ruffians, the proud wantons, those sons of Bacchus and spawn of Venus, that debauch their Consciences and prostitute their Souls to their filthy lusts; whose life is nothing else but either a raking together of fuel to maintain their fires, or a dancing before them, and

sacrificing all their virtue modesty yea and humanity in those flames, if these most brutish among the people, would for a few hours, put off beast and put on man, and view their reckoning they have to make of their masters goods, all either hoarded up in the dark, or spewed out into the draught, and pissed against the wall; and consider how this account would pass in the great day: this would rust out the comfort of all their treasures, stain the beauty of all their pleasant ways, and cool their lusting's after them.

2. Receive the prosperities of the world as temptations: What God bestows as Talents, the Devil makes temptations; what God intends as instruments for service, the Devil makes forage and weapons of war; provision for lust which fight, against the soul, God says, Make ye friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, that when these fail you may be received into everlasting habitations, Luk. 16:9. Make God thy friend, make conscience thy friend, make God's poor thy friends, make thee friends for hereafter, with what thou hast. The Devil saith, make thee friends here, make the rich thy friends, make thy companions thy friends, make thee friends here, with what thou hast, fear not for hereafter, for when will these things fail thee? God says Honor the Lord with thy substance, Prov. 3:9. Thou hast received much, now think what to return. The Devil says, now thou mayst kick against God, and spurn with the heel; now thou mayst be merry and mad; 'tis for poor men to be honest and sober, to pray and seek God, thou needest no such ways to supply thee: wherefore is it better with thee then with others? Wherefore hast thou money, and houses, and lands? Is it, that thou shouldst bury all under a bushel, or hide them in a napkin? Was it ever intended, thou shouldst be poor whilst thou art rich? That thou that hast, should be as those that have not? Why doth thy way prosper?

What's the meaning of all thy abundance? Doth it not call to thee, eat that which is good and let thy soul delight itself in fatness.

1 Tim. 6:9. They that will be rich fall into a temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in perdition and destruction.

He that falls into the hands of his riches, falls into the hands of his foolish and hurtful lusts; he that falls into the hands of these, falls into the hands of the Devil, into temptation and snare; and he that falls into temptation, is swimming down the stream into perdition and destruction.

He that dreads not temptation, knows not himself nor it. What art thou? What is temptation? Dost thou know what thou art? What a weak and silly thing thou art? How ignorant of Satan's devices? What a ductile sequacious soul thou art, apt to be led away with every lust? What a dry tree, what tinder thou art, apt to take fire of every spark? Brethren, if you know not your own weakness, if you are not sensible how hard tis for you to resist, how easily you are overcome of temptation, you are strangers from yourselves. Christ knew you better when he bid you pray, Lead us not into temptation. He knew well enough what work the tempter would make with you, if he could but get you within the reach of his net, and therefore taught you to pray to be kept out. Have you never proved your own weakness? Do you not remember how you use to come off when you have been tempted? Have you no sad experiences by you, your broken peace, your wounded spirits, your wasted Consciences to remember you of it? Do you not still use to come off by the loss?

Consider friend, it may be thou art of a Covetous heart, and an earthly mind; and this, when it meets thee in the presence of God, what a shame and sorrow is it to thee? Thou bewailest it, and abhorrest thyself for it; thou

confessest it to God, prayest against it, covenants against it; and by that thou hast stood a while before the Lord, and tasted of the delights of his love, thou hast gotten thine heart a little raised to things above; thou canst scorn this earth, and hopest thou shalt never be so taken with these beggarly things again; and yet, no sooner hath the Devil gotten thee abroad, into thy house among thy treasures, into thy field among thy sheep and oxen, but thine heart is gone presently after them; all the prayers and tears and vows are forgotten and thou art as busy and eager upon the world as ever.

It may be, thou art possessed of a slight and frothy spirit, given to vanity, carnal mirth and jollity, and when thou comest to pray or to humble thy self; when thou art alone and hast freedom to be conversant about the matters of thy soul, thou art for the time, gotten to be a little serious; the sense of eternity falling upon thee, thy soul taking a walk to the grave, and looking over to those deeps that are on the other side, thy spirit is hereby consolidated and gotten into a more sober frame; and then presently thou hopest thou shalt never evaporate into such froth and folly again: and yet behold, as soon as ever thou fallest into company with vain persons, and hast been entertained a while with their unsavory merriments, thou quickly becomest as one of them.

It may be, thou art of a pettish and froward spirit, and this hath cost thee dear; many tears and troubles of heart; and sometimes possibly thou hast prayed and humbled thyself into more meekness and patience and quietness of spirit; and yet the next cross that comes, if but a very look, a disrespectful word, nay, may be but a surmise or a jealousy of a slighting thought, will put thee besides all thy patience, and set thee all in a flame.

How many such experiences hast thou of thy self? Hast thou not often found it thus? Must thou not acknowledge it hath been thus again and

again? Have not these been sometimes thy groans before the Lord, at such times when thou hast felt thyself in a better frame, Oh that it might be ever thus? O that this might hold; that I might never sink into this earthliness, that I might never swell with this froth or fury again? O this slippery and unstable heart; I fear it, I doubt how it will serve me; if the world or this flesh do but call me away; if any temptation comes, either to court me or to cross me, I fear me, all this calm and serenity will quickly become clouds and tempests: Speak Christian hath it not been thus many a time? O what a weak thing art thou?

And what is temptation that you do not fear it? If you know not I will tell you: there are these four things in it.

Deception.

Infection.

Seduction.

Perdition.

1. Deception: temptation is an artifice contrived on purpose to beguile and deceive us, Gen. 3:13. The serpent beguiled me and I did eat: 'tis a juggle, or a cheat, that carries a stinging tail under a fair face: that promises a kindness or advantage, but either hath nothing in it, or a mischief: there's no temptation, but its outside and inside, its head and tail hath as much difference, either as substance and shadow, or as bait and hook.

2. Infection: the heart by reason of its filth and rottenness, is apt to take infection ('tis dangerous for persons abounding with ill humors, to come into ill airs) and temptation is as the air from a plague sore, that conveys infection: temptation does so ferment innate corruption, that it putrefies into the more deadly malignity: our being conversant with the pleasures, and fashions, and lusts of this World, our living in such evil airs, do leave such

corrupt impressions and dispositions upon us, as do suffocate our spirits, and destroy the very vitals of religion in us.

See it in experience: look what men's outward condition, and their ordinary converses are, such are their tempers and complexions: you may see in their faces, and smell in their very breaths, where they use to live. Those that are dwelling, and have their whole occupation in the earth, are they not mostly earthen souls? Those that dwell at ease, and with the careless and idle, are sluggish and sleepy souls: those that live in pleasure, in mirth and jollity, what are their Souls but bladders of froth and vanity? He that dwells in the pomp's and glories of the world, proud and haughty, scorner is his name, and according to his name so is the man: he that is the companion of drunkards, and partaker with the adulterer, his very inwards often become debauchery: possibly their ways of life at first found them in sounder tempers; but behold now they are all infected persons: this earth hath infected them, their ease hath infected them, their pleasures, and their pomp's, and their companions have infected them, leavened them into their own natures.

Oh what sad metamorphoses do we sometimes see, even of the most promising ingenuous natures, by their overbold or unwary converses; spoiled not only of their most gracious inclinations, but of all tinctures of good nature; grown proud, and wanton, and froward, and rude, and perverse, who were once loved for their humility, sobriety and meekness; and all this by the infection they have received from their ways, or companions.

Those that will run into temptations, that will adventure themselves anywhere whither their lust leads them, that will not first inquire, Is it good for me to be here? Is it safe for me to walk thus? Are as mad and foolish, as

those that will run into a Pesthouse, or lodge amongst Lepers. Dost thou not see what thy boldness hath already cost thee? Is not the hew of thy Society already grained into thy face? Art thou not become as one of them thou conversest withal? Has not the Infection seized on thine heart, and does not the Leprosy appear in thy forehead? Take heed foolish soul, if it be not already, in how little time, may this disease be incurable.

3. Seduction. Leading aside to errors and mistakes, to believe a lie: there are temptations that corrupt the judgment, as well as the affections, that change the principles, as well as the dispositions. When the heart is leavened into vanity, it must have a Religion that's suited to it; its vain ways must be all made right in its eyes: when the heart is become a Libertine, all its principles must be latitudinarian: What say the great men, and wise men? What say many of the wits of the world, the men whose eyes are opened, in comparison of whom all their fathers were but children, and knew nothing at all? Are these for this strict and circumspect self-denying life? Do they not teach us better doctrines? The Spirit of Religion is not nice and morose, nor so straitlaced as represented by some, but more Noble, and generous, and free, not feeding men with fears and jealousies, not loading them with heavy burdens, nor limiting them within narrow bounds, nor imposing on them such severities as some others plead for; that is, in other terms, (if some men's doings may be a Commentary on their sayings) Religion is for licentiousness, a Patron for lust, a friend of the flesh and fleshly liberties; as if Christ was out when he said, Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life; and his Apostles after him when they exhorted, See that you walk circumspectly: Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.

But why may not these be in the right? This is the easiest and least troublesome way; O that this might be Religion indeed! And why may it

not? These men see as much as others, and these men have souls as well as others; well, I am for them.

And when our spirits are suited to carnal ways, and our judgments are bribed to give their suffrage for them, how easily doth our foot fix in them: our lusts lead us aside, and our evil principles warrant our wanderings; our corrupt affections carry us into crooked ways, and our corrupt judgments will take upon them to make the crooked strait.

4. Perdition: that's the term, or Gulf, whether these streams are carrying us down; temptation is destruction begun, and destruction is temptation finished: the Devil hath done his work, temptation hath served his turn, when it hath drowned the soul in perdition and destruction.

Well now, Is not temptation to be feared? Would you not fear to be deceived, to be infected, to be seduced, to be destroyed? And is not prosperity a temptation? Will the devil be friend you for nothing? Is not this chaff a bait? Is there not a Net spread under? Who is it that said, The prosperity of fools shall destroy them? And how doth it destroy, but by first deceiving them?

Can you rejoice when you fall into temptation? Can you sport yourselves in your own deceiving's, and bless yourselves in your own destruction? Will you lust, and covet, and lie, and labor, and toil, and all to treasure up gins, and snares, and nets, and hooks, to take your souls withal, and will you take these, as the reward of all your labor?

Are you temptation proof? Are you gotten above the danger of temptation? Dare you challenge the tempter into the field? When so many great men, and wise men, and good men have so sadly fallen, and suffered such unspeakable loss, are you secure from any such prejudice? Are you

gotten to that pitch, that you can now touch pitch, and not be defiled, or walk upon coals, and not be burnt?

Have you never suffered by your prosperity? Hath your soul never suffered, your conscience never suffered? Have you never been deceived and beguiled by it? Have you never lost some better things, by your over-loving these? Have you been deceived formerly, and is there no danger of being deceived for the future? Have you been deceived, and is there no danger you may be destroyed? Hath the first work of temptation prospered, and is there no fear but that it will miscarry in its last?

Christians, study thoroughly the mischiefs of temptations, and be convinced, that the prosperities of the world are the most mischievous of temptations; receive them as such, and then see if this will not cool your covetousness.

A little to quicken and give life to these two particulars, ponder deeply, what a dreadful thing 'twill be to miscarry in the Judgment. It is not who shall stand in the Synagogue, or sit in the Palaces, but who shall stand in the Judgment; 'tis not, who hath been clothed in Purple, fared sumptuously, lived deliciously; 'tis not, who hath gotten the fairest houses, the largest fields, the greatest flocks; 'tis not, who hath been the greatest Landlord, but who hath been the best Steward, that will be the concerning question: whatever thy receipts have been, whether little or much, what if thy Bill of accounts should be rejected with this under-written, Away from me thou evil and slothful servant, thou hast been unfaithful: Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

What if this should be thy case? To be fetched down from thy high places, to be thrust out of thy Storehouses, to be snatched out of thy shop, or thy field, to be arrested at thy table, in the midst of the feast, and carried away

before thy Judge, with the account of an unprofitable servant, or an unfaithful steward? Oh how dreadful will be thy appearance at that day? How wilt thou hide thy self, or how wilt thou bear the face of thy Judge, before whom thy own Conscience shall arraign and accuse thee, for a false and foolish servant?

And what hazard is there that this may be thy case, whose way does prosper? When the very same things that are thy Talents to be accounted for, are thy temptations to neglect thy account; when the very matter of thy trust is a temptation to abuse it; the more thou hast, the more thou hast to answer for, and the less like to have what to answer; the more thou hast, the more will thy flesh be craving for itself, every lust will come in for a share; thy pride must have some, thy appetite must have some, thy passions must have some, thy covetousness would have all, and the more they see in thine hand, the more clamorous will they be for it; these beggars will neither take a denial, nor an ordinary alms at a rich man's door.

How hard will thy case be, either to grant or deny; if thou deny, thou seemest cruel to thine own flesh; if thou grantest, thou art false to God and thy soul.

Were these things duly weighed, there would not be such scuffling after the world, nor such whining's under its want; he that had least would not murmur at his poverty, and he that had most would not boast of his riches; he that had least would be content, and he that had most would be afraid; and all would conclude, that abundance is less to be desired, and want less to be feared.

CHAP XII. – Direction 5: Hold your thoughts, affections, and senses, under constant government.

HOLD YOUR THOUGHTS, AFFECTIONS, and senses, under constant government.

1. Your thoughts. Where the thoughts are, the soul is, Psa. 139:8. When I awake, I am still with thee; that is, my thoughts are presently with thee, my meditations are of thee; and where my thoughts are, there am I. When the thoughts are with God, the soul is with God, when the thoughts are in the earth and mud, the soul is all bemired.

The soul goes forth, to view, to taste, and to choose for itself; the thoughts take a view, the affections and senses taste and take the relish, and then accordingly the will chooses: The will should nakedly follow the understanding, and choose only what the unbiased judgment tells it is good; but it does too ordinarily follow the affections and senses; these blind the reason, and so engage the will; we choose what we love, and what pleases, rather than what upon an impartial deliberation, we judge to be good.

The things of both worlds work upon hearts objectively; by the good or evil that is apprehended in them, they accordingly affect us; our thoughts

search into things, what there is in them; when our thoughts by searching find out God, God is regarded; and when they are in search after the world, they make a shift to fancy this to be good, and accordingly it is embraced.

The thoughts are the feet and the eyes of the soul; the feet, Eccles. 5:1, keep thy feet when thou goest into the house of God; that is, keep and look well to thy thoughts. The eyes, Prov. 17:24. The eyes of a fool; that is, his thoughts, are in the ends of the earth; the roving's of the thoughts, are the souls compassing the earth, and its walking to and fro to the ends thereof.

Keep your thoughts in by the Lord, and you keep your souls in; your thoughts will be in exercise, will be walking daily and hourly, some whither or other; there's no keeping them in, they will abroad, either to heaven or earth: oh send them to heaven daily, and hold them there, let them have no leisure to wander in this earth.

Brethren, think yourselves up to heaven; as we may pray ourselves up, and believe ourselves up to heaven, so we may think ourselves thither: worldly men think themselves into pride, or think themselves into covetousness, or think themselves into wantonness, are so long thinking, and thinking in fuel for lust, till they have set it all in a flame: as worldly men think themselves into wickedness, so let Christians think themselves into holiness, think themselves into humility, sobriety, contentation, and heavenliness of mind; call off your thoughts from this earth, and you will cease to be earthly, call them back from vanity, and you will cease to be vain; call them up to heaven, and you call them off from what's below.

Think on God more Christians, and the everlasting Kingdom; think on the way that leads to it, on the dangers that lie in the way, on the dread of perishing in the way, on the beauty, and pleasure, and comfort of being upright in the way, of the goal and prize that is at the end of the way.

Take up such thoughts as these; Is not God better than the world? That is, is not all things better than nothing? Is not grace better than sin? That is, is not fair better than foul? Is not peace better than wrath, peace with God, than friendship with the world? Are not the fillings of Gold, better than heaps of earth?

Is a little grace so good, and is not more desirable? Can there be much grace, where the desire is so divided betwixt it and vanity? Is gold in the Our so precious, as gold out of the fire? Is the twilight pleasant, O what is the day light? Is a mixture of flesh and spirit, of heaven and earth, as desirable as all spirit, all heaven? If grace be so good, if peace with God be so precious, why do I not seek it? If I have a little grace, if I have a little peace, why do I not press for more? When shall I increase, and grow rich towards God, if I do not decrease towards this earth?

Be thinking thus on heaven and heavenly things, and if you will be thinking of earth too, think of the dark places of the earth, and the dark side of its brightness; think of the precipices, the marishes, the quagmires, the barren Mountains, and desolate Wildernesses, the briars, and thorns, and wild beasts of the earth; my meaning is, if you will study the world, study its vanity and vexations, the danger you are in of being lost, or torn in pieces, or swallowed up of them.

How uncertain are these riches? How vanishing is this mirth? How inconstant are these friends? What a blast are these honors? What a flash are these pleasures? What a bubble are these buildings? How long will they last? What will be left of them a few years hence? But O the thorns, and the briars, the vexations, the cares, the fears, the disappointments, the crosses, the sweat, and the sorrows, that are mingled with these pleasures and possessions. But yet farther, O the darts, and the arrows, and the stings that

come after! O the stabs, and the wounds that they give to the soul, the darkness, and death, and damnation, that they are dragging it into!

If you will be thinking on the world, let it be with such thoughts as these, and then see if it would be so hard to make an exchange of earth for heaven.

Brethren, the reason why it is so hard a work for the Ministry to persuade in souls to Christ is, because we cannot get them to entertain any serious thoughts of Christ, and of the blessedness that comes in with him: the reason why we cannot fetch them off from the world, is, because we cannot persuade them to think as they should of it, of the vanity of it, of the bondage it holds them in, and the misery it subjects them to: If we could but set you a thinking once, what harm would it be to me to hearken to Christ? What will become of me if I do not hearken to him? When shall I come to Christ, if I still cleave to this present world? What if I should never come, but should stand at this distance from him to my dying day? Can I ever hope for mercy from Christ, if for the love of the world I now refuse him? Will he regard my cries, when hereafter I shall call, Lord open to me, Lord answer for me, Lord save me; if I reject him when he calls, Soul open to me, Soul submit to me: How shall I stand in the Judgment, if I have no Christ to stand with me? Will my estate, will my pleasures, will my friends be good Advocates for me in that day? Will this be a good Plea, Lord Jesus appear for me, let thy wounds plead, let thy blood plead for me, let me stand as one of thine, for I am he that would none of thee; I set at naught thy counsels, and despised thy Covenant, and trampled upon thy blood, and preferred my house, and my money, and my pleasures, and my lusts, before thy love? I am he, whom when thou calledst I would not come, whom thou wouldst have turned, but I would not turn; when thou wouldst have pardoned and healed me, I sold thy pardon, and refused to be healed, and

wilt thou not plead for such a one as I? I have chosen [this] world for my portion, I have loved it, and served it, and when I should have been praying or hearing, minding my soul, and laying up treasure in heaven, I was loath to be such a bad husband, I was busy in following my affairs, looking to my Corn, and my Cattle, and my Trade; and here I have gotten money and Lands, and will not these plead for me? Is not a rich man's Plea good? Will not my gold, and my silver, my honors, or my ornaments, get entrance into thy Kingdom? If not Lord, this is all I have to say for myself, if this will not do, who shall plead for me?

O Brethren, if you would be persuaded to sit down daily, and to think over some such thoughts as these, then there would be hope: If we could but preach you upon this thinking, there would be hope that you might think you into Christ.

2. Hold your affections under government, Prov. 16:32. He that ruleth his spirit, is better than he that taketh a City: and no wonder, for he hath taken the whole world captive. All victories imaginable are summed up in this one victory, the conquest of the heart.

By spirit we are here to understand, the passions or affections, the spirit of man is, as the Apostle says Jam. 3, the tongue of man is, an unruly evil; impatient of subjection, and pressing for dominion.

God hath placed our affections under government; under the government of our reason, and those principles of heavenly wisdom, faith, righteousness and holiness, which we are endowed with; but these (like an unbroken horse, that will not go whither the rider, but whither itself listeth) do rise up and rebel against reason, and will be the leaders and not followers: and this unruliness of the passions is the root of the distempers and disorders of the life: when men surrender up themselves to be led by affection whither doth

it carry them? Reason leads us up to God. It is the Candle of the Lord; that lights us our way to him: our affections are blind guides; love is blind, desires are blind, and whether will the blind lead us? If we could live by faith, nay if we could but live more by reason (by right reason) we should get us up out of this earthly country: even reason will tell us, that God is better than creatures, and that the inordinate following of creatures, is the forsaking of God.

For the better holding your affections right, take these two directions.

1. Keep yourselves in the love of God.
2. Whatever you love in the world, let it be also your fear.

1. Keep yourselves in the love of God: let affection follow the conduct of reason to Heaven, and there let it dwell, but till reason lead it down again: keep yourselves in the love of God, Jude 21, keep up a right understanding of God and that will keep up your affections; keep up your affections to God, and that will keep them off from the world: the heart will ever be in love; and till it find a better, this harlot must be its beloved: deformity is as beauty whilst beauty is out of sight. He says in vain, set not your affections on the earth, that does not first say, set your affections on things above. He that says, set your affections on things above, and not on the earth, if he be heard in the first, will not be denied in the second: keep you in the love of God, and you keep you clear of the love of the world.

2. Whatever you love in the world, let it be also your fear: fear will be loves bridle, and reason would teach you to fear whatever you love here: nothing hath such an advantage upon us, to steal away our hearts from God as the things we love. The Lord is seldom such a loser as by his bounty, when he lets down his silver cords of love, to draw up our hearts, we make chains of them to fetter us here below. His gold and his Jewels, his bracelets

and earrings, which he sends us to allure our love, are often molten into an Idol and engross our hearts to them.

Whatever thou lovest in all the world, hast thou a wife or a child that thou lovest, hast thou a friend or companion that thou lovest, hast thou an house a pleasant habitation, hast thou gardens or orchards, fields or vineyards that thine heart is pleased withal, O be jealous of them: Keep your distance come not too near; thou comest for my Soul (my child) my house, my money my friends, I must have an eye to you, you come to steal away mine heart.

What a sad requital, and yet how commonly is this the requital, which we make for bounty and kindness? I should have loved God better, if he had not been so good to me: I should have loved God better, if he had not given me so good a wife, so dear a child, so fair an estate, so many friends: wilt thou fear such unworthiness? Then fear whatever thou lovest.

If what you love be not also your fear, it's like to be your loss and sorrow. If Samson had feared his Delilah whom he so loved, he had saved his locks, his God and his life: his love to that harlot did him more mischief, then all the armies of the Philistines. Solomon's wives became his tears: fondling children often revenge their parent's dotage, by becoming thorns in their sides and swords in their hearts: whatever thou over-lovest, look for it, to find it thy cross or thy curse: what will thy friends, or thy money be, when either thou hast lost them, or thy soul by them? Whatever thou over-lovest God will tear it from thine heart, if ever he mean thee good, he will touch thee in the apple of thine eye, he will try thee in thine Isaac, he will tear off that Jewel that entices thy Soul from him: what thou canst not part with, look for it, that must go, or thy soul.

3. Set a strict watch upon your senses: By these 'tis, that Satan with all his temptations, hath such an easy passage to our hearts: our senses are the doors of our hearts; the outlets of corruption, and the inlets of temptation; they bring the outward objects, and the inward lusts together; when the fuel and the fire are laid together, then there is a flame.

Both the Evil and the Good that is in us, came in much by this way. How came Sin and Death into this world, and all the plagues and miseries we are laboring under, or liable to? Which way came they in? By the eye they came in: when the woman [saw] the fatal apple, then she lusted and tasted, Gen. 3.

How came life and immortality, grace and peace, and all our glorious hopes in again? By the Ear they came in. By this the promise entered, by this Faith entered, Rom. 10:17. Faith cometh by hearing.

Nihil est intellectu quod non fuit prius in sensu, saith the Philosopher, there's nothing in our understandings, and as little in our affections, whether good or evil, but what made its way by our senses. If God hath our eye and our ear, he hath our heart; if the Devil have gotten these once, 'tis not like to be long, ere he be possessor of all: of such mighty consequence is the keeping our senses, as Heaven and Hell amount to.

Our senses are now vitiated and corrupted; pre-occupied by sin and the Devil; shut against God, and open to iniquity. Sin hath gotten the start of grace; and having gotten possession of the house, makes good the doors for itself and friends: whatever knocks for entrance, the word presently is who comes there: and if it be a friend, a friend of sin, there's free admission: So that now in pleasing our senses or leaving them at liberty to please themselves, we betray our Souls to the hands of Hell: to be a Sensualist is next to being a Devil: to leave our senses unguarded, is to leave open the

floodgates of Hell: the Devil could not wish our Souls in other hands, then to be given up to our senses: neither Devil or World need doubt of entrance, while they have a friend at the door; these earthen gates like that iron gate, will open of their own accord to them, whenever they come.

Our depraved senses are the great adversaries to Christianity: whatever is said of the enmity of the world, of it's gains and fashions, its pomp's and pleasures, all lies upon this score, as they are the objects that tickle and please the senses, and by these, deprave the mind and turn away the heart.

What is it that lies in the way of the Gospel; that obstructs it's passage and hinders it's work upon Souls? Why is it that Christ is not more gladly and generally received? O this is it that hinders; 'twould deprive us of many a sweet morsel, of many a pleasant draught, 'twould pull off our vain habits, and wanton fashions; 'twould pare off our fleshly pleasures: no more indulging to appetite, no more pleasing our eyes, and ears, and palates, if Christ be once entertained: now we can take our liberty to make provision for the flesh, and let the flesh take it's fill: we can feed ourselves with the finest, clothe ourselves with the best, we can soke ourselves in all sorts of sensualities; we can fetch in load upon load, and make the best of what's before us: we can milk every dug, we can suck every bottle, we can dig in every mine, we can plough and reap in every field that the world hath; there's nothing but Christ can hinder us; once give ear to him, and that will spoil all our mirth and mar all our markets: then we must keep within bounds, and neither get nor spend more than he allows us: we must keep to our allowance and but a short allowance neither, such as will be too strait for flesh and blood to submit to.

And hereupon our eyes and ears, which are so open upon the World and its vanities, do as it were invite, and call in all the help the world can make,

to resist Christ and his work; do call in all the baits and temptations that the whole world is furnished with, to divert and turn aside the heart from hearkening to Christ. Help World; help O my carnal friends, help O my fleshly pleasures, help O my house and money, Christ is come for mine heart, I am loath it should go there; can you do nothing to stay it with you? Help or it's gone.

Friends, would you not that the world keep Christ out, or draw you aside from him? Shut the doors against it; make a covenant with your eyes and ears, set a watch upon them; put a bridle upon your appetite, and keep the door of your lips; shut the world out; be deaf to its flattery, be blind to its glory, wink it into darkness; shut the doors and keep the world out, and then Christ will be the better accepted.

Live above the pleasures of sense. What have you no higher pleasures, no Nobler delights? Have you not a God to delight you in? Have you no soul delights? Or are these they, wherein the Brutes have as great a share as you? Is meat, and drink, and clothes, and sports, the food of souls, your heart delights? Must your immortal part live at the Trough, and feed on swill and husks? Where is peace with God? Where is the fellowship of the spirit? Where is the joy of the Holy Ghost, and the hope of glory? Where is the sweetness of sincerity, and the peace of conscience? Are there no such things, or is there no pleasure in them? Are you content to take up with this mud, whilst those pure streams run by? Or must you have both? Is it not enough that your souls may rejoice, that your hearts may feast and sing, unless your flesh also may frisk and frolic it out in its brutish mirth and pleasure? Go taste and see how good the Lord is, drink of his rivers, acquaint yourselves with his pleasures; and then see, if a Heaven satiated soul can envy the brutes the pleasures of sense.

CHAP XIII. – Direction 6: Make a Solemn Surrender of all you have to God.

LASTLY, MAKE A SOLEMN surrender of yourselves and all that you have to the government and disposal of God, lay down all at his feet, and resolve to take up nothing, but with his leave and for his use.

Let the Lord have the whole ordering of you, for your,
Getting, Keeping, Using.

1. Seek no other things, nor any greater abundance of them, then God allows you to seek: Buy not an house, nor a field, or a living, but make God the purchaser: go not into the fair, or the market, into the shop or over the seas, but when God sends you; drive not that trade or that bargain, concerning which you cannot say, I am herein trading for God: let the Lord appoint you, your work and your rest, your labor and your profit, be content with what comes in. Seek not great things for yourselves, and quarrel not with providence, if by all your seeking you get nothing.

Seek no more, nor no other things then God would have you, and seek them no otherwise then in God's way and order. God hath other works then these for you to do; God hath other things then these for you to seek. God

says seek my face, seek my Kingdom; [first] seek my kingdom and the righteousness thereof: what is this done? Is God sure? Is the kingdom sure? Have you grace? Have you peace? Have you enough of these? Have you wrought yourselves out of work here? Is there no more to be done, no more to be gotten? Is there never a gulf yet fixed betwixt you and glory, that needs your care how to get over? Are you past all danger of miscarrying forever? Is your way cleared of all your difficulties and hazards? Have your souls no enemy left alive? Are your lusts dead, the world vanquished, and the Devil trodden underfoot? Have you as much grace as you need? As much faith and love and patience as you need? Are you past that prayer Lord increase our Faith? Are you past those counsels, Hold fast that thou hast. Grow in grace, follow after, press to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus? Have you hit the mark, have you won the prize?

Is there not much of this work to be done which God would have [first] to be done? Yea with some of you, is it not all behind hand? Nothing done for your Souls; no knowledge, no grace gotten? Nothing of the work of conversion, nothing of the work of repentance done; the first stone of the new building yet to be laid, yea not so much as the old rubbish removed, not a lust cast out, your carnal hopes not yet thrown down the hard heart not so much as touched?

What is there nothing done for the other world by so many of you, and so little done by the best of you, and are you yet so busy for this world? Is this as God would have it? Is this to seek the world as God would have you seek it? Go and ask counsel of God, Lord what wouldst thou have me to do? How far forth for this world? How far forth for the other world? Which shall be first minded? Which shall be chief? And whatever the Lord doth

speaking, let this be thy resolve, I will first seek the kingdom of God, and for other things I must do as I may.

2. Keep and lay up no more by you, than God would have you: Say of all you lay up, This is God's stock, this is his treasure: whatever you have, let God keep the purse: when he says, Bring no more into the treasury, stay your hand, bestow it elsewhere as he shall appoint you. Let no stolen goods be found with you: all's stolen, stolen into your purse, stolen into your house, which the Lord would have otherwise disposed of. Be not then laying up, when God says lay out, be not then sparing when God would have you spending.

God says, Cast thy bread upon the waters, be ready to distribute: What saith he to those rich men, Jam. 5:2,3, your riches are corrupted, your garments are moth-eaten: your gold and silver is cankered, the rust of them shall be a witness against you; you have heaped up treasure (an evil treasure) against the last days: what do you treasure up for the moth and the canker and the rust? No more such heaping up, bring forth out of your treasure.

3. Use what you have as God would have you use it: bring forth, but only by God's order. Be good stewards; remember your account, book down all your expenses: let nothing go any way, but what you are willing should be booked, and let nothing be booked, but what you would have read in your reckoning day.

Let your flesh have no more than the Kings allowance: feed it as a servant, let it not want what's necessary, but feed it not into wantonness or idleness: let it have never a meal nor a morsel more, than is fit for a servant. Let it not have the command of your estate, or be its own carver, but let it be at the finding of conscience; let never a penny be laid out upon it, either

for food or raiment but what conscience allows. Let your families be provided for, your friends entertained so, as that nothing be wanting, nothing be wasted. Be provident but not penurious, use hospitality but hate to be prodigals: give to all their due and no more: and whilst your flesh hath it's due, your friends and families their due, let not God's friends want theirs: whomever he sends to you for an alms, send them not away empty, send portions to those for whom nothing is provided: feed, clothe, harbor, lend, give, according as God hath communicated to you, and shall command from you; and in giving thus to all, the things that are theirs, you give unto God the things that are God's.

Remember carefully this last direction: Lay down all you have at the feet of God, and neither seek nor use anything, but according to his order and will. Never let lust set you on work, and leave nothing to its dispose: feed not your eye or your appetite, feed not your pride or your covetousness, till God bids you feed them; and then you shall find your lusts to starve under your hands; and when worldly lusts are dead, the enmity of the world is slain, it's temptations vanquished, and from being your Lord, it's henceforth become your servant: now you may make your friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, and when these fail, you shall be received into everlasting habitations.

CHAP XIV. – Further Persuasive Arguments to Press on to Victory.

FOR A CLOSE OF all, let me yet a little farther persuade you, to press hard for this victory over the world; and to this end, let me ask you these following questions,

1. Are you for the saving of your Souls?
2. Is not the World an enemy to your Souls, and the salvation of them?
3. Is not victory over this enemy possible?
4. Is not victory over this enemy desirable?
5. Can this victory be bought too dear?
6. What if this enemy should reign to death?
7. Will you henceforth become enemies to this enemy?

1. Are you for the saving of your Souls? What are you for? For Heaven or Hell? 'Tis the same question as, are you for Heaven or Earth? Speak friends, where would you that your lot should fall? Will you be written in the earth, or amongst the living in Jerusalem? Will you have your good things here, or will you wait for them till hereafter? Which do you most regard, the joint and eternal interest of your bodies and Souls, or the single

and temporal interest of your bodies? In a word, will you be saved or damned?

Do you so verily believe, a resurrection from the dead, and a judgment to come? That there is another world? That this world shall vanish away, and the other world shall abide forever; that there is an eternal state of blessedness and misery, into one of which states your Souls must immediately enter, as soon as they are loosened from this body? That the future blessedness is unspeakable, that the future misery is intolerable? Are you Atheists or Infidels, or else do you so verily believe this, that it is the great aim and desire of your hearts, to obtain this blessedness, and to escape those torments?

Descend into your hearts, consider the choice that's set before you, and come to a resolution: what do you choose? Light or darkness? Life or death? Ease or anguish? Rejoicing or howling? Lifting up of the head or gnashing of teeth? Eternal pleasures, or eternal fire? With whom will you dwell? With the Saints or with Serpents: with Michael or the Dragon? In the joy of the Lord or in the terrors of the Lord? What shall be your sentence? Come or depart? Come ye blessed or depart ye cursed? Inherit the kingdom or away into the fire? What say you? Consider and speak, will you be damned, or are you for the saving of your Souls? If you say you are for salvation, then let me farther ask you,

2. Is not the world an enemy to your salvation? Is salvation possible without a victory over it?

Is it not against the declared will and purpose of God? Rom. 8:30. Whom he did predestinate, them he also called; whom he called, them he also justified; whom he justified, them he also glorified: who are the justified and glorified? Is it not, only the called? Is there ever another man of the

number? And who are the called of God? Is it all those that are bid to come? Is he of them that makes light of it? That says, I cannot come: that says, no Lord, I pray thee call some other guests, and let me alone as I am; to follow my oxen and my farm and my wife, I pray thee have me excused? Is this one of the called of God? If not, what hope of his salvation? Will God change his purpose and baulk his way, to gratify thy carnal mind, and reconcile lust and eternal life?

Is there not an inconsistency in the nature of the things? To be saved, and left under the power of the world, is to be saved, and yet left under the power of the Devil? To be saved and yet left unsanctified: to be made free and yet left in bonds. Doth it not enervate and resist all the means of salvation?

Doth not the world hinder the word, that that cannot prosper with you? Is not this it, the lusts and love and cares of this life that choke the word that it becomes unfruitful? Math. 13:22. Hath not the world hitherto dealt by you, as in the beginning of this discourse, I told you it would? Darkened your eye, that you could not see? Deadened your sense that you could not fear? Hung upon your hearts and about your necks that you could not come to Christ? Have you seen? Have you feared? Are you come to Christ? Or are you not yet in your sins? Why what is it that hath hindered you, and kept you back from Christ hitherto, but either the cares of this life, or the deceitfulness of riches, or the pleasures and lusts of this present world?

Doth not the world hinder prayer? Hold you back from going to God to seek your lives at his hands? While you should be with God to seek your lives, the world calls you abroad to seek your livings: a little praying must suffice a worldly heart; when the tribes go up to pray before the Lord, how often is the worldlings place empty? If I were to go in search for a

worldling's heart, I would seek all the places of the earth first, ere I would seek him before the throne of grace: he is so seldom there, that you may as well seek an idle shepherd in the pulpit, as a worldly heart in the closet: O if worldly men did no more diligently seek the world, then they use to seek God, what poor men would they be?

Get you asunder worldlings, let your Souls and this harlot part, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinence, that your prayers be not hindered: what praying whilst the world is still with you? And what hope of salvation, whilst no praying?

3. Is this enemy invincible? Is not victory over it possible? Is it not possible for thee to become an enemy to this world? If thou art an enemy thou art a conqueror. It's true thou hast an hard field to fight, and there's great hazard thou mayst be eternally lost by it. It hath slain so many Souls, and laid them up in everlasting chains; there have been so very few have escaped with their lives, that it's a great question, whether thy life may not also go. Thou hast been so long a captive, that it is much to be doubted whether ever thou mayst be set at liberty. Thou bearest such a love to the world, thou wilt so hardly be persuaded, that 'tis thine enemy, and art so apt to take it to be a better friend then God is to thee; thou art so hardly persuaded, that he is a friend to thee, that doth but tell thee, the world is an enemy, and art so angry at any that offers to assist thee against it, or but persuades thee to take heed of it; thou art so apt to take all the counsels, warnings, reproofs, that are given thee, to put thee upon thy watch against it, to be injuries, unkindness's; that it's much to be feared, how it may go with thee.

There have been so many charges made against it without success; the axe hath been so often laid at the root of this tree; God hath been hewing at it,

conscience hath been hewing at it, may be, all thy life long; the word hath been fighting against it, prayer hath been wrestling with it, meditation hath been considering about it; Thou hast been so often warned, Take heed and beware of covetousness; Love not the world, nor the things of the world; mortify thy members which are upon the earth; Flee youthful lusts; Get thee up from the tents of these men, set not thine affections on the earth; Thou hast been so often told, That the fashion of this world passeth away; those that will be rich fall into a snare; the friendship of the world is enmity against God; and after all this there is so little done; thy heart is so much upon it still, it holds to this day, so strong an hand over thee; thou art still siding with it and taking its part, against God and thine own Soul; thou art so loath to hear, that 'tis a sin to be worldly minded, or to be convinced that thou art a worldling; that I must tell thee, 'twill be hard work for thee, to obtain the victory, and to escape with thy Soul.

Look to it, such a disease which hath been so long rooted in thy nature; such an enemy that hath so long lien in thy bosom, that thou wilt not be persuaded, that 'tis thy disease, that 'tis thine enemy; such a disease will hardly be cured, such an enemy will hardly be conquered.

But yet, is not a victory possible? Is this disease unto death, and is there no remedy? Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no Physician there? Is the field lost, and is there no recovery? Who is it that hath bid thee fight against this enemy? Is it one that had a mind to mock thee? Look upon the Captain of thy Salvation, hath not he overcome the world? Hath not he said, Be of good comfort; look unto me, and be saved; come unto me, and ye shall have rest? Doth he not call to thee, Wilt thou not be made clean; wilt thou not be made free: If thou wilt thou mayst, there lies all the difficulty, that's all the doubt, whether thou wilt or no; as hard as the victory is, if thou perish by

the world at last, thy destruction will be laid at thine own door; 'tis because thou wilt not accept of deliverance, if thou wilt thou mayst.

4. Is not victory over this enemy desirable? Is not liberty desirable? Is not life desirable? Be an enemy and live, the world kills none but its friends.

Would it not be well with you, if this spirit of the world were cast out, and God had given you another spirit? Would it not be a good exchange, if for this carking, caring, anxious earthly greedy heart, you had obtained a contented patient mortified spirit, a heavenly mind? Would not the matter be well mended with you, if for your treasure on earth, you could make God your treasure? Could you not wish it were so?

Can you say, I thank God I am yet a worldling? I thank God my heart is still below? I can mind my pleasures, and gains; I can satisfy my lust, and take my liberty, and follow my affairs, without troubling myself about these higher matters that I know not? Hitherto I thank God, this world hath been too hard for the Gospel; the devil hath kept possession, and hath kept Christ out? Whilst others have puzzled and amused themselves with their thoughts, and hopes, and fears about another world, have made an adventure for the unknown riches, have been filling their heads, and perplexing their hearts, with cares for hereafter, and have neglected and straitened themselves here, I thank God I have been no such fool?

While you may say, I thank God, [I have] an estate in the world, I have friends in the world, can you also say, I thank God this is my treasure, these are my delights? I can never trouble myself with thinking of, or serving any other God but these, I can take these in exchange for my soul? I thank God for that unrighteousness, or that unmercifulness, which he hath left me to, and let me alone in, whereby I have gotten me an estate, and preserved it entire to me? It had been worse with me then 'tis, if I could not have lied

and defrauded; if I had made Conscience of Sabbaths, of praying, and hearing, and spending so much time this way as others do? I had been a poor man had I taken this course, but I thank God I was wiser then so? Can you say thus?

Christians may, and will say, I thank God I am crucified to the world, I thank God for Faith, and Prayers, and Sabbaths, for a new heart, and a new life; blessed be God that hath chosen me out of this world, and called me by his grace; blessed be God for a part in Christ, and hope towards God; blessed be the day, wherein my soul was divorced from this world, and espoused to another Husband; I would not be in bondage to this earth again, I would not be a flesh pleaser, a self-seeker again, if the devil would hire me with all the Kingdoms of the world; there is not a Christian in the world but will say thus: But where is the worldling that dares deliberately to say, I thank God I am a worldling still, God hath dealt well with me, that he hath left me out, and let me alone to follow mine own heart?

Speak worldling, had it not been well for thee if thou also hadst been brought in to Christ? Would it not be well for thee, if yet thou mightest, mightest cease from this earth, and be a Candidate for heaven, mightest cease to be a drudge, and a slave, and be delivered into the liberty of the Sons of God? Would it not be well with thee if thou wert? Would it not be well with thee if yet thou mightest? Dost thou never wish, O that my soul were in such a case? Why then wilt thou not, in this thy day?

5. Can this victory be bought too dear? There's nothing in this world but may be over-bought: An Army may be so weakened in the fight, that victory will not repair it; Crowns and Kingdoms may be bought too dear; all the royalties and revenues of the world may be purchased at such a rate, that they may not be a saving bargain: But can redemption from the world be

over-bought? Will not the salvation of thy soul pay all thy charges? Its true, thy rescuing from this enemy may not be without much damage and loss, not only of the ship, and the lading, but of thy life: when thou conquerest this enemy, thou wilt loose a friend; in thy conquering thou wilt purchase enmity; therefore the world hateth you: Thou wilt not only create thee enemies by thy Conquest, but wants, and straits, and labors, and cares: when thou ceasest to be a servant to this world, think not to have an easy idle life, thou wilt have more and harder work then ever; the pursuing thine enemy that he rally not again upon thee; the watching thine heart, the guarding thine eye, the governing thine appetite, that they run not again after it, the pleasing and following thy Lord in all things that he commands thee; what day thou breakest with the world, and joinest thyself to the Lord, this life of labor and care thou puttest thyself upon; thou must no more thirst after thy stolen waters, nor taste of thy forbidden pleasures; thou must no more traverse thy most pleasant ways, nor stick at the most painful duties; nay, not thine ease only, or thy pleasure, but thy life also, and all that thou hast must go, whenever thy Lord calls thee to it.

What course short of this, will either obtain, or secure thee the victory? But how will such a life down with thee? How will thy spirit bear it? When thy faint heart shrinks from it, when thy proud or stubborn heart swells against it; when thy old pleasures and liberties, when thine old friends and companions, when thy silver and thy gold cry after thee, canst thou leave us thus? Can thy soul part with us forever? Thou wilt then find that this victory costs thee dear.

But is not thy soul more worth then all this? Wilt say, Better I were damned then saved at such an hard rate; hell rather than this way to heaven?

It is hard to be a Christian, 'tis true; but blessed be God my soul is escaped, my foot is gotten out of the snare, liberty, liberty is brought to this captive, and the opening of the prison to the bound; he whom I now serve, how hard soever his work is, is no hard master, he gives good wages; were his work harder than 'tis, yet 'tis not worthy to be laid in the balance with salvation: I will not die for an easy life.

6. What if this enemy should reign till death? How do you think your worldly life will look, when you come to die? Do you think you shall then say, I have done well to be a worldling? It may be, if God should ask you now, dost thou well to be covetous? Dost thou well to be a self-seeker? You would answer him as Jonah did, Jonah 4:9, when God asked him, Dost thou well to be angry? It may be you would answer as he, yes, I do well to be angry, I do well to be covetous, or proud, or sensual; but do ye think you shall say thus at death? Shall you then think you say, I have done well, I have done wisely for myself, I have coveted a good covetousness, 'tis well for me that I did not hearken to these preachers, that I have lived in pleasure, that I have heaped up treasure for these last days? If I were to begin the world again, and were to live over my life the second time, I would take the same course I have taken; and I could wish every friend I have in the world, every companion I have, every child I have, to take example by me, and to live as I have lived? Would you say thus? Would you wish thus in that day?

Sometimes we hear a dying Worldling to wish all his friends, Take warning by me, O take heed as you love your souls, that you spend not your days as I have done; but do you ever hear them say, Take example from me, follow my steps; now I find the comfort of my earthly-mindedness, now I find the comfort of my lusts and pleasures; O that you might all have the

comfort at your dying day wherewith I am now comforted? When did you hear of such an instance?

Speak worldling, let thy Conscience speak; when death comes to arrest thy soul, and to carry it hence immediately before thy Judge, there to receive thy sentence according to what thou hast done in the body; is this the state thou wouldst be found in? Reeking in thy worldly lusts, soaked in sensuality, eaten out of worldly cares, loaden with worldly goods, and as empty of the knowledge and grace of God, as thou art at this day? Wouldst thou be content to say in respect of divine grace, as thou must in respect of worldly goods, Naked I came into this world, and naked I must go out of the world? Would you that death should carry you thus before your Judge? Would you have that written on your forehead, when you come to stand before that dreadful Tribunal, which was written on the Tomb of that Edomite, Psal. 52:7. Lo this is the man, that took not God for his strength, but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness?

Do not your hearts tremble whenever you give them leave to think of that day? Do not the fore-views of death, and those anticipations of Judgment you sometimes feel in the Court of Conscience, use to shake you?

But how will it be when it comes? When the pale horse comes to your door, and you are just mounting for the other world; when your Judge, whose eyes are as flames of fire, his feet as burning brass, with his sharp two-edged sword in his mouth; when your Judge shall be set on the bench, and your guilty Souls be brought to the Bar? When he shall make inquisition for blood; for the blood of Christ, which hath been trampled underfoot, for the blood of the poor, which hath been sucked out of their hearts; for the blood of your Souls, which hath been sold and sacrificed to

lust; when all your oaths and lies, your frauds and oppressions, your unrighteousness and unmercifulness; when your profaned sabbaths, your neglected duties, your wasted consciences; when either the rust and the canker of your riches, which you have wickedly gotten, or the wast and the ashes of them, which you have as wickedly spent; when the roll wherein all these things are written, shall be spread and read before the Lord, and your Souls struck dumb and speechless in his presence; Judge Oh Judge what your thoughts will then be of your present ways.

Lastly [will] you now become enemies to the world? Be enemies and you are conquerors, will you deal with the world as an enemy? Will you fear it as an enemy? Will you fly from it, will you fight against it as an enemy? Shall the Lord be your God? Shall the Lord be your friend? Shall the Lord be your treasure? Will you cast away all your Idols and will you come and be reconciled to God? What say you? Will you be crucified to this, and make an adventure for the other world?

Now because this is so great a question, and such as on the answering thereof, the whole issue and success of all that hath been said, depends, I shall give you the opportunity to pause a while here, and deliberate upon it, ere you give in your answer.

Before you answer this question, consider yet farther,

1. Doth not God call you off from the world?
2. What is there in your denial?

1. Doth not God call you off from the world? Who is it that said, 1 Joh. 2:15. Love not the world nor the things of the world? Consider and compare these two Scriptures. 2 Cor. 5:20. Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God, and Jam. 4:4. The friendship of the world it enmity

against God; whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

What is the errand, upon which the Ministers of the Gospel are sent from the Lord unto you? I, it not to persuade you to be reconciled to God? The word which they preach, is therefore called, the word of reconciliation Can you be reconciled to God, whilst you hold in with the world? Can anything be spoken plainer than this, He that will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God? When we therefore warn you be ye reconciled to God, do we not therein call you to make war with the world? And doth not God himself call you by us? Warn you by us?

But besides the call of the word, do not both the goodness and severity of God call upon you?

1 Doth not the goodness, the mercy and kindness of God call upon you, Rom. 2:4. Despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and long suffering, and forbearance not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? Rom. 12:1,2. I beseech you by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice; holy acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service: and be ye not conformed to this world. Worldly men mind worldly things, having their conversation in the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; But will you be conform to them? I beseech you be not. I beseech you by the mercies of God, be ye not conformed to this world: If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, any fellowship of the spirit, if any bowels of mercies, be ye otherwise minded. You profess that Christ is your consolation, that the love of God is your comfort, that the fellowship of the Spirit is your rejoicing; Are there any such things? Is there anything in them? Then let these suffice you: will you have your conversation, and take your portion, with those

who are strangers to Christ, and the comforts of his Spirit? I beseech you by the mercies of God that you do not. Do you hope for mercy? Have you received mercy? Do you live upon mercy? Hath mercy pitied you, spared you, pardoned you? Doth mercy feed you, clothe you, and comfort you, and will you not hearken to its beseeching's?

Why what doth mercy speak? Is this it's word, Continue in sin for grace hath abounded? Now follow thy pleasures, and thy liberties; God is reconciled, thy sins are forgiven, thy Soul is secure; now thou mayst slight the Lord, now thou mayst trample upon mercy, now thou hast obtained it; is this the lesson that mercy teaches? Or what doth it speak? Is not this the voice of all the kindnesses and compassions of the Lord, come back from your vanities, come away from following Idols, he sacrifices to God, and prostitute not yourselves any longer to the lusts of your flesh? Come away; for our sakes come; as you love mercy come, as you have received mercy come, as you hope for mercy come. Is not this the voice of mercy, and shall it not prevail? How shall mercy be heard when it pleads for you, if it cannot be heard, when it pleads thus with you? Is this the rate and price you put upon the grace of God, that you will deny it, in those little things it demands of you? Not a carnal pleasure to be abated, not a vain companion to be displeased, not a few handfuls of earth to be trodden underfoot, for its sake? Doth all the interest, that Christ and his grace hath in you, come to no more than this?

Brethren, where is ingenuity? Is not goodness obliging? Will you show what power mercy hath with you, how much you can do, how much you can leave for love? You at least, that have obtained mercy, methinks your hearts should be at your mouth, ready to take their flight from this wilderness, to the mountains of spices. Hath God given himself? Hath God

given me his Son, and granted me mercy unto life? Now let him take all; farms and oxen, silver and gold, honors and pleasures, let all go, and thou O my Soul become a sacrifice to the most high: my love where art thou, my desires whither run you? Come back from these vanities, and get you up to your God; mercy hath descended, let me ascend with it, and no longer dwell in the dust.

2. Do not the severities of God call you off? What mean the Judgments of God, which he executes on the earth, but to drive us up from our cisterns to the fountain? What mean the wormwood and the gall, but to wean us from these dugs? Wherefore are our disappointments, vexations, distresses, but to tell us, this is not your rest? What speak the winds and the storms, the floods and the fires, the sword and the famine, the thief and the moth, but get you up, get you up out of this place? Of what use is the cross but to crucify? To crucify us to the world, and to crucify the world unto us?

Brethren, have we not sufficiently smarted for our folly? What is it that makes us so many rods, and makes the lashes of them to cut so deep, but our unmortifiedness to this earth? How easy would our crosses lie were we dead to the world?

That's the voice of the cross, Be mortified, be crucified; prevent the greater severities of God: Be crucified or God will crucify you: Be crucified to the world or look to be crucified by the world: Friends, would you have but one cross in all your lives? Choose you whether you will have one or many; get your earthly minds nailed to the cross of Christ, and there's an end of all your crosses; every other cross that comes, will thenceforth be so easy, that it will even loose its nature.

2. What is there in your denial to hearken to these calls of God? Is there anything less in it then this I will not be reconciled to God! I choose rather

that God be mine enemy, then that the world be not my friend; I had rather have the wormwood and the gall, then not the milk and the honey. God says give me thine heart, no he shall never have it, I have bestowed it on the world, and there let it go. God says Take me for thy portion, no I will not, let me have my portion in this life. God says take me for thy Lord, no I will not; I will not that God shall reign over me. God says, as thou hopest for mercy hearken, as thou hopest for mercy submit to me; refuse at thy peril; be a worldling at thy peril, be a sensualist at thy peril: well at my peril be it, I will run the hazard of that; mercy or no mercy, I cannot hearken to that word which is so contrary to me.

Is not all this comprehended in your denial to come off from the world? O tremble, and now at length come and give in your answer.

Are there any of you that will yet say to me as those Jews, Jer. 44:16. The word which thou hast spoken to us in the name of the Lord we will not do? Or as those Jer. 2:25, there is no hope, as good hold thy peace, speak no more to us about it, for we will not hearken; we have loved strangers and after them we will go; we have loved our companions, and after them we will go; There is no hope, but we will walk after our own devices, we will walk after the imagination of our own evil heart, Jer. 18:12.

Is there no hope indeed? Would you henceforth be given over as hopeless? Would you that the Ambassadors of the Lord keep silence, and forever give you over as lost men? Shall there be no more treaty with you about this thing? Would you that we should preach no more to you, nor pray no more for you, that you may be brought to a better mind?

May there not be yet hope concerning you? May you not yet be convinced? May you not yet be persuaded?

This once let me prevail with you; Oh might we hear such a word from you, We have done with all our Idols; to the Moles and to the Batts with them all: we have done with this vain earthly life; no more such madness to venture eternity for minutes, to stake the everlasting kingdom for pictures and shadows. Come we will hearken to the Lord this day; hitherto we have been written in the earth, henceforth for the invisible world: hitherto we have lived in pleasures, we have been sowing to the flesh, we have been laboring for the wind, we have been laying up our treasure on earth; we have been gathering in dirt and throwing away Manna, we have fed upon ashes and trod upon pearls; our life hath been either a mere play or a labor for bubbles; Henceforth for substance, for the durable riches, for the everlasting pleasures, for the bags that wax not old, the treasure in Heaven that faileth not.

What say you brethren, shall this be your voice? Will you hearken to the Lord? At length give in your answer, will you now become enemies to the world? Will you indeed? Shall your Souls and it now be parted? Then go and draw up a writing of divorcement, carry it before the Lord, and acknowledge it as your act and deed; and giving yourselves to him, go presently and take your leave of all things under the Sun. Bid farewell to those that are with you in the house, farewell Father, farewell Child; farewell Husband, farewell Wife; Bid farewell to all within doors and without; farewell Goods, farewell Money, farewell Sheep and Oxen, Lands and Livings; farewell my pleasant habitation, farewell my merry days and easy nights; farewell my friends and dear acquaintance; farewell love friendship credit in the world, farewell liberty and life.

Go take your leave of all the world today, stay not till tomorrow, lest it again entangle you, and bewitch you into another mind; And this is the

leave I would advise you to take of all you have; Be able to say to them all, I am none of yours, you are none of mine. I am none of yours, I have given myself to the Lord; you are none of mine, with myself I have given away you all: the Lord hath given you me, and to him I return you, and shall not henceforth count you anything to me, but what you are to him. I have given him the right of you and when he calls for it, I will give him possession. I can enjoy you and I can want you, I can be thankful for fruition and I can bear your loss, with what I have I am content, if I have not, I will be patient, whether I have or no, I am still the same; and henceforth, I will seek you as if I sought you not, I will use you as if I used you not; while you are with me I will rejoice as if I rejoiced not, that I may weep as if I wept not when we must part, and I must know you no more.

Go thus and take your leave today, or if you find it more than one day's work, as 'tis like you may, set to it every day, let not your hearts be quiet till they and this world be thus parted.

And then arise, put on thy sandals, and after thy crucified Lord, Deny thyself, take up thy cross and follow him and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven.

FINIS.