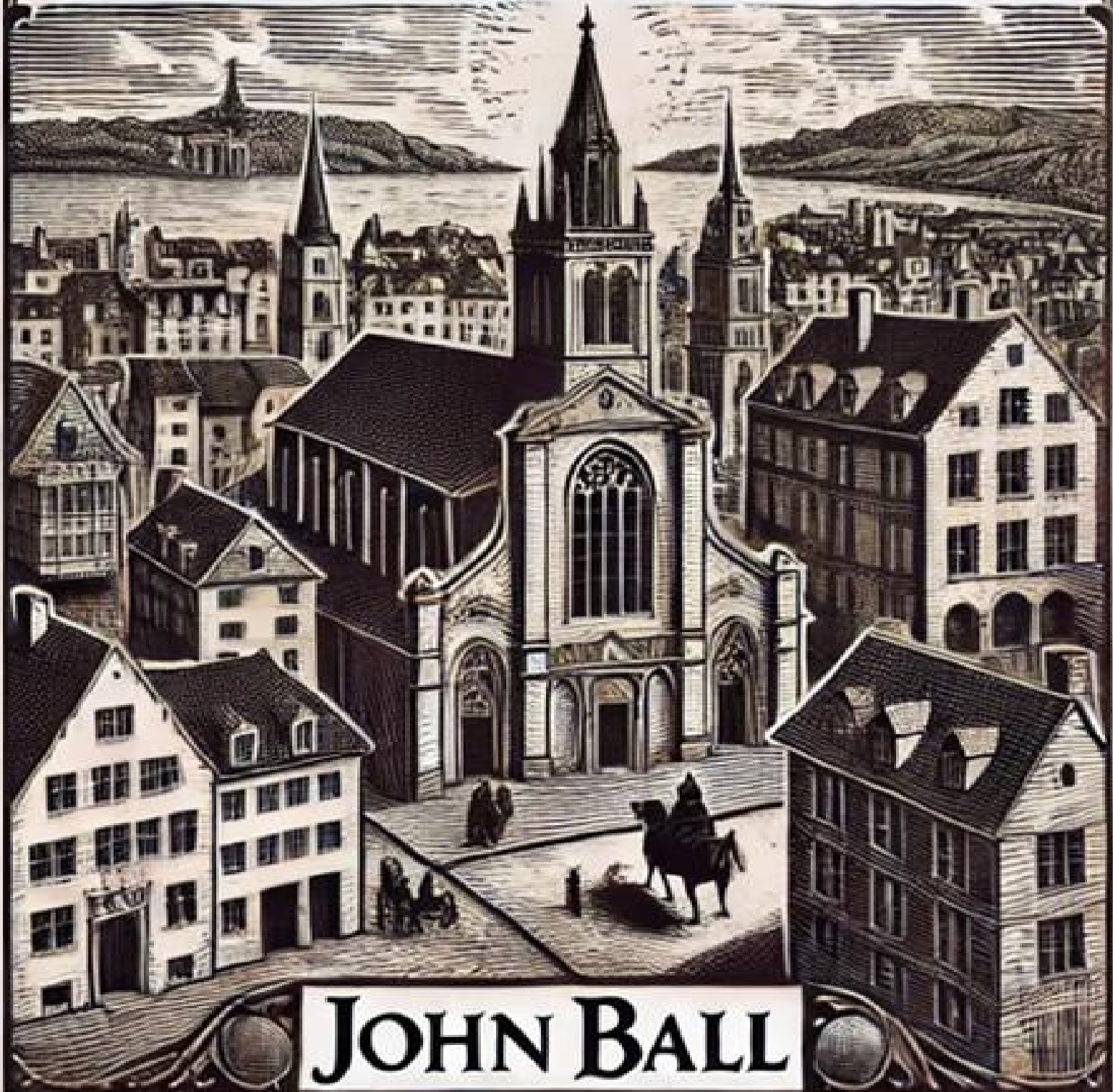


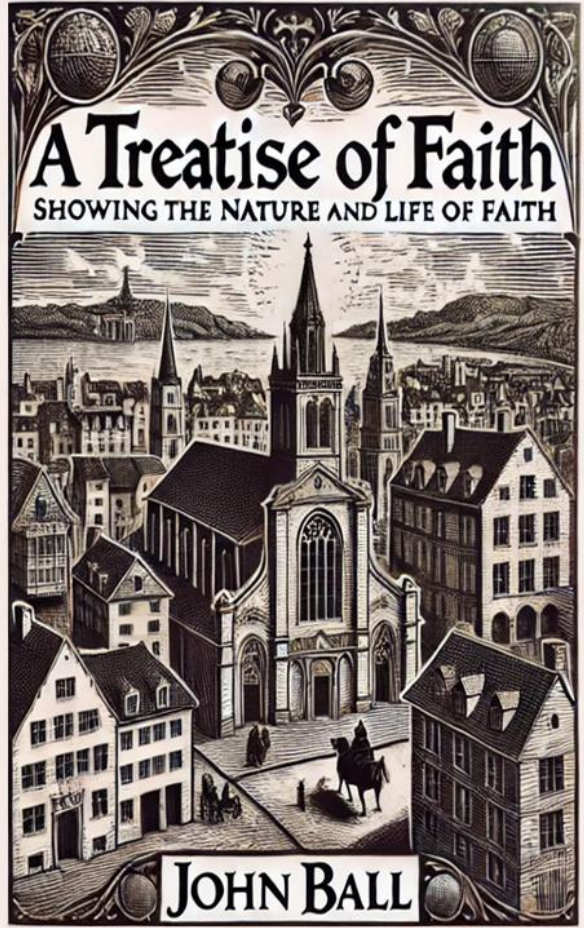


A Treatise of Faith

SHOWING THE NATURE AND LIFE OF FAITH



JOHN BALL



A Treatise of Faith

Showing the Nature and Life of Faith.

John Ball

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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 sincere apologies in advance where such errors occur. As the Puritan Edward Leigh once said "If thou findest faults and Errata in the book, let love cover them, for to err (as the Satirist saith) is the sad privilege of mortality, and he (of all men) erreth most, who challengeth a privilege from error." 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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PREF. – To the Reader.

GLORIOUS THINGS ARE SPOKEN of the grace of graces Faith in the Scriptures, God setting himself to honor that grace that yields up all the honor unto him in Christ; who indeed is the life of our life, and the soul of our soul. Faith only as the bond of union bringeth Christ and the soul together, and is as an artery that conveys the spirit from him as the heart; and as the sinews which convey the spirit to move to all duty from him as head, whence Saint Paul maketh Christ's living in us, and our living by faith all one, Gal. 2:20. Now that which giveth boldness and liberty to faith, is not only God's assignment of this office to it in the covenant of grace to come unto Christ, and unto him in Christ to receive grace, but likewise the gracious promises whereby the great God hath engaged himself as a debtor to his poor creature, for all things needful to life and godliness, until that blessed time when we shall be put into full possession of all things we have now only in promise; when faith shall end in fruition, and promises in performance. Faith first looks to this word of promise, and in the promise to Christ, in whom and for whom, they are yea and Amen, both made and

performed. And in Christ it eyeth God in whom it last resteth, is its proper center and foundation, otherwise how should we weak sinful creatures dare to have any intercourse with God that dwelleth in that light that none can attain unto, if he had not come forth and discovered his good pleasure in Christ the substantial Word, and in the word inspired by the Holy Ghost for the good of those whom God meant for to make heirs of salvation. Now these promises whereon all our present comfort and future hope dependeth, lie hid in the Scriptures, as veins of gold and silver in the bowels of the earth, and had need be laid open, that God's people may know what upon good grounds to lay claim unto. Those therefore that search these mines to bring to light these treasures deserve well of God's Church. We commend, (and not without cause) the witty industry of those that from Springs remote bring Rivers to Cities, and by Pipes from those Rivers derive water to every man's house for all domestical services: much more should we esteem of the religious pains of men that bring these waters of life home for every man his particular use, in all the passages and turnings of this life. In which regard, I do not doubt, but the pains of this godly, painful, and learned man will find good entertainment of all children of the promises that hope to inherit them, who hath with great pains, and with good evidence of spiritual understanding, endeavored to clear most matters concerning faith; and likewise discovered the variety and use of the promises with teaching Christians how to improve their riches in Christ here spread before them, how to use the shield of Faith, and the sword of the Spirit upon all occasions, that so they might not only be believing but skillful Christians, knowing how to manage and make the best advantage of their faith, and the word of faith. Which if they could do, there would another manner of power and beauty shine in their lives then doth. He is a man that hath formerly

deserved well of the Church, but in a more special manner fitted for a Treatise of this nature, as having been put to it, to know by experience what it is to live by faith, having in sight for matters of this life very little whereupon to depend. Those that are driven to exercise their faith, cannot but find God faithful, as never failing those that trust in him, they see more of God then others do. If it be objected that others of late time have digged in the same mine, and labored in the same field, and to good purpose and success: I answer, it is true, the more this age is bound to God that directs the spirits of men to so useful, so necessary an argument, seeing without faith we have no communion with the fountain of life, nothing in this world that can yield settled comfort to ground the soul upon, seeing without it the fairest carriage is but empty and dead morality, neither finding acceptance with God, nor yielding comfort to us in our greatest extremities, and by it God himself, and Christ with all that he hath done, suffered, conquered, becometh ours and for our use. Besides none that I know have written in our Language so largely of this argument, and such is the extent and spiritualness of this heavenly point, that many men and of the greatest graces and parts may with great benefit to the Church, dive and dig still into this mystery. Neither let any except against the multitude of quotations of Scriptures, they are brought under their proper head, and set in their proper place, and the matter itself is cut out into variety of parts. Store (as we use to speak) is no sore, we count it a delight to take out of a full heap, the more light, the conviction is the stronger, what suits not at one time will suit our spirits and occasions at another, and what taketh not with one, may take with another. But the full and well handling of matters in this Treatise carries such satisfaction with it, that it frees me from necessity of further discourse, and mine own present weakness of body taketh me off. Only I

was willing to yield that testimony to the fruitful pains of a faithful laborer in God's Vineyard, that I judge it deservedly. Receive it therefore, Christian Reader, with thanks to God that stirreth up such helpers of that faith by which we live, stand, conquer, and in which we must die, if we look to receive the end of our faith, the salvation of our souls.

RICHARD SIBBES.

Part I.

The Nature of Faith.

CHAP. I. Of the diverse acceptations of Faith.

SECT. 1. It is expedient and necessary that all Christians should acquaint themselves with the doctrine of Faith: because the safety of all Christian Religion doth depend upon the right understanding of this matter: and Satan with his subtleties hath ever endeavored to obscure this doctrine by the mists of Sophisms, or to weaken it some other ways, that he might rob God of his glory, and the Church of the certainty of her salvation. And if the necessity of a thing known and acknowledged stir up to inquire into it, and labor after it, this also may provoke us to search and inquire what faith is. 1. Faith is of the number of those necessary things, which are necessarily required to the obtaining of others; and not of those which are wrought by compulsion, or by any necessary cause compelling. As if a man would see, he must open his eyes, and yet he is not by external violence forced thereunto. 2. No unbeliever can please God: for how should he, who is incredulous and divided from God, please him who is most true and faithful? Salvation is in the pleasure and power of God, which he dispenseth according to his own, not our will. But he accepteth none as righteous to

life, but them that believe. 3. The quality of this present life and our habitation, in which we are absent from the Lord, doth evidence the necessity of faith: As a son that lives from the presence of his Father must believe his letters and messengers sent unto him. 4. The quality of things necessary to be known for the obtaining of salvation is such, that they cannot be apprehended or received without it: As in human things the quality, of Arts and Sciences is such, that they require understanding, because they cannot be conceived without it: so in things divine faith is requisite, without which we can never comprehend the mysteries of salvation. 5. The gifts which God bestoweth upon his children, the graces which the Holy Ghost doth work in their hearts, do necessarily require faith by the ordinance and determination of the Lord.

Sect. 2. The word Faith in Scripture is taken diversely 1. It is put for truth, fidelity or faithfulness, constancy and justice in word and action, promise or accomplishment 2. By faith sometimes true Christian knowledge and persuasion, or the measure thereof is to be understood, especially the sound knowledge of Christian liberty in Jesus Christ. 3. It noteth a sure testimony, or firm demonstration of a thing to come. 4. It signifieth the doctrine of the Gospel, and so Christ the subject of the Scripture, which preacheth salvation to be no otherwise but by faith in Christ: and this is called by Divines, faith which is believed. 5. It is taken for belief of the Gospel, the habit being implied in the act, the gift in the exercise: which is the faith whereby we believe. And this is expressed by the phrases of Believing God, Believing on God, Believing on Christ, Believing the Prophets. 6. Faith is put for unfeigned profession of faith joined with fervent desire, to further Christian Religion, and a godly life.

Sect. 3. Faith signifying belief is used to note. 1. An ordinary knowledge and bare assent to the historical truth of Scripture, grounded upon the authority and truth of the Speaker, though sometimes holpen by experiments, and other inducements, and probabilities of the things: and this is called faith Historical, that is, a naked, imperfect, dead assent, without trust or confidence in the mercies of God, or adherence to the Commandments. Howbeit we must not imagine, that faith is reputed unsound, or not salvifical, because historical (rather it is oftentimes insufficient to save, because it is not so fully historical as it might be) but the name of historical faith arose hence, that some are said to believe, who did never embrace Christ as their only Savior withal their hearts, nor confidently rely upon the promises of mercy: otherwise faith justifying doth more certainly believe the truth of the history of the Gospel, and so is more historical than the faith called historical. 2. It is taken for an affiance of heart embracing the word as good; which in respect of the object may be distinguished into Miraculous or Ordinary. For the object of faith is, either some special and singular promise, for the doing of some extraordinary effect, wherein we trust by a miraculous active faith: or it is some special promise for the obtaining of some spiritual or bodily good thing after an extraordinary manner, whereon we trust by a miraculous passive faith, as it is called: or else faith doth respect the general and common promises, which are made in the word of life, and made good to them that believe, whereon we rest by faith ordinary. But faith Miraculous and Ordinary are not diverse graces, but the same grace exercised about diverse objects. The grounds of faith are different, and so are the effects and adjuncts that flow from thence: but the grace itself one and the same. As the Fathers believed special revelations and extraordinary promises made to them, by the same

ordinary faith, by which we believe the common promises of salvation revealed in the Word: so the singular promises of God made to some Believers concerning the working of miracles, were embraced by the same faith, by which they did adhere to the general promises of mercy, or were raised up to the doing of acts of love. For that faith which doth receive the more excellent promises (as are they concerning spiritual life and salvation) can much more lay hold upon other promises of an inferior nature, if they be made and certified unto us. That faith which is carried to the general promises, is either a confidence vanishing, uncertain not-rooted, called faith Temporary: or an affiance certain, well-planted, constant, known by the name of Justifying or saving faith, so called from the principal effect. For to justify is not the full effect of this confidence or affiance, beyond which the efficiency of it doth not extend: but because this is the principal thing wherein the force of true faith is occupied, it is so called. Justifying faith believeth the history, purifieth the heart, sticketh to the Commandments, receiveth the temporal promises, worketh by love: but it is called Justifying from the principal effect; as the soul is called reasonable from the power it hath to invent, judge and discourse, not that these are her only faculties. In the Scriptures of the New Testament this faith is unfolded in these and such like phrases: To believe God; To believe in or upon God: To believe in or upon Jesus Christ, To receive him, To receive the testimony of God; To believe the Gospel, To receive the Word of God. To believe God signifies no more but to assent to that which the Lord speaketh: but believing, as it belongs to the understanding is the root and foundation from which confidence of the heart doth spring and flow: such a belief in the mind is signified in this and all other phrases, as is always necessarily accompanied with trusting in God, for that which we believe he can and will bring to

pass. And the other of trusting to or relying upon is implied, whensoever we find that ascribed to believing, which cannot be obtained without faith in Christ. And if we search the Scriptures, we shall find these phrases, To believe God, and to believe in God, to import one and the same thing. A preposition is added to believe, when nothing but assent of mind is signified: and it is put without a preposition when trust or confidence is implied. Moreover, we read sometimes the Faith of Christ, and faith which is by Christ: sometimes faith on Christ, and sometimes faith in Christ; which several forms of speech note much the same thing, but that (as some learned men observe) the first may be conceived as propounding Christ the simple object of faith: The second phrase Christ the object together with our adhering to him: The third noteth Christ the object, our adhering in him, together with the word propounded as the way and mean, by which we come believably to inhere in him.

Sect. 4. But evermore when faith is required, it is not the faculty, whereby we are apt, and furnished to believe, but the act and exercise of that habit, whereby we execute the function of believing, which is to be understood. For this is that which God commandeth in the Scriptures, not that our souls be adorned with the habit of faith though that be necessary, but that we believe in him. Believe in the Lord your God. Repent ye and believe the Gospel. If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. But as many as received him, to them he gave right to become the sons of God; even to them that believe on his Name. Ye believe in God, believe also in me. He that believeth on him is not condemned. If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, to everyone that believeth. This is his Commandment, that ye should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ. We are saved by faith, is all one with

that, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. We are justified by faith, is all one with that, By him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses. Whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness. And therefore the Israelites are reprehended, that they believed not in the Lord: A fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel. Because they believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation. None but those believers are praised; Blessed is she that believed, Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they which have not seen, and yet have believed. Whosoever believeth on him, shall not be ashamed.

CHAP. II. Of the Author and worker of Faith Justifying.

SECT. 1. Justifying faith, which not only believeth God speaking in his Word, but embraceth all divine truth as containing the chief good of Man, as being the most perfect, doth necessarily require before it faith historical, and comprehend all other kinds under it. It may be defined, a lively and obediential affiance or confidence, whereby we rest upon Christ for salvation, receive the promises of grace temporal and spiritual, stick to the Commandments as good both simply and in comparison, and feed upon the word with savor and delight. More largely, It is a wonderful and supernatural gift of grace, wrought by the Holy Ghost through the Ministry of the Gospel in the heart of Man a sinner, acknowledging and bewailing his offenses, whereby he doth not only assent to the whole truth of God, and is certainly persuaded that Jesus Christ is appointed of God to be the author of salvation to them that believe in him, and his Savior if he do believe: but doth rely, cast and repose his soul upon Christ his Savior, and by him upon God as a loving Father in him, cleaving inseparably to the Word of truth as

good both simply and in comparison, and feeding upon it as the wholesome food of life.

Sect. 2. God the Father, in his Son Jesus Christ our Mediator by the Holy Ghost, is the Author and worker of Faith. As salvation, so faith is the gift of God. It is through grace that men believe. No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him. Every good thing comes from the Father of lights: but faith is a gift after a special manner, most free and profitable, coming from the grace of the Donor, bestowed upon us, when we are every way unworthy. It is such a gift as comes not from common bounty, such as God made show of in the creation: but from a special favor, which he beareth his in Christ Jesus. The Scripture is clear and evident herein, and strong reasons may be deduced thence to prove it. For of ourselves we have no power to believe, or to prepare ourselves thereunto. There is no such soil in our hearts, whence such fruit should spring. The means of grace, and the operation of the spirit accompanying it, are free and voluntary. No man can believe, unless he be created and formed anew: But regeneration is a free work of God's grace and mercy. Faith is the work of God the Father in Jesus Christ. For as the natural head doth not only give sense and motion to all the members now conjoined, but doth send forth those bands, whereby they come to be coupled with it: so Christ doth not only give spiritual sense and motion to his members already united unto him by faith, but he is the spring whence this sinew of faith doth flow and issue unto us. The Spirit of God is the principal worker of faith: and hence we are said to receive the Spirit of faith, that is, the holy Ghost, in and through this gift of faith, which he worketh and continueth in us. By faith we receive the Holy Ghost: and faith is the work of the Holy Ghost: the action of the Holy Ghost creating faith in us, is before faith: But

the beginning of faith, is the receiving of the Holy Ghost, and faith being begun, the gifts of the spirit are more and more increased by it. Faith itself is a work of the spirit: but an augmentation of the graces of the spirit is obtained by faith; and the more our faith dilateth itself, the more plentifully do the graces of the spirit flow into us from Christ; Of whose fullness we receive grace for grace. Faith doth obtain the Holy Ghost by prayer: and prayer: is an act of grace and of the Spirit, as faith is a work of the Spirit. Before we can lift up our souls unto God, the holy Ghost must descend into us, and lift us up: for we move not, but as we are moved. The Holy Ghost is given to the Elect before they ask: but a greater measure of the Spirit is obtained by Prayer.

Sect. 3. Faith is not alike in all, in none perfect though it be the work of the Spirit: for the Spirit worketh faith not as a natural agent which putteth forth it power to the uttermost, and always produceth like effects, if it be not hindered: but as a voluntary agent, which putteth not forth his power to the utmost, worketh according to his pleasure in whom he will, and as he will, but not in all alike. The Spirit worketh faith not by moral persuasion only inciting to believe, and leaving it to our free choice whether we will assent or no: but by his powerful operation and omnipotent hand put forth for such a purpose, he produceth this gracious effect. There are no seeds of faith in our nature, out of which by mere outward teaching we may be brought to belief: for then should faith be natural, as all other things are, which our nature can attain to with outward helps. There is no spiritual life in us before the infusion of grace, whereby we should be able to embrace the persuasions of the spirit: for then we should live spiritually of ourselves before we are quickened by grace. If the Spirit of God do only move and persuade to believe, then God doth not make the believer to differ from the

unbeliever, but the good use of his own free will. It is of grace that man might believe, and so might he that continueth in infidelity, for he received equal aide, and was equally persuaded and incited by the Spirit. But if the question be, why doth the one believe and not the other, it is not the Spirit here that makes the difference, but the good use of man's free-will: and so, that man is enabled to believe, it should be of grace, but that he doth believe, and so differ from other men, this should be from himself. The same power that raised Christ from the dead, is said to raise us up to believe. If a hand or eye be wanting to a man from his birth, can any power restore them, but the Almighty power of God, by which the body was at first framed and fashioned? By what power then is this hand of faith created, which reacheth to heaven? This eye which doth see the things within the veil, which concern our peace? This further appeareth by the cause that moveth the Lord to bestow faith upon some, which is his free, eternal, unchangeable grace and love whereby he loved them to be made heirs of salvation, before the foundation of the earth was laid. For so far as God effectually willeth and intendeth to work, so far he putteth forth his omnipotent power to accomplish. But God doth intend and effectually will to draw some unto him before other some.

Sect. 4. In producing faith, first God bestoweth upon man the gift of understanding and spiritual wisdom, opening and illuminating the eyes of his mind, to know the promise in Christ, and to judge and esteem those things revealed of God to be the most undoubted and infallible truth. This understanding is requisite to faith: for it is impossible for a man to believe that whereof he hath no knowledge or understanding. Out of question, faith is a most wise gift or grace of God's holy Spirit, making those that be endued therewith wise unto salvation: which we shall easily discern, if we

consider how great the subtlety of that old Serpent the Devil is, as also the deceitfulness of sin, both which are defeated by faith. This understanding is the gift of God's grace: for as reasonable understanding is beyond the compass of that knowledge which the beasts have by kind: so is this understanding far beyond the reach of all that wisdom left in corrupted nature. It is a work irresistible, for it is wrought according to the purpose of the Lord, and the counsel of God cannot be frustrated. In illumination the mind suffereth not from any natural power which it hath to conceive or understand spiritual things, but from that state of obedience that the mind standeth in unto Almighty God, whereby it must necessarily see whatsoever he will enlighten it to behold, and set before it. There is no natural power in an eye now blind to receive sight: but if God will enlighten it must needs see: So there is no natural power in the eye of the mind now become darkness, to receive the light of saving knowledge, which is every way a thing both for matter and manner supernatural unto it: but if he open the eyes of the understanding, and shine into the heart, it must needs understand. Secondly, God doth infuse or pour the habit of faith into man, whereby he giveth to will to come unto Christ, and to enjoy him. The first work of God is signified in Scripture, by opening the eyes of the understanding: the second by God's drawing us: both at least figuratively by the opening of the ear, the opening of the heart, the taking away the heart of stone, and giving a heart of flesh. This second work is requisite to faith, for as a dead man can do no act of life until a living soul be breathed into him: nor a blind eye see unless new light be given unto it: no more can man dead in trespasses and sins, move himself to receive the promises of grace, until the free and gracious disposition or habit of faith be infused, whereby the will is inclined agreeably to the disposition of it, to come unto God. As man

cannot naturally see or perceive the things of God; no more can he naturally will or desire them. And this is apparent by the hardness of man's heart that cannot repent, till God mollify it: and by his stiff-neckedness and stubbornness to resist the holy Spirit speaking in the Ministry of the word, until he be renewed and changed by grace. This habit of faith is received, not by any natural disposition of will in us to heavenly things, for then man should live spiritually of himself, before the life of grace be put into him: but the heart, as it standeth in obedience to God's Almighty power, to take what stamp he shall imprint, to follow him whither he shall draw, and to contain what he poureth into it, admitteth this habit. And as the beginning, so the increase and progress, the consummation and perfection of faith is the gift of God, the work of the Spirit. Of God the increase of faith is to be asked, and from him it is received. As we cannot will to believe, unless God prepare the heart, and give that will; no more can we will to persevere in faith, or go forward therein, unless God do minister strength, and sustain us by his grace.

Sect. 5. Faith then is the gift of God, and the act of man: a wonderful and supernatural gift of God, and a lively motion of the heart renewed by grace, and powerfully moved by the Spirit. The power to believe, and will to use that power, is of God: But the act of the will in resting upon Christ is man's. It is man that believeth, but it is God only and altogether that enableth, stirreth up, putteth forward and inclineth the heart to believe. By God's enlightening man seeth, by his teaching he understands: and the Lord inclining his will, he willeth, embraceth, possesseth, and keepeth Christ with all blessings promised in him. So that faith is the motion of man's heart wrought in him by the Spirit of God. Even as a wheel which of itself cannot move, yet being moved of another, doth move; whose motion though but

one, is said to be the motion of the mover, and of the thing moved: so faith is nothing but the action of God in man, but considered in a diverse manner it is both the act of God and man; as wrought by God in man, it is the work of the Lord; as the motion of man his heart being moved of God, it is the act of man. For the action of man in believing with the heart, is nothing but his knowing and acknowledging of things, by God's making him know and acknowledge them; his apprehending, willing, choosing, embracing, and retaining them, by God's making him to apprehend, will, choose, embrace and retain them. It is true, that we Believe, because we will Believe: but, we will Believe, doth note not the principal cause, but a cause subordinate working by way of free disposition, which disposition it receiveth from an higher cause, not from natural strength. The Just is said to live by his own faith, and faith is called ours, or our own: not that we are the Authors, cause or workers of it: but because we possess it, and are the special subjects in which it is wrought by God. And also because it concerns ourselves in particular, and what we believe we believe it particularly concerning ourselves.

Sect. 6. Not to dispute whether God doth extraordinarily work faith in the hearts of men, without the external publishing of his word, will or pleasure: this is sure, that ordinarily the Holy Ghost doth work by the Ministry of the Word. The Word can do nothing without God's Spirit: and ordinarily the Spirit will do nothing without the Word. Faith is called the fruit of the lips: the Word is both the mean whereby we believe, and the subject matter of our belief. A man may see without light or color, hear without ear or sound, as possibly as believe without the Word of God. For when faith is an affiance or persuasion, touching the good will of God towards us in Jesus Christ, how can we be persuaded touching his gracious pleasure, till we be

acquainted with his word, whereby he hath declared it. How can I believe or certainly know that a friend will do me this or that good turn, unless I have his word or promise to that effect? No more could we ever know or be persuaded that God would forgive our sins, or show mercy upon us, should he not by his Word signify and make known the same. The Word is the Word of faith, propounding things to be believed, and commanding us to believe. The Gospel is the word of the kingdom, the power of God to salvation, the arm of God.

Faith is the mother of Prayer: Prayer a means of the increase and conservation of faith. The Sacraments do confirm, conserve and increase faith begun: but the Word only is the instrument to beget faith. Two things are here to be looked unto: First, that we sever not what God hath joined together. Secondly, that we attribute not to the instrument what is proper to the Author. For the Word by the Ordinance of God is appointed to represent to our minds what it is ordained to signify, and by it as an instrument it pleaseth God to work: but the whole force, efficacy and power doth flow from God, and he that created man at the first, is his restorer to life eternal.

If it be demanded, why do not all believe that hear the Word: The answer is, Mans willfulness is the fundamental, radical, prime cause of obstinate unbelief; and he believeth not because he will not believe; which disposition the will hath of itself by nature. But the reason why one believeth and not another, is, because the Holy Ghost doth not inwardly teach all men, but whom he will, and join his efficacy to the Word preached and heard in whom he will. The cause of this his will, we are not bound to render, we cannot render, but must rest in the good pleasure of God.

And though no man do believe by the external hearing of the Word, unless the inward operation of the Holy Ghost regenerating and giving faith do

accompany it, yet must all men give attendance to the hearing of the Word preached and diligent reading, because it is the means that God hath ordained for the begetting of faith, and by precept divine they are thereunto obliged. Neither shall it excuse any man to say, he could not believe, and if he should make trial his endeavor would be in vain. Such frivolous pretenses shall nothing avail before God. The less able we are to believe of ourselves, the more careful should we be to use the means that God hath ordained, that we might obtain it. Marriage was never held superfluous or unnecessary for the propagation of mankind, because the reasonable soul is not generated by our parents, but immediately created and infused of God. That faith is the sole gift of God, wholly infused, not partly acquired by us, should rather incite, then any way abate our endeavors for attaining it. For faith is not given, but in the use of the means: and though he give not faith unto all men, he violently withholds faith from no man that seeketh it, but denieth it justly to them that willingly prefer the pleasures of sin before the pearl of the Gospel. And as Christ infused not human life into trees, stocks and stones, but into bodies passively organized and figured for the fit habitation of the human soul: so neither doth he ordinarily bestow supernatural grace on everyone that hath a reasonable soul, but on such only as are by him passively prepared for it.

The conclusion is, that we must wait daily at the posts of Wisdoms gate, meditate seriously upon the Word of life, and nourish the motions of God's Spirit, as the means whereby faith is begun and increased in us.

CHAP. III. Of Justifying faith what it is, and what things are implied therein.

SECT. 1. Justifying faith presupposeth the knowledge of God and Christ, of the precepts of the word, and promises of the Gospel. Knowledge is an antecedent, if not a part of faith. Knowledge, I say, not of the reason and nature of the things, but of revelation which rests in the meaning of the testimony distinctly understood. The things which God commandeth us to believe exceed all natural capacity, cannot be known in their essence and properties as things natural are by the light of reason: But every believer must know it to be the Word of God which he receiveth, and what is signified thereby, and the things to be as they are revealed, though he cannot comprehend the reason or causes of them. Knowledge is put for faith, as that which ever accompanieth it. When God enricheth men with faith, he is said to open their eyes, to reveal unto them the mystery of his will, and they are said to be taught and instructed of him. Out of question, faith is a most wise grace, making them that be endued therewith wise unto salvation, and that evident to the believer which of itself is incomprehensible. In faith historical there must be knowledge of the history

and truth of the Gospel, much more in faith Justifying. There is such relation betwixt Faith and the Word, that without the Word there can be no Faith, as the foundation being taken away, that which should be built upon it, cannot stand. The order whereby men are brought to the faith is this; first they hear, and then they believe. Faith is an assent to the truth and promises of God. But no assent can be given to a thing utterly unknown. What is more absurd than to dream of a blind assent to we know not what, to a thing we never heard off? Howsoever faith apprehends mysteries not to be inquired into, yet the proposition and doctrine of all the Articles of faith must be distinctly conceived, that a man be able to understand what they are. If a man cannot give a reason of the thing believed, he must be able to give a reason of his belief. Faith captivates our understanding unto the obedience of Christ, but is not ignorant of Christ, or of his doctrine. It giveth credit and submitteth to the truth acknowledged, though it seem absurd to carnal reason, but it cherisheth not ignorance of divine mysteries exceeding all human capacity. It subjecteth reason to the doctrine of God and his revelation, but it neither extinguisheth the nature of man, nor the light of reason. Faith is not a brutish captivity, which yields up her eyes to be put out: but the understanding receiving a more excellent sight by faith, yields up the worse, and doth not lose her light, but exchange it for the better. There is a double assent, one from reason, the other from authority: both are made with the knowledge of the Mind; knowledge is included in both; in the one of the cause and properties, which is strictly called Science: in the other of the authority and truth of the revealer, and in that respect of the thing taught, which is called Faith. How shall we believe in him of whom we have not heard? There is no sight without some visible object, no faith without the knowledge of God in Christ. Though knowledge be not

faith, but a habit distinct from it, yet it concurs to the being of faith, in as much as no man can assent to that he never heard of. Wisdom is distinguished from knowledge as a thing more excellent, which yet it presupposeth: so faith is distinguished from knowledge, but cannot be without it. The knowledge which hath no ingrediency into faith, is the knowledge of that which is not revealed: for faith not only goeth before such knowledge, but utterly repels it, never admitting any curious search into God's secrets. But in things revealed faith knoweth what it believeth, and by believing knoweth the more. Faith is the cause of more ample knowledge: but some knowledge of God's will and pleasure is antecedent to faith. And this knowledge must be distinct, sound, and certain. For faith divine is sure and certain: therefore the knowledge whereupon it is grounded must be such as cannot deceive. The assent which faith gives to the Word of God is absolute and unlimited, which can never be yielded, unless being certain in itself, we know it certainly as it is, and be assured that we conceive of it aright. The examination of doctrines by the touchstone is commanded of God, and wonderfully commended by the Holy Ghost: the neglect of examining what we hear doth bring great peril and danger: for such as receive doctrines upon the credit of their Teachers are ever unsettled, apt to be seduced, and ready to start back in time of trouble. Certain knowledge is to be begged of God both for ourselves and others: and thanks have been and should be given to God for this grace and mercy vouchsafed unto the Saints. The Papists have much extolled the Colliars faith, commended ignorance and disgraced knowledge, as if faith were much better defined by ignorance, then by knowledge: but when they are pressed with evidence of Scripture in this point, they grant that knowledge in all fundamental points of Religion is necessary for lay people:

and would color the matter, as if they meant the knowledge of reason was not necessary to faith, but of revelation only. Not to dispute of their meaning in those propositions, [though their words and practice, and matter entreated of sufficiently argue the vanity of that excuse] we may take them as they say, and spare labor to prove that faith cannot be a blind assent, because we have their confession for it, that faith requireth knowledge of revelation. The Implicit faith then of them that know nothing in Religion, but believe as the Church believeth, not understanding what she believeth or professeth, is most absurd: but when we know Christ truly and whatsoever is absolutely necessary to salvation, there be many things wrapped up from us, which we ought to believe, in which respect faith may be called implicit or enfolded. For being compassed about with mists of ignorance, we attain not the understanding of many things revealed: of which we may note very many examples in the Disciples of Christ, having not yet obtained full illumination: and in them, who being only stirred up by the miracles of Christ, went no further, then to acknowledge him to be the promised Messias. So that when a man knows and understands in general, the substantial Articles belonging to faith, which are contained in the Scriptures, and is ignorant only in the particulars, whereby the said general Articles are demonstrated: and when withal he uses the means to increase in knowledge by searching the Scriptures, and hearing the Word preached: in this case his faith may be true, though enfolded in many particulars. Faith also may be implicit in another respect: for many that truly believe cannot certainly affirm they do believe: which befalleth them that are touched in conscience for sin, who bewail their offenses, and desire to be reconciled unto God. Now as in the little tender bud are enfolded the leaf, the blossom, and the fruit: so in true sorrow, broken-heartedness and unfeigned

acknowledgement, faith and many graces of God's Spirit are enfolded. But this is not properly understood when we speak of implicit faith, neither is faith so much wrapped up in these graces, as the sight of faith and sense of comfort hid from their eyes that be distressed.

Sect. 2. Faith presupposeth knowledge, and yields assent to the word of grace, relying upon the authority of God, who is true in all his sayings, sincere, faithful, constant in all promises, and can neither deceive nor be deceived. Abraham believed God; the word imports, he thought the words of God to be sure, certain, stable and constant. Moses saying, Israel will not believe me, meaneth, they would not assent or give credit to his words. And when it is said, Israel believed the Lord, and his servant Moses, thereby is understood, that they gave credit to the word of the Lord spoken by his servant Moses. This is clear in the exhortation of Jehoshaphat unto the people, saying, Believe in the Lord your God, so shall you be established, believe his Prophets, so shall ye prosper. And that of David, I believed, therefore have I spoken. Belief is always grounded upon the authority and reputation of him for whose word sake we believe, and must needs have reference to some uttered word or revelation as the object: but it may be sustained and strengthened by other motives and inducements, experiments and probabilities. Many objects of faith may also be evident, and that which is believed may also be seen. Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed. There is a compossibility of faith and evidence in diverse respects, whereby they may both stand together in the same man, about the same object, albeit faith rest not upon that evidence, but upon divine revelation. Faith and Science are habits that may stand together. Faith by authority revealed Knowledge or Science by evident demonstration. For albeit faith exceed the dimension of reason, yet reason is subordinate to it, as sense is

to understanding: And therefore as it is no inconvenience to say, we understand the thing we see, no more than is it to say, we believe that which is evident, in diverse respects. Many divine things touching God which are received by faith, may also be found out by natural reason. And if things credible by the manifest likelihood of truth which they have in themselves, be made more credible by the known condition and quality of the utterer, faith relying upon the authority of the revealer, may be strengthened by the probability of the thing. Faith is a firm assent, as appeareth by the original of the word, and the arguments wherewith it is joined. I am persuaded of the same thing, that he which hath begun this good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and art assured of. For thereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall before him assure our hearts. I am persuaded that neither life, nor death, nor Angels, nor principalities, &c. where the grounds of this persuasion show it to be firm and infallible. And it is further manifested by the definition of faith given by the Apostle, calling it, The evidence of things not seen: because it doth represent those things to the mind by a certain assent, and to the heart by certain confidence, which cannot be comprehended by reason. But though faith in itself be a firm assent, yet by reason of our infirmity it is sometimes accompanied with doubting's. The things believed of all are one and the same: but the habit, quality or inward strength by which they believe is not of like force in all. In its own nature faith is opposite to doubting and wavering; O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? If ye have faith, and doubt not. Whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Take thyself away, and cast thyself into the Sea, and shall not waver in his heart, but shall believe that those things, he saith, shall come to pass. Therefore ask not what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink: neither let

doubtful thoughts ascend in your hearts. Ask in faith, and waver not. But through our weakness it is often mixed with doubting's: Lord, I believe, help mine unbelief. Abraham is commended for his faith, and propounded by the Holy Ghost as a pattern to all his posterity; yet was he not free from infirmities, as the story showeth in diverse particulars. The Apostle writeth thus of the faith of Abraham: And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about a hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief: but was strong in faith, giving glory to God. He doubted not through infidelity, but of infirmity he doubted, when he took Hagar, and requested Sarah to say, she was his sister. Much is spoken in Scripture of the faith of David: but he was shaken many times, as he confesseth of himself; I said in mine hast, I am cut off from before thine eyes. Verily, I have cleansed my heart in vain; and washed mine hands in innocence. I said in my haste, All men are liars. And though it be out of question, that we are to endeavor for the perfection, as of all other graces of God's Spirit, so of that faith whereby we give assent to what God hath revealed: yet by reason of our weakness it comes to pass, that doubting's do many times arise in our hearts.

The assent that faith gives to the Word of God is absolute and unlimited; viz. to the whole truth, promises, threatening's, commandments. It will not take and leave at pleasure: but if it apprehend in one thing what the Lord saith, it will receive his testimony, if it can apprehend it to be of God, in everything, and that simply because it is the Word of God, though it exceed human capacity and likelihood. So worship I the God of my Fathers, believing all things that are written in the Law and the Prophets. It is a sin for a man not to believe whatsoever God hath made known in his Word, and

in that respect it is damnable not to believe or to misbelieve anything: But through ignorance and infirmity a Christian may misbelieve many things without the danger of damnation. Faith should be entire in all things, must be entire in all fundamental points, without the knowledge and faith of which, a man of age and discretion cannot be saved: but all error and misbelief doth not destroy the truth of faith, no more than every imperfection doth the truth of righteousness.

A man may misunderstand diverse places of Scripture, and thereupon hold that to be true which is false, and yet be saved for all this error. The Apostles themselves for a long time, even till after the Ascension of our Savior into Heaven, and till the coming of the Holy Ghost upon them, looked for the establishment of an earthly Kingdom in this world by their Lord and Master. Did they not slip into this error by misbelieving the prophesies of the Old Testament, concerning the Messiahs Kingdom? Yet were they out of danger of damnation, and in the state of grace all that time because they rested on Christ, as the spiritual Savior of their souls, that should take away their sins, and bring them to everlasting life in Heaven, though they erroneously hoped for a temporal kingdom also. And after they had received the gifts of the Holy Ghost, for a time they were ignorant of the conversion of the Gentiles. He that believeth the truth in one thing, because God hath revealed it, will believe everything that he understandeth to be revealed of God: But he that holdeth the foundation of faith firm, and stable, may dissent in some things from that which is generally holden without peril of damnation, because he discerneth it not to be of God.

Faith is an evident assent: perspicuity of truth in the object apprehended and certainty of persuasion are two twins that live and die together. In this life it is impossible for us fully to comprehend any one point of Christian

faith; yet are they plain and perspicuous in a sort to the spiritual, not to the natural man. There is a manifestation of things by reason and by revelation: and there is an evidence direct and an evidence by consequence: an evidence of the thing in itself, and by the effect: an evidence to the natural man, and an evidence to the spiritual man. Matters of faith are manifest by revelation, but to reason unsearchable, incomprehensible: seen by faith, to the natural man invisible, incredible. The Divinity of the Scripture is in itself evident to the spiritual man, so is it, that there is a Providence: other things are evident from this ground; That all truth contained in Scripture is to be embraced, though with opposition to all other professions: and that the profession of Religion is not to be relinquished, nor good success to be despaired of, for all the arguments the Devil, the World, and the Flesh can oppose against them. The apprehension of the joys of Heaven cannot be distinct and evident in this life: but that God hath provided such joys for his Elect, as it is certain from testimony of Scripture, so it is evident from the present peace of conscience, which the faithful enjoy. Beloved (saith the Apostle) now we are the sons of God, and yet it doth not appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is. The joys which be prepared for the godly, and of which the Apostle steadfastly hoped to be partaker, are as yet unseen: but that they shall actually be accomplished, is confirmed by the faithful promise of God, whereof we have evident and full assurance. The Apostle describing faith to be the evidence of things not seen, doth it not to disparage the evidence, but rather to set forth the excellency of that heavenly grace, which includes an evident knowledge and apprehension of some things present, which the world sees not.

Faith also is in some sort an assent discursive, as from manifest experiences of God's works and favors wrought and vouchsafed according to the word of promise, the Saints infer a possibility or certainty of like to ensue. Thus David, The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the Lion, and out of the paw of the Bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. Nothing is more ordinary in the Book of the Psalms, then for the servants of God to draw conclusions of future protection, deliverance, help, and comfort from present or former blessings. I call to remembrance my song in the night; I commune with mine own heart, and my Spirit made diligent search. We received the sentence of death in ourselves, because we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raised the dead. Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver us; in whom we trust, that yet hereafter he will deliver us. I fervently look for and hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed: but that with all confidence, as always, so now, Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or death. I was delivered out of the mouth of the Lion: And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly Kingdom.

Sect. 3. Moreover, Justifying faith is an obediencial confidence, or affiance conjoined with affection of piety, simply and in comparison cleaving to the mercy of God in Jesus Christ as better than life, and to the Commandments of God as necessary, good, worthy to be stuck unto, not only whilst considered in themselves, or in general, or without such encumbrances and occurrences as do often interpose or hinder practice: but even whilst actually compared with present loss of any sensual good thing, or infliction of any temporal evil, wherewith the World, the Devil, or the Flesh, can oppose their price. That faith is an affiance or resting upon the promises, appeareth by the several words used to express the nature of that

faith or belief, which the Lord requireth of his people, to the end they might receive any blessing from him, or have his protection or assistance. The first word is translated Believe, but signifieth such a belief as is opposed to fainting: I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. And it implieth trust in the Word of God as sure and stable: it is sometimes translated steadfast or constant, and expounded by trust: They believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation. The second word is opposed to feebleness of Mind, fear and doubt, and imports to trust securely: I will trust, and not be afraid. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed trusting in the Lord. They that trust in the Lord, shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever. The third is rendered to trust, but signifieth to betake himself to one as to his castle or hiding place. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him; How excellent is thy loving kindness, O Lord, therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust. The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him. The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him. Hence God is called our protection or hiding place, to which we may fly in trouble, and find shelter: God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble. The fourth is to lean upon, even as a man would stay himself on a staff, wherewith he is underpropped. Because thou hast relied upon the King of Syria, and not relied on the Lord thy God, therefore is the Host of the King of Syria escaped out of thy hand? Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet because thou didst rely upon the Lord, he delivered them into thine hand. And it shall come to pass

in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them, but shall stay upon the Lord the holy one in truth. Two of these words are used together in diverse places, and may serve to expound each other: Wherefore, thus saith the holy one of Israel: Because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon. Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help, and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many, and horsemen because they are very strong: but they look not unto the holy one of Israel, neither seek the Lord. Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light, let him trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. Another word there is almost of the same signification, which noteth with all the mind and thought confidently to lean or stay upon a prop. They call themselves of the holy City, and slay themselves upon the Lord God of Israel, the Lord of Hosts is his Name. So it is noted of the people of Israel, that they rested or leaned upon the words of King Hezekiah, comforting them against the rage of Sennacherib. This word is coupled sometimes with one or two others; Thou art my hope, O Lord God, thou art my trust from my youth. By thee have I been holden up or underpropped from the womb. He shall not be afraid for evil tidings; his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. His heart is established, he shall not be afraid, until he see his desire upon his enemies open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth, may enter in. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord forever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. The sixth word signifies, to roll or cast himself upon the Lord; as a man in danger of drowning catcheth fast hold of some willow or other thing that hangeth over the water, and is at

hand; or as he that is pressed with a grievous burden above his strength, easeth himself resting it upon some post or block, that is able to bear it. He trusted in Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he rolled himself on the Lord. Rolle thy way upon the Lord; trust in him, and he shall bring it to pass. Rolle thy works upon the Lord and thy thoughts shall be established. To trust in Man is to make man his arm, letting his heart go back from God: and to trust in God is to place our strength in him.

In the Scriptures, confidence is oft put for faith, and trust expounded by belief; as where the Old Testament commandeth trust, the New Testament requireth faith: and in the New Testament the same things are attributed to faith and believers, which in the Old Testament are attributed to confidence, and them that trust in the Lord. In the New Testament Faith and Belief are put for trust and affiance: and to believe is not only to assent, but to rest upon and embrace. The phrase which the Holy Ghost most commonly useth to express Believing in Christ, is neither in the Greek Translation of the Olde Testament, nor [for ought hath been yet observed] in any Greek Author whatsoever, except those that did write since, and took it from the Scripture. To believe in God or in Christ, is for substance and sense, to trust to God or Christ, and this kind of speech is usual amongst Greek Writers: To help us in the understanding of this matter, the seventy in their Greek afford another phrase marvelous significant, To believe on or upon God. This the Holy Ghost useth often: but withal he becomes the Author of a new phrase himself, to make us the more easily and fully understand, what faith he meaneth in the matter of our Justification. And though the phrase be sometimes used, when true and lively confidence is not understood, yet it is more than probable, that the Holy Ghost by that new manner of speech, would propound somewhat more than bare assenting to the truth of what

was promised. And if we consider the passages of Scripture, wherein the phrase is used, it will be plain and evident. To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. What is this, Believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly? No more, but believeth those things to be true, which he affirmeth, who justifieth the ungodly? That is not probable. Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone, and rock of offense; and whosoever believeth on him, shall not be ashamed. How can a man believe on this rock, unless he lean upon it, or stick and adhere unto it. Faith looketh at the promises as true, and putteth forth itself to receive and embrace them as good, which cannot be done by a bare persuasion of the Mind. If the promises were only true, but no ways beneficial, there might be an assured persuasion of them in Mind, without any affection or moving of will towards them: But faith adhereth to the word as good to me, as well as true in itself, which cannot be done without a godly affection embracing it. To believe on Christ, is, to receive him. And what is this receiving? Not only a comprehension of the understanding, but an embracing of the heart and affection, laying hold on him, as we take that with the hands which is reached unto us. Believing on Christ is implied in the phrase of going or coming to Christ, which going, no doubt, is rather a spiritual motion of the heart and affections towards Christ, then a contemplation of the Mind contented to see and behold him. The Holy Ghost speaking of Justifying faith doth use the entire phrase of faith in God and Christ, or on God and Christ, which either there or elsewhere is declared by confidence or trust in God and Christ. And the same must be understood, when nothing is added, but life or Justification is attributed to belief; that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. For it is a general rule, that words of knowledge are words of affection, much more words of belief. As

the people of God looked for the Messias, so according to the prophesies, they promised to themselves all good in and by the Messias. The woman of Samaria could say, When the Messias cometh, he will teach us all things: Where we may see, that there was not only a knowledge of Christ to come, but an expectation and hope placed in him, as in whom all good things promised, should be accomplished. So that if we consider the disposition of the people, whose hope did hang on the Messias, we may plainly understand, that to believe the Messias, is not only to know, but to have an affiance in him. If by believing that Jesus is Christ, no more be meant but bare assenting unto that truth, then the Devils profess as much. But that belief to which life is ascribed, is not a bare action of the understanding, but of the heart and will. It is such a belief, as whereby Christ is to our hearts that which we believe him to be: whereby we come to Christ, believe in him, and rest upon him for salvation: whereby we believe to our own use and comfort that which we believe. It is such a belief as desireth, seeketh, embraceth, holdeth, joyeth in that which it believeth, because therein it seeth peace: whereby we so believe that Jesus is Christ, as that according to that we believe him to be, we put our trust and confidence in hm. The faith of Abraham is commended for the firm assent that he gave to the promise of God: but the confidence of his heart resting upon and cleaving unto the promise, is not obscurely declared. For the Apostle saith, Abraham believed above hope, that is, he conceived firm confidence in heart of the truth and power of God, which is manifest by the Antithesis, He doubted not by distrust or infidelity: for incredulity is as well the distrust of heart, as the hesitation of mind. If Abraham had only acknowledged the truth of that which God promised, and not trusted to him for the performance thereof, what could that faith have profited him? What can it avail any man to

justification, that he holds Jesus Christ to be the only Savior, and faith in him the only means of salvation, if he do not withal rely upon him to be saved by his mediation? What, that the Apostle himself applying that particular of Abraham to all believers, expoundeth that believing, by confidence in or relying upon God: which believe on him, that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, not only because it makes things speculatively to subsist in the Mind, but much more because it makes them fiducially to subsist in the heart, as appeareth by the Apostle putting substance and confidence for the same. For the subsistence of things hoped for is trust or confidence, whereby we rest on the promises divine, knowing and being persuaded that God will make good whatsoever he hath spoken: And faith is the substance of things hoped for, because it is a confident resting upon God for the accomplishment of what he hath spoken, as if it were already fulfilled. And so it is the demonstration of things to come, not intellectual only, but fiducial: which is a sweet motion of the heart, enlarging itself and resting in the mercy of God present and to come, and making things to come in a sort present to the heart in respect of the promise made by God, and the taste and inchoation of the good promised. That faith is an assent to divine revelation, that it is in the understanding, and that the act of faith is to understand, no man denieth: but it is assent conjoined with affiance, not a bare, but fiducial assent: which is referred to God as he is faithful in performing promises, as hope is referred to him, as he hath power and authority: to perform whatsoever he hath promised. The Apostle saith, We have boldness and access, with confidence by the faith of Christ: which passage doth rather prove faith to be confidence, then otherwise: for confidence may be joined to faith as his proper passion. A

man is said to work by reason, because he is reasonable: so faith to come unto God with confidence, because it is fiducial. Nothing can make another thing hot, which hath not heat in itself; nor could faith in gender confidence in the believer, if in its own nature it did not contain the same. God is love essentially and originally, and yet he worketh love in us, another kind of love, which is an Image and effect of his love. Love in which we observe the Commandments, is the formal effect of love, the effects of love flow from love. As the effect is, so is the cause. Can the waters be sweet, if the fountain be bitter? Confidence accompanying faith respecteth all the promises of God, and is the storehouse of all particular confidence: the confidence wrought by faith, is the particular application of this general confidence. Confidence considered as it doth embrace Christ with a certain affiance, is the form of faith: as it begetteth in us quietness of conscience, and confidence of liberty it is an effect of faith. The meaning of the Apostle seemeth to be this; Because we are reconciled unto God by faith in Christ, therefore in confidence or confidently we come unto God, neither distrusting, nor doubting that we have access unto him. So that by confidence in Christ, we have confidence in God to obtain those things that we stand in need of. Moreover confidence is opposed to doubting, when the understanding doth cleave to neither part of the contradiction, but doth float betwixt both; and to Distrust when the will doth choose not to trust to the promiser. And if we expound the words of the Apostle in the passage before cited, of confidence as it is opposed to doubting, the sense runneth plainly. By faith we have so free and full access, that we do not doubt, but we shall obtain what we ask.

Sect. 4. Faith is a lively obsequious affiance, joined with an affection of piety: for as it makes plea for mercy, so it thrusteth forward in obedience; as

it uniteth the heart to the promise, so it glueth fast to the Commandments; as David saith, Teach me good judgment and knowledge; for I have believed thy Commandments. By faith Noah moved with reverence, prepared the Ark for the saving of his household. By faith Abraham left his Country and Kindred, and forsook all strange Religions and Idols to follow God: By faith he contentedly abode in the land of Canaan, as in a strange land, &c walking from place to place remained in tents, and in every place showed his godly devotion in making an Altar, and calling upon the Name of the Lord: He kindly yielded to his Nephew Lot, for avoiding of contention; charitably rescued him when he was taken prisoner; carefully provided a wife for his son Isaac; fervently entreated for the City of Sodom, and meekly prayed for him that had taken his wife. He is honorably commended by God himself for his good instruction to his household, children and posterity, that they might walk in the ways of the Lord: But above all other he approved his faith in this, that upon God's Commandment he so readily offered up his Son Isaac, being (after Ishmael's expulsion) his only Son, his beloved son, and concerning whom he had received the promise of life and salvation, and the establishment of the Covenant. Moses consent in this doctrine may be found, where God pronounceth the Law of the ten Commandments, teaching all duties of good works to God and Man, saying, I am the Lord thy God; he thereupon inferreth all their obedience to those Commandments. For what is, I am the Lord thy God, but the covenant of faith to be their God in the promise of Christ? Upon this he requiring obedience in a godly life, doth insinuate, that they which believe God to be their God, must declare the same by obedience to his Commandments. And therefore he saith in another place, Beware thou forget not the Lord thy God, not keeping his Commandments:

which showeth plainly, that where disobedience is, there is no faith: for how can he have faith, that forgetteth him, in whom he should believe. And this doth Moses aim at, when he saith, Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his Statutes, and his Commandments, and his Judgments, and to hearken unto his voice. Whereby it appears, that unto faith in covenanting with God, this is an inseparable consequent: that if we embrace God by faith, we must and ought to follow his Commandments by our deeds, and he that doth not this latter, bewrayeth that he hath not with a true heart and faith received the former. To believe is not only to give credence to what the Scripture saith, but to embrace what is said with an entire adherence of soul, and to cleave unto it. He that leaneth upon the Lord, his heart is upright before him: and he, whose spirit cleaveth not steadfastly unto the Lord, is incredulous. Therefore the Prophets which expound the Law, in the person of God say thus; A Son honoreth his Father, and a Servant his Master: If then I be a Father, where is my honor? And if I be a Master, where is my fear? Now we know that we are Sons no way but by faith: Therefore this Prophet intendeth, that we are not joined to the Lord by faith, either as his people, children, or servants, or that he is our God, Father and Lord, except our faith be unfeigned and operative in honor and fear. And another Prophet saith, I believed, therefore I spake, making it a most assured thing, that a lively faith will show itself by outward deeds, and namely profession. Mercy and obedience are linked; Christ is both a Lord and Savior: and that faith which maketh a plea for mercy, doth embrace the Commandments; that which receiveth Christ as a Savior, submitteth unto him as a Sovereign. The strength of faith is equal to the promises of life, and to the offices of piety and love: or if there be any difference, it is weakest to lay hold upon

the promises, because they are most spiritual, and furthest removed from sense. Confidence and relying upon the mercy of God in Christ for salvation may be less then care and ability to walk in obedience, greater it cannot be. The word that in the Old Testament signifieth, to seek, is by the seventy translated, Hope, which interpretation the Apostle alloweth: whence it followeth, that true confidence, the mother of hope, doth lift up the heart to seek the Lord in the way of his Commandments. Moreover, saith is opposed not only to doubting, diffidence, and fainting: but to wavering, double-mindedness, halting, disobedience, stubbornness; by reason of the necessary connection of those parts in both opposites. Ask in faith, and waver not: A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways. Through unbelief thou art broken off, and thou standest by faith. Take heed, brethren, lest at any time there be in you an evil heart and unfaithful, to depart away from the living God. They profess that they know God, but by works they deny him, and are abominable and disobedient or unfaithful. He that believeth in the Son hath everlasting life: but he that believeth or obeyeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. Now if incredulity be not without diffidence and disobedience: true faith in God is not without confidence and affection of obedience. Hereunto may be added, that the manifold rebellions of Israel in the Wilderness are called unbelief. They believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation: For all this they sinned still, and believed not for his wondrous works: I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. And belief in Christ inferreth the keeping of God's Commandments, whereunto the soul is inclined by faith. And this is his Commandment, that we should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus

Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his Commandments, dwelleth in him, and he in him: and hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the spirit which he hath given us.

Sect. 5. This faith is an affiance well-rooted and kindly planted, so that it diffuseth its virtue into every affection, even the whole mass, which it is ordained to purify and season. It is so close settled and fastened, that neither the fear of persecution can scorch it, nor the cares of this world choke it, nor the love of pleasure wither it: and being so deeply set, it disperseth the virtue of the word into every faculty of the soul, whereby we are seasoned, as a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump, wherein it is hid. Temporary faith makes it abode in the confines or suburbs of the soul, the external face of the heart, but soaks not into the bottom of it: either it hath but shallow rooting, or at best, can never get under the love of pleasure or worldly cares, which are fast riveted in, and will not be removed out of the affections; and being planted shallow, it doth not, it cannot send its virtue into the several faculties of the soul to season them throughout. For so far as the word enters it seasoneth: but being entertained slightly with subordination, it seasoneth but superficially.

2. Justifying faith is a sound and permanent affiance, which ariseth from the firm setting and rooting of it in the heart. For when the word of life is steadfastly, distinctly, certainly assented unto, and sincerely embraced, no temptation or assault can make a man flinch, shuffle, or start aside from the constant prosecution of salvation in the way of life, and the faithful practice of such duties as God prescribes for the attaining of that end. Faith that is sincere in quality, is ever sound in degree, being of strength to make resistance against all opposition that shall encounter it, having taken the heart for its Fort and defended Tower. Again, faith being once set in the Heart

as in it throne and seat of Majesty, doth every day confirm and strengthen itself more and more, whereby the believer grows more resolute to withstand all assaults and temptations shot against him. The faith that takes kindly, spreads itself by assent and close adherence to every object within the sphere of divine Truth, to which it cleaveth invincibly, and from which it cannot be separated by any adverse power, or carnal allurements, natural passion or fiery assault. The Temporary believer acknowledgeth the sum of Christian duties or practices, and subscribes unto them in gross, yea, unto most particulars: but ever with limitation, subducting as much as well pleasing humors disallow, until he finally dissolve what true faith buildeth, even unto the first foundation, if the opposition of carnal fears, hopes, love or hate come once to be eager and direct. And this comes to pass, because the word was never rightly planted in an honest heart: for as the tree that is not set deep to take lively rooting, doth in success of time wither, though for many years it may bring forth both leaves, buds and fruit: so is it with the temporary believer, because the word is not well hid and rooted in him.

3. As faith is a sound, so is it an over-ruling affiance, exercising a universal, mild sovereignty in Man. Faith ordinarily ruleth where it dwelleth: but the regiment is mild and gentle, not rigorous and tyrannical. For it seasoneth our inbred affections, altereth the taste of every appetite, qualifieth and strengtheneth our natural inclination to that which is good, and powerfully persuadeth to deny ourselves and follow the Lord. It hath every desire at command, or as it were undershot, that it dares not stir to it prejudice, but by stealth, or some secret advantage espied by the flesh unable to stand out against it: It is of strength to make resistance against all opposition, and break the violence of every inclination contrary to such motion as it suggesteth, having it force united by close reposal in the heart.

It curbeth untruly passions; as the power of a kingdom doth easily quell a company of Rogues that make inroads upon the borders, but cannot set footing in the heart of the Kingdom. Whatsoever is in the world, whereby we might be drawn away from God, that is subdued and vanquished by the power of faith: The pravity of nature, the wiles of Satan, all evil concupiscence, whatsoever is opposite to the Spirit of God, that is brought under by the might of faith. True it is, that our warfare doth last during life, our conflicts are daily, new and diverse battles are moved against us by the enemy almost every moment: but in all these, faith is victorious. This is the victory whereby we overcome the world, even our faith Who is he that overcomes the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God. I am able to do all things through Christ that strengthens me. David first encounters a Lion and a Bear, and afterwards overcomes the great Goliath: so true and lively faith first begins with petty desire, and passions or such temptations, as are incident to our present state and calling, and having gotten mastery over them, still increaseth as difficulties or oppositions multiply, until at length Satan, the world and the flesh be brought into subjection. But Temporary faith keeping residence only in the out-face of the heart, is over-swayed and overborn in temptation by every strong desire, or deep-rooted passion. It may perhaps suppress someone or few exorbitant passions, and keep under the out breach of some others: but the passion itself doth still live, and bear sway to keep faith out of it throne, and in time will prevail to choke the seed of grace.

4. Of all graces faith is the most humble; a poor petitioner, a begging hand; receiving all things of favor, challenging nothing to itself, ascribing all good to the praise of grace: It fighteth manfully, triumpheth victoriously,

worketh by love: but in all this it magnifieth the grace of God, relieth upon him and seeketh his praise.

Sect. 6. Lastly, justifying faith for nature and quality is a spiritual taste, howsoever defective for degree. It receiveth the word, tasteth, relisheth, and retaineth it, as the most sweet, wholesome, and delectable food. There is the same proportion betwixt the word of life, the food of the soul, and the lively faith, that is betwixt bodily food and the instrument of bodily taste. Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. The word profited them not (saith the Apostle, speaking of the Israelites) because it was not mixed with faith in them that heard it: where the doctrine of salvation is compared to wine, which profiteth not, unless it be drunken, that is, received by faith: and to believe is spiritually to drink the cup of salvation. My soul thirsteth for thee (saith David) Because thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee: My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, &c. To believe in Christ, is to eat the flesh of the Son of man, and to drink his blood. Temporary faith tasteth the word as men do meat, which they spit out again; receiveth it as a raw stomach doth meat, which it vomiteth up and cannot hold: but it never feedeth kindly upon the several parts of the Word of life, nor standeth affected towards it, as a good stomach doth to wholesome nourishment, which is evident in that the weeds of earthly-mindedness, pride, pleasure are not stocked up by the roots: and where these abide, the soul is not rightly tempered to apprehend the worth and quality, or feed upon the juice of heavenly mysteries. But where true and lively faith hath residence, the soul is tempered to symbolize with divine goodness, and standeth affected to the several branches of the word, as a good appetite doth to wholesome food of diverse qualities. This is the nature of Justifying faith: but it admits

many interruptions in acts or operations. The Mind is sometimes darkened with mists arising from our natural corruptions; sometimes our passions stir violently, that we cannot do as we would, nor continue our adherence unto the Word of life, as better for the time being, then the prosecution of some sensual good, that for the present doth move our affections, and is stolen into them. Natural taste is distempered with sick humors that abound in the body: so is the spiritual with temptations from without, and spiritual diseases from within. Thus it is with the best oftentimes in this life, whilst the mind is clouded with earthly thoughts, and the heart assailed with carnal lusts, which through weakness or neglect of watchfulness creep upon and disturb them for a time: but in their right temper and good plight they are much better; they taste and feed upon the Word of truth, and the favor of God is sweeter to them then all the delights of the sons of men. We conclude then that Justifying faith is a firm, absolute, unlimited assent, and well-rooted, all-seasoning, sovereign affiance, whereby we rest upon Christ for salvation, embrace the mercies of God as better than life, and feed upon the Word with sweet refreshing and delight.

CHAP. III. Love is not the soul of faith, yet Justifying Faith cannot be without Love.

SECT. 1. From that which hath been spoken of the nature of faith, these two things do plainly follow: First, That love is not the life and soul of faith. Secondly, That Justifying faith cannot be without love. As light and heat in the Sun be inseparable, so is faith and love, being knit together in a sure band by the Holy Ghost: but love cannot be the form or soul of faith. Livelihood is the qualification, Love the companion, Works the fruits or effects of that faith that justifieth: but faith receiveth not its virtue, life, or efficacy from Charity or any other virtue, but from the Spirit of whom it is breathed into us, from whom also it receiveth that it may give force to all other virtues and good works, whereby they are virtues and good works. It is faith and not Charity that gives influence to all other graces, even to Charity itself; as faith increaseth, so other graces increase; as faith decreaseth so other graces decrease: the life of faith is our life, the strength of faith is our strength: if our faith be weak, there is nothing else whereby we can be strong. It is the essential form or act of faith to accept of the promises of mercy, whereby we obtain them also; God having appointed

that as a condition, that the promise might be sure to all the seed, to exclude boasting, and to set forth his free grace and favor. But Charity cannot serve for that use: because I cannot presume of that that is another's, upon any conscience of my love towards him, but upon confidence only of his love towards me. Be it that all things are common amongst friends, before we can build thereupon, we must have it resolved unto us, that God takes us for his friends, which can be no otherwise but by faith only. Faith must first receive, embrace, and hold the merit of the blood of Christ, before there can be any assurance of friendship betwixt God and us. And although being now in friendship with Christ, our love may give us encouragement and comfort to make use to ourselves of that that is his; yet it is not by our love that we take it to make use thereof. For the act of love is done only by issue and passage from him that loveth to the thing that is loved, as from us to Christ; and therefore it must be somewhat else, whereby we receive from Christ to us. How should the goodness of God be the object of our charity, but by being first the object of our faith. For therefore fore do we love the goodness of God, or love God for his goodness towards us, because first we believe the same, neither can we so love but by believing. For charity consisting simply in affection apprehends nothing in God of itself: but receiveth all from faith. The form is the beginning of actions, and that that giveth influence and life to another thing, must needs have a priority to that that receiveth it. But charity is not the beginning of the actions of faith, specially of the act of believing; the act of love hath no priority to belief, but follows after it, and is quickened by it. For by faith we embrace the Word and receive Christ, when as charity compelleth us to love him, whom we know, embrace, and hold by faith. We first taste our meat, and then love it: faith is the spiritual taste of the soul, which feedeth upon the sweet and

tender mercies of the Lord, before the heart be enflamed with love. Faith and love are different gifts and graces: and some effects are attributed to faith which agree not to charity; as faith is said to justify, to purify the heart, to overcome the world, to receive the promises. Charity may be called an accidental form of faith, that is, it is an instrument unto it for moving and stirring abroad in the performance of all duties recommended unto us, both to God and Man: but the life and soul of faith it is not, or the inward and essential form, whereby it hath life and being within itself, and whence proceedeth a motion and working that is proper to itself. If charity should be the form of faith, then faith hath two different forms, its proper and the form of love; then faith should be the only pure matter of love, then should it be obedient to love, and contained of it, as the matter is obedient to the form, and contained of it. The Body is an instrument for the soul to work by, and not the soul an instrument for the body to work by. The form worketh in the matter, and not the matter either in, or by the form, seeing the matter of everything is passive only, and not active: And so it should be betwixt faith and love, if faith were as the body, and love as the soul. But charity is obedient to faith, faith governeth charity: for whatsoever we love uprightly, it must be known, by faith that we ought to love it, and our love must be quickened by faith, to love it uniformly, and in right order. Faith is the measure of love, and the measure of love is according to the measure of faith: the intention of love according to the degrees of faith, and the breadth of love according to the extension of faith. Where there is greater faith in God, there is greater love to God: and as faith spreadeth itself so doth love in uniform manner.

Sect. 2 Faith is not wrought by charity (as the Jesuit perverteth that text of Saint Paul) for then it will follow, that love by which faith is wrought must

needs follow, that love by which faith is wrought must needs be before faith, whereas all acknowledge that faith hath the first being. It is faith which first heareth and believeth, and receiveth the word of God, and thereby prescribeth unto charity the way that it is to go, and the duty it is to perform; it inciteth to the work, it animateth the act, and enlargeth the affection to the several branches of love, without which what is charity, but a wild, misshapen, wandering affection, rising or falling amiss, coming short or running over? What the partial and maimed fruits of love, but the very carcass of a good work? Faith worketh by love, not as fire maketh hot by heat, which is a formal property inherent in it: but as the soul doth this or that by the hand which is an externe instrument conjoined unto it. That by which a thing is constituted as by a beginning, and by which it is effectual, that is the form thereof. But love is a grace without the being of faith, though conjoined unto, and faith is effectual by love, as a primary mean, whereby it doth produce other effects not as by its beginning. Christ is the fountain of the water of life: Faith in the heart is as the pipes and leads that receive in and hold the water: Love in some part is as the cock of the conduit, that lets out the water to every comer. Faith justifieth by receiving the gift of righteousness, which is by the merit of Jesus Christ: and goeth forth by charity, whereby as a working hand it performeth all duties commanded of God, to the glory and honor of God.

What if love be the most excellent of all graces in some respects, doth it thence follow, that it is the life of faith? By the same reason we may argue; Whatsoever is not of faith is sin, is of no esteem or account with God: therefore faith is the form of all other graces. It followeth not, that because the eye is a more excellent member than the foot; therefore the eye is the soul and life of the foot: No more doth it, that because charity is a more

excellent gift then faith, therefore it should be the life and soul of faith. Faith and love respectively have the preferment each of other. In respect of spiritual life faith is the most necessary, upon which love hath necessary dependence: but otherwise to love is more then to believe, because it necessarily includes belief; as to taste meat in respect of life is of more use then to love it, though absolutely to love meat be more then to taste it, because it presupposeth taste. If we respect latitude of use, charity is more excellent then saith, as which is extended every way to God and Men, and by which all the gifts of God which he bestoweth upon us, are made profitable to other men. But if we consider man privately in himself, and for his own use, faith is more excellent then charity, as whereby we are radically united unto Christ, and wherein standeth originally our fellowship and communion with him; by which Christ dwelleth in our hearts, and we receive the promised spirit; into which as a hand, God putteth all the riches of his grace for our salvation, and by which all acts of grace are quickened; we feed upon Christ for the strengthening and nourishment of the soul, and whatsoever is in us is commended unto God. If we respect length of time and continuance, charity is to be preferred before faith. For faith is but for a time, and when the promise of God, which is the matter and subject of it, shall be fully accomplished, the use of it shall cease. When faith passeth into an open knowledge and revealed sight of the thing present, it changeth both his nature and kind. But love abideth forever, and shall continue betwixt God and us an everlasting bond: it shall be greater and more vehement, but shall still retain the same nature and substance, albeit some works which now it exerciseth shall cease. The end of our faith is charity: but the foundation and director of love is faith: faith also is the victory whereby we overcome the world. To save a man faith is the greater: in Man

being saved love is the greater. Till faith have finished our salvation love must yield to faith: when faith hath fully saved us, it shall have an end, for knowledge of sight takes away faith, but love shall abide forever. Absolutely love is greater than faith, but when we speak of the means of Justification, and attainment of that salvation, whereto perfect charity and righteousness doth belong, then faith must be preferred as the greater and more excellent. Faith only beareth sway therein: and this slender and weak charity which we have, is of no effect or moment thereunto.

When the Apostle makes comparison betwixt the body without the spirit, and faith without works, concluding that they are both dead, he cannot be thought to make love the soul of faith. For he speaks not of internal charity, which lodgeth in the heart, but of external works, which are outwardly visible and apparent unto men, and cannot be the life, but are the fruits and effects of faith. For that which is without and external, cannot be the life or soul of that which is within and internal: nay itself hath from within all the life that it hath; and if it receive not life from within, it is altogether dead. Works therefore being outward, and issuing from within, if they be true, can in no good construction be said to be the life of faith which is within, but to be the issues and productions of faith from which they spring. Besides the word used by the Apostle doth signify the breath, and so the comparison runneth plain; As the body of a living creature, if it breathe not is dead: so faith, if it bring forth no works, is dead: For breathing is an effect of a living body, and working is the proper effect of a living faith. If we speak of faith as it is outwardly professed to men, works which may be discerned by the eyes of men, not charity which is the inward affection of the heart, are they that give name and gain credit to profession. Charity is a hand or instrument whereby faith worketh: works are fruits, effects, demonstrations of the

inward life of faith: and that which gives name and being to our external profession, is a pure, blameless, upright conversation, fruitful in good works. If we speak of faith, a dead faith may be compared to a dead body, altogether void of spiritual quickening: but a lively faith cannot fitly be resembled to living body, but rather to the life of the body: because faith is not that which is quickened by charity or the works of charity, but that which quickeneth. Faith is the first wheel in the Clock that moveth all the rest: Faith stirreth up and directeth all other graces of the soul in their operations, whose strength increaseth according to the lively-hood, vigor, and increase of faith.

How then saith the Apostle, That faith is perfected by works? As we judge of the cause by the effects, and by the proportion of the effects the efficacy and force of the cause may seem to be increased or diminished, everything is acknowledged to be perfect when it worketh, and is esteemed so much the more perfect, by how much the more it worketh; as we say the goodness of a tree is perfect, when it hath brought forth some excellent good fruit. Thus Philosophers teach, that the form is not perfect, when it is considered as the first act, but when it is taken as the second act: for by working it putteth forth its force and declareth itself. And so faith is perfected by works, not that the nature of faith receiveth complement or perfection from works, but because it doth declare and manifest itself by love and good works, and is esteemed by so much the more perfect, as the works produced are the more excellent. Yea, as the exercise of outward members increaseth internal vigor and strength, and refresheth the spirits by which we move; so doth the exercise of grace and virtue rightly employed perfect faith, not imparting the perfection of works unto it, but stirring up exercising and intending its own vigor and perfection. Sense and motion is the effect, not the cause of

life in the body; but yet the body without them is dead, and perfected by them. Works are the effects, not the life of faith, but faith without works is dead, and by works it is perfected.

Sect. 3. There is a feigned and dead faith; a faith whereby the Devils are said to believe, and such whose hearts are not upright; a faith which resteth barely in the understanding or which slightly affecteth the heart, but is not rooted, bears not sovereignty: a faith subordinate to vain-glory or covetous desires, which the world destroyeth: and this saith, as it is ineffectual to season the affections throughout and incite to the sincere uniform acts of love, so is it unavailable to Justification. There is a faith unfeigned, well-rooted, sovereign, whereby we believe to righteousness, by which the heart is purified, and Christ dwelleth in us: which is the victory, whereby we overcome the world: and this faith worketh by love, and cannot but work. He that believeth in this sort loveth freely, and cannot but love, not through defect of liberty, but through the nature of faith, exciting the believer to will to love not to love if he will. Faith and love considered as habits of the renewed soul, and branches of inherent holiness, have their original from the Spirit of regeneration, and be distinct graces infused together. The deeds of charity are the proper acts or exercises of the grace of charity, from which they issue as branches from the flock, and fruit from the tree: nor can we properly say, that such works flow from faith, as the fruit doth from the root, seeing charity is no branch of faith, but a distinct grace of the renewing Spirit, which beareth it proper and distinct fruit. But such acts are said to be of faith because the doctrine of faith enjoineth them, the virtue of faith inclines the soul unto them, moveth charity unto the exercise of them, and directeth and quickeneth the acts themselves, without which they would be liveliness and out of square. Faith doth beget love, not that one habit

doth beget another, but that faith doth excite men to the works of charity. Thus the habits of faith and love be coupled in infusion; the exercise of faith and love be inseparably conjoined; and the acts of love be the effects of faith. Everyone that believeth is borne of God; he that is engrafted into Christ by faith is a new Creature, and made partaker of the divine nature. But he that is borne of God, is endued with the grace of love. The lively members of Christ Jesus, which receive from him the sap of grace, cannot be utterly destitute of true charity. But all true Believers are living members of Christ Jesus. He that believeth, abideth in God, and God in him. But in whom God abideth, in him is love. Every true Believer doth live spiritually, and where true faith is, there is true life. But he that lives spiritually, and is translated from death to life, is also endued with the grace of love. He that believeth is in the light, and abideth therein: But no man is in the light, who loveth not. Faith and Hope be inseparable: But it cannot be, but we should love those things, which we already know, embrace, taste, and hope to be singularly good. Faith receiveth and resteth upon the mercy of God as our sovereign Good: But it is not possible for a man truly to know and embrace the chiefest good, and yet to withhold affection from the love of it. It is faith, which setting God before us such a one as he is, wise, mighty, just, merciful, loving and gracious towards us, enamoreth our hearts, and stirreth in us affections correspondent to his grace: neither is there any spark of true love, which is not kindled by this means. We love God, because he loveth us first. But nothing can season and affect the heart, with the serious consideration, and sweet taste of God's mercy and favor, but faith only. In nature we see nothing can move in desire to this or that, till first it hath apprehended it lovely, and it cannot but move, when it hath soundly tasted of it goodness: So our affections cannot in love move to, and unite

themselves with God, till by faith we know him to be an amiable object for us sinners to embrace: and when we have soundly and truly tasted how good and gracious the Lord is, we cannot but love and affect him entirely. Faith is an obsequious and affianced acknowledgement of the truth of God's promises: But he that doth after that manner acknowledge the truth of God in Christ; is both inwardly affected towards God, and desirous to put forth the same in all duties of holiness and righteousness. The doctrine of grace, which bringeth salvation, teacheth us to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live godly, justly and soberly in this present world: which being embraced by faith, doth leaven every faculty, and season it in such sort, as the several affections will readily move at the command of faith.

When the Apostle separates faith and love, saying, If I had all faith, so that I could remove Mountains, and had not love, it profiteth me nothing: he speaks of that persuasion and confidence in the extraordinary promises of God, whereby the parties endued therewith, were enabled to do miracles. And the word, All, noteth manifestly the highest degree of doing miracles. That whereas some had faith to do some miracles, and not other some: the Apostle showeth, that if he had such a miraculous faith, that he could do all miracles, and have not love, it were nothing. This is clear, in that the Apostle reckoneth faith miraculous amongst the gifts of the Spirit, in the precedent Chapter: and by the example or instance of moving Mountains, which our Savior noteth as a Master miracle amongst others. He saith, If I had All knowledge, not understanding it simply and absolutely, of all kinds of knowledge, but of the gift of knowledge: and so by, All faith, he meaneth not all kinds of faith, but all faith of miracles. Universal propositions must be limited according to the subject matter, unless we will run into manifold absurdities. And that the faith he speaketh of was not fitly qualified to

Justification, appeareth in this, that it did not command, but rather was subordinate to their vain-glorious humor. Look as their confidence was greater in the power and extraordinary promises of God, the more were they puffed up, boasting in themselves, insulting over their brethren: whereas, if their affiance had been well settled upon the mercy of God in Christ, and had rightly spread itself to the several branches of holy truth, it would have inclined, yea, constrained them to serve one another in love, and bend their gifts to the edification of their brethren, which, whilst they do not, but rather turn their gifts to the service of their lusts, and the dishonor of God, it is evident, they believed not unto righteousness.

But by what faith should these Corinthians have come to know and rightly to value Christian love? The same by which they wrought wonders, or some other? If the same, then faith is true though separated from love. If some other, the Apostle in all congruity should first have exhorted them to embrace it; otherwise he had commended the beauty of Christian love but unto blind men. Besides, if it be some other, then by that grace of faith, whereby they rested upon the extraordinary promise and power of God, they had never been able to discern betwixt good and evil, or to behold the worth and dignity of Christian love and kindness, though never so well-rooted in their hearts. To this question it is directly answered, That the exercise of love was to be raised in these Corinthians hearts, by faith, for common offense and qualities the same with that whereby they wrought miracles; but by the same faith rightly set, deeply rooted, taking better in the heart diffusing it virtue into the several faculties, spreading itself uniformly unto the particular branches of Christian duties, directing the affections unto spiritual objects, and fixing them fastest upon such as it adjudgeth best, and most effectual to the edifying of themselves and others.

In Justifying faith two things are to be considered: the common nature or substance, and the specifical nature, plantation and sovereignty. For faith historical and Justifying agree in this, that both the one and the other is an assent to divine truths, grounded upon the authority of the revealer: Faith temporary and Justifying agree in this, that they receive the word, and rest upon the mercies of God: but in radication, sovereignty, and working, and so in special nature, saving faith differeth from other kinds. The seed which fell by the high way side, in stony ground, among thorns, and in good soil, was one and the same: and in most of these grounds it took, not alike in all, kindly in the good soil alone. The common nature of faith is to receive the Word, which some receive by bare assent of understanding, others by sleight and superficial confidence which vanisheth away: but the doctrine of life taketh kindly in the honest and good heart, which embraceth it soundly with unfeigned and well-rooted affiance. Justifying faith is discerned from the other kinds, not by this, that it receiveth the promises which they do not: but it receiveth them in another manner and degree, with firmer radication in the heart, which is the seat of the affections, that it might season them, and subject earthly desires to the affectation of heavenly things.

Amongst the chief Rulers of the Jews, many believed in Christ, saith the Evangelist, who yet confessed him not, because of the Pharisees, lest they should be cast out of the Synagogue. But John sometime following the Hebrew phrase useth the term of believing in Christ, for believing Christ, applying it to them, who by the miracles of Christ, and his manifest declaration of the truth, were convicted in conscience to acknowledge him to be of God, or did believe in him for a time, but did not in sincerity submit themselves unto him. And thus it might be said of some of those chief Rulers, that they believed in Christ, that is, were persuaded in their minds

that he spake the truth, but yet preferring their credit and reputation with men, gave no regard unto it. The very reason, which the Evangelist gives, why they did not confess Christ, makes it manifest, that their faith was not true and lively rooted in the heart. For (saith he) they loved the praise of men, more than the praise of God: which who so doth, his faith is not become such as lays sure hold on the promises of life. How can ye believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor which cometh from God only? They might have some beginnings and dispositions to true faith, but very weak and feeble, and they might be endued with some degree of love, but weak and feeble as their faith was. Their faith and love was too much tied and entangled in the nets and snares of carnal respects: but, admitting the least degree of faith, there is no ground, to affirm, they had no love. Indeed perfect love casteth out all fear, and perfect faith overcometh the world, and breedeth perfect love: but there is a beginning of faith and love, which being yet little and weak, and having not as yet over-mastered all worldly and carnal respects, is for a time timorous and fearful to confess Christ, but groweth to strength by little and little, till it resolve to cleave to him with loss of all other things. Such was the saith of Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea, yea, of the Apostles themselves, Peter not excepted, who were ever and anon affrighted, and at his last sufferings, some denied, all forsook our Savior and fled. And thus it may be these Rulers believed, but their faith was very weak, and their love was according to their faith: till increase of faith brought forth further strength of love, and they had learned by the strength of faith and love to prefer the service of Christ before all the glory of the world, and to adhere to the glory that comes from God alone, as so much better than that we receive of men, that the later did seem as nothing in comparison of the former. That which is added by the Evangelist,

that they durst not confess him, doth no more derogate from their love, then from their faith: for if they had believed firmly with the heart unto righteousness, they had confessed with the mouth unto salvation: and in that they confessed not the truth with their mouths, it argueth they believed but weakly with their heart. For the faith which bringeth forth sincere confession is coupled with love, but confession itself is an effect of faith. I believed, and therefore have I spoken: we also believe, and therefore speak.

The man that came to the wedding, not having on the wedding garment, had faith (as our Adversaries object) but wanted charity and good works. How may it appear that he had faith? Forsooth, because he was admitted to that Table, which are the Sacraments. Not to question that exposition for the present, was no man ever admitted to the Sacraments, that made show of faith, when indeed he had none? Many hypocrites are in the Church, that have not so much as a persuasion of the truth of the Scripture, and so absolutely want their marriage garment. And men are admitted to the Sacrament by men, and admitted for profession of faith, when they that admit them cannot tell whether they have faith or not. For many pretend that which is not in them, and with the mouth make profession of faith, when their heart is barren and empty of grace. Further this man might assent unto truths divine, and acknowledge them as true, but not from a sound and sincere ground: or he might assent unto the Articles of Christian Faith as true and good, whilst considered only in themselves, without opposition of such matters as he much valued: and such belief being unsound, shallow, subordinate to earthly pleasures or commodities, may be and is separated from love, but it is not that faith we speak of. The general meaning of the Parable seems to be no more but this, that many men thrust into the Church, who, when the day of trial comes, will be found to have no

interest to the Kingdom of Heaven. What if the wedding garment be charity? This doth hurt us nothing, unless it could be proved, (which can never be) that this man had Justifying faith. For he wanted the wedding garment, charity, because he wanted faith: and if he had been endued with the one, scilicet faith, he should also have had the other, scilicet, love: for faith worketh by love. But the wedding garment is as well faith as love. It is indeed Christ Jesus himself (of whom the Apostle saith), Put ye on the Lord Jesus. Christ (as he is a justifier of us from sin, and a sanctifier of us from the power of sin, rinsing away by the water of his Spirit, that stain of corruption defiling our nature) is that wedding garment: and so putting on Christ, we put on the new man, which according to God is created in righteousness and true holiness; Now we put on Christ, when we do by an affianced knowledge, and by consequent affections come more and more to be united with him. The first and radical union is made by faith only, which layeth hold on God in Christ, as our merciful God, whose anger before threatened us for sin. The secondary union, whereby the soul cleaveth more and more unto God, is by means of the affections; by love our hearts cleave unto him, by hope, joy, high estimation of him; whom though we have not seen, we love: but this presupposeth the former.

The five foolish Virgins (they say) were part of the Kingdom of God, and had faith but wanted works. They were indeed part of the Kingdom in profession, but not in election. They had a form or show of faith, but true Justifying faith they never knew. And as their faith was, such were their works. For it appeareth that they had oil in their lamps, and that their lamps were lighted, although by long tarrying of the Bridegroom, they were afterwards quenched. Our Adversaries teach, that these Virgins had aspired to more than ordinary perfection in the Church: and had they gotten this

without good works? It is a strange perfection that can be attained without all good deeds spiritual or corporal. But they continued not (they will say) in their former charity, when yet they presumed strongly on the assurance of their salvation, as is apparent, by their confident demanding to be let in: for they said, Lord, Lord, open unto us. Indeed they never had either true faith or love, and therefore could not continue therein. For if ever they had been partakers of either in truth, they would have persevered in both unto the end: and where the one is utterly wanting, the other never was. Their earnest demanding to be let in, shows rather their desire, then their hope; and yet how many hope presumptuously without true faith in Christ? Faith is grounded upon the Word of God, and the thing which it believeth, is that which the Lord hath said. Whatsoever we conceive of God besides his Word, it is imagination, opinion, presumption, but faith it is not. But the Word of God denounceth destruction to the workers of iniquity, to the fruitless and barren fig-tree, how can it then be said, that they that work iniquity, that bring forth no good fruit, have faith to believe assuredly, that they shall be saved. The Apostle makes mention of some, who professed that they knew God, but were indeed unbelievers, as the vulgar reads it. And we know it is often threatened in the Prophets, that the wicked shall cry, and not be heard: call in fear, but not in faith: for they that in faith call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved. But the Apostle James (as they object) supposeth plainly, that a man may have faith without good works, that is, without charity, saying: What shall it profit, if a man say he hath faith, and hath no works? Can faith save him? Wherein they take for granted, what can never be proved, that the Apostle takes works for charity. Do they think, that they against whom the Apostle writes would grant, that they were without the love of God? The Gnostics were never so absurd. But

the question was, whether a man that professed Jesus Christ to be the Savior of the world, was not by this saved, how lewdly soever he demeaned himself? And it is apparent by the text, that the Apostle speaks of an historical, dead faith, a saith in profession; as much differing from that whereto Paul ascribeth righteousness, as a live man doth from a dead, or a body endued with life and motion from a painted or carved Image. Therefore he compares it to the good words of him, that wisheth well to the poor man, but doth nothing at all for him. As therefore it is no true charity, which professeth good will to help, and helpeth not: so it is no true faith, which is severed from good works. To this tendeth his question, What availeth it, though a man say that he hath faith? And his other demand, Show me thy faith? The uttermost he extendeth it to by instance, is a mere historical faith, Thou believest that there is one God. His purpose is to show, that faith if it be truly professed hath taken root within, from whence spring by obedience the fruits of all good works, and if it give not forth itself by good works, it is a dead, no true and living faith. The men against whom he disputes did make profession of Justifying faith, but the Apostle brings the true, lively and working faith of Abraham, as opposite to that idle, dead, and breath-less faith professed by them; and saying, Was not Abraham our Father justified by works, when he offered his Son. Isaac upon the Altar: he meaneth no more, then if he had thus spoken: If Abraham had said (as they did whose empty faith he disapproves) I have faith, but had not proved his sayings true by his deeds, or readiness to offer up his only Son when God commanded him (for actually he did not offer him) he had not been justified before God. Why? Because he had not believed in such sort as Paul meant, when he saith; By faith Abraham offered up Isaac when he was tried; which was the act of his faith, as the text expressly

noteth. Yea, further to show the vanity of them that boasted of Justifying faith, because they professed faith in God, he addeth, The Devils believe also and tremble, showing, that the Devils go so far as to believe the truth of God, yea, further for they tremble: and therefore the faith professed in word by those boasters cannot be the same with that which the Scripture nameth for a Justifying faith. They cannot shuffle this over by telling us, that Christian faith, when it is naked and void of good works, may well be likened unto the Devils faith in two points. First, in both of them there is a perfect knowledge of all things revealed. Secondly, this knowledge shall not steed them any whit. But in many things they differ, but this one is principal: That Christians out of a godly and devout affection, do willingly submit their understanding to the rules of faith. But the, Devil against his will, believes all that God hath revealed. This is but a poor evasion, for if they will hear their brethren of Reims, they tell them plainly, that Saint James doubted not to call a dead faith without works, the faith not of Christians, but of Devils. The Apostle then doth not liken Christian Justifying faith to the faith of Devils in some points only, but proves the dead faith professed by some, not to be true and saving faith indeed, because the Devils believe in that manner. The first point, wherein the faith of Christians and of Devils is said to agree, comprehendeth the fullness and perfection of that which they call Catholic or Christian Faith, which consisteth in believing all to be true, that God hath revealed. No more is there in Abraham's faith, if we consider the act of faith, and no less in the Devil, and the same in every Catholic Christian, according to their doctrine. That which is added to show the difference betwixt the faith of Christians and the faith of Devils is little to the purpose. For it is not taken from the nature of faith itself, but from those things which to faith are merely

accidental. The godly and devout affection and willing submission to the rules of faith, which is in Christians, being an act of charity, and not of faith, differenceth not true faith in itself from the faith of Hypocrites, but distinguisheth faith and charity from faith only. And thus our Adversaries make the Devil a Catholic against his will. Or if they will say, that true Christian faith doth always actually and necessarily imply this godly affection, and willing submission of understanding to the rules of faith, then because this cannot be without charity, let them say, as the truth is, that true Christian faith cannot be separated from love and good works. It is impertinent to dispute, whether the faith of Devils be natural, coact, and dishonest, or the faith of wicked men supernatural, voluntary, and Honest, as if these things distinguished the faith of ungodly men from the faith of Devils. For if the majesty of God's infallible truth command the assent of Devils to that which they love not, doth not the same cause also prevail with ungodly men, who bear no affection to God or goodness. And as for the honesty or dishonesty of the act, there can no circumstance be named, why it should be honest in wicked men, and dishonest in the Devils: for it is fearfully abused in both. And if it be granted, that faith without works or grace, is in men the gift of God, but the faith of Devils not so: this argues a difference only in the cause, not in the essence, nature or quality. And though it be his gift, yet being without grace and charity, and without these of necessity as unfruitful as the faith of Devils (both which our Adversaries grant) it is no more available to make a Christian, then the faith of Devils is.

It is further objected, if faith cannot be without charity, then faith alone doth not justify. This followeth not, for it is one thing to say, faith alone doth not justify, another that faith which justifieth is not alone. This latter we yield unto, the first we deny. Faith alone doth justify, that is privatively

considered without hope or charity as causes concurring therewith in justification: but this faith cannot really be separated from, or negatively considered without hope and charity. For though it be true, that the total cause of anything being in act, the effect must needs follow, yet from the total cause we cannot separate those things, together with which it hath in nature its existence and being, and without which it cannot be in act for the producing of the effect, though they confer nothing thereto: because that is to deny the being of it, and to destroy the cause. The eye alone seeth, the ear alone heareth: but it must be a living eye, and hearing ear, not separated from the head or broken off from the rest of the body. Faith alone justifies without other graces, not in regard of their presence, but in regard of their co-working with faith to this effect of our Justification. It is one thing to say, the eye is in the head without other senses, and another thing to say, the eye doth see alone, no other sense seeing with it. Liveliness is the qualification of that faith that justifieth; and works, at least a preparation and promptitude of heart to good works, is an effect of faith as immediate as Justification. So then faith cannot be without love, and yet we apprehend not the promises, of eternal life by works, but by faith alone, although truly they cannot be apprehended by parties destitute of works, at least of sincere resolution to walk in obedience. Nor doth faith alone apprehend the truth or derive the benefit of divine promises to ourselves, but by it alone, (though accompanied with all other sanctifying graces, and attended with the whole train of good works) we expect and pray the promises may be fulfilled, not for our sakes, or for any righteousness we have in us, or can hope for in this Life, but only for the merit of Christ, by his sole mediation and intercession. In brief, the faith which justifieth is operative, attended with good works of all sorts, accompanied with all graces of the Spirit: but we live by it as it

unites us to the Lord of life; yea by it alone, not by it and other parts of grace, in as much as by it we trust in God's mercies offered in Christ, wholly relying on them, not partly on them, and partly on our works or righteousness.

CHAP. V. Of the general object or matter of Faith Justifying.

SECT. 1. Matters of faith strictly and properly those are called, which pertain to the nature and essence of faith first, and by themselves; as are the points of faith contained in the Gospel, the ignorance whereof is damnable, and the denial heretical. But in a more large acceptation all truth revealed by God in his holy Word, is a matter of faith, and to be believed as God hath revealed it. Hence is that rule of Divines, There are many integral parts in the Word of God, which are said to be of the word of faith, but not properly a matter of faith. For there are many historical, domestical, and particular matters set down for example, not properly for faith: which we believe, not because they pertain to saving faith, but for that they appertain to the Word written by the Spirit of God. And not much unlike hereunto is that distinction, that some things are necessary to be believed to salvation by themselves and the authority of the Scriptures, as the substantial points of faith and manners; others for the authority of the Scripture only, as those which are not so necessary; and some neither by themselves nor the

authority of the Scripture, as are things in themselves indifferent, so long as by circumstance they be not repugnant to faith, truth, love and edification.

Sect. 2. Justifying faith is considered, either according to it most eminent effect, which is to justify; or according to it full and adequate act. For that faith which justifieth, doth embrace the Commandments, believe the threatening's, look to all the promises of God made in Jesus Christ concerning this life or the life to come, and receive the good things promised: it sustaineth in adversities, worketh by love as an instrument conjoined with it, guideth all our actions, and giveth firm assent unto every article of faith and every part of divine truth; but as it justifieth, it is conversant about Christ obeying to death, that we may find righteousness and forgiveness of sins to life in him, or it cleaveth unto God's mercies manifested in that eternal sacrifice, always breathing out life to men, renouncing all trust and confidence, even in such graces as we have received from God. The truth, mercy, fidelity and power of God, with all benefits past and to come, which it pleaseth God to bestow upon his people in Jesus Christ, are the matter about which faith is exercised: but as it justifieth Christ is the full and adequate object of belief; as our reasonable soul doth see in the eye, hear in the ear, digest in the stomach, but doth not reason as it doth these things, but only as it conceiveth and discourseth within us. So that, according to the twofold consideration of justifying faith, the object of it is twofold, General and Special 1. The General object is the whole truth of God revealed unto us in his word, containing all Histories, Doctrines, Commands, Threatening's, promises of what kind soever. True faith respects all this, and only this. Only this, because divine revelations only be of certain and infallible truth, which cannot deceive, and whereunto men can safely give unlimited and absolute credit: All this, because every

part of divine inspired truth is worthy of all Belief and reverence: and so there is nothing contained in Scriptures, threatening, promise, precept, admonition, exhortation, prophesy, or history, which falls not in some degree or other within the compass of saving Faith. God who cannot lie, hath propounded to men for truth and to be believed, whatsoever is delivered in Scriptures, and so it is a matter of faith; but so far forth only, as it is intended to be held for true by the holy Ghost, the Author of the Scripture. There is no doubt to be made, but whatsoever is registered in the Historical Books of holy Scripture by way of report, is to be taken for true in respect of story, that we may not doubt whether those things were done or said, which are there reported to be done or said: But in these books, we have some worthy speeches of godly men, and some lewd and blasphemous words of profane and wretched men. The former are to be acknowledged to be for the truth of God every way: the later must be acknowledged to be truly reported. As for example, it is true that Jacob uttered those prophecies of the twelve Patriarchs his sons, and it is also true, that those prophecies of his were the very truth of God. It is as true, that Rabshaketh delivered those blasphemous threatening's against the Lord and his people, but it is not true, that those words came from God, as Jacob's did: so Jacob's were to be taken as every way true, truly related, and the truth of God; Rabshakeths only as truly reported from his mouth, but in themselves blasphemous.

Sect. 3. Thus faith yieldeth firm and absolute assent to all divine history, as containing a certain and sure relation of those things whereof they entreat; and to whatsoever came from God, as every way true, and to be received: nor doth it barely assent to the thing spoken as true, but moveth and stirreth affections according as the nature of the thing believed should and ought to work. Through faith we understand that the worlds were

framed by the word of God, not barely giving credit to Moses relation touching the creation of the world, but looking unto the wisdom, goodness, and power of God, whereby the heart is moved to fear, reverence and submission. That faith, which is deeply fastened in the heart, and beholdeth the true God the creator and Governor of all things, as his power, bounty and understanding shineth in his works; that faith inciteth to humility, reverence, love, and worship of God. Through faith we understand that God hath protected and preserved and blessed his people from time to time; afflicted them when they went astray, delivered them out of the hands of their persecutors when they humbled themselves and sought unto him, inclined the hearts of their enemies to show them favor confounded those that rose up against them, and mercifully performed all his promises in the fittest season: and where this firm belief is planted it begetteth a constant and well-advised resolution to draw near to God, and cleave to him in all conditions, prosperity and adversity, sickness and health, freedom and trouble, when religion is favored and when it is persecuted: because salvation is of the Lord, he will guide his people by counsel, and afterward receive them to glory, but they that are far from God shall perish, they that go a whoring from him shall be destroyed. What the Scripture teacheth of the misery of all men by sin, the vanity of Mind, and corruption of nature, that faith receiveth, and thence followeth self-denial and renunciation of all trust in worldly means. The High and profound mysteries of godliness, which the natural man perceiveth not, accounteth foolishness, faith embraceth with admiration, joy, delight, and affection answerable to the nature of the doctrine into which we are delivered. Belief of God's power, wisdom, grace, love and mercy manifested in Jesus Christ, doth frame the image of God or Christ in our minds, and proposeth it as a visible pattern

for our imitation in all our works, thoughts, and resolutions, and stirreth up to works of piety, justice, mercy, long suffering and the like.

Sect. 4. Besides the promise of forgiveness of sins in and through the blood of Christ, there be many other precious and rich promises spiritual and temporal, concerning this and the life to come: all which, as proceeding from the same fountain of truth, faith doth rest upon and embrace, and that so much the faster, as the promises be more excellent. There is a mutual relation betwixt God promising any good blessing in Christ, and the faithful soul putting forth itself to embrace grace offered. For faith hath not only eyes, by which it doth see the good promised, but hands wherewith it doth lay hold upon the good things bestowed: and the more excellent the good, which is reached unto us in the word of promise is, the closer doth faith stick unto it, the stronger doth it hold it. Men are credulous in things that may concern them in their name, goods or life: and the more weighty the matter, the more earnest they be in seeking resolution, and the stronger hope or fear it begetteth in them. All the promises of God be yea and Amen, sure in themselves, certain to the believer, and therefore he cannot but receive them with closer and stronger repose and adherence, the more he doth apprehend their goodness and worth. Amongst the great and more principal promises those are to be reckoned, which God hath made concerning our Sanctification by his holy Spirit, that he will enable them that believe, to bring forth fruits of amendment, and perfect the good work begun in them from day today. This is the covenant which God hath made with his people; I will put my fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from my ways. This promise is very necessary to be believed; for if people be not well grounded in believing that God will build them up more strongly from day today, and perfect the good work in them which he hath begun, even to full

sanctification in the fear of God, they shall very much stagger and go back, coldly set upon the practice of godliness, be off and on, now forward, now backward, not knowing how to begin or to proceed in the way of holiness. Belief that God will enable them to every duty he doth require, and strengthen them against enemies that do oppose, is a main post in the Christian building an exceeding furtherance unto godliness, without which they shall be oft shaken and dismayed. These promises be of great price: for if a Christian were allowed to ask of God whatsoever he would, next unto the pardon of his sins and salvation of his soul, what would he desire, but to be assured from God that he will establish him in grace, and teach him the good way which he ought to go; that he will sanctify him in soul, spirit and body, and keep him blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus unto judgment. And when he discerneth any such promise to be made, it is not hard to conceive, with what dear affection, and strong adherence he doth receive it, how close he layeth it up in his soul, and sweetly feedeth upon it. This promise is sweet, and belief thereof stirring and operative: for it hearteneth to the practice of mortification and new obedience with great courage, cheerfulness and stayedness; it quickeneth and encourageth to pray as necessities shall give cause; it preserveth from fainting and dismayedness, when strength is not very great, and if at any time, through weakness and infirmity, security catch hold upon us; faith in the promises, that God will be our strength and help, is that which raiseth us again, and putteth courage into us to fight against the adversaries of our soul.

Many gracious and free promises concerning the blessings of this life, are dispersed in the Word of life, which faith receiveth as true and certain, because they come from the God of Truth, who is faithful, sincere and constant in all his promises. Godliness hath the promises both of this life

and that which is to come. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all: how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? As health, maintenance, credit, prosperous success, in our callings and lawful dealings, deliverance out of troubles, and such like. This is the assurance that God hath given, even his faithful promise often repeated, many ways ratified and confirmed, that he will make competent provision for his children: which is to faith better than many bills of security from men, yea, then large possessions in hand for the present. The worth and goodness of earthly blessings promised is apparent, especially when they be given in love and mercy, as gifts of the covenant, tokens of free grace, and by a supernatural providence elevated to spiritual use, in which sense they are promised and vouchsafed unto them that fear God and walk in his ways. And therefore when the believer is rightly informed, that God hath made any such promises, he putteth forth the hand of faith to lay fast hold upon them, and boxeth them up safe as his best and only evidence for the things of this life, and the sanctification of them. For want of this faith, many virtuous and godly men are greatly staggered and perplexed, plunged into deep uncomfortable dumps and tedious troubles about the things of this life: But when once these promises be well riveted into, and have taken root in the heart by a lively faith, belief hereof bringeth forth contentment, comforteth in the multitude of perplexities, encourageth to diligence in our places, quickeneth in adversities, and strengthens to the works of righteousness, as knowing that to be the surest way for the gaining of durable riches, and trusting more to the faithful promises of God though above likelihood, then to their own carnal devices though in show and appearance probable.

Sect. 5. As faith receiveth what God promiseth, because God is faithful, and the promises of great worth and goodness: so it believeth the threatening's denounced in the Word, not barely apprehending them as true and certain, but also declining them as evil. For the whole Scripture breathed from God and every part thereof is God's Word, of infallible truth, deserving absolute credit. God is as well just as merciful; faithful and true as well in his threats, as in his promises, and equally to be believed in both, so far as by his Word he hath assured us of both. He that believeth the one as he ought, believeth both: and he that believeth not both, gives sound credit to neither. Belief of the threatening's is necessary: For whatsoever things are written (whether precepts, promises, threatening's, examples) are written for our learning: and as the promises of this life and the life to come are sharp spurs to quicken us unto godliness: so the threatening's are strong bridles to keep from naughtiness. Firm assent to the certain accomplishment of divine threatening's, doth beget humiliation for sin past, and vigilancy to shun sin and escape danger: it strengthens against base, carnal fears, and the threats of men that oppose the truth, and reviveth care to serve and please God at all times and in all things. Wherefore do the terrors of men so much affright, but because sleight belief is given to the threatening's of the Lord? The grace and mercy of God believed breeds love of God, and consequently true fear, which is opposed to senseless stupidity and carnal presumption, though it casteth out fear which proceedeth from unbelief. But what need Believers fear the threatening's, seeing there is no condemnation or cause of fear to them that believe? The Apostle saith indeed there is no condemnation to such: but we cannot therefore conclude, that there is no cause of fear to them, unless no other evils, but final damnation need to be feared. But whilst the soul is subject to bring upon it God's temporary

wrath, sicknesses spiritual; hellish anguish to the sense of it, there is still cause enough to fear. Seeing that concerning temporal threats and punishments God dealeth as sharply, or rather more sharply with his children, then any other, why should they not dread his Fatherly correction? Would a child that had but one spark of wit or common reason provoke his Father to scourge and whip him every day, because he knows he will not disinherit him in the end; and not rather say, it is good sleeping in a whole skin? And shall believers who are spiritually wise, willingly provoke God, because he will not condemn them eternally? The assurance which a godly man hath of his salvation, is ever joined with a faithful and conscionable care to walk uprightly before the Lord, and to decline by-paths and straying's; for which end he makes use of every part of the word. There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Moreover, there may be fear of that which a man is infallibly assured to escape, not a distrustful fear of falling into it, but a watchful fear of shunning and shrinking all means leading thereunto.

Sect. 6. The word of grace, which calleth upon us to believe the free mercy of God in Christ to the pardon of our offenses, teacheth us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live godly, justly, soberly in this present evil world: and this word of grace is the matter of faith, which is wholly received, if any part take good rooting. For the precepts of sanctity and holiness bind the conscience to obey God, as well as the promises bind to trust in God. What God hath linked together, faith will not separate: But God hath coupled mercy and obedience, grace and holiness. He cannot believe or make faithful plea to the promises of remission and salvation, who doth not make conscience of all sound doctrine that he heareth, and give free, unlimited assent to every part of God's Word, submitting himself

to be led by it, and that because it is his Word. Faith setteth the Image of God upon the heart, which is manifested in the several branches of holiness and righteousness which he commandeth in his Word: and it resigneth a man unto God to live not unto the world, not unto the lusts of the flesh, but unto the praise of his Name, which is not possible to be done, if he cleave not unto the Commandments as just, equal, honest and good, in all things and at all times to be obeyed. Faith cannot take and leave, yield and withhold assent at pleasure, part and mangle, divide with times, seasons, and private respects; or resign itself to God, with limitation to have leave in this or that to live at pleasure: but it is down-right for God, and willingly receiveth whatsoever he saith; what God approveth, that is pleasing to faith, though cross to age, education, custom, credit, honor, natural desire and inclination: what God condemneth, that faith disalloweth, though never so much countenanced by authority, graced by example, attended upon with honor, dignity, preferment, and suiting to our disposition. Faith subdueth the strongest passions as well, (and if due and right comparison be made) as much as the weakest, and acknowledging the Goodness, Mercy, and absolute Sovereignty of the Lord, yieldeth itself to be led by him, above all things that can oppose themselves, and will not give place to ought that doth set against him. If God bid Abraham leave all, his friends, his Fathers house, the land of his Nativity, to go into a strange country, he is straight upon his journey, without further questioning he will be gone, no entreaty will stay him in Mesopotamia. If God command him to offer his only Son in sacrifice, he is early up to do it.

The faithful soul gives firm and free assent unto all things revealed by God, eagerly fixeth the affiance of heart upon the promises, and cleaveth close unto the Commandments, not only such as suite with his disposition,

education, age, but even those that directly cross and oppose carnal reason, carnal affections, worldly pleasures, and what provocations soever there be in the world unto sin: and not then alone when it may be done without contradiction or resistance, but hen specially when temptations rise, human reason fails, sinful lusts hale this way and that, Satan rageth, the world frowns or flatters, our preferment, credit, honor, life, all lies at stake. In this case, faith looks directly unto God, and judgeth it best to stick unto him, from whom comes salvation. For no good can be equal to that which God promiseth, no evil so great as what he threatens, no course so safe as what he prescribes, no evidence so sure as the truth of God, no command so just as what God requires; the greatest gain is to lose all for Christ's sake if we be called thereunto; we should stand so affected to the glory of God as to shrink in no trial though never so difficult, nor think it much to resist unto blood, striving against sin: This is the constant certain judgment of faith, which bringeth forth a settled resolution to follow the Lord at all times, and in all things, notwithstanding all opposition.

In particular practice, the faithful soul may be ignorant of some things, and weak in the application of others: David in a passion may think, Samuel hath deceived him: and Peter surprised with bodily fear may deny his master: but the constant temper of the believer is much better; and if by some unexpected occasion he be unsettled, he is never quiet, until his former resolution be confirmed, and put in practice. For having weighed and pondered all things in an even balance, he is assuredly persuaded, that no outward evil can come in comparison with God's anger, no earthly good is to be matched with God's favor, that transitory delights are dear bought if a man endanger his soul to compass them; that the sufferings of this life are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed: and

therefore it is infinitely better to cleave unto God, though in reproaches, bands, imprisonment, or death, then to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

Sect. 7. And seeing faith kindly rooted doth spread itself to every branch of divine truth, cleaving inseparably to the whole, and with closest repose of heart to that which is most excellent and of greatest importance, the obedience which faith produceth, and the work which it animateth, must be entire, uniform, and constant. Entire not in degree, but in the branches of obedience. Maimed obedience to some duties of the law, lopping off other branches, which accord not with our state, humor and disposition, or grossly neglecting them, though no less commanded, is an argument of an unsound and imperfect root whence it springeth. The practice of someone or few Christian duties, joined with the extreme neglect of others no less excellent, and necessary, is no token of faith, but a strong presumption that what good is done, proceedeth from indulgence to corruption. For if we give ourselves to the prosecution of some good works, because we receive and embrace the word which commandeth them, then shall we give ourselves to the performance of every good work, which the same Word doth call for at our hands: If we do this or that good work commanded, because it is suitable to our disposition, passing over others that be cross thereunto, we obey not the Lord, but please ourselves. The Word of God doth work effectually as it is embraced, and the consideration of what Christ hath done for us, will bring forth in us the same mind that was in him, a mind to do his Fathers will in every point alike sincerely, but with greater intentions, fervor and cheerfulness, as the weightiness of the duty, or opportunity and season shall require. For true faith assenteth to every divine truth as certain and infallible, cleaveth to every promise and commandment

alike sincerely and unfeignedly, sticketh fastest to them that be of greatest worth, and necessity, or upon special occasion may most tend to the glory of God, the comfort of the soul, and good of our brethren; and so teacheth the affections to rise and fall, swell and assuage whether in admiration or detestation, in embracing or loathing, and to put themselves forth in practice, according to the different excellency or indignity, goodness or vileness of objects presented to them. It teacheth us absolutely and entirely to submit our wills unto God's will; to affect whatsoever he approves, to hate whatsoever he disallows, to love that best which his Word assureth us to be most excellent and dear to him, and to detest that most, which is most odious and abominable in his sight, though otherwise pleasant to our natural disposition, or not so distasteful as many other matters would be; did we take care for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof. Indeed the faithful soul may find itself more prone to one sin then another, and more dull to some good duties then other by reason of natural inclination, state of life, custom, or some other occasion: but, if right comparison be made, faith inciteth to hate all sin and to affect all duties of holiness one as well as another. A man sick of diverse diseases but one predominant, may be cured of it as much as of any of the rest, and yet be more troubled with the remainders of it, because it had deepest root and greatest head: and so every member of corruption may, be truly mortified, and yet the stronger passions before, though in proportionable degree tamed and brought into subjection as much as the rest, may be the most troublesome: which the faithful do acknowledge, bewail, and endeavor to redress keeping them under with greatest care, and striving against them with all earnestness. This fight against corruption is constantly maintained by faith, and constantly it cleaveth to the word of grace as much better then all carnal or worldly

allurements, whereby we might be drawn aside into sin, and so it bringeth forth constant obedience to the will of God. The good ground, are they, which with an honest and good heart having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

CHAP. VI. Of the Special object of Justifying. Faith.

SECT. 1. Faith seeketh not life and salvation in the threatening's, prohibitions or commandments, though it work by love, and earnestly contend against corruption: but acknowledging its imperfection in working, and renouncing all confidence in works or in ourselves, it resteth upon the promises of mercy in Jesus Christ, or word of reconciliation, which is called the word of faith. The more firm and lively our faith is, the more sincerely it worketh, and the more sincerely it worketh, the better we discern and unfeignedly acknowledge our imperfections, and disclaim all affiance in our own righteousness and the more faithfully we renounce all confidence in our works, the more earnestly we seek for salvation only by Christ. Faith resteth upon Christ as Mediator or as God and Man obeying to the cursed of the cross, that from the grace of God we might obtain pardon of sin, and be accepted as righteous unto life. For this we are always to have in Mind, that Christ is the object of faith not abstractly and nakedly considered, but Christ with his benefits, Christ lifted up as the brazen serpent, Christ set forth as a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins, Christ as our redeemer from sin and

death, Christ as he is set forth to the believer: and thus to receive Christ and believe on him, is to believe and receive in him ransom from sin and death. Christ and his Apostles testify that this is specially to be preached, viz remission of sins in and through Jesus Christ: This the faith of all the Saints, [through it have respected every part of the Word] hath in special manner respected, craved, embraced. But that which is specially to be preached and believed, that which the faith of all the Saints hath always in special manner respected, desired, craved, and obtained, that is the special object of Justifying faith. If at any time we read, that the belief of a temporary promise was accounted for righteousness, it is, because it doth in believing the thing temporal, apprehend him in whom all the promises are yea and Amen: who is at least the removed object of justifying faith in everything it apprehendeth. Thus Abraham believing the promise of seed, did apprehend that blessed seed which had from the beginning been promised, and saw his day. Neither did he look at the power of God, but to sustain his belief of a seed before promised, against the temptations wherewith he was exercised. Express mention of the special mercy of God we find not in the sermons of the Apostles: but it doth evidently follow of those things which are preached by them. For remission of sins doth presuppose the mercy of God, and the special subject of their preaching is remission of sins by and for the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. That which first pricketh and spurreth the soul to Christ, that giveth us to understand what the soul principally reacheth at, and receiveth in Christ. But sin and death urge the soul for mercy and life to be obtained prick and spur the soul to go forth of itself and receive Christ and rest upon him, as he is offered in the Gospel: Therefore it principally layeth hold on the free promise of mercy covering sin and delivering from death.

The confession of Peter and the rest of the Apostles [for he made answer for them all, as the question was propounded to them all] was no more in words, but of Christ's office, Thou art Christ; and his nature, The son of the living God. But shall we think the faith of the Apostles, to be nothing but a bare assent of Mind to that which they professed of Christ? Then shall we make the Devil himself to be as good and true a believer as the Apostles; for he professed as much, O Jesus of Nazareth, I know who thou art, &c. Noah doubt the Apostles rested upon Christ for salvation, and believed in him to be that to their souls, and for their use and comfort, which they believed him to be. The subject matter of their faith in that point was, that Jesus was the Christ: the manner of believing was with the heart relying upon him for salvation. The faith of Abraham, was not a bare assent given to the promise of God, but a confidence in the special mercy of God: for he rested upon the promise, not only in regard of his posterity, but also in regard of Christ, according to that which is said: In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed: which seed the Apostle teacheth to be Christ, and the blessing he interpreteth to be redemption from the curse of the law, and justification by faith. Abraham then believing the remission of sins in and through Jesus Christ of necessity it will follow, that his faith was directed unto and exercised about the special mercy of God in Jesus Christ. How then doth the Apostle set out Abraham's full belief in this, that he was assured that he who had promised was able also to do it? Not because Abraham's faith did justify him as he did believe the power of God; but because his justifying faith which was fixed upon the gracious promise, did sustain itself by the consideration of God's power in time of trial between the promise and the execution. Abraham had a promise of seed; but the execution is deferred, whereupon his faith is assailed thus: Abraham thy body is dead, thy wife

hopeless that way which things foiled Sarah for a time. Now when Abraham's faith on the promises is thus set upon, against these arguments of unbelief, faith opposeth the all-sufficient power of God, and sustaineth itself with this consideration, God is able. As another time, when he was tempted to offer up his son in sacrifice, he verily believed he should receive him again, because God was able to raise him up again. Belief of God's power is not the act of justifying faith, as it justifies, but the consideration of God's power is a prop and stay to faith against manifold temptations. And so we shall find, the Almighty power of God often alleged to confirm the weak and wavering heart. As for Sarah's laughing, thinking it impossible to have a child, the Lord said to Abraham, Is anything hard or impossible to God. And again to Moses objecting, whether all the fish in the sea should be gathered for food for Israel in the wilderness; The Lord answered, Is the Lord's hand waxed short, thou shalt see whether my word shall come to pass or not. And to the virgin Mary desiring to be further confirmed touching the promise of God, the Angel makes answer, with God nothing is impossible.

As for the faith of the Centurion so much commended by our Savior Christ, it might be a step or mean by which he was raised of God to a true faith for justification by the Messias; or it may be, it was some effect of a justifying faith: but in itself, as he did only believe the power of Christ to heal his servant, it did not justify. Our Adversaries themselves will not say that naked assent to this truth, that Christ by his bare word was of power to cure his servant absent, is sufficient to justification, which yet is the substance of his confession. If they answer that the profession of his faith is here mentioned according to the present occasion: They must withal confess it followeth not, that because none other act of his faith is here expressed,

therefore there was nothing further in his faith unto justification before God. Surely if he be believed to salvation, he believed somewhat else that made him to believe what is here noted: he believed some what else, that made him to say, Lord I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof. Christ is everywhere made the thing which faith embraceth to salvation, and whom it doth look unto and respect, as it doth make us righteous in the sight of God. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. I am the resurrection and the life he that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live. And by him all that believe, are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. That they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. It is with us as with malefactors; the king's pardon only received doth acquit them, and restore them to liberty: and God's mercy in Christ covering sin received by a lively faith, doth set us free from fear of damnation. It is true, that justifying faith doth give assent to every article of faith and cleave to every Commandment: but it obtaineth remission of sins, as it receiveth God's pardon in Christ. To him give all the Prophets witness, that through his Name, whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins.

Righteousness is everywhere tied unto faith, even to faith in Christ, whom only it doth and can look unto as it justifieth. I count all things but loss, for the excellent knowledge sake of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have

counted all things loss, and do judge them to be dung that I might win Christ. And might be found in him, that is, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God through faith. For look as nothing in a poor man can make him rich, further then it doth get riches into his possession; so nothing in us sinners can make us righteous to life, further then it doth lay hold on such a righteousness, which can take away sin, and make us righteous to the receiving of life eternal. Faith is called the faith of Christ, because Christ is he whom faith doth apprehend and receive to righteousness and life, according to that of the Evangelist; He that believeth on the Son of God hath life everlasting. That is the principal object of faith, for which embraced and received by faith, eternal life is given from grace. But eternal life is given of grace for Christ embraced or rested upon by Faith. To believe Christ dead and risen, as the Apostles taught him, is true belief: but that is not barely to believe the history of his Death and Resurrection, but the fruits and benefits thereof, and that with the affiance. It is so to believe the Death and Resurrection of Christ, as thereby to look for forgiveness of sins: which is to put our trust in the special mercy of God through Jesus Christ. This is plain by the words of Martha; for when Christ asked her, Doest thou believe this, that whosoever believeth on me shall not die everlastingly; She answereth, yea Lord, I believe that thou art Christ: that is, I cannot doubt, but that those that cleave to thee shall have life everlasting, teaching that these confessions imply an affiance and trust of all good through him. The Eunuch his profession was, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God: but the faith of this Eunuch was a particular confidence of heart, whereby he embraced Christ his Savior; and believed on him for his particular benefit and comfort. Nathanael professed of Christ,

that he was the King of Israel, that he was the son of God, and so much in general the Devils believe and know: was Nathanaels faith nothing but a bare persuasion that Christ was the Son of God? Yet it was a persuasion joined with affiance, for he rested upon him, and so believed the promise of mercy in him. God hath raised up Christ to be a Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins: and to believe Christ a Prince and Savior raised from the dead, and set at the right hand of the Father, doth imply trust and affiance in him for forgiveness of sins and life everlasting through the grace of God.

Sect. 2. It is objected, that to believe the power of God is Justifying faith: for our Savior required no more of the blind man, then to believe that he was able to heal him. And the Leper seemeth to doubt of his will, but was well persuaded of his power. But it is one thing to look unto Christ for bodily health, or to receive a temporal blessing: another to believe in him to Justification. For the faith which Christ requires to Justification, is such a faith as doth acquit us from our sins, and doth procure us righteousness: But many were healed by our Savior, that (for ought can be proved) were not acquitted from their sins. And if these blind men had only believed that he was able to cure the malady of their eyes, notwithstanding this their faith, their souls had been uncured, their sins uncovered. Many that were cured of their bodily infirmities, were also healed of their spiritual diseases: not because they believed his power to help them, but because they relied upon him as their only Savior.

And the testimony itself showeth, that the blind men believed Christ to be the Messiah in times past promised of the Father, and now exhibited: so that they might believe to justification, but their belief of his omnipotency did not justify them. The writer to the Hebrews showeth in diverse examples,

that by Justifying faith some subdued Kingdoms, other some stopped the mouths of Lions, certain quenched the force of fire, others escaped the edge of the sword, &c. All which things, (though temporal) were achieved by Justifying faith: which is the hand of the people of God to receive good by: but faith justified not, as it was occupied about, or looked unto these things, but as it was carried to a higher object. The healing of corporal diseases was a seal unto us, that Christ is our deliverer from sin and death, (as the Scriptures testify, and our Adversaries confess) and therefore in believing the mercy of God towards them in healing of their diseases, they might forthwith conceive, that of his free grace he would be pleased to forgive their sins, which are the true causes of all our maladies.

It is again objected, that in the Creed is contained the whole object of Justifying faith: But in it there is no mention of the special mercy of God. In this objection there is a twofold mistaking; for in the Creed is contained the object of faith which is believed, that is, the sum of doctrine to be believed to salvation is there explained: But here we speak of the object of Justifying faith, by which we believe. The doctrine of faith is one thing, the private act of the heart relying upon the promises of mercy another. Now when we inquire, what is the object of Justifying faith, the question is not what is the sum of faith, or of the articles to be believed, but what the faith of the heart in all these articles which it believeth, doth first and principally look unto, rest upon, and receive to salvation. For when all Christians profess and historically believe all the Articles of the Christian faith; yet many are not justified or saved, because they believe not as they ought: whence it is evident, that bare assent to the Articles of Religion, is not that faith which justify, or saves, but another of far different nature is required, if we would be partakers of these blessings. Again, verbal mention of God's special

mercy there is not any in the Creed, but really it is included. For to believe in God, is to depend upon his mercy reaching to the pardon of our offenses. To believe in Christ is to rely upon him as the author of redemption, reconciliation, and peace with God: which doth necessarily imply the special mercy of God. And in the Creed we believe the remission of sins, which article cannot be explained according to the doctrine of the Gospel, without belief in the special mercy of God, and confidence thereon. The conclusion is, The Word of God is the general object of Justifying faith, the special promises of mercy and forgiveness in Christ Jesus, is the special object of faith as it justifieth.

Sect. 3. This belief in the rich mercy of God, frameth the Image of God in our hearts, and imprinteth the virtues of Christ's death upon the soul, as by application the seal doth set it stamp upon the wax. A man cannot walk in the Sun, but he must bear it hue: no more can he believe in the grace and mercy of God to the pardon of his offenses, but he must bear the Image of God's mercy upon his soul. And so faith in Christ, doth incite to the uniform studious practice of piety towards God, who of his gracious, free, undeserved love and mercy is pleased to repute Believers as his Sons by adoption, and compass them with his favors; and of mercy, kindness, longsuffering, forbearance; forgiveness towards men, looking to God for it pattern, whom it must and ought to follow. The Believer cannot put on Christ as a Justifier, but he must put on the bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, forbearance, &c. and the closer he putteth on Christ unto righteousness, the more quick and operative be these graces of the Spirit, and more lively the operations themselves that issue from then, as quickened and animated by that faith.

CHAP. VII. Justifying faith is a particular and certain confidence.

JUSTIFYING FAITH IS A particular and certain confidence, resting upon the mercy of God in Christ for pardon and forgiveness, not an assured persuasion that our sins be already pardon d and forgiven.

Sect. 1 Justifying faith doth not only believe the promise of mercy in general; as that there is forgiveness for them that lay hold upon it: but it relieth upon the promise for our own particular, and depends wholly thereupon, looking after no other help. For trust or confidence importeth the application of some good to him, that trusteth: and so he that casteth himself upon the promises of mercy, draws near unto Christ, throws himself into his arms, and grasps about him with all his might. Look how the poor Infant affrighted with the apprehension of some danger, clings close to the parent for succor and defense: or a man in danger of drowning lays hold upon some willow that grows upon the bank, and hangs thereon for safety: so doth the soul pursued by the terrors of the Law, and affrighted with the ugly sight of sin, fly with speed unto Jesus Christ as he is held forth in the Gospel hang upon him, and to die for it will never loose his hold. For in

him it apprehends plentiful redemption, and out of him it knows no succor is to be found. In this sense, faith applieth the promise of grace to a man's self in particular, that is, it particularly relieth upon the grace of God in Jesus Christ to obtain pardon and forgiveness. Even as they that were stung with the fiery Serpents, did come and look to the brazen Serpent, believing to find the healing of those deadly stings that were fastened in them: Thus a soul stung with sin and fear of damnation, cometh by faith to Christ, relying on him, trusting to find in and through him, cure of those deadly evils wherewith it is wounded.

If a Prince should offer a general pardon to Rebels, causing it to be proclaimed, that if they would lay down arms, submit themselves and fly to his mercy, they should be received to favor, and we should see many hereupon cast down their weapons, and sue for mercy, would we not presently know, that they believed the promise, that they should be pardoned: So when Christ saith to sinners, come unto me, or believe on me, and I will ease you, what faith (think we) have sinners, who resort unto him? Is it not a belief, that he will (according to his word) deliver them from sin and death, and restore them to life eternal? If there be a particular word, or that which is equivalent then there is a particular faith. But there is a particular word, or that which is equivalent. For the thirsty, and barren soul, that is stung with the terrors of the Law; they, that labor and are heavy laden, are invited to come unto Christ, and exhorted, entreated, persuaded, commanded to believe; and the promise is, Whosoever believeth in him, shall not perish, but have everlasting life: which is as much as Thomas thou art burdened and doest labor, thou art weary and thirsty, come thou unto me, behold, I invite; believe thou, for unto thee do I reach forth the promise of mercy, receive it, and thou shalt live. For the particulars are ever in their

generals. How can we prove, that John or James are by nature under wrath and the curse? Otherwise it cannot be proved then thus, Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things, that are written in the book of the Law to do them. How can we prove that Thomas or Peter are bound to love the Lord, and to abstain from murder, fornication, theft; but because it is said to all men, Thou shalt love the Lord, Thou shalt not steal? &c. And thus it is said to all, Let everyone that is a thirst come unto me, and drink, Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved: whence every thirsty and burdened soul may conclude, I ought to believe, God calleth and commandeth me to believe; he hath given me his promise, and offers mercy, and believing I shall be saved.

The faith of true Believers goeth further then the faith of Devils can do. But they may, and do believe or know, that Christ died in general for sinners, and that they shall be saved who believe in him. If Justifying faith have not in it some particular confidence, then it is not opposed to despair, so as to expel it. For things that will not endure the one the other, most have contrariety; as fire and water: if the one do not fight and drive forth the other, then may they dwell together. But true faith and utter desperation cannot stand together, but do expel each other. Moreover true faith in Christ doth breed confidence and boldness, according to that, Let us enter with confidence and boldness through faith on him. True faith therefore hath in it particular confidence in the grace of God. For as nothing can make hot, which hath not heat in itself: so nothing can make confident, which after some manner hath not confidence in it. To receive is to take in particular to a man's self, or to apprehend and lay hold of for conveying a thing to himself. But to believe on Christ and to receive Christ do both import the same thing. Therefore to believe on Christ, is to rest upon him for the

conveying of his benefits particularly unto us. Meat nourisheth not unless it be eaten and digested: a plaster heals not, if it be not applied: a potion will not work' if it be not received. Christ is the true bread of life, that came down from Heaven, upon whom we must feed by faith, if we would be partakers of his benefits: and feed upon him we cannot, if we do not particularly believe in him for ourselves. The work of redemption remains proper to Christ: but the benefit of his death is communicated to every member of his mystical body for their justification: And how can we hope to have our sins forgiven, if we be not made one with him by faith? And rest upon the promise made in him for pardon? That profession which Paul makes, may here be considered; I know in whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that thing wherewith I have entrusted him, or delivered up to his keeping: where it is apparent, that to believe is to commit ourselves to Christ's trust or keeping, or to rest our souls upon the performance of the gracious promises, which God of his rich grace in Jesus Christ hath made unto us.

Sect. 2. This faith is certain, though mixed with many doubting's by reason of our weakness: Certain and assured in regard of the event and thing believed, not in regard of the sense and feeling of him who believeth. Whether his heart be steadfast in faith, or trembling through much unbelief, yet unfeignedly believing with a well-rooted confidence (though with much unbelief) he shall be sure of the thing promised. For the promise is made good to him that truly receiveth it, not for the steadfast manner of receiving, but for the thing received, which is Christ. Now look as a trembling palsy hand may take the same thing, which a more steady one doth take, though the manner be diverse, the one taking it with shaking, the other without any trembling: so an heart of faith, which yet shaketh and doubteth through

much unbelief, may take Christ, as well as an heart doth, which is more fully persuaded: and therefore shall have the grace promised for his sake, who is received by faith. The promise is universal, Whosoever believeth in Christ shall not perish, but have everlasting life: it is not, whosoever is fully assured or certainly persuaded of his salvation, but whosoever unfeignedly believeth in Christ, shall be saved. Now many a poor soul may cast himself upon Christ, and lay hold upon him with purpose through God's grace never to leave him, as being assured without wavering in this particular, that it is best both simply and in comparison to draw near unto God, and rely upon his grace; and so in event is sure of salvation, who yet would give a world to be assured of God's favor, and fully persuaded that his sins are pardoned. A house well built upon a rock is as sure as the foundation: everything hanging on a pin or peg is as sure as the pin or peg on which it hangeth: True faith firmly groundeth itself upon the faithful promises of God, and receiveth them as better than life itself, from which it will not be withdrawn by any carnal allurements: and therefore in event it cannot miscarry, for the ground is firm and unchangeable. The truth of God in itself is more certain then anything that can be apprehended by the senses but it is not evermore so apprehended by us: and faith which buildeth upon the infallible truth of God, coming to him when he calleth, relying upon his grace, because he hath spoken, is in event no less sure, then the foundation upon which it leaneth is certain and unmovable, but in the sense of the believer it is not always so, neither are matters of faith received by us with such certainty, as are other things subject to the senses, in themselves less certain. Things are to us according as we conceive them, which is not ever answerable to the evidence of the thing in itself, or to the certainty in regard of the event. Things most sure in themselves are sometimes but dimly

discerned of us, because our eye-sight is imperfect: and things less evident in themselves do appear to us most clear and manifest, when they come within the compass of sense or reason remaining in us. Besides, the promises of mercy in Christ being the highest and most spiritual, it is the hardest point of service in Christian warfare firmly to believe them: and the daily weaknesses which we espy in ourselves, the many and strong passions which still war within us, and many times prevail, do impel the mind to distrust. When a Christian calleth to mind what strength worldly allurements have in him, how often he yieldeth unto assaults in many petty temptations, how weak and frail, dull and negligent he is in the duties of Christianity and his particular calling: the consciousness of these things will, no question, trouble the eye of faith. Not that the comfort of a Christian is grounded upon his strength of grace or any good work that is or can be done by him: but because his belief in the mercy of God cannot be greater than his strength to overcome worldly allurements, whereby he might be withdrawn from God, or care to yield uniform, sincere and constant obedience to all God's Commandments. Again, it is one thing to have a thing surely, another thing to know I have it surely. We seek many things that we have in our hands: we have many things that we think we have lost: so a Believer, who hath a sure belief, yet doth not always know that he so believeth, seeketh but findeth it not; nay, thinketh he is altogether without faith, when he hath it unfeignedly. A man unregenerate that is wholly corrupt seeth little or no corruption in himself: yea, after due, serious and long examination many disorders may secretly lurk in the heart of a man sanctified, which he doth not espy: And is it then any marvel, that a true Believer should be unable (sometimes at least) to say that he doth believe? Yea, that he should not find it, though he make diligent search and

inquiry into his own heart about it. Look as children live in the womb, and know not, that they do live: so it is with many true believing souls, who long believe, before they come to see themselves believe, and be able by a reflexed operation of mind to say, I know on whom I have believed. A man of a contrite spirit, believing that his sins are pardonable, earnestly desiring remission of sins by the merits of Christ, and resting upon Christ alone for salvation, assuredly he receiveth forgiveness, although he be vexed with scruples and temptations, and want the assurance and persuasion in himself that his sins be remitted. For faith is necessary to salvation: but full assurance that I do believe in that sort, is not of like necessity. And if a man may believe unfeignedly, who is not fully assured that he doth so believe, then faith may be certain in the event, when it is not certain to the sense of the Believer.

Sect. 3. But what faith is necessary, to wit, on man's part to Justification? Is it an assured persuasion of our particular election, or that our sins be already pardoned and forgiven? No: It is one thing to rest on Christ obeying to the cursed death of the Cross, that I may obtain pardon and life everlasting from the grace of God, which is the act of true belief, required to Justification: another to believe that I am one of God's particular elect people, and that my sins are pardoned and done away: which is a privilege of grace granted to him who believeth, is sealed by the Spirit, and knoweth assuredly that he believeth. It is not an action of Christian faith previous or fundamental to Justification, for a man to believe himself to be one of God's elect: for we come to know our election by the effects thereof, as Faith, Justification, Sanctification. We must first read the effects of God's love in our hearts, and see that he hath wrought in us the saving graces of faith, love, hope, fear, &c. and sealed us by the spirit of promise, before we can

come to know his eternal decree and purpose towards us: therefore the belief of our particular election is an act of faith following Justification, not precedent to it. No man is justified by believing himself to be Just, nor pardoned, by believing that he is pardoned: but if his belief be true, he must be truly Just, before he can or ought to believe himself to be Just, and actually pardoned, before he can be assured that he is pardoned. This is the order of spiritual blessings conferred upon us in Christ, Faith is the band whereby we are united unto Christ: after Union followeth Communion with him: Justification, Adoption, Sanctification, be the benefits and fruits of Communion: Being made sons by faith, God sends forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba Father; and this Spirit beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; assurance or certain persuasion that our sins be pardoned, follows this witness of the Spirit, as the fruit and effect thereof. In which it is most manifest, that faith in Christ is before Justification in order of nature, though not in time; and Justification is precedent to the sense and feeling of remission: and therefore that belief which is required on our part to Justification cannot be an assurance that our sins be pardoned already, unless the same thing be before and after itself, and a man be pardoned before he believe, or assured that he is pardoned, before it be granted, or that act of faith which cannot be but in a person already justified, must go before the pardon of sin. The promise of remission of sins is conditional, and becometh not absolute, until the condition be fulfilled, either actually or in desire and preparation of mind. This is the word of grace, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved: when doth this conditional proposition become absolute? When we believe? What? That our sins are pardoned: No: but when we believe in Christ to obtain pardon; which is the thing promised upon

condition of belief. Assurance that our sins be pardoned is concluded in a practical Syllogism thus; He that truly believeth in Christ hath obtained pardon of his sins: But I believe: Therefore my sins are pardoned: where assurance of the pardon of sin is a conclusion drawn from a twofold ground, the one expressed in Scripture, the other evident (if true) by the testimony of the renewed conscience, and presupposeth that he believeth, and is assured that he doth believe. Now if assurance of remission be concluded from this ground, that he believeth, and knoweth certainly that he believeth, then the belief which is required on our parts to Justification cannot be an assurance that our sins be washed away already. For if we take the word believe for a persuasion that our sins are done away, then the Syllogism runneth thus; He that is assured of the pardon of his sins, his sins are pardoned. But I am assured of the pardon of my sins: therefore my sins are pardoned. Faith receiveth the pardon of sin, as it is proffered in the word of grace, and groundeth itself solely and immediately upon the promise of God in Jesus Christ: But the ground, whereupon a sinner in himself guilty should build assurance that his sins are pardoned, without some other act of faith coming betwixt the promise and that assurance, there is none. The Gospel offereth pardon to the thirsty and burdened, if he will receive it: assureth them of pardon, who have embraced the promise: but where shall we find ground, whereupon the guilty person who believeth not to remission of sins may be assured, that his sins not actually pardoned, are yet pardoned and blotted out of God's remembrance? Faith taketh the pardon presented to it in the word of promise, and travailing with it, bringeth forth actual remission of sin, which upon our faith we receive. Assurance is not before pardon, nor actual remission before faith, unless the effect be before the cause, and the same thing be both cause and effect. To believe in Christ to salvation is to

receive him. But to receive Christ as he is offered unto us in the Gospel is not to be assured that our sins are already pardoned in and through Jesus Christ, but to rest upon him for pardon. Before the act of justification faith hath for object this proposition concerning the future, To me believing my sins shall be forgiven: but after the promise is received and pardon obtained, it hath this proposition concerning the present or time past, To me believing in Christ my sins are forgiven.

And thus the horned argument of the Jesuit, whereby he would prove, the special mercy of God not to be the object of faith Justifying, and our doctrine in that point to be gross and absurd, is easily untied, For thus he reasoneth; Justifying faith goeth, before Justification: But faith in the special mercy of God followeth Justification. For he that believeth the pardon of his sins, is either just before or not just; if just before, then faith justifieth not; if unjust; then believing that his sins be pardoned, he believeth a lie. Our answer is, that special faith hath sundry acts; but to this purpose specially two. The first heartily to desire, earnestly to thirst after, humbly to entreat for acceptation and confidently to rest upon the promise of free remission: The other comfortably to assure and persuade, that that is granted, which was desired and received in promise. Faith by her first act obtaineth and receiveth pardon, and doth not find us just, when we begin to believe: by her second act, she doth not actually justify but finding the thing done, certifieth and assureth us of it. So then special faith in her first act, is before Justification, and procureth, obtaineth, and receiveth pardon, but then she hath not the persuasion of it as already done in her second act she presupposeth the thing done, and already obtained, and so truly persuadeth the believer of it, but procureth not the doing of it. Before Justification faith seeketh and receiveth the promise of forgiveness: after Justification, it

comfortably assureth of the blessing obtained: in both it hath for it object the special mercy of God in Christ. Faith receiveth Christ offered in the Gospel and it persuadeth and assureth of pardon in Christ received: both these be the acts of faith, sometimes expressed in the definition of Justifying faith: but if we speak of faith as it justifieth it peculiarly embraceth Christ with his benefits as he is proffered in the word and Sacrament. For faith which is required to Justification is not a persuasion or knowledge of things already possessed, but a confidence of things promised and upon believing to be obtained, which in the order of causes, not in time, doth go before remission of sins. Who knoweth not, that we must believe, that we might be justified? Justified, I say, and not certified of Justification by the benefit of faith. The Scripture is clear; Believe, and thou shalt be saved, God justifieth the circumcision by faith; and the uncircumcision through faith. Do not these, and many the like passages show, that Justification and not only the sense and manifestation of Justification already obtained, doth depend on faith.

Sect. 4. It may be said, we are justified before in God's decree. Indeed whom God doth justify, them he decreed to justify from all eternity, but whereas election is manifested by faith as by its effect, justification doth depend upon faith, as its cause, and we are justified by faith as the instrument thereof. For election is an act immanent and eternal, but justification transient and in time, inferring some change in the person justified, not physical, but moral and in respect of state, whereby it comes to pass that the person is in another condition and account then he was before. In brief, the act of faith persuading of the pardon of sin already obtained by believing, and glorying in the sense of God's mercy, must be distinguished from that act of faith which justifieth; and is a leaving or

staying upon Christ to obtain remission; the privilege of grace and comfort which comes to the soul by believing, must be distinguished from the condition of the covenant, which is required on our parts, before we can obtain pardon. This is the rather to be noted, because the main cavils of the papists against our doctrine touching particular confidence in God's mercy, and certainty of salvation, are grounded upon this surmise, that we make that faith, which is an assured and certain persuasion of our particular election, justification and salvation, to be the sole cause, to wit, on Mans part, of Justification: whereas Justification itself must go before the assurance of it, and such persons only can have true assurance and certainty of their Justification, election, and Salvation, who do unfeignedly believe and know assuredly that they believe as they ought. And it makes much for the comfort of many faithful people, who commit their souls unto Christ Jesus, and depend upon him and no other for salvation, who yet are much perplexed, as if they had no faith nor could do ought pleasing unto God, because they want this certain assurance of the remission of their sins; whereas if they had learned what it is to believe unto Justification, and trust unto the promise for pardon, they might for the present take comfort in this, that notwithstanding their fear, they rely upon Christ and commit their souls unto God as to their faithful Redeemer, and might with more ease and speed grow up unto the desired comfort and assurance, when they should distinctly perceive and discern the grounds of faith and assurance, by what steps and degrees they must clime from the one unto the other.

CHAP. VIII. By faith a true believer may be certain and infallibly assured of the remission of his sins and eternal salvation.

SECT. 1. It is a Principle, common amongst our Adversaries, that every conclusion issuing from one proposition revealed expressly in Scripture, and another clearly and certainly known otherwise, and by evident and good consequent added unto it, belongs to faith and is believed by no other habit, than of faith. As for example; All the dead shall rise. Peter is dead: therefore Peter shall rise. The conclusion is Theological and belongs to faith, though it be not expressly written, that Peter is dead, or that he shall rise again. So it is in this present matter; All that believe shall be saved: this proposition is of faith because it is immediately revealed and expressly written. But I believe; this is certain by the testimony of the renewed conscience, to him that hath proved himself to be in the faith. The conclusion, therefore I shall be saved, is certain by faith: because it is inferred of one thing believed, and another that is evident. And although the holy Ghost, not tying himself to terms, do sometime call it knowledge, yet calling it again believing alone, or believing and knowing, it is manifest such a knowledge is intended, as not only flows from the principles of faith,

but also is reduced to the same habit. For with what other eyes can the soul behold the heavenly light of the Gospel. How shall that confidence, assurance or certainty which is created by the mixture of the light of the Scripture, with the light of a good conscience renewed by the holy Ghost, belong to any human knowledge, when the Scripture saith expressly, The promise of the Spirit is received by faith; and wheresoever in all the Bible, the Gospel is revealed, men are called upon to believe. And if there be granted a certainty of a man's own special standing which certainty arises from the Scriptures, one ground thereof being a proposition or sentence immediately divine, the other inferred and concluded from that which is divine: it must be granted also, that it is a work or effect of faith. The Scripture reports how many of the children of God were tried by mocking and scourging, by bands and imprisonment, they were stoned, hewn asunder, tempted; they wandered up and down destitute and afflicted: All which the Apostle saith, They did by faith and confidence of the promises; and yet their assurance was no other, nor otherwise begotten, then the ordinary assurance of all God's children, which is concluded by joining the light of their conscience kindled by the holy Ghost, and ruled by the Scriptures, to the immediate light of the conditions revealed in the Scriptures. Faith which is believed or the doctrine of faith is written in the word of God, the holy Scriptures: but faith whereby we believe, or of the heart, is written engraven, rooted in the heart out of the word of God by the holy Ghost, and known, not believed, by the testimony of the renewed conscience enlightened by the Spirit and directed by the word: for the rule by which a man discerneth himself to believe, is the doctrine of God's word, declaring the quality of Faith: And the certainty or assurance which a just person hath of his particular Justification, depends upon the right

application of two propositions; one immediately divine and certainly believed, Whosoever believeth in Jesus Christ shall be saved: the other inferred and concluded from that which is divine, certainly known according to the direction of the word But I believe.

Sect. 2. This assurance is not such, as whereby a man is made absolutely out of all doubt: but such as many times is assaulted, and shaken with many difficulties, fears and doubts: which notwithstanding arise not from the nature of faith, as if it ought to be: but from the frailty and corruption of our evil nature, by reason whereof faith is not such as it ought to be It is not the office of faith to cherish and maintain such fears and doubts, but to resist them, to fight against them, and so much as is possible to expel them, and drive them out. But yet by reason of the strength of our natural corruption, and the weakness of our faith, we attain not to this; and how much the weaker our faith is so much are we the further from it. Again the days of faith are as the seasons of the year, some fair, some foul; one while a Sunshine summer, another while a long and tedious winter, sometimes no more but a storm and away. Our eyes are not always alike intent to the word of God; we do not always alike conceive the promises of God: nay, temptations sometimes hide them out of our sight. The effects of grace do not always appear the same, yea sometimes they seem to be quite overwhelmed with contrary effects. And in nature itself there is a voluntary shrinking and relinquishing of the comfort of faith, through the seeds of unbelief that originally are sown in us.

Sect. 3. The particular certainty of remission of sins and eternal salvation, which Just persons attain unto upon their Repentance, Faith and Obedience, is not equal in certainty and firmness of assent, to that assurance which they have about the common object of faith; to wit, concerning the articles of

Creation, Incarnation, Resurrection, or the like: because these articles are totally and immediately revealed in holy Scripture; but that his sins in particular are remitted, depends upon an Argument, whereof only one part is immediately the word of God, and the other a collection arising upon reflection and observation of a Mans own qualities and actions and the conclusion is more or less certain according to the condition of the second proposition. It is a thing more certain and evident to faith, that God gave Christ to die for sinners, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have life everlasting; then it is to my conscience, that I believe with well-rooted and all-seasoning confidence: I have greater assurance, that God is faithful and true, then that my heart is upright: Therefore I have greater assurance, that the true believer shall be saved, then that I myself am received unto mercy. Albeit faith do sometimes stagger and waver as touching the very principles themselves and immediate word of God; yet because the truth and certainty thereof is more easily and better conceived, they are for the most part more familiarly and readily believed. But the conclusions, because of themselves they are unknown, and have their light only from the principles, are not so firmly apprehended as the principles themselves, whilst doubts haply may be cast, least there be any error committed in the application and use thereof. It is a principle delivered for assurance of salvation, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ: and thou shalt be saved. Hereupon the faithful man inferreth to himself, I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ: therefore I shall be saved. In this either confusedly or expressly inferred, he comforteth himself, and rejoiceth in God, and in hope thereof cheerfully serveth God, calleth upon his name, in patience expecteth the revealing of his salvation. And yet oftentimes it falleth out, that he questioneth his faith, and not seeing such effects thereof as he supposeth

there ought to be, maketh doubt lest haply he be deceived, and though the principle be true by which he first believed, yet he is jealous lest he have misapplied it to himself.

Sect. 4. This will appear in the several states or sorts of true Believers. There is a state wherein faith is a smoking week, desiring that it could believe, rather than getting up to feel it self believe, discovering itself by earnest sighs and groans for mercy, and hanging upon Christ, though the Believer can scarce tell whether he rest upon him or no: This faith is certain in event, but the Believer in this state is far from particular assurance of his salvation. Again, though faith be not troubled, but do quietly stay on Christ, and taste God good in letting them find peace with him; yet such is the infancy of spiritual understanding in Christians, especially now first converted, that they do not return into themselves, and judge of that they do, and of the great consequence of that they do. Hence it is that they will tell you, they find God good to them, and go on cheerfully in duties for the present: but they come not to behold the stability of their salvation. The child lives before he knows that he doth live; and knows he doth live, before he knows the cause of life, or the inheritance whereunto he is borne: and so it may be and is with a Believer. There is a state in which faith is exercised with temptations from unbelief or otherwise, by which opposition the soul is kept from obtaining this certainty, being encountered with doubtful appearances, which it cannot well answer and clear for the present. There is a state wherein faith is now grown up, and hath either out-wrestled, or otherwise is exempted from knowing such temptations: in which condition the faithful do persuade themselves, that God's mercy, and truth and power shall carry them through unto salvation: But when now our consciences shall come to testify through faith and experience this happy

estate, we are subject by neglecting means, laying down our watch, giving the reins to our lusts, or by secret desertions ere-while to lose for a time this comfortable persuasion, the Spirit not speaking in us by his light as heretofore, and our consciences and faith so hurt and wounded, that the actions of them are troubled, depraved as we see the like befalleth the natural senses and reason. We see through Melancholy what reason comes to imagine, how that some should seek to kill us, who never thought us hurt; How the eye thinks it seeth things yellow and red, when they are nothing so; the taste things bitter, when they are sweet: So the sight of faith and conscience, when nothing but sin, guilt, wrath, angry desertion over-lay it, it seemeth to see everything for the time, of like color to those things wherewith it is possessed. Thus sometimes the strong faith is shaken greatly and strongly assaulted, so that he that unspeakably rejoiced in the salvation of the Lord, by hasty cogitations is brought to say, I am cast out of the sight of thine eyes. And if faith escape these rocks, may not yet a more serious examination of our ways, and through fight of our nakedness, imperfections, and manifold transgressions; the strength of our lusts, the disorder of our passions, our daily failings, and that great weakness which in trials we shall find in our selves: may not those things, I say, raise fear in the heart of a sound Believer, as not altogether without the reach of possible danger, without repentance and greater constancy in performing all Christian duties then hitherto he hath made proof of, especially if the apprehension of the multitude and heinousness of sins be quickened by afflictions, or the lively cogitations of the terrors of the day of Judgment? Nevertheless, as a child affrighted runneth to the Father, looking for defense and help of him, even so in the midst of all fears, temptations, difficulties, and distresses, faith is still running unto God, still importuning him, calling

upon him, expostulating with him, casting itself still upon him, depending upon his aide, and expecting of him that things become otherwise then presently they are.

Sect. 5. Thus faith of adherency is stronger than faith of evidence, and belief in Christ for remission, then assurance of pardon and forgiveness: And as faith in Christ is stronger than particular certainty of our salvation; so it is it more necessary. For belief in Christ is absolutely necessary to remission of sins, in all them that be of age and discretion: but assurance comes not at first when we believe, but by little and little as God seeth it requisite, according to the trial he hath appointed to make of us. Without faith in Christ as the only author of salvation and sole end of faith, with whom our souls seek perfect union, it is impossible to please God: no action, though in itself never so good or holy, is truly acceptable, unless it be quickened and enlived by this faith: But many poor souls that want assurance of God's special favor, are tenderly beloved of him as heirs of salvation, and their good works accepted in Jesus Christ. A Christian of an humble and broken spirit, denying himself and renouncing the World, believing that his sins are pardonable and earnestly desiring remission of sins by the merits of Christ; resting upon Christ alone for salvation, and joining with this desire and affiance the sincere, impartial practice of obedience to all God's Commandments, according to that measure of grace which he hath received, without question he shall receive the inheritance of eternal glory, although he may be scrupulous in himself, wanting this persuasion and assurance that his sins are pardoned. And yet because God hath commanded us to labor for the perfection of all graces, we are sure this must be entreated for, and have a promise that it shall be granted, as God seeth meet, both for the time and measure of it.

Sect. 6. That not only some uncertain hope and dim sight of God's favor, but even assurance is to be sought, and may be obtained, is thus manifest. Faith may receive what the Word doth testify: for the Word of God is the object of faith. But there is a word testifying thus much, that my particular person beholding the Son, and believing on him, shall have eternal life, and be raised up at the last day; that there is no condemnation to me being in Christ. Neither could John with the faithful believe God's love towards them in particular, if some word did not show it. For the Papists themselves will not say, that all of them were privileged with singular revelation. Our Adversaries reply, that there is no Word of God, saying, Cornelius believe thou that thou shalt be saved: and where there is no word, there is no faith: for these two are relatives. This cavil is easily removed: for that cannot be believed as out of the Word of God, which is not found in the Word of God expressly, or by consequence but whatsoever is found there expressly, or may evidently by direct consequence be deduced thence, that may be believed as out of the Word of God. Now howsoever it be not said in so many syllables, Peter, Thomas, Cornelius thy sins are remitted to thee believing, yet evidently so much may be concluded out of those general promises, Every man that believeth shall have eternal life: for the universal doth include it particular. Therefore the messengers of the Lord of Host, do give notice to their Congregations, that the matter which they proclaim in the Name of the Lord doth concern them, and every of them, saying in effect, To you is the word of this salvation sent. What they say to all men, they say to every man: what to penitents, to every penitent; what to Believers, to every Believer; what to sinners and ungodly, to every sinner. God gave his Law to all Israel, speaking to all, as if he had spoken namely and particularly to everyone, Thou shalt have no other God's, &c. May not,

ought not a man to infer thence, I must have none other God's, &c. The promise of the Gospel runs thus, If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. Is not this spoken to every man particularly? May not he as out of the Word infer, If I believe I shall be saved? Our Savior Christ had said nothing namely to Paul and Silas as touching the Jailer, that if he did believe he should be saved: But out of that universal, Whosoever believeth shall be saved, they proclaim comfort to him in special, Believe thou, and thou shalt be saved. There is nothing found in Scripture expressly touching this or that man's resurrection in particular: is it not then to be believed out of the Word? The Scripture saith to him that believeth, Thou shalt inherit eternal life, as much as it doth to any particular man now living, Thou shalt rise again. Because our Savior said to the Apostles, Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted, our Adversaries (though falsely) would collect; that their Priests have power to absolve a man from all his sins. Do they know assuredly, that what was spoken to the Apostles, was spoken also to their Priests, though there be no particular mention of them in the Gospel; and will they not allow us to infer a particular from a general? David could say, The Lord is my shepherd; Job I know that my Redeemer liveth: which they believed out of the Word, grounding themselves upon the promises of mercy. And we now living by the same faith, having the same precious promises, being led by the same Spirit, may out of the word of life be assured that our sins are forgiven and covered. Moreover every faithful soul in particular doth find, hear and read in the word, Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, and healeth all thine infirmities. To every faithful soul in special the Lord saith, I even I am he that blotteth out thine iniquities for mine own sake, and remember thy sins no more. This he speaketh to singular

believers, not to some persons only as it is evident in that the Scripture doth in universal repeat the same thing. What our Savior said to the young man, If thou wouldest enter into life, keep the Commandments, the papists teach that is spoken to all men, and if a man fulfill that condition he may believe to be saved. Look how they know the words spoken to the young man so many hundred years past to be directed unto them: by the same rule may every faithful soul interest himself in all the gracious and lovely speeches, wherewith God from time to time hath comforted his people, and take unto himself those promises, answers and assurances that God hath at any time made and given unto them, resolving of all the rest that which in one case the Apostles exemplifieth of that that was written of the Justification of Abraham, that those things were not written for them only, but for then also who believe as they had done.

The word then speaketh in particular to them that believe; but can a Christian, know and be assured that he doth truly believe? Such as truly believe, may know they believe, as he that hath a jewel in his hand, may know that he hath it. Paul did know on whom he had believed: the poor man in the Gospel crieth, Lord I believe: David saith, I believed, and therefore I spake; Hezekiah prayeth, Lord remember me how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart: John concludeth thus, Hereby we know that he abideth in us, even by the Spirit, which he hath given us. How could we say everyone we believe, if we might not know it? Can we speak that truly, whereof we can have no certainty? When I see one, or trust to a man's word promising me this or that, I know I see him, trust to him and rest on him for that he hath promised: Shall I by faith, see Christ the Son, and rest on him, and yet know no such thing? Carnal confidence may be discerned, why then should it be impossible for a true Believer to know

that he doth believe? The Spirit of man discerneth what is in man: he knoweth what is in himself, though not ever the measure or quantity thereof. He that loveth his Brother, knoweth the love, wherewith he loveth him: and he that believeth in God, may know the faith, wherewith he believeth. Many beguile themselves, while they stand in opinion they do believe, and believe not at all. What then? Shall he that believeth unfeignedly be altogether uncertain, whether he believe, or no? There is that boasteth when his soul hath naught: yet men whom God hath blessed with abundance, may know that they be rich. Many are deceived in matters of faith and true worship of God; shall not a Christian then be certain of his Religion? A man that dreameth of honor and promotion, plenty and abundance, may live in infamy and disgrace, penury and hunger: and yet they that be promoted to honor and live in plenty, may assuredly be persuaded of what God hath given them. Some men's senses are deluded, shall every man therefore be in suspense of whatsoever he seeth or heareth? He that is falsely persuaded of his good estate and strong faith, deceiveth his own soul: shall he therefore that unfeignedly embraceth Christ, and resteth upon him, be ever at uncertainties, whether he doth believe or no? The heart unregenerate is deceitful and wicked above all things: the heart regenerate is true and faithful: In respect of the exact measure of grace and strength the regenerate are oft deceived: but of the truth of grace they may be assured: in some particular resolutions they be ignorant of their own hearts: but of their general purpose they may firmly and truly be persuaded. Paul bids us to prove and try ourselves, whether we have not that faith, by which Christ dwelleth in our hearts, which worketh by love, which is the faith of such as are accepted with God, are purged from their sin, and are become Temples of the Holy Ghost: intimating that by examination it is to

be discerned and known whether we believe. And if we may know that we have faith, whereby Christ dwelleth in us by his Spirit, and we in him, then may we know also that we have repented truly of our sins: for faith and repentance be inseparable companions, and who so hath the one, he cannot be destitute of the other. It is one thing to repent, another to believe: but these two live and dwell together, that if one be wanting there is neither in truth.

Sect. 7. They object further, It sufficeth not to believe unto salvation, but a man must believe with his whole heart: which no man, say they, can certainly affirm. Indeed faith sincere, upright, and well-rooted is required on our parts to Justification, but not absolutely perfect in degree, without weakness or defect: And this may be known by him that hath it, else could not the Eunuch have answered, I believe; nor David have promised, I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart, with my whole heart have I sought thee. But in these and such like passages, the whole heart noteth the integrity and uprightness of the soul, not the perfection of grace without any infirmity or defect; as on the contrary, a fraudulent or hypocritical heart is called a heart divided, and the whole heart is opposed to a feigned and hypocritical heart; as the Lord complaineth by his Prophet, Judah hath not returned unto me, with her whole heart, but feignedly. And thus we shut up this first reason, That which the Scripture saith to pertain to all and singular Believers, that every Believer may certainly assure himself of by faith: But the Scripture showeth remission of sins to pertain to all and every Believer.

Again, What we are taught to ask of God in Prayer, and have a promise to obtain, that by faith we may be assured to obtain. For God that hath commanded us to pray, and directed what to ask according to his will, and promised to grant the desires of them that call upon him in truth according

to his Commandment, he will not deny his promise, nor go back from the thing that he hath spoken. But we are commanded to ask the pardon and forgiveness of our sins, and have a promise to be heard in that which we desire. Therefore by faith we may be assured of the particular remission of our offenses. Our Adversaries except, that what we are assured of already, that we cannot ask of God in prayer: and therefore if we be assured of pardon, we must not pray for pardon. What, is it lawful in no sense to pray for that whereof we are assured? David prayed to God for the pardon of those sins, which he believed by faith were forgiven (for so was he assured from the Lord by the Prophet Nathan) unless we shall charge him with infidelity for not believing the Prophet: since the speech was so plain, that he could not but understand it. I have sinned against the Lord: A plain and true confession. The Lord also hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die. As plain and certain an absolution. Will our Adversaries come in here with their vain distinction of guilt and punishment, of temporal and eternal? If they do, it is to no purpose. For whatsoever the respects were in which David prayed for the forgiveness of his sins, once this is clear, that he prayed for it: and then what remains, but that our adversaries must condemn him of sinning grievously in asking God pardon for those sins, which he believed by faith were forgiven him; or of infidelity for not believing; or else grant it lawful in some regard to crave pardon, when it is already granted, and believed to be so. But further it is manifest, that both guilt and punishment were remitted: because the Prophet precisely mentions both parts. The Lord hath taken away thy sin: There is the guilt wiped away. Thou shalt not die: There is the punishment forgiven, the whole punishment, the whole penalty of the statute concerning sin. And yet nothing is more clear, then that David begs pardon both of the guilt and

punishment of his offenses, and that God would make him see and feel this forgiveness of his every day more and more. Neither yet doth it follow, that then prayer for forgiveness is an effect of a weak faith; because though our faith were strong, yet the feeling of our own wretchedness, the just desert of sin, and the wrath of God due unto us, would wring out such entreaty from us: as we see the extremity which our Savior Christ was in upon the Cross made him cry out so mainly, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Albeit he was fully assured that God neither had, nor would utterly forsake him. Again, one chief reason and end of our praying to God for pardon is, that we may always acknowledge, that every sin committed by us deserves everlasting damnation of itself, and should everlastingly be punished, if that God had not accepted our Savior Christ's satisfaction for us: By which though we are freed if we rest on him by faith, yet both it is our duty according to God's Commandment to sue for pardon for his sake; and in truth if we do it not, we have no reason to persuade ourselves that our sins are pardoned. For howsoever it is true, that Christ our Head hath paid the price of our ransom, yet it is also true, that we every day deserve damnation, and must entreat God for pardon, that so we may come to that assurance, which the Lord hath enjoined us to labor and seek for. The Spirit that leadeth us to Christ, doth stir us up with all earnestness and confidence to crave pardon and forgiveness of our sins. These two confidence and prayer God hath joined together, and no man can or may put them asunder. Our faith assureth us not of forgiveness of sins without prayer, but that God forgiveth us when we pray: Nor is this heavenly pledge, while dormant, though truly dwelling in our souls, immediately apt to justify. Matters of faith be of diverse sorts: Some fully acted and done already, and those we only believe, we do not pray for them; as the Creation of the World, the

Birth, and Death and Resurrection of Christ, and other such like: Othersome are believed, as designed, promised, and in a sort conferred, but not yet fully acted and effected to us: which we so believe by faith, as that still we pray for them, till they be fully accomplished and effected. The Papists confess, that Peter, Paul, and some other particular persons to whom our Savior, said, Thy sins are forgiven thee, were assured of the remission of their iniquities: and yet they ceased not to pray, Forgive us our trespasses. Do they not see then, that prayer for pardon will stand well with assurance of remission? And why do they condemn that in us, which was well done by others.

Sect. 8. More distinctly, we continue daily to ask of God forgiveness of sins, according to the direction and commandment of our Savior Christ, in sundry respects.

First, because notwithstanding former assurance of pardon, if we take our eye off Christ, the remembrance and conscience of sin must needs trouble and disquiet: so that we must still look to Christ for forgiveness, and faith looks unto him as a Petitioner.

Secondly, we pray daily that we may have greater assurance and more comfortable feeling of God's love. Our faith being weak giveth but weak assurance, and therefore we beg daily to be settled and established more and more in the assurance of his favor.

Thirdly we sin every day, and therefore ask pardon daily: because we are to receive actual pardon from God continually, both for our original corruption, which always in this life abides with us, and for actual sins, which we daily and hourly commit against the Majesty of God. He that once believeth is thereby made a member of Christ's mystical body, and so hath all his sins satisfied for by the death and sufferings of his Head Christ:

But yet it is the good pleasure of God, that he should daily bewail his offenses and crave pardon for them, that he might receive, feel and be assured of the forgiveness of his particular and daily infirmities. Even after the infusion of faith most perfect, faithful repentance for sins committed, is as absolutely necessary to salvation, as the first infusion was.

Fourthly, God is not off and one, he plays not fast and loose: but whom once he justifieth from sin he never remembereth sin against them: Nevertheless, we must beg the continuance of his grace, that his merciful pardon may be a gift without repentance. Faith is a suitor to God for the accomplishment of his promises; and because we are assured of his unchangeable love, we beg with greater affiance the continuance of his mercy: prayer being nothing else but the stream or river of faith, and an issue of the desire of that which joyfully we believe. David being certified that God would forever stablish the kingdom in his house and posterity, forbeareth not to pray that it might be so. Our Savior Christ knew that his sheep should never perish; yet he prayeth, Holy Father, keep them in thy name. He prayeth also for deliverance from death and glorification, of both which he was fully assured. Paul knew assuredly the Lord would deliver him from every evil work, yet without ceasing he prayeth to be delivered from evil. Assurance to speed is that which addeth great fervency to prayer.

Fifthly, albeit by faith in the promise of God, we now rest assured of the remission of sins, yet we still pray, forgive us our trespasses, that we may more fully and really possess and enjoy, what we believe we already have in God's affection, and do in part enjoy. The remission of sins is by faith manifested to our conscience, and in part we reap the comfort, fruit and effect of it in this life: but still we are clogged with sin, we live in misery and sorrow; in ourselves we are condemned wretches; still we are liable to

many temporal and spiritual chastisements and desertions for sin, and live in a sort as exiles and banished men from the immediate and clear vision of God. Therefore being still in case, as if our sins were not completely pardoned, sin as yet abiding in us, and subjecting us to the displeasure of God disliking it, and to his Fatherly chastisement accompanying the same, we pray for forgiveness more absolute and entire every day in the fruit, effect and comfort of it. True it is, that persons justified have full title unto, and right in that mercy of God, which as it hath already delivered them from the dominion and condemnation of sin, so it will in the end wholly free them from all remainders of sin, and those chastisements, afflictions and miseries wherewith they are exercised in this life, and in this respect the remission of their sins is full and perfect: but so long as they live in this vale of tears, sin hath it abiding in them, and they are subject to many calamities by reason of sin, from which they heartily desire and pray to be delivered.

Sixthly, we have the grant of pardon sealed in our consciences, and possess it privately in part, but as yet the Judge hath not solemnly pronounced his sentence of absolution, nor set us in full and real possession, of absolute, complete, entire acquittance and remission. This therefore we expect, and pray for, which will not be till the time of refreshing come. So long as we walk by faith, and not by sight, we still pray for the sight of that, as touching which we have now but the comfort of faith and hope, which is in part and imperfect. By faith we know that we are redeemed both in soul and body, yet still we sigh in ourselves, waiting for the adoption, even the redemption of our bodies. Our adversaries object again, that by praying that Christ's merits may be made ours in particular, we greatly abase them As though the prophet David did abase God in

making him his in particular, saying, The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, my God and my strength, my shield, the horn of my salvation, and my refuge: The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want which agreeth sweetly with the voice of the faithful, He is our God, and he will save us; He is our Lord (not only by right of sovereignty, but of love and affection) and he will save us. As though Elihu did abase God in calling him, My Father; or Thomas did abase our Savior Christ in calling him, My Lord and my God; or Paul, when he glorieth and triumpheth in Christ after this manner, who loved me and gave himself for me; viz, in a special and peculiar manner, and not only as he loved Esau, Judas, and other reprobates. We do no injury to God to make him ours in particular, because he hath said, as to Abraham, so to everyone of the seed of Abraham, I will be thy God. We do no injury, because we do not thereby make him our peculiar, but leave him the same to others, that he is to us, as every man enjoyeth the light of the Sun to his own use, without the impeachment thereof to the use of any other man. A third reason to confirm, that a Christian believer may be assured of the pardon of his sins, is this: What the Apostles and other faithful men were assured of by ordinary faith, that may all the faithful be assured of in like manner. For all the faithful are Brethren and have the like precious faith and promises. But the Apostles and other faithful have been assured of their salvation by ordinary faith. Paul pronounceth the same certainty of other men's salvation that he doth of his own, and upon grounds which are common to all the faithful and Saints of God. The Rhemists object that Paul durst not assure himself that he was justified, saying, I know nothing by myself, yet am I not thereby justified. Did Paul speak this as doubting of his justification by faith in Christ? Of his particular assurance he gives plentiful testimony other where: and our Adversaries teach, that he was assured by

revelation. The place makes strongly against Justification by works: but against certainty of salvation it makes nothing, unless we shall make the Apostle contrary to himself, and our Adversaries will say that a man may be certain by revelation, and yet altogether uncertain. The drift of the place is to show, that we should not vainly be lifted up with the applause of men because they know us not, yea we know not ourselves thoroughly: for God is greater than our consciences, and doth espy many secret defaults in us, which we upon diligent search cannot find out in our own hearts. But did the Apostle protesting the innocence of his conscience, intend to intimate his doubtfulness of Mind touching his own salvation? In no sort: for if our conscience accuse us not, then have we boldness: This is our rejoicing before God, even the testimony of our conscience. Nay this text of Scripture well weighed, is sufficient to dash the vain cavils of the papists: For Paul was assured of his salvation, and of the uprightness of his heart and conscience, though he was ignorant of many secret infirmities which the most High did espy in him, and of that measure of grace which he had received. What followeth hereupon? Even these two things, which directly overthrow the doctrine of our Adversaries: viz, That he who hath received grace from God, may know the truth, though not the measure of his faith and repentance: And Ignorance of the exact multitude and greatness of our offenses is no bar or hindrance to the certainty of salvation. Who knows the multitude of his sins? Not one. In this life a man can never sufficiently understand the greatness and multitude of his offenses: yet may he be assured of the remission of sins known and secret. Because not the perfect knowledge of sin is the cause of certainty, but the perfect mercy of God, and the perfect merit of Christ; to which we must look by faith.

Sect. 9. If the end of the Scripture be that we should believe, and believing should know that we have eternal life, then every Believer that knoweth himself to be a Believer may be certain of his salvation. But the former is an undoubted truth. It is here objected, Whatsoever we believe by faith, is as infallible as the Word of God, which assureth us of it: If then the common sort of the faithful, do not believe their salvation to be as infallible as God's own Word, they are not by faith assured of it. The answer is, that the salvation of a Believer is as infallible in itself, and in event, as is the Word of God, which assureth him of it: but always it is not so in his apprehension and feeling. The principles of faith are ever alike certain, but not apprehended of all with the same degree of certainty. For there are diverse degrees of faith, little faith, great faith, full assurance of faith; even as a weak eye and a strong eye. And as a weak eye seeth but weakly and imperfectly, and a strong eye seeth strongly, and more fully discerneth the thing seen: so a little faith believeth faintly, though truly; greater faith believeth more steadfastly; full assurance of faith believeth under hope, even against hope. The Disciples of Christ said unto him, We believe and know that thou art Christ the Son of the living God: which in itself was infallibly true, and yet they did not so infallibly apprehend it, but that this faith was soon shaken; and because they did not infallibly believe it, our Savior tells them, that therefore he forewarned them of his Death and Resurrection, that when it was come to pass they might believe. It was faith that made Peter upon Christ's words to step into the Sea to go unto him upon the waters, believing that he should be safe; but yet he believed it not infallibly: for when he began to sink, he cried out for fear, Master, save me. The Disciples believed in our Savior as the only promised Messiah and Redeemer of Israel: but when they saw he was put to death, they began to

stagger at it. The like may be noted of their fear and doubting at other times. Yea, that assurance that is had by extraordinary revelation is not altogether free from fears and doubts, shaking sometimes the confidence of that which a man hath received immediately from the oracle of God's own mouth, or by special messengers directed from God for certificate in that behalf. Which is to be seen in the examples of Abraham, Isaac, David, and others, to whom God had given special promise of his protection and favor; and yet upon occasions they have bewrayed great infirmity in the apprehension thereof. And if this befall to faith in those things which are extraordinarily revealed (for it is faith ordinary by which a man believeth such extraordinary revelations) much more we may assure our selves, it befalleth there, where we have no other but ordinary revelation by the written Word of God. Also the Word of God once spoken and often reiterated is of equal certainty in itself: but to help our weakness, the Lord goeth over one and the same thing again and again. Things believed are in themselves more certain than things seen, but not apprehended by us with such assurance. Of these who doubteth? Of the other who doubteth not at sometimes? The Prophets, our Savior Christ and his Apostles, do labor oft to confirm unto us matters of faith by reasons, similitudes, signs examples, incurring into the senses, not only to better our understanding, but to confirm our faith: which is an argument, that to us things sensible are oft more certain than things believed, though in themselves more uncertain. Moreover, conclusions theological are in themselves as certain, as are the principles upon which they are grounded, but always they are not so infallible to our understanding and conscience: because the inference is not so well, readily and plainly perceived, as hath been showed before. And so though the salvation of the Believer be as certain as the word of promise, upon which his faith is surely

built, yet it is not so infallibly known to the Believer himself, it being far more easy to conceive, that a believer shall be saved, then to assure the conscience, that he is a true Believer. What the Lord hath immediately revealed, that faith receiveth with the greatest certainty: but what is concluded out of the Word from one proposition immediately divine, and another certainly known by some other light, that may be believed with infallible assurance. And so he that is justified and hath obtained remission of sins, may assuredly know or believe that he hath received mercy of the Lord: otherwise he can never truly be thankful to God for that inestimable benefit. For he that knoweth not whether he hath received it or not, nor can assure himself of it without intolerable and inexcusable presumption, how should he from the heart give God thanks for this unspeakable favor? But to think, that mortal men are never bound to give God thanks, for the greatest benefit that is bestowed upon them in this world, is most absurd. It is objected, That in this state of temptation, (such is our infirmity) assurance would engender pride. And immediate and perfect assurance, such as is free from all assault, and impeachment of fear and doubt, might peradventure by the corruption of our nature, be abused to security and pride: But such perfection in this life we attain not unto; because the Lord knows it not expedient. As we have a measure of true righteousness, though weak and imperfect: so have we a measure of true and comfortable assurance against fear and doubt, though by reason of our weakness, mixed with many fears and doubts. Thus the Lord deals with us in great wisdom, (knowing our inability to wield any better condition) that by the sweetness of grace we might be allured to yield cheerful obedience, and be sustained in temptations, and by the sense of our weakness together with the sharpness of temptation, fear and perplexity, might be kept from swelling in pride,

security, love of carnal liberty, negligence to preserve our faith, and such like. And as sometimes by his admirable wisdom he maketh sin the whetstone of righteousness: so by affliction and trouble, by distrusts and fearful doubts, he whetteth and sharpeneth our faith and assurance; which by fighting increaseth, and the longer it wrestleth the stronger it waxeth, whilst faith poureth forth Prayer, and pouring forth of Prayer obtaineth further strength of faith. Knocking makes the link to burn more clearly, and the shaking of a tree by stormy blasts settles the root and the tree more firmly: so temptations, troubles, and fears by the wise providence of God, make for the increase and confirmation of faith. As a man in danger of drowning catcheth for hold to save himself: so whilst the comfort of life makes offer to go from us, we take the better hold thereof, and it becomes so much the more precious and dear unto us. By our corruption virtues become poisons, and by the wisdom of God sins are made medicines: But as we do not condemn virtue, though our corrupt hearts do sometimes abuse it; nor commend sin, for that it is used as a spur to righteousness: no more do we approve doubting, for the good that God works by it, nor disallow full assurance because of the evil that might ensue to us thereby abusing the same. In brief, pride is the daughter of corruption, not of filial confidence, nor may it be condemned for it, because that weed springeth from another root.

Sect. 10. A man may believe, say the Romanists, that he shall have eternal life, if he keep the Commandments: but because he is not assured that he shall so do, he remaineth in fear. And very justly may he be in fear, or rather in despair, that looketh for eternal life upon no other condition. The Apostle indeed doth plainly debar him from all hope and expectation thereof, when he saith, So many as are of the works of the Law, are under the curse; for it

is written, Cursed is everyone, &c, It is not for them that profess the faith of Christ, by their keeping of the Commandments to expect the obtaining of eternal life: Ye are fallen from grace (saith the Apostle) that will be justified by the Law: If they which be of the Law be heirs, then is faith made void. The Commandments of God are laid before Believers, not as the cause for obtaining of eternal life, but as the way to walk in unto eternal life, assured unto us by the free promise, and gift of God. And of this promise and gift of God the keeping of God's Commandments is a part, who hath said, I will put my Law into their hearts, and cause them to walk in my Statutes. And though a man be weak, feeble, and imperfect, yet finding and feeling the work of sanctification begun in him, he may be assured that he who hath wrought this beginning of life, will go forward therewith unto the end. Our Savior Christ said to the young man in the Gospel, If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments: But that young Pharisee, was ignorant of the Law and his own estate, rested in external works of righteousness, and when he came to Christ, was destitute of the true knowledge of the Messias, without which (our Adversaries will confess) there is no eternal life: and so from their own grounds, it is absurd to imagine, that Christ by these words did simply intend to direct him a way for the obtaining of eternal life by his own works or merits. We grant, the Law to which our Savior referred that young man, to be the rule of obedience according to which people in covenant ought to walk, building their works of righteousness upon faith as the foundation: and obedience issuing from faith unfeigned to be the way to eternal bliss: We acknowledge also, that no man can be assured of remission of his sins, who doth not walk before God in uprightness and integrity: but this upright, unfeigned obedience is imperfect, the effect of that faith which justifieth, not the cause of Justification. When the Scripture pronounceth

them blessed that fear God, keep his Commandments, and walk in the undefiled way, doth it not describe the person whose sins are covered, in which stands his happiness? Our Savior hath taught us plainly, That except our righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, we shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. What righteousness doth he here mean? Inherent, or the righteousness of works: for he presseth a uniform observation of all God's Commandments. The Scribes and Pharisees did (as it seem) even then calumniate him, as they did afterward Paul (and the Papists do us still) as a destroyer of the Law, because he reprov'd their confidence in works, and sought to establish the doctrine of faith, which now we teach. Needful in this respect was that caveat; think not that I am come to destroy the Law and the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill them. And in these words, as our Savior rendereth a reason, why he that breaketh any of those Commandments, which the Scribes and Pharisees counted the least, shall be counted least in the kingdom of Heaven: so he maketh passage to the exposition of the law in the verses following, where he clears it from the corrupt glosses of the Scribes and Pharisees. And it is to be noted, that he saith, not, Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Law and Prophets: but except it exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, to wit, that righteousness which they taught and practiced, who made none account of some commandments which they called the least, urged only an external observation of the Law according to the letter without any respect of inward piety, and maimed and mangled the word as pleased themselves. The sentence therefore must be understood of inherent righteousness, whence the necessity of good works is strongly concluded. The faith that justifieth is lively and operative, ever conjoined with an affection of piety and

obsequious disposition, as powerful to bring forth deeds of mercy, as to make firm and faithful application of Christ's righteousness, or conceive sure trust of God's mercy offered in him. Now what is required in faith that it may justify, of necessity it must go before assurance of pardon and forgiveness. True it is then, that without inherent holiness no man can be assured of his acquittance from sin: but if we inquire into the true cause of absolution, it is the sole grace and mercy of God in Jesus Christ, embraced by a true and lively faith.

Doth this anything prejudice Christian assurance, that without true and sincere obedience, at least without a promptitude, aptness, inclination and resolution to do good works, and walk in obedience, there can be no assurance? No: For the believer relieth not upon his works, though he exercise himself therein with all diligence: and though he know well that he comes infinitely short of what God commandeth and bewail his daily failings, and sees he hath need to renew his purpose and resolution to better his obedience; and condemns the imperfections that he espieth more and more in himself: yet it is not impossible to be assured of the truth and uprightness of his heart and sincere, though imperfect, desire and endeavor to walk with God: which as the fruit of the Spirit and effect of faith doth evidence his reconciliation with God. For he that feareth God and walketh in his ways, in the perfect and undefiled way, is justified from sin. And he that knows, that he walketh before God in truth and with a perfect heart, may certainly conclude from this fruit of the Spirit, that his sins are pardoned.

Sect. 11. I might add, that the faithful are sealed by the Spirit, and by the same Spirit are enabled to cry Abba Father, whereby they are assured of the pardon of their sins: but I will shut up this matter, briefly showing what

infirmities may stand with assurance of faith, and what sins cannot, that Christians may be directed the better to make trial of their estate. If we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth: and if we say that we (such as John then was regenerate and in the state of grace) have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. Even such then as walk in the light, and have fellowship with God, are sinners, and not just or perfect in themselves. Who can say his heart is clean? There is no man just, who sinneth not: and yet the Apostle is bold to affirm, That he that is born of God sinneth not. The just then transgress the Law, and so are sinners: but they make not a trade of sin or profession of iniquity, and so are not law-breakers or transgressors. And this the Apostle plainly teacheth, saying, Everyone that hath this hope (of being the Son of God) doth purge himself as he is pure, not according to the measure of his purity or perfection, but according to the truth, in habit becomes like unto him: as on the contrary he that commits sin, that is, is a crafts-master of iniquity; and laboreth therein, he resembles his Father the Devil, whose chief delight is in doing mischief. Which is further confirmed by that of our Savior Christ to the Jews, Verily, whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin: and the servant abideth not in the house forever; but the Son abideth forever: If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. He that committeth sin with delight, willful indulgence to transgressions, and unrelenting opposition to the clear truth, he is the servant of sin, but they that are made free by the Son, are free from the reign of sin, not from every act of sin. He that is born of God keeps himself, that the wicked one cannot come within him to endanger him, the gates of hell can have no prevailing power over him; he sinneth not as the world doth, which lieth in iniquity: but altogether free from sin he is not, nor ever shall be so long as he carrieth

about with him this body of death. To sin habitually, willfully, indulgently, with full consent and greediness is not compatible with the hope and profession of a Christian: This spot is not the spot of God's children: but they have their blemishes, they sin of infirmity, though not of willfulness. Sin in its own nature is opposite to grace: but all sins are not altogether incompatible with grace, that is, they hinder not the graceful operation of faith, hope, and love. The remainders of Original corruption, under which the regenerate must labor so long as they live: sins of simple ignorance, and of unavoidable infirmity, which through weakness the faithful run into every day: these do not stop the lively work of faith in receiving the promises of mercy, but even at the very instant, when these have abode in the soul, faith can and doth make faithful plea for mercy, or otherwise none could plead for mercy before the throne of Grace: For in many things we sin all.

Sins of forgetfulness, inconsideration, and passion, whereunto there is not advised consent, these are as motes in the eye, which do somewhat trouble the clear sight of faith, but notwithstanding them, the heart principally adhereth unto God: and though now and then through infirmity a Christian be overtaken with them, yet may he upon good grounds be assured of God's love. Anger, pettishness, impatience, inordinate fear are sins which the godly ought and do watch against, and for which they ought and must judge themselves: but if through infirmity they be over-taken to speak a hasty or unadvised word, they must not therefore cast off their confidence: notwithstanding such slips, they may cry in faith, and be heard in their supplications. If any man sin, (to wit of infirmity, as they do who walk in the light, and addict themselves to the serious study of holiness) we have an Advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the

propitiation for our sins. What answer the Lord gave to Paul touching his temptations, My grace is sufficient for thee: that may be said of the infirmities of the Saints, such sins as be mere and absolute infirmities, God of his Grace, revealed in the covenant of grace, is pleased to grant unto them a pardon of course. Such sins as in regard of their matter, are not repugnant to the main offices prescribed by the Commandments of God, being of frailty committed, through unadvisedness or sudden passion, these do not denominate a man a Law-breaker, nor so weaken the power of faith, as that it should not be able to receive the promise of forgiveness, nor suspend the actual claim of eternal life. These frailties may be in the godly without any notable defect of faith: they debar not the soul from cleaving unto God. Abraham said of Sarah, She is my sister: this was an infirmity, but did not extinguish faith. Sarah laughed at the promise, and then denied it through fear: Jacob beguiled his Father, saying, I am thy Son, Esau: and many such like infirmities of the Saints are recorded, which argue their faith to be weak, not to be deposed from its sovereignty. The reason hereof is not to be taken from the matter or outward act, wherein they offended; but from their heart and affection, which was more inclined to good then to evil, and did stick fast unto God, even when through weakness they transgressed. By faith Rahab received the spies with peace, when through infirmity she offended in the means of their safety. The Prophet David was regenerate without question, and had sure hope that his prayers for mercy should be heard, when he uttered this complaint of himself, Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. So that a faithful man stepping aside through infirmity in the forenamed offenses; (I

say through infirmity, and not of habit, custom, gross carelessness or delight) doth retain his integrity, and faith though somewhat shaken, doth keep it standing, and continue lively to beg and embrace pardon. But he that sinneth of mere frailty, doth humble himself for his daily offenses and labor to repress and mortify his inbred lusts; seeketh forgiveness by unfeigned confession and hearty prayer, reneweth his purpose and resolution to be more circumspect, and setteth up his watch to shun and avoid the like sins for the time to come: And if he be overtaken at unawares he is warned by that slip to look more heedfully to his ways begging pardon and seeking help from above, that he may be able to stand fast: so that the slip, which did seem somewhat to lose him, is an occasion of his sticking faster and closer unto God.

Sect. 12. But if a godly man fall into a foul and enormous crime wasting conscience, for the time he loseth some degree of newness of Spirit, cleanness of heart, comfort of the holy Ghost, integrity in a sort, and peace of conscience. He plungeth himself into the sense of God's wrath and displeasure, and by his grievous transgression the power of faith is so weakened, that he can neither believe the pardon of any one sin formerly pardoned, nor lay actual claim to any privilege of grace formerly enjoyed. The favor of God towards his children is unchangeable, the sentence of pardon granted shall never be reversed, even after some grievous fall, the seeds of grace abide in them, and they remain in the state of Justification: but whilst they continue in such an estate of sin, they can make no actual claim to the promises of eternal life. The seeds of grace abiding in them, they still retain their right and title to eternal life to be given of free and undeserved grace: but they are suspended from actual claim until they rise again by true repentance, and then they recover not a new right or title, but

a new claim by virtue of the old title. For it is the perpetual ordinance of God, that if his children strike out of the way by sin, they must rise again, and renew their faith and repentance, before they can have any sound or true hope of salvation. There can be no Christian assurance which doth not fully consent and accord with these and such like passages of holy Scripture: If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me: The soul that sinneth shall die. Know ye not, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. If therefore a godly man, as David, turn aside into sin of this kind, he can have no assurance of mercy, till this iniquity be broken off by unfeigned repentance. For faith cannot receive what the word of grace doth not promise: But pardon of sin is promised to them only that confess and forsake their iniquity; that forsake all sin in habit, delight and indulgence gross sin utterly and upon good advice.

Sect. 13. The reign and absolute dominion of sin doth utterly exclude grace and he that is so guilty, hath nothing in him that can cry or call for pardon or forgiveness. In whom sin hath this dominion, he as yet is under the curse of the law, and the wrath of God abideth on him: for the presence of grace infused is a necessary qualification to the pardon of sin, and where sin doth bear such sway as to shut forth whatsoever in us should entreat mercy, it doth him up under wrath. Were it possible for a man regenerate (which shall never befall them that are called according to the purpose of God) after grace received to sin willfully, with full consent, delight and contentment, to the utter extinguishing of the Spirit of grace or finally to

abuse any extraordinary measure of inherent grace by indulgence to known sins secret or open, he should fall from the state of Justification, and be called to a strict account, as well for all his former sins, as this abuse of his talent.

Sect. 14. Assurance of salvation, if true, is ever joined with a religious and conscionable desire to walk before God in all well-pleasing, and to do the things that are acceptable in his sight: and assured standing in grace, depends upon a like certainty of not continuing indulgence to known offenses, or gross negligence in repenting or bewailing secret sins. Where this privilege is possessed the heart is most tender and sensible of sin, most watchful to shun and avoid whatsoever is displeasing unto his Highness grieved with holy indignation for former looseness and untowardliness: there flourisheth unfeigned love to God for his mercy, and to the brethren for the Lord's sake; sound humility and free submission to the Lord's will and command in everything; sincere and continual thankfulness to God for all his gifts, both in prosperity and trouble, health and sickness; holy covetousness after spiritual things, joined with sound delight in the word of God, and base account of all things in comparison of Christ: holy and reverent admiration to see his state thus changed, from so low a depth of misery, to so great an height of glory: sweet contentment, joy unspeakable, with continual care and constant resolution, to better his obedience, and merciful zealous desire both by edifying speech and godly example to draw on and build up others in faith and godliness. How can it be conceived, that a man should be assured of the pardon and forgiveness of many and great offenses committed by him, but it will work a greater loathing and detestation of sin unfeigned abasement for former wickedness, continual watchfulness to keep himself pure, and ardent love with inward joy that

cannot be expressed? How can a man be persuaded, that greater happiness is given him of God than all the world is worth, that more sins are pardoned him than he hath hairs on his head, the least whereof is sufficient to plunge him into the nethermost Hell, but he must needs love the Lord who hath graciously looked upon him in his distress, rejoice with joy unspeakable and glorious, and keep continual watch against the baits and allurements of sin, that he loose not his comfort, nor dishonor God, who hath done so great things for him? The Malefactor is glad of his Princes pardon, specially of his Highness favor, whereby he is advanced into great honor and dignity. When the Jews heard of the proclamation of King Cyrus (by which they were set free from their long and tedious captivity) they were wrapped with joy and wondering, that they were like to men that think they rather dream, than indeed possess the thing that their souls longed after: how much more will certain assurance, that we are set free from the perpetual bondage of sin, and restored to the everlasting freedom of righteousness and life, make us wonder at the infinite wisdom, and unspeakable goodness of our Heavenly Father? The Saints considering the goodness of God towards Man in his creation, break forth into holy admiration; Lord, what is man that thou art so mindful of him The Prophet calling to Mind long after, what God had done for his soul, in delivering him from the terror of death, and power of the grave, cannot pass it over without fervent thanks and praise, What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits towards me. And when Peter came to himself, and saw indeed that he was delivered from the tyranny of Herod, from the deep dungeon and bitter death prepared for him, he entered into a religious and thankful admiration of the great power and mercy of the Lord, saying, Now I know for a truth, that the Lord hath sent his Angel, and hath delivered me from the hand of Herod. How much more

ought and will that man, who is assured of God's favor and love towards him, forever admire the mighty power unspeakable goodness, and rich mercy of God, who hath delivered him from the pit of Hell, from the power of Satan, from the curse of the law, and from the waiting for of all the wicked Devils and damned Spirits, and hath translated him into the kingdom of his dear Son. And if he daily consider his unworthiness, and renewed sins, he shall see more cause to wonder every day, then at the first, if comparison may be made in such a case, and to renew his repentance, care, watch, and resolution to better his obedience. For is it not to be wondered at, that God pardoneth the sins of his children daily, and continueth his mercy towards them, and the sense of his love, even unto the end. Who can think upon his slips and infirmities, which break from him every day, for which the wrath of God is justly provoked against him; and withal remember how God is pleased to spare him, to grant him access into his presence, and to afford unto him the sense of his love; but he must needs be astonished at the enjoyment of so great and incomprehensible, so large and long-enduring kindness? His heart must be enflamed with love, and enlarged in praises still more and more, his affections raised to strive against sin, and set upon the works of holiness and righteousness whereunto they are designed, every day more and more? Assurance of salvation then doth not beget security, but quickeneth to more sincere, settled and constant obedience; nor it is possible, that a Christian should hold his assurance longer than he doth follow cherish and feed this heavenly affection in himself.

CHAP. IX. Faith is grounded upon the word of God, not upon the authority of the Church.

FAITH IS GROUNDED UPON the word of God, not upon the authority of the Church, and resteth upon God in Christ, not upon the Saints militant or triumphant.

Sect. 1. The Schoolmen divide the object of faith into the material object, and into the formal. The material are the Articles or things believed. The formal is the foundation and last main principle whereupon faith yieldeth, or that whereinto the assent, which yieldeth unto the matter believed, is resolved. In which sense, the object of faith is all one with the foundation or ground work of it. But howsoever we understand it, whether for the main reason and last resolution of assent or for that whereupon our confidence leaneth, relieth, resteth, the authority of the Church cannot be the ground, nor the Saints triumphant the object of faith divine. We believe that God hath his Church: but we neither believe in the Saints militant nor triumphant. The ground or foundation of faith must be something, which is purely and simply divine, admixed with no error, yea subject to no error; the indubitate word and revelation of Christ, the divine and prime verity

revealed by inspiration. But the word of God alone is purely and simply divine admixed with no error, the Church is subject to error, neither hath it any truth immediately or by divine inspiration, but by second means: the authority of the Church is a thing create, distinct from the first verity. The immortal seed whereby we are regenerate and made faithful, is the only formal principle or ground of faith. The word of God alone is that immortal seed. Therefore the word of God alone, is the only formal principle of faith. And even as in Husbandry, although diverse instruments and means be requisite and necessary; to wit, plowing, sowing, &c. yet the seed is the beginning and sole immediate cause of the grain springing up: even so in the spiritual plantation of faith, in which our souls are living fields, the immortal seed which the Apostles first preached, and afterwards committed to writing, produceth faith as the sole principle, immediate motive, and formal object of faith: as the ministry, authority and calling of the Church, produce the same as the adjuvant and instrumental cause, or as the means of applying the word and seals thereof, but not as the first principle. Whatsoever credit the Church hath, it receiveth the same from the Scriptures, as is acknowledged by some of our principal Adversaries, and confirmed by the Apostle, who saith; We are built upon the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles. The present faith of Christians, is of the same kind with the faith of the Prophets and Apostles. But the faith of these holy men was sounded upon immediate divine revelation, and not upon the authority of the Church.

Sect. 2. Herein the Romanists faith differs from the faith of ancient Christians; for the Saints who lived of old, grounded their faith upon the pure and faithful Word of God, as upon a sure foundation, but the authority of the Pope, whom they call the Church virtual, is the first ground and last

resolution of the Romanists faith. Indefinitely or indeterminately, they teach, whatsoever God hath spoken is most true, in that sense wherein he meant it: But if we descend to any determinate speeches, written or unwritten, either acknowledged or supposed for God Word, the present Romish Church doth take upon her absolutely to judge of all, and every part of them. If we speak of that Canon of Scripture which we have, the sense or interpretation of any text, any article of faith concluded out of it, the only cause they do or can believe them infallibly, is the Popes infallibility that commends them. The Churches or Popes proposal is not only a condition requisite, but the remonstrative root, the immediate cause and reason of their believing divine revelations. And if it be a reason why they believe them, and sway the mind to embrace the truth, then it is the proper efficient cause of belief. According to their doctrine, the orthodoxal answer to this Interrogation, Why do you believe the doctrine of the Trinity, to be a divine Revelation? Is, because the Church proposeth it to me for such. But he that admits this answer for sound and Catholic, and yet denies the Churches proposal to be the true and proper cause of his belief in the former point, hath smothered the light of nature, by admitting too artificial subtlety into his brains. Whatsoever it be, Cause, Condition, Circumstance or effect, that truly satisfieth this demand, Why do you believe this or that? It is a true and proper cause of our belief though not of the thing believed. We must here observe that there is a twofold resolution; One of the things or matters believed or known into their first parts or elements; Another of our belief or persuasions concerning them into their first causes or motives. In the one, the most general or remotest cause; In the other, the most immediate or next cause always terminates the resolution. The one imitates, the other inverts the order of composition. In the first acceptance, the first verity or divine

infallibility is that into which our faith is lastly resolved. For this is the first step in the progress of true belief the lowest foundation whereon any Religion can be built. But in the second acceptation (as we always take those terms, when we resolve our own persuasions) that is, for a resolution of all doubts or demands concerning the subject whereof we treat: A Roman Catholics faith, must according to his Principles, finally be resolved into the Churches or Popes infallibility. For this is the immediate ground, or first cause of any particular determinate point of Christian Faith: and the immediate is always that, into which our persuasions concerning the effect, is finally resolved, seeing it can satisfy all demands, doubts, or questions concerning it. It will not help them, to color over the matter, and say, God revealing divine truth is the formal object of faith: For seeing God worketh mediately, and revealeth no truth unto us but by external means: and divine authority in itself is hidden and unknown: therefore the thing whereinto our faith is resolved, must be something externally known, which we may read or hear. And our Adversaries must lead us to secret revelation, which in words they pretend so much to defy, or yield us an external foundation and formal object of faith: And rejecting the Scriptures, whatsoever they gloss in words, they neither can, nor do name us any other indeed, but the Roman Pope and Church.

Nor will it boot them ought to say, that God's Word in the Churches mouth is the rule of faith, whereinto it is finally resolved, seeing the Church defines nothing but by God's written or unwritten. For this is more than the party which believes it can know, nor hath he any other motive to believe it, besides the Churches definition or assertion. Suppose then we should conceive so well of a temporal Judge, as to presume he did never speak but according to the true meaning either of statute or customary law: yet if we

could not know either the one or the other, or their right interpretation, but only by his determinations; the law were little beholden to him (unless for a flout) that should say, he were resolved jointly by the Judge and it. For seeing the Law is to him altogether uncertain, but by the Judges avouchment or interpretation, his last resolution of any act of Justice, must be only into the Judges skill and fidelity. It is true indeed, that the Churches authority is not comprehended in the object of belief, whilst it only proposeth other Articles to be believed. No more is the Sun comprehended under the object of our actual sight, whilst we behold colors, or other visible things by the virtue of it. But yet, as it could not make colors or other things become more visible unto us, unless itself were the first visible, that is, unless it might be seen more clearly than those things which we see by it, (so we would direct our sight unto it) so would it be impossible, the Churches infallible proposal should be the reason of a Roman Catholics belief of Scriptures, or their orthodoxal sense, unless it were the first and principal credible, or primary object of his belief, or that which must be most clearly, most certainly, and most steadfastly believed, so as all other Articles besides, must be believed by the belief of it. Nor is this proposal of the Church necessary to the first plantation of faith only, but to the growth and continuance of it; as well after faith is produced, whilst it continues, as whiles it is in planting.

Sect. 3. But to leave this mystery of Romish iniquity, and to return to the matter the authority of the Church is not the ground of Christian faith, but the holy Scriptures, and faith resteth not upon the Saints, but upon Jesus Christ. God and Christ is the object of confidence according to the Scripture. God as the author and parent of all good things, of whom are all things, and we in him: Christ as the only Mediator of God and Men, by

whom are all things, and we by him: or by whom God bestoweth upon us all saving blessings, and by whom we come unto God. They are accursed, who make the arm of flesh their stay, and trust in man, in whom there is no help or power. The present faith of Believers hath the same object with the faith of Adam after his fall Abel, Abraham, Noah, David, the Virgin Marie, all the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles. For faith is one in object and kind, though different in number and degree. But the confidence of Adam, Abel, Noah, Abraham, &c. was exercised about, or directed unto God in Christ, not set upon any Saint. Abraham and the rest, who lived before and under the Law, believed in the Messias to come: The Apostles and all the faithful since, believe in Christ already come: But in nature the object of their faith is one and the same. Our Adversaries confess thus much; Bellarmine proves Christ to be God, because it is written of him, Blessed are they that put their trust in him: And the Scripture, saith he, teacheth everywhere, that we must put our trust in the true God alone.

The Roman Catechism teacheth, that we believe the holy Church, not in the Church: by which diverse form of speaking, say they, God the Creator is distinguished from things created. But the Rhemists in defense of their Saint-invocation, are driven to say, that we are to trust in the Saints departed, and that the Scripture useth also this speech, to believe in men, as They believed in the Lord, and in his servant Moses; Believe in the Lord, and ye shall be established, &c. This is their first pretense, whereby they seek to cover their Idolatry, whereas they might easily have known, that the vulgar and the Seventy both translate these places, They believed Moses, and believe his Prophets: and not, they believed in Moses, Believe in his Prophets. And it is certain, the preposition here added in Hebrew, doth not ever answer to In, in our language. What, that it is no less then blasphemy

to say, that the Israelites were commanded to put their confidence in Moses and the Prophets, either as the principal authors and parents of any good, or as Mediators betwixt God and them, by and through whose mediation they should obtain all good things spiritual and temporal. For so they should have made them their arm, who were but flesh. What is alleged out of Exodus, Moses speaketh in reproach of the Israelites, who believed neither the Lord, nor Moses touching the promise of their delivery out of Egypt, until such time as they having quite passed the Red Sea, did see their enemies dead in the Sea. And though they believed the truth of the Lord, and the word of his servant when they had the accomplishment of his promise; yet they did not confidently betake themselves to the Lord, as their only refuge, and rest under the shadow of his wings. For the Lord complaineth often of their infidelity towards him; and the history makes mention of their distrust, murmuring, and rebellion against the Lord. In the other place the people are praised, as those who rested in the word of the Prophet, before that the promise was effected: But they leaned not upon the Prophets, as authors of their help, neither had that been praise-worthy in them, nay, it had been detestable Idolatry. If they will have the Hebrew preposition to be of force in those places, by Moses and the Prophets we are to understand the word taught by Moses, and the Prophets from God; as the Chaldee explaineth it; they believed in the Word of the Lord, and in the prophesy of Moses his servant. The exposition of both texts may be taken out of that of the Lord to Moses, Loe, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee forever: that is, that they may receive thee for a faithful and true Prophet, and believe in the word that I shall make known unto them by thee. And as the Israelites are said to be baptized into Moses, that is, into the doctrine or law of

Moses, whereof he was a Minister, so are they said to believe in Moses and the Prophets, that is, in the word which they taught from God. They were the instruments and Ministers of the Lord, and ministerially the people believed in them, that is, in the Word of the Lord published by them. Of Zion it is said, the poor of his people shall trust in it. The meaning is not, that the faithful shall put their trust in Zion, as we must hope in God: but that the inhabitants of Zion shall dwell in a quiet and secure place; as the Prophets often affirm, that salvation is in Zion. It may well be translated, The poor of his people shall betake themselves unto it; as unto a place of protection and refuge by the blessing of God: not as unto the chief stay and prop of their souls.

They further object, that the Apostle referreth faith and love to the Saints, saying; Hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast towards the Lord Jesus, and toward all Saints. But in this place faith is referred only to Christ, and love to the brethren, as it appeareth in the two verses next following. In the former whereof faith is restrained unto Christ, and in the latter, the love here mentioned is carried to the brethren: which appeareth also in that other where upon the same occasion, he so distinguisheth faith and love, that faith is appropriated unto Christ, and love referred to the Saints. For the very words also, the Apostle hath so fenced them, that although the truth were not otherwise clear, our Adversaries can have no advantage for their doctrine of pinning our most holy faith upon the sleeve of every Saint.

For although he have coupled Charity and Faith together, which in other Epistles he doth distinctly refer the one to Christ, the other to the faithful; yet he hath used prepositions, which note that faith must pass no further then to Christ, as charity goeth no further in this place, but unto the Saints. For where the preposition εἰς is such as might have served both to note our

faith towards Christ, and our charity towards our Brethren; he declares that he would not have Faith and Charity carried to one and the same object, by the choice of several bands of prepositions, wherewith to tie each of these virtues with the subject whereunto they belong. But to go no further then to the Rhemists translation, can they say, that we have charity in the Lord Jesus? If with the later clause further removed, which is towards all Saints, they will have both Charity and Faith conjoined, yet it followeth much more, that with this clause, in the Lord Jesus, which is nearer unto charity then the other, they ought both also to be coupled. If this be absurd, much more is it, that upon this ground of coupling Faith and Charity together, they would have them both carried and applied unto these words, unto the Saints. As for the order of words, and coupling things together, which are to be referred distinctly, the like is to be found in other passages of holy Scripture. Again, Love and Faith may be put for faithful, firm, and steadfast love; the like whereunto we may often find. But by this resting of the place, our Adversaries are driven, not only to believe in the Catholic Church, but also in every several member of the Catholic Church. For seeing the Apostle commendeth Philemon for his love towards every Saint that came unto him: it followeth, that if (as they say) he commendeth faith towards the Saints, he commendeth it towards every man a part: and so every Christian is to believe in other: which our Adversaries will not affirm.

CHAP. X. Of the Effects, Subject and Degrees of Justifying Faith.

SECT. 1. Many and excellent are the fruits and effects of faith, for which cause it hath been adorned with many singular titles of honor. It is called the gift of gifts, the soul of our soul, the root of an honest life; the character of the sons of God, the key whereby the treasures which are in Christ are opened unto us, the mother of sound joy, and nurse of a good conscience: the hand whereby we apprehend Christ, the eye whereby we see the invisible things of God, the mouth whereby we receive the seed of salvation; the pledge of our eternal inheritance, the earnest of our peace with God, the seal of our election, the ladder whereby we certainly and safely ascend up to Heaven; the shield of a faithful soul, the sword whereby we beat and wound our enemies, the token of our union in Christ, our victory, and the band whereby we are united unto the chief good. The fruits of faith are divided into two Heads; Internal and External, which the Schoolmen call Elicit and Imperate. But to speak of them orderly as they are set down in Scripture, we find them to be these. By faith we are engrafted into Christ, and made one with him, flesh of his flesh, and bone of

his bone, lively members of that body, whereof he is the head: and by Christ we are united unto God. In Scripture to be in Christ, and to be in Faith are put indifferently. By faith we are married unto Christ, and have communion with him in his Death and Resurrection, he and all his benefits are truly and verily made ours; his name is put upon us, we are justified from the guilt and punishment of sin, we are clothed with his righteousness, we are sanctified against the power of sin, having our nature healed and our hearts purified: we draw virtue from him to die to sin, and live to righteousness. By faith we are admitted into the Family of Abraham, become the children of light, are adopted to be the Sons of God, are made acceptable unto him as heirs of life, unto whom he willeth eternal blessedness, and do receive the promise of the Spirit. By faith we abide in Christ, and have perpetual communion with him. It is the loadstone that looks ever to Christ, as that doth towards the North: and as that draws iron unto it, so doth faith join our hearts to Christ perpetually. By faith we receive of Christ's fullness; have profession of him do live in him, and are so refreshed by him, that we shall never wither or feel scarcity. Water in a ditch may be dried up, so cannot the pond which is fed with continual springs. By faith Christ dwelleth, and ruleth in our hearts, we have access to the throne of grace, the temporal gifts of God are sanctified unto us, all spiritual blessings are continued and augmented in us, and we are kept to the salvation to be revealed. Faith overcometh the world; the manifold ill examples of the multitude, which like a raging stream bears down all before it, and the alluring sweet baits of the deceitful enchanting world, which are most strong and dangerous; even whatsoever within us or without us would draw from the law of God: it quencheth the fiery darts of the Devil, putteth Satan to flight, and keepeth us safe from the mighty adversary of our souls and salvation. Faith

obtaineth of God what we ask agreeable to his will, prevaieth with him, maketh the ordinances of God sweet and comfortable, receiveth what is proffered in the word and Sacraments, and maketh that we shall never be ashamed nor confounded. Faith increaseth knowledge, inflameth the heart with love stronger then death, hotter then coals of Juniper, which cannot be quenched with much water; stirreth up earnest sighs and groans, enlargeth the heart in thankfulness and holy admiration, bloweth and quickeneth zeal, renounceth Satan and all his works, crucifieth the flesh with the affections and lusts, contemneth the world, scorneth the base and transitory pleasures or profits, whereby it doth allure to with-draw from God, and despiseth the frowns, threats, and utmost wrongs that it can do, in respect of the love of God and Christ Jesus, or hazarding his part in the eternal happiness.

It armeth with patience and invincible constancy, breedeth peace of conscience and joy unspeakable, maketh valiant in the combat striving against sin, courageous in difficulties, confident in desperate dangers; is accompanied with holy security concerning the grace, protection and love of God, joined with a certain expectation of eternal salvation, and assurance that all things shall work together for best. It seasoneth prosperity, receiveth earthly blessings as pledges of God's special and Fatherly love, and lifeth them up to spiritual use: it sweetens afflictions, supporteth under them, teacheth to profit by them, beareth them meekly, expecteth deliverance, and triumpheth before the victory. It seeth things invisible, assureth above likelihood; sense or reason, allayeth perplexing thoughts and fears, and breaketh off temptations. It stayeth upon the word of promise, and is confident of things, to reason incredible, in nature impossible, to sense direct contrary, because God hath said them. It preserveth from ill means, laboreth conscionably in the duties of our callings, yet without covetousness

or distracting care; swalloweth the painfulness of honest labor, and obtaineth many temporal blessings and deliverances, yea and spiritual privileges for ourselves, for our posterity, and for others. Faith preserveth from falling, raiseth us again being fallen, maketh courageous and hardy in the profession of the Gospel, even to the loss of goods, liberty, and death itself: it sweeteneth the communion of Saints, linketh the heart in love to them that fear God, laboreth the conversion of them that go astray, and the building forward of them that be called, and the comfort of them that be distressed in soul or body; maketh profitably to those that be without, worketh righteousness, obtaineth a good report, and wholly resigneth itself to the will of God. And to conclude, by faith we are certified of our election, are made wise unto salvation, do stand in grace, are assured of prosperous success in what we go about, do learn how to want and how to abound, and possess all things when for the present we have nothing in hand: are enriched with many spiritual graces, are kept to our Heavenly inheritance, and shall be glorified in the life to come. These be the sound, comfortable, enduring fruits of faith, in which respect who can but say, that faith is an excellent grace? A rich jewel, a pearl of price, the Christian man's treasure? Faith is a principal thing, the merchandise thereof is better than silver, and the fruits thereof then fine gold. Without faith there is no plenty to man on earth: with faith there can be no want of anything that is good. For how can he lack any good thing, who hath God for his Father, Christ his Savior, the holy Ghost his sealer and Comforter, the Angels to guard him, Heaven his inheritance: who hath God's faithful promise confirmed by oath and seal, to secure him of all things needful, grace, comfort and earthly blessings, and is kept by the power of God unto salvation? But here it must be observed, that faith doth not effect and perform these things, by any

excellency, force, or efficacy of its own above other graces but in respect of the office whereunto it is assigned in the Covenant of grace. It is a cause only Instrumental, and that is attributed unto it, which the principal cause worketh. Faith justifies not as an act or quality, but as it receiveth Christ: faith purifieth not the heart of itself, but as it is the instrument whereby the Spirit worketh. Whatsoever we are made by faith, we are made it in Christ and whatsoever faith makes to be ours, it is also in Christ. Therefore faith maketh not God to be our God, but in Christ: nor us the children of God, but in Christ. And whatsoever grace is wrought in the heart of any man, it is the gift of God, the work of the holy Ghost: but faith is the Instrument whereby the Spirit doth more renew and purify our hearts.

Sect. 2. Of all creatures only Man is capable of saving or justifying faith: not the blessed Angels who never sinned; nor the evil Angels, who are shut up in prison, and reserved in chains of darkness against the day of judgment. The Saints in glory do enjoy immediate fellowship and communion with God by sight, and know most perfectly and most clearly: But the light of Justifying faith, which doth include and suppose imperfection, pertaineth to this life in which we are in the way moving to perfection, not yet attained unto perfect vision. So that faith is proper unto Man in this life, in his journey towards his perfect home and eternal habitation: but all men are not enriched with this precious gift of mercy, and rare jewel of grace. All men have not faith. Many are not so much as outwardly called, the sound of the Gospel hath not reached unto them: many that hear, understand not, be not affected with the truth: and in some that be affected, the word takes not kind rooting, is not well planted. Those to whom faith is given are described to be the elect of God, the sheep of Christ, and to be given of the Father unto Christ. The subject of Justifying

faith is man a sinner, called according to the purpose of God, acknowledging his offenses, and hungering and thirsting after mercy. For none but a sinner can acknowledge Christ for his Savior for he is the Savior of sinners. Faith in Christ for remission of sins, is necessary for them only who have offended: but every sinner cannot believe, everyone is not fit to receive the promise of mercy. The enemies of the Gospel of Christ, worldlings, hypocrites, and all in whom sin reigneth, can have no true faith in Christ: he only is fit to embrace mercy, who knoweth that he is lost in himself, and insatiably desires to be eased of the heavy burden of his sins. Faith is not a work natural, but supernatural, not of nature, but of grace, not of the power of our free-will, but of the efficacy of God's Spirit, whereby we answer to the effectual call of God, and come unto him, that we might be partakers of life eternal. The infusion of faith is necessarily precedent to the act of faith, and grace to believe is given before we lay hold upon Christ. And if saving-effectual calling be precedent to faith, the subject of living faith is man savingly called according to the purpose of God's will. We can teach no faith to salvation, but according to the rule of Christ; Repent and believe the Gospel; no remission of sins, but according to the like rule: But faith seeketh and receiveth pardon as it is proffered in the word of grace. Repentance is necessary to the pardon of sin, as a condition without which it cannot be obtained, not as a cause why it is given. If mercy should be vouchsafed to all indifferently, the grace of God should be a bolster to Mans sin; there should be no difference betwixt the just and unjust, the penitent and obstinate. Faith comes to Christ as a humble penitent petitioner, suing to the throne of grace for what is promised in the Gospel, and it receiveth according to the promise of mercy.

Sect. 3. The seat of faith is the heart, but the heart contrite, humbled, bewailing sin, denying it self, and affected with desire of remission of sins. As the stomach is the place in which meat is received; but it is necessary it be desirous of meat: So the heart is the place, where remission of sins is received and felt, but it must be an heart desirous of, and thirsting after pardon. With the heart man believeth. If the Mind and will be two distinct faculties of the soul, then justifying faith is resident in both, but principally in the will: because it assenteth to divine revelation as true, and embraceth the promises as much better than any contrary good, the world, the Devil, or flesh can present to prevent our choice of what it prescribeth for our saving health. For the word of promise not only containing truth, but offering good unto us, cannot fully be received with the understanding, but the will also must move towards it. And so faith is not only a knowledge or assent in the Mind but, a godly affection in the will, which doth go to, embrace, rest upon Christ or the grace offered in Christ. Therefore the nature of faith is described by words which signify to stay and roll ourselves upon God, to lean on him as one would lean upon a staff: and by faith we come unto Christ and receive him. It is objected, that one and the same virtue or grace cannot be in distinct powers and faculties of the soul, nor faith in distinct subjects. Whereunto several answers are made, First, that one and the same thing in diverse respects may be referred to diverse subjects, as these subjects are not altogether separated, but conjoined amongst themselves. So friendship is one moral virtue, and yet in the Mind and will both. Love and hatred is nothing but the affection of good or evil will unto a thing known in the understanding. Our Adversaries themselves place hope in the understanding and the will, attributing a double certainty unto it, one in respect of the understanding, another in respect of the will. And so faith

being one doth properly possess one subject, to-wit, the soul; but considered according to the two faculties thereof, it possesseth the Mind, as it understandeth and assenteth; the will, as it receiveth and embraceth the word of promise. Secondly it is answered, that saving faith doth presuppose knowledge and assent as the root and foundation: but formally it is an affection, towards the promise of grace, and seated in the heart. As the reasonable soul doth give life, sense and motion as inferior operations: so justifying faith doth know and assent, but as justifying it doth trust and rely upon the mercy of God in Jesus Christ. Thirdly, Justifying faith, or faith as it justifieth, is not one virtue, not any virtue but justifieth only as it makes us partakers of the righteousness of Christ; which it doth not by any dignity or excellency of its own, but in respect of the place and office which our merciful God hath freely and liberally granted unto it.

Now nothing hindereth why God should not give the name of faith both to assent in the understanding, and to affiance in the will, and require both to Justification. And that it is not a virtue as it justifieth, is manifest hereby, that we are justified by the act of faith, not by the habit of faith, as Divines popish and protestant confess. But if Mind and will be indeed but two names or titles of one and the same intellectual nature, as truth and goodness in matters moral differ only in degrees of apprehension, then there is no room for this objection. Not to dispute this point any further, this is manifest, that in Scripture the heart is taken for the whole soul, with all its powers and operations; as of understanding, willing and choosing, remembering or retaining in Mind and affecting, that the Scripture doth simply attribute to the heart knowledge, confidence and affection; and that the Scripture hath no peculiar words, whereby that philosophical distinction of Mind and will may be confirmed: and therefore according to the sentence

of Scripture, we may seat faith in the heart or reasonable soul and not trouble ourselves about the distinction of the faculties. If the Scripture mention this as an act of faith, To believe that Christ is the son of God, which is seated in the Mind; it must be remembered, that words of knowledge do together by connotation imply affection, much more words of belief: and therefore where we find to believe that Christ is the son of God, we must conceive this belief to contain confidence in the Son. Words of knowledge most usually import, not idle knowledge in the Mind, but true and unfeigned affections in the heart, which accompany that knowledge. Knowledge is the ground of confidence, and so it is put for confidence which it doth bring forth. The whole intellectual nature is the seat of faith and that faith which justifieth is well-rooted and taketh kindly in the soul, otherwise it could not season the whole lump, disperse it virtue into every affection, command every passion, and bring into subjection whatsoever doth make head against the power of godliness. Faith that is not well planted can neither soundly receive, nor firmly hold Christ, but by the allurements of the world, the lusts of the flesh, and assaults of Satan it is easily over-turned. The stony ground received the seed, but wanting good root it withered, and brought forth no fruit to ripeness. Whilest faith possesseth the castle of the soul, it can as easily overcome the assaults of the Flesh, the World, and the Devil, as honest subjects which hold the heart of the Kingdom, can vanquish and bring under the scattered forces of an enemy, that makes inroads upon the borders. But if the heart be taken up with worldly delights, or vain lusts be suffered to build their castle therein, then shall we be made a prey to Satan. The cares of the world and pleasures of this life choke the seed of life received, that it brings forth no fruit unto perfection.

Sect. 4. This faith well-rooted is common to all, and proper to them only who be called according to the purpose of God. All that be savingly-effectually called, and they only are partakers of the same faith in subject, object, kind, but not in number and degree. Every Believer hath a proper, singular, sincere, individual faith, in kind the same, but in number differing from the faith of others; as the faith of Peter was distinct from the faith of the other Disciples. The just doth live by his own faith: A special and particular faith is required in everyone that shall be saved. This particular faith is commended by the holy Ghost in particular faithful men and women: And when the faithful of age and discretion were admitted to Baptism, they professed particularly their faith in Christ. Health of body and such like outward blessings, may be conferred by God upon one for the faith of another. And the children of Christian parents are within the covenant for their parents faith, as the promise is made to the faithful and to their seed, and they receive it for themselves and their posterity. And generally the faith of one may help to obtain for another, so far as it moveth to pray for others. But remission of sins and salvation is not obtained without a proper and special faith in them that be of ripe yeas, and have the use of reason. God takes no pleasure in them who withdraw themselves by unbelief.

Sect. 5. The faith which is believed is one and the same, the grace whereby we believe supernaturally infused, the seat of faith a humbled and contrite heart, but the measure of faith is not equal or like in all. To some is given a greater measure of faith, to others a lesser: faith is more strong in this Christian, more weak in that. There is a great faith, and a little faith; a strong faith, and a weak faith. All living trees in an Orchard be not of one growth or fruitfulness: All men be not of one stature, estate, or age; but

some high, some low, some rich others poor; some strong to labor, others that must be borne or held up by the arms: and so it is in the Church of God amongst Christians. All good ground is not equal in yielding fruit, some returns a hundred-fold, some thirty-fold. Such perfection of faith is granted to no man in this life, that neither he nor any other can be more perfect therein. The faith of all the elect is sincere; the faith of some perfect in comparison of others: but absolutely the greatest faith is imperfect. Justifying faith supposeth imperfection, and is itself imperfect in us so long as we live in this world. It is imperfect extensively in regard of things to be believed; and intensively, in respect of confidence, wherewith we believe in Christ. We know nothing as we should, of those things which we know: and many things we are ignorant in, which we should know. We are like the blind man, whose eyes now opened, began to see men like trees. Look as children know not at all many things, they come to know afterward; so we: and look as they do not fully know those things which they know, but superficially; so is it with us in heavenly matters. Hence our confidence cannot be perfect. For those who know God best, trust him best: those who dimly know him, his goodness and truth, they can but weakly believe on him. In speculative knowledge pertaining to discourse they may far excel, who come short in confidence: but in certain, distinct, practical knowledge they are most excellent, that with most lively affiance do cleave unto the Lord. Again, the mysteries of faith are so profound, that in this life we cannot attain unto the understanding of them fully and perfectly, but have need to pray daily, that the eyes of our Mind may be opened, that we may more fully conceive of the things that pertain to the Kingdom of God. And if our eye be dim in sight, our hand is feeble in receiving. For our will is as much corrupt as the understanding: and it is easier to discern the truth, then

firmly to embrace it against all oppositions. The darkness of Mind is an impediment to full and perfect knowledge: the corruption of will, which is never wholly removed in this life, is a stop and let to perfect confidence. Faith groweth and increaseth by degrees, which is an argument, that in this life it never comes to the highest pitch of perfection: For that which is already complete in degree, needeth no augmentation. What Believer is there, who finds not a continual combat of faith against many temptations arising from his native ignorance, infidelity, diffidence, the wisdom of the flesh, his own sense and feeling, &c. which assaults against faith from within do argue the weakness, as the resistance of them demonstrates the truth of faith. The tree is known by its fruit, and the goodness of a cause by the effects it produceth. But the fruits of faith are imperfect; as love, joy, and holiness. The faith of Abraham was great and excellent, but not perfect in degree: He was strong in faith, and doubted not of infidelity, but of infirmity he doubted: His faith remained invincible, though often assaulted, but now and then it was shaken.

Sect. 6. The strongest faith is imperfect, but the measure of faith is so divided by divine providence, that to none who are called according to his purpose, is given less then what may suffice to their salvation. The measure of faith containeth this in it, that it be a sufficient portion for everyone. God in his wise providence giveth the greatest measure of faith to them, who are to undergo the greatest combats. He hath appointed some for the example of others, and in them he propoundeth to the world certain tokens of his glory and virtue: and therefore he bestoweth upon them a more abundant measure of faith, not that they might acquire by it more salvation, but that they might singularly serve for the illustrating of the glory of God, and be an help, comfort and support to the weak. In the body human the bones have more

strength than the flesh, not that there is more life in them but that they might sustain the weak flesh: so here. There is no member of the body so weak, if it be endued with the Spirit of life, which is not as well a true and lively member of the body, as they which are better and more excellent: so the weakest Believer is a lively member of Christ, as truly as they that are more strong in faith.

Sect. 7. The degrees of true and lively faith may be considered according to the diverse growth, which God bringeth his children unto, and the diverse measure of grace; which God bestoweth upon them; according to the time wherein they have been trained up in the school of Christ, the means God hath vouchsafed for their building forward, their experiments of his love, and their care to use the means and employ their talent. God giveth not the same measure of grace to all Believers: all be not of equal standing in Christ's school, nor of equal pains to improve what they have received, nor live under like powerful means of grace, and enjoy like helps of increase in strength. In nature no man wonders to see a grown man stronger then a new borne babe; a plant set in a mellow and fertile garden thrive faster than that which groweth in a more barren soil; a Merchant that is wary and industrious to employ his stock, to increase more then he that is remiss; an old beaten Soldier to be more expert then one who hath newly put on his armor: In grace the same holds good; for faith thriveth according to the time, means, experiments, and one we take to improve our talent and preserve our faith. The degrees of faith may fitly be drawn into four Heads. For there is a weak faith as it were in the tender bud; a faith somewhat grown up: strong faith, and full assurance.

Faith is weak four ways: First, in knowledge, when a Believer is but a babe in understanding, ignorant of many profitable things needful to be

learned and practiced. Him that is weak in faith, receive you, but not to doubtful disputations. The Disciples had true faith, when they were very weak in knowledge. For though they believed that Christ was the Messiah, yet they were ignorant of his Death and Resurrection, and Ascension. When he told them of his sufferings, they understood not that saying; when Mary told them of his Resurrection, they believed it not; when he spake of his tarrying with them a little, and then of going unto his Father, they knew not what it meant.

Secondly, faith is weak in assent, when a Christian gives credit to the principles of doctrine and promises of life, not only as true and certain, but as much better than life itself, yet not without much reasoning and disputing in himself. Lord, I believe, help mine unbelief.

Thirdly, In confidence it is feeble, when the Believer rolls himself upon Christ and the promises of mercy made in him, purposing to adhere and cleave unto him, though he feel that he hangeth but weakly, discern not the certainty of his estate, nor the stableness of God's promises, cannot assure himself that he doth believe, is soon discouraged in troubles, and ready to faint if help come not presently. But when the mind is perplexed with temptations, fears, and doubts, and the heart ready to faint, not able with clear evidence to receive the promises, yet then this true Believer is habitually resolved (not without great dread and wavering) that it is good to trust and wait upon the Lord. And this must be remembered for certain, that howsoever faith be often shaken, oppressed with fears, or turned aside with oppositions that be made against it, for a time, as the Disciples did all forsake our Savior and flee, when he was apprehended; yet the weakest faith is advisedly resolved to stick fast unto the promises of life, as much better than the pleasures or profits of this life, and to embrace Christ

notwithstanding any opposition by allurements or terrors that the Devil, the World, or the Flesh can make against it.

Fourthly, In the fruits and effects thereof faith is weak; as in the sense of God's love, assurance of his grace and favor, power to subdue unruly passions, contempt of the world, patience and joy in tribulation, and the constant, lively practice of holiness. Ordinarily this is the state of Believers at their first conversion; and who can expect it should be otherwise: We do not look that a new borne babe should be able to go alone; if strength come with age, we think it is well. And thus it fareth with them also, who are not conscionable to gain knowledge, subdue their corruptions, cherish faith, nourish the motions of God's Spirit, pray earnestly, watch narrowly, get resolution of their doubts, tie up their passions, renew their repentance and purpose to better obedience.

But some there are, whom God in special manner doth privilege at one time, and in one day to receive that grace and gift of assurance, which others are long laboring and traveling for, before they attain it. As our Savior Christ pronounceth of Zacchaeus, This day is this Man become the Son of Abraham, and salvation is come into his house. So Lydia her heart was opened, that she attended to the preaching of Paul: the Jailor, and the Jews who were pricked in conscience at the preaching of Peter, were quickly comforted after they were thrown down. The like may be said of Matthew, and the thief who was converted upon the Cross.

Again, faith may be weak or small in one particular, when it is great and strong in another. The measure of knowledge may be scant, when affiance is strong, according to that a man doth know, as in Rahab: where there is small assurance of pardon, there strength of faith may discover itself by striving against doubting, bitter complaining for want of feeling comfort,

fervent seeking to be settled in believing, earnest longing after and insatiable desire of grace, high prizing and valuation of Jesus Christ, and mercy promised in him; self-denial, contempt of the world, care to search out the sin that may possibly hinder comfort, and expel it, continual watchfulness and holy jealousy lest they should be deceived, and faithful laboring to subdue corruption. These and such like fruits of sound, lively, well-rooted affiance may be seen in many that be troubled with manifold fears and doubts of their own salvation, though they themselves do not ever perceive, how God hath enriched them.

Sect. 8. A weak and strong faith differ not in special nature and plantation, but in degree: and the fruits of weak and strong faith are the same, though not in like measure, fullness and comfort. More distinctly the benefits of the weakest lively faith be these: By it the Believer is firmly and inseparably knit unto Christ, as a living member unto the Head. A true Believer, though never so weak, doth possess Christ with all his benefits, and all sufficiency in him (for knowledge of faith is never without possession.) And so he is justified, sanctified, adopted, and made free by Christ. By faith he apprehendeth things invisible, he doth see God, and is made wise unto salvation. Eternal life is already begun in every Believer weak and strong, even that life which shall never fade. The weakest faith gives will and ability in some sort to walk uprightly, and to live honestly in the sight of God and Man: it is also strong through the power of Christ to vanquish Satan and overcome the world, with whatsoever is therein that maketh head against the sovereignty of grace. The weakest faith is ever joined with the gift of perseverance, and cannot utterly be broken off. And weak faith, if found, will grow and increase, as a child now feeble in his joints, may in time become strong by nourishment, and able to run about. It is no wisdom

therefore for any man to content himself with a little faith, though the weakest faith shall never fail, nor be overcome by Satan, seeing God hath provided and doth afford means, whereby we may be built forward. It is a shame to be a man in years and a babe in knowledge: to be an Infant in faith, when God vouchsafeth time and means of better stature. Who would be poor that might be rich? Weak that might be strong? Who would live in fear and care, that might rest confident and secure? Who would walk pensively, that might continually rejoice and triumph? A weak faith will bring to salvation, but a strong faith is necessary for a Christian, that he may overcome with more ease, fight more manfully, endure with patience, and obey with cheerfulness. The least dram of faith is more precious than gold that perisheth, better than the whole world, who, that knoweth the price and value of such a jewel, would not desire and labor to be furnished with it, and grow rich therein. In earthly things a full estate pleaseth best: in heavenly shall we be contented to live from hand to mouth, and scarce that, when we might with better allowance enjoy plenty? All living things have an appetite to seek and desire nourishment for increase unto perfect stature in their kind: Herbs and plants suck juice out of the earth; new borne babes suck the mother breast. All true graces are still growing from a gram of Mustard seed to a great tree; and lively faith doth covet increase from feeble state to better growth, from growth to strength, from strength to full assurance.

Sect. 9. Faith somewhat grown is, when the Believer is better acquainted with the doctrine of salvation, giveth more full, absolute and unlimited assent to the word of truth than formerly, cleaveth faster to the promises of mercy, in Jesus Christ, is better stablished in the practice of godliness, and hath obtained some settled boldness, and confidence at sometimes, though

he be still ignorant of many privileges which he might enjoy, and of which he might be assured by the grace and bounty of the Lord; yea through weakness he wavereth often, doubteth again and again, and becometh like the smoking flax.

Strong faith excelleth the former in certain knowledge, firm and full assent, lively confidence joined with sincere purpose and resolution of impartial and constant obedience. This Believer is better acquainted with the promises of God temporal and spiritual to rely upon them, he can wrestle earnestly in prayer, is not discouraged if for a time his suite be denied, will take no repulse, is courageous in dangers, sharpened by difficulties, walketh on constantly in a godly course, and holdeth the confident assurance of his salvation more strongly, and hath it more usually than the two former. But yet he hath not learned in every state and thing so to live by faith, but that he is often shaken and troubled with his corruptions, distracted with cares, and kept under with other incumbrances more then he need, if he had attained to that measure of faith, which in this life many have obtained by the gift of God. Full assurance is, when the Believer hath obtained full assurance of understanding in the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ and assuredly believeth in Christ for salvation, and is certainly persuaded that all other promises spiritual and temporal do belong unto and shall be made good unto him in due season, though in appearance all things go clean contrary: and readily followeth the Lord's commandment, though repugnant to flesh and blood, cross to carnal reason, contrary to earthly pleasure and contentment. This degree of faith is not gotten at once, nor at first ordinarily, but by degrees, after good time and continuance in the use of the means, after many experiences of God's love and favor, after manifold trials and combats, and the long continued

practice of holiness; many never attain unto it in this life: but it is the duty of every Christian to labor after good establishment and full assurance in the faith.

As faith is more excellent, so are the fruits that issue from it: The stronger our faith the more firm and close is our union with Christ. A weak believer is as truly knit to Christ as the strong, but not so nearly and fast. The increase of faith makes our Communion with Christ more sweet and comfortable than before. For the more steadfastly we believe, the clearer apprehension have we of the remission of all our sins; the more virtue and strength draw we from Christ to kill and crucify our corruptions; the greater is our peace and joy in the sense of God's special favor and the more constantly enjoyed with an increase thereof. Fullness of faith breeds fullness of peace and joy which passeth understanding. The firmer our faith, the more free is our access with boldness and confidence to the throne of grace, the more fervently and confidently can we pray Abba Father, the better success do we find in prayer and the more quietly do we wait till the vision come, for it will come and will not lie. Assurance of faith doth enable with more ease to overcome the world, to contemn the pleasures of sin, to possess the soul in patience in hard and sore pressures, to curb unruly passions, to tread Satan under feet, to break through all worldly difficulties and to run with cheerfulness the race that is set before us. The weak believer creeps forward in the way to Heaven, but it is with much difficulty; He hath much ado with himself, he is perplexed with fears, frightened with troubles, discouraged with want of means; he is weary, feeble, panteth, maketh many a stand, and slippeth now and then. It is far better with him, who is settled, stablished and rooted in the knowledge and love of the truth, and is assured of God's mercy; hath interest in all the promises of grace, and

can lay actual claim unto them. For he contemneth the temptations of multitudes, customs, examples; he despiseth the offers of profits, pleasures, honors esteeming it greater riches to suffer affliction with the people of God, then to enjoy the pleasures of sin. As for reproach, trouble, persecution he shrinks not at them, for his heart is fixed and trusteth in the Lord. In dangers he is confident, through means of deliverance appear not, because he seeth in God who is invisible, and resteth upon his faithful promise, that cannot deceive. His affections are seasoned, his heart is in Heaven, his love to God is stronger than death, life itself is not dear unto him, that he may finish his course with joy. If at any time he tread awry through over-sight or infirmity, the stronger is his faith, the sooner doth he arise again, renew his repentance, and embrace the promises of mercy afresh. Let us then strive to attain unto the best measure of faith, and to excel ourselves. In earthly things men are willing to better their condition: and shall we be careless in heavenly things to provide well for ourselves. In fair weather the Traveler will carry his Cloak, because the season may change before his return: A strong faith is ever of use, most needful in temptations of long continuance, and grievous to be borne: and though now we live in peace, we know not how soon we may be called forth to trial, what service we may be put unto or how the Lord will exercise us.

Sect. 10. But here we must remember, the strongest faith hath infirmities under which it groaneth and is subject to temptations both on the right hand and on the left, even strong temptations whereby it is shaken for a time. Job's faith was shaken, when he cursed the day of his birth; Moses his Faith quailed at the rock: Elijah, that famous believer who had raised the dead, would be dead in a passion. Long delays did both try and shake the faith of Abraham. In one and the same believer faith is sometimes greater and

stronger, another time more weak and infirm: stronger in a great assault, weaker in a less. The gift of faith is without repentance, and being once kindly planted in the heart, there it remaineth forever: but in regard of greatness or meanness it hath many alterations increasing's and decreasing's; yea, the strong believer doth sometimes shrink and draw back like a coward in small temptations, and the weak doth quit himself valiantly in great trials. The strong must not be careless, as if he should never doubt again or be brought into straits: The weak must not be dismayed, as if they should utterly be overthrown: Both weak and strong must look for trials, and be careful to preserve and grow in faith. For the state of grace in this life is such as hath still relics of sin dwelling with it, and the Devil and the world still lay siege against the castle of our faith to batter it, and prevail much when they find us secure and careless, but are prevented by diligence and watchfulness the Lord assisting.

CHAP. XI. Of the right plantation of faith, and means whereby it is confirmed.

SECT. 1. The necessary use and excellent fruits of faith, should incite men if they want to seek it with all diligence, and if they be partakers of that heavenly gift to hold and keep it, to increase and grow therein. And this the rather, because we have many encouragements to believe. God doth beseech men to be reconciled unto him: Should not this wonderful clemency of God encourage us with boldness and confidence to come unto him? Christ himself doth graciously invite all that be poor, needy, weary and heavy laden to come unto him: and the Lord maketh a general proclamation of liberty to all distressed souls that will come and receive it, without exception of any in particular: which should the rather affect, if we consider who it is that proclaimeth, invite h, beseecheth, namely, God, who is able to help, and ready to forgive and succor. If a covetous man should offer us any great kindness, we might doubt of performance, because it is contrary to his nature but it is not so with our God; his name is gracious, and his nature is to be faithful in performance, and true in offer and promising. In the covenant that God of his rich grace and mercy hath made

with his Church and people sealed with Sacraments, and confirmed by oath, remission of sins secret and open, great and small, of what quality soever, is promised and assured to them that repent and believe. And when life and salvation is promised to them that will receive it by faith, no man is excluded from that mercy, but he that shuts forth himself by infidelity. We have a Savior, who came into the world to save sinners, and is able to deliver us out of the hands of all our enemies, his redemption being both precious and plentiful. And therefore though the multitude and grievousness of our sins should increase our repentance, yet they should not diminish our faith, and diligence in seeking assurance of forgiveness. For though our debt was never so great, our surety Christ Jesus hath paid it to the utmost farthing. The Lord who is best acquainted with his own love, merc e, and compassion, and knoweth what is pleasing and acceptable unto him, hath straightly charged and commanded us to believe in him, and believing will bestow upon us eternal life according to promise. And can there be any fraud in God's word? Or danger in yielding obedience to his Commandment? What need we fear to commit our souls to him, who is able to keep them, and hath bound himself to save them, if we rely upon him? Our Faith is directed to God in and through Jesus Christ our near kinsman, who hath taken our nature, and is become flesh of our flesh. Though we feared some great man, yet were he married to our house, very near us, this circumstance would animate us not a little: the same should we think of our God, married as aforesaid to our flesh. Christ our Savior and high Priest ever liveth, to appear in heaven before his Father, and to make intercession for us. The Father, who hath committed all judgment to the Son, hath given unto him power to remit and pardon sin; and he as our surety, having all our debt laid upon him, hath by one oblation of himself once offered, purchased

for us eternal redemption; and by virtue of his obedience hath received for us, whatsoever he distributeth unto us. By believing we glorify God both in his truth, power, wisdom, love, grace and mercy, whom before we dishonored by our sins. For the grace of God is manifested by faith in Jesus Christ, in the declaration and acknowledgment whereof standeth the chief praise and glory of the Lord, as the last end of all his works. Mercy and compassion in Man is but as the drop of a bucket in comparison of that huge Ocean of grace that is to be found in our God. But God requires that we should forgive our Brother seventy times seven times, if he did repent after he had trespassed against us: and will not our God, who exacteth such compassion in us, be much more ready to extend mercy unto us, if we sue unto him. There is no difficulty so great either in respect of sin or of the means &c, but it hath been overcome by everyone of the Saints, which is our encouragement to seek faith, that we might be healed.

Sect. 2. Now the knowledge of God and Christ supposed without which there can be no faith, the means for the right planting of faith be these.

First, serious meditation of our miserable estate by nature, the multitude and heinousness of our sins, and how deep stain sin hath made in the soul. The Physician is welcome to the sick patient: the guilty person esteems his pardon. Hunger causeth men to taste their meat: and mercy is pleasant to him that knows his need of mercy.

Secondly, learn and consider what promises be made in the Gospel, and to whom Christ offereth himself; even to the thirsty, weary, laden, and burdened; to them that be stung in conscience, parched with sin, that have neither sap nor fruit of grace. To them Christ offereth himself, and becomes a suiter, that if they will come unto him, he will ease and refresh, enrich and comfort them. Ho everyone that thirsteth come ye to the waters. Let

everyone that is a thirst, come unto me, and drink. If any be oppressed with the weight of sin, him doth the Lord entreat and persuade to come for ease: If any be confounded in conscience of his own wretchedness and sin, to him the Lord calleth in the Gospel, Come, and let thy soul delight in fatness. Men of this world labor to match with such in marriage, as be rich and virtuous: but Christ doth prefer love to such as be poor, that he might make them rich; filthy, that he might make them beautiful; in distress, that he might comfort them; base, that he might make them honorable; guilty, that he might acquit them; naked, that he might clothe them.

Thirdly, Ponder and weigh who it is that maketh this liberal and free promise, even God himself, who is able and willing, and faithful to perform what he promiseth of his rich grace and unspeakable mercy. All these are clear and manifest for the truth of them, but we have need oft to set them before us for our use, to encourage us the more boldly and sincerely to rely upon Christ. To this end specially, are these testimonies of God's Power, Mercy, and Truth so often repeated in the Scriptures, that we might have them ever before us, to uphold us against our doubting's and fears, whereof our nature is full. The things promised in the Gospel are unlikely in reason, opposite to sense and feeling, too great and excellent, as Satan and our distrustful hearts will suggest, to be conferred upon such vile and filthy creatures as we be, who have so many ways dishonored God, and have such a load of sin lying still upon us; For the overcoming of which temptation, we must look up to him that hath made the promise; his grace, faithfulness, and power; and keep them in our eye continually, rousing up our souls to believe against sense and feeling, reason and likelihood, because God is faithful and cannot deny himself; gracious, and will not cast us off for our unworthiness; great in might, able to do whatsoever he will, and willing to

perform with his hand, whatsoever cometh out of his mouth. We must say to our souls, The Lord of his grace invites thee a poor, needy, miserable, self-condemned wretch to come unto Jesus Christ, and of the same grace hath promised to accept thee if thou do come, to heal thy soars, to forgive thy sins; come therefore, behold, he calleth thee: reason may be deluded, sense is deceitful, but the Word of the Lord endureth forever: Thou hast his faithful promise for thy security, dispute no more, but draw near with confidence.

Fourthly, It is very needful again and again to consider what excellent things are promised, and so raise the heart to an high prizing and valuation of them. The wise Merchant doth not buy the pearl, till he know it to be of excellent price, or better than any price. Great things are eagerly sought upon probable hopes: The mere possibility of obtaining some great and extraordinary good, is of marvelous force in swaying men's actions. And if men consider seriously what rare, surpassing, precious things be promised to them that come unto Jesus Christ, and rest upon him, what shall withhold them from believing? Were we certainly persuaded, that everlasting life, full laden with all the fruits of true life, joy, peace, and all choicest pleasures, without any annoyance, should be conferred upon them that believe in Jesus Christ, would we not hang close, and stick fast, and not suffer the pleasures or profits of this transitory life, to divide us from him. The reason why we strive so slackly to believe, and be so dull in God's service, and faint in trouble, is, because our hearts be not holden with the serious consideration of that kingdom, joy and glory, which God hath prepared for them that believe, and cleave unto him.

Fifthly, It is also needful to deny ourselves, our desires, lusts and affections; to make over all our interest in our lives, or whatsoever is dear

unto us; inure our hearts calmly to the heat and opposition, though of dearest friends, and the reproaches and reviling's of men though abject and vile. This our Savior lays down as a fundamental principle, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. He that loveth Father or Mother more than me, is not worthy of me: and he that loveth Son or Daughter more than me, is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. The necessity of this resolution he more fully sets out unto us in two parables, of a builder that must be able to count his cost and charges, and means to defray them, before he take that work in hand; otherwise to begin to build, being unable to make an end, were to lay the foundation of his disgrace, in the loss of his cost and pains: And a Prince, who before he undertake war, must have sure trial of his own ability and skill to discover his enemies strength, otherwise to bid him battle, were rashly to provoke an enemy to his own loss and danger. The conclusion of these inductions is this, So likewise, whosoever he be of you, that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my Disciple. The Merchant that would purchase the pearl of price, must sell all that he hath to buy it; He must sell his sins, (which is properly all we have of our own) and renounce his interest in the world, and whatsoever natural contentment he might promise himself in the things of this world. The meaning is not, that rich men must forgo their wealth, and betake themselves to voluntary poverty; for riches well used be great instruments of doing good: But they must cast the world out of their affections, and make over their interest in whatsoever is most dear unto them: they must prefer the kingdom of Heaven before the whole world, and therefore renounce both themselves, and all the desires of the flesh, that nothing may hinder the enjoying of so rich a treasure. Christ doth make

love unto us, and by many fair, sweet and precious promises doth allure and entice us to embrace him, but will be received by way of Matrimonial covenant; we must forsake all base and carnal delights, cast out of the heart whatsoever we formerly accounted precious in the world, cleave unto him only, and be contented with those spiritual good things, which he promiseth unto us. Christ hath never due esteem with us, unless for his sake we withdraw our hearts from all the riches, delights, honors and profits of the world, and deny ourselves, that in all things we might be conformable unto his will and pleasure. What are we better then harlots, so long as the world or the delights thereof, lusts or passions possess the heart, and divide it from Christ? Roots, though of trees, can go no deeper than the rock or stone: nor can the Word of life sink deeper into the heart, then unto the roots of his natural desires or affections: which unrenounced, hinder the right taking and kindly spreading of it. The cares of this world and voluptuous living choke the seed of the word, after it hath taken some rooting, that it brings forth no fruit unto ripeness. Therefore that the word of the kingdom may take kindly and fructify in us, we must cast up our accounts beforehand, what we can be content to forgo for Christ's sake, and renounce the pleasures and delights of the World, giving up ourselves entirely to Jesus Christ, in all things to be directed and guided by him, inuring ourselves quietly to bear reproach, disgrace and contempt for his sake, and watching heedfully in prosperity, that the world creep not into our affection, and privily steal away our hearts from him. And this we shall do the more freely, if we attentively consider what excellent and incomparable treasures of delight, joy, and comfort are to be found in Jesus Christ, over and above all the world can promise or afford. Should a good husband be offered some goodly royalty, upon condition he would forsake his base tenement or hard

rented lease, when once he perceived the profit of the exchange, you need not use arguments to persuade him. Should some great Noble-man make suite of love to a mean personage, upon condition she would forsake her base drudgery for the honors and delights of a palace, the motion would be accepted. And if we seriously weigh that the Lord Jesus calleth us to forsake the flesh-pots of Egypt, and alienate our interest in the world, and the flesh with all their appurtenances, that we might be enriched with heavenly, ever-enduring pleasures, in comparison whereof all earthly contentment's are but dung and dogs-meat; that he invites us to cast away our harlotry delights, that he might marry us unto himself, and entitle us unto his everlasting kingdom, it will not be grievous to make this exchange. But here it must be remembered, that it is not the possession of earthly things, or delight in them, that is forbidden, but that possession and delight in them, which withholdeth us from resigning ourselves unto Christ, and seeking after the promised land withal the heart and all the soul. It is not the actual abandoning of riches, honor, or other contentment's of this life, which our Savior requires: but the dispossessing of the heart of such base delights, that the whole heart may be set upon heavenly things, and not with-drawn by secret reservation of special desires for other purposes. And being thus disposed, we receive Christ with well-rooted affiance, and cleave to the mercy of God, as much better than life itself.

Sect. 3. Faith kindly planted must be regarded seriously and carefully confirmed. For Satan useth all means to weaken faith, yea, quite to subvert and overthrow it. If a house begins to shrink or reel of one side, will we not put under some shore to prop it up? Or if any man questions the Title of Land we have purchased, will we not search Records, and use means to strengthen it? The malice of Satan in seeking by all means to batter down

our faith, is sufficient to show the excellency thereof, and to awaken us to a continual careful regard to preserve and increase it. In this life we are subject to many trials that require strength of faith to undergo them. The world, by reason of our continual employment in it, is apt to creep into the heart, and insensibly to steal the affections from the eager pursuit of heavenly things, which calleth upon us for more than ordinary care to increase our desires of grace, and moderate them in transitory things. He who will have a plant to thrive in a ground dry, barren, and unkindly for it, must strive much, because his soil will not do further, then it is forced: so he that will make fire burn in green moist wood, must follow it with blowing: thus to get faith to thrive in our natures, which are as apt to the weeds of diffidence and vice, as averse from faith and every true virtue, we must strive with them, and offer violence unto them. He who doth row against the stream, must plie his oar, or he will go down apace: so it is here, we go against the stream of corrupt nature, so far as we go in faith or grace. Our daily and continual weakness of faith which we find in assenting unto and receiving most objects of faith and promises of God, when it is encountered with temptations: Our ordinary failings in the practice of holy duties, and due ordering of our affections, which cannot be without a precedent defect of that faith which only can firmly unite us unto Christ doth sufficiently manifest how feeble our belief is in the special mercies of God towards us in Jesus Christ, which being the highest object is the hardest to be apprehended, and can never be separated from firm assent unto every precept of God, as much better than any incompatible good. And if men take food and physic to strengthen their bodies, because they are frail: must we not labor to confirm our weak and feeble faith? The labor bestowed about this most gainful and beautiful grace, is so far from tedious

toile, that it is the solace of a Christian heart, and the pleasure thereof more sweet than any pleasure that can be taken in all the pastimes of the World. For by that means we grow more and more familiarly and better acquainted with the mind and purpose of God towards us, we enjoy sweet communion and fellowship with him, we are made ready for our latter end at one time as well as another, and are armed to go well and cheerfully through with the affairs of the day, believing that God will guide and bless us. And of this also we may be well assured, that according to our strength of faith the lively fruits of holy obedience shall be found in us, and as our faith groweth, so doth sound peace, joy, and safety; strength against corruption, ability to resist temptations, poverty of spirit, meekness, purity, hunger and thirst after righteousness, mercifulness, and pleasure in the means whereby faith is preserved and confirmed, increased, and that from time to time, more and more. But as for such as will not settle themselves to nourish their faith with care and diligence, they deprive themselves of much inward peace, which they might enjoy, and make their lives uncomfortable to themselves, unprofitable to others: They lay themselves open to many offenses, which by this exercise they might prevent; and they go on, either in unsavory lightness and carnal joy, which doth deceive them, or else in unprofitable care and worldly sorrow, which will disquiet them. And when they neglect the fashioning of Christ in their hearts, and so truly to put him on in their daily conversation, they become unprofitable in their lives, offensive in their carriage; and the Devil weakeneth and holdeth back sundry (which were coming on) by their example, thinking themselves well in the case they are in, rather than they should be in following them, unless they saw some beauty and excellency in their lives, more than in themselves.

Sect. 4. The means whereby faith is confirmed and strengthened are these, and such like:

First, Daily to account it our best portion, richest jewel, most precious treasure and chiefest happiness in this life: which if we do, our hearts will be ever upon it, our fear will be usually lest we should lose it, and we shall think it most necessary to regard and look unto it, whatsoever we have besides it worth the looking after. And otherwise, every small occasion will hinder us, every fond delight carry us away, and every trifle take up the heart, much more our earnest and weighty affairs and business, to which most men think, that all exercises of religion ought to give place. Things of worth are disesteemed if their value be not known: and trifles are looked after when they be over-valued. A true esteem of the price, excellency and use of faith, the profit and comfort of it, will raise an earnest continual care to preserve and keep it.

Secondly, We must labor daily, not only to loath those things which are evil in themselves, but also to be very sober and moderate in our lawful labors and delights, desires and affections to things transitory, remembering what our Savior Christ saith, One thing is necessary; otherwise Satan who can change himself into an Angel of Light, will fill our hearts and heads with swarms of evil lusts, noisome delights, cares and distractions: which will draw our Minds from that which they ought most to mind and think upon. We must be heedful in this, not only that the world draw us not to increase our wealth by wicked or unjust means, but that it creep not insensibly into our affections, and so by degrees not observed, breed great distempers in the soul. Fear of want, joy and delight in what we justly and honestly possess, climbing into the heart, and by little and little getting head, do suck away that virtue, whereby the word sown should receive

strength and increase, and alienate part of the soul from God. Herein therefore we must be circumspect, gaging our hearts and trying them to the bottom, weaning ourselves from these delights, raising our souls to more spiritual and heavenly joys, and laboring that our desire of grace and care to exercise ourselves in all good works do grow, as the world comes in upon us.

Thirdly, Walking according to the rules of faith in humbleness of mind, meekness, purity, mercy, longsuffering, and in all good works, improving what we have received to the glory of God, is a notable means to confirm and strengthen faith. Faith brings forth good works, and good works increase faith. Faith hath his fruit created in it: but the better fruit it bringeth forth, the faster it groweth. Faith is a fruitful Mother that gives life to holiness: and good works, as a kind Daughter, help to support and sustain the Mother. Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

Fourthly, A daily viewing of our sins, which by examination we have found out, is available hereunto: that being humbled truly, and brought to account basely of ourselves, we may be kept from fullness and loathing of that death of Christ, the sweetness whereof we cannot taste or relish as we should, except we feel the tartness and bitterness of our sins.

Fifthly, A fifth means is daily and oft to send up strong prayers to God for it, and purposely to separate ourselves from all other things in the most convenient manner that we can, to think deeply of his unspeakable goodness, mercy, truth, fatherly affection and tender compassion in Jesus Christ; remembering withal what manifold, sweet and gracious promises he hath made unto us in the Gospel of his Son, whereby we come to have more near acquaintance with God's nature, his mind, and purpose towards us.

And if we believe an honest man so much the more, because he often goeth over it, when he affirmeth this or that unto us: the serious meditation of God's promises reiterated again and again, must be available to strengthen faith, and fashion the Image of God in us more and more.

Sixthly, To these must be joined ordinary and reverent hearing of the glad tidings of salvation, which is the key whereby God doth open and soften our iron hearts: and an holy use of the Sacraments, whereby this heavenly truth, which we have already received, is yet further sealed up to our consciences. These ordinances we must frequent with an appetite. Sound and healthful bodies receive nourishment from their food, and suck vigor out of it for growth and strength: Lively faith feedeth on the Word of life, and increaseth. Though the Word be immortal seed, which corruptible food is not, yet in this they are like, that look as bodily food doth not put to the body, all that substantial strength and latitude which belongeth to it; so the food of the Word doth not at one time augment the soul, with all length and depth of Knowledge, Faith, Hope, Love, Justice, Temperance, which it is to be brought unto. In which regard, as living bodies need daily food that they might grow unto perfection of nature, so souls having grace, have need to go over with the use of the means, as well as others, that the divine nature may be more and more enlarged, getting up as the light of the Sun doth in the air which it enlighteneth.

Seventhly, It is good to call to mind the experience of the faith and joy which we have had at any time before; remembering that former comforts are as a bill obligatory under God's hand to assure that he will not forsake us. For whom God loveth, he loveth to the end; because he is unchangeable, the same forever, which consideration may serve to settle us in assurance of

God's love towards us, more than a child can be of his Fathers good-will, or a wife of her bodily Husbands favor, for they are mutable.

Eighthly, Observe the opportunities, when it pleaseth God in special manner to draw nigh unto us, and make use of them. God visiteth his children sometimes in tender compassion, and knocketh at the door of their hearts, inviting them to divine and heavenly communication with him. Sometimes he inclineth their souls to fresh sorrow for sin, sometimes he refresheth them with more lively apprehension of the joys of Heaven, sometimes they feel the motions of the Spirit quick and lively upon what occasions soever, or in what manner it shall please God to offer himself unto us, it stands us upon to make use of that for our quickening, to nourish the motions of his Spirit, and by fervent Prayer to entreat the continuance of his presence.

Ninthly, Faith increaseth by exercise, and groweth by continual use. If we learn to live by faith in matters of this life, both when we have, and when we want the means, and rest upon God for success in our lawful callings without distracting care, we shall with more facility and ease depend upon the free promises of grace for mercy and forgiveness.

CHAP. XII. Of the temptations whereby Satan seeketh to batter down our faith, and how he may be resisted.

SECT. 1. The Devil knoweth right well, that faith is the band whereby we are knit unto Christ; the shield whereby we quench the fiery darts of the Devil, the ground-work of a godly life, and the safe castle of a Christian soul: If faith be weakened, our zeal cooleth, our courage abateth, our life is tedious, our Prayers faint, the exercises of Religion uncomfortable, and all the graces of God's Spirit pine and languish. Also by doubting and distrust we dishonor God, lay open our hearts to temptations, discourage others and tie our own hands that we cannot fight against our deadly enemies. For these causes Satan endeavors by all means to hinder, as the kindly taking so the growth of faith, that such as he cannot hold in the chains of sin, he might make their lives dead, wearisome, unprofitable by doubting and discomfort.

First, Satan suggesteth, that it is horrible presumption for such vile sinners and worthless wretches to persuade themselves of God's special love and favor. And to this end he spareth not to set forth the majesty, justice, and

purity of the Lord, that it might strike the greater terror into the wounded conscience.

For the repelling of this temptation, it is to be known and remembered that God's mercy, favor, promises, and benefits are all free, which he vouchsafeth, offereth, bestoweth, without any respect of worthiness or deserts, of his mere grace and undeserved love in Jesus Christ. And therefore as when we are most worthy in our own conceit, there is no reason we should presume the more; so when we find ourselves unworthy, there is no cause why we should hope the less. For the ground of our confidence is the promise of free and undeserved mercy made in Christ Jesus to miserable forlorn sinners, who see and acknowledge themselves to be more vile than the mire in the street. And this sets forth the praise of God's mercy so much the more, that it is afforded to such base objects, who deserve nothing: but to be cast forth and trodden underfoot. Should the prisoner doubt of his Princes mercy when he heareth his pardon read, and seeth it sealed, because he hath merited no such kindness? Again, it is good to call to mind and seriously to consider what strong encouragements we have to receive the promises; and how we are not more desirous to believe, than God is we should so do. For God doth through love entreat us, of friendship counsel us, and of his authority being able to perform commandeth us; as if he would hereby show that none hath authority to hinder or forbid the same. And therefore we must be warned, to beware of all occasions that may darken or put out the light of our confidence; as reasoning or questioning against ourselves for yielding to this truth lately received &c.

Sect. 2. Satan will here object to the weak and timorous Christian, that he knows not whether he be of the number of God's elect, and therefore hath nothing to do with the promises. If the Devil set upon us in this sort, we

must hold such suggestions to arise from the Spirit of error, because they are contrary to the voice of God, who saith to the afflicted conscience that is weary of sin, Believe, lay hold on eternal life, cast not away thy confidence; Be established, confirmed, and abound in faith. Therefore we must lend no ear to such whisperings of the old serpent, but cleave fast to the word of the Lord, and cut off all contrary enchantments. It was the first degree to the utter undoing of herself and posterity in our Grandmother Eve, that she opened her ear to a false and lying spirit in the mouth of a Serpent, which under a fair color persuaded, or rather covertly enticed and drew her to eat of the forbidden fruit. The decree of God which is secret in the bosom of the most High is not the rule according to which we must walk: but the word of life revealed in holy Scriptures we must take for our direction. If God make offer of mercy and forgiveness unto us in the ministry of the Gospel, which is the word of truth, the word of salvation, we are bound to receive it without looking into the book of his election: and if we receive them truly, we shall be saved as the Lord hath spoken.

Sect. 3. If Satan be driven from this hold, he solicits to fear, because many doubts and motions of distrust arise in the heart; as if there could be no faith where there are so many doubts. And it cannot be denied, but motions to distrust argue faith to be weak, which is a want that many of God's people do bewail in themselves, and for which they do well-nigh despair in themselves. Notwithstanding let not any be out of heart, for the small and scanty measure of his faith, if he have true faith, well-rooted. For faith may be true and lively, that is but weak and small. For difference in degrees doth not vary the nature of well-rooted affiance. And God requireth the truth of faith, but it is not necessary, that it be perfect in degree. If a Prince should proffer a pardon to a malefactor upon this condition only that he receive it,

would he question his Sovereigns bounty and grace, because he put forth a palsy-shaking hand? To doubt of God's mercy because our faith is feeble, is rather to rely upon our faith then upon the Lord. It is not the excellency and great measure of faith that doth make us righteous before God, but Christ whom faith doth receive and apprehend: which a weak faith can do as well as the strongest. They that did look on the brazen serpent but with one eye, yea but with half an eye were as well and fully cured of the deadly stings of the fiery serpents, as those which beheld it with both. As a small and weak hand is able to receive an alms as well as a stronger and greater: so our faith though feeble, doth receive Christ as truly and effectually for the salvation of the believer, as the greatest and most strong. In the manner of receiving there is some difference [for the more firm our confidence, the greater is our comfort] but in the truth none at all. Again it is not faith, but Christ received by faith that nourisheth to life eternal. Meat reached to the mouth by a trembling hand sustaineth the body no less, then if it were applied by an arm of strength; the goodness of the nourishment receiving no change or alteration from the external instrument of application: so here Christ is the same to them that receive him truly, though it be done in one with more, in another with less strength of affiance. We read in Scripture, that Christ reprov'd some for their small faith, that they might stir up themselves more confidently to rely upon him: but we have not heard, that he ever rejected any that came to him in weakness, desiring to be confirmed. The least grain of faith, if true, is acceptable unto the Lord: He will not quench the smoking flax. His dislike of our weakness is an argument of his love and care for our good, who would have us to be settled in the assurance of his favor, and not to waver in uncertainties to our great discomfort. The strait charge he hath laid upon us to believe, and the severe threatening's annexed to that his

Commandment if we obey it not, is a manifest evidence of his bounty and good will towards us, who is pleased thus to bind us unto himself, to confirm unto us his love, and so undoubtedly to assure us of his mercy, that it is to him a matter of unkindness, if we shall once make doubt or scruple of it. Doth any man mistrust the affection of his friend, because he hath oft charged him not to be strange, to make bold with him in any matter of importance and need, and hath rebuked him because he stands aloof as though he should not be welcome.

Sect. 4. Some are dismayed, for that they cannot keep their faith (for any continuance) strong and steadfast, but they feel it wavering, inconstant, flitting, so that they fall into great sorrow, fear and doubting's. For their comfort they must know that there is no shadow of change with God, and that it is their weakness so to think. Men are variable in their affections, whom they dote upon this day, they detest tomorrow: But such lightness and vanity is far from our God: His love, mercy, and gifts of grace are all unchangeable. Also they must be persuaded, that laboring after and groaning to rest their wearied souls upon the promises of mercy, being never satisfied till their doubtfulness be removed will bring a good end; so that they shall neither miscarry, nor be forsaken of the Lord in the lowest depth of their distress. And though for a time they feel not that they have faith or life, they may truly be alive unto God, as it is evident by sundry testimonies and properties of the new birth, which may be discerned in them who do most complain of their estates. A man suddenly stricken to the ground and amazed with some violent blow, wanteth not life altogether, though he perceive it not: Breathing and moving are infallible tokens of life in the body, which by many likelihoods appeareth to be dead: so painting and breathing after the consolations of the Lord, and the light of his

countenance, be undoubted signs of the new birth, though they be not easily discerned (especially in the hour of temptation) by them in whom they are. Wherefore the weak in faith must be wise in heart, and not measure themselves by their present fainting's and infirmities: but wait upon God, and use the means which he hath prescribed in his word. As children first learn to go by a stool or form; sick folk recover their taste or strength by little and little; plants shoot not up suddenly and at once, but by degrees, corn suffers many a sharp storm before it come to ripeness: so faith hath it beginning, growth, and confirmation; calms and storms to ripen it. If it be demanded, why doth God deal thus with his children, and suffer them to fall into such depth of doubting, sorrow and fear. The answer is, that in regard of the believer himself this doubting is a weakness, which must be withstood and overcome: For the attaining whereto, the occasion of this doubting in him who hath once believed must be searched out, and so removed: which ordinarily is our own infirmity, neglect of duty, and slightness in the manner of performing the same, or some particular sin, or proneness to sin and nourishing the same, or long lying therein; whereupon the tender conscience feareth that his former comfort was but deceitful and vain, and so doubteth of his good estate. But this falleth out by the wise providence of God so disposing, least by the sudden change from so damnable and uncomfortable an estate to so happy and joyful, he should be lifted up and conceited, and so become secure and presumptuous. Again this maketh him the more to prize the sense of God's mercy, and with the greater care to preserve his faith, and to shun all sin and wickedness, which might hinder the apprehension of his continual love.

Sect. 5. Satan tempteth some to doubt, because at first they received the truth without due trial and examination whose duty it is carefully to reform

whatsoever they espy to have been amiss: but for one rotten post it is no wisdom to pull down the whole building. For God is merciful, and ready to forgive our imperfections, when upon the knowledge and sight we confess and bewail them. The Disciples at first followed Christ in hope of temporal preferment, and yet their faith was sound and true; for when they came to the knowledge of their error, they reformed it, and did still inseparably cleave unto him. It is the great wisdom and mercy of the Lord, for a time to hide from his children the sight of their infirmities and wants, and notwithstanding their manifold weaknesses to afford unto them the sense of his love, least they should be utterly discouraged and faint under the burden for want of experience, finding the entrance into life hard and difficult. Natural discretion teacheth us to deal with children according to their ability, and not to dishearten them by exacting what is above their strength: The like compassion doth the Lord show to his, by the comforts of his Spirit preparing them to endure the assaults of Satan.

Sect. 6. Many Christians be exercised with this temptation, that they cannot be the children of God, because they never had that deep sorrow and long lying under it that many of their Brethren have had. Whereas they should know, that not men's examples but God's word must be our rule of direction. The Lord dealeth not with all alike, because in wisdom he knoweth what is most meet for every man. Doth any man complain because his joints are set, or his wounds cured with little smart and pain? The Physician knows best the strength of his patient, and what he can bear: what is necessary for one, would kill another. It is good to grieve, because we can grieve no more for sin: But to doubt of God's love, because he deals gently with us, least we should be swallowed up of sorrow, is great ignorance, weakness and folly. God many times keeps from his servants the horrible

and ghastly aspect of their sins in wonderful mercy, least the horror of them and God's wrath due for them, should over-whelm them. If God by enticements and speaking to thy heart have brought thee home unto him, thou hast cause to magnify the tender mercy of the Lord, who hath not dealt with thee after thine iniquities: for had he set thee upon the rack, as many have been, thou hast reason to think, thou hadst never been able to bear it. Fear of conscience, grief of mind, doubtfulness of salvation commends no man to God; neither is it against a man or with him in assuring himself of salvation, whether he have long or short time been pressed with such sorrows, but that he be well freed and delivered from such trouble, and discharged of his fear.

Sect. 7. A poor Christian is oft put to great plunges through the malice of Satan, because there is much weakness of spiritual life in him, he never felt any great strength of grace in himself, and what he formerly felt is now decayed. By this Temptation God doth chasten our pride and swelling of heart, unthankfulness, discontinuance of care to cherish and increase received graces by means sanctified, running into occasions of decay and cooling, and contentment with a small pittance of grace, faith, holiness: For all which sins and other of like kind, we must unfeignedly humble ourselves before God, craving pardon of his mere grace and mercy. This Humiliation is a special means to ease the conscience; as the wound doth cease raging when it is opened and well drawn. And it must be remembered, that we are but children, and therefore weak; yea, and subject to many spiritual diseases such as take away sense of life: and therefore we must seek to be cured, and not despair of life. When any one part or member is distempered or ill at ease, we despair not of the safety of the whole person, but labor to cure and restore it to health again: so when we have offended, we should resort to the

Physician Christ Jesus, make our complaint to him, and be confident for his promise sake that he will help us. And if they who have fallen and offended God, may turn home again to their first Husband with good welcome, shall not they much more be beloved of him, and comforted by him, who have not provoked him, but are only held down through fear and infirmity. And though their graces be small, they may be true whiles they be small. Little faith is faith, as a little fire is fire. God despiseth not little things in obedience offered to him. In the sacrifices of the Law, not the price of the gift, but the ability and affection of the offerer was respected. And if weakness of grace was any just cause of fear, who might assure himself of God's love? Not one. For though some have grace in greater measure than others, yet all are compassed with infirmities, and have not attained unto perfection. But it is not so much inquired how great or little, as how sincere our faith and obedience is. Faith if it be unfeigned, though but as a grain of Mustard seed; obedience, if it be hearty, though mingled with many infirmities hath promise of gracious acceptance. And the smallest beginnings are pledges of greater favors, where there is thankful acceptance and conscionable use of those already received to the glory of the bestower.

Sect. 8. If what was formerly felt be now decayed in feeling, even in God's dearest children there may be decay of graces in part, and for a time. Of the Philippians the Apostle saith, your care beginneth to spring again: belike they had their winter whom a new spring revived. It is true the Lord hath promised, that Hell gates shall never prevail utterly to overthrow the faith of his chosen, or any other grace radically accompanying salvation: but to preserve continual sensible exercise of any grace, he hath nowhere promised. The graces of God do ebb and flow in his servants (and that by the wise disposition of God) lest if we had attained facility in all things, we

should think that our own, which is merely his work. Who amongst the faithful doth always hear with equal attention, reverence, cheerfulness, &c. or pray with like earnestness of desire, feeling of wants, assurance to be heard, or submission to God's will? Or do anything at all times, so as at some. The Lord many times withdraws the use of some particular grace, that some other may in greater measure show forth itself in us. Joy and rejoicing in his mercy he withholds, that he might bring to the practice of humiliation.

Sect. 9. What if a Christian cannot find, no not after search and examination, any lively sense or feeling of faith; nay, he cannot discern any faith at all in himself? Hereby the Lord may correct our unthankfulness for mercies formerly received, or that presumptuous license we took to ourselves in sinning, or in questioning with ourselves of his graces: All which things we are heartily to confess and bewail. But for the comfort of the distressed, he is to know, that sometimes graces may lie hid, yea, and work in respect of our acknowledgment insensibly. The seed of faith cannot be lost, after it is once planted in an honest and good heart by the holy Spirit: but the sight thereof may be hid from our knowledge, and the lively functions thereof intermitted. The child lives in the mothers womb, though it know not so much. Life remains in a man fallen into a dead swoond, wherein he is deprived for a time of understanding, reason, memory, sense, motion, and all apparent vital functions. The tree lives in winter, though nipped with frosts, and weather-beaten with tempests, dead in appearance. Coals raked close under the ashes, that they give neither heat nor light, do yet retain both, though they show not forth themselves. There is a generation pure in their own eyes, who are not purged from their iniquities: the most holy are not privy to all their secret sins, nor thoroughly

acquainted with the deceitfulness of their own hearts: And the graces of the Spirit may lie hid in the hearts of the regenerate, and work insensibly to their feeling and discerning, as well as corruption lurk secretly and work privily in the soul both of regenerate and unregenerate. An argument drawn from his sense and feeling: may have some color in the conceit of a distressed mind: but in truth it is a deceitful reasoning to conclude, That they have no faith, because they have no sense or feeling thereof in their apprehension. In the agony of conscience none are more unfit to judge of our estate, then we of our own. Though at other times we be sick of self-love, and too partial in our own case; yet in this state, towards ourselves we are most uncharitable; and being out of love with ourselves, we are apt to derogate from the work of God's Spirit in us. It is most certain also, that in the examination and trial of our estates we commit no small errors in the time of temptation, the mind being clouded with the mists of Satan's suggestions, and the heart so distempered with fear, that we cannot discern the graces of God in us, nor acknowledge boldly what in a sort we see. Suggestions we take to be sins of consent and purpose; failing in the purposed measure of serving God or in some particular, we distinguish not from falling from our general purpose to cleave unto God in the performance of all duties of holiness and righteousness: we put not difference betwixt absolute falling from purpose, and failing in execution of purpose in some particular. Common infirmities we judge presumptuous sins, or such blemishes as cannot be in the Saints of God: passions we esteem as deliberate purposed resolutions: and motions to distrust, which are evidences of weakness, are supposed pregnant tokens of total infidelity. Certainty of adherence is not distinguished from certainty of evidence: if we find not assurance of pardon, we conclude there is no faith, though possibly

at the present, we resolve to roll ourselves upon the faithful promise of God, and pour out our souls for mercy. The Lord diversely gives evidence of his Spirits presence in us. Sometimes a child of God perceives little difference in practice betwixt himself and very aliens; yet let him view his affections, he may see grace there; sometimes again more may be seen in practice, then in the affection. When the heart is over-whelmed with fear and doubt, a man cannot find love, joy, or delight in the Word of God; but then his frequenting the house of God, his private reading and conference, are testimonies that his will is bent to the Law of God. But these things are not observed in the times of distress and bitter anguish, whence it followeth, that God may evidence his presence with us by the Spirit of grace, when by reason of our frailty we cannot discern it.

Furthermore, if a man can discern no spark of grace, nor feel any good thing in himself, he is not to despair. But as the sense and feeling of his present state ought to humble him under God's hand, and move him to enter into a serious examination of himself, and to unfeigned repentance for his sins: so must he take comfort unto himself, and prop up his weak declining faith, by calling to mind former times, and wherein the Lord hath caused his merciful and gracious countenance to shine upon him, and wherein he hath glorified God by an holy life and conversation. For if ever he hath discerned the graces of God's Spirit by the fruits of sanctification, they are not utterly taken away, though for a time they be buried from his sight, that he cannot find them. The seed is not dead that lieth all winter under the clods, and appeareth not by fruit above ground. If he be not able to gather comfort from former experience, but be ready to question that also, yet must he not give way to uncomfortable and deading sorrow: because the thirsty soul, who neither feeleth inward sap, nor findeth outward fruit of grace, is called

to come unto Christ the fountain of living waters, that in him and by him he might be eased, refreshed, made fruitful. This gracious invitation the poor soul must lay hold upon, and say within himself, I will draw near unto the God of my salvation and trust in him, for I have his firm and stable promise, that I shall be watered with grace and refreshed with comfort. If I be hungry, he hath plenty of provision; if barren, dry, and withered, with him there is abundance of grace, that I may be enriched.

Sect. 10. The Devil, who goeth about like a roaring Lion seeking whom he may devour, will not spare to suggest, to the contrite and humbled soul, that God cannot or will not forgive his transgressions, which have been most heinous for quality, many for number, and in which he hath long lived and continued. And it may be the Lord would hereby correct our former conceits in the days of our vanity, that of all things pardon of sins is most easily obtained, that it was but a slight and small thing to sin against God, that we might well enough take our fill of sin for the time, and turn to the Lord in old age and sickness. But withal this thought must be held to arise from Satan, and shunned as repugnant to the truth of God.

For the promise of pardon is made to repentant sinners without limitation to any time, person, quality or number of offenses. And for the remedy and removal of this temptation, first, we should humble ourselves before God for our light esteem of sin, and procrastination or delays: And then consider the endlessness of God's mercies in Christ, the price which was paid for our redemption, the sweet promises propounded in the Word, the stableness and perpetuity of the Covenant, and the examples of great sinners received to mercy. And what if a man sensibly feel the heavy burden of God's wrath, and plainly discern his frowning and angry countenance? Though sense of God's love fail, faith may continue strong. For faith is not grounded upon

sense and feeling: but upon God's gracious promises, immutable goodness, and infallible truth. Yea, when sense and feeling cease, then faith which is the evidence of things not seen, beginneth its chief work: and the most excellent faith showeth itself most clearly when we have no sense or feeling, or when we feel the plain contrary. Faith looketh to the promise, mercy, power and truth of God, and to the manner of his working: and seeing his mercy is incomprehensible, his power infinite, his manner of working by contraries, his truth firm and immovable, therefore in the greatest terrors it believeth peace, when God showeth himself an enemy, it apprehendeth him loving and merciful, and out of the deepest humiliation, above sense or reason, gathereth the sweetest consolation. If ever we have tasted of God's love and mercy, lively faith concludeth that we are still in his love and favor, whatsoever we apprehend in our present sense and feeling: for whom he loveth, to the end he loveth them. Yea, faith goeth before experience or sense of mercy, and waiteth for salvation in Christ, in the depth of misery, grounding itself merely upon the Word of truth which cannot lie. We believe to taste the goodness of the Lord, not because we have felt already, how kind the Lord is; though we may make use of feelings past to sustain us in present agonies.

Experience and sense is a stay or prop for our better ease, not the ground upon which our faith leaneth; and though it be shaken faith continueth firm. If therefore at any time our sense and feeling tell us one thing (namely that God hath cast us off forever, and will never look graciously upon us) and the Word of God assure us of another (to wit, that God doth love us, and will never forsake us utterly) we are not to give credit to our own feeling, but to God's Word. For our sense is oft deceiving, especially in matters of godliness: but the Word of the Lord is sincere and abideth forever. In bodily

diseases of some kind, we trust more to the judgment of a skillful Physician, then to our own conceits: and shall we not think, that God knows our spiritual estate better then we ourselves? What can we believe in matters of religion, if we believe not more then we can discern by sense or reason? The being of a thing, and the sensible discerning of the thing to be are diverse. Howsoever at sometimes they concur, yet oftentimes they are severed and disjoined. Because the Sun appeareth not to us at Midnight, shall we conclude, that it never hath, or will shine to us again. Shall a child imagine his Father never did or will truly love him hereafter, because for the present he doth not admit him into his presence, or afford him a favorable and lovely countenance? No less absurd, but more injurious is it to our heavenly Father, to conjecture, that no grace or favor is to be sound with God, seeing now the beams of his love and mercy are hidden from us. The dearest servants of God, who have been endued with most eminent graces, and highly advanced into special favor with him, have yet in their own sense apprehended wrath and indignation, instead of love and favor, displeasure instead of comfort, and trouble instead of peace. Did God tenderly respect them, when he seemed to tear them in pieces, and to break their bones like a roaring Lion: and shall we judge of his affection by our present feeling.

Sect. 11. But what if we have long used the means of grace, and can find no comfort? In this case, we must repent of the former neglect to accept of grace offered, and pray to God to forgive and pardon it. We must also examine our hearts with all care and diligence to find out the sins which haply do hinder comfort, and bemoaning the same, stir up ourselves to receive the promises. For oft times the entertaining of some bosom sin, which we are loath to part withal, is that which makes the breach in our

conscience. And sometimes we walk without comfort, not so much because God withholds it, as that we put it from us; either not knowing that we are called to believe, or not encouraging ourselves to strive against fears, or shutting our eyes against the evidences of grace, that God hath bestowed upon us, or mistaking what the testimony of the Spirit is, whereby God witnesseth to us that we are his children. For whiles we take it to be some vocal testimony, which certifieth us against fears and doubts, even in the midst of temptations, and in a manner whether we will or no; we fall into no small perplexities, not finding any such certificate in ourselves, whereas the witness of the Spirit is clean of another nature. This is no new thing, that God should cause his children to seek long before they find comfort. The Apostle in like extremity besought the Lord thrice, that is often, before he received answer. And though God delay, either to chasten neglects, or to kindle affection, or that graces hardly obtained may be valued according to their worth, yet will he not always despise his children that cry unto him day and night. The ardent desire shall at length be satisfied, the panting soul be refreshed with the waters of consolation Comfort and joy is the reward of our obedience: but patient waiting is a pleasing and acceptable service to God. It is God's work to give comfort, it is our duty to wait for it in the ways of holiness. Let us be contented to serve God freely without wages, and in the end, we shall be no losers. Remission of sins and peace of conscience are favors worth waiting for. If the Lord should keep us on the rack even till the last gasp, and then impart unto us the least drop of his mercy or sense of his love in Jesus Christ, his grace were unspeakable towards our souls: and let us not then think much to wait in patience a little while. We have not waited so many years in the means of grace for comfort, as God hath waited for our conversion. If we have made him to stand

knocking at the door of our hearts long before we gave him entrance, let it not seem tedious, if the Lord do not forthwith open to us the door of his privy chamber, and admit us to the sweet fellowship and communion with him. Comforts when they come are usually proportioned to the measure of tribulation, and multitude of fervent prayers poured out before the Lord. Much trouble receives in the end plentiful consolation.

Sect. 12. Satan molesteth some Christians with fear of falling into some fearful extremity: By which temptation it pleaseth God to acquaint men with their own weakness, and to chasten or prevent pride, security, rash censuring of others that have fallen into such discomforts, or the like. But for the remedy thereof let them labor to fortify faith in the gracious promises which God hath made to his children of sustentation and perservation. As faith increaseth, so fear abateth; as it ebbs so fear flows. And let them to this end consider, that Christ hath prayed for preservation against all separating extremes. And God that cannot lie, hath promised to keep his children from utter declining, and to establish them that be feeble and ready to fall. The Lord hath made it known to be his will and pleasure, that he will never take away that grace which once he hath given, but increase it rather till it be perfected and accomplished: and when we are assured of his will, we may rely upon his power for the effecting of it, and infer he will keep us safely, because he is able to establish and confirm us. The greater our weakness is in grace, and the more grievous our sickness through sin, and the noisome humors of corruption, the more carefully will he watch over us with his Almighty power. The strong cannot stand by their own might if God withdraw his hand: and the weakest shall be able to overcome their mightiest enemies being underpropped by the Lord. What floods of trouble soever do flow over us, we shall escape drowning, if the

Lord hold up our chin. Fear is a deceitful and malicious passion, tyrannical, rash and inconsiderate, proceeding oftentimes from want of judgment, more then from the presence or approach of evil to be feared, tormenting with the dread of what shall never come, we were never in danger of: It is therefore valiantly to be resisted, not to be believed or reasoned withal. Fear in our own strength is by all means to be cherished: but diffidence in God's power, mercy, goodness, truth and providence is to be abandoned. The strong must not presume in himself, though more excellent than others in grace, nor the weak distrust in the Lord, though feeble, and not able to go high-lone. The hope of preservation staying upon inherent grace is self-confidence: and the fear of falling arising from the sense of weakness is diffidence in God. In holy Scripture we shall find, that the strongest have fallen, when the weak have stood and they have been foiled most grievously, not in the greatest assaults, but when they have given way to their lusts, neglected their watch, or were grown secure and dreaded no danger. The Lord best knows the strength of his child, and will not suffer him to be overtaken with those uncomfortable falls out of which he shall not recover.

Sect. 13. Sundry Christians through the malice of the Devil, be unsettled with fears, that notwithstanding all their care they shall never hold out in faith and a holy course of life unto the end: but by persecutions or other afflictions and provocations shall be turned back; especially considering that they are marvelous apt to slip and cool in time of peace, and whilst they live under the means of grace. This fear is to be removed by calling to Mind the promises of God so plentifully and richly set down in the word of grace. And they must consider, that the same God who keeps them in time of peace, and blesseth the means of grace whilst they do enjoy them, is able and will uphold them in the time of trouble, and when means be wanting of

ourselves we stand not at any time, by his power we may overcome at all times. And when we are sorest assaulted, he is ever ready at our right hand to support and stay us that we shall not fall. He hath well begun, and shall happily go forward in his work, who hath in truth begun. For true grace well planted in the heart, how weak soever, shall hold out forever. All total decays come from this, that the heart was never truly mollified, nor grace deeply and kindly rooted therein. And as for present weaknesses it is good to acknowledge and bewail them, but they must not for some imperfections cast down themselves half desperately, as though God regarded them not, or they should wither and utterly decay. For as the dry and thirsty ground or sponge sucketh up much water; so the humble spirit drinks up much grace, and shall be replenished abundantly with the waters of comfort. And if their portion of grace be the smallest of all others, they must strive to grow forward, but without discouragement. For of small beginnings come great proceedings: of one little spark a mighty flame: of a small Acorn a mighty Oak; of a grain of Mustard-seed a great tree: and a little leaven seasoneth the whole lump. All fears and doubts which arise in their hearts, must drive them to send up earnest prayers to God daily and oft for this grace of faith to be more firmly rooted in them: which they must do willingly and gladly, that they may feel their doubting and fear to vanish as fast, as they perceive their hold in the promises of God to wax stronger.

Sect. 14. Satan bears many in hand, that their manifold crosses and troubles in the world, and their want of outward blessings, is an argument of God's displeasure towards them. This was the fiery dart, which he by the mouths of Eliphaz, Bildad and Tzophar (yea of his own wife) did shoot at Job; against all which, if he had not held out the shield of faith he had been pierced through and through. And we see by daily experience, that when a

godly Man is crossed in his wife, children, goods, reputation, these outward afflictions are often great occasions of deadly sorrows, and grievous temptations touching the assurance of his own salvation. The remedy is, to think seriously and to acquaint ourselves familiarly with the properties of God; the truth, unchangeableness and nature of his promises, and the manner of his dealing with others of his servants in his wonderful providence. For thereby we shall learn, that God doth love tenderly, when he doth correct severely; and remaineth unchangeable when our outward condition doth vary and alter: yea, that all his Chastisements are but purgative medicines to prevent or cure some spiritual disease, which he seeth we are inclined unto. Should God never minister physic till we see it needful, desire to take it, or be willing of it; alas, we should perish in our corruptions, and die for want of help in due time. It is good to humble ourselves when God correcteth: but to doubt of his love, when he dealeth lovingly with us, is a great weakness. Also we should call to mind that God allows, yea requires, that men in affliction should live by faith, both for a sanctified use in them, and a good issue out of them in due season. And so afflictions or earthly encumbrances would be no means to weaken our faith, but to increase it rather.

Sect. 15. Some godly persons, by the subtle and cruel malice of the Devil are brought to this bondage, that they are persuaded that they are utter reprobates, and have no remedy against their desperation. And this temptation enough of itself to shake and terrify the afflicted, is made far more grievous when Melancholy possesseth the party: for that raiseth excess of distrust and fear, and causeth the party to persuade himself of misery, where there is no cause. In this weakness Satan assails such poor servants of God by spiritual suggestion, tempting them to such sins as be

very strange, and such as they abhor the very least conceit of them, and when by such temptations they are brought low, in the anguish and bitterness of their souls, the Devil laboreth especially to dim their knowledge and judgment, that they may have no sure hold of any point of doctrine, which may soundly comfort them, that so he may as a roaring Lyon devour them speedily. And when he hath covered their hearts with darkness, and brought them into a dreadful fear of God's wrath, he holdeth them at this vantage, that everything which is before them, is made matter to increase their distressed estate. For the stay and comfort of such distressed souls, they are to be persuaded, that they be not under the wrath of God, neither is his anger kindled against them, for all the fear that oppreseth them, when their estate is in their own feeling at the worst because they have not sinned against the holy Ghost, nor maliciously set themselves against the truth and Gospel of God, nor persecuted it willfully against knowledge and conscience: which one sin only is able to shut them out from all hope of salvation. And here they must beware, they make no more sins of that kind, then God himself hath pronounced to be of that sort: for in these matters that concern God's Religion, even the perfection of our wisdom is but folly, much more our sick brains and melancholic understanding is to be removed far from handling such holy things. And seeing their consciences do bear them witness, how much these temptations are repugnant to their desires and liking, how gladly they would be freed and delivered from them, how grievous and burdensome they are unto them, and chiefly raised by Satan, who abuseth their simplicity: therefore there is no cause why they should be so discouraged or out of heart, no more than one that hath had a fearful dream when he awaketh. Moreover, they are with all earnestness to be put in mind (yet with the spirit of

meeckness and compassion) and to consider, how much it doth displease God, that they are removed from their faith, and have given place to conceits and spirits of error, contrary to the most clear and comfortable promises made them that thirst, repent, fear and love the Lord, tremble at his word, are broken-hearted, &c. And therefore they should gather more godly boldness and confidence in God on the one side, and more courage and strength against Satan on the other side.

For if God call and encourage us to trust and rely upon him, and we standing in need thereof, would most gladly embrace his promises made in Christ Jesus, who is he that should hinder us? The Scripture, speaking of the malice of Satan in tempting and assailing Christians, biddeth them, Be strong and of good courage, resist strong in the faith: Satan tempteth them to overthrow their faith, and by giving place to fears and doubts they advantage the enemy against their souls: but let them take occasion by the temptation to draw nigh unto God, and rouse up themselves more confidently to rest and wait upon the Lord, so shall they please God, and put Satan to flight. Neither let them after this be still objecting, that they feel small strength of faith and hope: for thereby the enemy may take encouragement to their disadvantage, when fear setteth open the heart to his malicious temptations, and binds the hands of the distressed that he cannot resist: but let them stir up their courage and resolution to wait upon the Lord, not listening anymore to their strong, but deceitful fear. And what though they feel not that sweetness, which sometimes they felt, will they therefore judge their state to be naught? What sweetness can the soul taste, when it is over-whelmed with fears, perplexed with temptations, troubled with doubts? Physic is unpleasant and bitter to the taste: Temptation should not be temptation, if it did not affect. If the soul be now sick, and tasteth not

the sweet meats of consolation, which it was wont, as the body which is in a course of Physic; will they judge themselves to be stark dead, or in a condition irrecoverable? We have experience how diverse times the disease prevaileth over the sick person, that actions fail, and faculties seem quite to be spent; neither hand nor foot is able to do their duty; the eye is dim, the hearing dull, the taste altered, and the tongue distasteth all things, even of most pleasant relish; and the weak and feeble patient seemeth to attend the time of dissolution: when yet notwithstanding there remaineth a secret power of nature, and a forcible spark of life that over-cometh all these infirmities, and consumeth them like dross, and rendereth to the body a greater purity and firmness of health then before the sickness it did enjoy. Even so it is in this spiritual estate, the soul is sick, and not dead, faith is assailed, but not overcome; and if in patience the finishing of this secret work which passeth all conceit and capacity of man be attended, these burning fevers of temptations shall appear to be flaked and cooled by the mercy and grace of Christ, and that spark of faith which now lieth hid and over-whelmed with heaps of temptations, to break forth again: And as nature after a perfect crise dischargeth herself, to the recovery of former health: so shall all doubts and fears and terrors be removed, and strength of faith restored with such supply, as it shall be able to make evident proof what secret virtue lay hid, and yet not idle in all this uncomfortable plight.

Again, as in outward senses we see sometimes, and feel, and hear, when we do not perceive it: so we may also have faith, and not always have the sensible perceiving thereof. Yea, such as most hunger and thirst after righteousness, and are poor in spirit and broken in heart, as they doubt and fear in every action lest God be dishonored by their conversation, so are they jealous of their precious faith, lest it be not in such measure as they

desire, or in truth be none at all: wherein they may easily be deceived, first, in the discerning, then in the measure and portion. For when the inward feeling thereof doth not answer their desire and the actions proceeding there-from do not satisfy their thirst of righteousness, whereby relief may rise to the nourishment of faith, and the satisfying of that holy appetite; they are discouraged and entangled with spiritual cares, from which a more advised consideration agreeable to God's Word might easily deliver them. And touching the portion, it is a fault to measure the excellency of faith and power thereof, partly by quantity and unseasonable fruits, (so to call them) and not by virtue, kind plantation, sovereignty, and seasonable fruit: which error in temptation the distressed are apt to run into, and so to trouble themselves without cause. Men look not that Corn should spring in harvest, or be ripe in spring; that trees should bud or bear fruit in winter: because it is not the season for such things. Neither ought we to expect such strength of memory and lively operative actions of grace, in age, sickness, great sorrows and temptations, as at other times in young years free from such assaults. The fruits of faith fit for the season may be discerned by them that can rightly judge, when sweet refreshing's form lie enjoyed be lacking. The effects of faith in great temptations and cloudy seasons are to look up for help, sigh, groan, complain to God, prize his favor, draw nigh unto him, and cast himself upon God, though he seem to be angry: at this time faith is encumbered with many strong fears wherewith it is burdened, against which it laboreth, over which it doth not easily nor speedily prevail. Joy, peace, sweet refreshing, and sensible tasting of God's mercy, be the fruits of well grown faith in the times of victory and freedom. Those Summer fruits are not to be gathered in the depth of winter. It is an error to measure the truth of grace in age by the effects proper to youth, or the soundness of faith in

temptation, by the effects peculiar to the days of triumph. Neither are we to account the nature of anything according to our sense or the show it maketh. For then should the most fruitful tree in winter be taken for barren, and the lusty soil for dry and unfruitful, whilst it is shut up with the hard frost. But reason being guided by the Word of God, must lead us rightly to judge of the presence and life of faith in our souls, which being the shield in this our spiritual warfare, endureth much battering and many brunt's, and receiveth the fore-front of the battle, and oftentimes fareth as if it were pierced through and worn: unfit for battle: yet is it indeed of nature invincible, and repelleth whatsoever engine the enemy enforceth against us, and standeth firm rooted whatsoever storm Satan raiseth for the displacing thereof. How then are the distressed to behave themselves in this temptation, when both the sense of faith is dulled in them, and the fruits minister discontentment? They must rightly consider what be the winter fruits of faith, and not expect such things in themselves as agree not to that season, and withal remember that the gifts and mercy of God is without repentance: and so take courage unto themselves confidently to cast their souls upon the mercy of the Lord in Jesus Christ. For as he knew them, when they were strangers from him, and loved them when they hated him, and had nothing which might provoke his mercy but sin and misery: so is his goodness continued still upon them for his own sake, and not at all for their deserving. And though they feel their ability weak, the enemy strong, their strength tired and clean worn, their corruption upon the point to prevail, the fruits and branches of faith, through these stormy tempests, nipped and shaken; yet the sap of faith shall never be dried up in the root, neither can any wind of Satan so blast, that the immortal seed be at any time quite withered. But patience and constancy with a resolute mind to bear

God's trial, will bring a good end; yea, by a meek going under God's hand in these, they shall learn experience to wade through greater afterwards; and yet in the midst of them, to have hope that they shall not be ashamed. Say their former course of life past hath not answered that sincerity the Lord requireth; what then? Are they therefore reprobates? No, but it argues want of faith. Not so; but place for further increase of faith, and the fruits thereof. Those whom the Lord hath chosen to be his worshippers, and hath redeemed and consecrated holy to himself, they be his plants, and engrafted Olive branches in his Son, who take not their full perfection at once: but (according to the nature of plants) require daily watering and dressing, whereby by degrees they attain in the end a full stature in Christ. In Scripture we have example of weak believers as well as of strong. As the Holy Ghost hath remembered the faith of Abraham, who believed above hope under hope: so hath it recorded the faith of Nicodemus in knowledge simple and weak, in profession and practice timorous and fearful. In one and the same person we shall find different degrees of faith at diverse times; at one time like a grain of Mustard-seed, at another time like a grown Oak; now like a smoking snuff, but soon after bursting out into a bright flame. The strongest faith of any Saint mentioned in Scripture is imperfect, assailed with temptations, mixed with manifold doubting's. For they were subject to innumerable infirmities, which are not specified in the Book of God; neither was it fit that it should be a register of their manifold temptations, frailties and falls. But out of those things which are recorded, we may perceive they were shaken with assaults, over-taken with corruptions, tripped and foiled sometimes by the policy of Satan. All which is set upon the file for our admonition and consolation. So that a Christian may not account himself void of grace, because he is not perfect in faith,

knowledge and love: but he is wisely to consider the secret work of God's Spirit and grace, and take comfort of the smallest crumb and drop of this heavenly sustentation, and attend the time of perfect growth according to the good pleasure of God.

Oh, but they feel not the testimony of God's Spirit, which might assure them; they can find no spark of grace in themselves. Neither do any of God's children at all times feel it: but that they may see their own frailty, God doth as it were hide himself for a season (as a Mother doth from her child to try his affection) that they may with more earnest desire mourn for God's wanted grace, and praise him with more joyfulness of heart when they have obtained it again. And yet God doth not withhold comfort from his children, many times when they walk heavily: but their own frailty and vehemency of temptation which oppreseth them, diminisheth the feeling thereof. When the wind is loud, the air stormy and tempestuous, a man cannot hear the voice of his friend when the heart is filled with fears, and perplexed with manifold temptations tossing it up and down, the calm and still voice of the Spirit is not discerned. And in those seasons, the trial of faith is to be taken by those fruits which are evident to the eye of others, who can judge more sincerely then the afflicted themselves in that anguish of soul and spirit. As the sick man during the time of his distemper, must not trust to his own taste, but rather rely upon the learned Physician, and other honest and discreet friends: so the faithful must not give too much credit to the suggestions of their own heart possessed with fear, but rather believe their faithful Pastor, and other godly and experienced Christians that are about them. But to yield so much to their present weakness (because in this perplexity they will be ever and anon questioning the soundness of former comfort, and integrity of their hearts) suppose they were destitute of

grace, and never had felt sound comfort, should they utterly despair, or give place to deading sorrow? In no sort, for Christ calleth the burdened and laden to come unto him for ease and comfort. Being destitute of grace and comfort, they are willed to repair unto him for both, who hath sufficient in store for them. If they find not themselves to be eased, they know they are burdened; if they be not watered, they feel themselves to be thirsty; if they believe not, they are allowed, invited, encouraged to come unto Christ: To them he calleth, as if he did particularly name them, Come ye to the waters and drink; Come unto me, and I will refresh you. Why stand ye trembling as if your case were desperate? Ye desire help, and he calleth you, Be of good courage, and come unto him.

The end of the first Part.

APPENDIX I. – Part I. Scripture References.

IN THE ORIGINAL FACSIMILE edition of this book, there were a considerable amount of scripture references in the margins. They have been listed here by Chapter in the order they appeared.

PART. I.

CHAP. 1

Heb. 11:6; Joh. 3:16,18,36; Rom. 3:28; 1 Cor. 1:21; 1 Cor. 5:6,7; Act. 15:9; Eph. 1:13,14; Matth. 23:23; Rom. 3:3; Gal. 5:22; Tit. 2:10; Rom. 12:3. & 14:1,22; Act. 17:31; Act. 9:7. & 13:8; Gal. 1:23. & 3:2,5; Gal. 3:23,24; Joh. 5:46,47; Joh. 2:22,23; Luk. 24:25; Act. 26:27; Rom. 1:8; Gal. 6:10; Act. 14:22; Matth. 9:2; 1 Thes. 1:3; Jam. 2:19,24; Act. 26:27; 1 Cor. 13:2; Matth. 21:21. & 7:22; Mar. 9:23; Act. 14:9; Luk. 17:19; Mat. 13:20,21; Luk. 8:13,14; Luk. 8:13; Matth. 13:23; Act. 24:14; Act. 15:9; Psalm. 119:66; Act. 27:25; Gal. 5:6; Rom. 4:3; Joh. 5:24; Act. 16:34. & 18:8; Joh. 14:1; Rom. 9:33; Act. 6:42; Act. 16:31; Joh. 2:11. & 3:16; Joh. 1:12. & 3:33; Mar. 1:15; Act. 11:1. & 2:41; 1 Cor. 2:14; Rom. 4:3; Rom. 4:5,24; Rom. 10:10,11; Joh. 8:30,31; Act. 19:4; Joh. 1:12; Act. 16:31,34;

Mar. 1:15; Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:3; Exod. 14:31. & 19:9; Luk. 24:25; Joh. 2:23; Joh. 9:35,38; Isa. 28:16; Rom. 9:33; Rom. 3:22,26; Act. 3:16; Gal. 2:16; Phil. 3:9; Act. 24:24; Col. 3:5; Gal. 2:26; Eph. 1:15; 2 Chron. 20:20; Mar. 1:1; Mar. 9:23; Joh. 14:1; Act. 8:37; Rom. 1:16; 1 Joh. 3:24; Eph. 1:8; Act. 16:31; Gal. 2:16; Act. 13:39. & 10:4; Rom. 4:3; Num. 14:11; Deut. 9:23; Psalm. 78:21,22; Luk. 1:45; Joh. 20:29; Rom. 9:33.

CHAP. 2

Phil. 1:29; Act. 18:27; Joh. 6:44; Jam. 1:17; Heb. 12:2; 2 Cor. 4:13; Rom. 15:13; Eph. 1:13; Gal. 3:14; Joh. 1:16; Luk. 11:13; Eph. 1:19,20; 1 Pet. 1:5; 2 Pet. 1:1,2,3; Joh. 6:37; Act. 13:48; Phil. 1:29; Matth. 11:26; 2 Cor. 4:6; 2 Tim. 1:9; Dan. 11:36; Eph. 1:18; Act. 26:18; Luk. 24:45; Joh. 6:44; Isa. 50:5; Act. 16:14; Ezek. 11:19; 1 Cor. 2:14; Isa. 65:2,3; Heb. 12:2; Luk. 17:5; Mar. 9:24; Phil. 1:6; 2 Thes. 1:3,11; Isa. 57:9; Rom. 10:8; Joh. 12:6; Mar. 1:15; Rom. 1:16; Isa. 53:1; Mar. 16:20; 1 Cor. 12:6.

CHAP. 3

Job. 19:25; Joh. 17:3; 2 Tim. 2:7; Act. 26:18; Mat. 11:25,26; Eph. 1:8,9; Joh. 6:15; 1 Joh. 4:16; Joh. 20:21; Rom. 10:17; Isa. 55:3; Col. 1:6; Eph. 1:12; 2 Cor. 10:5; Rom. 10:14,17; 1 Cor. 4:14; 1 Cor. 13:2; 1 Thes. 5:19,20; Col. 3:16; 1 Joh. 4:1; Act. 17:11,12; 1 Kings. 13:20,21; Psalm. 119:18,34,73,144; Col. 1:5; Eph. 1:16,17; 2 Cor. 8:7; Rom. 1:17; 1 Cor. 10:15. & 11:28; 2 Cor. 13:5; 2 Pet. 1:5; 1 Pet. 3:15; Rom. 12:1,2; Joh. 20:9; Matth. 16:22; Luk. 24:25; Act. 1:6. & 10:14; 2 Joh. 4:39,41; Heb. 11:31; Gen. 15:6; Exod. 4:31; Deut. 1:52; Exod. 4:31. & 14:31; 2 Chron. 20:20; Psalm. 116:10; Joh. 20:29; Act. 13:34; 2 Sam. 7:16; Phil. 1:6; 2 Tim. 3:14; 1 Joh. 3:19; Rom. 8:38; Heb. 11:1; Matth. 14:31. & 21:21; Mar. 11:23; Luk. 12:29; Jam. 1:6; Mar. 9:24; Rom. 4:16; Rom. 4:19,20; Gen. 16:2,3,4; Gen. 12:13; Psalm. 31:22; Psalm. 73:13,16,22; Act. 24:14; Act. 1:6. & 2:2,3;

Psalm. 72:17; Dan. 1:14; Act. 11:2,3; 1 Joh. 3:2; Heb. 11:1; 1 Sam. 17:37; Psalm. 3:3; Psalm. 77:6. & 143:4; 2 Cor. 1:9,10; Phil. 1:20; 2 Tim. 4:17,18; 2 Chron. 20:20; Gen. 45:26; Psalm. 27:13; Psalm. 78:37; Psalm. 78:22; 1 Chron. 5:20; Psalm. 78:53. & 146; Prov. 28:17,25; Psalm. 4:8 & 22:9. & 25:2; Isa. 12:3; Psalm. 112:7. & 118:8; Psalm. 125:1; Prov. 3:5; Psalm. 118:8; Psalm. 2:12; Psalm. 11:1; Psalm. 36:7; Ruth. 2:12; Psalm. 64:10; Nah. 1:7; Psalm. 46:1; Joel. 3:16; 2 Chron. 16:7,8; 2 Chron. 14:11; Prov. 3:5; Isa. 31:1; 2 Chron. 13:18; Isa. 10:20; Isa. 30:12; Isa. 31:1; Isa. 50:10; Isa. 48:2; 2 Chron. 32:8; Psalm. 71:5,6; Psalm. 112:7,8; Isa. 26:2,3,4; Psalm. 22:8; Psalm. 37:5; Prov. 16:3; Jer. 17:5; Psalm. 62:6,7; Psalm. 2:12. & 34:8; Mar. 16:16; Isa. 26:3; Rom. 5:1; Psalm. 22:5; Rom. 10:11; Psalm. 112:7,8; Heb. 10:38; Matth. 9:2,22; Luk. 5:20; 1 Joh. 5:13,14; Act. 27:21; Luk. 16:11; Rom. 3:2. & 4:19; Mar. 11:24; Psalm. 2:12; 2 Chron. 16:7; Psalm. 77:26. & 111:7. & 124:1; Act. 19:4. & 20:21. & 24:24; Matth. 9:4; 2 Joh. 1:12; Joh. 2:23. & 12:42; Rom. 4:5; Rom. 9:33; 1 Pet. 2:6; Joh. 1:12; Col. 2:6; 1 Pet. 1:8,21; Act. 16:31; Rom. 9:33; 1 Pet. 2:6; Joh. 14:1. & 3:16; Matth. 16:16; Joh. 20:31; Rom. 10:9; 1 Cor. 15:2,3,4; Act. 8:37; Joh. 4:25; Mar. 1:24; Rom. 4:19,20; Rom. 4:20; Matth. 14:31. & 17:20; Mar. 9:24; Rom. 4:24; Heb. 11:1; Heb. 4:16. & 10:22,35; Heb. 3:6,14; 2 Cor. 9:4. & 11:17; Ezek. 19:5; Mic. 5:7; Heb. 11:3; Eph. 3:12; 1 Joh. 4:8; Rom. 5:1,2,3; Rom. 8:33; 1 Cor. 1:14,15; 2 Cor. 8:22; 2 Cor. 10:2; Psalm. 119:66; Heb. 11:7; Gen. 12:1; Heb. 11:8,9; Gen. 13:8. & 14:19; Gen. 24:1; Gen. 18:19; Heb. 11:17; Exod. 20:1,2; Deut. 6:12; Deut. 26:17; 2 Chron. 6:8,9; Psalm. 78:9; Gal. 3:26; Psalm. 116:10; Isa. 11:10; Rom. 15:12; Jam. 1:6; Rom. 11:20; Heb. 3:12; Tit. 1:16; Joh. 3:36; Psalm. 78:22,32; Jude. 5; 1 Joh. 3:23,24; Luk. 8:15; Matth. 13:33; 2 Tim. 1:12; 1 Joh. 5:4,5; Phil. 4:13; Isa. 55:2; Heb. 4:2; Psalm. 63:1,3,5; Joh. 6:35,50,51,53,54; Heb. 6:5.

CHAP. 4

Heb. 11:33; Gal. 3:14,22; Matth. 8:13; Rom. 4:16; Rom. 3:27; Rom. 3:25; Gal. 5:6; Gal. 5:6; Rom. 7:5; 2 Cor. 4:12; 1 Cor. 13:13; Heb. 11:6; Eph. 3:17; Gal. 3:14; Jam. 2:26; Jam. 2:22; Jam. 2:20; Jam. 2:19; Act. 8:21; Luk. 8:14; 1 Tim. 1:5; Act. 15:9; Gal. 2:20; 1 Joh. 5:4; 1 Joh. 5:1; Joh. 1:12,13; 2 Cor. 5:17; 2 Pet. 1:4; Gal. 2:20; Rom. 11:17; Joh. 15:1,2; 1 Joh. 4:15; Rom. 1:17; Joh. 3:36. & 6:40; 1 Joh. 2:9,10; 1 Joh. 4:19; Tit. 2:11,12; 1 Cor. 13:2; 1 Cor. 12:9; 1 Cor. 13:2; Matth. 7:20; Luk. 17:6; Joh. 12:42; Joh. 2:23; Joh. 12:43; Joh. 5:44; 1 Joh. 4:18; 1 Joh. 5:4; Joh. 3:2 & 7:50,51, & 19:38; Luk. 23:51; Matth. 26:56,70,71; Rom. 10:10; 2 Cor. 4:13; Gal. 5:6; Rom. 13:14; Gal. 3:26,27; Col. 3:9,10; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:12; Eph. 6:15,16; Matth. 25:11; Rom. 20:8,19; Tit. 1:16; Rom. 10:15; Jam. 2:14; Jam. 2:18; Jam. 2:19; Jam. 2:20; Jam. 2:20,22; Heb. 11:19; Jam. 2:19.

CHAP. 5.

Gen. 44:1,2; Heb. 11:3; Psalm. 73:24,27; 2 Cor. 1:20; Jer. 32:40; Ezek. 36:26,27; Phil. 1:6; 1 Cor. 1:8; 2 Tim. 1:12; Jos. 1:5; Heb. 13:5; 1 Tim. 4:8; Rom. 15:4; Rom. 8:1; Amos. 3:2; 2 Sam. 12:14; Rom. 8:1; Tit. 2:11,13; Gen. 12:1,4; Gen. 22:2,3; Heb. 12:4; 1 Sam. 27:1; Psalm. 116; Matth. 26:70,72,74; Heb. 11:25; Luk. 8:15.

CHAP. 6.

2 Cor. 5:19; Rom. 15:25,26; Rom. 10:8; Mar. 1:15; Act. 20:24; Luk. 24:47; 1 Pet. 1:21; 2 Cor. 5:19,20; Psalm. 32:5. & 51:1,2. & 103:3; Dan. 9:17; Hos. 14:3. & 2:19,20; Luk. 1:71. & 18:19; Act. 15:11; Gen. 15:6; Gal. 3:8,16; Joh. 8:56; Psalm. 103:3,13. & 130:3,4; Mic. 7:19; Tit. 3:5; Act. 2:38; 10:43 & 8:37; Matth. 16:16; Mar. 1:24; Luk. 4:34; Gal. 3:16; Gal. 3:8; Rom. 4:21; Heb. 11:19; Gen. 8:14; Num. 11:23; Luk. 1:37; Luk. 7:9; Luk. 7:6; Joh. 3:16; Joh. 11:25; Act. 13:39; Act. 16:31; Act. 26:18; Rom. 3:25,26;

Eph. 1:15; Act. 15:1; 1 Joh. 1:12; Gal. 3:26; Act. 10:43; Rom. 3:22. & 10:4; Phil. 3:8,9; Gal. 2:16; 1 Joh. 3:12,13; Joh. 6:47. & 17:3; Rom. 10:10,11; 1 Cor. 15:3; Joh. 11:26,27; Act. 8:38; Joh. 1:49,50; Mar. 5:7; Luk. 8:28; Rom. 8:34; Matth. 9:27,28; Mar. 1:40; Heb. 11:33,34,35; Isa. 53:4; Matth. 8:17; Jer. 31:33; Isa. 25:9. & 33:22.

CHAP. 7

Num. 21:9; Joh. 3:14,15; Matth. 11:28; Isa. 55:1,2; 1 Joh. 3:24; Joh. 3:16,36; Act. 10:43. & 13:39; Rom. 10:9,10; Gal. 3:10; Deut. 6:5; Joh. 7:37; Act. 16:31; Jam. 1:6; Matth. 6:30; Rom. 4:20; Matth. 1:20. & 2:20; Joh. 17:8; Joh. 1:12; Col. 2:6; Rom. 5:11,17; Heb. 8:15; Joh. 6:35; 2 Tim. 1:12; Joh. 3:15; 2 Tim. 1:11; Gal. 4:6; Rom. 8:15,16; Isa. 1:16,17,18; Prov. 28:13; Matth. 6:14,15; Act. 16:30,31; Joh. 6:29. & 11:25; Act. 10:43; Act. 16:18; Joh. 1:12; Act. 16:31; Rom. 3:30.

CHAP. 8

1 Joh. 4:13. & 3:14. & 5:13; Rom. 6:8; Gal. 3:14; Heb. 11:36; Isa. 42:3; Psalm. 31:22. & 77:3,8,9,10; Phil. 1:19,20; 2 Tim. 4:18; Psalm. 31:22; Act. 10:43; 1 Thes. 5:10; Luk. 2:10,11; Isa. 9:6; 1 Joh. 3:15; Joh. 6:35; 1 Joh. 5:10,13; Act. 13:26. & 3:26. & 2:38; 2 Cor. 5:20; Exod. 20:1,2; Rom. 10:9; Joh. 3:16; Act. 16:31; Joh. 20:23; Psalm. 23:1; Job. 19:25; Psalm. 103:3,4; Isa. 43:25; Psalm. 103:17; Mic. 7:19; Jer. 31:34; Rom. 11:22; Eph. 5:10; Matth. 19:17; Rom. 4:23; 2 Tim. 1:12; Mar. 9:24; Psalm. 116:10; 2 Cor. 4:13; Isa. 38:3,4; 1 Joh. 3:24; 1 Joh. 3:19; 1 Cor. 2:11; Jer. 17:9; Rom. 8:1. & 5:9; Eph. 3:17; 1 Joh. 4:16; Rom. 8:8; 2 Cor. 13:5,6; Eph. 3:17; 2 Cor. 13:5; Act. 8:37; 1 Tim. 1:5; Act. 8:37,38; Psalm. 86:12. & 138:1; Psalm. 119:10,69; Psalm. 119:2; Deut. 4:29; Jer. 29:13; 2 Chron. 15:15; Prov. 3:5; Psalm. 73:1. & 57:11. & 28:6,7; Psalm. 12:2; Jer. 3:10; Luk. 7:50; Mar. 16:16; Mar. 11:24; 1 Joh. 5:14,15; Psalm. 145:18; 2 Sam. 12:12,13; Psalm.

32:1,2; Psalm. 51:1,2; Matth. 27:46; Zech. 12:10; Rom. 8:38; Matth. 9:2; 1 Joh. 1:8,9; Psalm. 32:3,4; 2 Sam. 12:12,13; Psalm. 51:1,2; 2 Sam. 7:15,27; 1 Chron. 17:25; Joh. 10:28; Joh. 17:11; Psalm. 16:10; Heb. 5:7; 2 Tim. 4:18; Act. 3:19; Rom. 8:23; Psalm. 18:1,2; Psalm. 23:1; Isa. 25:9; Isa. 33:22; Job. 34:36; Joh. 20:28; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:3; Jer. 31:32,33. & 32:38. & 30:22; Heb. 2:11; 2 Pet. 1:1; Rom. 8:38; 1 Cor. 7:40; 2 Tim. 4:8; 1 Joh. 3:14. & 5:13; 1 Cor. 4:4; Rom. 8:35; Phil. 1:19,20; 2 Tim. 4:8; Rom. 8:31; 1 Joh. 3:19,21; 2 Cor. 1:12; Psalm. 119:12; 1 Joh. 5:10,11,12,13; Joh. 20:31. & 3:16; Matth. 8:26; Matth. 15:28; Rom. 4:21; Rom. 4:18; Joh. 6:69; Joh. 14:29; Matth. 14:28; Luk. 24:21; Gen. 12:12,13; Psalm. 31:22; 1 Sam. 27:1; Gal. 3:10; Gal. 5:4; Rom. 4:14; Gal. 3:18; 1 Joh. 5:10,11; Rom. 6:23; Jer. 31:33; Ezek. 36:27; Eph. 2:10; Phil. 1:6; Matth. 19:17; Joh. 17:3; Psalm. 119:1,2. & 1:1,2; Psalm. 32:1,2; Matth. 5:20; Matth. 5:17; 1 Joh. 1:3,4; 1 Joh. 1:7; Prov. 20:9; Eccl. 7:2; 1 Joh. 3:9; Jam. 2:10; 1 Joh. 3:3; 1 Joh. 3:8; Joh. 8:34; 1 Joh. 5:18; Deut. 32:5; Jam. 3:2; 1 Joh. 2:1,2; 2 Cor. 12:7,8; Gen. 18:10,11; Gen. 27:19; Exod. 4:10,14; Job. 40:5; Matth. 16:22; 2 Chron. 35:22; 2 Chron. 30:18,19; Heb. 11:31; Psalm. 19:12,13; Psa. 51:10,14; 1 Kings. 11:4; Psalm. 37:24; Joh. 10:28,29,30; Joh. 8:35; 1 Joh. 3:9; Psalm. 66:18; Ezek. 18:4; 1 Cor. 6:9; Eph. 5:5; Col. 3:5,6; Rev. 21:8; Isa. 1:16; Prov. 28:13; 1 Joh. 1:6,7; Rom. 6:12,13,14; Joh. 3:36; Deut. 9:24; Mat. 7:23; Num. 15:30; 1 Joh. 3:22; Luk. 7:47; 1 Joh. 4:19; Cant. 5:8. & 8:7; 1 Pet. 1:8; Psalm. 103:1,2,3; 1 Cor. 14:1; Col. 3:1,2; Phil. 3:9; Psalm. 4:6,7. & 63:3; 1 Pet. 1:8; Act. 8:39; Rom. 5:4; Jer. 9:23; Psa. 126:1,2; Psalm. 8:4,5; Joh. 7:17; Psalm. 144:3; Psalm. 116:12; Act. 12:11.

CHAP. 9

1 Thes. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:16; Rom. 11:20; 1 Pet. 1:13; Eph. 2:20; Isa. 26:34; Psalm. 130:5,6,7 & 22:5; Prov. 3:5; Joh. 14:1; 1 Pet. 1:21; Rom. 3:22;

Psalm. 2:12; Jer. 17:5; Eph. 4:4; Heb. 13:8; Rom. 10:14; Exod. 14:31; 2 Chron. 20:21; Deut. 28:66; Job. 24:22; Isa. 33:15; 1 Sam. 27:12; Jon. 3:5; Jer. 17:5; Psalm. 106:12; Psalm. 78:22; Exod. 19:9; Joh. 5:45; 1 Cor. 10:1; Isa. 14:32; Joel. 2:32; Job. 24:8; Psalm. 104:18; Phil. 5; Eph. 1:15; Col. 1:4; Matth. 12:22.

CHAP. 10.

Joh. 15:1; Eph. 5:30; Rom. 8:10; 2 Cor. 13:3,5; Hos. 2:18,20; Act. 10:43; Rom. 3:25,28; Rom. 9:32. & 5:1; Act. 15:9; Col. 2:12; Gal. 3:7,9; Gal. 3:20; Heb. 11:6; Joh. 7:38,39; Eph. 1:13,17; Gal. 3:14; Joh. 15:3,5; Joh. 1:16. & 15:6; Gal. 2:20; Joh. 4:14; Eph. 3:17; Eph. 3:12; Heb. 10:22. & 4:14; Tit. 1:15; 1 Pet. 1:5; 1 Joh. 5:4; Eph. 6:16; Matth. 8:13; 1 Joh. 5:14; Gen. 32:26; Heb. 4:2; Rom. 1:16; Mar. 16:16; Rom. 5:5. & 10:11; 1 Pet. 2:6; Psalm. 25:3. & 22:5,6; Gal. 5:6; Luk. 7:47; 1 Pet. 1:8; Rom. 8:26; Gal. 4:6; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 6:14; Eph. 5:11; Heb. 11:8,23; Rom. 5:1; 1 Pet. 1:7; 2 Cor. 1:9; Phil. 1:25; Rom. 14:7; 1 Pet. 3:5; Joh. 8:56; 2 Tim. 1:12; Heb. 11:34,35; 2 Chron. 14:11. & 20:12; 1 Joh. 3:21; Luk. 7:50; Eph. 2:8; Rom. 8:28; Gal. 5:5; Heb. 6:12; Heb. 11:1; Joh. 8:56; Heb. 11:11,17; Psalm. 27:12,13; Isa. 28:16; Jer. 39:18; Rom. 11:20; Rom. 10:10; 2 Cor. 4:13; 1 Tim. 3:13; Rom. 1:12; Psalm. 16:3; Luk. 22:32,33; Jam. 5:15; Heb. 10:38,39. & 11:4,6,7,8,33,34; Col. 2:7; 2 Thes. 2:13; Rom. 11:20. & 5:1,2; Psalm. 1:3; Isa. 40:30,31; Phil. 4:11; 1 Pet. 1:5; Eph. 2:8; Rom. 4:13,14; Isa. 53:1; Matth. 11:25. & 13:11; Rom. 9:18; Tit. 1:1; Act. 13:48; Rom. 11:5; Joh. 10:11,15,26; Joh. 6:37,39. & 20:39. & 17:2,6; Matth. 1:21. & 18:11; Matth. 11:28; Mar. 1:15; 1 Joh. 5:1; Joh. 1:12,13; Joh. 6:44; Luk. 24:47; Act. 2:37,38; Luk. 13:3; 1 Joh. 1:9; Act. 11:18; Rom. 10:10; Act. 8:37; 2 Pet. 1:19; Act. 16:14; 1 Kings. 3:9; 2 Cor. 3:15; Act. 7:39 & 11:23; 1 Cor. 7:37; Matth. 6:21; Rom. 1:24; Joh. 14:1; Luk. 1:66. & 21:14; Matth. 12:35;

Matth. 13:14,15; Luk. 24:25. & 4:11; Psalm. 119:11; Prov. 3:5,20; 1 Joh. 5:1; Rom. 10:8; 1 Joh. 5:4. & 5:20; Joh. 2:4; Psalm. 78:22; Psalm. 137:4,5; Neh. 6:14 & 13:14,29; Joh. 17:3; Heb. 4:2,3; Eccl. 12:1; Eph. 4:5; 2 Cor. 4:13; Matth. 9:2; 2 Pet. 1:1; 1 Pet. 1:7; Rom. 1:17; 1 Joh. 3:23; Hab. 2:4; Joh. 20:27; Act. 16:31; Mar. 11:22; Joh. 14:1; 1 Pet. 1:7; Gal. 3:26; Act. 8:37; Jam. 5:14,15; Phil. 1:19; Eph. 6:18; Heb. 10:38; Rom. 12:3; Matth. 8:10. & 15:28; Matth. 6:30. & 8:26. & 14:31. & 16:8; Mar. 9:24; Rom. 4:20; Rom. 14:1. & 15:1; 1 Thes. 1:7,8; 1 Thes. 3:10; 1 Tim. 1:5; Phil. 3:15; 1 Cor. 13:12; Mar. 8:24; Psalm. 9:10; 2 Cor. 10:15; 2 Thes. 1:3; Eph. 1:17,18. & 4:18,19; Col. 1:9,10; Rom. 1:17; Psalm. 73:1,2. & 30:6,7,8; Rom. 14:1. & 15:1; Heb. 5:11,12; 1 Cor. 8:10; Matth. 16:16; Luk. 9:45; Mar. 9:9; Joh. 20:9; Mar. 16:11; Joh. 14:5; Mar. 9:24; Matth. 8:26. & 14:31; Psalm. 73:28; Matth. 26:56; Luk. 19:9; Act. 16:14; Act. 16:34. & 2:38; Matth. 9:9; Luk. 22:43; Heb. 11:31; Rom. 11:20; Joh. 14:17. & 6:35; Eph. 3:17; 1 Joh. 5:20; Joh. 17:3. & 6:54; Rom. 6:4,5; 1 Joh. 5:4; Joh. 7:37 38; Rom. 11:29; Rom. 1:17; Matth. 13:31,32; Matth. 15:28. & 8:10; Col. 2:2; Rom. 15:14; Col. 1:23; Rom. 4:20; Psalm. 27:1. & 23:4; Job. 13:15; Est. 4:14; 2 Cor. 1:7; Heb. 6:11; Col. 2:11; Rom. 15:13; Rom. 5:1,2,3; Heb. 10:22; Eph. 3:12; Mat. 15:28. & 9:29. & 8:13; Heb. 12:2; Act. 20:24; Psalm. 27:3; Act. 7:59; Job. 3:3,8; Num. 20:10,11,12; 1 Kings. 19:4; Gen. 15:2; Psalm. 3:5. & 31:22; 1 Sam. 27:1.

CHAP. 11

2 Cor. 5:20; Isa. 55:1; Matth. 11:28; Deut. 7:9; Jer. 31:34; Heb. 10:16; Psalm. 32:10; Isa. 55:7; Ezek. 18:21. & 33:11; Mal. 3:17; Isa. 1:18; Tit. 2:14; 1 Joh. 1:7; Mar. 16:16; Joh. 3:15,16. & 6:34,40; Act. 10:43; Matth. 1:21. & 18:11; Luk. 19:10; 1 Joh. 3:23,24; 2 Tim. 1:12; Heb. 7:25; Matth. 9:6; 2 Cor. 5:19; Rom. 4:20; Rom. 3:24,28; Matth. 18:21,22; Matth.

9:12,13; Isa. 55:1,2; Joh. 7:37; Num. 21:9; Joh. 3:14; Matth. 11:18; Matth. 13:44; Matth. 16:24; Matth. 10:37,38; Luk. 14:25; Luk. 14:33; Mat. 13:44,45; Luk. 8:14; Phil. 3:8; Luk. 22:31; Act. 14:22; 1 Thes. 3:2,3,4; Luk. 10:42; 1 Cor. 15:58; Exod. 34:6; Joh. 7:37; Hos. 14:2,3; 1 Joh. 5:14; Prov. 28:13; Eph. 2:4; Rom. 10:17; Rom. 4:11; 2 Cor. 10; Joh. 13:1.

CHAP. 12

Eph. 6:16; 1 Pet. 5:8; 2 Cor. 5:19,20; 1 Tim. 1:15; 1 Joh. 3:23,24; 1 Joh. 3:23; 1 Tim. 6:12; Heb. 10:35; Matth. 13:31; Joel. 2:6,7; Joh. 10:27; Gen. 3:1,2,3; Eph. 1:13; Psalm. 77:10,11; Joh. 4:39,41,52; Matth. 20:20,18; Luk. 9:45; Mar. 9:32; Luk. 24:11; Joh. 13:38. & 14:5; Act. 1:6; Matth. 12:20; Isa. 42:3; Mar. 9:24; Jam. 1:17; Psalm. 77:10,11; Rom. 11:29; 1 Joh. 1:9; Hos. 2:14; Act. 16:14,15; Jer. 3:1; Luk. 21:2,3,4; Phil. 4:10; Matth. 16:18; Prov. 30:12; Psalm. 19:12; Psalm. 77:3,9,10,11; Isa. 55:1,2; Matth. 11:28; 1 Pet. 5:8,10; 2 Cor. 1:3; Isa. 55:7; Jam. 5:7; Jer. 3:1. & 2:3,13. & 14:11; Job. 13:15; Heb. 11:1; Jam. 1:17; Joh. 13:1,2; Psalm. 22:1,2. & 38:3,4. & 77:7. & 88:14; Jer. 20:14,15; Cant. 5:2,3; 2 Cor. 12:8; Luk. 22:32; Rom. 8:24,35; Phil. 1:6; Rom. 11:29; Psalm. 37:24; Psalm. 16:8; Luk. 8:13; Job. 5:17; Jam. 1:12; Heb. 12:7,8,9,10,11,12; Rom. 8:28; Jam. 1:12; Isa. 66:2; Eph. 6:10,12; 1 Pet. 5:8,9; Mar. 9:24; Joh. 3:1; Num. 20:11,12; Psalm. 21:1. & 77:7,8; Rom. 15:4; Matth. 11:28; Isa. 55:1,2; Joh. 7:37; Rev. 22:17; Mar. 10:49.

Part II.

The Life of Faith.

CHAP. I. What it is to live by faith, and how a Christian should stir up himself thereunto.

MANY AND PRECIOUS ARE the fruits of faith, whereof we have use at all times, in every state, at every turn, and in all things that we go about: which who so would enjoy, he must learn not only to have, but to use it aright; to live by it here; feeding upon the several promises of mercy, and not only to be saved by it when he goeth hence. The Lord himself, the Author and giver of life, hath often taught us, by his Prophet and Apostle, That the just man, is not only to believe to Justification, but to live by Faith. The worthy servants of God in all ages, are all brought in as a cloud of witnesses, testifying this truth, that The Just shall live by faith. By faith Enoch walked with God: By faith Abraham walked before God. Paul lived, if ever any comfortably, happily, from the time of his conversion, to the time of his dissolution: but even whilst he lived in the flesh, he lived by the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. Without faith what are we but dead souls? Living carcasses that carry about, and are carried with dead souls? The best, most excellent and precious part of Man is destitute of true life till faith be inspired into it from above, whereby we are united unto Christ the fountain

of supernatural and eternal life. The most glorious or pleasant life of Man without faith, is but a vain shadow, a mere picture and resemblance of life, or of death rather, drowned in carnal delights full of vexation, and leading towards everlasting perdition. The best work of the regenerate, if it be not animated and quickened by lively faith, is but the very outside and dull matter of a good and acceptable work: There is no going right forward in the way to Heaven, if faith be not the guide. The end of the Commandment is love out of a pure conscience, and faith unfeigned. That which is here called the precept is not all the law, but only the precept that Paul giveth to Timothy, that he should have care to see that there were no strange doctrine admitted neither for form, nor matter, neither for things directly contrary to wholesome doctrine nor for idle questions, not tending to build up the people in the love of God, and of their Neighbor, as appeareth evidently, both by the verb before, whereof this word here is derived, and by this same word used afterward in this chapter, where the signification of it is restrained unto the present matter of exhortation. Nevertheless, it may well be applied to confirm, that every act of sincere and impartial obedience, must come from a lively, well-rooted and sovereign faith.

Christ is the fountain, and faith the means of life. The power and original of life is entirely reserved to the Lord and Prince of life, the Light and Life of men, the Author of eternal salvation: But faith is the radical band on our part, whereby we are tied unto Christ, and live in him. The body hath it soul which enlives it; and so hath the soul its soul whereby it lives, and that is Christ the quickening spirit. Take away the soul from the body, and earth becomes earth: sever Christ and the soul, what is it but a dead carrion? The members die if they be separated from the Head, live so long as they be conjoined to it: Christ is to his Church and every living member of it, what

the natural Head is to the natural members. And so we live primarily and properly by Christ as by the soul and Head; by faith secondarily, as by the Spirits, the band of soul and body, or by Nerves and sinews, the ties of the Head and Members. Look as the leg or arm lives by proper sinews, uniting them to the Head: so doth every believer live in Christ by a well-rooted, sovereign, particular faith, whereby he receiveth Christ, and is made one with him. Thus saith he himself, Who is the truth and the life, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and, I am the bread of life, he that believeth in me shall never hunger; and again, As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself. Thus speak the holy Scriptures of him, In it was life, and that life was the light of men; When Christ who is your life shall appear; Our hands have handled the word of life. For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us. And this is the testimony of those three heavenly and earthly witnesses, That God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son; He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son, hath not life. Whatsoever grace we want, it is to be received from Christ, Who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption: and whatsoever grace is in Christ for us, it is made ours by faith. And so we find in diverse passages of Scripture, that he that hath faith, hath the Son, and eternal life in him. This is lively represented unto us by the Parable of the Vine and the branches, that as the branch receives all the sap (whereby it lives and is fruitful) from the Vine, so do we from Christ, being engrafted into him. Life then is from Christ as the Author, Prince and Fountain: but we live by faith as it incorporateth us into Christ, and receiveth him to dwell in our hearts. So

that whatsoever we lend to faith, it redounds to the honor of Christ. Impossible it is, that faith should wax proud towards her Lord, or insolent over her fellow servants, challenging anything of desert unto herself. No; faith receives all of grace as a poor beggar, and altogether excludes the hateful law of boasting. This is the nature, the place, the office of faith: for God hath ordained that life should be through faith, that it might be of mere and rich grace. And if the end and means appointed of God to lead thereunto, do well consent, then it cannot be, that faith should lift up herself against grace, or in anything seek her own praise, and not the glory of God. Among all the gifts of God there is none more useful than faith: others are profitable for some few things, this is for this life and the life to come; for all parts and purposes of our lives, in the use of it manifold, and rich every manner of way: But evermore it advanceth the grace of God, and causeth man altogether to disclaim himself, his ability and worth. Faith serveth not only to justify, but to make us endure in all afflictions without making haste; The Just liveth, in time of his afflictions by faith; He that believeth, maketh not haste: It doth work in us, and guide the course of our obedience; We have received grace and Apostleship to the obedience of faith, not only in believing the promise of the Gospel, but the other part or word of command: It doth also prevail against all Enemies; This is the victory that over-cometh the world, even our faith: But in all this, it leaneth upon the grace of God, looketh to his power and trusteth upon his faithful promise.

To live by Faith, is by faith in Christ to assent and adhere unto, and possess the whole Word of God as our own, in all estates and conditions, resting quietly upon his gracious and faithful promise to receive from his good hand all needful blessings and comforts in fittest season, and in all good conscience yielding ourselves unto his good pleasure in sincere,

universal and constant obedience. To live by faith is not only to believe in Christ for salvation, or to believe throughout our life, that we shall be saved in the life to come; but also to rest upon the grace and free favor of God, that we shall have whatsoever is expedient to bring us safely thither, given us freely by the Lord in this life, so far as he knoweth it good for us. God hath made promise of all good things, more then we could ask or think, that no good thing shall be wanting, that whatsoever cometh shall be for our good: all which the Just man possesseth by faith, and is as well satisfied, when in temptations and trials he hath no means of help, as if he had all that his heart could desire. To the burdened God hath promised ease, refreshing to the thirsty; pardon to the penitent, comfort to them that mourn, perfect peace to them that wait upon the Lord: assistance, comfort, deliverance to them that be tempted, preservation and protection from evil, with comfortable supply of all blessings temporal and spiritual so far as shall be good: all these faith embraceth, possesseth, feedeth upon, and so resteth contented and comforted, as if all help that could be devised, were present, and comfort enjoyed. The word of grace teacheth us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live godly, justly and soberly in this present world: from this word of command faith cannot be wholly turned aside by allurements or terror, but resteth upon God for ability, and sweetly inclineth the heart with delight and cheerfulness to follow after the Lord. Thus to live by faith, is firmly to rely upon the Word of God, in all estates and conditions, with full purpose to be guided by it, until the good things contained therein be fully accomplished. This is to be seen in that honorable company of Worthies summed up by the Apostle, as patterns of faith, who in all estates and straits whatsoever they were brought into, in all temptations wherewith they were tried, and in all difficulties wherein they

were exercised, yet so lived by faith, that nothing could dismay them, much less to overthrow them. By whose example we may learn, so to rest upon God's Word and promise for all needful help, assistance, comfort and deliverance, what danger or difficulty soever befall us, that we be neither dismayed with terror, nor turned aside with worldly allurements, nor wearied with delays, nor faint in the combat.

Now for the attaining hereof these two things are carefully to be performed.

First, to acquaint ourselves familiarly with the Word of God, that we might have it in readiness for direction and comfort.

Secondly, to exercise faith aright in the Word of God.

The Word of God is the ground of all our faith, whereby we live, be directed, maintained, and upheld in all our trials. The promises of mercy are as so many legacies bequeathed us by our heavenly Father, and by his Son Jesus Christ, in his last Will and Testament: The Commandments are so many directions to guide in the way of blessedness, until we be full partakers of the good things promised: It is therefore most necessary and behooveful for us to search this Will and Testament for all such legacies as may concern us: and to bind this law continually upon the heart, that it might lead, keep counsel, and comfort us as occasion requires. Faith is the life of our souls, the Word is the ground, life, guide, and moderator of our faith. If God shall lead us into the dark at any time, or bring us into any straight, that we see no way of escaping, or means of relief, will it not be a great stay and comfort to our soul, if then we can call to mind the good Word of God formerly laid up in store, whence we can raise such hope of help in due time as may quiet and content us till we do enjoy in effect the good desired? When the heart is perplexed with thoughts, distracted with

fears, and unsettled with temptations, is it not a great refreshing, that we can call to mind the commandments of God, directing what we must do or leave undone, instructing in the way of peace wherein our feet shall never stumble? If we would be ready and skillful practitioners in the great art of living by faith, we must exercise ourselves in the Word of God, and get into our hearts and memories, at least, the principal promises and Commandments, that we may have them in readiness for direction and comfort upon all occasions. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.

And here it is to be observed, that besides express Commandments and direct promises generally offered, there be special promises and Commandments by consequent, which we are to note and make use of. As whatsoever God promiseth to any one of his children, (not in any special or proper respect, only concerning such a person and for such a time, but) as a common favor belonging to all his children, that we may, and ought to receive as a promise made to us; Thus the Apostle dissuading from covetousness, applieth that promise to all the faithful, which in special was spoken unto Joshua, I will not leave thee, nor forsake thee. Whensoever we find that any of God's people have prayed for any good thing, and have been heard, if it were not by special prerogative peculiar to them, we may take it as a promise to us. I sought the Lord, and he heard me: and delivered me from all my fears. They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. What favor God hath showed unto any of his children, according to promise and covenant of grace, the same may all that be in covenant with him, expect and look for. For all the faithful have the same God to be their God, live under the same covenant, and have

interest in the same promises of mercy. Thus James exhorting to patience in trouble, allegeth the example of Job, Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord. As for extraordinary favors or deliverances granted unto some persons by special privilege, and not by virtue of common covenant: we cannot promise ourselves the same in particular from their example, nor did the Lord vouchsafe the same to the same persons at all times: but as such peculiar mercies imply a common ground or reason, they are unto us arguments of comfort and encouragement. God doth not ordinarily send his Angels to open the prison doors, nor stop the mouths of Lions, nor quench the force of the fire for the preservation of his people: but from such extraordinary examples, we may conclude, that God will be with us in the fire and in the water to deliver or comfort us, to succor or support us, that we shall not be forsaken, much less overcome. Also in the practice of the servants of God, we may learn our duty: for whatsoever they did upon common grounds and reasons pertaining to us, no less then unto them, that duty belongeth unto us as well as unto them, and their example is for our imitation. Special Commandments by privilege given to some peculiar persons, belong not unto them, who have received no such warrant: but if the immediate ground be common, the duty itself reacheth unto us.

Being acquainted with the Word, if we would live by faith, we must exercise it aright therein, and that consisteth in divers acts.

First, Faith doth firmly and universally assent to the whole Word of God, and set a due price and value upon it, as that which contains the chief good of Man. The Gospel is that pearl of price in comparison whereof the merchandise of silver and gold are of no worth.

Secondly, It ponders the Word seriously, and treasures it up safe. Earthly men keep the conveyances and assurances of their Lands very circumspectly, lay up their bills and bands, write upon them, know when they expire, and what to challenge by them. The promises of God unto the faithful soul, are instead of all assurances, bills and bands for his livelihood, maintenance, protection, assistance, deliverance, comfort, and everlasting happiness: therefore he is careful to view them often, lay them up sure, meditate upon their stableness and certainty, and cast with himself what profit and comfort they will bring in fittest season.

Thirdly, It preserveth and keepeth in the way of the promises, it persuadeth, inciteth and strengthens therein. All the promises of God are free, his favors of mere grace: but this free favor is in special bequeathed unto the penitent, meek, humble, upright, that walk in the undefiled way, and do none iniquity: and faith in these promises, expecting the Lord's help all-sufficient in due season, carrieth a man forward in the path, wherein he shall find rest and peace, and will not be turned out of the right way, then which it acknowledgeth none safe or pleasant.

Fourthly, It plies the throne of grace with earnest and continual supplications, entreating help and succor according unto promise. Faith hearkeneth what the Lord speaketh, and speaketh back again in fervent groans and desires. It hath the promise of God, and therefore is bold to pray, and will not keep silence.

Fifthly, It looketh up directly unto God, his wisdom, power, mercy, and faithfulness; If means be present, faith beholdeth God's hand in them: if means be wanting, the eye is lifted up unto the Lord, who can provide means, or work without means and against means, and most certainly will perform what he hath promised when it shall be for our good. My voice

shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord, in the morning will I orderly address unto thee, and will look out.

Sixthly, It resteth quietly observing the effects of God's promises, and triumpheth before the victory. I have trusted in thy mercy, my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation. But of these more at large in the particulars following.

Now for the better stirring up of ourselves to live by faith.

First, We must find and ferret out the Infidelity that lurketh in our bosoms, condemn it, and make it odious. Ah, how is my heart fallen by unbelief? What a mass of infidelity harboreth in my breast? O Lord, I am grossly ignorant of thy ways, doubtful of thy truth, distrustful of thy power and goodness, disobedient to thy Commandment. Thou hast given rare and excellent promises in thy holy Word, but I inquire not after them, rejoice not in them, cleave not unto them in truth and steadfastness, settle not mine heart upon them, make them not mine own, keep them not safe, that I may know what to challenge by them, prize them not according to the worth and value of the good promised. Because by a civil faith men believe men, therefore they seek to get their security, and if they have a man of credit his word for what was desperate, they are glad; If they have bonds or specialties, they box them up, they know when they expire, what to challenge by virtue of them, they will do nothing that may be prejudicial to themselves therein. But as for the promises of life made in thy Word, I seek them not, build not upon them, hide them not carefully in my heart, cast not seriously with myself what good I may assuredly look for by virtue of them, keep them not continually in thought to cut off all carnal reasonings and distractions, am not wary to prevent what may bring prejudice to my soul and state. Thou threatenest in thy Word, but I do not fear, am not careful to

decline sin. Who is so hardy as to thrust his finger into the fire? But I have suffered myself often to be carried aside with lusts through unbelief. How many wicked motions have I entertained? What sinful passions have I nourished? How vainly, rashly, wickedly have I spoken, though I have been warned by thy Word of threatening to the contrary? True and righteous are thy precepts according to which thou hast commanded me to walk: But I have followed the customs, examples, and traditions of men, the suggestions of Satan, and allurements of the World. Lust and passion have oft come betwixt my heart and thy holy precepts, whereby I am turned aside from the strait way of peace. I can find small relish and savor in the Word of life, I digest it not, feed not upon it, hunger not after it, am not changed into the nature of it. I receive not the truth, or it abides not in me for substantial nourishment: I believe no further then I see, fear no more then I feel, start aside in temptation.

The Symptoms of unbelief are evident. From this root springeth that immeasurable deadness that presseth down. If a man of authority threaten with rack or gibbet, I quake and fear: but when I hear the Judgments of God denounced against my sins, I am scarce moved at all.

From this ariseth impatience, murmuring, discontent, unquietness, when outward things are wanting: For did the heart cleave fast unto God, it would rest quiet in his promise, if all other things were lacking. Self-confidence, resting in means, and leaning upon them, as lands, riches, friends, &c. are effects of unbelief. He that rejoiceth in Christ Jesus can have no confidence in the flesh. As we grow down, denying our wisdom, and all strength we can make; so doth faith in our great God grow up; as we swell or be puffed up in conceit of our wisdom or strength, so doth faith languish or decay. So much as the heart stayeth upon the creature, it is by sin with-drawn from the

Creator. But my heart is much poisoned with self-sufficiency: I feel myself apt to lean upon mine own devices to presume upon mine own strength, and so wickedly to depart from God. If means be at hand I grow secure, forgetting, that further then God doth send forth his Word, they can do nothing. If means be wanting, I faint, or at least, am greatly distracted, not remembering that it is all one with God to save with many as with few, with small or no means as great. If I enjoy the things I would, I think much upon the means, ascribe little to God's blessing: my affections do work more lively on this or that which fell out (as men speak) more luckily, then on the blessing of God, which is all in all. In any matter of weight concerning livelihood or state, I am ready to plod what friends I can make, what means be present, what likelihoods of good success, and here I rest, not seeking to the Lord, though all judgment come from him. But if this or that requisite (in my judgment) cannot be obtained, though I be never so diligent, seek never so earnestly, still I distrust and suspect the event, saying in heart, that it cannot prove well. And when my desire is accomplished, the means are still in mine eye, I think myself indebted to such or such friends, never able to requite their kindness, when the chief cause, upon whom all things depend, is much forgotten, not affectionately remembered. In trials I am very tottering, and like a poor cripple who leaneth upon his crutches, easily brought to the ground, when sensible helps are taken away. Carnal delights, covetousness, love of praise, double diligence about earthly things, and excessive care: these are evil accidents of this disease.

Did we possess the spiritual comforts of the Word, the heart could neither covet, nor take pleasure in the transitory things of this life.

Did we assuredly believe that our Heavenly Father will provide for us, we would not disquiet ourselves with troublesome thoughts about living,

maintenance, and success of our labors. But, ah, how is my heart taken up with distracting cares, drawn away with carnal pleasures and aspiring desires after great things. If riches increase, I rejoice in them; if troubles or crosses come on, my head is wholly busied about them; I can keep no measure in casting, discoursing, contriving how things will go. The many thoughts that I spend about these things to no purpose, upon no occasion, do more than sufficiently convince the earthly distemper of my heart.

Partial obedience, indulgence to any sin, slightness in the performance of holy duties, and rashness in the undertaking of ordinary works without fear, reverence and due consideration, is the evil fruit of unbelief. For the strength of faith is uniform, it fighteth against all sin, feedeth upon the dainties that God hath prepared for them that love him, and teacheth in natural and civil actions to hold Christ, that his Spirit may guide us in the doing of them. But I have been too favorable to boisterous passions, evil lusts, vain roving's, idle speeches, neglect of holy duties. I have prayed without intention, fervency, or care to speed: I have heard the Word, but not attended unto it with diligence, not labored to get it into possession, nor to be changed into the nature of it. I have feasted without fear or thankfulness; I have laid me down to sleep and risen again, not minding the promise of God, who giveth sleep to his beloved, not acknowledging him who is my life, and the length of my days, nor fearing the grin that is set for me in every creature and business of this life. What shall I say? O Lord, I have sinned against thy goodness, power, mercy, and truth; against the Mediation and blood of Christ. He that believes not in God, makes him a liar, then which what can be more reproachful? He that resteth not upon Christ, maketh his blood of none effect, then which what is more abominable? To fear the threats of Man, to rest on his Word, to obey his Commandments,

when the will and pleasure of God is neglected; what is this, but to rob God of his glory, and set up Man in his room or steed? If a great Man should threaten, would I not be careful to decline his wrath? Shall my God threaten, and I be secure and careless? If I have a man's word or bond that is of worth, I write upon the matter, as if I had it: Shall I not joyfully rest in the word, seal, and oath of my God? If a Man of great place should be asked a pawn, and not credited on his word, he would take it in evil part: what a shame is it, that I should not believe God further then I have his caution? The servants of Noblemen attend on their Lord's pleasure at an Inch, come at their call, go at their command, do everything exactly that is given them in charge: What wretchedness is this in me, that I have obeyed the Lord by the halves, been slighty in his worship, most negligent where all diligence is no more than duty, most praise-worthy. As I have dishonored God, so I have hurt mine own soul. If it were not for unbelief, nothing could harm me; this doth all the mischief: for it rejecteth the medicines, which taken, would cure all maladies, and pulleth off God's plasters, which lying on would salve our miseries: it defileth our best works, doubleth the bitterness of crosses, pulleth down many judgments upon us, disinableth in the combat against Satan, is the nurse of spiritual idleness, and hindereth the sweetness of all holy duties. It were just with thee, Deare Father, to cast me off forever, and give me over to the vanity of mine unbelieving heart. I have drawn back from thee by infidelity, cleaving to the lusts of the flesh and allurements of the World, trusting in vain devices; and thou mightest justly forsake me utterly for this mine hypocritical starting aside from thy testimonies. O Lord, I am not more full of infidelity by nature, then of myself unable to remove it: unto thee therefore, do I lift up my soul; O tame in me the fierceness of infidelity, and teach me to believe as thou hast

commanded: then shall I cleave unto thee inseparably, wait confidently on thy salvation, and serve thee cheerfully as long as I live. Thus are we to find out, and make infidelity odious.

Secondly, We must labor to see the necessity and preciousness of faith, and these seen, will make a man hold hard ere he part with it. A man that hath a great charge, his whole state about him, will as soon lose his life, as part with his treasure. Of what excellency and use is this grace of faith, which subdueth passions, overcometh allurements, maketh things impossible to the flesh, easy and delightsome; enableth to stand fast when we are buffeted by Satan, lifteth up the head amidst all the surges of temptation, remaineth victorious in all combats, raiseth us up when we are laid along, and our weapons beaten on our Heads; knitteth the heart fast to the heavenly Commandments, quickeneth in deadness, and holdeth the Lord fast when he leadeth us into the dark. Who would not prefer the custody and increase of such a grace before life itself? Nay, what is our life without it? If faith live in us, we live blessedly, whatsoever misery compass us about; if faith decay, we die; if it die, we perish.

Thirdly, We must consider whom we trust, and meditate on the grounds of faith (to wit) the grace, power, goodness, truth and unchangeableness of God: for this will strengthen belief. We must consider the promises of God, that we may see what his good will and pleasure is, what a Fatherly care of our welfare he hath, and not only how able but how willing also he is to help and succor us; what promises he hath made, and how faithful he is in performance for his own names sake and of free undeserved love.

The Mother of unbelief is ignorance of God; his faithfulness, mercy, and power. Those that know thee, will trust in thee. This confirmed Paul, Abraham, Sarah in the faith. I know whom I have believed, and that he is

able to keep that I have committed unto him, until that day. He is faithful who hath promised, and able also to perform. The free promises of the Lord are all certain, his Commandments right and good, the recompense of reward inestimably to be valued above thousands of gold and silver: Trust therefore in the Lord, O my soul, and follow hard after him. Thou hast his free promise, who never failed, who hath promised more than possibly thou couldst ask or think, who hath done more for thee then ever he promised, who is good and bountiful to the wicked and ungodly: thou doest his work, who is able, and assuredly will bear thee out; there is a Crown of glory proposed unto thee above all conceit of merit: stick fast unto his Word, and suffer nothing to divide thee from it. Rest upon his promises, though he seem to kill thee, cleave unto his statutes, though the flesh lust, the World allure, the Devil tempt by flatteries or threatening's to the contrary.

Fourthly, When we feel our faith weak, we must look up to Christ, the beginner and finisher of faith in us. A fainting body will taste something that is cordial and restorative: and a fainting soul must bait itself with looking to Jesus, who is our cordial and restorative.

Fifthly, Faith is a grace that is given from above and cometh down from the Father of lights unto whom we must fly by fervent prayer, humbly begging, that he would by his Spirit both reveal unto us what be those precious promises, which he hath made unto his people, and give us wisdom rightly to judge of them, and firmly to receive them in every estate: and above all, to move our hearts so to believe them, that we may assure ourselves of all needful help in due time, seeing God all-sufficient and faithful hath promised it, and wait upon him in the way of his Commandments. Merciful Father, it is my sincere desire and unfeigned resolution to draw nigh unto thee, and put my trust in thy mercies for

evermore. But of myself I have no ability to stand in faith, or to follow hard after thy Commandments; I am full of doubting's, when I can see no means to put me in hope of help, and ready to sink down in despair: upon every small occasion I am ready to stagger and slip aside. Take pity upon me, O Lord, for thy mercy sake, for I fly unto thee for help. Thou hast commanded me to believe, hold me by thy right hand that I shrink not; reveal thy promises unto my understanding give me a sound judgment, establish me in the faith more and more, unite my heart close unto thee, that all the darts of the Devil may fall off, and not be able to wound my conscience. Thou hast given me to see my weakness in faith, and to bewail it; to see the necessity and excellent use of faith, and to desire it: give me also steadfastly to believe according to the riches of thy grace, that I may glorify thy name.

CHAP. II. What it is to live by faith in particular touching the promises of pardon and forgiveness.

WHAT IT IS TO live by faith in particular touching the promises of pardon and forgiveness, and how to stir up ourselves thereunto.

The use of faith, which is as large as the word of God, must be distinguished according to the arts and several branches of it, promises, Commandments, threatening's. By promises understand all those declarations of God's will, wherein he signifies in the Gospel what good he will freely bestow. And these be either Spiritual or Temporal; concerning this life, or the life to come of things simply necessary to salvation, or of things good in themselves, but not always good for us: all which are received, possessed, and enjoyed by faith, according as they be promised of God, either with, or without limitation. Amongst spiritual promises absolutely necessary, without which there can be no salvation, the first and chief is concerning pardon or forgiveness of sins and Justification. God of his rich grace and mercy in Jesus Christ doth make offer of free and full forgiveness of all sins to every burdened, thirsty, and penitent soul. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him

return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God for he will abundantly pardon. Return thou back-sliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep mine anger forever. I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me and I will pardon all their iniquities whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me. This promise is made of free and undeserved mercy, not for any merit that is, or possibly could be in us. I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake and will not remember thy sins. I will love them freely, for mine anger is turned away from him. Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth in mercy. I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. Be merciful, O Lord, unto thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed. But when we hear of grace, we must remember Christ, in and through whom God is gracious unto us. Christ is the lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world: and this great benefit of forgiveness of sin is plentifully proclaimed unto us miserable sinners, in and through him. Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance and Remission of sins, should be preached among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Be it known unto you therefore, Men and brethren, that through this Man, (meaning Christ) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins. Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ stead, be ye reconciled to God. Hereunto agreeth that invitation of our Savior; Come unto me all ye that labor, and are heaven laden, and I will

give you rest. This promise of grace is received, possessed and enjoyed by faith alone, but by an operative and lively faith, To him give all the prophets witness, that through his Name, whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins. And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses. Though faith be accompanied with other graces, yet Man liveth by it alone, not by it and other parts of grace as joint supporters, in as much as by it alone he trusts in God's mercy offered in Christ, wholly relying on it, not partly on mercy, partly on righteousness inherent; We are justified freely by his grace, though the redemption that is in Jesus Christ: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past. The Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. And thus the Lord hath ordained for diverse reasons.

First, this promise is of faith, that it might be of free grace, which cannot stand with the dignity of works. If it be by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace, otherwise work is no more work. Faith answers the promise and receives the pardon of grace as a poor beggar, utterly denying all worthiness in the subject, whereas other graces, had they been assigned to this office, would have challenged something to themselves.

Secondly, it is of faith that it might be steadfast and sure to all the seed: why so? Because the promise is of grace. Faith and grace do sweetly consent, mutually uphold each other. Faith leaneth upon grace alone: and grace or mercy is promised freely, that we might believe, and vouchsafed to him that doth believe and accept it. Without faith therefore the promise doth

fall. And if the promise of remission of sins did depend upon any worthiness in us to receive it, we should not only waver and be uncertain, but even utterly despair of ever speeding.

Thirdly, that only is the true manner of Justification, which shuts forth all boasting in the dignity of our works. But faith excludes all boasting in ourselves, and teacheth us to glory in the Lord our righteousness. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what Law? Of works? Nay, but by the Law of faith. Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the Law. For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory but not before God. For what saith the Scripture, Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

As God invites us to receive the promise of pardon offered in the Gospel, so it is necessary that we embrace it by a lively faith. For in ourselves we be sinful and cursed, no way able to make any satisfaction, whereby we might be delivered, and remission which is of grace, can be obtained by no other means, but only by faith in Jesus Christ. To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness; even as David also describeth the blessedness of the Man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works; Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; Blessed is the Man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. Faith goeth directly unto Christ, that by him we might be Justified, and embraceth the promises of God concerning Justification, which is the manner by which alone God hath ordained to justify us. No man can be heir according to the hope of eternal life, unless he be justified from sin by the free grace of God: for sins, not blotted out by the free pardon of grace, separate betwixt God and us, and hide his face from us. Not by works of righteousness which we have done,

but according to his mercy he saved us &c. That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal glory. But no pardon is obtained, unless the promise of pardon be received by faith. Faith in the promises of mercy, that we might be acquitted from sin, and accepted as just and righteous, doth commend and maintain the glory of God's grace entire, and in this respect also it is the more necessary. As a penitent malefactor, if he were to plead his cause before the Prince himself, would not stand upon terms of innocence or present integrity, because he had his pardon under seal, seeing that was given him to plead for mercy, not for justice: so the faithful soul relieth upon the free mercy of God and promise of pardon proclaimed indefinitely to all burdened and penitent sinners, and sealed to every believer in particular by the pledges of the Spirit not upon those sanctified graces which are given unto him, that he might be qualified and fitted to plead for grace and mercy.

The acts of Faith concerning this promise of forgiveness be diverse.

First, it generally believeth the promise true, and thereby discerns, that sin is pardonable through grace. The knowledge of this, that our sins may be pardoned, or that there is mercy with the Lord to cover sin, is a work of faith. For whatsoever cannot be conceived or found out by sense or reason, that is manifested by revelation, and assented unto or judged true and certain by faith, or else it remains as a mystery unknown. When the Apostle defines, faith to be the evidence of things not seen; doth he not intimate, that things unseen to sense or natural reason, are discovered and made evident only by faith? But that God will pardon iniquity, transgression and sin, is a truth that can never be comprehended by the light of nature: flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto us. Supernatural truths which exceed all human capacity, cannot be discerned or received by any power of nature:

But that God will be, merciful to our sins, is a truth supernatural, hidden from the Angels themselves, until it was revealed in the Gospel. Who hath known the Mind of God or been acquainted with the mysteries of his wisdom? In the days of security, whilst men sleep in sin, without all sense of evil, or knowledge of God's justice, it is an easy matter to say, God is merciful, Christ died for sinners: But when the conscience is awakened with the terrors of God's wrath, and the fearful sight of sin; the experience both of wicked men, and of the Saints of God can testify, that it is a difficult thing, to look beyond the cloud of justice, and contrary to the natural sentence of conscience, commination's of the Law, and present feeling, to believe, that there is forgiveness with God.

Secondly, faith stirreth up earnest desires and longings to be made partakers of this mercy of God, and to be refreshed with his gracious and free favor. All holy and fervent desires are both kindled and nourished by it. As our assent to the Divine and heavenly promises is more or less firm, certain, absolute, and evident, so are our desires more or less fiery, constant, unsatiated, yea in respect of heavenly things unquenchable: As faith languisheth, these faint: as faith increaseth, these gather strength. And no marvel, for appetite followeth knowledge, and desire is answerable to that certain and clear judgment that we have of the necessity and worth, value and dignity of the object apprehended. Now faith discovereth both the necessity and excellency of the good certainly contained in the word of promise, (which act of faith is signified by the opening or piercing of the ear) and seriously meditateth upon the singular benefits offered therein, and so raiseth the heart incessantly to hunger and thirst after them. And these desires will be the greater and more constant, the more faith is exercised in the meditation of the goodness, freeness and certainty of these promises.

Many things are neglected which are most precious, only because the value of them lieth hid, or is not apparent, or the prejudice of sensible but deceivable experience doth over-sway. No marvel then if the pardon of sin be neglected, though the benefit be probably known, when it is but slightly thought upon superficially looked into, custom having injured the Mind by long practice to the pursuit of earthly delights or profits, wherewith it is besotted. But with the true believer it fareth much better, for he seeth how happy it should be with him, if his sins were covered, and his soul eased of the burden of them, (however it fare with him in matters of this world) and withal, he pondereth the truth and faithfulness of the promise made of mere grace, whereby the heart is stirred up to desire and long after this blessing above all good that can be imagined. And yet, such is our corruption, we must oft breathe ourselves in the meditation of these things, or else we shall find our esteem of pardon to decay, and our desire to grow cold and dull.

Thirdly, It draweth us forward to seek mercy of God. The wise Merchant first discovers the pearl of price, and then seeketh to get possession of it. The desire of a believer is not a dead or sluggish wish, Oh, that my sins were pardoned, when he never stirreth up himself to receive the promise: But it is a deliberate desire, of a benefit known, possible to be attained, attended with much comfort, and freely promised by him that cannot lie, which is ever accompanied with proportionable care to get and possess the blessing desired; Faith will not suffer a man to smother or conceal his desires, nor desires themselves to die: but it perserveth and kindleth desires, and constraineth with an holy violence to lay them open before the Lord. Thus by faith a man cometh freely to renounce his title and interest in the world, and to part with anything, that might hinder mercy. The wise Merchant having found the pearl of price, for joy thereof goeth and selleth

all that he hath; not as if he could merit pardon, but that he might be capable of pardon and make a faithful plea for mercy. To this end also he humbleth himself before the throne of grace in true and unfeigned confession of his sins, freely judging and condemning himself before God, with a broken and contrite heart. I will declare mine iniquity, I will be sorry for my sin. So the prodigal son coming home to his Father, doth bewail his former lewdness, saying, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee. Pharaoh and Saul being evidently convinced of sin, may be constrained in conscience to make some confession to men, I have sinned this time, and the Lord is righteous: I have played the fool, and erred exceedingly. Ahab humbleth himself before God, and putteth on sackcloth, in hope to prevent the temporal evil denounced against him and his house: But the confession of true and unfeigned faith is free and voluntary, in hope of free pardon and forgiveness. Temporary believers may make confession of their sins with some grief and sorrow, but as they confess their sins, so they believe: their confession is maimed, and their faith superficial; they renounce not their interest in the world, which infers the willing choice of some inferior good, before the favor and love of God, and their belief of the promises is shallow and subordinate to their base and earthly passions. But the confession of faith unfeigned is hearty and sincere, joined with a true detestation of all sin, as that which hath, and would make separation betwixt God and him, if it be not renounced by him, and pardoned of God. And to them that confess their sins in this manner is the promise made; If we confess our sins, God is faithful, and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but who so confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. Only acknowledge thine iniquity that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God. If we would

judge ourselves, we should not be judged. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Which is most lively to be seen in the parable of the prodigal before mentioned, where the Father (resembling God) is said, to have met his lost son before he came at him, and to have embraced and kissed him after he was resolved in himself, to acknowledge and confess his faults. As faith teacheth the poor sinner to humble himself in unfeigned confession of his manifold offenses so it stirreth and encourageth him to power out his soul in earnest and hearty prayer unto God for pardon and forgiveness, through the mediation of Jesus Christ. Thus he is taught of God, Take with you words and turn to the Lord, say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips. Both these may be seen in the poor Publican, who durst not lift up his eyes to Heaven, but smote himself upon the breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. And so the Church prayeth. O remember not against us former iniquities: let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us. This prayer of faith is not presented before God, in assurance that his sins be already pardoned but to obtain pardon of the rich mercy of God by and through the merits of Jesus Christ. And the promise is to him that prayeth unfeignedly, that he shall be forgiven: If my people which are called by Name, shall humble themselves and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways: then will I hear from Heaven, and will forgive their sin. Ask, and it shall be given you: seek and ye shall find. Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be delivered, viz, from sin and death.

Fourthly, Faith receiveth the promise of mercy made in Christ, and embraceth or resteth upon the special, free mercy of God in Christ for pardon: and hereby we are justified, that is, of sinners made Just and

Righteous, not by infusion of holiness, but by free condonation and acceptance of grace. Christ is everywhere made the thing which faith embraceth to salvation and whom it looketh unto and respecteth, as it makes us righteous in the sight of God: and faith justifieth, not by any virtue or dignity of its own, but as it receiveth and resteth on Christ our Righteousness, our Savior, our Redeemer from sin and death. It is the good pleasure of God revealed in the Gospel, to pardon and justify them from all their sins, that believe in Christ, and faith justifieth as it leaneth upon him to receive special mercy through him, or which is all one, to obtain forgiveness of sinners of the mere and rich grace of God through him and this is the most formal act of faith as justifying.

Fifthly, It doth certify of pardon granted and sealed unto us: It doth obtain, receive and assure of forgiveness in particular. I know that my Redeemer liveth; Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin; Thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back; As for our transgressions thou shalt purge them away: Christ hath loved me, and given himself for me, We know that we are passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. These are divine conclusions of a lively faith: But this persuasion or assurance that our sins are already pardoned, is not an act of faith justifying, as it justifieth, but an act of faith following justification, a privilege granted of grace to a sinner now set in the state of grace, or an act of experience in a sinner now justified by faith. Forgiveness of sins in and through Christ is offered in the Gospel to every burdened and weary soul, that will receive it as the ground of faith; vouchsafed to everyone that believeth; but pardon of sin is apprehended as already granted when we come to be assured that we do believe. Faith in order of nature is precedent to Justification, but Justification itself goeth before the sense thereof. As faith obtaineth and

receiveth the promise of special mercy it doth not find us Just when we begin to believe, but maketh us Just by embracing the Righteousness of Christ as it certifieth and assureth of favor, it doth not actively Justify but findeth the thing done already. Faith assureth of the pardon of sin by a double act. First, it layeth hold upon the general promises made to Believers, such as these; He that believeth shall be saved; By faith everyone that believeth is justified; He that believeth hath everlasting life: Secondly, it concludes undoubtedly from them, That he believing is already received into favor, and hath obtained remission of sins. Now betwixt these two comes the testimonies of the renewed Conscience, working upon the soul by reflection, whereby the true Believer is made privy to his own estate, and assured that he doth believe. The whole is collected thus; He that believeth in Christ is already Justified, or hath received pardon and forgiveness: This is the voice of faith, grounding itself upon the express testimony of God speaking in holy Scripture. But I believe: This is the witness of the renewed conscience, enlightened by the Spirit, and directed by the Word, whereby the Believer comes to know what God hath wrought in him. For no man can be said to Believe that he doth Believe: but he believeth the promises by faith, and knoweth himself to be a Believer by the witness of his Conscience, renewed by the Spirit. The conclusion of faith, grounded upon the former propositions, the one expressed in Scripture, the other evident by the witness of Conscience is, Therefore my sins are forgiven, or I shall be saved. The order of climbing to this assurance, is the rather to be marked, that weak Christians, who want the comfortable sense and feeling of this mercy, might learn to seek it in due order, as the way is laid down before them in the Word; and not deject themselves without cause, as though they were utterly destitute of faith in Christ, because they want the sense of this

assurance, and so could do nothing acceptable, because it is not done in faith; nor tire themselves in a preposterous course, not knowing where to lay the foundation or begin their work.

Three prerogatives do ever accompany this confident assurance of our Reconciliation with God.

First, Peace with God or stable tranquility and sweet calmness of Mind; Sin had broken off our friendship and peace with God: but being justified by faith we have remission of sins, and so the cause of enmity being taken away, peace is restored, Even that peace of God which passeth understanding, and is instead of a guard to keep our hearts and minds in Christ; that golden Legacy which Christ bequeathed unto his Disciples, when he left the World. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. And from this peace begins lively consolation against the temptations of sin, Satan and the World: from the sense hereof the faithful soul may triumph with David, The Lord is with me, I will not fear what man can do unto me; and with the Apostle, Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth.

Secondly, Free access unto the throne of grace with boldness and confidence, Christ as it were leading us by the hand, into the presence of God, that we might enjoy his grace in presence. When we were enemies we fled from the throne of God: but being reconciled by his grace, we have free access to come into his presence, to ask what we will, with assurance it shall be done unto us. By whom (sc. Christ) also we have access by faith, into this grace wherein we stand.

Thirdly, Joy in the Holy Ghost unspeakable and glorious, which doth so lift the faithful above the Heavens, that being cheered with the Essence of

God's favor, and contented with Christ alone, they despise the world and the base things therein. We rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also. Thus David prayed, Make me to hear joy and gladness; Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation. All these rare and precious privileges spring from faith: for without faith no man can please God, by faith we have peace with God, by faith we come unto him, by faith we rejoice in him. The God of Hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing. In whom we have boldness and access, with confidence by the faith of him. But this faith which highly advanceth the Believer to boast in God all the day long, lifteth not up itself, waxeth not proud towards the Lord. Free remission, sweet peace, assurance of God's favor, familiar and heavenly communion with him, and whatsoever rich token of special and entire good will God bestoweth, these cannot puff up, but abase the Believer in himself: the higher he is exalted by the free mercy of God, the lower he humbleth himself before God. I will establish my covenant with thee, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth anymore: because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee, for all that thou hast done saith the Lord God.

Sixthly, By faith we continue in this blessed state, in sweet peace and fellowship with God. We can never take the eye from Christ, but immediately the remembrance of former sins doth trouble and vex the conscience: and daily weaknesses and infirmities will breed no small disturbance, if we do not sue forth a daily pardon. Therefore as we believe to Justification, so must we continue in believing for the actual pardon of our daily trespasses. The Apostle saith, God justifieth the ungodly: but by ungodly in that sentence of Paul, he is meant, who doth not bring his works

or merits, nor look to his graces, qualities, acts or virtues in the matter of Justification: but doth bewail his impiety, and fly to the throne of grace for pardon, being convinced of guiltiness. Thus Abraham was all his time comprehended in this Catalogue, and is made by the Apostle, as a perpetual, so a principal instance of that final resolution: Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith without the works of the Law. For if believing in him that justifieth the ungodly, was imputed for righteousness unto Abraham, after he had been for a long time more righteous than the ordinary sort of God's Saints or chosen, Abraham all this while unfeignedly believed himself to be a sinner, no way justified in himself, but seeking to be justified by him, who if he show not mercy to sinners, whilst they be sinners, all mankind should perish utterly. The drift and scope of Paul in the third and fourth to the Romans is only this: That although men may be truly just and holy in respect of others, and rich in all manner of works, as Abraham was thus far known and approved, not by men only, but by God: yet when they appear before God's Tribunal, who best knows as well the imperfection, as the truth of their integrity, they still acknowledge themselves to be unprofitable servants, always praying, Lord, forgive us our sins, and be merciful to our offenses. So that all men, even the most holy are sinners in themselves, and in the sight of God in the Apostles sense, and are justified by grace not of debt, after the infusion of supernatural holiness. The sincere and upright man, in whose spirit there is no guile, is justified, not because of his sincerity, but because the Lord imputeth not that sin unto him, which he still unfeignedly acknowledgeth to be in him, continually praying, Lord, enter not into judgment with thy servant; always confessing, Lord, in thy sight no flesh living can be justified, to wit, otherwise than by not entering into judgment, or by non-imputation of his sins. And faith that

layeth hold upon the promise of mercy offered in Christ, causeth a man every day to humble himself for sin, and to seek pardon by earnest prayer every day it receiveth and feedeth upon the promises made in Christ, and so assureth that his sins are done away as a mist.

And thus a Christian may live by faith for many days, or rather all the days of his life, in sweet peace and communion with God, if he will learn to maintain, and take pains to use his faith aright. It is to be lamented that amongst Christians, who desire to live honestly and keep a good conscience, so few know, so many neglect the ordinary use and improvement of their faith; as if it served only to give them comfort in the remission of sins at their first conversion, and then had finished all it should or could do, except till they fall into some notable decay, if not great offense, or be plunged into deep doubts, or be exercised with some great afflictions: whereas the daily use and improvement of faith for the continuance and increase of assurance of forgiveness, peace, access unto the throne of grace, Joy, and communion with God, is as necessary, should be as constant as is the use of Fire and Water, of the Light, of Meat or Drink or whatsoever is more ordinary for the comfort of the Body. Serves faith for entrance and beginnings, and not for continuance, progress and increasing's? Is faith the breeder and bringer forth of Joy and Peace, and not the Nurse and foster Mother of them, cherishing and feeding them, till we come to a full and perfect age in Christ? All fruits the nearer they come to ripeness, the sweeter they be: and so is the fruit of faith, sweeter in the ear then in the blade. If the sense of pardon be pleasant and delightsome at the first, must it not increase as strength of faith and spiritual acquaintance with God increaseth? Is it not easier to preserve peace, then to recover out of dumps and distresses? Every day to reckon with our souls, and get our debts

cancelled, then to do it now and then, when we have run far behind hand, not knowing which way to turn ourselves? Fire once kindled is kept burning with less pains, then being oft quenched, it can be kindled. The labor of maintaining health is much less, then the toil of recovering out of sickness. Let us then learn to make use of our faith every day; As every day to humble ourselves before the throne of grace, and beg the pardon and forgiveness of our sins; every day to look unto the grounds of comfort, and meditate thereupon, that we may find joy and sweetness therein; every day to renew our faith in believing the pardon of such particular offenses as we have espied in ourselves that day, and confessed before the Lord with sighs and groans for mercy. Let us think seriously with ourselves, how excellent a thing it is to be in league of amity with God; how blessed and pleasant a state to be freed from the fear of death and Hell; how rich and comfortable a thing to be Heir of Glory. Let us often stir up ourselves to converse with Christ; the better we know him, the more delight and contentment we shall take in fellowship and communion with him. This is to live by faith, and to stir up the grace that God hath given us. This is to maintain faith, that it may serve us. Fire in the embers glows not, heats not the house: Faith in the heart not used, doth neither increase, nor comfort. A man may well be said not to have the wealth, he useth not for his benefit: surely he wants the benefit of faith, who exerciseth it not. Use limbs, and have limbs. The beauty and benefit, yea, the very increase and perfection of all gifts, virtues and graces consisteth in use, and action. Exercise perfecteth understanding and memory; strengthens the disposition of the soul, increaseth vigor, begetteth promptness: the more thou doest, the more thou mayest. The oftener the liberal man gives Alms, and doth good turns, the more his liberality grows and shines. Let any man diligently and thoroughly improve

his faith, and great will be his faith, and great the joy it will bring in. It is our fault, if we suffer Satan with light temptations, ordinarily to interrupt our spiritual mirth, or to detain us in dumps and pensiveness. Did we but carefully maintain our faith, it would do away all disturbance which is within us against ourselves, and tame the rebellion of lust against the spirit of the mind renewed; it would secure us against the power of enemies inward or outward, that they should not be able to hurt us, much less to prevail against us, and repress or vanquish all perturbations, which spiritual wickedness's, unbelief, want of godly contentation, defects in our condition, might occasion: it would expel unquietness, keep under passions, allay fears and griefs, and calm the boisterous storms of discontent. Let us keep our faith, and it will keep our Joy: It will keep it an even ever-flowing current, without ebb and flow, clouds and eclipses: let us increase our faith, it will increase our joy. But to what measure of Joy may a grown Christian attain, if he be careful to preserve and stir up his faith? It is a small thing for him to come to an ordinary pitch of cheerfulness, except his joy exceeds the mirth of a worldling in the quality and quantity of it. If his mirth be not a sweeter and more ravishing mirth, of a higher kind, of a more pure nature, of a most constant tenure, then any carnal man's whatever, he disparages faith. The Christians joy, is joy unspeakable and glorious, joy in the Holy Ghost, another manner of Joy then ever entered into the heart of a natural man. So is that text to be construed, eye hath not seen, &c. not chiefly of the joys of Heaven, which here the spiritual man himself cannot tell what they shall be, but of the Gospels joy, of the wine and fatlings already prepared, and now revealed to the Believer by the Spirit: which if the carnal man scorn and scoff at, it is because he cannot comprehend it. It is a more pure and constant joy, which needs not the support of earthly delights: his

joy is within, he joys in the favor of God, which is unchangeable. It beseems not a Christian to be merry in one estate, dumpish in another, as if their joy depended upon their outward condition. No, no, the favor of God alone is sufficient to uphold a good man's joy. Your joy no man taketh from you, We glory in tribulations also: And great reason, for if sin be pardoned, everything causeth a progress of salvation. Were it not odious to see one professing some I befall Science, to live by lewd and dishonest shifting? No better sight is it to see a Christian hanging his joy upon course and earthly pleasures, who hath more noble and generous, yea, Angelical delights, then which what hath Heaven better but in degree only and manner of fruition? How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God, therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house: and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light. It is a pleasure to him to want other pleasures, who is oft and every day serious in the meditation of the remission of his sins, the free grace and eternal love of God towards him in Jesus Christ. He that is every day busied to fetch out a pardon of course for his daily infirmities, and to make even reckoning betwixt God and his Soul, that nothing remain on the score to interrupt his peace, shall neither be idle, nor unprofitable; neither want employment, nor comfort. This course can open no gap to licentiousness, liberty in sin, or carnal security: for he is ever most studious not to run into arrearages, who is most desirous to have his debts cancelled and blotted out. Faith is of the nature of sovereign purifying waters, which so wash off the corruption of the ulcer, that they cool the heat, and stay the spread of the infection, and by degrees heal the same. And of Cordials, which so comfort and ease the heart, as also they expel noxious humors,

and strengthen nature against them. Justifying faith takes kindly rooting in a clean heart, and being rooted purifieth it more and more. Faith that pleads for mercy, doth cleave to the Commandments, stir up to holiness, over-rule the affections, delight in purity, and diffuse the virtue of the word into every faculty of the soul.

It may be objected, If faith certify that our sins be pardoned, and there be such joy in believing, how comes it to pass that many good Christians live so long in fear and doubt, who would be contented to take any pains to be settled in assurance of God's love? The common causes of this slowness of belief are many.

First, an immoderate aggravation of their sin, and continual thought of their unworthiness. Thus the case stands with many poor Christians; fain they would believe (as they acknowledge) but they are unworthy, they have been sinners. These must know, it is good they should see their own unworthiness, but not that they should be hindered thereby from coming to Christ it is good to deny themselves, but not to doubt of the mercy of the Lord. Christ came to seek that which was lost, to bind up the broken hearted, and to save sinners. He died for his enemies, for the unworthy: He inviteth the burdened to come unto him, and makes suit to the poor and worthless, that he might ease and enrich them. If they were not unworthy, what need had they of God's mercy? Or how should God glorify the riches of his mercy in pardoning their offenses? The feeling of their unworthiness makes them fit to receive mercy from God who doth vouchsafe it freely: seeing besides their sin which makes them unworthy, they have a sense of it, and are heartbroken for it. If they were not unworthy, they could not believe: If their case had not been desperate, what need was there, that Christ should come from the bosom of his Father? Pardon is offered freely

of grace, the more vile they be in themselves, the fitter to receive this undeserved kindness.

Oh, but their sins are grievous and notorious, scarlet, crying, scandalous sins? This detestation of sin is greatly to be commended, if they remember withal, that there is hope in Israel concerning this: if they will set one eye upon the mercy of God, as they set the other upon the vileness of their iniquities. If their sins be many and great, God is rich in mercy, abundant in goodness, hath a multitude of tender mercies; His mercy reacheth above the Heavens, he forgiveth iniquity, transgression, sin and rebellion. All faults are easily pardonable to his infinite mercy, which exceeds Mans, as Heaven doth Earth; which can readilier forgive seventy, then Man seven offenses. Was not Adam, Manasseh, Paul, the sinful woman commonly called Mary Magdalene, the Cretans and Jews who imbrued their hands in the blood of Christ, received of him to mercy? Doth not he delight to forgive much, that he may bind to love much? Shall not his favor superabound to the sense of faith, where sin hath abounded to the wounding of Conscience? It matters not what the wound is, so Christ be the Physician. The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin. Nothing but the blood of Christ can wash away the guilt of the least sin; and his blood is sufficient to purge the most polluted Conscience. But they have felt no extraordinary measure of sorrow for sin, they are rather dull and senseless? Are they weary of sin? Have they sorrowed to self-denial and to renounce their interest in whatsoever might separate betwixt Christ and them? To such is the word of Reconciliation sent. But they have often slipped into the same sins. There is a difference of offenses. There be sins of ignorance, infirmity, forgetfulness, and sudden passion, whereunto the heart yieldeth not advised consent, and from which the faithful by reason of their frailty can never be free in this life, in some

degree or other. Now unto these God of his mercy is pleased to grant a pardon of course, notwithstanding his servants step oft into them through weakness, provided they humble themselves, seek mercy, and labor the mortification of their infirmities. Abraham twice denied Sarah to be his wife, saying, She is my Sister. Of David it is recorded, that though he were a man after God's own heart in all things, except the matter of Uriah, yet of frailty he offended many times in the same particular. There be foul, enormous notorious sins, which wound the conscience, and stop and hinder the lively operation of grace; and these must be repented of, and advisedly left and forsaken, before we can believe to the pardon and forgiveness of them. Nevertheless, if a man have often fallen into these offenses, he is not to despair, but seriously to confess, and to forsake his sin, that he may obtain mercy. For the Lord inviteth the obstinate and rebellious to repent, and by word and oath assureth them of forgiveness, if they will return. And if we look upon examples, we shall find many such, who upon humiliation and earnest prayer have been received unto mercy. But they have fallen grievously since conversion. So did David and Peter, who yet recovered by grace, and upon repentance were forgiven. A foul offense after grace received is not unpardonable. The blood of Christ, which washeth away the guilt of sins before conversion, is sufficient to purge the conscience from sins after conversion likewise; We are commanded to repent of, taught to pray for the pardon of sins without exception. It is of free mercy that former sins are covered, and by the same mercy of God this transgression may be pardoned. The mercy of God is everlasting, his covenant unchangeable, though we be unfaithful, yet he cannot forget himself. He delighteth to show mercy, and rejoiceth in the soul that hath sinned, but now lamenteth, saying, I have sinned, and it did not profit me. The commandment of God,

enjoining us to forgive our brother not seven times but seventy times seven times if he repent, is an expression of his readiness to show mercy to them who do oft and grievously offend, if they return by unfeigned repentance, and sue for mercy. Oh, then take heed, that to other great and many sins infidelity be not added. Doubting begets deadness, whereas looking up unto the promises of mercy, will both ease and soften the heart. But they cannot believe. Indeed they think there is no promise of mercy made to them, upon which they should ground their confidence. Therefore they must know; that God calleth them, in his word to come unto him, as if he did particularly name them, and promiseth to receive them unto mercy; and then they must consider of the free grace of God in promising, and his faithfulness in making good whatsoever he hath promised, that neither want of feeling, nor conceit of unworthiness dis-hearten them from drawing nigh unto him. They must think seriously with themselves, I need mercy, and the Lord hath promised it: I thirst after it, and the Lord will grant unto me my desire according to his promise: I am utterly undone if I obtain not help; and help is not to be found, but in the Lord Jesus, who lovingly inviteth me to come unto him, that I may be refreshed. Seeing therefore I long for mercy and, the Lord makes offer of it in his dearly beloved Son, I will go unto him and humble my soul before the throne of his grace, I will entreat mercy, and roll my soul upon the promise of salvation. All my help is to look off myself an object of confusion, and look upon Christ an object of consolation, therefore I cleave unto him as mine only Savior, and trust in him though he should kill me. It doth not please God, that I should stand aloof and strain courtesy, now he encourageth me to come with confidence, or give way to doubting's, now I have his promise, who never failed any that trusted in him, who hath done more for me then ever he promised: therefore I will go

unto him in the mediation of Jesus Christ, and importune his grace; if I perish I will perish in his bosom, to die for it nothing shall separate me from his mercy.

A second cause of this slowness may be ignorance of the way how this assurance is to be sought, upon what foundation it is to be laid, in what order they come unto it. Sometimes they misconceive the promises, as if they were offered only to Believers, and not laid as the foundations of faith, and thereupon falsely conclude, that no promise is made unto them, because they cannot find that they do believe. Sometimes they mistake the nature of faith, taking it to be a persuasion or assurance that their sins are pardoned, and so conclude, that they have no faith, because they want assurance: when in the order of nature, faith is precedent to actual remission. And many times Christians are herein deceived, that they fear to receive and apply the promises of grace, till they can find in themselves such a measure of sanctification, as is scarce, if at all, attainable in this life. These and such like blocks must be removed by good information, acquainting themselves out of the word of God, what faith is, the order in which we must climb up to assurance, how the promises are to be received, and what is the true use of sanctification. But two things are specially to be learned for their direction.

First, that as soon as ever a man feels sin as a burden, and doth truly, earnestly, fervently thirst to be eased of it, he hath a calling to come unto Christ to ask, obtain, and receive mercy. He that was bitten with the fiery serpent, was appointed to look up to the brazen Serpent, that he might recover. Oh then delay no longer, be not held back with vain objections and causeless scruples. Behold, he calls thee to come, why shouldst thou fear in respect of thy vileness? Faith is obedience and obedience is more

acceptable than courtesy and complement. The sooner thou comest, the better welcome. It is rudeness, and not good manners, not to do as thou art bidden to do, yea, and so earnestly persuaded, entreated and charged to do. To do the work of God is to believe in him, whom he hath sealed and sent to be thy Savior. And shalt thou not ten times more honor and please him in trusting upon his mercies, and sealing to his truth, then in fearing his justice, and dreading his power?

Secondly, he that finds himself plunged into the gulf of misery by sin, and destitute of the sap and fruit of grace is invited to come unto Christ, that he may receive from him the grace of sanctification, as well as remission: Oh, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; He that believeth, out of his belly shall flow rivers of water of life. The barren in grace must come unto Christ to be supplied of his fullness. By faith we receive the promised Spirit. He that walloweth in sin, is not fitted to believe, for justifying faith can never take sound rooting in the heart which is not resolved to forgo the practice, and hast cast off the love of all sin: but when a man is weary of sin, and finds emptiness of grace; as he is commanded to pray for mercy, and the gifts of grace, so is he to believe in Christ, for the obtaining of both. Wherefore study, strive, endeavor to believe, and lay hold on the Rock, as in danger of drowning a man will do on the tree or post that comes next to hand. When thou hast, in thy conceit, most cause to despair, labor against it: When thou hast no reason in thy apprehension to believe, believe with all thy power; when the favor of God is lost to thy feeling, it may be present to thy faith, which discerneth what is promised, though to sense it have no being. And for thine encouragement, set before thine eyes Christ's freedom to all suitors in the time of his flesh, repelling none who truly desired the

price of his blood. There be other causes of this weakness, which have been mentioned, and answered before.

Now if any poor and weak Christian desire to know (as he desires nothing more) how he should stir up himself to believe the promise of forgiveness when he wants the comfort of it, yea, when to his own sense he feels the contrary.

First he must unfeignedly humble his soul before God in the confession of sin, with earnest prayer for pardon. For he that acknowledgeth his sins, shall be received into favor. O Lord, I have sinned, and thou art justly displeased: I have cast off thy law, and thy wrath is kindled against me. My heart trembleth at the apprehension of thy sore displeasure, and I am afraid of thy judgments. All this is come upon me by reason of my foolishness: my smart and sorrow is bred in mine own bosom. I have no rest in my bones because of my sin. But, dear Father, I look unto thee for mercy in Jesus Christ, I beseech thee, take away the transgression of thy servant. It is thy property to show mercy, it is thy free promise to pardon the iniquities, transgressions and sins of thy people that turn unto thee, and pray: for thy Names sake be favorable to mine iniquities, and remember my sin no more: cast them behind thy back, do them away as a mist, and bury them in perpetual oblivion. I have gone astray like a lost sheep, but now my desire is to return home unto thee: With my whole heart I desire thy favor, O suffer me not to perish under the burden of my sin. Remember not to my revolting's from thy Commandments: but according to the multitude of thy tender compassions remember me for thy goodness sake, O Lord. Truth it is, I am not worthy to be called thy son, or to be partaker of the least crumb of thy mercy: But thou art a most loving and compassionate Father, who dealest not according to the iniquities of thy children that trespass against thee, nor

rewardest them according to their deserts: who retainest not thine anger forever, because mercy pleaseth thee. If thou wilt be merciful to my sin, then shall thy glory appear, my heart shall be enflamed with thy love, I shall walk in thy fear, and my tongue shall sing of thy goodness.

Secondly, He must rouse and stir up himself to believe, with reasons drawn from the promises, and covenant of God made in Jesus Christ, considerations taken out of the Word and experience of his dealing with other his servants in former times. Why art thou cast down, O my soul, why art thou disquieted within me? Trust in God, and cast thy burden upon him, for he will ease thee. Thou hast his promise confirmed by oath and covenant, that he will cast thy sins into the bottom of the Sea, purge away thy transgressions, forgive thine iniquities, cover all thine infirmities, and never remember them anymore. Behold, he persuadeth, entreateth, beseecheth, commandeth thee to believe: why art thou afraid? It is the will of God that thou shouldst rest on his mercy: he cannot be offended for that which himself commandeth, nor deny that which he hath promised. If sin abound, mercy shall abound much more. His burning wrath is pacified in Jesus Christ, who hath given himself an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor, that grace might glorify herself in the pardoning of thy offenses. Hast thou nothing to bring before him but sin and impiety that he abhorreth? He looketh upon thee in his dear Son Jesus Christ, whom he hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, and loveth freely. Doest thou require testimonies of his undeserved kindness? God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life: He hath entered into a free and everlasting covenant with thee, and waited long for thy conversion when thou wentest astray: and will he not much more have

mercy upon thee now thou prayest? Why art thou dismayed at the sight of thy great unworthiness? Misery is the object of mercy: the greater thy distress, the more glorious will be the grace of God in thy deliverance. The baser thou art in thine own sight, the fitter to believe: for faith excludes all conceit of worth, and receiveth pardon as a mere gift of grace. Sinful men, whose compassions are not as the drop of a bucket to the huge Ocean, if compared with the infinite Sea of mercy which is in our God, must forgive their Brethren till seventy times seven times, if they sin against them, and repent: Our God, who requires so much of us, who have nothing but what he giveth, will he not deal tenderly with the poor soul, which hath sinned, and repenteth? God hath done more for us then for shame we could desire, before we asked anything at his hand; yea, when we sought to excuse our disobedience, and charge the fault upon his Highness: what will he not do, when we accuse ourselves, and pray for mercy? My soul, nothing can hurt thee, but unbelief. Thou art wounded by sin: Believe in Christ, and by his blood thou art healed. God is angry: Believe, and thou art reconciled: All variance ceaseth, when thou art knit unto Christ. Wherefore shake off distrust, hearken no longer to the assaults of Satan: but roll thyself upon the Lord, and stick fast unto his mercy. If thou want the sense of his love, thou hast his promise that he will be good unto thee: cleave unto it above all thou canst feel, see or comprehend. O my God I will trust in thee, though thou shouldest kill me: I will believe thy favor, when thou frownest upon me: and expect comfort when I lie groaning under the heavy weight of thy displeasure. Thou causest man for a time to possess the sins which thou hast pardoned: and I will believe the pardon of my sins, when thou seemest to set them in order before my face.

Thirdly, He must be instant with the Lord to give him both strength of faith, and the sight of his belief, that he may know he doth believe unfeignedly. Give me, Gracious Father, to believe as thou commanded me to rely upon thee. Thou stretchest forth thy hand in love, and offerest rich treasures of goodness to them, that lay hold upon them; create in me the hand of faith, that I may effectually receive what in mercy thou reachest forth. The knowledge of faith is of thee, as is the gift itself: give me the Spirit of revelation, that I may discern truly what thou hast given me, that my lips may sing of thy praise all the day long.

Fourthly, He must comfort his heart in the certainty of God's Word, though for the present he feel no comfort. Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord will deal bountifully with thee. His Word is gone forth in truth, wait a little while, and thou shalt behold the light of his countenance. The Lord deferreth to grant the comfort of forgiveness, that he might confirm faith, train thee up in obedience, try thy patience, preserve his graces, and do thee good in the later end. Thou art already blessed, because the grant of pardon is sealed, and received: the sense of deliverance pertaineth to the execution, which for a little season is deferred, that it may be perfected with greater glory to God, and comfort to thyself. Blessed be the Lord, who hath turned away his eyes from my transgressions, but hath not turned away his mercy from me. Rejoice in the Lord, O my soul, again I say, rejoice: for he hath covered thine iniquities, and purged away thy sin, that thou shalt not die. Oh, the blessedness of that man, whose iniquities are forgiven, to whom the Lord imputeth no sin.

Fifthly, Thus faith is daily to be preserved and quickened, unto which it is not unprofitable to add some thoughts concerning the blessedness of the Man, whose debts are cancelled out of God's Book; the grace and love of

God, who vouchsafeth to show compassion herein, the price that was paid to divine Justice, that grace might justly confer this blessing upon them that believe. These things may serve to quicken the heart in the consideration of this mercy.

CHAP. III. What it is to live by faith touching the promises of Sanctification.

WHAT IT IS TO live by faith touching the promises of Sanctification, and how to stir up our selves thereunto

The next spiritual promises of things absolutely necessary to salvation are concerning Sanctification, or the killing of sin and quickening us to newness of life, by the continued infusion of holiness: and renovation of our hearts according to God's Image, and to the enabling us to walk in new obedience according to covenant. And this is signified by the general terms of subduing, saving, washing, cleansing, and purging from sin and iniquity. Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities, and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the Sea. He shall save his people from their sin; which as it is true in the matter of our Justification for the forgiveness of our sin; so also in the point of Sanctification, for delivering us from the power of sin. And so are the like general speeches to be understood, that

Christ is the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world, that he was manifested to take away our sins, that the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin, that he loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood. And this is that which the Lord of his free mercy promised to effect, for his Church and people, And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even everyone that is written among the living in Jerusalem. When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the Spirit of Judgment, and by the spirit of burning.

Now seeing we have such promises from God, it followeth necessarily, that a Christian is allowed to believe, that God of his free grace in Christ, will purge him from the filthy remainders of sin, and renew him more and more after his own Image, in righteousness and true holiness.

In the covenant of grace which God made with his people, he promiseth to take away their hearts of stone, and to give them hearts of flesh; to put his law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; to put his fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from him: and to give them a new heart, and to put his Spirit within them. But what God promiseth, faith receiveth. It is no presumption, but true obedience to assure ourselves from God, of whatsoever he hath past his promise and entered into band and covenant freely to give.

The burdened are invited to come unto Christ for ease, and the thirsty for refreshing. Is any man dried, withered, and burnt up for lack of the sap and moisture of grace, the fountain is set open unto him, he may come and drink to the satisfying of his soul. If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture saith, out of his belly shall

flow rivers of living water. Christ is the fountain of grace and the well of life, ever-flowing and ever full, of whose fullness every Believer doth receive grace for grace, who filleth all in all, who is all in all, in whom we are complete, filled with all heavenly graces, which serve to remove evil, or set us in state of blessedness. There is no grace but from Christ: no communion with Christ, but by faith. From Christ we receive to believe; and from him believing, we daily suck the life of grace. Christ is made unto us of God, Wisdom and Sanctification, as well as Righteousness and Redemption: and as it is our duty to believe in Christ for pardon of sin, so to embrace him by faith for sanctification, and to be filled with his gifts of grace in our measure.

Christ by his blood hath purchased for his people all spiritual blessings in heavenly things, even all things that pertain to glory in the world to come, and to live godly in this present world. But what Christ hath purchased, that we may assuredly believe God will bestow: He will not withhold anything, that he hath graciously given to our Savior on our behalf.

We are taught to ask of God in Jesus Christ, increase and strength of grace, that we may be enabled to walk before him in new obedience. We cease not to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding: That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly. But what we are taught and commanded to beg in prayer, we are allowed to believe, that we shall obtain it of free grace.

The faithful have relied upon God for grace and ability to walk in his ways, and to finish the work whereunto they were ordained. But all the

faithful, as faithful be partners in the same promises and privileges, and live by the same faith.

We are commanded to cast off the old man, which is corrupt, with the affections and lusts, and to put on the New man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness: But in the covenant of Grace, God giveth what he requireth: Mans duty is his free gift of grace.

It is necessary a Christian should believe, that God will sanctify his nature, and enable him to those duties of holiness and righteousness that he requires.

For Justification and Sanctification be individual: whom God doth acquit from the guilt of sin, and accept as righteous unto life through Jesus Christ, them he doth sanctify by his Spirit to walk before him in newness of life. Christ himself cannot be divided, nor the participation of his benefits: If by communion in his death, we be delivered from the curse and malediction of the Law, by the power of his Resurrection, we are raised up to live unto God.

If Christians be not persuaded that God will mortify their corrupt affections, and build them forward in holiness, they shall very much stagger, coldly set upon the practice of Christianity, be off and on, unstayed, often fainting at the difficulty of the work, dismayed at their manifold slips, strong corruptions, and little prevailing's against them.

Our own strength is too weak for the work of holiness; as to defeat the policies of Satan, to repress and vanquish the lusts of our rebellious hearts and allurements of the world: much more to change and cleanse our hearts, which are by nature and custom in sin so deeply polluted. If we have not faith to believe that God will aide, assist, and bless us in our endeavors, yea, and do the whole work for us; what courage can we have to go about it?

What success are we like to find in it? What shameful foils and repulses shall we sustain?

But settledness in this, that God will perfect his work begun, causeth men to go about the practice of mortification with much readiness, cheerfulness, ease, staidness, and happy speed. He will fight manfully against his lusts, and continue in the combat against them, who is assured of victory from God in the end. It is a great heartening to resist evil, or to do any good duty, when we believe God will be with us, in the one and in the other, to give us help against our enemies, and to enable us unto the work: and that work must needs prosper that God will forward, and succeed well, that he will bring to perfection.

The promises of God concerning spiritual blessings are so linked together, that whosoever believeth not everyone aright, he cannot believe any one steadfastly as he ought. He shall many times be in doubt of the remission of his sins, and in fear of falling away, who hath not learned to rest upon God for the grace of sanctification, no less than for the pardon of his offenses: for the certainty of both these is like, if it be well considered.

The acts of Faith concerning these promises be these and such like.

First, It acquaints a man with his emptiness of grace, the strength of his inbred corruptions, how deep they have eaten, how fast they stick, how unable he is to crucify his inordinate affections, or to repair the decayed Image of God in him, and that he is in woeful case, unless the Lord put to his helping hand. Faith in this act doth not properly work upon the promise, but prepares the heart thereunto. And sure it is a worthy lesson: for the serious thought of this matter is exceeding forcible to abase and humble him in his own eyes, and so wholly to drive him out of himself. For he perceiveth, he is as strongly bound by the tyranny of sin to perpetual

slavery, as by the guilt of sin to the danger of condemnation. Could he get pardon for sin, what would this profit, so long as he lieth still under the power and dominion of sin, from which he hath no ability to deliver his soul. If a man labor of some painful, loathsome incurable disease, though in many things he be advanced, this will pull down conceits of greatness: and when a Christian comes to see, how many dangerous, noisome, spiritual diseases he laboreth under, he is not lightly affected with it: no, he abhorreth himself, and crieth out, O miserable wretch that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death, how shall I be cured of these maladies. Hereby also he is drawn in all his purposes and resolutions to deny himself, and to rely upon the power of the Lord, who only remains victorious. He purposeth, but through the might of God: which causeth earnest and hearty prayer to be strengthened unto, and established in that which is good. I will keep thy statutes: O forsake me not utterly. I have stuck unto thy Testimonies: O Lord, put me not to shame. I will run the way of thy Commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart, Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes, and I shall keep it unto the end. Give me understanding and I shall keep thy Law, yea, I will observe it with my whole heart. Make me to go in the path of thy Commandments, for therein do I delight. Incline my heart to thy testimonies, and not to covetousness. Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not. Purposes thus grounded bring forth holy performances: but when they are taken up without consideration of our frailty, and we rely not upon Christ for his grace and assistance, they quickly vanish and come to nothing. In the time of sickness, danger, disgrace, we make fair promises to amend what is amiss, and reform things out of order: but when the rod is removed, shortly all is clean forgotten. What may be the reason? We stand upon our own feet, presume to go alone,

of ourselves, by our own strength, and then no marvel if we fall and catch many a knock.

Secondly, It showeth where the strength is to be had which we want, and stirs up to a conscionable, diligent and constant use of the means of grace, that God hath ordained, but looks up to him for a blessing, and resteth not in the means. Faith is ever hungry, sensible of want and emptiness, and therefore attends upon the Lord in the use of all such means, whereby he is pleased to convey Christ unto us for our spiritual filling. The laborious Bee is early abroad to gather, when there is a honey fall: and faith is early awake to wait upon the Lord in his ordinances, when he showers his blessings upon his people. But it knoweth to distinguish betwixt the ordinances in and by which grace is obtained, and the Author and Giver of it. And this urgeth the Believer earnestly to beg the blessing of God upon his own ordinances, without which they cannot avail us.

Thirdly, It inciteth to an holy improvement of what graces he hath received already, as the ready way to have them increased. God bestoweth his gifts of grace in most plentiful measure, upon them that are most careful to put them forth to advantage. To him that hath, that is, that useth well what he hath received, shall be given, and he shall have in abundance. Grace is given freely, not deserved by works: but by the appointment of God, he that would increase therein, must religiously employ what he possesseth. Men increase their substance by labor and pains, their learning by diligence: and he that best improveth graces received, shall most abound therein.

Fourthly, It fighteth courageously against sin, and crieth instantly to the Lord for help. Faith will not yield to corruption, be the combat never so hot and fiery, because it apprehends victory: neither will it give the Lord rest,

because it is sensible of want, and weary of sin. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Fifthly, It submitteth willingly to what course the Lord is pleased to take for the crucifying of sin, and healing of our nature. Look as the patient yieldeth himself unto the Physician to be dieted, purged or lanced, for the curing of his maladies and recovery of health: so doth the soul resign itself by faith into the hands of God the spiritual Physician of the soul, who only is able to heal all diseases, to be dieted, purged, exercised as seemeth best unto his heavenly wisdom, only it desires that spiritual maladies may be removed and health recovered.

Sixthly, Faith is the band or sinew whereby we are tied unto Christ the fountain of grace, and the pipe whereby grace is conveyed from him into the soul. Look what a full treasure of all sorts of graces Christ hath stored up in him, faith draweth and deriveth them out of his fullness to the use of each several Christian, even grace for grace. It fetcheth sap from the root Christ, which maketh every tree bring forth fruit in its kind, every Christian in his own calling. As water brought by pipes from the fountain to the cock, doth come faster or slower, as the pipes be wider or narrower, open or stopped: so grace doth flow from Christ into our hearts more or less, as our faith is weaker or stronger in degree and measure. Faith openeth (as it were) the passages of grace, that it may distill more plentifully upon us. And thus by fetching supernatural efficacy from the death and life of Christ, it changeth the heart, creates and infuseth new principles of action, begetteth a pliable willingness unto everything that is good, and conveyeth both will and ability thereunto: as the medicine curing the vicious stomach, and restoring it to health makes it long for wholesome meat, as before for coals and ashes. By the precious promises which we have from God (when they

are ours by faith) we are made partakers of the divine nature, or the graces of the Holy Ghost.

The preposterous care and travel of many well-affected, is to be pitied, who study the practice of this or that virtue, neglecting this cardinal and radical virtue; as if men should water all the branches of a Tree, and not the root. Fain would they abound and shine in patience, meekness, zeal, yet establish and root not themselves in faith, that should maintain all the rest. If water come not to the cock we use to open or amend the pipes or leads that convey it from the spring: Christ is the well-spring of grace, if we would have our wants supplied we must labor steadfastly to believe. All defects in sanctification must admonish us to look to our faith. Thirst drives men to the Springs of water: cold forceth them to the fire: weakness or want of grace should move us to come unto Christ by a lively faith. Oh, everyone that thirsteth come ye to the waters. To give way to doubting because the graces of God's Spirit be weak and feeble in us, is, as if a man should refuse to eat, because he is faint for want of sustenance.

Seventhly, True faith stirreth up to thankfulness for the beginning of sanctification. I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the Law of God. The least measure of sanctifying grace is in itself an unspeakable benefit, considering the poison of our corrupt nature; and also a pledge of future favors to be received, till the work be perfected. God in great wisdom poureth the graces of his Spirit upon us by degrees, and doth not perfectly sanctify us at once, least we should forget what great things he doth for us in forgiving our daily trespasses, and curing the grievous and loathsome diseases of our polluted souls: but the beginning of sanctification is an earnest of further grace to be vouchsafed, till the

work be finished to the praise of his grace, which doth appear the more, in that the gifts of grace, are communicated by degrees.

The way or means whereby a Christian may stir up his faith to believe that God will sanctify him, when he seeth nothing but thralldom and sin prevailing, and feeleth nothing but deadness of heart, is this.

First, he must bewail his spiritual nakedness, thralldom and vassalage under sin acknowledging his inability to free and deliver himself. Into what misery and bondage have I brought myself. Thou Lord madest me holy, pure and upright: But by sin I sold myself unto the service of sin, from which to this day, I cannot get deliverance: Every faculty of soul is deeply infected with that contagious leprosy; the Mind is blind, vain, foolish; the will perverse and rebellious: all the affections out of order: there is nothing whole or sound within me. Night and day I am pestered with sinful motions. The desires of my sinful heart be so strong and prevailing, that I am carried head-long to that which is evil. The body is weary after labor, and requires rest, but sin is ever stirring, never quiet, no not when occasions be wanting. And that it might appear out of measure sinful, it takes occasion by the commandment, it resisteth the good motions of the Spirit, it disenableth to every good work, it diffuseth it venom into every action, and leadeth captive to the committing of sin against knowledge and conscience. The cursed earth is not so apt to be over-grown with weeds, briars, thorns and thistles, as the soul with lusts, passions, distempers, worldly cares, and sinful delights. The law of the flesh rebelleth against the law of the mind, and carrieth with violence to the works of darkness. The Gally-slaves condition is very hard and miserable: but the spiritual bond-slave is in far worse estate. No drudgery so base as the service of sin, no Tyrant so cruel as sin, which allows no respite, or time of refreshing. O miserable man that

I am, who shall deliver me from this dominion of sin, this body of death. I have deeply defiled myself by transgression, but have no power to cleanse my heart: O Lord, I have defaced thine Image, but cannot repair it: I have yielded the powers of my soul to the obedience of sin, and now I would cast off that subjection and break those snares, I am altogether insufficient for it. When I would do well, evil is present with me: but I find no means to perfect what I desire. I cannot desire good, my will is so in bondage: I am not able to crawl about the doing of that which is good, such is my feebleness: but I want no strength to that which is evil, I am apt and ready to go astray. I am environed and beset with sin on every side; oh, when shall I be set at liberty, that I might do the work of God, and run the race of his Commandments.

Secondly, He must look to the grace, truth and power of God, who hath promised to sanctify; to the fullness and sufficiency that is in Christ, the fountain of grace. He who hath spoken this to me, Hold me, and I will set thee free, I will circumcise thy heart, wash it, purge it, heal it of all sicknesses and infirmities: he that hath spoken it, is God Almighty, who giveth Being to all visible creatures, and that invisible world of Spirits: who calleth the things that are not, as if they were: who if there were no print of these things in me, can work and create them gloriously, as at first he drew this excellent frame of the world out of that confused lump, or Mass which he made of nothing. And as he is great in power, so is he rich in mercy, abundant in goodness and truth; as ready and faithful to keep, as he was free to make the promise. His grace is unsearchable, his Word purer than silver seven times refined. In myself I am full of sin, barren and destitute of grace: but Christ is an over-flowing fountain, who hath plentifully filled all that believe. All the faithful have drawn of his fullness, and yet his store is no

whit diminished O my soul, trust thou in the Lord, and thou shalt be purged from thy filthiness, replenished with his grace. Loe, he calleth the thirsty, who be destitute of all sap and fruit of grace, to come unto him, that they may be refreshed. The Saints, who have been most enriched with variety of graces, were by nature as poor and destitute as thou art. What they had, they received by faith: Believe as they did, and speed with them. Why criest thou out distrustfully by reason of thy barrenness? Doth the streaming fountain deny water to the thirsty traveler? No more doth Christ to the empty parched soul, that comes unto him. Thou hast no grace of thyself: cleave unto him and thou shalt want none that may be for thy good. He filleth the empty and satisfieth the poor, that he might be acknowledged the well-spring of all grace and goodness.

Thirdly, He must pray instantly unto the Lord for sanctifying grace. Faith obtaineth as a poor petitioner, what the Lord promiseth in special favor: nor can it believe longer, then it prayeth virtually or actually. O Lord, thou hast promised to pour water upon the thirsty, and rivers upon the dry ground: I pray thee, wash me thoroughly from my filthiness, and water me bountifully with the dew of thy grace, which may cool and allay the scorching heat of sin. Thou hast opened a fountain to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness: let the streams thereof flow upon my dry and barren soul, that it may be fruitful in the works of holiness. O put thy good Spirit into me, which may be as a fountain of living waters springing unto eternal life.

Fourthly, It is good to move and quicken the heart quietly to rest in the promise, and rejoice in hope. Waite on the Lord, O my soul, and be glad in him: for he hath given Christ to be thy Sanctification. He is appointed to be the beginner and finisher of thy holiness: and surely he will not leave that

work imperfect, whereunto he is ordained of the Father. Were the progress of that building committed to thy care and over-sight, there might be cause of fear: but since it is laid upon him, thine only and all-sufficient Redeemer, there is no place for doubting. Hold him fast, and thou art safe. Lord increase my faith, and keep me close unto thee in believing for evermore.

CHAP. III. What it is to live by Faith concerning the promises of everlasting life.

AS IF IT WERE a light thing, that God should forgive all our sins, and heal our infirmities, he hath given promise of everlasting life to be conferred of his rich grace upon them that believe in Jesus Christ. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. And Christ hath purchased life everlasting no less for us, then righteousness: By the blood of Jesus we may be hold to enter into the Holiest, by the new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh. For this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions, that were under the first Testament, they which are called, might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. And therefore as he is said to have made reconciliation for iniquity, and to have brought in everlasting righteousness: so also to have abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light. And he makes promise of everlasting life to them that hear and obey his voice. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; And I give unto them eternal life, and they

shall never perish. In the Gospel we find eternal life promised upon condition of faith in Christ; Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved: and what God promiseth of free grace, that faith doth certainly receive. Life is promised upon condition of faith, and by faith we are quickened, entitled unto, and made partakers of life everlasting. He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life; He that heareth my Word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but hath passed from death to life. This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that not the Son, hath not life. If once we be brought to believe in Christ, life eternal is then begun in us. This is life eternal, to know (that is, with the knowledge of faith) thee to be the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. For Christ is our life, who dwells in our hearts by faith: and therefore whosoever believe in him, have life through and with him. And this life is not another, but one in substance with that blessed and glorious estate, which the Saints enjoy in Heaven, though different in degree. Again, when first we believe, then we are entitled to life everlasting, and so have the accomplishment of glory in respect of right and propriety. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God, by the death of his Son: much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. They which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ. To an earthly inheritance title followeth upon the

birth; to the spiritual upon our Adoption. But when we believe in Christ, we are then made the Sons of God by Adoption, yea, sons accepted. To as many as received him, to them gave he privilege to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his Name. Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God. Beloved, now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear, what we shall be. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, &c. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that are under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of Sons. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God, &c. And if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. And for this cause the faithful are called the Church of the first begotten, whose names are written in Heaven. Now if eternal life be promised in the Gospel, purchased by Christ, and in right and title belong unto the faithful, we may conclude it is our part and duty to believe in God through Jesus Christ, as well for the obtaining of eternal life to be given of grace, as the forgiveness of our sins.

And this is necessary, that we might with the more quietness of Mind bear the afflictions and worldly losses, the troubles and persecutions, which befall us in this world. Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward: for ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. Abraham is commended in Scripture, that he left his friends, his native Country, and all earthly hopes there, which were not small, and came to dwell in a strange

Land, as a Pilgrim, where he suffered many injuries, and was exercised with many troubles of sundry kinds: all which he endured with invincible patience, by the hope and desire of eternal life, and that heavenly Country whereunto he was called. The hope of Heaven is the firm and sure anchor of the soul, to sustain and stablish it that it be not tossed up and down and over-whelmed with reproaches and indignities offered with the worldly losses and miseries of this life.

It serves also to establish our hearts against sundry worldly cares and fears, affectation of earthly greatness and carking for earthly necessities. For why should we admire the glory of this life, when most excellent glory, riches and happiness joined with it, is prepared and given us through faith in Christ? Why should we doubt of earthly necessities, when God hath bequeathed unto us a heavenly kingdom. Faith in Christ to receive an incorruptible crown of glory will moderate desires of earthly things, that we shall neither admire, nor aspire after great things below, nor basely distrust the Lord for supply of what he knows meet and convenient for us. Fear not little flock, for it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you the Kingdom.

If we keep Heaven in our eye, and look to the high price of our calling, we shall fight courageously, and run with patience, notwithstanding all opposition. What can daunt him in the ways of godliness, or make him slack his pace, who runs to obtain not a corruptible, but an incorruptible crown? By faith some were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Let us run with patience unto the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus, the Author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

The acts of faith concerning these promises be these.

First, As a humble petitioner it receiveth and layeth hold upon salvation itself promised, which we have of God's grace, as well as any benefit tending thereunto. As we are justified by faith, so we are saved by faith, not in respect of present salvation or redemption, whereof here we are partakers, but in respect of glorification to come, in due time to be revealed. Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved. By faith we have access into this grace, wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of glory. When the Apostle saith, With the heart Man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. He doth not so distinguish these two, as if faith were the cause of righteousness, confession of salvation; or as if faith were sufficient to righteousness, but not to salvation: for he had often said, that we are saved by faith, that the promise is by faith: But he describes the qualification of that faith which justifieth and saveth, namely, that it is a steadfast affiance, that flieth to God by hearty supplication, and breaketh forth into profession of God's name. The promise is, Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved: and faith herein, flieth to the throne of grace with ardent supplications, and layeth hold of salvation promised of grace.

Secondly, Faith doth not begin to apprehend life, and then leave it to works, that we might attain the accomplishment by then, but it doth ever rest upon the promise, until we come to enjoy it. Heaven is an inheritance freely vouchsafed to the adopted sons of God, whose interest unto it cometh by believing, not by working. The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord: and if it be a gift of mere favor, it cannot be of works. If the inheritance be of the Law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. And that which God will do about his children in the day of judgment, is called mercy. The Lord show mercy to Onesiphorus in

that day. The immediate cause of life is God's grace, as the immediate cause of death is sin. But if life be of grace, it is by faith. We are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. So that our faith never gives over, till we come to be actually possessed of the immortal and undefiled inheritance, reserved for us in Heaven.

Thirdly, By faith we receive the promised Spirit, as the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession. Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father. The holy Ghost doth first infuse the grace of faith into our hearts, whereby we believe: but believing, and being made the sons of God, we receive the Spirit more fully and manifestly, dwelling in us to sanctification, and assurance of our Redemption. By the benefit of the holy Ghost faith springeth in us, by which faith the abundance of the self-same spirit is increased: and so of a greater faith, is still made a greater increase of the Spirit. In whom after ye believed, ye were sealed with the Spirit of promise. He that believeth, out of his belly, shall flow rivers of living water. And these gifts of the Spirit, which we receive by faith from Christ our Head, are the beginnings of that glorious life we expect and look for; one in substance, different in degrees: and according to the measure of grace received, so is the life of glory begun in us.

Fourthly, Faith in the promises of everlasting life, leadeth forward in the paths of peace and righteousness: It mortifieth corruption, studieth holiness, raiseth the heart to things above, and directeth the conversation, according to the policy of the new Jerusalem. Life eternal is not given for works, but it is the good pleasure of God, that his children should be holy and exercise themselves in all good works. If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. He that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit

reap life everlasting. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. Charge them that be rich in this world, that they be not high minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth richly all things to enjoy. That they do good, that they be rich in good works ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. But ye beloved, building up yourselves in your most holy faith, praying in the holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungered, and ye gave me meat, &c. These and such like passages of Scripture show, not the cause why, but the qualification of the persons unto whom; not how it is deserved, but what doth precede the bestowing of life eternal. And faith that looketh for that blessed hope and layeth hold upon the promise of that heavenly and incorruptible inheritance, lifteth up the heart into Heaven, kindleth love, inflameth with zeal, encourageth against difficulties, and inciteth to run the way of God's Commandments. If probable hope of great advantage draws on the Merchant to undertake a long and tedious voyage by Sea, notwithstanding the many casualties and perils wherewith it is beset: faith in the assured promises of God concerning salvation, will set a man forward in his Christian journey, hold him on in his way with courage and cheerfulness; and hearten him to the works of godliness notwithstanding the temptations of Satan, the allurements of the world, or oppositions of the flesh to the contrary. Our conversation is in Heaven, from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to God, and since

we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the Saints, For the hope which is laid up for you in Heaven. By faith Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob confessed that they were pilgrims and strangers on the earth, and having opportunity would not return into their own country, because they desired a better country, that is, a heavenly.

Fifthly, It seeketh to get our title confirmed and assured to the conscience by evidence and earnest or pawn; it exerciseth itself upon the many gracious promises, whereby God doth freely pass it upon us, and earnestly beggeth the powerful effectual inhabitation of the Spirit to stamp and imprint the Image of Christ more and more upon the soul; it peruseth it evidence again and again, and nourisheth the motions, stirreth up the graces of the Spirit, which is the earnest penny and seal of the promised inheritance. If Men make an earthly purchase, they will spare no cost or labor to get it assured, they will have good evidence, fine and recovery and take what course in time may exempt it from claim; and faith receiving the promise of this purchased inheritance, will not rest in uncertainties or presumption, but doth travail to have it assuredly passed and made upon the soul.

Sixthly, It striveth to enter the possession of this heavenly kingdom by degrees. Men that purchase an inheritance to come in hereafter, they are glad if any part fall into their hands for the present, or if they can get some by parcels, before the whole be possessed. Fullness of glory is reserved to the life to come: but beginnings of glory, peace of conscience, joy in the holy Ghost, and sanctification of the Spirit, are vouchsafed here. Grace is the beginning of glory, and glory the perfection of grace. According to the measure of grace received, and as we grow up in Sanctification, so we enter

upon the possession of our eternal inheritance. And true lively faith doth covet grace more and more and draw unto itself from Christ's fullness.

Seventhly, It earnestly desires and longeth after the full accomplishment of glory. Ourselves also which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the Adoption, to wit, the redemption of the Body. I desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better. Salvation is the end of faith: Heaven the habitation or home of the faithful. For in this we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house, which is from Heaven. Natural bodies move to their proper place; all living things covet perfection in their kind: heaven is the proper place and condition of the faithful, life everlasting the perfection of faith: therefore if faith be lively; it longeth after the fruition of glory, and full possession of the promised inheritance.

Eighthly, It assureth that we are made heir of everlasting life, to which God of his grace will bring us in his time appointed. Behold what love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. Neither doth the manner of speaking savor of ought but certainty, neither could it agree with the gravity of the Apostle to speak so indefinitely, so indeterminately of that, whereof he had no certain ground, no firm resolution, but only some likely guess, or conjectural hope. And grant it of John and the Apostles that they knew their own Adoption, and we may infer, that this knowledge is a privilege of all believers in their measure as well as theirs. For the faith whereby they were assured, was ordinary; the grounds of assurance common to them with all true believers; the benefit itself general, not in any special manner appropriated. What promises

soever concerning life and happiness were made to the Apostles, the same are made to all believers, and confirmed and sealed unto them after the same manner. For they have all one God, one Christ, one Spirit they are under one Covenant, and live by the same faith. The Adoption of Believers is confirmed on God's part unto them by his word, seals, oath, pledge and witness of his Spirit with the graces thereof. And what God so sufficiently confirmeth, we by faith may receive it: for faith enableth us to believe what God revealeth. Faith giveth assurance, but every believer is not assured in himself, nor is any assurance in this life, so certain, that it is never intermixed, nor disturbed with doubting's. There is a state in which faith showeth itself, rather in earnest longings and paintings after mercy, then in certain apprehension of it: there is a state of infancy, a state of temptation and spiritual conflict, in which the soul cannot attain this certainty and assurance. And even in the grown and confirmed state the believer must not look to walk on smoothly without any rubs, or to enjoy perfect assurance without doubting's and assaults. The assurance of this believer is an assurance aiming and striving after assurance; an assurance wrestling and combating with many assaults: an assurance which labors with continual weakness and looks not to come to perfection but by temptations. But of this before.

God in great mercy doth vouchsafe to his Adopted sons many excellent royalties in this life. They are most precious unto him, His chief treasure, His love for delights, his peculiar people, the lot of his inheritance, his chosen, his hidden ones his jewels. He that toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eye. They are his Beloved, as the signet upon his right hand. He dwelleth with them, he followeth them whither soever they go; he stands at their right hand, and holds them up by it. He covers them under his

pavilion, he keeps their feet, he counts their wanderings, he numbereth their hairs, he observes their sighs, is moved with compassion upon their complaints, he is the shield of their help, the sword of their excellency, and the God of all grace, who will fulfill all their necessities. He is their hope, their help, their health, their rock, their refuge, the Father of mercies and God of all consolation. He will teach them in the way that they should choose, and make them perfect in good works: He will establish them in every good word and work, he will walk with them, his eye is ever upon them for good, and he will give them their hearts desire. They have the Angels of God to minister unto them for their safeguard and protection; they have dominion over the creatures of the earth, and the free use of them, both for necessity and delight. This is a true saying; The charter anciently given by that great Lord of all at our first conversion, touching the use of his creatures, was forfeited into the hands of the Doner by Adams fall. But it is restored and renewed by Christ to them who are honored with the Adoption. The heirs of heaven are the right inheritors of the earth. The Sons of God, by Adoption are Brethren and Coheirs with Christ whom the Father hath appointed heir of all things: and hence ariseth unto them the holy use of the creatures, and ministry of the Angels. Are chastisements needful or behooveful for them? He will correct them in measure, for a moment for good, to take away sin: but his loving kindness he will not take from them, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. Are they loaded with reproaches for righteousness sake? The Spirit of glory, and of God shall rest upon them. In a word whatsoever may happen, All things shall work together for the best unto them. And seeing God hath prepared and promised such excellent privileges unto his children in this life, hence it is, that faith resteth upon his grace to receive from him whatsoever may be good and profitable for them.

O how great is the goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee: which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee, before the sons of men? Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion, from the strife of tongues. How excellent is thy loving kindness, O Lord; therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fullness of thy house: and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He shall lead his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young. What can they want, who have God to be their Father, to provide for them, and protect them; to bless them and dwell with them; to succor them, and supply them with all needful blessings spiritual and bodily, in fittest season: whose ear is open to their desires, whose compassions exceed the tenderness of a mother to her sucking babe: who hath chosen them to be his own proper good which he loveth, and keepeth in store for himself and for special use. Thou Israel art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend. Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee; Thou art my servant, I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away. Fear thou not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the Lord of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in the high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.

Secondly, It petitioneth instantly for succor. For it seeth in God whatsoever it needeth or desireth, and will never cease to seek relief. The more confident it is to obtain, the more importunate it will be in suing. Oile put to the fire causeth the flame to ascend: and the promises of help and succor received by faith, put life and vigor into the petitions of faith, Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me. Hide not thy face far from me, put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help, leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation. Unto thee will I cry, O Lord, my rock, be not silent to me, lest if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit. Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee: when I lift up my hands towards thy holy Oracle. With-hold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord; let thy loving kindness, and thy truth continually preserve me.

Thirdly, It receiveth earthly blessings as gifts of the covenant and part of his childes portion. God vouchsafeth outward things to wicked men of common bounty; but to his children the blessings of this life be tokens of his love and special good-will, and so received and embraced by faith. For substance the gift is one, both to the Just and unjust: but in respect of the cause, possession and use, there is great difference: which is discerned by faith, though it cannot be seen with the eye. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord. And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the Heavens, and they shall hear the Earth, and the Earth shall hear the Corn, and the Wine, and the Oile, and they shall hear Jezreel.

Fourthly, Faith in these and the foresaid promises doth greatly enlarge the heart towards God, and stirreth up to a serious and earnest study of holiness. If a Christian be much in the meditation of God's singular goodness towards

him every manner of way, above all that he could possibly ask or think, it will even constrain him to yield up himself wholly unto God in all manner of godly conversation. Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart: For thy loving kindness is before mine eyes: and I have walked in thy truth.

Fifthly, It doth inwardly quiet and cheer the heart in the midst of manifold outward discouragements, troubles and persecutions in the world. Hope of glory in due time to be revealed, and of continual supply of all good things from God in the mean space to be freely given, will stablish the heart with strong consolation, and cause in outward profession of Joy, to the glory of God, the encouragement of other faithful people, and the amazement of the wicked. This is to be seen in the lives and deaths of God's faithful servants, who took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves that they had in Heaven a better, and an enduring substance; who for this hope, endured the cross, and despised shame, as is testified of our Savior himself. By faith, Moses when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, then to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season: Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches then the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of reward. By faith others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.

The way or means to stir up faith in these promises, is;

First, to humble ourselves unfeignedly in respect of our miserable and accursed estate by sin, and former carelessness to seek mercy, enter possession and get assured evidence of that everlasting inheritance.

Woe is me, how I am fallen from that state of blessedness wherein I was first created, into a most miserable and accursed condition? I have

grievously sinned, and God is highly provoked, the sentence of the Law is already gone forth, I am shut up under wrath, and if I have my desert, I can expect nothing but the terrible execution of fearful vengeance denounced. Mortality as a worm corrupteth my body: ignorance and lust tyrannize in my soul: my condition is exposed to a thousand vanities and wearisome courses; and through fear of death the upshot of evils, I am subject to bondage all my life. In my first estate I was made far above all visible Creatures, and by free bounty lifted up to be the Favorite of the most High God: but by willful disobedience, I am fallen into God's displeasure, and lie prisoner under the revenging justice of the law. Nor is my wretched condition worse than my carelessness to be delivered from it. The brute beasts take it as a grievous thing to be ensnared and taken: but I have delighted in bondage, and counted it a liberty to live a slave to Satan, and to follow things and courses pleasing corrupt nature.

Thou Lord of thine infinite grace hast proclaimed liberty, published peace, and made offer of a better state and condition in Christ, then what I formerly lost in Adam: But I preferred spiritual thralldom to liberty, death to life, and chose rather to follow the temptations of Satan, and to fulfill the lusts of the flesh, then to come unto Christ that I might be saved. The men of this world are wise in their generation to accept of earthly commodities when they be offered, and not to put by the opportunity: but when the Lord hath made promise of everlasting life, if I would renounce the pleasures of sin, and forego the vanities of this world, I have followed vanity and neglected mercy, I have despised the great salvation, and walked in the paths of death and condemnation. O Lord, it is thine own work of grace in me, that ever I did bethink myself of the danger of my course, and repent to lay hold upon the promises of life. Nor hath my sloth and negligence to

seek evidence, get assurance, and enter possession of that glorious inheritance, by growing up in peace, joy, holiness and sanctification, been less odious, than former carelessness. Since I have been enlightened, and tasted of the heavenly gift, I have slighted the promises of mercy, which should have been my continual meditation; I have neglected to get and keep the holy spirit, holy in itself, making them holy in whom as temples it dwelleth, the seal and earnest of the promised inheritance. Ah, what a dwarf am I in holiness and sanctification? For these many years how little have I gained? My spiritual sight is exceeding dim, my passions boisterous, my heart unquiet, my thoughts evil, my nature corrupt. I am dull to good, apt to sin, feeble and of no power to withstand temptations, shaken with many fears touching my salvation, soon unsettled and removed from steadfastness by any contrary opposition, farthest to seek for evidence and assurance when I stand in greatest need. All this is come upon me through mine own foolishness: because I have not acquainted myself with the promises of grace, nourished the motions of the Spirit, carefully improved the gifts received, endeavored after perfection, and labored to be sealed more and more with the promised Spirit. What might I have grown unto in Christ, if I had instantly desired the Spirit of Grace of him who giveth it, heeded the inspirations and suggestions of it, and by all conscionable means? Sought increase of grace, and assurance of salvation? Long ere now I might have attained fullness of spiritual wisdom and understanding, strength of faith, power of grace, sweet communion and fellowship with God, liberty and freedom to walk with God, comfortable possession in part, and good assurance of eternal life in due time to be accomplished: whereas by reason of sloth and negligence the powers of grace are so enfeebled, that I can scarce breathe, sigh, crawl in the way to Heaven, my heart is desolate, I am

a stranger to the comforts of godliness, terrified with the remembrance of death, ready to faint at the apprehension of trouble and danger, and continually disquieted with fears and doubts touching mine own salvation, if the world with the things thereof have not cast me into the sleep of security for a season. The slothful man is justly condemned, who had rather starve in Summer for lack of bread, then plough in winter because of the cold: We censure him that had rather go lame and crooked as long as he liveth, then be at a little pain to move an aching joint. He is worthily accounted improvident, who neglecting to gather in his writings, or sue out fine and recovery, will hazard the loss of his whole inheritance. My folly hath exceeded herein, who to live in peace and quiet with sin, have impoverished my soul, impaired my stock of grace, wounded my conscience, deprived myself of many rich privileges of grace, which I might have enjoyed, weakened my title to mine everlasting inheritance, and been contented to creep feebly towards the heavenly Canaan; thinking it better to keep where I was with quiet, then to make my condition, by still dealing with myself too too restless. The sluggards shameless excuse hath fearfully bewitched me; Better is a handful with ease, then both hands full with travel and vexation of Spirit. The more excellent the inheritance I hope for is, the more detestable is my sluggishness and folly, that I have not earnestly sought to make it sure unto myself, and entered possession thereof so far as in this life is given of grace.

Secondly, We must incite and stir up ourselves to receive the promises of everlasting life, by consideration of the free and rich grace of God, his truth and faithfulness, the sufficiency of Christ's merits and greatness, excellency and worth of the benefit promised.

Awake, my soul, why sleepest thou; arise, and lay hold upon the promises of life, which God of his great mercy in Jesus Christ doth offer unto thee in the Gospel. Be not dismayed by reason of thine unworthiness, for the promise is of grace, freely offered, and freely given to them that be most unworthy in their own eyes. Thou art unworthy of the least crumb of mercy, but of his rich mercy God hath made promise of highest advancement unto thee, if thou wilt embrace it.

I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. He that overcometh shall inherit all things, And I will be his God, and he shall be my son. And it shall be in the place where it was said unto them, ye are not my people, that there they shall be called the children of the living God. Life eternal is given of grace, not sold for works; received by faith, not purchased by desert: and the more worthless thou art in thy own lowly conceit, the more shall the grace of God be magnified in thine exaltation. Christ hath purchased righteousness and everlasting life: believe in him, and live forever. The Son of God debased himself to become the Son of Man, and to be made under the law, that he might redeem us that were under the Law; that we might receive the Adoption of sons. Oh the bountifulness and love of God to man, by so great a price to purchase so high a dignity, that we should be called the Sons of God, and be partakers with Christ of all his glory in his Fathers kingdom. O my soul, why art thou so dull and sluggish? Wherefore dost thou not put forth thyself to embrace and receive such an inestimable benefit. If the worth of things may be measured by their price, well then may the Sonship of true Believers be valued at the highest rate. Who can sufficiently admire the dignity of this estate (to be the Son of God) which could not be procured save only by this infinite price, the making of him become nothing, by whom God in the

beginning made everything? It is esteemed a matter of great honor to be the servant of the Prince in some special place of eminency in the Commonwealth: How do men seek and sue for such Offices? How do they rejoice when their desires are accomplished? But there is no comparison betwixt the servant of a Prince, and the Son of God; the favor of a Prince, and the Fatherly love of God; the dignity of the Court, and the Joys of Heaven; a temporal office, and an eternal inheritance. It is better and more honorable to be the servant of God, then the Commander of men; to be an heir apparent to Heaven, then the possessor of the whole World. There is a great opinion, and not without just cause, of the estate of our first Parents, Adam and Eve, whilst they were in Paradise, before their fall. But their estate, notwithstanding all their privileges, ornaments and favors, exceeded not the condition of servants. Had they continued in obedience to their Creator, they should have been exempted from all misery, and confirmed in perfect blessedness: But they could never have attained this dignity. To be made the Sons of God by Adoption, of mere, rich, and undeserved love in Christ. And is it not an admirable prerogative, to be brought by Christ into a more excellent state, then that which Adam in his innocence and glory had just cause to wonder at. The low degree from which we are raised, doth commend this, and as the graciousness of him who preferreth, so the excellency of that state whereunto the Believer is exalted. Of the servants of sin, to be made the Sons of God; of the vassals of Satan, to be taken to reign with Christ in glory for evermore; of children of wrath, dead in trespasses, to be begotten again to the hope of an inheritance, immortal, undefiled, that fadeth not; what an unspeakable favor is this? O my soul arise, stir up thyself steadfastly to receive the promise of life; and hold it fast: for God's promises are certain, never less, but rather more in accomplishment then in

tender. Enter possession, and get the inheritance sealed unto thee. Would not a poor Beggar, if he should understand of some great and goodly inheritance bequeathed unto him in a far country, much rejoice therein, long to go see it, and take possession of it. In matters of weight men love great earnest and good assurance: for great advantage they will endure any pains, hazard many difficulties. Did men know the worth and glory of the kingdom of Heaven, freely offered, and that without all expiration of time, to be possessed here in part of them that will receive it, fully hereafter, when their days on earth be determined, would they not seek it with all earnestness, inquire after good evidence, get sound assurance, and labor the possession of it more and more? Men seek earthly things, and often miss of their desires: but the promise of Heaven is sure and steadfast, and he that resteth upon the Lord shall not be confounded.

Everlasting life is freely offered, but men are not left at liberty whether they will receive and seek it, or no. He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. Do not they perish worthily, who prefer the pleasures of sin, and honors of this transitory life, before life everlasting, promised of grace, purchased by Christ, full laden with all fruits of true life, joy, peace, and all choicest pleasures, beyond comparison exceeding whatsoever can be enjoyed in this world both in worth and endless settledness? The labor to make Heaven sure, which is full of pleasure and delight, doth ease the heart of many burdensome, distracting and cutting care. For if thou be the child of God, thou hast liberty to come into his presence, and to make thy requests known unto him with thanksgiving; Nothing that is truly evil shall betide thee. The plague shall not come nigh thy Tabernacle: Thou shalt walk upon the Lion and Asp, and tread them

under feet: God will provide all things necessary for soul and body, and see that no good thing be wanting unto thee. Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. What then should withdraw or hold me back from believing the promise, and seeking the possession of that inheritance. It is God who hath freely promised it, who can and will perform whatsoever he hath spoken; it is Christ who hath purchased it by the sacrifice of himself once for all, why then should I doubt? I am commanded to believe, and believing the possession of life is given in part, which may be increased by a daily addition to the graces and comforts of the Adopted; why should I be negligent to seek it confirmed and sealed? Everlasting life is the only true life, full of joy, peace and contentation; a durable treasure which can never fade, a crown that never withereth: and shall base things take up the heart, when God calleth to seek a most glorious and everlasting inheritance? Oh, the inestimable love and favor of God, who makes offer of an Adoption and immortal Inheritance to the most contemptible wretches, that live upon the face of the earth? The man that toiles hard all day long for a small piece of silver, or lies at the rich man's gate waiting for an Alms, the scraps that come from his Table: he is invited to come unto Christ, that he might obtain a kingdom, an eternal kingdom that hath none end, an inheritance abundantly glorious; surpassing the glory and worth of all earthly treasures and inheritances laid together, much more then all earthly treasures do exceed the worth of one pin. What a heart-break is it to a man, when he finds that by some default he hath forfeited some earthly matters, which he might have held, had he been wary? But what grief and confusion will this cause, when he shall see that through folly, sloth, carelessness, matchless cruelty and unthankfulness, he hath lost an everlasting inheritance of glory, which he might have obtained?

Mere possibility of compassing some great and extraordinary good is of more weight in swaying men's actions and inciting endeavors, then certainty of accomplishing petty desires. But certainty and commodity do here concur in one. There is no good to the possession of eternal life: no success certain but this, that he who unfeignedly believeth in Christ, shall inherit the crown of glory. It is good for me to draw nigh unto God, and put my trust in his mercy; to lay fast hold upon the promises of life and protection, to get the spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry Abba Father, and fly unto his grace in Christ, to get my title made sure and strengthened unto my conscience, and while time serveth, earnestly to seek the kingdom of God.

Thirdly, We must pray earnestly that God would increase our faith, seal us by his Spirit, lead us in the way of peace, cause us to grow up in holiness, make us wise to prize and value, to taste and relish the joys of Heaven, and assure our consciences of right and title to that everlasting inheritance. For it is God that sealeth us, and makes us to read the sealing; that promiseth Heaven, and affecteth the heart with the goodness and worth of the thing promised; that by the pledges of his favor and the earnest of his Spirit doth sufficiently testify our Adoption, and cause us certainly to apprehend what he doth testify and assure. As the beginning, so the progress, comfort and assurance of life is from him, and instantly is to be begged of him. Faith receiveth the promise of life, and gives assurance of what is received, as it prayeth.

Who am I O Lord, that thou shouldst make such ample and free promises unto thy poor servant concerning his everlasting happiness? Of thy free mercy, and according to thine own heart, hast thou spoken all these great things, to make thy servant know them. And now, O Lord God, establish I beseech thee the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant

graciously accept me for thy child by the earnest of thy Spirit and pledges of thy favor, seal unto me the promised inheritance, and make me assuredly to know what great things thou hast done, and what those hopes be which are reserved for me in Heaven.

My sight is dim, not proportioned and fitted to so high an object, my affections carnal that I cannot set myself to purpose about this contemplation, the Devil labors nothing more than to keep me hood-winked this way O Lord, I beseech thee enable me to know this good and blessed hope, the matter of mine inheritance abundantly glorious, that my heart may be still in Heaven, and by thy Spirit lead me into all truth and holiness, that in due time I may possess the Kingdom of glory whereunto I am called. Of thy free grace thou hast called me by the Gospel to this blessed hope, which is laid up for me in Heaven: therefore is thy servant bold to entreat the sense of thy love, the knowledge of this Hope, the increase of grace, and assurance of thy mercy for evermore.

Fourthly, We must quicken ourselves to rejoice in God, wait patiently and walk cheerfully before him. Oh, the incomprehensible love and favor of the Lord.

Was it ever found that any man of rank or place did adopt the blind, lame, deaf, dumb, or otherwise deformed to be heir, to succeed him in his inheritance? My soul, rejoice thou in the Lord, and bless his holy Name, for he hath looked upon my base estate, and visited me with mercy from on high: Of a stranger and foreigner, I am made a free denizen of the new Jerusalem: of the bondslave of Satan, the friend of Christ, of the child of wrath and damnation, the son of God and heir of salvation.

My Name is registered in Heaven, an eternal weight of glory is reserved which the most righteous God hath promised, and in fittest season will give

unto me. Why should I dote on earthly braveries, who have an eternal life that hath most excellent glory, honor, riches and happiness, above all the heart can comprehend, joined with it, prepared and given through faith in Christ. It were notable baseness, if an heir of sumptuous and stately palaces should covet the poor cottages of beggars that stand by the high way side. The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea I have a goodly heritage. My study and care should be to know my heavenly hopes better and more fully, that I might wean myself the more willingly from all earthly vanities. Heaven is my home, my hope, mine inheritance: and where should my heart be, but where my treasure is, where my thoughts, but where my hope is? In this life I receive only the first fruits of the Spirit, the earnest of the inheritance: but I will wait patiently for the full possession thereof, and walk cheerfully in the way that leadeth thereunto. In earthly things men are contented to wait for a good lease in reversion, and to lay out their money for that which shall not come to their hands till some lives be expired: and should not I wait for the accomplishment of glory there being but one life betwixt it and me, and that is mine own.

CHAP. V. What it is live by faith touching the promises of perseverance.

WHAT IT IS LIVE by faith touching the promises of perseverance, and how to stir up ourselves thereunto.

God of his infinite mercy hath made further promises, (the necessity of his servants so requiring,) that his mercy shall never depart from them, that he will confirm and strengthen them to the end, notwithstanding their own weakness, and the malice of their spiritual enemies, and that nothing shall separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. This is implied in the first promise which God made, It shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel: where Satan is stinted to the heel of the true Christian seed. In many passages of Scripture the same is most clearly and manifestly expressed. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season, his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doth shall prosper. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand. For this God is our God forever and ever, he will be our guide even unto death. Thou shalt

guide me with thy council, and afterward receive me to glory. My flesh and heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever. The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him. A good man showeth favor and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion: Surely he shall not be moved forever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. They that trust in the Lord, shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench. And even to your old age I am he; and even to the hoary hairs will I carry you; I have made, and I will bear, even I will carry, and will deliver you. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord, My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, that is, such as be effectually called according to the purpose of God. Hereunto may be added those passages which testify, that the love which God beareth to his people is an everlasting love, and the covenant which he hath made with them effectually and shall be kept assuredly, is an everlasting covenant. The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment: but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. For this is as the waters of Noah unto me for as I have sworn, that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn, that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. Behold, the days come saith the Lord, that I will make a new Covenant with the house of Israel and

with the house of Judah: Not according to the Covenant that I made with their Fathers in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt, which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God. And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me forever, for the good of them, and of their children after them. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good: but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. In which covenant or Testament God freely promiseth to give what he requireth of his people, and to effect in them what he calleth for at their hands. If the benefits given be compared amongst themselves, one is as it were a condition to another: but they be all effects in respect of the grace and free favor of God certainly conferring them upon whom he will. Righteousness and life are promised upon condition of faith: but the condition of the covenant is promised in the covenant itself. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord. The external betrothing by outward covenant, so as God betroths himself to all professing the true faith, may be broken, for though God offer them mercy if they will believe, yet he gives not faith to them, but the internal by effectual disposition, of which the Prophet speaketh in

this place, is indissoluble. Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock. But all the faithful are built upon the rock, not upon the rock now, and anon upon the sand, but once built upon the rock, they remain unmovable. Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it: assail it they may, prevail against it they shall not. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand: My Father which gave them me, is greater than all: and no man is able to pluck them out of my Fathers hand. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation; or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you. Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Beloved, now we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy: To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, now and ever, Amen. Doth God in these

places promise to protect us against foreign enemies, not against domestic perfidiousness? The texts do respect no condition, as the cause of fulfilling these promises, but plainly affirm, that God himself doth promise and will give the condition which he requires. For to what end doth he write the Law in the heart, uphold with his hand, and give a good issue to the temptation, but that the will, prone to wickedness, should not yield, and altogether start back from grace received? Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin: for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is borne of God. And if the seed abide in the faithful as an indelible character and pledge of their inheritance, that they cannot sin in the Apostles sense, then are they fenced against the treachery of their own hearts remaining in them. Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst: but the water that I give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life: where thirst is opposed to a total want of grace, not to the earnest desire of increase in grace. The thirst of total indigency is taken away by the participation of grace, the thirst of complacency or more ample fruition of grace, is increased. The Holy Spirit who is sent into the hearts of the Sons of God, is not there as a guest to tarry for a night or two: but as an inhabitant to dwell and remain forever: yea, as an earnest of their inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession. I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever. Now he which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is, God, who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts: which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. The seed whereof the faithful are begotten is incorruptible, the life which they live by faith in Christ is an everlasting life. Verily, verily I say unto you, He

that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the son hath not life. Now the Scripture saying, He that believeth hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, doth import that faith and the fruits thereof be such from which the godly through the power of God never fall. And for further confirmation the Scripture testifieth, that Christ hath prayed for his people that their faith should not fail, that they should be kept from the evil. This cannot be restrained to the Apostles, but it is the common privilege of all the faithful; Neither pray I for these alone; but for all them also which shall believe on me through their word. And the intercession of Christ; even for this particular blessing of the not failing of faith, never ceaseth, is ever effectual, and speedeth always. And that nothing might be wanting to full consolation in this point, we are assured from God, that he will perfect the work of grace which he hath begun. Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it, that is, (as goeth immediately before) preserve your whole Spirit, and soul and body blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and keep you from evil.

Now seeing God hath been pleased by so many promises to assure the faithful of their sure and steadfast estate, it is necessary seriously to learn and think upon them, that they might be settled in believing their perseverance. Had it not been a point of great weight and necessity, we

cannot think the Lord would have mentioned it so often, and confirmed it so many ways: which will soon appear to any man that shall consider his own frailty, and the strength and malice of his spiritual enemies; how potent and vigilant they be to assail, how weak and feeble he is to withstand and make resistance. Nor is our weakness greater than our backwardness to believe the promises of perseverance, when we stand in most need of them. When corruptions stir, and temptations be hot and fiery, and we find ourselves ready to faint, then are we to seek of a promise that might uphold against the fear of falling away; or if the promise be at hand, we cannot lay hold upon it, some mist or other comes between it and the eye of our understanding. Many good Christians are kept under with this temptation, they are afraid they shall never hold out, if persecution should come, they stand in doubt lest they should fall away as many have done, who made greater shows, and seemed to have gone further than ever they did. And whilst they distrustfully question their perseverance, all present favors seem less then otherwise they would, all other promises be held the more weakly, and Satan takes advantage to fill their hearts with manifold discomforts. God (I deny not) doth order these temptations to the best, and will do his children good by them: for hereby they are driven to distrust themselves and run unto God, and rely upon him in all their necessities: nevertheless the many perplexities wherein they are entangled for want of faith in the promises of perseverance, doth sufficiently convince how necessary it is we should labor to have our hearts established in this confidence, that the Lord will never leave us nor forsake us. Confidence in the promises of perseverance doth encourage and quicken in a Christian course, stablish in well-doing, and hearten against the greatest difficulties. Or old it hath been objected against the doctrine of assurance, of not falling away, that it doth

set open a door to all licentiousness: for if men cannot fall from their estate of happiness why should they fear to commit all kind of wickedness. But he that hath faith in-deed, will not, nay, he cannot take courage to go on in sin upon this pretense, that faith once had cannot utterly be lost. The believer knows himself bound to the obedience of the Gospel, though he be freed from the damnation of the law; and certain it is, that faith which knits to Christ, doth lead us forth in all holiness. Mercy covering sin doth beget reverence; the more assurance of salvation in a man's soul, the more fear and trembling in a man's course. He who is best assured hath most power of God's Spirit, and the stronger the Spirit of God is within, the more holiness and fruits of grace without.

Paul was assured that nothing should separate him from the love of God in Christ: Peter was assured, that his faith should not fail: did this make them the more careless? Nay, rather the more careful to run their race; the more courageous to fight out their combat. The load-stone of love is love: Love in the superior doth draw love from the inferior: and is it then possible for us to apprehend such unspeakable love of God in choosing us to such an excellent, happy, unchangeable condition, and not be affected to love the Lord again? Of necessity the faith which continueth must be lively, nor can it embrace the promises of perseverance but whilst it is lively. The more operative faith is, the greater our assurance of future standing: if faith be dormant or languish for a time, for that time we are to seek of this comfort, nor can it be recovered, till faith recover, and put forth itself valiantly in combating against Satan, subduing corruption, and working righteousness. Look how much we come short in believing the faithful promises of God concerning our future protection from all hurtful evils, (the greatest whereof is falling away) so much are we lacking to sound peace and stable

tranquility of Mind and Conscience. The better we have learned to live by faith in Christ, as the Author and finisher of our faith, and raiser of us up at the last day, the greater and more steadfast is our comfort. The men of this world be not satisfied with the possession of their purchased inheritance, but they seek to strengthen and assure their title against future claims, before they can be quiet. When a Christian is acquainted with the promises of pardon and forgiveness, believeth in Christ for salvation, and is reconciled unto God; When his conscience is purged, that there remaineth no more terrible remembrance of sins past, his lusts subdued and vanquished, his heart quieted from all perturbations, and all inward disturbance, which was in man against himself done away; and when these things are known unto the Conscience: yet one thing is wanting to sound and full peace, that is, holy security for time to come against all enemies both inward and outward, that they shall not hunt us much less prevail against us. For if what we possess may utterly be lost, or what we hope and expect be merely uncertain and conjectural, built upon the good use of our free-will, and not upon the free and unchangeable grace of God, what rest or quiet in respect of his future estate can any man find in himself? But let the heart be established in this, that God will carry him forward from grace to grace till he have brought him to his everlasting Kingdom; that his faith shall never fail, the graces of the Spirit shall never wither and decay. Satan with all his malice, the world with the manifold allurements thereof shall never prevail against him; this freeth from much heart-grief, perplexity, distrustful sorrow, and unprofitable trouble, when he feels his own weakness, thinks of Satan and the worlds power, hears of the falls of some who have gone far in the profession of godliness, and casts with himself what persecutions may be raised against him for the truth and Gospel. This

also refresheth the heart with sweet and heavenly comfort in the midst of those many trials and incumbrances which we do and must make account to meet with all: and this our heavenly Father knew to be no more than necessary for our cheerful walking before him. For the which cause I also suffer these things, nevertheless, I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

And seeing God hath promised to perfect the work of grace begun, and bound himself by covenant to confirm, strengthen, and stablish his children unto the end, and in the end to give them eternal life, such as find any true and lively work of grace wrought in them, are allowed from God to believe, that they shall never perish, nor quite be broken off from Christ, nor those living waters clean be dried up, but notwithstanding their own infirmities, and the sore temptations wherewith they are oppressed, they shall be preserved, upheld and kept unto salvation. For what God hath confirmed by promise and covenant unto his children, undertaken to effect by his Almighty power, and ratified by earnest and pawn, that they are allowed to believe and expect from him of his unchangeable grace and love. This is the golden and indissoluble chain which the Apostle speaks of, Whom he did predestinate, them also he called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified: so that effectual vocation is a pledge and token of glorification to ensue. Christ hath prayed for his people, that their faith might not fail: the faithful pray instantly, Lead us not into temptation: and that no man might waver a promise is annexed, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you. But without question, they have allowance to believe the obtaining of that which Christ hath prayed for, and the faithful ask of God in the Name of

Christ according to his will. The servants of Christ, who lived by the like precious faith with us, grounded upon the same promises, and subject to the same temptations, believed their perseverance. I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. According to mine earnest expectation, and my hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed: but that with all boldness, as always so now, also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. But what one believed upon common and ordinary grounds, that is the privilege of all believers which they are allowed to receive. It is a great glory to God that we live by faith on him concerning our future estate, and rely upon his grace, that shall encounters we shall be more then Conquerors, through him that loved us. For this is to take God to be our God, not only to put our confidence in him in prosperity and adversity, when we have means or means be wanting, for our souls and bodies: but also to relic upon him, that he will make us walk in his Commandments, and put his fear in our hearts, that we shall not depart from him; that he will perfect his work begun in us, finish our faith, and preserve us unto his everlasting kingdom This faith doth give unto God the praise of all grace which he is pleased to bestow, and of all works of grace which he effecteth by us. He that relieth upon the good use of his free-will, must necessarily ascribe the praise of his perseverance in part, if not principally, unto himself: but he that resteth upon the Lord for establishment against all spiritual enemies, and ability

unto every good work, he must necessarily ascribe the whole praise unto the glory of God's grace, upon which he doth depend.

The acts of faith concerning perseverance be these and such like.

First, It makes a man sensible of his own frailty and infirmity, how weak and feeble he is, apt not only to fall, but even to fall away, if he were not upholden by the grace and power of God. Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of our selves: but our sufficiency is of God. Naturally we trust in ourselves, and are presumptuous of our strength: but when by faith we go forth of ourselves unto God for help, we can see nothing in ourselves but weakness and frailty.

Secondly, It stirs up holy jealousy and suspicion, lest we should cool, decay, start-aside or fall back. Faith is bold and timorous, confident and suspicious: confident in God, suspicious of our selves. I was afraid (saith Job) of all my works; knowing, that if I did wickedly, thou wouldst not acquit me. And this suspicion doth beget care to shun occasions of sin, and watchfulness to prevent spiritual distempers. A man jealous of his health is wary in his diet: and he that hath his soul in suspicion will ever be questioning with it and watching over it least he should offend. This jealousy is ever waking, apt to cast the worst that may fall out, but to counsel the best, that is, to keep far from the occasions of sin, abstain from all appearance of evil, and take heed of the snare in lawful businesses of this life. And surely, in this kind considering our great frailty, it is more behooveful for a man to be somewhat too he die and cautelous, then to be a little too secure and self-confident: to be suspicious of his weakness that he may be enabled by God and become strong in him, then while he is fool-hardy and strong in his own conceit, to run into danger, and prove weak in trial.

Thirdly, Faith instantly crieth unto the Lord for help and strength and continual supply of grace. Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not. I will keep thy statutes: O forsake me not utterly. Look thou upon me and be merciful unto me: as thou usest to do unto those that love thy Name. Order my steps in thy word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me. Draw me, we will run after thee. Show me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation, on thee do I wait all the day long. When men be conscious to themselves of their own wants, they are wont to resort unto others by whom their wants may be supplied: The Believer is empty in himself and sensible of his own weakness, desirous of supply and confident of help in God, who alone is able to confirm and strengthen him, yea so to enable him notwithstanding his infirmity, that his power and might shall appear in him amidst his feebleness, and his very infirmity shall make much for his glory: and therefore he will not cease day after day to repair unto him for continual supply and strength of grace.

Fourthly, Faith desireth, digesteth, and feedeth upon the wholesome food of life. As new borne babes desire the sincere milk of the Word that ye may grow thereby. If the body be healthful, and in case to grow in strength, there will be an appetite to wholesome food and good digestion by the stomach; every living thing hath a faculty to draw nourishment unto itself: and the faith which never faileth doth not only covet, but kindly digest the Word of life, and suck nourishment from it, whereby it is made able and strong to every good word and work: If the stomach decay, or the appetite be inordinate after things hurtful and unwholesome food, or the digestion ill, that meat taken in, passeth away not altered by the stomach, the natural life is in danger, so the life of grace languisheth, when our appetite to the word

decayeth, we affect earthly things immoderately, delight in a frothy, windy, vain sound of words, which pleaseth the ear, but edifieth not the conscience, or if we hear slightly, we take not pains to feed substantially upon the Word. I deny not, but a lively never-fading faith is subject to these and more grievous distempers for a time, but in this languishing fit, though it be not unto death, until it recover, it is unable to embrace the promises of perseverance: and the more lively it is to receive those promises, the more earnestly doth it desire and sweetly feed upon the Word of grace.

Fifthly, It putteth forth itself to perform all duties of holiness and love with life and fervor: It laboreth and taketh pains in well-doing. For Idleness corrupts natural strength; use and exercise confirms it. Dull and sluggish actions argue feebleness of the faculty and tend unto decay; as if we do not things with that vigor we have done, it is a sign of infirmity, and of a faculty inwardly or outwardly hindered; and if we rest in such a perfunctory course and challenge not ourselves for it, we are in danger to grow worse and worse. But liveliness and contention in doing is both an argument of good disposition, and a means of increase. The more lively faith is, the better it worketh: and the more it worketh, the faster it groweth. Life is the daily and continual vigor of a living substance: and everything as it is most lively and likely to continue, the more it doth show forth its strength in working. For a time faith may fall asleep, and the actions of faith be heartless, dull and perfunctory: but faith now asleep will awake anon, shake up itself, stir up affections, resist sloth, blow up devotion, and restlessly aspire after heavenly things. And like as it is with them, whose going back helpeth them to take their rise and fetch their leap more commodiously, or whose linking for a season makes them to ply their business the closer afterward: So here, faith (through him that is the Author and finisher of it) after such remissness

doth renew its endeavors, and with more vigor and holy contention set upon the works of piety and godliness, stir up the graces of the Spirit, tie up the thoughts to heavenly things, labor against wind and tide, and walk before God in all well-pleasing, though not without great weakness.

Sixthly, It coveteth increase of grace and sanctification; Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed: save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise Lord be merciful unto me, heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee. How are men affected in recovering bodily health, somewhat better will not content or satisfy? When they can sit up, but not able to walk up and down the chamber, oh that they had a little strength to stir: when they dare walk within doors, oh that they could stir abroad, then that their stomach were returned, and they could walk in their accustomed strength. Every living thing the more it doth live, the more it coveteth perfection of life in its kind. And so is faith affected in receiving spiritual strength from the sickness of sin, till it feel itself enlarged to walk constantly and cheerfully before the Lord, yea, till it be perfectly recovered, which cannot be so long as we carry about us this body of death. By reason man excelleth the beasts, by holiness he excelleth himself, inferior only to the Angels in degree, and made like unto the Lord, as far as a creature may be to his Creator: Sin is the sickness of the soul, so much more loathsome and dangerous then distempers of the body, as the soul is more excellent then the body: Holiness is the health, ornament and excellency of the soul, as far surpassing it in worth, as man doth the basest creature in dignity and honor. There is no trouble, shame, and sorrow to sin: there is no honor and comfort to holiness and sanctification. According to the nature of holiness, so is the fruit; the merchandise thereof is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof then fine gold; It is more precious than rubies, and whatsoever can

be desired without, it is not to be compared unto it. The natural man neglecteth to seek after holiness or take pains to get it, because he feels not the sickness of his soul, nor understands the worth and fruit of grace: But the true Believer, who is grieved with his infirmities, and knows the excellency and comfort of spiritual health, cannot but desire and covet grace more and more, that in due time he might be perfectly healed.

Seventhly, It receiveth new supply of grace continually from Jesus Christ the fountain of grace. Of his fullness have we all received, and grace for grace: Christ is an ever-flowing fountain of grace, of whose plenty all Believers are abundantly partakers, and that from one degree of grace to another, though not all in the same measure and degree. Water in a ditch, which hath no living spring to feed it, is soon dried up: but the pond which is nourished continually with fresh springs, doth not fear the drought of Summer, or scorching heat of the Sun. The Temporary, who was never knit unto Christ, as a living natural and proper member, may fall away from that which he seemed to have; But the true Believer, in whom Christ, the fountain of life dwelleth, who daily receives grace from him, according to the measure of the gift of Christ, he shall never utterly be destitute. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

Eighthly, It assureth of perseverance through such promises as these; I will make you to walk in my Commandments; I will put my fear in your heart, that you shall not depart. Who so eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. But Faith giveth assurance of perseverance as it doth of the pardon and forgiveness of

sins, and what is necessary to be known of that point, hath been largely handled before.

Now if a Christian would stir up his faith to believe the promises of perseverance, when he feels his own weakness, and considereth the strength and malice of his Adversaries.

First, Let him heartily bewail his proneness to sin, aptness to decline, inability to withstand any one temptation, or set one step forward in the way to Heaven.

Woe is me, poor wretch, blind, lame, crooked, sick, impotent, unstable as the running water: How was I bewitched with self-confidence and conceit of spiritual fullness? I have presumed upon my wisdom, as sufficient to direct my ways, and leaned upon my strength, as able to make resistance against temptations, stand upon mine own bottom, and go through stich with my resolutions: But now I find my wisdom is ignorance, vanity and folly, my strength weakness: I am unable to think one good thought, set one step forward towards Heaven, keep my standing, or withstand the least assault.

In pain I am pettish, under crosses faint, heartless, discontent, ready to fly at the sound of persecution, secure in prosperity, puffed up with comforts, apt to be led away with worldly allurements. My spiritual taste is distempered with carnal vanities, which relish sweeter to me then the mercies of God in Christ; mine appetite to the Word and food of life is abated, my zeal decayed, mine affections dull to good, my devotion cooled, my conscience benumbed. I hear, but feed not upon the Word, my Prayers are cold, heartless, roving; in earthly employments I keep no moderation, daily weaknesses and lesser sins go down without reluctance: the motions of the spirit quickly die, the motions of the flesh live and get strength,

admonition is fruitless, reproof unwelcome in my course I am ready to stumble at every rub, linger after every bait laid by Satan or the world to catch me, and totter upon the smallest temptation. Every day I have greater experience of my weakness than other; soon distempered and put out of frame, if by any means for a little time my heart be brought into some better order, I am forgetful of my purposes, negligent of the opportunities to get good, distracted with lawful business and weary of the works of my calling, perplexed at the troubles I meet with, giving way to frowardness, not looking up to God: unthankful for mercies, trifling out the time in foolish surmises, vain plodding's, and unprofitable speeches. The poor, lean, thin fruits of grace, which through the mercy of God now and then I espy in myself, these proclaim my sick and feeble state: my thoughts and meditations are poor and few; strivings against sin weak, appetite to the wholesome food of life small, digestion slow, obedience marvelous defective and in a manner liveliness. I live under the powerful means of grace, enjoy many helps in private, am free from many great temptations wherewith others are exercised in respect of their outward condition, blessed with the society of them that fear God, pruned and dressed by my heavenly Father, and yet I reel, waver, am tossed to and fro, and ready to fall upon every occasion. Ah, wretched man that I am, how shall I be able to stand if the means should fail, persecutions be raised, or the powers of Hell let loose upon me.

Secondly, He must stir up himself to rest upon God through Jesus Christ, for establishment and conformation. Why should I fear by reason of mine infirmities, or the malice of my spiritual enemies?

I am sick, but God is my physician; weak, but God is my rock, my strength, my high tower; I like a lost sheep am ready to go astray, but the

Lord is my Shepherd, and will not suffer me to perish.

Christ's intercession is ever effectual: but he hath prayed that my faith should not fail, and promised that the gates of hell shall not prevail. The sons of Adam mortal by birth, can never grow beyond the state of mortality: the children of God borne of immortal seed can never fall from the state of immortality. True faith is a never fading faith, the life of grace an everlasting life, the water of life, a well springing unto eternal life. Christ once died for sin, never to die anymore: and he that liveth in Christ shall live forever. Indeed if faith were the work of freewill or had dependence upon it, it might well perish, but being the entire gift of God according to his purpose of grace, it must needs partake of the unchangeable love of God, which is the fountain whence it springeth. I will walk jealous of myself, because feeble and apt to offend, but confident in God's mercy and grace, because he is faithful, who shall confirm me unto the end, and perfect his work he hath begun. My care shall be to feed upon the word of life, to shun sin and the occasions leading thereunto, to cry for aide and strength and when I feel myself ready to sink, I will hang upon the Lord, for his power shall sustain me, his right hand shall uphold me, and by his might I shall be kept through faith unto salvation. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment into victory: his power shall be magnified in my weakness.

Thirdly, He must pray instantly that God would uphold him, and make him to see that he will establish him unto the end. Our strength is of God, and it is of him that we know or be assured that through the power of his grace, we shall stand firm and unmovable. The state of a Believer is sure, and it is impossible the elect should be deceived: but as they stand by the grace of God, so it is of God that they know their standing. O Lord God of

heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that rest upon thy gracious promise and desire to yield up themselves in obedience to thy Commandments, look mercifully upon me, thy weak unworthy servant: heal mine infirmities, for they are many, and stablish me by thy free Spirit for I am brought very low. Remember, I beseech thee, the word of thy covenant, saying, I will give them one heart and one way that they may fear me forever for the good of them, and of their children after them. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Now I am thy poor creature, the work of thine hands whom thou hast made; thy poor servant with whom thou hast stricken covenant, unto whom thou hast showed this mercy, that I desire to fear thy Name: O Lord, I beseech thee, teach me thy way, make me to walk in thy truth, unite my heart to thy fear, confirm, strengthen, stablish me unto the end, and make me to know that by thy power I shall be enabled to stand fast and vanish the enemies of my salvation, that I may fight manfully, obey cheerfully, persist undaunted, and rejoice in thy salvation all the days of my life.

CHAP. VI. How to live by faith in time of Temptation.

HOW TO LIVE BY faith in time of Temptation, when Satan encounters and seeks to winnow the poor servants of Christ.

No sooner doth a Christian set himself unfeignedly to seek the Lord, but Satan with all his malice, subtlety, might, and fury doth make out after him, assaying by inward suggestions and outward temptations again and again reiterated to discourage, turn back, and utterly over throw him. The servants, of Christ are all soldiers, and have continual war not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness's. This they must expect, they have sworn it, and are called unto of the Lord; who for their encouragement doth not only acquaint them with the necessity of the fight, the justness of their cause, the weight of the business, the honor of the combat, the reward of victory if they overcome, that he himself doth behold and approve the valiant, but also by his faithful promise doth assure them of strength and victory. This is signified in the first promise. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel: which properly being understood of Christ, by communication of grace doth belong to all the

faithful. Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he might sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand. Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you. He that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not. The gates of hell shall not prevail against it. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come. Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Satan was the strong man armed who possessed all in peace: but our Savior hath overcome him, taken from him all his armor, and divided his spoils. Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them upon the Cross; and so through death hath destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil, that he might deliver all them which for fear of death were all their life subject to bondage. Wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive.

In this state of temptation the servants of God are allowed to live by faith. For the God of peace hath promised to tread Satan under our feet shortly, opportunely. When Satan may seem to prevail and get the victory, God will speedily bruise and crush him under the feet of the faithful, least he should hurt or overthrow their salvation. The craft of Satan is great to deceive, but God will teach wisdom and providence to discern and disappoint his stratagems. The power of Satan is great to molest, but if we fight manfully against him, not trusting in our own strength, but in the living Lord, we shall obtain a joyful victory. We must not be slothful nor self-confident, but valiant in the Lord, and the success is certain through his blessed aide.

Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies. This is the commandment of God, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ. Nothing is so glorious to God: nothing so profitable to us. It doth give God, as it were, a testimonial of his truth, power, mercy and goodness. And for ourselves, it is our treasure, strength and victory. God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith. In quietness, and in confidence shall be your strength. We have a charge to resist the Devil strong in the faith. The more fiercely we be assailed, the more confidently should we betake ourselves unto the Lord for help, who is our strong castle, and rock of defense. In peace if men let their armor hang by and rust, yet it is time to buckle it about them, when the enemy is at the gates, and beginneth to batter the walls. The Lord permits Satan to buffet us, that we might be moved to seek and take unto us the armor of a Christian, more especially to put on the shield of faith. To doubt and fear because we are exercised in spiritual combats, is as if a soldier should lay aside his harness, because he is called forth to battle with his enemies. The Apostle speaking of our spiritual conflict with the malicious enemies of our souls, chargeth us not only to believe, but above all things to labor after faith. Above all things taking the shield of faith: which manner of exhorting doth show us, both what care we must have of it, and what approbation we have from God to believe. For if we bid a servant buy many things, but above all such a thing by his charge he might easily gather what he should be careful in, and what allowance he had to do it. So when we are counseled above all things to get faith, it is not hard to understand, that we must be chiefly careful about it, and that God is well pleased we should so be. Faith is one of the first things that is formed in a Christian, and wherewith God furnisheth him, when he prepareth and calleth him forth to the encounter: so that to question whether

we should believe, is to question whether we should dedicate ourselves to the service of God, deny our lusts, or fight against the Devil. That which is fabulously spoken of the Giants is truly spoken of us; we are no sooner borne, then we have our swords girded to us, our shields on our arms. The Lord stands betwixt his children and all dangers that are intended against them by their malicious enemies. He is ever at their right hand to save their souls from death. And if God stand forth for their help, they cannot better provide for their one ease and safety, then if they confidently hope in the Lord, and repose their souls upon his might.

It is necessary that a Christian should live by faith in that condition. For all spiritual soldiers must put one courage and resolution not to fear the assaults of mighty enemies, nor be dismayed at any difficulties. Let not your hearts fear, tremble not because of your enemies; quite yourselves like men, be strong. But true valor cannot be had without faith in Christ. Stand fast in the faith, be strong. The Devil is like a serpentine Crocodile, whose property is, if one follow, it flieth away, if one fly, it pursueth him Resist Satan, and he will fly: be afraid, and he will follow. Cowardice doth encourage the adversary, courage daunts him. But courage issueth from sound confidence in the Lord, who is the rock and shield of them that fly unto him. Waite one the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thy heart. Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the Lord thy God he it is that doth go with thee, he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Of ourselves we have no strength to prevail against the strong one in the world: all our victories must come of God, his power doth all our works for us. We are kept by the power of God unto salvation, he bruise the Serpents head, he dissolveth the works of the Devil, he treadeth Satan under feet. The chiefest strength of soldiers lieth in their Captain, who yet

must fight for themselves and him, by their own power and skill: but all our strength lieth in Christ, the Captain that leadeth us to salvation, from whom we receive all power and ability to do what is good, whose Almighty power subdueth all things for us. We ourselves before our conversion are of no strength, after also of no strength, not sufficient to think a good thought: all our sufficiency is of God. But we cannot be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, unless we believe and lean upon it. God's strength is the matter apprehended, faith the hand whereby we apprehend it. This is our strength, stand still, fear not, behold the salvation of the Lord. If we had the strength of our first parents and were left to ourselves, we should come short of happiness: this is all our security, that it is God's strength being trusted unto by faith, that must help us to salvation: Through God we shall do valiantly: he is our shield, tower, rock strength and glory. Faith is of force to keep us against all assaults of the Devil: This is our victory which overcometh the world: this is so mighty, that the powers of Hell cannot prevail against it. Faith doth latch the fiery darts of the Devil, that they fall off without piercing us: or if they enter, it doth quench and allay their burning heat, that they shall not kill us. Peter had the dart stuck in him a while: but faith did renew repentance; and healed him, making the poison of sin a Treacle. Paul was buffeted with inward suggestions, and had troubles as thick as hail-stones following him; yet all these prevailed not against him, because he kept the faith. The Devil will renew his assaults against us, and we must renew our courage and strength against him; which cannot be done, unless we live by faith. He that hath no trust in himself, but leaneth on the power of God, will, though he fall often, still have hope, and be courageous to set upon his enemies with fresh assaults after some foil received. For he that knows he hath no strength, cannot wonder, if when

God leaveth him he do fall: and he that maketh God's strength his stay, though he be never so far from a thing, yet will not cast away hope in time to obtain. The acts of faith in respect of temptation be these or such like.

First, Faith makes sensible, that we cannot resist of our selves. By Satan's force the mighty Cedars have been overthrown, and with more case we might be overturned: But yet when he rageth with greatest fury, it assureth that he is chained up by the power of Almighty God, and can go no further, then he will give him leave. Well may the Devil bark and roar, like a band-dog or Lion safely chained or shut up, but he cannot stir further then God is pleased to let him lose. He cannot tempt whom he will, nor when he will, nor how he would, not by what means, nor in what measure he would, nor with what temptations, nor for what continuance: in all these he is confined by the providence of God, who hath promised, that he will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it. A legion of Devils could not enter into a Gadarene Hog, till Christ had given them leave. Satan cannot touch one Bleat pertaining to Job, till he have obtained liberty: nor then lay a finger upon his body, till his liberty be renewed. The Devil is the sinful Author of Temptations, whereby he seeks to molest and overthrow the Saints: but God in his infinite wisdom and mercy doth limit them both in respect of time, place, person and temptation itself, and direct them to such an end as Satan never intended. Faith speaketh on this wise, Satan desires to fifth me as wheat, but it is the Lord who hath made choice of this temptation wherewith I am exercised rather than another, and hath set bounds to the spiritual enemies of my soul, what time they shall continue to assail, how far they shall proceed and no further, and will direct the

temptation to a good end, above all I can conceive: therefore I will not fear the enemy but wait upon the Lord.

Secondly, It discovereth the Methods of Satan, and his Ends in tempting. The Devils aims are not ever one and the same. Always he labors the destruction of the Saints, but his ways, whereby he endeavors to effect it, are contrary. Sometimes he purposeth to entice unto sin by his allurements; sometimes to vex, trouble, and drive into despair; at least to make the life of a Christian uncomfortable with his manifold and hellish assaults. This is wisely discerned by faith, whereby the stratagems of our Adversary are more easily disappointed. For as an Enemy, who intends by policy to get the victory, is more than half overcome when his plot is disclosed: so it is here, Satan is soon discomfited, when his intents and projects are manifested and made known.

Thirdly, It lifteth up the heart to cry and complain unto God of the cruelty and malice of that spiritual Adversary: but suffers it not to muse upon his blasphemous temptations or to confer with them. If Rabshakeh revile the living God, the people of Judah will hold their peace, and not answer him a word, least being enraged he should blaspheme the more. Direct opposition in such cases stirreth up the outrageous blasphemer to grow more furious. When the Devil requires of our Savior to fall down and worship him, he reasons not the case, but repelleth him with detestation, Avoid Satan. Giving us to understand, that the blasphemous may not be reasoned with, if they should, it would make them but burst forth into greater outrage against the peerless wisdom of God. Wherefore if Satan buffet us with suggestions of this nature, it is our wisdom to turn from him, and to make our complaint unto the Lord. So Hezekiah spread the blasphemous letter of Sennacherib, before the Lord: And when the enemies of David insulted over him, as

though there had been no help for him in his God, he crieth, Lord, how are mine enemies increased.

Fourthly, By faith the poor soul eying the promise betakes itself unto the Lord for succor promised to be defended against the malice of that roaring Lion. It is the promise of our Savior, that Hell gates shall not prevail against his faithful people: they shall fight against them, but not prevail. When the spirit of man begins to faint, faith bids him be of good courage, for there is help in Heaven. The Devil may thrust sore at thee, but shall not get the victory, for God is with thee. If the Lord plunge thee into the Sea, he will go down with thee thither to keep thee, that thou shalt not be drowned; although Hell gates had shut mouth against thee, yet there his Almighty hand will be with thee, and from thence his arm will deliver thee. Fear not, for the Lord will be thy defense, and the shadow of his wings thy cover.

Fifthly, It stirreth up courage and resolution to set upon the practice of godliness, and the duties of our particular calling with diligence and cheerfulness, as the means sanctified of God to procure freedom. For despair, dumpishness, foregoing the means of grace, and neglect of our calling, these are the things which Satan labors to drive us unto: we do him the greatest pleasure that may be, when we yield unto him therein. Excessive fear brings that upon us, from which especially we desire to be freed, and ties up the powers of the soul, that it can make no resistance. Cowardice and fainting sorrow put courage into our Adversary: valor, resolution, and confidence forceth him to give back. When we give place to doubting, dejectedness, inordinate tyrannical fears, we put ourselves into the hands of our Enemy: but the victory is ours, when by faith in the power and mercy of the Lord, we raise up our hearts in courage, and buckle ourselves to the duties that lie before us, according to ability granted of

God. When we are idle and solitary, Satan hath most advantage to molest and disquiet, as the thief hath to steal, when the door stands wide open: but conscionable employment shutteth the door against him, and takes away opportunity. This is the voice of faith, though Satan furiously assail thee, be not dismayed: when his temptations be most fierce, be thou most diligent in the means of grace, the practice of holiness, the labors of an honest calling; pray earnestly call to remembrance the promises of grace, exercise thyself in works of mercy. Make this use of all his malicious assaults, that thou be quickened to stick faster unto the word of promise, lift up thy heart to crave his aide with confidence, and take courage to labor more earnestly in the paths of righteousness. For Satan will then cease to vex with his temptations, when that which he puts as a stumbling block, we make a spur and incitement to more diligence in well-doing.

Sixthly, It fortifieth the soul against all invasions: For the persuasions of faith are most forcible, the strength of faith invincible. Satan endeavors by horrible, and fearful injections to drive the poor soul to despair. Faith hearteneth him the more to believe, and keep close under the shadow of the Lord's wings. For the Devil is let loose, to chase us nearer home, that we might stick faster unto the Lord, as the child affrighted will cling unto the mother. Satan desires by carnal allurements and outward objects to draw him from God, which he enforceth with all subtlety: Faith opposeth stronger persuasions to well-doing; it setteth before him the terrors of death eternal if he revolt; the comforts of grace, and the joys of Heaven, if he continue constant: in comparison whereof all carnal enticements be of no moment. When the Devil cannot prevail by flatteries, he seeks by force and violence to overthrow the poor servants of Christ. Faith buildeth itself upon Christ the everlasting rock, resisteth in his name, and getteth the victory.

The Believer is too weak of himself to withstand the least assault, but relying upon the Lord, through his power he is made victorious in the greatest.

Seventhly, Faith is vigilant and watchful at all times, in all places, upon all occasions against all sins, with all degrees thereof, especially against sins of constitution, calling, the time, company, corrupt education, the first rise of sin-delighting motions, and sins of solitariness, that it be not circumvented by the wiles of Satan. Faith may slumber and take a nap for a little season, when it is ill at ease: but the property of faith, when lively and in good plight, is to keep waking. For nothing is more wisely fearful than faith, nor more cautelous and circumspect than holy fear: Nothing more careful and suspicious than faith: more waking and industrious than holy care and suspicion. Nothing more covetous and courageous than faith, more watchful than covetousness and courage. Faith makes a man jealous of himself, lest he take cold, catch a knock, or be deceived; cautelous and circumspect, that the Devil get not advantage, set not upon him at unawares; desirous to keep standing, grow in grace, live in peace with God, and valiant in the Name of God to take arms in the cause and quarrel of God against principalities, powers and spiritual wickedness's. Fear, care, suspicion, covetousness, courage any one of these, is sufficient to keep waking in earthly things: and when all of them jointly concur, shall they not have this effect in spiritual? Satan is vigilant to tempt, as he can espy his opportunity: and faith is watchful to avoid the snare, or withstand the assault.

Eighthly, In the most forcible tempests which the enemy raiseth against us, when to present sense and feeling all sight and hope of the grace and goodness of God in Jesus Christ is lost, faith tells the heart, that a calm is at

hand. When the strength of the enemy is wasted, and his provision decayed, that he hath no hope to continue the siege long, he will make one or two furious assaults against the place before his departure, intending to win the horse or lose the spurs, as the Proverb goeth: so it is with Satan, his rage is greatest, when his time is shortest. Even as the darkness is greatest a little before day: so the grand pieces which the Devil keeps in store, until the case be desperate, be with the claps they give, and mists they send forth, messengers of his retiring, and our deliverance which is before the door. The last temptation wherewith Satan set upon Christ was the most furious, and when he could not prevail thereby, he departed from him for a season. The Lord knows well the malice of Satan, and the weakness of his children: his fury to devour, and their frailty to stand long in the encounter: therefore he will not suffer that roaring Lion above measure to discharge upon them. This faith assures of, and persuades quietly to wait for.

Ninthly, If Satan renew his assaults, faith stands prepared through the power of God to make resistance afresh? When Paul was buffeted by the messenger of Satan, he besought the Lord often in that thing. Thus when we are led into darkness without light, we lean upon God, and cry unto him for salvation. If a child have his Father by the hand, though he be in the dark, or otherwise see, what might hurt him, approach, and make often at him, yet he is not afraid: and so it is with us, whilst by the eye of faith, we see that invisible one, at our right hand to support and save us. Neither are we scarred at this, that Satan doth shift his temptations, and return again after he had left us for a season: But having experience of God's gracious dealing and tender compassion, we fly unto him, and shroud ourselves under the shade of the Almighty. If we have in some fits found case by this or that means, we know if we come into like case how to help ourselves; it is we

say, but doing such a thing, or taking such a matter: thus having once found in distress and temptation, strength and deliverance by recourse to our God in Christ, we know what to do when such like state returneth on us. Satan will not cease to assail though he be overcome; nor the Believer faint though he be set upon again and again: but having once returned with victory through the power of God, he will abide in the secret place of the most High forever.

Tenthly, The faithful are the Lord's vessels, which he useth to scour by temptations. True it is, that in the time of trial, the graces of the Spirit do not so much appear to the notice of the believing heart: but by the over-ruling providence of God, they serve for the increase of grace, as the truth teacheth, faith believeth, and experience can testify. Thus faith ministereth comfort in the most bitter agonies, if it be rightly used, and stirred up. But what if the child of God be brought so low, that he can discern no spark of faith, no fruit of grace, no mark of God's love in himself? It is not to be doubted, but the servants of Christ through their weakness, are oft brought by extremity of temptation into woeful desolation, which yet the Lord doth wisely order for the glory of his Name, and the good of his dejected servants. And as in other things, so in this, that they cannot discern any fruit of the Spirit, wherewith through the mercy of God, they are comfortably replenished. For the blustering Tempests which the enemy raiseth against them, cause such disturbance in the soul, and fill the heart with such confusion, fear and terror, that for the present they are altogether unable to judge of their own estate. For when the Mind is over-clouded with the mists of Temptation, as the eye with the rising of dust; and the heart tossed to and fro with unquietness, as the waves of the Sea when the winds are boisterous; conscience by recoiling upon the soul cannot conceive, or give

right notice of its true state and temper. Troubled water will not give back the reflection of the countenance: nor an afflicted Spirit the true disposition of the inner man. When the poor Christian makes search into himself, the temptation first puts forth itself, wherewith the heart is daunted, and thereupon concludeth, that no grace doth lodge or abide in him, because at first sight it doth not appear. Unto these may be added, that good men are sometimes pettishly disposed, to cast away all they have as nothing, because they have not what they desire, or imagine others to enjoy: herein resembling little children, who for want of some small trifle that they desire, or some of their fellows have, throw away many things much more precious.

But not to inquire further into the causes of this mistaking, the remedy is;

First, he must know, that as in sick persons we see it cometh to pass, they think there is no hope of life, when the Physician and standers by see certain and undoubted tokens of health: So it is oftentimes in these spiritual sicknesses.

Secondly, It is the wisdom of a Christian in this case to observe the mark that Satan drives at, which is to hide from his sight the graces of the Spirit, that he might bring him to despair. This being the Devils aim, he must stir up himself to believe, and roll his soul upon Christ for salvation. For when he can see no grace in his soul, he cannot but see himself to be miserable, and so called to come unto Christ the fountain of living waters, that by him he might be replenished, in him he might find refreshing. Again, taking courage to believe, he disappoints Satan, who intendeth not so much to draw him into security, as to force him to cast away all hope of mercy. Oh, but a Christian is to examine and try himself, whether he be enriched with the graces of the Spirit, or no? True it is, that the examination of our hearts

is a necessary duty, but to be done in due order, so as we be stirred unto, not driven from the practice of other duties no less needful: But when the soul is distempered with the assaults of Satan, and unable to judge of its own state, it is unseasonable to make search into our hearts, and preposterous is to give place to doubting's, because we cannot find what we desire. We have a commandment to believe, as well as to prove ourselves, both which must be coupled together, otherwise neither can be done as they ought: and it is a plain case, that he who finds himself to be poor and naked, is called to come unto Christ, that he might receive of his fullness, be enriched with his plenty. If thou canst not find in thyself what thou seekest after, come unto Jesus Christ, and believe in him, that thou mayest receive what thou seekest, and is to be found in him.

Thirdly, The distressed soul must learn, that the grace of God worketh not always alike in his children. When we walk in the fields in winter, we see not only no good fruit, but not so much as a leaf on the trees, in some also the very trunk or stock appeareth to be dead: yet is the sap hidden in the root, which in due time will show that the tree was never dead. When fire is raked up, there appeareth oftentimes a sort of cold dead ashes, when there are underneath certain sparks, of which you may afterward make a fire. Yea, many times the fruits of grace may shine in the conversation to the eyes of others, when the powers and stirrings of grace inwardly, being hindered with temptations, cannot be felt.

Fourthly, The long and manifold temptations of Satan, wherewith he seeks to throw Christians head-long into despair, is to them a testimony of the inhabitation of the Spirit in their hearts. For the power and strength whereby those assaults are repelled, is it not of God? The unclean spirit might easily enter into the house with seven other spirits worse than himself, and dwell

there, if he found it swept and garnished, that is, empty and destitute of grace. The strong man armed might well break into the house, if a stronger than he did not keep possession. As the children of God are conquerors over many temptations, so one only temptation (and that of no long continuance) is able to sink the stoutest among the Reprobates, who are mere dross and refuse, into the bottomless pit of Hell. The strong assaults whereby the Devil laboreth the over-throw of the poor servant of God, is to him an argument of strength received, or that God will strengthen him. For if he look unto God in the temptation, he calleth not forth his servants to the conflict, until they be furnished, nor will he let Satan loose until he have enabled them to make resistance. He will not lay weight upon green Timber: nor crush the tender youngling with burdens unsupportable: whom God doth employ in his war either he hath, or will make them able for the service. If he have an eye, unto Satan's malice, why doth he muster all his forces to besiege, if there be no strength to withstand? The long continued furious temptations of Satan do make proof, that the heart is well fortified against him.

The way and means to stir up faith in these perplexities and times of grievous temptations, is:

First, the distressed Christian must unfeignedly humble his soul for former ignorance, vanity of Mind, disesteem of mercy, timorousness, discontent, unbelief, misinterpreting the Lord's doings, solitary musings on the temptations of Satan, self-confidence, and such other sins which may seem to set open the soul to the fierce and dreadful assaults of Satan: and in that acknowledgement and humiliation he must unfold his present misery before the Lord. O my God, I am ashamed and confounded, and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for my sins are multiplied exceedingly, and

mine iniquities are risen up against me. I was conceived in sin, I have lived in vanity: my thoughts are loose, mine affections boisterous I have disesteemed mercy, regarded lying vanities; given way to doubtful reasonings, pettishly taken on when my carnal desires have been crossed; distrusted thy promises, disputed with thee of thy judgments; given way to thoughts of unbelief, harbored unquietness and discontent: and so exposed my soul to the most violent, horrible and fiery temptations and assaults of Satan. My soul which should be seasoned with sweet meditation on thy goodness, mercy, and grace manifested in Jesus Christ, delighted in the promises of mercy, and ravished with the joys of Heaven, is continually pestered and assailed with the black and hellish thoughts of Atheism, despair, blasphemy, discontent; and extremely tortured with soul-vexing fears. O my God, look mercifully upon the misery of a poor distressed sinner. I am brought into great darkness, and can see no light. There is no soundness in my flesh, nor rest in my bones, nor quiet in my soul. My heart trembleth, my strength faileth me, my life is spent with grief, my spirit within me is overwhelmed: and prevailing fears so tyrannize over me, that I cannot speak. My Mind is full of disorder and confusion, my heart of terror: my soul refuseth comfort. In the day I am terrified with thoughts, in the night affrighted with dreams. I am sore wounded and broken, I go mourning and desolate all the day: my moisture is like the drought of summer, and in this deep discomfort the Tempter ceaseth not to suggest, That there is no help for me in my God.

Secondly, he must complain of the malice of the Devil, and instantly entreat the Lord to pardon sin, bridle, restrain, and tread Satan under foot. Whiles I declare mine iniquity, and am sorry for my sin, the Devil rageth with incredible fury seeking to devour and swallow me up. He fighteth

against me continually: night and day is my soul vexed with temptations to be abhorred. If I say, I will remember the mercies of the Lord, and think upon his Name; I will unload my soul into the bosom of my heavenly Father, and wait upon his grace: then he suggesteth impious thoughts and horrible blasphemies to the great annoyance, miserable distraction, astonishment and vexation of my poor soul. Remember me O my God, according to the multitude of thy tender compassions, and blot mine iniquities out of thy remembrance for thy Names sake. There is mercy with thee covering sin: pardon the trespasses of thy poor servant, and impute not unto me those hellish thoughts suggested by Satan, which through thy grace I detest unfeignedly, under which I desire to be sincerely humbled, and from which I heartily beg to be delivered. Return, O Lord, cause the light of thy countenance to shine upon me; refresh my parched soul with the sense of thy mercy; dispel the mists of temptation, rebuke Satan, and restrain his malice. Thou art the God of peace, tread Satan, I beseech thee under my feet shortly, that with a quiet and cheerful Spirit I may sing of thy praise, and serve thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life. Thou art my strength and portion, my rock and tower of defense, unto thee do I fly for succor, Oh, plead my cause against the enemy of my soul, and thy glory. I am purposed through thy grace to stick and cleave fast unto thy mercy, never to assent unto or approve his horrible suggestions: Oh keep me that the evil one may never touch me. Lord, how long wilt thou look on? Rescue my soul from the fiery assaults of that wicked one; my darling from the Lyon. I am sore troubled, I am bowed down greatly, I walk in heaviness all the day long: My heart panteth, my soul is exceedingly disquieted with temptations. This thou hast seen (O Lord) keep not silence: O Lord be not far from me. Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment, curb and chain up

Satan, that he may molest no longer, and strengthen thy poor servant, that through thy might, I may conquer and triumph over him. And my soul shall rejoice in the Lord, it shall rejoice in his salvation. All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea the poor and needy, from him that spoileth him.

Thirdly, he must cease to muse on the temptations of Satan, and stir up himself courageously, valiantly to trust in the mercies of the Lord, and rely upon his grace. Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted within me? Why dost thou harbor perplexing doubtful thoughts, and in much pensiveness toss to and fro the temptations of Satan. This musing kindles the fire: the more thou thinkest upon the temptation, and art disquieted with doubting's, the greater liberty hath the Devil to tempt, the less able are thou to with-stand his malice. If thou be dejected, he will be insolent: if thou be affrighted, he will be the more furious. Trust therefore in the Lord, and wait upon his grace: for he hath seen thine adversity, he will hear thy prayers; the sins cleaving to the temptations which thou so much fearest, are pardoned and forgiven unto thee. Evil thoughts conceived with delight, pleasure, and purpose, are most displeasing unto God, dangerous unto the soul: but even hellish temptations, which never found consent or approbation under which thou art humbled, from which thou earnestly cravest to be delivered, doubt not, but upon thine unfeigned suite, they are freely remitted and done away. Be strong, and of good courage, fear not, nor be dismayed: for the Lord will be thy defense, and under the shadow of his wings thou shalt be safe. Satan cannot tempt longer than God shall give him leave: and he will never suffer thee to be tempted above measure, but will give a good issue unto the temptation. Thou art called to fight under the banner of Christ Jesus, and in the name of the Lord thou shalt be enabled to

do valiantly and overcome. If Satan continue his assaults, God's grace is sufficient for thee. If thy strength be clean gone, God's power shall be magnified the more in thee: and he hath brought thee low, that thou mayest not trust in thyself, but in the living Lord, and that the whole praise of the victory might be ascribed unto him. If thy strength did remain, it was not to be leaned unto; and now it is decayed and gone, there is no cause of fear: for the Lord will be thy stay. In the most difficult assaults and tedious encounters we are exhorted, to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Be of good courage, and God will grant thee an easy, a joyful victory. Satan's drift in tempting is to turmoil, dis-hearten, perplex with fears, and drive into despair: and if thou take heart and courage to rest quietly upon God's grace, and fly unto his Name, thou shalt put him to flight, thou hast already got the day. Waite but a while, and these dark mists, and terrible storms shall be dispersed. By these temptations the Lord hath taught thee to see thy weakness, and the malice of Satan; to deny thine own wisdom, and prize his favor: lightly to esteem all things here below, and highly to value mercy reaching to the pardon of sin, and heavenly communion and fellowship with God: And if this bitter potion hath wrought so kindly for thy spiritual good, why shouldst thou be dismayed? Trust in the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thee. The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants, and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.

Fourthly, He must exercise himself in well-doing, harbor holy and heavenly meditations, nourish the motions of God's Spirit, be zealous and diligent in Prayer, reading, and hearing the Word of God, cheerful and industrious in the works of his honest calling. For idleness, and dejected lumpishness, and excessive fear prepare for all temptations: but serious and

good employment is a special means to prevent or divert them. In this case, constant proceeding in a course of godliness, and continual exercise of Mind and Body in that which is good, and pleasing in the sight of God, doth much more avail than direct opposition. I have too long vexed and turmoiled myself with the temptations of Satan; broken off the exercise of godliness directly to answer and oppose them, yielded to thoughts of unbelief; given way to discouragements, as if it had been in vain to pray, omitted the duty upon conceit of unfitness, dullness, unworthiness; accounted the duties of my calling tedious and burthensome, set open my heart to entangling scruples and distracting fears, questioning the love of God towards me upon every false suggestion, and concluding oft through unbelief, that God had shut up his loving kindness forever in displeasure. So foolish have I been, and ignorant: even in this point a beast. Pardon, O Lord, the infidelity, doubting, dejectedness, and carnal excessive fears of thy poor servant; deliver my soul from the snares of Satan, acquaint me with his Methods in tempting, and how I may prevent him, and strengthen me in the combat, that I never faint, nor break off the course of godliness through unbelief. I am purposed through thy grace, to cast my soul upon thy tender mercies, to seek thy face continually, to wait upon thee in thine ordinances, and to exercise myself in the works of Piety, Mercy, and an honest calling. If Satan tempt to distrust, raise fears, seek to discourage my soul, or break off my prayers by his hellish suggestions; I will strive to maintain my faith, lay faster hold upon the promises of mercy, stop mine ears against scruples and doubting's; take greater courage to draw nigh unto God, believe the acceptance of my willing though weak service: and by how much the Devil shall seek to oppose or hinder my comfort, courage, or constancy, so much the more will I stir up myself to go forward and

continue therein. The Lord will hear a sigh or groan, bottle up a tear, and graciously accept poor and mean service from a sick child. I perceive the main scope of Satan in suggesting hellish temptations, is to drive me into despair, disquiet the soul with fears, cast me into deep, unprofitable sorrow, and discourage in every holy duty, that I might altogether neglect it, or with great heartlessness go about it, as if it were unprofitable, should never be accepted. And I shall then prevent Satan, and put him to flight, when I take occasion by his temptations to stick closer unto the word of promise, stir up myself zealously to seek the favor of God; turn my thoughts from disputing about his suggestions, pray that I may be fitted to pray, wait upon God for help, beg the pardon of daily infirmities, and take heart and resolution to commit my soul unto him in well-doing, striving daily to reform what is amiss, and grow in grace; but not questioning acceptance because of my infirmities, present dullness, and distemper of soul, being wasted and spent, whiles I struggled with the temptations of the Devil. Arise, O Lord, disappoint Satan, cast him down: deliver my soul from the wicked one: Be thou my strength in trouble; incline thine care unto my prayer, and save me, for I fly unto thee for succor. I am ready to halt, and my sorrow is continually before me. Forsake me not, O Lord, O my God, be not far from me. Hide not thy face far from me, put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help, leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation. Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies. Show me the path of life, guide me in the ways of peace, give thy strength unto thy servant, and save me for thy mercy sake. Hold up my goings in thy paths, that I be not turned aside by the malice or sleights of Satan. I am fully resolved to depend upon thy grace, and keep thy Commandments, Lord have mercy upon me, raise me up, and strengthen

me unto the end. By this I know that thou favorest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me. Uphold me in mine integrity, and set me before thy face forever. And here, if the distressed Christian have wasted his Spirits with violent and continual sorrow, he must be admonished not to think, that presently he should recover former liveliness and ability. Satan will not cease to suggest, that this course he hath now set upon is vain and fruitless, because he finds more dullness and loggishness, then formerly. But he must tell himself, that natural powers once weakened are not soon repaired; and in such case, when stirrings be less, the work of grace may be more sound then heretofore. Liveliness and activeness is greatest in youth, but the truth of grace greater in age. Therefore he must not scrupulously question his state, because he feels himself more feeble, and less active then in former times.

CHAP. VII. How to live by faith in the times of trouble and adversity.

HOW TO LIVE BY faith in the times of trouble and adversity, especially when we be exercised with many and long afflictions.

Afflictions are not more ordinary, then burdensome and heavy to be borne. Many are the troubles of the righteous, and manifold the infirmities of the righteous in their troubles. Sometimes they take carnal counsel; sometimes they fret and murmur, sometimes they faint and despair for a fit. David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul: there is nothing better for me, then that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines. I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes. I remembered God and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was over-whelmed. Will the Lord cast off forever? And will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever: doth his promise fail for evermore? Which frailty of the Saints doth lesson us, what need we have to be strengthened against all discouragements and hindrances which in afflictions we shall meet withal, that we neither grow weary, nor be turned aside in our Christian course. And the Lord, our most merciful and loving

Father, knowing it to be most necessary, hath for the comfort and encouragement of his children plentifully signified, that he will correct them in wisdom, love and tender compassion, to the, purge and refine them; and graciously promised to aide, comfort and direct, and in fittest time to deliver them out of adversities. We have had Fathers of our flesh, who corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of Spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure, but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Hath he smitten him as he smote those that smote him? Or is he slain according to the slaughter of them that are slain by him? In measure when it shooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it: he stayeth his rough wind in the day of the East wind. Fear thou not, O Jacob, my servant, saith the Lord, for I am with thee, for I will make a full end of all Nations whither I have driven thee, but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure, yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished. This is that which the Prophet so earnestly begged of God, O Lord, correct me, but with judgment, not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing. He corrects but for a while: For his anger endureth but a moment, in his favor is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger, forever. The rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous: lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity. For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction. For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee, for a moment: but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer. For I will not contend forever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail

before me, and the souls which I have made. Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth in mercy. Whom the Lord loveth, he correcteth, even as a Father the Son, in whom he delighteth. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the Angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old. Like as a Father pitieth his children: so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame: he remembereth that we are dust. How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me, my repenting's are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim, for I am God, and not Man, the holy one in the midst of thee. Thou shalt remember all the way, which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart. For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried. And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy sin. By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away his sin. And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them and to purge, and to make them white. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: and they shall call on my Name, and I will hear them. Now for a season (if need be) ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be sound unto praise, and honor, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus

Christ. Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you as though some strange thing happened unto you. He openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, That he may with-draw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man. He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword. He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity. Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end.

My brethren, count it all joy when yea fall into diverse temptations, knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. We glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience; and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed. Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty. For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hand maketh whole. He shall deliver thee in six troubles, yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee. Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord; and teachest out of thy law: That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity: until the pit be digged for the wicked. Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. Thou tellest my wanderings, put thou my tears in thy bottle: are they not in thy book? I will be glad, and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities. Behold, the

eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him: upon them that hope in his mercy: To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine. The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth them, and delivereth them out of all their troubles: The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart: and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit: The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed: a refuge in times of trouble. The needy shall not always be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall not perish forever. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Fear thou not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, yea I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Behold, all they that were incensed against thee, shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing, and they that strive with thee shall perish. Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel: I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the holy One of Israel. Sing, O Heaven, and be joyful, O Earth, and break forth into singing, O Mountains: for God hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted. But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my God hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking babe, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee. Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me. Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my Name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him, and honor him. In these and such like passages of holy Scripture, we see with what love and tenderness the Lord doth correct his children, for the glory of his great Name, and their exceeding great benefit; that they might know themselves, their frailties and graces, be purged from

their dross, emptied of self-conceitedness, confirmed in hope, patience, humility; quickened unto prayer, and fitted for his kingdom: how graciously he doth protect and comfort them in heaviness, lighten their darkness, heal their wounds, keep their feet from falling, cover them with his feathers, hide them in his pavilion, and set them upon high from such as rise up against them. He is the salvation of the righteous, and their strength in time of trouble: His thoughts towards them, are thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give an expected end: He is continually with them, and holdeth them by their hand; he will guide them with his counsel, and afterward receive them unto glory. These promises so often repeated be firm grounds whereupon to build our faith, that we shall not be hindered by afflictions in our Christian course, but rather furthered, till we attain unto the end of our course in God's Kingdom.

And surely it is most necessary that we learn to live by faith in afflictions. For faith is the ground of silent and quiet expectation of salvation. When Christians are persecuted for the name of Christ, all men see they have great need of patience, that after they have suffered for a time, they might enjoy the promise, which now they hold by faith, as it were by reversion, not in actual possession. But without confidence there can be no patience. Faith in God is the only stay and support of the heart in trouble and affliction. I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Remember thy word unto servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope. This is my comfort in my affliction, for thy word hath quickened me. In daily and lighter trials a man of mild and patient temper may hold up the Head: but when one deep calleth unto another, and the waves flow over our head; when nature yieldeth, and the heart fainteth, then to stand fast and be of good courage, that only can faith do, which is

grounded upon the rich mercy of God, and relieth upon his Almighty power. Faith is the Palme, that sinks not under the weightiest of burdens, the Chamomile that spreads the more it is trodden; the oil that ever over-swims the greatest quantity of water you can power upon it. In the most boisterous tempests it lifteth up the chin, that we shall not drown: and when a man is half dead, it quickens and puts life into him. By faith the Saints have endured cruel mocking's and scourging's, bonds and imprisonments, tortures and death and in all these were more than conquerors. Faith is the shield of the soul, whereby it is defended against all the fiery darts of the Devil. When we are afflicted, we shall be tempted to impatience, despair, doubting of God's love, and the use of wicked means to help ourselves out of trouble. The world will follow us with scorns and taunts, as if God had forsaken us and would not arise for our help: Our own corrupt hearts will be ready to start aside, repine, faint, question the Lord's truth and mercy: and Satan will not be wanting to his opportunity with all his might, malice, and subtlety to seduce, discourage, or terrify. When our Savior was a hungered in the wilderness, the tempter came unto him, and said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. Now seeing the burden of afflictions is made more heavy by temptations accompanying, we had need to be well underpropped with a lively faith, that we might withstand and repel the force of the Enemy. Faith only supplieth all our wants in affliction. He that possesseth all earthly things in greatest prosperity and hath not faith, hath nothing in deed; much less the man that liveth in misery: but he that lives by saith wants nothing that is good, when miseries beset him on every side. For the present riches of a Christian are the gracious and faithful promises of God, which faith possesseth, not looking to what we have in hand, but what the Lord hath laid up in store; and expecteth to

receive from God in fittest season, more assuredly, then if he had it in his own power to use. The Men of this world trust their friends with their stock or money, and make account it is as ready at hand, as if they had it in their own possession: and sure it is, the true believe hath just and good cause to trust God rather than himself, and to rely upon his Word for whatsoever he hath committed unto him. Faith in time of danger doth as it were fence and compass us with the promises of God: but without faith we are naked, and lie open to the malice of our Adversaries. Behold, his soul which is lifted up, is not upright in him, but the just shall live by his faith. The unjust man puffs up himself, and builds towers of defense to himself: but the just man believeth, and that shall be to him instead of all castles, towers, and bulwarks in the world. For it brings us under the wing, presence, and protection of God: it makes him our refuge and safeguard, high rock and tower of defense. Afflictions profit not, if they be not mixed with faith in them that bear them. Bodily physic procureth not health if natural heat be lacking in the patient, which might cause the potion to work to the expelling of the sick humor: faith in respect of afflictions the physic of the soul, is that natural heat, whereby they are made to work kindly to the purging of sin and the increase of grace and comfort: where it is altogether wanting, there can be no kindly work.

The righteous are allowed to live by faith in the times of evil, when calamities of all sorts compass them about, for godliness hath the promise of this life, and that which is to come: and the godly are to believe both, according to the word of the Lord. God hath promised, that all things shall work together for good, to them that love God, and that he will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able: and it is our duty to believe God, that it shall be even as he hath told us. The godly have had this confidence in

formers times, whose practice is both a token of our privilege, and a pattern of our duty. What time I am afraid I will trust in thee. Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth, yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will, fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy rod, and thy staff they comfort me. Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us, he hath smitten, and he will bind us up: After two days will he revive us, in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. God is hereby much glorified that we rely upon him as our rock of defense, all-sufficient Savior, and trustiest friend in time of distress. It is one of the Lord's most royal titles, to be the Father of the Fatherless, and a judge of the widows, a refuge for the oppressed, and the helper of the poor. Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress; a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is, as a storm against the wall. And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you. The Lord hath commanded us to wait upon him in the days of calamity and sorrow. The Just shall live by faith. It is the very scope of this text to teach this one point of doctrine to the Jews, when they would be oppressed by the Babylonians, viz, that in greatest dangers, the only way is to stay ourselves, and establish our hearts by faith on God's promises. Confidence in God doth the more bind and oblige him, as it were, to do us good. The Lord shall help the righteous and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them because they trust in him. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he hath trusted in thee. I will surely deliver thee, and thou shalt not fall by the word, but thy life shall be for a prey unto thee because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the Lord. If

a friend rely and build upon our faithful promise, we take ourselves bound not to frustrate his expectation in a dead lift: the Lord will never leave the soul destitute; which trusts in him. The faithful have promised themselves, help, and confidently begged aide, because they trusted in the Lord: Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me, for my soul trusteth in thee; yea in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be over past. Cause me to hear thy loving kindness in the Morning, for in thee do I trust; cause me to know the way wherein I should walk, for I lift up my soul unto thee. Deliver me, O Lord, from mine enemies, for I fly unto thee to hide me. And to hope in God, and to have God for our help, are linked together in Scripture, so that his help is ready for all them, who rest upon him in truth. Happy is he, that hath, the God of Jacob for his help: whose hope is in the Lord his God.

The acts of faith in respect of these promises be these.

First, It looketh unto God and acknowledgeth his hand in all afflictions, whosoever be the instruments. Shall there be evil in a City, and they Lord hath not done it. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons: for what son is he, whom the Father chasteneth not. And this is one special ground of humiliation, patience, and comfort. Come, and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us. My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary of his correction. For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a father the son, in whom he delighteth. Let him curse: for the Lord hath bidden him. It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite good for his cursing this day. But of these more particularly hereafter.

Secondly, It teacheth that we are in such distresses out of which none can help us but the strong helper of Israel. Faith speaketh on this manner; We have no might against this great company, that cometh against us: neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee. And great is the benefit of this instruction, for it draws the heart from carnal repose in means or friends; it expels vexations and distracting cares, and estranges from the use of unlawful means of deliverance whatsoever. The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the Lord. A horse is but a vain thing to save a man; neither is any man delivered by his great strength. And the same may be said of wisdom, swiftness, wealth, or the force of any means whatsoever, though never so lawful, or likely: But as for unlawful means, no good success can be hoped from them. The Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose; therefore have I cried concerning this, their strength is to sit still.

Thirdly, It wisely directeth us to consider, that the cause of all misery and sorrow is sin, and thereupon drives to examine our ways, humble ourselves before God for mercy; renew our hope in his grace, and set upon reformation of what is out of order. Faith is a good Physician, that seeketh to cure the disease, by taking away the cause thereof: when God takes trial of us that we might know our selves, faith maketh search into the heart; when he judgeth by his chastisements, faith maketh us to judge ourselves: and when God striketh for sin, faith striketh at the head of sin. Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. I thought on my ways: and turned my feet unto thy testimonies. When Manasseh was in affliction, he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his Fathers. Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne

chastisement, I will not offend anymore, That which I see not, teach me; if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.

Fourthly, Faith meekeneth the heart willingly to submit itself to the good pleasure of God, and patiently to bear his correction. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way. Yet unto God my soul keep thou silence: for from him is my expectation. By faith the servants of God have been enabled to say, The word of the Lord is good, I will bear the indignation of the Lord: because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me, If he say thus, I have no delight in thee, behold here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him, Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his Mother; my soul is even as a weaned child. I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs. For in thee, O Lord, do I hope. Guiltiness of Conscience (which is ever fearful) and untamed passions make unquietness, when the rod of God is upon our backs; both which are corrected by faith. The conscience is comforted by faith, resting upon the gracious promises of pardon, and giving assurance that sin is pardoned: Passions are curbed and bridled by the sovereignty, of faith, as having the affections under command, which it doth season and move according to the direction of the word: and by strong, potent, irresistible persuasions, whereby it worketh the soul to this sweet and heavenly submission. And as a plaster, which upon sore flesh causeth much smart, upon sound flesh stirreth no pain: so troubles lighting upon a soul healed by grace, and seasoned by faith, are nothing so grievous. The considerations of faith, whereby it persuades unto meekness, be such like. The first taken from the desert of sin, which is far greater than anything we

suffer, or can conceive. Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?

The second, from the hand that layeth the rod upon our back, or reacheth out this bitter potion, which we are forced to drink off and that is God, our most wise, just, gracious and loving Father. Whereas human reason did cloudily and obscurely suggest to it followers certain broken and confused opinions, little better then dreams, of destiny and providence: Faith doth evidently and certainly assure of this ground of patience and comfort, that the least tick befalls us not, without the over-ruling eye and hand, not only of a wise God, but of a tender Father, and fellow-feeling Elder brother, who best knoweth, and can measure out exactly what is meetest. He will not lay upon man more than is right, that he should enter into Judgment with God. I was dumb, and opened not my mouth because thou didst it. It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.

Thirdly, Out of this principle faith extracts this infallible conclusion, This Cup, how bitter and wringing soever, is a medicine to cure, not a poison to destroy, mingled by him, that most perfectly doth understand our need, our strength, and the working of his own potion; ministered in great love and tender compassion to drive out corruption, confirm faith, preserve from falling, strengthen grace, wean from the world, and bring nearer to God by unfeigned repentance. If it be sickness or poverty, it is in our Fathers own hand, and he will not contend forever, lest the spirit should fail before him: If he turn us over to a servant to scourge us; yea, though Satan himself buffet us, yet he stands by to number and moderate the stripes, that they shall not lay more upon us then shall be for our good; and he will enable us to bear. I am very sore displeased with the Heathen that are at ease: for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction: Therefore

thus saith the Lord, I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies. My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Whatever falls being in Christ, it cannot bend to our utter confusion: but an issue shall be given unto it. What terrible noise soever the storm shall make over our heads, it shall be but as hail-stones upon the tiled or leaded house, that rattle more than hurt. We are kept by the power of Christ, that the Evil one shall not touch us: we are in safe harbor under the rock, and shall never be confounded. Sick we are, and that of diverse humors, which may breed dangerous diseases if they be not prevented: troubles, losses, disgraces, dangers and such like, are the Lord's baths and pills, whereby he rids us of that infectious matter, which would impair our spiritual health, if it were let alone; his bitter potions, that shall work for our health and welfare. He hath said unto Crosses, purge, refine, try, exercise, breed the quiet fruits of righteousness, give them experience of their faith, confirm their patience, support their hope, make them bring forth more fruit: but he hath given them no allowance to hurt, vex, confound, weaken faith, or waste any grace of the Spirit. When we feel our bowels wring, or (as in a Sea-sickness) are dead sick for the present, then faith puts us in remembrance, we shall be the better many days after. Physic makes sick before it give health: so do afflictions, but the fruit is pleasant. When they are a little over we shall be able to say, Oh, this was good for me, I would not for anything, but I had borne the yoke in my youth, that I may live the more comfortably in my age. Wise parents do not always correct their children in measure, as being ignorant of their nature and disposition. The most learned Physician may be deceived in the disease and constitution of his patient, mistake in the quality or strength of his Physic, and so miss of his intended cure: But the spiritual Physician of our souls, doth so exactly know our temper and disease, doth

so entirely affect our health, so accurately mingle the malign and poisonous ingredients in our Physic with correctors and allays, that the confection shall be good, and altogether shall and must work for the best. What though they be bitter to the taste? It is better with the body when it feedeth on sour herbs, which breed good blood, then on sweet meats which engender bitter vomits, and mortal sicknesses. The true soul-sickness, viz. sin and corruption that dwelleth in it, doth cleave so fast, and hath eaten so deep, that gentle purges, easy corrosives (that scarce work to sense or feeling) cannot expel or remove it. True it is, that all evils in themselves are hurtful, but faith looketh upon them as they are changed in and by Christ, who hath taken away the poison which would be in the crosses we bear, and makes them serviceable for our good: Even as the art of the Apothecary doth make a poisonous Viper into a wholesome Treacle.

A man will bear much when he spieth this, that it cometh from love in another to him: But God is love itself, and from love proceedeth every course he passeth upon us, as well this of adversity, as the other of prosperity. Whom he loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. The care and good will of Parents shows itself in providing Medicines and Physic, which may preserve or procure the health of their children, no less than in their allowance of meat, drink, apparel, or other benefits, which they bestow upon them. And God is as merciful in preparing and ministering Physic for our souls health, as in all other his daily benefits. Nay, herein doth appear the most special and tender regard that God hath over us. For if good things be wanting, to the body specially, we are apt to ask, and seek after them: But should the Lord let us alone till we find out the diseases of the soul, and be desirous of, or willing to receive his medicinal potions, our sores would grow incurable, we should perish in

our sins. Therefore, as the believer doth receive good things from God with joy: so doth he evil with meekness. The child will take from the mothers hand, as well sour as sweet, because he is persuaded of her tender love and affection: so doth faith entertain afflictions from God, knowing them to be fruits of his grace and fatherly compassion.

Fourthly, After serious humiliation and unfeigned abasing of the soul, faith brings tidings that God will look down from Heaven in mercy, and send help in fittest season. If their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity. Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember. And this doth marvelously quiet and still the heart. Should a man be very sick whilst the Physic doth work, he would not be dismayed so long as he knew the fit should last but a season; and then ease should return with health: And so it fareth with the faithful in their afflictions: Hezekiah said to Isaiah; Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken; he said moreover, for there shall be peace and truth in my days. Rejoice not (saith the Church) against me; O mine enemy; When I fall, I shall arise, when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me. I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause and execute judgment for me; he will bring me forth to light, and I shall behold his righteousness.

Fifthly, Moreover, faith doth re-mind us of our conformity with Christ in afflictions, and of his partnership with us therein. If he that was the first-borne, the only begotten and entirely beloved Son of God: if he that was without sin, yet was not without stripes; should we hope to go free, or look to be cockered continually? All the Sons of God by Adoption are predestinated to be made like their elder-brother, as in holiness and glory, so

in afflictions. Should we think much to sip or taste of that cup, which he hath drunk off for our sake? The first lesson we take out in the school of Christ is, Deny thyself, take up the cross, and follow the Lord Jesus. And the sorrows which we bear, are not so much ours as Christ's. In all our troubles he is troubled with us: what burden soever lies upon us, he feels the weight of it. When Stephen is stoned, he is persecuted: the wrong done to the Saints, is offered to him. And he can no more be unmindful of his people, then forgetful of himself.

Lastly, Faith setteth before us the infinite recompense of reward, not only renown in this world, which yet by faith the patience of Job, and all holy Martyrs hath obtained: but that far most excellent weight of glory, which Paul eying, counted his afflictions (which to us would have been intolerable) light and momentary, not worthy to be named in comparison: which made him not only not weep, and howl, but sing in the Dungeon, and reckon it a special favor and honor to be counted, not only a believer, but a sufferer for Christ. And even as waters fall down into valleys, not able to abide in grounds that lie high: so the sense of these afflictions goeth away from minds that are lifted up in such contemplation. By these and such like persuasions, faith allures the heart willingly, freely, constantly to resign itself to the good pleasure of God in all things.

The fifth act of faith, It teacheth wisdom to judge aright of all afflictions. Blessed is the man whom thou instructest, and teachest him out of thy law: scil. wisely to consider of afflictions; of their nature, end, use, and issue to them that fear God. He shall rest, [or be quiet] in the days of adversity. Did we not through false glasses see things otherwise then they are, they would not cast us down so much as they do. Want of heavenly wisdom, what voices doth it draw from us? Even such as these; Were it anything but this, I

could hope to receive good from it. Whereas through the spectacles of faith we come to discern, that the things we suffer are most fit to do us good. For faith seeth not according to sense or outward appearance, but as the truth is in Jesus Christ, always magnifying the wisdom and courses of God, as best and most for our profit. The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, of judgment and counsel was poured upon Christ; of which Spirit we partake by faith, and so are made wise to perceive the things of God, and to judge aright of his dealings towards us. And from this proceeds willingness to give our necks to the yoke, when God is pleased to put it on. Fear of hurt is that which makes us shun the cross, or go heartless under it: when once by faith, the scales falling from our eyes, we come to see it useful, beneficial, healthful, we strain courtesy no longer, but take it down.

Sixthly, True and unfeigned confidence will not keep silence in the cares of the Lord, nor cease to importune his aide, to entreat his favor. Arise, cry out in the night: in the beginning of the watches pour out thine heart like water, before the face of the Lord: lift up thy hands towards him. Be merciful unto me, O God be merciful unto me, for my soul trusteth in thee; yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be over-past. I will cry unto God most high: unto God that performeth all things for me. Trust in him at all times, ye people pour out your hearts before him: Lord in trouble have they visited thee; they poured out a prayer, when thy chastening was upon them. The counsel, which Elephaz and Zophar gave to Job, faith doth apply and put in practice; which was to seek unto God, and commit the cause unto him; to prepare the heart and stretch out the hands towards him. Having no wisdom of ourselves to make use of chastisements, nor power to deliver our souls, faith urgeth to seek unto God, that he would lead us by his grace in the way that we should

go, teach us to profit, and in due time vouchsafe freedom and deliverance. The true believer desires the benefit and fruit of restraint and correction, no less than the comfort of freedom and liberty. He covets that the spiritual sickness, may be removed, when the bitter potion is taken away. A wise patient will neither refuse to swallow bitter pills, when it may be for health; nor disorder himself to make work for the Physician: he will take Physic to recover strength, and lay it aside when the troublesome malady is expelled. A believing patient had rather be held in a continual course of Physic, then that the matter of spiritual sickness should gather, and engender diseases in the soul. Deliverance with inward soundness is the thing which he longeth after, and beggeth of God. Thus faith will not suffer impotently to fret, repine, or murmur; nor yet to grow secure, as though it were no great matter how things went, forward or backward: it doth both calm the heart, and kindle desires. Nor doth faith incite barely to cry unto God in distress, but in all conditions establisheth the heart upon his aide, that it looks not after other means of deliverance, then he affords. The upright man will delight himself in the Almighty, when trouble cometh upon him; he will call upon God at all times, and look unto him for help.

Seventhly, It raiseth the heart being conscious of it weakness to rest upon the Lord for strength, who makes us able to do all things through his strengthening of us: who strengtheneth his in the inner man to longsuffering with joyfulness; who hath said, such as look to me, shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as Eagles, they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint: yea, it fixeth and establisheth the heart upon Christ the rock strong and impregnable, whence followeth courage and steadiness to undergo them. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace (saith the Prophet) whose mind or thought is stayed on thee: because

he trusteth in thee. The righteous shall not be afraid of evil tidings, his heart is fixed or established, and trusteth in the Lord. Thus faith setteth the Lord always in it sight, and fortifieth the heart in confidence of his might. I have set the Lord always before me, because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved; (that is) I have overcome all temptations my hope being fastened upon the Lord; for he hath powerfully assisted and comforted me. Our strength is to clasp to Christ, and hold to him, as the person in whom is all our strength. The hill-rats are a weak creature, having neither strength of limbs, nor other means of nature to defend themselves: but making their houses in the rocks or stony places, and flying thither in time of danger, they save themselves, and provide safely for their young-ones. We of ourselves are feeble and weak, easily overturned with the least temptation: but working ourselves by faith into that rock Jesus Christ, against whom the powers of Hell cannot prevail, we become courageous, unmovable, invincible. It matters not what weight be laid upon the foundation, so it be sure and steadfast: if Christ be our supporter, (as by faith he is made ours) nothing can overwhelm us. In quietness and confidence is our strength.

Again, by faith we receive the Spirit of fortitude and courage, whereby we are made able to endure the burden of afflictions, and become valiant in combats. For the spirit of wisdom and counsel, of understanding and strength was poured into Christ, to the end we might boldly go unto him, to ask those things we stand in need of, and receive them by faith according to our measure. As the head communicates strength to the body, so Christ pours out the virtue of his heavenly unction upon the whole body of his Church. When the Apostles had received this spirit of strength, they make a play of all their sufferings and labors; even as in bodily things, we see men that have strength and courage (as these porters and such) they will make a

sport to bear such burdens, as a weak creature would tremble to lift at. For as bladders swim aloft all waters whilst they are filled with wind: so do we above all afflictions, whilst this Spirit is with us, to support us in them. Fear, doubting, feebleness, fainting, nice-tenderness, or melting of heart proceed from infidelity and distrust. Hardiness, courage, valor, invincible durance are the fruits of faith, staying itself upon the Lord, and seeking unto him. Be strong, be of good courage, fear not, nor be dismayed, for the Lord will be with thee, he will not fail thee nor forsake thee. Distrust many times wrings from us such voices as these, were it anything but this, I could hope to bear it: Whereas did we in conscience of our impotency seek to Christ to make us able, and fasten ourselves upon him by a lively faith, we should find strength enough through his might, whereby to bear that comfortably, which we think most intolerable. Faith drives a man out of himself, as not able to bear the least cross as he ought, and through the power of God it enableth to bear that best (how troublesome soever) with which God is pleased to try us.

Eighthly, By faith the godly heart is drawn to use all lawful means of help, that God in his providence doth afford, but resteth quietly upon God's promises, and assurance of his presence above all likelihoods and appearances, God shall stand (saith the Psalmist) at the right hand of the poor to save him from those, that condemn his soul. When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back, this I know, for God is for me. Moses left Egypt, and feared not the wrath of the King: because he saw him that was invisible. The reason hereof is, faith coupleth the means and the end, but looketh to the promiser, his grace, faithfulness and power (who is able to do above all that we can comprehend) and not to the probability of the thing promised. Abraham against hope believed in hope, that he might

become the Father of many Nations, being fully persuaded, that what God had promised, he was able to perform. By faith Sarah received strength to bear a Son, when she was past age; because she judged him faithful who had promised. This dependence on the promises which faith worketh, is absolute, without limitation of time, measure of affliction, or manner of deliverance. All these it referreth to the good pleasure of God's will, and repositeth itself securely upon his faithful word and providence. He that believeth will not make haste. Fear rides post to out-run danger, and folly turns over with speed, our mourning part before God, delighting to be in the house of laughter: but faith, which leaneth upon the promises of truth, makes no haste without good speed. Daniel waited seventy years for deliverance out of captivity in Babylon, and then finding the time of redemption to be at hand, he prayed to God for the same. As for the measure of affliction, or means of deliverance, the voice of faith may be heard in Job and Abraham. The one promised he would trust in God though he should kill him; The other being commanded to sacrifice his only Son Isaac, the son of the promise, believed that some other way he should receive him from the dead. This effect faith bringeth forth when all means fail, yea, against all oppositions in show never so strong and irresistible. For the means of themselves be of no worth and validity, and God is the same, one and unchangeable (whosoever oppose themselves against his determinations) most ready to succor when all means fail. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble: Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be cast into the midst of the Sea. Though the waters thereof roar, and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Wherefore should I fear in the days of Evil, when the iniquity of my heels (that is, the wickedness my

feet carried me to) shall compass me about. For the hand of our God is, upon all them for good that seek him, but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him. The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of life, of whom shall I be afraid? Though a host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear. Behold, God is my helper, the Lord is with them that uphold my soul. He shall reward evil unto mine enemies; cut them off in thy truth. But for support in this case, faith turneth itself to meditate on God's truth, which never faileth; his might which cannot be resisted; his wisdom, which ever effecteth his own works by means best approved, in his counsel, in the fittest season; and his tender compassions whereby he is ready to succor them that are brought low.

Again, it looketh to the manner of God's dealing, and to the usual course, which he hath held with his servants in all ages past: which is to grant deliverance, when the afflictions of his servants be increased, and send help when to sense and reason it is furthest off. For every soul is the Lord's, as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son: and what favor he hath showed unto any one, he will vouchsafe to everyone that seeketh him diligently, if it may be for their good. It is also confirmed by the experience of God's dealing with us in former times of distress and danger. Thou art he that took me out of the womb; thou didst make me hope, when, I was upon my mothers breasts. I was cast upon thee from the womb; thou art my God from my mothers belly. O God, thou hast taught me from my youth; and hither unto have I declared thy wondrous works. For former mercies are as bills obligatory under his hand, to assure of future good things, as they shall be needful. That which God hath once done for us in sustaining, quickening, quieting our spirits with peace which passeth understanding,

keeping our hearts, that he will do every day unto us, if we enforce ourselves towards him. Moreover, a good heart will not cease to accuse, check and condemn itself for the Infidelity, distrust and weakness of faith that it espieth; to incite, stir up, and call upon itself more confidently to wait, and trust in the Lord; and in bitterness of heart to seek and sue unto him for more strength from above. Why art thou cast down, O my soul, why art thou disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance. O God, my soul is cast down within me.

Ninthly, Faith believeth one contrary in another, and out of deepest distresses gathereth assurance of sweetest deliverances. For the Lord shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up or left. The Lord will be a refuge for the oppressed: a refuge in times, or due time of trouble. Mans extremity is God's opportunity: Deepest misery is the fittest season for deliverance. Men often like to Swallows, will be with us in Summer, but leave us in winter. The Devil, when he hath drawn his into the briars will give them leave to look for themselves. But God hath ever stood nearest to his, when their exigencies have been greatest. The experience of misery and calamity is made the sure ground of such joyful hopes, as the Lord hath promised. The greater sorrows the people of God suffered, the more undoubted experience they had of divine truth contained in Mosaical threatening's: the more undoubted the experience of their truth, upon consciousness of their own transgressions, the greater motives they had upon hearty and sincere repentance, to apprehend the stability of his sweetest promises for their good. No depression of this people, but served as a counter-sway to hasten, intend, or enlarge the measure of their wonted exaltation, so long as they rightly weighed all their actions and proceedings

in Moses balances, and compared their permanent sorrow for sin past with their wonted delight in transient pleasures. This that the Lord had stricken Jacob with the wound of an enemy, and with a sharp chastisement for the multitude of his iniquities, is propounded as an argument of consolation: for because the Lord had killed, they must believe, he would make alive again. The present wounds inflicted contrary to the rules of politic defense, were the best pledges of their future health, beyond all hope of State-Surgeons. And when Jeremiah more admired, then distrusted God's mercies, in tendering the purchase of his Kinsman's field to him, when the Kings and Princes of Judah had no assurance of so much possession in the promised Land, as to inherit the Sepulchers of their Fathers: the Lord expels not his suspensive, rather than diffident admiration with signs and wonders, as he did Gideon's doubt, or his stiff-necked Fore-fathers distrust. By what means then? By the present calamities which had seized upon the Cities of Judah, and that very place, wherein his late purchased possession lay. This is the very scale of Jeremiah's assurance, from the Lord's own mouth. Thus saith the Lord, like as I have brought all this great plague upon this people; so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them. And the fields shall be possessed in this land, whereof ye say, It is desolate without man or beast, &c. The depth of misery is usually made an argument to move the Lord with speed to hear and send help: and this is grounded upon the promise of God to give audience to his children, when in their distresses they remember themselves, and seek his face. Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord? Arise, cast us not off forever. Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and forgetteth our affliction and oppression? Attend unto my cry, for I am brought very low, deliver me from my persecutors: for they are stronger

than I. What, that as we feel God to be true in his threats, so we may be assured he will not fail of his promises.

Lastly, it rejoiceth in tribulations, and triumpheth before the victory. The patient is glad when he feels his physic to work, though it make sick for the time; because he hopes it will procure health. We rejoice in afflictions, not that they are joyous for the present, but because they shall work for our good. As faith rejoiceth, so it triumpheth in assurance of good success: for it seeth not according to outward appearance, but when all means fail it keepeth God in sight, and beholdeth him present for our succor. As for me, I will come into, thy house, in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I worship towards thy holy Temple. I have trusted in thy mercy, my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation. The righteous shall compass me about: for thou shalt deal bountifully with me. Thus are we to live by faith when God is pleased to exercise us with afflictions of what sort soever, though heavy to be borne and of long continuance. Great troubles of long durance are the exercises of faith, as weighty burden are trials of strength. As none for a little headache, or for the ranch of a pin will seek to the bodily Physician or Surgeon: So it is in a manner with the soul, whilst it is troubled with like grievances spiritual. Little things do not much exercise our faith, nor stir us up to seek God, and short afflictions are soon forgotten. Faith indeed despiseth not the least cross, but is most proved and stirred up in the greatest. Without question there is most need of faith, when afflictions lie the heaviest, and the more because Satan will be most busy at such times to molest and trouble; he wills to show his power and malice when we are most feeble. When God follows a man with one affliction upon another, and those of great continuance, then the Devil will tempt to impatience and despair, as if God took him for his enemy, and would not show compassion

anymore. When the heart faileth, because of the multitude of evils that compass us about, and God hideth his face, man is apt to conceive, sure God hath forsaken me, and will not arise for my help. If God did love me, he would never have absented himself so long, now I am brought so low, in so grievous distress. How should the poor soul, weak and feeble in itself, stand under this great weight of sore affliction increased by temptation and continuance, if it be not upheld by a lively faith? The acts of faith in this case, are for substance the same with those before mentioned, but for the help of the distressed Christian, who may be unable to direct himself, I conceive it not amiss to repeat the principal.

First, it teacheth that many and strong afflictions of great continuance are no more than necessary. A wise Physician will not minister a strong potion, where a lenitive or gentle matter is enough, nor put one dram too much in his prescription: much less will the Lord. We need great afflictions that our corruptions may be subdued within us. For as the untamedness of some colt is such, that unless he were sore ridden, he would never be broken, so it is with our rebellious nature. Learning tells the Physician, that in healing some bodily diseases the patient must be kept so low, that he must be almost pined with want, before a spring of better blood can be procured. Faith instructeth, that God is as it were forced to cast man upon the bed of sorrow, till his days draw towards the burial, and his bones begin to clatter, that he might hide, that is, suppress and remove his pride, and cure the distempers of the soul. Our afflictions are many and diverse, because our corruptions are many, and of diverse kinds, and such as are not expelled with one purgation. If one medicine fit not our sore, will we not seek another. What Father will not use many remedies to help the infirmities of his Child, if one do no good? Our heavenly Father keeps us in a daily course of physic, now

with one thing, now with another, because we profit not with any one alone. When afflictions are grown ordinary, and usual, they move the less, because they be familiar; therefore God is pleased to alter and change his medicines, that they might work more kindly. And as it is necessary that afflictions be strong and diverse, so also that they be of long continuance: for grown diseases are not hastily removed, not old sores quickly healed. As stains long settled in a cloth, require much scouring and long whiting: so do the evils which have deeply eaten into our soul. In others we may behold what is needful for ourselves. The posterity of Israel endured trial four hundred years. The elder people of God were all led captive seventy years. By woeful experience every Godly man may find, that being newly taken out of the furnace, he standeth in need to be refined again. Be our afflictions of never so long continuance in this life, we are well assured, they shall not press us longer than sin doth harbor in our bosom. And if faith be not overcome and vanquished with daily and continual conflicts against corruption: why should it faint under the burden of long during crosses. Sin is more opposite to faith, more perilous to the soul, then any fatherly Chastisements (though sharp and cutting,) as the disease is worse than the physic ministered to expel it.

Secondly, Faith in the greatest extremities suggesteth, that we are under the hand of God, who correcteth in measure, and for our profit, who hath determined the time and weight of our afflictions, and by his blessing will turn them to our good: who doth proportion our evils according to the strength we have, or which he will give, not according to our deserving's, and also continue our afflictions in great wisdom, faithfulness and mercy. Even as the Physician only can prescribe what quantity of physic is to be taken, with what change, and how long the course or diet is to be continued:

so the Lord only doth appoint the measure, variety and continuance of troubles, wherewith he is pleased to exercise us. Wicked men cannot set the time, nor measure out the quantity of such miseries, whereof they are instruments; to the godly for they would know no mean, nor ever make an end. They may be fit executioners of God's will herein, when they be set too, and taken off, according to his appointment: but unfit determiners what is to be inflicted, or how long it must be endured. Nor are we ourselves to appoint the quality of our Chastisements; or the terms and seasons wherein and how long they shall be continued: for we would taste only, (if at all) of the milder physic, or sap but lightly of bitters potions, when necessity requires we should take deep. The patient is not to be trusted with the searching and dressing of his own wound, if painful to be handled. Now seeing it is the Lord, great in mercy, infinite in wisdom, abundant in love and tender in compassions, who doth mingle our cup, why should we fear or faint? If Jacob had held or tended Joseph in prison, would he have used him roughly, or kept him overlong? No no: much less will God; (who is more merciful than any Father, and more pitiful then any Mother) hold us overlong, or deal rigorously with us: but ordering all corrections by his Fatherly providence, he will in his good time make them work together for good, and not for evil unto us. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered, Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value, then many sparrows.

Thirdly, faith setteth a man about his work, that is, seriously to make inquiry into his heart and ways, deeply to humble himself before God, and fervently to entreat mercy for sin past, wisdom to make use of present misery, and favor and mercy to be delivered and set free. Sinful men (if well advised) strike not without cause: the just God when he correcteth, hath ever just reason. And forasmuch as our consciences for the most part are

blinded with ignorance and self-love, or over clouded with sinful lusts, (as looking-glasses covered with dust) that we cannot find out of ourselves much that is out of order, nor amend what we espy to be amiss, faith directeth to seek unto God by hearty prayer, who can thoroughly acquaint us with our selves, and teach us to reform what he would have us to amend. Why doth the Lord give his children the repulse when they cry unto him in their calamities, but that he would have them search more narrowly into their courses, and more unfeignedly prepare themselves to seek and return unto him? And if they pray unto him, he will instruct what is to be done. He who will have sinful men to join instruction with correction, yea and putteth into man such regard of dumb creatures, that he will not strike a dog, but he will make him see, so well as he can, what it is for which he striketh him; shall not he instruct us, when his hand is now upon us for want of duty to him? But when we see our faults, and smart for them in such sort as we account grievous, there is no power in us to redress, and set straight what is crooked and out of frame. It is God only, who is able to bless afflictions and make them profitable: we of ourselves are like little children, who being taken in the fault, and fearing the rod, promise to do no more, but presently forget both the fault and danger. This we learn by faith, which soundly lesseneth us to deny our own wisdom, and strength, and in all purposes, resolutions and endeavors to beg wisdom and strength from God above, and wholly to rely upon his power and grace. In vain should iron be beaten, did not fire soften it: in vain should afflictions (which are God's hammer) strike on our hearts, should not Gods holy Spirit, which is compared to fire, both soften our hearts, and enlighten us to see our duties towards him, and teach us to make use of the affliction wherewith we are exercised. Moreover faith importuneth the Lord for mercy and deliverance. For this thing I besought

the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. My times are in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me. Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: save me for thy mercies sake. Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me: O Lord, make hast to help me. Unto thee have I cried, O Lord, and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee. Lord why castest thou off my soul, why hidest thou thy face from me.

Fourthly, Faith raiseth the heart to expect abundance of mercy from God, and through prayer and supply of the Spirit, to reap profit and taste comfort answerable to the sorrows it hath felt and endured. Great afflictions make place for abundant mercy from God to us, which cannot be received without singular joy on our part. A hard frosty winter makes a fruitful summer: an afflicted state causeth a mellow heart, if our sufferings be from God, we must look for profit by every trouble, unless we will deny God's wisdom, and challenge his truth, or show ourselves, as if we were not his children, nor truly godly, and loving of God. If God throw us down, we must wait to be comforted of him, according to the years wherein we have felt afflictions. To say we cannot think, that such a thing shall ever do us good, that ever we shall escape out of such a danger, that ever we shall see good days after these and these trials, doth argue great weakness and unbelief. For what cannot he make for our good, in what distress and anguish cannot he revive, who calleth light out of darkness, and things that are not as if they were, if we will give glory to his Word by resting upon it? The heart knoweth the bitterness thereof, and the stranger shall not meddle with it joy. Thus living by faith in times of trial and visitation, doth fit and prepare the heart to thankfulness when light shall shine from on high; and that so much the more, as our afflictions have been the sharper, or of greater continuance. Return, O Lord, how long, and let it repent thee concerning thy servants; O

satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing; thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness: To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent: O Lord my God, I will give thanks unto thee forever. If one heal a trifling disease it neither so bindeth the patient, nor commendeth the Physician: but if one heal us of some deadly incurable malady, O we say then we could never have met with such a Physician, not the like in the world again. Thou broughtest us into the net, thou laidst affliction upon our loins, thou hast caused men to ride over our heads, we went through fire, and through water; but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place. I will go into thy house with burnt Offerings, I will pay thee my vows.

It will be objected, That in affliction faith seemeth to be most weak, and corruption most stirring.

First, And true it is, that many doubtful thoughts ascend into Christians hearts, partly because they know not that they are allowed to live by faith in an afflicted state; partly because they judge amiss of their afflictions, taking them as arguments of wrath and displeasure, rather than trials of faith, and chastisements of peace. As children through want of wisdom are afraid of bug-bears: so the error of our mind raiseth great fear and doubt of that which cannot hurt us, peradventure, might greatly comfort us, if rightly understood. This mistaking must be corrected by faith and spiritual wisdom.

Secondly, True it is also, we sometime feel more stirring of corruption in time of trouble for a while, then we felt before: but as Physic then expelleth hurtful humors when it worketh upon them, and maketh us complain, as feeling them more then when they were let alone: so doth God's Physic to the soul (even while it is driving out corruption) it makes us feel and

complain of it more than ever. The like may be said of faith which we feel weaker during the time of trial: But striking the Torch, which for the present seemeth to put it out, maketh it blaze: Physic, which for the time weakens, doth tend to strengthen the body: shaking the Tree, which seemeth to loose the roots, fasteneth them deeper; and the same may be said in this case.

Thirdly, In afflictions faith is tried, the sweetness of it is not so much felt, as it is latent, which makes us think it to be brought exceeding low. The strength of the body is put forth in conflicts and burdens: felt when we walk at ease and liberty. A man may show most strength in wrestling, when to his own feeling he discerneth most weakness: and so it is in faith, when the sense is lest, the power may be greatest. There is an afflicted strength, which cannot be felt great, though it be so in truth: and there is an afflicted faith, which is not discerned to be of that force of which indeed it is. But strength afflicted, and strength decayed, faith afflicted and faith overwhelmed are much different.

Fourthly, If want of spiritual refreshing's doth trouble and breed scruple in us, we must remember that Physic purgative and restorative must not be taken at one and the same time: To admit of sorrows, but on condition that spiritual consolation should drown the feeling thereof, is as it were to wish sufferings without suffering. When God ministereth for the preservation or recovery of spiritual health, it is the office of faith to receive the potion, and further the kindly working of it: which cannot be done unless it give way unto, yea, stir up godly sorrow, and wrestle painfully to drive out such corruptions, as God would have removed by them. During battle the Soldier must exercise his skill, valor and strength in repelling, subduing, and pursuing the enemy: his refreshing comes when the fight is ended, and the spoil divided. In the days of affliction faith is conflicting with doubts,

allurements, corruptions which show themselves; if we do not feel those sweet comforts of the spirit, that our souls desire, let us wait with patience, till the victory be obtained.

And if we would stir up our faith to believe and depend upon God in the days of great tribulations, when all means of help fail, we must.

First, Lay open our sorrows before the Lord, and pour out our complaint into his bosom. Lord, how am I beset with miseries? How do my sorrows increase daily? I am the man that have seen affliction by the rod of thine anger. Thou hast brought me into darkness, but not into light. My heart fainteth, my strength faileth, my skin is made old, my sight waxeth dim, and all my bones are out of joint. Thou hast hedged me about that I cannot get out, and made my chain heavy. My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my stroke, and my neighbors stand afar off. But they that seek my hurt do multiply, they speak mischievous things, and imagine deceit all the day long. I am the reproach of men, the despised of the people, the song of the Drunkards. False witnesses are risen up against me, who lay to my charge things I never knew, and tear me in pieces with their continual slanders. In mine adversity they rejoice, they gather themselves together against me, they revile without ceasing: they open their mouths wide against me, and spare not to blaspheme thy Name. As with a sword in my bones mine enemies reproach me, while they say daily unto me, where is thy God. Lord, all this is come upon me, and yet thou standest afar off, and hidest thyself from my trouble. I cry unto thee, but thou hearest not; thou coverest thyself with a cloud that my prayers should not ascend.

Secondly, Confess our sins with hatred and godly sorrow. The disquietness of my heart, and trouble of my flesh ariseth from my sin: I will therefore declare mine iniquity, I will be sorry for my sin: I will

acknowledge myself guilty before the Lord. For innumerable evils have compassed me about, mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me. I have sinned, and rebelled, and thou hast not spared. Loe, I have sinned, I have done wickedly, I have sinned greatly, I have done very foolishly. Behold, I am vile, what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth. I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.

Thirdly, Take up our heats for halting through unbelief, and call upon them to rest in the promise of divine aide, assistance and deliverance. Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my he les shall compass me about? When the mighty man doth boast himself in mischief? The loving kindness of the Lord endureth at all times. He will not forsake his Saints although they be afflicted for a season. God is my refuge, who hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant, and will draw near for my deliverance, and make haste for my help, when sorrows environ on every side When all succor fails, he careth for my soul: When my spirit is contrite, and my heart within me desolate, he is at my right hand to sustain, yea, to save my soul. He will hide his merciful-Saint, until the calamity be over-past. I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh on me: I am sunk deep into the mire and clay, but his hand shall pluck me up, he will set me before his face forever. Marvelous things hath he wrought for his people in former times. He turned the Sea into dry land, and made way for them through the midst thereof. He led them through fire and water, and by a stretched-out arm brought them into a wealthy place. Is not our God from Everlasting, the Holy One, the same for Ever? His power is infinite, his goodness incomprehensible, his love as great towards his Saints now as ever heretofore. He will send down from Heaven to save me, he will deliver

me out of many waters. When I am hemmed in on every side, the Lord will provide some way for my escape: for he can do more than I am able to conceive or think. Thou who hast showed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth. When I was enclosed in the womb, my distress and danger was great, my strength weak, my condition hopeless: nevertheless I was saved by thy power, and by thy providence was brought alive into this world: and should I now doubt of thy help and mercy, because in likelihood I cannot see them? My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever. The depths of misery are the Lord's fittest seasons to rescue his afflicted ones. Merciless men will show compassion in great extremity: and shall not the Lord; who is rich in mercy and loving kindness, extend his favor to me when I am ready to perish? Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him.

Fourthly, Importune the Lord, and direct thy supplications before him. In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee, for thou wilt answer me. Hear me speedily, O Lord, my spirit faileth, hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit. Cause me to hear thy loving kindness in the morning, for in thee do I trust. Deliver me from mine enemies: I fly unto thee to hide me. Lord, how long wilt thou look upon the miseries of thy servant, and keep silence: rescue my soul from the destruction of the adversary, my darling from the Lions: Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord, let thy loving kindness and thy truth continually preserve me. Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me: O Lord, make haste to help me. O God, the proud are risen against me, and the assemblies of violent men have sought after my soul, and have not set thee before them. But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion and gracious,

longsuffering and plenteous in mercy and truth: O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me, give thy strength unto thy servant, and save the son of thy handmaid. How long Lord, wilt thou hide thyself forever? Shall thy wrath burn like fire? Remember thy former loving kindnesses which have been of old: remember that I am but dust, and that my days pass away like a shadow: remember the reproach of thy servant, wherewith I am reproached, of them that dwell round about; wherewith the ungodly and profane have reproached thy pure Religion, and blasphemed thy holy Name. Lord look upon mine affliction, and my tears: for I am brought very low.

Fifthly, Quicken thy resolution to trust in the Lord at all times, even when all other refuge faileth, and none shows himself for thy help. What time I am in trouble I will trust in God: for he shall redeem my soul. He is the God of my salvation, who will send deliverance to his people in the lowest extremity, and vouchsafe mercy to his chosen, above all they expect and look for, in most convenient season. I cried unto the Lord in the day of my calamity, and my prayer entered into his ears: therefore will I trust in him as long as I live. Lord I will wait for thy salvation, establish my heart in thy truth, that I be not moved.

CHAP. VIII. What it is to live by faith touching the promises of earthly blessings, temporal prosperity, and good success.

WHAT IT IS TO live by faith touching the promises of earthly blessings, temporal prosperity, and good success in the things that we go about.

The Lord our God knowing that earthly blessings be so necessary for the maintenance of this life, that we cannot be without them, hath of his infinite bounty and free grace undertaken, and promised to make competent provision for his children, that being freed from the cares and troubles of these things below, they might with greater freedom attend upon his service, and with more cheerfulness run the race of Christianity. O fear the Lord ye his Saints: for there is no want to them that fear him. The young Lions do lack and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. The meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. The meek shall eat and be satisfied. For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord: that walketh in his ways. For thou shalt eat the labor of thy hands, happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. This is that which is so oft repeated, That it may go well with thee in the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, In special the Lord promiseth length of days, Health, strength, wealth, favor, peace, Joy, good success, safety, good Name: and all these not only to the righteous themselves, but to their children and posterity. You shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days in the land which you shall possess. What man is he that desireth life: and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. My son forget not my law, but let thine heart keep my Commandments: For length of days, and long life and peace shall they add to thee. Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honor. By me thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of thy life shall be increased. With long life will I satisfy him; and show him my salvation. If thou wilt diligently hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his Commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians, for I am the Lord that healeth thee. Fear the Lord and depart from evil; It shall be health to thy naval, and marrow to thy bones. He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly, he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; He shall dwell on high; his place of

defense shall be the munitions of rocks, bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure. And the inhabitant shall not say I am sick. The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger. The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace. It is the Lord thy God that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy Fathers. Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine. Riches and honor are with me, yea durable riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, and my revenue than choice silver. In the house of the righteous is much treasure. Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord that delighteth greatly in his Commandments. Wealth and riches shall be in his house: and his righteousness endureth forever. If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles: Then shalt thou lay-up gold as dust, and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks: yea, the Almighty shall be thy defense, and thou shalt have plenty of silver. And God is able to make all grace abound towards you, that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work. With all thy getting get understanding: exalt her, and she shall promote thee, she shall bring thee to honor, when thou doest embrace her. She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace, a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee. So shalt thou find favor, and good understanding in the sight of God and man. Then shalt thou walk in the way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble. Who so hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even, the most high thy habitation. There shall no evil befall thee, ne there shall any plague

come nigh thy dwelling. Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue; neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh. At destruction and famine shalt thou laugh, neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth. And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid. For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field: and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee. When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him. Them that honor me, I will honor. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon day. The wise shall inherit glory. The memory of the Just is blessed; the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He that regardeth reproof shall be honored. Blessings are upon the head of the Just; and whatsoever he doth shall prosper. Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord &c, his seed shall be mighty upon earth, the generation of the upright shall be blessed. What man is he that feareth the Lord? Him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose. His soul shall dwell at ease, and his seed shall inherit the earth. Though hand join, in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered. In the fear of the Lord, is strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge. The Just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him. These and such like be the promises concerning temporal blessings, which God of his infinite grace and love hath made to the faithful and their posterity, that we might live by faith, quietly submitting ourselves to the good pleasure of God in these things, and expecting from him in due season such relief as shall be most expedient.

First, This is necessary; for faith in these promises doth kill covetous desires, distrustful and distracting ears. Let your conversation be without

covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have. For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. Man is privy to his want of blessings, and will never cease with excessive care, diligence and vexation to hunt after them, till he come to know that God will provide for him. When one hath great friends, which they are known to lean upon, we say of them, Such need take no care, they know such and such will see to them. On the contrary, come to one who knows no end of toiling and caring, ask him, why will you thus tire yourself out? He will answer, I must needs do it, I have none but myself to trust to. So Christ followeth his Disciples carefulness to this door, their unbelief, which did not let them consider our heavenly Father cared for them. No present estate, (though never so great) can free the heart from distraction, because it is subject to decay and vanish: we shall never cast the burden of care off our own shoulders, till we learn by faith to cast it upon the Lord, whose eye is over us for good.

Secondly, He will never renounce carnal supports, who makes not God the stay of his soul for outward things. He will trust in the abundance of his riches, wisdom, friends, or strength, that makes not God his strength. The heart of man being privy to his inability to sustain himself, if he be not underset, will seek out some prop true or false, sound or rotten to lean unto. They will go down to Egypt for help, and stay on horses, and trust in Chariots, because they are many, and in horsemen, because they are very strong, who look not to the holy one of Israel, seek not the Lord.

Thirdly, Belief in God brings good success. The Lord will be entreated to shower his blessings plentifully upon them, that put their trust in him. Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established: believe his prophets so shall ye prosper. Men are ashamed to falsify the trust that is

reposed in them: And shall the Lord frustrate the desire of them, that hope in his mercy.

Fourthly, If we cleave not to the promises of God made concerning temporal things, we shall adhere to the promises of life with less assurance. Both promises flow from one fountain, even God's everlasting love, are stablished in the same mediator, and received by the same faith: yea the promises of life everlasting (as more spiritual and furthest removed from sense) are in themselves more difficult to be believed: so that our assurance of them cannot be greater, then is our confidence in God for the other which concern this life, so far as he seeth it to be for our good; and the glory of his great name, if we be instructed, exercised, and assaulted in both alike. Christians are of assaulted touching these promises, and many virtuous and godly men not duly considering and embracing them by faith, are much perplexed in themselves. I said in my hast (said David, when he fled from Saul, and his heart began to faint) all men are liars; even the prophets, who told me I should be king, have deceived me. Distrust in the temporal promises of God, hath driven the faithful to many hard, dangerous shifts, and been the occasion of divers slips and some dangerous falls. The examples of Abraham, David, and many others, together with daily experience in all places, do sufficiently testify thus much.

Fifthly, Faith sweeteneth and sanctifieth unto us the use of all outward comforts under our hands. Meat, apparel, riches, honors (though lawfully compassed and in abundance possessed) yield but a sour taste in comparison, are but of small profit, when they be not used in faith. Nay, blessings not received and used in faith become Idols, or occasions of Idolatry: for either we trust in them, or be lifted up in ourselves by reason of them. The rich man's wealth is his strong City: he rejoiceth in his riches,

and hath in his thoughts to do great matters by them. Give me neither poverty nor riches, feed me with food convenient for me: Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, who is the Lord. The godly are allowed to live by faith touching these temporal promises, and the sanctified use of God's blessings which they enjoy.

First, For seeing God hath given Christ for us, as the Apostle reasoneth: how shall he not with him also freely give us all things. He hath given his son, the fountain of all good things: what is it then, that he will deny unto us? The promise of Christ before his incarnation was to the Jews a seal of all temporal good things promised. But we know God hath given his son, not only to be born, but to die for us: which is an undoubted token, that he will deny us nothing that may be for our good and comfort.

Secondly, The Lord by covenant hath promised to furnish his people with all needful blessings pertaining to this life. He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him as a shepherd doth his flock. For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, shall slow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock, and of the herd: their soul shall be as a watered garden, and they shall not sorrow anymore at all. And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with goodness, saith the Lord. I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beast to cease out of the Land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods. And I will make them, and the places round about my hill a blessing, and I will cause the shower to come down in his season: there shall be showers of blessing. And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they

shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the Lord: I will call for corn, and increase it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field; that ye shall no more receive reproach of famine among the heathen. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord. And it shall come to pass, in that day I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth, and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, the oil. Now seeing the Lord hath by promise and covenant, again and again repeated for our confirmation, assured us of all needful blessings, it is our duty by faith to make these promises our own, and rest quietly upon his word to find relief at such time, and in such measure, as he knows to be expedient, and may be for our good.

Thirdly, And this we may the rather be encouraged unto, considering the relation which is betwixt God and us: for he is our faithful creator, we the work of his hands: he is our Shepherd, we the flock of his pasture: he is our Father, we his children. Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator. Cast all your care upon him, for he careth for you. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day, that he is among his sheep that are scattered: so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places, where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be; there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. Take

no thought, saying, What shall we eat? Or what shall we drink? Or wherewith shall we be clothed? For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. God is the great Father of the family, who provideth all things necessary for them that be under his government. The eyes of all wait upon thee and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing. He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry. It is his property, who is the chief good, to communicate his blessings unto his creatures: much more to compass them with mercy that depend upon him. He hath put this natural affection into Parents, nay, into brute beasts to tender their young ones: and shall not he much more provide for them that cry unto him day and night for relief and succor? The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance: and God is the portion of his people: He hath chosen them, and they have given themselves to him: they rely upon him, and he hath undertaken to make plentiful provision for them. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul, therefore will I hope in him. The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup; thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in a pleasant places: yea, I have a goodly heritage. The Lord by his special providence will make that prosperous unto the righteous which they possess, be it little or much. There is nothing better for a man, then, that he should eat and drink and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labor, This also I saw, and it was from the hand of God. And this gift the Lord freely gives to the man, whom he doth approve: To the man that is good in his sight God giveth wisdom, and knowledge and Joy, (to wit) together and use earthly blessings with delight and comfort. The revenues of the righteous are small many times, but their state is comfortable: for the little that the righteous man, hath is better than much

riches of many and mighty wicked ones, who flow in wealth, and excel in power. Better is a little with the fear of the Lord then great treasure, and trouble therewith. Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, then a stalled Ox, and hatred therewith. God giveth his beloved sleep. And it is the blessing of God which maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.

Fourthly, The patient expectation of the Saints hath confirmed this, that God will not be wanting to his children in things of this life, so far as may be for their spiritual welfare: I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. He is ever merciful and lendeth, and his seed is blessed. The children of the needy shall be succored in due season, for God who knoweth their wants is faithful to perform promise.

The acts of faith in respect of these promises and blessings are.

First, it preserveth from the use of all unlawful means knowing that nothing can prosper, which God approves not. The Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose; therefore have I cried concerning this, Their strength is to sit still. When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound: then went Ephraim to the Assyrian, and sent to King Jareb; yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wound. If a man be soundly persuaded, that the blessing of God is all in all, he will ply that fare first, and not undertake anything, till he see God witnessing unto him by his Spirit, that he will be with him to bless him: which he cannot hope for, if the means used to compass and secure any blessing or good thing, be indirect and sinful. Nay, to hope for blessed and good success in any evil course is palpable and gross Idolatry: what is it but really to acknowledge the Devil (whose direction thou followest for advantage) to be the Governor of the world, and the disposer of earthly things? Then which nothing is

more opposite to lively faith. Faith speaketh on this wise, Better is a little with righteousness, then great revenues without right; more comfortable in respect of inward peace, the present use of this life, and continuance; which maketh the Believer consult what is just, not what is gainful or profitable: what may be compassed by honest courses, not what may be gained by fraud, deceit, cozenage, or other carnal dealing. Again, faith taketh direction of God in his Word in all businesses, being assured that his counsel only is firm and stable, and that course prosperous, which is consonant to his revealed will. There are many devices in a man's heart, nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand. The Lord bringeth the counsel of the Heathen to naught: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations. Carnal policies are disappointed, and counsels broken, but the direction of the Lord it shall prosper.

Secondly, Faith is painful, provident and frugal, though not distrustful, pinching or niggardly. It shakes off idleness, observes God's providence, takes the opportunity, husbands thriftily what he bestoweth, and ordereth all affairs with discretion. He that rests most confident upon God's blessing for all good things of this life, will be most diligent to seek them by lawful means, and careful to preserve what the bountiful hand of God shall minister unto him. He that is silent, expecting God's help when means fail, cannot sit still when means be at hand, nor lavish indiscreetly, when his cup runneth over. Labor and providence be imposed of God, whereunto faith doth as freely submit it self, even when God's blessings do slow in abundantly, as it doth heartily wish and expect supply from God in the time of need.

Thirdly, It maketh inquiry into the heart, turneth from evil, and seeketh the face of God earnestly. Confidence in God breeds suspicion of ourselves, lest any sin should harbor secretly in our bosom, or corruption get head to hinder prosperity: specially if God bless us not according to promise, the first work of faith is to ransack and fan the soul narrowly, to find out and remove whatsoever doth offend. I thought on my ways; and turned my feet unto thy testimonies. Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now I have kept thy word. The counsel of Elephaz to Job was good, if he had rightly applied it; Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee. Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart. If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy Tabernacles. This sound advice faith digesteth, and with much seriousness doth early with the whole heart seek the Lord, exercise itself in the worship of God, laboreth the reformation of what is amiss, and composeth itself wholly to the prescript rule of his Word. By faith we know, God will draw nigh to us, if we draw nigh to him; he will lift us up, if we humble ourselves in his sight; and if God lift us up, it shall go well; if he be with us, we shall want nothing which may be for our good. This is the way of faith, which cleaveth unto the Lord, and seeketh the accomplishment of his promises, as God hath promised to fulfill them.

Fourthly, It stirreth up to pray without distrustful, fruitless, excessive care: It committeth the cause unto God, and makes supplication to the Almighty. Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thy hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil that it may not grieve me. If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on: So that I

come again to my Fathers house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God. It is the exhortation of Paul, Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your request be made known unto God. Now faith turneth precepts into prayers, and maketh request according to the will of God. What God requires, that faith petitioneth for, and in such manner.

Fifthly, It seeth riches in God, submitteth to his wisdom, resteth in his love, and so maintaineth a Christian in some measure of contentment. By faith we so embrace the Lord, as that in him we seek and see whatsoever is necessary to salvation, and possess him as the portion of our lot and inheritance, who will keep back nothing from us, but what is hurtful and pernicious. It leaneth upon the everlasting providence of God, and promiseth present succor and supply from him, as in wisdom he knoweth best, and of grace hath promised. I have set the Lord always before me: that is, I constantly lean upon the aide of God, and am fastened to his providence, being confident that when necessity doth urge, he will be at hand to sustain my soul, to minister unto my necessity, powerfully to assist and comfort.

Sixthly, In prosperity it keeps the heart in an holy temper and disposition; (scil.) in humility and meekness, free from carnal confidence and pride; and in tenderness and compassion towards them that be in misery, specially the Church, if she be in heaviness. For the blessings of God embraced by faith set an impression upon the soul, answerable to those properties in him from whence they flow. What he gives in grace doth work the heart to humility and tender commiseration. Faith hath learned that power is of God, and that all his gifts are freely bestowed of mercy, without desert; but mercy received doth both humble and mollify the heart. The godly man having

obtained mercy and grace from God, is again holy, pious, kind and merciful to others. It is the commandment of God, Thou shalt not make strong thy heart, nor shut up the bowels of compassion from thy needy brother: But evermore the frame of a believing heart is correspondent to the will and pleasure of God: for faith sets the stamp and Image of God upon the soul. Moreover, it disposeth the heart to thankfulness and obedience: for it disposeth spiritual emptiness, which giveth a sweet relish to the mercies of God: and excluding all boasting in ourselves, stirreth up to glory in the Lord, and willingly to devote ourselves unto his service, from whom we have received whatsoever we enjoy. What shall I render to the Lord for all his mercies towards me? I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the Name of the Lord. Men look for thanks for a small kindness; for a token, a dinner, if they write but a letter, speak a word, take a journey in our behalf: Faith reads the name of God in all his mercies, and seriously calleth them to remembrance, what then can it do less then magnify the Name of God for all his goodness? The mercies of God to a believing heart, are as manure to sound and good soil, which makes it more fertile. Satan himself will confess, that God is specially to be served in the days of prosperity, for when God asked him, Hast thou considered my servant Job, a just man, &c. He replieth, Doth Job fear God for naught? Hast thou not made a hedge about him? And faith doth both remember man of his duty, and persuade him to be so much the more serviceable and obedient, as the mercies of God are poured upon him more plentifully. I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living. When the Churches had rest throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, they were edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.

Seventhly, It prayeth as earnestly for the sanctification of prosperity, and God's blessing upon the means, as for the means themselves if they were wanting. The more we prosper the more earnest be the prayers of faith. For of ourselves, we have no power to wield a good estate well: nor ability to preserve and keep it. A high estate is subject to many storms and tempests: in greatest ease we lie open to most temptations. In the hot Summer men quickly catch cold: and if we pray not earnestly when we prosper in the world, we shall cool in grace. Earthly blessings be so frail, and we of ourselves so weak, that the more we have, the more we stand in need of God's gracious assistance and support. The Creatures themselves have no power to help, can profit nothing unless God put forth his hand to bless them for our use. This makes that the requests of faith be not formal and perfunctory, but effectual, fervent, arising from a true consideration of the weakness and impotency of the creature to sustain and uphold us. And thus to live by faith in the abundance of all things: makes way for patience, contentedness, sound peace in the depth of misery, when we be left naked and destitute of all human aide. For if when we enjoy means we lean not upon them, but upon the Lord; when they are taken away we shall not fall; our stay remaining.

Eighthly, It makes heavenly minded in the use and possession of a prosperous estate. As it receiveth all earthly blessings from God as pledges of his special love, and part of their childe's portion: so it windeth and pulleth up the soul to God again. Look what love-tokens are to link the hearts of well-willers, and bring them together, or to preserve, renew, and increase affection amongst friends; such force have the good things of this life to lift up the believing heart to commune with the Lord. And sure prosperity is the fittest season for heavenly contemplation: the less trouble

lieth upon our state, the more liberty we have with freedom to think upon such things as concern our eternal inheritance. Besides, faith cannot savor earthly blessings, unless it taste his love, and feed upon his goodness in them. If being invited to a Nobleman's table, he be pleased to carve a bit upon our Trencher, that is better than all the feast. The love of God giving us earthly things to enjoy, is that which giveth them the best relish. And if we taste the sweetness of his loving kindness in these things, we cannot but desire, and long to be refreshed with fuller communion with him.

Ninthly, Faith breeds godly jealousy and suspicion, lest the heart should be drawn away with the pleasing delights of things transitory. For by grace we are made conscious of our own weakness, and of the snare that is in every creature to take and entangle us. Prosperity is pleasing but dangerous. Children quickly surfeit on sweet meats: Cozening companions give flattering speeches. Long peace begets idleness: Poverty is more fertile of men: plenty of riot, niceness, ease and such like. Blustering winds cannot pull the cloak from the traveler, who casts it off in the heat of the Sun. We have examples of many great worthies, who have caught much hurt in prosperity. Rest hath effeminated many Captains, who could never be crushed or overcome with the terrors of war. Soft sands swallow more ships, then hard rocks split asunder. This makes the waking believer circumspect to examine his heart, and watch over it, how he performs holy duties, how he entertains holy thoughts, how his affections move towards that which is above, lest he should miscarry upon the sands.

Tenthly, It mindeh us of our change, even when our mountain seemeth strongest. The thing that I greatly feared (saith Job) is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me. I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither had I quiet: I always thought upon my change, and looked for

an alteration of mine estate. The longest day hath night at length entering: yea, there is no wind which may not blow rain, if God be so pleased. Estates which have the longest periods of prosperity, be at length exercised with afflictions: and there is no condition so sure and peaceable, but may turn tempestuous on the sudden, should not God be more gracious. This being in itself appparent, and confirmed by infinite examples, cannot be hid from the piercing eye of faith, which is spiritually wise to discern aforehand, what events we are subject unto in this vale of tears. Nature by instinct giveth unto unreasonable Creatures a faculty which maketh them afore-hand apprehensive of that which is ready to ensue. The wisdom which is from above, maketh the Lord's children sensible in like kind, that as Job, so they in their greatest calm foresee how Gods hand may change for their exercise. Nor doth faith only foresee danger, but prepare for it. The wise man seeth the plague and hideth himself. The believer hath learned by due consideration, how wanting he is in wisdom, and weak in strength to stand when God trieth, and so renouncing his wit and strength, he flieth unto God and holdeth him, as he who hath been, is, and must be forever his salvation: and looketh unto Christ the Author and finisher of our faith, who hath received commandment of the Father, that he should not only call us and bring us into the state of grace, but also raise us up at the last day: who is that great God and Savior, who will keep his from every evil work unto his heavenly kingdom.

This matter may be exemplified in some particular, scil. how we are to live by faith in the use of meat and drink.

First, By faith we learn out of the Word of God, who have son-like interest and title unto the creatures, what creatures are sanctified unto our use, and how each man must sanctify them unto himself by a reverent and

holy use. As that the person must be in covenant, resting upon Christ for salvation, and giving himself unto the study, and sincere, impartial practice of holiness; the food must be lawfully gotten, provided with wise respect of our place and means, without distracting care, or exquisite curiosity and niceness, received with thanksgiving as from God's hand, and used as in his sight and presence, for such ends and purposes as he hath appointed.

Secondly, It receiveth them not as the fruit of our forecast, labor, or desert, but as gifts of God's bounty, yea, as gifts of the gracious covenant, proceeding from the free love of God. For in the covenant of grace God promiseth not only to write his Law in our hearts, and to forgive our sins, but also to confer temporal blessings, as they shall be serviceable to us in our journey towards Heaven. Men that make a great purchase, desire to have some part in present possession: and our gracious God making promise of eternal happiness, doth give earthly blessings in hand as pertaining to that heavenly possession, which we shall enjoy hereafter. Now as God gives temporal things to his people in covenant, so doth faith receive them as tokens of special good-will and favor in Jesus Christ, in and through whom of free grace, son-like right and title to the creatures is restored, which by sin and disobedience was forfeited. And these considerations strike the heart with reverence, inflame it with love, and raise a holy regard and care not to abuse this grant of mercy, breeds an acknowledgement of our unworthiness of any mercy, admiration of God's provision and contentation with the least blessing of God.

Thirdly, By faith we are taught, that man liveth not by bread only, but by the providence of God, and his blessing upon his own ordinance. It is not the nature of the thing it self simply to nourish; if God's blessing be not upon it, it can afford no refreshing. Bread strengthens, wine comforts the

heart by his ordinance and application of them to that use: but the blessing is not in the creature, it comes from above. Bread nourisheth when it is God's hand or means to confer strength and vigor: but if he pluck away his hand, it is but a deaf nut. Thou mayest eat and not be filled; drink and not be satisfied. Thus it is noted of the Israelites, The Lord fed them with Manna, but sent leanness into their souls. This persuasion sinking deep into the believing heart, taketh it off the creature, and lifteth it unto the Lord in earnest and pertinent prayer, that he would of his grace vouchsafe unto us, as leave to use his creatures, so his blessing upon them, that the food we receive may do us good, we feeling the nourishing virtue thereof, and that with joy and cheerfulness. The prayer of faith for God's blessing upon the creatures when they are set before us should be no less earnest, then for the mercies themselves if wanting. For there is no more possibility in meat of itself to nourish without God's blessing, then it is for man to live without meat.

Fourthly, It teacheth to be heavenly-minded, laboring to taste God's goodness and feel his gracious presence with our spirits at our sweetest feasts. And this is the best sauce to all meats, which giveth them the daintiest relish. When we sit down to meat, we come to a lively Sermon of God's bounty and love: for the bread we feed upon is not ours, but the Lord's, all the provision are gifts of his mercy in Jesus Christ. And the more sensible the creatures are, the more pleasant and delightsome to our palate, the more should we be affected with the sense of God's love and favor.

Fifthly, Faith worketh the heart to sobriety and moderation, watchfulness and fear, lest it should be ensnared and drawn away with these delights. To sobriety in affecting, and in using earthly things; To sobriety in thought that we suffer not the mind to be taken up with cogitations, what we shall eat

next, how we may gratify the palate: Sobriety in desire, that we long not after dainty meat; for such longing effeminates the mind, engenders and feeds passion, and makes way to hardness of heart; Sobriety in receiving them, for the strengthening of nature, and not to the dulling of our Spirits. For faith raiseth the heart to more spiritual delights, and guardeth the appetite that it range not immoderately after sensual things. The word of grace teacheth to live soberly, and faith receiving this word worketh sobriety in earthly things, refreshing the soul with spiritual sweetness's, and watching against intemperate cherishing's that they win not ground. As a man that hath took in the taste of the best creatures, cannot forth-with feed on that which is coarse, mean, no way to be compared: so a Christian who by faith hath tasted the love of God, which is better than wine, the comforts of the word, which are sweeter then honey to the mouth, he cannot affect (as sometimes before he did) those sensual delights which carnal men (who know no better) follow with greediness. If earthly delights creep upon us, it is because the exercise of faith is neglected, which must conscionably be renewed again. Moreover, a Christian believer comes to his Table with a holy Jealousy, remembering that a snare is laid for him in every creature. Satan is a cunning fowler, who hath his baits laid secretly to catch us, where we least suspect. The Snake lurketh in the fairest grass: and the most dangerous grins are set in our lawful liberties. And through neglect to keep up our watch, these oft take, when others miss. More perish through the abuse of things lawful, then by the practice of what is simply unlawful. They are spots in the feasts of Charity, who feed without fear. Eating, drinking, building, matter of marriage, the world shall be drowned in these, when Christ comes to Judgment. How many times do the best offend in lawful things? The pleasure we take in these things, how insensibly doth it

steal the heart away from spiritual delights? How doth it indispose the frame of the soul to heavenly exercises? How doth it cherish wrath, and foster unbridled passions? Dainty meats are very dangerous and deceitful: for the sensible delight they give, whereby the appetite is inordinately moved after them, doth press down the soul that it cannot mount aloft in spiritual contemplation: These evils faith doth wisely foresee and watch to prevent.

Sixthly, It lifteth up the soul in thanksgiving. Our Savior blessed the Table as well by praising God for his mercy, as by prayer for a blessing. The creatures are not ours, but the Lord's; we must not meddle with them before we have craved leave: and when we have made use of them for supply of our necessity, we must not forget to return praise. If men borrow ought of their neighbor, when they bring it home, they forget not to give thanks. Great is the misery of man if he want these outward comforts: and the greater our misery without them, the more incomprehensible is the Lord's mercy in supplying our necessity. The providence of God in ministering daily food is no less wonderful, then was his feeding of Israel in the wilderness with Manna and Quails from Heaven: for as we are not fed as they were, so are we preserved from their necessity. That the earth should yield her increase for our daily sustenance, so as we feel no extremity, is it not as great a blessing, as to be supplied from Heaven, when we are brought into distress? Who would not choose rather never to be sick, then to recover by miracle? What man would not rather enjoy the constant benefit of eyesight, then to be restored after long blindness? Besides, they be not simply favors which for the present sustain nature, but they are some small pittance of our child's portion, pawns of our heavenly inheritance: which doth add much unto their sweetness. If friends be absent, a letter, a token serves

much to maintain love and kindness: now these be some of those love-tokens, which our heavenly Father sendeth unto us, that he might draw our love unto him.

Seventhly, Faith is frugal, compassionate, industrious. After we have been refreshed, it suffers not the meat which remaineth to be lost, but reserveth it for good use. At greater feasts it is mindful of the poor: at ordinary meals it remembers the affliction of Joseph, regardeth the work of the Lord, and considereth the operation of his hands. For the mercies of God received by faith do leave an impression of his mercy upon the soul: and so our compassion towards others is increased as the mercies of God are multiplied upon us. Daily refreshing reneweth the continual remembrance of our infirmities, and begetteth a lively sense of the miseries of them that want and stand in need. And when vigor of Mind and body is repaired, it setteth us about the work and business, whereunto we are appointed of God. God gives none food to live idle. Men look for work from them to whom they give meat, drink and wages: and shall not we labor in the work of God, who live daily on his allowance.

CHAP. IX. What it is to live by faith touching the Commandments.

WHAT IT IS TO live by faith touching the Commandments: which God hath given for direction of our lives, according to which we ought to walk.

In the word of grace the Lord calleth for universal, voluntary, sincere, uniform, constant obedience; and promiseth both to enable his Children to do what is pleasing, and to accept of their willing, though weak service. The first of these branches is apparent and well known to them that be any whit exercised in the word; the second hath been proved at large already: nevertheless that weak Christians might have in readiness some grounds of faith in these particulars, it will not be superfluous to point to some passages of Scripture where they may see them confirmed. That Christians are bound to serve God willingly and cheerfully without constraint, universally in holiness, and righteousness, unfeignedly as in his sight all the days of their life, constantly in all estates unto the end, these few texts may be sufficient to prove. I am the Almighty God, walk before me, and be thou perfect. If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people. O that there were such

a heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep my commandments always that it might be well with them, and with their Children forever. You shall diligently keep the Commandments of the Lord your God. If thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his Commandments which I command thee this day, the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all the nations of the earth. Take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of the Lord charged you, to love the Lord your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his Commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart, and withal your soul. Blessed are they that keep judgment, and he that doth justice at all times. To this end are we delivered out of the hands of our enemies, that we might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days our life. Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long. And look what service the Lord doth expect and call for, that he will enable his people in covenant to perform. What man is he that feareth the Lord, him will he teach in the way that he shall choose. The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed to the love Lord thy God with all thy heart and withal thy soul, that thou mayest live. And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the Lord, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day. And I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God; for they shall return unto me with their whole heart. And I will put a new Spirit within you, and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh. I will save them out of their dwelling places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them, so shall they be my people, and I will be their God. And David my servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd: they shall also walk in

my judgments, and observe my statutes and do them. In that day sing ye unto her. A vineyard of red wine. I the Lord do keep it, and will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day. Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength. Those, that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age, they shall be fat and flourishing. Sin shall not have dominion over you. Now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held, that we should serve in newness of Spirit, and not in oldness of the letter I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. The obedience of the faithful which through the power of grace they perform, is weak and imperfect, but pleasing and acceptable unto God. The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him: in those that hope in his mercy. The Lord taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation. In every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him. The Lord by Moses did often times tell his people that they offering up their sacrifices, such as he commanded, they should be accepted: which is often repeated by the prophets. Thou shalt make a plate of pure gold and grave upon it like the engravings of a signet, Holiness to the Lord; and it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts, and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the Lord. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together, the Rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar. The Priest shall make you burnt offerings upon the alter, and your peace offerings, and I will accept you, saith the Lord God. Then shall the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years. Then

shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness; with burnt offering, and whole burnt offering. Hereunto may be referred the prayer of the prophet. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord my strength, and my redeemer. Accept I beseech thee, the freewill offerings of my mouth, O Lord, and teach me thy Judgements. There be many other testimonies to the same purpose. I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice holy, acceptable unto God. I am full having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God. But to do good, and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. Ye also, as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, a holy Priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Children obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing. Before his translation Enoch had received this testimony, that he pleased God.

And this faith is most necessary to the leading of a Christian life, scil. to adhere and stick fast unto the commandments, rest upon God for ability to do what he requireth, and that he will accept what sincere and unfeigned service, though weak and imperfect, is tendered unto his Highness. For the word of grace, which commandeth to believe the free mercy of the Lord to the pardoning of sin, teacheth us to deny ungodliness and worldly lust, and to live godly, justly and soberly in this present evil world. Such as give up their names to Christ, must not look to be lawless; but they come to take a yoke upon them, and stand obliged to fulfill the law of Christ, called the new Commandment. Want of believing the precepts is the cause why many do still continue in the practice of diverse things inconvenient, and suffer inordinate passions to hold them under. Ignorance or carelessness in this

point, is the cause, why some of the better sort of people are off and on, now forward then backward, scarce settled or stayed at any time: not knowing how to set upon the practice of repentance; how to begin or to proceed therein: Whereas this faith much availeth to the furthering of the dear Children of God in a godly course, the shunning of evil, and the practice of holiness. True faith is an obsequious confidence, which carrieth a man whither soever he shall see the Lord to go before him. By faith Enoch walked with God; Noah built an Ark; Abraham offered up his son Isaac: Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaohs daughter. Our present faith or trust in God is but commensurable to our fidelity in his Commandments: ere we can make a faithful plea for mercy, God's will neglected must be executed, either in act, if the object be present, and may be prosecuted; or in sincere and constant resolution, if abilities and opportunities required to execution of what we resolve upon, be altogether wanting, or our endeavors upon inevitable occasions hindered. Faith worketh by love, which constraineth men to do the will of God, and submit themselves to his holy Commandments. The strength of faith to it several objects is uniform, that assurance of forgiveness cannot be greater than care of obedience. The very consciousness of any one sin whereunto we have been indulgent; will be of like force to withdraw our assent from God's mercy, as the delight or pleasure of that sensual object, was to cause us to transgress any part of his will revealed. The same strength, beauty had to allure unto adultery, will that foul sin unrepented of, have to divorce our souls from Christ. Nor can we fail in practice of this or other Commandment, without a precedent defect of that faith, which only can firmly unite us unto Christ: whereby likewise were it firm itself, we should assent unto every precept of God as much better than any incompatible

good. That act cannot please God; which is not animated by faith: for it is but the naked carcass of a good work, without life or soul, if that be wanting. It is faith, which impelleth to work righteousness, and putteth life and vigor into the work wrought: so that the best works of the regenerate be dull and liveliness, if faith be dormant, and put not forth itself for a time. And when a Christian knows not, whether he shall have strength to do what God requireth; nor whether God hath given him any promise, that his burden shall be made light and that Christ will bear the greatest part of it for him, it must needs be very tedious and troublesome; it will occasion many fears and doubts, deadness and uncheerfulness. This killeth the heart of right good Christians, when they are ignorant, or not thoroughly informed, that God will make them able and fit for so great a work, as the leading of a godly life.

But if they have this faith as a foundation to uphold them, they shall sooner wade through their doubts, and grow out of their fears, as knowing that God will be ever with them for their assistance. Who doth not know, that when some certainty of salvation is obtained, yet for all that in as much as it is but weak, they have many heart-griefs for this, that they see they have a wearisome pilgrimage to go through, and little knowledge and persuasion of any great guiding of them through all the fears and difficulties of it? A Christian that hath this confidence, that God will strengthen him to every good work, he shall go about it with heart and cheerfulness; he shall be encouraged to pray as his necessity shall give cause, he shall be kept from fainting and dismayedness, when his strength is not very great, and rise up again when he is fallen. But if he be not well grounded in believing, that God will build him up more strongly from day today; and perfect the good work in him which is begun, he shall very much stagger and go back.

If a chief and main post in a building be wanting, will not the whole house be soon shaken, so if a Christian, who must reform his life, go about it, not resting upon the grace of God in Christ to be made able, he may be sure he shall want a main help hereto, even that which may shake all that is set up. Sundry true-hearted Christians, very Conscionable in their conversation, be yet much discouraged by reason of the infirmities of their best duties, and have little comfort in anything they do, because they question what acceptance their poor service hath with God. And though they desire to please him willing, in all things to live honestly, yet still looking upon their frailties, they hardly admit any comfort, because they come so far short of what is required. Whereas, if they were well instructed and assured of this, that although by reason of their corruption dwelling in them, they can never offer up any sacrifice to God without blemish and spot (for which God might reject all, which they offer unto him) yet offering them up in the Name of Christ they shall be accepted and rewarded; this would put life and courage into them, and make them perform all holy duties with more cheerfulness and constancy, to the glory of God, the comfort of their souls, and the good encouragement of others. Confidence in God to be accepted, what tedious disputes would it remove? What temptations would it cut off? What discouragements would it trample under feet? What strength, vigor, resolution and forwardness in well-doing would it nourish and conserve? The sharpest spur to incite unto and encourage to go forward in the works of holiness, is affianced of favorable acceptation.

Every Christian is allowed to believe that God will strengthen him by his grace to walk in obedience, and make him able through the hearing of the Scriptures to cast off his old conversation. For God hath promised in Covenant that he will teach them the way that they shall choose, guide them

with his eye, and put his fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from his Commandments. The Spirit of grace is promised and given to all true and unfeigned Believers, to lead them into all truth and holiness. As many as be the children of God, they are led by the Spirit of God; and the law of the Spirit of life, in Jesus Christ, hath freed them from the law of sin and death. The Lord when he sendeth forth his servants upon any message or business, doth evermore promise to be with them to aide and assist them in the execution of it. Thus the Lord promised to Moses, Go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say. Thus our Savior to his Disciples, Loe, I am with you always, even to the end of the world. And thus David encouraged his Son Solomon, Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed, for the Lord God, even, my God, will be with thee; he will not fail thee nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the Lord. And the same promise belongeth to them, that yield obedience to his Commandments: for the work is his, and he will not fail nor forsake them, that set their hearts and souls to seek him, and do the thing that is good in his fight. Whatsoever the Saints have and may beg in prayer according to the will and pleasure of God, they are allowed to believe that they shall obtain it, and be answered in their requests with favorable acceptation, so far as shall be for their good, and the glory of God: But the servants of God have and do beg grace to bring forth fruits worthy repentance and amendment of life. I will run the race of thy Commandments, when thou shalt enlarge mine heart. Teach me the way of thy statutes, O Lord, and I shall keep it unto the end. Make me to go in the paths of thy Commandments, for therein do I delight. Teach me thy way, O Lord, I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy Name. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation, on thee do I

wait all the day. Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not. Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path because of mine enemies. The faithful have bound themselves by covenant and oath to keep the righteous judgments of the Lord. I have sworn, and I will perform it that I will keep thy righteous judgments. But they came not to this covenant and oath, as trusting in their own strength, but in assurance of divine assistance; as the Prophet prayeth, I will keep thy statutes, O forsake me not utterly. Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness. Order my steps in thy word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me. Make thy face to shine upon thy servant, and teach me thy statutes. God will perfect the saving work, which he hath begun in any of his children: for the gifts that flow from his eternal and free grace are without repentance. God who calleth us according to his purpose is faithful, who will also confirm us unto the end, that we may be blameless in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul saith, he lived by faith in the Son of God, by whom he was strengthened with ability to perform whatsoever was required of him. Notwithstanding all the hope of help that he had, yet he complaineth of the rebellion of his flesh, which did mightily resist the Spirit in him: But still he was confident in the promise of God, that he should be delivered from every evil work, and preserved unto the heavenly kingdom Now in all this Paul had no peculiar prerogative above other Christians: but what he expected from God, they may all hope for. The acts of faith touching that obedience which we owe unto God in Christ are these or the like.

First, It makes a man wise to discern what is lawful, good, and seasonable, both in respect of the work, the means, and circumstances of it. David saith, he was wiser than his Enemies, then his Teachers then the Ancient: and he renders the cause thereof from the work of his faith; for thy

testimonies are ever with me, they are my meditation, and the men of my counsel with whom I advise.

Secondly, It curbs and bridles inordinate passions, and overcomes all impediments, temptations, difficulties and allurements to the contrary. This is the victory whereby we overcome the world, even our faith. For faith being well-rooted, possessing the heart, and having its force united by close reposal therein, commands every delight, affection, or pleasure of our souls, and breaks the violence of every inclination contrary to such motion as it suggests; seeing no hopes can be equal to the reward which it proposeth to the constant and resolute, no fears comparable to the terrors which it represents to the negligent or slothful followers of such courses as it prescribes. What? That faith sets an inestimable price upon the pearl of the Gospel, accounting all other things as dross and dung in comparison, which causeth a free and advised renouncing of all interest in the world, the flesh, and all their appurtenances, for assurance of it, with as great willingness as good husbands forsake base tenements, and hard-rented leases, to compass some goodly royalty and large possessions, offered them more than half for nothing.

Again, faith fighteth against temptations and enticements unto sin by the power of Christ, which cannot be vanquished. Satan and the world are too strong for us, standing in our own might: but by the grace of God, leaning upon his power, we remain invincible. The strength of nature is corrupt, feeble, and defiled through sin; and therefore the truth which it taketh hold off, it hath not effectually. But faith hath joined with it the inspiration of God, and the power of the holy Ghost, and therefore it taketh hold of the truth effectually. Wherefore this difference is not in the truth itself, but in the mean and instrument whereby we embrace it. Hereof it cometh, that by

faith we are changed, but in the other case we remain the self-same that we were before. A clear testimony of this we have in the Gospel. Christ set forth to the young-man, what he should do to obtain salvation: but when he heard, he was not persuaded to obey, but went away sorrowful. Contrariwise Matthew, so soon as he was called, embraced the same with so great faith, that he left his money and Customer-ship, and straight-way followed Christ. And Zacchaeus when he had heard of the Lord, that he would turn in unto him, he not only received him into his house with a glad heart, but also offered immediately to distribute half his goods to the poor, and to restore four-fold, if he had defrauded any man. Indeed passions are not so bridled, nor corruptions so killed that they do not stir, and resist the work of faith: But the force and power of them is so far subdued, that they shall not reign, or hale us ordinarily to that which is evil. Whatsoever inordinateness faith can espy, it doth presently condemn before the throne of grace, and endeavor the killing of it by the power and efficacy of Christ's death, which it doth happily effect in measure and by degrees. Hast thou then been long kept under of some violent passion, strong corruption, or customary vice, against which thou hast resolved and resolved, but not prevailed or gotten victory? Get thee to Christ, and by faith thou shalt draw virtue from him to cure thy infirmities. Die to thyself, renounce the broken reed of thine own free-will, which hath so often deceived thee: and put all thy trust in the grace of Christ, and it will crucify the old man, and give him his deaths wound. Be weak in thyself, and strong in the Lord, and through faith thou shalt be more then conqueror. Dig up the fallow ground of thy heart, that the word of the Kingdom may take deeper root in it, raise thy soul to a holy admiration of the promises of life, stir up thyself to cleave and adhere firmly to the grace of God: as faith increaseth, the power of

corruption will languish and decrease. Admirable is the efficacy of faith well planted in the heart, it casteth down strong holds, and brings every imagination into subjection.

Thirdly, It enableth to obey: for it purifieth the heart, seasoneth every faculty of soul reasonable and sensual, qualifieth and strengtheneth our natural inclinations to good, and altereth the taste of every appetite. By faith we are partakers of the divine nature: by faith Christ dwelleth in our hearts: by faith we receive the Spirit of promise, who is greater than he that is in the world: No marvel then, if that be sweet and delightful to the believing heart, which is tedious and irksome to the unregenerate. How came David to that high delight in God's service, that he loved the Commandments of God more than thousands of gold and silver, the honey and the honey comb? That he rose at mid-night to meditate in them, was it not by faith? The grace of Christ, the power of the Spirit, and the Word of life, do change the disposition of the soul; so far as they enter and be received into it. But by faith their virtue is diffused into the whole mass.

Fourthly, Admirable in force and efficacy is the persuasion of faith, above all the Oratory in the world. All the common inducements taken from profit, pleasure, honor, what poor and weak engines are they to the irresistible arguments of faith, by which it moveth the heart to yield willing and cheerful obedience. Thus it goeth to work with us, Hath Christ given himself for thee, forgiven thee so many debts, conferred favors of all kinds upon thee, and what hast thou to retribute? If thou give all thy goods to the poor, thy body to the fire, thy soul to his service, were not all short of recompense? Lovest thou, lovest thou this Savior of thine, and darest thou adventure upon anything displeasing unto him? Is there anything too hard to be done for his sake? Too dear or good for him? Whom hast thou in heaven

or earth worthy to be affected in comparison of thy Savior? What is to be dreaded but his displeasure? Is there any recompense to the joys of Heaven? Any danger to the torments of Hell? Any pleasure to the sense of his favor? O my soul why doest thou not resign thyself to the pleasure of his will in everything, run when he calleth, and do what he requireth at thy hands? What dost thou fear? Wherewith art thou entangled? God is thy sovereign, thy Father, thy Savior; to him thou owest thyself, and all that thou hast: thy honor, wealth, life, or if anything be more precious than these. Thou canst not love thyself as is meet, if thou deny not thyself to follow the Lord in all things. For in keeping his Commandments there is great reward. Can, or did any Believer ever give the nay to these melting commands, or commanding entreaties of faith? Will it take the repulse? Doth it not constrain or extort more then all racks and strapadoes; allure more then all wages and prizes? When thou wouldst be sure to speed and obtain anything of thine own untoward heart, set faith on work to make the motion, and thou shalt prevail. For the motives of faith are certain, evident, and such as cause firm assent, whereby the heart is drawn to follow after the thing proposed.

Fifthly, It disposeth and moveth the heart to absolute, uniform, impartial and constant obedience to every commandment, and that in one estate as well as another. In Scripture, to believe in Christ, and to keep the Commandments mutually infer one another, either capable of others properties. Faith includes the complete and practical knowledge of good and evil, inclining the faculties of our soul to avoid all commerce with the one, and embrace every branch of the other. It frameth the Image of God or Christ in our minds, and proposeth him as a pattern for our imitation in all our works, thoughts, and resolutions: It acknowledgeth his sovereignty, assenteth faithfully to his will and pleasure, embraceth soundly every part

of the holy truth of God, and sticketh so fast that nothing can come betwixt the heart and it: from whence issueth universal respect to all and every precept. Faith doth not admit one part of the Word and exclude another: nor receive it barely into the Head, and shut it forth of the heart: but entertaineth it wholly, diffuseth the virtue of it into every power of the soul, and changeth the natural disposition into the quality of the truth. And thus by faith the soul is kindly disposed to follow the Lord, whithersoever he goeth before us. If the heart be dull and untoward, the best course to redress what is out of order, is by quickening our assent to the good pleasure of his command, and our confidence in his mercy.

Sixthly, It fires the heart with such an indefatigable and unquenchable love, that in comparison of obedience it contemneth the whole world. For it acquainteth with the incomprehensible mercy and favor of God towards us in giving his Son, pardoning and forgiving manifold offenses, lading us with his daily blessings: It representeth the inestimable joy, that is prepared for them that walk before God in holiness and righteousness: and this inflameth the heart to follow hard after the Lord. When by faith we discern what love the Lord beareth unto us, we cannot but return love for love. Many sins are forgiven her therefore she loveth much. And from all these acts it followeth, That what a temporary believer doth by the halves, superficially, or with an halting divided heart, that the true and unfeigned believer takes in hand with an entire, sound, upright affection. What in the one is a liveliness action, the outside, or carcass of a good work; that in the other is a good work indeed, springing from an holy, well-planted confidence in the mercy of God, and resolute adherence to his Commandments, which (as the animal faculty) impels to that exercise. The self-same duties may be done by the civil man and by the believer for the

outside and deed done: both may go to Church, hear a Sermon, read a Chapter, give an Alms, make a Prayer; but the one goeth as a Bear to the stake in comparison of the other, who is moved by faith: or let the civil man's delight be as it may, his acts are liveliness, because they issue not from an obediencial confidence in the Lord's mercy.

Seventhly, Faith makes sensible of our manifold defects, infirmities and failings, fainting's and cooling's. It shows how weak we are of ourselves, how far we come short, how apt we are to decline and start aside. And this consideration of faith hath blessed effects.

First, It causeth serious and attentive meditation upon the Word of God that it may sink deep and abide firm in the heart. I have hid or treasured up thy Commandments in my heart, that I might not sin against thee. And to this purpose, a believer will not be negligent to watch all opportunities, when his soul is thoroughly affected with unexpected matter of sorrow, joy, grief, fear, admiration, or the like, and forthwith to apply such passages of Scripture, as suit best to the present affections.

Secondly, It worketh the heart often and deliberately to renew its resolution, not trusting in our own strength, but in the grace of God. I have sworn, and will perform it (trusting upon thy divine grace, without which we can do nothing) that I will keep thy righteous Judgments.

Thirdly, It stirs up earnest, constant and hearty prayers, to be taught in the law, upheld, established and confirmed. Faith leaneth upon the Lord, and crieth unto him for help, knowing that we have no strength of our selves. Open thou mine eyes that I may behold the wondrous things out of thy law. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes. With my whole heart have I sought thee, O let me not wander from thy Commandments. My soul

melteth for heaviness: strengthen thou me according to thy word. Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.

Eighthly, It doth confirm in obedience, and prick forward therein, though it be in manifold and bitter persecutions: It puts into us both courage and constancy to sight against the strongest lusts, and set upon the practice of the most difficult duties, notwithstanding all opposition from the World or the Devil; yea, though we have been foiled, or taken the repulse. He will not fear the subduing of the most head-strong passion, who resteth upon God for power and ability, nor be dismayed because once he hath received a foil, who depends upon God for strength to recover; nor dread the might of his greatest adversary, who knoweth that God will be at his right hand to sustain and strengthen him; nor start aside in the most difficult duty, whose heart is fast linked unto the Lord; and relieth upon his grace to be enabled unto whatsoever he is pleased to call him. By faith Abraham sojourned in the land of promise, and minded not to return to his native Country, though he had opportunity. By faith, being tried of God he offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises, offered up his only begotten Son. By faith some were tortured, not accepting deliverance, some stoned, some slain with the sword: Faith encourageth to constancy in well-doing, by assuring of God's all-seeing presence, powerful protection, continual assistance, gracious acceptance, good success, and everlasting recompense: Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart. For the Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be confounded. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the Camp, bearing his reproach. For here we have no continuing City, but we seek one to come. By faith Moses did choose rather

to suffer affliction with the people of God, then to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of reward. But faith that continually drives forward to do good works, doth ever force the believer to deny himself, and acknowledge it to be the mercy of the Lord in Christ, that he is not confounded. Though a man be plentifully laden with good works; yet faith doth ever present him before the throne of grace as poor and miserable, desiring of mere mercy to be received and accepted: It confesseth the manifold imperfections of our best works, acknowledgeth every grace and good work to be of God, and never looketh to works further than as they be signs of grace, effects of faith, and qualifications of that subject, which makes faithful plea to the Kingdom of Heaven, through the free mercy of God in Jesus Christ.

But how should a Christian quicken faith to the cheerful practice of that duty, whereunto he finds himself dull and sluggish?

First, He must acknowledge and bewail his dullness and sloth, make it hateful, and shame himself for it before God. O Lord, I cannot, I desire not to hide from thee mine indisposition, and unfitness to any holy duty; how dull, remiss, slighty. I am in the practice of true piety and godliness. I find more life, diligence, cheerfulness in any worldly business, than in the works of holiness which thou requirest. Cursed is the man that doth the work of the Lord negligently, who hath a male in his flock, and offereth the halt or lame unto the Lord. What is my portion if I should be dealt with in justice, who have neglected my duty, and sacrificed that which is torn and sick unto the great King and Lord of hosts, whose name is dreadful among the Heathen? It is hateful in a servant to do his work by the halves: specially if he owe himself unto his Master for undeserved kindnesses: Whatsoever I

am, I have received it of the Lord: all possible duty that can be performed of a reasonable creature, I owe unto him; he hath obliged me unto his highness by many great, undeserved, incomprehensible mercies, that I am never able to repay, or sufficiently to acknowledge: and in me it is most abominable that I have been halting and deceitful in what he commandeth. Can any man deserve that duty from another, that thou, O Lord, hast and dost deserve of me? Can he be in such dependence unto another, as I am unto thy Majesty, in whom I live, move, have my being; by whom I am preserved, redeemed, and called unto life? If the idle, untrusty, deceitful servant merit stripes: my slightness and double dealing in the exercises of Godliness, is worthy shame and confusion of face for evermore. No marvel, if I find small comfort in life, feel no power and sweetness in the ordinances of grace, when I deal partially, hear perfunctorily, pray coldly, labor not to feed upon the word, and suck vigor out of it. The duties of courtesy lose their worth and esteem with men, when wrung from us by importunacy, or followed with a slack hand: Lord, thou lovest a cheerful giver, delightest in willing and free-hearted offerings: with what face then can I present unto thy Majesty, or how shouldest thou take pleasure in that maimed, corrupt, uncheerful, superficial, dead service which I perform? In former times I have served sin and Satan with more willingness, alacrity and pains: I have been ready to run whither the Devil drove me; I am still forward to gratify unruly desires with this or that they stand unto, and are bent upon. What am I but a spiritual adulteress, in that I have yielded the members of my body as weapons of unrighteousness to do the will of Satan, and listened to the motions of the flesh, with more readiness to lean unto them, then hitherto I could give myself unto God in all things to be ruled and directed by him? O

Lord, I am vile, it is of thy unspeakable mercy, that thou art pleased to look down upon me, or to accept of any service that I can offer.

Secondly, He must call upon his soul by many powerful and strong persuasions to awake to the work of God with liveliness.

Arise, O my soul, why sleepest thou, stir up thyself with readiness to obey the charge of God in the duties of his worship, and the works of Mercy and Justice: withstand sin, subdue corruptions, fight manfully against the temptations of Satan, and the allurements of the world: Stick fast unto the testimonies of the Lord, and lay his judgments before thee.

For the testimonies of the Lord are wonderful, his judgments good, righteous and very faithful: his word is very pure; and his law is the truth. The service of God is perfect freedom: he walketh at liberty, who runneth on in obedience. As thy love to the law is, such shall thy life be: nothing is hard to a willing mind. Want of affection to the word of truth, makes the duties commanded to seem irksome and tedious. Love the Commandments above gold, and obedience will be as pleasant as gain to the covetous. Look upon the Saints, who have gone before: they endured imprisonment, loss of liberty, the spoiling of goods, hazard of life with joy, looking unto the eternal and incomprehensible recompense of reward. Thou art not called to suffer, but to obey; at least not to suffer such grievous torments as they did: why doest thou then delay, start aside, or go forth unwillingly? Wouldest thou reign with them, and not labor with them? Receive the price, and not run the race? Divide the spoil, and not fight the battle? In the affairs of this life we love to excel, and out-go our fellows; as to be first up, and about our work; to exceed in favor, riches, honor, wisdom; and in matters of Religion to be dead and lumpish, is it not abominable? Obedience is no dull service, no dead piece of work, but the way to blessedness and the crown of glory.

The Lord hath not said Seek me in vain. The reward of obedience is certain, though our works deserve nothing. The Merchant undertakes dangerous adventures to raise his estate, enrich himself. But what is the gold of India to the joys of Heaven? A fading possession to an eternal weight of glory? Strive to enter, and go forward in the straightway that leadeth unto life. Arise, why tarriest thou? Forget not the high price of thy calling, but contend forward towards the mark. Heaven is worth all thy labor. We are glad to be entertained of them, who have a name to be liberal and bountiful to their attendants; who is to be compared to the Lord our God herein? He is most able, and best willing to prefer his servants. Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, it exceeds all human capacity to conceive, what surpassing glory and joy the Lord hath prepared for them that love him.

Thirdly, He must pray to the Lord that he would revive and quicken him. Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God; thy Spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness. My desire is to do thy good pleasure, but of myself I have no ability thereunto: Draw me and I will run after thee. Teach me the way of thy statutes, and I will keep it unto the end. Give me understanding and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart. Lord thou hast commanded me to keep thy testimonies; give me I pray thee to do what thou requirest. Incline my heart to thy statutes, and not to covetousness.

Fourthly, He must renew his resolution to walk with God, trusting in his grace. I will never forget thy precepts for with them thou hast quickened me. I have fully purposed to keep and cleave unto thy Commandments, for they are the joy of my heart. But, Lord I lean not upon mine own strength, but upon thy grace, who giveth both to will and to do. Thou art my portion,

O Lord, I have said that I will keep thy words. Order my steps in thy word:
and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.

CHAP. X. What it is to live by faith in the duties of our vocation.

IT IS THE ORDINANCE of God that men should labor in some honest vocation, for their private maintenance, and the common good, that is, the benefit and good estate of mankind: And for encouragement he hath promised to protect and bless them that keep themselves within the limits, and do the works of their calling with diligence. The texts of Scripture are plain for both. The Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it, and to keep it. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground. Let him that stole, steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good: that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called, study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your one hands, (as we commanded you) that ye may walk honestly toward them that are without. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any man would not work neither should he eat. The hand of the diligent maketh rich. The substance of a diligent man is precious. He that gathereth by labor shall increase. The hand of the diligent

shall bear rule. Seest thou a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before Kings, he shall not stand before mean men. He shall give his Angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways. Now seeing God hath commanded us to labor in a calling, prescribed the bonds of our calling and promised his protection and blessing to our honest endeavors, it cannot be questioned whether we be allowed to live by faith in the duties of our calling. For the exercise of faith is as large as the word whereby it is guided and moderated, that it neither exceed, nor come short. Where a work is commanded, faith puts forth itself in action: where a promise is made, it trusteth, relieth, and waiteth for accomplishment. In every honest state and condition of life there is use of faith in both respects: For labor is commanded and promise of blessing is made to them that work according to the will and pleasure of God. Moreover, God is hereby much glorified, that we commit ourselves wholly unto him, laboring as he hath appointed, and depending upon his grace for good success.

It is necessary we should live by faith, to prevent the evils which beset us in our ordinary callings: covetousness, injustice, impatience, and distracting care. Naturally men are apt to incumber themselves with superfluous business, and trouble themselves about the event and success: they content not themselves with their lot and condition, but desire to heap up riches and increase their substance above measure: they forecast many things in their heads long before; and know no end of their cares. The trouble men meet with in the world, begets love of the world; and whether they be crossed or prosper, the more they be exercised about the things of this life, the more they follow after them with greediness, vexation discontent, plotting and devising how to compass their designs, whether by right or wrong, fraud or oppression. The sovereign remedy against those and other the like

mischiefs, which we are prone to run into, is a lively faith, which lifteth up the heart to better things, then ought is to be found under the moon, quietly submitteth unto the good pleasure of God, commendeth the success and event of all honest endeavors unto his Highness, and resteth upon his grace for present help and future supply in the use of such means as he hath ordained. Without faith it is impossible to please God. God is the Author of every honest vocation, and by his appointment men ought to labor in some particular state or condition of life: but that work is not acceptable, which is not done in faith. If faith do not quicken, season, and guide the works of our calling, they are dead and carnal as they come from us, neither begun upon sound ground, nor done in uniform and right manner, nor directed to a right end. That which should put life into the action is absent, if faith be lacking. Experience is of great use in a godly life, both to confirm faith, strengthen hope, preserve love, overcome temptations, and direct in difficulties. But the ready means to get grounded experience, is to live by faith in the works of our vocation, and observe how the Lord dealeth with us therein according to his word.

The acts of faith in this particular be these.

First, It informeth to make choice of an honest vocation, for which we are fitted; and into which we may enter, by direct, good and lawful means. He that understandeth a matter shall find good, saith Solomon: wherein he teacheth, that what business any man taketh in hand, he must know it well and accurately, if he look to finish it honestly and with good success. This therefore is the rule, by which we are directed in our vocation, that what art any man knoweth, he should exercise himself in it. This, as it must be observed in all arts, sciences, professions, in the family, Commonwealth, Church, so as every art or profession, is of greater moment in any society

public or private, sacred or prophane, it is with greater diligence more studiously to be looked unto. As our calling must be honest, that is, serviceable to the Church, Common-wealth or private family; and as we must be gifted for it: so must we enter by lawful and direct means appointed of God, that we may be assured our calling is of God, and that he will accept of our service in that estate and condition of life.

Secondly, Faith instructeth not to meddle above our knowledge, but to lean upon the living Lord, not on our skill or cunning. Who so trusteth in the Lord happy is he. Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding: In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. It is hard for a man very skillful so to with-draw his heart and thought from his skill, as that he do not wholly rest in it: but faith, looking further then sense or reason is able, dispossesseth the heart of this carnal confidence, and fixeth it upon the Lord alone. For it acknowledgeth him only to be the fountain of all good, and persuadeth the soul, that unless it rely upon his grace, wisdom, and strength, he shall bring nothing to pass by his own wisdom, wit and cunning. For either he shall not effect what he endeavors, to do by the help and benefit of his skill: or if he bring it to pass, it shall not succeed or avail him to those honest uses which he intended. The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding; nor yet favor to men of skill.

Thirdly, It quickeneth the most skillful workman to strive with God in prayer, that the work he setteth upon might succeed well and prosper; that is, that his skill might be ready and at hand, whereby he might finish the thing that he goeth about, and that it might be of use to them for whom it is appointed. For being sensible of his own weakness, and expecting help and

supply from heaven, he will not cease to crave the aide and blessing of God. It is the property of faith to pray continually, looking unto the most High for help, and having a lively sense of present want which stirreth up a serious affection of praying.

Fourthly, It causeth diligence, care, uprightness, and faithfulness in all the works, actions and business of our calling, as knowing that whilst we walk honestly therein, we do service to the Lord Jesus. It is noted of the virtuous, wise, faithful and godly woman, that she seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands: She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household. Faith awakeneth the sluggard, rouseth the lazy, maketh the idle lay his bones to work, and him that was a purloiner to deal truly, justly and honestly. It is the best cock to call up the drowsy: for it ringeth in his ear; when wilt thou arise? Loe the Lord calleth thee to thy task; why tarriest thou so long, stirrest so slowly? The Sun rejoiceth as a Giant to run his race: why sharpenest not thou thyself to the work which God hath laid upon thee? It is the willingest messenger to be sent upon any business; the trustiest overseer of any labor, the most free undergoer of any toil or pains, you need not call him to reckoning who accounts with faith: nor hast him forward who moveth by faith: nor chain him to his work, who by faith undertaketh it. For he is assured he doth it unto God, who calleth upon him, and from whom he must expect recompense, if he walk cheerfully, and in singleness of heart. When a man is persuaded that his calling is approved of God, and profitable to men, by helping to maintain the state of the Church or commonwealth, and that it is that, in which God will be served of him; then he takes it in hand, not like a drudge or droil who doth his work for fear of the whip, nor like an hireling, who works only for wages; nor like eye-servants who leave their business when the

masters eye is turned aside: but with good will, diligence and singleness of heart, he addresseth himself to his work, being assured of God's assistance and furtherance therein, whom he serves in his vocation. This persuasion that we serve the Lord in our callings, who is a bountiful pay-master, and hath promised a large blessing unto us, forceth to go willingly about that work, which otherwise would seem toilsome and unpleasant.

Fifthly, It encourageth to the most difficult, painful and (in the worlds esteem) disgraceful works of our callings. Distrust breeds niceness, fear and sluggishness: faith produceth hardiness, valor, and activity: for it assures of divine protection and good success: Pride makes men ashamed of many things, which in the world be matters of disgrace: but faith witnesseth, that the truest honor is to be God's servant, and the greatest glory to do whatsoever the Lord requireth at our hands. By faith Noah prepareth the Ark, let the men of the old world mock their fill. By faith Judah goeth up to fight the Lord's battles, whatsoever danger appear in the voyage. Faith bringeth Abraham from his native country, and his fathers house to sojourn in a strange land, when he is called of the Lord. Faith maketh John the Baptist bold to tell Herod plainly, that it is not lawful for him to have his brothers wife, let him take it as he please. Corruption will suggest, such a thing beseemeth not a man of my place, breeding, bringing up; it would be taken ill, might procure displeasure, trouble, disgrace, and danger: but faith looketh to the word of God, and if it be a duty required encourageth to set about it with speed, referring the issue and event to him that hath commanded it, and esteemeth it the greatest credit to do the will and pleasure of the Lord.

Sixthly, It strengtheneth against manifold troubles, disgraces, oppositions and discouragements that men meet withal in their places; and enableth to

go through with our business in ill report and good report, in honor and disgrace. Distrust bringeth forth weariness and fainting: faith persisteth in the work, notwithstanding all difficulties which may arise, either from the daily continuance of the labor, or other impediments. Faith either neglecteth, or removeth, or breaketh through all lets and obstacles. Worldlings and hypocrites are disheartened in their business, because no man respects their pains, is well-pleased with their doings; let them do what they can, they shall not have a good word: But the sound believer is abundantly satisfied with God's approbation and reward, and goeth on cheerfully, though men show him no countenance, allow no recompense; yea though he be molested, persecuted, imprisoned, killed for well-doing. If God be pleased to vouchsafe other encouragements to take pains, faith makes use of them with thankfulness: but if they be wanting, it will not give place to negligence or remissness. With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment. Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome as the Apostles of Christ. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things; and do count them but dung that I may win Christ.

Seventhly, It directeth wisely to order the affairs of our calling, and to go about them in good manner, that is, in obedience, to right ends, and with an heavenly Mind, exercising the graces that God hath bestowed upon us: whereby it comes to pass that they are furtherance's and not hindrances in the duties of piety. Thus David behaved himself wisely in all his ways: and being called of God to the government of the kingdom, he promiseth to

execute his office in uprightness and innocence to the praise of God: I will sing of mercy and judgment, to thee, O Lord, will I sing.

Eighthly, As faith quickeneth to labor and do what pertaineth to our calling, so it teacheth to moderate cares, confine desires of earthly things, and commit ourselves to God, for the success of our work. Labor is man's duty; good success is the blessing of God. Men commonly take upon them a double care; one to do the works of their place, the other to take thought about the blessing and success of their labors. But faith in God's Word, where it reigns, applieth the hearts of men to the performance of their duties, and leaveth the blessing of their endeavors to the good will and pleasure of God. Thus we are exhorted to do. Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved. A Christian is to consider the difficulty of all things pertaining to him, and what danger is in them. He is diligently to set his hand to the work, and through negligence to omit nothing that is of moment to effect and bring it to pass. But having taken counsel and labored painfully, he must lay aside care of the event, and roll his burden upon the Lord, who hath promised that all things shall be well regarded. And this faith hath an infallible ground, namely, that God best knows our wants, and will give us all things, which in his heavenly wisdom he knoweth to be necessary. Your heavenly Father knows that ye have need of these things, that is, food and raiment. Cast your care on God, for he careth for you. Nothing shall be wanting unto them that fear God. And thus faith building upon these promises, obtaineth a greater blessing of God with less care, toile and vexation, then worldlings can by all their cunning shifts, sleights and devices. Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established. Faith also restraineth the desires of transitory things, as it lifteth

up the heart to better and more durable riches, seeketh the Kingdom of Heaven, hungers and thirsteth after righteousness, feedeth upon the mercy of God in Christ, and resteth satisfied in the Lord as its only portion.

Ninthly, It supporteth with strength patiently to bear the miseries and calamities that accompany us in our callings. Ever since the fall of Adam, labor and affliction attend every state and condition of life, both which are easily digested by faith. If we be crossed in the good things we go about, faith considereth, that this cometh to pass by the good providence of God, who sometimes crosseth our good and lawful attempts, least we should trust in ourselves, despise the poor and afflicted, and be glued fast to these earthly things. Also it remembers us of God's dear and tender love, who of mere favor doth chastise, and will so order, that all miseries shall in the end turn to our good. And by such like meditations it worketh the soul to contentation in every estate. I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere, in all things I am instructed, both to be full, and to be hungry, both to abound, and to suffer need. Moreover, faith turneth crosses into advantage: as it calleth the afflicted unto the examination of his ways, and reformation of what is amiss, worketh self-denial, emptieth the heart of the love of base and transitory things, quickeneth unto prayer, causeth to relish mercy with more sweetness, and covet spiritual things more earnestly, reviveth hope, and gaineth experience of God's favor and tender compassion.

Tenthly, Faith restraineth distrustful care concerning the success of our labors, but is not slack to crave God's blessing upon our labors. It wrappeth all griefs, vexations and cares together, and poureth them forth before the Lord in prayer. Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and

supplication with thanksgiving, let your request be made known unto God. In the midst of sorrows faith is silent from murmuring and impatience: but it is never silent in prayer: it doth continually cry unto the Lord for succor.

Eleventhly, If we find wished success, it makes vigilant, frugal, humble, merciful, and thankful: for it receiveth all blessings as gifts of grace to be employed according to God's will and appointment, to the glory of his Name, and comfort of his people: and teacheth so to use the world, as willingly to renounce all interest in the world, for the fashion thereof passeth away. And with what conscience towards God we are inclined to labor, with the same we are stirred up to give to others as need requireth. The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labor. He coveteth greedily all the day long: but the righteous giveth and spareth not.

Twelfthly, Faith coupleth the labors of our calling with the practice of Christianity: for God hath laid his Commandment upon us, both to seek his Kingdom, work out our salvation, make our election sure, exercise ourselves in all good works, walk in love, and labor honestly in our particular vocation: and faith cannot separate what God hath joined. He that laboreth in faith looketh not only what he doth, but why he doth it; and hath respect to one duty commanded as well as another, the reason of his obedience being one and the same, namely, the will and commandment of the Lord. If a man labor in faith, the better he laboreth, the more diligent he is in the service of God and works of mercy: and the more diligent he is in the duties of piety, the more faithful in his honest labor.

But how should a Christian live by faith touching the good success and direction of that work or business whereunto he is called, which he finds to be much above his strength or means?

First, Faith causeth self-denial in respect of judgment, wisdom and power: for we are blind in choosing, foolish in resolving what is to be done: what is right in our eyes is abominable before God. Nor is our wisdom to dispose and manage matters resolved on, of greater ripeness and perfection. Our own counsel oft leads us awry in things corporal, either we miss of the right manner, or use right means amiss, either we lean upon deceitful props, or take a good staff by the wrong end. And if we be brought into distress, then how are we plunged in our consultations, not knowing which way to turn our selves. As for power to accomplish any work, though never so well-conceived, though means never so potent, so ready at hand, so well ordered: though the business be in never so good forwardness, we have it not. Alas, poor impotent creatures, what can we do of ourselves, who cannot keep our breath for one moment? In God we live, and move, and have our being: and he that maintains life must perfect all our works for us. In matter of profit no man can say, my power, my labor, the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth. Nor in point of honor, By my policy I have built my nest on high, by the strength of my arm I have gotten me the victory. This weakness is discovered by faith, which in every business worketh self-denial, knowing the beginning, direction and success of all honest labors to be of grace.

Secondly, It teacheth submission to God's direction, and dependeth upon his help and assistance. It asketh counsel at the word, and followeth the determination of it. It chooseth what God approveth, though to human wisdom it seem bootless and improbable: it rejecteth what God condemneth, though to corrupt reason it promise profit and contentment. For true confidence is obediencial, subjecting itself to the will of God as the rule of holiness, acknowledging his sovereignty, subscribing to his wisdom

as most absolute, and to his ways as most true, just and merciful. And as it consulteth with God, so it putteth over all business into his hands, and in a manner out of our own. For it trusteth to him for ability to the work, provision of the means, the disposition of them, and good success to come by them. Yea, though all means fail, and all things seem to make against the proceedings, faith relieth upon God, who is everlasting, unchangeable, the same forever. The eye of faith is ever towards the Lord, that he may instruct and guide in the way; that he would be with us to enable in the work we take in hand. And for the means, it looketh to have such ministered which may advance our just designs, and esteemeth them most precious, which he shall put into our hands. To provide means is the work of God: it only belongs to us to use them which he shall grant in mercy. And seeing we have not this wisdom and ability of ourselves, faith expecteth both from the hand of God, scil. to prepare means and make us wise to take the opportunity. The props of this faith are these two.

First, The exact infinite wisdom of God, who knoweth what means will be fit to be used now, and what not, both for his glory, and the establishing of the thing in hand: who knoweth what may hinder, and can either prevent or frustrate it: and who can knit secondary causes one into another, and make them conspire together in an admirable harmony, which we ourselves cannot do.

Secondly, God's providence which rules in everything which falls out, even the least matters. Not a Sparrow falls to the ground but by his will. Mans goings are of the Lord. He disposeth of everything that concerns us and our affairs. The work that we take in hand is not our own, but the Lord's: and the success of the business doth depend upon his pleasure, to whom it must be committed. Let the Lord do what seemeth him good. And

he gives issue, not according to the seeming abilities of the persons, or likelihood of the means used, but according to the good pleasure of his own will.

Thirdly, Faith thus underpropped bringeth forth industry, and endeavor to observe God in his providence. He that is most confident to speed, is most vigilant to take all opportunities, most diligent to labor in the use of all lawful means. For God, who worketh for us, will have us work with him. Faith layeth hold upon the promises of aide and provision with one hand, worketh with the other. Nothing can so much encourage, quicken, confirm in pains taking, as faith. The persuasions of faith are most powerful, the motives strong, the encouragements effectual to put life and vigor into the dull and sluggish. He that believeth will labor, and not make haste. He that distrusteth not his pay-master is not hasty to get the pay into his own hand: because he knows whom he hath trusted.

Fourthly, Faith cannot be silent, as hath been formerly observed. He that believeth will pray. The weaker he is in himself, the more difficult his task, the more fervent his supplications. O Lord, there is no strength in us to stand against this great people that cometh against us, neither do we know what to do: but our eyes are towards thee. And if the work stick fast, and stir not at the first, it pulleth the harder: difficulties incite to earnest prayer. In the morning will I direct me unto thee, and will look out.

Fifthly, It putteth life and hardiness into us. If the work be great, and our strength small, faith biddeth us be strong and play the men: for God will be with us for our support. Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeopardated their lives unto the death, in the high places of the field. In the most easy work faith will not suffer to lean upon our own strength: in greatest difficulties it will not despair of the Lord's aide. This is the stay of faith He

will not leave thee, nor forsake thee. Everything is too hard for us, if we rely upon ourselves: nothing too hard if we trust in the Lord, and go forth in the power of his might.

Sixthly. It waiteth upon God for good success, and triumpheth before the victory. Commit thy ways unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be directed. Faith looketh to the promise, and concludeth assuredly, The word of the Lord shall never fail: The zeal of the Lord of hosts will bring it to pass.

Seventhly, Faith is ready and forward to praise God for good success, as it is willing and desirous to obey. For it abaseth itself, looketh more and more into God's admirable kindness, and is ashamed of unthankfulness. David promiseth to praise God three times, nay, seven times a day: that he would do it openly in the Congregation, and privately by himself: and yet, as though he had forgot himself, and been much behind others in this duty, he quickeneth up himself unto it: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy Name. The meditation of God's Name is sweet, the remembrance of his kindness is pleasant: the faithful cannot satisfy themselves in singing his praises. Hence it is that they stir up themselves and provoke others to magnify the Lord. My heart is towards the Governors of Israel, that offered themselves willingly among the people, Bless ye the Lord. Speak ye that ride on white Asses, ye that sit in Judgment, and walk by the way. They that are delivered, from the noise of the Archers in the places of drawing water; there shall they rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord, even the righteous acts, towards the inhabitants, of his villages in Israel.

CHAP. XI. How to live by Faith in the use of God's Ordinances, the Word and Sacraments.

IN SCRIPTURE WE READ many promises made to such as shall conscionably hearken unto the Word, and receive the holy Sacraments, the seals of the covenant of grace; that God will bless his own Ordinances to their edification, comfort, strengthening in grace and everlasting salvation. Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: Come ye, buy and eat, yea come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price: Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? And your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live. The law of the Lord is perfect converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right rejoicing the heart: the Commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. A wise man will hear and will increase learning: and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels. Take fast hold of instruction, let her not go; keep her for she is thy life. My son, hear thy fathers

commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother; Bind them continually upon thy heart, and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee, and when thou awakest it shall talk with thee. For the Commandment is a lamp, and the Law is light: and reproofs of instruction are the way of life. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. Do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly? As new borne babes desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby. This is confirmed by the comparisons, which are used to set forth the use and profit of the word; as it is resembled to the light, rain, dew, living water, wine and milk: By the titles which are given unto it; as it is called the word of this life, the word of this salvation: and by the passages of Scripture, which testify, that the word is able to save our souls. And now Brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. Take heed unto thyself; and unto the doctrine: continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee. Wherefore lay apart all filthiness, and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. This also is manifest of the Sacraments, which be truly called a visible word, because that which is spoken in the word to the ear, is in visible signs represented to our eyes, and sealed to our hearts, that we may be the more assured of them to be ours: And were purposely ordained of God to help our weak faith, that having his word and seal, we might be put out of doubt, that we shall as certainly be made partakers of Christ himself, and all his benefits, as we are of the outward signs of his

covenant. What the Apostle saith of Circumcision, that is true of Sacraments in general, They are seals of the righteousness of faith, or of the covenant of grace. And for the better assurance of the believer, that receiving the outward sign as he ought, he shall be partaker of the thing signified, very oft that which properly belongs to the thing sealed, is given to the outward sign; as that Baptism saveth, that our sins are washed away in Baptism; and that we are buried with Christ by Baptism: And the like of the Lord's Supper, when our Lord Jesus did ordain it, he speaking of the Bread said, This is my Body, and of the Wine, This is my Blood of the New Testament. These promises are firm grounds, whereupon the faithful soul may build this affiance, that by the sincere and conscionable use of God's holy Ordinances, the Word and Sacraments, he shall be made wise unto salvation, confirmed in faith, strengthened in grace, refreshed with joy and comfort, and perfected unto everlasting happiness. And the serious meditation and remembrance of these things, is exceeding profitable to quicken and encourage unto cheerful and constant attendance upon God in his ordinances, that so we may in due season reap the sweet fruit thereof. Blessed is the man that heareth me: watching daily at my gates, waiting daily at the posts of my doors. For who so findeth me, findeth life; and shall obtain favor of the Lord. Did Christians oft and earnestly breathe themselves in meditation on those great things, that God offereth in the Gospel; and his truth and faithfulness to make good whatsoever he hath spoken: Did they set before them, both the mercy of God in ordaining the Sacraments for the strengthening of their faith, and his grace and faithfulness in bestowing upon them freely, that which he offereth and sealeth unto them in these outward seals: Did they consider what he graciously promiseth in both, and expect to be made partakers of them in

the use of those ordinances; it would marvelously comfort, and quicken to the diligent use of all holy means ordained of God for our present comfort, quickening, and strengthening, and for our everlasting salvation.

This faith is necessary; for it availeth not to live under the Gospel, and to be present at the administration of the Sacraments, if they be not used in faith. The word profiteth not, unless it be mingled with faith in them that hear it: And the same may be said of receiving the Sacraments. Faith is the eye, the hand, the mouth, the stomach of the soul: by it we see, receive, feed upon Christ. Look as at a feast, though the Table be never so richly furnished, yet if a man have neither hand, mouth, nor stomach, he is not fed thereby: so is it here. Nor is it sufficient to have faith, but it must be exercised to receive that grace which the word of God doth reach us with the seal. It is not the having but the new exercise of faith, which maketh us profitable hearers of the word, worthy receivers of the Sacrament. Look as a man may have a hand, and yet, if when a thing is reached forth to him, he do not put it out, nothing is received: so we may have the grace of faith, and yet, if when God reacheth us the body and blood of his Christ, we do not then awaken it, to lay hold on the grace God offereth, we shall go away without receiving it. Or look as at a feast, though we have a mouth, and there be plentiful provision, if we will not open it, and take down the sustenance before us, we shall rise empty; so though we have the mouth of faith, yet if we do not open it to God now offering to feed us, we shall not get a crumb of grace.

The Acts of faith be these or the like.

First, It teacheth to worship the true God purely: to esteem approve and exercise that worship, and that alone which he prescribeth: for faith looketh to the revealed will of God, as the rule of all acceptable service, and to the

promises, as the grounds of comfort, and good success. It tenders unto God, what he requireth: and looketh unto God to receive what he is pleased, and hath promised to give. But God will not accept that worship, which he hath not appointed, nor work effectually by the devices of men. No piety, comfort, or true devotion is, or can be stirred up by human traditions: for as they are destitute of commandment for their rule, so are they of promise, that God will kindle or quicken by them any sparkle of knowledge, faith, invocation, thankfulness, or other saving motions of heart.

Secondly, It delighteth greatly to behold the face of God in his sanctuary. When thou saidest, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord will I seek. When shall I come and appear before God. O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is: To see thy power and glory, so as I have seen thee in the Sanctuary. How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts? My soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart, and my flesh crieth out for the living God. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house. The Levitical worship was as a glass more dim, in which they beheld the face of the Lord obscurely: the word and Sacraments are to Christians as a clear glass, in which as with open face we behold the glory of God in Christ. Christ is present with us, as long as we hold his public worship: he is found, when we recover it having been lost. Then doth the face of the Lord shine upon us, when he offers himself unto his people to be seen in his public worship, the pure and undefiled exercises of piety. And from hence springeth the willingness of the Saints, to wait continually at the posts of wisdoms gates, to hear her words, their earnest contention and study to preserve, maintain, uphold and set forward the pure worship of God, and to save, or free it from the dross

of superstitious vanities, which obscure the clear light of the Lord's countenance, and to restore it according to the pattern, if once it fall: and their diligent inquiry after Christ, if his face be hidden from them, or his worship be polluted with Idolatry. Tell me (O thou whom my soul loveth) where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that is veiled, amongst the flocks of thy companions? Why should I be as a women wasting herself with sorrow and grief, while I seek thy presence in thine ordinances.

Thirdly, It seeketh acquaintance with God, and the knowledge of his will in Christ Jesus. Without some knowledge of God in Christ, and of his word going before, there can be no faith: but faith endeavoreth the increase of knowledge: It crieth after knowledge, and lifteth up the voice for understanding: It seeketh her as silver, and searcheth for her as for hid treasures. My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments, at all times. Make me to understand the way of thy precepts, so shall I meditate or talk of thy wondrous works This is implied in the phrase of seeking God, which signifieth to bend all their strength and power to know, acknowledge and worship God aright. Knowledge is pleasant to the believing soul, and wisdom delighteth the heart. Children covet sweet meats, because they please the taste; and the believer desires the knowledge of God and his word, because it is sweet and dear unto him. God in Christ is the object of faith; the matter, whatsoever is revealed of God to be received or believed; and faith itself is more strong, and the operations of faith more lively and comfortable, as these are better known. And from this desire it cometh, that the believer doth apply himself to attend unto the word of truth, ponder it seriously, and treasure it up safe, that it might not over-slip him.

Fourthly, It giveth the heart close to the word, receiveth and possesseth the good things promised, and changeth the disposition of soul into the nature of the word. Faith followeth hard after the word till it be made our own, and its lively Character stamped upon the soul: It feedeth upon every part of the word, getteth interest in every promise, and sucketh vigor and juice out of it. By faith we stick close unto the word, and the word doth stick, or is ingrafted into us. And to the end we might possess the pearl of the Gospel, and be seasoned with the doctrine of grace thoroughly, faith renounceth all interest in the lusts of the flesh, and things of this life. It earnestly pondereth and meditateth upon the great things of the law, to work the heart to a holy esteem of the excellent and heavenly things contained in it, and to a gracious affectation to every duty therein required. And it importuneth the Lord by true prayer, without hypocritical halting or starting aside, that he would be pleased to write his law in our hearts, and keep us steadfast unto him, that we may never depart from his fear. For by faith we cleave fast unto God; but it is God that knitteth us unto himself: As the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I tied unto me the whole house of Israel, that they might be my people.

Fifthly, It quickeneth to serve God in the use of all his ordinances with diligence, cheerfulness, and best endeavor. By faith Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof an offering to the Lord. By faith David went with the multitude unto the house of God with the voice of joy and praise: faith can neither be cloyed with God's presence, nor account any service too good for him. The voice of faith is, I will sing and give praise with the best member that I have. How should he be negligent in the use of any ordinance, who seeth God in his whole worship, and findeth comfort, tasteth sweetness in every part. We see by experience, the desire of gain

draws men to rise early, rest late, toil hard in any business that may bring in commodity: But faith begetteth an unsatiable, operative, constant thirst and desire of spiritual things, which makes the believer industrious in the use of all means, whereby his treasure may be increased. Look as the Merchant takes pains to enrich himself, and increase his substance; so doth the faithful soul to get possession of the true treasure. Lively faith and burning love towards the Lord, lodge both together, which bring forth pains and forwardness in the works of holiness, willingness and delight to please him in all things.

More particularly it may be inquired how parents in faith should present their children unto baptism. What use Christians should make of their baptism, when they come to age and discretion; and how we are to receive the Lord's Supper in faith. The dedication of a child to God, is a work of singular and great importance, one of the weightiest services we can take in hand, though (we may fear) it is considered of few. For to say nothing of the ignorant and profane sort, who savor not the things of God, and therefore can have no reverent regard to the seals of the covenant; how many be there of better hopes, well instructed in the principles of religion, diligent frequenters of God's Ordinances, and careful to beautify their profession with a holy conversation, who did never distinctly, and in good earnest consider of this matter? When yet they must needs acknowledge, that it cannot be well done as it ought, if it be not done in faith.

The acts of faith in this particular be these, and such like.

First, It calleth to remembrance the free and gracious covenant, which God hath made with the believing parents and their posterity. I am thy God, and the God of thy seed. For the promise is made unto you, and to your children, and to all that are a far off, even as many as the Lord our God

shall call: which covenant, as it is made with the parents and their seed, so doth the faith of the parent apprehend the promise of the covenant for himself and for his seed. And this is the ground of that tender, which a Christian makes of his Child unto holy Baptism. For by natural generation the Children of believing parents are defiled with sin, and so under wrath: but they are holy by covenant and free acceptance, the believing parent embracing the merciful promise of God for himself, and for his posterity. Infants are not borne Christians by natural birth, but made Christians by virtue of the covenant, God promising to accept them, upon offer made unto him by the parents.

Secondly, By faith the believing parents must give themselves unto God, choosing him to be their portion, and resigning themselves in all things to be guided by his word, in all estates and conditions. He that would give his child unto God, must give himself first. Is it probable, that Father can truly desire, and long after the preferment of his child in the Kingdom of grace here, and of glory hereafter, who will not enter himself, nor submit his will to the commandment of grace? The promise is made to the faithful; and that faith only, which draws a man to yield up soul and body, as a living sacrifice unto God, pleasing and acceptable unto his Majesty, doth quicken a parent truly, sincerely, freely, and as he ought to make tender of his child unto God.

Thirdly, It provoketh parents to offer their children unto God by hearty and unfeigned prayer, as soon as ever they have received them from him. God's promise to accept our children, calleth for prayer and supplication on our part, that he would be pleased to make good his merciful and free promise. Thus David reasoneth, Thou, O Lord, of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house: therefore hath thy

servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee. And so should every Father, O Lord, thou hast covenanted to be my God, and the God of my posterity, therefore am I bold to entreat thy fatherly acceptance of my poor Infant.

Fourthly, It considereth what a singular prerogative it is, to be actually admitted into covenant with God, received into his family, and to have his name put upon us: to be partaker of the seal of regeneration, remission of sins, adoption, and everlasting inheritance: solemnly to be made free of the society of Saints, and wear the Lord's badge and livery. And what a high and incomprehensible mercy it is, that God hath promised, and doth vouchsafe these great and inestimable blessings, not only to himself a miserable and wretched sinner, but also to his posterity, who by natural generation are enemies to his Highness, dead in trespasses, and in bondage unto the curse of the law. With these or the like meditations of faith, believing parents must present their children unto Baptism, that they might receive the seal of regeneration, remission of sins, and spiritual liberty; that the Name of God might be set upon them, and their names registered amongst the free Denizens of the heavenly Jerusalem. And fervent effectual prayer doth accompany this admission, that God would be pleased to accept the party baptized for his child by grace and adoption, release him of his sins, and make him partaker of his everlasting kingdom. Faith believeth what God promiseth, as he promiseth it: and beggeth fervently, what he giveth freely.

Fifthly, It stirreth up hearty rejoicing in the Lord, that he hath vouchsafed in tender compassion to look upon them, and their posterity, and thus to honor and advance them: for the truest Nobility is to be made a Christian, and to live in favor with God. A worldly Father would much rejoice, if his

child should be preferred to some chief Office in the Princes Court, as soon as it was borne: A Christian Father hath much greater cause of joy, that he is admitted, not as a servant, but as a son and heir, into the Court of the great King of Heaven and Earth. If parents can compass but a Lease of some Farm for themselves, and theirs, they are glad: and shall they not rejoice, that God hath by covenant and seal passed the grant of the Kingdom of Heaven to them and theirs?

Sixthly, It stirreth up parents to be diligent and careful to bring up their children in information and fear of the Lord, being instant with God to bless their endeavors for the good of their children, and the glory of his name. For thus faith persuadeth: Thy child is not thine, but the Lord's: thou hast dedicated him unto the service of his Majesty, and he from whom thou receivedst him at first, hath committed him to thy charge, to be trained up in his fear. It is a great honor to be trusted with such a charge, and it is a fearful sin to neglect so great a trust. Wilt thou consecrate thy child to God this day, and leave him to the Devil forever after? Wilt thou teach him a trade, that he might live as a Man, and not teach him the way of godliness, that he might live as a Christian? Didst thou not undertake for his education in the true Religion, and wilt thou neglect the performance of that solemn oath? Christ commanded the children of Christian parents to be brought unto him: and wilt thou present them untaught, and ignorant of the Christian faith? The same conscience which moved parents to offer their children to Baptism, will quicken them to endeavor their education in the true faith, and service of God.

Baptism is a seal of the covenant betwixt God and us, of God's promise to us that he will be our God: and of our promise to him, that we will be his people, repent of our sins, believe in Christ, and walk before him in sincere

obedience. For signification, force, use and fruit it continueth, not for a moment of time, but for the whole course of a man's life. It doth respect not only the time past and present, but that which is to come; yea, that whole time a man hath to spend, from the very act of his Baptism, to his death. For as it is the seal of a free, everlasting, unchangeable covenant, so is the force and use of it perpetual. Baptism is the true Sacrament of repentance, for remission of sins, and spiritual renovation, which being once received, remaineth a perpetual testimony and pledge of the everlasting Covenant of God, and continual washing away of sin by the blood of Christ, and the Spirit of sanctification. By singular appropriation it representeth and confirmeth our engrafting into Christ, but withal it sealeth the whole Covenant of grace.

The use of Baptism is twofold. First, It serves to be a pledge and token of God's favor, and that diverse ways.

First, In that it is a seal of our regeneration by the holy Spirit, whereby a divine quality is infused into us, in the room and place of original corruption. And therefore Baptism (as the text is ordinarily expounded) is called the laver of regeneration; it being a usual thing to call the principal cause, and the instrument by the same name.

Secondly, It sealeth and confirmeth unto us the free pardon and forgiveness of our sins. Repent and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins. Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the Name of the Lord.

Thirdly, Baptism is a pledge of the virtue of Christ's death, and of our fellowship therein. Do ye not know that all we, who have been baptized into Jesus Christ, have been baptized into his death?

Fourthly, It is also a pledge of the virtue of Christ's life, and of our communion with him therein. The life of Christ is the life of every believer, who liveth in Christ, and shall live forever with him, and in him: a certain pledge whereof he hath given us in this Sacrament. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death: we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Buried with him in Baptism, wherein also you are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

Fifthly, Baptism is a pledge of our adoption in Jesus Christ. By nature we are the children of wrath: but by grace and adoption the sons of God, through faith in Christ, which is sealed in Baptism, wherein the name of the Father, Son, and holy Spirit is put upon us. When Jacob blessed the sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, saying, Let my name be named on them; he adopted them for his sons, to have inheritance with them in the land of Canaan: and when God putteth his name upon us, he signifieth and assureth that we are his sons. Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you, as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.

Sixthly, Baptism is a solemn testimony of our communion with all the lively members of Christ Jesus. It is a seal of the bond of mutual love and fellowship, both of Christ with his members, and of his members one with another. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free: And Baptism is one of those things whereby the unity of the Spirit is preserved in the bond of peace.

Seventhly, It is a seal and pledge to assure, that God will provide for us in this life, raise up our bodies unto life at the last day of Judgment, and bestow upon us that everlasting Kingdom and Inheritance, which he hath prepared. For in Baptism the Lord doth promise to be our God, that he will

provide us of all things necessary for soul and body, turn all evils which do befall in this miserable life, to the furtherance of our salvation, raise up our bodies at the last day, and receive us unto himself to dwell with him for evermore. In all which respects Baptism is of great force to strengthen faith, and ease the heart in distress. For when the repentant sinner feels himself heavy laden with the burden of his sins, when Satan tempts him to doubt or despair in regard of his corruptions: when his own corruption moveth him to sin, and he is even now in the combat, the Spirit lusting against the flesh, and the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and when he is deeply perplexed with fear of falling away: then the consideration and remembrance of what was promised, and sealed in Baptism, will serve to stay, support and comfort the soul. For there he shall find that his name is written in the covenant of God, that God hath promised to give Christ to be his Redeemer, to accept of Christ's satisfaction for him, to wash away all his sins, as certainly as the water washeth away the filth of the body: and having such a faithful promise confirmed by seal, wherefore should he be dismayed? In Baptism also God hath sealed unto him the mortification of his sin, by the power of Christ's death; which is the ground of confidence, that God will enable him to overcome the rebellious lusts of his heart, and crucify the old man more and more, until the body of sin be utterly destroyed. True it is, that man by nature is dead in sin: but in Baptism, God of his mercy hath sealed unto the believer, his rising from the death of sin to newness of life. True it is, that of ourselves we are prone to fall away from grace received: But God of his rich grace sealet unto the faithful in Baptism a Resurrection unto immortal life, which shall grow daily, but never decay. If the faithful be afflicted, and despised of men, persecuted and forsaken, cast out the visible Congregation, and banished from the house of God: yea, even in the

agonies of death; the remembrance of the promises sealed in Baptism, will afford comfort. For if men have forsaken, God hath received them; If men scorn and contemn, the Lord will acknowledge them. He hath long ago sealed them for his own, received them into his family, undertaken to provide for them, and adopted them as heirs apparent to the Kingdom of Heaven. If God had given them his word alone for security, it had been sufficient; But having confirmed it by seal in Baptism, they have great cause to rest assured. True it is they may be cast out of the visible assemblies, but they can never be cut off from the invisible Communion of Saints: they must die, but God hath sealed unto them their rising from the grave to everlasting life, by the power and virtue of Christ's Resurrection: which is a comfort of all comforts, able to uphold the soul of man in the hour of death.

The second use of Baptism, it is a seal of our duty promised, and so a spur and provocation to repentance, faith, new-obedience, brotherly love, and unity.

First, It is a spur to repentance and mortification: for Baptism doth seal remission of sins to them only that repent, and by Godly sorrow come home unto God. And as we expect the blessing, we must look that we fail not in the condition. If we be buried with Christ in Baptism, it is our duty to mortify the flesh with the affections and lusts, that it may live no longer, to bring forth fruits unto death. For a dead man cannot live. By solemn oath we are bound to crucify unruly lusts, which fight against the soul: and shall we falsify so great a promise? Against whom should we fight, if not against Satan? Or what will he be willing to spare for the Lord's sake, who will not part with his sins? Why should we fear the strength of Satan, the power of sin, the rage of persecutors, the loss of earthly things? Or despair because of

the wrath of God justly kindled against sin. If we turn unto God by unfeigned repentance, we have his faithful promise confirmed by seal, that he will be merciful unto our sins, enable us to overcome our corruptions, fortify us against the powers of Hell, support us under, or deliver us out of all trials, and graciously provide whatsoever shall be needful for us.

Secondly, It is a provocation unto faith, and a pledge thereof. We have the promise of God vnder his hand and seal, that he will wash us from our iniquities, receive us for his children, remember our necessities, bestow upon us the Kingdom of Heaven: we shall do great wrong and dishonor to God, if we doubt or make question, whether he will perform promise freely made, and confirmed by covenant and seal. We are bound by commandment to believe in Jesus Christ, and to commit ourselves wholly unto him, as unto a faithful Savior: And we have bound ourselves by promise, covenant and seal, that we will believe and cleave unto him, as our only Savior: shall we then go back, grow remiss, or give way to doubting? If doubting's arise, through the sight of sin, or want of sense and feeling comfort, or the world begin to creep into the heart, and divide it from Christ, let us then remember, we have troth-plighted ourselves to Jesus Christ, and by faithful promise, never to be called back, given ourselves wholly to rest, and stick close unto him: and therefore must admit no thought, whereby we should be drawn aside, or divided, from him.

Thirdly, It is an incitement unto new obedience, and a pledge thereof. We are buried with him by Baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead, by the glory of the Father: Even so we also should walk in newness of life: in which Chapter the Apostle disputeth of our actions, that we should abstain from evil and follow those that are good. We have solemnly sworn to fight against the Devil, the World, and the Flesh; and

having taken the press-money of Jesus Christ, it were an immortal disgrace to accept of truce with Satan. We carry the badge and livery of Jesus Christ, and shall we forsake our colors, and fight for the Devil? It is strange, that children should leave their parents and take part with their enemies: We have given ourselves unto God, and were once dedicated unto his service; shall we now turn back, and offer ourselves unto Satan? Honor is due unto parents: If God be our Father, we must freely submit ourselves to his will and pleasure. God will strengthen us to obey, and accept of weak, if sincere obedience: and that shuts forth all place of excuse. If we be engrafted into the similitude of Christ's resurrection, we must express by our actions the power and likeness of Christ's resurrection; which is done, when we walk in all-pleasing before God, and set our affections upon things above. And this, as it is commanded on God's part, so it is sealed on our part in Baptism.

Fourthly, It is a pledge or pawn of love and unity. We must keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; for we are all baptized into one body. We must not jar, for we are brethren: We must not quarrel nor contend, for we are members of the same body, and have been sealed into the same body. It goeth ill with the natural body, when the joints are dissolved: it is unnatural that the members of the body mystical should be divided.

It is not the having faith, but the new exercise of faith, which maketh us worthy receivers of the Lord's Supper. The Corinthians had faith, yet received not the grace of the Sacrament, because they received not in faith.

The acts of faith in receiving the Lord's Supper are many.

First, By it we discern the Sacrament to be the holy Ordinance of God, instituted for our special good and benefit, sealing unto us the promises, which God of his free mercy hath made unto us in Jesus Christ. By faith we understand what promises God hath made, for what cause, in whom he hath

made them, what he requireth, and how he hath sealed his free promises in the Sacrament. And the certain, distinct, clear, effectual knowledge of this point, is a matter of singular and great importance. For if worldly men make good account of a sufficient man's security for some great sum of money; in what esteem will a Christian have this pledge of God's favor, when he certainly understands what it doth signify and assure?

Secondly, By it we see what the Lord doth offer unto us therein, how excellent and precious it is, with what assurance it is freely tendered, and may be received. The outward signs in the Sacrament are visible to the bodily eye: but the inward grace signified and sealed thereby, which must seriously be considered and minded of us, is not manifest, but to the understanding enlightened by the Spirit, and seasoned by faith, which only can judge distinctly of it worth and excellency.

Thirdly, It sharpeneth spiritual appetite, and stirreth up hungering and thirsting after Christ, and his benefits. By faith we see our want, by faith we taste how good the Lord is, how sweet and pleasant the dainties he hath prepared; which raiseth an appetite of desire, and complacency. O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is a great and spiritual feast, whereunto the faithful are invited: and faith whetteth the spiritual appetite to long after, and relish the fatness and marrow, which is there provided.

Fourthly, It earnestly contendeth for mercy, confessing sin with grief and hatred, judging and condemning it freely, unfeignedly begging pardon with strength of grace to withstand sin for the time to come. Whensoever faith cometh to receive the seal of pardon, it pleadeth guilty, humbleth for

transgression, and entreateth forgiveness of undeserved mercy, that grace might be magnified in forgiveness.

Fifthly, By faith we receive Christ offering himself freely to be contracted unto us. Christ maketh love as a suitor, and hath given the Sacrament as a token of his love and faithfulness: faith apprehendeth the misery of the soul without Christ, the excellent dignity, honor and beauty of Christ, and the happiness of the soul which is united unto him; and thereupon humbly embraceth his offer of love.

Sixthly, By faith we resign up ourselves unto Jesus Christ, and willingly yield soul and body unto him. This the nature of the matrimonial contract, which passeth betwixt Christ, and the believer, requireth: for as Christ promiseth to be a Savior, Head and Husband unto the believer: so doth he troth-plight himself unto Jesus Christ, to cleave unto him as his only Savior, and in all things to be obedient unto his will and pleasure. Wherefore my brethren, ye are also become dead to the Law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

Seventhly, Faith feedeth upon Christ, and sucketh vigor from him. His flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed. Meat to be eaten, not with the teeth, but by faith. Meat indeed, not in nature, but in effect, because it nourisheth the soul, and giveth eternal life to them that eat thereof. And by faith we spiritually eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood. And as he that eateth wholesome food, is strengthened thereby, and made fit and able for the actions of this life; so he that feedeth upon Christ spiritually and by faith, is strengthened to the actions of spiritual life, and made able for the exercises of piety and holiness.

Eighthly, Faith assureth of that spiritual contract which hath passed betwixt Christ and the Christian soul, and is sealed in the Sacrament; so that he may truly say, My beloved is mine, and I am his. As a couple, who have lawfully given faith to each other, and confirmed the same by pledge or token in the Congregation, are assured of each other: so when we have contracted ourselves unto Christ, and received the pledge thereof, we come to be assured by faith, that Christ is ours, and that we have communion in all the benefits of his death and passion. Thus faith reasoneth, God the Father hath freely promised the pardon of all sins in and through Jesus Christ: Christ doth offer himself as a Redeemer to deliver them from the power of darkness, and to bring them into perpetual grace with his Father, to wash them from their sins by his blood and spirit, and to preserve and nourish them unto life eternal, who will receive and believe in him. And being so lovingly called and invited, I have received the merciful promise, and resigned myself unto Jesus Christ; why then should I stand in doubt? I hear the word of promise, I see and have received the seals annexed to the Word of grace, the true and faithful testimony of God confirmed by oath, and I may not question his truth, nor draw back from mine own promise, to rest upon and cleave unto him for evermore.

Ninthly, It stirreth up joy and thankfulness with serious remembrance of the manifold benefits and blessings which in Christ Jesus are vouchsafed. When men have a lease of some good bargain sealed, they are merry and glad; much greater cause of joy have they, who have received from God, who cannot lie, such a pledge of his love, the seal of an everlasting inheritance.

Arise, O my soul, and sing for joy, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. Thou didst sit in darkness, forlorn and

miserable, guilty of sin, in bondage to the curse, in fear of eternal condemnation: but now God is appeased, Christ hath satisfied justice, pardon is proclaimed, thou hast received the free gracious promise, and eternal blessed peace is concluded.

And for thy greater assurance, God hath added his seal to his free grant of pardon: holy bread is added, and given to thee for a Sacrament and divine testimony, that the body of Christ was crucified for thee: blessed wine is added, and given to thee, for a certain pledge and token, that the blood of Christ was shed for thee, that righteousness purchased by that sacrifice is thine, that eternal salvation procured by that price is thine by an irrevocable title. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not the great love of God in giving his Son to die, that thou mightest be delivered from the fear of hell and death, forget not the Love of Christ in suffering death, that thou mightest be set free from the curse of the law, and burning wrath of God deserved by sin; forget not the grace and favor of God in calling thee to feast with him, and giving this pledge and earnest of his perpetual love. Thou canst not forget these, but thou forgettest thyself: thou canst not neglect these, but thou hatest thyself. What canst thou desire more, then to have God to be thy God, Christ to thy Savior? What wouldst thou remember if thou forget the love of Christ in suffering death for thy redemption, and the earnest of his love, whereby he doth assure, that his body was crucified, and his blood shed for thee?

Now the better to stir up ourselves to receive this Sacrament in faith.

First, We must bewail our unbelief, dullness, earthly-mindedness, the distemper of our spiritual taste, and conceit of spiritual fullness, laboring to quicken the sense of our misery, and raise the soul to an high prizing of Christ, and hungering after him. Emptiness prepares to receive meat, and

hunger gives it a good relish; and if we see our misery and nakedness without Christ, and thirst after him, we shall eat his flesh, and drink his blood with sweet comfort and refreshing.

Secondly, Consider how freely the Lord doth tender Christ to be received in his Word and Sacrament. The Lord, I say, faithful in his promises, plentiful in mercies who hath authority to give what he promiseth, offereth Christ withal the benefits of his death and passion, to every poor, despised, thirsty, afflicted soul, who doth desire and will receive him.

Thirdly, weigh and consider the blessed state and condition of them, who be reconciled unto God, contracted unto Jesus Christ, who are eased from their sins, washed from their filthiness, and separated unto glory: and so quicken our souls to receive and lay fast hold upon these inestimable benefits offered unto us by name.

Fourthly, Having troth-plighted ourselves to Jesus Christ unfeignedly, we must awaken and rouse up ourselves to rejoice in him. What can I desire more? God the Father hath given his only begotten Son to be my Savior, and I have received and am betrothed unto him: a firm peace is concluded, an everlasting inheritance is assured unto me. I have a good legacy bequeathed unto me in the promises, whereunto I stick; sealed unto me in the Sacrament, which I may produce as an evidence to stop the mouth of Satan, if he shall contend and seek to rob me of my privileges bestowed of grace. If I be hunger-starved in myself, the body of Christ is true meat, nourishing me to life eternal; If thirsty and destitute of the sap of grace, the blood of Christ is true drink, nourishing me to life eternal: and eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, he dwelleth in me, and I in him. Thus we must quicken our hearts to rejoice in belief of the promises made and

sealed, waiting upon God, till he be pleased to give the sense and comfort of it.

CHAP. XII. The faithful are bound, and it is behooveful for them, to believe the threatening's.

GOD IS AS WELL just as merciful, faithful and true as well in his threats, as in his promises: and therefore equally to be believed in both, so far as in his word he hath assured us of both. He who is certain of his salvation, knoweth assuredly he should be damned, if he should go on in sin without repentance, and shall taste of much bitterness, if he grow indulgent to his corruptions. It is as sure, that God will condemn the wicked and impenitent, as that he will save the righteous and repentant. If Paul beat not down his body, and bring it into subjection, he shall be as dross and refuse. If the righteous forsake his righteousness and commit wickedness, or be a worker of iniquity, all his former righteousness shall be forgotten. The godly man is not slavishly to fear falling away, or running into destruction, but wisely to believe the threatening's, to prevent falling into sin, and so into condemnation. The subject, who feareth the punishment of the law, and keepeth himself innocent, taketh a wise course for his own security. Every part of Scripture is God's word, of certain and undoubted truth, which cannot be gain-said, written for the benefit and profit of them, who shall be

heirs of salvation: But the threatening's are part of the word of God. Whatsoever things were written afore-time (even as well examples of judgment inflicted upon transgressors, and threatening's denounced against them that shall offend, as promises of mercy to allure unto obedience) were written for our learning and instruction. In the state of innocence there was use of threatening's, so is there in the state of grace. As a means to keep our first parents from sin, the Lord denounced death against them, if they should eat of the forbidden fruit. Job professeth, he durst not lift up his hand against the Fatherless, for destruction from God was a terror unto him. So David, My flesh trembleth for fear of thee: and I am afraid of thy Judgments. The righteous man wisely considereth the house of the wicked: but God overthroweth the wicked for their wickedness. And sure it is expedient for us, that threatening's should be mingled with the promises of grace, for (so prone are we to flatter, and favor ourselves) milder doctrine would grow cold, unless these spurs were added. The tartness of the threatening makes us best taste the sweetness of promise: Sour and sweet make the best sauce; promises and threatening's mingled, fit our state, and serve to keep the heart in the best temper. We grow overbold with God if the threatening do not awe; are soon dejected, if the promise do not support. The Lord knoweth both necessary to keep us in awe; and therefore beginneth with promises, to the intent we might follow him the more willingly; but to drive forward when we stop, or grow remiss, he addeth threatening's. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom, which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire.

The acts of faith in respect of the threatening's be these.

First, It worketh humbleness of mind and heart: for what the law threateneth, the faithful will freely acknowledge, that they deserve, and so arraign themselves as guilty of all misery and death before the throne of grace; whereby the pride and stubbornness of nature is much abated. Say we not of him, who hath been once impleaded before the tribunal of an earthly Judge, as guilty of felony or treason, he hath no reason to be stout? What then will the arraignment of the soul work, when a man shall be drawn to acknowledge before God, that he hath deserved to be cast into hell for his manifold offenses and transgressions, against God?

Secondly, It bringeth forth awfulness, reverence and fear. The righteous also shall see and fear. As the Child quaketh, when he heareth that his Father is angry with, or doth correct a servant: so the heart and body of the faithful tremble, as oft as they consider the severity of God's wrath against the wicked and ungodly. When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice: rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble: That is, when the fame of thy divine punishment and judgment came to mine ears, which thou hast decreed to inflict upon thy people; my belly, that is, my heart and bowels moved for grief and fear, Thus Noah hearing of God's just wrath against the sinful world, and of his purpose to overthrow all living flesh by water, was moved with great fear and reverence at this strange, dreadful, and mighty work of God and from the view of this his great and just judgment, his faith made him arise to a more earnest consideration of the glorious Majesty of the Almighty. And this is the effect of judgment executed by men according to the direction of God's word. And all Israel shall hear and fear, and shall do no more any such wickedness. True faith then worketh an holy fear and reverent awe of God in respect of his judgments. Who would not fear thee,

O King of nations? For to thee doth it appertain. Thou even thou art to be feared, and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry? The godly man's assurance of God's favor will stand well with reverence of his Majesty, and fear of temporal afflictions, spiritual desertions, and the torments of hell, not as an evil he shall fall into, but which he shall escape by the constant study and practice of holiness. For our assurance to escape damnation through the death of Christ, is no greater than our care to avoid sin, which leadeth thereunto. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling. Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Thirdly, It stirreth up continual watchfulness to shun whatsoever might breed danger, or procure God's displeasure. When sleepiness beginneth to come upon us, faith joggeth our elbow, and telleth the Lord is at hand with a whip to awaken us. The approach of peril apprehended, will rouse up the sluggard to look about him. Faith also teacheth so to acknowledge the anger of God, as that it draweth the heart above all things to take heed not to provoke him by carelessness and security. Who knoweth the power of thy anger? Even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.

Fourthly, The threatening's mingled with faith, cause sorrowful melting or relenting of heart for sin committed. When the King of Nineveh believed the preaching of Jonah, that within forty days that great City should be destroyed, he rose from his throne, put on sackcloth, and proclaimed a Fast unto the Lord. And when the Lord testified his displeasure against the Israelites by sending thunder and lightning in Wheat Harvest, all the people feared greatly, and said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God, that we die not; for we have added unto all our sins, this evil, to ask us a King. Now the threatening's believed work the same effect, that the

judgments seen. When Josiah heard what the Lord spake against Jerusalem, and against the inhabitants of that place, his heart was tender, and he humbled himself before the Lord.

Fifthly, When we see by faith from what miseries we are delivered of the free grace and mercy of God, our hearts are enlarged in praise and thanksgiving. In distress faith poureth out supplications; when the calamity is over-past it setteth forth the goodness of the Lord, and singeth of his glory. When the Israelites were in safety on the shore, looking back upon the danger escaped, when they passed through the red Sea, they make a joyful noise to the God of their salvation: their songs are answerable to their fore-conceived fear. And so when the Lord brought back the captivity of Babylon, their mouths were filled with laughter, and their tongues with joy. The due consideration of our deserts, manifest by the threatening's contained in the Word of God, doth marvelously affect the heart with desire to publish and spread abroad the loving kindness of the Lord, when by faith in Christ we see ourselves to be set free from the dreadful curses of the Law, and mercifully saved from the righteous judgment of our sins. By this which hath been said, it is manifest, that this life of faith is most excellent and comfortable, and by good proof and experience we should be able to say so, if we would be persuaded, but to take a taste of the benefit and sweetness that it bringeth. For by this faith we are directed to seek and follow after Christ, till we come to be assured, that he dwelleth in us as the fountain of life, and that in him we are delivered from the guilt and punishment of all our sins: whereas others, who live not by it, waver, are oft distracted, and know not where to begin the foundation of that great work, nor how to build thereon. By this faith we may come to sound rest and holy security about our salvation from time to time, enjoying the comfort of it

still more and more with incredible joy: whereas others, even the best, are oft unsettled and much disquieted. If the Lord lead us into the dark, and exercise us with manifold afflictions and temptations, by this faith we are enabled to hold him by the hand, to cast ourselves upon the promises of grace, and so relying upon his power, faithfulness and mercy, to promise safety unto ourselves above likelihood and appearance; yea, when we feel the contrary. The rage of sin is weakened, and we have strength against it, though not always to prevail (which were not expedient) yet at least to be in combat with it, which is ever a good testimony of our safety: for hereby we prove ourselves to be lively members of the Church Militant.

Also by this we are preserved against fearful sins, and have grace to walk in newness of life, and all parts of it with joy and cheerfulness. If we live by faith we have deliverance from many sharp and bitter afflictions; and bear those, which we must go under, more meekly and patiently: because it makes us depend upon God's promises, not stinting him to any set time, manner of deliverance, or measure of affliction. By it we walk in our callings more cheerfully, honestly, painfully; and with less distraction, toil and vexation, but with more profit, then they that flow in with wealth, and have all shifts and cunning slights to gain by. For whiles we see God ever going before us in all our earthly dealings and actions (as we should more look to it, that we find it so, then to our greatest profits and weightiest dealings) this faith shall uphold us in the quietest estate and most sweet peace, such as all the carnal wisdom of man shall never find nor enjoy. This faith teacheth us to pray at all times as our necessities require, with fervency and confidence, even in the depth of afflictions, when the grave is ready to swallow us up, and shut her mouth upon us, it enableth to look unto the Lord, and with strong arguments to implore his aid. O Lord God of

my salvation, I have cried day and night before thee for my soul is full of troubles, and my life draweth nigh unto the grave. Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord: Lord hear my voice. My spirit within me is overwhelmed, my heart within me is desolate. I stretch forth my hands unto thee, my soul thirsteth for thee in a thirsty land. O remember not against us former iniquities, let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us: for we are brought very low. If the affliction be very grievous and of long continuance, faith doth neither quail, nor cease to seek help; but looketh up to the Lord, expecting salvation in due time to be revealed. O God, why hast thou cast us off forever? Why doth thine anger smoke against the sheep of thy pasture? Remember thy Congregation, which thou hast purchased of old, the rod of thine inheritance, which thou hast redeemed. I am poor and sorrowful, let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high; for God is the strength of his people, who will bring them again from the depths of the Sea. The life of faith shall end in joy and comfort. He that trusteth in the Lord shall rejoice in his holy Name. I am a wonder unto many, but thou art my strong refuge. Let my mouth be filled with thy praise, and with thy honor all the day. Our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy Name. Loe, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad, and rejoice in his salvation. The expectation of them that hope in the Lord, shall not be frustrated, therefore they shall rejoice in him, and sound forth his praises. He that hath learned to live by faith, shall also die in faith. All these died in or according to the faith. If we know how to walk with God by faith, as Enoch did, all the days of our life, amidst the manifold temptations and changes that we meet withal in this world; we shall the better encounter with death, when the agonies thereof be upon us. Death is many ways

terrible, and the assaults of Satan at that time are usually most strong, as being his last: but he that hath taken out this lesson, To live by faith, shall easily quench the fiery darts of the Devil, manfully conquer this strong enemy, renew his repentance, and confidence in God's mercy upon the sight of sin, and willingly resign himself into the hands of God. This is the ordinary course, Live in faith, and die in faith, Live holily, and die blessedly. Therefore let us leave late repentance to them that think it but a sport to venture a soul, and take that course that is sure to speed. To say no more, it is exceeding dangerous to put off repentance from day today, though some few have obtained mercy at their latter end: But this is sure, he that liveth in faith, shall die in faith, and live in glory for evermore. Amen.

FINIS.

APPENDIX II. – Part II. Scripture References.

IN THE ORIGINAL FACSIMILE edition of this book, there were a considerable amount of scripture references in the margins. They have been listed here by Chapter in the order they appeared.

PART. II.

CHAP. 1

Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38; Gen. 5:24; Heb. 11:5; Gen. 24:40; Col. 3:3,4; 1 Tim. 1:5; Act. 2:15; Joh. 1:4; Psalm. 36:9; Heb. 5:9; 1 Cor. 15:45; Eph. 1:22,23. & 4:16; Joh. 14:6; Joh. 11:25; Joh. 6:35; Joh. 5:26; Joh. 1:4; Col. 3:4; 1 Joh. 1:2,3; 1 Joh. 5:11,12; 1 Cor. 1:30; 1 Joh. 5:13; Joh. 15:5; Rom. 11:20; Eph. 3:17; Rom. 3:27; Rom. 4:16; Eph. 2:8,9,10; Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:5; 1 Joh. 5:4; Gal. 3:2; Rom. 4:21; Heb. 11:11; Psalm. 34:9,10; Rom. 8:28; Matth. 11:28; Isa. 55:1; Jer. 31:34; Isa. 26:1; Prov. 10:28; Zech. 1:8; 1 Cor. 10:13; Psalm. 91:2,3. & 84:11; Matth. 6:33; Tit. 2:12; Heb. 11:1,2,3,4. &c.; Job. 22:21,22; Psalm. 85:8; 2 Pet. 1:4; Psalm. 119:105; Joh. 5:39; Prov. 6:21,22; Psalm. 94:19; Psalm. 119:24; Col. 3:16; Heb. 13:5; Psalm. 34:4,5,6; Jam. 5:11; Psalm. 91:15; Isa. 43:2; 2 Cor.

4:8,7; Phil. 3:17; Prov. 2:20; Act. 24:14; Matth. 13:45,46; Psalm. 119:11; Prov. 19:16; Psalm. 119:1,2,3; 2 Sam. 7:27; Psalm. 5:3; Psalm. 13:5; Psalm. 78:19,21,22; Num. 14:27; Rom. 10:3; Jer. 17:5; Psalm. 40:4. & 52:7; Phil. 3:3; Jer. 9:13; Prov. 29:26; Matth. 6:30; Joh. 12:43. & 5:44; Matth. 14:31; Mar. 8:16,17; 1 Joh. 5:10; Tit. 1:15; Isa. 7:9; Num. 20:12; Luk. 1:20; Heb. 10:38,39; Psalm. 9:10; 2 Tim. 1:12; Heb. 11:11; Rom. 4:21.

CHAP. 2

Isa. 55:7; Deut. 30:1,2; Jer. 3:12; Jer. 33:8. & 1:34; Isa. 43:25. & 44:22; Hos. 14:4; Mic. 7:18; Heb. 8:12; Jer. 31:34; Deut. 21:8; Num. 14:28; Joh. 1:29; Luk. 24:46,47; Act. 13:38; 2 Cor. 5:10; Matth. 11:28; Act. 10:43; Act. 13:39; Rom. 1:17; Gal. 2:16. & 3:11,24; Rom. 3:24,25,26; Gal. 3:8; Gen. 12:3; Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:16; Rom. 11:6; Jer. 9:23; Rom. 3:27,28; Rom. 4:1,3; Eph. 2:8,9,10; 1 Cor. 1:30,31; Rom. 4:5,6,7; Psalm. 32:1; Gal. 1:16. & 3:22; Isa. 59:2; Tit. 3:5,7; Psalm. 130:4; Luk. 15:18; Heb. 11:1; 1 Pet. 1:12; Rom. 16:25,26; Eph. 1:8,9; Isa. 40:13,14; Gen. 1:13; Matth. 27:5; Psalm. 77:3,7,8; Joh. 4:10; Matth. 13:45,46; Matth. 13:44; Psalm. 38:18; Luk. 15:18; Psalm. 32:5; Exod. 9:27; 1 Sam. 26:21; 1 Joh. 1:9; Prov. 28:19; Jer. 3:13; 1 Cor. 11:31; Psalm. 32:5; Luk. 15:20; Act. 8:22; Hos. 14:2; Luk. 18:13; Joel. 2:17; Psalm. 79:8; 2 Chron. 7:14; Matth. 7:7; Joel. 2:32; Rom. 10:13; Joh. 11:25,26; Act. 15:11; Rom. 10:4; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 1:15; Phil. 3:9; Job. 19:25; Psalm. 32:5; Isa. 38:17; Psalm. 65:3; Gal. 2:20; 1 Joh. 3:14; Joh. 3:18; Act. 13:39; Joh. 3:36; Isa. 59:2; Phil. 4:7; Joh. 14:27; Eph. 2:16,17; Rom. 5:1; Psalm. 56:4; Rom. 8:33,34; Rom. 5:2; Eph. 2:8; 1 Pet. 1:8; Rom. 5:2,3; Psalm. 51:8,12; Heb. 11:8; Rom. 15:13; Phil. 1:25; Ezek. 16:62,63 & 36:31,32; Rom. 4:5; Rom. 3:28; Psalm. 32:1,2; Rom. 4:4,5,6; Psalm. 143:2; Psalm. 139:17,18 & 36:7; 2 Tim. 1:6; 1 Pet. 1:8; Rom. 14:17; 1 Cor. 2:9,10; Joh. 16:22; Rom. 5:3; Jam. 1:2; Psalm. 36:7,8,9; Psalm. 19:12,13; Matth.

18:11; Isa. 61:1,2; Matth. 9:13; 1 Pet. 3:18; Rom. 5:10; Matth. 11:28; Isa. 43:25. & 44:22; Hos. 14:3,4; Ezra. 10:2; Eph. 2:4; Psalm. 51:1,2; Exod. 34:6,7; Isa. 55:9; 2 Chron. 33:12,13; 1 Tim. 1:13,15; Act. 2:37,38; Joh. 1:7; Isa. 1:18; 1 Joh. 1:8; 1 Joh. 2:2; Isa. 55:1; Joh. 7:37; Num. 21:9; Matth. 11:28; 1 Joh. 3:24; Joh. 6:29; Rev. 22:17; Isa. 55:1,2; Joh. 7:37,38; Gal. 3:14; Jer. 3:13; Psalm. 38:5; Psalm. 38:3; 2 Sam. 24:10; Exod. 34:6,7; 1 Kings. 8:33,34; Isa. 43:25. & 44:22; Isa. 38:17; Mic. 7:18; Psalm. 51:1,2; Num. 14:19; Psalm. 103:10; Matth. 11:28; Isa. 55:1,2; Mic. 7:19; Psalm. 65:3; Psalm. 85:2; Isa. 1:18; 2 Cor. 5:19,20; 1 Joh. 3:23; Rom. 5:20; Eph. 5:2. & 1:7; Rom. 3:25; Hos. 14:3; Joh. 3:16; Isa. 54:8; Ezek. 16:60; Act. 9:11; Luk. 17:34.

CHAP. 3

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Gen. 2:15; Gen. 3:19; Eph. 4:28; 1 Cor. 7:20; 1 Thes. 4:11,12; 2 Thes. 3:10,11,12; Prov. 10:4. & 12:27; Prov. 13:11; Prov. 12:24; Prov. 22:29; Psalm. 91:11; Heb. 11:6; Prov. 16:20; Prov. 3:5,6; Psalm. 127:1,2; Hag. 1:6,9; Eccl. 9:11; Psalm. 128:2; Eph. 6:2,5; Prov. 31:13,15; Eph. 6:8; Isa. 7:4; Jos. 7:5; Prov. 31:17; 2 Tim. 1:7,8,9; Heb. 11:7; Judg. 1:4; Heb. 11:9,10; Mar. 6:18; Heb. 11:35,36,37; 1 Cor. 4:3; 1 Thes. 2:6,9; Phil. 3:7,8; Eccl. 2:26; 1 Sam. 18:14; Psalm. 101:8; Psalm. 55:22; Matth. 6:32; 1 Pet. 5:7; Psalm. 127:2; Prov. 16:3; Matth. 6:33; Psalm. 42:1; Psalm. 16:5; Phil. 4:11,12; Phil. 4:6; Psalm. 62:1; 1 Cor. 7:31; Prov. 21:25,26; Psalm. 112:9; Prov. 3:5; Jer. 10:23; Prov. 16:2. & 21:2; Lam. 3:37; Deut. 8:17,18; Psalm.

44:3; Judg. 1:1. & 20:18,23,28; Isa. 8:20; Matth. 6:25. & 10:19; Psalm. 32:8; Ezr. 5:5; Judg. 6:16; Exod. 4:11; Matth. 10:29; Prov. 20:24; Psalm. 37:23; Prov. 16:3; Psalm. 37:5; Act. 14:23; 2 Sam. 10:12; 2 Chron. 20:12; Psalm. 5:2,3; Judg. 5:18; Jos. 1:5,9; Prov. 16:3; Psalm. 103:1,2; Judg. 5:9,10,11.

CHAP. 11

Isa. 55:1,2,3; Psalm. 19:7,8; Prov. 1:5; Prov. 4:13; Prov. 6:20,21,22,23; Joh. 17:17; Mic. 2:7; 1 Pet. 2:2; Isa. 9:2; Matth. 4:15; Deut. 32:2; Zech. 14:8; Ezek. 47:9; Cant. 2:5; Isa. 55:1,2; Act. 5:20; Act. 13:26; Act. 20:32; 1 Cor. 1:21; 1 Tim. 4:16; Jam. 1:21; Rom. 4:11; 1 Pet. 3:21; Act. 22:16; Col. 2:12; Rom. 6:3; Matth. 26:26,28; Prov. 8:34,35; Heb. 4:2; Isa. 8:20; Deut. 12:32; Isa. 29:13; Matth. 15:9; Jer. 7:31; Psalm. 105:4; 1 Chron. 16:11; Psalm. 27:8; Psalm. 42:2; Psalm. 63:1,2; Psalm. 84:1,2; Rev. 4:6; 2 Cor. 3:18; Prov. 8:34; Cant. 1:7; Rom. 10:19; Psalm. 119:20; Psalm. 9:10. & 40:16; Psalm. 105:4; Isa. 58:2; Act. 16:14; Luk. 2:51; Heb. 2:1,2; Psalm. 63:8; Deut. 10:20. & 13:4; Psalm. 63:5; Joh. 6:51,53; Psalm. 119:31; Jam. 1:21; Jer. 1:3,11; Gen. 4:4; Heb. 11:4; Isa. 64:4; Gen. 17:7,9; Act. 2:39; 2 Sam. 7:27; Mar. 10:25,26; Tit. 3:5; Act. 2:38; Act. 22:16; Rom. 6:3; Rom. 6:5; Col. 2:12; Gen. 48:16; Gal. 3:26,27; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:5; Mar. 16:16; Tit. 3:5,6,7; 1 Pet. 3:21; Rom. 6:9,10; Mar. 1:4; Rom. 6:4; Psalm. 63:1; Rom. 7:4; Joh. 6:55; Cant. 2:16; Joh. 6:56.

CHAP. 12

1 Cor. 9:27; Ezek. 18:24,26; Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:6; Gen. 2:17; Job. 31:21,23; Psalm. 119:120; Prov. 21:12; Heb. 12:28,29; Psalm. 52:6; Act. 5:5; Psalm. 119:120; Jon. 1:16; 1 Chron. 13:12; Hab. 3:16; Prov. 29:27,30; Psalm. 40:8; Heb. 11:7; Deut. 13:11. & 17:13. & 19:26; Jer. 10:7; Psalm. 76:7; Phil. 2:12; Matth. 10:28; Luk. 12:4,5; 2 Cor. 5:10,11; Psalm. 90:11;

Jon. 3:6,7,8; 1 Sam. 12:18,19; Judg. 2:3,4; 2 Kings. 22:18,19; Exod. 15:1,2;
Psalm. 126:2; Eph. 3:17; 2 Cor. 5:19; Psalm. 127:1,2; Psalm.
69:13,14,15,16; Psalm. 88:1,2,3; Psalm. 130:1,2; Psalm. 143:3,6; Psalm.
79:8; Psalm. 74:1,2; Psalm. 69:29; Psalm. 68:35; Psalm. 71:7,8; Psalm.
33:21; Isa. 25:9; Psalm. 68:19. & 69:30; Heb. 11:13.