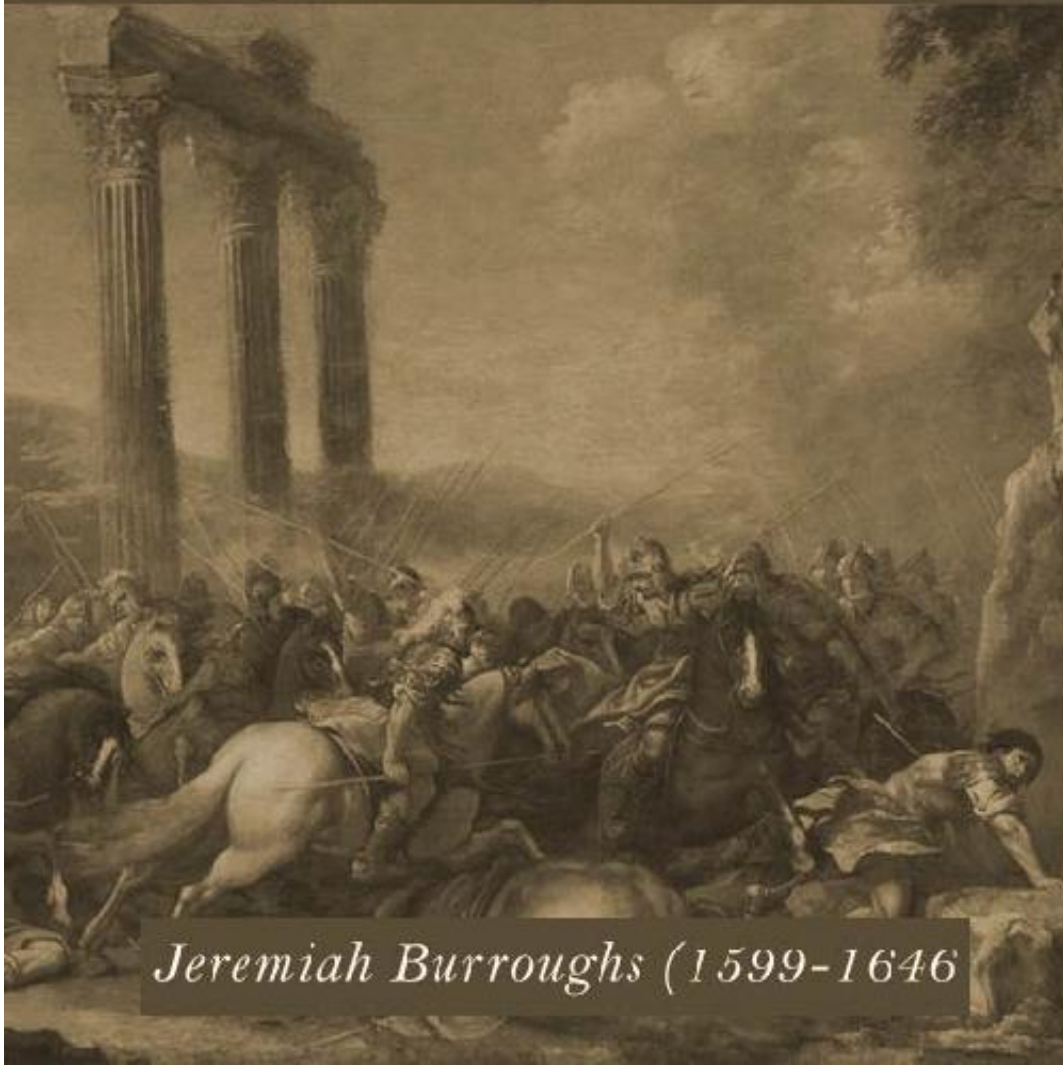


THE EVIL OF EVILS



Jeremiah Burroughs (1599-1646)

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The Evil of Evils, or the Exceeding Sinfulness of Sin

by Jeremiah Burroughs

The eighth book of Mr. Jeremiah Burroughs. Being a treatise of the evil of evils, or the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Wherein is shewed, 1 There is more evil in the least sin, than there is in the greatest affliction. 2 sin is most opposite to God. 3 sin is most opposite to mans good. 4 sin is opposite to all good in general. 5 sin is the poison, or evil of all other evils. 6 sin has a kind of infiniteness in it. 7 sin makes a man conformable to the Devil. All these several heads are branched out into very many particulars.

Burroughs, Jeremiah, 1599-1646., Goodwin, Thomas, 1600-1680.

THE EIGHTH BOOK OF Mr. Jeremiah Burroughs.

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A TESTIMONY TO THE world, Concerning Several Books of MR Jeremiah Burroughs, that are Printing, and will shortly be Published.

WHAT we have by way of Preface set before the several Books already published of this Reverend Author, Mr.. Jeremiah Burroughs, may sufficiently serve for all that are come forth: So that we only need now, to give Letters Testimonial to the world, that these (viz. The Sermons on Job, 36. chapt. 21. verse: The Second Epistle of Peter, the 1. chapter, the 1. verse: The First Epistle of John, the 3. chap. 3. verse: The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, the 5. chapter, 7. verse: Matthew, the 11. chapter, 28, 29, and 30. verses: The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, the 5. chapter, the 18, 19, and 20. verses, which are, or will shortly be Printed) We avouch likewise to be the painful and profitable Labors of the same Author, and published by the best and most Authentic Copies.

- Thomas Goodwin,
- William Greenbil,
- William Bridge,
- Sydrach Simpson,
- Philip Nye,

- John Yates,
- William Adderley.

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To the Reader.

READER,

THE creatures vanity and emptiness, the abounding sinfulness of sin, and Christ's All-sufficiency and fullness, and how to live the life of Faith in Christ, are subjects containing the sum and substance of religion, and much treated on promiscuously amongst divines. And I think amongst all the treatises of this blessed man, Mr.. Jeremiah Burroughs (now triumphing in glory above all sin and sorrow) which have been received with so much acceptance amongst the Saints, there has not been presented to thy view a more practical piece than this now under thy hands: And though divers divines have written and spoken much concerning this Subject, yet in my poor judgment, this out-goes all of this nature, that ever my eyes beheld, setting forth with life and spirit the Subject in hand, and bringing it down powerfully in a practical way to convince the judgment, and work upon the affections of the weakest reader. That which is the undoing of those who think themselves no small Christians, is resting in a bare notion of the creatures emptiness, sins filthiness, Christ's fullness, and having some high towering speculations concerning the nature and object of faith: and to be able to discourse of these things in company, and upon occasion, is the religion of the world, and more especially of our formal professors.

Now the reality of these confessed principles are not made powerful upon the conscience by the clearest natural acquired light in the world: but when the Lord is pleased to set home those over-awing, soul ballasting-thoughts of Eternity, then, and never till then, shall we live, act, and walk as a people who acknowledged these principles of Christianity to be true: Whilst the things of religion, and thoughts of eternity lie swimming only in our brains, they never conquer, command, and subdue the heart in a way of practical obedience. Many mens thoughts language, and lives are such, that if they were certain there is no God, no sin, no Hell, no wrath to be feared, no grace to be minded and attained, no judgment day when they must give an account, they could not be worse than they are, nor do worse than they do.

Oh the horrid atheism bound up in mens hearts, and they see it not, how else durst men be so profane in their lives under Gospel light? how durst they sit so stupidly under the powerful awaking means of grace? how else could such vile thoughts be cherish'd, and such cursed practises and principles maintained? how else durst men choose sin rather than affliction when they are brought into straights? how otherwise are men more afraid of open shame than of secret sins? In a word, how durst men walk without God in the world, at least without secret prayer and communing with their own hearts, days, weeks, months, years together?

I am persuaded more souls drop down to Hell in our days under the abuse os Gospel light, than ever did in the gross darkness of popery; they then better improved their talents according to the light afforded, and walked better and more suitably to the light they received; whereas these Gospel truths which now shines more fully and clearly in the faces of so many thousands, are not so much improved in a more circumspect, holy, and humble walking, but rather abused to a more loose and wanton carriage and censorious judging of one another, men sinning the more because grace so much abounds; how could the Saints then love and embrace with singleness of heart? but now the foundations of love are shaken, and a perverse spirit is mingled amongst us.

Oh how heavily does the wrath of God lie upon the professors of our age for the abuse of Gospel light, and they feel it not; God's administrations in this latter age of the world, being more subtile and Spiritual, and therefore more undesirable than in former ages: Oh how many have we nowadays, who think they walk clearly in the midst of Gospel light, magnifying and exalting free grace, triumphing in their Christian liberty, looking upon others as kept in bondage, who come not up to their pitch and practice, and yet are no better than Solomon's fools, who make a mock of sin, being conceitedly set at liberty, but really sin and Satan's bond slaves.

Certainly, till mens consciences be made tender and fearful of the least touches and appearances of evil, they have good cause to suspect, not only the strength, but the soundness of their hearts in grace: Whilst men are bold with sin, and can put it off at an easy rate of sorrow, let their attainments seem never so high in understanding the Mysteries of the Gospel, they never yet knew truly what it is to exalt Christ and free grace, for look in what measure we slight sin, in the same measure we slight God himself in his persons and attributes; And how can that great Gospel duty of walking humbly with God, be expressed? how can Christ be rightly lifted up and advanced in our souls without a right sight and sense of sin? Never will Christ be wonderful Christ, and grace wonderful grace, till sin be wonderful sin, and experimentally apprehended as out of measure sinful; never till sin be seen and sorrowed for as the greatest evil, will Christ be seen and rejoiced in as the greatest good.

Were we once thoroughly convinced of the infinite evil in sin, as containing in it the Evil of all Evils (nothing being an evil indeed properly, but as it has the bitter ingredient and cursed sting of sin in it) how would sin be hated and shunned more than the most deadly poison, and feared more than the Devil, more than Hell it self? seeing nothing has made and founded Hell but sin, nor made the Devil such a black fiend but sin; nay, nothing is so much a Hell, I mean a torment, as sin it self; nothing binds the creature in such chains of misery as when it is held in the cords of its own sin, Prov. 5. 22. Men look upon sin through false mediums, and believe the reports and interpretations which the world and the flesh gives of sin, and thus are cheated to their own destruction: Could we but a little lay our Ears to Hell and hear the howlings and yelling of those damned spirits aggravating sin, we should then have a true comment upon the subject in hand: afflictions in this world now and then awaken the conscience, reviving the sight and sense of sin by some grievous pains; but one half hour in Hell, being separated from the comfortable presence of all good and blessed... will make the evil of sin rightly understood. Certainly there's an evil in sin beyond what the largest created understanding is able to fathom, sin

being one of those things which can never be punished enough, which appears in that all those unspeakable, insufferable torments inflicted upon the damned through all eternity, is but a continual paying this sad debt, and giving satisfaction to Divine justice for the wrong which sin has done, in regard Divine justice shall not otherwise sufficiently in time have taken it's due out of the sinner. Now the Judge of all the world who is the standard of justice it self, neither can, nor will do any wrong to his creature in punishing it more than it's iniquity deserves.

Reader, I shall say no more now, but beseech the Lord to carry home these truths by his Spirit into thy bosom, that there may be a Divine impression made upon thy heart in reading, suitable to the authors in preaching, and that thou mayest (out of love to Holiness) so fear and hate sin now, that thou mayest never suffer the vengeance of eternal fire (the wages of sin) hereafter: Which is the unfeigned and earnest desire of

Thy souls well-wisher in Christ Jesus, John Yates.

THE EVIL of EVILS: OR, The Exceeding sinfulness OF sin.

JOB. 36. 21. later part.

—For this hast thou Chosen rather than affliction.

CHAP. I.

That it's a very evil choice, to choose sin rather than affliction.

IN these words is drawn up Elihu's false Charge against holy Job wherein he did shamefully scandalized this man of God, concerning whom the Lord himself gives in this letter testimonial That he was perfect and upright, one that feared God and eschewed evil, Job 1. 1. And yet Elihu's speaks here to this effect against him, That he chose Iniquity rather than affliction; that he should see less Evil in sin, then he did in affliction: that for his affliction he was troubled but for his sin he was not Afflicted; that the burden of his affliction lay heavy as a talent of lead upon him, but his sin was lighter than a Feather. Or thus, Thou hast Chosen Iniquity, rather than affliction; whereas God requires of thee to give him glory in thy humble submission unto him in thy Patience, under his mighty hand, thou hast behaved thy self stubbornly and stoutly, and hast denied to give God the glory of his Sovereignty, Majesty, Holiness, Justice, and Purity; and this thou hast Chosen rather than to be content to lie under the Afflicting hand of God: which way so ever it be taken, it was a heavy Charge had it been true; So for it to be alleged against any Souls, That they Choose Iniquity rather than affliction, is a great and heavy Charge.

The Doctrinal truth which arises from the words thus opened, is this, **That it is a very evil choice for any soul under heaven, to choose the least sin, rather then the greatest affliction.** Better be under the greatest affliction then be under the guilt or power of any sin: it is true, that neither sin, nor affliction is to be chosen: affliction in it self is an Evil, and sin is an Evil, but the object of the Will is good, and choice is of the Will, therefore neither (barely considered as in themselves) can be chosen; but because of some evils, the less in comparison of the greater, may come under a notion of good, and so may be sometimes chosen the will cannot choose any thing but under the notion of good, either real, or in appearance: and though affliction be in it self an evil, yet in regard

of sin, it may come under the notion of good, and that's to be chosen rather than sin: Now this is the work I have to do, to make out this Conclusion to you, That any affliction is to be chosen rather than any sin; that there is more evil in any sin, the least sin, than in the greatest affliction.

My principal business is, To charge mens consciences with the evil of their sin, and shew to them how much evil there is in sin: all men are a raid of afflictions, and troubled at affliction, but where's the man or woman that fears sin, and flies from it as from a Serpent, and is troubled at sin more then any affliction? That there is more evil in sin than in affliction, in the general (I sup|pose is granted of all, none dare deny it; but because they do not see how this is, they have not convincing arguments to bring this truth with power unto their souls: but I hope before I have done with this Point, that I shall make it clear to every ones conscience, That there is more evil in sin, than in affliction; not only more evil in sin, than in outward trouble in the world but more evil in sin, than in al the miseries and torments of Hell itself.

Suppose that God should bring any of you to the very brink of that bottomless gulf and open it to you, and there you should see those damned creatures lie sweltering under the wrath of the infinite God, and there you should hear the dreadful and hideous cries and shrieks of those that are under such soul amazing, and soul-sinking torments through the wrath of the Almighty; yet I say there is more evil in one sinful thought, than there is in all these everlasting burnings: and that is that which I shall endeavor to clear and prove to every mans conscience, that we shall not only see it an ill choice that we choose sin rather than affliction, but (if it come in competition) to choose sin rather than al the tortures and torments of Hell, howsoever many of you admit of sin upon very easy terms; yet the truth is, that if it should come into competition whether we would endure al the torments that there are in Hell to all eternity rather than to commit one sin, I say, if our spirits were as they

should be, we would rather be willing to endure al these torments, than commit the least sin.

And Brethren do not think this is a high strain, for that come to speak in the Name of God come not to speak Hyperbolically, to raise expressions higher than the things are in their reality; no, I come not for that end, and I should take the Name of God in vain if I should do so, therefore I dare not raise things beyond that which they are in reality in themselves: Therefore know, whatsoever I shall say unto you in this thing, that they are not words or expressions, but I speak as in the name of God as I would take it upon mine own conscience, having to deal between God and you in this great work, and in this place to deliver this truth, That there is more evil in the least sin, than in al the miseries that possible a creature is capable of, either here or in Hell besides: I hope if I shall make out this to you, you will then believe that sure you have not yet understood the sinfulness of sin, that yet the burden of sin has not lain upon you to be felt as the burden of sin▪ Now then that I may fully convince you, That there is more Evil in the least sin, than in any affliction.

CHAP. II.

The Servants of God, have Chose the most dreadful afflictions rather than the least sin.

First, Those servants of God that have been guided by the wisdom of God, to make their choice, they have rather chose the sorest and most dreadful afflictions in this world than willingly to commit the least sin: as now, if you would but turn your thoughts to what you have read or heard of the martyrs, what hideous, and grievous

torments did they suffer; the boiling of their bodies in scalding Lead, laying of their naked backs upon hot Gridirons, rending and tearing their members a pieces with horses, the pulling of their flesh off from their bodies with pinchers, and others by red hot burning tongs, their enduring their flesh to be scorched with broiling of it, first on the one side, and afterward on the other side; Yea, weak Women have endured this, To have their flesh harrowed with stones and sharp irons, to have their bodies flayed, and then thrown into rivers of cold ice; and a thousand more whatsoever Hell and wicked men could devise: they were content to endure al this, and certainly could they have devised ten thousand times more exquisite torments then they did, they would have been content to have endured that, and whatsoever else, rather than to act against their consciences the least sin, and they accounted this to be a good choice, when as they saw sin against their consciences on the one hand, and al their torments on the other, they did rather embrace these tortures, then embrace that sin.

For this their choice they are renowned in the hearts of the saints to all generations: yea, the Holy Ghost does witness, That they have a good report, Heb. 11. Those that suffered sawing asunder, and scourging, and went up and down in sheepskins and Goats skins, in leather breeches and doublets, and suffered the spoiling of their goods and of al that they had, these had a good report, and the Holy Ghost commends them for their choice.

Many of you when it comes to it will be more loathe to loose a groat than commit a sin, more loathe to endure the least shame or a nickname, than to commit a sin: Are there not many servants here, or children, will tell a lie (when they have done an evil) rather than suffer a little shame in the Family from their parents, or masters, or fellow servants, and children. What a difference is there between thy heart, and the heart of the martyrs?

They could endure al tortures on their bodies that could be devised, rather than to commit any known sin against their consciences; and

thou wilt venture to commit a known sin against thy conscience, rather than to be found out in some fault, and have an angry word, or a little shame: If it be but to gain two pence they will tell a lie, and are willing to choose sin rather than endure the least trouble; a mighty difference between thee and them.

You know how it was with Paul, when he speaks of afflictions these be his expressions, but light and momentary, but for a moment, but they work an exceeding weight of glory: (mark) light afflictions, what were they? you would account them heavier if they were upon you. blessed Paul (that great vessel to bear the name of God as great an instrument of God's glory as any in the world except Christ himself, and yet this Paul) was whipped up & down as if he had been a rogue, put into the stocks, had not clothes to cover his nakedness, had not bread to eat, and was accounted the off scouring of the world; and yet he accounts all this but light.

But when he comes to sin, that is heavy, Oh wretched man that I am! Thus he gives a dreadful shriek at sin; see what a difference he makes between affliction and sin, and accounts it abundantly more evil to be in sin, than in affliction. And so Christ himself▪ that is the wisdom of the Father, and therefore could not choose but judge right, and yet he was content for the sake of poor souls, to come and under go al kind of affliction, and pain, and sorrow, so as to be made a man of sorrows, according as the Scripture speaks; How was he content to have his body whipped and scourged, was laughed at and scorned, and though he was possessor of heaven and earth, yet had not a house to put his head in; yea, to bear the wrath of God for the sin of man, to be made a curse for man, under the curse of the law, and to be under that pain & extremity through the wrath of his Father, when he sweat great drops of blood?

All this Christ would endure: But now if it had been to have committed the least sin to have saved al the world, Christ would never have done it: though Christ could be content to suffer all kind of miseries, yea, the wrath of his Father; yet had it been to have

committed the least sin, Christ would have let al the world be Damned eternally rather than he would have done that, there is so much evil in it. afflictions taken in the strength and latitude of them, yet they have no greater evil in them then Christ is capable of. I say, take them in the strength and latitude of them, certainly there was never any affliction since the world began endured like Christ's, and yet these be no other than Christ, God and man, is capable of; and it may stand with the blessedness of his Divinity, That that person, both God and man, could be under such afflictions: Christ was content with these, He made his soul an offering for sin: But sin is so great an evil, that Christ is not capable of it.

Christ never entertained the least thought of it, but cast it off if it came to him: therefore certainly there is more evil in the least sin, than there is in the greatest affliction: The afflictions that Christ endured, though they were not every way the same with the damned in hell, yet certainly there was the wrath of God as really and truly upon Christ, as truly as upon the damned in hell, as really though I say not in every kind in the same way and manner; and therefore see, Christ was capable of that evil, of the wrath of the Almighty upon his soul, and yet not capable of sin, he was willing to undergo that, and yet not to have the least guilt of sin applied to him; and therefore certainly there is more evil in the least sin, than in the greatest affliction.

CHAP. III.

There is some good in affliction, but none in sin:

First, no good of Entity: Secondly, No good of Causality: Thirdly, No good principle from whence sin can come: Fourthly, No Good

annexed as is to afflictions, viz. 1 Of Promise. 2 Of Evidence. 3 Of Blessing. Also Five different workings of the hearts of the Saints under sin and under affliction: Fifthly, It's not capable of any Good, 1 Add all the good to sin that all the creatures in heaven and earth have, yet it cannot make sin good. 2 Good ends though 1. to help against temptation, 2. to do good to others, 3. to glorify God cannot make sin good. 4 God can not make sin good. Sixthly, It's not comparatively good.

WEL, for further arguments, though this one thing were enough to stop all mouths in the world, and make e|very Soul subscribe and acknowledge that there is greater evil in the least sin, than in any affliction: I shall be large in this argument, because it is of wonderful concernment, to stop men in their course of sin, and to humble them for sin, and make them resolve against sin, and to see their miserable estate in sin, and so see their need of Christ.

First, I shall fully make it out, That affliction is to be chosen rather than sin.

- 1 First, Because there is some good in affliction, but none in sin.
- 2 Because sin has more Evil in it, than affliction.

This Second I shall shew in the following Chapters.

First, affliction has some good in it, but sin has none: You know what David said, Ps. 119 71. It is good for me that I have been Afflicted; thus he spoke of affliction: But when St. Paul speaks of sin, he said, In me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good, Rom. 7. as if he should say, So far as I am unregenerate, in my unregenerate part there is no good at all; he calls sin by the name of flesh; there is no good at all in sin.

First, There is no good of entity or being; all things that have a being, there is some good in them; for God has a being, and every thing that has a being has some good in it, because it is of God; but

sin is a non entity, a no being: Its rather the deprivation of a Being then any being at all; & here is a great mystery of iniquity, That that which is a non-entity in it self, yet should have such a mighty efficacy to trouble heaven and earth. This is a great mystery.

Secondly, It has no good of causality: that is, sin is so evil, as it can bring forth no good: afflictions bring forth good: sin is such an evil as it cannot be made good: not an instrument for good: afflictions are made instrumental for good.

Object. No, will you say, cannot God bring good out of sin? And does not God bring good out of sin?

Answ. To this I answer, true, God brings good out of sin, that is occasionally, but not instrumentally: He may take occasion to bring good out of sin committed: but (mark) God never makes sin an instrument for good; for an instrument comes under somewhat as an efficiency: for an instrument gives some power towards the effect; but thus God never useth sin, God never made sin an instrument of any good; that is, that sin should have any power any influence into that good effect that God brings out of it as afflictions have; God does not only take occasion by afflictions to do his people good, but he makes them channels to convey the mercies to their souls: And thus afflictions have an instrumental efficacy in them, to do men good: Therefore said the Holy Ghost in Heb. 12. He chastens them for their profit, that they might be partakers of his holiness: The greatest good the creature is capable of, affliction is made oftentimes the instrument to convey: And in Isa. 27. By this the iniquity of Jacob shall be purged: That is, by this as an instrument; but sin is never thus: sin is never sanctified by God to do good to any soul: afflictions are sanctified by God to do good; therefore sin is a greater evil than affliction: sin is so evil that it is not capable of any work of God to sanctify it for good; but no afflictions are so evil but that they are capable of a work of God to sanctify them for abundance of good. This is the second.

Thirdly, sin has greater evil than affliction in the rise of it; there is no good principle whence sin comes, but there are good principles from whence afflictions arise: as thus, Whom he loves he chastens, he chastens every son whom he receives; so that chastisement has a principle of love, but it cannot be said whom God loves he suffers to fall into sin, that this can be a fruit of his Love: it can never be said that it is a fruit of God's love that such a man or woman commits sin; but it may be said it is a fruit of God's love that such a man or woman is afflicted, therefore there is more good in afflictions than there is in sin.

Nay, observe this, many times God does not afflict a man or woman because he does not love them, but it can never be said God suffers not a man or woman to sin because he does not love them: I say, there is many a man or woman goeth on in a prosperous condition, and they meet not with such afflictions as others meet withal; and the reason is, Because God has not such a love to them as to other men, but it cannot be said thus, That there be such men that keep them selves from such sins that others do wallow in, & therefore they do it because God has not such a love to them as to others, it cannot be said so; but it may be said such be not afflicted so much as others because God does not love them as well as others.

It is a dreadful fruit of God's hatred that he does not afflict them, but it is not a fruit of his hatred to let them fall into sin. I remember a Speech an Ancient has upon that place of Hosea, I will not punish their Daughters when they commit adultery, Hos. 4. 14. said he, Oh dismal wrath of God that God will not afflict them and punish them! But now if this be so that want of afflictions may come from God's wrath and the being put into affliction may come from God's love, certainly then there is not so much evil in affliction as is in sin; for it can never be said so of sin.

Fourthly, There is no good annexed to sin as is to affliction: as thus, 1 Not the good of promise: 2ly Not the good of Evidence: Not the good of blessing annexed to sin as is to affliction.

As now afflictions has abundance of promises, I will be with you in the fire and in the water: And by this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged: and I could spend the remainder of the book to open the many great promises God has annexed to afflictions: but God has not annexed any promise of good to sin; when God afflicts then you may challenge God's promise, Psal. 119. 75. said David, In very faithfulness hast thou afflicted me, O Lord: this is but a fruit of thy promise afflictions: and thou art faithful in afflicting, but sin has no promise annexed to it.

Yet it may be you will say that all shall work together for the good of them that love God: But this does not go in way of a promise; this Scripture will not bear it, though it be true God may occasionally work good to his people by sin; but this Scripture cannot bear it, that there is any promise for it in that place: For, First it is against the scope of that text, for the scope of that place is to uphold the hearts of God's people in afflictions: For he said, all things: but sin is no thing; and all things work together: and so he speaks of that which has an efficacy in it, that will together with God, work for good; but sin has not any efficacy to work on, for God will not work by that. That is one thing then, affliction has the good of promise annexed to it, but so has not sin: therefore there is some good in affliction, but none in sin.

Secondly. affliction has the good of evidence: God makes our afflictions signs of our sonship and adoption; If you be not afflicted then are you bastards, and not sons: And Phil. 1. Be not troubled, or terrified: trouble of the saints is an evidence of salvation to them, but a token of their perdition who are the terrifiers or troublers of them, but a sign of your salvation: But it is not so of sin.

Thirdly. Further, There is a blessing propounded to afflictions, blessed be those that mourn, and blessed be the man whom thou chastisest and teachest in thy Law; but there is no blessing allowed to sin, it is not capable of it: there is not that good annexed to sin

that is to affliction; and therefore affliction is to be chosen rather than sin.

And from hence see the different working of the hearts of the saints under their sin, and under their affliction; That follows from this head, That there is some good annexed to affliction that is not to sin.

First, hence it follows, that the saints can cry to God with liberty of spirit under affliction, but they cannot under sin: They can go to God, and tell God their afflictions, and challenge God with a holy boldness in afflictions; but who can go to God and challenge God because he has told a Lie, or the like? does this make them go with a holy boldness to God, and challenge God's promise, because I have committed such and such a sin?

Secondly, When affliction does come, a gracious heart can kiss the rod and accept of the punishment of his sin, but now a gracious heart can never be well pleased with his sin, can never accept of sin, though God punish one sin with another sometimes, yet I say, there cannot be a well pleasedness with sin, and a kissing of that.

Thirdly, A gracious heart may rejoice in affliction, and have abundance of comfort in afflictions, account it all joy (said the Holy Ghost) when you fall into trials and afflictions, but now he can never rejoice in sin, no man can rejoice in sin though God should turn sin to never so much good: one cannot rejoice in sin, and have that comfort he may in affliction.

Fourthly, A gracious heart may bless God for afflictions, bless God that ever he did cast him into an afflicted estate; but he can never bless God for putting him into a sinful estate, though God do work good out of it: Nay further, That good a gracious heart has sometimes by afflictions may encourage him to be more willing to go into affliction again when God calls him to it, but if a gracious heart should get good occasionally by sin, yet this good cannot

encourage him to fall into sin again, this were a desperate wickedness if he should.

Fifthly, A gracious heart may desire of God that he would not take away affliction till it be sanctified, and that he would continue it till it be sanctified; but no man may or ought to pray thus, Lord, continue me in this sin till I am humbled: therefore you see there is abundance of difference between affliction and sin, one has a great deal of good annexed to it, and the other has none at all.

Sin it is so evil that it is not capable of any good at all; the air though it be dark, yet it is capable of light; that were a dismal darkness that were not capable of light to come to it: and that which is bitter, though never so bitter, yet it is capable of receiving that which will sweeten it: that which is never so venomous, yet is capable of such things as will make it wholesome; but sin is so dark that it is incapable of light; so bitter, as there is no way to make it sweet; so venomous as it is no way capable of any wholesomeness: now for the clearing of this, consider these three Things:

Put all the good in heaven and earth, and in all the creatures in heaven and earth together: suppose the quintessence of all the good of all the creatures of heaven and earth were put together, and bring that to sin, and ad it to it, it would not make it good: no, sin would remain still as evil as before it was. Now that must needs be poison indeed, that bring all the sovereign things in the world and put to it, yet there would not be a dimension of the least strength of that poison, and so it is with sin: therefore (I beseech you brethren observe it) those men and women be mightily mistaken, that think (I have been a sinful creature indeed, but now I will amend and reform and be better) that by adding some good to their former sinful Lives, it will make all good: Oh! know that there is so much evil in sin, that the addition of all the good of all the creatures in heaven and earth cannot make it less evil than before; so that you must not only now think to live better & ad good unto your former evil, but you must take a course for the taking away of the former

evil, for the delivering you from the guilt and stain and filth of your former sin.

Sin is not capable of good; All those good ends that any men have in the commission of sin, yet do not make their sin the better: that cannot make sin good, because they have good ends: as thus,

There may be three good ends some may think they have in the commission of sin.

1 They may perhaps think that by commission of some sin they may further some grace, do good to others, or glorify God; there may be such deceit in the heart: as thus,

1 They may think such a sin will help such a grace, and help against such a temptation, and such a sin may help my humility; and it is ordinary this temptation (when in trouble of conscience) make away thy self, and then thou wilt sin no more; for so long as I live I shall sin against God, & therefore make away thy self and so cease to sin: But know, if thou lay violent hands upon thy self, and think thou shalt have this good by it to sin no more; yet thy sin is wicked and abominable, though thou put this good end upon it, though it were possible to increase grace never so much by the least sinful thought, we must not commit this least sinful thought for never so good an end, as to help forward such a grace.

2 A Second end may be to do good to others, and I say if it were possible, if a man might be a means to save the whole world if he would commit one sin, if he could save the whole world from eternal torments by the commission of one sin, you should suffer the whole world to perish rather than commit one sin, there is so much evil in sin.

It is the expression of Augustine in a tractate of his concerning an officious lie, a friend of his wrote to him to answer this question about telling of a lie, Whether he might not tell a lie, to do good to another man?

Many think, What though I do tell a lie so I do another good; indeed if I may do hurt then I must not, but if I may do good, may I not tell a lie, (well) this Question was brought to Augustine, and said he, Thou must not tell a lie to save the whole world: this was his answer.

Suppose that the soul of thy father, mother, or child, (this is but a supposition) or the like, should lie upon it to be saved, or damned if thou wilt commit one sin, suppose such a temptation should come, thou must not commit one sin, though the soul of thy father or mother, or all the world lay upon it.

Now it is another manner of thing to commit a sin to gain a coin; Oh now by a deceitful word I may have this gain, if it were twenty shillings, thou must not venture upon sin to save the world; therefore not to gain six pence or a shilling: Certainly these be the truths of God, and for one to come and speak these things in a solemn manner in the presence of God if it were not upon deliberation and good search, it were a great boldness; and therefore certainly believe there is such evil in sin: and though you pass by a thousand idle thoughts and evil actions and they be gone with you and you make little of them: but if you did know what the evil of sin were, you would look upon them with amazement, and cry out, Lord what have I done!

Men and women go abroad, and before they come home meet with Company, and there swear many oaths commit lewdness, have told lies, and done wickedness; Oh did they but know what they have done that day, they would come home wringing their hands and ready to tear their hair, and lie tumbling upon the very ground for the evil that they have done.

3. Further, We must not commit sin though for the glory of God: for many put this end upon it: as the papists, this is their principle, to advance the Catholic cause they think they may do any wickedness, murder princes, blow up parliaments, keep no faith, promises,

oaths: take liberty to rise in rebellion, to commit all outrages, and cut all the Protestants throats; and to advance the Catholic cause take the sacrament upon it, and yet think because tis for so good an end (as they conceive) therefore they may commit any wickedness.

It is certain God needs not the Devil to help his cause: but suppose by sin God's glory might be furthered in some particular, yet we must not commit the least sin for the greatest glory of God that can be imagined: so much evil there is in sin. And therefore, for such that many times strain their conscience to do that which their consciences have regret upon, and their conscience told them they should not do it, yet merely upon this pretence, that they might do service in the Church.

Oh their ministry is dear, to do good to souls, to preach to so many souls, by this means God may have glory, and hereupon they venture to strain their consciences to have liberty to preach; this certainly is a great evil, we must not strain our consciences in any thing to commit the least sin upon imagination of the greatest glory that can be brought to God. Good ends put upon sins, cannot make them better. This is the second thing.

Fourthly, All the good that God himself can bring from sin, can never make sin good: such evil there is in it, that the infinite power and goodness of God can never make sin good: true, God may destroy sin, Yet that which is sin all the power of God cannot make that good: Such evil there is in sin. This is a fifth thing.

6. There is no good in sin, not comparatively. That is, though it be true one sin is less than another; yet no sin is good in comparison of another. In affliction, as one affliction is less than another, so one affliction is good in comparison of another: a less affliction is good in comparison of a greater; and all affliction is good in comparison of sin. But in sin, though one sin be less than another, yet the least sin is not good in comparison of the greatest: and take the least sin

of all it is not good in comparison of any affliction. And you shall see how this is useful to us.

CHAP. IV.

Uses: And Nine Consequences of Excellent Use,

viz 1. sin is not the Work of God. 2. sins promises are all Delusions. 3. sin cannot be the Object of a rational creature. 4. Nothing that's good should be ventured for sin. 5. Nothing that's good to be made serviceable to sin. 6. The mistake of making sin the chief good. 7. Time spent in sin lost. 8. The wicked, useless members. 9. sin need no debate whether to be done, or not.

Hence we see for our Instruction, that that maxim many have, has nothing to do in point of sin; to wit, of two evils you must choose the least: True, in regard of the evil of affliction, comparing one affliction with another, so we may choose the least; but this cannot have truth in matter of sin, that of two sins we may choose the least; because though one sin be less than another, yet the least sin can never come under the notion of good comparatively. As all other evils be good comparatively, though never so great evils, yet comparatively they may be good. Yet sin can have no goodness any way comparatively. Therefore of two evils we must not choose the least, in this sense.

1 Because sin in it self is sinful: And

2 Because, Choosing the least can never be a means to prevent the greater, but rather to make way for the greater. And Brethren observe it, (for it may be useful in the course of our lives) God never brings any man or woman to such straits, that of necessity they

must choose one sin, choose this or the other sin. When two sins shall stand in competition, we may conceit such straits to our selves, yet there is no such real straits. Though God does bring men into such straits that of necessity they must choose one affliction, either this or that affliction: So David was brought into such a strait, that he must choose Famine, Sword, or Pestilence; yea, God does never bring men into such straits, that of necessity they must choose this or that sin; thou deceivest thine own heart if thou thinkest thou art brought into such a strait.

Therefore this is a vain thing, and savors of an exceeding carnal heart, when men are doing that which is evil, for them to say, I were as good do this as worse: As for instance now, Suppose some keep at home upon the Lords day and mend their Clothes, if any rebuke them, they will say, Better do this than worse; better do this than go to the Ale-house.

This is true, but this savors of a carnal heart, to think that you must choose one sin rather than another; thou must not choose any of them, both of these are evil, though one may be less evil than the other. Or if some spend their time in Play, when they are rebuked, they put it off with this shift, Better do this than worse: and so they go abroad and spend their time in seeing Plays; and say, Better do this then worse; 'tis yet true though this be not so great a sin as others, if it be a sin it must not be done upon any terms; and thou deceivest thine own heart in this conceit, that thou wert better do this than worse, for sin cannot be good, and so not to be chosen at any time. Thus we see there is no good in sin, and a great deal of good in affliction.

Hence there follows these Nine consequences, of excellent use for us.

First Consequence.

If there be no good in sin; then certainly sin is not the work of God, for God saw all his works and they were very good, but sin has no goodness in it, therefore not of God. God disclaims it.

The Second Consequence.

If this be so, then hence whatsoever promises sin do make to any people, Certainly they be all but delusions. Why? Because sin is not good in any kind: sin can bring no good to any soul. If any one say; Oh but sin bring pleasure; and does it not bring profit, and honors in the world? do not many live in high esteem in the world by sinful courses? have they not pleasures and delights in sinful Courses; But cursed be the Pleasures, Honors, Profits that come in by sin. Certainly if sin promise any good, it deludes you, & thy seduced heart deceives thee, and thou dost feed upon ashes: for there is no good in sin.

The Third Consequence.

Hence it follows, That no sin can be the object of the will of a Rational creature; because the true object of the will, for it to close withal, is good. Oh the desperate deceit in the hearts of men in the world, that whereas God has made the will, (and put it into a rational soul) to be of that nature, that the only object of it, is good one way or other, yet they are so miserably mistaken that they choose sin under colour of good: certainly there is no good in sin.

The Fourth Consequence.

Hence it follows, that nothing that is good should be ventured for sin, why? because sin has no good: and will you venture the loss of good to get that which has no good; sure if sin have no good in it, then there should not be the loss of any good ventured for it. You would not venture at Sea or Land, any good for that which has no good. Oh how infinitely be men deceived, that venture the loss of God, peace of conscience; loss of Credit, health, estate, loss of all for their lusts. Oh this is a mighty mistake, thou hast ventured the loss

of a great deal of good, for that which has no good at all. Know this day God presents to thy soul the desperate delusions of it, what? wilt thou lose God, Heaven, and Christ, and all for that which has no good? but thus do many venture all the good in God, in Christ, in Heaven, in eternal life; they are laid on the one side as it were, and their lusts on the other; and they will venture the loss of all that good that they may attain the supposed good in sin. What hast thou done Oh Man or Woman; that hast ventured the loss of all good for that which has no good at all, nay all evil in it?

The Fifth Consequence

It follows, if there be no good at all in sin, then we ought to make nothing that is good to be any way serviceable to our sin; as thus we must not take the good creatures of God and make them serviceable to our lusts that have no good at all; take not the faculties of your souls and members of your bodies to make them serviceable to your lusts. Oh how do Men and Women abuse the good things of God to make them serve their corruptions. Yea Brethren, there be many that abuse the ordinances of God, the duties of God's worship, the graces of God's spirit, to make them serviceable to their lusts; to serve their pride, and self ends, and self seekings. Do but think of it, if it be a great wickedness to take meat and drink, any of God's good creatures and make them serviceable to thy lusts, Oh how great a wickedness is it to take the graces of God's spirit, working of God's spirit, enlargement in prayer, and following of sermons, and profession of Religion, to make these serve thy lusts that have no good at all in them?

The Sixth Consequence.

Hence (if sin have no good at all in it) follows this; How be they mistaken that make sin their chief good as thousand thousands in the world, their chief good that their hearts are set upon, is, satisfying themselves in some base lust. I put it to your souls this day as in the name of God, what is it that thy heart is set upon as

thy chief Good? is it not that height of wickedness that I speak of? Such a secret lust thou livest in? that thou ventur'est thy eternal estate upon? Oh wickedness above measure.

The Seventh Consequence.

Hence followeth this then, That all the time that we spend in a sinful estate is all lost time. Oh look to this you young ones, all the time that you spend in the vanity of your youth is all lost time; and you that have lived til you are old, & a long time in a sinful estate, you have lost all your time. Oh the time upon which Eternity depends is all lost; for you have spent it in the ways of sin, that has no good in it.

The Eight Consequence

If sin have no good in it, then all wicked men that live in the ways of sin, are useless members in the world; burdens upon the earth; unprofitable members, that go on in the ways of sin, that neither have nor can have any good.

The Ninth Consequence.

Lastly, if sin have no good at all in it; hence then when there is a temptation to sin there needs no deliberation about it, whether it should be admitted or not; if once thou knowest it to be a sin, thou needest not Reason the condition of admission or not, or what will follow, but presently reject it, without deliberation. Why? because there is no good in it; any thing that has but a little good, we may (though a greater good be offered) deliberate the business before we accept of the one, & cast off the other, but if there be no good there needs no deliberation,.

If any thing be pronounced to be sin, to be prejudicial to the estate of thy soul, This must not be deliberated upon. Therefore this is a vain plea that men have, what kind of government must we have if this be taken away? First examine if this be evil or not evil that we

have, if evil, it must be rejected without deliberation what we must have in the stead. Indeed if it were good we might deliberate, but if be it evil and a sin, it must be cast off without deliberation. Brethren, it is of great use this I speak of, because that strength sin has usually got, is from deliberation about it.

I beseech you observe this; Take heed for ever of reasoning with Temptation, of consulting and casting about in your thoughts, what will become of it? what trouble may come by this if I hearken not to this?

Take heed of reasoning, if the Devil do but get you to reason about it, he has got it half granted already: you need not reason with any temptation, but cast it off presently, because sin has no good in it. Oh that God would convince al our hearts of these things.

CHAP. V.

There is more Evil in the least sin, than in the greatest affliction,

Opened in six Particulars, being the General Scope of the whole Treatise.

TO go on to that which remains. I am yet further to make out to you, That sin is worse than affliction. First I have shewed, that there is no good at all in sin; and there is good in affliction.

Now Secondly, There is more Evil in the least sin, than there is in the greatest affliction.

This I am now to make out unto you in these Six Particulars.

- First, sin is most opposite unto God himself, the chief Good.
- Secondly, sin is most opposite unto Mans good: affliction is not so opposite to the good of the creature as sin is.
- Thirdly, sin is opposite unto all Good in General; and so will be discovered to be an universal Evil.
- Fourthly, sin, it is the Evil of all other Evils; it is that which is the very venom and poison of all other Evils whatsoever, therefore greatest.
- Fifthly, There is a kind of Infiniteness in sin, though not properly Infinite, it cannot be so, yet in the Nature of it, it has a kind of infiniteness.
- Sixthly, The Evil of it is discovered, In the conformity sin has with the Devil; there is no creature that conspires against God, but only Devils and sinful Men.

These be the six things to be opened, for the discovery of the evil of sin: And I beseech you seriously attend to what shall be delivered in these, for I hope before I have done to make it appear to every ones conscience that shall vouchsafe to read, attend, and consider what I say, that sin is another manner of business than the world thinks it to be. Oh that your hearts might come to see yourselves to be as you are, in an ill Case, in a worse condition than you imagine: and I beseech you give way to this, and be willing to hear it, for though it seem a hard Doctrine, yet it is a Soul saving Doctrine; and for want of this, many thousand thousands of Souls perish, because they never understood what sin meant.

Many thousands in hell if they had known what sin had been, it might have delivered them from everlasting flames. God has reserved you alive, and who knows but for this end, To understand what sin is, that so your hearts may be humbled, and so everlastingly saved through Christ. Brethren, but that the way to understand sin, is the way to be humbled for sin; and to be humbled for sin, is the way to have sin pardoned, and the Soul saved, I should never treat upon such a Doctrine as this is: therefore I beseech you

mark what I say, and see whether I do not make out these things I undertake.

CHAP. VI.

Sin most Opposite to God the chief Good

Opened in four Heads: 1. sin most opposite to God's Nature 2. sin opposite in its working against God. 3. sin wrong God more than any thing else. 4. sin strikes at God's Being.

First, It is most opposite to God who is the chief Good. The meanest Capacity may easily understand, That which is most opposite to the chief good, that must needs be the chief evil: I suppose the weakest in this Congregation will understand this way of Reasoning, that evil that is most opposite to the chief good, that must needs be the chief evil; but sin is that which is most opposite to God, who is the chief good, and therefore must needs be the chief evil. That then is that I must make good.

Quest. How does it appear that sin is most opposite to the chief good?

Answ. Brethren, When I have made out this, I shall shew sin to be very sinful, and the greatest venom of sin lies in this one thing I am now opening. Should I tell you never so much of the evil of sin, in the danger that comes by it, Hell that follows it: should I write a Book about Hell and Damnation for sin, it has not so much to humble the Soul in a saving manner, as this I now treat about.

Perhaps I might scare you in preaching of Hell and damnation, but discovering this I now speak of, the opposition sin has unto God; it has more in it to humble the Soul in a saving manner, and to cause

the Soul to feel sin to be most evil where it is most evil; to be the greatest burden where it is most weighty. This Point I say has more power in it than any other; therefore let me set upon this, and see how I make this good, That sin is most opposite to God the chief good. There be these four things discover the truth of this.

- First, sin in its own Nature, is most opposite to the Nature of God.
- Secondly, sin in the Working of it, is a continual working against God. The Nature of sin is opposite to God's Nature, and the working of sin is most opposite to God.
- Thirdly, sin, it does wrong God more than any thing else.
- Fourthly, Yea, sin strikes at the very Being of God so far as it can do.

So then let us sum it up again: That which in its own Nature is most opposite to God, 2ly That which in its working, is continually working against God, 3ly That we do most wrong God, and 4ly That which strikes at the very Being of God Himself, that must needs be the greatest evil: but so does sin.

CHAP. VII.

Sin in it Self Opposite to God, Shewed in Five Things,

1. Nothing directly contrary to God but sin: 2. God would cease to be God if but one drop of sin in Him: 3. sin so opposite to God that he cease to be God if He did but cause sin to be in another: 4. He should cease to be God if he should but approve it in others: 5. sin would cause God to cease to be, if he did not hate sin as much as he does.

First, That sin in it self is most opposite to God. To understand this, take these five things; and they rightly understood will make it as clear as the Sun at noon day.

1 The Nature of sin is so opposite to God, that there is nothing so contrary to Him as sin God has nothing but sin contrary to him (take it so•) therefore it must needs be opposite; for God has nothing contrary to His own Nature but sin, it is the only contrary, the only opposite to God. There is nothing perfectly contrary to another, but it is so contrary as there is nothing but that which is so contrary as that is; for that is the rule of contraries, that there must be one to one: there may be diversity and difference of many things to one; but an absolute perfect Contrariety, can be only of one to one.

Now there is nothing contrary to God's nature but only sin; God has no object that he can look upon contrary to himself in all the world, but only sin: For there is nothing else except sin, but it is from God, and by God, and for God: Now that which is from Him, and by Him, and for Him, cannot have contrariety to Him: but sin is neither from Him, nor by Him, nor for Him; but that is directly contrary unto Him: therefore there is more evil in sin than in any other thing.

It is not so with affliction, affliction is from God, and by God, and for God, and is not contrary unto God, because it is from Himself.

2 Sin is so opposite to God, that if it were possible that the least drop of it could get into God's nature, God would instantly cease to be a God, He could not continue one moment to be a God any longer; such evil there is in sin. If there should be such a poison, that if one drop of it should come into the ocean, all the whole ocean would be at an instant poisoned; yea, all destroyed and annihilated in one instant; you would say that were a very fearful poison. If a drop of poison should be so poisonous, that if one drop of it got into Heaven, that then presently the sun, moon, and stars would fail down, and be annihilated; you would say this were a

venomous poison. Certainly if but one drop of sin should get into God, the infinite being of God would instantly cease to be.

The Sea, though vast, is not infinite; the Heaven, though vast, is not infinite; the infinite God would have no Being at all if sin should get into God; therefore it is very evil: Therefore (also) we ought to have holy thoughts of God, seeing sin is so infinitely contrary to his Nature.

3. So opposite is sin to God, that if God should be but the cause of any sin in any other; He would instantly Cease to be a God. It strikes at the very life of God, He would cease to be God, he could be God no longer if he should be the Cause of any sin in any other. We had need take heed therefore how we father sin upon God, that he should be the cause of sin, for such is the evil of sin that God must cease to be, if he should be but any cause to give any efficacy to sin in us. Indeed for afflictions God will own that, he said in Amos 3. 6. Is there any evil in a City and the Lord has not done it? and in Mich. <◇>. 3. it is said there that God deviseth evil: If there be no evil in the City but God does it, yea (said the Prophet) God deviseth evil; there is no evil of punishment, but God deviseth it, God will be content to own it, to be the Author of all the torments, of the damned in hell, God will own; God will say I have done it, and I am the Author of all the torments of all the damned in hell; but such is the evil of sin, if God were the Author of that, He could not be God any longer but would cease to be God.

4. Such is the evil of sin, that if God should but approve of it and like it, if he should but like it when another have committed it, even that would cause him to cease to be God. Wicked men be ready to think because God is patient and long suffering, that God is of the same judgment with themselves, Psal. 50. 21. Because I held my Peace thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself; but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes; it is the just temper and frame of wicked and ungodly men to this day; because God holds his peace, and comes not upon them to revenge

sin presently; they be ready to think that God approves sin, and is of their judgment.

Indeed (said a wicked man) many Ministers cry out of sin that it is very grievous, but I hope God will give liberty to my ways and walkings, sure God is not against them, he approves of them; otherwise why should God suffer me in them, and be so patient towards me in them?

Oh! know when thou hast any such thought of God as this, thou blasphemest God: If that were true that thou thinkest, That God did approve of thy wicked ways, God must cease to be God, God would be God no longer.

Quest. Why? How does this appear?

Answ. This is the reason of it: because then God were not infinitely holy, and holiness is God's Being; and if God be not infinitely holy, he is not God at all, but ceases to be presently. Which is impossible, and blasphemous to think.

5. Such is the evil of sin, so opposite to God's Nature, that if God did not hate sin as much as he does, he would cease to be a God, not only if he did allow of it, and like of it; for he may permit it in his creature and not like of it: But I say, If God did not hate sin so much as he does hate it, if it could be conceived that God could but hate sin somewhat less than he does (I say) he would instantly cease to be a God; he could not remain to be God one moment if he did cease to hate sin in any degree less than he does.

Quest. Why? How does this appear?

Answ. Thus; If God cease to hate sin (I do not speak of the manifesting of his hatred, but that which is his nature, that is proportionable to hatred, as we say) if God did not hate it so much as he does, then he did not hate sin infinitely, for there cannot be any infinite and less than infinite stand together, these two cannot

ever stand, that it should be infinite and less then so and remain infinite, if it be infinite it remains so; if there should be a degree under that, it must be finite.

Now if God's hatred to sin were less than it is, it would be but a finite hatred, and if it were a finite hatred, then God could not be infinitely holy; for infinite holiness must needs have infinite hatred against sin.

I beseech you observe this, for you are ready to think, Though God be against sin, and hate it, yet I hope God hates it not so much as many Ministers make of it, tush God is not so much against sin as they speak of; though its true when we do a miss we must cry God mercy, and pray God to forgive us; yet to make so much of sin as they do; and that God sets himself so much against it as they say; this is but their opinion; and he hopeth God does not hate it so much as they say.

Oh! Brethren take heed of this opinion, for if God should hate sin less then he does, he should cease to be; either he must hate sin with infinite hatred, or he ceaseth to be God: So evil and opposite is sin to God's Nature.

And if these things be true, there is a great deal of evil in sin. If there be nothing so opposite to God as sin; and if but the least drop of sin should get into God, it would make God cease to be God; and if he should be but the cause of any sin in his creature he would cease to be God; and if he should but like it in his creature, he would cease to be God; and if he should but hate it less then he does, he could not be God: but al this is true; Then we had need take heed to our selves, and think certainly there is more evil in my heart, more opposition in my heart against God than I have been aware of. What say you now? Will you venture to commit sin for a groat or six pence, if there be so much opposition against God in it? Were it not better to be under any affliction than under the guilt of sin, if there be in it such opposition to God? This is the First general

Head, nothing is so opposite to God as sin: I say sin is most opposite to God.

CHAP. VIII.

The Workings of Sin is Always Against God.

The Scripture calls it, 1 Enmity. 2 Walking contrary 3 Fighting. 4 Resisting. 5 Striving. 6 Rising against God.

Secondly, As the nature of sin is opposite to God; so in the workings of sin there is a continual working against God; A sinful heart that is always stirring and working, is always working against God: And therefore you shall observe these several Expressions the Holy Ghost has concerning sin.

1 The holy Ghost calls it, Enmity to God, Rom. 8. 7. The wisdom of the flesh (the best part the flesh has) is enmity against God.

2 Yea, The holy Ghost said it is a walking contrary unto God, Levit. 26. you shall have it there in many places If you walk contrary unto me: 21. and 28. vers and divers others.

3 It is a fighting against God, Acts 5. 39. and Acts 23. 9. in these two places rejecting of the Gospel is called a fighting against God.

4 And in Acts 7. 51. You do always resist the holy Ghost; there is a company of men naturally walk contrary; resisting, and fighting against God. We see we had need take heed of opposing the Ministry of the Gospel, for while you do that, you fight against God. You think you do but oppose such and such men, but half a dozen in the parish that you oppose but certainly the opposing the Gospel is

not a fighting against us men, but against God: you may turn it off with what names you will, and put what pretences you will upon it, let me tell you, They that strike upon the lantern, offer violence to the Candle therein.

5 sin, in Scripture is called striving against God, Isa. 45. 9. Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker: Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth: So far as sin does prevail in thy heart, or in thy life, so far thou art guilty of striving with thy Maker.

6 A rising against God: By sin the Soul does rise against God. And for that you have an Expression in the 2. Micah, 8. Even my people of late are risen up as an Enemy. these be strange expressions; enmity, walking contrary, striving, fighting, resisting, rising against God; and yet this is in sin. But that I may open it further, I shall shew how sin does fight, strive, and rise against God.

CHAP. IX.

How Sin Resists God:

1 It's a hating of God. 2 It's rebellion against God. 3 It's a despising of God.

First, sin does resist God in his Authority; in his Sovereignty, in his Dominion over the creature; the language of sin is, God shall not reign. It is the setting of the Will of a base wretched creature, against the will of the infinite, eternal, glorious God. And is there not evil in this? though it may be thou does not on purpose do so, set thy will against God, yet it is so in sin, there is the setting of thy will against the will of the infinite eternal God: resisting the Sovereignty, and Majesty, and Dominion of the infinite God. Yea,

thou doest resist-God in his Law, thou resisteth and opposes God in that righteous Law of his, which he gave thee to obey.

Quest. But how is this in every sin? It may be in some great and notorious sins this may be, but is this fighting against God, striving, and rising, and walking contrary to him, (and so of the rest) is this in every sin?

Answ. For that I Answer, 1 That every sin comes from the same root, and look what venom there is in any one sin, for the nature of it, it is in every sin, though not for its degree: 'Tis true, one sin may have a higher degree of evil in it than another, but every sin is envenomed with the same evil: That which is the venom of any one sin, is the venom of all; all comes from the same root. As in a Tree, there is more Sap in an Arm of the Tree, than in a little Sprig; but the Sprig has the same Sap for kind that the Arm of the Tree has, and it al comes from the same root. So though there be more venom in some gross, crying sins, than in some others; yet there is no sin but has the same Sap, and the same venom, for the kind, that every sin has, that the worst sin has.

2 Yea, consider further, That God does not account sin only according to mans intentions in sinning; what man intends, but what the nature of the sin tends unto, not what I do aim at in my sinning, but what my sin does aim at. There is the end of the agent, and the end of the act, now tis true though the end of a sinner be not always to strive against God, and fight with God, yet the end of his sin is so, though not of the sinner; I beseech you observe how God may lay grievous sins to their charge, and that he does not account of a mans sins according to his intentions, but according to that which is in the nature of his sin as now, you would think it a strange sin, to charge any man in the world with hating of God, come to any man though the greatest sinner in the world, the most notorious villain, and charge him thus, Thou art a vile wretch thou hatest the living God; he would revile you and be ready to spit in your face: and yet it is said, He hates God: In the 1 Rom. the Apostle

in the catalogue of sins (when he would shew the state of all men by nature, for the first seven chapters of the Epistle to the Romans are to shew the nature of the Jews and Gentiles) and among others, he tells them there were those that were haters of God, among other notorious sins haters of God is one: But I will shew it in a more plainer way, in the Second Commandment.

The worst villain in the nation would spit in your face if you should say he hates God: What say you to him that will seem devout, and worship God in a more glorious way then he has appointed; the Scripture said, he hates God: See the Second Commandment, Thou shalt not make unto thy self an, graven image, nor &c. Thou shalt not bow down thy self to them, nor worship them, &c. for I will visit the sin of the Fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that HATE me: Why is this set in the Second Commandment rather than any other? That God will visit the sins of them that hate him, those that sin against the Second Commandment seem to honor God, and to love God more than any other, they be not only content to worship God in that ordinary way others do, but in a more glorious, and pompous way; well, it may be the breaker of the second Commandment pretends more love to God than any, and yet there God said they be those that hate him, so that you see God does not reek on sin according to mans intentions. Certainly the worshippers of Images do not intend to hate God, but God accounts of sin what it is in its own nature, it is as if God should say, If you will not worship me according to my way of worship, will not be content with that, but will set up a new devised worship of your own, do you call it what you will, I account it hatred of me.

Secondly, sin is rebellion: What man in the world will be convinced that he does any thing in way of rebellion against God, and yet mark, God charges sin with Rebellion even in that which they pretend they do all for God's glory; See in that Example of Saul, [1 Sam. 15](#). you shall find there, when Saul did but spare Agag and the fat of the cattle, and pretends to offer Sacrifice to God; Samuel

comes to him in the name of God, and said he, rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft. Why (might Saul say) Lord, have mercy upon me, is this such rebellion? I did it for the honor of God, I did it to sacrifice to God; and yet the Prophet of God in God's name charges Saul with rebellion. Now brethren, sin you see has that in its own nature that is not intended by men in their sinning: Therefore while I speak of the nature of sin, some may say, Indeed this may be true of sinful, wicked, notorious wretches; but is this true of me? Yea, it may be true of the most civil man or woman in God's presence this day; God may charge them with hatred and rebellion.

Thirdly, sin is a despising of God. Who would acknowledge in the way of sin they despise God? Scarce any in the world is so wicked as to acknowledge they despise God. And yet mark, God charges David with this for the commission of that one sin: see the 2 Sam. 12. 9. David did despise God.

Well, if hatred, and rebellion, and despising of God, though neither of them all be in the intention of the man in committing of them, yet God seeth it in the Nature of them. So then if sin be a despising of God, rebellion against God, walking contrary, and enmity, &c. if there be all this in sin, though in every sin the creature intend not this, but God seeth this in the root of every sin, in the venom of every sin: Therefore then, you that have gone on in the course of sin, lay but this second thing to heart, That you are those, who have walked in the course of your lives in an opposition against the infinite dreadful God of all the world; against the infinite God, this has been the course of your life.

Truly Brethren, it is enough, this that I speak of, to pluck down the stoutest heart, the most wicked and most wretched hard heart in the world.

For a Minister of God to come and charge them in God's Name, Thou hast gone on in all thy life hitherto, ever since thou wast born, in a continual opposition to God Himself, unto the infinite Lord, the

Eternal first being of all the world; thy life has been nothing but enmity to this God: thou hast as directly opposed, and striven against, and resisted Him, as ever man did oppose, and resist, and strive with another man, and this thou hast done in the whole course of thy life: Certainly there is more in this to humble a man than any thing that can be spoken to shew him the evil of sin.

When Christ would humble Saul's heart, what does he do? he comes and said, Saul, Saul, Why persecutest thou me?

Alas, thou thinkest thou hast to deal with these poor creatures, who are not able to right themselves: but be it known to thee, thou hast to deal with Me, the ever living, Eternal God. Why persecutest thou Me? Who art thou Lord? as if he had said, Lord, I did not think I had to deal with thee, who art thou Lord? I am He whom thou persecutest. He said no more, but as if should have said thus, Look upon me, I am that great and glorious God that has thee at an advantage, and can tread thee under My feet.

Immediately Saul falls down (the text said) trembling, and astonished, and said, Lord what wilt thou have me to do?

Oh that it might be so this day, that some heart might fall down trembling, and astonished: and when you get alone, and think on what has been declared, say, Lord, in the ways of sin have opposed, resisted, and been an Enemy to thee; Oh Lord never thought it, Oh now Lord forgive.

It is time, it is time brethren, to cease resisting of God, and walking contrary to God; for he is above you, and will have the victory and the glory over all creatures Oh perhaps thou hast been an old Enemy, an old sinner, that all thy days hast walked on in a course of sin; yea, perhaps thy Father has been an Enemy, thou his Enemy, and thy Father his enemy; an old adulterer, a swearer, a wicked opposite to God; and perhaps thou nourishest up children to be enemies to God; thou nourishest and breedest up a company of

brats to be enemies to God; thou breedest them in the ways of sin and wickedness, and so there is a generation of enemies against God.

Oh brethren, that God would but stir your hearts and make you fall down before Him, and see yourselves guilty of so great an enmity.

Many be ready to excuse themselves and others thus; He is no bodies enemy but his own, a good natured man, and I am no bodies enemy but my own.

Yes, besides thy own, thou art an enemy to the eternal God; and thy ways has been a way quite contrary to the eternal God, and this thou art guilty of, and the Lord chargeth thee with it this day. I remember when Daniel comes to Belshezzar, he comes to him, and thinks he has enough to humble that proud King Belshezzar, when he said thus to him: That God in whose hands the breath of thy nostrils, and al thy ways are, that God thou hast not glorified.

And it has a mighty deal of power to bring down the proudest and stoutest spirit upon the Earth; when God shall give commission to conscience to come and charge him and say; Oh thou wicked wretch, remember that, that God in whose hands all thy ways, and the breath of thy nostrils are, that God thou hast not glorified.

And suppose conscience has commission to come thus, and say, That God in whose hands the breath of thy nostrils and all thy ways are, that God in all thy life thou hast walked quite cross unto, in all thy life. I say it would have a great deal of power in it to humble the proudest heart in the world. And this is the second particular of the operations of sins workings; it is a going cross to God.

There are two more in this Branch, how sin is opposite to God. sin wrongs God, and sin is a striking at God. But because the fourth is shorter than the third, I shall begin with the fourth, and make the third last. I said before, sin was continually working against God; but now I say,

CHAP. X.

Sin is a Striking Against God.

1 The sinner wishes God were not so Holy, &c. 2 It seek the destruction of God. Also sin is a wronging of God.

Thirdly, sin is a striking against God. I told you sin was an opposing of God, and all his ways: but now I say, sin is a striking at God; at the very life of God. A man may fight with another, and yet not seek to take away his life, to destroy him; but sin strikes at the very being of God. I remember an expression in the 24 of Leviticus 16. speaking of the blasphemer that blasphemed the name of God; the words are translated in the Latin, He did strike through the name of God: Certainly sin is a striking of God.

Indeed God is not a Body that we can strike through him with our hands; but God is a Spirit, and so the Spirits of men may by their sins strike through God Himself: so strike at God (observe it) as for the maintenance of thy sin, thou dost wish God might cease to be God; this is horrible wickedness you will say indeed.

What will you say to such a wickedness as this, that it should enter into the heart of any creature, Oh that I might have my lust, and rather than I will part with my lust, I had rather God should cease to be God; rather than I would leave my lust, I had rather God should be no more; this is horrible wickedness.

But what will you say if I convince your consciences that this is in your bosoms, that you have been guilty of this sin? yea in some measure, every sin may justly be charged with this, that rather than the sin should not be committed, thou wouldst rather have God to cease to be. You will say, Lord, have mercy upon us, though you

have told us some other things hard, and strict, and yet they seem to be true; but you shall never make me believe this, all the men in the world shall never make me to believe this; that I should be guilty of so much wickedness, as to be set upon my lusts so, as to desire rather God not to be God at all, rather than I lose my lust; I hope there is not such wickedness in me.

I beseech you hearken, and I hope to convince you that there is so much wickedness in the heart of man; that they be set upon their sins so, that they had rather God were not God at all, than they lose their lusts; and to this end, observe these two things.

First, Do you not think it in the nature of a sinner, so far as sin prevails in his heart, to come to this (so far as sin prevails I say) that he could wish God were not so holy as he is: hated not sin so much as he does; that he were not so just, and so strict, and severe against sin as he is: Is not this in every sinners heart in the world? Certainly you deceive yourselves if you do not own this.

I say so far as sin prevails in your hearts, could not you wish that God were not so holy, to hate those sins you love, and not so just, to be so severe against sin as he is, is not this in your hearts? It is impossible for any creature to love any thing, and yet not wish that another did not hate it so much as he does. Well, if there be this in thee, that thou lovest such a sin, that thou couldest wish God did not hate it so much as he does, that he were not so just, holy, and severe against sin as he is; this is to wish in thy heart that God were no God at al, that the Life of God, and Being of God were gone.

So that thy heart in this sinful frame and disposition of it, it is no other but to strike at the very Being of God: For it is the work of the heart wishing that God were not God, for if he did not (as I told you) hate sin as much as he does, he could not be a God at al. Now this is plain, and there is scarce any one bosom, but is guilty of this, scarce any of you, but may lay your hand upon your hearts and say, This Breast of mine is guilty of this, that when my heart is set upon any

evil way, I could wish that God were not so holy to hate this; I had rather God should like of this: I hear of God's Justice, but does not my heart rise against God's Justice? and I could wish that God were not so just as he is.

Certainly there is this in some degree or other; therefore charge your hearts with this; and know, That so far as you have been guilty of this, you have struck at the Being of God; and this horrible wickedness is charged upon you, That your hearts have been set so far upon sin, that you could wish God had not been God rather than you lose your sin. You would think it a horrible wickedness for any man to be so far in lust with another woman, as to wish his Wife dead, that he might have his fill of lust with that woman; this were a horrible wickedness; and yet this is in your hearts, to wish God had no Being, so that you might have your sin: especially those that be profane ones, they, if they could have their wish, would desire there were no God at all. The Scripture said, That the fool said in his heart, that there is no God at all. That man or woman that could wish that there were no God at all, so he might have his lust; and to wish God were not so holy, and did not hate sin so much as he does, so he might have his lust; this is a horrible wickedness.

Oh that God would make thee fall down and think, Oh the horrible wickedness and abomination of my heart, that I should be set so far upon any base lust, as to wish that God were not God rather than I not be satisfied with my lust; and yet this is in sin, I and in every sin, so far as it prevails in thy heart.

Secondly, It must needs be thus, because it is the nature of Contraries, to seek the destruction of one another, as it is the nature of fire to seek the destruction of water; so of any thing contrary to another it is the Nature of it to seek the destruction of the contrary. But now you have heard there is nothing contrary to God (to speak properly) but only sin; and if sin be the only contrary that God has, then certainly sin does seek the destruction of God, so much as it can.

Though it be true, a sinner can never do God hurt, nor cannot hinder God's working, or Being at all: whatsoever become of this wretch, though he be destroyed, and perish to all Eternity, God will remain blessed for ever. But this is the Nature of sin, to seek the destruction of the Eternal God of glory. Oh charge your hearts with this; do not stay till God come at the day of Judgment to charge you with this; for many poor sinners that went on blind-fold all their days, and never saw sin what it was, then comes God upon their death bed, and chargeth them with this, and then their hearts are full of horror. And so at the day of Judgment, when God comes to charge them with this, then they will be amazed, and will see the truth of this. Therefore, seeing God does it now before the day of Judgment, do you now charge it upon your own hearts, that so you may be humbled. This is the third particular, It strikes at God.

Fourthly, sin wrongs God exceedingly. It does that wrong unto God, that all the angels in Heaven, and men in the world cannot make up again. Any one sin, take but the least sin that thou dost commit, I say it does that wrong unto God, that all the angels in Heaven, and men in the world can never make up for.

If all the angels in Heaven, and men in the world, should come and say, Lord God, this poor wretched creature has committed this sin this day, O Lord we are content to suffer ten thousand years torment in Hell, to satisfy for that wrong that is done to thee by this man or woman's sin; God would say, it cannot be done by all men and angels, they can never make up this wrong: and yet (as I shall shew hereafter) God will have this wrong made up, or thou must perish Eternally. Many men plead thus, Who can challenge me and say, I have wronged them in all my life; they think this enough: well, suppose thou hast lived so, that thou hast not wronged man, either in word or deed; Oh but thou hast wronged God, the living eternal God can charge thee (though man cannot) that thou hast done him that wrong that all the creatures in the world cannot make it good.

It were a sad thing if a man had done that wrong to a Kingdom, that all the Blood in his Veins, and in ten thousand generations more could not make up again, he would be weary of his life. You have done that wrong to the God of Heaven, that all the Angels in Heaven, and Men in the world can never make up again.

Well, to conclude, Though the things be hard, and sad to think on, God knows I treat in tender bowels and compassion to you: and I do not know that ever I spoke to any people in the world with more compassion, and that in this particular: And know, though I speak of these things now, yet if God give liberty, I shall be as glad and willing to be large in shewing you the riches of the grace of the Gospel in Christ: and God's mercy in Christ. And I hope your hearts will be as free and large in this, as I am in speaking of this. And if I were now treating never so much of the riches of God's mercy in Christ, I could not do it with more bowels of compassion than I do this.

I do this that you may come to know yourselves; that you may come to know Christ; that Christ may be precious in your thoughts: For the special end of Christ's coming was, To take away sin, to deliver from sin; therefore we must know sin, and charge our souls with sin, that Christ may be precious. Therefore if any soul shall go away and say, Woe to me what have I done? yea then, such a soul is fit to hear of the Doctrine of grace and mercy in Christ, and that in due time (if God give liberty) may be declared to such a soul.

But now for the present I believe this is a necessary point for you to know; and this is that (though some may perhaps rise against it) that thousand thousands will have cause to bless God for to all eternity when it is preached home upon their consciences by the Spirit of the Lord which convinceth of the sinfulness of sin.

CHAP. XI.

How Sin Wrongs God

1 In his Attributes. 2 Relation of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. 3 His Counsels. 4 In the End for which God has done all he has done. And First, sin wrong God's Attributes: 1 His All-sufficiency, shewd in two particulars. 2 It wrong his Omnipresence, and Omniscience. 3 sin wrong his wisdom. 4 Wrong his Holiness. 5 sin wrong God in setting mans will above God's. 6 sin wrong God's Dominion. 7 sin wrong God's Justice. 8 sin wrong God in his Truth.

This was that which we proposed in the third place; but we shall handle it in this fourth place, that we may enlarge upon it. But how does sin wrong God? The wrong you do to God by sin, is such wrong, that if all the Angels in Heaven, and Men in the world, would be content to endure thousands of years of torment in Hell to make up that wrong, it could not be; any one sin that you commit does such wrong to God. How does this appear? To make it out, I shall shew unto you four things.

- 1 How sin does wrong God in all his Attributes.
- 2 How it wrongs God in his Personal Relations, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
- 3 How it wrongs him in his Counsels, in that order he has set in the world in all creatures.
- 4 How it wrongs God in the very End for which he has done all that he has done, in the end of all his Works, even his Glory.

First, sin wrongs God in his Attributes: As thus,

First, sin does hold forth this, That there is not a sufficiency of good in God, for the satisfying of a soul; this language is apparent in every sin, and it holds this forth; so far as sin does appear, it holds this forth before all, and speaks this language, That there is not enough good in God, That is, the blessed, glorious, all-sufficient, eternal, unchangeable good and fountain of all good: yet sin makes this profession, That there is not enough good in God to satisfy this

soul: or else why does the soul depart from him in any sinful way, and go to the creature for any good, if there be enough in God himself?

Now there is great wrong done to that blessed God, who is goodness it self; for any creature to hold this forth, That there is not sufficient good there, but that the creature must be fain to seek for it elsewhere out of God. So long as we seek comforts in the creature in order to God, we seek for it in God, though in the creature, if in order unto God: but when we come to seek for any good, any comfort in any way of sin (as no sin can be committed, but there is this in it) Though deliberately you do not say, that you think there is not comfort enough in God, but you will have it in this sinful way, you do not say so: but there is this in thy walking in the way of sin.

God seeth this in the nature of every sin. would not a father think it a wrong to him, or a Master think it a wrong, to have his Son, or his Servant, go and complain to his neighbor and say, he has not meat enough? That wrong you would think your child does to you, in going to shark at your neighbors door for meat; this you do to God when you go to sin: As if you should say, notwithstanding there is so much said of the infinite goodness of God, and that infinite satisfaction in Him; for my part I find not enough in Him, I must have it elsewhere. This is a wrong to God's All-sufficiency in this first regard.

Secondly, A sinner, going in ways of sin, wrongs God thus; he holds this forth, That there is more good to be had in a sinful lust, than there is to be had in all the glory and excellency in the infinite blessed God. This you will say is a wrong, if this can be made out that there is this evil in sin, holding this forth, That there is more good to be had in a base sinful lust, than in all the glory in Heaven, and comfort in God.

Certainly this is so, and God seeth it so; and except God be satisfied for this sin in Christ, God will charge this upon thy soul another

day, that hast been guilty of this great sin. And that I may clear it to your conscience, That in every evil way there is this: Thus it appears;

Because every sinful way is a departing from God, and all that good in God: now this in the account of Reason may appear to the weakest capacity, That where there stands two goods propounded, and I depart from one, and choose the other; by my choosing, though I say nothing, when I chose the one, when I cannot enjoy both together; I do thereby profess I account more good to be in that other I choose, than in that former I parted from.

Thus it is in the ways of sin, God sets forth himself to the soul, and shews his goodness and excellency, as appeareth in all his glorious works; and those that live under the Gospel, as appeareth in his word to them; and God woes the Soul, My Son give me thy heart, and here I am willing to communicate my self to thee, and all that good in me to thy Soul; if I have any good, any thing in that infinite Nature of mine, to comfort thy Soul, and make thee happy, here I am willing to let it out and communicate it to thee.

Thus God professes to all the world, all the Children of men, to whom at least the Ministry of the Gospel comes, if thy Soul will come in and close with him in that way he reveals to thee, he is ready to communicate that goodness in him to thy Soul to make thee blessed.

But now any man or woman in any sinful way, though they do not say so, yet they profess by their practice this, That though there be such goodness in thee, yet here is such a sinful lust, I expect more goodness in this than in thy blessed Majesty.

Certainly there is this in every sin, and God seeth it, and God will deal with a sinner according to this if he come to answer for his sin himself. For (Brethren) thus it stands, we cannot enjoy God and sinful ways both together; so far as any decline to sinful ways, so far

they venture the loss of God eternally, and all that good in God. It may be God may have mercy upon thee, and bring thee into Christ; and Christ may satisfy God for that wrong thou didst to him, this is nothing to thee. but there is this evil in thee, there is not one sinful way that thou closest with, but thou venturtest the loss of all that infinite good to be enjoyed in the blessed God, in that sin.

Here is the evil of sin: And is not this a wrong to God?

What is God, if not better than a base lust? The Devil himself is better than a base lust, that is, the Devil has an entity in him, he is of God, though he be a Devil by sin, yet he is a being that is of God; but sin has no good, and therefore sin is worse than the Devil: It is that which makes the Devil so evil as he is, and yet thou in thy sinful way doest profess, thou accountest more good to be in sin than in all the good of God himself, as if sin were better than God himself: For thou venturtest the loss of God that thou maiest have thy sinful way.

Oh sinner! stop in thy way, and consider what thou doest: and know all thy life long which thou hast lived, has been nothing else but a continual profession before all the world by thy sinful life, That thou accountest more good in a lust, than all the good in the blessed God to be enjoyed to al Eternity.

Second, Thou wrongest God in the way of thy sin thus, in his omnipresence, and omniscience: to put them both together.

1 In that thou darest do that before the very face of God, that God infinitely hates: Is it not a wrong to any King, yea, to yourselves though mean, for those that are your inferiors to do that before your face that you hate above all things in the world? thus a sinner does, al the ways of thy sin are before the very face of God, and they are such things as God infinitely hates, yet thou darest do that before the face of God in some sin, that thou darest not do before the

meanest boy or girl in thy house. What a wrong is this to God's Omniscience and Omnipresence!

Nay, perhaps thou darest not do it before a child of six years old, and yet darest do it before the face of the infinite blessed God, if a man should be afraid to do a thing before any servant in his house, the very scullion of the kitchen, and yet when he comes before the King, does it there; were not this a wrong to his majesty, that any dare be so bold before him?

2 Again, Thou wrongest his Omnipresence in this, in that thou darest to cast that which is filthy before his presence, to cast Carrion, a dead Dog, before a Prince, is a wrong: men in sinful ways do nothing but cast vomit and filth before the presence of a most holy ▪ God: thus thou wrongest God in his Omnipresence and Omniscience.

Thirdly, Thou wrongest God in his way of wisdom, because in sin thou professest God's ways are not ways of wisdom, but thou knowest better to provide for thy self, than in that way God has set thee; how doest thou cast folly on the ways of God, and settest thy shallow way and heart of thine before God's, as if thou couldest provide for thy self and thy own good more wisely than God has set thee in a way to do.

The Word of God and that revealed in the light of Nature, is nothing else but several beams of the infinite wisdom of God for the guiding of making unto happiness and glory; the light of Nature helps somewhat, though it reach not far enough, yet I say, the light of Nature is made up of several beams of God's wisdom, but the light of the Word is made up of beams of wisdom, a great deal more bright than the beams of Nature, now any sinner that forsakes the ways of God, rejects these beams of wisdom as if they were dark, and does as if he should say, I know how better to provide by this way.

Hence carnal men account the ways of God foolishness, and preaching of the Word foolishness, and the usual title that they give to those that walk more strict than others, is this, What fools they are, nothing but a company of fools that keep such a stir.

It is an ordinary thing in the world for carnal hearts to cast folly upon the ways of God; and for themselves, they can sit at home and applaud themselves in their wisdom, as if they go in a nearer way than others; and why should they be such fools as others?

And it is usual for Parents that be carnal, to come to their Children and cast folly upon them when they look after the ways of God, some do it openly, but every sin does cast folly upon God and his blessed way; and in every sin thou settest thy wisdom above God's wisdom.

Fourthly, In sin thou doest cast dirt on the Holiness of God. Holiness is the brightness of of God's glory, and in the ways of sin thou castest dirt upon the face of Holiness it self: God's Nature is pure, thy sin is filthy and vile, and contrary to him, and does what it can to darken the brightness of the infinite Holiness of God.

Fifthly, Thou wrongest God in this, That thou settest up thy Will above the Will of God; God's Will is to be the rule of all the actions and ways of the creature, but thou comest and settest up thy Will above God's; there is this hideous wickedness in every sin, at least in every wilful sin when it comes into the will, then the will of man is set up above the will of the infinite and glorious God.

Do not you account yourselves wronged when you will have your will, and a poor boy said he will have it otherwise? do not you account yourselves wronged when he dares set his will before yours? Oh consider this you that are wilful, you cannot bear to have your will crossed, to have an inferior, or a Child set their will against yours, you are not able to bear it: Oh consider what you do when

you set your will against the will of the infinite God: nay, above it in two regards.

1 Because when God's will is one way, and yours another, you will rather have yours, than God shall have his.

2 Though God does only will that which is right and good, and is content to have his will satisfied in nothing but in things good, you will have yours right or wrong, good or bad; God will have his in only that which is righteous and good, if you were set upon your will in that which were good, it were another matter; but in that you will have your will right or wrong, good or bad, as come to men in their passion, and reason with them, why this is not well, yet say they, I will; and this carries it: what a proud Spirit is this that dares set up his will against God's will; good or bad, right or wrong I must have it, and this is in sin.

Sixthly, sin wrongs God in the Dominion and Power, and Sovereignty of God, which with men is a very tender thing, where there is Sovereignty, there cannot be endured the least wrong. Men be mighty tender of Power and Sovereignty; sure if they be so, God may much more be tender of his, which is as the apple of his eye. Let me suggest one Consideration to you, which should make any mans heart to bleed to consider how God is wronged in the world; and that is this, You shall have poor men and servants, that dare not do any thing to displease those that have power over them, if but a Master, or Landlord, or Justice of the Peace (especially if it come higher) Oh how they shake and tremble if they be displeased, and if any thing go against their mind they dare not do it; but there is not the basest fellow, the vilest wretch that lives, the poorest worm, but he dares venture to sin against God, blaspheme the Name of God, shakes at the word of a man of power, or a man but a little above him; but he dares fill his mouth with Oaths even in the face of God himself, there he has courage and valor, and he scorns to be afraid, what to fear an Oath! he has too brave a Spirit to be afraid of that: Oh horrible wrong to the infinite God! What is any Superiority in

man so great that men dare not offend them, and yet the poorest Spirit that is, dares wrong and blaspheme the Name of God.

Seventhly, There is a wrong to God in his Justice: sin wrongs God in his infinite Justice.

1 In that it is not afraid of God; God expects all creatures should fear him because of his Justice.

2 Thou doest wrong to his Justice, in that by ways of sin, thou doest as much as in thee lies even accuse the ways of God for unjust-ways, and not equal, but that your ways be more just and equal than God's. Therefore God in Scripture reasons the Case with his People, What are not my ways equal, are not your ways unequal? Ezek. 18. 29. Certainly there is this in sin, for if you account not your ways more equal, why choose you them?

Eightly, You wrong God in his Truth: As if all God's threatnings against the ways of sin you walk in were nothing but a Tale and a Lie, as if all the Promises God has made in his word of grace and mercy to poor sinners that will come in and repent, they were all but a Lie: thus sin wrongs God in his Truth.

Hence it is that a sinner is in a woeful estate, because he has thus wronged God; he has therefore all the Attributes of God pleading against him, yea, they are continually against thee. Therefore look to it, till your sins be done away in Christ, and your Souls cleansed in him, both night and day all the Attributes of God are pleading against thee for to require that wrong you have done to them may be righted upon thee.

A man is in a sad condition if he have but divers thousands of men come to plead against him, and these cry out for Justice, justice, upon him! but if a man have a whole Kingdom, and every one comes and cries Justice! Justice! upon this man that has wronged this Kingdom, this man is in a woeful estate, but I speak of every sinner before God, if that thy sins be not done away in Christ, know

it is not a whole Kingdom speaks against thee, but all the divine Attributes, al the Attributes of God be continually before the Lord, crying out against thee, Justice against this sin; he has wronged me said one, and me said another, and me said another, and thus, and thus, and thus, and therefore thou art in an evil condition, and it is much that thou shouldest sleep quietly when all God's Attributes plead against thee, it is a hard case when the Devil pleads against a man, and but accuse him, and plead against him before God, but when all the Attributes of God plead against him (as I might shew you more at large) how woeful is his condition.

Object. But you will say, though all the other Attributes plead against me, yet I hope Mercy will plead for me

Answ. But that pleads against thee too, for thou wrongest his mercy also. Indeed there is no attribute more wronged by sinners ordinarily than the mmercy of God is. The mercy of God, doest thou think that shall plead for thee? That is wronged especially: Why? Because there is no attribute abused to be an abettor to sin, more than the mercy of God is; and its abused and made to harden the hearts of men and women in sin, no attribute so much abused.

The Justice of God thou thinkest that pleads against thee, but mercy thou thinkest pleads for thee; justice is not so much wronged by sin as mercy is: The justice of God is not made an Abettor of sin.

Now that is the greatest wrong that can be for God's Mercy to be made a means to abet sin, and to harden mens hearts in sin. It is a great wrong to make use of any creature to be serviceable to our sin; if a man make meat, or drink, or clothes, or any creature serviceable to his Lust, it is a wrong to that creature and to God the creator of that creature that thou makest serviceable to thy lust: but if it be a wrong to the creature, what is it to make the Mercy of God serviceable to your lusts? and who is there almost but makes the mercy of God in some degree or other serviceable to his lusts? It is a horrible thing thus to abuse mercy.

How doest thou think the mercy of God should plead for thee when thou doest it such infinite wrong? when thou ventur'est upon sin because God is a merciful God. Thus you wrong the attributes of God by sin.

CHAP. XII.

How sin wrongs God in his personal Relations. 1 The Father. 2 The Son. 3 The Spirit.

Secondly, Now for the Personal Relations of God; Father, Son, and holy Ghost; how they be wronged in way of sin.

First, God the Father. Consider of these in those operations most proper, and especially attributed to them. As now, that attributed to the Father, is the work of Creation: now thou wrongest God the Father in this especial operation, In that thou abusest the gifts God has given thee; that body and soul God has made, thou abusest it to God's dishonor; abusest his creatures; takest God's own creatures, and abusest them to his dishonor: yea, thy own members that God made thee to honor him withal, thou takest them, and with his own weapons fightest against himself: not only fightest against him, but with his own weapons, faculties and gifts he has given thee, thou fightest against him. Thus thou wrongest God the Father in his work of creation.

Secondly, Thou wrongest Christ in the Work of Redemption.

1 Because the least sin thou committest (if ever it be pardoned) it is that which stabbed Jesus Christ to the very heart: I say, thy sin was that which pierced Christ, and brought forth blood and water from

him; it was that which whipped Christ; it was that which put Christ to death, that shed the blood of Christ, that crucified Christ.

I may say to every sinner that expects to be saved by Christ, as Peter in the 2. Acts said to those Jews, Whom you have crucified, and the text said, that then they were pricked to their hearts. Certain it is, thou sinner (man or woman, whosoever thou art) that dost expect to have part in the blood of Christ, Thy sin crucified Christ, made Christ cry out upon the Cross, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? What dost thou think of thy sins now? And if thou be such an one as has never been affected with the Blood of Christ that was shed for thy sins, then thou wrongest the Blood of Christ more, for then thou dost trample the Blood of the everlasting Covenant under thy feet, and accountest it a common thing. Most men and women be such that live under the light of the Gospel, that like Swine trample the very blood of Christ under their feet, and make nothing of the Blood of Christ, go to the Sacrament hand over head unprepared, and so come to be guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ. Certainly these be not strains of wit above the truth and reality of things; there is a reality in it, that thy soul is charged from God this day of wronging Christ the second Person of the Godhead.

Thirdly, Thou wrongest the Spirit of God, in defacing of the work of Sanctification (what in thee lies) in opposing the work of God's Spirit in thy soul, in resisting the motions of God's Spirit. Who is there but is guilty of resisting the motions of the Holy Ghost? Who is there but at some time or other when they have been at the Word, but they have had some stirrings of the Spirit of God within them, when they have heard such and such truths of God? But they have gone to company, and laughed it away, drunk, and played it away talked it away. What a wrong is this to the Holy Ghost? thou wrongest the Holy Ghost by defiling thy Body, which should be the Temple of the Holy Ghost.

CHAP. XIII.

Sin Wrongs the Counsels of God in Setting that Order in the World that He Has Set.

Thirdly, Thou wrongest the counsels of God in setting that order in the world which he has set. To understand it know this, God in his eternal counsel has set a due order in all his creatures, they walk in an orderly way to fetch about that end that he himself did intend. As a workman that makes a curious work, puts every wheel and piece in a right frame, and due order, that so by that order his art has placed in the work, the work may attain unto that end he made it for: So God has done.

He has made all things by weight and measure in due order. God made all things good, very good, and all that one creature might be serviceable to another; as one wheel to a curious watch is serviceable to another, and all to bring about the end of the workman; so God in his eternal will and Counsel has set all things in that proportion and order that he may fetch about his own end. But sin is the thing, and the only thing that break the order of God in the world, and strikes at God's Work to break it al to pieces what lies in the sinner.

If we should suppose that all the cunning artificers in the whole nation, nay in all the world, should join together to make a curious work in a curious frame, perhaps they have been seven years in making of it, and at length bring it to perfection, and things be made in that order and exactness, that it is to admiration, so that this work is worth more than can be imagined, because of the curious art and order in this work: But suppose now, one should come, and (through ignorance, much more if knowingly) give it a blow and strike it al to pieces; what a mischievous thing were this?

Certainly there is this in sin, for there is infinite depth of counsel and wisdom of God in setting all things in frame, that one thing should be serviceable to another; and at length all should come to be for God's glory.

Now there is no creature can break the order God has made but men and angels, none but those creatures that are capable of sin. And certainly sin does not only aim to break God's order, but does it actually; sin brings disorder, and does break the order God has set: only God by his mighty Power knows how to bring sin it self to that, that he will have his glory from it, to take occasion at least by it to bring things into their right order again. But were it not that God were of infinite wisdom and Power, sin would break all that curious work God has made, and bring it all to confusion.

Now we know art and wisdom ads to any thing; as suppose some curious building were all beaten too pieces and rubbish, there were no material less in the rubbish than in the building, only the art of the workman, the art and the order that makes the beauty of the work, and the difference in excellency from a heap of rubbish.

So it is the Order God has set in the world that makes the beauty of God's work, and sin does do all it can to make all the work of God to be a heap of rubbish, a mere Confusion. Indeed when there is such a curious piece of work of a workman broke all in pieces on a sudden, if he had so much skill and power instantly to put it in frame again, his art would exceedingly be admired and wondered at. Thus it is with God.

Certainly were it not for God's infinite wisdom and Power, whereby he can bring all in Order again, sin would bring all to Rubbish; and know thou hast a hand in this that hast a hand in sin.

CHAP. XIV.

Sin Wrongs God in the End for Which He Has Made All Things.

Fourthly, sin wrongs God in the end for which he has made all things, which is his own glory. Now we know that of all things a man cannot endure to be wronged in his end, when he has an End to such & such a thing, and aims to bring such and such a thing to pass, though he should be frustrated in regard of some means, this troubles him not, but when he comes to lose his end, this troubles him exceedingly.

Thus it is with a sinner, he sets himself against God to do what lies in him that God should lose his end of all that ever he has done: and if so be God were not Almighty to over power things, certainly sin would quite frustrate God of his end of his works, for which he did make all things, to wit, his glory.

Now a sinner does what he can to darken the glory of God, does in effect stand up and say, if I can help it, God shall have no glory in the world.

I say, you that walk on in ways of sin, this you are charged with in the name of God this day, that you are guilty of this, you have in effect stood up, and as it were said, If I can help it God shall have no glory in the world: and yet it was for his glory that God made all things.

Truly brethren, it cannot but be a soul-piercing consideration for any stout stubborn sinner in the world for to have this one thought (take it with you, and work it upon your hearts, see what it will do) to think thus, had I never been born, God had never been so much dishonored: this one thought has a mighty power to pierce the stoutest hearted sinner in the world. Oh! is not God infinitely worthy of all glory and honor in the world? has he not made all creatures for his glory? and if I had never been born, and never had

had a being, God should never have been so dishonored, he would have had more glory if I had never been. If God had made me a dog or a toad, a snake or a serpent, God should have had more glory than by making me a man.

True, God will bring about his glory, and have more glory from thee another way, than if thou hadst been made a Dog or a Toad; but no thanks to thee, thou dost what thou canst in way of sin to hinder his glory, God's almighty power brings this to pass. But if thou goest on in ways of sin, it may be said of thee, that if thou hadest been made a Dog or Toad, God would have had more glory in the world than now he has in making thee a Man: yea, thou art so far from bringing God glory that thou dishonored God as much as in thee lies. And this, if it lies upon the heart as it should is a sad consideration to humble the proudest heart in the world; to think that thou livest, and God has no glory by thee, though this be the End for which God made the world.

Think thus, suppose God should have no more glory by all the world, than by me, to what end were the world made? Suppose one that lives in a mere Atheistical way, and takes no notice of the Majesty and Glory of God, but lives only to eat and drink, and play and swear, and the like; now if his conscience tell him this has been his way, I speak to such a one in these words, suppose God had never had more glory from any creature than from thee? to what purpose had the world been made? For God that has wrought so wonderfully and gloriously in raising such a glorious Edifice and Frame, certainly it was, that he might have some glory from what he has done.

No man works any thing but for some end, and wisdom directs every man that his end be worth his Labor, that, that which he aims at shall be worth all his work. Now God had some end therefore in making thee, and he must needs have some excellent end; but now, what do I think in my conscience was the End of God in making of the world and me? what was it for no other end but that men and

women might live and eat and drink, and lie, and swear, and commit such wickedness? was this God's end?

I put it to your conscience every sinful man or woman; think how hast thou lived? what hast thou done in all thy life? look back to thy former life, and think how hast thou spent it? I have gotten money, and what to do? is it only to eat and drink, and the like? and thou hast lived in a Course of Nature thy conscience tells thee thus, now I put this to thee, Doest thou think in thy conscience this is the end thou livest in the world for?

Did God (when from all Eternity he intended to make such a creature as thou art, to live in such a time in such a place, and preserved thee all this while from such dangers at Sea, or at Land) I say, did God aim at no other end but this that thou shouldest live to do thus? Certainly thy conscience will condemn thee if thou hast but a heart for to think of it.

Thou wert upon thy sick bed, and then thou cryest to God to spare thee; well, thou didest escape, now I put this to thee, Dost thou think God spared thee, and gave thee thy life, to live to no other end but this? dost thou think this was the only end?

Take heed thou dost not go on in ways of crossing God in his end, for God will have his end one way or other. If a man have been at a great deal of cost to deliver another man from misery, redeemed him from Captivity, and when he has brought him home, he rails at him that did this for him, and does him all the mischief he can: And in any mans account he is exceedingly wronged that has done thus and thus for one that is thereby as it were his creature, and yet he live and do thus and thus wrong and abuse him.

Certainly then, God is wronged when he has given thee a body, delivered thee from such and such dangers, and thou livest to no other end but to satisfy thy lust; thou exceedingly wrongest God. This is so clear, that a man would wonder where mens consciences

are, that they live quietly, and that their consciences flies not in their faces continually.

Certainly, when God shall enlighten the conscience, and bring these things with power to their souls, then sinners will stand amazed and wonder they saw not this before: These things be so clear, that its a wonder I was so blind, that I had not eyes to see these before, and yet who lays these things to heart?

And thus we have done with this first thing in the explanation, the wrong sin does to God in his nature, working against, and striking at God, and in his relations, &c. Now there are, I confess, those things I most aimed at in this work behind, therefore I will wind up in a word or two, in some corollaries, and consequences, to be drawn from hence: only thus much, when I have told you sin is a greater evil than affliction; yea, a greater evil than all the torments of Hell, as I said in the beginning. Then you may see by what I have said, how this truth results out of these consequences, because it wrongs God, and God is so infinitely good.

If any man be afflicted, or perish in Hell eternally, it is but the good of a creature, and the comfort of a creature crossed in this, but in sin there is the crossing of the good of an infinite God, and of his glory; and there is more good in God's glory, than in all the peace and comfort of all creatures in the world: and if so, then certainly there must be more evil in sin that is cross to God's glory, than in all pains and torments that are but only cross to the peace and comforts that are in the creature: I say, Hence followeth these corollaries.

CHAP. XV.

The First Corollary.

It appears by this, That but few men know what they do when they sin against GOD.

FIRST from this, Certainly it does evidently appear that there are but few men that know what they do in sinning against God, nor have not known all this while. It was the Complaint of the Prophet Jeremiah, No man said, What have I done?

Certainly men in ways of sin never say, Oh Lord, what have I done? Give me but that man or woman that have gone on in ways of sin, that have imagined they have wronged God so much; that they have done so much against the infinite eternal glorious God. They think indeed they have done amiss, what they should not do; but it is another manner of matter, it is not only doing what you should not do, but it is a wrong to the infinite glorious God, and therefore certainly it appears but few men know God, or know sin; neither know what that God is with whom they have to deal.

Neither know what sin is, and how it makes against that God with whom they have to deal; if men did only know God, it were enough to keep them from sin. And there is a notable place in the 1 John 2. He that said I know him and keepeth not his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him. If there be any man in the congregation that said he knows God, and keepeth not his Commandments, he lies said the Holy Ghost. What, doest thou know God, man or woman? sinner, Man or woman doest thou know God, that infinite glorious eternal God, with whom thou hast to do? and not to keep his Commandments, but goest on in ways of sin? certainly thou art a liar.

It may be many of you are apt to say, We know God, what need we have so much of God Preached?

If you say you know God and keep not his commandments, you are a Liar. But now join these together, To know what a glorious God this is, and how sin works against this God.

Some knows somewhat of God's attributes, and can discourse of him, yet perhaps never knew before how sin made against this God, this is that people fail in; certainly both together has not been known by most people. I remember a speech I have read of a German divine upon his sick bed; he cries out thus, In this disease I have learned what sin is, and how great the majesty of God is: These together. We cannot know what sin is, except we know how great the majesty of God is; put these together, and these two together, will make men understand that they did never consider of before, what their lives are, and how people go on in a resolute, inconsiderate way, and know not what they do, and what God is. Therefore we may pray as Christ in another case, Father forgive them they know not what they do: poor creatures they know not what they do; they never imagined what the greatness of the glory of God is.

CHAP. XVI.

The Second Corollary.

The Necessity of our Mediators being God and Man.

Secondly, hence appeareth, the necessity that our Mediator between God and us, must be God as well as man: great is the mystery of godliness that God is manifest in the flesh. Well, but what is the reason of this mystery of godliness? How comes it to pass that there is a necessity of such a mystery of godliness for saving of poor Souls? That God must be manifested in the flesh? That God must be man? That all the angels in Heaven, and men in the world, could not

be a Mediator between God and us, but our Mediator must be truly and verily God as well as man? What is the reason of this?

That that I have been speaking of gives a full reason of it, our sins have so wronged God, has been so much against God, that it is only God can make up the wrong, only such a Mediator as Christ that is both God and man, that can make it up.

I suppose most of you know so far in your catechism, That Christ is God and Man; but suppose I should put this question to you, you say Christ is God and man; but give me a sound reason, Why it is necessary that Christ must be God and Man? Why cannot man be saved by any Savior but such a one as must be verily and truly God and man? I suppose you will give a sound substantial reason, and say, God appointed and has ordained it should be so: but though it be God's will, and God has ordained it, yet there is another reason, and this it is; You may say (when you hear Christ was God and man that mighty Savior) here is the reason of all that, because sin does so wrong and strike at God, and oppose God, that of necessity whosoever comes to be a Mediator between God and us, must be God as well as man. Therefore the Scripture said of Christ, his name shall be called Wonderful, counsellor, the mighty God. Isa. 9. 6.

Christ is the mighty God, and the mighty God in the work of reconciliation, in reconciling God and us together, then he shews himself mighty. Because if all the world had undertaken to meditate between God and us, such is the breach between God and us, that all the men in the world could have done no more than if so be you had gone and put a piece of paper to a mighty flame, as if one had a mighty flame coming upon him, and he puts a piece of paper to keep it off; we know that will quickly burn it; he must put some Brass or Iron.

So that wrong is done to God by the sin of man, That if all the men in world, all the Created powers in Heaven and Earth, had come to have stood between God and us, to have satisfied God for that

wrong sin did to him, it had been but just like a piece of brown paper against a mighty flame.

But whosoever comes to stand between God and us, must be one infinite, as well as that person is infinite against whom we have offended, and that is Christ the Mediator, the mighty God, God and Man. Oh know the Mediator by which you must be saved must be very God; and the reason is, because sin has done such infinite wrong to God.

CHAP. XVII.

The Third Corollary.

That but few are humbled as they should for sin. 1 It will not be deep enough except it be for sin as its against God. 2. It will not Sanctify the Name of God. 3 It will not be lasting. 4 Else it will never make a divorce between sin and the Soul.

Thirdly, That which follows hence, That sin is so much against God as has been shewed, We see that there are but very few that are humbled for sin aright: It will follow from hence, I shall make it out from the Point, That if sin be of this nature so much against God as you have heard, certainly there are few people in the world are humbled for sin aright.

There are many people that are troubled for sin, and will cry out of their sin, are struck with many fears and terrors for sin, and yet never humbled for sin aright, and it is clear from that you have heard out of this Point. Why? Because that Humiliation for sin that is aright, it must needs be an humiliation for it as it is the greatest evil of all; and it is the greatest evil as it is against God himself.

Now the humiliation of most in the world it is not so much for this, because sin is so much against God, because it opposeth God, strikes at God, and wrongs God so much: This is not the thing that does usually take the hearts of men and women▪ in their trouble for sin; but for the fear of the wrath of God, and of Hell, and an accusing conscience that does flash the very fire of Hell in their faces; this troubles them. And well were it for many that they were but troubled so far; true, this trouble is that which God does many times bless, and there is great use of it, but this is not all; no nor the chief trouble of the soul for sin.

These fears and horrors (I say) are not the chief; the chief of all is the humiliation of the soul for sin, as it is against God; then is the heart humbled aright for sin, when it apprehends how by sin the soul has been against the infinite glorious first-Being of all things. All other humiliations in the world is not sufficient without this. For,

1 It is not deep enough, there can be no humiliation deep enough, except the soul be humbled for sin, as it has sinned against God: yea, though the heart be so burdened with fears and horrors as to be sunk down into despair, yet I do not call that a depth of humiliation, it is not from the depth of humiliation that the soul despairs, for certainly (consider what I say Brethren) there is a mistake in this, to think that those that despair are humbled too much: no, despair is for want of humiliation, for despair and pride may stand both together.

The Devil is proud; you will say as proud as Lucifer; The Devils despair, they be the most despairing creatures in the world, and yet the most proud creatures in the world; therefore despair does not come from the depth of humiliation, but rather from the want of humiliation. Certainly the hearts of men and women in despair fly against God, many times flies most desperately and proudly against God.

In despair therefore the heart is not humbled enough when it has only terrors and fears, except it be humbled for sin when it seeth it against the Majesty of God as here has been opened to you: nothing does cast down the soul so low in true humiliation as the sight of sin against God. Oh what have I done against God? what has my life been against that infinite, glorious, eternal first-Being of all things?

When the soul comes to see that effectually, then it falls down, and falls down low too. Certainly Brethren, the heart is never humbled thoroughly till it come to feel the burden of sin to be heaviest there where it is heaviest; mark, I say, till the heart feel the burden of sin to be heaviest where it is heaviest, it is not brought low enough: but the burden of sin it is heaviest as it is against God, rather than as it is against the good of the creature; that though it be a wonderful burden, yea (if God put not under his hand) an intolerable burden if the conscience only apprehend sin as against the good of the creature; but the apprehension of sin as against God is a great deal more, it does shew the burden of sin, and make the burden of sin to be far more weighty than the other can possibly be.

2 The Apprehensions of sin any other way but this, it does not so sanctify the Name of God as this does. When the soul shall be cast down before the Lord for sin, as it is against himself, as it is against his glory, as it has wronged him; I say, that this does sanctify the Name of God a great deal more than any other humiliation does: for other humiliation, other trouble for sin (for I will rather call it trouble for sin than humiliation) if this be not in it, there may appear in it much self-love, and a forced perplexity of spirit: But now the Name of God is not sanctified so as when the heart shall fall down and be humbled because that God has been wronged, his Attributes wronged, because he has been opposed in his glory. Now this humiliation does especially lift up the Name of God, and sanctify the Name of God.

3 Take any other humiliation, and it is not such an abiding humiliation as this is; this humiliation for sin will more abide upon

the Spirit than any other does, many are troubled for sin, have a great deal of horror and perplexity of Spirit in some fits, in some moods, at some times; but this their trouble is but for a flash, and it goes away, vanisheth and comes to nothing: when trouble is only from the apprehension of danger and misery in itself, I say it usually vanisheth and comes to nothing; why? Because when there comes but any thing to make you to think that this danger may be in any degree over, or that things are not so bad as I was afraid, now the trouble presently vanisheth upon that.

In times of sickness, the soul apprehends it self in danger of perishing, I am now going, I see my self at the brink of the Pit; now the soul is troubled for sin, but when the danger appeareth to be a little over, the trouble for sin ceaseth. But when the soul is troubled for sin as against God, this trouble cannot but abide, though afflictions be gone, yet my trouble abides.

What's the reason many people upon their sick beds be so troubled for sin (as they think) and cry out, Oh! if God ever restore them, they will never do as they have done, and yet as soon as they are well they fall to their sin again: here is the reason, Because only their danger troubled them. But now let the soul be kindly humbled for sin as against God, Oh I have wronged God that infinite Deity, that infinite glorious First Being of all things; let such an one be in sickness or in health, whatsoever condition such an one is in, the trouble abides upon the spirit, yea brethren it abides upon the spirit even then when the soul has hope sin shall be pardoned.

Yes, when the soul knows certainly sin shall be pardoned, yet will the humiliation abide upon the heart of such a man or woman There's a great mistake in the world in the matter of trouble for sin; they think Repentance or mourning for sin, is but one act, that if once they have been troubled for sin, they need never be troubled any more It is a dangerous mistake, for we are to know, true sorrow for sin, true repentance, is a continual act that must abide all our lives: and it is not only at that time when we are afraid that God will

not pardon our sins, when we be afraid we shall be damned for our sins, but when we come to hope that God will, yea when we come to know that God has pardoned our sins, yet then it will abide, only working in another manner, and it must needs be so if the heart be humbled for sin thus against God, for suppose God come in and graciously tell the soul, though thou hast wronged me, yet through the Mediation of my Son, I will forgive thee; will this quiet the soul so as it will be no more troubled and sorry for sin? No.

Now the sorrow comes in another way: And is this the God I have wronged, the gracious merciful God I have wronged, that notwithstanding all the wrong I have done him, that when he had my soul at an advantage, and might justly have sent me down to the nethermost Hell, and will he yet pardon though no goodness in me? and yet will he have such thoughts of mercy, as to send his own Son to make up that wrong, and satisfy for the evil I have done? Oh now the heart bleed afresh upon this, and mourns more than ever it did before. Many can say of this, that after they have apprehended their sin to be pardoned, then their souls have mourned and melted more than ever they did before in the apprehension of horror and fear of God's wrath; and all upon this, because they did not see sin to be an evil only as it brings danger of punishment, but they did see the evil of sin as against a God, as I have wronged God, stroke at the infinite glorious first-Being of all things; and this will abide upon the heart: therefore this is another manner of trouble for sin than the other; and because this trouble for sin is so effectual, and so good, therefore it is that I have endeavored the more to open unto you how sin is against God: Therefore when I come to the other to shew how it is against our selves, I shall be but brief in that because I know that this is the Principal.

4 The trouble for sin if it be apprehended evil any other way but this (or if this be not chief) cannot be so good, because there is no trouble for sin but this that ever will make a divorce between sin and the soul; all other trouble will not do it unless this come in. And indeed it is to admiration to consider how strong the union between

sin and the soul is, and how hard to make the divorce; that take a man or a woman that apprehends never so much the wrath of God against sin; take a man that lies as it were scalding in God's wrath, his conscience burning and bringing even Hell to him, that he cries, and roars, in the anguish of his soul for sin; one would think certainly this man will never have to do more with sin, that is in this horror and anguish, and trouble for sin, certainly he will never keep company, be drunk, be unclean, or cozen any more: But this may be to the admiration of Men and Angels, to see how men and women's hearts are set upon sin, that notwithstanding al that anguish and horror, that they have many times for it, yet they will to it again, and that as greedily as ever; yea, and sometimes more greedily.

For if once a man (consider I beseech you what I say) has overcome the trouble of conscience for sin, and fallen to it again, he will then be more greedy; he will slight conscience then, and scorn at conscience then, and make nothing of it if once he have out stood conscience. As an unruly horse, if he have but once cast his Rider, then let him come on his back he cares not for him, he contemns him, he will quickly throw him off again: So when the stubborn unruly lusts of a mans heart have once cast off conscience, that a man or woman have been once under terrors of conscience for sin, and yet fall to it again, such a mans condition is very lamentable. I do not say not wholly desperate, I dare not say so, for God's thoughts are higher than ours as high as the Heaven is above the Earth: but this mans condition is very lamentable.

There is this strength in sin in the soul, that all the terrors in the world will not breed a divorce between sin and the soul. But when once the soul can come to say with David, Against thee, against thee only have I sinned; in my sins I have gone against that God who is so infinitely above all praise and glory: This is the humiliation; if any thing make a divorce between sin and the Soul this will do it.

This is the third Corollary, That therefore there be very few humbled for sin aright, because not thus humbled.

CHAP. XVIII.

The Fourth Corollary.

Admire the Patience of God in seeing so much sin in the world, and yet bear it.

Fourthly, If this be so, that sin is so much against God, does so much wrong God, hence then we have all cause to stand and admire at the infinite patience of the great God that shall behold so much sin in the world from such poor wretched vile creatures, and yet shall bear it: 'Tis true, those that do not know how sin does make against God, strikes at him, and wrongs him; they are not so much taken with the patience of God, and with the long suffering of God: But now that man or woman that comes to know how sin wrongs God, and comes to understand this, such a one cannot but to amazement stand and wonder at God's infinite patience; that such a great God who seeth himself so struck at, fought against, opposed, and wronged by such wretched creatures, that yet he does forbear crushing them too pieces presently.

I beseech you brethren consider, do but take along with you what I have said about sin, how it is against God, and then consider, how all sins that are committed, God is present at it, stands and looks upon it. Do but think sometimes with yourselves, when you are among a great concourse of people, among a company of profane wretched people, as in markets, fairs, taverns, inns, and ale-houses, how is God's name blasphemed there? What daring of the blessed God? what scorning and contemning of his word and sacraments and ordinances?

Well, and now carry along that thought, how God is wronged in all these, struck at in all this, and what an infinite God this is; and then

think how God stands by them, heareth every Oath, seeth every filthy act of uncleanness, seeth every drunkard, and yet when the least word of his mouth were enough to sink them to the bottomless-pit; yet God is patient the first, second, and third time; yea, a hundred times.

Perhaps thou hast been a blasphemer twenty years; forty years a swearer: and when thou comest in company, Oh the wicked Oaths that come from thee! and hideous uncleanness, and abominable wickedness! and yet God stands by, and looks upon the Swearer, and is patient all the while. Certainly brethren, there is no man in all the world that is wronged as God is, and yet man is not able to bear wrong from his equal if he have power in his hand to prevent it. What! Shall he wrong me?

I will make him know what it is to wrong me. You cannot bear any wrong from your fellow creature; Oh consider what wrong God has born from you and others, stand and admire at the infinite patience and long-suffering of the Lord! Truly brethren, when any mans conscience comes to be enlightened and awakened, then the greatest wonder in the world to such a conscience is the patience and long-suffering of God. Oh! that God should be so patient and long-suffering unto me all this time of my life that I am out of Hell.

He stands and wonders that he is out of Hell, and wonders at others, that others should not be affected with the patience of God. Certainly brethren, that wrong is done unto God by sin.

If any one man that had all the patience of all the men and women in the world, put into his heart; all the patience and meekness that ever was in all the Saints, since the beginning of the world, if it were all distilled into the heart of one man or woman, and suppose that this man or woman were but wronged as God is, it were impossible but that that man or woman should break forth with revenge against those wrongs done to him or her; it were impossible for such an one to bear, so far as he can see himself able (I mean) to

right himself, so far he could not bear the wrongs done to him: But now God shews himself here to be infinite in patience and long-suffering, as well as infinite in any other attribute of his.

Brethren it will be an especial part of the glory of the great day of judgment, that when all the wrong that ever was done to God from the beginning of the world by sinners, shall then be opened at the day of Judgment: Alas, we see but little wrong done to God now; we look upon notorious wretches and think they wrong God; now we see but little, but at the day of Judgment, then all the secret villanies and wickedness that ever was committed in secret places, since the beginning of the world, in all places of the world; then shall it all appear: And then how will it appear to men and angels how God was wronged by his creature? and then there will be the patience of God seen that he should be so patient so many thousand years together, notwithstanding there was so much wrong done to God and never discovered to man, but God sees it all this while.

This will be a great part of the glory of the day or Judgment. If our hearts were enlightened we would begin now to give God the glory of His Patience which we shall see at that day.

CHAP. XIX.

A Fifth Corollary.

Hence is this, if sin be so much against God as you have heard, then here you may find a means and way to break your hearts for sin. And also to keep you from Temptation.

Fifthly, A fifth Corollary. Hence is this, If sin be so much against God as you have heard, then here you may find a means and way both how to break your hearts for sin, and how to keep yourselves

against temptation for the time to come: I put them both together for brevity. This is the strongest way and means I can shew you to break your hearts. Would you fain break your hearts for sin? Oh said some, what a hard heart have I? Many put up papers complaining of the hardness of their hearts, and desire the Minister and Congregation to seek God to break their hearts: well, Would you fain have broken hearts? have your hearts troubled in such a manner as you may give glory to God? This is the way.

There is two ways to humble the heart for sin, There is looking upward unto God, and seeing whom it is thou hast sinned against: And looking downward to thine own misery, and what thou hast deserved by sin. Now many altogether pore downward, and look nothing but downward to sin, and what is the desert, and punishment, and misery; but their hearts though they be troubled and vexed, yet they are not kindly broken (as I shewed before) but now if you would have your hearts kindly broken for sin (for this is one use of Direction, that we may get our hearts broken for sin) look upwards and behold him whom you have pierced: That is, behold,

1 God in his infinite Glory, and what an infinite blessed Being God is, and how worthy of all the honor the creature can give: set this before your Eyes in a fixed and settled way.

2 Look upon God, in all the relations God has to you, as your Creator from whom you had your being; as he that preserves your being every moment; look upon him as your Lord, infinitely above you, at whose mercy you wholly lie: Thus view God, and see him in his glory, and the relations he has to you; and thus by beholding God in such a manner is an especial way to work strongly upon the heart. For hereby I come to see, as it were, the present evil of sin; the other is but only a sight of the evil of sin to come; as when a man or woman looks upon sin as bringing Hell, that is but only to look upon that evil of sin that is to come hereafter. But we know

that present things do most affect; as now any good thing, if it be to come, it does not take the heart so much as a present good.

As when the soul makes the good of the Promises to be present, then they affect the soul; but if the soul look upon them as to come, they do not so much affect: So if the evil of sin be look't upon as bringing Hell and misery, this is looked upon as to come hereafter, so that it may be avoided; but if I look upon sin as against God, then I look upon sin as a present evil upon me, that flows from the very nature of sin, and cannot be avoided, and this evil is even now upon me, and does as immediately flow from the Nature of sin, as light does from the Sun it self: And now looking thus upon sin, is a mighty means to break the heart.

And then for avoiding sin for the time to come; when Temptation come, you say it is strong, and overcomes me: Now would you avoid sin for the time to come in temptations? then do as we read of Joseph; you know how he beat off the strength of the temptation, and when he might have done the evil in secret; see what prevails with him, *Oh how shall I do this great wickedness and sin against God?*

Not, How shall I do this great wickedness, and bring danger and misery upon me? but, How shall I do this and sin against God? So if you can have your Eye upon sin, and remember what especial things you have heard of the evil of sin, and when temptations come, you can say, how shall I do this, and sin against God? Oh remember this you Servants that have opportunity in secret to do evil.

Joseph was a Servant, and yet this kept off that temptation from him, when he was a young man, that is the honor of Joseph, a young man and a Servant, when the temptation comes, Oh this breaks his heart, How shall I do this and sin against God?

So you young ones and Servants go away with this lesson, when any temptations to sin comes, think, Oh! I have heard in such a Point,

and out of such a Text, how sin makes against God, strikes at him, wrongs him, How shall I do this and sin against God? impossible, unreasonable it should be done upon any terms.

Set but this one Argument against the most powerful temptation, and certainly it will prevail. Psal. 97. 10. *Ye that love the Lord hate evil.*

What! do ye hear how sin is against God, strikes at God! that it is evil, not only against you, and endangers you, but strikes at God. Oh all you that love God, hate sin; let your hearts be set against sin, because so much against God.

Oh Brethren, there be many people do indeed avoid sin, but it is upon poor low grounds, very low and mean be the grounds of many people upon which they avoid sin: There be many, Oh they will not do such and such evils, they will resist a temptation to such and such a sin, why? mark the ground, according as the grounds of men and women are, upon which they do, or stay from doing of a thing; so judge of your hearts; if the grounds be high and raised, then their spirits are high and raised; if their grounds be but low and mean, then their spirits be low and mean.

As thus, many abstain from such and such sins, why? Oh if I do it, it will be known, and I shall be made ashamed, therefore I will not do it.

It is good to resist sin upon any terms, but if this be the chief cause, it is a poor low base thing, and argues a great deal of lowness in the heart, to resist sin upon this, Oh if I do this, I shall be known, and incur the displeasure of my Father, or Master, or such a dear Friend; it may incur punishment, or it may be I shall be turned out of the family, and such like arguments.

I say it is true, it is good to bring in all the arguments we can to oppose sin withal, but when these be the chief things, when these be the only Grounds, that keeps thee from such wickedness that thy

heart is set upon; and thou wouldest be glad to tamper withal: couldest thou be sure it should not be known, and thou shouldest not be brought to shame for it, and have the displeasure of such a friend, thou couldest find in thy heart to be meddling with it; Couldest thou?

Oh! know thou hast a base heart that hast no other grounds to keep thee from sin withal. Whereas know if thou be a Christian indeed, and that God has aright made known sin to thee, thou wouldest rise higher, Oh I am to deal with God, an infinite glorious first-Being, and if it be sin only that strikes at this infinite glorious eternal first-Being of all things, Then I will avoid sin whatsoever become of me; yea, whatsoever I suffer I will not have to do with it: this is a raised Spirit; this heart is like to stand out against sin.

Alas! those poor low grounds upon which many resist sin; though they may stand out against sin a little, against a weak temptation, yet if there come a strong temptation, will quickly break through the hedge: Al those poor low grounds and Arguments, temptation will quickly break through them. But when the heart is raised to oppose sin, upon such high grounds as this is, Certainly this notes a true raised heart by God, and such an one is like to stand out against temptations, in another manner than others do.

And truly when the heart is possessed with this thought, it cannot perhaps parley and reason with the temptation as others can; yea, this one principle of sinning against God, will so fill the heart of a man or woman, that though it does not stand reasoning and answering every thing, yet it will even burst out, either in tears, and fail a lamenting that it should be pestered with temptation; or burst out into Resolution against it.

I remember an excellent Story reported in the Book of Martyrs, you may find it in King Edwards life; that young Prince, that died at some fifteen years of age, in his time, there were two Bishops (otherwise good, and proved Martyrs, and yet you may see what the

best of them were in those times) they came to persuade the King to yield to a Toleration of the Mass, and it was but for his Sister neither, not for the whole Kingdom, but merely for his own Sister, to yield to a Toleration of it in her Chapel, he stood out against it though young, thought it a dishonor to God; well, they plead and Reason with him, telling him it was best in State Policy, and other grounds they use to persuade a Toleration of Popery, (thus you see what kind of men these in these ways are, and if you do not know, yet you are like to know more in this kind about these ways) but this I bring it for, when the poor King, though young, having his heart possessed with this principle, That he should not do any thing against God, he could not answer the Bishops that came so subtilely; but instead of Answering their Reasons, he burst out with tears, and then they were convinced, and confessed the King had more divinity in his little finger than they had in all their bodies.

So I apply it to you young ones, perhaps temptations to that which is a sin against God, comes subtilely, strengthened with this Argument, and the other Argument; but if you have your hearts possessed with this truth, it is a sin against God; Oh when you cannot Answer the particulars of temptation, burst out and weep, and cry either for your condition, or that you should be pestered with that you know is a sin against God, and say, I had rather lose my life, suffer any thing in the world, than sin against God.

If your hearts be filled with this Principle, when temptation to sin comes, you will be ready to burst out and weep before the Lord; and this will be as strong an Answer to temptation as can be, and Satan will quickly avoid, if you can when you find yourselves pestered with temptation, and it follows and dogs and pursues you, if you can being filled with this Principle, That sin is against God, if you can get alone, and fall a weeping, and lamenting, that your hearts are even ready to break, from the consideration of this Principle, this will be the strongest way and means to resist temptation that can be.

CHAP. XX.

A Sixth Corollary.

If sin be thus sinful, it should teach us not only to be troubled for our own sins, but the sins of others.

Sixthly, A Sixth Corollary, If sin be so much against God, and wrong God so, Hence it should teach all those that know God, and have any love to God, to be troubled, not only for their own sins, but for the sins of others, for sin wheresoever they see it. Oh I see the blessed God wronged, fought against, stroke at; and this should go near the heart of all those that have any love to God at all: As with David in the 119. Psalm, 136. *Rivers of water run down mine eyes because they keep not thy Laws.*

It is true, every man and woman should especially look to themselves, and their hearts should especially be troubled for their own sins; but mark the Saints that know how sin is against God, their hearts cannot but be wonderfully troubled when they see that God, so dear and precious to them, thus wronged; Rivers of water run down mine eyes because they keep not thy Law. Oh when (I put it to thee in the Name of the Lord) in all thy life didst thou shed one tear for the sins of those among whom you live? for the sins of thy Family? And vers. 158. I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved: Oh I was grieved and pained at my heart.

Yes, thus it will be with thee if thou lovest God. When thou in the family, may be thou art a child, when thou beholdest thy Father or Mother Carnal, and spending all their lives without the knowledge of God, and in ways of sinning against God, thou shouldest get alone, and mourn and lament for it: Oh it is that, if any thing in the world, that would break a Parents heart, if there be a young Child, a

Youth, or a Maid, that God begins to reveal himself unto them, and the Parent speaks, may be against them, and God's people, and swear, or profane God's Day, or speak against his Ordinances, though it may be it do not become thee to speak to them; but if thou canst before them, let tears drop from thine eyes; or get alone, and fall down and lament before God, if thou canst by lamenting reprove their sins; that they shall see thee lament for them, this may break their hearts it may be: notwithstanding if it do not break their hearts, it has this in it; Certainly, if any thing in the world will stir us and break our own hearts, this should be it, To see God dishonored in the world as he is, though our hearts be never so much hardened otherwise.

There is a Story of a Child of Cressus that was born dumb, he seeing a Soldier ready to strike at his Father and kill him, the affection to his Father brake the bars of his Tongue, and he cried out, Oh why will you kill the King? Then he cried out thus though he never spoke before; but the stroke against his Father made him speak.

So thou man or woman, shouldest have thy heart dead in other things, and have no mind to speak, yet when you see wretched men and women strike at God, (as they do, as I have shewed in their sin) if thou have any heart in the world; any life in the world, when thou seest this stroke at God, now speak; Oh that should burst all bars asunder.

Though thou beest never so meek in thy family, and canst bear other things, yet thou shouldest shew that thou canst not bear sin against God. Oh I beseech you consider this, and see how near this comes to you; How many if any thing be done in your Family against you, or among your neighbors that is against you, you cannot bear it; but you can bear that which is done against God, and never be troubled at it.

As many a master, let the servant neglect his work, and displease him, he cannot bear it; but let his servant be wicked, and break the

Sabbath, deny God his time, let his servant perhaps swear, or do such wickedness, he goes away and said it may be, Why do you so? or, you should not do so; or it may be, takes no notice of it. Certainly that man knows neither God nor sin, or has little relation to God that takes so little notice of that done against God. Yet that done against himself, he cannot bear it.

Take this along with you, If you have any relation to God, your hearts will be more troubled for the wrong done to God by your children and servants, than when yourselves are wronged by your servants or children. Oh how many men and women would go and wring their hands to their neighbors and friends, Oh! never man or woman so miserable as I! my own child out of my bowels wrongs me, and does what hurt he can to me! this is accounted matter of bitter lamentation: But now why should not thy heart melt and lament when thou canst say, Oh the child out of my loins and bowels, how does he wrong the blessed God of all the world? Oh that I should be so miserable to bear in my bowels one an enemy to the infinite blessed God! Oh that an Enemy to God should ever come out of my Loins!

I think this should move tender hearted mothers, to see that they should bring forth such that should go on in ways of enmity against God himself. Suppose one out of your bowels should be a traitor to the Parliament, and do mischief to the State, would not this trouble you, that one out of your bowels should be a traitor to the commonwealth? this would be a grievous vexation. Now is it not more if that thou hast a wicked Child, one out of thy bowels that strikes at God, and is a Traitor to the God of Heaven? these do more mischief than to destroy a whole nation; I say, if a man should live to destroy, to undo a whole land for their outward estate, there were not so much evil in it, as in one sin against God.

You would say, that were a miscreant that should be born to undo a whole nation, and woe to me that I should bear one that should live to do such mischief to undo a State: Now if thou bear one that

strikes against God, and wrongs God in ways of sin, this should trouble thee as much as the other: therefore never be at quiet till thou see some work of grace, till thou see the heart of thy Child called in.

I remember Augustine said this of his mother, and I propound this for mothers example, he being very wicked a while, and his mother godly; Oh it grieved her heart that she should have a child go on in such wickedness against God, and she prayed and wept, so that Augustine said of her, after God had enlightened his eyes to consider what she did for him, said he, I persuade my self my mother did as much labor, and endure as much pain for my second birth, as ever for my first birth.

This is his testimony of her, that by her prayers and tears for her child's salvation that was wicked, he did verily believe it cost her as much labor for the second birth, as for the first: upon which, when she comes and complains to Ambrose of her child, well said he, Be of good comfort, surely a son of so many prayers and tears can hardly perish; and he did not indeed, for he proved a worthy instrument of God's glory afterward in the Church.

Now is there any mother in this congregation that can say, I have labored as much, and it has cost me as much pain for the second Birth of my child, as ever it did for the first?

Certainly did you know what sin were, and how against God, it would cost you a great deal of travail when you see your children wicked, and much prayer and cost, that you might not have a child an enemy to God, a traitor to the crown, scepter, and dignity of Jesus Christ.

Oh Brethren, does it not pity your souls to see that infinite, blessed, holy, dreadful God so much wronged in the world as he is. It should move us to pity to see any saint, a man or a woman of an excellent gracious Spirit, to see such a soul abused and wronged; as Solomon

said, there was a wise man in the city and not regarded, though he delivered the city; to see but one man of wisdom that has but any excellency in his Spirit to be wronged, it should trouble any ingenious heart. But then I reason thus, if it would be, and should be such a trouble to any ingenious heart to see any one man of a gracious Spirit wronged and abused, then how should it trouble any ingenious, any gracious heart in the world to see the infinite blessed glorious God to be wronged in the world by sin, as I have already shewed he is in every sin, when I discovered to you how sin is against God that I might possess your hearts with this principle, for I know no principle of greater power through the strength of Christ to do good upon your spirits than this.

CHAP. XXI.

A Seventh Corollary.

If sin has done thus much against God, then all that are now converted had need do much for God.

Seventhly, Another is this, If sin have done so much against God, and so much wronged God, hence it follows, That all those that have heretofore lived in a sinful way, and God has now been pleased to enlighten them, and work upon their hearts, had need now do much for God: This follows clearly, thou didst heretofore live in ways of sin, and what didst thou do in all this? Nothing but strike at God, and wrong God all that time of thy Natural Estate, till God opened thine eyes, and awakened thy conscience.

Oh think now what a deal of wrong have I done to God all my life, if I have done nothing else?

Well, now God opens thine eyes, Oh now thou hadst need to do much for God. If God have shewed himself, and given hopes of mercy, and that he has pardoned me; this will certainly prevail with any heart that God has turned.

What! have I done so much against God heretofore! Oh I have cause to seek the honor of God upon my hands and feet all my days, that if I can do any thing for God: What! I such a vile wretch, and yet out of Hell! yea, and hope to be pardoned! Oh any thing I can do for him, though to creep upon my hands and feet all my days in this world, to suffer all the hardships in the world, shame, loss of estate, any thing in the world; no matter how great and hard the suffering be that God calls for. There is infinite Reason I should do and suffer all for God, for I have wronged God by sin.

This is how we shall turn sin to grace as it were, and of poison make an antidote against poison, by taking advantage by sin to be more obedient unto God.

You that have been swearers and wronged God that way, now sanctify God's Name the other way: You that have broken so many Sabbaths, now sanctify Sabbaths: true, all that you can do cannot make up the wrong, but that will shew thy good will, that thou wilt do what thou canst, and manifest to God and all the world, That if thou hadst ten thousand times more strength than thou hast thou couldest lay it out for God; and certainly any man or woman that have been great sinners, if God have humbled them and pardoned them, they will be great Saints for the time to come.

Carry this home with you, any that have been vile, perhaps you think you have grace because you are not so vile as heretofore you have been; but certainly if you have grace, there will be a proportionableness between the holiness of your lives now, and your wicked life before; you will take advantage, I have wronged God so before, now I must live thus and thus.

It will be so between man and man, if one have wronged you, and you have pardoned him, you expect he should do, what he can for you: Thus it should be with God and you, you have wronged God, others have sinned as well as you, and others sins have been furthered by you; this now should inflame your hearts, I have sin enough in my self, and I have been the cause of it in thousand thousand sins in others, my sins strike against God, yea, and I have caused others to sin and strike against God: now if I could draw some from sin, I should think it the happiest thing in the world; I would creep upon my hands and knees to draw others from sin to God, to be in love with the ways of God, and of religion.

Oh you that have been forward in sin, don't think it enough that now you be troubled for your sins and leave them; but know, you must do for God now as much as you have done against him; he requires it of you: Oh go to your friends, and acquaintance, and kindred, and labor to draw them off from sin; tell your kindred, and friends, and acquaintance, Oh Brother, that you did but know what sin means; Oh Sister, that you did but understand what it is to sin against God: God has shewed me in some measure; yea, I that went on in such and such sins; Oh I see how I struck at God, and what an evil this is; Oh that God would enlighten your eyes: Come and hear the Word, I thought lightly of sin before, now I have gone and heard, and God has shewed me what it was; Oh that God would make you see.

Pray for them, and take no nay, but to them again and again, that so you may do somewhat for God as you have done abundance of wrong against God.

CHAP. XXII.

The Eight Corollary

If sin does so much against God, hence see why God manifest such sore displeasure against sin as he does: 1 Against the Angels that sinned. 2 Against all Adams Posterity. 3 See it in God's giving the Law against sin. 4 See it in God's punishing sins that are accounted small. 5 See it in God's destroying all the world for sin. 6 See his displeasure in punishing sin eternally.

Eighthly, This is one Consequence follows, If sin be so great an evil as you have heard, so much against God, wrongs God so much as it does, and strikes at God; Hence then we see the reason why God manifests such sore displeasure against sin. We find (Brethren) most dreadful manifestations of God's displeasure against sin, and the ground and bottom of them is in these things which you have heard opened unto you. And indeed did you understand and believe what has been opened unto you concerning sins opposition of God, you could not then wonder at God's manifestation of his displeasure against sin. There are manifold Manifestations of God's displeasure against sin, which when they be spoken of, and opened unto people that do not understand the dreadful evil that is in sin, they stand and wonder at it, and think, Oh they be hard and severe things. When Ministers reveal the threatnings of God against sin, Oh say they, God forbid, we hope God is more merciful than so; and all because they apprehend not what dreadful evil there is in sin. That soul that apprehends and believes these particulars that have been opened unto you, cannot but justify God when they hear the revelation, and the manifestation of the displeasure of God against sin. As now in these Particulars: That which has been delivered is the bottom and ground of these that we shall mention, and we see the reason of all these. As

First, That dreadful manifestation of the displeasure of God against the Angels that sinned against him: there is that revelation of the displeasure of God against the Angels, that might cause all our hearts to tremble before the Lord at the very thought and hearing of it. I beseech you consider, you who think that God is only a God of Mercy, and God is not so severe against sin as many Ministers

would make him; do but attend to what I shall say unto you, how God has manifested his displeasure against sin in the Angels: Consider of these five or six Particulars, I will but only mention them.

1 That God should cast so many glorious creatures as the Angels are, for ever from himself, considering the Excellency of their Nature.

2 Consider their Multitude.

3 Consider, That the Chains of darkness that they be cast into, are eternal Miseries.

4 Consider, That this was but for one sin.

5 And consider, That this was but the first sin that ever they committed.

6 Lastly, consider, That God should not now enter so much as into any parley with them about any terms of peace; nor never would, nor never will: This is the sore displeasure of God against them, that God (I say) should not look upon the Angels that he has made glorious creatures, the most excellent of all the work of his hands: And when there were many thousand millions of them, for so the Scripture speaks of Legions, even in one man Legions of Devils: though there were thousands and millions of such glorious creatures that God made; and these were in Heaven about his Throne, beholding his glory, and when these committed but one sin against him, never but one before their Fall, and the first that ever was committed; they had no example before them of God's wrath, but upon the very first sin, though it were but one that all these glorious creatures committed, they were presently cast down from Heaven, and of Angels made Devils, and reserved in Chains of eternal darkness.

And so is God set against them all for that one first sin, that he would never enter into any parley with them, to be reconciled upon

any terms; never to consider of any terms of peace, but cast them away from him unto eternal torments without any recovery; this is the dreadful displeasure of God against sin.

Now Brethren, this I speak of, is that which there is no doubting or controversy about; any one that knows the Scripture knows this. In some things there may be controversies about them; but no Divine that has knowledge of any thing of Scripture, but will confess this that I speak of; and if you know not this, certainly you were never acquainted with the Scripture: Though other Points be controverted, yet none that know God's Word make question of this, this is clearly granted of all.

And the consideration of this might strike abundance of fear & terror into the hearts of wicked and ungodly men and women, to think, Lord, how have I thought of thee al this while, and have looked upon God as a merciful God, that though I have sinned, I have thought things would not be with me as I have heard by such and such Ministers; but this day I have heard, such was the sore displeasure of the infinite God against sin, that when he had to deal with those glorious Angels for one sin, he cast thousands of them into eternal Misery, and upon no terms will be reconciled, nor never will.

You think if you sin against God, you will cry God mercy, and so hope God will pardon: true, there is a difference between Man-kind and the Angels, because we have a Mediator, and they have not; but most people that speak of crying to God for mercy, they look upon God, as God's Nature merely being merciful, and not through a Mediator; they do not understand the necessity of a Mediator between God and them, but they apprehend that that God that made them will hear their cry.

Now God made the Angels and they were more noble creatures than you abundantly; now the Angels that sinned but once, for that one sin are cast for ever, and God resolves, though they should cry and

shriek, and shed thousands of tears for sin, God will never hear them; God's displeasure against sin is so great: certainly then sin is a dreadful evil.

Suppose a Prince were so wrath with a great company of his nobles, that he casts a great multitude of them into a dungeon, and there they endure torment, and the King would not vouchsafe so much as to enter into a parley, to be reconciled upon any terms; every one would say, surely 'tis some great matter that has provoked the King.

if they understand this Prince is very Just, and withal very merciful; to be sure he would do none any wrong, but were very merciful above all men in the world; and yet for but one offence he should cast these his nobles down into a dungeon to be tormented, and would by no means be reconciled: every one would conclude, certainly there was much evil in that offence if it deserved thus much; and certainly for the Prince to deal thus with them there was much in it: Would you not make such a conclusion from thence?

Then learn to make such a conclusion from God's dealing with the Angels; That seeing God is Just, and can do no creature wrong; yea, God is infinitely merciful, and yet he does cast his noble creatures, those creatures that were the highest that ever he made any creature, for one sin without any means of Reconciliation: Certainly sin has more evil in it than men are aware of, for though God has not dealt thus with Man-kind, yet he might; there is so much evil in sin that God might have done thus with any of us; and had it not been for the Mediation of his Son, we had been thus irrecoverably miserable to all eternity.

Secondly, Consider, That for one sin in our first Parents (and not in our own persons) that all the Children of men by Nature are put in such an estate to be Children of wrath, and liable to eternal misery, and that for the sin of our Parents: that will shew the wonderful Justice of God: How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his ways past finding out! Certainly God is infinitely displeased with sin, that

when the first Parents of Man-kind did offend, then upon that all their Posterity to the end of the world are put into a damnable condition, all of them are children of wrath, and heirs of eternal perdition as in themselves. Certainly my Brethren, this is a truth, and none can deny it that understand Scripture, and if you do not understand this, you have not understood a great and necessary Truth of the Word of God, that is necessary to eternal life, That all Man-kind are by the sin of their first Parents put into a condemned estate, so as they are all the children of wrath by nature as the Scripture said: so that we are not only in danger of God's eternal wrath through the sin that we in our own persons do actually commit, but though we had never committed any actual sin in our own persons, yet the sin of our first Parents is enough to make us children of wrath, and be our eternal ruin. Certainly there is a great deal of evil in sin more than the world thinks of, when it shall so provoke God as that he shall have such displeasure to put all Man-kind to be in the state of Children of wrath for the sin of our first Parents. This is a second Manifestation of God's displeasure against sin.

Thirdly, A third Manifestation of God's displeasure against sin is in that fiery Law (as the Scripture calls it) that God has given for forbidding and threatening of sin. Consider the dreadful manner of God's giving the Law, that it was with Fire, Lightning, Thunderings, and Earthquakes, and Smoke, so as the Scripture said Moses did shake and tremble at the very sight of the dreadfulfulness of the Law when it was first given. That was only to set forth thus much to us, That if the Law that God gave be broken, that then God will be very dreadful to those that break it; therefore he gives it at first in such a dreadful manner. It may be many bold presumptuous sinners think it nothing to break the Law of the infinite eternal God; but in that God gives the Law in such a dreadful manner as you may read in the 19. of Exodus, how dreadfully God gave the Law; God does thereby declare to all the world, how dreadful sinners are to expect him to be, if they do break the Law. But especially consider that dreadful Curse annexed to the Law, Cursed is every one that abides not in

every thing that is written in the Law; to do that which the Law of God pronounces to be done: a curse to every one that does any thing at any time that shall break it. That there should be such a dreadful Curse annexed; this manifests the sore displeasure of God against sin.

Fourthly, A fourth Manifestation of the sore displeasure of God against sin (all this but to shew you further how sin is a greater evil than affliction) the Manifestation I say of God's displeasure against sin is seen, in that we find in God's word God has so severely punished some sins that do appear to us to be very small, little sins: and yet God has been exceedingly severe against those sins which appear to us to be exceeding small: To instance in three.

1 In 1 Sam. 6. 19. there you have this example, that the men of Bethshershesh, when the Ark came to them they did but look into the Ark out of curiosity, for ought we know for no other end but merely out of curiosity: Now because the Ark was a holy thing, and none but the Priests of God were to meddle with it, God did presently at an instant slay fifty thousand, and three score and ten men of them: Upon this the text said, these men beholding this severity of God for this offence, they all said, Oh! who shall stand before the holy God! If God be so holy that he cannot bear so small a sin as this did appear to men, that but for looking into the Ark so many thousands shall be slain presently: who can stand before the holy Lord! Many of you have slight thoughts of the Lord and his Holiness, and think you may be bold and presumptuous, you venture upon greater offences than this was; but these men upon the venturing upon this one thing, above fifty thousand are slain presently: This is the displeasure of God against sin, though very small to our thoughts.

2 Again, A second example you have in Uzzah that did but touch the Ark out of a good intention, as being ready to fall, yet that not being according to the Law, God struck him with death presently; it cost him his life, he was struck with sudden death. We are terrified when we see one fall down suddenly: now upon that offence, though he

had a good meaning, and good intention, yet God brake in upon him with his wrath, and struck him dead presently. Consider this you that think you have good meanings, and good intentions, yet not doing according to the Law; the least breach of the Law, though we have a good meaning, does provoke the wrath of God, and God when he pleaseth lets out this his wrath.

3 A third example you have in that poor man that we read of, who did but gather sticks upon the Lords day, and by the Command of God from Heaven this man must be stoned to death: You would think these things little matters. Alas poor man, he might have need of them: How many of you venture upon other manner of things upon the Lords Day, profaning of it? and yet God speaks from Heaven, and gives command to have this man stoned to death. Now Brethren, though it be true, that God does not always come upon men for such little sins, it may be to make known his Patience and long-suffering. Perhaps the Lord does let others go on for a long time in greater sins: but yet God by a few such examples does declare to all the world what the evil of the least sin is, and how his displeasure is out against the least sin. If he do forbear, that is to be attributed to his patience and long-suffering, but not to the littleness of the sin, or the littleness of the evil that is in that sin. This is a Fourth.

Fifthly, A fifth thing wherein God manifests his displeasure against sin, is in those dreadful and hideous Judgments that the Lord executes abroad in the world that we have the stories of in the Scripture, and all Ages: As that God should come and drown a whole world except eight persons, all the whole world swept away and drowned. And so that God should command fire and Brimstone to come down from Heaven, and burn and consume whole Cities, Sodom and Gomorrah, and the Cities adjoining; yea, and all the men, women, and children, but only Lot, and those few with him. And so the fire to come down upon those Captains and their Fifties, 2 Kings, 1. And the Earth swallowing up Corah, Dathan, and Abiram. There is no Age but has some one or other dreadful example of His

Judgments against sin. The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all unrighteousness. Now Brethren, though some people have escaped, and these manifestations of God's Judgments are not so general and ordinary; yet when they are but now and then, God manifests what his displeasure is against sin, and what might be to all that sin against him.

Sixthly, A sixth manifestation of God's displeasure against sin, is in those eternal torments and miseries in Hell that the Scripture speaks of: the worm that never dies, and the fire that never goes out: when you hear Ministers speak of fire that never is quenched; for poor people to lie burning in fire thousands of thousands of years in eternal flames, scalding under the wrath of God; you stand aghast at the dreadfulness of these expressions. Certainly these are only to reveal the displeasure of God against sin, because there is no finite time can be sufficient to manifest to the full the displeasure of God against sin: therefore those that perish, must perish eternally.

CHAP. XXIII.

A Seventh discovery of God's displeasure against sin, opened from the sufferings of Christ.

First, See the several expressions of Scripture: 1 He was sorrowful to death, 2 He began to be amazed, 3 He began to be in an Agony. Secondly, See the effects of Christ's being in an Agony, 1 He fell grovelling on the ground, 2 He sweat drops of blood, 3 He cries to God if it be possible to let this cup pass from me. Thirdly, There is eight Considerations of Christ's sufferings.

Seventhly, And that is greater than all that has been said: Put all the former six together; His dealings with the Angels, and with Mankind; The dreadful giving of the Law; His dreadful Judgments for small sins; And examples of his wrath abroad in the world; And the eternal torments in Hell: Put all these six together, and yet I say all these six is not so much to manifest the displeasure of God against sin as this one that now I shall tell you of: and if there be any thing in the world that should make us to see the evil of sin, it should be this; if any thing make our hearts to shake and tremble at the evil of that sin of which it is so much guilty, then this I say that now I speak of should do it; and that is this, The dealings of God the Father with his Son: when Jesus Christ that was the second Person of the Trinity, God blessed for ever, came to be our Mediator, and to have but our sins imputed unto him; and according to Scriptures phrase, to be made sin: Do but then take notice how God deals with him, how God manifests himself to his own Son, when his own Son did but take mans sin upon him, to answer for it: do but then consider how God the Father did deal with him. The Scripture said, he did not spare his Son, but let out the vials of his wrath upon him in a most dreadful manner. If we do but consider,

First, that Christ God blessed for ever should come and be in the form of a Servant, should be a man of sorrows as the Scripture speaks, that in the whole course of his life should live a contemptible life before men, and undergo grievous sufferings. But because I must hasten, do but look upon Christ in his Agony, and upon the Cross at his death, and there you will see the dreadful displeasure of God against sin, and in nothing more than that. True, there is the bright glass of the Law wherein we may see the evil of sin: but there is the red glass of the sufferings of Christ, and in that we may see more of the evil of sin than if God should let us down to Hell, and if there we should see all the tortures and torments of the damned in Hell, see them how they lie sweltering under God's wrath there; it were not so much as beholding sin through the red glass of the sufferings of Jesus Christ, and that of his Agony. And give me leave a little to shew to you how God let out himself

against his Son when he came into the Garden; and a little before when he was to die and suffer upon the Cross. And for this consider these two things:

First, The several Expressions the holy Ghost useth in the several Evangelists for the setting out of those dreadful things Christ suffered as a fruit of God's displeasure upon him.

1 One Evangelist said that Christ was very * sorrowful even to the death, [Mat. 26. 38](#). he began to be (the word in the Original signifies) compassed about with sorrows, to have sorrows round about him, and as it were beset and besieged with grief; and it was to the very death, usque ad mortem, sorrowful to the very death: What was it for? upon the apprehension of the wrath of his Father, which he was to endure for the sin of man: he was sorrowful to the death in the apprehension of it. You it may be upon the sight of sin content yourselves with some slight little sorrow. You will it may be, when * you are told of sin, cry, Lord have mercy upon me, I am sorry for it, and so pass it away. But Christ when God comes to deal with him, he makes his soul to be compassed about with sorrows, sorrowful to the death for our sins.

2 Another Evangelist tells us he began to be amazed, Mark, 14. 33. that is, when Christ came to drink the Cup of the wrath of his Father, due for our sins, he stood amazed at the sight of the dreadfulness of that Cup he was to drink of; because he knew what God's wrath was, he understood what it was before he drunk of it; and this made him stand amazed at it. Many sinners hear God's wrath, and this makes them fear, but they be not amazed at it, they can pass it away and they be not affected with it afterward; because they understand it not, they know not what it is for a creature to stand before the wrath of an infinite Deity: Who knows the power of thy wrath? said the Scripture: therefore they be not amazed. But Christ that knew full well what the wrath of God was, and saw to the bottom of it, he understood to the dregs what that Cup was; and he stood amazed at the sight of it when he was to drink it.

3 Another Evangelist has this Expression, * ('tis in Luke 22. 44.) Christ began to be in an Agony: Now the word Agony, signifies a strife, a combat; it is taken from the word that signifies a combat in Battle. Christ was in an Agony, in a Combat: Combat, with what? with whom? With the Wrath of God, he saw coming out upon him to sink him; he saw the Curse of the Law come out upon him; he saw the infinite Justice of God, of the infinite Deity come out upon him: and he was in an Agony, in combat with the infinite Justice and wrath of God, and the dreadful Curse of the Law, and so Christ came to be in an Agony. These be the three Expressions of the Evangelists.

Secondly, Consider the Effects of Christ's being in an Agony, and apprehending the wrath of his Father for sin.

1 One Effect was this, you shall find it in the story of the Gospel, that the text said, he fell grovelling upon the ground upon the apprehension of God's wrath and displeasure upon him for sin, which he was to suffer: he fell down grovelling upon the ground. When he that upholds the Heavens and the Earth by his Power, now falls grovelling upon the Earth, having the weight and burden of mans sin upon him he falls upon his face, he falls to the ground. Certainly Brethren, Christ had that weight and burden upon him, that would have pressed all the Angels in Heaven, and Men in the world down to the bottomless gulf of despair: If all the strength of all the men that ever were since the beginning of the world, and all the Angels in Heaven were put into one, and he had but that weight upon him that Christ had, it would have made him sink down into eternal despair: for had not Christ been God as well as Man, he could never have born it, but would have sunk down eternally: But the burden and weight was so great that he sinks down to the ground.

2 A second effect of Christ's bearing the wrath of God for sin is this, He sweat great drops of blood; the word in the original is "clodders of blood"; Blood thickened into clods. Never was there such a sweat;

it was in the Winters night, a cold night, abroad upon the ground in a cold Winters night, and he had nothing else upon him to make him sweat but the burden of sin, and the weight of the wrath of God being upon him, he being under that burden sweat, and such a sweat as made the very blood break through his very Veins and run to cladders, and so run down upon the ground cladders of blood: and all this but upon the apprehension of the wrath of God his Father against him for our sin. Now you know when porters be under great Burdens, sometimes they sweat; but never did any sweat like this sweat of Christ, being under the weight of mans sin, sweat so as cladders of blood should fall from him: One would think fear should rather draw in the Blood; fear naturally draws in the blood to the heart: therefore it is that men and women when they are scared, and are afraid, they are so pale in their Countenance; fear causeth paleness in the outward parts, because the blood retires to the heart when they be afraid. But such was the amazement upon Christ, upon the apprehension of the wrath of his Father for sin, that it sends out blood in Cladders trickling down his sides.

3 And then a third expression which shew the effect of God's wrath on Christ, is the Prayer of Christ; Christ does as it were shrink under this weight and burden of sin, and cries to God, if it be possible let this Cup pass from me. When we cry with vehemence, we say, if it be possible let it be thus or thus; but Christ cries out so three times. We may apprehend Christ taking as it were the Cup of the wrath of his Father in his hand, and because he knew it was the end wherefore he came into the world, that he must drink of it for satisfaction for mans sin; and being willing to save Man-kind, that he knew could not be saved but he must drink the Cup, he takes it in his hand ready to drink it; but beholding the hideousness and dreadfulness of this Cup, and knowing what was in it, he puts it away, and cries, Father if it be possible, let this Cup pass: but now he sees if he did not drink it, all the Children of men must be eternally damned; for such was our misery, if Christ had not drunk this Cup, we had all eternally perish't; therefore Christ puts it to his mouth again (as it were) the second time; but yet seeing what

dreadfulness was in this Cup, and he knowing it, he takes it away again, and cries, If it be possible, let this Cup pass: but yet having love to Man-kind, being loth to see so many thousands of poor creatures perish eternally, he puts it to his mouth again a third time; and yet seeing the dreadfulness of it, puts it away again, and yet said, If it be possible let it pass. This might make a man tremble to think that he shall (as Job said 21. Job) drink of the wrath of God: Thus it was with Christ, and all this while he did not drink it: But afterwards when he comes to the Cross, there he drunk the Cup of God's wrath, and there he cries out with another cry more bitter than all the other, and that is, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? so that he apprehends himself forsaken. Oh the wrath of the Almighty that then was upon the Spirit of Jesus Christ at that time: What! for the son of God blessed for evermore thus to cry out, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me! Oh you Heavens how could you be able to behold such a Spectacle as this was, or the Earth be able to bear it! Truly, neither Heaven nor Earth were able; for the Scripture said, that the Sun withdrew his light, and was darkened so many hours; it was from twelve to three, that the Sun withdrew his light and did not shine, but there was dismal darkness in the world as not being able to behold such a Spectacle as this: and the Earth shook and trembled, and the Graves opened, and the Rocks clove in sunder, the very stones themselves were affected with such a work as this; and the vale of the Temple rent asunder: these things were done upon Christ's bearing of the Wrath of his Father for sin. Here you have the fruits of God's displeasure for sin, and in this you may see, surely sin must needs be a vile thing that causeth God the Father thus to deal with his own Son, when he had mans sin upon him.

Thirdly, Consider yet further, for there is much in it, and if this do not shew the evil of sin, and cause you to fear and tremble, those that be guilty of sin, and their consciences tell them so; if their hearts tremble not, certainly their hearts be hard, and their minds be blinded, and little hopes can they have for the present of ever having their parts in these sufferings of Christ; what shall Christ

suffer such sufferings, and wilt thou go away and have slight thoughts of sin? shall sin be so great a burden to Christ, and wilt thou be so merry under it? Certainly you see it is more than you were aware of: for you to say, I trust in Jesus Christ, and hope to be saved by Jesus Christ; you see how Christ felt sin, the Scripture said he was made a Curse: Were it not we had it from the holy Ghost, no man or Angel durst say so, that Christ should be made a Curse; in the abstract, not Cursed, but made a Curse: What! he that was God and Man, by the sin of man was made a Curse! Oh the displeasure of God against sin! But yet to give it you a little more fully, see these Aggravations, and you will say, certainly the displeasure of God was great against his Son.

1 As first, All that Christ suffered he perfectly knew it long before he suffered, and yet it was so dreadful unto him. Oh Brethren, there be many men and women understand nothing at all of the wrath of God against sin, these think there is no great matter in it: Of all the men and women in the world, when they come to suffer this wrath, it will be dreadful to them, because it come unexpectedly; they that went on merrily and cheerfully in the ways of sin, and for the wrath of God, never thought of it; now then when the wrath of God comes on them, it will be more dangerous and intolerable: This is the reason why many people when their consciences are awakened upon their sick Beds, then they despair, crying and roaring under God's wrath and rage with despair: Why? Because they never in their lives came to understand the danger of sin, and of God's wrath for sin; and because it comes now suddenly upon them, they be not able to bear it. But it was not so with Christ, Christ understood this long before; he knew what it would be before he took our Nature, and he knew what it would be when he came in humane Nature to undertake it. Those men and women that know not what storms and tempests are, it is grievous to them when they come to know them suddenly; when they are in the midst of a storm or tempest at Sea, Oh they are grievous: but Mariners that know beforehand what they are like to meet withal, it is not grievous to them. But Christ

though he knew it beforehand, yet how dreadful was it to him when it came?

2 Consider, Christ had no sin in himself to weaken his strength, and take away his strength, and so make the burden greater; he had no sin but only by imputation. But now when the wrath of God comes upon us, we having so much sin in our Natures, this weakens us, and will therefore make the burden of Divine wrath so much the more intolerable to us: For as it is with a sound man, If a great weight be laid upon a man healthful and strong, he feels not the burden of it; but if you lay the same weight upon a man very sick and weak through distemper of body, it is grievous to him: So here, If the weight of sin were so grievous to Christ that had no distemper of weakness, how grievous will it be to a sinner that is distempered, and so weakened with sin? If the shoulders of a Porter be sore, and all the Skin off, and a boil upon his shoulder, how grievous would the burden be then? So it is with us, when God comes to lay the burden of his Wrath upon us, we be but weak creatures at the best, but through the distemper of sin in our hearts we are more weak and more unable to bear: because we be sore, and have boils of sin; this makes God's wrath much more dreadful; but it was not so with Christ.

3 Christ had absolute perfect Patience, there was not the least impatience in Christ: therefore when Christ that had perfect Patience, and yet did thus cry out and sweat, and was thus sorrowful under it, surely there was some fearful burden in this. Some men and women will lie and roar out under some pains, and it may be it is great, but had they perfect patience, they would not make such dolor and out-cries: it is through the weakness of their Patience that they make such out-cries, and manifest such sense of their affliction. But Christ made not such out-cries through impatience.

4 Consider, Christ had the strength of an infinite Deity to support him: He had the strength of God, he was God and Man, he had the strength of the Divine Nature to support the Humane Nature which

no creature can have as Christ had; for there was an Hypostatical union between the Divine and Humane Nature at that time, and yet notwithstanding the Hypostatical union of both Natures, yet Christ expresses himself thus, and is thus sensible of the Wrath upon him for the sin of Man.

5 Consider, Christ was the Captain of all that were to suffer hereafter: and therefore he would if he had had no more upon him than that which the humane Nature could have born, have manifested (one would think) abundance of Resolution and Magnanimity, and not have cried out so: and surely had there not been the suffering of the Wrath of the Deity, and the Curse of the Law in it; certainly he that was the Captain of all that were to suffer, he would have manifested it to be a light burden he met withal; for there be many Martyrs have suffered outwardly as great Extremities as ever Christ did, for outward torture, and born them with joy; therefore seeing the Martyrs many of them suffering greater tortures to their bodies, and have born them with Joy; no sorrow, nor crying out, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? nor, If it be possible, let this cup pass, but endured them with a great deal of Joy. Now how comes it to pass that the Martyrs did bear them with such joy, and Christ the Captain of them all falls to the Earth, and cries out so? Certainly there was more in Christ's sufferings than in all the sufferings in the world, more of the displeasure of God.

6 Consider, That it was through the strength of Christ that all that ever did suffer were enabled to suffer what they did undergo. Now if Christ had that strength, that through him all the Martyrs were enabled to suffer what they did; certainly Christ had abundance of strength in himself to suffer when he came to it: How comes it to pass then that the strength whereby they were enabled to suffer being from Christ, they manifested not that horror and trouble that Christ himself did? Certainly therefore Christ suffered other manner of things than they did.

7 Consider this, Christ did know what an infinite good his sufferings would do: that by suffering he should save so many thousands, reconcile God and man, glorify his Father, that he should do the greatest work for God and his Father that ever was; that by his sufferings there should be that work done that should be matter of eternal praise, and Hallelujahs of the Saints and Angels eternally in the Heavens: And yet though Christ knew and understood what good should be done by his sufferings, yet see how sensible he was of the greatness of it. One would have thought the good he saw to be done should much have lightened it; and so certainly it did.

8 Consider, Christ did know his sufferings were to continue but a little while; though they were extreme, yet that they should last but for a few hours, and then he should be glorified. And yet though he did understand his sufferings were to last but a few hours, and then himself should come to glory; yet for all this they were thus hideous and dreadful to him. Oh Lord, then how hideous shall the sufferings of the damned be to them, when as every damned soul that goes to Hell, knows certainly how he must lie to all eternity; after thousands of thousands, and ten thousand millions of years; after so many thousands of years as there be drops in those mighty Waters which you sail over; yet the time is no more expired than the very first moment they enter'd into those miserable torments.

Consider of this thus you that have to do in the great Waters, consider how many drops there might be in the Sea, as big as the bill of a Bird could carry, and that this Bird should be supposed once in a thousand years to carry away one drop, yet this Bird would sooner empty that mighty Sea than the torments of the damned should be at an end. Oh how dreadful will it be to them when as Christ's tortures which he did endure but a little while, made him to cry out so. Oh Brethren, put all these together and then know the evil of sin. Oh that we could apprehend it now before we come to feel it. For this is the end for which I speak of these things and present them before you, that you may now know them, and never come to feel experimentally what they be. Blessed be those that in

hearing tremble and believe, and do not come to know by experience that dreadful evil in them. If God should in his infinite wisdom have studied (as one may so speak) from all Eternity to have found out a way to have presented sin to be dreadful to the Children of men, we could not conceive how infinite wisdom should from all eternity have found out an Argument to manifest the evil of sin more, or so much as in the sufferings of Jesus Christ: So that in them God does as it were say, Well, I see wretched Men and Women will not believe the evil of sin; well, among other Arguments, I will have one, that if possible, shall Convince all wicked hard hearts in the world to make them see what sin is, and that is in my Son, in my dealings with my Son; and that wrath of mine I shall lay upon my Son; this shall make it appear to them what sin is. Now if God have done this on purpose to render sin odious and abominable, and a most dreadful Evil; Oh woe then to that Soul, that after all this shall go on in ways of sin pleasingly and delightfully, and easily entertain sin.

THE SECOND PART OF THIS TREATISE.

sin is most opposite to Mans Good; and far more opposite to the Good of man than affliction.

IT may be by all that has been said of sins being against God, the hearts of some (at least) may not be so much as turned: therefore now we come to shew how sin is against the Good of Man; not only against God, but against our selves. Certainly Brethren, sin makes the sinner to be in an evil case: from that which has been said we may conclude, That of a truth a sinner, a wicked man or woman must needs be in an evil case. This is the Subject which I am to open, What an evil case sin brings our selves into: and thereby we shall see that sin is a greater Evil than affliction. Though we have spent divers Exercises upon this, yet it is as various as if we had

several Texts. Now this is the Argument to demonstrate, That a sinner does not only dishonor and strike at God; but sin is against his own soul, against his own life, against his own peace and comfort, against his own happiness; he does undo himself by sin. This is that which I am now to declare to you; and for the opening of this, divers Particulars offer themselves to be handled.

CHAP. XXIV.

First, sin make a man evil, but no affliction can make him so:

1 Those that are in affliction are not the worse, 2 But those that are wicked are vile persons, though they be the greatest Princes.

First, more Generally thus, sin is against Man more than any affliction. For,

First, sin makes a man to be evil: no affliction makes him to be evil but only sin: I beseech you observe it, a man or woman is not a worse man or woman because afflicted, not worse than they were before; but sin makes the man or the woman to be worse: and there is a great deal in this to shew the evil of sin to be beyond the evil of affliction.

Take a man that is never so sorely afflicted, suppose the affliction to be as grievous as the afflictions of Job, suppose a man scraping off his Sores upon the dunghill as Job did, this affliction makes him not a worse man than he was before; only it may occasion sin sometimes, and so make him worse: but take Job, considered in his afflictions only, and he was not a worse man than in the greatest prosperity, when the candle of the Lord shined upon him, and all his parts, only it occasioned some sin in Job, otherwise he had not been

the worse; and in conclusion he was not the worse, for as it occasioned some sin, so it stirred up a great deal of grace; as the Apostle said 1 Cor. 8. 8, 9. For neither if we eat, are we the better; neither if we eat not, are we the worse: So I may say of all outward things in the world: If a man have riches, it makes him not the better; if he be in poverty, it makes him not the worse: if he have honor, he is not better; if disgrace, he is not worse, his condition may be worse, but himself not at all the worse:

Therefore you shall observe it, that when the Scriptures speaks of God's people afflicted, yet it speaks of them as most honorable, and in a most excellent condition notwithstanding their afflictions: but when it speaks of some in great prosperity, but wicked, it speaks of them as most contemptible and vile. I will give you an example of each, the most remarkable in all the Book of God.

1 Those that are most sorely afflicted, yet to shew that they are not the worse for their afflictions, see the 11. [Heb. 36, 37, 38](#). verses; I suppose you that are acquainted with the Word of God, know the story, that the Christians went up and down the world in sheep skins and goats skins, persecuted and afflicted, and dwelling in the caves of the Earth; they had trials of cruel mockings, and scourgings; yea, moreover, of bands, and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheep skins and goat skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented.

What can be said be more of affliction? if affliction can make a man miserable, surely these must needs be miserable: They were mocked and slouted, and made the off-scouring of the world; driven from house and home, and went in sheep skins and goat skins.

Many think themselves miserable if they cannot go fine and brave; these went in sheep skins and goat skins, and were sawn asunder, miserably tormented and afflicted: It may be some will say, certainly these were in a most miserable condition: now mark the

next words of the holy Ghost, Of whom the world was not worthy: they were under such sore afflictions, and yet they were such excellent persons as the world was not worthy of them in their worst condition, they were so excellent that the world was not worthy of them: They were thought to be such as were not worthy to live in the world, thus the evil world thought of them; but mark the difference of the Judgment of God from the Judgment of the world; the world thinks they are so vile that they are not worthy to live in the world; and God thinks they are so excellent that the world is not worthy that they should live amongst them.

I remember Chrysostom has this upon it, That they were so excellent, as all the men in the world were not worth one of them; put all the other men in the world together, and they were not worth so much as (at least) a few of these afflicted, persecuted, tormented Christians: as if he should say, do you see a company of poor creatures walking in sheep skins and goat skins, and live in caves and dens of the Earth; look upon them, and take all the men of the world, Kings, Princes, and Monarchs, rich men, and mighty Captains of the world, all other men, and put them all together, they are not all worth these few poor creatures that go up and down in sheep skins and goat skins. Thus afflictions make not a man a pin the worse: Man he is exceeding glorious in God's eyes notwithstanding afflictions.

2 But now secondly, Come to sin, let there be sin, although a man have never so much outward prosperity and glory in the world, he is a most vile abominable creature, when sinful. See one famous example for this parallel to this on the other side, in the prophecy of Daniel, 11. Dan. verse 2. And there shall stand up a VILE Person: Now who is this vile person that the Holy Ghost speaks of? It is according to interpreters Antiochus Epiphanus, the great king of Assyria; and his very name signifies illustrious, so the word Epiphanus signifies, illustrious, famous, glorious. So that he has these two titles, the great King of Assyria, and the great King, famous, illustrious, glorious.

And Josephus writing of this man, has this story, That the Samaritans when they saw how he persecuted the Jews, they sought his favor, and would not own themselves Jews; and they writ to Antiochus the mighty God, this was their title in a letter they sent to him, Antiochus the mighty God: Well, now see here is one that has outward glory enough; the great King of Assyria; Antiochus, famous, illustrious, that has the title of the mighty God; but now because he is a wicked man, the Scripture said, there shall a vile person arise; a vile person notwithstanding his greatness; let him be never so glorious a King, and called the mighty God, yet a vile person.

I beseech you in your thoughts put these two Scriptures together, these that go up and down in sheep skins and goat skins, are such that the world is not worthy of; and Antiochus the "most glorious" king in the world, in God's judgment is a vile person. Thus you see afflictions make not a man worse, but under them he may be as good as he was before; and prosperity makes not a man better, but he may be as vile in prosperity as he was before.

Therefore though a man may have his Estate increase, and his estate bettered, yet he is not better: We speak of such or such, Oh he is the best man in the parish, or the best man in the town: What do you mean by that? Oh he has so much by the year, and so great a stock at sea, he is owner of ships, and has part of so many ships; and he is a great man, worth so much.

True, his estate is worth something, but he (if he be a wicked man) is worth nothing: In the mean time, Oh he is worth so much.

Yea, but you are deceived, his money or his Land is worth so much, or his ships are worth so much, but he is worth nothing himself: therefore the Scripture speaks of the wicked, Prov, 10. 20. The heart of the wicked is little worth: Now the heart of a man, that is his Soul, and that is the man; the mind of a man, is the man; the spirit, that is the man: now the heart of the wicked is little worth; his

house and his land may be worth something, but the heart of the wicked, he himself, is worth nothing.

So that sin makes a man an evil man, but afflictions does not make him evil: therefore sin is more against the good of a man, than afflictions possibly can be. This is the first.

CHAP. XXV.

Secondly, sin is more opposite to the Good of man than afflictions, because most opposite to the Image of God in man:

three Particulars instanced, and a Question resolved.

Secondly, This will come more close, and particularly to demonstrate it more plainly to you, how that sin is more against the good of a man, than ever afflictions and troubles can be; Because sin is most against the Image of God in man, most opposite unto the Image of God in man, it defaced that Image: therefore it must needs be a greater evil than afflictions: For Brethren, of all creatures in the world that God made, Angels and Men were the only creatures that God stamped his Image upon; for as it is with Princes, they use not to stamp their Image (if they be glorious magnificent Princes they use not to stamp their Image) upon Brass, or Copper, or Leather, upon base Metals, but upon pure Metals, Gold or Silver; and it is a sign the State grows low, when the Kings Image must be stamped upon lower Metals: So it is here.

God would have his Image stamped upon some of his creatures; now he would not take the lowest meanest creatures, but God takes the most excellent creatures, as I may so say, Gold and Silver; the

Angels I may compare to Gold, and the Children of Men to Silver; and God makes the same Image (as the same Image that is upon the Gold, is upon the Silver) God makes the same upon Man that is upon the Angels: the same Image of God that makes the Angels glorious creatures, does make Man kind to be glorious too in the same Image; and our Natures be capable of the very same Image of God that the Angels themselves have; and this is the excellency of Man-kind. Now it is needful to shew the excellency of God's Image in man, that so I may shew you the evil of sin; in that it defaced such an excellency of man, and therefore it is more against the good of man than any affliction can be.

1 Now the Image of God in Man is a glorious excellency, for it is that whereby men come to resemble God in his highest excellency; it is not a likeness unto God in some inferior thing; for though it be true, all in God is alike glorious, yet to our apprehensions some things appear more glorious than other: now the Image of God in Man, is that whereby Man resembles God in that which does appear to be the highest Excellency in God himself. For as in an Image or Picture of a Man; when I draw the Image of a Man, I draw not the resemblance of a Man in in some inferior thing, but I labor to draw the lively countenance; in that is the greatest excellency of a man. And so in the Image of God, now the Image of God is the Holiness of God, and so in mans soul the impression of God's own Holiness, that is the Image of God in man; and by that, man comes to resemble God in the top of his glory and excellency. Now this must needs be glorious for the creature to come so near unto God as is possible for the creature; for there is no excellency any creature is capable of, higher than the Image of God, only that Hypostatical union of the two Natures.

2 Upon this God must needs take an infinite delight in looking upon the souls of the Children of men; as you know a man takes delight in looking upon his own Image where ever he seeth it: so God takes delight in looking upon his own Image; there is nothing in all the world can take the Eye of God so much as looking upon Angels and

the Souls of men, and God sees the very same thing in the souls of men as he did in his Angels. The most glorious object God has to behold, is to behold himself in the creature; the more God seeth of himself in any creature, the more delight must he needs take in viewing and looking upon that creature. Now no creature in this inferior world had so much of God's work in it as Man-kind had, having the Image of God.

3 Hence it follows, That all the creatures in the world were brought under the dominion of man to be serviceable unto man; why? Because he had so much of the image of God in him: upon that all creatures in the world were to lie under his feet, to be perfectly subject to the dominion of man.

Now if the Image of God be such a glorious thing as it is, then what would you say of that which does deface this Image? that must needs be an evil thing, and do much to the hurt of man that shall deface such an excellency as this is. Now certainly sin does so.

Sin does cast dirt into this Image of God, and does deface it: and therefore in the 3. Col 10. the Apostle there speaking of renewing grace, sanctifying grace, it is said, by it we come to have the Image of God renewed: by grace; then it is apparent, by sin the Image of God is defaced. Now Brethren, if a man did take delight in a curious piece, as there be some men that will give five hundred pounds, a thousand pounds for some curious thing drawn with Art.

Suppose such a one that prized such a piece, and there should come one and quite deface it; would he not account this a great evil, and his heart rise against him? Thus it is in this case, the Image of God in the soul of man, is the most curious piece that ever was drawn in the world by the finger of God's Spirit; all creatures in Heaven and Earth could never draw such a piece, but sin defaced it; nay, such is the evil of sin, that one sin is enough quite to deface, and take away the Image of God: As we know in Adam, that was made according to the Image of God, one sin quite defaced the Image of God.

As we account a House quite defaced and demolished, though here and there a little rubbish and stones remain: as in your Monasteries or Abbeys that are demolished, though there be a few stones and rubbish left, yet the House is demolished. So all that is left in Man of God's Image, is but as the little rubbish of such a house left after its demolishing; yea, that which is left, according to the opinion of many of the Learned, is not a remainder of the Image of God in man that he had at first Creation; but rather a small pittance of some common gifts of God's Spirit: For many wise and godly men hold that the remainders of that which we usually conceive to be the ruins and remainders of God's Image since the Fall, is not the remainders of what is left, but that which God (for societies sake in the world, and that he may have a Church in the world) was pleased by some givings out of his Spirit to renew somewhat in those that shall not be saved; and so they come to have some light of knowledge even by Jesus Christ himself, Christ enlightens every man that comes into the world, said the Scripture; that is, if a man have common light, Christ enlightens that man; if a man have saving light, Christ enlightens that man with saving light: so that the Image of God was quite defaced by one sin. Oh the evil and venom of sin, that one sin quite takes away the Image of God.

Quest. But you will say, Why is it not so now, for in the regenerate, there is the Image of God in part renewed in them, and yet they commit many sins? how comes it to pass sin quite defaced not the Image of God in those Regenerate, that have it not perfectly, as well as the Image of God in man that had it perfectly at first?

Answ. To this I answer: This is not from a any reason of want of malignity in sin, for sin would do it; but because of the strength that is in the Covenant of Grace, that God has made in Christ, hence God preserves his Image in those that be Regenerate, notwithstanding they commit many sins: and it is a demonstration of the infinite power of God, that notwithstanding there is so many sins in those Regenerate, that yet there should be preserved the Image of God in man, which was not in Adam: Because God entered not into such a

gracious Covenant with Adam to preserve him, therefore God leaving Adam to a common course of Providence, and had to do with him in a Covenant of works, therefore God leaves that for sin to do in him, that it should not in us.

But now there is more strength in the Covenant of Grace, and therefore it is, that 'tis not every sin we commit that does deface the Image of God: but this is no thank to sin, nor does it argue the less evil in sin. But be it known unto you that be sanctified, when you give liberty to sin, there is this in it, that in its own Nature it would quite take away all the Image of God renewed in you: And certainly those that understand what a blessing there is in this, to have God's Image renewed in them, cannot but see that there is greater evil in sin than in any thing in the world; that I should commit that which in its own Nature would quite deface the whole Image of God in me. And this is the second Argument to declare the evil of sin against mans good.

CHAP. XXVI.

Thirdly, sin is opposite to the Life of God in Man.

A Third Particular to discover the evil of sin as opposite to mans good is this, Be|cause sin is opposite to the Life of God in Man. Before I shewed sin strikes at the Life of God in Himself: now I am to shew you how sin strikes at the Life of God in Mans Soul: For Brethren, certainly this is the happiness of the Children of men above other creatures, that God did make them to be of such a Nature that they should live that life the Lord himself lived, in a kind; and so the Scripture is very plain, [Ephes. 4. 18](#) the text said there, That they were alienated from the life of God through the

darkness of their minds: it was the sinfulness of their hearts that did alienate them from the life of God; therefore it is apparent that they were capable of the life of God; and the life of God is the excellency of the Children of men: now the sin of their hearts alienated them from the life of God.

Quest. Now you will say, What do you mean when you speak of the Life of God, and that the Soul of Man is capable of the Life of God, and shew how sin is opposite to God? Certainly if I should come and tell you of the flames of Hell, and torments of Hell due to sin, perhaps I might scare some more that way: but for those that have any understanding, and truly know the excellency of man, their hearts will more rise upon the opening of this, than if I should spend many Sermons to open the torments of Hell to you: well then, what is this Life of God?

Answ. 1. That everlasting Principle of grace in the souls of men united unto Christ by his Spirit, whereby men come to act and work as God does act, and as God does work for his own glory as the utmost end. As life is a Principle whereby the creature moves within himself unto perfection, unto that which tends to perfection; an active Principle within it self to move towards perfection, that we account life. Now that Principle whereby a man shall come to move and work just as God moves and works (still speaking after the manner of man) that is, to have the likeness of God; not in the very same thing, but the same in proportion of likeness, as the creature is capable of.

How is that you will say?

Thus; This is the Life of God (so far as we can conceive of him) that God is a continual act always working for himself, and willing of himself as the last end of all: the very Life of God consists in that, and in that consists the nature of holiness.

Now then when a man has such a Principle within him as that he can work unto God, as his last and highest end, and obey God as his chief good, he works as God himself does. Now Brethren, this is the Life of God that the Children of men be capable of above all other creatures; and it is this that makes them fit to converse with God himself.

I say, it is that which makes the children of men to be fit to converse with that infinite, glorious, eternal first-Being of all things: and here is the happiness of man, That he is of that Nature that he is capable of this excellency, to have to do with the infinite eternal first-Being: For many know no more excellency than to converse with meat and drink; that Swine, and Dogs, and other Beasts do: but know, you be of more Noble Natures than so; God has made the meanest and poorest in this Congregation, God has made you of so Noble a Nature, that you may come to converse with the infinite, glorious, first-Being of all things.

As we know the excellency of men, that which puts a difference between man and man is this; that this man that lives in a mean condition, their meanness consists in this, that they spend all their days in converse with bruit Beasts, and turning the clods of the Earth; but Noble and great men are busied in State Affairs, they be raised higher because they converse with Princes, and great Affairs of State; the things they converse about are higher, and therefore they are more noble and higher than other men.

As some children of men know no other excellency than to eat and drink, and play, and be filthy, and have nothing but that which the Beasts have: but others, to whom God has revealed himself, and has made them of such a noble Nature, that when others be in base acts of uncleanness, that know no other way of rejoicing in time of Joy, but laughing, and eating and drinking, and filthiness: but others can get alone, and there contemplate of the glory of the great God, and their souls be opened to God, and God lets in beams of himself to them, and they let out beams of their love to God, and their desires

to God, there is an intercourse between Heaven and them; God opens himself to them, and they open their souls to God, and so enjoy communion from God; and they because they have the Life of God in them, they be fit to converse with God.

For mark, those things that converse one with another, they be such things that must live the same life; as now, man can converse with man; why? because he lives the same life that man lives: but man is not so fit to converse with beasts, because they live not the same life; though some men live even the very life of beasts: as a beast cannot converse with plants (but only devours them) because they live not the same life; but those that live the same life be fittest for converse. So if man did not live the same life God does, he could not converse with God:

Hence wicked and ungodly men cannot converse with God, because they live not the same life of God: When you talk of conversing with God, it is a riddle to many men; why? because they are strangers to the Life of God, they have nothing of the Life of God in them, but it is strange to them; therefore they cannot converse with God. But now that which strikes at this Life, and is the death of the soul, is sin (for sin is the death of the Soul) therefore [Ephes. 2.](#) beginning, You be dead in trespasses and sins, sin brings death; he means not a bodily death, though that be a truth, but there is this death, the Life of God is gone: all men by nature have the Life of God gone; and if ever it be renewed, it is by a mighty work of God's Spirit: but sin strikes at the Life of God in us, at this Candle of the Lord in this Earthen Pitcher.

2 Again, The excellency of the Life of God will consist in this, as to make a man converse with him, so in this, That God must needs take infinite delight in the souls of those that live his life: as before in looking upon his Image, now much more when he can see his creatures work as he himself works: this is the delight of God to see his creatures work just as himself. As a man takes delight to see his picture, but abundantly more to look upon himself in his child, and

to see his life in his Child that comes from him, to see it able to work as he works.

As suppose any Artificer, or one skilled in Navigation, suppose he see a Picture drawn of Navigation, he takes delight in that because there is something of himself in it; but now suppose he has a Child, and he puts skill into him and he seeth him work as he works, and discourse about naval affairs as he discourses; this is wonderfully delightful to him.

So when God shall see the same life in his creature that is in himself, that he works and wills as he does, this takes the very heart of God; and this shews the excellency of grace.

But sin is that which strikes at this Life of God, and brings death to the soul, wholly takes away this life: and were it not for the Covenant of grace even one sin would take away this Image of God; for sin did it in Adam, and so would in the regenerate, if it were not for the Covenant of grace.

My Brethren, life is the most excellent of any thing: as Augustine said, The life of a Fly is more excellent than the Sun (it is his expression, not mine) because the Sun though an excellent creature, has not life, but a Fly, though little, yet it has life; though we know little of it ▪ yet it shews the excellency of God to make a living creature: but if the life of a Fly, or a Beast be so excellent, much more the life of Man.

Now then, what is the life of God! now if that be evil which strikes at the natural life of the Body, the life of Man; we account those Diseases most grievous that are mortal; as if a man have a Disease only painful, this is not so much if they be painful if not mortal, as those that be mortal. If a Physician come and tell one, you must endure pain, but be of good cheer, your life is sure; this comforts him: but take a Disease that he feels no pain of, it may be the sense of pain is gone, but if the Physician come and tell him, Oh you be

dangerously ill, because your distemper is like to prove mortal: we account that without pain that strikes at life, more than that with a great deal of pain that does not strike at life: Skin for skin, and all that a man has will he give for his life.

Now that which strikes at the highest life, even the life of God, and makes the creature appear so vile before God, as certainly sin makes the creature more vile than any dead Carrion that lies stinking in a ditch; sin is more vile in God's eyes than any dead Dog on the Dunghill is in your Eyes.

This is the third Particular, How sin is most opposite to mans good more than affliction; therefore a man were better bear the greatest affliction, than commit the least sin, because affliction never strikes at the life of God: nay, many live not the life of God so gloriously as they do in affliction; many seem to have their hearts dead in times of prosperity, but when afflictions come then they manifest a glorious life of God.

CHAP. XXVII.

Fourthly, sin is opposite to mans good, because it is most opposite to the last end for which man was made.

A Fourth thing wherein the evil of sin consists as most opposite to mans good is this, Because it lies most opposite to the last end for which man was made. In that other passage I opened before, I shewed how sin opposes God in his own end, & therefore there was a great deal of evil in sin.

But now I must shew how sin opposes man in that end God made man for. I am afraid some of these things are such that some cannot go along with me in them; it is my endeavor to make things (though spiritual, and above our natural reach, to make them) as low as I can: but if there be some that do not understand, I hope others do, and such (I hope) will make use of what I speak. For certainly these things I speak of do more declare the evil of sin, and will keep an ingenuous spirit more from sin, than all the evils and torments of Hell. It is more against mans last end.

Now we use to say the end and the good of a thing is the same: That which is the last end is better than the thing it self, therefore whatsoever strikes at the last end is the greatest evil of all. That is the happiness of any creature to enjoy its last end: As thus, The greatest good or the last end of a Plant or a Tree is to flourish and bear fruit, and be suited for the service of man, this is its end. And what is the evil of a Tree? When it comes to flourish, and when fruit hangs full upon it, if it be blasted, and never come to attain to its utmost end, to be serviceable for that for which it was appointed; that is the evil of it. And we account it a great evil if we see this flourishing Tree when it is full of fruit, if before it come to maturity it be blasted. So look upon mans end, and if that be blasted, that is his great evil.

Now the end of man is this, To live to the eternal praise of God, in the everlasting enjoyment of him. God made the Children of men for this end, That they might eternally live to his praise in the eternal enjoyment of himself. Now if man be blasted in this, there is his great evil, to blast man in this end for which he was made.

Now no affliction does it, all the afflictions in the world does not hinder man from the attaining to his end. But sin comes, and directly opposes that end for which man was made, and crosses him in this Excellency of his, in living to the praise of the infinite eternal first-Being of all things. Now before, I could not shew you the evil of sin, but by shewing you the Excellency of the Image and Life of

God: So here I cannot shew the evil of sin, being opposite to mans last end, but by shewing you the Excellency of mans last end. Now the Excellency of mans last end, I mean the good God has made man for, it appears in this.

1 It is such a kind of Excellency as is worthy of all the good that there is in mans Nature, or that mans Nature is capable of. For the end and happiness of any thing, must be that that must have as much excellency in it, that all in the thing must tend to the making of him happy. Mans nature is capable of the Image and life of God. Now that which must be the happiness of such a creature must be worthy of such an Excellency as the Image of God, and the life of God in man; therefore it must be a very high and glorious Excellency.

2 That which is mans happiness and end is that which is worthy of al the ways of God toward mankind. Now I beseech you observe this thing, The ways of God towards the Children of Men in bringing them to his last end, be the most glorious of all God's ways to any creature; God did never manifest so much glory in all the world, nor never will manifest so much glory to al eternity in any thing, as he has manifested in these ways of his to bring mankind to the attaining his last end, for which he made him. Now if God be so glorious in that way of his concerning his working, in bringing man to his last end, then certainly that end of man, that happiness man was made for must be very glorious: because it must have so much glory and excellency in it as must be worthy all the glorious ways of God's working towards him.

'Tis thus with man. There is no wise man that does any great work, manifests any great skill, or lays out great cost, but will do it for such an end, as that end, if ever it be attained, shall be worth all his cost, and skill, and pains. For a wise man to bestow much cost, skill, and pains upon a mean thing, is absurd and ridiculous; And no wise man but if he bestow much cost and pains, and manifest much skill,

but he will be sure it shall be for that, which if he attain to that he aims at, it shall be worth all.

If a man be at a great deal of charge in a voyage, he aims at such an end as may be worth his charge: So when God above all things lays out his wisdom, power, and mercy, & goodness, & faithfulness; and sets at work all his Counsels to be laid out upon such a business, as to get man to attain to his last end; then certainly mans end and happiness must be worth it all. And it must needs be a glorious thing, God intends for the children of men to make them happy withal, when the great Counsels of God, and ways of God's wisdom and power be so about this business of bringing man to happiness.

Now if there be such a glorious happiness for mankind, then that which is most opposite to this great happiness, must be very evil. Now sin directly opposes mans happiness, the end man was made for: and thus you see the evil of sin. When God comes to awaken mans conscience, and enlighten mans Soul to see how sin crosses their happiness more than any affliction, they will choose rather to be under the greatest affliction, than the least sin.

Object. I but it may be you will say it does not cross man's happiness, but that he may come to be happy for all sin?

Answ. I Answer, Of its own nature it directly crosses mans happiness; quite undoes man; and if God by his Power fetch it about another way, this is no thank to sin, but to God.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Fifthly, sin is more opposite to mans good than affliction because tis a defilement of

the Soul.

1 It defiles all a man meddles with. 2 sin is the matter the worm shall gnaw upon to all eternity.

Fifthly, The evil of sin against a mans good appears in this, In that it is the defilement and corruption of the Soul, a rottenness in the Soul. affliction is not the filth and corruption of the Soul, the Soul may be as clear from filth and corruption, notwithstanding affliction, as it was before man sinned. sin, it is the rottenness of the Soul, and therefore such a kind of defilement, As,

1 It defiles all things a man meddles withal, and al his actions; it makes a man vile, and defiles every thing that comes from him. To the unclean all things are unclean and impure, [Tit. 1. 15](#). It defiles the creature and every thing he has to do withal, and every thing he meddles withal.

2 And especially it appears in this, That it is no other than the matter for the worm to breed in that shall gnaw upon the Soul of the wicked to all eternity. You read in Scripture, That the damned shall be punished with fire that shall never go out; and the worm that shall never dye. What is that worm that shall never dye? The worm of conscience that shall gnaw upon their Spirits to all eternity.

Now, what breeds this worm, and supplies it with matter? No other but the corruption of sin in the soul. For as with worms (as the Holy Ghost makes use of that Metaphor) that breed in the corruption and filth in a mans body, there are some worms that breed in the body which are deadly. But out of what do those worms breed? Out of the filth and corruption of the Body, and the corruption of the body supplies matter for the worm to gnaw upon.

And so in trees, and timber, there breeds worms; upon what do they breed but upon the corruption of the timber when it begins to rot. So then worms breed out of corruption, and live upon corruption; so

that worm of conscience that shall lie gnawing upon the souls of those that perish to all eternity, is nothing else but that which breeds from the filth of their hearts while they live here the worm breeds.

Therefore you that live a long time in sin, old sinners, gray headed sinners, though you do not feel the worm gnaw for the present; yet ever since you were born the worm was breeding, and it will be a great and a dreadful worm hereafter: and know you supply abundance of Corruption for to feed that worm that will gnaw another day: You feel it not now, but the longer you be before you feel it, the more dreadful will it be then. All those that have corrupt hearts, and have this worm breed, if God would make the worm gnaw now, it would be well for them; for there be ways to kill it here, to kill the worm of conscience.

If it gnaw, there is a sovereign medicine, the blood of Christ: And certainly there is no Medicine in the world to kill this worm but the blood of Christ, and those that God does intend to kill this worm in, and those that shall not have it gnaw to all eternity, God lets it gnaw now, the Ministry of the Word makes it gnaw and pain them, and they feel such pain that wheresoever they go, or whatsoever they do yet the worm lies gnawing upon their hearts, they cannot sleep, or eat their meat:

Alas! what should I eat, and have my worm gnaw there!

And they can never be at rest till God apply the blood of Christ, and then they void the worm as it were. How will you rejoice when your Children, if the worms be great and put them to pain, if the Physician give them that which makes them void them, how do you rejoice to see the worm that would have been the death of your Child? It might have grown bigger and bigger, if it had not been taken away.

So I dare say there is never a Soul here before the Lord, but has, or had a worm in their breasts, I say, There was a time you had this worm in your breasts, that without it were cured, would lie gnawing to all eternity, it is that which breeds of the filth and corruption of your hearts.

Suppose a man had a little dirt on his face, this endangers not the life of the body, but when there is corruption within, and defilement of the Body within, that breeds diseases, and will breed worms, it may be it will breed the wolf that lies gnawing at their breasts.

Many women have had it in their breasts that lies gnawing upon their flesh: but know, your sins breed another manner of worm or wolf that will gnaw worse than ever that did.

And this is the evil of sin, it is not only the defilement of the soul, but such a defilement that breeds such a worm that will gnaw upon conscience to all eternity.

CHAP. XXIX.

Sixthly, sin is more opposite to mans good than affliction, because sin is the object of God's hatred; but God hateth not any for affliction.

Sixthly, sin is the only object of the hatred of God, nothing is the object of God's hatred but sin: God does not hate a man or a woman because they are poor, God may love them as well as any Monarch or Prince in the world, though they be poor: God hates not a man because he is sick, you hate not your Children because they be sick or weak: all the afflictions in the world make not a man an object of

God's hatred, but sin does: mark that expression in Scripture, Psalm, 5. 5. The Fool shall not stand in thy sight, thou hatest all workers of iniquity; so that sin makes the creature the object of God's hatred.

God said not (mark) he hates the work of iniquity only; but the worker of iniquity: God hates not the creature as he made them, but through sin the creature come to be hated; even the workers of iniquity.

Now observe the strength of the Reason, That which makes a man the object of God's hatred, must needs be a greater evil than that which can stand with God's everlasting love: for afflictions in the strength of them, and bitterness of them, may stand with God's eternal love; nay observe, they may stand with the same love wherewithal God the Father loved his Son Jesus Christ; for so in the 17. of John, latter end; there Christ prays to the Father, that thou may love them with the very same love with which thou lovest me.

Now God the Father loved Christ, and yet God the Father afflicted Christ, and Christ was under sore afflictions, and yet at that very time God the Father loved him.

So a man or a woman afflicted, notwithstanding all their afflictions, they may have the very same love of God the Father that Jesus Christ himself had, in a manner the very same: And my thinks this might be a mighty encouragement to afflicted souls.

Are you afflicted with poverty, bodily sickness, persecution, any thing? Know, for all this affliction, God may love you with the same love he loved his Son: but sin makes the creature the object of the hatred of God.

But you will say, God's Children have sin.

Of its own nature, it would make them objects of God's hatred, but there comes in the blood of Christ, and the purchase of his blood

procures peace between God and man; but I speak of it in its own Nature; and those that God looks upon in a sinful condition, he cannot look upon them but he hates them.

Now that which makes a man the object of God's hatred, must needs be very evil; as thus, when any affection runs in one Current, it must needs run very strongly. As in the Sea, suppose there were many Arms and Rivers to break the strength of the Current, it would not run so powerfully; but when there is but one Current, the Current of the Ocean there runs very strongly.

So in the Affections, when the Affections be only set upon one object, then they be strong: when Love is scattered upon this and the other thing, then 'tis not strong, but when it is upon one, then it is strong. When Parents have many Children, and they love this, and this, then it may be they love not any so strongly; but when they have but one there is great love. So in hatred, where there is a hatred of many, there is not so much hatred against one; but where it runs in one Current only, there it is strong. So here, there is no object that God's hatred runs out against but only sin, therefore the hatred must needs be very powerful.

Oh for a man or woman to live to be the object of the hatred of the eternal God, how dreadful an evil is this! We desire to be beloved where we are, of every one; what a sad thing is it to live in a Family, or a Town, and no body love them: men desire to be beloved though it be of a dog, and they will boast sometimes, such a dog, or a horse loved such an one, loved his Master; when he does but come home, they will leap, and skip, and faun on him.

Do we take delight to have our neighbors, or the family love us? nay, for the dog to love us? Oh what is the love of an infinite, eternal, glorious God!

A man accounts it an evil if the dog only snarl and bark at him, this we account an evil: Oh what an evil is it then, to have the infinite,

eternal, only wise God to be an enemy, and I the object of his hatred! Oh think of these things.

And Brethren, in these times it is to be feared you contract abundance of sin; you will have more to answer for before these * twelve days be gone, than you had before. Oh let this stop the course of some sin, that otherwise might be committed in these times of sensuality; therefore when you see some go on in sinful ways, do you stop and say, God forbid I should do as they do; I have been in such a place, and heard what sin is, heard how it is against God, and this might stop me; but this day I have heard how it is against me and my own soul, and how it destroys my own soul, therefore I will hate sin everlastingly.

CHAP. XXX.

Seventhly, sin is more opposite to mans good than affliction, because sin brings guilt upon the soul.

Seventhly, There is more evil in sin than in affliction, Because sin is more opposite against our own good than affliction, and that in this seventh respect, sin brings guilt upon the soul, it makes the creature stand guilty in the presence of God: Now guilt upon the soul is a greater evil than any affliction can be: that is the thing I am now to open.

Guilt, what is that? it is the binding over of the sinner to God's Justice, and to the Law, to answer, and be liable unto what the Law requires as punishment due to the sinner: so that then for a creature to stand bound over to God's infinite Justice, and the Law,

has more evil in it against mans good than all the afflictions and miseries in the world; this is the thing I am to make good.

A sinner goes up and down with the chains of guilt upon him; Iron chains grating upon the sore flesh of a man, is not so tedious and grievous as the chains of guilt upon conscience. Certainly this is one especial reason why many wicked men and women are so froward as they are, because they have much guilt upon their spirits, that as Iron chains would grate the raw flesh, so does that guilt lie upon conscience, and that makes them so froward & peevish as they are; froward against God, and against man.

Many men that you are to deal withal, you shall find them against the Word extreme froward, & perverse against their acquaintance, neighbors, & family, & nearest friends, & we cannot imagine sometimes what is the reason: Certainly this is one especial reason, there is much guilt upon their consciences, and spirits; and this does so disquiet and vex them, that they fling out at God, and his Word, and every one; they can have no quiet they be so vexed and gauled with that guilt upon their spirits.

There is a great deal of cause to suspect much guilt to be upon those that be so outrageous, and can bear nothing; that have their hearts rise against the Word especially.

Brethren, if you see any one that has any light of conscience, and has made profession heretofore, if such an one shall frowardly fly out against the Word, and those that be godly, you may conclude there is some woeful guilt upon that mans spirit, he is so froward, and peevish, and disquiet as he is:.

And so we find it in Saul, he was a man at first of a very quiet spirit, and very moderate; but after, Saul being a man much enlightened, and had forsaken God, and had contracted abundance of guilt upon his soul, he was a most froward perverse spirit as any we read of in the Book of God; then how froward was he with David, and the

Priests of God, and so outrageous as that he slays them all; a bloody man after he had contracted much guilt.

Do you see men so froward, and outrageous, and bloody? Oh there is much guilt within upon their spirits, great breaches between God and their souls, and the guilt of sin within grates upon their hearts, and that makes them so outrageous as they are.

If guilt be upon the soul, it takes away al the comfort of every thing; that man or woman that has an enlightened conscience, and has guilt upon them, there's little comfort such a one can take in any thing they enjoy.

No affliction in the world can take away the comfort of what we enjoy, as guilt can do; if you have afflictions one way, you have comforts another.

If a man go abroad and meet with hard dealings, he comes home and has comfort it may be in his wife, a comfortable yoke-fellow, this rejoices him; or may be he has comfort in his Children, or in such or such a friend: But now let a man or a woman have guilt upon conscience, abroad he has no comfort, at home he has no comfort; yea, the more comfortable things he does enjoy, the more trouble there is in his spirit.

As thus, Take a guilty conscience, and when he comes and looks upon a comfortable family, comfortable estate, means coming in, a sweet yoke-fellow, good friends; Oh but if I had not some guilt upon my soul, I could rejoice in these; but that guilt that lies upon his conscience take away all the comfort of these; and if he sees others that enjoy these, Oh said he, this man may have comfort in a comfortable yoke-fellow, children, or friends, and a good estate; but he has not guilt upon his spirit, and that breach between his God and he as I have.

May be the world knows not where his shoe pinched him, and what saddens his spirit: many men that have comforts about them

(though they cannot be said to enjoy them) yet their hearts be troubled and disquieted, and nobody knows the matter; Oh there is guilt upon their spirits: they think within themselves, Oh, if it were with me as it is with such a one, it would be well, sure they have not that guilt I have, if they had they could not but be disquieted as I am.

Again, Guilt brings woeful fear upon the conscience; no affliction can bring such fear upon the conscience. Though there should be never such troubles and fears, and confusions in the world, alas this is not so terrible and fearful as that fear the guilty conscience has.

Take a man or woman whose conscience is delivered from the guilt of sin, such a one, though Heaven and Earth should meet, is not so much troubled. Certainly Brethren, in these great fears amongst us, that you be scared at everything, it is partly because you have not thoroughly made up your peace between God and your souls, and some guilt lies upon your spirits and consciences; and this indeed will make every thing terrible to you, if that lie there:.

Guilt upon the conscience makes God, the thoughts of God seem terrible. Now it is a greater evil for the creature not to be able to look upon God, & to have thoughts of God without being pierced with terror, than to be under any affliction in the world; sorrows, fears, and disgrace and persecutions are not so terrible as this, that I am in such a condition that I cannot look up to God, nor think upon God without having the thoughts of his Majesty to be terrible to me.

A guilty conscience cannot endure to have a thought of God, it is terrible to him, and therefore he labors by going into company, and sports, and business in the world, to take off the thoughts of God, because the thoughts of God pierce his heart. And so the presence of God is very terrible where guilt is upon the conscience, and the conscience of such a one cannot endure to come into God's

presence; nor into the Communion of Saints where God's presence is.

And he cannot endure to pray, the thoughts of that strike his heart; to go alone to pray, the presence of God when alone is extreme terrible. And this is a sadder condition than to be under any affliction: better be under any affliction than in such a case, as that the presence of God is terrible: the presence of God in Prayer, and so the presence of God in his Word.

Oh the Word is terrible to such a one, the Word of God speaks nothing but terror so long as guilt remains upon the conscience. This is worse than affliction that that Word which is a treasure of sweetness, and goodness, and comfort to those that are gracious and godly, should be filled with terror to the soul of one that is full of guilt. Yea, to such a one all the ways of God's Providence are full of terror; if there be any Judgment of God abroad, Oh the terror that this brings upon his foul.

Brethren, sin is committed quickly, you have a temptation comes, and you fall upon the sin and act it; the sin, the act of it, is transient and quickly gone; the guilt that sticks to you.

When a man or woman has satisfied their lust in a sinful way, the guilt sticks behind: may be the time is gone for the pleasure of it; it was perhaps yesterday, or such a night or time thou hadest the pleasure of it, but now the sin is gone the pleasure of it, but the guilt sticks, and that abides upon thy Spirit to all eternity if thou look not to it.

Nay, certainly it must stick upon the Spirit, it is not in the power of any creature in heaven or in earth to deliver thee from it: yea the guilt so remains, that though thou feel it not now for the present, it may stick terribly many years after. But affliction is terrible only for the present, not for afterward; but guilt and sin lays a foundation for

many years after. Nay, many times it is grievous painful to the Soul long after it is committed: as it was in Joseph's Brethren.

We read of them that they committed that great sin against their Brother, and it troubled them not a great while; but twenty two years after when they were in an affliction, then the guilt of their sin comes a fresh, Oh then we sinned against our Brother; when they were in prison there: now it was twenty two years from the time they committed that sin to that time when they were in trouble there.

So you that have committed sin and think some slight sorrow may wash it away, know the guilt may abide upon your spirits perhaps twenty, may be forty years after. And you that are young take heed and know that sin is more evil than any affliction, for the sin that you commit when you are young in your Masters Families, the guilt may abide upon you, and youthful sins may prove ages terror.

It may be with you as with a man that gets a bruise, when he is young he feels it not, but when he is old than it ache in his bones, and puts him to terrible pain many times; so many young people feel not sin when their blood is hot, but afterward, the guilt of sin abides upon them, and is the torment of their souls when their blood is cold.

Now what evil is there in sin that may do a man mischief perhaps twenty or forty years hence. As it is with some poison, there are some poisons men have skill in, that they can give poison shall not work in three or four, perhaps not till seven years afterward, and yet they know certainly, That if that man be not cut off before (except God work extraordinarily) he shall dye at the seven years end of that poison he took seven years before. So sin is such a thing that it will do a man a mischief many years after.

Again, The guilt of sin has this evil further in it, which appears in that difference between men that come to suffer with guilt, and

those that come to suffer without guilt: Take them that have come to the most grievous sufferings in the world, and had not the guilt of sin upon their consciences, who had all clear between God and their souls; their sufferings be joyful, and they can rejoice in tribulation and troubles, as the Martyrs in Persecution, how did they rejoice and glory in their sufferings? with what a Spirit of magnanimity did they come to their sufferings? But take those who suffer through guilt, as Malefactors, when they come to suffer, what shame and confusion is upon them!

Thus affliction is nothing to them that have no guilt, but those that have the guilt of sin upon them when they come to suffer their guilt is a thousand times more than their affliction. There is a great deal of difference between a man guilty of treason when he come to suffer for it, there is shame and confusion, and dismal darkness in the spirit where there is guilt: but let one be accused for treason, or any such horrible crime, and no guilt upon the spirit, such a one can go on with joy, and comfort, and peace; whatsoever can be done to him is very little or nothing when guilt is removed.

The truth is, there is no suffering can countervail the suffering that guilt makes. The guilt makes the suffering evil, otherwise not. If one man come upon another man with suffering, it is nothing without guilt.

So it is true, when God comes it is nothing if God and we be at peace: but now when God comes with any such affliction as the very affliction shall have the mark of the sin upon it, and so shall stir up conscience to accuse you for it, then the heart is ready to sink when the affliction shall bear the name of the sin together with it.

I remember the difference of David's Spirit at several times; one time, Though an Host encamp about me, yet will I not fear, and though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; Psal. 23. Another time he is afraid when he flies from Absalom; and when there was a breach between God and his soul, when he

had brought guilt upon his spirit, then David was quickly cooled; and upon any occasion of trouble, David was quickly frightened.

This is a seventh thing wherein sin appears to be a greater and more evil thing than affliction, because it makes the soul guilty before God.

CHAP. XXXI.

Eighthly, sin is a greater evil to man than affliction, because it's that which put the creature under the Sentence of Condemnation.

Eighthly, sin is a greater evil than affliction, Because it is that which puts the creature under the Sentence of Condemnation, and so makes more against the good of man than any affliction can do. For a poor creature to see himself stand before the great Judge of all the world, and have the Sentence of Condemnation come out against him. This is a greater evil than to have any affliction that all the creatures of Heaven and Earth could bring upon him.

As now, take a Malefactor that is to stand before Mans Judgment Seat, and to receive Sentence of Condemnation; is not this a greater evil unto him than if he should hear of loss in his estate, than if he had sickness in his body, any pain in his limbs; to stand thus to receive the Sentence, he looks upon it as a greater evil than possibly can befall him in this world otherwise. But then, when the soul shall see it self stand before the infinite glorious, eternal first-Being of all things, and looks upon God sitting upon his Tribunal passing Sentence of Eternal Death upon him; this is another manner of evil than any affliction and suffering that can befall him.

But now, know there is not any one sin that thou committest (but if you look upon it as in it self) God sits, I say, upon his Throne, and passes Sentence of death upon thee for it as really as ever he will do at the great day of Judgment; it is done now as really and as truly in this world as ever it shall be at the day of Judgment, only here is the difference, then it is irrecoverable; nay, shall I say it cannot be recalled here; no certainly it shall not, only it may be transmitted to Christ, he must bear it, he must have the sentence; so that it is not properly recalled, God does not as a Judge that passes Sentence, and afterward nullifies it: no, but God passes Sentence and condemns the sinner; only Christ comes in and takes the Sentence upon himself; so that the Sentence goeth on still, only it is transferred from one person to another; Christ comes in, and he puts on the Sentence of Condemnation for thee that hast it passed against thee, so that the Sentence is not properly nullified, but transferred to Christ.

Ecclesiastes. 8. 11. says, *Because Sentence against an evil Work is not speedily executed, therefore the heart of the sons of men are fully set in them to do evil.* (Mark) the sentence against an evil work is not speedily executed: so that it appears there is a sentence against every evil work: The sentence is out brethren; thou goest and art drunk, or to the commission of such a sin, I say, presently the sentence of death is clapped upon thee, the sentence is out against all sinners.

You see men go on and live in prosperity a great while in the world; but they be under the Sentence all the while, sin is not removed by the blood of Christ, and all the comforts (I beseech you observe that) that any man or woman have in the world that are in their natural condition, and are not delivered from condemnation by Christ, they are all but just as meat and drink, and some refreshments that are granted to a condemned Malefactor before Execution.

Suppose a malefactor is condemned, but now Execution is not till two or three days after; in that space of time he has granted unto him liberty to have meat and drink, and friends come to him, and he may refresh himself in those two or three days; but he has forfeited all his Estate, and the tenure now upon which he holds any comfort, it is not the same which he had before, but merely through the bounty of the Prince it is that he has comforts.

So here, wicked men have committed sin, and the sentence of death is out against them, and they have forfeited all the comforts of their estates, and of their lives, only God in patience grants unto them some outward comforts here a few days before Execution; and upon this tenure do all wicked men hold their Estates: I will not say that every wicked man is an usurper of their estates, as some perhaps have held, that they have no right at all before God; some right he has, as you cannot say a Malefactor has no right (when he is condemned) to meat and drink before Execution; he has right to what is given to him of donation and bounty, but not that right which he had before:

So I say, for wicked men that have estates in this world, they have a kind of right to that they have; but how? Just that right that a condemned man has to his dinner or supper before Execution; this is the right of wicked men to their Estates; that is, God of his bounty grants a little while before Execution they shall have a few comforts to them in this world: And this is the evil of sin, and the least sin, there is not any one sin, but the fruit of it is Condemnation. And Brethren, you must not mistake, to think that wicked men are never condemned until they come before God in the day of Judgment; they be condemned here, mark that, John, 3. 18. He that believes not is condemned already: now condemned, not hereafter, but a condemned man already: this is a sad condition indeed.

If a man had the Sentence of death so past that the whole Parliament could not help him, you would think that man in a sad condition. Now let me speak it, and God speaks it to the conscience

of every sinner; I say, thou that standest before God in any one sin, and not delivered through the blood of his Son Christ, thou standest so under the Sentence of condemnation, as all the creatures in Heaven and Earth cannot help and deliver thee, thou must have some help beyond the help of all the creatures in Heaven and Earth to deliver thee.

When Paul would comfort the Saints against all troubles and afflictions they meet withal, Rom. 8. he begins thus, There is no condemnation to them in Christ Jesus: as if he should say, this is the comfort, no Condemnation.

If I know I am delivered from the Sentence of Condemnation, let what will fall out I am well enough; but this be sure of, there is Condemnation to those that are not in Christ.

I remember Luther had this Speech when he had got assurance of pardon of sin, that he was freed and absolved by God; he cries out, Lord strike, Lord, now strike, for I am absolved from my sins, thou hast delivered me from sin; now strike, now let any affliction befall that possibly can; let never so much trouble attend I am absolved from sin; now Lord strike.

This is the Eighth, sin is more opposite against the good of man than affliction, for it brings them under the Sentence of Condemnation.

CHAP. XXXII.

Ninthly, sin is a greater Evil to man than affliction, because it breaks the Union between God and the Soul.

Ninthly, sin is a greater evil than affliction in this, In that it is the very thing that breaks the Union between God and the Soul: It is that does it, and no affliction does it. Now Brethren, this I confess might seem to be less than that of Hatred, and might have come before it; but now I bring it in here, That it breaks the Union between God and the Soul, [Isa. 59. 2](#). Your sins have separated between you and your God!

We are to know, The Souls of men are capable of a very near and high Union between God and them; the more spiritual any thing is, the more power has it to Unite, and the more near the Union.

As thus, The beams of the Sun because they be very spiritual, they can Unite a thousand of them into one Point as it were; but grosser things cannot so Unite themselves together. So Brethren, God being a Spirit, and our Souls being Spirits, they come to be capable of a most near Communion one with another. And the Souls of men are nearer a glorious Union with God, in this regard more near than any creature but the Angels.

Because the Object of mans Understanding is not any particular truth, but veritas, truth in general, truth it self in the whole latitude is the Object of mans Understanding. So the Object of mans Will, Is not this good, or that good in particular; but Bonitas, good in general, in the full latitude of it.

It is not so with other creatures, they have their objects in some particular thing, in such a limit and compass, and they can work no further, nor higher. But it is otherwise with mans soul, God has made man in such a kind, that the Object of his Soul should be truth and goodness in the full latitude, in the infiniteness of it, take it in the utmost extent that can be, yet still it is the object of the soul of man.

Now hence it is that the Soul of man is of such a wonderful large extent, even capable of God himself, of enjoyment of Union and

Communion with God himself, which otherwise could not be. No other creature has to do with infiniteness, nor can have to do with it but men and Angels, and upon that ground, because God has made them of such a nature so large that their Faculties should be of so large a nature. Now hence it is that man being capable of the enjoyment of God in such a glorious manner.

We have these Expressions in Scripture, He that is joined to the Lord, is one Spirit: 1 Cor. 6. 17. Made one Spirit with God. A most strange expression that the soul of a poor creature should be made one Spirit with God, and yet so it is. And so John 17. 21. we have two or three notable expressions, That they may be all one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, and that they may be one in us. Christ prays that the Saints may be one in him, and in the Father, as the Father is in him, and he in the Father: so they may be one with them. And Vers. 22. And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them: that they may be one, even as we are one. Christ has given the Saints the same glory God the Father gave him. And to what end? what was the effect of that glory Christ gave to the Saints? It was that they may be one with the Father and one with the Son.

So that you see mankind is capable of a wonderful near Union with God; Oh consider this to raise your spirits. You that look after such low things and think there is no higher good than to eat, and drink, and to have your pleasures in the Flesh: know that the meanest and poorest in the Congregation, are capable to receive that glory God gave his Son Christ; that you may be one with God the Father and the Son, as God the Father and the Son are one; not every way: but know there is a likeness, Christ himself has expressed it.

Therefore you that have your hearts so low, that mind nothing but these things below, know that you have more noble things to mind if your hearts consider it. But here is the evil of sin; sin breaks the union between God and the soul; it separates between God and the Soul, it keeps off God that infinite, eternal, glorious fountain of all

good; it keeps him off from you; it makes you lose God, and all the good in God.

By sin you depart from God, which is the Curse of the Damned at the day of Judgment,

Depart from me you Cursed: you here, for the present, in every sin, do begin to have that dreadful Sentence executed on you: Depart from me ye Cursed. You do it yourselves while you live in sinful ways, there is a real actual departing from God, and executing of that dreadful Sentence, Depart you Cursed. You think there is little evil in sin; but if you knew that God is an infinite Good, and then knew the Union you are capable of with God, and then see sin break this Union; this would make you see sin the greatest evil in the world.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Tenthly, sin is more against mans good than affliction, for that it stirs up all in God to come against a sinner in way of Enmity.

Tenthly, The Evil of sin as against our good, consists in this, It stirs up all in God to come in way of Enmity against a sinner: and this is another manner of business than to suffer affliction. A most dreadful place of Scripture we have for this, Levit. 26. verse 24. 28. If you walk contrary to me, I will walk contrary unto you: What is that? All my glorious Attributes shall work against you; as if God should say, Is there any thing in me can make you miserable? you have it? if all my Power or wisdom can bring evil upon you, you shall have it: I will walk contrary in all the working of my Attributes, and ways of My Providence.

And a most dreadful place we have, Psalm, 34. 16. there God said, The face of the Lord is against them that do evil: Mark, the face of the Lord: What is God's face? The manifestation of himself, and his glorious Attributes; the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. Oh that thou wouldest consider this thou that dost evil, whose conscience cannot but tell thee thou dost evil; know, the face of God is against thee: and is this nothing to have the face of God against thee? The face of God is terrible in the world when he meets with a sinner; one sight of the face of God against a soul, cannot but overwhelm the soul and strike it down to the bottomless Gulf of eternal despair, if God hold him not by his mighty hand, there is so much terror in it: and yet the Scripture said, the face of God is against them that do evil.

Another text very remarkable we have in the 2 Sam. 22. 27. With the pure thou wilt shew thy self pure, and with the froward thou wilt shew thy self froward; or unsavory: But it may be translated, With the perverse thou wilt wrestle: so that those that be froward and perverse, and will walk on in a sinful way, God wrestles it out with them; God puts forth his Power to wrestle, and certainly if God wrestle with thee, he will lay thee upon thy back.

It is a dreadful thing that God should use such a speech, that he will wrestle with man; for all men in sin, as I shewed before, they wrestle with God, as if they would have the day; God will have his will, and thou shalt have the fall; thou wrestlest, and God wrestle: you know wrestlers put forth all their strength against one another, and know, God puts forth all his strength against every sinner.

And that I may bring it more full to your senses, consider this, From whence has any creature power to bring evil upon thee, or to torment thee? Surely it has somewhat of God in it: as thus, Fire has power to torment the Body, and it is only one spark of God let out through the power of that creature, otherwise it had no power. And again, another creature, Swords and Weapons, they have power to gash and wound the Body; whence have these Instruments their power? it is but some drop of God's power through these instruments.

So one Disease has power to torment one way, and another, another way; whence has any Disease power to torment? only there is some little of God's power let out through that Disease. Now if all creatures tormenting has only power through God's letting out his power, then what a dreadful thing will it be when God's Power shall be infinitely let out against the creature?

Take all creatures in their several powers to torment, and put them all together, one creature in one kind, and another in another, and put them all together, this would be great torture: Now all the Power of God is the several powers of all the creatures put together

in one, and infinitely more; and when that comes against the creature, it must needs make them miserable: its another manner of matter than afflictions, when all in God comes out against the soul; and there is not any one sin but endangers this.

CHAP. XXXIV.

Sin is more opposite to mans good than affliction, for that sin make all the creatures of God at enmity with a sinner.

Further, in the next place, The evil that sin has beyond all the evil of affliction is this: That sin, it does make all the creatures of God to be at an enmity with a sinner: I say, sin puts a sinner in this condition, that all the creatures of God are Enemies unto the sinner; they be all as the Host of God that come out against a sinner, ready armed with God's wrath, ready bent to execute the wrath of God against a sinner: the creatures of God are called God's Host, not only because they be armed with God's wrath, but because there is in them a propensity to destroy those sinners that sin against the God of their being.

Every creature is ready and does as it were cry to God, Oh Lord, when wilt thou give me commission to take away such a wretch, Lord, such a one is a filthy, wretched Blasphemer, a Sabbath breaker, a drunkard, and thou livest all this while, and hast been at peace, and yet they are still crying, Lord, shall I go and take him away, and send him to his own place?

If thou couldest hear it, all the creatures in the world cry thus, and they be all desirous to send thee to thy own place, and take thee away.

I think when I see a sinner, I hear all the creatures cry as did Abishai the son of Zerviah; Abishai was one of David's Soldiers,

when Shimei cursed David: Shall I go and cut off this dead Dogs neck? So he said concerning Shimei, Let me go over I pray thee, and take off his head; why should this dead Dog curse my Lord? So when thou art blaspheming God, the creatures look upon thee with disdain, and they rise against thee, and all the creatures say, Oh this dead Dog, this wretched creature, how long shall he live to blaspheme God? shall I cut off his head? shall I go and send him down to his own place? It would terrify thy heart if thou shouldst hear every creature crying to God to be thy Executioner from him. And certainly when God gives commission, and God falls upon thee, every creature will fall upon thee: As you read in the 2 Sam. 18. when Joab fell upon Absalom, presently the ten men fell upon him, and slue him too, as soon as Joab gave the stroke. So, as soon as God gives the stroke against the sinner, certainly all other creatures be ready to fall upon the sinner also.

So you see that sin brings a man to such a condition that all creatures are at enmity with him; whereas when once the soul is reconciled to God, and sin pardoned, all creatures be at Peace with you, you are then in League with all the creatures. We should account it an evil condition to be in such a place where all the men in the Nation are our Enemies, and stand ready to murder us: Certainly all the sinners in the world are in the midst of the creatures of God that stand ready armed with God's wrath against them.

Hence it is, That when once God enlightens (I beseech you observe it) the conscience of a sinner, he fears every thing; The wicked flee, when none pursue them. It is very observable of Cain, after he had committed that sin of slaying his Brother, then said Cain, Every one that meets me, will slay me: Who was there then in the world? No body but his Father and Mother: and yet every one that meets him will slay him, he was afraid of every thing, and every one, because he had sinned against the Lord. So every enlightened conscience that knows what sin means, when he comes to have conscience awakened, they be afraid of every thing: If there be thundrings, &

lightenings, & storms, & tempests, it sees the wrath of God in this Storm and Tempest, Thunder and Lightning; any stirs abroad in the world be but as Messengers of God's wrath against me, said the awakened conscience:

This is the misery of a sinner; and then how much is the evil of sin greater than affliction!

CHAP. XXXV.

XII. sin is a greater Evil to man than affliction, because it puts a man under the Curse of God.

XII. Nay further, It puts the creature under the Curse of God: it does separate the creature for evil. Psal. 4. 3. It is said, God separates the righteous man for himself. So sin separates the creature for evil, and makes him Anathema, accursed: For God in Deut. 27 26. said, Cursed is every one that abides not in every thing that is written in the Law to do it; he is accursed in all that he has and does: The Curse of God is against him. And here observe, sin does not only deserve a Curse, that the creature should be accursed, but of its own nature it is a Curse, and makes the creature accursed in its own nature.

As thus, you may see the evil of sin by the excellency of Grace: Thus Grace does not only bring excellency upon the creature, and brings a blessing, but of it self it separates the creature for a blessing. For what is holiness but grace? they be usually expressed for one and the same; now what is Holiness but the Consecration of a thing for God; so that when Holiness comes into the heart, that is nothing else but that gracious Principle whereby the soul of a man or

woman, before common to Lust and sin, is now come to be separated from al these things and to be consecrated and given up to God himself, that's Holiness.

Now sin must needs be contrary unto holiness. As holiness is a separation of the creature from other things, and a consecration of it unto God; so sin is a separation of the creature from God and all good, and devoting of it up unto wrath, and misery, and a curse, and al evil whatsoever in its own nature; it is not in the desert only.

Many men think sin in its desert deserves a Curse, but they understand not how sin in its own nature separates the heart from God, and so gives it up to al evil, and all misery, as grace does to all good. This is the evil of sin, and therefore another manner of evil than there is in affliction.

CHAP. XXXVI.

XIII. Sin is the Seed of Eternal Evil, therefore More Hurtful to Man than Affliction.

An Use thereof, Then see that those men are deceived that think to provide well for themselves by sin. Use. 2. The Ministry of the Word is for our good, as well as God's glory.

XIII. Further, sin it is a principal evil; so I call it, because it is a principal of Eternal evil to the creature, (I beseech you observe what I mean) I do not mean that it deserves eternal evil only, but of it self it is eternal evil. As thus, Grace does not only deserve eternal happiness, but it is the seed of eternal happiness, it is that principle, that if let alone will grow to eternal happiness.

So sin does not only deserve eternal misery, but it is the seed of eternal evil, and sin it self will be executioner upon the soul, and will prove an intolerable misery to the soul. Though sin be the very element in which many men and women live and so delight themselves: yet be it known, That this sin does not only deserve that God should bring his wrath upon thee for it, but that sin will prove eternal torment to thee.

As thus, The Fish that plays and leaps in the water, the water is the element to the Fish that it delights in; but if you put fire under this water if in a vessel, then that water that was the element in which the Fish skipped, and played, and delighted it self, that water will be torture and torment to the Fish boiling hot.

So sin is the element where men play, and delight in sinful ways, as the Fish in the water, but when God comes and mingles wrath with sin, then that very sin which was thy delight, shall be torture and torment, and so a principle of eternal evil it shall be to you. Thus sin is another manner of evil than affliction.

As thus, afflictions though in Diseases they bring pains and sorrows to the Body, the matter of this will wear out in time, and so the Disease will fall; but sin is such a principal evil and misery to the creature, as it will never go out, but continues a principal of eternal misery. Thus you have seen how sin is against our own good. Somewhat I would fain say by way of APPLICATION in this work.

Use 1. sin is against our own good: Hence all those promises that any sinful way has to you, to provide for your own selves in, and your own good, they be all deceitful, and will deceive you The way of the wicked deceives them. Certainly thou art mistaken, if thou thinkest to make any provision for thy self in sinful ways. And the best way for any man or woman to provide for themselves, is to abandon sin: Wouldest thou provide for thy self, for thy own good, and be a true self-lover, abandon sin, for sin is against thy own good.

Use 2. Again, Hence you see, That the Ministry of the Word is that that is for our good, and that that makes for your good, as well as for God's glory. God in sending the Ministry of the Word, sends it for your own good as well as his own glory. Why what does it do? Only seeks to get away your sins, and make them bitter and grievous unto you.

I have in many particulars opened the nature of sin, and how grievous and evil tis: now what is the intendment of this, but to get the Serpent out of your bosoms, that which will do you mischief, and all for your own good.

Certainly if ever God open your eyes, you will then desire, with your faces upon the ground, to bless God that ever he sent his Ministers to shew you what sin is. Many times mens spirits rise against the Word, and they take the Ministers as enemies, Oh he speaks against me.

No it is not against any ones person, but against thy sin, man or woman, that which will do thee mischief, and undo thee.

Again, many cry out against the Minister as that man against Christ, He comes to torment us before the time. No it is against thy sin man, it is to take away that which will undo thee. Many are ready to say of the Minister as he to the Prophet Elijah, What hast thou met me, Oh my enemy! But as the Prophet said, does not my words do you good?

Certainly that which makes sin grievous to you, does you as much good as creatures can be done to for the present. Many have sin in their stomachs, that rise against the Minister and the Word, as the sick mans stomach against the glass or the pot in which the Physic is, but when for that evil grief within, he takes a vomit, it makes him sick it may be for a while, and the man casts up many filthy things and nauseating stuff; and then he cries out, Oh! blessed be God,

though I had pain, yet this takes away a great deal of that bad stuff that would have bred Diseases.

So though our Ministry may put you to pain, yet you will bless God when that is cast out that it has to deal withal. Many when they hear the Word, their spirits rise against it; but when it has pleased God to get away their sins, though upon hard terms, they have blest God that ever they heard the Word that did trouble them, or ever saw such a mans face.

I remember an expression of one to my self, That when he sate and heard me, he was persuaded every thing I spoke was against himself, though a stranger whom I never knew, and he professed his spirit rose both against the Word and the Speaker, going home, and the Word working, and working out sin, he comes not long after and blessed God that ever he heard that Sermon: And so certainly it will be.

I have shewed you in these thirteen Particulars how evil sin is against your own souls; know then, if the Minister by the Word can but get away your sin, Oh you will see it above the greatest good and happiness that ever you had in all your lives, that ever you did understand that which would do you so much hurt: Alas you will say, I did not see sin would do me so much hurt; woe to me if I had not heard the evil of sin; if I had known the evil of sin by feeling, what had become of me?

You have heard and read much of the evil of sin; now think, if these things be so grievous in the hearing or reading, what a woeful condition will that soul be in that must feel it? that must have every one of these Particulars made good to the full? Certainly such a soul must needs be in a woeful condition.

Now the Lord so sanctify and bless unto you the reading or hearing of all these evils, that none of your souls may ever come to feel them.

CHAP. XXXVII.

Sin is Worse than Affliction, because it Hardens the Heart Against God and the Means of Grace.

The opposition sin has to our own good, It has more evil against our selves than any affliction; & for the manifesting that we have opened Thirteen Particulars: Thus far we have gone. There is two Particulars more to discover the evil of sin as against our good more than afflictions.

XIV. sin is worse than affliction as against our selves, For it is that which hardens the heart against God, and the means of Grace more than any affliction. I do not speak now of hardening the heart against God in opposition to him; but as in opposition to our own good that we should receive from God, in the use of the means of grace; and so sin is more opposite to our good than afflictions.

Affliction rather, usually, does further the means of grace, and prepare the heart for the entertaining of the means of grace; affliction does: But sin hardens the heart against it, and hinders the efficacy of the means of grace upon the souls of men and women; Hosea, 5. and the last, In their afflictions they will seek me early: then the more afflictions are upon them, the more ready are they to seek me; Isaiah, 26. 16. When thy chastening was upon them, they powered forth their prayer.

Many men and women that never knew how to pray, that would say they could not pray in their families, that they could not pray in secret, any otherwise than to say a prayer, or that they had learned

when they were children to say so many words; they could not pray otherwise:

But when their afflictions are upon them, then their hearts could be driven to God, and they could find how to pray otherwise. There is a speech concerning Mariners, He that knows not how to pray, let him go to Sea: noting, that when he comes into the waves, and tempests, and storms, that would teach him to pray: You Mariners, consider if ever it have taught you to pray: my thinks, of any sort of men in the world, Mariners should have the gift of prayer, because so often in affliction, and in danger of their lives; and many times they find, though they know not how to use their mouths, to fashion their tongues to any thing but oaths at other times; yet when in danger of their lives, they can fall to prayer, and power forth their prayer; when thy chastening is upon them, they power forth their prayer: and that word there translated Prayer, in the Original is a word that signifies to Enchant; and the reason comes from hence, because Enchanters did put a great deal of efficacy in a few words, closed their Sentences in a few words, and thought there was much efficacy in them: So the prayers that comes from men & women in affliction has much efficacy in them, they be not vain light words, but have abundance of efficacy.

So, then, afflictions further the means of grace in the hearts of men and women; it brings them to the Word, and furthers that also; it is as the rain that softens the Earth, and fits it for the Plow; Plow up the fallow ground of your hearts, said the Lord: the Word of God is as the Plow, to plow up the fallow ground of your hearts.

Now Husband-men know when the Earth is dry and hard they cannot plow, their plows are kept out; but when Rain comes and softens the Earth, then their Plows can go. Many times it is so with the hearts of many men and women when they are in prosperity, the Sun-shine of prosperity being upon them, the Plow of the Word cannot get into their hearts; but when afflictions or sickness comes, then the Plow of the Word can get in, and cast up the fallow ground

of their hearts: times of affliction do bring men and women to the Word.

Therefore I remember I have read of Chrysostom, in a Sermon of his to the people of Antioch, where he preached, he tells them, When they were in trouble, then their Congregations were thrust and filled: It was at such a time when Theodocius the Emperor by the Instigation of the Empress, his Wife, was angry with the City, and threatened to come against it and destroy it in a Warlike manner: then all the people got together, and the Congregations were thrust; and then they prayed and sighed, and great and much prayer there was, when they were afraid the King would come in anger against the City to destroy it.

So that afflictions and troubles, and fears, they do bring men and women to the means of grace, and they do further the means of grace, and make the means to be profitable many times: As it is with the Seed that is sown, if there be a dry hot time after the sowing, it lies under the clods, and comes not up; but if there come rain, then that which was sown divers weeks before, springs up. So we sow the Word of God in your hearts, but the Seed lies under the clods so long as there is the hot Sun-shine of prosperity, till afflictions come, and the rain of affliction brings the Word out, and then something appears.

We have known men that never seemed to be wrought on by the Word, yet when God has laid his hand upon them in some affliction, then there has been brought to their remembrance such a Truth that they heard such a time, and then they have acknowledged the power of the Word, and conscience has then been awakened, and not before.

I remember it is reported of Beza, that famous Instrument of God in the Church, That being a Papist, and living in Paris, and in great Honor, as he was there, being a man of great Esteem, and good Birth, and had Preferments there; yet he had often times misgiving

thoughts that he was not right, that the Popish Religion was not right, and that the Protestants were in the right, because he had read the Scriptures and compared the Controversy; yet because of his great Honors and preferments in Paris, all went away and could not prevail: but God laid upon him a great sickness, and great afflictions, and then that which he had but overly upon his spirit before, now sunk into his heart more deeply, that as soon as he began to recover, he left Paris, and all his Preferments, and got to Geneva, and there made public profession of the Truth. Thus afflictions further the means of grace; but it is otherwise with sin, that, if let alone, hardens the heart desperately against all the means of grace: Though it be true, God may sometimes put forth his Almighty Power, and notwithstanding all the sin in the soul of a man or woman, he may make the means of grace effectual; though mans heart be never so stout and stubborn in their ways of sin, yet God may please to come by his Almighty Power, and over power the heart, as he does many times.

Yes, God sometimes lets men go on in horrible wickedness, to manifest his power the more: As the Prophet Elijah; when he would have fire come to devour the Sacrifice, he poured much water upon it, that so the Power of God might the more be manifested: so God suffers deluges of sin to be sometimes in men and women, that he might magnify his Power so much the more in the efficacy of the means of grace.

But yet we are to know that sin, and every sin of its own Nature, does harden the heart against God in the use of all the means of grace; yea, and so hardens the heart, that if men and women live any long time under the means of grace, and continue in the ways of sin, it is a thousand to one whether ever they be wrought upon afterward: usually we find where the means of grace comes to any place, it works for the most part at the first; I do not, nor will not limit God, but for the most part at first it works upon men and women, before they have by sin hardened themselves against it; if once they have continued some little time under it, and their hearts

have followed their sin, and so come to be hardened, it is I say a most dangerous thing, and many times God for ever leaves them to their hardness; yea, such evil there may be in sin, as if a man or woman has an enlightened conscience, and shall go against the light of their conscience, when they live under the means of grace, any one sin against the light of conscience may for ever harden them.

Thou that hast come to the Word and hast heard, these things thou knowest has come near to thy soul, and yet there has been that violence of corruption to go against the light of thy conscience, and that particular truth that has been made known unto thee from God, that one sin may be enough evil to harden thy heart, that the means shall never do thee good; therefore there is a great, deal more evil in sin than in any affliction.

I beseech you consider of this one note further in it; God comes many times, yea, usually with abundance of grace to the souls of men and women in their affliction, and that in the continuance of their afflictions, and in the increase of their afflictions, yet the means of grace work; but God can never come with grace while they sin, except sin be decreased;

I say, God never comes to make any means of grace effectual, but it must be with the decrease, and with the taking away of sin; the means of grace may be effectual with the increase of affliction, but the means of grace can never be effectual but with the decrease of sin: therefore there is more evil in sin than in affliction, as against our selves.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

**Sin is Worse to us than Affliction, Because
Sin Brings more Shame than Affliction.**

There is more evil in sin than in affliction as against our selves, In regard of the shame that it does bring; sin brings more shame than any affliction brings, Rom. 6. 20. What profit, or what fruit had you in those things whereof you be now ashamed? sin, it is that which brings shame, not only to a man or woman in particular, but likewise to a whole Nation, when sin prevails. Prov. 14. 34. Righteousness exalts a Nation, but sin is a reproach to any People.

Afflictions are not a reproach any further than as they be the fruit of sin, and then there is shame in them (but this we shall speak of afterward) but sin is the proper cause of any reproach and shame: and certainly this Scripture has been fulfilled concerning us; our sin has been a reproach to this Nation: there was a time, this Nation was honored among other Nations, and a terror to them; but of late since we have sinned and grown Superstitious, and come nearer unto Popery, since there has been more wickedness among us.

This Nation has been an exceeding reproach: we may apply for that, that in the 13, of Hosea, according to the Interpretation of most, When Ephraim spoke, trembling, he exalted himself in Israel; but when he offended in Baal, he died; thus Interpreters carry it: There was a time when Ephraim spoke, then was trembling in all Nations about him, and he exalted himself above other Nations: but when he sinned in Baal, then he died, his Honor died, he was a dead Nation, and no body regarded him.

True, time was, when England spoke, there was trembling, and England exalted himself above other Nations; but since we sinned in Baal, and there has been so much Idolatry and Superstition, we have been a dead Nation in respect of what we have been before. sin is a reproach, to any Nation a shame: There is no such shame in affliction as there is in sin; that brings shame. That which argues worthlessness in any, that which argues there is little good or worth in any: or if any one should do any thing unbeseeming either his own excellency, or that supposed to be in him; as to lie in the mire, or to go naked, or in their carriage, or by any deportment, to behave

themselves besides that excellency supposed to be in him, this brings shame. Job 30. 7. Those that went up and down braying among the bushes, it was contemptible, and it was a shame: So for any man to do any thing beneath the excellency of a man, is a shame. Now there is nothing so below the excellency of a man as sin, no affliction brings a man under his excellency as sin does, therefore no affliction can be such a shame to man as sin.

Now the Rational creature that is guided by Counsel in his actions is the proper subject of shame: Brute beasts cannot be capable of shame, because they have no Counsel to be the cause of their Actions, but the reasonable creature failing in that which is his aim, coming short of the rule of his work, through his unskillfulness this causes shame. As now, Take any workman, if he do any work beneath the rule of the work through unskillfulness, it causes shame, he comes to be ashamed of it.

Now sin must needs bring shame, because it comes beneath the Rule of eternal Life, and therefore must needs cause shame. It is true, in natural things to fail through ignorance is a greater shame than to fail through wilfulness; but in spirituals, the greater shame is to fail through wilfulness. And the greater the Art, the greater the shame to come short of the rule of that art.

As suppose a General; it is a greater shame for him to fail, and come short of the Rules of Military Art, than for a Country-man to come short of his Rules of Husbandry, because one is more noble than the other.

Now Brethren, The Art of Divinity to guide to eternal Life, is the most Noble of any Art; and for any creature to fail and come short of this Art, is the greatest shame that can be. Though men be ashamed of any thing else, take a painter, or any workman or a husbandman, if he come short of the rule, he is ashamed, but if men fail of the Rule of eternal Life, they are not ashamed then.

I Remember Augustine has this Expression, said he, A Scholar if he fail in pronouncing a word and pronounce it amiss, if he pronounce Omer for Homer (he instanceth in that) he is ashamed of that; but men be not ashamed of breaking the Rules of Divinity: And there is more failings in the Breach of the Rule of Divinity and in failing there, than in any Art whatsoever.

Now sin is the greatest shame, and the Reason why sinners be not ashamed, is, Because they know not the Excellency of man; they know not wherein the excellency of the Rational creature consists, and therefore they are not ashamed of that which brings them under the excellency of the Rational creature.

Besides, They know not God's infinite Holiness, therefore are not ashamed; They be now among other sinners, and they think though some seem to be Religious, yet they think others are as bad as themselves in their hearts at least, though not in Practice:

As Nero, because he was bad, he thought others were as bad as himself. So a wicked man, when he cannot see others break out in such great sins as he does, yet he thinks they are as bad some other way, and have some other sins as great. And because they live among them that are as bad as themselves, and live in the same sins, therefore they are not ashamed:

For as a collier living among colliers is not ashamed, but if he lived among princes and noblemen, he would be ashamed. So wicked men in this world because they live in this world among sinners, they conceive to be sinners like themselves they be not ashamed; but when God shall come to open what sin means, and what the Holiness of God means, and they see themselves stand in the presence of the holy God, then they will be ashamed. But certainly sin is a greater-shame than affliction; none need be ashamed of affliction any further-than it has a Connexion to some great sin; but sin in the greatest prosperity has shame with it.

CHAP. XXXIX.

He that sins, wrongs, despises, and hates his own soul.

Use 1. Then see the maliciousness that is in sin. Use 2. To pity those that go on in sinful ways. Use 3. Let sin be dealt hardly with.

Thus we have Discovered how sin makes more against our good, than affliction does. Now there be divers things which follow hence as Consequences: I spoke of one or two before, I will name them no more: But only thus far, Hence we see that sin makes more against our selves, than any thing else; Therefore it is the worst way for any to provide for themselves by giving way to live in any sinful course. And for this I shall ad Two or Three Scriptures I spoke not of before, to shew how men go against themselves, and those men that think to provide best for themselves, the truth is in the ways of sin, they go most against themselves: You have these Three notable Expressions for this in Scripture:

- First, That men by sin, wrong their own Souls.
- Secondly, That they Despise their own Souls.
- Thirdly, They Hate their own Souls.

If I should Charge these Three things upon the most vile sinner at this present before the Lord; Oh thou dost wrong thy own soul, Thou dost despise thy own soul, Thou hatest thy own soul, he would be loth to yield to it; and yet the Scripture chargeth this upon sinners, Prov. 8. 36. He that sins against me, wrongs his own soul. He does not only wrong God, that was in the first thing we opened; but by sin he wrongs his own soul:

You will say sometimes, I do no body wrong, I thank God none can say I wrong them; but thou wrongest thine own soul, and certainly it is as great an evil to wrong thy own soul, as to wrong the Body of another, and a great deal more.

Nay further (mark) All they that hate me (that is, wisdom and Instruction, the Rule of Lise) they love death: It is a strange expression; if any Minister should say thus to you, you love death, you would think it a rash speech from us: the Holy Ghost said so of al that hate Instruction.

If there be any Truth of God revealed against sin, and thy heart rise against it, thou lovest death, thy own ruin, and thy own destruction: And what pity is it for men and women to die? who can pity them that die eternally, when as they love death? if they love death, they must have it: So the Holy Ghost said, they wrong their souls, and they love death; and Prov. 15. 32. He that refuseth Instruction, detests his own soul.

When you come and hear any instruction against any sinful way, and refuse it, you despise your own souls; as if your own souls were worth little. Hence it is that men and women, though they hear sin tends to the death of their souls, to their eternal ruin, yet if they have but any temptation, but to get a groat or sixpence, they will venture upon it: what is this but to despise thy soul? that is to despise a thing, to account it little worth.

Though thy soul be worth a whole world. There is none so poor in this place, the meanest boy, servant; or girl, but has a soul more worth than Heaven and Earth; but though the meanest here has a soul more worth than the world, yet we see it ordinary, that to get twopence or a groat, they will venture the ruin of their souls: Is not this to despise their souls? as if they were not worth a groat or sixpence; and they will lie or steal to get that which is less.

Nay, not only so, but they are haters of their own souls; and this you have [Prov. 29. 24.](#) He that is partner with a Thief, hates his own soul: there is an instance in that one sin, but it is true of every sin; for this must be taken as a rule to help you to understand the evil of sin, Know what is said of any one sin, is virtually true of all; that evil which is in any one sin, is virtually in any sin, he hates his own soul that goes on in any one sin: therefore if you will provide for your own good, you must abandon sin.

Object. But it may be said, Is that Lawful for a man to abstain from sin out of self respects? for this I am upon, I am shewing how sin is against our selves, and therefore urge you to abandon, and take heed of sin as it is against our selves; then this Question arises, What should we abstain from sin out of self respects? what good is in this? is that from grace?

To that I answer three things.

Answ. 1. That at first when God does begin to work upon the soul, God does usually move us from self most; and these self grounds works most to take men and women off from the acts of their sin (from outward acts at least) and to stop them from the commission of sin and bring them to the means of grace; self motives God makes use of at first: but yet the work is not done till the soul goeth beyond these: it is good for men and women to abstain from sin upon any grounds; there is so much evil in sin, that upon any grounds men and women abstaining from sin, it is well, but only except it be such a ground, that the ground it self be a greater sin than the sin I abstain from. But yet the work is not done: Therefore

Know, That though when grace is come into the soul, God uses self arguments, and self motives to further the abstaining from sin (and it is Lawful to do so) yet self motives, and self arguments be not the chief and highest of all. But

That which I most pitch upon, and most fully answers this Question is this; That if we did but know wherein our self good consists, which is certainly to live to God; our self good is in this, not only the glory of God, but our own good and happiness; our self good is in our living to God, that infinite first-Being of all things. Now if we understand this, I say, that thing which is our self good, we may make to be our highest aim in abstaining from sin, and in doing any good; that thing which is our self good: but we must not make it our highest aim as it is our self good, we must look to God above our selves; but still the same thing that is our self good, our own good, may be made our highest aim of all, which is our living to God and his praise. Thus God has connected our good and his glory together, that the same thing which is the highest end of all I must aim at, to wit, God's glory and his praise, that is also our highest good; and so we may aim at it in our chief aims.

Secondly, If sin make so against us, I shall give you Three uses of it.

Use 1. Then we from hence see the desperate maliciousness that is in sin. It follows thus: What for a creature to sin against the blessed God, and to get no good to himself neither, yea, to do hurt to himself too; this is horrible mischief and malice. We account it horrible malice against man, if any man be so notoriously malicious, that he seeks to do mischief to another man though he get no good, yea, though he hurt himself by it, yet he will do another man a mischief: certainly if this be maliciousness against man, then there is certainly malice in sin against God.

For when thou sinnest against God; suppose thou shouldest get never so much good, suppose thou by sin, one sin, couldest get the the greatest good that ever any creature had, yet thou must not commit it; it were wickedness to do it: But what sayest thou to this, that when thou sinnest against God, thou mischief thy self; not only gettest no good, but doest that which is the greatest wrong and evil to thy self, and yet wilt thou go on in sin against God? Oh what dost thou think of God? and what hurt has God done to thee that thou

shouldest be so malicious against him? that thou wilt dishonor him, and strike at him? though thou gettest nothing thy self, nay, though thou doest undo thy self by it: men will rather go on in that way that is dishonorable to God though they venture their own damnation to do it.

It is one of the highest expressions we can have against our Enemies, I will be even with him, I will have my mind of him, or I will spend all I have to a groat; this is desperate malice in man, we account it so. Thou dost more against God, though thou saiest not so, it may be, in word, yet God sees that there is this language in it, well, I will do that which the Word forbids though I undo my self, I will venture my own perishing, my own eternal destruction, rather than that shall not be done that I hear God will not have done,

There is this in every sin. Brethren, because we do not examine what is in sin, we think it but a little, we see but the outside; but when God comes to unravel out sin, and to pick out all that his Omniscient eye seeth in sin, then it will appear to be evil, transcendently evil.

Use 2. If sin have so much evil in it more than affliction as against our selves, Then it should teach us all to look with pity, and abundance of commiseration upon men and women that go on in ways of sin. Ah poor creatures, they undo themselves, their ways are against themselves, and they will work their own ruin and misery by these ways of theirs: You that are Tradesmen, if you see a man going on in way of Trading, so that you know certainly that he will undo himself, you look upon him with pity; poor young man, he goes on in such a way as he will undo himself; you pity him upon that ground, because he undoes himself: the more hand a man has in doing himself hurt, the more he is to be pitied.

As you mariners, if you see one at Sea, go through ignorance, so that he will be by and by split into the Sea, or you know he will be by and by upon the Rocks and Sands, and he is wilful in his way, you pity

him, he is an object of pity Doest thou see any man or woman, thy father or mother, brother or sister, husband or wife, or any thou lovest dearly, going on in ways of sin, Oh pity them; let thy heart bleed over them poor wretches, they will undo themselves, split themselves eternally.

If thou shouldest see a company of men stab and murder themselves, and lying dead in the streets, if it should be asked how came they dead? and it should be answered every one of them murdered himself; were it not an object of pity? if you see men & women go on in sin, every one stabs, and murders, and mischiefs themselves, and cuts their own throats, this is the way of sin: and though they do not see it themselves, yet if God open their eyes they will see it; and certainly they shall see it ere long, and they will be forced to cry out in the bitterness of their souls, Woe to me, woe to me, I am lost and undone, and I have undone myself.

Therefore brethren we should not look upon sinners now as they are in the height of their prosperity and the roof of their pride, but look upon them as within a little time they will be; look upon them in their end, and then learn to pity them. Although sinners go on conceitedly, and boast themselves in their evil ways for the present, pity them so much the more, for the more any sinner is conceited and boasts in his way, the more dangerous is his condition, the more dangerous sign the seal of God is upon him to seal him to destruction. The more conceited any man is in any thing that will ruin him, the more lamentable is the object therefore. Though we many times when we see men under grievous afflictions, you go to your neighbors and see them lie under God's hand, grievous pains and tortures of body, Crying out dolefully, it makes your hearts bleed, and draws tears from your eyes; and you say, Oh the lamentable condition this man or woman is in; you pity them in affliction, because they are in such grievous pain.

But now you have another neighbor by, and you hear him swearing, certainly though you pity the other neighbor under affliction, yet to

hear him swear is more pitiful than to hear the other roar out in the most grievous torture that any man or woman was ever in. When we hear them in torture, we have our hearts bleed, and are not affected with their sinning, this is a sign we know not the evil of sin.

Further, if you should hear one in the anguish of conscience crying out, I am undone, I am damned, I am damned; in the anguish of his conscience thus crying out, of hell, and of the devil, you look upon such with pity.

Now this I say, Those that are in the greatest torment of conscience for their sin, they are in a better Case than those that go on most conceitedly, and boasting in their sin. Do you see one that is your neighbor, or in your family, or friend, when he is rebuked or reprov'd for any sin, that is careless and hardened in sin; I say, This man or woman, servant or child, is in a worse condition and a more lamentable object than if you should see another in the greatest horror, and anguish, and trouble of conscience, crying out most bitterly of sin: For there is a great deal more hope of this man or woman that cries out in anguish of conscience for sin, he may be saved, and not eternally ruined by sin, there is more hopes a great deal; therefore learn who is to be pitied; for sin is more against our own good, than any affliction.

Use 3. If sin be so much against ourselves, Then learn to have sin hardly dealt withal: For thus it follows, That which we look upon as our own enemy, we are willing should be hardly dealt withal: Now, nothing such an enemy to our good, as sin is.

If you apprehend any one has done you hurt, or intends to do you hurt, you think you may take liberty to let out your self to the utmost to revenge your self; but this is sinful, and the distemper of your hearts to do so: But you men and women that have your hearts filled with revenge, because you conceive others have done you hurt; here is an object God gives you leave to let out your revenge to the full upon; other men do you hurt, therefore you think you may

let out revenge, that is your wickedness, for vengeance belongs to God; but sin does you hurt more than any man can, and in this God lets you have leave to revenge yourselves upon sin.

Revenge yourselves as much as you can; look upon it as most mischievous. There be some such spiteful and revengeful men, revengeful and spiteful dispositions that have it lie moldering at their hearts, because they cannot let it out upon objects, so much as they would.

Now here is an object you may let it out as much as you can, to revenge yourselves, and to seek the ruin and destruction of sin; and to labor to use it as hardly as possibly you can: yea, it is made in Scripture a sign of true Repentance to be willing to revenge ones self upon sin, 2 Cor. 7. 11. when they had committed sin, what revenge was there, said the Apostle; they manifested their repentance by revenge upon sin: follow thy sin with a deadly hatred if thou wilt; thou hast a hateful disposition against others, follow sin with as deadly a hatred as thou canst. It was an Argument of David's heart cleaving to Absalom when Joab was to go against him, Use the young man kindly for my sake, said he; this was an argument David's heart was with him: So when you would fain have sin used kindly, gently. It is an argument your hearts are not set against sin so much as they should: No, you should not say, use sin kindly, but roughly and hardly.

As the Prophet said of one that came to destroy him, use him roughly when he comes at the door: so when sin comes to the door, when temptations be seeking to have entrance, use them roughly at the door, and say, Let the righteous smite me, Oh that the Word might come as a two edged Sword to stab and slay my sin; Oh that when I go to hear the Word, I might meet with some hard thing against sin.

Thus we should come when we come to the Word, and when sin has got a blow by the Word of God, bless God, and say, blessed be God,

my sins this day have got a blow; this sin of mine that has done me so much hurt, and so pestered me, and so hindered my peace and comfort, blessed be God this day it has got a blow.

Thus we should do because sin makes so much against our selves. And thus we have finished the Two First Heads of sins being against God, and against our selves. Now there be Four more.

THE THIRD PART OF THIS TREATISE.

CHAP. XL.

Sin is opposite to all Good, and therefore a greater evil than any affliction,

opened in five things: 1 sin take away the Excellency of all things: 2 It brings a Curse upon all: 3 sin is a burden to Heaven and Earth, and all creatures: 4 sin turn the greatest Good into the greatest Evil: 5 sin (if let alone) would bring all things to confusion.

Thirdly, sin is opposite to all Good in General. sin is opposite to God, and to our selves; and I say in the third place, It's against all kind of Good, and therefore a greater evil than any affliction: Now for that there be five things to be opened: only in the general, take this sure Rule, There must needs be more evil in sin than in any affliction, because there is no other evil, but is opposite to some particular good; an affliction is opposite to the particular good contrary to that affliction: but sin is opposite to every good; not only is sin opposite to the contrary virtue, but it is opposite to every good, so Divinity teaches us; though Heathens in Morality teaches, that one sin is opposite to the contrary virtue, but Divinity teaches,

that one sin is opposite to every Virtue, and every Good: which appears in Five things.

First, sin spoils all good, takes away the beauty and excellency of all Good whatsoever: It may be said of any thing that has an Excellency when sin comes, as its said of Reuben, Gen. 49. 4. His Excellency is gone, is departed, he shall not excel: therefore Rom. 8. 20. it is said (through the sin of man) All creatures be subject to vanity, the whole world is put under vanity through mans sin. Now then it appears by that, that the lustre, and beauty, and excellency of glory of all things in this world, are spoiled by the sin of man, for all is put under vanity by sin; and sin not only makes the heart vain, and so is against our selves, but all things in the world is put under vanity by sin; the excellency of thy estate, of thy parts, the excellency of any creature thou doest enjoy, all is spoiled through sin: therefore Tit. 1. 15. it is said, All things be unclean to the sinner: said he, To him that is unclean, al things are unclean. This is the first, Your sin is opposite to al Good, spoils al Good.

Secondly, sin brings a curse upon all: I opened before how it puts man under a curse; but now I am to shew how it brings a curse upon the whole world, Gen. 3. Cursed shall the Earth be for thy sake; and so by the same reason upon the whole world that thou hast to do withal: not only the sinner, but through mans sin the world is under a curse; and therefore it is a most dangerous thing for any man or woman to seek after happiness in the things of the world, when as the whole world is under a curse, and wilt thou seek thy happiness in that which is under a curse? no marvel though the Devil himself be called the god of this world; why? because the world is accursed through the sin of man: sin brings a curse upon the whole world.

Thirdly, sin is a burden to Heaven and Earth, to all creatures: Rom. 8. 22. The whole creation groans and travels in pain to be delivered, and that through the sin of man. Now what is the evil of sin, when it is so weighty, that it makes the whole frame of Heaven and Earth to

groan to bear the burden of it? It may be thy sin is light to thy Soul, thou carriest it lightly, but as light as it is to thee, it is such a heavy burden to Heaven and Earth, and the whole Frame of the Creation, that if God did not hold it by his mighty Power, it would make it not only shake, but fall down.

Fourthly, sin turns the greatest Good into the greatest evil, therefore opposite to all Good. As thus, Take the greatest good of man in prosperity: the more prosperity thou hast, though a fruit of God's Bounty, yet thy sin turns it to the greatest evil to thee: As if Poison get in Wine, it works more strongly than in Water: so sin in a prosperous Estate, usually works more strongly to turn it to a greater evil, than sin in a lower Estate. Poor men by sin, have their Water poisoned; and rich men by sin, have their wine poisoned: Now poisoned wine has more strength than poisoned water. And it turns not only prosperity, but the best means, not only the means of grace, but the better any means is thou enjoyest, the more evil it is turned into to thee, except the means take away the sinfulness of thy heart: if thou retainest the sinfulness of thy heart, the more powerful Sermons thou hearest, and the more glorious truths laid open, the worse will be thy condition, and thou wilt one day curse the time that ever thou hadst such means.

Yea, sin turns God to be the greatest evil, and makes him the greatest evil in all his Attributes: And Christ himself (though infinitely good) to be the greatest evil: Christ is a stumbling stone to wicked men, and laid by God a stumbling stone: what! Christ the precious Corner stone, that has infinite treasures of all excellency, in whom the fullness of the God head dwells bodily, yet this Christ a stumbling stone, and the greatest evil through sin to wicked men; so that one day they will curse the time that ever they heard of Christ. So sin is opposite to all good, because it turns the greatest good to the greatest evil.

Fifthly, and Lastly, sin is the greatest evil, Because if let alone, it would bring all things to Confusion: Therefore it is said, by Christ

all things subsists; were it not for Christ who sets himself against the evil of sin, all things would be brought to Confusion: [1 Joh. 5. 19.](#) The whole world lies in wickedness: Just as a Carrion lies in slime and filth, and there rots; so the whole world would be in the same case that the Carrion is that lies in filth and brought to confusion. Were it not that God has his number of elect, and they keep the world from confusion.

Now put all these together, sin spoils all, brings a Curse upon all, is a burden to heaven and earth, turns the greatest good to the greatest evil, and would bring all things to Confusion if let alone: This is the evil of sin in Opposition to all good.

There be but Three more, and they be, 1 To shew how sin is the evil of all evils whatsoever. 2 has a kind of infiniteness in it. And, 3 It has Reference to the Devil: But these I cannot come to in this Chapter, but shall in the following to conclude all; much you have read of the evil of sin, and how it is above all afflictions; afflictions are of a lower nature: Oh Brethren, This is that we should seek for and prize, to enjoy those means, that may lessen sin, and oppose wickedness among us: And of all others these be the two great means to crush sin, and bring down, or make it less in all places; the great Ordinance of the Magistracy, and the great Ordinance of the Ministry.

Now (as I told you before) reproach has come to our nation through sin, and from whence is it sin has grown to that height it has, but because there has been corruption in both, great Corruption in Magistracy, and Ministry, among us.

As we read of Dan and Bethel, two Calves set up there: Dan signifies Judgement; and Bethel The house of God. So there was great Corruption in Dan and Bethel places of Judgement Magistracy, and Bethel the house of God in the Ministry.

Now it has pleased God of late, to begin to be merciful to us, this way; through that great Ordinance of good, he has appointed for us, The Assembly of Parliament, to purge both Dan and Bethel, Magistracy, and Ministry, to cast out Corruption from places of Judgement, and the House of God. And as we are to bless God for this; so we are to further this work of theirs, and stand by them to the utmost that we are able in all good ways those Worthies of God in that great Assembly for the finishing of that Work which they have begun: and that our sins and wickedness may be done away from among us.

And for that which has been done, certainly God has received much praise, and we have cause to bless God for it. And those that have gone on in a good way according to what the Law does permit them they are to be encouraged. And in a more especial manner, you that be the especial means of good to this Land, I mean in regard of Safety, and your employment; the Mariners, in whom much of the Strength of this Nation consists, for our Walls be Water and Wooden Walls: Seas and Ships be the Walls of this Land, and therefore much of the Good, and of the Safety, and Prosperity of this State depends upon those.

And if God stir up their hearts to the maintenance of their Protestation, and Parliament, and Liberties, and to set themselves against Popery and Superstition, and to encourage the Parliament in their good way; this is that we be to bless God for, and encourage you in.

We read in Judges 5. several Tribes when the People of God were in straits, would not go up but had many excuses: others did go to help in the Cause of God, [Judg. 5. 14](#). See how many excuse themselves, but especially in the 16. Vers. Why abidest thou among the Sheep-folds to hear the bleatings of the flocks? Oh Ruben said, We must not leave House and Cattle, we must not go out: And Gilead abode beyond Jordan; and Dan abode in Ships; some think Dan did not live near the Sea, but thought they ran to Ships and abode there:

And Asher continued by the Sea shore, and abode in his Breaches: He pleads thus, We must continue our business, in making Fences against the Sea; we have many Breaches, and we must continue there and look to our business. But Zebulon and Naphtali they jeopardized their lives to the death in the high places of the field. Who be those two Zebulon and Naphtali that were full of courage and zeal, when others were-full of Pleas and would not venture their lives? Who be these that ventured their lives? These two were the especial Tribes of Mariners that were forward rather than others. That these were Mariners appears [Matt. 4. 15](#). The Land of Zebulon and Nephtali by the way of the Sea beyond Jordan these that lived by the Sea. Others would not stir that lived by the Sea, but Zebulon and Nephtali, these jeopardied their lives.

Now mark, God seems to remember this: they did not jeopard themselves in a good Cause in vain: God remembers it many hundred years after. When Christ comes, the first Tribes that seem to be enlightened were these; the people that sate in darkness saw a great light, and to them that sate in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up: they sate in darkness, a company of poor Mariners, exceeding ignorant of the ways of God; and Christ comes first to them, and brings light to them.

It may be God might aim to shew Mercy to these Tribes the rather for this that they did in appearing in a good Cause, though it were with jeopardy to themselves. So go you on, and in a good Cause appear and venture yourselves to assist these Worthies of ours in whom so much of our good consists, and God will remember this in Spiritual Mercies.

Would you have the means of Grace continued, and the means of Light come to them that sit in darkness; if you would have the blessing of Zebulon and Nephtali, then be Zebulon's and Nephtalies to go out, whatsoever excuses others have, and jeopard yourselves for the good, of this Common-wealth.

THE FOURTH PART OF THIS TREATISE.

CHAP. XLI.

That sin is the Evil and Poison of all other Evils,

shewed in several Particulars: First, Its the strength of all Evils. Secondly, Its the sting of affliction. Thirdly, Its the Curse of all Evils, opened in Five Particulars. Fourthly, sin is the shame of all Evils. Fifthly, The eternity of all Evil comes from sin.

There are Four Things, which except we be well instructed in, and know, we know nothing to Purpose: Except we know God, and sin, and Christ, and Eternity: These are the Four great Things that you had need to be well instructed in: The knowledge of sin I have endeavored to set before you: In this Argument I have shewed you the evil of sin above all affliction. The next thing I am to Open to you, is the Fourth General Head, Propounded in the Fifth Chapter.

Fourthly, Therefore, that sin is the Evil of all other Evils.

It is the very pith of all other Evils; there's nothing that would be scarce worthy the name of Evil, if sin were not in it. That it is the evil of all other evils, will appear in these Particulars:

First, It is the strength of all other Evils. The strength, the prevailing strength that any evil has against man, it is from sin. There is no Evil would have any prevailing strength to do us any hurt were there not sin in it. That is certain, nothing in heaven, or earth, or hell, would do any of the Children of men any hurt, were it not for sin, if

there were not sin to give it strength. The strength of any evil that can do us any hurt, is from sin.

Let the evil be never so small, yet if it come armed with the strength of the guilt of sin, it is enough to undo any man or woman in the world. This is the Reason of the difference of the power, the prevailing power, of any cross and affliction in some more than in others; you shall have some, that let there be but the least cross and affliction upon them, it sinks their hearts, they are not able to stand under it; others that have a hundred times more upon them, they go under it with joy: this is the especial difference, one having the guilt of sin in the evil, and the other being delivered from it.

It is a Comparison I remember of a learned man, to express the difference of afflictions; afflictions are like water, and a little water upon a mans shoulder in a Leaden vessel, is a great deal heavier than much more water in a vessel of Leather or Wood; take a Leather Bucket filled with water, it is not so heavy as a little water in a Leaden vessel; so a little affliction where there is much guilt of sin is abundantly more heavy than a great deal of affliction where there is not the guilt of sin.

Haman could not stand before such a petty Cross as that Mordecai would not bow his knee; being a wicked man, that Cross being with sin, troubled him sore: and Achitaphel when he was crossed in his way could not bear it. Therefore Brethren, if you would bear afflictions, this is your way; your wisdom is to labor to know wherein the strength of an affliction lies, if you would overcome it. As you know the Philistines that desired to overcome Sampson, their great care was to know wherein his strength lay, if they could by Dalilah's means find out the strength of Sampson, they thought they might easily overcome him. So certainly if you could but find out where the strength of your afflictions •lie, it is easy then for you to have fears and disquiets taken away: the reason why fears and disquiets overcome you as they do, is, because you find not out the strength of them; if that were found out and gotten away, you might

quickly overcome afflictions, and they would be light to you. The prevailing strength of all afflictions is from sin: this is the first thing to shew sin is the evil of all evils.

Secondly, Not only the prevailing strength, But the bitterness, the sting of affliction, that which makes it bitter to the Spirit, is sin; sin makes it come like an Armed man with power: And besides, sin makes it inwardly gaul at the very heart, sting like a serpent, as the Apostle [1 Cor. 15 56](#). said of death, The sting of death, is sin, said the Apostle: so that which he said of death, it is true of all evils, of all afflictions, that are but makers of way to death; the sting of a sickness, the sting of the loss of your estates, the sting of discredit, the sting of imprisonment, the sting of all afflictions, and that which makes them bitter to the soul is sin: you have a notable place; [Jer. 4. 18](#). *Thy wages, and thy doings have procured these things unto thee, this is thy wickedness, because it is bitter, because it reacheth unto thy heart*: In the Greek it is, This is thy wickedness, and because it is bitter it reacheth unto thy heart, that interprets the word: said he, thy wickedness has procured this, and the punishment to thy wickedness is bitter, and reacheth to thy heart; because it comes as a punishment of thy wickedness, so it comes to be bitter, and reacheth to thy very heart.

Oh when sin is in affliction, it comes to the heart, and is very bitter: were the guilt of sin taken away in any affliction, the soul might be able to make use of that expression of Agag in a better way than he did, and come joyfully and cheerfully to look upon any affliction, and say, The bitterness of death is past: So does God lay any affliction upon me, or my family, the bitterness of death is gone; the bitterness is gone, because my sin is gone.

Sin is as it were the rotten core in an apple, or fruit, it will make all the fruit to be bitter and rotten: And so sin, that is the rotten core, take away, cut out the rotten core, and then you will not taste so much bitterness in the Fruit: So if sin, the rotten core be cut out, affliction will not be so bitter. This is the Second, All the prevailing

strength of affliction is from sin, and the bitterness and anguish of spirit in affliction, is from sin.

Thirdly, The source of all evil is from sin (the strength of all evil, the bitterness of all evil, and the curse of all evil) I have shewed before, sin brings a Curse upon our selves, yea, how it brings a Curse upon all good. Now I am to shew you how sin brings a Curse upon all evil; it is that which makes the affliction to be accursed.

We have a most excellent Scripture for this, to shew the difference between God's afflicting of his people whom he has pardoned, when sin is pardoned and removed; and God's afflicting of the wicked and ungodly, whose sin is yet upon them: a most admirable Text for this, and the difference between these two, that you may see what a difference sin puts upon affliction when it is upon us; the Text is, [Jer. 24. 5.](#) compared with verse 9. We have before (in the Chapter) God's expression of the differing estate of his people by the basket of good Figs, and evil Figs; those that were godly, like good figs, and the wicked by the evil figs: Mark the different dealing of God with both: both were in Captivity, both good and evil, they must both be delivered into the hand of their enemies; but see with what difference, vers. 5. like the good Figs, So will I acknowledge them whom I have carried away Captive into the Land of the Chaldeans for their good: Mark, they must go into the Land of the Chaldeans, but it must be for their good: said God, though I do afflict them, yet because I have pardoned them, let them know I aim at nothing but their good.

Then he speaks of the bad Figs, the wicked men in Captivity, vers. 9. I do deliver them to be removed into all Kingdoms of the Earth for their hurt: I will send them, they shall go into Captivity, but I intend them no good, it shall be for their hurt; to be a reproach, and a proverb, a taunt and a curse in all places, whither I shall deliver them.

I beseech you keep this Text by you, that which is said of this particular affliction is true of every affliction: when God does bring any evil upon any wicked man or woman, looking upon them, said he of such as are in their sins, God certainly intends their hurt, he brings it for their hurt, even the same affliction that befalls one whose sin is pardoned, and God intends for their good: so the privilege of godly men that have their sins pardoned through Christ, how different that is from the estate of wicked men that have the guilt of sin upon them: sin is the curse of all evils; I will deliver them for their hurt that it may be a curse to them. Now this Argument would enlarge it self (but that I study brevity) to shew how sin brings a Curse upon every affliction, and what that is; and that thereby we shall make it appear, sin is a greater evil than affliction, because it brings a Curse upon affliction. I will but briefly name what might more largely be insisted upon.

1 When there is sin and affliction, affliction comes out of God's revenge for sin: God looks upon the guilty creature with indignation and wrath: Here's a wretch that has been bold, thus to sin against me, and now my hand shall be upon him. And so when the sinner is under God's hand, God is so far from looking upon him with pity and compassion, that he looks upon him with indignation and wrath, as an Enemy to him when he looks upon the sinner that is got under him: and this is a sore evil, that when God, that is the God of all mercy, and of infinite compassion, yet when he gets a wretched sinner under him, he shall look upon him in the depth of his affliction, with indignation and wrath, as a loathsome creature, as loathing and abhorring this creature under his wrath: he shall be cast out in his wrath, God casts out a sinner and curses him, when he looks upon him in such a manner.

2 The Curse of afflictions when it comes in such a manner in way of sin is in this, God regards neither the time, nor the manner, or the measure of the affliction: whether it be a time seasonable for the sinner or no, nor the manner, nor the measure, whether it be such as the sinner can bear; no, let that go, God minds not that. Indeed

when God comes with his afflicting hand upon those to whom sin is pardoned, whom he looks upon in Christ, he weighs out their afflictions: God comes, and with his wisdom does order it, for the due time, and weighs it out for the due proportion, that there shall not be one dram put into it; any further than their strength can bear; he does not tempt us beyond our strength, he lays not upon us what we cannot be able to bear; this is true of his People. But when God comes upon those that have the guilt of sin lying on them, he will come at that time that is most unseasonable for them, at the worst time that can be: As thus, when a Husband-man would cut a tree, to make it fruitful, he will observe his time, and lop his Tree in its season, perhaps about this * time of the year, and then it will grow up; but if he mean to have it die he lops it about Midsummer, when the Tree has sent forth his Sap, and then the Tree dies. So God, when he comes to his children with afflictions, he will come in a seasonable time, such a time to lop when lopping may make them more fruitful: But when he afflicts wicked men, he comes to them as to a Tree at Midsummer, when as they be flourishing, and then cuts them down, and then they perish; God regards not the time and season for their good when he comes in a way of a curse for sin.

And so for the manner and measure of affliction: When God comes to his children when sin is pardoned, God weighs it out: As a skilful Physician weighs out Physic, though that which the Patient takes, it may be is Poison in it self, yet the Physician will be sure there shall not be one dram too much, and there shall be enough mixed with it, that shall be proportionable to weaken the strength of that poison, that it shall do no hurt, but good: but now if he give poison to Vermin, he gives it without mixture, or weight, he never stands weighing for them, let them eat and burst themselves, he will mix no help there: when he gives Poison to Vermin, 'tis to destroy them.

So all afflictions that come to wicked men, when God comes upon them in a way of a Curse for sin, God gives it to them as we give poison to vermin to destroy them: but the afflictions that come to Saints, when sin is pardoned, God gives that which indeed in its own

nature is poison, but it is so weighed out, that there is not one dram too much, and so mixed with Ingredients of the mercy and goodness of God, as only it works good to them to work out corruption, and do them no hurt at all.

Here's the difference of afflictions upon those whose sins be pardoned, and those who have guilt upon them. Harken to this you that have the guilt of sin, when any evil comes to you, for ought you know it comes as poison to Vermin to kill you; whereas if your hearts be humbled for sin, and sin▪ pardoned, if you be under never so much affliction, it comes but as from a skilful loving Physician, that weighs out the Physic, to do the Patient good. This is the Second thing wherein the Curse of affliction consists when it comes for sin.

3 The Curse of afflictions when they come for sin, is in this, That all afflictions that come merely for sin, they are but forerunners of the miseries of Hell it self; I say they are the forerunners of the very ferments of Hell: Let the affliction be never so little in it self, yet it is the harbinger and forerunner of those dreadful eternal torments that thou must bear; it is but a Messenger from the Lord, whatsoever they are: What dost thou feel them grievous and tedious for the present? some grievous tedious distemper, trouble or disease thou hast; they are but a taste of that bitter Cup full of wrath, and they do but give thee notice of what dreadful things thou art to endure when time shall be no more.

4 Nay, they are not only forerunners to give notice of what is like to be, But they be the very beginnings of the miseries of Hell: every evil a wicked man does suffer, he may look upon it but as the beginnings of everlasting torments, if he die so, if he be not delivered from the guilt of sin, and this is that which makes it grievous: 'tis not so much the pain that lies upon a man for the present, as that he by this pain is told what he shall have for ever; it is as a summons of him to bear the wrath of God eternally; and this is that which is the beginning of that everlasting torment he shall

endure. Suppose there were one to be executed, and he were to die some grievous and fearful death; well, it may be when the tormenter comes at first, he does but a little pain his hand, put his wrist to pain, ties his hands, and he cries out of the pain of his wrist. Alas! what is this? does he cry for this? What is this but a preparation for those dreadful torments that are now about to be executed upon him. So all men and women in the guilt of sin, when they have any affliction, sickness, or trouble, I say, so long as they be in that estate they may look upon it but as the girding of their hands with the cords. A little pain they be put to by the strictness of the cord that binds them, but this is but to the body, and so prepares them to be cast out into utter darkness, as you know the Phrase is, Take him that came without the wedding garment, and bind him hand and foot and cast him into utter darkness.

Thy afflictions be but as bindings of thee, they are but the beginnings of those everlasting pains thou art like to have: and that should make the least affliction of any ungodly man or woman in the world exceeding dreadful to them; now I feel pain, but what is this but the beginning of sorrows? I am now a sinking, but how far I shall sink, I do not know.

5. Again, All afflictions when they come in a way of a Cause for sin, they be sent to ripen men and women for destruction, and therefore they harden their hearts and make them often fly out against God. There is no affliction sent in a way of a Curse, but does ripen any man or woman for eternal misery. Oh consider this you that have been under great afflictions, it may be you are delivered from the pain, and you think yourselves safe: examine, how is it? are not your hearts more hard than before? are you not more greedy upon sin than before? know then that is a dangerous sign that that affliction was but sent to ripen you for destruction and eternal misery; though you be escaped for a time, yet they only were ripeners to hasten you to everlasting destruction. And in these things consists the Curse of sin; in all evils that befall us. This is the Third.

Fourthly, sin is the Evil of all Evils, For it is the shame of all evils; it is that which makes any affliction to be a shame to us: I remember before in the opening the nature of sin as it is against our own good, there I shewed, sin was a shame to the Soul; whether there be affliction or no; but now I am to shew you how sin puts shame into other evils, not only brings shame to our selves, but puts a shame upon the evils and afflictions that are or shall be upon us.

As thus, A Male factor is stigmatized, is branded; well, there is pain to his body in the branding, and then there is the shame that is in the brand that Goth along with the pain; and therefore it is, that it might be a Note of perpetual shame and reproach. So in afflictions, there is the pain of the affliction, and then there is the shame that is upon men through the affliction. Let men be branded, and if it be not for their sin, if it be for Righteousness, then their brands are honorable, let them be stigmatized never so much; let their Ears be cut off, and branded with an. S. or any other brand in the cheeks, or foreheads; if it be for Righteousness; this is their honor and glory. As the Apostle speaks in a triumphing way, I bear about with me the marks of the Lord Jesus: and he glories in it.

So for any man to be branded for Christ, he bears the marks of Jesus Christ, though there be pain, there is no shame. So in any affliction God sends, if there be no sin, there may be pain but no shame: but when God comes upon men for sin, and by the very affliction God does as it were point out the sin of man; Oh! then it is not only painful, but abundance of shame and confusion goes along with it. And therefore in that Text, [Jer. 24. 9.](#) God said, He would cast them out for a reproach, and a taunt, and a by-word. For a reproach as well as trouble. The shame of affliction comes from sin: This is the Fourth Thing.

Fifthly, The eternity of all evil comes, from sin: I remember I shewed before, how sin was a principle of eternal evil; but this is in another regard. I speak not of sin now, as than; that was, as it is in its own nature, sin it self was a principal evil, and brought an eternal

evil. But thus I say here, sin puts an Eternity upon that present evil thou dost suffer, if the guilt be not taken away.

No creatures but only the reasonable creatures, men and angels, be subject to any eternity of evil. What ever evil is upon any other creature it cannot have that denomination of eternity; but the evils upon a sinner may have a denomination of eternity upon them. For this, observe this one Note (though it be high) as in Grace that is in it self (I told you) an eternal good, and brought eternal good: But further, Grace is not only in it self a principle of eternal good, and brings eternal good, but Grace does make that very good that now we have, to have an eternity upon it. It doth not only procure that hereafter it shall have eternity, but makes our present good to be eternal, though it be conveyed in another way. As now, we have abundance of Comforts from creatures, and God's Ordinances; it is true, we shall not have our Comforts conveyed to us from creatures, and Ordinances, but those that have Grace shall have the same comforts that now they have from the creature, and the Ordinances, conveyed immediately from God, as from the fountain: that which thou now hast from Cisterns and Conduits of conveyance, thou shalt come to enjoy the same from God immediately, and really, another way. So that no man or woman in affliction (if gracious) need to be troubled for any thing. For this is a true maxim in Divinity, A Christian may have many Crosses, but no Losses. A Christian never lost any thing.

How can that be? A Christian receives good, in husband, and wife, and Children, and estate, and they have losses in these as well as others.

No, they be crossed for the present, but never any Christian had any loss: This we may (as a certain truth) assent to, never any godly man or woman that had sin pardoned, never had after that time, any loss. Grace (me thinks) should be very precious in your thoughts if this be true, if I can make this good; if I should come and tell you Mariners, or Merchant adventurers in dangerous Seas, well, I will

come and shew you what Course you shall take, and you shall never have loss more; you would think this good News, if it were not a fancy, and deceit, if you found it so, you would account your time well spent if you could but find this to be true, though you heard nothing but this. Certainly I can tell you a way where you shall never have loss in the world; the way of godliness. Get but sin once pardoned in Christ, and you shall never have any loss.

Suppose I had a Pipe that were laid into a fountain of water that brought water to me; well, afterward this pipe is stopped, and there comes no more water through this pipe, but though this pipe be stopped, yet if I come to enjoy the very fountain, I have no loss of Water, for I have it from the fountain, though the pipe be stopped yet I have the same water I had before.

So it is with a Christian that have any loss in the creature. For thus we are to know, all creatures be but as so many Pipes of conveyance of comfort, and good, from God the fountain of all good in the creature, and he is pleased with one kind of Pipe, to convey comfort from one creature, and from another another way, some have greater, and some smaller Pipes, as God shall minister in his wisdom and Providence to his Servants.

But now, one that is godly, though the poorest man or woman in the world, has an interest in God himself, the fountain of all good: And therefore if any Pipe be cut off and stopped, as perhaps such a time thou dowdiest loose a thousand pound, perhaps three or four thousand pound; there was three or four Pipes cut off, but still thou hats a God and an interest in him, and there all is made up. And there is this art in godliness, and the skill, that still thou may est come and enjoy that immediately from God, and suck that from the fountain, that thou did est from the Pipes. So that a Christian may loose much of his estate, or comfort in friends, so as he shall never receive it from them any more, but he Goth to God and enjoys it in God: So that that present good which he had here, he makes it all up in God.

Thus grace makes that good and comfort you have here now, an eternal good; only the conveyance is in another way, more immediately from God, and therefore the sweeter and the fuller.

So sin puts an eternity, in every evil; observe sin does not only deserve, that thou shouldst have eternal evil befall thee hereafter; but whatsoever evil thou hast now, sorrows, distresses, anguish, or troubles upon thee; sin will make that sorrow, and anguish, and distress, to be eternal: though not perhaps conveyed that way, by that channel, yet thou shalt have that to be immediately let out through God's wrath and Justice. All that evil that ever thou didst bear here from any creature; here perhaps thou hast a grievous disease; Oh! it does (it may be) extremely afflict, and torment thee; perhaps thou dies; the strength of that evil is gone: but that torment upon thee by the disease was nothing else but the wrath of God working through that channel; and let out through that; though now thou die, and the matter of the disease be gone, yet when thou comes to hell, there thou shalt meet with the same grievous pain; only in another way. That is, The wrath of God shall let out this evil immediately, through his wrath, which was mediately through the creature before, and now it is immediately from himself.

And this meditation rightly considered, is enough to bring down the proudest, stoutest sinner on the earth; to Consider how the Wrath of God is all that evil to a sinner that all the creatures in Heaven and Earth are able to convey, and much more.

And thus you have this opened how sin is the evil of all evils.

THE FIFTH PART OF THIS TREATISE.

CHAP. XLII.

Sin has a kind of Infiniteness in it:

Opened in Seven Particulars. First, Because nothing but an Infinite Power can overcome it. Secondly, sin has a kind of infiniteness, because it has an infinite desert in it, expressed in Three Particulars: 1 The desert of the loss of an infinite Good. 2 It deserves to put an infinite distance between God and thee. 3 It deserves infinite misery. Thirdly, sin has a kind of infinite Evil, because there is required an infinite Price to make an Atonement between God and Man. Fourthly, There is a kind of infinite Evil in sin, because we must hate it infinitely. Fifthly, sin is an infinite Evil, because it is the universal Cause of all Evil. Sixthly, The Scripture make use of Evil things, to set out the Evil of sin. Seventhly, There's an infiniteness in sin, because the Scripture set out sin, by sin it self.

A fifth general head that was Propounded in the beginning is this: sin has a kind of Infiniteness of Evil in it.

It is true, we must acknowledge that nothing but God can be properly said to be infinite: There is not an infiniteness in a strict sense in sin, for then certainly all the Mercy of God, and all the Power of God, could never overcome it, if properly and absolutely sin had an infiniteness in it; therefore I do not say it is properly infinite. Well, but there is a kind of infiniteness, it comes exceeding near to infiniteness (if we may so speak, though it is somewhat improper to say it comes near, but we must speak so as we can to our own apprehensions, you shall see in the opening what I mean) As thus, There is a kind of infiniteness of evil in sin beyond all bounds.

First, Because there is nothing but infinite power can overcome it. Take the least sin that any man or woman lies under the power of; nothing but the infinite power of God can overcome that sin: and this is the reason that many that have had many convictions of conscience of the evil of sin, many resolutions against sin, many

vows and covenants, and promises they have made against sin: Oh when they are sick, now they see the evil of sin, now they promise if God will restore them▪ they will never do the like; and they speak from their hearts, they do not only dally, but they do verily think they will never come in company more, and commit sin more because it is so evil: but when they be well, they be under the power of sin as before, and al their resolutions and experiences, and all their own strength and power, and all the means they have, are nothing; though sin be opened to be never so vile, and they be convinced thereof, yet al comes to nothing. Certainly there is more dreadful evil in sin than we be aware of; and all the pleasure and profit we have by sin can never countervail that evil that is in sin: and this they see, and therefore promise and hope they shall never commit such sins again.

Perhaps there has been such thoughts in your hearts, may be God has had some beginnings to come in by his Power into your souls: this is the way of God's coming in to the hearts of men and women, when he comes to convince and give them such resolutions. But know, all thy resolutions cannot overcome sin; perhaps you may forbear for the present, the acts of sin a while may be restrained; but nothing but the infinite Power of an infinite God can overcome any one sin, any one lust, sin shall not have Dominion over you, ROM. 6. 14. for you are not under the Law, but under Grace, said the Holy Ghost.

As if he had said, if you be not now under the Grace of the Gospel, in which the infinite Power of God comes upon the soul to deliver them from the Dominion of sin, sin would for ever have Dominion over you; but sin shall not have Dominion over you, because you be not under the Law, but under Grace: It is the Grace of the Gospel through which this infinite Power of God comes upon your hearts, that keeps sin from having Dominion over you. This is the first, there is a kind of Infiniteness in it, because nothing but the infinite Power of God can overcome it.

Secondly, There is a kind of Infiniteness in it, Because it has an infinite desert, it does deserve that which is infinite: There is an infinite desert in it, therefore a kind of infiniteness in it. As thus, the infinite desert of sin, may be set out in these three Particulars:

1 The desert of the loss of an infinite Good, all the good in God: By every sin thou dost deserve to be deprived of that good there is in God; that desert comes upon thee, to lose all the good there is in the infinite God, not in this or that particular good, but in the Infinite God, and all the good in him.

2 Every sin does make an infinite breach between God and you; not only you do deserve to lose all the good in God, but it puts an infinite distance between God and thee. Abraham could say to Dives when Lazarus was in his bosom, there is a great gulf between you and us: There is a great gulf between the sinner, and those that are godly; but what a gulf is there between God himself and a sinner? If there be such a gulf between Abraham and Dives, surely a greater gulf between God himself, and a sinner.

3 The desert of sin is Infinite, In regard of the Infiniteness of misery, and pain, and tortures that sin deserves, which because they cannot possibly be infinite in degree, for it is impossible for a finite creature to bear any one moment, pains infinite in degree: But because it deserves infinite torment, it must therefore be infinite in time, because it cannot be infinite in degree: and so it is infinite this way, in duration, because it cannot be infinite in degree: thus sin is infinite. Certainly that which makes such an infinite loss, and such an infinite breach, and brings such infinite tortures; this must be an infinite evil in a kind.

Thirdly, sin is a kind of infinite evil, Because there is required an infinite price to make an atonement: nothing can make an atonement between God and a sinner, but an infinite price paid. You may think when you have sinned, it may quickly be made up again: Every Fool can sin, can be drunk, be unclean, and wicked; but when

you have sinned, how will you get it away? All the Angels in Heaven, and Men in the world cannot do it; all the creatures in Heaven and Earth cannot get away one sin.

You let out your thoughts idly; take the guilt of one sin, of an idle thought, I say, it is beyond the power of all the Angels in Heaven, and creatures in the world to get away that sin: it must be an infinite price; there must be more done for to get away the guilt of this sin, than if God should say, here is a poor creature has sinned, and is guilty, I will make ten thousand worlds for his or her sake, and they shall be all given that I may manifest my mercy towards them: Now if God do but deliver thee from one sin, he does more for thee, than if thou shouldst hear him speak from Heaven, and say, he would do all that for thee.

For you know what the Apostle said, 1 Pet. 1. 18. For as much as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, as Silver and Gold from your vain Conversation, received by tradition from your Fathers, but with the precious Blood of Jesus Christ as of a Lamb without spot or blemish▪ not with gold and silver. If it were gold and silver, all the gold and silver in the world would not redeem one; but it was with an infinite price with which you were redeemed: and mark, from your vain Conversation; he does not say, your vain wicked, notorious idolatry, but vain Conversation; yea, and that vain Conversation which you might have some plea for, received from the tradition of your fathers: you will keep your old Customs you received from your Fathers, received a great while ago; you cry out of new things, new kind of ways, now I am sure I have lived this thirty, or this forty years, and I never knew such things, and heard of such things, and so you will rest on the Traditions of your Fore fathers.

Mark what the Scripture said, speaking of those that were delivered from their vain conversation, and the vanities received by Tradition; these were redeemed by the precious Blood of Jesus Christ, not with Gold and Silver: though you stick to them as being such as you

received from your Fathers, yet know all the world cannot deliver you from the guilt of one of these vain Conversations.

If you knew all you would see there were so much evil in one sin, as required a price to ransom you from it• of more worth than Heaven and Earth, yea, than ten thousand Heavens and Earths: there must be a price laid down of infinite worth: And observe this before you go away; there may be a price laid down to ransom a captive, and this price may note not so much the greatness of the deliverance, as the worth of the person for whom this price is laid down; because the person is worthy, not from the miserableness of the bondage, but the greatness of the person: But it is not so here, the reason of the greatness of the price for your ransom, is not from the worthiness of the person, we be poor, vile, dirt, and dross, and filthy before God: what if you were all buried to all eternity, what great matter were it? But God has paid a great price to note the greatness of your misery, and evil you have brought upon yourselves by reason of sin, and therefore this is the price of our ransom. This is the third thing wherein the infiniteness of sin appears.

A Fourth thing to discover a kind of infiniteness of evil in sin is this, That sin, it is so evil, that let there be never so much hatred against it in thy soul, let there be as much hatred against it as possibly can be; yet there is enough evil in sin to raise this hatred higher and higher, if it were possible to an infinite hatred: therefore there is a kind of infiniteness in it.

If sin were but a mere finite Evil, then there might be some bounds and limits set to the hatred of our sin; but that cannot be, there can be no bounds nor limits set to the hatred of our sin, but we are to hate it more and more still, and if we could, grow to an infinite hatred: therefore there must be some kind of infinite Evil in it.

Other things be not so; we may set bounds to our hatred in other things: but when it comes to sin, there is no limits to be set to the hatred of it.

As Brethren thus, It does note the infiniteness of goodness that there is in God, why? Because we are to love God, and our love to God must be without any bounds at all: we love him thus much, and still our love is to go further, and higher and higher, and if possible to raise our love to be infinite, because he is an infinite good who is the object of our loves.

So hatred on the other side; we are to hate sin, we are to hate it more and more, and still grow up in hatred, and never set bounds to our hatred: why does not this as well argue a kind of infiniteness in sin?

And here then Brethren by the way you may have a note of your true love to God, and true hatred against sin, whether it be right or no: as now, If you will know if you love God truly, then you set no bounds to your love, not only to your love to him, but to your love to his ways, and your love to Grace, and Christ, and the like, you set no bounds.

That man or woman that would be Religious but so far, and said, why will you be so strict, and so hot? and sets bounds to the working of their hearts in Religious ways; let such men and women know, their Religion is in vain, it is but merely a Natural one.

I remember a Speech Seneca a Heathen has, though he applies it another way, yet he makes it appear, he had some understanding of this Truth, said he, Would you know when desires be Natural, and when not Natural? If they be Natural, then they be in bounds, and you set limits to them; but when they break bounds, then they be no more Natural.

But he applies it to sinful desires (for he knew no better than desires at the highest, as they had some Naturalness in them) and said he, speaking of sinful desires so long as you keep your desires in certain bounds, they be Natural and good, but when once you let them out beyond bounds, they be no more Natural. We may very

well apply it to speak of the Work of Nature, and the Work of Grace: Would you know whether the ground of your desires, or work, be Natural, or Supernatural? You may know them by this, If you propound limits, thus far you will go; this certainly is a Natural work: But when the heart lets out it self to God without any limits or bounds; this is a Supernatural work.

So you dislike sin, and Oh you would not commit it; but this is the Question, Whether your dislike or hatred be Natural or Supernatural? If Natural, then there be some limits and bounds you propound, that is, you will not commit such gross sins, and live in such open sins; and upon such and such grounds, you will abstain from such and such sins: But if there be a Supernatural work, your hearts are set against all sins with a kind of infiniteness, without any bounds or terms, you will set no bounds to your hatred of any sin.

That man or woman that so hates sin, as to set no bounds at all unto their hatred, and will admit it upon no terms; this is a Supernatural hatred. Many are against sin Naturally; but in that true hatred, it is so boundless, that there must be no bounds set to your hatred: it evidently shews sin to have a kind of infiniteness of evil in it.

Fifthly, sin has a kind of infiniteness in it in that it is the universal Cause of all Evil: As God appears to be an infinite good, because he is the universal cause of all good; this does much set out the infiniteness of God's goodness in that he is the universal cause of all good So it does set out the infiniteness of sin, in that sin is the universal cause of all evil, all evils flow from it. This is the Fifth Thing.

Sixthly, There is an infiniteness of Evil in sin; it appeareth thus, That as the infiniteness of good in God is shadowed out unto us by all good things, and in as much as we and the Scripture makes use of all good things to shadow out the goodness of God, this manifests an infiniteness of good in him: So in as much as the Scripture

makes use of all kind of Evil things, only to set and shadow out the evil in sin; this makes it appear there is a kind of infiniteness of Evil in it: As thus, That all those creatures, Vipers, Serpents, Dogs, Cockatrices, Dragons, Wolves: all deadly creatures the Scripture makes use of but to shadow out the evil in sin. As if the Holy Ghost should say, do you see any evil in such creatures that you account the worst: put them all together, and that is in sin and more. So take all kinds of uncleanness, the vomit of a dog menstruous cloths, all this does but shadow out the evil in sin. Look at sicknesses, leprosy, plague, and death it self, and darkness, any hideous evil, all these do but shadow out the evil of sin. We might mention many more to shew you the evil of sin. And in that the Scripture makes use of so many evil things to shew the evil of sin. This shews sin has a kind of infiniteness in it.

Seventhly, As God's infinite goodness is set out thus, that he is his own Happiness and Blessedness; in this God does appear to be infinitely good, because he is his own good and happiness, there is no higher good to be the goodness of God; no higher blessedness to be the blessedness of God but himself; because he is infinitely good and blessed.

So the Scripture sets out to us the Evil of sin by it self, because there is no greater evil to set sin out by, but by it self: Therefore this shews there is a kind of infiniteness of evil in sin. And therefore you have that of [Rom. 7. 13](#). Was that then that was good made death to me? God forbid, but sin that it might appear sin working death in me by that which was good: that sin by the Commandment might become EXCEEDING sinful. He does not say that sin might appear to be Exceeding miserable: but that it might become Exceeding sinful: So that the sinfulness of sin is that which sets out the evil of sin more than any other thing does. It was the Speech of the Heathen Seneca, It is the punishment of sin, to have sin: So it is the reward of Virtues to have them. Godliness in it self is the Excellency of a man; and sin in it self is the misery of a man: and this is a Proof of this, That there is a kind of infiniteness of evil in sin.

Now then by all these Seven Discoveries of the evil in sin, having a kind of infiniteness in it, this one thing comes fully and powerfully from them; That for to fall into sin again, and for to be prevailed withal by any such temptation as this, Oh it is no great matter, if I do no worse than this, I hope it is well, and others do worse.

I say, to yield again to the commission of any sin upon such a temptation, is a great wickedness. What dost thou make any comparison in sin, and use any such words, when thou hast heard it, or read it proved to thee, that sin has a kind of infiniteness of evil in it.

Nay, which I thought to have finished here, but cannot now come to it, but shall in the next chapter shew the reference sin has to the Devil; this shews the greatness of sin above all Evils: sin is that which makes the Soul conformable to the Devil. afflictions does not, they make the soul conformable to Jesus Christ.

I suppose you know that place, [Phil. 3. 10.](#) mark there the difference between sin and affliction, Paul there accounted all things dung and dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ: and what more? That he might be found in him, and that he might know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings being made conformable unto his death.

He did desire above all things to have the fellowship of his sufferings, and to be conformable to his death: he accounts all the world as dung and dross to be conformable to Christ by afflictions, or sufferings. It is true, it may be many account all the world to be nothing, to be conformable to Christ in Glory in Heaven. But here is the work of Grace (and I beseech you observe this in the conclusion, and carry it away) That a gracious heart accounts all the world dung and dross to be conformable to Jesus Christ in his sufferings; there is so much excellency and glory in the Sufferings of Jesus Christ.

Now you see the wide difference between afflictions and sin: sin makes a man conformable to the Devil; afflictions make a man conformable to Jesus Christ.

I would have shewed wherein, in several Particulars, how sin makes us conformable to the Devil: I will but name this one now, and that which might be enough to make every soul out of love with sin, in that by sin thou joinest with the Devil, and conspirest with the Devil against God himself. There is no creature that is against God, but Men and Devils.

The Devil was God's first Enemy, and now man comes in and conspires with the Devil. Now we account it a great evil if you had a Child; and if there were but one Traitor in the Common wealth, and you hear, Oh my Child is joined with this Traitor, and conspires against me and the State.

Before sinful Man, there was but one sort of sinful creatures in the world, the Devils: now by sin, Man comes in, and joins in conspiracy against the blessed God; and so one Generation after another: perhaps the Father comes and conspires with the Devil, and then the Child; and so along in a Succession. And this should come near our hearts to humble us for our sins and wickedness, that in this we be those that of all creatures that ever God has made, conspire with the Devil against the blessed God, the Fountain of all Good.

THE SIXTH PART OF THIS TREATISE.

CHAP. XLIII.

**Sin makes a man conformable to the
Devil,**

Opened in Six Particulars. First, sin is of the same Nature with the Devil. Secondly, sin is from the Devil. Thirdly, sin is a furtherance of the Devils Kingdom in the world: For 1 By sin we oppose Christ's destroying the Devils Kingdom in the world. 2 By sin thou opposeth thy prayers when thou prayest, Thy Kingdom come. 3 By going on in a way of sin, thou becomest guilty of all the sin in the world. Fourthly, sinning is a fulfilling the will of the Devil. Fifthly, sin sells the Soul to the Devil. Sixthly, sin, it turns the Soul into a Devil.

The Sixth and Last Demonstration of the Evil of sin; It is from that reference sin has to the Devil.

The Scripture speaks of afflictions, that they make us conformable to Christ; but sin makes us conformable to the Devil. There are Six things to be opened about this: I have mentioned the First, which was this, That sin was of the same Nature with the Devil: every sin has the same kind of Malignity in it, that the Devil has. But,

Secondly, All sin, it is from the Devil, either Originally, or at least by way of a Cause, helping it forward: sin is the work of the Devil, not only a joining with him, but his work: therefore Christ is said to come to dissolve the works of the Devil: sin is from the Devil, therefore it is said in 1 John, 3. 8. He that commits sin is of the Devil, for the Devil sinneth from the beginning; and to this purpose the Son of man was manifest, that he might destroy the works of the Devil.

He that commits sin is of the Devil, it comes from the Devil. And so John, 8. 44. Brethren (these things which I speak concerning the reference sin has to the Devil, though they may seem hard and harsh, yet) it is to be observed, none speaks so much of sins coming from the Devil as John, who was of the most loving, sweet Nature of any of the Disciples; and yet when he comes to speak of sin, he speaks of it in the most harsh terms that possibly can be; so that it comes not from harshness, but may stand with a loving and sweet Nature to speak of sin in the harshest terms that we can do: for

John the most loving, and beloved Disciple of Christ, so full of love; and yet none spoke so harshly of sin, especially in its reference it has to the Devil, as he said here, [Joh. 8. 44](#). You are of the Devil, and his lust you will do.

Thus sin, the lusts of sin come from the Devil, and it makes a man or a woman to be the Child of the Devil: So the Scripture is clear it comes from him Originally; all sin that is in you, is Originally the Spawn of the very Devil himself in your souls; and originally it comes from him: as all sin originally comes from his temptations and suggestions, so also the Devil helps forward and furthers all sin that is in your souls, this is the evil of it.

But here understand this aright, The Devil is not so the cause of all sin, as God is the cause of all Grace, not so: It is true, the Devil has a hand in every sin, but not such a hand in sin, as God has in Grace; for God has such a hand in the work of Grace, that he does not only give a principle of Grace, but all the operation of Grace is so from him, as it would never stir but by him, he gives the will to work and do all; the will and the deed are from him: But all sin is not so from the Devil, though originally it is, and the Devil puts it on; yet we are to know, though the Devil now should tempt no more, yet there is enough in the hearts of men and women to sin against God all manner of sin, even from their own innate corruption that now is in them; if the Devil were destroyed, sin would not be destroyed.

In grace there is no power to work but by God's working together with it; but in sin there is a power to work without the Devil's working: though the Devil is forward enough to work with our corruption, yet I say there is corruption enough in our hearts for to work al kind of sin, though the Devil should not tempt us any more; therefore we must not lay all upon the Devil, as many do; when they fall into any wickedness, they will say, this is the Devil, and lay all the fault upon the Devil, and so think to take it off from themselves by laying it upon the Devil: No, know, though the Devil labors to further it what he can, yet there is such corruption in you,

that it would stream forth from you though the Devil stir it not at all: therefore charge your own hearts as well as the Devil.

In the work of Grace, we must give all the glory to God; but in the work of sin, we cannot allot all the fault to the Devil; we are not to take any of the glory of the work of Grace to our selves, but we are to take a great part, yea, sometimes the greatest part of sin to our selves: but however the Devil is the cause of sin originally, and helps forward to it.

Thirdly, All sin is the furtherance of the Kingdom of the Devil in the world. You know that the Scripture said, that the Devil is the Prince that rules in the Air, and is called the God of this world, because he rules in the Children of disobedience. There is a Kingdom of the Devil set up by sin in the world, and maintained by sin in the world; it has a succession in the world by sin: So that all sinners that continue in ways of sin, they do what in them lies to uphold the Kingdom of the Devil in the world, and the Rule of the Devil in the world.

1 Therefore men in sin, are exceeding opposite to the End of Christ's coming in the world: for it is Christ's End in coming into the world to dissolve the Kingdom of the Devil, as you had it before in 1 John, 3. 8. It is an especial End why Christ came into the world, for to bring down the Kingdom of the Devil, and yet thou by sinning upholdest the Kingdom of the Devil; so thou dost what in thee lies to oppose and resist the very End of Christ's coming into the world.

There is very much in this consideration to humble the hearts of all wicked men for sin; thou hast lived in a course of sin it may be many years; now Brethren know, the Lord charges thee with this, this day, That all this time that thou hast lived in a course of sin, thou hast done what in thee lies to oppose the End of Christ's coming into the world.

That if thou couldest thou wouldst hinder the end of the death of Christ, and of all that he has done: for the especial end why Christ is come into the world, it is to dissolve the work of the Devil; and thou keepest up the work of the Devil.

2 Again, it follows hence, That thou dost directly contradict thy own Prayers: When thou prayest, Thy Kingdom come, in the Lords Prayer, thou prayest there that the Kingdom of Christ might come: but in every way of sin that thou takest liberty in, thou dost oppose the Kingdom of Christ: How dost thou take the Name of God in vain, and mock God in this Prayer? Every wicked man and woman in the world mocks God in praying the Lords Prayer, when they say Thy Kingdom come, and yet live in such ways as upholds the Kingdom of the Devil, instead of the Kingdom of Christ.

3 Yea further, this follows, That by going on in ways of sin, thou comest to be guilty, and standest charged for all the sins that ever were committed in the world: This may seem to be a hard thing, to charge any man or woman that now lives in ways of sin, that by that sin of thine that thou now livest in, thou comest to be guilty of all the sins that ever was done in the world, since the beginning of the world. I undertake to make that good thus.

You know the Scripture chargeth those that persecuted the Prophets, as guilty of all the persecution of the Prophets that ever were, all the blood that was shed from Abel to Zacharias shall come upon this Generation, said Christ; why so? why should all the blood shed from Abel to that time, come upon that Generation? The Reason is this, Because they continued the succession of that sin of persecution of the Prophets, that as there was a persecution of the Prophets before, so they go on and uphold this succession of that sin.

Now by the holding of the succession of a way of sin, we come to be guilty of all that sin that went before.

As for example, suppose there should be treason against a King or State, by some vile treasonable act; now the Father commits the first act, the Son afterward goeth on in the same way, and his Children come after him, and goeth on in the same way, and their Children after them: now I say, the Children, and the Grand-children, and the great Grand-children, are guilty of the first treasonable act that was committed; why? Because they uphold the succession of the treasonous act.

So now, sin that was in the beginning of the world, was to bring in the Kingdom of Satan; and the next Generation upheld it, and the next upheld the same, and the next Generation went on the same way; so that every Generation is not only guilty of those particular sins which they commit; but they be guilty of all that went before, because they uphold the succession of the Kingdom of the Devil, and the opposition of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

As for instance, Take a scorner of Religion, that is one sin (for we cannot open things but by instancing in particulars) I say, take a scorner of Religion, know thou art not guilty of these acts of scorning only in thy self, but art guilty of all the scorning of Godliness since the beginning of the world; why? Because thou holdest a succession of that way of scorning of Religion. So a Blasphemer may be said to be guilty of all the blasphemies in the world; why? Because he upholds the succession of that way of sinning against God; and so opposing the Kingdom of Christ, and upholding the Kingdom of the Devil. This is the third thing, sin is the upholding of the Kingdom of the Devil in the world.

Fourthly, A fourth thing is this, That sin, it is a fulfilling of the will of the Devil: That is another distinct consideration, and you shall see that in the opening of it, it will be of distinct use to you: I say, it is a fulfilling the will of the Devil; that place is very famous for that in the 2 Tim. 2. 26. That they may recover themselves out of the snare of the Devil, who are taken captive of him at his WILL: There wicked men be taken captive by the Devil at his will, or to do his

will, so you may read it: some they be ensnared by Satan to do his will, his lusts you do, as Christ speaks: you may think you do your own will in sinning, but certainly you do the will of the Devil as well as your own.

As for instance, that of passion and anger Ephes. 4. 26. Be angry, but sin not, let not the Sun go down upon your wrath; neither give place to the Devil: you think you give place to your own passion, but you give place to the Devil, and fulfil the will of the Devil: You come by sin to do the Devils drudgery and slavery; you do his work he sets you about, and his will you fulfil. Now for such a noble creature as man is, to come to be a slave of the Devil, that is the lowest now of all creatures; it must needs be a very dreadful thing; it is an evil to be in slavery to any thing vile or base.

I remember I have read a story of one Gunno, King of the Danes, that having overcome a people, he set a dog over them to be their Governor; that is thus, he would have all Commands to go out under the name of the Dog, and they should be under the Government of the Dog; this he did in disdain and indignation against those people he overcame. But now, as he would shew the baseness of that people that he designed to be under a dog; much more debasement is it for an immortal Soul to be under the command of the Devil, as all wicked men are under the command of the Devil himself.

Thou wilt not fulfil the will of God when it is opened to thee out of his Word and will, what thou oughtest to do; thou standest out against the will of God: But now you that think it such a bondage to be obedient to the will of God, you be brought under a worse bondage, you are fain to be obedient to the will of the Devil. And certainly those men and women that think they be at most liberty when they be free from obedience to the will of God; by that liberty they come to be under bondage, under slavery to the Devil.

All wicked men that think much to obey God, they must be obedient one way or other; we must be all servants, and obedient either to the will of God, or the Devil: which is best then? Wicked men think it a brave life that they may have their own will; true, if they might have their own will, they might think it a brave life: but know, you have rather the will of the devil than your own, in that you do his will, you fulfil the will of the devil.

To be in slavery, not only to the devil, but to any man, is a great evil, to be at the will of man, yea, to be at the will of a good man is an evil: I should be loth to live in any such commonwealth, as that I should be under the will of man in it, any further than might be revealed and bounded by some set Law. The difference between a slave and a subject is this, A slave is such a one as lives under arbitrary government, that is the WILL of such as are in authority, is their law, and they are ruled by no other law but by the will of such as govern them, there is no law set, to know when they shall offend, and when not; but when their rulers say, this is an offence, that his will is crossed, that is an offence, and they be therefore punished.

But now subjects, they be bound to no obedience to any man, any further than some set law does require their obedience; that is a subject, and that is the very difference between a slave and a subject. If men in authority should command any thing, though good (I mean only indifferent) yet I am not bound in conscience to obey at al, because they command, except it be by a Law, except they command it by a Law: if he command it merely as his will, and only say, I will, here is no tie upon the conscience.

It is ordinary for people to think, if men in Authority command, they will have such a thing done, Oh say they, authority commands.

We deny it, authority commands nothing but what it commands by a law; and then we are bound to obey, or to suffer, if it be a law once: but if it be not a Law, though it should be the will of men in

authority, it does not bind us at all, till it come to be a Law, any further than there is equity it self in the thing, in its own nature: for then does a people come to be in slavery when they come to be subject to the will of men without a law.

Now brethren thus; If it be a slavery, and a great evil to be subject to men, though good men, subject to their will, and nothing else, without law; then what an evil is it to be in subjection and slavery to the will of the devil? merely at his will? and yet every wicked man is so.

We should account it a very sore thing if we should come under arbitrary government, to be subject to the will of men. Now so long as thou remainest under the power of sin, thou remained under the government of the devil himself; this is a sorer evil than affliction.

A man were better live in any country, though not so fruitful as England, and suffer hardship in his Estate, so he live like a free man, than to live here, or in any other fruitful country, and live under arbitrary government. This we hope for, not to be under the wills of men, but the Laws made by them. Then it were better to endure hardship and any affliction, than bear this, to be at the will of the Devil, and fulfil his will.

Fifthly, In reference to the devil, sin has this evil in it, if it grows to a height, itself the soul to the Devil: As with Ahab, 1 Kings, 21. 20. when Elijah met Ahab, Hast thou found me, O my Enemy? (said Ahab) And he answered, I have found thee, because thou hast SOLD thy self to work evil in the sight of the Lord.

Now if he sell himself, he must sell himself to some body, to somewhat, we cannot sell a thing but we must sell it to some body, or to somewhat; now to what must Ahab sell himself? Certainly, to no body but to the devil; he sold himself to work iniquity and wickedness, and wickedness when it comes to the height, is a selling of our selves to the very devil himself.

We cry out of those poor, miserable creatures that sell themselves to the devil, we say, Oh how be they deluded and besotted that sell themselves to the devil? Certainly every wicked man and woman in the world, when sin groweth to the height sell themselves to the devil.

Sixthly and lastly, sin when it grows to a height, it does turn the Soul into a Devil; it makes men and women to become Devils, when it grows once to a height: The Scripture is very clear in that; you know what is said concerning Judas, John, 6. 70. Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a Devil? and so ordinarily the Scripture speaks in this kind of phrase, Revel. 2. 10. Fear none of these things you shall suffer, behold the Devil shall cast some of you into prison: why? is the Devil come to be a Pursevant, or an Officer, or to give Warrants to cast into prison? No, but it is spoken of wicked Persecutors that the Devil sets on work, they be called by the name of the Devil.

Sin when it comes to a height, it makes the sinners to be such, that they are pronounced to be Devils: the Devil shall cast some of you into prison; and one of you is a Devil: that is a strange metamorphosis.

We read of strange Fictions, of some creatures turned into other creatures; but this, for the creature to be turned into a Devil, is the strangest metamorphosis that can be.

Brethren, what made the Devil a Devil? they were once glorious Angels, more glorious creatures than men and women, but what is it that should make them devils now? Nothing but sin; it is sin that has made Angels to be Devils: and therefore do not so much wonder that sin should make men and women to be devils Incarnate. Do not wonder at the phrase of Scripture, seeing Angels by sin, yea, the sin that the Angels did commit, did presently turn them into devils,

Therefore wonder not, that the continuing the acts of sin, when it groweth to the height, should turn men and women into devils.

These be the Six Particulars in this Head, of sins Reference to the Devil. 1 It is of the same Nature with the devil, joins with him against God. 2 It is the work of the devil, that is, he is the Original, and helping Cause of it. 3 It furthers the Kingdom of the devil. 4 It fulfils the will of the devil. 5 When it grows to a height it sells the creature to the devil. 6 It turns them into devils. These be the Six Particulars of the evil of sin in the Reference it has to the Devil.

From these Six, follow these notable Corollaries and Consequences, to shew the dreadful Evil in sin beyond all affliction.

Corollaries and Consequences from all the former Particulars.

CHAP. XLIV.

The First Corollary. Its Worse for a Man to be Sinful, than to be Turned into a Beast.

First, Hence then it is worse for a man to be sinful and wicked, than if he were turned into a beast.

It is worse to be like the Devil to fulfil his will, to be a servant to him, to be turned into a devil, than to be turned into a beast. And yet we should account it a great misery if God should put any one under such a punishment to turn your bodies into beasts. I remember I have read out of Lactantius of a place he quotes out of Tully, Who would not rather die (said he) than have his body, the body of a

man, turned into the shape of a beast, though he should retain the mind of a man, under this condition? As if God by his power should turn the fashion of a mans body, to be just like a Dog or a Swine, and yet he should have the mind of a man the soul should be kept within such a body, of such a forme, of a dog or a swine, and he should go up and down in the world as a dog or a swine, with the mind of a man.

Now this Heathen said, A man had rather die than be so; then how great an evil (said he) is it for a man to have the soul of a man turned into the fashion of a beast, though his body continue still in the form of a man, this a heathen could say.

By this it appeareth, Though we see not God work such miracles, as to turn the bodies of men and women, by his judgements, into the fashion of swine, or dogs, or such creatures as he might do if he pleased; but this we see ordinary that the souls of men and women, be turned just into the very fashion and shape (as I may so speak) of the sensitive souls of bruit beasts; as a drunkard, or a glutton, his soul is just like to the sensitive soul of the swine. And those that do rail against Religion, their souls be turned just like the sensitive soul of a barking dog, and they do bark like (nay, a great deal worse than) a dog. And those that are wickedly subtile, they are like to Foxes. And the Scripture speaks of men cruel, like to Wolves: their sins do turn their souls to be like the very spirit and sensitive souls of the bruit beasts. So that they are in a worse condition than if their bodies were turned into the shape of bruit beasts. But when their souls be turned to be like the Devil, this is worse a great deal than if they were like bruit beasts. This is the First.

CHAP. XLV.

The Second Corollary. Its worse to be sinful, than to be Afflicted with Temptation from the Devil.

Secondly, From the Reference sin has to the Devil, it follows, That for any man or woman to be wicked, it is worse a great deal than to have the greatest trouble and affliction by any temptation from the Devil.

There be many men and women exceedingly pestered with hideous and horrible temptations by the Devil, and so troubled with them that they be even weary of their lives, and know not what to do. Many send up Papers to the Minister in Public, desiring to be prayed for, because of that sore affliction upon them, those dreadful temptations of the devil; wheresoever they go, wheresoever they be, whatsoever they be adoin, when a hearing, a reading, and if they go to prayer, still hideous temptations of the devil comes upon them, and this wearies their lives: They had rather endure any misery in the world.

I dare appeal to you that be troubled with hideous temptations of the devil, which dog, and follow you; had you not rather endure loss of estate, sickness, poverty, and shame, and disgrace, rather than have these hideous temptations follow you? Oh you should have many quickly make their choice, rather let any thing befall me than have such hideous temptations pursue & pester me.

Now if such hideous temptations, be a greater evil in your account than all afflictions that can befall your body; than much more evil are your sins than all afflictions; for sin has greater Reference unto the devil than temptations, and make you more like the devil than temptations do: for temptations may be no other but such as did befall the Son of God himself.

Christ was pestered with temptations, hideous temptations, temptations to deny God, and to tempt God, and to worship the devil himself: As hideous temptations befell Christ as could befall any one, yet the Son of God, beloved of God, therefore your temptations are no other, no greater than might befall Christ, and therefore not so great evils as sin. They make you not so like the devil as sin; if temptations come from the Devil, if not entertained, though they be afflictions, yet not sin. Now in that sin has such reference to the devil it appeareth that sin is worse than all the Annoyance you can have by any temptation.

CHAP. XLVI.

The Third Corollary. Its Worse to be under sin, than to be haunted by the Devil.

Thirdly, Hence it follows, That sin is worse than to be continually in the presence of the Devil.

It is worse for a man or woman to be under the power of any sin, than to be continually haunted by devils, and to have the sight of devils before their eyes, and be in company with them. If God should lay such a judgment upon a man or woman, that wheresoever they should be, they should see devils before them; to be under the power of any one sin is worse than if God should lay such a judgment upon thee.

Many be mightily terrified in the dark, Oh! there is the devil in the room, and Oh! he comes to them, and there be apparitions of devils, this they be troubled with; Oh! these men and women haunted by devils, and houses haunted by devils, this is a miserable condition.

Now art thou haunted by any wicked lust and sin, certainly thou art in a worse condition than any man or woman haunted by devils, or house haunted by the devil. Is there any house in your parish where there is Blaspheming, and Oaths, and railing at goodness, and Sabbath breaking, and such things? this house is worse than any house haunted by devils: For sin is worse a great deal, than the mere presence of the devil.

I remember I have read of a tyrant, one Maxensius in Hetrusia, he invented this torment to put men to death, he would have a dead mans Carcass tied about their bodies and so let them go wheresoever he would, but he still carried the dead Carcass about him, and at length the stench put them to death: this was his tyranny.

If you should have a dead man or woman tied about your bodies; may be the face of a dead man is hideous to you, but if they should be tied about you, so that when you lie in bed, and when you rise, when you sit at meat, it should be always with you, and you should endure the stink and putrefaction; what a sore evil would this be?

Now if in the presence of a dead Carcass there is so much evil, than in the presence of the devil there is much more. Now sin, any one sin, tied close to your hearts, that you carry about with you, wheresoever you go; know there is in that a greater evil upon you, than if a dead Carcass should be tied to you; yea, than if the devil should haunt you wheresoever you go: because the presence of the devil, is not so much, as turning of the souls of men and women into the nature of the devil; and making the Souls of men and women so like to him.

CHAP. XLVII.

The Fourth Corollary. Its worse to be given up to any way of sin, than to be given up to the Devil:

Quest. How the Delivering up to Satan, can be for the saving the Soul?

A Fourth Corollary hence is this, That for any man or woman to be left to one sin, it is worse than to be given up to the Devil. I say, it is a greater evil, a greater judgement for any man or woman to be left to any way of sin, than to be given up to Satan: is thy soul given up to the power of any one sin? I dare here as I stand in the presence of God, To speak the truths of God, I dare avow it; you are in a worse condition than if you should be given up to the devil.

I make that good thus, In Scripture, 1 Cor 5. 5. we have an example of one that was given up to the Devil, and that in a right way, there is an Incestuous person that committed that horrible wickedness, not named among the Gentiles, that had his fathers wife and committed Incest with her: the Apostle commands him to be delivered to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus: He was delivered to Satan; but for the destruction of the flesh; but to the end that he might have his Spirit saved in the day of the Lord Jesus: So that the delivering up to Satan was a means appointed by God to save his soul.

But to deliver up any one to the power of sin, is no means to save his soul, that is a means to damn the soul, and not to save it. So then, you see the reason grounded clearly upon Scripture, That it is worse to be delivered up unto any sin than to be delivered to the Devil; for he that was delivered to Satan, it was for the saving of the soul; but he that is delivered to sin, it is for the damning of his soul. This requires a little opening.

Quest. You will say, How can the delivering up to Satan be for the saving of the soul?

Answ. It will be needful for clearing of this, to tell you what this delivering up to Satan was; and the truth is, this delivering up to Satan, or excommunication from the Church, this was a most dreadful thing when done in a right way; it was done when the Church was gathered together by the power of Jesus Christ: As certainly where there are a company of Saints, that at least outwardly so appear; a Church, that in a solemn manner is gathered together, through the power of Jesus Christ, having their Elder going before them the Officer of the Church.

When they in a solemn manner, in the power of Christ, shall cast out any one deservedly from Church Communion; this is a delivering a man or woman to Satan (this is another manner of business than ordinarily we were wont to have, by the Ordinary, or Commisary, and Dean, in the Prelates Courts; certainly they were but wooden Daggers in comparison of this dreadful Sword, to cut off from the Communion of the Church).

It was when the Church was Assembled, not the Commissary and Officers, but when the Church was gathered together, to cut such a one from the Church of Christ, for some vile act; not for not paying of their Fees, or the like, these things only scared people; but if this Censure of Excommunication were in a right way executed, it were the most dreadful thing in the world: it is that which has awed and terrified the most proud and stout sinners; the very sight of another's Excommunicating, it has terrified the conscience of those that have been by: It is a delivering them to Satan, and putting them from under the protection of God, giving them up to the devil, to take power over them, except they come in, and repent.

And this is a way to save the soul, because if there be any way in the world to cause men to see their sin, and repent, and be humbled,

and come in, this is it; and when no other way would do it, this many times has done it.

And therefore those people that live in such a condition, that want this Ordinance of Excommunication in the right way, want an especial means to keep off sin, both to keep them from sin before they are fallen, and of delivering of them from sin when they have fallen into it. But to be given over to the power of sin, is a greater evil than to be delivered to Satan.

CHAP. XLVIII.

The Fifth Corollary. It is worse to be given up to one sin, than to be actually possessed by the Devil.

Fifthly, Shall I say further (and this will make it plainly appear what abundance of evil there is in sin, more than in affliction): for though we have spoken much of it, yet all this only draws the point higher and higher, and drives the nail deeper and deeper, that this Truth of God might settle upon your spirits; and therefore a Fifth is this, which follows from this reference sin has to the Devil) That it is worse to be given up to any one sin, than to be actually possessed by the Devil, than for the Devil to come and actually possess us as those poor creatures were in the Gospel; and this is worse than to be given up to Satan.

There is a spiritual possession of Satan, as in Judas, and that is a spiritual possession of their hearts to rule them: but there is a temporal possession spoken of in the Gospel, and that is of their bodies, that the Devil possessed them, and caused them to rage and foam at the mouth, and rend and tear: and the men we read of in

the Gospel that lived among the graves and dead people, and cut themselves with knives and stones; this was a grievous thing to see men thus possessed Many men have extraordinary fits of the Convulsion; and the like, and men think they be possessed; we ordinarily mistake, and it is but a mere fit of the Convulsion; but if we did know they were really possessed, we should be terrified.

Oh such a friend, such a neighbor lived wickedly before, and now the Devil has possessed him; we thought it a Disease till now, we thought it the Convulsion, but now we see it is from the Devils possession of them.

Would you not endure any affliction in the world rather than God should say of you, the next oath you swear, when you open your mouths to swear, the Devil shall come in and take possession of your bodies; or the next evil language you speak, the Devil shall come in and possess you; this were a fearful thing, and you would take heed of this.

But this I am to make good, That when you go on in sin, in any one sin, it is a greater evil than if never so many Devils possessed you, if there should be Legions; as he said to Christ when he asked his name, he said, Legion, because we be many. It is not so great an evil if God should give up your bodies to be possessed by Legions of Devils.

You will say, surely that is a great evil, but not so great as to be under the power of one sin.

How will that appear you will say?

Thus: possession makes you not hateful to God, and guilty before God, and loathsome to God; nor is it that which God hates, but it is an object of pity; Christ pitied them when he saw them thus: but sin makes a man odious and hateful to God. I remember an excellent Observation Gregory has on the Book of Job, (said he) What is the reason when God gave up Job to the Devil, and bid him do what he

would, but spare his life? (said he) What is the reason the Devil did not possess him when he was given up to his hands, for so the words are, He is in thy Hands, only spare his life? So that it appears, he was in his power to possess him, but yet he did not; and what is the reason? this is the Answer that Ancient gives, the reason is this, Because if he had possessed him, then though Job had fretted, and frowned, and torn himself, it had not been his sin, his impatience, so as it was when he was not possessed.

Now because the Devil envied Job, the Devil would bring that upon Job which he knew to be the greatest evil as much as he could; for so all envy does. One that envies another, labors to bring the greatest evil on him that he can.

So certainly the Devil envied Job, and therefore he labored to bring the greatest evil on him that he could.

Now it seems possession was not the greatest evil; but the Devil would go so to work, as if he could possibly he would get Job to be impatient, and make Job curse God, and sin against God. If Job should have cursed God in word by possession of the Devil, the Devil cursed God in him, it had not been Jobs sin so much as if he had got him to curse God otherwise.

Now the Devil would have him so curse God, as to be a sin to him; and therefore the Devil would not possess him because that was the lesser evil: So that to be given up to sin is a greater evil than to be possessed.

Therefore all you that have friends and children, which you see wicked and licentious, and you see some cause to fear they be given up to the power of sin for the present, it should cause Fathers and Mothers to come to Christ, as earnestly as ever those poor creatures did, that had Children possessed with the Devil, in the Gospel; poor women had children possessed, and so men; Fathers that had Children possessed with the Devil, that did rent and tear him in the

presence of Christ, he cries out mightily to Christ, if he could, Oh that he would come and help him: and so the woman of Canaan for her daughter, cries after Christ to help her Daughter, for she was miserably vexed with an unclean Spirit.

So you should even go and cry to God, Lord, help if possible, and have mercy upon my Son, upon my Daughter, for they have unclean Spirits; yea, they are in a worse condition than if possessed by the Devil: I have a Son, a swearing young man; a Daughter, that is vain, and profane, and wicked, and licentious, and stubborn, and unruly, Oh if it be possible help me.

if you could be as sensible of the sins, and wickedness of your Children, as in the time of the Gospel, Fathers and Mothers were of the possession of their Children, much might then be done.

CHAP. XLIX.

The Sixth Corollary. sin brings to wicked men the same Portion the Devils have.

Sixthly, Hence it follows, if sin has such reference to the Devil, then this must needs follow, That the same Portion that the Devils have, must needs be at last the portion of wicked men: The Scripture expresses it, Mat. 25. Go you wicked into the Portion prepared for the Devil. And so in Timothy, the same portion that the Devil has, shall be the portion of wicked and ungodly men. We read in the Book of the Revelations, of fearful Judgments that shall befall such as have the mark of Antichrist upon them, Revel. 14. 9, 10. An Angel followed, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the Beast, and his Image, and receive his mark in their Foreheads, or in their Hands, the same shall drink of the Wine of the wrath of God poured

out without mixture, and shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the Presence of God, and his holy Angels, and of the Lamb.

Mark the dreadful Judgments upon such as have the mark of Antichrist, either openly in their Foreheads, in profession, or more privately in their Hands, he shall drink of the wrath of God, &c. Now if such as have but the mark of Antichrist upon them shall have such dreadful punishment; pray what shall those have that have such a likeness unto the Devil himself? the mark of the Devil, that are even turned into the very Nature of the Devil, that are children of the Devil, what shall the end of such wicked and ungodly men and women be?

And now Brethren, we have finished all these Six Particulars, in opening the evil of sin; and therein shewed that there is more evil in sin, that there is in any affliction. And now I had thought to have made some good entrance into the Application of this; for though all this while in the Explanation, I have mingled some Application, yet there remains very many excellent useful Considerations, which does flow from all that has been said of the evil of sin, that if possible it may be brought to your hearts, that all may not vanish and come to nothing in the Conclusion.

Now this one Use I had verily thought to have gone through; I shall only name it, and shew what I intend in it, and I shall finish it in the following Discourse.

CHAP. L

Use I. Shew that trouble of conscience for sin, is another manner of business than Melancholy, or timorousness.

Use I. Hence follows this plainly from all that have been spoken, if sin be worse than any affliction, and not to be chosen rather than affliction; Hence it follows, Then that trouble of conscience for sin certainly is another manner of business than merely Melancholy distemper, it comes not from Melancholy, nor foolish timorousness, and the like.

There is another manner of business in trouble of conscience for sin then the world thinks for; this is the First Use that follows from all that has been delivered. Me thinks all of you should yield to the strength of this Consequence: If you have heard or read what I have opened: you that have heard al, or read it, it should take this effect in you all: Well then by what I have heard now, I come to understand what the meaning of trouble of conscience for sin is.

I have heard (heretofore) of many men and women troubled for sin, and I wondered what it meant, I wondered what it was that troubled them; many young people may be heirs of great estates and excellent good friends, of healthful bodies, in good trades, all well about them; and yet mightily troubled for sin. yea, perhaps some that to the view of the world lived very civilly, yet had in secret been guilty of some notorious profane course, and yet when God shall but settle any one sin upon their hearts, and trouble their consciences for any one sin; they could not bear the horror of their conscience for this one sin.

Well, this I have heard of the evil of sin, tells me I have had mistaken thoughts about it; I thought all was melancholy, and even madness, and the Physician must be sent for, and merry company sent for, because men and women have such poor and mean apprehensions of the evil of sin. and therefore when any are troubled in conscience for sin, Oh then get him into merry company, get a pair of cards, make them play a fit of Music, go to some business in the world, put themselves upon business, one thing or other, drink down their trouble, play down their trouble, thus many have slight thoughts of trouble of conscience.

And therefore when in their children, they cry out, Oh! my child will certainly run mad, is grown mad; many carnal men and women when their children begin to think of sin, they think verily they begin to run mad.

I remember in the story of Erancis Spira, he said thus (because his friends thought it a kind of Frenzy, and that it was not trouble of conscience for sin) Oh said he to his friends, I would to God it were Frenzy, either feigned or real; if it were feigned Frenzy, then I could put it off when I pleased: if it were a real Frenzy, there were a great deal more hope of God's mercy, I should not apprehend God's wrath as I do, but it is otherwise with me.

Brethren, those that have felt trouble of conscience for sin, upon whose hearts God has settled, but the guilt of any one sin: what do you think of trouble of conscience for sin? they feel reality, they find that there is real lie unto them, that which is a greater burden, and grief, and trouble than all the miseries of the world. Dreadful expressions are many of them that Francis spirit has, which is a most dreadful example of horror of conscience for sin; Oh! (said he) I feel the very torments of hell within me, and this afflicts my conscience with intolerable pain: Oh! that some body would let out this tired soul out of my body; Oh! that I were in the place of the damned, that I might be but free from FEARING any thing that is yet WORSE to come.

For though he did acknowledge, there was greater torments in hell, yet he professed he did desire to be in hell, that he might be freed from the torture of his Spirit, that was still in fear of worse, that was to come. And verily a most hideous story it is, that shews the dreadfulness of a wounded and troubled conscience for sin.

Certainly if sin be all that which you have heard, or read, well might the Holy Ghost say, A wounded spirit, who can bear? A man may sustain his infirmities, whatsoever his infirmities and troubles are in the world, it is no great matter to sustain them; but a wounded spirit who can bear? for a wounded spirit seeth it has to deal with the Infinite God, the Glorious Eternal Deity: and you must not tell such a one of Melancholy, and such grounds of trouble; for such a one knows, the Arrows of the Almighty stick in his heart, and it is another manner of business than so.

I might here have enlarged my self, and have spoken much to those that have such mean apprehensions of trouble of conscience for sin; and have shewed the difference between melancholy and trouble of conscience for sin; but I shall not at present, only I shall wind up all now briefly, and prosecute it further in the next Chapter.

Certainly it is not Melancholy, it is another manner of business than melancholy What think you of the Lord Christ himself in his Agony? that sweat drops of water and blood, which you see was the fruit of sin? was that melancholy? certainly that was of the same nature that the troubled in conscience feel for sin.

The angels that sinned against God, the devils themselves, they are not capable of melancholy, they have no bodies; and yet none have such horrors for sin as they have: And so the souls of wicked men many times they have horrid apprehensions of the wrath of God for sin. But certainly, if the souls of wicked men and women go out of their bodies without pardon, the very first instant the soul is departed from the body, it has other manner of horrid, dreadful, and

dismal, apprehensions of the wrath of God for sin, then ever it had before.

I remember further, Luther had such a Speech concerning trouble of conscience for sin, in his Comment upon Genesis; It is a harder matter to Comfort an Afflicted conscience for sin, than to raise one from the Dead. This was a Speech of Luther, he saw what was in an Afflicted conscience for sin.

Further, Surely Melancholy 'tis not; no nor timorousness, nor folly▪ do but take an example or two, and so I shall conclude. •hat of David, you shall find in David that he was a man most free from melancholy, for the temper of his body it was a most cheerful disposition, and a warlike spirit, and very wise: And yet there is none in the Book of God more troubled in spirit •or sin, than he was.

First, I will shew you what manner of man David was; and then what his troubles of conscience were for sin: Sure he was no melancholy man▪ For First) you shall find it in [1 Sam. 16 12](#). that he for his bodily Constitution was sanguine, and not melancholy; he was of a ruddy and beautiful Continuance, and good to look upon: So that David for the Constitution of his body, was of a sanguine constitution. And then, for the Valor of David, he was a mighty man of Valor, [2 Sam. 17. 10](#). And he was valiant whose heart •as as the heart of a Lion: This was the commendation of Hushay, [2 Sam. 17. 10](#). concerning David. And he was very cheerful who made so many Psalms, and was so Musical as David? [2 Sam. 22. 1](#).

He is called the sweet singer of Israel; and had such a sweet complexion, was sanguine, and a great deal of valor, and the sweet singer of Israel. And for wisdom, he was as an Angel of God, as the woman of Taco spoke to him. And yet, who ever in such anguish and distress for sin as David was? this you shall find if you read his penitential Psalms; I cannot mention all, take but some few; Psal. 6. there he is in trouble of Spirit; and then Psal. 32. When I kept

silence my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long: Mark, David felt the weight of sin so upon his heart that his bones waxed old through his roaring all the day long; he found not sin a light matter as many ordinary people do. And Psal. 38. there is notable expressions, vers. 2. Thy Arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore: there is no soundness in my flesh because of thy Anger, nor rest in my bones because of my sin. Vers. 3. and vers. 4. My iniquities have gone over my head as an heavy burden, they are to heavy for me: vers. 5. My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness. vers. 6. I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly, I go mourning all the day long.

See what sin cost David. And I beseech you take this note along with you; you that will make use of David's sin to encourage you, and harden your hearts in sin; you will say, Why? did not David commit Adultery & sin, that was a man according to God's own heart?

Yea, but mark, you that will make use of David's sin, make use of what David felt for sin, you see David's sin cost him dear, and made the arrows of the Almighty stick fast in him, and caused him to roar out in anguish and distress of Spirit, all day long, and he professes, he watered his Couch with tears.

And that 51 Psal. Restore to me the joy of thy salvation, that the bones that thou hast broken may rejoice. David's bones were broken through the trouble of his Spirit, that is the strength of his spirit (not bones literally) as bones are the strength of the body, so the strength of his spirit was overcome by the anguish and trouble of his soul for sin.

Thus it was with David that was such a sanguine, such a pleasant, and such a valiant man, and such a wise man, and yet he felt this trouble of Spirit; trouble of conscience for sin.

You think slight, and make a light matter of it, Oh you have brave stout Spirits, you will scorn to be so afraid, What! afraid of every

thing the Minister speaks, I scorn to be such a fool.

You think you be Sermon proof, and can hear all this dreadful evil of sin, opened without any fear or trembling: Well, you that have so stout spirits, know David's spirit was as valiant as yours, his heart was as valiant as a Lion, and yet the weight of sin broke his heart, and so it will yours too if God lay it aright upon your spirits.

Oh! it is not timorousness that causeth this trouble of conscience; for let God come and lay afflictions, his afflicting hand on them, they can bear that as nothing in comparison of sin.

I remember I have heard a story of a Woman that had Nine Children, and great pains with them all, and yet having afterward trouble of conscience, Oh! said she, All the pains I have had with my Nine Children, is nothing to that which I have felt in a little time, in trouble of conscience.

So certainly, all pains are nothing, in comparison of the pains of Spirit when sin is settled by strong conviction upon your souls. So you have many that are troubled for sin, that could bear outward affliction, but can not bear that. And you that speak of the valor of your Spirits, that are so valiant, that can bear trouble for sin so easily as you think, and are so full of Courage; when afflictions are upon you, your hearts are down, and are poor, low, spirits; white liver'd, and can bear nothing, no cross, and affliction, this shews you have no true courage; you have courage to resist conscience and the motions of the holy Ghost, and the Word; but no true courage, it may be you have impudent spirits.

And mark one example more: One of the wisest men that ever lived upon the earth, yet greatly troubled for sin, all his days, and this is the example of Heman, such woeful trouble of spirit had he on him for sin: See Psal. 88. read the whole Psalm and you shall see the trouble of his spirit for sin, especially the 7. vers Thy wrath lies hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves. And the 14.

vers. Lord, why castest thou off my soul? Why hidest thou thy face from me? I am afflicted and ready to die (mark) from my youth up.

God was pleased to exercise him from a young man & it is a blessed thing when God begins with young ones, & makes them know what sin means, when they are young, as Heman did, from my youth up. While I suffer thy terrors I am distracted.. Thy fierce wrath goeth over me, thy terrors even cut me off.

Well, who was this Heman? for this is not a Psalm of David; you shall see in the Title it was a Psalm of Heman, and you shall find, that he was one of the wisest men that lived upon the Earth, •Kings, 4. 31. there he speaks of Heman, he was brought in, in the Story among the most wise men that lived upon the Earth, he is compared with Solomon; it is said of him, he was exceeding wise, and of excellent wisdom, More wise than the Children of the East Country, for he was wiser than all men, than Heman; for he was one of the wisest of all, though Solomon excelled him; yet next him, he was one of the wisest: and how comes he to be thus wise?

It is like that was one means that caused him to be so wise, he was afflicted, and ready to die; from his youth up, he was troubled for sin all his days.

What is the folly of young people? They go up and down, and take liberty in wickedness and sin, and never feel the weight of sin; but if God please to begin with them, and make them to see the evil of sin rightly, this is the way for them to come to have true wisdom; if God train them up in trouble of conscience for sin, it is the way to make them wiser than their Teachers, train their Fore-fathers, and to bring them to the wisdom even of the most wise.

CHAP. LI.

The Former Use further prosecuted.

First, Against those that have slight thoughts of trouble of conscience, which ariseth either from gross Ignorance, or Atheism, or desperate slighting of God. Secondly, Trouble of conscience is the beginning of Eternal death. Thirdly, Those that have slight thoughts of trouble of conscience, can never prize Christ. Fourthly, Those that have slight thoughts of trouble of conscience now, shall one day alter their opinion. Fifthly, It were just with God to let those sink under the burden of conscience that have slight thoughts of it now. Sixthly, Those that have slight thoughts of trouble of conscience, those very thoughts do take away a chief restraint from sin. Seventhly, Slight thoughts of trouble of conscience for sin, are, 1 A high degree of Blasphemy. 2 And a degree towards the unpardonable sin.

WE have entered upon the Application of all that has been said concerning the evil of sin. And you may remember I have only named one Use that do arise from all that has been said about the evil of sin: and that we shall now prosecute.

The use is this, If there be so much evil in sin as you have heard opened unto you, beyond all the evil of any affliction, Hence then we see that the wounds and trouble of conscience for sin, certainly it is no melancholy conceit, it is not a fancy or imagination, as many in the world think of it. Many men have very slight thoughts about the trouble of conscience for sin; and when they hear of men or women troubled for their sin, they think, it is nothing but melancholy, or temptation, or some kind of frenzy, or madness, or folly, or weakness of spirit, or timorousness.

These be the thoughts men have of trouble of conscience, and according to their thoughts that they have of it, such are their Cures that they seek for it. I spoke some what of it in the last Chapter: but now certainly, if these things be true, as verily they are the truths of

God that have been delivered concerning the evil of sin; then we are not to wonder at men and women that have troubles of conscience for sin. I shewed by some examples, that trouble of conscience was not melancholy; especially in the example of Christ himself, that had the burden of sin, troubles of spirit; I cannot so properly call it trouble of conscience, for there is a substantial difference between the wrath upon his soul that he felt, and the wrath of God that others feel upon their consciences; but in effect, the wrath of God is the same, that was upon him by imputation of sin; and upon others by reason: of their own proper guilt: and it was not melancholy in him, nor in David, as I shewed in the last chapter.

Now to proceed. There be two things I desire to proceed in: And

First, I have many things to say unto those that have slight thoughts of trouble of conscience for sin, somewhat to say to those; and if there be any in this place that have wondered at men and women that have been troubled in their conscience for sin; let them attend to what they read, I have divers things to say unto them.

Secondly, I am to shew you some difference between melancholy distempers, and trouble of conscience for sin

First, These thoughts of thine, they certainly come from either abundance of Ignorance; or, Atheism; or, Desperate slighting of God: One of these three Causes

1 Ordinarily these thoughts that men have of trouble of conscience, to be no greater matter than such melancholy conceits, they do come from gross Ignorance: thou knowest not God, thou knowest not what it is for a soul to have to deal with an infinite Deity; thou never yet hadest a real sight of an infinite Deity, with whom thou hast to deal: And it is a sad thing to think, that men and women should live a long time, and never in all their lives come to have a real sight of that infinite Majesty and Deity, with whom we have to do.

It comes from ignorance of the nature of sin; thou dost not know what sin is, God has yet blinded thine eyes that thou shouldst sin, but not know what sin is. Certainly thou dost not know the Law of God, the Spiritualness of it, and the dreadfulness of the wrath of God revealed against sin: thou dost not know what Eternity means, thou dost not apprehend what it is for a soul to be in hazard of miscarrying to all Eternity. It was the Speech of Francis Spira (as I opened in the former Chapter) I shall make use of that example further, because a notable example: Oh said he, If I might endure the heavy wrath of God, but for twenty thousand years I should not think it much; but it must be Eternally, Eternally; I must endure the Eternal wrath of God: that lay heavy upon his spirit. Let any man or woman in the world, the stoutest, proudest spirit that lives upon the face of the Earth, think what it is to miscarry to Eternity, and this will make his spirit be troubled. Therefore its gross Ignorance in men, that makes many have such slight thoughts of trouble of conscience for sin.

2 Again, If not from Ignorance, yet from Atheism: For many men that seem to have excellent Parts, and are not ignorant Sots, and yet have slight thoughts of trouble of conscience for sin. It is not so much to be wondered at, to see a company of ignorant Sots, that know nothing of God, and the Principles of Religion, that they should have such slight thoughts, and wonder what men mean to be troubled for sin: But men, that have good Parts, perhaps men of great Gifts, and pregnant Wit, and great Scholars, and yet they have slight thoughts of trouble of conscience for sin.

Now in them, usually the cause is Atheism, or slighting of God. Woeful desperate Atheism is in the hearts of many great Scholars, many pregnant Wits, many that will speak much of Religion, yet they are desperate Atheists in their hearts, therefore from thence it comes. Therefore when you see learned men, understanding men, go on in such and such sinful ways, and slight all that is said concerning the evil of sin, do not wonder at it; for woeful desperate Atheism lies under abundance of Knowledge, a great deal of

knowledge, learning, wit, and parts; and yet slight sin: this is the Cause, the Atheism in their spirits. Compare these two Scriptures together, Psalm, 14. 1. The fool has said in his heart, there is no God: and in [Prov. 14. 9.](#) Fools make a mock of sin: that is, those fools that do say in their hearts, there is no God, those fools make a mock of sin, and they think lightly of all that has been said of the evil of sin: and what need so much ado about the evil of sin? they can slight it, and make light of it; well, it is such that make a mock of sin, as say in their hearts, there is no God; or otherwise, it comes from desperate wickedness, slighting of God: Perhaps men are not grown so far, to be plain, downright Atheists, yet they have slight thoughts of God: Oh what slighting the Majesty of God is this, for any man or woman, to think it a light matter to sin against God? or for trouble of conscience for sin, to be a slight matter: thus it will appear to spring from some of these Causes. Perhaps if thou thy self beest but crossed in any thing, or any thing come cross to thy will, thou thinkest it a great thing, and art troubled woefully, and art in a rage; when thou art crossed, thou thinkest it intolerable, it must not be born or suffered, that any should cross you: but when it comes to cross God, and sin against him; thou hast slight thoughts of it, and it is a matter of nothing to cross God, or sin against God is a slight matter: to cross you, or to do any evil against you is insufferable; what a slighting of God is this, that if you be crossed in your will, it is so insufferable; and yet to have such slight thoughts of sinning against God. This is the First.

Secondly, Thou that hast slight thoughts concerning troubles of conscience, consider that what thou hast slight thoughts of, In it self, in its own Nature, it is no other but the very beginnings of Eternal death, of the second death, the very beginnings of Hell. The principal torments of Hell, lie in the perfection of that trouble now, that for the present, is upon conscience; and yet this thou makest nothing of, as if it were but melancholy, as if the wrath of God that shall lie upon the damned in Hell to all Eternity, were but a frenzy. Certainly that which the Lord will at the last torment the souls of the Damned withal to all Eternity, it is the principal of that, it is of

the very same Nature with the wounds and horrors of conscience in this world: It is true, that God does indeed often times bless the horrors of conscience to the saving of the soul, to bring the soul to Christ; but horrors of conscience in their own Nature (I say) are the beginnings of the second death: as pains, and sicknesses of the body of a man or woman, are the beginnings of the first death; so wounds and horrors of conscience are the beginnings of the second death. The Soul of Man is a Subject of more large Capacity for torments than the Body can be: Now the principal way that God has to torment the Soul, that we know of, in Hell it self, it is by the horrors and wounds of conscience. I remember therefore it was the Speech of Francis Spira, said he, I feel in me the wrath of God, as the torments of Hell; and he was not mistaken, for they be the beginnings of the torments of Hell: and therefore God many times, to keep men from being swallowed up in those torments, he makes them feel these torments, they have some sparks of these torments of Hell upon their souls now, that they may be delivered from the flames of Hell to all Eternity. Troubles of conscience for sin, is nothing else, but God's letting out some sparks of Hell upon the Soul. Now what a mistake is this, Thou thinkest this but melancholy, when the truth is it is nothing else but the sparks of Hell upon the soul. This is the Second.

Thirdly, Thou thinkest this a melancholy conceit: Certainly, It is impossible for such a man or woman, ever, so long as they thus continue, to prize Christ, or love Christ: I say, whosoever thou art that has such conceits, if this abide in thee, I dare as from the Lord charge thee, That, thou didest never yet in all thy life prize Jesus Christ, and love Jesus Christ.

But how does this appear?

Thus: Thou didest never prize Christ, and love Christ aright, if thou hast this conceit, Because thou canst never know what Christ suffered for thee. The principal thing Christ suffered for sinners, was The bearing of the Wrath of the Father upon his Soul, his Soul

sufferings were more than his Bodily sufferings. Thou hearest sometimes of Christ's shedding his precious Blood for thee, and dying upon the Cross; but the death of his body, shedding of his blood, was not the principal thing Christ suffered for thee if thou ever beest saved; but the sufferings of the Wrath of God upon his Soul, when his Soul was troubled, when he cried out, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? and yet thou hast slight thoughts of these Sufferings.

If you see a man or woman in tortures in their body, in some disease, thou thinkest, there is some reality in that, but for the sufferings of the soul, thou hast poor thoughts of these, and canst not imagine what they should mean when they speak of the wrath of God to be upon the Soul.

Now if thou hast slight thoughts of the wrath of God upon the soul, it is impossible thou shouldst prize Christ, because thou knowest not what he suffered. But a man or woman that has felt the wrath of God upon their souls, in the wounds of conscience for sin, such a one has a little intimation of what things the Lord Christ endured for them, such a one can tell what Christ endured, and so can prize Christ, and love Christ, such a one can Reason thus, What? is one spark of the wrath of God upon the soul so terrible? and the tortures so sore? What then did the flame of God's wrath that was let out upon the soul of Jesus Christ? For so it was.

If thou hast a little trouble of soul under the sense of sin now; know it is but as a spark of that fire that did blaze out upon Christ; if thou hast one drop upon thee, it is but as one drop of those flood gates let out upon the soul of Jesus Christ; the flood gates of God's displeasure were let out upon the soul of Christ.

This certainly is one Reason, why God will have sinners that be saved eternally, to feel trouble of soul for sin, that they may know how to prize Christ, and love Christ more, and understand what the sufferings of the soul of Christ were for sin. As (brethren) Christ did

suffer in his soul, that he might be a merciful high Priest, and have compassion upon us, and help us, when we need, as tis a comfort to one that suffers in soul, that Christ suffered in his soul, and so knows how to compassionate such: So, on the other side, God causeth poor souls to suffer trouble, that they might be sensible of Christ's sufferings, and so praise and love him the more.

Fourthly, Thou that hast slight thoughts of trouble of conscience for sin; certainly whosoever thou art, this is a most certain truth, These thoughts of thy heart shall certainly be altered one day, though they be slight now: This I dare affirm of every one that have slight thoughts of sin, and the trouble for it; these thoughts of their hearts shall be altered. You must come to know sin in another manner than now you do; you must come to feel what sin is, in another manner than now you do.

I remember I once heard a credible Relation of a Scholar, that was in jovial Company, and very merry, and yet one that had some enlightenings of conscience, and being very profane, there was occasionally, one in the Company, speaking of a wounded conscience, he presently claps his hand upon his breast, Well, said he, One day this breast of mine must know what a wounded conscience means: He being Conscious to himself of abundance of guilt in him, for he had light, and yet was profane, and his conscience told him, though now he was merry, yet one day that breast of mine, must know what a wounded Spirit means.

So I say to you, is there any profane person this day before the Lord, that has had, or still has, slight thoughts of the evil of sin, and trouble of conscience for sin: Well, Go thy ways, and lay thy hand upon thy breast, and say to thy self, One day this breast of mine must know what a wounded Spirit is, and must have other manner of thoughts about a troubled conscience for sin.

If thy heart be not yet troubled for sin, if thou feelest not the weight of sin now, it is a dangerous sign, that thou art reserved to feel the

weight of sin in torment, to know what the meaning of sin is, in the burden of it in torment. If now thou hast slight thoughts concerning trouble for sin; I say, take it as from the Lord this day as spoken to thee, it is a fearful sign, a brand upon thee, that thou art reserved to feel trouble for sin eternally.

God has time enough to trouble you for sin hereafter, and therefore it may be he lets you go on in these slight thoughts for the present, and you do bless yourselves in your own conceits; and God does not now convince you, because he has time enough hereafter.

A Fifth thing I would say to those that have slight thoughts about trouble for sin, is this, That if ever God should in this world come to awaken your conscience, and lay the weight of sin upon your souls: it were just with God then to let you sink under the burden. I say it were just with God so to wound you for sin, as to see you sweltering in your wounds, and deny compassion. Why? Because you have had slight thoughts of such a wound.

Certainly brethren (observe what I say unto you) the very Reason why men and women are so long in anguish of Spirit for their sin, and under such sore troubles, and distress of conscience, by reason of their sin, and can have no comfort; it is because heretofore they have had such slight thoughts of trouble of conscience. Perhaps when they were in their jollity and mirth, they made a mock of it, made nothing of it; heard dreadful threats against sin, and made light of it, and thought people were troubled more than needs. Well, you once had such slight thoughts of trouble of conscience for sin; now God comes upon you for it, and this hand of God lies upon you, and it is just with God you should feel it to purpose, that you should have smart enough; that God might instruct you, and convince you, of your error, and might now come and teach you after another manner.

What do you think now of trouble of conscience for sin? you had such and such thoughts of it heretofore, what be your thoughts of it

now?

I remember there was one not far from the place where I ordinarily lived, and it was a young Maid, hearing of many troubled in conscience for sin, she in a kind of scorn and contempt of it, would feign her self troubled in conscience for sin, and ô, she was mightily troubled, and in scorn of the Ministers, Oh these and these Ministers must be sent for to comfort her, merely out of contempt and scorn; but afterward God laid on in good earnest upon her conscience, and then she was troubled to purpose; and so, that she was at the very brink of making away her self, and it was very much feared by al her friends; indeed she would have made away her self, and attempted it many ways, if God had not wonderfully hindered it.

So those that have light thoughts of perplexities of conscience for sin, when it comes indeed, it may be just with God it should be so heavy, that they should not be able to bear it, but sink under it; then it will be so strange a thing, to such as have slight thoughts of it, that the very strangeness of trouble of conscience for sin, will amaze them, that they, will not know what in the world to do. This is a Fifth thing, When trouble comes upon them, God may justly leave them under trouble.

A Sixth thing, I would say to such that have slight thoughts about trouble of conscience for sin, is this. These thoughts of yours do take away a chief restraint of sin, and causes you to disregard all the Authority of the Word: There be these Two fearful Evils that do, follow upon your slight thoughts of trouble of conscience, for sin.

1 They take away that which is the chief Restraint of sin. There are many outward restraints to keep men and women from sin, but all outward restraints from sin are nothing to the restraints of conscience; a man that has a tender conscience, has the greatest restraint of sin that can be, no restraint like to that; but one that is so far from a tender conscience; that he thinks trouble of conscience is a melancholy conceit, such a man has no restraint (to purpose)

from sin: he may have restraints from outward and gross sins, but from close, secret sins, he has none. Now it is a great evil to a man, that the hindrances to secret sins be taken away, and he gives himself liberty in secret sins.

2 And then for the Authority of the Word: It is a great mercy for men and women, to be in such a condition, that their heart should be continually under the authority of the Word; howsoever you think it a brave thing that you can get your hearts above the Word: but certainly it is one of the greatest mercies of God upon the earth, for God to keep the hearts of men and women under the authority of the Word. But that man or woman that thinks lightly of troubles of conscience, such a one can slight the Word, regards it not, let what will be spoken, he can easily put it off, because the main hold that the Word has, upon the heart of a man or woman, it is upon their conscience, the Word takes hold upon their conscience, and brings down the heart under the power of it: but if the Word take not hold upon conscience, it takes not hold at all. But let a man or woman come to know what trouble of conscience for sin is, and what the power and authority of the word is, and how then does the soul prize the word? no man or woman ever comes to prize the word till they have felt the power of the word troubling their conscience; then they come to prize the word.

You have a famous place for this, Job 33. 16. Then he opens the ears of man, and seals their instruction. That is, God coming upon men, in times of affliction, opens their ears, and seals their instructions; that is, makes the word come with power and authority. As a thing sealed, comes with more authority, than a blank, or a writing not sealed; Sealed, that is when the word comes with power; That, I may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man: That is, Having Sealed instruction, •he humbles the heart.

First, he causeth the word to come with power, and then he humbles the heart, He keepeth back his, soul from the pit, and his

life from perishing, he is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pains, (and so forth) And in vers. 23. If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness: Then he is gracious unto him, and said, Deliver him from going down unto the pit. That is, when God comes to •deal Instruction, and to humble the heart, •and to cause pains to be upon the man, and so make them sensible of their sin; then let a messenger, an Interpreter be found▪ one of a thousand: such a one does account a Messenger and Interpreter that shall be able to declare the way of Righteousness, and shew him a ransom how to be delivered from sin; he accounts him a man of a thousand; Oh he is a man of a thousand: whereas, if he should come thus before, •he were no body, and the Word nothing, a mere silly business; but now he is a man of a thousand, Oh such a Messenger, let such a one come and welcome:

And therefore you shall have many men slight a conscientious Minister in their health, and prize those that preach slightly; but in their sickness, when conscience is open, they will not send to a slight vain Minister, that preach and never touch conscience; but they will have those that have preached most to conscience, they shall be most prized by them upon their sick and death beds; when conscience is awake, such a one will be one of a thousand then. This is the Sixth.

Seventhly and lastly, and indeed one of the Principallest; and I desire all those that have had slight thoughts of trouble of conscience for sin to attend to it; & it is this: Those slight thoughts of thine about trouble of conscience for sin, they are a high degree of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. If I make this plain, that they be guilty of a high degree of Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, (this should •...we the hearts of men and women, and make them take heed• what they do, in giving way to these vain thoughts, about trouble of conscience) yea, such a degree I will not say it reaches the highest degree of blasphemy, yet I shall make it out to you, that they come near it.

It is a high degree of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost: it appeareth thus; Because trouble of conscience for sin, it is an especial work of the Spirit of God upon the Soul of a man or woman, wheresoever it is: such a work of the Spirit of God, as from thence, the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, has the denomination, so as he is called the Spirit of Bondage: no, God has no denomination from any light and slight work, there must be some especial, and great work of God, in which God does much glory, that he has a denomination from it; now [Rom. 8. 15.](#) the Spirit of God has this denomination, it is called the Spirit of Bondage: For you have not received the Spirit of Bondage again to fear; but you have received the Spirit of Adoption, crying Abba Father: Ye have not received the Spirit of Bondage again to fear; as if the Holy Ghost should say, there was a time when you had the Spirit of Bondage; and what was this Spirit of Bondage? It was no other but the Spirit of God, discovering unto, and setting upon the heart of a man or woman, that bondage that they be in under the Law, and corruption, and Satan.

This is the Spirit of Bondage; when God's Spirit shall come to enlighten a man, and convince the conscience, and so lay this upon the conscience of any man or woman; thou art by reason of sin, a bond-slave to the Devil; under bondage of all the Curses of the Law, by reason of sin; yea, a bond-slave to thy Lusts: this the Spirit discovering, and making the Soul sensible of this bondage, is that which causeth this denomination to the Spirit of God, to be called the Spirit of Bondage.

Now for thee to attribute that to foolish melancholy conceits, that is one of the especial works of the HOLY GHOST in the SOUL, and is the Spirit of Bondage: Is not this Blasphemy against God? This is God's work, and it is a work of God's glory; for all the works of God be his glory; and that which the Spirit of God glories in, as that work proper to him, thou saiest it is but folly, and melancholy conceits, and the like; is not this blasphemy and reproach to the Spirit God? Certainly it is no other but reproach and blasphemy against the

Holy Ghost, in attributing the trouble of conscience to these conceits.

2 Nay further, It is a great degree towards the unpardonable sin, if ye do it out of malice and knowledge, by it you come to the unpardonable sin; Take for that this one place of Scripture, Mark 3. compare the 22. verse with the 24. 30. Verse 22. when Christ cast out Devils, the Text said of the Scribes and Pharisees that came from Jerusalem, that they said, he has Beelzebub; and by the Prince of the Devils, casts he out Devils: they attributed the work of Christ casting out Devils, to the power of the Devil; he casts out Devils by the Devil. But now it was by the Finger of God.

Well, Christ calls them to him, and said, How can Satan cast out Satan? There he convinces them, Satan could not cast out Satan; and told them it was by the Spirit of God they were cast out: Mark how he goeth on in the 28. verse, Verily I say unto you, all sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and Blasphemies, wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, has never forgiveness, but is in danger of Eternal Damnation.

Because they said, he has an unclean Spirit, Christ tells them, other blasphemies shall be forgiven, but the blasphemies against the Spirit of God shall never be forgiven.

Why does Christ speak of this, how comes it in? (Mark) the Text said, Christ spoke it, because they said he has an unclean Spirit: Mark, Christ casting out Devils, the Scribes and the Pharisees attribute this to an unclean Spirit, and therefore they sinned against the Holy Ghost, merely because they attributed that which Christ did by the Finger of God, to an unclean Spirit; and therefore Christ tells them they sinned against the Holy Ghost, and they shall never be forgiven.

Now Brethren, see how near you come to this sin, for the Scribes and Pharisees saw Christ cast out Devils; they did it out of malice, they could not but know, and yet they say it was by the Devil. You see one troubled in conscience, which is by the Holy Ghost, and you say it is a foolish and a mad spirit, and sometimes. 'tis an unclean spirit; but it is worse when you say it is a foolish and melancholy spirit, you do more blaspheme the Holy Ghost, and come nearer this sin.

Oh take heed, and be humbled, your condition is dangerous, that have had, or have any such low thoughts about trouble of conscience for sin.

Object. But we see by experience men and women troubled for sin, be very melancholy, and heavy.

Answ. To speak to this: True, sometimes God may be pleased to sanctify, even that humor of melancholy, so as to further such a work as this; yea, God may cause a work on conscience to be furthered by melancholy, and yet a great deal of difference between melancholy and this.

1 As first, God may make use of melancholy to bring in trouble of conscience: as thus; If it be not too prevailing, to besot men and women, as sometimes it does; but if it be no more prevailing but thus, to make men seriously consider, and ponder, and weigh things, then God makes use of a degree of melancholy, to make men and women to know themselves; and sin, and the things of their Eternal Estate, and such a melancholy is a blessed melancholy, and you have cause to bless God for it.

Melancholy in some inferior things is very useful; and the Philosophers say, That the most Eminent men in the world for great matters, were melancholy, because they were serious in their thoughts; whereas other men be of slight, vain, frothy Spirits. Many that never had melancholy, they conceive of things, and it passer,

and they never say any thing to heart, they never knew what it was for one half hour to be serious in their thoughts all their lives.

Many that be Sanguine, be of a light, vain spirit, and it is a heavy Judgment of God to be given over to a light vain Spirit, that considers nothing. Now when God makes use of this Particular degree of melancholy, to make men and women serious, to consider what shall become of them another day, what the terms between God and they are; what if I were now to die? and what if I were now to stand before God? then it is a good help to this work: But yet because this work is a work beyond any melancholy conceit, we shall give you in the Differences.

But yet further, it must be acknowledged, when God comes with trouble of conscience, it may be so mighty, and strong, that it may alter the body, and consume the very Spirits in the Bodies of men and women, and alter the temper of blood, it may be so strong and powerful, and so there may come melancholy in afterward; but yet there is abundance of difference between melancholy and trouble of conscience, and that will appear in these Six Particulars.

CHAP. LII.

Six Differences between Melancholy and Trouble of conscience.

Diff. 1. Melancholy may be in those that are most grossly ignorant; but trouble of conscience comes with some enlightening work. Diff. 2. Melancholy prevails on men by degrees, but trouble of conscience many times comes suddenly, as lightning. Diff. 3. Melancholy trouble is exceeding confused, but troubles of conscience are more distinct. Diff. 4. The more melancholy any has, the less able are they

to bear outward affliction; but the more trouble of conscience, the more able to bear outward afflictions. Diff. 5. Melancholy puts a dulness upon the spirits of men, but trouble of conscience for sin puts a mighty activity upon mens spirits. Diff. 6. Trouble of conscience cannot be cured the ways melancholy may.

First, Melancholy, it is many times in men and women where there is most gross Ignorance of God, and of sin, and of the things of their Eternal Estate; it may consist with gross ignorance: Many melancholy people are most ignorant and sottish, and know nothing of the Principles of Religion: but troubles of conscience can never come without some new Light of God darted in, and settled upon the hearts of men and women; it comes always with some enlightening work of the Spirit. Melancholy is many times with a great deal of darkness within; the mind is dark where melancholy prevails, and many times gross ignorance; but never any true trouble of conscience, but God comes in with some light. And therefore if any man or woman be troubled, and say it is for sin, I put this to you; What has God discovered to you now, more than before? What Truths of God has God settled upon their hearts more than before? If they can give no further account of no other light let into them, than before, or further Truth let in upon their hearts than before; then indeed it may be suspected not to be trouble for sin; as many melancholy people have the name of being troubled for sin, and they have fears of Hell, because of dark thoughts: But 'tis not the true work of the Spirit upon the Soul, except it be with convincement of some new Light, or settling some Truth more upon the Soul than before.

Secondly, Melancholy comes by degrees upon men and women; alterations of the Body are not sudden things, the temper of men and women's Bodies cannot suddenly be altered to any extremity, but gradually, from one degree to another: but trouble of conscience comes many times as a flash of Lightning from Heaven. Many men and women have come to the Congregation with scornful spirits, profane, wicked, and ungodly; never knew what sin meant, nor

trouble for sin meant, and God has met with them in the Word, and fastened some Sentence upon their hearts so, that they fall down under the power of it: that comes just as an Arrow struck into their Liver, and they could never get out of it, & have gone away with horrors of soul and therefore this has not been melancholy.

Certainly the humors of the Body, never so suddenly alters the Spirits of men: but when God comes to work, when the Spirit of God, and Bondage comes to work, it needs no matter before, no preparative matter, for the work of the Word is such, as it works immediately, without any preparation.

Therefore many men that understood as little of trouble of conscience as ever any did in their lives, and yet God lets some Truth reach them, fitted to their hearts and dispositions; that he finds his own sin come to be discovered, and the man is smitten: as he in [1 Cor. 14. 25.](#) the ignorant man that comes into the Church, and hears there the Saints prophecy, He is convinced, and falls down, and said, verily God is among them, of a truth God is in them: it is a remarkable Text: what ever he thought before; it may be he heard strange Stories of the Church of Christ, of profane Meetings, That God's People, when they met together, they blew out the Candles, and committed Uncleaness, and Wickedness. As there be notorious lies reported abroad of such Sects in the world; for certainly there is no such Sect in the world; but such reports are raised, merely to make the Meetings of God's Saints odious in the esteem of others. As the Jesuits said, Do you but Calumniate strongly, somewhat will stick, though nothing be true.

Well, what ever thoughts they had of the Assemblies of the people of God (for it is like the Heathens had strange thoughts) but when he came in, and heard what was done, he is Convinced, and Judged, and the secrets of his heart came to be discovered; the text said, The man falls down and Worships God, and reports God is among them. So many people hear great Relations of such Men, and such Preachers, and Sermons, and they go to hear what they can say, and

what they do; and may be go with an intention to scorn; as I have known some, come and sit close to a Pilar, and with an intention to jeer, and scorn, but before they have been gone, God has darted some truth into their conscience, and they have been struck with the word, and gone away with terrors in their conscience, this cannot be melancholy. As Paul, when God converted him, God comes and meets him, with light from heaven, and strikes him from his horse, and he stands trembling, and cries out, Lord! What wilt thou have me to do? There is a great deal of difference between this and melancholy.

A Third difference is this, melancholy is exceeding confused, they are exceeding Confused in their thoughts, and the trouble of their Spirit: And many times they have troubles, and sinkings, but they can give no account of it at all; yea, their troubles be beyond their ground, the grounds that they be troubled about, are very confused, that they understand them not themselves; but troubles of conscience are a great deal more distinct, and there the soul seeth ground for the trouble beyond the trouble. As in Melancholy, the trouble is beyond the ground of trouble; so in affliction of conscience, the ground is beyond all trouble; I am troubled indeed▪ but I see cause to be troubled more; and this is a great part of many mens trouble, That they can be troubled no more.

A Fourth Difference is this, The more melancholy there is in any man or woman, the less able are they to bear any outward affliction that befalls them: but the more trouble of conscience, the more able shall they be to bear afflictions that befalls them.

Those who feel the trouble of sin heavy, do account all other afflictions light: but melancholy people do feel all afflictions heavy, they cannot bear the least cross, their hearts are ready to sink upon any thing, and the more melancholy increases, the more weak are their spirits, and the less able to bear any cross. But now, trouble of conscience, the more sin, and the heavier the burden of sin lies

upon the Soul, the more slight thoughts has the soul of outward crosses.

Alas, it may be he hears of some that have some grievous diseases in their bodies; Oh said he that is troubled in conscience, Oh if it were no worse with me than so, it were but a flea bite, but it is another manner of matter: if God would change my trouble, I could easily bear that.

As Francis Spira has this expression, Oh! (said he) were I but released, and set free, as before, from trouble of spirit, my thinks I could scorn all the threatnings of cruel Tyrants, and with undaunted resolution bear all torments: So that the height of this trouble makes the other less. It was a good Speech of a reverend Divine of our times, when he heard any impatient under afflictions; he used to say thus, Surely the Reason why affliction is heavy upon you, is because sin is light. Those that be impatient under afflictions, it is a sign sin is light, because afflictions are heavy; troubles of conscience would make all afflictions light, Melancholy will not.

Fifthly, A principal Difference above all that has been named is this, Melancholy does mightily dull the spirit of any man or woman wheresoever it prevails it makes them heavy, and dull, and inept: But now, trouble of conscience for sin, it puts a mighty quickness in men, it puts an activity, another manner of activity and stirring in the spirit than ever was before. You shall have many men and women sit dully under a Minister many years, under the word, and never act; but when God comes to stir, and awaken conscience for sin, their Spirits be active and stirring then, in another manner than they were before. Whereas poor people, overwhelm'd with melancholy, they sit moping, and heavy, and dull, and lumpish, and no activity of spirit at all; but trouble of conscience for sin, is as fire in his bones. As Jeremiah said, He would speak no more in the Name of the Lord; but the word of God was as fire in his bones, and made him active and stirring.

So trouble in conscience makes them active and stirring; now they can pray, they could not pray before; now they be active, and working.

As Acts 9:11 When God troubled Paul, the text said, Behold, Paul Prays: Go said the Lord to Annanias to Saul, Behold he prays: as if Paul never prayed in all his life before. Certainly you that cannot pray, that never prayed, but read a prayer, or prayers your mothers taught you; you cannot Pray: but if ever God troubles your consciences for sin, then you will Pray, as if you were in heaven, Oh mighty Prayers then, Oh for Christ, Oh Pardon of sin, and Peace.

Then there is another manner of acting, and stirring of his spirit, in Prayer; than ever was before. But melancholy, will not do it; but makes a man heavy, and dull, in the very act of prayer.

There is a notable example of the actings of Spirit in troubles that come from sin, whereas the other makes them dull: 'tis that in the Book of Ezra, Chap. 9. vers. 3. and 5. Verse 3. And when I heard this thing, I rent my garment and my mantle, and plucked off the hair of my head, and of my beard, and sat down astonished This you will say made him dull; mark what follows: Verse. 5. And at the evening sacrifice I arose up from my heaviness, and having rent my garment and my mantle, I fell upon my knees, and I spread forth my hands unto the Lord my God, and said, Oh Lord my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee my God, for our iniquities are increased over our heads, and our trespasses are grown up to the heavens, &c. There mark the Prayer Ezra makes at the evening Sacrificed when the time was come that he should stir and seek God, then his Spirit was mighty active, and stirring, though he were astonished before. If it had been melancholy, his heart would have sate still then.

So that trouble of conscience puts life into the Soul in Prayer. And so it makes the soul active in meditation and contemplation;

melancholy people be dull, and heavy, and know not how to meditate, nor what to meditate on.

Those troubled in conscience, Oh what quick thoughts have they about God, & Christ, and eternity, and the law, and sin; and their souls work about such objects, that they can have no help unto from their bodies and senses, and yet their spirits are raised higher than before, in their workings... And so when they come to hear the Word, Oh how active be their spirits; in catching of the word, and at every truth.

I appeal to you that are troubled, what difference there is between your spirits now, and what they were before you were troubled for sin, before you came to the Congregation, to see and be seen, and wondered what men meant to be so earnest; and now, you mark every truth, and catch hold of every sentence, and mark the mind of God, and understand what is said: before you came and heard, and never understood what was meant by such and such things; you saw the Minister earnest, but you could not conceive what the man meant in his earnestness, but now you see what he means in his earnestness, and understand what weight is in those truths, you hear revealed: this is somewhat like, when the spirit is thus moved, and acted in Prayer, and Pearing. And in Conference, when you were in Conference with good men, before, Conference about good things was dry, and a dull thing, and you savored not the things conferred on, but presently were asleep: but now, if you come where there is Conference of God and his Word, and Christ, and the like, your mind closes with this. If you were only melancholy, this would make you more dull and heavy, but this makes you more lively and active, therefore there is a great deal of difference.

Lastly, Trouble of conscience cannot be cured as Melancholy is. Melancholy many times is worn out with time, and Physic cures that, and outward comforts and contentments cures that, but trouble of conscience is a wound of a higher nature. As Francis Spira said, when they brought Physicians, and thought it trouble of body;

Alas poor men, they think to cure me by physic: Ah it is another manner of malady, and must have another manner of medicine than plasters and Drugs to cure a fainting Soul and Spirit for sin.

Conscience must have Gospel Antidotes; therefore you that thought you had trouble of conscience for sin, and you are now eased, or perhaps not so much troubled now as before; look back what cured you, how comes it to pass you be less troubled than before? has time worn it away? such a Sermon, and such apprehensions of such a truth, darted into you mightily, and troubled you; you had such troubles, but what has cured you? many times one can give no account but this, Sure time has worn it away; if so, then it was not a right trouble.

So it may be you took physic, your body was troubled before, now it is lively, and more blood in your veins, more spirit now, and may be now your affliction is taken away, and this has cured you: if there be no other trouble than this, certainly you know not what trouble of conscience means, at least not in a saving way; either it was not trouble of conscience at all, or else it is not cured aright, but as the thorn that lies rotting and rankling in the flesh; a thorn when it first gets in, puts one to a great deal of pain; perhaps if it be let alone, the pain will be over for the present; but it lies rankling, and will put you to pain afterward, if it be not cured: So of trouble of conscience for sin, and if nothing have cured it, but these things, it is like the thorn in the flesh, and will trouble you afterward.

There is another manner of Cure, for it is the greatest thing God can do to comfort a troubled conscience, it must be the blood of Christ applied by the holy Ghost; it must be a plaster made of the blood of Jesus Christ, and applied by the holy Ghost to Cure this. And therefore I beseech you consider what has been said about this Argument; and as the Psalmist said, Blessed is the man that wisely considereth of the poor, so I say blessed is the man and woman, that wisely considereth of these troubles; in this, dont cast it upon your

children, & friends, Oh they be froward, or mad-men, or melancholy, Oh do not say so.

You that are acquainted with storms and tempests, you think them dreadful, it may be some of your friends have lately known what dreadful storms there have been; now if any of them should make relation of it, and another should say, this is but a conceit, and a fancy, and no reality but a dream; would you think these men spoke like wise men? Certainly, if any storm you have met withal at Sea has terror in it, know, storms in conscience has a thousand times more than storms at Sea:

Therefore when you see any troubled in conscience for sin, fear and tremble, let your conscience shake at it, and make use of their trouble. I remember a story of one Vergerius that came to comfort Francis Spira, and he came to comfort him as other men did; but he saw such dreadfulness upon Francis Spira, that it struck terror in his Soul, that he left his Bishopric, and went to Basil, and became a famous Protestant.

Thus when we hear of troubles of conscience, slight it not, but let the fear of God be upon you; go and renounce sin. Oh if some of our friends did know what slighting of a troubled conscience were, it would make them do as he did; though he had a rich Bishopric, he renounced all. And thus we have done with this First Use.

CHAP. LIII.

**A Second Use from the whole Treatise,
shewing that a man may be in a most
miserable condition, though he be
delivered from outward affliction.**

First, If a man be prosperous by sin, if a man raise himself to a prosperous condition by any sinful way, let such men consider three things: 1 What is got by sin, it cost dear. 2 What is got by sin, is accursed to thee. 3 What is got by sin, must be cast away, or thy soul is cast away. Secondly, When men come to be more sinful by their prosperity: explained in three Particulars: 1 When prosperity is fuel for their sin. 2 When it gives men further liberty to sin. 3 When it hardens in sin.

WE are yet upon the great doctrine of the evil of sin, shewing that there is more evil in sin than in any affliction. Many things you know have been delivered in the Explanatory part of it, wherein I have endeavored to set before you, the vileness of sin, to paint it out unto you in the true colors of it, as I was able: And having set sin before you in the vileness of it, we have begun the Applicatory part of this Point, to draw some Collections by way of Use from what has been said concerning the dreadful Evil of sin. I have finished the first Use: I shall now proceed to the Second.

Use 2. And that is this, If there be such dreadful evil in sin above all Evils of affliction, Hence then it follows, that a man or woman may be in a most miserable condition, a miserable estate although they be delivered from affliction: I say, It is possible for a man or woman to be a most miserable creature, though they have no outward affliction.

Yet their condition may be very miserable, because there is evil enough in sin to make one miserable without affliction. Most people in the world know no other miseries than that misery that comes by affliction, and they make afflictions to be the only rule and measure of a miserable condition: so much afflicted, so miserable is their estate; and so little afflicted, so happy is their estate: They think that those people that are delivered from affliction, are happy people; and those people that are under affliction, are miserable people; Oh he has lost his estate, suffered shipwreck, has grievous diseases in his body, is put in prison, and so

lives miserably all his days: thus people look upon men and women in affliction, as if they were only miserable. Before I have done with this Use, I shall I hope, convince you, That it is not affliction, yea, all afflictions, miseries, troubles outwardly, do not make us miserable, but only sin; where there is most sin, there is most misery, though less affliction. It is a great mistake in people to judge of happiness or unhappiness by these outward things: You shall have many people when they see men and women very poor, that have no houses, nor clothes, nor meat and drink, that are fain to work hard for their livings, that are sickly and weak, Oh they be in a pitiful condition: but when they see others provided of houses and land, that have attendance, and are gorgeously attired, brave diet, and good trades; these be happy men.

Now the Point that has been opened to you, will serve to rectify your Judgments in these things, and not to make afflictions or no afflictions to be the rule of happiness; but to make sin, or no sin; or less sin, to be the rule of judging of the happiness of our condition.

It was the Speech of Luther, One drop of an evil conscience is enough to swallow up all the joys in the world, all the prosperity in the world.

There is so much evil: in sin, that though a man or woman had all the joys and prosperity that possibly the world can afford, yet one drop of an evil conscience, the guilt of one sin in an evil conscience, is enough to swallow up all, and make this man miserable in the height of all prosperity. Let a man be raised up as high as the world can raise him, set upon a Throne, having a Scepter in his hand, and a Crown upon his head, having all the Pomp and Glory the world can afford; yet if sinful, yea, if he have but the guilt of any one sin upon his Spirit, this man is a miserable man. But let any one be as poor as Job, and sitting upon the dunghill scraping his sores, if delivered from the evil of sin, this man is a happy man.

I remember a speech of Anselm that I have read; That he had rather be in Hell without sin, than in Heaven with sin: looking upon sin as so great an evil, as if to be rid of sin would make a man happy under the torments of Hell: and being under the guilt of sin, it would make a man miserable, though in Heaven. Certainly then the guilt of sin, makes a man miserable in al outward prosperity; and the deliverance from sin, will make a man happy under all outward afflictions and miseries. So though a man be prosperous in his worldly estate, yet if sinful, that has enough in it to make a man miserable: especially considered in this, if there be these two Branches in it:

- First, If a men be prosperous by sin. Or,
- Secondly, Be sinful by his prosperity.

Then he is indeed a miserable creature notwithstanding all his prosperity, I beseech you observe it, and it follows from the Point that has been opened, that there is so much evil in sin.

As First, If there be so much evil in sin, Let a man be never so prosperous, if prosperity be furthered by sin, or sin furthered by prosperity, he must needs be a most wretched miserable creature. If prosperity be furthered by sin: as thus; If any man raise himself to any outward prosperous estate in a sinful way, although the world may judge such a man happy, having his hearts desire satisfied yet it is most certain, this man is a wretched man. As suppose a man get preferment by a sinful way, Oh his heart is eagerly desirous to get up to Preferment, to get Livings and Estate in the world, and he does strain his conscience for it; and when there is a sin between him and his Preferment, he will get over the sin he will climb and scramble over this sin to get the Preferment; rather than lose the Preferment, he will scramble over sin, and go through sin unto his Preferment: so eagerly desirous are men of Preferment, that though sin be between them and their Preferment, they will break through; they will break through the hedge but they will gain it.

Oh how many Scholars, and others, especially such whose Educations have been mean, when they see any way of Preferment, Livings, or Estates, though they have some sin between them and Preferment, how have they got it, and think themselves safe when they have got Livings and Preferment: Oh these men be miserable, and therefore miserable because preferred, because prospered in their hearts desire. And so for men that get riches and estates otherwise than by right, by deceit and oppression; in any sinful wicked way.

It may be now they have got fair houses, and well furnished, and means coming in, and they bless themselves, and think now they be happy; yea, and others also, they think them happy, and live bravely in the world: but if you knew all, you would look upon these men as most wretched cursed creatures. Certainly those men will one day curse the time that ever they had such an estate, and will wish rather, that they had begged their bread from door to door, than have got their estate by sin. Seeing there is so much evil in sin, let these men consider these things. Such as have Prosperity by sin, let them consider,

1 This thy prosperity it cost dear▪ exceeding dear; of thou make up thy reckoning, and put all in that it cost thee, you will find you be no gainers at all. When men have got any thing in possession, they usually reckon, I but, what did this cost me? thus much, or thus much; and if they see that the costs and charges comes not so high as the benefit, then they applaud themselves as gainers. Well, you have gotten Estates, Preferments, Honors, be it what it will in the world; but what did it cost you? Some sin or other, did you not strain your conscience in that benefit you have got? And if did so, certainly if this be put in the reckoning, if there were any sin in it thou hast got nothing by the bargain.

What hope has a hypocrite though he has gained? though he may seem to have gained his own hearts desire, yet if all be reckoned, put in what sin it cost, and there is no gain at all.

If any of you should go to Sea, and when you come there, you suffer shipwreck, and yet thou makest a shift to get home, by boat or some other way, saving your life, and when you come home, you have brought a toy or trifle to your wife; now has this been a good voyage? do you reckon this a good voyage? perhaps it was for a toy you suffered shipwreck, and you bring this home; do you think this will make the voyage good when you have cast up your reckoning?

How many men and women in the world for trifles and joys, suffer shipwreck of a good conscience? when you look upon that you have got, it is but a trifle and a toy; you might have been happy without it, and you have ventured shipwreck of a good conscience for this; do you think your prosperity to be delighted in that you have got in sinful, and vile evil ways?

I remember the Prophet when he came to Ahab, when he had gotten Naboths Vineyard by most cursed, sinful, wicked ways, 1 Kings, 21. 19. God bad him go and meet Ahab, and say, What hast thou killed, and gotten possession? As if the Prophet should say, Oh wretched man that thou art, thou hast gotten possession of the Vineyard, but hast thou killed, and gotten possession? So may I say to any wicked man or woman in the world that has got by ways of sin; What hast thou sinned, and gotten possession? lied, and gotten possession? cozened and cheated, and gotten possession? Dost thou think good will come of this? art thou happy in the enjoyment of this? Well,

2 Know, Whatsoever thou hast gotten by sin, it is accursed to thee: Thou maiest look upon every bit of bread thou eatest, that thou hast got by sinful ways, look upon it as having death in it; and every draught of beer, & wine, thou drinkest, thou maiest look upon it, as having the wrath of the Almighty mixed with it.

You have got an Estate, perhaps you were poor, and mean before; but now you have wronged, and cheated, and cozened others in sinful ways, and now you have your tables furnish't, and can go to the Tavern, and drink: in this meat and drink of thine, there is the

wrath and curse of God. Suppose a man had stolen a garment, and it proved to be in a house that had the plague; suppose a thief got into a house that has the plague, and has got clothes, and perhaps the bed-clothes of one that died of the plague, and if one tell him what they be, can he have delight in them? perhaps he has them upon his bed, but the plague is in them. Certainly whatsoever any of you in all your lives, have got by any way of sin, the plague is in it: that is a certain truth, there is the plague, the very curse of the Almighty in it.

3 Therefore, Whatsoever is got by sin, it must be cast away, or else thy soul is cast away: It must be restored again, there must be restitution made to the utmost of thy power, for any thing got in a sinful way; for there is so much evil in the way of sin, that God will not have any man by any means in the world, enjoy comforts that come that way; God himself does so hate sin, and he would have all his people so hate sin, that he would not have any one in the world have any comfort by sin.

Therefore as soon as ever any ones conscience comes to be enlightened, to understand what sin means, if they find that there be any thing in the house, got in a sinful way, they can never be quiet til they have render'd it back again; the sight of it strikes terror into them, they cannot endure to come into the room to see that got in a sinful way.

There have been some have got much by ways of sin, and when they have lain upon their sick and death beds, and conscience awakened, Oh they have cried for God's sake take them from my sight; they could not bear such things in their sight, that they have got in the ways of sin.

As Judas got thirty pieces, out of a covetous heart he would have money, and not be so poor as the other Disciples, but he gets money in a sinful way: but when conscience came to be awakened, and terrified, he goeth, and a kind of vengeance goeth with him, he

goeth and throweth it to the Scribes and Pharisees; he throws them down, they were too hot for him, he could not endure the scolding of them in his conscience, they were even as it were melted in his Soul, he could not keep the thirty pieces, they were so terrible to him.

So certainly that's thy 30. pieces, any household stuff, any thing thou hast got in a sinful way, oh it will be terrible to you one day I beseech you brethren take notice of it, any one that has got by ways of sin any thing, it is not enough to the salvation of that soul that it has been never so much sorrowful; all the sorrow in the world, and repentance thou canst have for sin, will not save thy soul, except thou dost restore, except restitution, to the utmost of your ability be made, you can never have comfort and assurance that sin is pardoned. It is an old speech of an ancient, The sin is not remitted, till that taken away be restored.

There are many men and women, if they think if they can get any thing by sinful ways, they will repent, and pray to God for forgiveness, and be sorry, and yet keep that obtained in a sinful way. No, that will not serve the turn, all thy praying to God with never so much sorrow, yet there must be restitution of what you have sinfully obtained to the utmost of your abilities, though the party be dead, you must not keep it.

Suppose whomsoever you have wronged are dead, you must not keep it if they have any heirs, or executors; suppose you know not them, then you must give it to the poor, you must be rid of it. So much stain and evil is in sin, that any thing that comes by way of sin must not be kept. And this is not so strange a thing but that the heathen have been convinced of it.

I remember a story of a heathen that did but owe to a Shoemaker for a pair of Shoes, and no body knew he owed it, when the Shoemaker was dead, he thought to save it; but his conscience was so troubled, though the man was dead, and no body could charge him with it, that he could not sleep, or rest, and be quiet, but riseth

with amazement and trouble in the night, and runs to the Shoemakers house, and throws the Money in, and said, Though he be dead to others, yet he is alive to me.

If a heathen had such convictions of conscience, that he must not keep that which was obtained by sin, if he could see sin so sinful, that what was gotten by sin must be cast out; surely you Christians must be so wise; Oh consider this, you are a multitude, come together, is there never a man or woman's conscience now in the presence of God, that tells them, That there is something that they have gotten by such a sinful way. Now this is the charge of God to you upon your spirits, That as ever you do expect to find Mercy from God, that you do forth with and immediately restore that which you have gotten by any sinful way, it will be your bane, and your ruin, you will venture your souls else; that must be restored, or your souls must go for it; and all your sorrow and trouble, will not do, except these be restored, these be restored to your power; either that, or some other thing in lieu of it, you must not think to live upon sin.

It may be servants, in their Masters service, pilfered and purloined; whatsoever you got for yourselves, perhaps you have spent it, but hereafter, either your souls must perish, or else you must, if God have made you able, restore it, though it be all your estates, you be bound to cast up those sweet morsels you have taken. There was once one that had wronged a man in five shillings, and it was fifty years after that wrong was done, that he sent to these hands of mine, those five shillings, and desired me to restore it; conscience now did so sting him, that he could not enjoy it.

So though it be forty, fifty, or threescore years ago, when you were young, that you did the wrong, you be bound, as you do expect mercy from God, to restore what you have wronged, because there can no prosperity come in by sin, no good, there is so much evil in sin. This is the First, when a man comes to be prosperous by sin, then he may be miserable notwithstanding his prosperity.

Secondly, When a man comes to be sinful by Prosperity: As when a man comes to Prosper by sin, so when sin comes in by Prosperity: And for this, Three Considerations likewise. sin sometimes comes in, by Prosperity, a man is more sinful, because more Prosperous; certainly this man may be miserable notwithstanding his Prosperity As,

- First, When Prosperity is fuel for sin.
- Secondly, When it gives them further license, and liberty to sin.
- Thirdly, When it more hardens them in sin.

Certainly this man, though he be freed from afflictions all his days, yet is a most miserable man; because he is delivered from afflictions.

1 He comes to have Prosperity fuel for sin: That is matter for sin to work upon; so that Prosperity nourishes and fattens up sin. As many men, because they have Prosperity, their sins grow to a mighty height by Prosperity: Prosperity is fuel for Lust, fattens your malice, and occasions pride. Were it not he had such an estate as he has, and a healthful lusty body, then he could not be guilty of so much Lust, uncleanness, drunkenness, pride; so much malice and revenge; the more God does deliver them from afflictions, sickness, poverty, the more fuel has he for sin, wickedness, and the lusts of his heart to burn upon, and grow up to a flame. As it is with a body, those humors of the body, are matters for the disease to grow upon, and feed the disease; they be no good to the body, but mischief to it.

Some men have great big arms and legs, but what bigness is it? a bigness that comes by disease by dropsies, such humors their bodies being full of them, they feed the disease of the body: now be these humors any such things as that we should rejoice in? do they make for the good of the body? they make for the bigness, but not the goodness of the body.

So any mans estate, that makes matter to feed lust upon, and nourish and grow upon this; such a man is so much the more miserable, by how much the more Prosperous he is: as usually wicked men, through the malignity in their hearts, they do make all their Prosperity to be nothing else but nourishment for lust to breed on. As it is with a gracious heart, it will turn al things he does enjoy, to be matter for his grace to work upon, and to further the work of grace: so a wicked heart will turn all he does enjoy, to be matter for his lust to work upon, and to further his lust; the excellency of grace appears in the one, and the malignity of sin appears in the other. Now if sin be so great an evil, then whatsoever a man enjoys, if it be a furtherance of sin, and nourish sin, it makes him the more miserable, a miserable creature; though a prosperous man, yet this man is miserable, because his Prosperity makes him more sinful.

2 If his Prosperity does give him further liberty in sin? As thus, many men that be poor, be quickly restrained, they have many restraints, alas, they be afraid the Law will get hold of them if they be drunk, or unclean, he is quickly restrained; may be he dares not for fear of the displeasure of some friend he depends upon: a hundred things keeps in men in affliction from taking▪ their liberty in sin, which otherwise his heart would have committed, whereas, a man Prosperous in the world, takes liberty, and who shall control him? he will be drunk, and unclean, and break the Sabbath, and who dares control and speak to him? and I beseech you observe this, many men account that the greatest happiness of Prosperity, that by this means they may come to have their wills, their sinful wills, that they shall live without control in the satisfying their sinful lusts; this they account the happiness of Prosperity.

This is a most abominable cursed happiness, to account the good of Prosperity to consist in this, That it gives more liberty to sin; Oh it is a most Pestelentious Power that enables to do mischief, to hurt ones own soul, or others: So that is a most pestiferous estate & condition, that gives a man liberty to satisfy his lusts the more.

Brethren, consider of this, it is a most dreadful curse of God upon a man, that God will let a man go on smoothly in ways of sin, without control, that he shall have liberty without control; if there be any brand of Reprobation that one may give, this is it, as black a brand as can be given, that God suffers a man to go on smoothly in sin without any control, that he can have full liberty. It is a speech of Bernards, Therefore does God spare the Rich, because his iniquity is not found only to DISPLEASURE, but to HATRED; because God is not only now Angry, but he Hates him for sin: that is a Speech of Bernard, Therefore does God spare the rich, and deliver many wicked men from affliction, because sin is grown to the height, that it is above God's Displeasure, God may be displeased with his children for sin, but he does not come to Hate them; they be not children of hatred, because of infirmity; but now when God suffers a wicked man to go on smoothly without any affliction in his way of sin, and so take liberty in sin, this mans sin it is to be feared is grown to the height, that it comes to the very hatred of God, not only to displeasure.

I remember Bernard in another place calls this kind of mercy in God, to deliver men from affliction in a sinful way, he calls it a mercy more cruel than all anger, and praise God to deliver him from that mercy. That is, That he should go on Prosperously in a wicked way. And if you knew all, it would be one Petition to God (you in a Prosperous way, it would be one Petition you would put up to God) every day, Oh Lord, never let me prosper in a sinful way and course, Oh Lord, rather let any affliction be upon me, than that my smoothness in my way should make my sin more smooth and delightful.

I appeal to you mariners, suppose you were sailing near Rocks or sands, and were becalmed, till you come just there where they are, and then you should have a wind come full upon you, and fill your sails to the full, your sails perhaps are all up, and a wind comes that fills them to the full with wind, I but this wind carries you directly upon the sands, or rocks, would you not rather have the wind a little

more still? would you not rather have a half wind? or a side wind? would you not rather have your sails down? or not half so much filled as they are, when they carry you upon the rocks and sands? So here, it is just as if you should see a man rejoice that his sails be filled with wind, and all his sails up, when another that stands by knows, it carries him upon the sands that will undo him.

So it is with a man that rejoices in prosperity, that carries him with full sail to wickedness. God fills their sails, their hearts be filled to the full, with all that their hearts can desire, and they be filled with all their bravery, but this (as the sail) carries them on further to sin and wickedness; upon the rocks and sands to eternal destruction: It were better for these men, that their sails were down, and all under the hatches, a thousand times better than to have all the liberty to sin.

I beseech you brethren, observe the difference between God's dispensations and his dealings with the wicked, and his dispensations and dealings with his Children, in this one thing it is very observable; with the wicked God deals thus, in just judgment he suffers stumbling blocks to lie in the way of Religion, that they stumble therein, and find abundance of difficulties, when they have some good stirrings of their affections, and good motions, and intentions; but there is such a stumbling block they be offended at, and such a thing lies there and hinders them, and makes the ways of RELIGION difficult: but when they come to the ways of sin, there all their ways be smooth, there's no stumbling block lies there, but all is clear, and God suffers them to prosper and go on a pace; the way to life is full of stumbling blocks, but the way to destruction is clear: thus God deals with the wicked.

But with his children God will make the way to life and Salvation to be very smooth and clear; The way of the upright is plain: if the heart be upright, those things others be offended at, and stumble at, they be delivered from; those stumbling blocks be taken away: gracious hearts find the Ways of Godliness, plain, comfortable, and

smooth ways: But now, the ways of sin to God's Children, they be full of stumbling blocks, there God is pleased to lay stumbling blocks; when God seeth his Children hanker after sinful ways, God makes this let, and the other let, this affliction, and the other affliction; one thing or other they shall find in God's Providence to stop them in the way.

A most excellent Promise for this to the Children of God, when God was in a way of mercy to them, you have in Hosea, 2. 6, 7. Therefore behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall that she shall not find her paths: (Mark) when God intends good to his Church, he promises to hedge up the way, and wall it up; that is, the way to Idols, that they should not find it so easily as before: Oh take notice of this, Oh all ye Servants of God, when you have found your hearts hanker after evil ways; Oh the goodness of God, he has laid stumbling blocks in the ways of death; whereas others when they have come to the ways of death, all is clear and smooth before them, and they have their hearts desire. This is the difference between God's dealings with his people, and the wicked.

3 As Prosperity is fuel for sin, and gives liberty to sin, So it hardens the hearts of men and women in sin: As it is with the Clay, when the Sun shines upon it, it grows harder, mire and dirt grows harder with the shining of the Sun; so wicked and ungodly men, their hearts grow hard in the ways of sin, with the shine of Prosperity upon it.

As the Iron is soft when the fire is in it, but harder when the fire is out; so with men and women, in affliction they seem soft, but they are the harder when out again: We have a notable place for this, Job, 21. from the 7. verse, to the 14. there is a description of the prosperous Estate of the wicked; now at the 14. verse, see how their hearts be hardened, Therefore they say to God, depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of his way; because he had said before of them, Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them. Their bull gendreth and faileth not, their cow calveth and casteth not her calf. They send forth their little ones like a flock,

and their children dance. They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ. They spend their days in wealth.

They live merry, brave lives; therefore their hearts be hardened in sin, that they say to the Almighty, depart from us, what need we the knowledge of God? what need so much preaching? and so much ado? we desire not such things. I beseech you mark, and observe what kind of men those are, that so slight the Word of God, and disesteem of it; and that in their carriage and actions, do as it were, say unto God himself, depart from us; for so it is, though it may be they think not so, when the Word and ordinances depart; yet they do as much as if they should say to God, depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy way.

I say, observe what kind of men these are, not men under God's wrath, or afflictions, observe what men they are, and when they say so, I say, not when they be under God's wrath, but those that live in Authority, and flourish, and have delights and contentments to the flesh; these say, depart.

I confess, many poor people that know nothing of God, and that be mere Atheists, that live all their days in mere Atheism, to hear them say so, it is no wonder: But I speak of men enlightened, and where, almost, have you any so ready to say, depart from us, let the Word and Ordinances depart, and that slight God in his Ordinances, as men do that are in the greatest Prosperity, that enjoy comforts, and brave lives, and have the world at will. Now let all such know, That though they may bless themselves, and the world may bless them; yet woe to them, when God said, let them prosper in sin; Hosea, 4. 14. I will not punish your daughters when they commit iniquity: God threatens it as a Judgment not to afflict them.

I remember Origen upon that Text has this note; Will you hear the terrible voice of God? God speaking with indignation? I will not visit when you sin; this he calls the terrible voice of God, speaking with

indignation: This is the most extreme of God's anger, when thus he speaks.

And so Luther has such an expression, Woe to those men at whose sins God does wink and connive, and that have not afflictions as other men.

And so Jerome, in writing to a friend that prospered in wicked ways, said he, I judge thee miserable, because thou art not miserable:

So certainly, those men are therefore miserable, because they be not miserable; and it were a thousand times better for these men, to lie under some heavy and dreadful affliction in this world.

And this is the Second Use, If there be so much evil in sin, then a man may be a miserable man, though he be not an afflicted man, because there is evil enough in sin alone to make a man miserable without affliction.

CHAP. LIV.

Use 3. If there be so much evil in sin, then it's a mighty mercy to get the pardon of sin.

Use III. IF there be so much evil in sin as you have heard of, then certainly this must needs follow, That to get pardon of sin is a mighty mercy. It must needs be a wonderful thing to have the pardon of sin, to get to be delivered from that which has so much evil, that is so dreadful, it must needs be very hard to be obtained; grievous diseases be very hardly cured.

Certainly Brethren, those men and women that do think, that to get pardon of, and power against sin, is a little or light matter, I dare charge them as in the presence of God, they never yet knew what sin meant; and all that I have delivered about the evil of sin, has been but as the beating of the air to them, to no purpose, that yet make but light of the great work of procuring pardon for sin, and making peace with God for their sin.

If all the world were in a confusion, turned into a Chaos, we should think it a great work of God to bring all in frame and order again: Certainly it is a greater work of God, for to deliver the soul from the evil of sin, and free the soul of it, than it would be for to raise up the frame of Heaven and Earth again, if all were turned into a Chaos.

Therefore Numbers, 14. 17, 19. verses, where Moses speaks of pardon of sin; see how Moses speaks of it there: And now I beseech thee (said he) let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying. What was this concerning which God had spoken, that he would shew his great power in? See the 19. verse, Pardon I beseech thee the iniquity of this people, according to the greatness of thy mercy: (Mark) let the power of my Lord be great, and then pardon the iniquity of thy people: as if Moses should say; Oh Lord, this requires great power, the Almighty power of God is required for pardoning of iniquity, as well as the infinite mercy of God.

Oh consider this, you that think lightly of getting pardon of sin, this is the greatest business in the world, and certainly that soul that God does set in good earnest about this work, to get the pardon of sin, that soul is the most busy creature in all the world: never was the soul taken up about a more blessed work, since it had a being, than this is; if it understand what it is about, it takes up the whole strength of soul and body, when the soul is about so great a work.

Therefore you that come to have some enlightenings to shew you the evil of sin, and you be about that work of getting pardon; Oh you had need intend it; and work mightily and strongly indeed; for know this, you are about the greatest business, the greatest work that ever creature was about in the world; there is no creature in all the world was ever about so great a work as thou art about; when thou art about the getting pardon of sin, thou hadst need mind it, and follow it, and not have thy heart taken up about other things, for it is the great work of the Lord, that infinitely concerns thee.

Oh that men and women had clear apprehensions about the sweetness of this work; 'tis true, God's mercy is above all our sins, and he is ready to pardon, and to forgive; but the Lord will have his creatures know, that it is the greatest work that ever he did: yea, and take altogether Justification of a sinner, is as great a work as ever God did; the means that tend to it, and the work of a soul about procuring pardon, is the greatest work that ever soul was about: so you must understand it; and you cannot but understand it, if you understand what has been delivered. This is the Third Use.

CHAP. LV.

Use 4. If there be so much evil in sin, this justifies the strictness and care of God's People against sin.

Two Directions to those that make conscience of small sins. First, Be even in your ways, strict against all sin. Secondly, Be very yielding in all Lawful things.

Use IV. IF there be so much evil in sin, Hence then is justified the strictness and care of the People of God against sin. They be afraid

of every sin, they dare not be so bold in the ways of sin as others are, but they tremble; when any sin is presented to them, they be afraid, and tremble; others go on boldly, and presumptuously, and laugh at such as be afraid; Oh such scrupulous consciences! Oh they dare not do such a thing because 'tis a sin they say! Oh they dare not by any means because they dare not sin.

Thus others laugh at them, because they think they be more scrupulous than they need be, that should be afraid to do things so little as they think these are.

I beseech you observe the perverseness of mens hearts; you shall have them if men offend the Law of man, them that are in Authority, the Commands of men, in things that they themselves will profess to be very little, and small, then they will cry out of such its Rebellion, and Rebels against authority, and they are not worthy to live, and they would have the severest punishments that can be, against them that will not obey mans authority in little things: but mark, these men that will so urge small things, and where they be small, the worse the disobedience (say they) in disobeying in small things. Yet these men that seem very Conscientious in such things, when they see men afraid to offend God, that dare not do little things if sinful, dare not speak an idle word, and be sinfully merry as others are, that are afraid of intemperance, and every small thing, (as they think) these men will jeer such.

What a horrible sin is this?

What! urge mans Authority in small things, and jeer those that be Conscientious to God's Authority in small things! What shall the Authority of man put weight upon small things, and not the Authority of the Almighty put weight in small things?

Well, whatsoever they think, brethren go on, and make conscience of small things, and never call any sin little, because you have heard

of so much evil in it, go away with this impression of the Evil of sin on your hearts; Well, by this I have heard of the Evil of sin, I have learned to account no sin small, though never so little in the eye of the world.

Is it a sin? If so, do thou never admit of it; if it be a sin, abhorred it: let this temptation never prevail with thee; What? will you not do this, you may do worse? This I would advise those gracious and godly, that do indeed make conscience of small sins, and do well in making conscience of small things; I give you these Two Instructions to carry along with you, as you do make conscience of small things, and you do well in it, because there is so much Evil in sin. So,

The First Instruction, Be sure your Course be even this way, that as you seem to make conscience of some things small; so make conscience of all: Let not men of the world, that observe your ways, find you tripping, and have just cause to say, These men seem scrupulous in small things, but in other ways, they give liberty enough to themselves. And (say they) though they will not swear, they will lie.

And such like aspersions, sometimes through malice, the men of the world cast upon Profession. But I speak to you in the name of the Lord, take heed you give not occasion to the men of the world to say so; to say, I, these be so scrupulous in Ceremonies, and so nice in these things; though certainly we are bound to be so, for God is a jealous God, and if in any thing we be Conscientious, we must in his Worship be Conscientious there; but then you had need be so much the more careful, that they find you exact in every thing that you do.

You servants, perhaps you inquire after the Worship of God, you young people; and it is a great mercy of God, that God stirs up young ones to inquire after the true worship of God, and not to worship God in that ignorance that your fore-fathers did; that took up every thing upon custom, or the use of the Parish they lived in;

for certainly it is not the practise of many; nor the command of Authority can make it lawful, if not warranted by the Word: Well, perhaps many young ones now begin to inquire after the way of God's Worship; and perhaps your Masters, or Parents, or may be Husbands be angry, and vexed, and wonder what is come to you; because grown so scrupulous of these things.

Now I say, you had need be very exact in your Masters family, that you may not be found tripping in other things; and you Wives had need be very exact, that your Husbands find you not faulty in other things; and you Children had need be very respectful to your Parents, and careful of your Duties to them, because they be more apprehensive of any failings in that which is due to them, then they are of any thing in the Worship of God; and they know God ties you to the practice of those duties.

Now if you cannot join in their practice, and such Superstition as your Masters do. Now if these Servants be unfaithful in Service, and careless, and stubborn, and stout in answering again: how does this harden their Masters against this way of Worship; and harden their hearts against them? What? You make conscience of Superstition because sinful, and is not this sin, as well as that? to be unfaithful, and stubborn, and stout; if you make conscience of one sin, why not of another? therefore all you that seem to have more tender consciences than others, and more afraid of the least sin than others; be sure you walk exactly, and especially have a care of your duty towards men, with whom you walk; for they can spy you presently, if you trip.

A Second Instruction I commend to those that make conscience of little, of the least sin; is this, Be sure you be as yielding and tractable in all other things as possible you may, in all things lawful: I ground it upon this, Because those whose consciences be tender, and dare not commit the least sin, for any seeming good; they cannot but stand out rather than commit some evils, some things that they be required to do they dare not do, because sinful, it cannot be but in

some things they must stand out, because they be convinced that it is a sin.

Now this the world judges stoutness, and pride, you make conscience of it, but they think it pride, and stoutness of spirit, why? Cannot you do this as well as others? when alas God knows, and your consciences tells you, that you would with all your hearts, but cannot; you should sin against, and wound your own consciences, therefore let them do what they will, you cannot do what is required; let masters rage, and be angry, and husbands be displeased, you cannot yield, your consciences will not suffer you.

Now that you may convince them, that it is conscience, and not stubbornness, how shall this be known, that it is consciousness, and not stubbornness? for we cannot see into your consciences? I give you this Note to discover it, to them; be more pliable and yielding in all other things, and there, to go beyond all other women, or children, or servants. As now, if there be a woman whose conscience cannot yield to some things, and her husband is displeased because he believes it is stoutness, now that her husband may believe it conscience and not stoutness, it concerns that woman to observe whatsoever gives content to her husband in every thing else; & to be more yielding, and pliable, and tractable, and herein denying her own will, to give content to her husband in other things, and hereby he will be convinced, sure she is not stout and stubborn in other things; why? because in this I find her more pliable, and yielding, and willing, than before. So for Servants, if you cannot yield in that your Masters would have you; strive to give him the more content in other things: Children to your Parents, in other things be more dutiful, and one neighbor to another; if neighbors would have you do that which is against your conscience, when you cannot do that, yet in other things yield to your own prejudice, to convince them, that in what you do not yield, it is merely out of conscience, and not stubbornness. This is the Fourth Use

I might here have gone further, and (if there be so much evil in sin, I would) have labored with men and women to come to be sensible of all the evil of sin, and to have stopped sinners in their sinful ways, and courses; and likewise to have drawn sinners to Christ, and to have made men and women to prize Jesus Christ, by whom all their sins may possibly come to be forgiven; who is the only Ransom & Propitiation for sin: for this brethren, is the ground of all I have said, that we might be made to esteem Christ, and prize Christ. And in this regard, though what I have said, seems legal, yet certainly it is a fond mistake in people that think Christ is not preached, except the word Christ be named.

But know all that has been said about the sinful ness of sin, has been a Preaching of Christ, for it has been in way and order to bring Souls to Christ, that I might cause Souls to fly to Christ, and go to him that is the only propitiation for sin, and the only Ransom for Souls.

And certainly brethren, if once these things I have delivered concerning the Evil of sin, come to be apprehended, and the Soul made sensible of them; Oh! how sweet, and precious, and dear will Christ be to such a Soul? and the Name of that great God will be honored in such a Soul: But I shall prosecute this in the following Discourse.

CHAP. LVI.

Use 5. If there be such Evil in sin, hence then is justified the dreadful things spoken in the Word against sinners.

There is more Evil in sin, than in all affliction: That's the Argument we have been long upon; and have made some good entrance into the Application of it, there has been Four Uses made of this Point already, that has flowed naturally from the Evil of sin. There are yet divers more Uses which are of great Concernment: wherefore we proceed to it.

Use V. If there be such dreadful Evil in sin, Hence then the Word of God that speaks such dreadful things against sinners, cannot but be justified of all those that know what sin is. There are very severe and fearful things, revealed in the Word against sin. Now, such as understand not what the Evil of sin is, are ready to think them very hard. For indeed, it is only by the word, we come to understand, wherein the true Evil of sin lies. Paul to the Romans tells us, That before the Law came, he knew not sin: And had I Preached these Sermons concerning the Evil of sin before the Athenians, the wisest of Philosophers, they would have said as they did concerning Paul, What new? What strange Doctrine is this?

And so it is like it has been unto all those who have no other rule to judge of things by, than carnal Reason and Hence. Those who are not acquainted with the mind of God, revealed in his Word; they perhaps have strange thoughts concerning all that has been delivered; and think I have been but an hyperboler al this while: but certainly those that judge of things according to the word, they see that there is a realty in all that has been delivered, and they justify the Word in all; yea, they justify the severity of the word against sin, when they see it even against themselves, for their own sins; that's a good sign, when the heart of a man or woman, does not only justify the word in general, but when the word comes most powerfully, and sharply against his own sins; yet he lies under the power of the Word, and said, It is good, and holy, and righteous, the word of the Lord; though it speaks bitter things against his own sins.

There are many men and women that have some seeming good affections, and some tenderness of spirit, and would seem to melt at a Sermon, when some truths be delivered to them: but when the severity and strictness of God's Justice, in the word is presented before them, their hearts fly off, and they seem to be very hard things.

We have a notable example for this in Luke 20. if you read in the story before, you shall find the people spoken of, were much stirred, with many things they heard of in the Word: but in the 16. verse, when Christ told them he would come and destroy those husbandmen that had used the messengers so ill that were sent for fruit, and the Kings only Son too: He shall come and destroy those Husbandmen, and give the Vineyard unto others; and when they heard it, they said, God forbid.

Oh God forbid that there should be so much severity: those people, in this particular, discovering a slightness of spirit; that though they were people that seemed to have tender hearts, and were much stirred, and their hearts melted at some truths delivered: well, but yet when they heard of the severe Judgments against evil men; Oh they had more compassion in them than God had, & said, God forbid that things should be so hard; What? is not God a merciful God? and we hear of nothing but severity; that there should be such severity in God, utterly to destroy, God forbid.

Thus people now a days, when they hear Arguments of God's goodness, and mercy, their hearts be ready to melt and yield, and they be affected, and stirred; but when they hear the severity of God's Justice against sin, Oh then God forbid that there should be such hard things, God forbid these things should be true.

Certainly Brethren, you cannot have any true meltings of Spirit wrought in you, nor work of God's Sanctifying Spirit, unless you find such a principle in your hearts, as should cause you to fall down and tremble, and yield unto the Justice of God, and the

severity of the Word against sin; except you find a willingness to justify God and his Word in all the severity that he does reveal against you in your own sins. I his is the Fifth.

CHAP. LVII.

Use 6. If there be so much evil in sin, it shew the miserable condition of those whose hearts and lives are filled with sin.

Use VI. Another Use is this, If there be so much evil in sin, Then what a miserable condition are those in that be full of sin, whose hearts and lives are filled up to the brim, to the very top, exceeding full of sin. Is there all this evil (that I have spoken of) in the nature of sin? in one sin? (as you have heard) such dreadful evil in the least sin? Oh Lord, what a condition are those in (I say) that are guilty of an infinite number of sins?

It is said, [Eccles. 9. 3](#). The hearts of men are full of evil, full of sin: it is true of all the sons and daughters of men in the world that their hearts be full of sin. A toad is not so full of poison as the heart of every man and woman in the world is full of sin: and that which thou art full of, is such an abominable thing in the eyes of God, as you have heard: yea, and as their hearts are full of sin, so they be fully set to do evil, [Eccles. 8. 11](#). Because Sentence against an evil work is not speedily executed, therefore the hearts of the sons of men are fully set in them to do evil. This is true of all; in their natural condition, their hearts are full of evil, and their hearts are fully set in them to do evil.

All the actions that ever thou didst do, all the thoughts of thy mind, and the words of thy mouth; all the actions of thy life, ever since

thou were born, has been nothing else but sin, if thou be in thy natural estate. This we dare avow, and speak as in the presence of God, That every man and woman not yet converted, had never any thought▪ never spoke word, never did any action in all their lives, but they sinned against God. And if sin be to evil, what an evil case are those men in, who be so full of sin? in all that ever they did in all their lives, yea, their best actions; how full of sin be those? and how miserable is their condition, in that regard; who have given up themselves to follow sin with greediness?

Are there not some of you before the Lord, whose consciences cannot but •el you that you have given up yourselves to follow the lusts of your own hearts with greediness? to satisfy them to the full? and all your grief has been, that you could satisfy them no more: this has been the condition of many who have lived in a course of sin all their days; yea, and it may be against conscience also; who have been guilty, not only of multitudes of sin, but guilty of such multitudes with woeful aggravations, as against light, against means, against vows: Certainly if sin be such an evil in its own nature, though but any one, if God should set but the least sin, but of thought, upon a mans heart as he may do, he would •ink the stoutest-heart down to the bottomless gulf of despair.

Then what will become of thee if God come to settle all thy abominations upon thy heart altogether? The Floods of ungodly men (said David, Psal. 18. 14.) has made me afraid: The word Men there, is not in the Original; but translated by some, The floods of wickedness have made me afraid. Certainly if God discover the floods of those wickedness that your consciences may tell you, you have been guilty of it cannot but make you afraid: if God come, and set all those sins in order before thy face, it will be a most dreadful Object and Spectacle.

Let me make use of that Phrase, Job, 6. 12. Is my strength the strength of stones? and my flesh of Brass? So may I say unto those who have such woeful guilt of sin upon them; What is thy strength

the strength of stones, and thy flesh of brass? that thou canst bear the weight and burden of so many, and such horrible transgressions as thou hast been guilty of? when thou hearest that there is so much evil in one sin, and that in the least sin.

We read, Leviticus, 16. 22, 24. of the Scape Goat, that when Aaron and his Sons the Priests, should come and lay his hands upon it, and put the sins of the people upon him, he was to go into the Wilderness, into a desolate place among the wild beasts there; to note the woeful condition of a sinner that has the guilt of multitudes of sins upon him; when he is like that Scape Goat to go into the Wilderness among wild beasts ready to tear him. Thy condition is worse, except thou art delivered from the guilt of sin.

I speak of one under the guilt of sin, it is like to be worse with thee, thou art in a worse condition, than if thou were to live among Tigers, and Bears, and Dragons, ready to tear thee: Certainly thy estate is far worse. If thy body were full of sores, thou wouldest think thy condition very sad, it would cause much dejection of Spirit; but for thy soul to be full of sin, to have so much sin, is worse than if thou hadest plague sores upon thy body from head to foot. If you should see a man, all over from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, full of plague sores, you would think that man in a sad condition: Certainly the state of every man unconverted, is far worse, because he is all over full of sin, that has so much evil in it.

As for that Doctrine of the fullness of sin in the heart and life of man, that will require another and larger Treatise by it self; therefore I do not intend to fall upon that Doctrine, how man is full of sin in his heart and life; that may be done hereafter: but only for the present, to present this Meditation before you; If so much evil be in every sin, then the fullness of sin must needs put a man or woman in an evil and sad condition: Psal. 73. 10. God said, He will wring out to the wicked, a full cup of wrath, to those full of sin. Job, 20. 11. there it is spoken of the wicked and ungodly, That their bones are full of the sins of their youth.

Thy life is full of sin, thy bones may be full of the sins of thy youth: many youths, young people, run on in great iniquities in the times of their youth; and multiply sins, and ad sin to sin: well, know that thy youthful sins, may prove thy ages terror; and thou that art so full of sins when young, and given up to all kind of sin now, hereafter thy bones may be full of the sins of thy youth.

Thus much for this Use likewise, because that it would require a Doctrine by it self. I proceed to another.

CHAP. LVIII.

Use 7. If there be so much evil in sin, how dreadful a thing it is for men or women to delight in sin.

Use VII. IF there be so much evil in sin as you have heard, mark then further what follows: What a dreadful thing is it for men and women to delight in sin, and rejoice in sinful ways, to make a sport of sin: What infinite impudence is this for a creature to make merry and rejoice in sin against God? Hast thou nothing to be merry withal? Hast thou nothing to rejoice in but sinning against the Almighty?

What? shall there be so much revealed to thee concerning the dreadful evil of thy sins, and yet you so far from being convinced, that there is so much evil in it, as you rather look upon it, as having more good in it, than there is in God himself, and Christ, and Heaven, and all the glorious things of eternal life? for so does every man and woman that makes any sinful way their chief joy; I say, they are so far from being convinced of so much evil in it, as has been declared, as that they do rejoice in it, as if there were more

good in it, than there is in God himself, or Christ, or any thing revealed in the Word concerning the treasures of the riches of the grace of God in Christ.

This is horrible wickedness: it is an horrible evil in thy heart, that such an evil as sin is, should be so suitable to thy heart; that there should be any suitableness between thy heart, and so great an evil as sin is.

Yes note that thou hast a very cursed heart, that should be suitable to that which is so evil; a very poisonous heart, that there should be so much agreement between that which is so poisonous, and the temper of thy heart: True, a toad will take poison, and it is suitable to it, it lives upon it, and takes delight in it, as you do in meat and drink.

Now those that can make sin their meat and drink; as Christ said, It is meat and drink to do the Will of my Father; so it is meat and drink to many ungodly men and women to do wickedly. Now hereby thou art declared to be a toad, to be of a venomous nature, that hast such a suitableness between thy Nature and sin. Sure nothing but a venomous toad can delight in poison: so nothing but a heart more venomous and loathsome than a toad is to the daintiest Lady in the world to put a toads head to their mouth; I say, none but such a heart can take delight in a sinful and ungodly way.

Suppose there were a suitableness between the corrupt humors in thy soul and sin; yet now thou hast heard so much of the evil of it, it is a cursed madness in thee to take delight in it, because it is suitable to thy Nature: What canst thou delight to drink sweet poison? because poison is sweet, and comes to be suitable because of the sweetness? If thou know it to be poison, and strong poison, what a madness were it in thee, to drink a whole draught only because 'tis sweet?

There is the same madness in all men and women in the world that can take pleasure in sin, because there is sweetness in it, and the suitability of it unto their corrupt nature. There is not only difference, but contrariety between thy heart and a godly mans; a godly man or woman had rather suffer all the torments in the world, than endure that which thou makest thy chief Joy. What a contrariety to God, and the Nature of God? what a difference between the Nature of God and thee? That which is a burden to the Spirit of God, is the most delightful thing in the world to thy spirit.

Yes, what a desperate heart hast thou, that that which murdered Christ, thou canst delight in. Certainly where there is delight and pleasure in sin; sin increases infinitely; there must be most desperate increase of sin. For as it is with grace, those men and women that have gracious hearts, and come to make the ways of godliness their delight once; Oh they grow up in godliness; no men and women grow up in godliness so as these do that come to make the ways of God their delight. If you would grow up in grace, make the ways of God your delight, and then you will grow in grace.

So contrarily, those men and women that come to make any ways of sin their delight, and joy of their hearts, they grow up in sin, in a most dreadful manner. And be it known unto you, that according unto the measure of your delight in sin, so shall be the bitterness and torment that you shall endure hereafter. As [Rev. 18. 7.](#) it is said of Babylon, So much as she has glorified her self, so much torment give her.

So God will say of all sinners, that has taken pleasure in unrighteousness; So much as you have rejoiced in sin, so much torment give that soul. Yea, the time will come that God will take as much delight in your destruction, as you have delighted in sinning against him. [Prov. 1.](#) latter end, God will laugh at their destruction, and mock when their fear cometh.

Is there never a man or woman here in this congregation that has committed sin and laughed at it? or made some others commit sin and laugh at it? I speak to you as in the name of God, Is there not one man or woman whose conscience tells them, I have sworn an oath, or told a lie, and laughed at it? made another drunk and laughed at it? Dost thou laugh at sin? rejoice at sin? take heed, come in quickly, thou hadst need fall down and mourn bitterly at Christ's feet; otherwise certainly thou art the man or woman at whose destruction God will laugh another day.

It were thy wisdom rather to howl and cry out in anguish of Spirit, because of sin, than to make it matter of jollity and joy; Let us all take heed of making our selves merry with sin: We must not play with edge tools.

There is a notable place we have [Prov. 26. 18, 19](#). As a mad man, who casts fire brands, arrows, and death, so is the man that deceives his neighbor, and said, Am I not in Sport? I beseech you consider this text, many of you will cozen and cheat your neighbors, and when you have done, make a jest, and mock of it that you cozened and cheated: so what the Holy Ghost speaks to such a man, and this Scripture culls out that man and woman whosoever they be that ever deceived their neighbor. And afterwards when they come among their companions, laughed at it. As mad men or women (mark what the text said) who casts fire-brands, arrows, and death.

So is the man that deceives his neighbor, and said, Am I not in Sport? and it is but a jest, and a matter of nothing, and can jeer him, when he has done: mark, this is a mad man that casts fire-brands, arrows, and death; Oh that God this day, would cast a fire-brand, and arrows, and every sentence of death upon thy heart that hast been guilty of this, and not humbled to this day for it, Oh it is the fool as I have shewed, makes a mock of sin. What? Canst thou commit a wickedness, be drunk, or unclean, or filthy, and then thou afterward go and tell thy companions, and make a sport, or a mock at sin? Thou art one of the fools in Israel, and God this day casts

shame in thy face; thou hast shame cast in thy face even by the Almighty this day out of his Word.

Certainly Brethren, if we understand what the evil of sin is, when we are in any company, where men and women be never so merry; if there were but one wilful sin committed among them, any one apparent sin, it were enough to damp all the joy that day; and indeed it should be so.

We read of David when he carried the Ark, a gracious work, and there was but one sin committed, in touching the Ark unadvisedly, and it damped all the joy. And certainly, it was the sin from which there was more cause of damping the joy, than from the punishment; for there was more evil in the sin, than in the punishment.

Now you shall have many men and women in merry meetings, and Company, they be merry, and eat, and drink, and laugh: well, but abundance of sin is committed in the Company, but not one whit damp all that day; but can go on in their mirth, and tales, and laughing; go on as freely and fully, as if there were no sin committed. Be it known to you this day from the Lord, any of you that have been in any Company, merry and jolly, and yet sin has been committed before your eyes, and you have heard it with your ears, if it have not damp your joy and mirth; know your hearts be not right with God; and it is a sign your hearts have been vile, cursed hearts, that when you have seen sin committed in your company, yet you can go on with joy.

Suppose in your company, in the midst of your mirth, one takes a knife and stabs himself into the heart; would not this damp your joy? would you go on in your mirth still? would not all your joy be gone? when you be in company and hear one swear, if you had eyes you would see them even stab them selves to the heart: and there is more Evil in this, than in the other; and yet you can go on in your joy and mirth, though since you sate down there has been forty

oaths sworn there. We read in the [2 Sam. 13. 29.](#) at the feast of David's Sons, Abalom's inviting of Amnon to dinner, Absalom bids his servants, when Amnon was merry, to strike him to the wall; and they did so: and then every one of the King's Sons gat up, and all their mirth was done, though they were very merry before. So if your hearts be right when you are in company, and hear one swear, or blaspheme God's Name, or speak against Religion, it would be as much as if one were stab'd in the room, all the mirth of that day would be gone if your hearts were right.

And do not think this too strict, that sin committed by others should damp your joy: Certainly, the thing is most reasonable, and apparent as possibly can be, to convince any mans conscience, that understands what the Evil of sin means: and yet many of you have not only continued your joy, but have been joyful and jocund, the rather because sin is committed in the company.

As suppose one make a jest upon Religion, and scorn Profession, you laugh with them, and make merry with them. When one makes a lie upon Religion, you can laugh and be merry: Oh certainly, if you have any conscience at all, you cannot but be this day convinced of horrible sin against God.

Suppose thou wet in merry company, and thou shouldest hear of a certain, that tidings is come, that thy Ship is cast away, and that thou hast lost all that ever thou didst venture in that Ship, wouldest not thou give over wouldest thou go on? wouldest not thou say it is time for me to be gone now? and dost thou not account more the hazard of thy own soul? and the soul of thy brother? than of thy Goods? Certainly, thy heart cannot be right with God.

Oh! take heed than in your merry meetings; we do not deny but men and women may be joyful, and eat, and drink together, and delight themselves in the creature, but it must be so, that it must be without apparent sin: I know there will be natural infirmities in any action; but I speak of open and apparent wickedness.

Joy must not be when there is apparent wickedness. You think godly people are not for Society and good-fellowship; indeed you cannot expect they should be joyful and merry, but that they should rather be melancholy and heavy, and sad in your company, when they see so many sins committed there.

What would you have them merry when they see the company imbrue their hands in their fathers bloods? would you have the Son merry, when the company imbrue their hands in his Fathers blood? Certainly every godly man or woman, when they come in company, and see so many sins committed, they do actually and really see you stab and imbrue your hands in God's blood: when you rejoice in the Lord, they can be as merry and joyful as any of you all: and have sweet comfort in your company; but not when sin is there committed.

Many of you when you have been in merry company, when you are gone, you can report, Oh we were to day in such a place, and we had such merry company, it would do ones heart good to be among them; we were so merry and jocund, we had a brave time. Well, but was there no apparent wickedness committed in your company? never an oath sworn? no excess in the creature in drinking? no ribaldry talking? you never think of that, as if that were nothing at all, it did not abate the least of thy joy: Certainly thy heart is not right, thou knowst not what sin means, thou must know it after another manner.

One Particular more, because tis useful, and these merry times are most pleasing among the younger people, when they come abroad in company, they will make a sport of sin, and think nothing of it. I will apply one text of Scripture to that sport of young men, when they seek to make one another drunk, or swear, and speak wickedly, and rejoice in it: 'tis just like that sport, 2 Sam. 14. Abner said to Joab, Let the young men arise and play before us: and observe what play this was; then there arose and went over twelve men of Benjamin, which pertained to Ishbosheth the Son of Saul, and

twelve of the servants of David, and they caught every one his fellow by the head, and thrust his sword in his fellows side, so they fell down together: and this was their play.

So it is with young men, many times when they come into company, young profane men, they come to play, and make sport, but it is in the furtherance of sin one in another; and they do but as it were take the sword and thrust it in one another's bowels, and what in them lies, to be their ruin and eternal destruction for ever.

CHAP. LIX.

Use 8. If There be so Much Evil in Sin, then Every Soul is to be Humbled for Sin.

Use VIII. IF there be so much Evil in sin as you have heard, Hence the Consideration of what has been delivered, should cause al your hearts to be humbled for the sins your consciences tells you, you be guilty of: not only those that are so full of sin, but every woman's Child has cause to apply what has been said, and to be humbled in their souls before the Lord for that woeful guilt they have brought upon themselves. And now I speak to every soul, for there is none here but have much sin, they be guilty of.

Now Oh thou sinner whosoever thou art, charge upon thy soul what thou rememberest concerning the evil of sin, charge it upon thy own heart, labor to bring it with power upon thy own spirit; bring thy sin with all the aggravations of it that possible thou canst, and lay it upon thy heart, and labor to burden thy heart, to make thy spirit sensible of it: open thy conscience, and let in all these Truths thou hast heard, suffer the Law to come with power, and though it does slay thee (as Paul said, when the Law came, sin revived, and I

died) though it slay thy soul, open thy bosom, and let it come: go to the very pits brink that sin endeavors to plunge soul and body in eternally; be willing to go to the pits brink, and see what there is in the very pits brink, and upbraid thine own heart for the hardness of it, and think with thy self thus, Lord, what a heart have I? I can be troubled for every little loss and affliction, but Oh the hardness of my heart, for sin I cannot be affected, it yields and stirs not; for any petty loss, or if any cross me, what a disturbance is there in my spirit then? but little or nothing for my sin; Oh what shall become of this heart of mine? what shall I do with this heart of mine, thus hardened from the fear of the Lord? what? will sin bring confusion upon the whole Creation? what shall then become of my soul, if ever I come to answer for my sin myself?

Certainly my Brethren, God must have glory, and therefore we must be humbled for sin, seeing there is so much evil in it: it cannot possibly be, but that God must expect to see all his poor creatures that have been so guilty, to lie down abased, and humbled, as poor, wretched, miserable, forlorn undone creatures by reason of sin. It is a mighty dishonor to God that ever we have sinned thus against him, as we have done: but that we should not be sensible of it; this ads as great dishonor unto God as the former sin did.

When a man or a woman commits sin, they dishonor God in that; but being not sensible of it after committed, is a greater dishonor to God than the commission of it was: and the longer they continue insensible of their sin, the more desperate their sin against God grows: for if thou hast not any sense of sin, but goest on, in a little time thou maiest come to be past feeling, as the Scripture has the Phrase, being past feeling: So many men and women, first they begin not to be troubled for sin, and put it off; at length they come to be past feeling, and if thy heart be insensible of the evil of it, then sin grows exceedingly: So said the Scripture, Being past feeling they give up themselves with greediness to all lasciviousness, and wantonness. What is the reason men and women give up their souls to sin, to lasciviousness and wantonness with greediness? Because

they be past feeling. Oh the hardness of the heart in sin; the stone in the heart, is worse than the stone in the bladder.

Object. But you will say, If I labor to bring the weight of sin upon my soul, you have told us there is so much evil in sin, that if God should but bring, and set it upon my heart, it would sink my heart, and bring me to despair; we had need labor to put off the weight and burden of it then; and yet now, after you have told us the heavy weight of it, do you labor now to bring the weight and burden of it upon our souls?

Answ. Yes Brethren, To bring the weight and sense of sin, is that I labor for; not to bring more guilt, but the sense and burden of sin; and this is not the way to bring you to despair. But first learn what I mean by this, that you may learn, not to be so shy of bearing the weight of sin, as before you have been; but to be willing to take up the burden; for there is no danger of despair in this: If there come despair, it is rather when God shall force the burden of sin upon your souls; but if God see a man and woman free and willing to lay the weight and burden of sin upon themselves; to that end that they may be humbled before the Lord, and give glory to God: Certainly God will take care of that soul, it shall never sink under the burden of sin.

This now, as in the name of the Lord, I pronounce to you; every soul that is willing to bring the weight of sin upon himself, to that end that it may be humbled, and give glory to God; my life for that soul, that soul shall never sink under the burden of sin; certainly God will take care of such a soul, that it shall not sink under that burden: therefore be as willing as you will, to let as much weight of sin as will, be upon your heart, and the more willing you be, the greater is the care of God over that heart, that it shall not perish.

But 'tis the way to despair, if you upon the hearing of these things, come to be shy of meditating upon sin, and be loth to entertain those meditations, that may work the weight of sin upon your own

souls. Now it is just with God, when he shall come and force the weight of sin upon you, and lay the burden of it upon your spirits, then to let you sink under the burden of it, for God to behold you sweltering under the burden of it without pity and compassion; and your own conscience will be ready to tell you so; yea, now the weight of sin is upon me, but is forced whether I will or no.

Now God may justly let it lie: This is a sad and a sinking thought; and if any thing let sin lie upon the soul, that it shall never be purged, it will be this; When the Spirit would have brought sin in the weight of it upon my conscience, I put it off, and now God puts it upon me, and therefore it troubles me thus. Therefore be willing to be humbled, and know, if you be willing, Jesus Christ is appointed for that end to raise you up; and there is as much power in the Gospel to raise your heart, as there is in sin to press down your heart, if you be rightly burdened with it.

CHAP. LX.

Use 9 If there be so much evil in sin, this should be a loud cry to stop men, and turn them from sin.

Use IX. Another Use is this, If there be so much evil in sin, Then the consideration and meditation of all that has been said, should be a mighty cry unto all, to turn back, and stop in the ways of sin. Oh thou sinner, whosoever thou art, in whatsoever place of the Congregation thou art; God has brought thee by his providence to hear or read these Sermons concerning the evil of sin; know that all these Sermons that have been preached unto thee, they be all but as one loud, loud cry to thy soul, stop, stop; Oh sinner in thy sinful courses, stop here, turn, turn; Oh sinner out of thy sinful ways,

turn, turn, why wilt thou die? why wilt thou die? Oh wretched, sinful soul, thou art lost, cursed, undone, and wilt perish eternally in that way thou art in; turn, turn, while thou hast time.

God cries, his Word cries, his Ministers cries, conscience cries, all those that have known what the evil of sin means, cry to thee, unless thou wilt destroy thy self, undo thy self eternally, stop in that way, for it is a dangerous desperate way thou goest in, the very road way to the Chambers of eternal Death.

As ever thou wouldest be willing God shall hear thy cry upon thy sick bed, in the anguish of thy soul; thou wilt then cry, now Lord have mercy upon a poor, wretched, sinful soul: Thou wouldest be glad (I say) that the Lord should hear thy cry upon thy sick bed and death bed: Now then, as ever you would have God hear your cry, when you are in the greatest anguish of your souls upon your sick bed, and see death before you, be willing to hear the cry of God to your souls at this present: and know, if you do not hear the cry of God that cries to you, to stop you in sinful ways; then these very words I have spoken to you at this present, may come in your mind, when you cry for mercy; and then you may think, Oh wretch, now I cry to God for mercy, but do I not remember such a time? was there not a loud cry in my Ears and conscience, as from God, that I should stop in my sinful ways and courses? and was not I then charged as in the Name of God, and as ever I expected God should hear my cry in such a time, that I should hear his voice?

Oh it will be dreadful for you to hear such a voice as this, Because you would not hear me, therefore I will not hear you. Therefore behold, I cry again in the Name of God, stop, stop, turn thee; Oh sinful soul; alas! whether art thou going? from God, from Comfort, from Life, from Happiness, from all good whatsoever, thou art going!

I call Heaven and Earth to record, that these things that I have delivered to you concerning the evil of sin, are the Truths of God,

and have been the Truths of God: And certainly what I have delivered, and you read, concerning the evil of sin, it will come and rise up one day against every sinful man and woman that does go on in any known way of sin; and it will prove as scalding lead in thy conscience: Every Truth thou hast heard, and every Chapter thou hast read, concerning the evil of sin, I say, if yet thou goest on in any one known way of sin, it will one day be as scalding lead in thy conscience; the dropping of scalding lead in the eyes of a man, will not be more terrible to him, than the droppings in of these Truths will be in thy conscience another day.

Now it will be a sad thing, my Brethren, if God should send me amongst you by his Providence, only to aggravate any of your Condemnations: God forbid, there should be this errant sent amongst you, that any of his Messengers should be sent for this end, to aggravate your condemnation: this is that which is the prayers of my soul, that this may not be the errant I am sent for, if possible; not to seal the condemnation of any one soul: But this I know, except there be great reformation among many, certainly the very Errand God intended in the conclusion (though I do not say that is the primary, and first end, but it is that which will prove so in the conclusion) through the stubbornness of the hearts of sinners, that will prove the Aggravation of their condemnation.

Wherefore yet let me labor with your souls; who knows whether any of you shall hear me preach any one Sermon more? whether ever God will call after you any more? to stop or turn in the ways of sin? whether ever you shall hear the Word more? Perhaps God will sear your conscience, and say to him that is filthy, let him be filthy. God now speaks to you, and cries after you, if you harden your hearts now, it is more than Angels or men know, whether ever you will have one cry more. Therefore let me abide here; tell me Oh sinner what is it thou gettest in ways of sin that thou wilt dwell here? what is it the world has to draw thy heart from the strength of all these Truths delivered in these Sermons? Sure it must be some mighty thing when such Truths as these, backed with Arguments

from Scripture, strength of Reason (as all these be) cannot restrain thee. Sure it must be some wonderful thing, that must over balance all these Sermons, and all these things.

What hast thou such a heart, that is set upon any sinful way, any secret haunt of sin, that thou findest such good in it? that by it all these Truths are over balanced? Certainly there is no such good in the world, if all creatures in the world should join together, to give some comfort to balance these Truths delivered concerning the evil of sin, all the creatures in Heaven and Earth could not give such things as would balance it.

Therefore certainly thou art deceived; therefore return, return, Oh Shulamite, return▪ return. Oh that the Truths delivered in this Point might be as that sudden amazing sigh that came to Saul, when he was going on in courses of sin, Acts, 9. there was an amazing Light came and stopped Saul in his course. Oh that God would cause the light of these glorious Truths delivered concerning this Argument, to be as an amazing light to thy soul, to stop you in the ways of sin.

Object. Oh but you will say, We cannot stop, you put that upon our power, that God must do.

Answ. 1 First, For that act (I have told you) what power God gives, though you have none of your own; God gives power for the bare outward act; and do not say you cannot do this; you know what convincements you have had of that, therefore say no more you cannot: And though you cannot, yet God uses to convey power through the Word, while God calls upon sinners to stop and mend, God's way is then to convey power: But in the mean time though there be no saving work of grace come in; yet thus much by an ordinary and common work of God's Spirit may be done, God may cause a sinner to resolve whatsoever come of it, that way of sin I dwelt in, I will never meddle withal; and so there may be a sequestration of the heart from sin, though not a full possession of God's Spirit come into the soul.

As thus, It is many times with God and the sinner, as with man and man; A man in debt, and not able to pay, an arrest comes on his goods, and there is a sequestration of the goods, but so as they are to lie in other men's hands; so as though they, be not quite taken away from the debtor, yet they be out of his power, he can have no use of them for the present, til the debt is paid; but whosoever will come & pay the debt, he shall have the goods.

So with the heart, when the sinner comes to venture on Christ for pardon of sin; the sinner sees I cannot over-rule my self, sanctify my heart, overcome my lusts; however, God sequesters the heart for the present so far from them, that I will not go on in these ways again, I will not follow that Company again; there is a forbearance of those acts of sin; that though the heart could not sanctify it self; yet it lies thus before the Lord, Oh Lord, do thou pardon, do thou come in, and Oh, let Christ pay the debt for my sin, and let him take possession of my heart, but in the mean time, Satan shall not use it, as before; and the ways of sin, those gross ways I will forbear, though I die for it: I will rather sit still all my days and never stir off my seat, than go to such wicked Company; and I will rather never open my mouth again, than swear, and speak so filthily; but Oh Lord, do thou discharge my soul, and take it to thy self: and then comes in a sanctifying work of God, to sanctify the soul, and save it. But

Oh! that I might prevail thus far, That there might be but a Sequestration of the Soul from sin this day; though Sanctification come not in, though the holy Ghost come not to rule in thy Soul; yet that there might be a Sequestration, that the heart might come and lie down, and say, Lord, come thou in, and take Possession; but for those delights and contents, I took in sin before; I am resolved, though I perish for ever; I will not go on in them hereafter.

Here would be a good stop in the ways of sin; for a man that goes in a dangerous way, he must make a stop before he turns, and consider, Oh Lord, where am I? and whether am I a going? and is

this my way? and then he turns. Now this I endeavor, if possible, to make a stop in sinful ways; that you might consider, Oh Lord, where am I? what am I a doing? what will become of me?

Oh! that you might go away with such thoughts in your bosoms. And then follows the next.

CHAP. LXI.

Use 10, & 11. If there be so much Evil in sin, than turn to Christ, and bless God for Christ.

Use X. TO labor to drive your hearts to Christ; Oh then fly to Christ: Here you have revealed to you that which one would think would terrify the hearts of men and women, and make them fly to Christ. One would think that revealed concerning the Evil of sin, should make heaven ring with cries to God for Christ; Oh! none but Christ, none but Christ.

What would become of all your souls, if it were not for Jesus Christ? were it not for that glorious Mediator sent to be a propitiation for sin, and to make an atonement to the Father for sin. Christ is set up as that Brazen Serpent, that al those stung in conscience with the venom and poison of sin, might look up to the Brazen Serpent, and be saved.

Is there any soul, that by all I have said, of the Evil of sin, finds it self stung with the poison of sin? Know Christ is that Brazen Serpent that is set up for thee to look upon. If thou find sin, as the avenger of blood pursue thee, Oh now run to Christ. If thy heart burn, and scorch in the apprehensions of sin; as the Hart brays after

the water brooks, so let thy heart bray after Christ, there are cooling and refreshing waters: then indeed, shall that I have delivered, be useful for the souls of poor creatures.

When the Soul has been before the Lord, crying mightily to heaven for pardon, and part in Jesus Christ, if so be after I have Preached all these Sermons, if God shall hear of Souls, getting alone in their closets, and crying out, Oh Lord, I never understood what the meaning of sin was; Oh what a wretched creature have I been all my days? now Lord, except thou have mercy in thy Son, in the mediation of Jesus Christ, through his blood, his heart blood that was shed for sinners; I am a lost and undone creature for ever: Oh Lord, that which is done can never be undone; Oh Lord, let me find favor in thy Son, here I am, do with me whatsoever thou please, only a pardon; a pardon in Jesus Christ, to deliver me from the guilt, and uncleanness of my sin.

Yes, now will God say here is somewhat done, when sinners cries come up to heaven; what has been doing in this Congregation? what is the matter you come crying for Christ? heretofore your hearts were never stirred after Christ, what is the matter? why stir you so? who has told you any thing?

As God said to Adam, when God called, and he hid himself, when he comes out, he said, I was afraid because I was naked: said God, Who told you that you were naked? So when poor souls cry to heaven for Christ, God may say to the poor soul, Why? what is the matter? who has told thee any thing? As Christ said to the Pharisees, Who has forewarned you to fly from the wrath to come? So God will say, Why? what is the matter? who told you this?

I hope some poor soul will have experience of this, when you go to pray for Christ, and you shall Pray after another manner than formerly, when your Prayers shall be, even cries to heaven; when God shall say, Why? what is the matter? why cry you more than before? I hope some poor souls, can give a good account of it, and

say, I see my self lost and undone without Christ; better be a Dog, or a Toad, or any thing, than a man, if I have not Christ; because they are not capable of sin, and my heart is full of sin; and I have heard the evil of it, and therefore Oh give me Christ or I am undone.

Oh! such a Soul will be exceeding acceptable unto God. And therefore, to such a soul, I propound in the name of the Lord, the Doctrine of Life, and Salvation, and Peace; be it known therefore to you, God the Father, looking upon the sinful Children of men, and seeing them all in a perishing condition by sin, out of infinite bowels of tender compassion, he has provided a glorious way of Mediation, of propitiation for sin; and to that end he has sent his only beloved Son, out of his bosom, that has taken mans Nature upon him, united in a personal union, to that end that he might be a fit Mediator to stand between a provoked God and sinful souls; and this Christ has born the full vials of the wrath of his Father, the curse of the Law due to sin; satisfied infinite divine Justice, made a full atonement between God and sinful man. only upon these terms now, he does tender and offer to every poor wearied distressed soul, al that his Son has purchased by his blood, all his merits, that they might be an atonement for thy sin, a propitiation for thy soul, to discharge all thy sin, that thou mightest come through him to stand acquitted before the father for ever more. This is the sum of the Gospel, and this I present and Preach it, and offer it to you, and this not only to the least sinner, but to the greatest sinner in the world.

This I present, as in the name of God, that is the message we have in the name of God to deliver unto you; and now whatsoever your sins have been heretofore, God only requires that your souls should now stand admiring at the infinite riches of his Grace in his Son, and that your souls should be taken off from the creature, and sin, and live upon Christ, surrender your souls to him, and cast your souls on that infinite rich grace of God in him, and upon that instant, every one of your sins, though never so great and heinous, yet I pronounce in the Name of the Lord, every one of them is pardoned, and all done away, as if they had never been committed,

This is the Sum of the Gospel unto those that come to see their sins, and be sensible of their need of Christ by their sin.

Object. But you will say, This makes all you have done, but a little matter; if sin may be done away thus, what need all this discovery of the evil of sin? it is not so great an evil, if it may be thus wash't away?

Answ. Ah poor carnal heart, that speaks thus! Is this a light or little matter? True, it is in a few words, in the end of a Sermon; but be it known to you, There is more in these words I have spoken in this last half quarter of an hour, there is more of the glory of God in them; than in Heaven and Earth beside; not because they come from me, but because I have spoken that which is the Sum of the Gospel; and in truth, in one Sentence of the Gospel, there is more of the glory of God, than in all Heaven and Earth besides. You must be convinced of this, and know it is so; and if ever you come to be partakers of the good of the Gospel, you will see it to be so.

Oh Brethren! in that I have said, there is the glorious mystery of Godliness; great is the mysteries of Godliness, God manifest in the flesh; the great Counsel of God, working from all Eternity, is in this, in the Sum of the Gospel. The greatest work that ever God did, was in sending his Son, and in the offer of his Son to sinners that their sins might be pardoned. Therefore think it not a small thing, and hear when I call upon sinners to come and cast their souls upon Christ.

It is one of the most glorious works that ever was done, for a sinful soul to come and close with Christ the Mediator; and if once you come in, your hearts will be so full of the glory of God, that presently all the glory of the creature will be darkened in your eyes, and you will be so filled with the glory of God, that you will come to see the filthiness of sin this way as much as in any way. All the Sermons I have delivered concerning the evil of sin, will not set out the filthiness of sin to you, as that glory of God that your hearts will

be filled withal, as soon as you come to close with God in this mystery of the Gospel. Perhaps it is not so apparent to every soul; but wait a while, and there will more of the evil of sin be discovered in this, than in any way.

Use XI. And then the Use that I shall make of it is this, If there be such evil in sin, then bless, bless God for Christ; Blessed is that man and woman whose sin is pardoned, Psalm 32. Oh blessed is he whose sin is forgiven. Certainly it is a blessed thing, that sin should be forgiven; this requires a whole Sermon by it self: I shall but name it now, because I shall (it may be) hereafter speak of this particularly, of the great Blessedness of the Pardon of sin, only take notice of it; any that has a comfortable assurance of their sin being pardoned, go away rejoicing, Son, Daughter, rejoice, your sins are pardoned▪ there is enough in that word to bring comfort and joy to your souls.

CHAP. LXII.

Use 12. If there be so much evil in sin, then it is of great concernment to be Religious betimes, and there by prevent much sin.

Use XII. Again; One Use more. If there be such evil in sin, Then it is of great use to begin to be godly and Religious betimes, for young ones to come to be godly betimes: why? Because they may come to prevent so much evil and so much sin. Oh happy those that begin to be godly when young; you prevent a thousand sins, that others commit by their not knowing sin betimes. True, if there were no other use of godliness, than merely to bring you to Heaven, then you might stay till your sick and death beds, and then be Religious, it were enough: but besides bringing you to Heaven, there is use of

Godliness to keep you away from sin and Ungodliness; and there is enough in that to countervail any pleasure.

Suppose you young people abstain from some pleasure, or joy that others have; the truth is, you have greater and better pleasures; but suppose you had none but keeping of your souls from sin, this merely were enough to countervail whatsoever you suffer in the ways of God.

There are many converted when they were old, and what would these give for to be delivered from the guilt of some sins committed when they were young? When they look back to their lives, Oh this sin I committed in such a family, and when I was an apprentice in such a place; Oh that I were delivered from them! Oh they lie upon my heart! Oh that vanity and wickedness! Oh those oaths I swore in such a company, among young men! Oh those Sabbaths I brake! Oh those lies I told, and the drunkenness I was drawn to! Oh I cannot look back to these, but my thinks I could even tear my heart from my belly, to think what a heart I had, to sin against God, and multiply sin against Him.

Thus at the best, when God awakens their hearts, they would give ten thousand worlds to be delivered from the sins of their Youth: And therefore now, you young ones, seeing there is such evil in sin, Oh prevent it: You know how the sins of Youth lay upon David, remember not against me the sins of my youth; therefore now prevent those sins that otherwise will lie so heavily upon you, as that you will be forced to cry out, Oh remember not against me, the sins of my youth.

Oh it is a happy thing to see young ones good; and it is the greatest hope that God will shew mercy to England, in that God begins to draw young ones on in the ways of Godliness, so that we hope there will not be so many sins committed in the age to come. We have cried out of the sins of young ones; and one Generation that has followed another, has been but like the Kennel, the lower and

further it goeth, the more filth it has gathered; and so the lower Generations have gone, the more filthy they have been. But we hope God intends to turn the course, and to make Godliness as much honored, as it has been dishonored heretofore, and that there should not be so much sin in the next Generation.

Heretofore young people when they had days of Recreation, what did they but multiply sin? what abundance of wickedness was committed by Youth then? and on Shrove-Tuesdays, abundance of wickedness committed by Youth then; and so the Generation was filled with sins of Youth. But now God is pleased to stir up the hearts of young ones, that instead of multiplying of sin, they be got together on such days, to Fast, and to Pray, and make days to attend upon the Word, and so avoid sin: It is that certainly, that does encourage the hearts of God's People to pray to him, and to seek him for mercy, that God gives hearts to young people that they multiply not sin as heretofore.

If there be any here that have begun this, Oh go on in that way, and when others multiply wickedness upon such days, get alone, and attend upon the Word, and recreate your Souls in the Word, and holy conference: true, God gives liberty to recreate, but let it be as it was wont to be with the Companies in London, though they did recreate, they would have their Sermons too. So instead of horrible wickedness that was wont to be upon those days, as I suppose some of you can remember; upon Shrove-Tuesdays infinite wickedness was committed in the city, and thereabouts: we hope instead of wickedness, and joining together in wickedness, there will be joining together in the ways of God: And thus doing, you will encourage us in the ways of God; and Peace and mercy will be upon you.

CHAP. LXIII.

Use 13. If there be so much evil in sin, Then its a fearful thing for any to be instrumental to draw others to sin.

WEE are now to finish that Tractate about the greatness of the evil of sin: It has been an Argument that has much increased in our hands, like unto the bread, the Loaves that Christ did break unto the People, that in the very breaking did multiply; and so has this Argument done: but we are now to put a period to it.

Many Uses you know has been made already, as Corollaries and Consequences, from that great Doctrine of the evil of sin, that sin is a greater evil than affliction: The last day the especial aim and intention of the Application was, Therefore to drive sinners to Jesus Christ, seeing there is so much evil in sin more than in all affliction: Oh what need have we (who are such great sinners) of Jesus Christ, that is the propitiation for sin? I have only one Note to ad further on that, and we shall proceed.

It is an xxcellent xxpression I find in Luther, said he, there is a great deal of difference between the Consequencia Legis, and Consequencia Evangelii. There is a consequence of the law, and that is this, Thou hast sinned, and therefore thou must be damned: But the Consequence of the Gospel is this, Thou hast sinned, therefore go to Jesus Christ; that is the Argument the Gospel uses from sin. But passing by all we have said concerning that Use, we proceed to further Applications that are behind. Four or Five Uses we are to speak of, and then we shall have done with the Point: I will be brief upon the first Two or Three, and the Two last we shall stick most upon.

Use XIII. If there be such evil in sin as you have heard, Hence then it is a fearful thing for any one to be instrumental to draw others to sin. All that has been said in the opening of the evil of sin, must needs speak very terribly unto all that ever have been any way

instruments to draw others to sin in all their lives. Now, Oh that God would speak to every man and woman's conscience in this Congregation, that are conscious to themselves, that ever they have been any cause to draw others to sin: Is there not one whose conscience presently at the naming of this use does even tell you, well, now God speaks to me, for certainly there has been some that I have drawn to sin, that I have been a means to further sin in.

If any one of you have ever been a means, by counsel, or advise, by approbation, by persuasion, by encouragement, by abetting of any, by joining with any in any sinful course to draw them to sin; know, that God speaks to you.

First, God tells you this; That if you had been born to do mischief, you could not do a greater mischief than this is; if you had been the means to undo men and women in their outward Estate, it had been nothing so much; but thou hast what in thee lies, been a means to undo an immortal soul; yea; and to cause them to sin against the infinite God; so that thou art guilty of every sin thou hast been a means to draw others to, and thou art worse than those that have sinned; for thy act in drawing them to it, is a dreadful evil, and then that which they have done is thine too.

Hast not thou sins of thine own enough to answer for before the Lord, but thou must have the sins of another also? Dost thou know what thou hast done, in enticing others to sin? either to uncleanness, drunkenness, to company keeping, and breach of the Sabbath, and other sins: Perhaps thou hast brought them to pilfering and purloining, and many other particulars, and other ways that might be named; for indeed if we should enlarge our selves in this Point, it might well require a whole Treatise, but we must contract our thoughts.

It may be there are some in this congregation, that have been a means to draw others to sin, and they be now in Hell at this instant for that sin thou wert a cause of. What a sad thing is this for any

man or woman, to have this to lay to heart; I know I have drawn such and such to sin, I have been a means (at least) to further sin in them; well, they be dead and gone, and they manifested no repentance before they died, and therefore for ought I know, yea, it is much to be feared that they be now in Hell, and now a tormenting for that very sin I was the cause of, and if the Lord gives me wages according to my works, I must thither to them: What? shall they be in Hell for the sins I brought them to, and shall I escape? is it any way likely and probable, but that I must follow, when as they be there for the sins I brought them to? what shall the Accessory be condemned and executed, and shall not the Principal? I am the Principal, and the other is but the accessory.

Certainly there had need be a mighty work of humiliation, for thou art in exceeding danger that art the cause of bringing any other to sin, for it is that must needs lie exceeding heavy upon the soul of any man and woman; if God never give you a sight of this great evil; certainly you perish: but suppose God do give you the sight of so great an evil, and you begin to be humbled; Oh this very meditation will cause your humiliation to be full of bitterness, and will cause it to be very hard for you to lay hold upon mercy and pardon; when you shall think thus, Ah were it for my own sins only I were to answer for, I might have greater hope; but there be others sins I drew them into, and they be condemned perhaps, and in hell, and how shall I escape condemnation my self?

I do not say that there is an impossibility of pardon, for the Grace of God is infinite; and were it not infinite, it were impossible for such a soul to perish, and thou (that art the cause of it) come to be saved: I say, there is a possibility, but it is as if it were through the fire, if ever thou escape; do but thou consider, if it should be, that thou shouldest die in impenitence also, as the other did, and that thou didest go to Hell, when you two should meet at the day of Judgment, and he should see thee, the cause that drew him to sin, Oh what a grief it would be to thee, how would he curse thee and

the time that ever he saw thy face? that ever he lived in that family where thou lived?

It may be some Parents have been a means to draw by counsel and advice, the Child to sin; Oh the Child when he sees his Parent at the Day of Judgment; how will he curse the time that ever he came from such loins? and such a woman's womb? Oh that rather he had been the off-spring of a Dragon, and the generation of a viper, than from the loins of such a man and woman; you encouraged me to such and such ways of sin, to opposition, and hatred, and speaking evil against the People of God, the servants of God that were strict in their way; and now you and I must perish eternally.

Surely in Hell they will be ready to cast fire-brands in one another's faces that have been the cause of sin in one another in this world: and so Husband and Wife, that lie in one another's bosoms, if they be the cause of any sin in one another, it may cause woeful terror to them, and appear worse than if a Serpent had lay in their bosom; for those that draw others to sin, do worse mischief than any Serpent or viper in the world can do.

You had need look to it quickly (I shall wind it up with this one Note) Whosoever has been the cause to draw others to commit any sin; know this, That the least that can be required, if God do give thee a sight of thy sin, and to be humbled for it, if thou doest go away out of the presence of God, as having an Arrow darted into thy bosom for this, then I say, go away with this one Note: You be bound to make some restitution in a spiritual way as much as you can.

For this you know (I shewed before) in a mans temporal Estate when you have wronged, you must make restitution; if you will have mercy, you must make up the wrong as you are able: much more here, when you have wronged any in their souls; a Soul wrong calls for Spiritual Restitution, as well as Body wrong, or Estate wrong, calls for a bodily, or Estate Restitution.

Quest. What do you mean (will you say) by this Spiritual Restitution?

Answ. This I mean, That if those be alive that thou hast drawn to sin, thou art bound to this part of Restitution; that is, To go to them and to undo what possibly thou canst what thou hast done; and now to tell them of the evil of that sin, and to do them all the good for their Souls that possibly thou canst: Now to shew to them, how God has convinced thee, and what the work of God has been upon thee, and how heavy and dreadful sin has been made to thee, and to beseech them for the Lords sake, to look to themselves, and to consider of their estates, and to repent of that their sin, that you were the cause to bring them to:

And so, if there be any means in the world whereby thou canst do good unto their Souls, thou art bound to do it; yea, to them, their children, their friends, as you are bound to make restitution unto the next friends and heirs of those that you have wronged in their goods, if the party wronged be dead. So if those should be dead thou hast drawn to sin, suppose when thou wast young, thou drewest such a man to drunkenness, adultery, or the like, and they be dead and gone; thou art bound to do good to the souls of their Children: for know, according to the nature of the wrong, must the restitution be.

One text is observable for this, to shew that according to the nature of the wrong must the restitution be to the utmost that can be, Exod. 22. 5. *If a man shall cause a field, or vineyard to be eaten, and shall put in his beast, and shall feed in another mans field: of the best of his own field, and of the best of his own Vineyard shall he make restitution.* This is the scope of the Holy Ghost in this text of Scripture, That if any one shall wrong another in his vineyard, or his field, he shall make restitution: (and mark what the text said) not in any slight manner, but of the best of his field, and vineyard,

He must not say, I warrant my Cattle did not do any hurt, but eat a little of the worst, and I will make restitution of the worst;

No, but must make restitution of the best of his field and vineyard: he must not think to get off with a barren piece of ground, but with the best must he make restitution. This shews what a full restitution God will have. So then if a man has wronged his neighbor in his vineyard, tis not enough for him to say, I will make restitution in my barren ground; no, but out of his vineyard must he make restitution; so if he have wronged his neighbor in his field, he must not go and say, I will give a part of the Common, but of the best of his field must he make restitution; so if he have wronged another in his estate; he must give of his estate: and if the wrong be to the soul, the restitution must be to the soul; according to the wrong must be the restitution.

And I beseech you be convinced of this, All the sorrow in the world is not sufficient, without you make restitution; this is so clear out of the word, and even by the light of nature and of conscience, that they may easily convince themselves, whosoever doubts of the thing; nothing in Religion more clear than this is, therefore restitution is required by God of thee, as ever thou wilt expect to find mercy.

This Argument (if God be pleased to set it home) will make many men and women, who when they were young, were ring leaders to wickedness to others, Oh how forward would they be to good now, they would be ring-leaders to good to others now. I pronounce it as in the name of God, you can have no assurance of the truth of Repentance, except there be some endeavor in some degree to be as forward for God, now as thou hast been in the ways of sin before.

If you have been Ring-leaders to the sin of Sabbath breaking, you must be Ring-leaders to draw others to keep the Sabbath; and if you have been Ring-leaders to ungodliness, you must be forward to draw others to godliness.

Oh take heed of this, it is a woeful thing to draw others to sin, seeing there is so much evil in sin as there is.

CHAP. LXIV.

Use 14. If there be so much Evil in sin, than there ought to be no pleading for sin.

Use XIV. IF there be so much Evil in sin as you have heard, hence then surely there ought to be no pleading for sin; there is too much evil in it for any one in the world to plead for it; to make any excuse, or any Plea for it: As if there be a notorious wicked house where there is much evil done in it, we account it a great disgrace for any to Plead for it: If it be in Question, and any Justice of Peace plead for wicked Ale-houses it is a blot to him. If there were no sin committed in it, it were not much; but if it be a notorious house for sin, to Plead for it, is accounted a great blot.

And now you that have heard of the great evil of sin, will you ever open your mouths to diminish and excuse sin? and yet how ordinary is this in the world? Some go to evil wicked company, and when they spend their times in drinking; Plead, Why? they must have recreation?

I pray, what work do they tire themselves withal that needs so much recreation? what service do they do for God wherein they spend their Spirits? and the strength of their Souls in serving God, that they need so much refreshing? And so when they spend whole days in drinking and eating, why? they do but rejoice in the use of the creature; and may they not keep company with such men that be honest men?

And so any kind of sin, wicked ribaldry talking, is but mirth; and notorious covetousness, but providing for their family; and horrible pride, but handsomeness; somewhat they will have to say, Pleas and Excuses for almost any sin. certainly brethren, if we understood the nature of sin, we would say as Jerubael, Let Baal plead for himself: So let sin plead for it self; never be heard to open thy mouth to plead for sin in others, excuse it in others; much less in thy self. Those that be so full of excuses and pleas for sin, it is an evident argument God never discovered the evil of sin yet to them; never caused the weight and burden of sin to lie upon their conscience, nor what we have mentioned of the evil of it.

Oh! know thou hast to deal with the infinite God, it is a matter of thy soul and eternal estate; and think not to put it off with vain pleas and excuses; but set thy self in the presence of the eternal infinite God. Indeed if you have to deal with your Mothers, or Friends, you may put them off with excuses for sin; but if you would set yourselves as in the presence of God, and there set sin before your eyes, you would not so easily put it off with excuses, as you do.

CHAP. LXV.

Use 15. If there be so much Evil in sin, Then of all JUDGEMENTS, spiritual Judgements are the greatest.

Use XV. If there be so much Evil in sin as has been delivered, then above all judgements spiritual judgements are the greatest. Oh! what a dreadful thing then is it for God to give men or women up to sin, this is the most fearful Judgement that can befall any man or woman in the world, except God should send them quick down to hell. Yea, it may be, if God should send them quick down to Hell,

and cause Hells mouth to open presently, it would not be so great a judgement as to give them up to sin. And yet this the Scripture speaks of; much of God's wrath burning this way; God hardened the heart of Pharaoh, God gives up to a reprobate sense; he that will be filthy, let him be filthy still; he gives men up to their own counsels.

I might shew you divers texts of Scripture for this, but there are two things in this POINT, that requires large discussion.

1 How can God that is so infinitely good, have a hand in sin, that have so much evil in it? we must clear God, that he is not the Cause of sin in any, but to shew how far God has a hand in sin, this would require a long time to open, which I cannot now do.

2 To shew how much dreadfulnes there is in this misery to be given up to sin; to open to you the dreadfulnes of spiritual Judgements will require a long time also: Therefore because I have resolved to make an end of this at this time, therefore I must reserve these Two things to larger discussion. Only thus for the present upon what has been said, let this be the Prayer of every one of you; Oh Lord, whatsoever Judgement thou sendest upon us, deliver us not up to spiritual Judgments; Lord, give us not up to sin; do not punish sin with sin; rather punish sin with any affliction than with sin: when God does come to punish sin with sin, the condition of that man or woman is a very dreadful Condition, because there is so much Evil in sin.

CHAP. LXVI.

Use 16. If there be more Evil in sin than in affliction, Then when sin and affliction meet, they make a man most miserable.

NOW we come to the two last uses; we must insist a little longer upon them: especially the last, as having several branches.

Use XVI. Therefore if there be more evil in sin than in affliction; Hence, what a miserable Condition be those in, that have both these evils upon them, and that in a high degree. That affliction does make a man in a very sad and miserable condition, that sense teaches men and women; every one does account those men and women that are under great afflictions to be under great miseries: well, but now you have heard in these many Sermons, how that there is another Evil, greater than all afflictions.

Now then, what if both these evils come together, and concur both together to make a man miserable? then he is a miserable man every way. Then he is a miserable man to sense and reason of men, to the judgment of the world; and then he is a miserable man in the judgement of the Holy Ghost too; in the judgment of God, and the saints, in the judgment of the word: when both shall come and join together to make a man to be miserable, sure these be miserable persons indeed.

If a child of God see a man in affliction, he will not presently judge him miserable, because he does not know; it may be he is godly, if he be godly, he is not miserable, though he be afflicted; but the world presently judges him miserable, because afflicted: On the other side, the world judges him not miserable though he be sinful, if he be not afflicted.

On the one hand, the godly man judges that man in affliction, not miserable, if not sinful; on the other hand, the world judges that man not miserable that is not afflicted, though he be sinful. But now when both these be together in one man, as a sinful man, so an afflicted man in a high degree; this all judge misery. And what a company of most miserable wretches have we in this world?

How many in woeful straits and extremities, for the body? in their estates, for want of bread, for want of clothes, in want of house, in want of fire, in want of all necessaries that can be; their bodies diseased, full of pains, their bodies deformed, their very parts of Nature exceeding loathsome, unfit for Service every way, in all outward appearance, for their outward estates extremely miserable; and yet together with this extremely wicked also, extremely sinful.

Go into their houses, there is nothing but beggary, and misery there, and there is as much wickedness and iniquity, as beggary and misery: it may be these poor creatures thus miserable, their hearts be full of Atheism, live without a God in the world, know not God, know not Christ, know nothing of their IMMORTAL SOULS, know nothing of another Life, live just like Bruit creatures, in all filthy uncleanness; it may be suffer for their wickedness before men, are whipped, put in the stocks, or cage, lie in dark dungeons, in cold, nakedness, and hunger, and all for their sin and wickedness.

What woeful creatures are these, and how many hundreds, nay thousands, have you of this kind of creatures in this Stepney, that are such objects of pity, that me thinks should make all your hearts bleed when you consider them, and how many you have of them in this place: were it, I confess, that the charge of Souls in this place should lie upon me, I should think I had work enough to do with such poor creatures as these; if I should live Methuselah's days, and should make every day to be more hours than twenty four; yet work enough for all my time; I should think I had little time for any refreshment any other way; knowing how many poor souls are in such a condition that perhaps are not only outwardly miserable, and inwardly poor; but their outward misery, increases by their inward misery, the one increases the other.

As it is a great evil for sin to bring affliction; so a great evil for affliction to increase sin as their affliction does; there affliction puts them upon swearing, lying, profaness, cozening, keeps them from sanctifying the Sabbath, seldom come in the Congregation.

I persuade my self, there be thousands belonging to this place, scarce ever heard Sermon in this place, scarce know whether Christ be man or woman, scarce know any more than if they had lived among the Turks; and yet these poor creatures live miserable lives every way for their bodies.

Alas, I suppose there be very few of these I preach to now, that be Hearers of me now; perhaps God may have some love to some poor creatures that may come creeping into the Congregation, that may hear me: this Exercise was intended for such Poor that might come in the morning, for many of the Richer sort had rather take their ease, and give them room enough; they might supply the want of their room, and yet how few of them come here: they, it may be, are at home (many of them) mending their clothes, or perhaps at some worse exercise on the Sabbath; and thus have neither God, nor the world; are miserable here, and like to be eternally miserable.

If there had been given to this Place by the Parliament, or any other, so much, as that every Sabbath day morning, sixpence a piece should have been given by way of dole; nay, if it had been but a twopenny dole, we should have had abundance; whereas now scarce any once come.

And as, not many mighty, not many rich or noble come, so not many very poor, and outwardly miserable come. Me thinks when any of you look upon their condition, you should have your hearts raised to bless God that has made a difference between you and them: and when you be crossed in your families, think with yourselves, Why should I be discontented because I have this or that cross? does not God make my condition a thousand times better than many hundreds that live near to me? do not I every day, nay every hour almost in the street, see hundreds of people, I would be loth to change conditions withal?

And who has made the difference? who has put a difference between you and them? You that have Estates, and comfortable

Yoke-fellows, and Children about you, that have your Tables spread, and Houses furnish't, and Lodging, and good Friends, and God has made known Himself, and given his Ordinances unto you, and hopes of Eternal Life; Oh what a difference is between you, and such wretched creatures as these are? And yet there are many of such poor creatures thus afflicted, that (may be) look upon themselves, and do acknowledge they be miserable creatures in regard of affliction, but never think themselves miserable in regard of sin, they understand not that misery.

But now I speak to you who have heard these sermons of the evil of sin, or read them, I hope by this time you come to understand what a deal of evil there is in sin, that so you may put both together, woeful affliction, and sin. If there be any here account themselves miserable by affliction, as I suppose (though you be not in that extremity of poverty that others are, yet) many think themselves miserable by affliction, that little think yourselves miserable by sin all this while: nay, some may be have thought themselves so miserable by affliction that you have made out and measured God's intentions of good to you hereafter by that; you have your Hell here for the present, and therefore think you shall have Heaven hereafter.

This is the great argument many men and women have, because they have a Hell here, therefore they shall have Heaven hereafter. But be it known unto thee, if together with thine affliction thou still remainest sinful and wicked, thou maiest have a Hell here; and a Hell Eternal hereafter also.

Mark what is said of Sodom, unclean and filthy Sodom who lived in all manner of filthiness like bruit Beasts; it is said of them in the Epistle of Jude, ver. 7. Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the Cities, about them in like manner giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of Eternal fire. Mark, Sodom suffered the vengeance of Eternal fire, and yet Sodom suffered the

vengeance of present fire; there came fire in this world, and brimstone, and consumed them for uncleanness who burned in Lust; and yet for all the fire and brimstone upon them in this world, the Holy Ghost said, that they suffered the vengeance of Eternal fire; they were sent down from fire in this world, to Eternal fire in that world to come.

So certainly, many people be sent from misery in this world to Eternal misery; and all the miseries on them in this world, be but the beginnings of misery, but as the parboiling of flesh to the roasting hereafter; they have a little heat of misery here, but 'tis but as the parboiling to the roasting in Hell hereafter.

Know therefore, all those that are miserable here, and sinful, and wicked; let them know, the Justice of God is an infinite stream, and there is never a whit the less to run because of al that has run before, but his hand is stretched out still; as in [Isa. 5. 25.](#) after God had spoken of dreadful wrath against his people, said he, Therefore is the anger of the Lord kindled against his people, and he has stretched out his hand against them, and smitten them, and the hills did tremble, and their carcasses were torn in the midst of the street; for all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

Mark, God's wrath is so terrible, that hills and mountains tremble at it: We hope now, we that endured so much shall endure no more; mark what he said next, For all this, his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still: So though God have manifested some displeasure, or brought woeful misery upon thy Body, Estate, or Name, and yet thy heart not brought to the true work of repentance; for all this, the hand of God is stretched out still, and Eternally against thee, if so be thou return not from sin.

For thee to think there will be an end at last, because thou hast endured hard things, is just like the Fool I have read of, one that sate by a running stream, a river, and he would have gone over, but

he thought he could not yet; but there had a great deal of water run away, and he saw it still running apace, and so sate still, hoping it would have done running before night, nay said he, it has run a great deal, at last I hope it will be dry, and never considered it was fed by the Fountain, and was a running stream.

Such is the folly of many people that think because that they suffer somewhat now, ere long they shall suffer no more: Doest thou not know God's wrath is a continual stream, fed from an Eternal Fountain?

Some reason thus, Because I prosper, therefore I hope God loves me: And others reason thus, Because I am afflicted, I hope He loves me: but both these Reasons will certainly deceive thee.

Oh that I had here many of these people to speak to, I would enlarge my self much to them, for my soul even bleeds over them: Oh consider, thou that art under great afflictions (if God have brought any such poor creature to this Exercise) consider you are under great and sore afflictions, and sensible of them; Oh if thou wert but delivered from sin and wickedness, the greater part of thy misery by far, were gone and over: What wouldest thou do to deliver thy self from misery? thou art in woeful poverty, and in painful diseases, and grievous extremities; Oh if one should come to help thee, he would be a good Master that could but deliver thee from thy woeful pain, and thy miserable poverty and extremity.

We know, if God do but give a heart to turn from sin, the greatest of thy misery were gone, and thou wilt presently be in a better condition than the greatest emperor, or monarch, or prince in the world, in a sinful condition. I would but put this to any of those poor sinful creatures, sensible enough of their misery by affliction; Suppose thou wert quite delivered from outward misery, and thou hadest an Estate given thee to live bravely, and in as great pomp as any Gentleman or Knight; so that thou that wert in great beggary and misery, now comest to live like a man of fashion: wouldest not

thou think it a woeful evil for thee, upon a sudden to be put in the same beggary thou wert in before, in rags, and beggest for a farthing? If now thy Estate be changed, and thou ridest in thy Coach, and hast all thy heart can desire, wouldest not thou account it a woeful condition to be presently put in that woeful beggary and penury thou wert in before? This would sink thy heart.

Know, the commission of any one sin, is a greater misery than if there should be such a change of thy Estate; if God should give thee a heart to turn from thy sin, perhaps thine affliction might be taken away, for it's a punishment for sin; and as you know David said, I have been young, and now am old, yet never saw I the Righteous forsaken, and his seed begging their bread. And truly that he has said, I verily believe most of you may say, That in all your lives you never saw one, that you had good evidence of, to be truly godly and gracious, to go up and down as our common beggars in that woeful perplexity. I do not say but godly righteous men may be in want and in need, but for my part I never knew any godly and righteous, but one way or other, God stirred up some to relieve them: Or if they have been forced to seek relief of some, they have gone and made known their condition to others their neighbors, and so they have commended them to others, and those to others, and so they are commended from one to another, that either know them, or by the recommendation of them that do know them, and so are relieved.

But to go in such an extravagant way, from door to door a begging their bread, I hardly think you can give example of any godly have been so: And if God would but turn the heart of some poor, wretched, miserable creature, so that there might appear godliness in them, God would provide for them. Its true, though there be not godliness, we should not let them perish, God forbid; let them not want that which is absolutely necessary, let them not starve; yet the Scripture said, Let them that will not work, not eat; let not us do more than the Scripture commands, to give liberty in such ways as increaseth sin; and let not us nourish that which nourishes sin; but inquire after them that be godly, and relieve them: And if poor

people would depend upon God in his ways, he would provide for them. And know if thy afflictions should not be taken away, if thy sin were gone, thou wouldest be far more able to bear thy affliction: for a man that has a sore shoulder cannot bear a burden, but if the soreness be gone, he can bear it the better: so thy affliction would not be so heavy, if thou wert godly, as it is now; nay, it would be sanctified to thee, and thou wouldest bear them the better.

I confess, this is hard to convince them that be ignorant of God & the nature of grace; but certainly there is a truth in these things; therefore though it be rare for God to come in with his saving grace into the heart of such that be miserably afflicted; though it is true, their affliction does not hinder, for were it not for their wickedness, they might be happy; I would not make their affliction greater than it is, they might be happy were it not for their wickedness: but we see it so rare, because their Education is such, there is no good Principle in them, and nothing to work upon in them; being bred up in Atheism, therefore it is very rare.

But because it is so rare, so much the greater will God's grace be, if God have some of these poor creatures in this Congregation at this present, and speak to their hearts; how much more rare would it be because it is not often seen? what if God pass by great, rich men, Noble men, Princes, and shall look into thy Cottage, and on thy miserable Estate, and convert thy Soul, and shew mercy to thee: What! for God to set his heart upon thee! and give the Blood of his Son for thee! and to make thee an Heir with Jesus Christ! give thee an Inheritance in the Kingdom of Glory, and in Life! to make thee come and reign with him Eternally! Oh the infiniteness of God's grace, that ever God should set his heart upon such a poor creature as thou art!

Therefore go away with these thoughts; Oh wretched creature, how have I lived without God in the world, and look't for nothing but a little bread and drink, and thought my self happy if I could but get this; and thus lived miserably here, and I confess have thought my

self a miserable wretch all this while; but God has told me this at this present, there is a worse evil than all this; the evil of sin I have been full of all my life; and put both together, how miserable are we? and therefore the Lord be merciful to me.

if God strike thy heart, know, thy soul is as precious in God's eyes as the richest man in the world, as King or Prince; the greatest Noble man's in the Land is not more precious in God's eyes than thine.

Yes, and the Ministers of the Gospel be sent by God to preach Jesus Christ to thee, as well as to preach to the richest and greatest in the world; Christ came to shed his blood for thee, as well as for the greatest in the world; and the Kingdom of Heaven is opened as wide to thee as to the greatest and richest; though 'tis true, thou canst not deliver thy self from outward affliction, yet thou maist deliver thy Soul from Hell as well as the greatest in the world: therefore be not miserable here, and miserable hereafter, but look after God, and Christ, and Eternal Life.

Though thou beest not like to be great here, yet who knows but that thou maiest be crowned with Glory Eternally hereafter? there is fullness of Mercy in God.

Poor creatures, if they see a Coach come, if they think a Gentleman be there, or a Noble man, how they run, and cry out, Oh good my Lord, or your Worship, and lift up their voices for Alms.

If an ordinary man come, they will desire relief, and beseech them for a halfpenny or a farthing: but if a rich and a great man pass by, then they cry and lift up their voices; why? because they think there is more to be had.

Oh know, there is fullness of Riches and Grace in God, to turn thy misery to Eternal felicity; there is mercy enough in God to raise thee from thy low, weak, miserable estate, to the height of glory and happiness: And if God cause his Word to prevail with thy Soul, thou maiest go away with the best dole that ever thou hadest in all thy

life. And thus much I thought to speak to those poor people that were both sinful, miserable, and afflicted.

CHAP. LXVII.

Use 17 Being of Reprehension to six sorts of people.

First, It reprehends those that are more afraid of affliction than sin. Secondly, It reprehends those that are careful to keep themselves from sin, but it's merely for fear of affliction. For 1 This may be without change of Nature. 2 Thy obedience is forced. 3 Thou art not released from thy self. 4 Thou art not like to hold out. Also two Answers to an Objection of those that think they avoid sin for fear of Hell: 1. Thy Sensitive part may be most stirred by fear; but yet thy rational part may be most carried against sin as sin. 2. Those that avoid sin merely for fear, never come to love the Command that forbid the sin. 3 They are willingly ignorant of many sins. 4. Those that avoid sin, and not out of fear; even when they fear, God will destroy them; then they desire God may be glorified. 5. Those that avoid sin out of fear, do not see the excellency of Godliness, so as to be enamored with it. Thirdly, It reprehends those that will sin to avoid affliction. Fourthly, It rebukes such, as when they are under affliction, they be more sensible of affliction than of sin. Also there is five Discoveries whether mens affliction or sin trouble them. Fifthly, It reprehends those that get out of affliction by sinful courses, and yet think they do well. Sixthly, It reprehends those that after deliverance from affliction, can bless themselves in their sins.

Use XVII. Come we now to the last thing. The last Use is this (I will but shew what might have been said, and so wind up all) There are six sorts of People, that from this Point are reprehended. You shall

see all Naturally follow from the Point in hand, that there is greater Evil in sin than in affliction.

First, Such kind of people as be more afraid of affliction than of sin. There be many people very shy of affliction and solicitous to prevent affliction, but not to prevent sin. Many reason thus, I had need be a good Husband, and lay up somewhat, I know not what I may meet withal before I die, I may want before I die: many are penurious and covetous, and will not enlarge themselves to good uses when God calls, because they be afraid they and their Children may want before they die; who knows what we may meet withal? and thus they are careful to prevent affliction.

But for sin, they do not lay up to prevent that; whereas we should be very solicitous, least we should be drawn into temptation, and therefore we are taught to pray, Lead us not into temptation, as well as, Forgive us our trespasses: True, God keeps me from such and such sins, but what if God should leave me to temptation? what a wretched creature should I be if ever this corrupt heart of mine should prevail against me? as I have cause to fear, I find such wickedness boiling and bubbling up, and such proneness to such and such sin; if the Lord be not infinitely merciful to me I shall break out to the dishonor of his Name, scandal of Religion, and wounding of my conscience; and this God knows causes the most solicitous care that I ever had, least my heart should break out against God, to the scandal of that holy Profession I have taken upon me.

Oh is it thus with you? Oh this were a happy thing indeed

As when men hear of one that is broke, they will inquire what is the reason; he had such an Estate, what is the reason he broke? One (may be) said, he trusted Servants too much, and that caused him to break; Oh this will cause him to look so to it, that he will never trust his Servants too much.

Another (may be) said, because he lived above his means; and this makes him that he will not live above his means: And another, He will have his country house, and his servants riot at home when he is abroad: and another, He trusted too much, and such like reasons.

Now we will be wise to take heed of that which brings others to afflictions. So it should be with us when we see any fall into sin; Professors that made a shew of Religion, and afterwards fall foully, inquire now, what is the matter this man broke? he broke his conscience, what is the matter? one that had such admirable gifts, and made such a Profession; Oh may be all the time he had a proud heart; therefore I will keep my heart humble: Oh he had Excellent Gifts, and enlargements in Prayer; but he had a slight vain Spirit; Oh let me take heed of this root of bitterness in my Soul: He is broke now, but what is the matter? Oh he began to be sluggish and cold in closet work, and such duties in his family; Oh let me take heed, and keep up communion with God in secret in my Closet, and in my Family: He broke indeed, but how? Oh some secret sin he kept in his bosom, there was some secret sin he let his heart hanker after, and now God has left him to it; now by God's grace I will look to my self, I will by the grace of God take heed of secret sins.

Thus Brethren, if we were sensible of the evil of sin, we would be thus careful to prevent the evil of sin, as well as the evil of affliction.

And so many, for their Children, Oh they will be providing for their Children, that they may live like men, and have somewhat to take to: but if you were apprehensive of the evil of sin, you would provide for their Souls as well as their Bodies; and therefore, Oh let me put him in a good Family, and there he may learn to prevent sin.

This is the First, To reprove those that labor to prevent affliction, but not sin.

Secondly, It serves to reprove those that be careful to keep themselves from sin, but 'tis merely for fear of affliction, only upon

that ground: as if there were not evil enough in sin it self, but all the evil were in affliction. Certainly these men and women understand not this, That there is more evil in sin, than in affliction; if thou didest understand, and wert sensible of this Point I have treated upon, thou wouldest find arguments enough from sin it self to keep thee from sin, though no affliction should follow.

Thou abstainest from sin, what is the reason? not because of any great evil thou seest in sin, but because of affliction; thy conscience tells thee it will bring thee to trouble, and into affliction, and this keeps away sin: 'Tis true, it is good for men and women to avoid sin upon any terms, and this is one motive God propounds to avoid sin by, but this is not all or the chief motive; because of affliction, and trouble, conscience tells thee, God will be even with thee, and the wrath of God pursues thee: very few come so far, to have such apprehensions of the evil consequences of sin, and to avoid sin upon them grounds: But you should labor, not only to avoid sin from the evil consequences of sin, but for the evil of sin it self; for if thou avoid sin only from the evil consequences of sin: Know,

1 This may be without change of Nature; a man or a woman may be in such an estate, as they may not dare to commit some sin out of fear of trouble that may follow, and yet not his Nature changed: as a Wolf chained up, may be the same that he was before he was chained up; his nature is not changed.

2 If merely for fear of trouble thou forbearst sin; then know, thy service and obedience is forced service and obedience, and so not accepted when merely forced.

3 If thou avoid sin merely for fear of affliction, then thou art not yet released off from thy self, not quite taken off from thy self.

4 If thou avoid sin merely to prevent affliction, then thou art not like to hold out; that is a principle in Nature, nothing is perpetual that is violent; and this is violent, to avoid sin merely for fear of

affliction: such men and women will not hold out, if there be no other principle than this, they will fall off at last, they will abate at last, and so they will come to fall off.

But you will say, Oh Lord, this is my condition; I am afraid.

There are I suppose many in this Congregation may, and do apply these things, and it strikes to their hearts to think, Lord, then I am afraid I have no grace at all; for it is true, I have avoided sin, and have not gone on in the same sins others have done; but for my own part, for ought I know, merely out of fear of Hell and affliction, and trouble that will follow, rather than from any other evil in sin: What is there no grace in me that avoid sin for fear of affliction?

For the helping of them that apply it otherwise than it should be, to conclude there is no grace at all. Therefore,

1 Know, That though the Sensitive part may not be so much stirred from the beholding the evil of sin, as of affliction, yet the Rational part may more work against sin as sin, than from affliction that follows. How will this follow (will you say) that the Rational part is not ordered by the Sensitive? Thus: If I put my finger in the fire, there will be more pain to sense, than if I endured that which is a hundred times worse: as, suppose a Prince should lose his kingdom, that is a greater evil than to have his finger a little burnt; yet there would be more to sense for the instant, than can be in the other: But if he come to the Rational part, to choose which he will take, he will rather take that which is most painful for the present. So the troubled soul, though to sense it find more from the fear of evil; but if it were put to its choice, he will choose any affliction rather than sin; so that the Rational part fears its sin more than its affliction: For if it were thus, that it might have its choice, that it might commit such a sin without any affliction, or such an affliction without sin; which will you take? Certainly that soul in the rational part, will choose the affliction without sin, rather than the sin without the affliction.

But yet I have here more to say to such, to satisfy the consciences of those that are troubled, and that say they be afraid that they avoid sin from fear of affliction: To see if there may not yet be grace.

2 Know therefore, That man or woman that avoids sin merely from fear of affliction, though he avoids the sin, he never comes to love the command that forbids that sin; but is weary of God's Command: But now a soul that does not only avoid sin through fear, but withal has a love to that command that binds his Spirit also: if thou find it thus, that thou hast a love to that command that forbids that sin that thou doest avoid; certainly thou doest not avoid it merely from fear of affliction.

Those that avoid sin merely from fear of affliction, they do not commit sin because they dare not; but in the mean time would be glad if there were no command against it. As it was the Speech of one that cried out, Oh that God had never made the seventh commandment: He had an enlightened conscience, but a filthy heart; but conscience now stood in his way, he hates therefore the Command that forbid that sin; Oh that that Command had never been made, said he. So those that merely refrain sin from fear of trouble and Hell, though they keep from the sin, yet they never love the Command that forbids sin: But if thy heart close with the Command, and said it is good, holy, and righteous, and blessed be God for this holy Law; peace be to thy soul: it is not thy case to avoid sin for fear of affliction, but for sin it self.

3 To satisfy those consciences: Those that avoid sin merely from fear of affliction, they are willingly ignorant of many sins; they do willingly turn their eyes from the Law of God that forbids sin: True, they dare not go on in the commission of those sins directly against conscience, conscience will not suffer them: now because they have a mind to sin, they wink with their eyes, and be loth to be convinced that it is a sin, because that they have a heart delighting to close with the sin: there is a great deal of deceit this way.

But now when a mans or a woman's conscience tells them this; It is the desire of my soul to know any sin, and if I find there be a sin that I am ignorant of in the way I walk, I could spend night and day till I come to know it; and when I have found it out, I hope my Soul should come to rejoice that God has revealed that to be sin, that before I knew not to be sin. But now one that avoids sin for fear of affliction, if he know it not, he can go on quietly, and therefore is willing to go on in that ignorance, and therefore is loth to take pains to know a sin to be sin; if he have any fear of, or suspicion that such a gainful way, or pleasant way be sin, if he fear it, said he, give me time to examine whether it be sin or no, & he is willing to pass over examination, that so he may go on & enjoy his lust without fear.

But now where the heart is right, if there come to be suspicion that such a way is sinful, though I have got never so much by it, yet it must be left off; I must, if this be sin, come to live lower than I have done; yea, my conscience tells me, if this be found to be sin, I must come down; yet my heart tells me, I would with all my heart know it, and ask counsel of them that know the mind of God, and beg of God that he would discover to me whether this be a sin or no. But now those that avoid sin for fear, they when they ask counsel, will be sure to ask their advice (whether such a sin be a sin or no) that be of their mind.

4 Those men that are willing to avoid sin, not out of fear, but because of the evil of sin it self, they shall find this disposition in their souls; At such a time as they be even afraid God will destroy them for sin, they even then desire God may be glorified; though I perish, let God be glorified. But those that avoid sin out of fear, when they apprehend there is no hope, they be ready to fly in God's face: nay, if I must be damned, I will be damned for somewhat; if I must perish, I will perish for somewhat: But that soul that fears sin for the evil of it, it said, well, though I perish, and am damned, yet let God be glorified, though I perish: Certainly thou avoidest not sin merely out of fear.

5 Again, Those that avoid sin out of fear, they do not see the beauty and excellency of godliness in others, so as to be enamored with it. Some avoid sin out of dislike and hatred of sin; and doest thou see a beauty in these, and doest thou say, Oh that I were in such a condition. Those that can see the excellency of grace in others, and prize and love it in others; certainly there is some Seed of that grace in their souls. So now, they that have no grace, envy others that have grace: but they that have grace rejoice in those that they see have any grace. This is the second Particular, rebuking those that avoid sin merely out of fear of affliction, together with satisfaction to that case of conscience, because I know it lies heavy upon men and women's Souls

Thirdly, The Consideration of this Point, does rebuke such as are so shy of affliction as that they will fall into sin to prevent affliction. Certainly this is a foolish choice, for any to be so afraid of affliction, as to prevent affliction, rather venture upon sin. As if a man should see a Craggy way, and he will rather turn into a puddlely way, one all mire and dirt, than endure one hard and craggy: Thou seest the ways of God hard and craggy, and thou turnest into the puddlely and dirty ways of sin to avoid that hard craggy way: well, if God have a love to thee, he will bring thee back again, and thou must go that way that thou wilt not now.

Augustine has this expression in his Confessions, said he, when God first convinced me, I was convinced of the rightness of God's way, but I saw the trouble in it, and I cried out, it pleaseth not me well to go in such troublesome ways.

So many men and women, be convinced of God's ways, but they shall suffer such trouble in them, and they must go through such traits; and to prevent this, they will choose sin. Certainly Brethren, it was not long, since there was a time, that those that made conscience of sin, were subject to many troubles, and suffered much; when (we know) if a man departed from evil, it was enough to make him a prey: I beseech you, see if you did not (to prevent

some suffering) commit some sin: Some of you when brought to be sworn Vassals to those Courts, that never were by God's Institution; had you not some remorse in conscience? (I mean the Church-Wardens, as they styled them) and when you were put to such Oaths, had you never inward regret in your consciences? but yet you must be excommunicated if you did not take the Oath; and if you did, then you bound yourselves, not only to be their Vassals (which were not of God) but besides, you bound yourselves to be Persecutors of the Saints by it: for certainly, the fulfilling of all their Cannons, it was merely persecution, and yet you were their sworn Vassals; and yet because you were afraid of trouble, you ventured and made bold with your conscience.

Oh look back to these things. If you will say, now Ministers speak against such things; you should have done so two or three years ago. For my own part, I did then, two, three, four, or five years ago, and was of the same mind I am now; and through the strength of Christ and God's mercy to me, I ventured somewhat, and therefore I may the more freely and boldly speak now; not because it was merely to keep from danger that I have spoke no more, for I did speak it heretofore. But now look back what regret of conscience you had; and yet merely for fear of affliction, thou passedst through that regret of conscience: It were just with God to make affliction more sore and heavy; and those that will avoid the affliction by sin, God may justly bring back that affliction: But this would be a large Argument, to speak to those that will not venture upon suffering, but run upon sin.

Fourthly, This rebukes such, that when they be under affliction, yet they be a great deal more sensible of affliction than of sin. This is against the Point, that said there is more evil in sin than in affliction; and yet when you be under affliction, you be more sensible of the evil of affliction than of sin. There be divers sorts of these, and divers things to be said to these.

1 As some profane wicked men that commit horrible wickedness, that it is a wonder their conscience flies not in their faces, and tears not their hearts out of their bosom, for the woeful guilt upon them; and yet they are never stirred: But when God's hand is upon them, in some grievous sickness, they cry out for pain, but not one whit sensible of sin, that never comes in their minds; but their pains and disease: and when their friends come, they complain of grievous nights, and what heat they be in with their fever, and how they burn, and have been tormented, but not a word of sin; all their guilt, the Sabbath breaking, oaths, company keeping, opposition of goodness, this lies not upon their conscience at all: Oh! these be wretched creatures, besotted, guilty, hard hearted, left of God to the day of His Righteous Judgement.

2 Others, when they be under God's hand, they lie fretting, and vexing, and murmuring, and repining: As Solomon said, [Prov. 19. 3.](#) Man perverts his way, and his heart frets against God: First perverts his way, and yet when God's hand is upon them, fret against God's way; thou shouldst fret against thine own heart for sin; but thou fretest against God for affliction.

3 A Third sort, and these principally I intend, and they be such that when they be in affliction, will complain much of sin, and seem to put all the trouble upon sin; but in truth their trouble is more for affliction than sin. Now I would find out these (it will require time) I suppose I might cull out a great many that it may be make a great complaint of sin, and yet the truth is, that which lies at the heart and pincheth there, is affliction rather than sin.

How do you know this? If a man come and complain, Oh this wretched heart of mine, and pray help me against it; how can you tell it is for affliction and not for sin? Perhaps they have had great loss by Sea; brought their names into disgrace, lost such a friend, are pinched with poverty; and then come and lay all upon sin: whereas it is the affliction that lies in the heart, this pincheth them most. Many men and women, account it a kind of shame to

complain of affliction, this they think a disgrace, and therefore that they might not have the disgrace of complaining of affliction, they turn all upon sin; and tis sin troubles them. Now I would find them out thus.

1 You shall find many that come and complain of sin: who do they complain to? to strangers, that know little of them and their condition, rather than to others that are acquainted with al their ways, and their whole-courses, though able to help them: for there is a great deal of Suspicion in that; for certainly if your heart be right, you will make complaint to those that know most of your ways and courses; but those that be strangers, you can go and complain to in some general way; and perhaps to some that may be some way able to help and relieve you in affliction; but will not complain to those that may help you against sin, if they be not able to help otherwise.

2 Another is this, Those that make complaint of sin (and indeed not true) it is affliction, not sin; you may know it by this, Though they complain of sin, it is in general terms, Oh! they be vile sinful creatures, but never come to rip up the secrets of their hearts to those that they complain unto: But now any secret sins that might cause shame, they be kept in, and never opened. But that is their general complaint, That they be vile sinful creatures; whereas if it were sin that lay upon thy heart, thou wouldest come and open all thy secret sins to those that are faithful and willing and able to help thee, if thou judgest them faithful, if thou dost not judge them so, why complainest thou, to them? if thou thinkest they be, thou wilt be willing to open all thy sins to them. But if thou art all upon general terms, it is a dangerous sign, it is affliction, and not sin.

3 Again, Many complain to others, but very little between God and their own Souls in secret; their complaints be more large, when they come to them than when they are between God and their own souls in their closets: now if it be for thy sin thou complainest, then though thou dost complain to them that through God's blessing

may help, yet thy chief complaint will be to God at the throne of grace, and there thou wilt pour forth thy soul in the bitterness of thy heart. Many come to the Minister and complain That they be wretched sinners, but scarce go to God in secret: or content themselves with some Prayers, just as they are in the Book, or the like, but never pour forth their souls in secret for sin. This is another Note that it is rather for affliction, than for sin.

4 Another Note is this, If it be for affliction more than for sin, any one that has grief upon them, according to that grief that is upon them, they be ready to aggravate that grief: As thus, suppose a man or a woman troubled for the death of their Father, or Husband, or Wife, Oh such a ones dear friend is dead, father dead, or husband, or wife is dead; well, they be mightily troubled and perplexed for this: Now if any come and speak any thing to aggravate their sorrow, they close with it presently; as thus, You complain of sorrow for your father; I he was a loving father, and they presently close with it, and this aggravates their sorrow; and so you have lost your husband; Oh! never woman lost so precious a husband as I! so that which is spoken to aggravate that which lies upon the spirits of men and women they be ready to close withal.

So now, if you would know what lies upon your spirits, when men and women be troubled, for trial, what they be troubled for, here is the art of a Minister, or a Christian to find out what lies upon the spirits of men or women; some say sin; well, but it may be its not that; how shall we find it out? Thus, Whatsoever lies upon the heart that troubles them, they will be very willing to acknowledge any thing said to aggravate it that lies upon their Spirits most. If any come and tell them of the Evil of sin, and aggravate it, and say, This is an evil condition, and you must be humbled for it, and thoroughly apply the Word of God to them, to shew how deeply they are to be humbled, and lay sin before them in its right colours: if sin trouble them, they join with it, and say, It is evil indeed, the Lord humble me, and shew me more of this Evil of sin, and they like that Word of God that lays home the Evil of sin most.

But if it be not sin that they are troubled for, by these speakings against sin their hearts be hardened, and their hearts rise against the aggravation of sin; but if it be affliction, come and pity and condole them, and say, Alas! you have such sorrows, and troubles, and Oh! poor creatures it is pity but some others should help you; I, they take this, and this aggravates their sorrow.

'Tis observable in David when he fled from Absalom, how ready he was to entertain any thing that might aggravate his sorrow. When Ziba came and accused Mephibosheth, though it were very unlikely, he presently embraceth it. So when a man is under affliction, he will readily hear, and embrace what may aggravate it, and a man under trouble for sin, will readily embrace that which will aggravate his sin; this is an excellent Note to come to know where the burden pincheth, whether it be sin, or affliction.

5 The last Note to try whether sin or affliction trouble thee, is this, There is according to the trouble of the heart for sin, a favoring of Spirit to the contrary good: thy heart will in some measure have a love to, and a favor and relish of that spiritual grace contrary to that sin of thine that thou complainest of. But now you have many that complain of sin, they say, but yet their hearts be still as unsavory, and they do no more relish spiritual and heavenly things, contrary to that sin that they complain of, than ever they did before. Therefore the burden and weight lies not upon sin, but affliction. Take heed, examine thine own heart, there is much deceitfulness in the spirits of men and women. Thou takest the name of God in vain, when thou comest and complainest of sin, and the truth is, thine affliction is upon thee, and if thine affliction were gone, thou wert well enough: perhaps thou art crossed in thy family, if that were taken away thou wert well enough for all sin. Therefore be sure thou beest faithful with God, and thine own Soul.

A Fifth sort of people to be reprehended are such that get out of affliction by sinful ways, and think they do well. But if there be more Evil in sin than in affliction, Then it must be a woeful getting

out if by way of sin. Many people in straits, if they can get out any way, by hook or by crook, so they get out, they care not how: what! hast thou gotten out of prison by sin? thou hast broke prison.

Just like a malefactor that has broke prison, but then there is hue and cry sent after him, and the Constable pursues him, and if he be taken, he is laid in the dungeon, and bolts put upon him, and is used more hardly. So I say, if thou art in any affliction, thou shouldest lie there till God let thee out; but if you break out before God let you out, hue and cry follows you and you will be certainly ever taken; the Remedy is worse than the disease: this is to skip out of the Frying-pan into the Fire. Like a man in a burning fever, should he drink a pint of cold water to ease himself, this may ease him a while, but he is scorched and parched with heat afterward.

This is like as if a man should run from a little Cur that barks at him, and he runs into the mouth of a Lyon. Are you in affliction, and to prevent it run to sin? This is just as if some little Whelp should come at thee, and thou runnest from it to a Lyon. So much difference there is between sin and affliction: Just as if you should say, God will not, and therefore the Devil shall: every man that takes sin to help him, does as much as if he should say, well, I see God will not help, therefore the Devil must.

For what God does, he does by Lawful means, and if thou must not have it by Lawful means, thou must say, well, this way I shall not have help, and yet thou wilt have it, and therefore thou wilt to the Devil for it. Certainly if thou knewest all, thou wouldest have little comfort in this. Wilt thou break thy bounds in sinful ways to get out of affliction? As many apprentices, because their Masters chastise them, run away into many hardships: So many men and women, because they have crosses in their yoke-fellows, break away, and will not live together.

There are a hundred other particulars I might shew how men break from affliction by sinful ways: but I must hasten, only take that

place for this in Jeremiah, 28. 13. Go tell Hananiah, saying, thus said the Lord, Thou hast broken the yokes of Wood, but thou shalt make for them, yokes of Iron: When God sent a yoke of Wood to declare what affliction the people should bear, Hananiah breaks it; yea said God, has he broke them? go tell him, he shall have a yoke of Iron. Thou breakest off the yoke of affliction; know from God, thou shalt have a yoke of Iron.

Sixthly, This reprehends those, that after deliverance from affliction, can bless themselves in their sin, though they be not delivered from that. There was such a sickness thou hadest, and there thou laiest in anguish of Spirit, and every one thought thou wouldest die, then thou thoughtest thou shouldest to Hell; well, thou art delivered, and art as bad as ever, as unclean as ever, as covetous as ever, as malicious and profane as ever; Oh know thy condition is woeful.

I remember Austin has this speech of one, Thou hast lost the benefit of affliction as well as thou hast lost the affliction: Oh it is a heavy loss, to lose affliction without profit, for this is the last means God usually useth, and therefore thou art worse than before thou wert.

It may be thou wert troubled with the stone, and thou art cut of the stone, but hast as hard a heart as ever; What is the stone gone from the bladder, and the stone in the heart still? Oh! God it may be sent this to cure thy heart, and thou art delivered from the one, and thou art glad of that; Oh know, that thou art in a woeful case, for sin by this means has gotten firmer root, because it has withstood affliction; as if the Arrow were taken out, and the venom still remains.

Now all I shall say is this, The Lord seal all these Truths about the Evil of sin upon your hearts, all I have said of the Evil of sin. I must be brought at the day of Judgment to avouch and justify what I have delivered: and know every one of you here, at that great audit day,

must be brought to answer, what, and how you have heard, and what effect it has had upon you all. Consider what has been said, and the Lord give you understanding in all things.

FINIS.

MONERGISM BOOKS

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