

Monergism

A COMPLETE COLLECTION OF
FAREWELL SERMONS
BY VARIOUS PURITAN AUTHORS

SERMONS OF THE GREAT EJECTION

*Thomas Manton, Thomas Watson, Thomas Brooks, Joseph Caryl,
William Jenkin, William Bates, and more*

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A Complete Collection of Farewell Sermons

by Various Authors

preached by

Mr. Calamy, Dr. Manton, Mr. Caryl, Mr. Case, Mr. Jenkins, Mr.
Baxter, Dr. Jacomb, Dr. Bates,

Mr. Watson, Mr. Lye, Mr. Mead, Dr. Seaman, Mr. Venning, Mr.
Brooks,

Mr. Collings, Mr. Newcomen, Mr. Beerman, Mr. Cradacott, Mr.
Sclater, Mr. Pledger,

Mr. Bull, Mr. Lamb, Mr. Wadsworth, Mr. Cooper, Mr. G. N, Mr.
Gaspine, Mr. Evank, Mr. George Thorn.

Together, With Mr. Ash his Funeral Sermon, Mr. Nalton's Funeral
Sermon, Mr. Lye's Rehearsal at the conclusion of the last Morning
Exercise, at Alhallowes Lombard-street, Mr. Calamy's Sermon
Preached at Aldermanbury, December. 28th. last. With their several
Prayers.

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01. Mr. Calamy's First Sermon

And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait, let us fall now into the hand of the Lord (for his mercies are great) and let me not fall into the hand of man - 2 Sam. 24:14.

In which words we have three Parts.

1. David's great perplexity & distress, I am in a great strait.
2. David's Resolution.
 1. Affirmative, let us fall into the hands of the Lord.
 2. Negative, let me not fall into the hands of man.
3. We have the Reasons of David's choice, for the Mercies of God are great. The mercies of wicked men are cruel; therefore let me not fall into the hands of men: but the mercies of God are many, and great; therefore let us now fall into the hands of God.
 1. For the first, that is, David's great distress, wherein we must speak.
 1. To the distress itself: Then
 2. To the person thus perplexed: I am in a great strait: David a great man, David a Godly man.

1. In the perplexity itself we shall consider,

1. The reality of this perplexity.

2. The greatness of it.

1. For the reality of it: after David had sinned in numbering the people, God sends the Prophet Gad to him, and puts three things to his choice, as you may read in verse 12. God was determined to make David smart for numbering the people, but leaves it to David's liberty, whether he would have seven years famine, or three months to flee before his enemies, or three days pestilence: This was a posing question, and David had cause to be in a great strait; for these objects are not amiable in their own nature, they are objects to be avoided and declined; in the first view of them they seem to be equally miserable, therefore David had cause to say he was in a strait.

2. This perplexity was not only real, but exceeding great: I am in a great strait: and there were two things made this so great.

1. The greatness of the punishments proposed, Famine, Sword, and Plague: these are the three ways with which God sweeps mankind from off the Earth: these are Gods three Iron whips, by which he chastiseth sinful man: these are the three Arrows shot out of the Quiver of Gods wrath, for the punishment of man; they are as one calleth them, *Tonsurae humani generis*. In Rev. 6. you shall read of four Horses, when the four first Seals were opened, a white Horse, a red Horse, a black Horse, and a pale Horse: After Christ had ridden on the white Horse, propagating the Gospel, then follows the red Horse, a type of War; then the black Horse, a Hieroglyphic of Famine: then the pale Horse, the emblem of Pestilence. Now God was resolved to ride on one of these Horses, and David must choose upon which God should ride: this is a great strait: let me present David's lifting up his eyes to Heaven, and speaking to God thus; O my God, what is this message thou hast sent me? thou offerest me three things: I am in a strait, I know which to refuse, but which to

choose I know not: Shall the Land of Canaan a land flowing with milk and honey, shall this land endure seven years famine, and be turned into a Wilderness, and dispeopled? and shall I, whose hands thou hast taught to fight, and whose fingers to war, shall I that have subdued all mine enemies, shall I in my old age, and all my Captains, fly three months before our enemies, and be driven to Caves and Rocks to hide ourselves? O thou my God, who art my refuge, shall I and my people be a prey to the Pestilence, that walketh in darkness and destruction, that walketh at noon day? O my God, I know not what to do, I am in a great strait.

2. The second reason why this strait was so great, was because of the guilt of sin that lay on David's spirit: for David knew that this severe message was the fruit of the sin he committed in numbering the people. But you will say, Why, was it a sin in David to number the people? Moses had often numbered the people, three times, and it was not counted sin. Josephus answereth, the sin of David was, because he did not require the half shekel, which he was to have had from all that were numbered, Exod. 30:12, 13.

Others say he sinned in numbering all ages, whereas he was to number but from twenty years: but these are conjectural reasons. I conceive the sin of David was, because he did it without a lawful call, and for an unlawful end: *Sine causa legitima*; he sinned in the manner rather than in the matter; for there was no cause for him to number the people but curiosity, and no end but vain-glory: Go through all the tribes of Israel, and number the people, that I may know the number of my people. David's heart was lifted up with pride, and creature-confidence: he begins to boast of the multitude of his people, and to trust in an arm of flesh: therefore God sends the Prophet to David, to prick the bladder of his pride; as if God should say, I will teach you to number the people by lessening the number of your people. Now the burthen of his sin did add much to the burthen of this heavy message: vers.13. After David had numbered the people, his heart smote him: the message smites him, and his heart smites him; and he said, I have sinned greatly in that which I have

done: now I beseech thee take away the iniquity of thy servant, for I have done very foolishly. If David had been to suffer this great punishment out of love to God, or for a good Conscience, he would not have been so distracted. There are two sorts of straits in Scripture; some suffered for God and a good Conscience, and there are straits suffered for sin.

1. There are straits suffered for God and a good Conscience, Heb. 11:36, 37. those Martyrs there were driven to great straits: but these were straits for God and a good Conscience, and these straits were the Saints greatest enlargements, they were so sweetened to them by the consolations and supportations of Gods Spirit; a Prison was a Paradise to them, Heb. 10:34. they look joyfully at the spoiling of their goods, Acts 5:41. They departed from the presense of the Council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his Name. Straits for a good conscience are greatest enlargements; therefore St. Paul glorieth in his strait, Paul a Prisoner, &c.

2. There are straits suffered for sin, and these are envenomed by the guilt of sin: sin puts poison into all our distresses and perplexities. Now such was the strait into which David was now driven, it was a strait caused by sin, and that made it so unwelcome and uncomfortable: so that from hence I gather this Observation.

Doctrine. That sin and iniquity brings persons and Nations into marvelous labyrinths and perplexities; into time, real, and great molestations; and a man free from sin, is free in the midst of straits; a man guilty of sin, is in a strait in the midst of freedom.

After Adam had sinned in eating the forbidden fruit, the whole world was a prison to him: Paradise itself was a Hell to him, he knew not where to hide himself from the presense of God. After that Cain had murdered his Brother Abel, he was brought into such a strait, that he was afraid that every one that met him would slay him. Alas, poor Cain, how many there was then in the world? We read, but his Father and Mother? yet such was his distress, teat he cryeth out, every one

that met him would slay him, Gen. 4:14. Into what a strait did sin bring the old world? the deluge of sin, brought a deluge of water to drown them. Into what a strait did sin bring Sodom and Gomorrah? the fire of Lust reigning in Sodom and Gomorrah, brought down fire from Heaven to destroy them. Sin brings external, internal, and eternal straits upon persons and Nations.

1. Sin brings external straits; Sin brings Famine, Sword, and Plague; Sin brings Agues and Fevers, Gout and Stone, and all manner of Diseases: yea Sin brings death itself, which is the wages of sin. Read Lev. 26. and Deut. 23. and you will see a black Roll of curses, which were the fruit of sin, Sin brought Sion into Babylon; and when the Jews had murdered Christ, forty years after they were brought into that distress, when the City was besieged by Titus Vespasian, that they did eat one another, the Mother did eat her Child, that whereas David had a choice which of the three he would have, either Famine, Plague or Sword, the poor Jews had all three concatenated together in the siege. Sin brings all manner of external Plagues.

2. Sin brought persons and Nations into eternal straits: sin brings soul-plagues, which are worse than bodily plagues: sin brings hardness of heart, blindness of mind, a spirit of slumber, a reprobate sense: sin brings a spiritual Famine upon a Land, it brings a Famine on the Word, Amos 8:11. Sin causes God to take away the Gospel from a people; sin brings internal plagues: sin awakens Conscience, and fills it full of perplexities. Into what a strait did sin drive Judas after he had betrayed Christ? Into what a strait did sin drive Spira? Saint Paul glorified in his tribulations for God; but when he speaks of his sin, he cryeth out, O miserable man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death? David a valiant man, when he speaks of sin, saith, they are too heavy a burden for him to bear? A wounded conscience who can bear? saith the wise Man.

3. Sin bringeth eternal straits. O the strait that a wicked man shall be brought into at the great and dreadful day of Judgment, when all the world shall be on fire about him! when he shall call to the Mountains

to hide him, and to the rocks to cover him from the wrath of God; then will he cry out with David, I am, O Lord, in a great strait. And when the wicked shall be condemned to Hell, who can express the straits they then shall be in? Bind them hand and foot, and cast them into everlasting darkness, Matt. 25. When a wicked man shall be bound with everlasting chains of darkness, then he will cry out, I am in a great strait, consider what Dives saith to Abraham; he desires that Lazarus might but dip the tip of his finger in water, and that he might cool his tongue; not his whole body, but his tongue; but that would not be granted.

It is impossible the tongue of man should set out the great straits the damned suffer in Hell, both in regard of the greatness and everlastingness of them.

This is all I shall say for the Explication.

Use 1. I chiefly aim at the Application; Doth sin bring Nations and Persons into external, internal, and eternal straits? then this sadly reproves those that choose to commit sin to avoid perplexity. There are thousands in England guilty of this, that to avoid poverty, will lie, cheat and cozen, and to gain an estate will sell God and a good conscience, and to avoid the loss of estate and imprisonment, will do anything; they will be sure to be of that Religion which is uppermost, be it what it will. Now give me leave this morning to speak three things to these sorts of men, and O that my words might prevail with them.

1. Consider it is sin only that makes trouble deserve the name of trouble; for when we suffer for God's sake, or a good Conscience, these troubles are so sweetened by the consolations of Heaven, that they are no troubles at all: therefore in Queen Maries days the Martyrs wrote to their friends out of prison, If you knew the comforts we have in Prison, you would wish to be with us. I am in Prison before I am in Prison, saith Mr. Sanders.

Famous is the story of the three Children: they were in a great strait when cast into the fiery Furnace: Bind them hand and foot, and cast them into the Furnace; but when they were there, they were unbound, Dan. 3:25. saith Nebuchadnezzar, did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? and lo I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God. I have often told you when three are cast into the fire for a good Conscience, God will make the fourth: therefore, I say, straits and sufferings for God are not worth the name of straits. David was often driven into straits, 1 Sam. 30:6. he was sore distressed when his Town was burnt, and his Wives and Children taken captives by the Amalekites: I, but that was a distress of danger, not of sin; therefore he encouraged himself in the Lord his God. Jehosaphat was in a great strait, 2 Chron. 20:12. We know not what to do, saith he; this was a strait of danger, not caused by his sin; and God quickly delivered him: but the strait that David was in, was caused by his sin, and that made it so bitter. I am loath to enlarge here: St. Paul was in a great strait, Phil. 3:23. but this was a blessed strait, an Evangelical strait, saith St. Chrysostome, He knew not whether to die for his own sake, or to live for the Churches sake, were best: he was willing to adjourn his going to Heaven for the good of the people of God. Nay, Christ was in a strait, Luke 12:15. I have a baptism to be baptized withal, and how am I straitned till it be accomplished? I am to shed my blood for my Elect; this is the baptism he speaks of.

This was a strait of dear affection to the Elect of God: all these were blessed straits: but now a strait caused by sin, these are imbittered and envenomed by the guilt of sin, and sense of Gods wrath. It is sin that maketh straits deserve the name of straits; therefore you are spiritually mad that commit sin to avoid straits.

2. There is more evil in the least sin, than in the greatest outward calamity whatsoever: this the world will not believe; therefore St. Austin saith, That a man ought not to tell a lie, though he might save all the world from hell: for there is more evil in one lye, than there is good in the salvation of all the world. I have often told you the story

of St. Austin, saith he, If Hell were on one side, and sin on the other, and I must choose one, I would choose hell rather than sin: for God is the Author of Hell, but it is blasphemy to say he is the Author of Sin. There is a famous story of Charles the ninth, King of France, he sent a message to the Prince of Conde, a zealous Protestant, gives him three things to choose, either to go to Mass, or to be put to death, or to suffer banishment all his life long: saith he, Primum Deo, juvante nunquam eligo: The first (God helping) I will never choose, I abhor the Idolatry of the Mass; but for the two other, I leave it to the choice of the King to do as he pleases: there is more evil in the least sin, than the greatest misery.

3. The third thing I would have you consider, that whosoever goeth out of Gods way to avoid danger, shall certainly meet with greater danger. Balaam went out of Gods way, Numb. 22:22. and God sent an Angel with a drawn sword, and he riding upon an Asse, verse 26. the Angel stood in a narrow place, where was no way to go from the right hand or from the left: if his Asse had not fallen under him, he had been run thorow by the sword of the Angel. Jonah, for fear of the King of Nineveh, went out of Gods way, but he met with a mighty tempest, he met with a Whale. What do you do when you commit sin? you make way to be cast into the eternal prison of Hell; you destroy your precious souls, to save your perishing bodies.

Use 2. If sin be the father and mother of all perplexity and distresses, then I beseech you, let us above all things in the world abhor sin: all the curses of the Bible are all due only to a sinner; and all the curses not named in the Bible: for that is observable, Deut. 28:36. every plague that is not written in the Book shall light upon him: there are strange punishments to the workers of iniquity, Job 31:3. Is not destruction to the wicked, a strange punishment to the workers of iniquity? sin it bringeth the sinner to little ease: little ease at death, little ease at the day of Judgment, and little ease in Hell, tribulation and anguish, little ease to every soul that doth iniquity: O my beloved, will you promise me to look upon sin, and consider it in all its woeful consequence, as the Father, Mother, and Womb, out of

which come external, eternal, and internal straits? more particularly there are twelve sins I especially command you to take heed of and avoid.

1. Take heed of Covetousness: the love of the world will pierce you thorow with many sorrows? the love of money is the root of all evil; the love of the world drowns men in perdition.

2. Take heed of the sin of Pride: into what a woeful strait did Pride bring Haman! God crossed him in what he most desired: God made him hold the stirrup, while Mordecai rode in Triumph; and God hanged him on the Gallows which he had made for Mordecai.

3. Take heed of Drunkenness; Look not on the Wine when it gives its color in the cup, &c. Drunkenness will bring you into snares, in will bite like a Serpent, and sting like an Adder.

4. Take heed of Disobedience and Rebellion against the Commandments of God: it brought Jonah to the three nights and three days in the Whales belly.

5. Take heed of Fornication and Adultery, and all uncleanness; this brought Sampson to a woeful strait: this brought David and Solomon into great perplexity.

6. Take heed of Oppression, and all acts of Injustice: this brought Ahab into great straits insomuch that the Dogs licked his blood.

7. Take heed of unnecessary familiarity with wicked men: this brought Jehosaphat into a great strait.

8. Take heed of mis-using the Prophets of God: this made God destroy the children of Israel without remedy, 2 Chron. 36:15, 16.

9. Take heed of coming prophanely to the Lords Table: this brought the Church of Corinth into a great distress, insomuch as the Apostle

saith, for this cause many among you are sick, and many weak, and many fallen asleep.

10. Take heed of loathing the Manna of your souls: this brought the children of Israel into woeful misery, that God destroyed all their carcasses in the wilderness, save Joshua and Caleb.

Take heed of slighting the Gospel: this brought Queen Maries persecution, as many godly and learned men that fled for Religions sake out of the Land; have confessed their thankfulness for, and unfruitfulness under the Gospel in King Edward the sixths time, brought the persecution in Queen Maries time.

11. Take heed of losing your first love: that makes God threaten to take away his Candlestick.

12. Take heed of prophaning the Christian Sabbath, which is much prophaned everywhere; a day that Christ by his resurrection from the dead hath consecrated to be kept holy to God: Certainly if the Jews were so severely punished for breaking the Sabbath, which was set a part in memory of the Creation, surely God will severely punish those that break the Sabbath, set a part in memory of Christs Resurrection. May be some will say, I have committed many of these sins, but am not brought into any strait. Remember it was nine months after David had numbered the people, before he was in this strait; but as sure as God is in Heaven, sin will bring straits sooner or later; though one sin a hundred years, yet shall he be accursed: may be thy prosperity makes way for thy damnation; and this is thy greatest distress, that thou goest on in sin and prosperity.

Use 3. If sin bringeth a Nation into marvelous labyrinths, learn what great cause we have to fear that God shall bring this Nation into great distress, because of the great abominations are committed in the midst of it: Our King and Sovereign was in a great strait in the days of his banishment, but God hath delivered him. God hath delivered this Nation out of great straits; but alas, we requite God evil for good,

and instead of repenting of old sins, we commit new sins. I am told there are new Oaths invented, Oaths not fit to be named in any place, much less here: Certainly the drunkenness and adultery, the oppression and injustice, the bribery and Sabbath-breaking, the vain and wicked swearing and forswearing this Nation is guilty of, must of necessity provoke God to say of us, as he did of them in Jer. 15:29. Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord? shall not my Soul be avenged on such a Nation as this? God will not only punish us, but be avenged on us. There is no way to avoid a National Desolation, but by a National Reformation.

Lastly, learn what cause you of this Congregation and Parish, what cause you have to expect that God should bring you into great straits, because of your great unthankfulness and unfruitfulness under the means of Grace, you that have so long enjoyed the Gospel; you have had the Gospel in this place in great abundance; Dr. Taylor he served an Apprenticeship in this place; Dr. Stoughton served another Apprenticeship, and I, through Divine Mercy, have served three Apprenticeships, and half another almost among you; you have had the Spirit of God seven and thirty years in the faithful Ministry of the Word, knocking at the door of your hearts, but many of you have hardened your hearts. Are there not some of you, I only put the question, that begin to loath the Manna of your Souls, and to look back towards Egypt again? Are there not some of you have itching ears, and would fain have Preachers that would feed you with dainty phrases, and begin not to care for a Minister that unrips your Consciences, speaks to your hearts and souls, and would force you into Heaven by frightening you out of your sins? Are there not some of you, that by often hearing Sermons, are become Sermon-proof, that know how to sleep and scoff away Sermons? I would be glad to say, there are but few such; but the Lord knoweth there are too many that by long preaching, get little good by preaching, insomuch that I have often said it, and say it now again, there is hardly any way to raise the price of the Gospel-Ministry, but by the want of it: And that I may flatter not you, you have not profited under the means you have enjoyed, therefore you may justly expect God may bring you into a

strait, and take away the Gospel from you: God may justly take away your Ministers by death, or other ways. Have you not lost your first love? Why did God take away the Gospel from the Church of Ephesus, but because they lost their first love? Are you not like the Church of Laodicea, that was neither hot nor cold? therefore God may justly spew you out of his mouth: what God will do with you, I know not; a few weeks will determine: God can make a great change in a little time; we leave all to God; but in the meantime let me commend one Text of Scripture to you, Jer. 13:16. Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark Mountains, and while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness. Verse 17. But if you will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride, and mine eyes shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the Lords flock is carried away captive. Give glory to God by confessing and repenting of your sins, by humbling your souls before the Lord, before darkness come, and who knoweth but this may prevent darkness?

02. Mr. Calamy's Second Sermon

"And when he came, Lo, Eli sate upon a seat by the way side, waiting; for his heart trembled for the Ark of God." - 1 Sam. 4:13.

That you may the better understand these words, you must know, that whatsoever God threatned against old Eli, in the second and third Chapters, because he did not restrain his wicked Sons from their lewd courses, is here executed in this Chapter: therefore we read there were four thousand Israelites slain by the Philistines? And the Elders of Israel met together to consult how to repair this great loss; they confess it was the Lord that had smitten them: For, say

they, Wherefore hath the Lord smitten us to day before the Philistines: And they conclude, the way to repair this their loss, it was, to fetch the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord from Shiloh, and carry it into the battel; whereupon they appointed Hophni and Phinehas to fetch it, whereby they imagined that the presense of the Ark would save them from ruin, but herein they were miserably mistaken; for this judgment befell them not because the Ark was not in the Camp: but because their sin was in the Camp: The Ark of the Covenant would not preserve those that had broken Covenant with God: And therefore there was a great slaughter of the Israelites, and were slain thirty thousand men, and Hophni and Phinehas were slain, and the Ark itself was taken Prisoner. But what was old Eli doing? He was ninety and eight years old, and was not able to go to the Battel, but sits upon a seat by the way side near the Battel; and there he sits, thinking what shall become of the Ark: And lo, Eli sate upon a seat by the way side watching; for his heart trembled for the Ark of God, for fear lest the Ark should be taken: He was not troubled, what should become of his two sons, or what should become of the people of Israel, but what should become of the Ark of God.

In the words are three parts.

1. Old Eli's solicitousness for the Ark.
2. Old Eli's heart trembling for fear of the Ark.
3. Old Eli's preferring the safety of the Ark before the safety of his two sons, wife, and children.

He sat upon a seat by the way side watching, for his heart trembled for the Ark of God.

But what was the Ark of God? why should old Eli's heart tremble for fear of the Ark?

I answer, this Ark was the holiest of all the things of God; it was so holy that it made every place holy where it came, 2 Chr. 8:11. And Solomon brought up the daughter of Pharaoh, out of the City of David, into the house that he had built for her, for he said, my Wife shall not dwell in the house of David King of Israel, because the places are holy whereunto the Ark of the Lord hath come. This Ark was the dwelling place of God, it was the habitation of God, Psalm 99:1. The Lord reigneth, he sitteth between the Cherubins. Now these Cherubins were placed over the Ark it was the speaking place of God, he met his people there, and there he gave an answer to them: Exod. 25:21, 22. And thou shalt put the Mercy-seat, above upon the Ark, and in the Ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee: And there will I meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the Mercy-seat, from above the two Cherubins, which are upon the Ark of the Testimony, of all things I shall give thee in Commandment unto the children of Israel. This Ark was Gods Foot-stool, and all the people of God worship him before the Foot-stool of God. Psalm 99:5. Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his foot-stool, for he is holy. The Ark, it was the glory and the strength of Israel, Psalm 78:61. And he delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into his enemies bands; and it was the terror of the enemies of God: And therefore when the Ark came into the battel, the Philistines were afraid, and said, Woe unto us; for God is come down into the Camp. And indeed this Ark was called Jehovah, Num. 10:35. And it came to pass, when the Ark set forward, that Moses said, Rise up Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered; and when it rested, he said, Return O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel. The Ark was a pledge and a visible symptom of Gods gracious presense with his people; as long as the Ark was saved, they were saved; and when the Ark was with them, then Gods presense was with them: but when the Ark was gone, God was gone, his comforting presense, his protecting presense, and his preserving presense: And therefore no wonder that this good old man face watching here sort fear of the Ark. I call him good old man, many are of opinion that he was not good, because he suffered his Sons to be wicked and indeed his fault was great, but surely he was a good man, and I have two Reasons to prove it: First,

in that he took the punishment of his iniquity so patiently, It is the Lord, let him do what seems good. And

Page secondly, he was a good man, as appears by the Text, his solicitousness for the Ark: He sat trembling for fear of the Ark.

Now this Ark was a Type of three things.

First, it was a Type of Jesus Christ; for God spake from the Ark; so God speaks to us by Christ.

Secondly, it was a Type of the Church of Christ; for as the Ark was the preserver of the two Tables of the Law, so the Church of Christ is the preservative of the Scriptures.

Thirdly, the Ark was a Type of the Ordinances of Christ; for as God did communicate himself by the Ark, so God by his Ordinances communicates his Counsels, Comforts, and Grace unto his people; The Ordinances of Christ they are the way by which he conveys himself unto his people. Thus I have shewed you what the Ark was.

I shall gather two observations from the words.

1. That when the Ark of God is in danger of being lost, the people of God have thoughtful heads and trembling hearts.
2. That a true Child of God is more troubled, and more solicitous what shall become of the Ark, than what shall become of Wife and Children or Estate.

I shall begin with the first Doctrine.

That when the Ark of God is in danger of being lost, the people of God have thoughtful heads and trembling hearts.

Or, if I may put this Doctrine in a Gospel dress, take it thus.

That when the Gospel is in danger of losing, when Gospel-Ordinances are in danger of being lost, and Gospel-Ministers in danger of losing, that then the people of God have trembling heads, and careful and solicitous hearts about it.

Mark what I say: I say not when the Ark is lost; for that was death to old Eli, that broke his neck: and it cost the life of Eli's Daughter-in-Law, when the Ark of God was taken, she took no comfort, in her child, though a man-child; she regarded it not: For the glory is departed from Israel, the Ark of God is taken.

I say not when the Ark of God is lost: but I say when it is in danger of losing: when the Gospel is in danger, the Ministers of the Gospel in danger, and the Ordinances in danger to be lost, then the People of God have trembling hearts, and careful heads. When God threatened the Israelites, that he would not go with them, they were troubled for the loss of God's presense, and would not put on their Ornaments, *Exod. 33:3, 4.* I will not go up in the midst of thee, for thou art a stiff-necked people, lest I consume thee in the way: And when the people heard these evil tidings, they mourned, and no man did put on his ornaments. *1 Sam. 7:2.* And it came to pass while the Ark abode in Kiriath-jearim, that the time was long, for it was twenty years, and all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord, that is, after the presense of God, speaking from the Ark, *2 Sam. 11:10, 11.* David would have had Uriah to have gone down to his house and made merry: And Uriah said unto David, The Ark, and Israel, and Judah abide in Tennis, and my Lord Joab, and the servants of my Lord are incamped in open fields: shall I then go into mine house to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? as thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing, *1 King. 19:10.* And Elijah said, I have been very jealous for the Lord of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy Covenant, thrown down thy Altars, and slain thy Prophets with the sword, and I, even I only am left, and they seek my life to take it away. Thus you see when the Ark is in danger, the people of God mourn and are sorrowful.

And there be four reasons, why the people of God are so much troubled when the Ark of God is in danger.

Reason 1. Because of the great love they bear to the Ark of God; As God loveth the gates of Sion, more than all the dwellings of Jacob, Psalm 87:2. so the people of God love the Ordinances of God, and the faithful Ministers of Christ, Psalm 26:8. Lord I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth, Psalm 27:4. One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his Temple. Now love stirreth up the affections, as young Cresus, though he were dumb, yet seeing his Father like to be killed, cryed out, do not kill my Father. Such is the love of the Saints of God to the Ark, that they cannot be silent, they cannot but tremble when they see the Ark in danger. and for Sions sake, they cannot hold their peace: and they cannot be silent until the Lord make the righteous thereof go out like brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.

2. The people of God are troubled at this, because of the interest they have in the Ark of God: Now interest stirreth up affection, as when another man's house is on fire: as you had a lamentable and sad providence this last week, and it is not to be forgotten, how suddenly in all our feasting, may God dash all our mirth. Now consider, how were they affected that had an interest in those that were burned: so the people of God have an interest in the Ark. God is the Haven of a child of God, the portion and inheritance of a child of God; and when God begins to forsake them, they cannot but be afflicted and troubled: The Ordinances of God are the Jewels of a Christian, & the Treasure of a Christian; and the loss of them cannot but trouble them: And Jesus Christ is the joy of a Christian, and therefore when Christ is departing, they cannot but be much afflicted at it.

3. The people of God are much troubled when the Ark is in danger, because of the mischiefs that comes upon a Nation when the Ark of God is lost: woe be to that Nation when the Ark is gone. The

Heathens had the Image of Apollo, and they conceived, that as long as that Image was presented among them, they could never be worsted, but be preserved; and the Romans had a Buckler, upon which they had a Tradition, that as long as that Buckler was preserved, Rome could not be taken. Shall I give a hint, and set it out a little in five particulars.

1. When the Ark of God is taken, then the ways of Sion mourn, and none come to the solemn Assemblies: it was the complaint of the Church, Lam. 1:4. that is matter of sadness.

2. When the Ark of God is taken, then the Ministers of Christ are driven into corners: And this is matter of heart-trembling.

3. When the Ark of God is taken, then the souls of many are in danger: when the Gospel is gone, your souls are in hazard: There is cause of sadness.

4. Then do the enemies of God blaspheme, and are ready to say, where is your God? then do the enemies of God triumph, Psalm 42:10. As with a sword in my bones mine enemies reproach me: while they say daily unto me, where is thy God?

5. Then is Jesus Christ trampled underfoot, and the Ordinances of God defiled and trampled on; and then Blasphemy and Atheism comes in like an armed man.

4. The people of God must needs tremble when the Ark is in danger, because of their accessoriness to the losing of the Ark; & this was that which made old Eli so much troubled, because he knew it was for his sin that God suffered the Ark to be taken: He knew that his not punishing his two sons, was one cause of that great slaughter the people of Israel met withal, and that made him tremble: There is no person here in this Congregation, but his heart will tell him, he hath contributed something towards the loss of the Ark. None of us so holy but our consciences must accuse us; we have done something that might cause God to take the Ark from us: And therefore Mr.

Bradford that blessed Martyr, said in his Prayer, Lord it was, for my unthankfulness for the Gospel, that brought in Popery in Queen Mary's days: and my unfruitfulness under the Gospel, that was the cause of the untimely death of King Edward the sixth: and those that fled in Queen Mary's days, sadly complained that they were the cause of Gods taking away the Gospel from England. O beloved, it is for thy sin and my sin, that the Ark of God is in danger; and therefore the Lod gave us trembling solicitous hearts, what shall become of the Ark.

I come now to Application.

Use 1. If this be the property of a true child of God, to be solicitous when the Ark of God is in danger, and to have such a trembling heart for fear of the Ark, then this is a certain sign there are but few that are the children of God in truth. O where is the man? and where is the woman that like old Eli sits watching and trembling for fear of the Ark? And that will appear by these reasons.

First, in reference to the many sins in this Nation; for let me tell you, there is not one sin for which God ever took away the Ark from any people, but it is to be found in England. Did the Church of Ephesus lose the Candlestick, because they had lost their first love? And have not we lost our first love to the Gospel, and to the Ordinances? And did the Church of Laodicea lose the Candlestick, because of lukewarmness? and are not we lukewarm? Did the people of Israel, as here in the Text, lose the Ark, because they abhorred the offerings of God? and do not you do so? are not the sins of Israel amongst us? the sins of Germany, and the sins of all other Nations about us? and can any man here before God this day, in this Congregation, that considers the great unthankfulness of this Nation, & the great prophaneness & wickedness of this Nation, but they may conclude the Ark is in danger, & God may justly take the Ark from us.

I might tell you of the Drunkenness, Adultery, Covetousness, Injustice, and Uncharitableness, &c. that doth abound among us;

and I might tell you of Sanctuary sins, prophanation of Sabbath and Sacraments, our unthankfulness, and unfruitfulness, and unworthy walking under the Gospel: and you of this place, God may very well take the Ark even from you; and indeed it was the great interest I had in you, the which while I live I shall ever own; and that great affection and respect I had to you, that I would not send you home this day without a Sermon, and let you go without a blessing. Now can any of you in this Parish, and this Congregation; can any of you say, God may not justly take the Gospel from you?

Secondly, shall I add, the discontents and divisions of a Nation, as Christ saith, A Nation divided against itself cannot stand; but I leave these things to your considerations: I believe there is none here but will confess the Ark of God is in danger to be lost. But now where are our Eli's to sit watching and trembling for fear of the Ark? Where is Phinehas his Wife, that would not be comforted, because the Ark of God was taken? Where are our Moses? our Elijah's, our Uriah's? Where are they that lay to heart the dangers of the Ark? you complain of Taxes, decay of Trading, of this civil burden, and that civil burden; but where is the man or the woman that complains of this misery, the loss of the Ark; Most of you are like Gallio, he cared not for these things; if it had been a civil matter, then he would have meddled with it; but for Religion, he cared not for that; every man is troubled about meum and tuum, about civil concernments; but who lays to heart? who regards what shall become of Religion? There is a strange kind of indifferency and lukewarmness upon most peoples spirits; so they have their trading go on, and their civil burdens removed, they care not what becomes of the Ark.

There is a Text of Scripture, I shall not spend much time in opening it, but I would have you well consider it, Hos. 7:9. Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not: yea gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not. Shall I say gray hairs are upon the Gospel? I come not hither to Prophecy, I say not, the Gospel is dying, but I say it hath gray hairs: for you have had the Gospel a hundred years and above, and therefore it is in its old-age:

and I dare challenge any Scholar to shew me an example of any Nation that hath enjoyed the Gospel for a hundred years together. Now that gray hairs is to a hundred years, is no wonder: well, gray hairs are here and there, and yet no man layeth it to heart.

Now shall I spend time to shew you what a great sin it is not to be affected with the danger that the Ark of God is in: consider but three particulars.

First, it is a sign you do not love the Gospel: if you had any love to it, you would be troubled more for the danger of the Ark, than for any outward danger whatsoever.

Secondly, it is a sign you have no interest in the Gospel, for interest will stir up your affections: it is a sign you are not concerned in the Gospel, for if you were concerned in it, you would be affected with it, as those that were interested in those persons that were in that lamentable fire the last week, it is impossible but they should be affected: and so it is a sign you have no interest in God and Christ, if your hearts do not tremble for fear of the loss of the Ark.

But thirdly, there is a curse of God pronounced against all those that do not lay to heart the afflictions of Joseph, Amos 6:1-6. Wo be to them that are at ease in Sion, and trust in the Mountain of Samaria: ye that put far away the evil day: that lie upon beds of Ivory, and stretch themselves upon their Couches: that eat the Lambs out of the flock, and the Calves out of the midst of the stall: that chant to the sound of the Viol, and invent to themselves Instruments of Music: that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments: but they are non-grieved for the afflictions of Joseph. Wo be to you that enjoy your fulness of outward things, and make merry therewith, and never consider the afflictions of Gods people, and the danger of the Ark.

Use 2. For exhortation, to beseech you all, that God by a providence hath so unexpectedly brought this day to hear me, & there may be a

good providence in it; possibly I may do good herein: I say let me beseech you all to declare you are the people of God indeed and in truth, by following the example of old Eli, to be very silicious of the Ark of God, and let me exhort you to five particulars.

First, let me persuade you to believe, that the Gospel is not entailed upon England; England hath no Letters Patents of the Gospel; the Gospel is removeable: God took away the Ark and forsook Shiloh, and he did not only take away the Ark, but the Temple also: he unchurched the Jews, he unchurched the seven Churches of Asia, and we know not how soon he may unchurch us: I know no warrant we have to think that we shall have the Gospel another hundred years: God knows how to remove his Candlestick, but not to destroy it: God doth often remove the Church, but doth not destroy it: God removed his Church out of the East, as the Greek Churches were famous Churches, but God removed them, and now the Turk overspreads that Country.

Secondly, I would persuade you that England's Ark is in danger to be lost: were it not only for the sins of England, those prodigious iniquities amongst us, and that strange un-heard-of ingratitude that is in the Land: but I will say no more of that, because I would speak nothing but what becomes a sober Minister of the Gospel.

Thirdly, I would persuade you, and O that I could raise you up to old Eli's practice: He sat watching, for his heart trembled for fear of the Ark: He had a thoughtful head and a aching heart, for the Ark of God that was in great danger: and that I might move you to this, consider what a sad condition we are in, if the Ark be taken: what will your Estate do you good? or what will your concernments do you good if the Gospel be gone? wherein doth England exceed other places? there is more wealth in Turkey than in England: And the Heathen Nations have more of the glory of the world, than any Christian King hath: What is the glory of England? what is the glory of Christianity but the Gospel? if the Gospel be gone, our glory is gone. Pray remember Eli's Daughter-in-Law, the wife of Phinehas she

hearkened not though a man Child was born, and would receive no comfort, but called his name Ichabod: for the glory is departed from Israel, The Ark of God is taken: O when the glory is gone, who would desire to live? I am loth to tell you the story of Chrysostome, he was but one man, yet when he was banished Constantinople, the people all petitioned for him, and said, they could as well lose the Sun out of the Firmament, as lose Chrysostom from among them.

Fourthly, let me persuade you not to mourn immoderately, neither be discouraged: I would willingly speak something to comfort you before I leave you, I know not by what strange providence I came here this day, and the Lord knows when I shall speak to you again: therefore I would not send you home comfortless: O therefore mourn not as without hope, for I have four Arguments to persuade me, that the Ark of God will not be lost, though it be in danger of losing.

First, because God hath done great things already for this Nation; and I argue like Manoah's Wife, surely if God had intended to destroy us, he would not have done that he hath done for us: He that hath done so much for us, will not now forsake us. And therefore though our hearts tremble, yet let them not sink within us.

Secondly, I argue from the abundance of praying people that are in this Nation, there are many that night and day pray unto God, that the Ark may not be taken; and let me assure you, God did never forsake a praying & reforming people. When God intends to destroy a Nation, and take away the Ark, he takes away the Spirit of Prayer; but where God gives the Spirit of Prayer, there God will continue the Ark. You all know, that if there had been but ten good men in those five Cities, God would have spared them: We have many hundreds that fear God in this Nation, that do not give God rest, but night and day pray unto God for this Land: And who knows but for their sakes God will spare the Ark.

Thirdly, another ground of comfort is this, that God hath hitherto dealt with England, not by way of Rule, but by way of Prerogative; we

have had un-churching sins all the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, and of King James; and the godly Ministers have been threatened ruin from year to year; but God hath hitherto saved England by way of Prerogative; God hath spared us, because he will spare us: according to that Text, I will be gracious, to whom I will be gracious. God will not be tied to his own rule; and who knoweth but God will deliver us?

Fourthly, another ground of comfort is, that God is now pouring out his Viols upon Antichrist and all this shall end in the ruin of Antichrist; God is pouring forth his Viols upon the Throne of the Beast, and all these transactions shall end in the ruin of Antichrist: though some drops of these Viols may light upon the Reformed Churches, and they may smart a while, and God may severely punish them, yet it will be but for a little while, but the Viols shall be poured out upon Antichrist: God may scourge all the Reformed Churches before these Viols be poured out, and persecution may go through them all; the which I call drops of these Viols, but the Viols are intended for Antichrist, and shall end in the time of Antichrist: and whatsoever becomes of us, yet our children, and our children's children, shall see the issue of the Viols poured out upon the Whore of Babylon. This I speak for your comfort.

Fifthly, I am to exhort you, that you would all of you contribute your utmost endeavor, to keep the Ark of God from being taken: and here I shall shew you,

1. What the Magistrate should do.
2. What the Minister should do.
3. What the People should do.

First, what the Magistrate should do, I shall say but little of them, because I am not now to speak to them; they are to use their Authority for the settling of the Ark: for the Ark of the Covenant will be like the Ark of Noah, always floating upon the waters, until the Magistrates settle it. Thus David, 2 Sam. 6:12. he gathered together

all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand to fetch home the Ark. So Solomon, he assembled the Elders of Israel, and the heads of the Tribes, the Nobles, & the chief of the Fathers of the children of Israel to Jerusalem, with a great deal of pomp, to bring up the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord into its place. O that God would encourage our Nobles & Magistrates that they might be solicitous to settle the Ark: Magistrates must not be as the Philistine, they had the Ark, but what did they with it? they set it up in the house of Dagon, but Dagon and the Ark could never agree: where false Religion comes in at one door, the true Religion goes out at the other; you must not put the Ark and Dagon together.

Secondly, what must the Ministers do to keep the Ark from losing? They must endeavor after holiness, the Ark will never stand steady, nor prosper upon the shoulders of Hophni & Phinehas. A wicked, prophane, drunken Ministry, will never settle the Ark; it must be the sober, pious, godly Ministers that must do it: How holy must they be that draw nigh to the God of holiness?

Thirdly, what must the people of God do, that the Ark may not be lost? there be five things? I shall commend unto you, & then commend you to God.

1. You must not Idolize the Ark.
2. You must not undervalue the Ark.
3. You must not pry into the Ark.
4. You must not meddle with the Ark without a lawful Call.
5. You must keep the Covenant of the Ark.

First; You must not Idolize the Ark, that was the sin of the people in the

Text; they thought the very presense of the Ark would excuse them, and keep them safe, and therefore they carried the Ark into the Camp: though they reformed not, and repented not, yet they thought the Ark would save them.

So many there be that think the Ark will save them, though never so wicked: but nothing will secure a Nation but repentance & reformation.

Secondly, do not undervalue the Ark: this was Michal's sin, 2 Sam. 6:14-16. When David danced before the Ark, and Michal mocked him, and despised him in her heart: but saith he, it was before the Lord, and if this be vile, I will he more vile. Some men begin to say, what need we any preaching, will not reading prayers serve? Others say, what need so much preaching, will not once a day serve? Now this is to undervalue the Ark; therefore let us say as David, if to preach the word, if to fast and pray for the Nation, If this be vile, then I will be more vile.

Thirdly, we must not pry into the Ark: this was the sin of the men of Beth Shemesh. 1 Sam. 6:19. They looked into the Ark and God smote them, and cut off fifty thousand and threescore men. Be not too curious in searching where God hath not discovered or revealed. For example, there be great thoughts of a heart, when God will deliver his people, and set his Churches at liberty; and many men talk much of the Year 1666. that shall be the year wherein Antichrist shall be destroyed: And there are strange impressions upon the hearts of many learned men, as to this Year; some go to the Year 1669. and others pitch upon other times; but truly if you will have my judgment, and I am glad of this opportunity to tell you, this is to pry too much into the Ark: Remember the Text, Acts 1:17. It is not for you to know the Times or the Seasons which the Father hath put in his own power. And thus to conclude upon any particular time, if you find you are deceived, it is the way to make you Atheists, and that afterwards you shall believe nothing: And those Ministers do no

service, or rather ill service to the Church of God, that conclude of the Times and Seasons.

A Popish Author saith, that in the Year 1000. there was a general belief over the Christian World, that the day of Judgment should be that Year; but when they saw it happened nor they fell to their old sinning again, and were worse than before, and believed nothing. Well Gods time is the best, therefore let not us pry too much into the Ark.

Fourthly, you must not meddle with the Ark, unless you have a lawful call to meddle with it: this was the sin of Uzzi, 2 Sam. 6:6,7. the Ark was in danger of falling, and the good man meaning no hurt to keep up the Ark, took hold of it; but for so doing, he destroyed himself, and made a breach and hindered the carrying home of the Ark at that time.

We have had a great deal of disorder heretofore; and an abundance of Well-minded people usurped upon the Ministerial Offices they were afraid the Ark was falling, and therefore they touched the Ark, they laid hold on the Ark; but their touching the Ark hath undone the Ark, and themselves too. O take heed of touching the Ark.

Fifthly, If ever you would preserve the Ark, then keep the Covenant of the Ark, keep the Law which the Ark preserves: The Ark was a place wherein the Law was kept, the two Tables; keep the Law and God will keep the Ark; but if you break the Law, you will forfeit the Ark: The Ark was called the Ark of the Covenant; keep Covenant with God, and God will preserve the Ark; but if you break the Covenant of the Ark, the Covenant made in Baptism, and that Covenant often renewed in the Sacrament; if you break Covenant, God will take away the Ark.

03. Mr. Calamy's Funeral Sermon

"The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart, and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come."- Isaiah 57:1.

We are here met this Evening to perform the last office of Love for an eminent and ancient servant of Jesus Christ, and excellent Minister of the Gospel, Mr. Simeon Ash, one who hath formerly performed this office for many other Ministers, and now we are met to perform this office for him; and it is not long before others will meet to perform the same office for us, so frail, so brittle, and so uncertain is the life of man.

Now the Text that I have chosen, is suitable for this occasion; for this Reverend Minister was first a righteous man, he was righteous in an Evangelical sense, he was one that was justified and sanctified. Secondly, he was a merciful man both in active and passive sense; he was one that shewed mercy to the distressed Members of Jesus Christ, and he was one to whom God shewed mercy; this righteous and merciful man is now perished, as to his outward condition, not as to his everlasting condition: but as to his outward bodily condition, he is perished, and he is taken away: the word in the Hebrew is very emphatical; merciful men are gathered; it is the same word that is used concerning Josiah 2 Kin. 22:10. Thou shalt be gathered to thy Fathers, and go to thy grave in peace, and shalt not see the evil that I will bring upon this Nation. This godly and righteous man is now gathered, as ripe Corn into the Barn of Heaven; he is taken away from the evil that is to come, from beholding that evil that is to come upon this sinful world, he is taken away in mercy, that he may not be troubled with the troubles that are coming upon many; he is taken away from the evil to come.

And thus you see how suitable the Text is to the occasion; there is only one particular that I desire may prove unsuitable; for the

righteous and merciful man, saith the Text, perisheth, and no man considers, nor lays it to heart: These words are verba commentantis, & objurgantis, the words of the Prophet bemoaning the spiritual security of the people of Israel, chiding and reproving them for their spiritual Lethargy: Now I desire that this part may not prove suitable, but that all of you may lay to heart the death of this ancient, merciful and righteous man.

The Observations from the words, are these six.

First, that the righteous man must perish as well as the unrighteous.

Secondly, That the perishing of a righteous man, is nothing but his gathering to God, Christ, and the blessed company of Saints and Angels.

Thirdly, a righteous man as long as he lives, is the preservative of a Nation, and the supporter of a Kingdom, the Chariots and Horsemen of a Nation.

Fourthly, the death of a righteous man is a warning-piece from Heaven, a Beacon set on fire to give notice of evil approaching.

Fifthly, that God doth on purpose take away righteous men, that they might not see the evil that is coming on a Nation.

Sixthly, that it is a great and common sin, not to consider and lay to heart the death of a righteous man.

1. It is a common sin, and therefore it is set down in the greatest latitude, the righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; that is, very few: And merciful men are taken away, no man considering; that is, very few.

2. It is a great sin, and therefore the Prophet Jeremy in the former Chapter calls to all the beasts of the field to devour, that is, all the Enemies of the Church to destroy the Children of Israel, because they

drank strong drink, filling themselves with merriment, and promised themselves happy days, but did not consider that the righteous were taken away from the evil to come.

He begins with the first, that the righteous perish as well as the unrighteous.

How is it that the righteous perish? not in their soul, they cannot perish so: nay, the truth is, they cannot perish properly in their bodies; for the bodies of the Saints never totally and finally perish; for the very dust of the Saints in the grave, is precious in Gods sight, and they are asleep in Jesus, and by the power of Jesus Christ, they shall be raised glorious bodies: Nothing perisheth of a righteous man by death totally & finally, but sin: and therefore the meaning of the word is as Musculus and Justin Martyr observe, perisheth; that is not according to the truth of the thing, but according to the opinion of the world, and the proper language of his expression is this, the righteous perisheth; that is, the righteous must dye, and go down to the house of rottenness as well as others, and that up upon a four-fold account.

First, Because the righteous are included within the statute of death as well as the unrighteous; statutum est: Heb. 9:27. It is appointed for all men once to die, the righteous as well as the unrighteous; it is true, Jesus Christ hath taken away the hurt of death, but not death itself: Jesus Christ hath disarmed death, made death like the Viper that fastened upon Paul's hand, but did not hurt him; he hath made it like the brazen Serpent that hath no sting, but a healing power in it: Christ hath sanctified death, conquered and sweetened death: at the present we are all under the statute of death, but at last this enemy shall be destroyed, 2 Cor. 15. ult.

2. The righteous consist of perishing principles as well as the unrighteous: the righteous are earthly vessels made of dust, I, their foundation is in the dust; their lives are a vapor as well as the lives of the unrighteous:

3. The righteous must dye as well as others, because they have a body of sin which they carry about them; for there is no man so wise, that lives and sins not, Eccles. 7:10. wherefore there is that which deserves death in a righteous man.

Lastly, and especially, the righteous perish upon a peculiar account: For if we have hope only in this life (saith the Apostle) we are of all men most miserable, and therefore they must perish to keep them from perishing: they must say as Themistocles, *Perissem nisi periissem*, they must dye that they may rest from their labor: for here is not our rest, Mich. 2:10. there remaineth a rest for the people of God: there is no rest in this world: the word *quies* wants the plural number.

2. The righteous must die that they may have their reward, their crown of glory, that God hath laid up for them, they must first fight the good fight, and finish their course, and then they shall receive a crown of glory.

3. They must dye, that they may be free from sin; for they shall never put off the body of sin, till they put off the body of the flesh.

4. They must dye, that mortality may be swallowed up of life, that corruption may put on incorruption.

5. They must dye, that they may be perfect in grace.

Lastly, they must dye, that they may see God face to face, and be forever with the Lord, which they cannot do till they dye: therefore blessed by God that the righteous must perish. If a man should always live on earth, always be young, rich, and healthful, it would be unwelcome news, for while we are in the body, we are absent from the Lord, and subject to sin; and therefore when Peter asked Christ what should be done with John, Christ tells him, *If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?* from henceforth there went a report abroad that John should not dye; Now the Apostle himself was much displeased with this report, and looked upon it as a great affliction

that he should not dye, and therefore he himself confutes it; But yet Jesus (said he) said not that he should not dye; as if he had said, God forbid that I should not dye.

Before I come to Application of this point, give me leave to speak something to the second point, and so I shall apply them both together.

The second Doctrine is this, That the perishing of a righteous man, is nothing but a gathering him to God, Christ, and the blessed society of Saints and Angels in Heaven.

This is contained in the second expression, merciful men are taken away; the word in the Hebrew is Colliguntur, they are gathered; it is exegetical of the former, they did not perish, but they are gathered to God and Christ: there is a great deal of excellency, and a Magazine of sweetness in this expression, they are gathered. It implies two things.

First, That the righteous are in a scattered condition while they are in this world, and that three ways.

1. They are scattered among the wicked and ungodly of the world, as sheep among wolves, as lambs among Lyons, rent and torn in pieces, forced to wander up and down in Sheep skins and Goats skins.

2. The righteous are scattered in the world one from another, and that two ways.

1. They are scattered by their different habitations, for the godly are forced one from another, as Lot from Abraham.

2. They are scattered one from another by the cruel persecution of wicked men; and therefore you read Acts 8. that at that time when there was a persecution against the Church at Jerusalem, that they were all scattered abroad.

3. The godly are scattered in this life from the glorious presense of God in Heaven, indeed they are never scattered from the gracious presense of God, but sometimes they are scattered from the comfortable presense of God; as long as we live in the world, we shall be scattered from the glorious presense of God: for while we are in the body, we are absent from the Lord.

Secondly, This implies a bringing of Gods people out of this scattered condition; it is a gathering of the Righteous out of this world into another, from a sinful persecuted world, into a sinless glorious world; from diversity of dwellings on earth, to dwell altogether in one Heaven; it is a gathering out of the reach of Men and Devils, and a gathering them not only to the gracious, but to the glorious presense of God and Christ, and to the souls of just men made perfect, and to the general assembly of the first born, and to the City of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, where they shall live together, never to be scattered again. To understand this the better, let me offer three things to you, shewing you that the Godly are gathered to God three ways: in this life, at death, and at the day of Judgment.

First, The Righteous are gathered to God in this life, and that is at their first conversion, for by nature we are Aliens and strangers to God, scattered from any union or communion with God, not only scattered from the glorious, but from the gracious presense of God. God made men, at first to enjoy communion with himself, but Adam lost this by sin, and now we are all Cains and vagabonds, scattered from the love of God, and from union and communion with God; but when God converts any of the Elect, he gathers them home to himself; for conversion is nothing but Gods gathering them to himself in the second Adam, that were scattered from him in the first Adam: the first Adam was a Root of scattering, a Root of separation from God; but the second Adam was a Root of union and conjunction. Christ is the head, and the Elect are all gathered together in him, that he might gather together in one all things in Christ, so that conversion is nothing but a gathering of the Elect of

God, to Christ by faith, and a gathering to one another by love and charity.

Secondly, God's people are gathered at death: here they are gathered to Christ by Grace, but at death they are gathered to Christ in glory; here they are gathered to God by hope, but at death by fruition: here Christ is gathered to us, he comes down and dwells with us; but at death, we shall be gathered to him, we shall go up and be joined with him. There's a great deal of difference between esse cum Christo, and esse in Christo: esse cum Christo, to be one with Christ is a Christians great security, but esse in Christo, to be one in Christ, it is a Christians great felicity; in this life we are gathered to God by Faith, but at death by vision.

Lastly, we shall be gathered to God at the day of judgment, it is called the day of the gathering of the Saints together: a day when all the Saints that are, have been, or shall be, shall be gathered together, 2 Thes. 2:1. I beseech you brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him at the great day: At the day of Judgment, we shall all be gathered together, and shall all be taken up to Heaven? I mean all the righteous, and be ever with the Lord: and so much for the opening of the Doctrine.

But here it may be objected; Are not the unrighteous gathered by death as well as the righteous?

I answer, it is true, the unrighteous are scattered in this life, and gathered by death, as well as the righteous, but with a great deal of difference.

First, the wicked are scattered in this life, but they are scattered from God; but the Godly are scattered for God, and for a good conscience many times, as they at Jerusalem were scattered: The godly are scattered from the glorious presense of God in Heaven; but the wicked are scattered from the gracious presense of God on earth. Again, the scattering of the wicked is a curse to them, and it is

threatened as a curse, Lev. 26:32. I will scatter you among the Heathen, and draw out my sword after you: and where-ever the wicked come, in what part soever of the world the wicked are scattered, they bring the curse of God with them: and they bring the judgments of God on Towns and Cities where they are, as plague, famine, and sword, and all miseries. But the Godly, when they are scattered, they are scattered as a blessing, into what country or town soever they come, they come as a blessing, they come like a Ship laden with Corn, to a Town ready to perish with famine: they come as a blessing four ways.

First, they pray down a blessing on the place where they come.

Secondly, they come as a blessing by their holy life and conversation, that is a Load-stone to draw others to holiness.

Thirdly, they come as a blessing, by their holy advice and counsel that they give to the place where they come.

Nay fourthly, their very presense is a blessing; as long as Lot was in Sodom, Sodom could not be destroyed; so long as Paul was in the ship, the 300 could not be drowned. So that the godly come as a blessing wherever they are scattered, but the wicked are as chaff scattered by the wind, and they are scattered as the dust of the earth: You know when the dust is scattered, it gets into men's eyes and blinds them; and falls upon their clothes, and sullies them; so the wicked, wherever they are scattered, they defile the place where they are scattered. The godly are as Planets, that wander & move from one part of Heaven to another, carrying light to the world.

Secondly, as the wicked are scattered while they live, so when they die, they are gathered; it is true, but how? not to God, and Christ, and his Angels; but they are gathered to the Devil and his Angels, and to damned spirits: not as bundles of Wheat in the Barn of Heaven, but as bundles of Tares to be burned for ever in everlasting fire.

Now, if the righteous perish as well as others, and if their perishing be nothing but a gathering to God and Christ, then,

First, learn hence the preciousness of every righteous man, the great God will not gather things of no value; great men do not use to gather chaff and straw; and therefore, when Christ said of Josiah, I will gather thee to thy Fathers, it was a sign he was a precious Pearl worth the gathering, and of a high value and account in the sight of God, and so is every true Child of God, right dear and precious are they in the sight of God, both living, and dying; they are bought with a great price, not with Gold and Silver, and other corruptible things, but they are bought with the precious blood of the Son of God: they are as precious to God as thee Apple of his eye: so precious that he hath given Christ for them, and to them; so precious that he called them his Jewels, his peculiar treasure, his Jedidiah's, and therefore God will not suffer them to perish, but gather them to himself before the evil day come, as the Husbandman gathers in the Corn, before the Beast go out into the field.

Secondly, learn here what reason we have to be comforted in the death of a righteous man or woman, because their death is not a perishing, but a gathering to God and Christ, and the society of Saints and Angels. The death of a righteous man is no more than if a Merchant that hath abundance of Jewels in a far Country, he should send for the home. Why death to a righteous man is nothing but God sending for his Jewels home. Such a phrase there is in Mal. 3:17. In the day that I make up my Jewels, they shall be mine. In this life they are imperfect Jewels; they are like Gold in the Oar mingled with a great deal of dross; and death is nothing but a perfection of the Jewels; death is nothing more; and God doth nothing by death, but as a Gold-siner gathers up all his ends of Gold and Silver; it is nothing but just as if a Father should send for his Son home, that had been a long time absent from him, to his own house: it is a carrying us to our Fathers house. And therefore let us be comforted when our Righteous Friends dye, though their death be matter of sorrow to us, in regard of the loss, that we sustain by their death, and because their

death is a warning-piece of evil to come: yet in regard of them we have no cause to mourn. I speak this of those that are related to the righteous, when they dye; did you ever hear of a Husbandman that mourned for the carrying in of his Corn into the Barn? or a Jeweler mourn for making up of his Jewels? Let us mourn rather that we are lest scattered among the wicked of the earth, and from the glorious presense of God and Christ: and let us morn for those that are scattered from Christ, and from grace: and for those that whilst they live are scattered, and when they dye are gathered to the Devil and his Angels. Let us not mourn for those that dye in Christ, but let us mourn for those that live out of Christ; let us not mourn over the body the soul hath left, but let us mourn over the soul God hath left.

The third use is of Consolation to all the people of God, in reference to evil times that are coming upon us, or to the evil of times. Whatever befalls a Child of God in this life, though he be scattered by wicked men, from England into foreign Countries, though he wanders up and down in Deserts and Wildernesses, though he be scattered from house to prison, yet there shall be a gathering time shortly: there will a time come when all the Saints shall be gathered to Christ, and to one another, never to part any more. The death of Gods people is not a perishing, but a gathering: comfort your selves therefore with these words against the fear of death: look upon death as a gathering, as a gathering to Christ: you are here as Daniel in the Lyons Den, as Jeremiah in the dungeon; yet there will come a gathering, and if you dye in a good cause, you shall not perish, but be gathered to Christ, to his Saints and Angels.

But you will say, If I were sure when I dye, that I should be gathered to Christ, to live forever with him, this would be matter of great consolation to me: but you told me, the wicked are gathered by death, as well as the Godly: how shall I know whether (when I come to dye) I shall be gathered to the Devil and his Angels, or to Christ and his Angels? How shall I know whether I shall be gathered at death, as a bundle of tears to be burned in Hell, or a bundle of Wheat to be carried up into the Barn of Heaven?

I answer, you may know it by four things.

1. If you are righteous, then you shall be gathered to Christ at death; For the Righteous shall go into everlasting life: Heaven is entailed upon righteous men; by Righteousness I mean the imputed Righteousness, and imparted Righteousness of Jesus Christ: I wave the explication of them, because time will not give leave. Know you not (saith the Apostle) that no unrighteous man shall inherit the Kingdom of God? Damnation is entailed upon unrighteous men.

2. If you are merciful, you shall be gathered to Christ: if you are one that is full of bowels of compassion to the distressed members of Christ Jesus, for Christ hath said it, blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy, now if you are hard-hearted, covetous, worldly minded, remember that Text, He shall have judgement without mercy, that shews no mercy.

3. He that is gathered to the second Adam by faith in this world, shall certainly be gathered unto Christ by vision in the other world; Christ Jesus will save all his members, and you must know that faith is a transplanting grace, it is not only a heart-purifying, but a world-overcoming grace: It takes a man out of the old Adam, and puts him into a new Adam; it takes a man out of the root of scattering, and puts him into the root of union and conjunction: Wherefore you that are now joined to Christ by faith here, shall be joined to Christ in glory hereafter. But now, you that are vagabonds, Cains, and aliens from the life of God, and from the life of grace: You that are wooden members, wooden legs in Christs body, that have no real conjunction with Christ, you shall not be gathered to him in glory.

Lastly, if you are gathered here to the Saints by love, then you shall be gathered to the Saints in Heaven, and to the everlasting enjoyment of God with them to all eternity. Consider this, every man shall be gathered (when he dies) to those whom he delights, and chooseth to keep company with while he lives in this world. If you are gathered to the wicked in love and affection here, you shall be

gathered to them at death in hell and destruction, for it is pity companions should be parted, wheat must to wheat, and tares to tares, for wheat and tares shall not be bound together at the last day.

The last use is of exhortation: If the righteous must perish, and if their death be nothing but a gathering, then take this threefold Exhortation.

First, let us labor to make the best use we can of our godly friends and Ministers before they be gathered; let us do as Elisha did, he was told that his Master Elijah was to be taken up to Heaven, and therefore he would never leave him till he had got the spirit of Elijah doubled upon him: If Elisha had not thought that Elijah would have been taken up that day, he would never have followed him so punctually and inseparably as he did. O beloved! did you believe that Text, Zech. 1:5. of which we have often had experience, your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live forever? Indeed if they did live forever, we might get good from them when we please, because we are sure never to lose them; but they live not forever, but must perish, and be taken up to heaven: And therefore whilst we have them, let us make what use we can of them, before they be taken away from us. It is a great fault among the people of God, that they make no more use of their Godly friends and Ministers. I have known many that have godly relations that have died, that it hath been the greatest burden on their consciences, that they got no more good by those Godly Relations while they lived. Many of us deal with our Ministers, as we do with a strange sight that is to be seen near our doors; we are not so much solicitous when we see it, but a stranger that comes from a far Country, is curious, and very careful presently to see it. So do we in this City especially; I have had experience of it by being here many years; strangers that come out of the Country, many times get that good by a Minister, that his own people do not, because they think their Minister is continually with them: but a stranger knows he is there but for a day, and he hears so, that he carries Christ home with him, and a great deal of consolation also. Beloved, this is a great fault; I beseech you remember, the

Righteous must be gathered: let us therefore do with them as we do with Books that are borrowed: if a man borrows a Book, he knows he must keep it but for a day or two, and therefore he will be sure to read it over, whereas if the Book be a man's own, he lays it aside, because he knows he can read it at any time. Remember, your Ministers are but lent you, they are not your own, and you know not but that God may take away your Elijah's from you this night: Therefore make what use you can of them, while you have them.

Secondly, Must the Righteous be taken away? Then let the Righteous make conscience of doing what good they can before they are taken away. Beloved, if it were possible for the Godly to grieve in Heaven, this would be their greatest sorrow, that they have done God no more service here upon earth. Be wise for God, O ye Righteous! do as old men that have rich places & offices, they labor to buy the reversion of their places for their Children: So must you to whom God hath given great gifts and graces, labor to propagate your gifts & graces, that there may be no loss by your death. Observe the cares of St. Paul the aged in his exhortation to Timothy, 2 Tim. 3:4,5. Watch thou all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an Evangelist, make full proof of thy Ministry, why so? for I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand, and therefore work thou, see that thou endure affliction, preach the Gospel as becomes a Minister of the Gospel, that there may be no loss by my departure. So in 2 Tim. 2:2. The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men that shall be able to teach others also. Hath God committed anything to you, a treasure of Learning or Grace? commit it to young Ministers that they may commit it to others, that so there may be a succession of Gifts and Graces: Do as Physicians do, that labor to communicate their skill to their Children, and to others; so should we, that there may be a succession of Godly ones, that Godliness may be entailed upon us, and our Relations.

Thirdly and lastly, let us all labor to be such, that when we dye, when we come to be gathered, we may be gathered to Christ and his

Angels; not to the Devil and his angels; And for that purpose let us labor to be merciful and righteous, and let us be gathered to Christ by Faith, and to one another by love and dear affection: and then we shall be gathered at the great day to Christ, and the blessed company of the Saints & Angels.

There are 4 observations yet behind, but I must wave them at this time.

I have now another Sermon to preach, and I cannot without injury to you that are alive, and without wrong to the memory of my dearly beloved Brother, but speak something of him, at whose Funeral we are met this Evening, not so much for his commendation, he needs not, but for our imitation; it is pity, great pity something should not be said, that this Reverend Minister, though dead, may yet preach this night; and I have so much to say of him, that I know not where to begin, and when I have begun, I hardly know how to make an end: I must confess, the little time allotted me for the providing this solemn work, and the necessary avocations in this little time, have hindered me from informing myself about his Breeding and manner of Education at Emanuel Colledge, under Mr. Steaker, and his excellent carriage and converse with Mr. Hildersham, Mr. Dod, Mr. Ball, Mr. Langly, and other Ministers famous in their generations; and the many pressures and hardships that he suffered in those parts and times, for the keeping of his conscience pure from that which he counted sin, and therefore I must draw a vail over that part of his life, and confine my discourse only to the time since his coming to live with us in London, which is about the space of twenty two, or twenty three years, all which time I have had the happiness to be intimately acquainted with him, insomuch as that I can freely and clearly profess, and that with a sad heart, that I, and many others, have lost a real, wise, and Godly friend, brother, and fellow-laborer in the Lord; the Church hath lost an eminent Member, and choice pillar; and this City hath lost an antient faithful, and painful Minister; who by his Prayers and Holy life, did seek to keep off the judgements of God from falling on us; and the less sensible the City

is of this loss, the greater is the loss. I fear we may too truly repeat the words in the Text, the righteous perisheth, and no man lays it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come. I have read of Philo the Jew, and by chance met with the same in the life of St. Ambrose, that when they came to any City or Town, and heard of the death of any Godly man, though never so poor, they would both of them mourn exceedingly, because of the great loss that place had by the death of that Godly man, and because it was a warning-piece from God of evil approaching. But we have had many Godly men, and Godly Ministers taken away of late, and yet I fear me, but few lay it to heart; and therefore as I said, the loss is the greater to this City, because it is so little sensible of it. It is a great loss also to his relations; his Wife hath lost a dear and loving Husband, his Sister a brother, his Parish and Congregation a faithful Pastor.

The Ministerial excellencies of many Ministers were collected and concentered in one Simeon Ash, he was a Bezalel in Gods Tabernacle, a Master-builder, an old Disciple, a Polycarp, a Christian of long standing in the School of Christ, a burning and a shining light, one whom many Ministers and other good Christians called Father, insomuch that it was a common proverb in this City, Father Ash; and I believe many experimentally weep over him, as the King did over the Prophet Elisha, My Father, my Father, the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof! for he lived desired, and died lamented; not only in the City, but I believe in many places in the Country where he was known. But more particular, there were twelve excellencies I observed in this reverend Minister, and my dear Brother, that were as 12 Jewels or precious Pearls in that Crown with which God had crowned him: I shall name them for your imitation and benefit; He needs them not, for he is above our Eulogy.

The first and chief Jewel that did beautify & adorn this our Brother, was his sincerity and uprightness in heart; which indeed is not a single Grace, but the soul of all Grace, and the interlineary that must run through all Grace; what is faith if it be not unfeigned? what will

love to God profit you if it be not without dissimulation? what is repentance worth if it be not in truth? as the body without the soul is a rotten carcass, so is all grace without sincerity; this is the soul of all grace, this is the girdle of truth. Sincerity is that which girts all our spiritual armor together, and makes them useful: what advantage is it to have the breastplate of Righteousness, the shield of Faith, the helmet of Hope, if they be but painted things? it is the girdle of sincerity that makes all the other parts of our armor useful. Now this excellent grace of sincerity was eminent in our dear Brother; he was a true Nathaniel in whom there was no guile; I mean no allowed hypocrisy, this was that which carried him through the pangs of death with a great deal of comfort; for he was able to say with Hezekiah, Remember, O Lord, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart. He could say with Paul, this is my rejoicing, the testimony of my conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, I have had my conversation in this world.

2. Another grace was his humility, this is a grace that he was clothed withal, and it is a rare grace: for God dwells with the humble he resists the proud; but he gives grace to the humble. This Reverend Minister was low in his own eyes, and therefore very high in Gods eyes; he had a mean esteem of himself, and therefore he was high in esteem with God. He was as Jacob said of himself, less than the least of Gods mercies, and therefore he was made partaker of the best of Gods mercies. He was like an ear of Corn full of fruit, bowing down in thankfulness to God.

3. Another Jewel was the fruitfulness of his discourse; for it may be said of him as it was of Christ, he went about doing good: where ever he went, he scattered his goodness, this all that knew him, knew to be true. He was full of good discourse where ever he came; when I was with him in his sickness, he took occasion to complain much, and not without just cause; (God grant his complaint may make impression upon our hearts) he complained that it was a great fault of Ministers, that when they met together, they discoursed no more of Christ, of Heaven, and of the concernments of the other world,

and professed that if GOD should restore him, he would be more careful in his discourse, and more fruitful than ever yet he had been.

4. Another Jewel that beautified this Righteous man, was his mercifulness; he was a merciful man, which he manifested not only in his charity to the members of Jesus Christ, but in his frequent visiting of sick persons, and persons that needed Spiritual physick. I know not any Minister in this City more careful in visiting the sick than he was.

5. Another Jewel was his Prudence and Spiritual wisdom; he was not only a Pious and Godly, but a Wise and Prudent Minister: that had zeal for God, but knew how to mingle his zeal with discretion; discretion is nothing but frantic fury; discretion without zeal will quickly eat out the heart of Religion, and eat Religion out of the heart. Zeal without discretion is not a coal from the Altar, but a coal kindled by the wild-fire of passion, that is able to set a Nation on fire; but this Reverend Minister had zeal sweetly tempered with discretion.

6. Another Jewel was his Patience; God was pleased to exercise him with long and great afflictions, by reason of the Gout, that did often, especially of late years, affix him to his bed, and afflict him with great pain; but God was pleased to put his everlasting Arms underneath him, supporting him under all his pains, and giving him a great measure of patience, insomuch, that in patience he did possess his soul, and patience had its perfect work in him.

The 7th Jewel was his high valuation of Jesus Christ; a written copy for us to follow, and for you his people also. Being with him in his last sickness, he exhorted me, and other Ministers with him, to preach much of Jesus Christ; and to speak to him of Jesus Christ; and he said, When I consider my best duties, I sink, I dye, I despair; but when I think of Christ, I have enough, he is all, and in all. I think these were his very words. I desire (said he) to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and him Crucified: I account all things dung and dross,

that I may be found in Christ: To this effect he spake in the morning before the evening in which he died, speaking much of Jesus Christ.

1. Another Jewel was, his diligence in preaching the Gospel in season, and out of season; in the time of his health he was a painful, laborious Preacher; one that did not preach to tickle the ear, but to wound the heart; not to please, but to profit; not seeking the applause of the People, but the salvation of their souls: This you all know to be true.

2. Another Jewel that did beautify and adorn this Reverend Minister, was his excellent gift in Prayer; and herein he was very eminent, and did exceed many, nay I may say, most of his Brethren: As Apollos was mighty in the Scriptures, so was he (as you all know) mighty in Prayer; he was a Jacob, very skillful in wrestling with God; like Moses he often stood in the Gap, and at most Fasts, all the time of his health, he was a Minister that was chosen to conclude with Prayer: and this heightens the loss that we sustain by the death of this Godly Minister; because we have lost the benefit of his Prayers, which is an invaluable loss; for though I doubt not but he prays in Heaven for the Church in general, yet I believe he prays not for any in particular; as not knowing what our condition is, For Abraham knows us not, for the Saints in Heaven know not what is done upon earth. The loss therefore is the greater, because we have lost not only a preaching, but a praying Minister: And give me leave to add, that this excellency in this Minister is sufficient to prove,

1. That there is a gift of Prayer, which some against all reason do deny.

2. That conceived prayers, when uttered by one that hath the gift of prayer, are not vain tautologies, or empty repetitions, and a rate of non-sense, as some unjustly charge men with, but they are the bleating's of Gods Spirit, that pierce not only into the ears and hearts of the hearers, but into the ears and heart of God himself.

10. The next Jewel was, he had great acquaintance and communion with God; for he was of a long standing in the School of Christ, and a good Proficient in that School. Much acquaintance he had with God, he was often in the Mount with God, and came down with his face shining, though he in his modesty did not see it; and when he came to dye, he was able to say as Dr. Preston did when he lay a dying, I shall change my place, but not my company.

11. Another Jewel was, his comfortable passage out of this world, dying with a great deal of calmness and serenity upon his Conscience: The morning before he died, I heard him say these words. It is one thing to speak of Christ, and of Heaven, and another thing to feel the consolation of Christ, and of Heaven, as I do, clapping his hand on his breast. Another time I heard him say, the comforts of a holy Life are real, soul-supporting; and that he felt the reality of those comforts, and that by him we might know it was not in vain to serve God. And I cannot forget this speech the morning before he died, I am a little straitened, but I care no more for my life than I do for this Phillip. That which was said of old Simeon, Luke 2. may be said of this reverend Mr. Simeon Ash, who was a Simeon, a just and devout man, an old servant of Jesus Christ, one that waited for the consolation of Israel; one that dyed, though not with Christ in his bodily Arm, yet with Christ in the Arms of his faith; and when he died, could say, as it is there, Now Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.

Lastly, Another Jewel was his constancy and perseverance; he was not a Reed shaken with every wind, but as firm as a Rock, an immoveable pillar in God's house, he was unchangeable in changeable times: in Religion he was a house built upon a Rock, not on the Sand; and as he lived, so he dyed holily, even as the ancient Patriarchs that dyed in the faith, and endured faithfully unto the death.

Now this excellent Minister of Christ thus beautified with these Jewels, is now perished as to his outward man, gathered to God, to

Christ, and the blessed company of Saints and Angels. The Application that I shall make of this discourse, is this:

1. To us Ministers.
2. To you of this Parish and Congregation.

First, to us Ministers. God hath of late years taken to himself many famous men: seven of the Lecturers of Cornhill are dead, Mr. Burroughs, Dr. Bolton, Mr. Sedgwick. Mr., Whitakers, Mr. Cranford, Mr. Vines, and now Mr. Ash. I might name many other excellent Ministers that are dead, as Dr. Gouge, Mr. Walker, Mr. Gataker, Mr. Marshal, Mr. Robinson, and lately Mr. Cook, with many more: Now all these are warning-pieces from Heaven of Judgements approaching; For the righteous perish, and no man lays it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come. Thus Methuselah dyed a year before the Flood: Now Methuselah in Hebrew signifies a messenger of death. Thus Austin dyed a little before Hippo was taken; and Pareus a little before Hiddleburg was taken, and Luther a little before the wars in Germany began. The death of the Godly is like the separating the Israelites from the Tents of Corah and his company, like the taking of Lot out of Sodom. When the Israelites departed from Corah and his company, the earth swallowed them up; and when Lot departed out of Sodom, God rained down fire and brimstone upon them. Let the thoughts of these things cause us to provide our Arks, to get our Zoars. Let it teach young Samuels to rise up in the room of old Elies; young Elisha's in the room of old Elijah's; and young Timothies in the room of Paul the aged; that there may be a succession of Gospel-ministers to hold forth the Word of life to the Nation. And let us labor to be Inheritors of the Twelve Excellencies, that beautified this our Reverend Brother.

Secondly, let me speak a few words to you of this Parish, the Auditors of this worthy Minister. There is scarce one man of a hundred, that understands the tie and obligation that is betwixt a Minister and his

People. Oh the Love and Affection that ought to be betwixt them! Paul tells the Galatians, that they could have plucked out their eyes for him if need were. Chrysostom tells us, that when Miletus was taken away by death from his People, their hearts sunk with sorrow; and such love had they to him, that they called all their Children by his name, and got his picture engraven on their Rings. And I have read of Chrysostom, that when he was banished from his People there was not a corner in the City, but was full of People weeping and lamenting. The loss of a Godly Minister is a public loss, and therefore there ought to be a public mourning: it is a soul loss, and therefore methinks every one of you should weep and mourn; you have lost your common Father: you of this Congregation have lost your spiritual Father, your spiritual Shepheard: you have lost your eyes, your guide: and indeed it is you that are his Flock, that must commend your Minister by practicing that which he preached; saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. 3:1. Do we again begin to commend ourselves, or need we, as some others, Epistles of Commendations to you, or Letters of commendation from you? Ye are our Epistle written in our hearts, known and read all men. As if the Apostle should say, do we need Letters of commendation? is it necessary that we should spend time in commending our Ministry? you are our Letters of commendation: your holiness & piety commends a Minister above all other things. As when a man comes into an Orchard, or Vineyard, (saith Chrysostom) and sees everything skillfully handled, and neatly trimmed, he need not spend time in commending the Vine-dresser, or Carpenter, the work its self commends them. So ought it to be among you. When we preach the Funeral Sermons of Ministers, we must look into the Parish or Congregation and see what Letters of commendation there are: whether the proficiency of the Auditors commend their Ministers, I grant, it is not always true: God doth not always give success to a godly Minister, but the worst is yours, I had almost said, the curse is yours: but I will speak modestly, the worst is yours. Tell me, how many of you are able to say, I bless God that ever such a Minister was sent among us: blessed be God that ever we heard him preach? what seal of his ministry is there here among you? he was in another, and another place of this City, it may be here

are people from all places that have been his Auditors, what seal of his Ministry is there now to be found among you? how many Souls hath he plucked out of the snares of the Devil? how many of you have gone weeping from a Sermon, knocking your breasts, and pricked at the heart of sin, crying out, Men and Brethren what shall we do to be saved? your tears and mourning for sin, these are the Auditors that commend your Ministers. Go home now and think with your selves, what can I remember of all the Sermons that I have heard from Mr. Ash? and give me leave to tell you, woe be to you, if as your Minister be dead, so all the Sermons he made die with him: for as Abel being dead, yet speaketh, so shall the Sermons of this worthy Minister, at the great day, speak for you, or against you: for they are spiritual Talents that God hath be-trusted you with, and you must be accountable: both he and you shall appear before the Tribunal of God; your Minister shall be examined, how he can free himself from the guilt of Soul-blood? and you shall be examined, what fruit you brought forth answerable to the means you have enjoyed? and if it appear you have been unprofitable and unfruitful hearers, Christ will say, Cast the unprofitable servants into utter darkness. But I hope better things of you, and things that accompany salvation. Whatever was good in this reverend Minister, let it live in you: and though he be dead, yet let not his Sermons that he preached die with you, but let them be in you: that at the great day, when he and you appear before God, he may be able to say, here am I, and the Children that thou hast given me.

04. Dr. Manton's Sermon

"Wherefore, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of Witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin

which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."- Hebrews 12:1.

In the former Chapter you have a spiritual Chronicle, or a Catalogue of the Lords Worthies, and all the eminent effects of their Faith; and now the Apostle comes to make use of this History, that he had produced through so many successions of Ages of all the holy men of God that excelled in Faith. Wherefore seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of Witnesses, &c.

The Text is wholly Hortatory. In it observe,

1. The Premises, or principle the Apostle worketh upon, seeing we are compassed about with, &c.

2. The practical Inferences, which are deduced from thence, and they are two.

1. One concerning the private part of our duty, let us lay aside every weight, &c. there is something external and without, like to clog us in our way to Heaven, —every weight, and something within that will hinder and trouble us within: therefore he saith, And the sin which doth so easily beset us.

2. Here is the positive part, let us run with patience the race that is set before us. There's motion [Run] the manner [with patience] the stage or way [the race that is set before us.]

My purpose is to give you some brief thoughts upon this useful and practical inference of the Apostle, from the History of the faithful before recorded. Therefore I will sum up the whole Text in this point.

Doct. The people of God that have such a multitude of examples of holy Men and Women set before them, should prepare themselves to run the spiritual race with more patience and cheerfulness.

There are two things in this Doctrine, the Encouragement and the Duty. I shall open both with respect to the circumstances of the Text.

First, The Encouragement; A multitude of examples, or, as in the Text, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of Witnesses. Mark here are witnesses, a great cloud of witnesses, and these, compassing us round about.

First, here are witnesses; by that term we are to understand those worthy Saints mentioned and reckoned up in the former Chapter, Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, &c. All the Saints of God that have had experience of the goodness of his providence to them, and the fulfilling of his promises, they are all called Witnesses; why? because they depose a testimony for God, and to speak to future generations to be constant, as they were, that they might receive the like reward. This witness was partly in their Faith, and partly in the fruit of their Faith.

1. They witnessed by their faith, (John 3:33.) He that hath received his testimony, hath set to his zeal that God is true. A man that hath soundly digested the promises, that expresses his faith by cheerfulness and patience under all difficulties, troubles, delays, and those sundry trials that he meets with, he gives it under hand and seal, proclaims it to the world that he hath to do with the true God. And,

2. They witnessed in the fruits of their faith, as they give us an instance of Gods fidelity towards them that faithfully adhere to, and firmly believe in his promises; so it is said, Heb. 6:12. Be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promise. Let Faith but set Patience a work, do but hold out a little while with God, and you may learn by the example of all those holy men, we shall inherit the promises, they shall be made good to a tittle, and nor one thing fail of all that the Lord hath spoken; as those holy men were exercised and tossed to and fro, but it succeeded well with them at the last. O then let us hearken to the deposition of these

worthy witnesses that are recorded in the Scripture, and with such an invincible resolution as theirs was, let us hold out our course towards true happiness: If we do not, they that are now propounded as Witnesses to us, will at the day of Judgment be produced as witnesses against us. And pray also let us remember that we are to continue and keep afoot that testimony to succeeding generations: for not only the Prophets and holy men of God, were Gods witnesses, but all Gods people also are his witnesses, Isai. 43:10. by their faith, patience, diligence, constancy and cheerfulness under afflictions, they are to give it under hand and seal to the world, that God is a true and faithful God. But now, if we either by our sinful walking, or by our drooping discouragements, discredit Christ and his profession, then we, are witnesses against him, we deny that Religion which we would seem to profess and cry up, (Tit. 1:16.) They profess they know God, but in works they deny him; and the more dangerous, because deeds are more deliberate than words, and so a greater evidence of what we think in our hearts. If we by drooping discouragements and sinful walking discredit Religion, we deny it, and do in effect put the lye upon Christ. Therefore let us remember they were witnesses, and so must we.

Secondly, by a figurative speech they are called a Cloud, [having a cloud of witnesses] why so? I might trouble you with many conceits Interpreters have had of this word Cloud; say some, because of the raisedness of their spirits, because Clouds fly aloft: Clouds, for the fruitfulness of their Doctrine, as Clouds send down fruitful showers upon the earth; & Clouds, because they cool and cover us from the heat; so some would gloss for our comfort: others with more judgment say, a Cloud with allusion to the pillar of cloud which conducted the Israelites to Canaan; yet neither doth this come up fully to the scope of the Apostle; for the Apostle speaks not of a Cloud that goes before us, but of a Cloud that compasseth us round about, and therefore a Cloud; the reason why 'tis called so, is the number and multitude of those Witnesses, as a Cloud is made up of a multitude of vapors gathered together, and condensed into one body; and so the expression is often used, Ezek. 38:9. Thou shalt be like a

cloud to cover the Land, &c. noting the increase of the people when God would restore them, the multitude of Converts; and so in prophane Authors, Livie hath such an expression, an army of men is called a cloud. But this is enough to shew the intent of this expression, that there are a multitude, a very great number: though the godly comparatively, and with respect to the wicked, are a few, yet considered in themselves, they are a great number; for, if the Martyrs, and those glorious instances of Heroic saith, and that under the Old Testament, when Gods Interest was more confined to one People, if there were such a Church then, of so great a number, what will the whole Church of the Old and New Testament be, when we shall meet together in Heaven? We are often discouraged with the paucity of Professors, and are apt to think our selves to be left alone, 1 Kings 19:10. But let us remember there is a Cloud of Witnesses, we are not solitary now, and certainly we shall not want company when we come to Heaven, To the innumerable company of, &c.

Again, it meets with an ordinary and strong temptation which Satan suggests to the heart of the godly, that they are singular and matchless in their afflictions, that none of the people of God have ever under gone such difficulties as they are exposed unto; and this makes them question their Fathers affections, and put themselves out of the number of his children. I, but all these things are accomplished in the Saints of God before you, here is a Cloud of Witnesses that have been exercised and tried to purpose, 1 Pet. 4:9. They are troubled with a busy Devil, a naughty world, a corrupt heart, all have had their trial from Gods correcting hand, the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren, that are in the world. So that we have many fellows, our lot is no harder than the Saints of God that have gone before us, for there is a Cloud of Witnesses.

3. Observe, the Apostle calls it a Cloud that compasses us round about, i.e. We have instances for every Trial, Temptation, Duty that we are put upon: Here we have examples of those that have fulfilled the commands of Christ on this side with an undaunted courage, and the examples of those that have born the Cross of Christ with an

invincible patience: here we have examples of those that have conquered right-hand temptations, that have despised the delights of the world; and there are those that have conquered left-hand temptations, that have not been broken and affrighted with the terrors of the world; all the Saints of God have trodden that way; the same paths wherein we are to walk after them: we cannot look this way or that way, but we have instances of Faith, confidence in God, and patience, we are compassed about, &c. In short, here lies the encouragement that Christians should propound to themselves.

1. That there are examples. Christians of latter times have more to answer for their infidelity, than those of former Ages; they that first believed the promises, believed without such a cloud of witnesses, or multitude of examples; many have gone before us that have broken the Ice, and that found good success from their own experience, they have commended God to us, as a true and faithful God, and will not you go on? When Jonathan and his Armor-bearer climbed up the Rocks of the Philistines, then the people were encouraged to go up after; so here are some that have gone before you, and it hath succeeded well with them.

2. These examples are many; not one or two that might be supposed to be singularly assisted, and to have eminent Prerogatives above the rest of their brethren, but many in every Age, a whole cloud of them,

3. There are examples of many rare and excellent men, the best that ever lived under Heaven: Take (my brethren) the Prophets for an example, &c. Jam. 5:10.

4. They are propounded to us, not for their words only, and for their profession, but for their deeds, for their bitter sufferings; and they abundantly manifest to us, that there is nothing impossible in our duty, or anything so difficult but may be overcome through Christs strength enabling us: They all had the same nature we have; they were of the like passion with us, flesh and blood as we are, of the same relations and concernments; and then on the other side, we

have the same cause with them, the same recompense of reward to encourage us, the same God and Savior to recompense us; he suffered for us as well as for them; therefore we should follow in their steps, and hold fast our confidence to the end, for they have shewed us, that poverty, reproaches, death itself, and all those things that would look harsh, and with a ghastly aspect upon the eyes of the world, are not such evils, but that a Believer may rejoice in them, and triumph over them. I say, they have shewed the blandishments of the world have not such a charm, but they may be renounced without any loss of considerable joy and contentment, and that the duties of Christianity are not so hard, but that a little waiting upon God will bring in grace enough to perform them; therefore saith the Apostle, Seeing we have a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside, &c. And so I come to the Encouragement, to the

Second thing, and that is the duty here pressed.

1. Here is the privative.

2. The positive part of our duty: Here is Mortification and Vivification.

Mortification, let us lay aside, &c. Vivification, let us run with patience, &c. In both the branches, he alludes to terms proper to Races: In a Race you know men strip themselves of their clothes, and whatever is burdensome and heavy, that they may be the more light of foot; and so the Apostle bids us lay aside every weight; and they do withal diet themselves, that they might have no clog from within, 1 Cor. 9:25. Every man that striveth for the mastery, is temperate in all things, i.e. They took care that they did not clog and indispose themselves for the race they were to run; but they verily run only for a corruptible Crown, we for a Crown that is incorruptible and glorious: so according to this double practice of Races, we are to cast aside every weight from without, &c. So here's a double object, laying aside every weight, and of sin, There's onus externum, the weight without, that presses us down, and hinders our speed; and then

there's impedimentum internum, there's sin, that which weakens within; by reason of the former, we make little speed; by reason of the latter, we are often interrupted; and therefore we must do as they, that they might be swift and expedite, lay aside ever weight, and be more temperate in all things. Herein a Runner in a Race differs from a Traveler, a Traveler strengthens himself for his Journey as well as he can, his clothes on, sometimes carries a great burden with him; but a Runner of a Race makes himself as light as he can. But to come more particularly to the words.

First, (lay aside every weight.) By weight is meant those things that burden the soul, and make our heavenly progress more tedious and cumbersome: and by weight is meant (I think) the delights and cares of the world, the multitude of secular business, all our earthly contentment's and affairs, so far as they are a burden to us, hinder us in our way to heaven; these must all be put off, Luke 21:3,4. saith Christ, Take heed to your selves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, &c. The heart that is depressed, cannot be so free for God, and the Offices of our heavenly Calling, when we give way to surfeiting, drunkenness, and cares of this world,

1. The heart may be overcharged with the delights of the World; Surfeiting and Drunkenness must not be taken in the gross notion; you must not think of spewing, reeling, vomiting, as if to avoid these were a full compliance with Christs direction, the heart may be overcharged when the stomach is not; there is a dry drunkenness, and a more refined surfeiting, and that is when the heart grows heavy, unfit for Prayer, relishes not the things of the Spirit, when the delights of the Flesh clog the wheel, abate that vigor and cheerfulness that we should shew forth in the worship of God and holy Actions, when the delights of the flesh withdraw us from that watchfulness and diligence that is necessary in taking care for our souls, then the heart is overcharged; voluptuous living is a great sin, it choaks the seed of Piety so soon as planted in the heart, so that they can bring nothing to perfection, it brings a brawn and a deadness upon the Conscience

and Affections; there is nothing that hardens the heart so much, as the softness of carnal pleasure, (Jude 19.) Sensual, having not the spirit; Sensuality quenches our natural bravery and briskness of spirit that becomes a man; much more doth it hinder the sublime operations of the spirit of God. Well then, remember Christians, you are not only Travelers by the way, but Runners in a Race: If we were to speak to you only under the notion of Travelers in a way, this were enough to wean you from the delights of the flesh, 1 Pet. 2:11. As strangers and Pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which was against the soul. The more you indulge these fleshly lusts, the more you hearten and strengthen the great enemy of your souls, and starve the better parts; but you are as Runners in a Race: by this Metaphor the duty is more bound upon you, much more should you beat down the body, and keep it in subjection; the Apostle hath a notable word, 1 Cor. 9:27. I keep under my body, and bring it in subjection, &c. I heat down my body; you must either keep under pleasures, or pleasures will keep you under; for a man is soon brought under the power, dominion, and tyranny of evil customs, and me so brutish pleasure, by indulging the lusts of the flesh, 1 Cor 6:12. Be but a little addicted to an▪ one thing, and you are brought under the power of it; the flesh waxes wanton and imperious, and a slavery grows upon you by degrees: The more you cocker carnal affections, the more, they increase upon you; and therefore you must hold the reins hard, exercise a powerful restraint. Solomon in his Penitentials gives us an account of his own folly; and how fearfully he was corrupt this way, Eccles. 2:20. Whatsoever mine eyes desired, I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy, &c. This was that which brought him to such a lawless excess, and at length to fall off from God. When we give nature the full swing, and use pleasure with too free a license, the heart is insensibly corrupted, and the necessities of life are turned into diseases, and all that you do, 'tis but in compliance with your lusts; your eating and drinking is but a meat-offering, and drink-offering to lusts and carnal appetites. I remember Solomon saith, Prov. 29:21. He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child, shall have him become his Son at length, i.e. allow a servant too much liberty, and he will no more know his condition, but grow

contemptuous, bold and troublesome, so it is here: We are all the worse for license; natural desires, unless they feel fetters and prudent restraints, grow unruly and excessive: And therefore it is good to abate the liberty of the flesh, that the body may be a servant, and not a Master; when you deny your selves in nothing, but satisfy every vain appetite, a custom grows upon the fowl, and Intemperance proves a Trade, and an habitual distemper, so that you cannot when you would, upon prudent and pious respects refrain and command your desires; and therefore 'tis good sometimes to thwart and vex the flesh, as David poured out the water of Bethlehem that he longed for, 2 Sam. 23:17. not to deny ourselves in what we affect and covet; lust grows into a wanton, and bold, and imperious, and so prescribes upon us, and we are brought under the power of these things.

2. The business and cares of this world; for these immoderately followed, and not in obedience to God, are a sore burden, and makes the soul heavy, and allows no time and strength for God and his service, and those happy opportunities of private communion with him, when we are encumbered with much service, we neglect that one thing necessary, Luke 10:42. and therefore Christians must take heed that the lean kind do not devour the fat; that Sarah be not thrown out of doors instead of Hagar; that Religion be not thrust to the walls, which should be our prime and chief business, while every business hath its time and course. The Scriptures knowing the proneness of our hearts to temporal things, deals with us as we do with a crooked stick, we bend it so much the other way, and therefore sometimes they forbid necessary labor, John 6:28. Labor not for the meat which perisheth, &c. the meaning is, not chiefly; but it bends the stick another way, set not your affections on the things of the earth: A man must have some kind of affection to his work here below; but we had need to be bent the other way. We may gather is from this Precept, 'tis better encroach upon the world, then the world should encroach upon Godliness. In short, things are a burden and clog to us, according as our delight and scope is; if the pomp and increase of the world be our end and scope, then Religion will be looked upon as a burden, that will be a weight, and all duties of

godliness as a melancholy interruption, as they, Amos 2:8. When will the Sabbath be over? The exercise of godliness will be a troublesome thing, and we shall go about the work of Religion as if we went about it not: But, on the other side, if Heaven and heavenly things be our scope, then the world is a burthen, and then we shall use it in the way, but not abusing, as taking up our rest here, 1 Cor. 7:31, 32. Man hath a body and soul, and he doth provide for both but for one in subordination; the soul is the chief, and therefore we must not so look after the interests and concernments of the bodily life as to forget the interests of the soul, or to neglect them. Many will not so grossly idolize present things, so as to renounce things to come; I but they so often follow the things of the world, that they neglect their eternal concernments. The happiness of a people, in communion with God, and therefore that must be looked after; we must take heed that the cares of the world have not such a hand and power over us, as either to divert us from or unfit us for these higher and nobler pursuits, the enjoyments of God in Christ. This is the first thing the Apostle speaks to these spiritual Racers, to lay aside every weight, that is, the delights of the flesh and the cares of the world.

Secondly, the next thing to be laid aside, is sin, which doth so easily beset us. As we must guard against things without so we must mortify our corrupt inclinations within: or else, it will soon make us weary of our heavenly Race, or faint in it. Sin you know is twofold, Original and Actual. Actual sin is not meant primarily, for that is not peccatum agens, the sin that easily besets us, but peccatum transiens, the sin that passes from us; and original sin is that which is emphatically called sin Rom. 7:8 Now this original corruption may be considered as merely native, or as acquired and improved into evil customs and habits: for according to men's tempers and constitutions, as they are severally disposed, so by the corruption of nature they are inclined to one sin more than another: as the channel is cut, so corrupt nature finds a vent and issue: every man there in some predominant sin, and in every regenerate person some relics of that sin, from whence is the greatest danger of his soul: thus David speaks of his iniquity, Psalm 18:23. Well then, this is that sin that

doth easily beset us: original sin improved into some tyranny or evil custom which doth increase and prevail upon us more and more. Now this is said (easily beset us) for three reasons: Partly, because it hath a great power and restraint over us, and implies the whole man, the members the body, the faculties of the soul; so great an interest hath it acquired in our affections, it doth easily beset us, it hath great power and command over us. Partly, because it sticks so close, that we cannot by our own strength lay it aside, Jer. 13:23 Can the Ethiopian change his skin? or the Leopard his sports? &c. A man can as soon change his skin as lay aside his customs, that are so deeply engraven as the blackness of an Ethiopian or the spots of Leopard. And partly because it mingles itself with all our motions and actions, Rom. 7:21. &c. It easily besets us, 'tis present with us, it impels us, and solicits us, and draws us to sin further and further and doth make us negligent in what is Gods: we cannot do or speak any thing, but it will infest us in all our duties of Piety, Charity, Justice; on every side it is interposing, vexing, thwarting the motions of the Spirit, and so abates our strength, vigor, and agility, and retards our course towards heaven and glory: therefore, lay aside, as every Weight, so every Sin, &c.

Quest. Now what is it to (lay aside?) or how can we lay aside, since sin sticks so close to us, and is engraven in our natures?

Answ. Certainly, something may be done by us; for this is everywhere pressed as our duty, Ephes. 4:22. Put off the old man, and 1 Pet. 2:11 we may put it off more and more, though we cannot lay it aside. Then we are said to lay aside the sin that so easily besets us, when we prevent and break the dominion of it, that it shall not reign over us, Rom 6:12. Let not sin reign, &c. Though it dwells in us, lives in us; and works in us, yet it should not overcome us, and bring us into bondage, and so it will not be imputed to our condemnation; and at length when then the soul shall be separated from the body, we shall be wholly free from it.

Quest. I, but what must we do that we may so repress it? (the question returns) that we may break the dominion of it?

Answ. I answer this is the work of the Spirit of God; but we must know, the Spirit of God doth work the work of mortification two ways: by Regeneration, and after Regeneration: By Regeneration, and so he doth immediately without any co-operation of ours mortify the deeds of sin, gives sin its death-wound; that which is left, is a thing mortified, it broken. The Scripture often speaks of this first work of Regeneration, Rom. 6:6., Col. 2:11. First, when we are planted into Christ, then we put off the body of sin; and though it doth not presently die, yet 'tis weakened, that it cannot reign, though it be not destroyed.

2. After Regeneration, the Spirit doth more and more destroy sin, the relics of sin, this crucified body of sin, till it dieth wholly away; this he doth in us, but not without us Rom. 8:13. Through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body: Not the Spirit without us, nor we without the Spirit, but ye through the Spirit. What is then required of us?

1. Seriously purpose not to sin, and promise to God to yield him unfeigned obedience. Especially should we make this promise in the use of those solemn Rites by which the Covenant between God and us is confirmed. Take up a solemn purpose not to grieve the Spirit, nor to break his Law, Psalm 119:106. I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgements: This purpose of heart is the root of all good actions; therefore in the confidence of Gods help, in the sense of thy own weakness, Psalm 119:32. we cannot lay wagers upon our own strength, yet 'tis our duty to engage our hearts to God. To sin against the light of our own conscience, and illumination of the Spirit, and the chastening and instruction of our own reins, that aggravates our sin: but to sin against, and besides our fixed purpose of not sinning, that lightens sin, for then 'tis a sin of weakness and infirmity, not of willfulness and malice; and then we can say as Paul Rom. 7:19. When the heart is fixedly bent towards

God, The evil which I would not, that do I, Two ways may we be said to sin against purpose; either when we are over-born besides our purpose, or our purpose still remains to please God: As, when the water breaks over the bank, the bank remaining, in such a case the fault is not in the bank, but in the violence of the flood. Or 2. when we break off our purpose, or consent to do evil; as when we cut thorow the band, the water may easily make thorow. There's a great deal of difference between sin dwelling in us, and sin entertained by us; between sin remaining, and sin reserved: when you have a firm purpose against all sin, there is sin remaining, but 'tis not reserved, 'tis not kept and allowed.

2. Watch over thy self with a holy suspicion, because thou hast sin within thee that doth easily beset thee; therefore consider thy ways, Psalm 119 59. Guard thy senses. Job. 31:1. but above all, keep thy heart, Prov. 4:23. Conscience must stand Porter at the door, and examine what comes in and what goes out: watch over the stratagems of Satan, and seducing motions of thy own heart.

3. Resist and oppose strongly against the first risings of the flesh, and the tickling & pleasing motions of sin that doth easily beset us, when it doth entice us away from God, or do anything that is unseemly, & contrary unto the duties of our heavenly calling. Oh remember we are not debtors to the flesh, Rom. 8:20. Thou art tied to the Lord by all obligations and indulgencies therefore break the force of sin by a serious resistance; check it, and let thy soul rise up in indignation against it; my business is not to pleasure the flesh but to please the Lord.

4. Bewail thy involuntary lapses and falls with penitential tears, as Peter went out and wept bitterly, Matt. 26:57. Godly sorrow is of great use for laying aside of sin as salt potions kill worms. When Children are troubled with worms, we give them salt potions; so these bitter penitential tears are the means God hath appointed to

mortify sin; that's the reason the Apostle saith, 2 Cor. 7:10. Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of: 'Tis not only a part of repentance but worketh preserving durable resolutions, a walking closely with God: 'tis a means God hath blessed to this end and purpose.

5. Recover from thy falls, renew thy combat, as Israel when they were overcome in battle they would try it again and again, Judg. 20:28. Take heed of ceasing for the present for though thy enemy seems to prevail, though the flesh seems to prevail against the spirit in the battel, yet thou shalt have the best of it in the war; by the power of grace thou shalt have the victory.

Thus I have gone over the privative part of our duty. Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us. I should have come to the positive, let us run with patience the race that is set before us: there is the duty, let us run the race that is set before us: and there is the manner of the duty, let us run with patience. I should have shown you, that a Christians life is like a race from earth to heaven in a way of holiness, and exercise of Grace. This Race it continues as long as we continue in the world, from our Nativity, to our death; after death the strife is ended: Now in this race we must run, and o run that we may obtain the crown, 1 Cor. 9:24. Running is a motion, and a speedy motion; there is lying, sitting or standing, but still there must be running: •e must make a further progress in the way to heaven, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before Phil. 2:13.

The Runner was not to enquire how much of the way already was past but to strain himself to overcome what was yet behind. And so should we consider what sin are yet to be mortified, what duties yet untouched, almost untouched; what heard conflicts are yet to be undergone, and still to hold on our way without wining aside, or halting because of difficulties, discouragements, stumbling blocks. And there are fellows and copartners with us, that run this Race, with whom we may strive in a holy emulation, who should go

forwardest, who should be most forward in the course of pleasing God. O Christians, there are many contentions amongst us but when shall we have this holy contention? Heb 10:24. In a Race there is the Agonetheta, the Judge of the sports: so here God observes all; no matter what the standers by say, the Judge of the sports must decide who must have the Crown, 1 Cor. 14:3,4 And then at the end of the Race there is the Crown, 2 Tim. 4:7,8. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, &c. In a race there are spectators: so there are here, God, Angels and men, 1 Cor. 4:9. We are a spectacle to the world, to angel, and to men; &c.

Thus for the similitude of our Race, in our way to heaven. Now wherein it differs.

This is a Race not undertaken out of wantonness, but out of necessity: God hath called us to this course, and if we run not in this Race, we are undone forever. And in other Races, but one had the Crown; here all are crowned, 2 Tim. 4:8 though they be not so eminent as the Apostle; here all are crowned that run in the manner God hath required: Henceforth is laid upon me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto them that love his appearing.

For the manner, (with patience) Let us run with patience: Patience is necessary.

1. Partly because of the length of the Race, and the distance between us and the promised reward. Our Race cannot be ended but after some degrees of time; long waiting is troublesome to the flesh, and therefore we have need of patience.

2. Because we meet with many impediments, troubles and temptations by the way; there are spiritual adversaries with whom we must fight; for we go on, we not only run, but fight; therefore run with patience, &c.

3. Because the spectators will be ready to discourage us: We are set forth not only as a spectacle to God and Angels, but to the world, and they will be ready to deride, scorn and oppose us for our Zeal to God, and out forwardness in the ways of God, to discourage us by bitter mocking's, &c. therefore let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

05. Mr. Caryl's Sermon

"And they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy." - Rev. 3. latter part of Ver. 4.

In the former part of this Verse, you heard the commendation of those few names in Sardis: it was this They had not defiled their garments. In this latter part you have their encouragement in their reward: They shall walke with me in white. In which encouragement I told you we might consider two things, or take it into two parts.

First, that they should walk with Christ.

Secondly, they should walk in White.

I have spoken to the former of these, they shall walk with Christ, and that the Scripture holds forth under a two-fold notion:

First as matter of duty, It is a duty to walk with Christ.

Secondly, it is matter of promise: That they keep their garments undefiled, and live in high favour with Christ, they shall walk with Christ: we favour those that walk with us.

Walking with Christ notes to us three things.

1. That we have peace with him.
2. That we have intimacy with him.
3. That his being so much above us, we should have this favour from him.

And hence I noted the great priviledge of the people of God, that they shall walk with Christ.

1. It notes the great satisfaction of the Saints to walk with Christ; they shall be filled with his company.
2. How safe it is, and what safety there is to walk with Christ: he hath a wing to spread over them.
3. What opportunities such have as walk with Christ.
4. What liberty such have as walk with Christ.
5. Such as walk with Christ, may be sure he will communicate his secrets to them, he will show them what they have to do.

2. We shewed you the great goodness of Jesus Christ, that he should take such creatures to walk with him, such defiled creatures.

3. Then let us take heed of keeping our garments undefiled, lest Jesus Christ cast us out of his company, and we can no longer walk with Christ any more. Oh take heed of walking blameless in the wayes of Christ.

These things were spoken from the first point. Now I come to the walking with Christ in White.

In opening the Text, I told you white might be considered two wayes.

1. As it respects our state, and so that by way of Justification, and thus they shall walk with Christ; but this is not the walking in white, the Text means.

2. Here is a further walking in white, and that is matter of reward to the people of God.

1. To walk with Christ in white, it is matter of honour, white garments are matter of honour. Princes, great Kings walk in white

garments, so the Saints of God shall walk in white Christ will honour them, and give them honour among them, because they have kept their garments undefiled. They shall walk in white like great Princes, and honoured persons. A good name is better then precious ointment: they that are good indeed, they shall have a good name, they shall walk in white. To keep the conscience clean, is to keep the credit clean; and they who are careful not to blot their conversation, Christ will take care of their reputations, that they be not blotted, that they walk with men in honour,

It was worthily spoken in the 11th. of the Hebrews, they kept their garments undefiled; and it was by the power of faith, and they obtained a good report by faith, keeping themselves from the pollutions of the world, they kept to themselves a good report. This honour and good report which we get by keeping our garments undefiled, is sure: Abraham had an honourable title, Abraham my friend, and a man after mine own heart. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou wast honourable And not only so, that the people of God are honourable in his eyes, but they also sometimes walk in white, in the eyes of the men of the world: he can give his people room in the opinions of men, he moves their hearts to think well of them and he opens their mouths to speak well of them; though indeed the honour which they, who keep their garments undefiled, have in this world, it is most usually from good men, from godly men, and indeed honour of them is most honourable.

It is not much to us that others say or think of us, what the wicked world judge of us, yet I say, God can and doth sometimes raise a testimony of honour for his people amongst carnal men of the world. Joseph would not defile his garments, he walked in white amongst men: true, he was cast into prison, what of that? he was respected by the keepers of the prison afterwards he walked in white.

In the whole Egyptian Court, Daniel was one that walked in white with common men of the world; first with the Princes of the Eunuchs, he had tender favour with him, he told him, he would not

disobey God, to Please men; yet he did not rail against him, and call him a stubborn fellow, because he would not bow to Baal; and afterwards Daniel was as great a man as any in all that Province, he walked in white. God hath created testimonies of honour for his People from some men of the world yea, they many times put white garments upon them: so it was with Christ, in Matt. 27:4. common men put a good report upon Christ, a white garment; Truly, saith the Centurion, this was the Son of God. Truth, this was a righteous man, saith he; when he saw how he carried himself at his death, he gave him a good report: thus it doth come to pass, God doth sometimes keep up their honour in the world, who will not defile their garments, nor touch the sacrifice of Baal; and it follows so with them, that the Lord shall clear up their credit and reputation and they shall walk in white, in honour, before the men of the world, Rev. 6:11. where the souls under the Altar are spoken of, who were miserably used in this world, white Robes were given them, to every one of them, that is, their evidences were cleared.

This may teach us the readiest way to the white Robe, to the Robe of Honour it is to keep us from being defiled with sinful practices: certainly they who please God, he can make the world to honour them; if God approves us, he can make the world approve us too yet we must not think to have all speak well of us: yet this we may say, if we keep our garments undefiled, we shall walk in white in the eyes of men; if God see our garments in the dirt, and spotted with the filth of the world, it will spoil the honour we should have in the world: as it was said of Arius, when his garments were defiled, they called him Satanarius, that is to say, devilish: thus it may be, for the Lord hath a time to take our good name from us, to cause our light of honor to be taken from us.

And as he hath caused us to walk in the white of honor in the world, so he doth sometimes cause us to walk in reproach with the world: they who defile their garments, lose their honor with men, and they lose their joy they should have hereafter, Mal. 2:9 You have departed from my law, therefore will I make you contemptible in the eyes of all

men. It is a design of the spirit of wickedness to draw men to sin, that they may upbraid them, that I conceive is the sense of the Apostle, Gal. 6:13. For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the Law, but desire to have you circumcised, that they might glory in your flesh, saith he. Oh there are some of this wicked spirit, that would draw men to such and such wickedness, not that they joy in their returning but that they might glory in their flesh; when as they who stand fast, do even force a good testimony from their enemies: So it was the unhappy chance of Cranmer, the Pope did persuade him to subscribe, and did he get any honour by it? No truly, they did upbraid him, and reproach him, and so he had dyed in a raving condition, had not the Lord been merciful to him. I remember a speech of St. Austin, about drinking of heaths: Oh, say they, 'tis upon the Kings Birth-day, and we cannot avoid it; if we deny it, say they, we shall be reproached and scorned of all men. He gives them many answers to it, one of which (as I remember) was this; God will so work that if you will not comply with them, they in their hearts will honour you; and whereas if you did comply with them, they would dishonour you, and say you are base spirited. That is one thing of this point, that keeping close to Jesus Christ will get you this reward; you shall walk with him in the White of honour with his people, and it may be with the World too.

2. They shall walk in White, in the White of peace and joy, and inward comfort.

I shewed you in the opening of the Text, how the Scripture calls that walking in White, then the point is this: Whatever becomes of the other White of honour in the World, they shall be sure of this, that abundance of peace, and joy, and comfort, shall possess their souls that keep their garments White; they shall walk in the inward White of joy and peace with Jesus Christ, and this is a blessed reward.

Indeed now this joy, this White of joy, arises in the Soul three ways.

1. From the testimony of their own Consciences, O they who have a good testimony from their own consciences, walk in White, 2 Cor. 1:12. We have this for our rejoycing, the testimony of our consciences, that in all simplicity, and godly sincerity, we have our conversation in Heaven: that is, walking in White: this is our rejoycing, our conscience speaks well of us, and kindly to us; and who is able to express the sweetness of this thing? None can know what this is, but they that have it, as it is said of the New Name written upon the White Stone, Rev. 2:17. 'Tis a thing beyond expression, what the joy and peace of a good Conscience is! Now this I say that our White garments, and our walking in White, ariseth from the testimony of our Consciences.

2. As from the testimony of our Consciences, so from that testimony which is greater than our Consciences, the Spirit shedding abroad of Divine Love, thus it is with those that do not defile their garments, but endure anything rather than defile their garments, Rom. 5:3,4,5.

And not only so, but we glory in tribulations, knowing tribulations worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, and whence was all this?) because of the Holy Ghost which was given to us, this causeth joy unspeakable, The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the Children of God. This witness doth cause wonderful joy; much more than the witness of our own Consciences.

3. This joy doth arise from a well-grounded hope, which that soul hath that keeps himself clean; hope of enjoying Heaven at last, hope of future glory is our present joy, Rom. 5:2. By whom also we have access by faith into his grace, even we stand and rejoyce in hope of the glory of God.

Now they who keep their garments white, have good ground of hope of the love of God; therefore this must needs cause them to walk comfortably as they who have this hope purifie themselves; so they who purifie themselves, have good ground of their hope, and therein

great cause to rejoyce, 1 Pet. 1:5,6. Who are kept by the power of God through Faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last times, wherein ye greatly rejoyce, though now for a season (if need be) ye are in heaviness through many temptations.

We walk in white, in hope we have of that inheritance: now lay these three things together; If they who keep their Garments undefiled, have the testimony of their own consciences, and the testimony of the Spirit, shedding the love of God in their hearts, and a well-grounded hope of future glory, how can it be but these must walk in white with Jesus Christ? that is, in comfort and joy of the Spirit, and of their own spirits.

Thus David walked, he had abundance of joy upon his conscience of his own integrity, and of keeping his heart and hands clean from those iniquities his enemies charged him with, Psalm 3. The Lord shall judge his people. Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in me. He appeals to the Lord, the Lord shall judge his people: Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness. Thus he appeals to God himself, he had so much confidence, and his heart gave him, he kept himself from those sins.

So Job walkt in white, though his friends black't him exceedingly, yet he walkt in white in his conscience, Job 16:10. Behold my witness is in Heaven, and my record is on high: I have not only a witness in my conscience, but my witness is above. He walkt in white, notwithstanding all his afflictions from God and his friends. Hezekiah walkt in this white when death looked him in the face: Lord, thou knowest I have walkt uprightly with thee.

I need not stay in the proof of the thing, let me make some Use and Improvement of it.

Use. Is this blessed reward to those who keep their garments white, to walk in the white of peace and joy: then here we see the happiness

of all those who are true to Christ and his ways, Psalm 119:1. Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the Law of the Lord. 'Tis just in the language of the Text; they indeed shall walk in white, it is a great part of our blessedness to have peace of conscience, and inward joy. Oh how much better is it, than the peace and joy of this world, and the comforts of this world? Prov. 15:13. A merry heart, or as another translation saith, A good conscience, and indeed a merry heart, and a good conscience, do but one explain the other; a merry heart or a good conscience, is a continual feast: Here is no surfeiting in this feast, but a continual musick, continual joy and comfort; Oh how blessed are they who are undefiled in the way!

That which Christ said of the Lilly, Solomon in all his Glory was not arrayed like one of these, so may I say of the Lilly-white soul that keeps himself white in the world, who keeps himself white in matter of practice and worship, Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these Lilly-white ones: Oh the Rivers of Consolations that flows to them that keep themselves out of the puddles of the world! if you keep your selves from the puddles of the world, from the dung of the world, ye shall have rivers of joy flowing into your souls. I may say to all such, as Solomon saith, Eccles. 11:9. Go thy way: it is a familiar speaking to them: Go thy way blessed soul, eat thy bread with joy, though the world feed thee with the bread of adversity, and though the world give thee nothing but the water of affliction, yet let thy Garments be always White; though the World cloath thee in mourning, and cause thee to prophesie in Sackcloth with the Witnesses, yet be of good comfort, O Lilly-white soul, for God now accepteth thy works; now drink thy Wine with a merry heart, thy labour, thy ambitious labour is that, whether present or absent, thou mayest be accepted of him, thou hast the fruits of thy labour, the Lord accepts thy works, therefore rejoyce in it. Here is the happiness of those who keep themselves clean from a defiled, and a defiling World.

2. This point gives us an account why the servants of Christ stand so strictly upon their terms with the World, even while some call it

peevishness, others ignorance, others willful stubbornness.

What is the reason? the reason is, because they understand in some measure, and have had experience in some measure, what it is to walk in some measure with Christ in white, & it hath left such a relish upon their souls, that they would not lose it for all the dainty morsels of this world; they had rather indeed walk with Christ in White, than walk with the world in scarlet; therefore they must stand upon their terms, Prov. 10:32. The lips of the Righteous know what is acceptable: The lips are instruments of speech, not faculties of knowledge. Ay, but there is a great deal of commerce and converse between the speech and the understanding, and a righteous man will speak nothing with his lips, but what he understands; therefore he is said to understand. The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable: to whom? The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable to God, for they are acquainted with his rule, and God hath shown them his Covenant, he hath shewed them the pattern of his House, and the way of his Worship: now because they are pretty well skilled, and know what is acceptable to God, therefore they will run any hazard, undergo any affliction, rather than do anything that will not please God, or be hurtful to their own consciences; they are afraid of losing their peace, and comfort, and joy with God, therefore they will not let go the ways of God, as Job saith, Job 26:6. I hold fast my integrity, and my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live: as if he had said, You my friends have reproached me, but I am resolved my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.

The heart or Conscience is a busie faculty, and hath many offices, it records what we do, and comes as a witness: the Conscience is Judge of what we do, and accordingly reproveth what we do amiss; therefore saith Job, I'll take care of this: I am more afraid of the reproach of Conscience, than of any man whatsoever; therefore I will not do anything that may cause my conscience to reproach me as long as I live. This is upon the heart of Gods people, they are resolved, let men reproach and rail against them as much as they will, their hearts shall not reproach them.

3. In the third place, let it be a word of Caution, and Admonition to all at this day, to take heed of defiling their garments: if you defile your garments, Christ will pronounce another sentence, he will pronounce a sentence against you; he hath threatnings for those who defile their garments, in the place of rewards, for those who keep them clean; they who defile garments, shall walk in garments of black, in the black of dishonour, as Job saith, I walk all day mourning without the Sun: the Sun of Righteousness shall not shine upon them: Oh what bitter and sore things have many tasted for defiling their garments, when for favour of men, or to please men, they have stained their own garments! What sad bitter things have been upon them, how hath Conscience risen up against them! O take heed of the After-claps of Conscience, I may say, take heed of the Thunder-claps of conscience; for they will come upon you one time or other, if you defile your garments: As they who to please men defile their garments, often fall into their displeasure, whose favour they sought: so oftentimes such fall into displeasure with themselves, or to be sure they shall at last: there is many a one lives under the dis-favor of his own conscience, many a one that his conscience will not give him a good word, or a good look, whence hath it been? they have defiled their garments. They who venture to do things displeasing to God, shall not long be pleasing to themselves.

The story speaks of Francis Spira, that to please men, to save an estate, he defiled his garments, and he presently fell into rebuke of himself, and lived under the rebuke of his conscience a long time.

Job 8:15. speaking of the hypocrite, his hope shall be cut off, the word signifies to loath, so some translate, his hope shall be a loathing to him, he shall loath his hope. There is a two-fold loathing: First, a loathing to repentance, that is, a gracious loathing, a loathing ourselves for our sins against God. And there is a loathing of despair, and that is the loathing there meant: the Hypocrite shall loath his own hope, that is, he shall loath it despairingly. 'Tis an affliction to be loathed by men, but 'tis a dreadful judgement to be loathed of our selves despairingly; this is the suburbs of Hell, for this will be the

portion of the damned forever, for their vanity, for their madness, 'tis next to the Regions of Hell, for their Worm dieth not; and than is the Worm of Conscience: Oh therefore, take heed, Conscience may be silent, yea, it may flatter for a time, but when Conscience is provoked, it will speak, yea thunder.

There is no such thundering Preacher in the World as Conscience is, the thundering of Mount Sinai, is not like the thundering of our Conscience.

Fourthly and lastly, let it be for exhortation, and encouragement, for Christ here makes it an encouragement, so let this be an encouragement to keep our garments undefiled, the remembrance that we shall walk with him in White, in the White of peace, and joy in this World: who would not walk in this White? who would not be among those who keep their garments White in the midst of a defiled and defiling World?

Let me give you but a three-fold consideration. To stir you up to an exceeding exactness and carefulness not to defile your garments, seeing there is such a reward promised, such a habit of White promised, as this White, wherein we shall walk with Jesus Christ. It is an Angelical happiness, so much Heaven is come down upon ye, while you have this white. 'Tis heaven before heaven, Matt. 28:3. the Angel that came down to the Sepulchre of Christ, his Raiment was white as the light. The Martyrs when they had Angelical Apparitions, they always appeared to them in white; as one upon the Rack thought he felt an Angel supplying him, while his enemies tormented him.

Christ calls the Pharisees whited Sepulchres; they are whited, but whited Sepulchres, that is a woful condition to be whited like a Sepulchre. Thus it is with those who defile themselves, they are whited Walls, and whited Sepulchres. They that keep themselves White, shall walk in White, shall have Angelical Glory.

Secondly, Consider this White, or walking in White, is such as conquers all the blackness of this World: 'tis not possible for the World to alter the colour of this White, how much dirt soever they put upon it: this White will be White still, they cannot turn it to be black; they cannot take away this peace, this joy from us; they cannot strip us of this habit, they may pull off your fine garments, but you cannot be stripped of this White. Your joy shall no man take from you, 2 Cor. 6:20. As sorrowful, yet always rejoycing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet freely possessing all things. The World may put us into a sad estate, as to the World, yet we are not out of our white garments, always rejoycing, Heb. 3:13. Although the Fig-tree shall not blossome, neither shall fruit be in the Vines, the labour of the Olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat, and the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls, this cannot take away the White garments, no, saith the Prophet, Yet will I rejoyce in the Lord, and joy in the God of my Salvation; 'Tis a conquering joy, turns all sorrow into joy, and blackness to White, therefore keep clean.

Thirdly, Consider this: this White of peace and joy, as 'tis a joy unconquerable; so 'tis that will be with us most, when we most need it, when Worldly joys are farthest from us, then this joy will be near to us; that is a marvellous comfort, to have comfort in its season. The Martyrs who have kept themselves White, have had this White, and walkt in this White; but when they have most need of it, and come Actually to suffering, then they have had most of it. This is a blessed thing! this the Martyrs of Jesus Christ hath given witness of, although they have had peace and joy in their consciences at other times, yet never so much as in the hour of temptation. When they have been cast into the Cole-house, they have had white garments, when they have been cast into prisons and dungeons, how have they rejoyced? 'Tis said of Paul and Silas, they were men that kept their garments undefiled, and they had a great deal of peace and joy; when they were put in the flocks and dungeon, then they sung at midnight: what an enlargement of heart had they at that time!

So in the stories of ancient and latter times, how have they rejoiced, and gone triumphing to the Gibbet? for then Christ gives most of this White. It hath been the use of persecutors to put filthy garments upon the Martyrs, drawing Pictures of Devils upon them; and as their malice hath risen to the height (that in the time of sufferings) to make them look like Devils, then the love of Christ hath risen to the height, and they have been full of peace and joy at that time; therefore be encouraged to walk with Christ in this White. This White is an Angelical Habit, 'tis an unconquerable Habit, and 'tis that will be with us most when we have most need of it. I should have added a third, that walking with Christ is an honour, and 'tis walking in the White of peace and joy.

So thirdly, 'tis a truth of walking with Christ in the White of glory, as in the Transfiguration, which was a Type of Heaven, his Rayment was White, so as no Fuller on earth was able to whiten it; and that is it which I might have spoken of to you, that they who keep their garments undesiled here, shall be sure of that, to walk with Christ in glory hereafter. If we should miss of the White of honour, and have not much of the White of joy, yet be sure we shall walk with Christ in the White of Glory.

I would only say this to you, That as I have from this Text, and many more, laboured to bring poor souls into a White state, to a state of Justification, to a state of Holiness; and as I have been pressing you to keep your garments White, that you may be in the Habit of White, as your Reward: so it shall be the desire and prayers of ray heart, that if I should have no more opportunities among you, that as you have been stirred up to get into this White of Grace, that you and I may meet in the White of Glory, where we shall never part.

Here are three Whites: The White of Honour is good, the White of Peace and Joy, is very good, the White of Glory is best of all; that is the answer of all our prayers, and that is the issue of all our working, then we shall have as much as we can hold forever.

06. Mr. Case's Sermon

"Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove the Candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."- Rev. 2:5.

Christ here prescribes precious Physick for the healing of this languishing Church of Ephesus; 'Tis compounded of a threefold ingredient.

1. Self reflexion, Remember from, &c.
2. Holy contrition and humiliation before the Lord, Repent.
3. Through Reformation, do thy first Works.

I left the last time upon the second of these; namely, Repentance; and that which I did upon this part of Christs advice was, not so much to open to you the nature of Repentance, (which is not so proper for this place) as to give in a Catalogue or List of such special sins, as Christ doth expect that all his people in these three Nations should lay to heart, and repent of before the Lord, I gave you in a List of eleven special sins that we should repent of, and humble ourselves for before the Lord. As

1. Omission of Duty, Prayer, reading the Word, Meditation, &c. anything will be for excuse to say by duties, and we are secretly glad of an excuse.
2. Remisness of Duty. In things of the World, we are all in all, and all in every part; a man cannot thrust another thought into us; but in

prayer, how many things are we doing?

3. Hypocrisie. How unlike are we at home to what abroad? and in company to what in secret?

4. Pride. In Apparel, Houses, Parts, Blood, Birth-right, yea, of Grace itself, of Humility, Ministers, Ordinances, &c.

5. Covetousness. Never did Covetousness invade the professing party as now: The more goods men get, the less good they do.

6. Sensuality. Voluptuousness, Wantonness, Christians let themselves loose to the Creature: lay out their affections on things below, as if part in the Serpents curse as well as their own.

7. Animosities and Divisions among Christians: many have been active to kindle, but few to quench Divisions.

8. Uncharitable censuring one another.

9. Formality in Duty. Witness,

1. Unprepared coming.

2. Unsuitableness of spirit, to: And

3. want of reflexion after duty, how we have sped, what we have got; Sabbaths, Sacraments, comes and goes, Monday morning finds us the same as before.

10. Mis-spent Sabbaths, some prophane, others idle away the Sabbath, &c.

11. Neglect of our Bibles in our families and closets. I pray God it forego not some great evil coming upon you, as before the massacre in Germany it was observed, &c. I proceed.

12. That want of mutual forbearance among Christians. Alas Christians know not how to bear one with another in the least kind of measure. Oh the short-spiritedness among Christians, they cannot bear one anothers burthens, they cannot bear with one another. 'Tis very sad, that we that stand in need of so much forbearance, should express so little to our Brother: 'Tis an Argument we know not of what spirit we are of, (as Christ told his Disciples) Oh! how unlike to that God whom we profess to be our God? He is long suffering, patient, full of goodness, gentleness, mercy, &c. we can bear nothing, we can suffer nothing one from another.

13. Our great murmuring against Reformation and Reformers (God hath heard the voyce of our murmuring; Exod. 2:6.) As if there had been nothing that would have undone us but Reformation: and truly God seems to speak such a word as that was, Numb. 7:5. in displeasure and anger, I will make your murmuring to cease: I will take away the cause of your murmuring: I would have reformed you, and you would not be reformed: As Christ to Jerusalem, I would, but you would not, Matt. 23. The time may come when we would, and God will not: when we shall cry, Other Lords have had dominion over us, &c. Isa. 26:13. but thou Lord, set up thou thy Government: rule thou over us and God may say, No, 'tis too late, I would have healed you, and you would not be healed.

14. The great neglect of the care of our Families. Truly 'tis not the least sin that threatens the removal of our Candle-stick. How generally have the duties of Religion been let fall in our families, reading the word, singing Psalm, &c. time was, when one could not have come through the streets of London on an evening in the week-day, but we might hear the praises of God, singing of Psalm: now 'tis a stranger in the City, even upon the Lords own day. Oh! how have Governours of Families cast off the care of the souls that God hath committed to them? How careless are they of the souls of their yoak-fellows that lye in their bosome, of their Children, the fruit of their loins, Masters of their servants, &c. And in the meantime are ready to stand up and justifie themselves with the boldness of Cain; to say

to God, Am I my brothers keeper? Am I the keeper of my yoak-fellows, Childrens, servants souls? Yes, thou art the keeper, &c. God hath put them into thy trust, and if they perish through thy fault, they may die in their sins, but their blood shall be required at thy hand. God will say to thee as he did to Cain, Thy Brothers blood cryeth in my ear.

15. Our indifferences as to matter of faith and doctrine: That we have not been more zealous for the Truth of Christ, that great trust and depositum which hath been committed to us: We have accounted it no matter of what opinion or judgment men be in these latter times. 'Tis an universal saying, No matter what judgment men be of, so they be Saints: as if truth in the judgment, did not go to the making up of a Saint, as well as holiness in the Will and Affections: As if Christ had not come into the World to bear witness of the truth, which was his great design: as if it were no matter, if God have the heart, so the devil be in the head: as if no matter that be full of darkness, so the heart be for God.

16. The unsuitableness of our conversation to the Gospel of Christ: 'Tis the only thing the Apostles puts the Philippians in mind of, and commits to their care, Phil. 1:27. and truly in these unhappy dayes it hath been the only thing men have neglected and despised: how little care that our conversations should honour the Gospel, &c.

17. Our living by sense, and not by faith. Surely (my Brethren) among all the sins in England that the people of God have cause to be humbled for, there is not any whereby we have more provoked God than by that sin of our unbelief: murmuring and infidelity have been our two great sins, for which, it is the wonder of Gods mercy that he hath not caused our carkasses to fall in the Wilderness: he may take up that complaint of us, that he did of Israel, Num. 14:22. Because all those men which have seen my glory and my miracles which I did in Egypt and in the Wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkned to my voyce, surely they shall not see the Land, &c. And this is the lamentation we may take up, that truly

to this very day we have not faith enough to carry us from one miracle to another, from one deliverance to another, from one salvation to another: let one deliverance pass over our head, and no sooner one Wave rises higher than another, but we are ready to cry out with Peter, Lord save me, I perish: and well were it if our fears did issue into tears, and cryes after Christ: we rather are ready to cry out, as those in Ezek. 37:11. Our bones are dryed, and our hope is lost, we are out off for our parts. We are a people that never knew how to honour God in any distress God hath brought us into; never learnt to glorifie God by believing: if we cannot see him, we cannot believe him: surely that which God hath done for us in such a succession of miracles, it might well at least have been found for our faith, during our so journeying: In our Pilgrimage we might have learned by all that we have seen, to believe God: we might have made experience to be the food of our faith: and upon all the Providences of Divine Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, we might have discoursed ourselves into belief, as David, 1 Sam. 17:37. The Lord hath delivered me out of the paw of the Lyon, and of the Bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. So Paul, He hath delivered, and doth deliver, we trust he will also deliver.

Oh my Brethren, we dishonour God, and starve our faith, by forgetting our experience, while we proclaim by our own unbelief, that we have a God that we dare not trust. If we perish we may thank our selves for it: surely if we miscarry, that account may be given for it, that we find, Matt. 13 58. Because of our unbelief. There is a rest of God before us: if we do not enter in, it is because of our unbelief.

18. Went of sympathy with the bleeding, gasping, groaning, dying, Churches of Jesus Christ. They have been in great afflictions round about; have call'd to us, pittie me! Oh pittie me my friends! for the hand of God is gone out against me. We cannot look any way but we see cause of bitter mourning; but we have not laid the blood of Germany, Lituania, Piedmount, &c. to heart; therefore God may justly lay it to our charge. Want of fellow-feeling, with our Brethren in their afflictions, it is a kind of persecution, a kind of being

accessary to their sufferings. That we have not mourned, wept, bled with them; that we have not lien in the dust smote on our thighs, &c. God may justly say to us, as Ames 6:6,7. They shall go captive with the first that go captive, because they are not grieved for the afflictions of Joseph. The word in the Hebrew signifies, none of them have been sick for the afflictions of Joseph. Oh my Brethren! when did we go to bed sick for the afflictions of Gods people abroad? when did their miseries cost us an hours sleep? or a meals meat? when did we lye in the dust, and cry out, Ah Lord! their glory? because we have not shed tears for their blood, God may justly say, The next turn of persecution shall be yours, because you have not been afflicted in the afflictions of my people, &c.

19. Our grievous unsensibleness of Gods dishonour. Religion never suffered the like as it hath done these latter dayes, by the Pride and Hypocrisie of some pretenders to it. Gods name hath been thereby blasphemed by an evil & hypocritical generation, the people of God have lien under the greatest reproaches and contempt that ever any did under the Heavens; and yet all this while we have not been concerned in it, carried ourselves as if unconcern'd in the reproaches of Religion: Blasphemies reflected upon the name of God, who in these times of Blasphemy, have gone in secret, lien in the dust, and cryed with holy Joshua, What wilt thou do unto thy great name? Josh. 7:9. We have not labored to preserve in our own souls, or stir up our brethren, a holy sense of Gods name, as those Primitive Saints, Mal. 3:16. Where are they that have been affected with, and afflicted for the sufferings of the name of God? O consider how little is God and Religion beholding to us for our tears, sighs, or groans? What is become of that child-like spirit that was wont to possess the spirits of Gods people? 'Tis perished, and with it, without special timely repentance we shall perish also.

20. That Epedemical sin of self-seeking, and self-pleasing. Oh my Brethren, we may revive that complaint of the Apostle, All seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christs, Phil. 2:21. This, this hath been the source of all our miseries. While some had power in

their hands to have done great things for God, what did they do, but neglect the interest and trust in their hands, and fell a feathering their own nest, and building to themselves House and Names, that they thought would continue forever: and to divide the spoil among themselves, as if their own game they hunted, and others in inferior station began to divide, and every one began to snatch, as if the dust of the earth would not serve every one for a handful: and in the meantime a Sea of Error hath been ready to over-turn us. Yea, all men seeking to be pleased, not to please: whereas our duty is to study to please, nor to be pleased, &c.

You see in all this I have not mentioned one of those gross prophanenesses, that stare heaven in the face, as Drunkenness, filthy and abominable Whoredom, Fornication poured out in every place, horrible Blasphemy, contempt of God and Religion, prophanation of Gods Sabbath, &c. because I speak now to those that are Professors: I have given in a Catalogue of the sins of those that profess the Name of Christ, that relate to Christ by a special Engagement and Relation: these have been the sins of Gods family. And if we would have God repent of the evil of punishment, we had need to make haste to repent of the evil of sin? We have been a long time in sinning, we had need be a long time in repenting. I tell you Christians, we have been these late twenty years doing nothing else but sinning against God: and should God let us live twenty years more, it would be too little to weep for the procreation thereof. Learn to lay these and other sins to heart, that God may never lay them to your charge.

The third advice Christ gives here for the prevention of the removal of her Candlestick, is Reformation, [do thy first works.] Reformation indeed is a fruit and evidence of such repentance: repentance is nothing else but the breaking of the heart for and from sin.

I have spoken of it meerly as it is the contrition of the soul for sin: I come to speak a word of the other part, as it consists in turning to God, and doing our first works.

This is the method God prescribes his people, Lam. 3:39. Wherefore doth a living man complain, &c. under Gods afflicting hand? Instead of reforming, men are prone to fall a complaining; not only naturally, as irrational creatures may under some pinching extremity; but sinfully, i.e. when their natural grief is let out in a distempered and inordinate manner; when natural groans are accompanied with unscriptural affections, which vents itself,

1. Sometimes upon the affliction, as if but one intolerable burden in the world, and God must needs lay that upon them, Lam. 1:12, 3:1, 5:10.

2. Sometimes of instruments; thus Esau complains of his brother; is he not rightly called Jacob, a Supplanter? of his Father, hast thou but one blessing, &c? Gen. 27:3,4. of anything rather than of himself; he doth not say, am not I rightly called Esau? What a wretch am I that have despised and sold my blessing? Mostly we complain of that which deserves no blame, the guilty of the innocent, 1 King. 18:7. Isa. 10:5. Jer. 8. or we pore too much upon second causes, or complain of instruments, nor of our selves; or of wicked men, not of wickedness; of their cruelty, more than of their blasphemy; of their injuries against us, more than as Gods enemies; or more of revenge in our complaints than murmuring; our complaints concerning their afflicting us; not accompanied with our prayers for their conversion, &c.

3. Sometimes of God himself, not as one of his children, who complains

1. To God, not of God: Thus Christ, My God, my God, &c.

2. With a holy Confidence, my God, my God, two words of faith, for one word of fear, &c.

3. In his complaints, is very tender of Gods glory, afraid to think or speak a heard or uncomely thought or word of God.

4. Carefully distinguishes between what God doth, and what man doth; observes and separates the unrighteousness of men from the righteousness of God,

5. With humble inquiry what cause may be of his dispensation, Job 10:2. and Job 34:31.

6. With a disposition to bring up his will to God, not that God should bring down his will to him; if it be possible let this cup pass; however glorifie thy name, provide for thy own glory, and do with me as thou pleasest.

But as a sinful creature, sometimes ready to call Providence in question, Ezek. 8:12. or to break forth and to charge God foolishly, either of too much severity, Ezek. 18:2,25. or of too long delay, Isa. 49:14. or their mournings are turned into murmurings, Num. 14:27. or their complaints are mixed with unbelief: Psalm 78:19. or of their punishment, not of their sin; and nothing will satisfie them but deliverance.

Now this is not the way; for this way of complaining is,

1. Fruitless, a house on fire is not quenched with tears. Murmuring will not scatter the Clouds.

2. Causeless: Thou hast thy life for a prey, Jer. 4:5, 6. What, a living man, and complain, and that when 'tis for the punishment of his sins? this kind of complaining is causeless: if you compare sin and punishment together, there's no proportion: for sin is a transgression against an infinite God; punishment but an affliction upon the finite Creature: Sin is an evil against God; punishment an evil against the Creature: Or if you consider what sin is in its nature, 'tis a contrariety to Gods nature (God is holy, sin impurity.) A contradiction to Gods will: God saith, do this; the sinner saith, I will not: God saith, Do not this abominable thing which I hate: the sinner saith, I will: 'Tis the transgression of Gods pure and holy Law: nay, 'tis a practical blaspheming against all the names of God, the rape of Gods mercy,

and the dare of Gods justice, the challenge of Gods power: Sin gives the lye to Gods truth, and the fool to Gods wisdom: And what can sin do more than to take away Gods good name? Gods being? And that sin would do. Or, 'tis causeless if you consider against whom sin is, i.e. God himself, who is a jealous God: Now a sinner takes another lover into his bosome before his eyes; yea, he is a holy righteous, omnipotent, almighty, living God: Thoughts of this may well keep us from complaining. Indeed, whatever our affliction be, we have as much cause to give thanks, as to mourn: if you consider, whatever the punishment be, it might be worse; or do but look well into it, you will see more mercy than affliction, Psalm 119:75.

3. Sinful, there is in it 1. unthankfulness; while we complain of one affliction, we over-look a thousand mercies: whereas true grace is ingenious, and can see a little kindness mingled with a great deal of severity. The Church of God in captivity comparing her afflictions with her mercies, breaks forth, It is of the Lords mercy that we are not consumed, 3:22. blessed be God, 'tis not yet so bad, but it might be worse, 2 Cor. 4:8. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed: though laid wait for; beset on every side, put to strive and struggle, yet we escape; God gives an issue in the temptation: We are perplexed, but not in despair: we are not so helpless that we know not how to turn us: we have a God to go to as bad as things are, the Lords name is a strong tower: persecuted, but not forsaken, we are shaken out, but not to shivers; persecuted, but not conquered, our God hath not quite forsaken us: Cast down, but not destroyed, Psalm 118:13. we are cast down, but not cast off. So Luther, They may thrust me back, but they cannot thrust me down; they may crush me, but they cannot kill me, or, they may kill me, but they cannot hurt me: they may shew their teeth, but they cannot devour. Is it a feaver? it might have been eternal flames: It is scarcity? it might be universal famine: Is it the danger of losing the Gospel? 'tis the mercy of God it is not done already: Are we in Captivity? we might have been in Hell: are we in Prison? it might have been Tophet. The Lord hath chastened me sore, but he hath not given me over unto death, Psalm 118:18. Though men have lost their bowels, Gods compassions fail

not; God's as faithful as ever; he hath taken away some of our mercies, but he hath not taken away all; he hath left us more than he hath taken: They are new, they are renewed every morning; when old mercies are spent, God sends us new; he is the Father of mercies, begets new mercies every moment. Who can number or measure his mercies of one day? whatever our fears are, O blessed be God he loads us with mercies.

Now the Complainer over-looks all these, there's much unthankfulness in it, and that's a kind of Atheism. She knew not that I gave her corn and wine, &c. Hos. 2:8.

2. Pride; only by pride comes contention: men never quarrel with God about their condition, but 'tis long of the pride of their heart; proud man would fain sin, and not hear from God; would take liberty to sin, but would not have God take liberty to punish, Isa. 8:3. God must take notice of our duties, not of our sins. God shall hear of it, if he take not notice of our prayers; but it shall be by complaining if he take notice of our sins. A proud man, whatever he hath its no more than his due, and whatever he wants, God's his debter, Hos. 6:14.

The want of a Complement undoeth him in the midst of honour: if we want but one thing our hearts would have, surely nature is proud and ready to pick quarrels with God on the least occasion; nay, if he will not give that mercy we would, take all, &c.

3. Rebellion: God strikes him for sin, he strikes against God, Jer. 31:18. God draws one way, and he another, &c.

4. Unbelief: He that complains of his punishment, never believed sin to be so great an evil, or God to be such a one as revealed in the Word.

5. Interpretative Blasphemy.

1. While we dispute our afflictions, and wrangle with the present dispensation, what is it but to make ourselves wiser than God? We

seem to tell. God how it might have been better, and so we do as it were give God counsel: When he calls for obedience, is not that Blasphemy to set up our wisdom against Gods?

2. While we complain of punishment, we take sins part against God, we do as it were justifie sin, and judge God: God is unrighteous to punish such a sin as this with such grievous afflictions.

3. By complaining we do as it were summon God to our Bar, to come and give an account of his actions at our Tribunal: What poor miserable Creatures are we, that in our afflictions are so far from helping our selves, that we commonly add to our own misery?

No affliction is intolerable till sin come in it.

The yoke God hath made easie, we make intolerable, and make God to be our enemy, while he by affliction would become our friend.

Now this being found not to be the way; that which God counsels and advises, is:

1. Self-examination, [Let us search and try our ways] Sin and Hypocrisie lies close and deep; therefore we must take pains, dig to the bottom, set up a tribunal in our own conscience, summon, try, judge ourselves over and over in Gods presense: He stands at our closet doors, to hear what we will say, Jer. 8:6. before execution; what indictment we will bring in against our selves.

We can tell what such a Drunkard, such an unclean person, &c. hath done; but no man saith, what have I done? my pride, my unthankfulness, my unfruitfulness, &c.

2. Reformation, [and turn again unto the Lord] Sin is *aversio a Deo*, & *conversio ad creaturam*; Reformation is a turning again from the creature to God.

3. Frequent and fervent prayer, [let us lift up] There's the frequency, let's do nothing else but pray: let's be continually lifting up our prayers: make our houses houses of prayer: Thus David, Thou foughtest against me without a cause: (Did he take counsel against Princes to be disloyal? to take up arms? No.) But I gave myself unto Prayer, Psalm 109:4. Therefore if you prayed before, now do nothing else: it notes habitual and constant prayer. [Our hearts with our hands] to crave, and as it were to pull down mercy, as if we would wrestle with God, and say, Nay, nay, I will not let thee go until thou bless me, Gen. 32:26. it notes our fervency: And for our encouragement it is [Unto God in the Heavens] which expresses his Sovereignty, Omniscieny, Omnipotency, Everlastingness, &c.

4. Judging ourselves, or confessing of sin [We have transgressed:]

5. Aggravating our sins, [and have rebelled] i.e. we have turned sin in-into rebellion: rebellion hath been the aggravation of our sin: we have sinned against the clearest light, dearest love, &c. Neh. 9, Ezek. 9, Dan. 6.

6. Justifying God, [thou hast not pardoned.] A word not of murmuring, complaining, or accusing God of hard dealing, but by way of justifying God: we have transgressed, therefore thou hast not pardoned. Why shouldest thou repent of the evil of punishment, when we have not repented of the evil of sin? Thou hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve.

So in the Text, [Do thy first works.] Sin is a departure from God, Repentance a coming back again to God: Turn thou to him from whom the Children of Israel have deeply revolted. The soul hath many turnings and windings, but there's the best motion of all, when the soul (with the Dove) returns to God, from whom it came.

Apostacy is the loss of our first love. Repentance is the recovery of it, and Reformation is the doing of our first works. I have not time to

enlarge as I desire: I shall only offer a few things, that might help to quicken you to this great duty.

My Brethren, we have no great cause to boast of Englands first love: Never so good as it should be, yet many can remember when England hath been much better than it is.

Time was, when Doctrines have been more sound, Discipline more exercised for the suppressing of sin and prophaneness. Ordinances kept more pure from sinful mixtures: when London kept Sabbaths better than now, loved their godly Ministers more than now, honoured them that were set over her for their works sake; would have thought nothing too good for a faithful Minister: when Christians loved one another with a dear, hearty, fervent love: when there was less complement, but more real love and affection among Christians: when Christians improved their meetings, converse, Christian Conference, and other soul duties to better purpose than now: not to foolish disputations, or wanton sensual excess, but to their mutual edification: when they improved their times for comparing their evidences, communicating their experiences, and building up one another in their most holy faith: when there was more industry in Professors than now, to bring in Converts, when private Christians thought it their duty to be subservient to the works of their Ministers, to bring in others to Christ, especially their family.

Time was, when more care of young Converts than now, when none could have looked out after Religion, but some or other ready to lend them their hand, and shew them the way, explaining it clearly to them; but now young Converts may be snapt into separation and error, and none look after them.

Time was, when more care of the truly godly poor; when error was more odious; when Popery was more hated than now: when the name of a toleration would have made Christians to have trembled; when Christians were better acquainted with their Bibles: when more time spent in secret prayer: when more tender of one anothers

names and honours, would heal one anothers reputations, and would spread the lap of charity over those mis-reports and scandals that might be cast upon then: when Christians rejoyced more in one anothers good, and mourned in one anothers sufferings: when Christians did more earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the Saints, &c.

Oh do you not only your first works, but our fore-fathers first works: be as zealous for God and his truths, as tender, mutually careful of one another as they.

Our fears be very great, and truly our provocations be greater: our dangers are great, but our sins greater: yet here is a word, here is matter of encouragement, that yet there is Balm in Gilead, Physick of Christs own composition, for the reviving and healing of a back-sliding people, Christians, Christ Jesus is become your Physician, he hath prescribed you a potion made up of these three ingredients, Self-reflection, Holy Contrition, Thorow Reformation. Christians, now take this Receipt, Christ advises you, if you will not, there is no way but one, Or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy Candlestick.

There is yet a means or two I find in Scripture for the preventing of threatned ruine that hath been very near, that God hath prescribed for a people or person in great danger, when ready to be cut off and destroyed.

Now that which I would commend to you in reference to what you would beg of God for England, is,

First, in your addressing yourself to God for that mercy your souls are set upon, and you wrestle with God for, that you would make some special vow to God. I find the Saints have done so, when reduced to great straits, not knowing what to do: Thus Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me on this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and rayment to put on, so

that I come again to my Fathers house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God. And this Stone which I here set for a pillar, shall be Gods house, Gen. 28:20, 21, 22. The special thing Jacob vows, is, that he would continue in the pure worship of his fore-fathers, that he would still honour God as his God, in that way he would be worshipped; the special thing is, that he would build a house for the worship of God; here he would erect a place of publick worship. And thus Israel vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, If thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand, then will I utterly destroy their Cities, Numb. 21:2. They vowed they would not spare any of the enemies of God, if he would deliver them into their hands. Thus Jephtha, Hannah, David, &c. Judg. 11:31, 1 Sam. 1:11, Psalm 132:1, 2. Certainly in times of great distress, 'tis nor improper or uncomely, but that which God may expect and take well, that you make some special vow, if God would prevent your fears, if God would continue forfeited mercies, dearer to you than your lives, you would set apart some special thing for God, something for the propagation of the Gospel abroad, for the maintenance of a godly Ministry at home, for setting up the preaching of the Gospel in the dark corners of the Kingdom, &c. This must have some cautions with it: As,

1. We must be sure our vow be of what is in our own power, we must not make vows of that which is none of our own. I hate robbery for burnt-offerings.

We must not make a vow to God of that which hath been unjustly or unrighteously taken away, or with-held from any. 'Tis Sacrilege instead of a Sacrifice.

2. It must be of things warrantable and justifiable by the Word.

3. It must be of such things that we are not bound to do, before vows, by the standing obligation of Religion, and of our profession: but of something that is in our own choice, that we will voluntarily make a free-will offering of it to God.

4. We must take heed that we do not entertain a superstitious thought of our own vows, as if we had merited a mercy at Gods hands by our vows: God looks for some special vow at our hands, that we may shew how much we prize and value the mercy we would have, that we would be content to part with anything, though to the half of our estate for it.

2. Another thing I find, is, that in the mean time we should do something by way of extraordinary bounty and charity to the relief of Gods indigent servants. Thus the Prophet Daniel: Wherefore, O King, let my counsel be acceptable to thee; break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor, if it may be a lengthning of thy tranquility, Dan. 4:27.

The Prophet advises him to break off his sins by Righteousness, there's Reformation: and besides Reformation, that he would do something in an extraordinary way to the relief of the poor. Mercy to the poor, what's that?

Interpreters conceive, by the poor, here he understands Gods poor, i.e. the poor Jews that were now in the Babylonian Captivity: he advises, he would do something by way of sympathy to the Jews, to ease their yokes and oppressions: break off thine iniquities by pitying and shewing mercy to thy poor Captives, under thy power now at this time; take off their yoke; ease their burdens, and restore them to their liberties again. Thus do you, and those that have been the instruments of your conversation, or edification, set apart something extraordinary for their relief and supply: The Prophet Daniel seems to advise this to the King, as it were by way of satisfaction.

There be two things in repentance; in wrongs we have done, there must be confession, and satisfaction, or restoration: he seems to advise this to make up compleat repentance; namely, to make restoration and retribution of what he had injuriously taken from the Jews. Oh then! let me say, without breach of charity, that

whatsoever, except it be in this case of extraordinary supplies for his poor, it will be found but making restitution and satisfaction. It may be upon a twofold ground.

1. With some it may be truly restitution and restoration of what he hath taken away by unjust means, God knows how; that's between God and their own souls; what unlawful means have been used to augment the heap, and swell their Estate.

If there be any that hear me this day, whose consciences shall tell them that they have increased their estate by undue and unwarrantable means; Oh Restore, Restore, break off your iniquities by shewing mercy, &c. by making reparation as you can: it will be but like Zacheus giving half his goods to the poor, and restoring four-fold, &c. in a liberal Contribution to the poor.

2. It will be restitution in another sense, in reference to an unjust withholding: some have injuriously, and I am afraid too many have kept injuriously. Have we not rob'd the poor by an unjust denying of what God hath commanded us to distribute to their necessities? there is that withholdeth more than is meet, &c. Prov. 3:17. and Prov. 11:24. It may be God hath given you so much: there's Gods share, there's the Ministers portion, &c. Now all that you have with-held beyond the Rule of Scripture, is all stolen goods, and is like a Wheat-sheaf on fire, will burn down the whole Barn of Corn.

That which I would exhort you to, is, for everyone to set a part some considerable part of your Estate, and account it as a hollow thing, dedicated to God, as a thing, which to touch, were sacrilege; that you may be ready on all occasions, in all regular and due ways, to bring out for the relief of the poor, you know objects abounding in every place, and you may expect warrantable means for dispensing of what God shall put into your hearts in this matter.

07. Mr. Jenkin's Forenoon Sermon

"Of whom the world was not worthy." - Heb. 11:38. The former part of that Verse.

The Apostle in this excellent Chapter, (that by some is deservedly called a little Book of Martyrs) discovers the triumph of faith, or victory against all difficulty we meet with.

1. Faith it assents to truths be they never so improbable.
2. It puts men upon duties, be they never so irrational, or against carnal interest.
3. It enables to sufferings, be they never so afflictive. These Worthies went through all by the victory that overcame the world, the bitterness as well as the sweetness thereof.

In these verses the Apostle doth two things: First, he sets down the greatness and smartness of their sufferings, which are by some learned men reduced to three heads.

First, those sufferings that were to tempt them, and draw them from God, by those pains and tortures they were to undergo.

Secondly, those sufferings they underwent in dying.

Thirdly, their sufferings in regard of wandering, and leaving their comforts, rather than they would lose God.

There were all kind of persecutions laid upon these Saints, through all which they waded, and never would be brought to forsake God and his truth, for any of them. 2. We have here the excellency of the sufferers, and that is in that expression, these men, or, these persons, when they were under all these distresses from the world, yet they were such of whom the world was not worthy.

Brethren, the excellency of these saints and servants of God is considerable two ways, that we may proceed distinctly and clearly.

First, in reference to the wicked; their excellency was so great that the wicked World was not worthy of them.

Secondly, their excellency is discovered from the estimate or judgment that the Apostle passes upon them, who tells us, that he accounted them to be such; though they were under such distresses, and troubles, yet they were a people of whom the world was not worthy.

I shall fall upon the due estimation the blessed Apostle raises upon these persecuted Saints, who was enlightened by the Spirit of God, and so was able to pass a right sentence upon these persecuted Saints; from this I raise this ensuing observation.

Observe. That a godly man doth see a very great worth and excellency in the people of God in the midst of all their troubles and distresses; or, that a godly man; a gracious heart, one that hath spiritual spectacles, does see an excellency and worth in the people of God, in the midst of all trouble and persecution that can befall them.

Here I shall handle it first doctrinally, according to my constant method, then come to improve it by way of Application ▪ For the doctrinal handling of it, there are two things must be discovered.

First, wherein the high estimation of a gracious heart does appear, wherein it doth discover itself, wherein they shew they have such an high estimation.

Secondly, whence it is, and how it comes to pass, that Godly men have this high and honourable esteem of the Saints and people of God in their troubles and distresses which befall them.

For the first, wherein the high estimation of a gracious heart does appear, I shall shew it in five or six following particulars.

First, it appears in this, in that they are not ashamed of owning their persons and faith, that they profess in their troubles and distresses: the society of the people of God, and the fellowship of the faith and profession, is highly respected by a gracious heart, let the Saints lie under never so great distresses. This is manifested in Moses, in the 25. and 26. verses of this Chapter; He chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, then to enjoy all the pleasures and preferments of Pharaohs Court. The Israelites Religion, the profession of the truth of God, and owning the faith and those truths the Israelites stood up for, this was that which Moses would not desert: and thence it was he did not desert their company and society, but went and visited them when they lay under those burthens under which they lay.

Secondly, the second thing wherein is discovered so high an estimation of the Saints and people of God in suffering, is, their sympathizing and fellow-feeling with them in their suffering: If it goes ill with the Church and people of God, all the rest sympathize with them; if one member suffers, all the rest suffers. Instance Nehemiah (who had the greatest favour of the greatest Prince then on the earth) he looks with a sad countenance because of the sufferings of the Saints and people of God, Neh. 2:2. Wherefore, the King said unto me, why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick: This is nothing else but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid, and answered the King, because of the distresses the people of God lye under. The pleasure of musick should never be with him says David in Psalm 137:6. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, If I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy. As it is with two strings in an instrument rightly tuned, if one be touched the other trembles: if one servant of Christ be in a suffering condition, the rest suffers with him: this is the damp of all worldly delight, if it be ill with any of the people of God, the rest suffers in the way of compassion.

Thirdly, in that they can plead for them, and take their parts, when they are never so much out of favour, when they are never so much

despised and abused: This was in the case of Jonathan, how he pleaded for poor David before his cruel father Saul, though Saul called him a cursed Son, and fell soul on his Mother because of him. See this in the case of Esther, though it was death to go into the King to plead for the Jews, yet for all this she says, If I perish, I perish: resolved I am, come what will come of it, in I will go, I can dye, but I cannot be silent.

Fourthly, in that they will relieve them, and help and supply them with all needful good things they can, if they cannot do what they would, they will do for them what they can: See this in the case of Jeremiah 28:8 11,12,13. Ebedmelech went forth of the Kings house and spake to the King— So Ebedmelech took the man with him, and went into the house of the King under the Treasury, and took thence old clouts, and old rotten rags and let them down by cords into the Dungeon to Jeremiah. And Ebedmelech the Ethiopian said unto Jeremiah, Put now these old cast clouts, and rotten rags under thine arm-holes, under the cords. And Jeremiah did so, so they drew up Jeremiah with cords, and took him up out of the Dungeon, & Jeremiah remained in the court of the Prison. He would never be quiet till he got the Prophet out of the Dungeon, and though the cords were lined with rags, yet more with love and this favour of Ebedmelech, God remembered. 1 King. 18:4. Obediahs master was not only an oppressor of the Saints and Prophets of God, but a very great Persecutor: This good man Obediah took and hid 400 Prophets of the Lord, and led them with bread and water: (I will not undertake to prophesie to you this day, yet time may come when bread and water may be good food for a faithful Prophet.) Here note the gracious disposition of good Obediah, as well as the providence of God in this act, 2 Tim. 1:16,17,18. The Lord give mercy unto the douse of Onesiphorus, for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain.

But when he was in Rome, he sought me out very gently, and found me. The Lord grant unto him, that he may finde mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus,

thou knowest very well. A most admirable Scripture to this purpose: blessed Paul being thrown into prison; being in bonds, Onesiphorus often refresht him, and was not ashamed of his chains: How did he shew this? When he was in Rome, he sought him out diligently. By the way note, That Rome was the place where the cruel Nero was Emperour, it was the place where much bloud of the Martyrs was spilt, yet there this good man sought out Paul diligently: Mark what follows, which is the prayer of Paul, The Lord grant to him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day. I profess Sirs, I had rather have the prayer of Paul, than the preferments of the greatest Court on earth. Christians, it is the greatest treasure in your house, to have the prayers of good men to God for you: you that have shewn your great and abundant love to the Saints and servants of God in distress, I do from my soul beg the mercy for you, that whatever you have done for his, may be ten thousand times made up by him, that you may finde mercy in that day; and truly Sirs, in that day mercy will be worth receiving.

Fifthly, they supplicate to God for them; they do not go to the throne of Grace for themselves, but Sion is in their thoughts. I am confident it is so with some, and am persuaded it is so with all; they never beg daily bread for themselves, but they remember Sion. In Psalm 51 David was under trouble of conscience, soul-trouble, which is the soul of trouble; yet at the latter end of the 51 Psalm he breaks out into this earnest supplication to God; Do good in thy good pleasure unto Sion, build thou up the walls of Jerusalem. So long as it is ill with the people of God, so long they are earnest with God: and though they cannot overcome men with their prayers (which by the way they are to endeavour) yet they will never leave supplicating the Almighty, till they have overcome. As the sufferings of Gods people are precious in the sight of God, so they are in the fight of the people of God.

I come now to shew whence it is, that there is such an high esteem in the people of God, of the people of God, when under trouble and distress: for this take two heads of reasons.

First, in regard of those people of God that do behold their sufferings.

Secondly, in regard of those people of God that are in sufferings.

First, in regard of those people of God that do behold their sufferings, troubles, and distresses, in three regards.

First, those of the people of God that look upon others in trouble, though they are such as may differ from them in regard of outward estate: one may be in honour, the other in dishonour, yet they have an interest in the same head, and do belong to the same body that they do, they are not wooden legs, not glass eyes: therefore Christ is called the common Saviour, and the Saviour of the body, the whole Church: Faith, it is called, the like precious Faith, 2 Pet. 1, in the beginning. The Faith of one Believer does as truly lay hold on Christ, as the Faith of another. This Salvation is called common salvation: my meaning is, this outward disproportion as the birth and education, puts no difference at all in a spiritual respect between Believer and Believer: a King and a Beggar are all one in Christ; a Jew, or a Greek, a great Scholar or a poor ignorant man, as to the spiritual state, all are made happy the same way.

Secondly, because these look at Spiritual excellency, and are able to discern Spiritual excellency: they have a renewed judgement, as they look upon their old courses and sins with a new eye, so they look upon their company with a new eye: those that before they highly esteemed, they now dis-esteem: those persons that before they esteemed a damp to their mirth, they now look upon them as the excellent ones of the earth, Prov. 12:26. The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour. In the sixteenth Psalm, says David, my goodness extends not to thee, but to the Saints, the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight. Here was a renewed estimation; David saw excellency in those which Worldlings despised. A carnal eye sees no glory but in carnal objects: Worldlings bless the covetous, whom the Lord abhors. A gracious heart sees a spiritual worth in a man

devested of worldly enjoyments, as a curious eye may, and does see a great deal of Art and curiosity in a Picture, though in a broken frame. A beast can see the shining of a Diamond, but knows not the worth of it: A Beast will rather lick up a lock of hay, than a Diamond, though of never so great value. A wicked man wants a spirit of discerning. The people of God are the workmanship of God, which a godly man is very much taken withal, not with the greatness, but with the goodness that is in them. The four Monarchs of the earth is exprest by four Beasts, which shews their cruelty, not their curiosity, in observing that of God which may be observed. A Child is taken with the Gay, but a learned man is taken with the learning and art of a Lesson.

Thirdly, A Child of God is one that highly esteems the people of God, judging of them as God judges. The child esteems as the father esteems: if the father cannot love any one, the ingenious Child cannot endure that he should come into the House. The Courtier follows the favorite of the King; whom the King honours, they cringe to. But to be sure it is true as to spirituals: God judges not by the Gold Ring, or Silken suit: a sinner is a vile person in Gods account, and so he is in a godly mans account: God is more taken with a broken hearted sigh, then with all the gaudery in Solomons Temple. He did not chuse the Eagle, or Lyon for Sacrifice, but the Lamb and the Dove: not many noble, not many rich, but the poor hath God chosen: he that hath the choice of God, hath the life of God.

The second Reason is from the people of God that are beheld. And this will appear in five or six particulars.

First, the people of God, those that are truly such, let their present condition be what it will, their end shall be happy. Men are not regarded in reference to what they have in possession, but what they shall have in reversion: the poor here are rich in Faith, and shall be rich in Glory, 1 Pet. 3. The people of God are Heirs of Glory, co-heirs with Christ: when he shall appear, they shall appear with him in Glory: they are not possessors here, but they are heirs; and are to be

look'd upon as what they shall be hereafter: Here they are Princes going to their Crown, hereafter they shall be possessed of it: Here they may be oppressed, banish'd, disgrac'd, libell'd, hereafter they shall shine as the Sun in glory.

Secondly, they are not only such as shall be happy, but they are very useful and beneficial in the world; they are those, for whose sake the world was made, they are the great common blessings of the World, like fire and water, they are those for whose sake God spares the world. If God would have spared the City for ten righteous persons sakes, surely for many tens God spares the world; those that are pulled down by the world, are those for whose sake God doth not pull down the world; they are the soul of the world, as I may so say: If God hath gathered in all his Elect, the world would not continue one hour longer.

Thirdly, the excellency of their performances is highly esteemed, there is a worth in every holy work that worldlings are not able to discern; every heavenly Prayer, and sincerely bestowed Alms, hath a worth that a carnal man doth not see. Luther sayes, I had rather do the least truly good work, than obtain all the Conquests of Caesar and Alexander: If their good works shall be so rewarded, do you think a holy man can see them and not be taken with them? Many a wicked man when he hears a holy man make an excellent Oration, wishes that he could do so too, it is not from the goodness he observes in it, or the principle from whence it comes, but from something of natural accomplishments that he is taken with it; so a godly man when he hears another pray excellently, and live holily, he wishes from his heart that he could do so too, his aim is to grow in holiness.

Fourthly, the present priviledges of the people of God, not only what they shall have hereafter, but what they have here, they are freed from a world of evils that worldlings lie under, whatever befalls them turns to their benefit; they may be afflicted, but not hurt by affliction; the greatest hurt the world does to them; tends to their greatest

good. Worldlings may take away their heads, they cannot their crowns: there is a real communication of a blessed interest in all that is good, for they have an interest in all that God hath, or is; the power of God is theirs to protect them, the love of God is set upon them, the righteousness of God imputed to them, so as to acquit them from sin; so that a Child of God may not only appeal to the bowels of Gods mercy, but to the bar of his justice, all the providences of God shall tend to their good. In Psalm 25:10. the Holy Ghost says, All the ways of God are mercy and truth, to them that are in covenant with him: they are mercy, because they are appointed to do them good; and truth, because they shall certainly do them good: Christ, and God, and all is laid out for the good of a godly man.

In this world they may go to God, and tell him wherein they are troubled, pained, or afflicted, and they are never more welcome then when they ask most from him; if thou ask great things from God, God is well taken with such requests; but if thou ask Riches and Honours, these are the low things of the foot-stool: God is exceedingly taken with thee when thou askest Peace and Pardon, Peace of Conscience, Pardon of sin, strength against sin, power to overcome thy Lusts, to withstand temptations. The people of God may have from God all that they want, and all that they can regularly wish.

Fifthly, These are such as have an incomparable dear and near relation to God; they are his delight, they are set apart by God as his own, his peculiar people: though God have a propriety in all, yet he hath a peculiar propriety in, and a relation to these; therefore they are called his children, his house, his jewels, his garden: Gods whole treasure and portion is his people; as God is his peoples portion, so his people are his portion; they are those he hath been at a great deal of cost to purchase.

Sixthly, they are such as have the image of God imprinted upon them; take notice of this word image, for the image of God appears in holiness: Now an image does not represent anything of imperfection

or deformity, but of excellency. If a man takes the picture of a man, he will not take it off his back-side, or leg, or hand, or the like, but of his face, his beautifullest part is chiefly aimed at in the picture. Wicked men discover Gods bounty in having wit and wealth; this is not the image of God; the image of God is that which is most excellent in a man, which is holiness: the power of God is the hand of God, the wisdom of God is the eye of God, the holiness of God is the face, the beauty of God; the people of God resemble God in purity. Be ye holy, as your heavenly Father is holy, there's the pattern, they have the Divine Nature: 2 Pet. 1:4. Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these you might be partakers of the Divine Nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world; as it is in Ephes. 4:18. Having the understanding darkned, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Rom. 3:23. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. There is more of God in grace, then in all the works that ever God did in the world beside: there is much of God seen in making the Sun, Moon, and Stars; but in giving a man a new nature, a renewed understanding, in changing of a man from being a vessel of wrath and vessel of Satan, in making of him become a new man, a vessel of glory, God shews more of himself, then in making ten thousand worlds.

Use. Here I shall raise these following inferences. If it be so, that there is such an excellency in the people of God here, then first, what excellency shall there be seen on the people of God in heaven? If they are so beautiful in their Rags, what will they be when they appear in their Robes? The glory of Christ shall be admired in them that believe. Oh what a Head is he that hath such Members? what a Lord is he that hath such attendance? The people of God are in a state of non-appearance now, hereafter it shall appear what they are; the very wicked themselves shall admire them.

2. Inference. What have we to think of those that have no regard either for Religion, or for Religious ones, any farther forth then it is

deck'd and adorned with advantageous beauty, and outward glory? If Religion be not lookt upon with a favourable eye from Authority, farewell Religion, and Religiousness. These love the child for the Nurses sake; what is the thing in fashion these are for; what Authority commands, they'll creep and cringe to, when the Deer is shot, the Herd flies from her; when Religion is shot at, then farewell Religion. What is this but to have the Faith of God in respect of persons? If I love Religion for the countenance of Authority, then it is certain I love Religion for the Authorities sake: this is a sign thou shalt not have communion with those hereafter, that thou contemnest here. If the people of God are too bad for thee when they are in trouble and affliction, they will be too good for thee in glory.

3. Inference. Note here the excellency of holiness above worldly glory: Here a man is dignified by what is conferr'd upon him; when outward honour ceaseth, the man is contemned; but holiness it dignifies a man, and shall remain here and hereafter. Set a Gyant in a valley, he is a Gyant still, a Pearl is a Pearl though on a Dunghil; a holy man is a holy man, though never so much disgrac'd and contemned by men. John Baptist had a leathern girdle, and had locusts for his food, yet there was not a greater than John Baptist born of women: He was the forerunner of Christ, the friend of the Bridegroom. On the other side, Herod, that was like the voice of God, and not of man, what was he in Gods account? the Angel smote him, and he became worms-meat. There is a silent dignity in reproached piety, and a silent ignominy in advanced iniquity. As it was with Christ, so it is with the servants of Christ; when he was on earth, no man had more ignominy poured upon him; yet there was a secret glory attended him in all that befel him: though born in a manger, yet worshipped there: sometimes he was driven to be hungry, the fish brought him money: sometimes a weary, at that very time converts a woman; sometimes laid hold on by his enemies, at that very time his enemies fell down before him. Look through the whole course of his life, there was a secret glory under all ignominy: Just thus it is with the servants of Christ, they are in trouble & disgrace, but there is a secret glory & dignity shines in them, the Spirit of God

& of glory rests upon them: If ye suffer for righteousness sake, blessed are ye. To be in high place, and yet to be a Drunkard, a Swearer, a Whoremaster, or Prophane, this spoils all thy glory, be thou never so high.

4. Inference. This is the way for a man to have a good name: wouldst thou gain a good report living and dying? Take heed of sin, take heed of dishonouring God; then God will have thee in everlasting remembrance.

5. Inference. Note here the certain happiness of those beholders, that do see certain excellency in holiness, though disgrac'd & under valu'd; if there be any thing in the world that is a sign of sincerity, it is this, to love holiness when disgrac'd, abused, and spit upon; to cross the stream, and thwart the multitude, is a sign of the truth of grace, and strength of grace: this is a sign of true sight, and strong sight. To see beauty in a godly man in sufferings, the Lord will certainly have an eye upon thee in times of trouble. Here is comfort in thine infirmities. Dost thou love holiness when compassed about with sufferings and persecution? God will take notice of thy grace, though compassed about with abundance of infirmities; the Lord will take notice of a little of his, in a great deal of ours. Here's comfort in sufferings; if you regard his in their sufferings, the Lord will remember you in your sufferings; the Lord will remember what thou didst for such and such a servant of his own in trouble or distress. God doth not cast away any in their lowness, that have kept close to him in their highness; and this will be comfort in inward trouble, when thou canst find nothing from which to fetch comfort. And this will be comfort in the last day; though we can say nothing in that day, by way of merit, yet will it be comfort to be able sincerely to say that thou hast owned God and his people in the midst of sufferings. Do ye think that Judge would not save that Malefactor that had saved the life of his wife? If thou hast owned Christ when he was in his Rags, do not fear but he will own thee when he comes in his Robes.

6. Inference and last, the people of God should learn not to be discouraged under any misery or affliction that can befall them in this world; at this very time God hath a high esteem of you; at this time you are his delight, his Garden, his Spouse. The Saints of God are the wise men of the world, they have chosen that which cannot be taken from them: I profess, Sirs, the love of one Saint makes amends for all the hatred you undergo for sinners: the very wicked themselves have a good opinion of you, when you do not basely comply; their Consciences cannot but have an high esteem of you, when peradventure their tongues might speak against you. If all this will not do, remember, your own consciences are more than a thousand witnesses for you, will then comfort you: no man is a miserable man for anything in the world that is done to him, or said of him: No, it is a good Conscience that will give the best acquittance; for thee to have the whole number of Gods people to look upon thee as an unworthy wretch, and as a vile person, I look upon it as a greater ignominy and disgrace, then to have all the disgraces of wicked men cast upon thee: That man that hath a godly man to be afraid of him, had need to be very much afraid of himself. I shall conclude all with this one word, there is great reason to look narrowly to your hearts and ways, when they stand at a distance from you, and are afraid to come near you.

o8. Mr. Jenkin's Afternoon Sermon

And the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush, and he looked, and behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses, and he said, here am I. And he said, draw not

night hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest as holy ground. - Exod. 3:2,3,4,5.

Let us take a short view of the foregoing Verses: and that this may be the more useful and profitable to us, we may take notice, That as in the former chapter there is described Moses preservation to his future employment: so in this Chapter there is described his preparation, and his sitting for that employment, i.e. by a Vision, or rather suitable Apparition, in which God discovered unto Moses his care of his people, of whom Moses was to be a speedy deliverer: You have here in the words read unto you, the preparation afforded to Moses for the great work of being called to be Israels deliverer; and in this preparation you may take notice of three principal parts.

1. An Apparition that is here presented to the view of Moses, a burning, though not a consumed bush.

2. Moses care to observe it, I will turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burned. And then,

3. Gods Monitory Precept, or Admonition, which he afforded unto Moses, when he was drawing near to see this wonder, in which we have principally considered two parts.

1. This Precept propounded.

1. Negatively, that he should not draw near.

2. Affirmatively, that he should put off his shoes from off his feet.

2. You have considerable the Reason or Argument, whereby God doth back this Precept or Admonition, i.e. because the place whereon he stood was holy ground. The time would fail me if I should go over all these parts, we shall only touch on the two former. The Apparition which Moses saw, and Moses's desire to observe it: of the first I shall only speak transitorily, and insist on the latter more fully, which I chiefly intend.

1. For the Apparition, or emblematical discovery of the estate of the Church in the burning, and yet unconsumed Bush. And herein take notice of three things.

1. The lowness and weakness of the Church, represented by a Bush.

2. The cruelty of the Churches enemies, signified and represented by Fire.

1. The eminency of its preservation, though in the Fire, yet unconsumed

And in this only take notice, that the Church is compared to a Bush, for two reasons:

1. In regard of its deformity and blackness, and imcomeliness.

2. In regard of its weakness and brittleness.

The Church is uncomely in regard of sin, and weak in regard of suffering; and God sees it best that it should be thus with them to humble them, and to shew his goodness to accept them, and to love them; and make them long for their future beauty: and hereby God makes them more conformable to their Head, hereby he makes them endeavour to look after inward beauty and glory: hereby he puts them on a life of faith, and takes them off from living by sense, and creature-comforts, and from being intangled with creature-comforts. And hereby he shews how little he regards the beauty and glory of this life, which he denies to the best of his people: And hereby he shows, that there is a better state of appearance and glory approaching: and therefore the people of God are not to be censured under their blackness and deformity, either in regard of sin or suffering: their happiness is not to be judged by its outward appearance: because this life is but the obscurity of the Church: we see them like the Tents of Kedar, but we do not see how like the Curtains of Solomon they shall be. 2. The people of God should take heed of expecting that glory of this world, which is not promised to

them, and to set their hearts on heaven. And you may see the reason why wicked men stumble so much at the outside of Gods worship, because there is no outward bravery and beauty to allure them to the true worship.

2. The Church is compared to a Bush, in regard of its weakness and brittleness. Note, that it is not compared to a strong sturdy Oak, but to a weak brittle Bush. God loves to bring his Church into a low estate and weak condition; as it is here compared to a Bush, so other-where to a Vine, a Dove, a Lamb, and a Sheep, all weak creatures. Sometimes the Church is said to be fatherless and destitute; and as our Lord Jesus Christ the head of the Church, was said to be weak, a worm, and no man; and as the Apostle said, suffered through weakness. And this makes them to trust in God, and puts them to rest on his strength; When we are weak, then we are strong; outward weakness will make us look the more to Christ for spiritual strength; the weakness of our state doth shew the spiritual strength God gives to his people for the upholding of them. And this weakness of his Church doth exceedingly confound his enemies, when so weak a company shall be delivered, not only against, but by the strength of men: and hereby God doth gain to himself the greater glory in their deliverance, for remembring them in their weak estate. Hereby the people of God are made the more thankful, both for their preservation in, and deliverance from their powerful adversaries. You see, here is a large field opened unto me, for the discoursing upon the Churches weakness, which whether it be more suitable to the Text, or to the Times, I leave to you to judge.

2. Consider the cruelty of their opposition, that is set forth and represented by the fire that burned in the Bush. Afflictions, and especially persecuting ones, are in the Scripture frequently set out by fire, as, The fiery tryal, the fire of afflictions. This doth not only discover the rage and cruelty of men, but also the benefit and utility that comes to the Church by affliction: for the afflictions of the Church are not as consuming, but trying fire: as the fire in the furnace is to Gold, it only takes away the dross: not like the fire of

Hell, which hath heat without light, but the School of persecution hath light as well as heat; the School of affliction is the School of teaching. God teacheth his Saints excellent Lessons by the light of that fire. But I pass by that, I might now insist upon the third thing.

3. Consider the eminence of the reservation, It was not consumed; the Church of God was hot, but not altogether and wholly consumed: let the fire be never so hot and spreading, the Church of God shall have a being: if the Church be less in one place, it will be greater in another; what it loses in one place, it gets in another: And God will have a Name among his people on earth: A man may as well attempt to blow out the light of the Sun with a pair of bellows, or batter it with snow-balls, as to root the Church out of the world; for it is impossible to root Christs Church out of the world. And if you take notice of particular Believers, it is not consumed in a way of hurting and destroying them; and consider, their graces are not consumed, their welfare is not destroyed: this fire cannot burn them up, though it burn upon them: but as he will mitigate and allay the fire, so as that it shall not decrease their strength, so he will cleanse his people by the fire, so as it shall burn up nothing but their dross, and what makes them offensive unto God, & what may make them hurtful to one another. But I pass by these things to the second general Part, viz.

2. Moses care to observe Gods admonition, That he would turn aside and see this great sight, why the Bush was not burnt. Moses was an excellent Naturalist, and yet here he was posed; he could see no reason in nature by all the learning of the Egyptians, how this thing should come to pass, that a flaming fire should be in a brittle Bush, and yet the Bush not consumed: And yet I do not conceive (as some Jesuitical Expositors upon the place do) that Moses did turn aside so much out of curiosity, as to understand what it was that God did intend by it, and would have him to learn by it. And doubtless when Gods works are great, our observations should not be small; when his providence is eminently lifted up, we should not be cast down; when the hand of God is upon us, we must not shut our eyes. I am

very far from being a Fanatick, and to give credit, or be led by unscriptural Revelations; but yet let me tell you, the times wherein we live are strange times, in regard of strange sights and apparitions, and I question if there have not been some as wonderful as this in our times; but I shall not now mention them; though it be a forfeiture of your modesty to give a reason for them, yet they do portend some strange things; the hand of God is not to be neglected, though it cannot be perfectly conceived; and it is the nature of a wicked man to have Gods work far out of his sight; be sure to lay them up in your hearts. And thus far you may take notice of them, to trust the God that hath all the elementary Meteors in his power, and at his command; and this learn, to tremble and dread before that God that hath you in his power, and can do with you and all other things, as he pleases.

3. You have here considerable, the admonition of God, or the Monitory Precept God lays down to Moses, i. e. he forbids him to draw nigher, and then bids him to pull off his shoes: the reason of the former will be easily understood in the opening of the latter: I shall therefore in it briefly take notice of two things.

1. An Injunction, Put off thy shoes.

2. The Argument whereby he doth back this, Because the place whereon he stood was holy ground.

For the opening of the former, the Injunction, Put off thy shoes, I shall not give the divers glosses, and divers interpretations, which men, with more wit than weight, have endeavoured to make of this Scripture; the plain meaning is this, which is given us by Theodoret, Put off thy shoes, Gods scope, and drift, and intent hereby was, to require of Moses reverence, when he was to receive a message of very great concernment and importance about his Church; the design of God was in this, to prepare him to obedience, therefore God required that of him then, which servants were wont to do when they came to their Lord and Master, to shew their reverence to them: Servants use

to come bare-foot to their Masters, to testify reverence to the commands of them on whom they waited: *Nudare pedes signum reverentiae*. And the putting on the shoes is in Scripture, as well as among other Writers, held a token of denomination or masterly power. Hence some conceive, John spake of Christ, as one that had his shoes on; and of himself, as one that was unworthy to unite his shoes. And the prophet Isaiah, by a sign of putting off his shoes, is commanded by God to put off his shoes from off his feet, and to walk naked and bare-foot, and he did so, *Isai. 20:2*. which denoteth the servility of the people, in token that Gods people were to be in a low condition in captivity. So we read of Mourners, in *Ezek. 24:17*. that were of a low spirit, they are said to go without shoes, or unshod. And my Brethren, on the other side, when God would shew the freedom of his people, and their deliverance from servitude, he is said to put shoes on their feet, *Ezek. 16:10*. and the reception of the Prodigal into his fathers house, and the freedom and priviledge his father intended him, (according to some learned men, intended by that expression in *Luk. 15:22*.) is set forth by putting on shoes upon his feet. So that I take the meaning of this command to be so much; Shew by this thy reverence, thy humility, thy due submissiveness, thy subjection of spirit, together with thy servile readiness to do whatsoever I shall command thee. Calvin hath this Note upon the Text: If so excellent a servant of God as Moses, had need to be quickened to reverence and obedience by such a Ceremony, certainly we that are more backward to humility and obedience, should by our reverent behaviour, when we come into the presense of God, signifie both the reverence of our souls by our outward expressions, and likewise quicken and fortifie the inward graces of our souls by the inward gestures of the body; especially in prayer, as kneeling, and lifting up the hands, uncovering of the head, and the like: for the presense of God is great, and it's the presense of the great God indeed. We that are not only by the Law of Creation, so infinitely below him, but also in regard of that illegal Law of sin, so much against him, should testify our humility before him, and subjection to him, when he calls for it by our reverence.

2. The reason by which this is backt, Because the place whereon Moses did stand, was holy ground. The meaning I take to be this, it is holy in regard of that visible and miraculous token, symbol, and sign of his presense, that is here discovered in this place; not because the place was (as I do not understand how any place is) of its own nature holy, but God did testifie, that the place being the place of his special presense, had thereby a holiness; there being now a sign given by God to Moses, that he was extraordinarily and miraculously there. And thus I have opened the second Branch, whereon this Injunction was backt, This place was holy; so it was then. Now I do not understand how I can discourse of this so profitably unto you, concerning the holiness of places, unless we take notice of the holiness of places in the time of the Gospel, and consider, whether, and how in these times, one place may be said to be holy, or holier then another. And truly I am not put on this employment willingly, nor the handling of this subject; and if it were not extorted from me by something, I do not say that I have seen, but that I have read, that was written by men, and those none of the meanest neither, the learnedst of the Papists, I should not now have chosen to have entred upon this Task, concerning the holiness of places; in opposition to whom, I have entred upon this Discourse: I will give you expressions, which one of the devoutest, and the other of the learnedst of them hath: the learnedst of them, accounted so at least, (though blessed be God, his weapons have not been formidable to the Church) is Bellarmine, his words are these: *Templum consecrandum merito venerabile & divina vir | tute preaeditum est*: The Temple consecrated is deservedly holy, and venerable in worship, and endowed with divine virtue and efficacy; the Temple ought to be looked upon as honourable and venerable. And for the other, Durandus he tells us; So great is the Religion and holiness of Churches, that those things should be, and may be forbidden to be done in them, (he means perpetually, or else he said nothing, for we grant as much) which in other places may duly and lawfully be done.

In the handling of this question, How are we to judge and conceive of the holiness of places, in the time of the Gospel? I shall endeavour,

first, to explain it, and then faithfully and truly endeavour to resolve and determine the same.

First then, for explanation, I shall here endeavour to open these two things to you: first, what it is for a place to be holy, or wherein the nature of the holiness of the places consists; secondly, what that is, that is foundation or cause of the holiness of places; and both these must in our discourse, and likewise apprehension, be accurately distinguisht.

1. What it is for a place to be holy, this is two ways to be considered:

1. Generally;

2. More particularly.

1. More generally, the holiness of a place doth consist in the separation thereof, the setting it apart, the distinction and discrimination in the way of some excellent pre-eminence, or the exalting of it before and above all other places. Thus the notion of the holiness of places is taken in Scripture, Exod. 30:31,37,38. you shall there read, that the Lord tells them in the 31 verse, concerning the ointment that he prescribed, and likewise the composition of it for his service: This shall be an holy anointing oil unto me throughout your generations. Now see how God doth discover this to be holy; On mans flesh it shall not be poured, neither shall you make any other like it, after the composition of it. Here was a discrimination, as well to the using of it, as to the making and composition of it; as none was to make such an ointment as this was, so none was to use it in their ordinary and common employment, so that now the holiness thereof did consist in the distinction & discrimination of it from other uses, and likewise from all other ointment. And this is further expressed concerning the holy perfumes, in the 37 and 38 verses, there was to be a difference betwixt this and other perfume; and this was the holiness thereof. And so you shall find it not only concerning holy things, but likewise concerning holy persons, Lev. 20:24,25. I am the

Lord your God, which have separated you from other people; you shall therefore put a difference between clean beasts, and unclean. Mark ye, herein is the holiness of the people, that they were a differenced and severed people. And hence it is you read in Deut. 26:18,19. that God is there said to avouch his people, openly to discover himself, to assert it, that they are his people; their holiness was a discrimination, a separation from the rest of the people. And in Deut. 7:6. and Deut. 14:2. you have there the very same things described and discovered unto you. And now for this, I shall desire you to take notice of comparing two places of Scripture, which discovers the holiness of places; in Deut. 19:2,3. Thou shalt separate three cities for the in thee midst of thy land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it. And at the seventh verse, Wherefore I command thee, saying, thou shalt separate three cities for thee. Now you shall have this again propounded to you in Josh. 20:7. And they sanctified Kadesh in Galilee in Napthali, and Sichem in mount Ephraim, and Kiriath-arba (which is Hebron) in the mountain of Judah. Mark, the Scripture that was called Separation in Deut. 9:2,7. is here called Sanctification; therefore the word in the Hebrew is, and you shall sanctifie, or make holy these places; that is, holy by the separation of them unto that employment that I shall appoint. Hence a thing is said to be unholy in Scripture, when it is common, is not separated and set apart to holy employments and services; and from everything that is of a civil concernment. And hence you read in Acts 10:14. in the vision that Peter had, God bids Peter, Kill and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean. That that is unclean and unholy, in a way of legal unholiness, is said to be common, not set apart, Heb. 10:29. you shall there read this notion clearly discovered to you in the New Testament: Of how much sorer punishment suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath troden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing? An unholy thing is a common thing. So that now what is sanctification in the former part of the verse, is called commonness and uncleanness in the latter part. But not to give you any more

instances of this nature, the general nature of holiness is discrimination or separation.

2. To answer it more particularly, this setting apart, or discrimination, or separation of places for holy uses, must have these two properties.

1. A place that is holy must have such a separation from other places, as that it must be alienated from all uses but holy uses, it must not at all be employed to civil uses; for the employing of it unto civil uses, must be looked upon as sinful and unlawful. Thus in the Scripture, when times, things, persons are reputed as holy, they are to be exempted from common employment: the Sabbath-day, a holy day, In it thou must not do any manner of work. The Vessels and Utensils of the Temple were holy, and therefore were not to be used to ordinary uses; and this as some do think, was the great sin of Belshazzar, that he would offer to drink in the vessels of the Temple. And so the garments of the Priests were holy, and not to be used by secular persons. And the Tabernacle and the Temple were holy, and not to be used in civil employment.

2. More particularly, concerning this holiness, I desire to shew you what it is, by shewing you, it must be such a holiness and separation as that the service done to God in those places must be accounted and looked upon as a better service, and more acceptable, then if so be it had been elsewhere, more acceptable to God, and advantagious to ourselves Now, as places are said to be holy in regard they are only to be for holy services; so

2. Holy, in regard that holy services are only to be done there, with acceptation or advantage, at least with so great acceptation. And therefore I desire you to take notice, that places in Scripture are said to be holy, which did sanctifie the Worship which was done in them, and sanctifie the Worshippers, and so the very places are part of Worship; and so not only places in which God was worshipped, but by which God was worshipped. And thus the Sabbath was sanctified,

and so the performance of Gods Worship therein, made Gods service more acceptable & sanctified. And so the Altar, when it was holy, it made the gift the more holy and sanctified, and so the more acceptable, the Altar sanctified the gift, Matt. 23:18,19. And so the incense was acceptable to God, as being put into such a censer: And so the service done to God in such Garments, was more acceptable, because done in them which God had instituted and appointed for Aaron and his Sons to wear. And so I have opened the first thing in explanation, and that is to shew you wherein holiness consists, and how it is that places or things may be said to be holy; and I think I have sufficiently cleared the notion to you.

2. To shew what the cause or the foundation of this holiness is; for this my Brethren, I shall desire you also to take notice of it more generally, and then more particularly.

1. More generally, That the cause and the foundation of a place, or any other thing's holiness, it is its belonging to God, Gods peculiar relation to it, and propriety in it, declared as he shall please, and therefore to be holy, & to be Gods, are the words of the like importance, or equivalence; its being Gods, and his having a relation to it, is the foundation and cause of its holiness. And therefore if you look into Exod. 15:2. you shall there find God commands, that they should sanctifie to him all the first-born, it is mine; there now is that which is the cause, and reason, and ground of its being sanctified, or holy, it is God himself; God hath a propriety in it. And therefore I desire you to look into Luk 2:23. it will open this notion to you; there you shall see that this command is again repeated, but yet in other words; And therefore he saith, As it is written in the Law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord; that which is said in one place to be sanctified or separated, is here said to be holy, and therefore holy because separated to God, Levit. 27:30. All the tythes of the Land is the Lords, it is holy unto the Lord; it is holy, and therefore holy because it is the Lords. So that here is the general answer. This is the foundation, ground, and cause of its holiness, Gods peculiar propriety in it, it is the Lords.

2. More particularly, That the declared propriety that God hath in any place, or his relation to a place, or its belonging unto God, that is the foundation of its holiness. This belonging unto God, or Gods propriety in it, is declared two ways.

Its belonging unto God is declared,

1. From his presense.

2. From his precept.

1. By his presense. Now the presense of God, that was the foundation of the holiness of a place, was two-fold.

1. Extraordinary.

2. Ordinary.

1. The extraordinary presense of God was by his miraculous apparitions, and discovering himself by some miraculous token, vision, sign, or manifestation of his presense, as now here in this burning, and not consuming Bush; here was a miraculous token of Gods presense. We shall find in the fifth of Joshua, and the last verse, God commands Joshua to put off his shoes, Loose thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. And Joshua did so. And therefore, as I conceive, hence it is, the Mountain in which Christ was transfigured, is called, the holy Mountain, 2 Pet. 1:18. And this voice which came from Heaven, we heard when we were with him in the holy Mount. Why holy? Not as if it were holy at that time when the Apostle writ that Epistle, but it were manifest, there was an extraordinary manifestation and sign of Gods presense, and so long as this extraordinary manifestation of Gods presense continued, it was called holy. And this miraculous manifestation of the gloriousness of Christs God-head ceasing, the holiness of the place ceased also. And remember this place now, of Gods extraordinary miraculous manifestation of himself in the Bush, was holy for that time, and no longer, wherein he did manifest

himself; for otherwise in the time of the Law, it were unholy to offer up sacrifice there.

2. As the presense of God was extraordinary, so it is ordinary, which is two-fold.

1. The presense of his standing residence in a place, by some visible or external Symbole; or else

2. The Presense of God, is a spiritual Presense, in the Religious services and performances of his people, in the place of their Meetings, and Assemblies. Now concerning the first of these:

1. The presense of God by the more visible and lasting tokens of his Presense, which was chiefly afforded in the time of the Levitical Pedagogue; So the Altar, Temple, Ark, and Mercy-seat, were symboles of Gods presense among that people, by them God signified his presense, he recorded his Name there by those visible tokens of his Presense; and therefore the Ark was said to be Gods face: and when the Ark was lifted up, it was said, Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered. Hence they so much rejoyced when the Ark came into the city of David, because it was the sign of Gods presense, and mourned when it was taken away captive. And God is said to deliver his glory into captivity, that is, the token of his glorious presense: and as long as this continued, God was looked upon as there present; and thither the people went to pray, and offer sacrifice. And thus God more fixedly declared his durable relation to a place by these to and while these continued in a place, he was looked upon to be there.

2. Gods ordinary presense is considerable in the Religious service of his people, and this I call the rather the more spiritual Presense of God; that is that presense of God in the Ordinances, which we have, we hope this day, and which Christ did promise, Matt. 18:20. Where ever two or three are met together in my Name, there am I present in the midst of them: not in the midst of the place, but of them, when

they do perform holy and institute Worship. This spiritual presense of God is that, that is afforded in the use of those Ordinances of Praying, Hearing, and Administration of Sacraments, his Presense is there to accept of these, and bless them, and make them operative, and to assist in these, and to enable both Minister and people to go through their duty by his own power. Nor can Gods Presense be ordinarily expected, but in this his own way. Now then,

2. You must know, that as the presense of God is the foundation of a places sanctity, and as it is several, so you must know, Gods propriety in, and relation to a place is declared by his Precept; the precept of God is Gods propriety in a place, as well as his Presense; thus it belongs to him by command to make it holy, he may do what he will, and chuse out what places he will to be holy. He to whom all things belong, surely may have some places and things more proper to himself und peculiar; so the Temple of old, and the Tabernacle, those Places of Levitical and Ceremonial Worship was separated and set apart by God by Divine institution. Hence we have many commands.

1. God commands that such a House, and such a Tabernacle shall be built, and this had been unlawful to do had it not been commanded.

2. He directs the manner, and the mode, and that all things should exactly be done according to the pattern in the Mount. And

3. God doth command it should be in such a place, in the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite, and that place that himself had chosen.

4. He commands that he will be served in these places peculiarly, rather than in any other place, he would not have these places changed for others. Herein this place typified Christ, one that is only able to make our services acceptable. Hence it is said, Exod. 23:17. Three times in the year all thy Males shall appear before the Lord.

And Acts 27. the Eunuch there went unto that place that God had commanded.

5. He doth command, that he would have these places revered, and no civil employments used there when the holy service was doing, and that after the service was done, at that very time the place should be only for God.

6. And lastly, He annexed a promise unto that place, that he would accept of a duty done there rather than in any other place, even because it was done there; hence they prayed in the Temple, rather than in their private houses, Luke 2:27. and when they could not be present, by reason of Gods providence, in the Temple, if they do but look to the City and the temple, God accepted of their duty, 1 Kings 8:48. So that God did promise that that place that he had instituted for his worship and service, that the service performed there should be more acceptable to him than else-where. This shews the reason and foundation of a places holiness, the precept of God, and the promise and presense of God. And thus I have opened to you the second thing. Now having thus explained and opened the Question to you;

2. I come to resolve the Question, according to what I think in my conscience to be the truth of God; and this I shall do two ways.

1. By granting that which must not be denied.

2. By denying what must not be granted.

1. By granting what must not be denied: and here I grant willingly these four things.

1. That in the time of the Gospel; it is not only lawful, but it is often very commendable and necessary, to design and dedicate places unto God. Now when I say, it is lawful to design them and to dedicate them; I pray you bear me witness, I do not say it is lawful to

consecrate them, or to sanctifie them; but I say it is lawful to design and dedicate them. Now for this take notice, That between

1. The designing and appointing of a place;
2. the dedication of a place: and
3. the consecrating of a place, there are these differences.

1. Concerning the designation of a place, then is a place designed, when it is appointed to be made use of for the most convenience for such a service, as Tuesday and Wednesday may be appointed for Lecture-days, not consecrated. Now you must know, that this designation of a day may be altered, and so may a place: if such a place be designed, it is in our power to make use of it, so as to leave off the use of it when we please.

2. As to dedication, I mean so lawfully to dedicate a place, which is of our own right to dispose of; so to dedicate it, as not again to be able to revoke it, or call it back from such a use and purpose. It is lawful and commendable for a rich man to dedicate so much ground, or money, for building a House for a Free-School, or for the poor, and to give it away from ourselves, and from our own right and power: and if so be that a man hath power or propriety over a place or thing, it is lawful for a man to alienate such a thing. And yet this you must know by the way, that this Dedication that now is in the time of the Gospel, doth very much differ from that dedication of Free-will-offering unto God in the time of the Law; for they were dedicated to God in the time of the Law immediately, that is, to his immediate Worship; it was part of Gods Worship, it was a part of Religion to do that thing: whereas it is not now dedicated to the immediate Worship of God, but it is dedicated immediately to such a Priest, or Minister, or Place, or company of people, that we have a good will to gratifie; and so it more remotely redounds to Gods glory not immediately. For God hath not declared in his Word the same acceptation in the Gospel of things done in an immediate way, as he had in the time of

the Law, of which acceptation now we have no such promise. And therefore it is observable, as one speaks concerning that Benefactor in the Gospel to the Jews, He hath loved our Nation, and builded us a Synagogue; it is not said, for God, but for us: This man out of love to us hath bestowed these things to God; which though a giving ourselves out of our own power, yet it doth differ from the Free-will-offer being in the time of the Law. Ay, but now, Sirs, ye must know, that sanctification, or consecration, that is a great deal more; when we sanctifie a thing, or consecrate a thing, this thing that is so consecrated, it is so holy, that there must nothing at all of unholiness, or of a civil or secular employment and concernment be done in it. Now we do not dedicate a thing, but there may be secular things in an ordinary and civil way done in them; and our services are not more acceptable for the place, nor the places less holy because of those civil employments. There is the first concession, that in the time of the Gospel there may be a designment and dedication of places, and it is not only lawful, but commendable.

2. I grant, that in times of the Gospel, some places are to have Religious services performed in them, rather than in other places; I mean places of natural conveniency, and fitness for the meeting of people together, whereby they may be free from disturbance, from the violence of Enemies, and from tempestuous weather. As publick meetings, whereby we have the society of Gods people, their examples to stir us up to zeal, and their joynt help in prayer and holy performances, to go along with us, that we may joyn our forces together, and with a great force wrestle with God, and overcome him which is invincible. And therefore, my Brethren, I desire you to bear me witness this day, that I plead for publick Ordinances, & for the purity of Gods Ordinances to be administered in publick places, rather than other places; so that I do here profess, that I do avowedly and openly declare my judgement to be for publick meetings in publick places, and the purity of Gods Ordinances, if they may be enjoyed without humane mixture, which may hurt and pollute them.

3. I grant, that in the time of holy service, we are not then to use secular employments at that time in those places, as eating, drinking, and talking, it being unsuitable to the work in hand; and howsoever they may be lawful at another time, yet unlawful then, because against the Apostles command, let all things be done in decency, and in order; and that which is unsuitable to the commands of God, the taking his Name in vain. My Brethren, I will go further with you, we are to abstain from all other Religious Services, when not in season; and therefore when the Minister is in Preaching, we must not run into our places and kneel down, as some people do, and fall a praying. And I cannot but wonder, that they that do so much cry up Uniformity and Sanctity of places, that yet they should censure their judgment by their practice, that they should pray secretly, when the whole Congregation is a praying vocally; and it may be the Congregation is singing a Psalm, or the Minister Preaching, and then they go to their Prayers; I pray where is the Uniformity, Decency, and Order they so much stand for?

Lastly, I grant, that after the performances of holy duties, in places wherein we meet for the Worship and Service of God, it is our duty to abstain, not only from filthy and indecent actions of a natural or moral filthiness, unseemly, as looked upon by men against Gods Laws; but from all those civil, moral, lawful actions, at other times, they may reflect any dishonour upon the work that hath been done, or upon the work that shall be done, or that may render the place unmeet for Religious Services afterwards: And this is that that one calls a Negative, or private reverence, a reverence or not doing something, not because the place is more holy, but for decency and order, considering the Religious Duties performed in that place. So that things subservient to Religion, call for a Negative reverence, and are not so to be used, as that the Religious Services which are there performed and transacted, should be made disgraceful and dishonourable; as the Bread of the Sacrament, after the Sacrament is done, is not lawful to be cast unto unreasonable creatures, because it reflects dishonour upon the Religious Service which we were before doing; so, dirty water is not to be put into the Communion-Cup, not

that the Cup is holy, but because it is a reflection of disgrace upon that holy Service wherein that Cup is made use of; and that Cup is not to be made use of to drunkenness. But in all this bear me witness that I say, all this is but a civil reverence, and so due to any place where there is any Honourable Convention, as in the Parliament-House, or Presense Chamber, or the like. Having yielded this:

2. I must come now to deny what must not be granted: and I likewise deny four thing.

1. It is not now in the times of the Gospel in any mans power to set apart a place for Religious duties, so as that it should be unlawful upon a due occasion to use it for civil employments, or that it should be always unlawful to alienate to other uses, besides those uses that are Divine; the Bread and Wine sanctified by Gods own institution, by the Minister, after the publick use and administration of them in the Ordinance, are not now holy, but they may be eaten in a civil use and way as our ordinary and common food. The Synagogues among the Jews were as holy as our Churches, they were for Holy duties, as Prayer, Preaching, and the like, and dedicated to Gods Worship, and yet you must know there were Civil employments used in those places after the Religious Worship was done; and therefore in Matt. 23:34. saith our Saviour, some of them you shall scourge in your Synagogues. Hence we use to keep Courts and Consistories in Churches amongst us, and some of them none of the best, and we use here among us in this City constantly in our Churches, (and I doubt not but it is lawful) for an Alderman in his Ward to meet about secular business, as to chuse Common-Council-men, or the like. But where there hath been a dedication of a place to Gods Worship, it is only God that can make it so holy, as that it should be sinful to imploy it to other uses, and if the Governours of the Church upon due occasion and reason shall substitute other places more fit than the former for Divine Worship, then the former places may return to their former proper uses; but it is not so in things consecrated by God: If the Font, Table, or Pulpit wax old, they may be layed aside and looked upon as common things, and may be used for other

employments; and suppose the Surplice be a lawful Garment in Gods Worship, (which yet I am persuaded none of you believe) doubtless it is not to be burned, when it is old and past wearing, and the ashes put into a pot or some such like thing, and be buried under the Altar, but it may be used as other linen may. And so the common Utensils, as the Cup, and the like, when they are come to be old, they may be used for other employments, without fear of sin. And therefore it is an excellent speech of one, saith he; So to Consecrate moveable or immoveable goods, as that it should be a sin for the Church to use them in any secular employments, it is an execrable and abominable superstition: God hath not consecrated anything in the Gospel so, as that it is a sin to use it otherwise. It was a sin in them to make use of the Cups, in the Temple, in any secular way, but it is not so for us: the reason is, because those things were set apart by Gods own institution: but there can be nothing so consecrated by men, as that it may not be made use of in secular things without sin.

2. A second thing I deny is, That no place now in the time of the Gospel hath such an holiness either from Institution or Use, as to sanctifie or make more acceptable or effectual the Services therein performed: This is not in the time of the Gospel; God is present at places of Religious performances, not with respect unto the place, but the performance by him instituted and enjoyned; and therefore he doth not say, Where two or three are met together, I will be in the midst of that place, but among them. God will be present in the place for the Duties sake, not among them for the Places sake, but the Duties sake in the place, to bless the Ordinance for his own Institution sake. Prayers and other Duties in the Ceremonial Law were regarded for the Places sake, but now we must abhor this piece of Judaism: For a man to set a place apart by Consecration, that this place makes the Duty anything the more excellent, or acceptable to God, this is to make the Traditions of men equal to the Institution of God. The Temple sanctified the Duty, but not the Synagogue; and the Altar did sanctifie the Gift, and the Person and Service, because it was by Gods Institution, and so the Temple and Altar did add efficacy and worth to the work; but for men to Consecrate the

Church, it is to make the appointment of men equal with the Institution of God. Our Churches and Meeting-places, are not holy (if they be holy at all) without relation to the Duties performed, but our Duties are holy without relation to the Church or the Place. None but God can Consecrate a place to be an effectual means of Worship. The Jews worshipped God by the Temple, but we worship God in the Church, as the place doth afford a natural conveniency for our meeting together; the place then hath no influence at all upon our duties, and if any of you should think so, you do erre exceedingly: It is but only a Physical act of Duty, or a natural Adjunct of duty, which is but at the most helpful to the bodies conveniency.

3. The third thing I deny is this, that there is no place so holy as to exclude another place from being as holy in a way of proper sanctity and holiness, which we have been now opening. God now makes not one place properly more holy than another; there is not now properly any Religious difference of places. We have not now the precept of God to sanctifie and separate one place from another, to preferre one place before another; we have not now the miraculous Presense of God, his appearing as at the Bush. God hath not given us under the Gospel those Symboles of his standing Presense and Residency, as by the Ark, and Mercy-Seat, and Altar of old, he gave unto his People. And as for his Ordinances, if they make a place holy in regard of performance of Duty to God there, and his spiritual presense in that place, then my Parlour, Chamber, or Closet are holy where I use to pray; and where God doth afford his assisting blessing, and comforting presense: So that if you make the spiritual presense of God to make a thing holy, in regard of Gods spiritual presense going along with those services, then your Houses are holy, and the Field is holy where you walk when you meditate, and praying by the River side makes it holy: Humane Consecration makes no place truly holy. If the spiritual presense of Christ makes one place more holy than another, then the Communion-Table and Font are more holy than any other place in the Temple. And so when Gods presense hath been enjoyed at the Font, that is more holy than the Communion-Table; and so when the presense of God hath been enjoyed at the

Communion-Table, that is more holy than the Font, and so you must bring in Judaism. If the presense of God makes a thing holy, a new Communion-Table, upon which the Sacraments was never administered, cannot be so holy as the old Table. Nay, by this the mouths of the Communicants are holy, having eaten the Bread, and drank the Wine which was dedicated to an holy use, and so it will be sinful for you to eat any other food. I conclude all with this, That the difference and holiness of Religious places in the times of the Gospel, is not given, but taken away by the Gospel, 1 Tim. 2:8. I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting. You may pray, and that with as much acceptableness to God in one place as in another, John 4:21. Christ saith, the time comes when you shall neither in this Mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father: That is, Gods Worship and Service shall not be confined and limited to those places, as if others were not as good and holy as they. 1 Cor. 1:2. To them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be Saints, with all that in every place call upon the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours. One place for the calling upon Christ is as good as another; and therefore, where two or three are gathered together, I will be in the midst of them. And this is fore-told in Zeph. 2:11. and in Mal. 1:11. So that this is the sum of all, Gods Institution makes the Sabbath holy; and the Bread and the Wine set apart by Gods own Institution, after the duty, may be used in secular uses.

But fourthly and lastly, to name no more, no place is so sanctified by God, as that after the ceasing of that presense of God, any holiness should belong unto it; as now when the signs and tokens of Gods presense ceased and was gone, the holiness of that place was gone, and then it was lawful for Moses to put on his shoes. And so when Gods presense ceased in the Ark, the Altar, and Mercy-seat, the places became no other than secular, and civil. And now for us to go about (as the Papists do) a Pilgrimage to Jerusalem, as if that place had any more holiness than others, is a foolish and abominable thing: How many bloody Battels have been fought, to the disgrace, as well as the loss of Christianity, for the regaining of the Holy Land.

Nay, let me add, those places where the presense of God hath been formerly, when it hath taken away, and those places have been used to Idolatry, they are the worse, and the more unholy; for this is turning the House of God into vanity.

The conclusion of all is this: whatever places are in holy duties, out of them they lose and leave all their holiness; and therefore I say it is boldness for us to go about to tie Gods presense to a place where God hath never tied it: I cannot but wonder how it is possible for men of reason and learning to be so blind, as to hold that the Lords day (which was set apart by God for the Sabbath, as you may see in the fourth Commandment, and afterwards by Christ and his Apostles, which doth amount to no less than an Institution) is not holy after the Service or Sermon is ended, but then you may go play at Football, and Cudgels, and Drinking, and what not; and yet they should say that the place of performing Religious duties in, is so holy after Religious performances, as that you cannot come into it without bowing the knee, and putting off the hat, and bowing to the Altar and Communion-Table, and the like; this I cannot apprehend how it should be, and I wish any of you that are of this mind, would privately give me your reasons for it, why it should be so.

Now having explained the Point, and given you a resolution of the question, in these particulars, give me leave to winde up all with some Uses.

First, We infer the great difference that is between sanctity of places under the Old Testament, and sanctity and holiness of places under the New Testament: they under the Old Testament had the immediate presense of God, the standing Symbols, and visible signs of his presense, so long as these lasted: which was set apart by Gods special Commandment, and so they were holy, though they were not employed in a way of worship; but you cannot say so now, our places for performance of holy duties have no such holiness; places now differ from places then.

Secondly, by way of inference, I note the great goodness of God to give us such a sweet and gracious indulgent dispensation in the time of the Gospel under the New Testament, as that he doth not tye us to Ceremonies or places; he doth not bind us as he did the Jews to go three times in the year to the furthestmost part of the Nation to worship: No my Brethren, no Land, no ground is now unholy, as famous old Doctor Reynolds said, every place is now a Judea, no Coast but is a Judea, every house is a Jerusalem, every Congregation is now a Sion: See here the goodness of God in indulging of us so far as to take any service done by us in a solemn and real manner, as if it had been done in those places which were formerly appointed for it to be done in.

Thirdly, I infer hence, there are several persons to be reprov'd.

1. We find hereby that all the holiness of Relics of Saints doth fall to the ground, and we see the folly of those that make Pilgrimages unto Saints and Relics as the Papists do: there was a time (say they) when such a Saints relics were laid up in such a place, and these are more holy then other places: so that this you see falls to the ground in its self: I might tell you concerning their lying about their relics, as one said, that there were as many Relics as would fill an hundred Carts: but supposing so, all that would not make that place the more holy.

2. Hence the superstition of those is to be reprov'd, which put holiness in place of Burial, and make it more holy to be buried in one place then in another: it is more holy (say they) to be buried in the Church then in the Church-yard; and more holy under the Communion-Table then in any other part of the Church.

3. This reprov's them which cannot pray anywhere but in the Temple, and they that use private prayers in Churches: if you have houses and Rooms at home, what is the reason that if Pauls or any other Church stand open you must run in thither, and drop down behind a Pillar to say your Prayers.

4. This reproves them that have reverence towards any place more than another, as if they did deserve more holiness in one part than another, as bowing to the Altar, or Communion-Table, or the like.

5. It reproves those that have reverence for scituation of these places, they must stand East and West, and why not North and South? All these things fall off, like Fig-leaves: if what I have said be true, that there is no holiness in places; and this I have made known to you not only as my judgment, but as my duty.

Now for exhortation, I shall desire you to take notice of four things, and I have done, and shall leave you to God, and commit you to the word of his grace. If this be so, that there is no holiness in places, then first of all, bee the more encouraged to serve God in your Families, in those places where God hath set you, where God is as well pleased with your service as in publick places, serve God upon your knees with devotion, humility and reverence. And therefore, though I am against Superstition, and Popish practices, and those wicked cursed traps of innovations, that the men of the World have disturbed the Church of God with; yet I am against putting on your Hats in prayer; and sitting in Prayer. Those that are for holiness of places, do not, with Abraham, in every place they come build God an Altar. But let us in every closet and room build God an Altar; let no morning nor evening go without a Prayer in thy Family, pray often, and pray continually, let your houses be as so many Churches, as you read in Rom. 16:5. Likewise greet the Church that is in their House: and in the second verse of Philemons Epistle, To the Church that is in thy House; There the Houses of the Saints are called Churches. This will bring a blessing upon your Families: And if you be not willing to have that curse denounced against you, (in Jer. 10:25. Pour out fury upon the Heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not upon thy Name) then neglect not Family-Prayers, be much in Prayer, and pray with frequency and encouragement, because God binds you to no place.

The second Exhortation is this, labour to promote personal holiness, as well as Family Devotion: I am against local holiness: As one said, (that I heard once when I was a Youth) Happy are those garments that can carry away any of the dust of the Temple; but they think not that any of their Garments are unclean in wallowing in the mire of sin. But I say, do you labour to promote holiness in your lives, in your hearts and conversations. The Holy Ghost saith, Unless you be pure in heart you shall not see God. And therefore put away sin, for if you regard iniquity; God will not hear your prayers: It is not your ducking, or bowing, or cringing never so much, or your going with your Hat off through the Church that will make God hear your Prayers, these will but dishonour you, because you live not accordingly.

3. Love the holiness of the living Members, be not so much in love with the Holiness of Wood and Timber, Bricks and Stones; but wheresoever you see the Image of Christ, be in love with that soul; where ever the Presense of God shines, and where ever thou seest one that gives up himself to God in holy duties, do thou say, Oh! my soul, delight to come into the company of these men, The Righteous is more excellent then his neighbour. If there be a Heaven upon earth, I tell you, it is in the company of godly men. I remember a famous man hath this expression, saith he, When I was in the company of the Saints and people of God, I was as a living coal; but when I was separated from them, and was among the wicked Swearers and Drunkards, me thoughts there was a spiritual coldness and frozenness went over my soul. Though the People of God are best company in Heaven, yet they are very good company here on earth: And Christians should stir up one another, and be provoking one another to love and good works; and where ever you have grace, be sure to impart it to others. Endeavour to love the holiness of Saints, and be willing to impart your experiences to others, for this is your duty. Do not make a Monopoly of Holiness, but carry company with you to Heaven.

Lastly, to name no more, labour to preserve the holiness of Gods true Institutions, those things which are of divine Consecration. What is humane Consecration without divine Institution? The Sabbath day is of di | vine Institution, labour to keep it holy; this is a Holy day indeed, and this labour to keep your families from profaning of; but for other holy dayes, and holy things, they are much alike for holiness: The Lords day is a holy day indeed, and for shame, do not let your children gad abroad on this day. Truly, I do verily believe, that though here be a great company of people in the Congregation, yet they are but a handful in comparison of what are drinking in Ale-houses, and whoring, and walking in the Fields, that one can hardly get home to their house for the crowd of the people that are going thither. For shame let not this be told in Gath, nor published in Askelon. What! shall we stand up for the holiness of places, and yet oppose the holiness of the Lords Day, which God hath enjoined and instituted? Oh! that the Magistrates of London; Oh! that Englands King; Oh! that Englands Parliament would do something for the Reformation of this, to oppose wickedness and prophaneness, which will otherwise bring upon us the judgments of Sodom and Gomorrah, and make us guilty and worthy of a thousand punishments. And labour by Prayer in your Families to overcome that flood of prophaneness, which you cannot by your strength prevent. And then for the Sacraments of Christ, Baptism and the Lords Supper, these are Ordinances of Gods appointment, they are holy, and therefore should not be given to those that are unholy; and yet those who are so much for the holiness of places, do not care who come to the Sacrament, if they have but a Nose on their Face, they shall come and partake of the Ordinances, let them be what they will; this is to prefer mans Institution before Gods Institution. And then for the Lords Message and Word, that is a holy thing, and therefore love his Messengers: the Messengers of God delivering his message with fear and reverence, you are to hear them with the same fear, reverence, and resolution to be holy, as if Christ were present. And for the Word of God, it is not enough for you to have a choice Sentence written upon the Walls of your Churches, but let Gods Law be written in your hearts and consciences, and practised in your

lives, that all the world may see you live as men dedicated to the true God, in all the duties of his wayes and obedience. Many of these things might have been enlarged. What I have give you with the right hand, I pray you Christians, do not take with the left; for if you do, you will make your selves guilty of a double sin.

First, because you do not obey the truth you hear.

And secondly, for putting a wrong construction upon it.

But I have better hopes of you, my beloved hearers, and hope that the Lord will be better unto your souls than his Ministers, than his Word, or anything else can be. God bless you and his Ordinances, and discover his mind and will at this time to you.

09. Mr. Baxter's Sermon

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him. Rooted and built in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abunding therein with thanksgiving." - Coloss. 2:6,7.

Omitting the division, and in part the opening of the words, the Observations is; That those that have received Christ Jesus the Lord, must accordingly bee rooted, built up in him, and established in the Faith; and walk in him as they have been taught, and abound therein with thanksgiving.

This receiving of Christ signifies to believe in him. It is not only to receive his Doctrine or Benefits, but to receive his person, to receive him as related to us, for the uses and end for which he came into the World, and for which he offers himself to souls, by the Preaching of the Gospel. Sinners have lost and undone themselves; Christ comes to be the Physitian of Souls; he will not save the unwilling, and

Despisers of his Grace, while they continue in their unwillingness. He will save them by the way of covenant, while he consents and tenders them his Grace, he will have them consent to the terms of his Covenant. The consent of the heart exprest by our covenanting with him, is this receiving of Jesus Christ. He is willing to be our Physitian, and when we take him to be so, we receive him. He is willing to save us from the guilt and power of sin, willing to be our Lord, Head, Intercessor with God, Justifier, and all unto us; and if we consent to this, and take him as offered, this is receiving Christ; with whom his benefits are also received, the remission of sins, indwelling, renewing, comforting spirit, title to everlasting life, &c. In receiving Christ all this is received.

Receiving of Christ contains these two things, or these two things are essentially contained to make up the nature of saving Faith, that is, to believe the Doctrine of the Gospel concerning Jesus Christ to be true, and to consent that the goodness that is therein revealed and proposed, shall be ours. To believe what Christ is, and what he hath done; so far to believe it, as here we are resolved to venture our souls, (though there may be some weakness through our Faiths imperfection) and believing the Gospel to be the certain Word of God: Then next, to entertain the Christ that is offered in this Gospel to be ours, with all the benefits that accompany, and to all the blessed ends to which he is revealed: Thus the Water of Life is freely tendered to all that are athirst, and there is no more required, but come and drink.

Then there is two things implied, that are the immediate products of saving Faith, and inseparable from it, that is, trusting on him as the Redeemer, and obeying him as a Lord. To rest upon him as a Redeemer, Romans 15:12. And here as far as the soul feels entertainment and encouragement by Christ, overcoming his doubts that Christ will reject him, &c. so far he hath quietness of soul in Christ, and will trust his soul upon Christ. And then, the obeying of him in order to our full recovery, as a Patient must obey his Physitian

in using his Remedies, and Means he prescribes for killing our sins, restoring our souls to Gods love, and being with him to eternity.

The nature of Faith is to receive Christ; the sincerity of it lies in the suitableness of the act to the object; that we receive him as he is: Now, in Christ there is something essential to this act; that he be a Saviour, and our Saviour, &c. and there is something makes unto the well-being and fuller attaining of the end: The first are the objects of Faith itself, as 'tis of absolute necessity to Salvation: The second sort are the objects of Faith as it is strong, and makes to the well-being of a Christian.

All that is essential to Christ, as a Saviour, and Redeemer, is to be believed by him that will approve himself a true Believer. And thus to receive Christ as the eternal Son of God, made man, the Redeemer of the World, ruling us upon the right of Redemption, justifying us before God, bringing us to God, and interceding for us: And thus Christ must be received according to his Offices, and as those uses for which he is given to the soul do import and imply.

For the Application of this Point;

First, let us begin with those that our business at present doth not mainly lye on. Must men walk in Christ as they have received him? What shall we say to those that have not, will not receive him? stop us at the door, that we cannot bring in the doctrine of Christ; that will not receive the principles of Christ? How can we bring them, and build them up, that will not suffer the Foundation to be laid, the Seed to be received? Hast thou not received Christ? then thou hast refused Christ, been a despiser of the Gospel of Christ, which will prove thy great condemnation. What is it for thee to hear the Name, and not to have the Spirit of Christ? Do not go upon conjectures; its one thing to number thy self with those that are Christians, as to outward appearance, and another thing to open thy heart, and deliver up thy self to Christs Government, and as a lost Sinner, to receive him to those ends a Saviour must be received. And remember, this was no

small worke, Gods sending Christ into the world no small thing to fetch thee, from Hell and Satan, to wash guilty souls from all their sins, and to bring them to everlasting glory. If these great things be rightly understood and believed by thee, if Christ be understood well as Christ, it must be done with a weakened, humbled, self-resigned heart, making the greatest matter in the world of these things: Hath thy soul been seriously taken up about thy own recovery? And hast thou received Christ as a man that was ready to be damned; as one that had a load on his Soul heavier than all the Mountains of the Earth, to ease and deliver him? as one that was under the frowns of God in a state of enmity, receives reconciliation? Hast thou received Christ, as if thou hadst received Heaven in him? Believe it, these are great transactions, and will affect thy heart; and it is not a sleepy or jesting matter thus to receive Christ. Consider what it is to receive Christ.

1. If you have received Christ, you have received the great Reconciler that bindes up the broken hearted, quiets those that tremble under the threatnings of God, for fear he should forsake and cast them off forever.

2. If thou hast received Christ, thou hast received a perfect enmity to all sin, that will never let thee rest in sin, but be perswading thee from it, and conflicting in thee against sin in thy soul: If thou hast received Christ, thou hast not received a friend for sin, that will plead for, or give thee leave to commit sin; but one, that though he bear with thee in thy weakness, yet abominates thy sin. If thou hast received a Lord and Master to rule, to be consented and subjected to him, and to be ruled by none but in subordination to him, who will break those in pieces that refuse his Government: Obedience, and not verbal profession, is the thing he requires. Hast thou entertained Christ to be the Master of thy words, thoughts, and deeds, whose Government thou livest under, more than under any in the world?

3. If you have received Christ, you have then received the beginning of felicity, and full contentment to your souls; having found none in

your sins, you have it discovered to you where it is: therefore with gladness go you on; and so far as you have hopes of attaining it, so far you have great contentment, &c.

4. In a word, if you have received Christ, you have fallen out with sin, subjected pleasures, profits and honours to him; and you have received his Spirit, and this hath made you new, and maintains the way within you against the flesh, &c. If this be not thy case, Oh that thou knewest what a case thou art in! For then,

1. What the better art thou for all his blood shed as yet, if thou wert this day to dye? What would Christs blood do to the cleansing and saving of thy soul?

2. How canst thou look thy sins in the face, and think on what thou hast done, and art! How canst thou look inward into thy defiled heart, and not tremble, when thou hast no more shelter from the wrath of God?

3. How canst thou look God in the face who is a hater of sin? How canst thou read his Attributes, think on his threatnings?

4. How canst thou think to have any Duty accepted, and Prayer heard, or rewarded, &c.

5. How canst thou think on the Day of Judgment, on the time when thou must receive thy final sentence, if thou hast not received Christ? Oh what a thing is a Christless heart! &c.

Q. What shall I do that I may receive Christ?

A. 1. Till Christ be thine, and hath brought peace from Heaven to thy Soul, let no peace be there to keep him out: I do not say, overwhelm thy self with sorrow, but let sorrow dwell there, and let holy cares and solicitousness about thy spiritual state be there, till Christ come and quiet, and reconcile thee to God.

2. Read and believe the Gospel; see there what Christ is, and thy necessity of him: Believing, will open the door to entertain him; assent will procure thy consent.

3. Keep up no Idol in thy heart against him. Turn out that that keeps out Christ, how dear soever it seems now, at last thou wilt see it more necessary to detest then keep it.

I come now to exhort all poor weak Christians, that they would make after confirmation, and grow to a greater measure in Grace, as they have received Christ. It is not enough to be conceited that you have been converted; and it will not be enough to the assurance of your conversation, or safety of your souls, that you think you are converted, and you sit down there: He that is content with the opinion he hath Grace; therefore desires to have no more, because the promise of salvation is made to the Truth of Grace, it is a sign he never had Grace; Strength in Grace is your own felicity, 'tis part of your happiness: Your eternal happiness will partly consist in your personal perfection; and without personal perfection, all Heavenly glory will not be a perfect felicity. If you have fixed your Anchor in Gods promises, this engages you to look up, make after, and proceed, &c.

Take these Motives.

1. Consider, there is the same reason to move thee to grow, and proceed, as there was to move thee to thy first believing. Why do you become Christians, but because of the necessity of the Riches and Excellencies of Christs, and that there was better things in Christ, then in the World? And are they not so still? Is the case changed? If Christianity was reasonable then, it is reasonable now; If it was necessary to begin, it is necessary to hold on, and proceed in your Race till you have obtained the Crown.

2. Your receiving Christ essentially, contains in it an obligation to proceed and go further; actually to trust and obey him, whom you

have taken for your Lord and Saviour, from the very Offices and Relations of Christ received.

If I be a Father, where is my fear? If I be a Master, where is my honour? If I be a Saviour, where is your confidence in me, submission to my saving work, obedience to my healing precepts? If I be your Lord and Master, why do you not learn of me your Master, &c.

Your first Covenant engages you to proceed in fulfilling the things promised in your Covenant, &c. Better not have promised to be his people, than to promise and break this promise. The very mercies also you have received from him, pardoning your former sin, entertainment in his Church, and all the blessings there found, are as so many obligations to proceed.

3. Ever since we came home to Christ, we have had an addition of Reasons, besides the first Reasons we had to believe: Every day brings in new, &c. Certainly if a little were desireable, more were more desireable: If the people that stood afar off, and never tryed what Christ and Grace is, were bid to come in, those that have tryed and tasted are bound to proceed much more: You have the Spirit of God, experiences of his love, tasted the bitterness of sin, have had some tryal of the truth of such things of which we speak, when others have eyes and see not, &c. and will you turn back that have tasted, &c.

4. Consider how much hath been lost upon many a soul for want of care to take rooting and to proceed; how much labour of the Ministry, mercies of God, pains and care of their own? I speak of those that have seemed sincere, not indeed so; that have many times comforted the hearts of their Ministers and Friends, and have had some kind of comfort to themselves in that taste they have had of the good word of God. How many times hath the Preacher been gladdened to see such a one come to him, seemingly with a broken heart, seeming to set themselves in the way of life! yet the flesh prevailed

for want of confirmation. How many years have some spent in duty, in hearing, prayer, gracious society, profession of Religion! yet afterwards the world hath drowned all. What cause have you to see, you lose not the thing you have wrought.

5. Consider how much of the works of your own salvation when you are converted, is yet undone. Though you are sure your conversion is true, how many temptations to resist, enemies to conquer, duties to perform, and Heaven to be taken upon all those terms, as the tenor of your Christianity! therefore you had need to stand fast, and having done all, to stand, you have need not only to believe, but to wait and be patient in believing; and to proceed in the way you have chosen.

6. The want of strength & building up, makes the lives of many full of lamentable languishing weaknesses, scandals unto others; pain, calamity, & trouble to themselves. How long in healing? And how much smart and pain, while the fruit of their own folly is cured? How little, and how frequently do temptations prevail? And hence as in a wilderness, they are going one step forward, another backward; no evident keeping in God, and all through the fruit of their own languishing weakness; the fruits of the sins of Professors have been such, that it should make you do all you can possible to escape the troubles at home, and reproaches abroad.

7. A life of spiritual weakness, is usually a burden unto him that hath it, it doth not only occasion his falling into sin, and so renews the wounds of his Soul, but is a constant burden to him; not that any measure of Grace is troublesome, but that which consists with so great a measure of remaining corruption; this is the burden: sickness is burdensome, though there be life. Methinks you should not then be reconciled to your fears; you should methinks see so great difference between the sick and the well, that for your own peace sake you should seek after confirmation. Every duty they do is their pain, which is anothers pleasure, prayer, &c. their burden; sometimes tir'd, wearied, dull, &c. presently overwhelmed with

temptation: every duty is a grievance to them through the weakness of their grade and their corruption.

8. Christians that are weak and not confirmed, lose abundance of the fruit of Gods Ordinances that are improved by others. How many a truth that taste exceeding sweet to others, have no great relish to them, nor growth by it? A healthy man hath more relish in ordinary fare, than a sick person in varieties, the full stomach loaths the Honey-comb.

9. The weak and unconfirmed Christian is unprofitable comparatively unto others; not that the Church would wish the weakest member out, but comparatively unconfirmed Christians are very unprofitable unto others; like little children in the Family that must be looked to, make work for a great many more about them. What doth a sick person, but the work of others is to feed, support, and be a help to him. The Church of God hath need of strong Christians that can pray in Faith servantly for others, and you scarcely pray son your selves. Consider when the Church needs a great deal of help, will you sit down with low attainments, and little things, when so many hundred about you need so great assistance?

10. Weak persons are many times the troublers, and very dangers of the Church; many calamities have been occasioned by them; the sins of professors have occasioned the displeasure of God on the Church; their errors hindred truth, and made divisions. When Christians have not so much strength as to know Truth from Error, that hearkens to everyone that speaks with likeness: What have these Christians done in the Church? what mercies have been driven away, so far, that I think the Church of God, from the Apostles days till now, have suffer'd more by the sins of Professors, then the malice of their Enemies! and how canst thou expect God will save thy soul, when thou hast set the Church on fire, and been so great hindrance to others, that many should perish occasionally by thy example? &c. The greatest sufferings of the Church have come from the miscarriages of the Church.

11. Such have been the great dishonours of Christ: but the Graces of ancient Christians, the glory of their professions, their Charity Self-denial, Heavenly-mindedness, Patience, &c. have preached the Gospel to the World more effectually then ever their words could do. God expects your lives should be a considerable means for the conversion of wicked men: the same God that hath commanded Ministers to teach others by their Doctrine, hath commanded you should live for the conversion of the World, that you zeal, humility, patience, charity, self-denial should win souls to God: and if it be a sin to give over preaching when we may, surely so to give over living, &c. If wo unto me if I preach not the Gospel, then woe unto you if you by your lives preach not the Gospel. How many sinners have you about you? and how do you wrong and rob the ungodly of that Ordinance God hath appointed for their conversion and salvation? You are the persons that take the bread out of their mouths, the means that should save them out of their hands, while you deny them one of the commanded means of salvation, that is, the eminent example of your lives: And if it be so great a sin to stop Preachers mouths, how great a sin to neglect this Ordinance? Nay, are you not a dishonour and disgrace to the Church? Is it not because of Professors ill lives, that the prophane deride Religion, while they see not the glory in it that should over-power an unbelieving and denying soul, and should indeed effectually manifest its excellency? Are these the Professors, that are proud, stubborn, passionate, censorious, self-conceited, contemptuous, & envious as any others? I know the World is apt enough to slander, and the Servants of God to bear a world of unjust reproaches: but oh! that there were not this occasion, &c.

12. Those that are not confirmed and established in grace, the devil, when he hath prevailed by a temptation on themselves, can easily make them his instruments to draw and tempt others from their duty, to discourage them in their Religion, and to do that mischief in the world he hath done by temptation of their own soul. 'Tis ordinary for Satan to make use of lapsed, distempered Christians, to be the instruments of his temptations to those that are better, &c. An

honest Christian will not so easily hearken to a Drunkard, Swearer, as to a Professor he had good thoughts of, Gal. 2:23.

13. For want of strength and establishment in grace, poor weak Christians are a very great encouragement to the carnal hopes of wicked men. I think scarce anything in the world hinders our Preaching more than this; when the wicked see those that make the greatest profession no better than themselves, and in some things worse, this hardens him against all the convictions that can be brought against him: tell him he cannot be saved without conversion, he looks upon professors, sees them contentious, worldly, peevish, passionate, &c. sees some sin or other, this makes him think he is as well as they: must there be so much ado to bring men to this state? is this the difference, &c.

14. Methinks it should be some trouble to an honest heart, that yet we must be so like to the children of the wicked ones; and the weakest Christians are the likeliest to the wicked; I do not mean weakness in gifts or knowledge, &c. but a weakness in practical saving knowledge, love of God, self-denial, mortification, heavenly mindedness, &c. they that are in these the weakest Christians, are the next and likeliest to the wicked: and doth not this grieve thee, that though thou art not a child of the Devil, thou art so like one. We should not be conform'd to the world, nor like to them in anything, no not in outward vanities; but to imitate the fashion of the world, as to outward corruptions, to go in their garb, when a palpable vanity; to have so much of their pride, peevishness, malice, worldliness: Oh look upon thy heart with humiliation.

15. Consider what a dangerous and lamentable standing those have that be not established, &c. you stand, but it is as unrooted plants or trees that stand shaking in the wind; beholders are always looking when they fall, you stand, but it is as a sick man, wavering, reeling; like Lots wife, looking back, and always upon every occasion ready to repent, you have been believers; little things perplex and trouble you; little tribulations and afflictions discompose and disturb you, little

temptations make you question the Scripture, the providence of God, his love and care of his people, & the great foundations of Religion: Foundation seems to shake, because you are shaking and tottering, &c. And what is like to become of such a soul; If thou standest shaking under small temptations for want of confirmation, what wilt thou do when a Papist or Quaker, &c. shall so speak concerning Religion which thou art not able to answer? and so the surest foundation seems nothing when thou hast so weak hold: our greatest afflictions next to the misery of the ungodly, is to think of our weak ones, what will become of them: and verily we do expect a considerable part of our Congregation should be carried away, those that are Christians, & know not why, yet have not humility enough to make use of others, and to keep close to those that should assist them: Remember when you see such times, when Seducers are able to say the worst, shall make the strongest assaults on the weak ones, how many will be like to fall? Again, sickness, death, dying times will come, when you shall find a little grace will not easily do your work; and though you perish not, yet you may faint, and to your sorrow find the want of confirmation. You cannot but know how the strongest are put to it in trying hours, or at death. Will slack unsettled hopes of another life, such distempered hearts fight and encounter with such tryals? Never think of dying comfortably, if you follow not after confirming grace.

16. It should humble you the more, that you have been so long, so many years in the School of Christ, and love God, &c. no better: Should not you in this apprenticeship have learned better your Religion, and been teachers of others, when perhaps, if in the principles you are assaulted, you will shew your weakness as soon as any? May not Christ say, Have I been so long time with you, and yet have you known, lived, &c. no better? reached no higher, attained no further? weaklings still? Nay, confider in this time what advantage you have had for growth? A tree planted on a barren Wilderness may not grow so much as in a fruitful place; but you have had the plenty and power of the Ordinances of God, the choicest of the means and helps of salvation.

17. Consider, the nature of true Grace tends to this: will you cross the nature of it? shall we be such weaklings in Religion, which cross so the nature of Grace? for Grace the more it is exercised, the more it encreases.

18. Heaven itself is perfection, and the work of a Christian is to press towards Heaven, and therefore 'tis to press towards perfection. You should make towards the end in a manner and way that is suitable to the end. Persons that enjoy so much already, and hope for so much greater, should not put off God with such little things.

19. Little grace shall have but little glory. You know not how great a difference there is between the least and highest in the kingdom of God: Nay, 'tis not only for a Christian to desire to be glorified, but to enjoy the highest degree in glory: to serve God with the best, and improve his talent to the utmost, that his heavenly reward may be according. A Christian should not slight it when 'tis tendred to him, and in his eye.

Q. But how shall I know I have attained this confirming grace?

A. These signs following, shew a Christian confirmed and strong in grace, which I will name that you may know what to aim at, and what to desire. There is not so great a difference between a King and a Beggar, between the greatest health and ficklest man, as between a strong useful Christian, and a poor languishing soul, &c.

1. A confirmed Christian is one, that can resist many subtle and strong temptations, not only a single temptation, but when Satan assaults on every side, with errors on both extremes, with importunities of several parties, with temptations of prosperity offered, of adversity felt or feared; strong temptations that seem to lay a necessity of yielding on a weakling, that makes him say, I must do it to save my liberty, family, life, &c. A strong Christian can say, there is no necessity; he can make light of those temptations that seem to be a necessity to other persons: he can confute a subtle

Sophister, and deal with a cunning Adversary: Satan cannot so easily go beyond and out-wit him.

2. He can do great, excellent, and useful work, is serviceable to God, if he have opportunity in business of greatest consequence: he doth not serve God only in some little and inconsiderable thing, but in his place sets himself to the work of God, doth the great work of his Majesty faithfully. The service of God to him is more easie and deligtful: as to go ten miles is more easie to the healthful, then one to a sickly person, he can go through Gods service with pleasure, ease, and delight, without tiring, fainting, sitting down, or giving over.

3. He can digest the hard truths and providences of God, that are ready to puzzle, perplex, and over-set the stomach of a weak Christian, he hath laid his foundation, to which he reduces all things of difficulty, and by the help of those great truths he hath received, he can easily see through the difficulties that are yet before him. He can tell how to reconcile those things in Scripture that seem contradictions: where he meets with a difficulty, he can easily discern the cause is in himself, and that there is an undoubted way of reconciling them, though he hath not attained to it. He can easily quiet his soul under the most difficult providences, and interpret them so as is consistent with the truths of God, which must expound them: he reconciles providence with providence: and providence with Scripture, whereas a weak Christian is ready to say, A hard saying, who can bear this and that: and 'tis the difficulty of these kind of truths that makes so many turn their Religion, because not able to digest the hardest Truths of God. Cross providences makes them question Gods love, &c.

4. He is one that can exercise various graces without setting one against another, destroying or contradicting one another: He can do many works, believe many truths, perform many duties at once. He can rejoyce & sorrow at once, and make his sorrow a help to his joy, and his joy a help to his sorrow, & so exercise both in that nature as will not directly hinder or weaken one another. He can tell how in

such a time as we are in to rejoyce, yet to be humble, to be cast down at Gods feet in the sense of the sins we have committed, and of Gods displeasure, &c. yet to rejoyce in the mercies we have and do expect to possess. He doth not look all upon sin, all upon affliction, or all upon mercy, but can eye everything, and give everything its part: can exercise graces methodically, give Truths & Providences their proper place in his meditations and affections: and this makes his life orderly, beautiful, regular, and useful; whereas a weak Christian, let him set himself against one temptation, he is taken in another; if he humble himself in soul, he can do nothing but humble, weep, grieve, fear, and be ready to cast away all comfort, all sense of the love of God: if he set himself to the consideration of the grace of Christ, he is apt to forget humiliation, and to be puffed up with spiritual pride, &c. Thus he hath not skill, strength, and ability to carry on all the whole work of Grace together.

5. A strong Christian sinks not under those burthens that would press down and overwhelm a weak Christian; he can bear heavy burthens, and more easily away with them, making it a Recreation to bear some things that another would sink under, and cannot bear, 'Tis thy weakness that makes thee make such a stir, when God lays on thee Personal, Family, publick affections, that makes thee shrink under them; strength of grace would enable thee to see God and Glory in the midst of them, and to say, All shall work for my good: it would enable thee to get advantage, and be bettered by them. Hadst thou strength enough to improve them, thou wouldst take comfort from them, and support thy self under them; but when thou hadst not strength enough to understand Gods meaning, to see the Duty then called for, to improve all for God, to do that service to God thou shouldst do in such a condition: no wonder if thou have not grace to support and comfort thee in that condition. Whereas the confirmed Christian by strong faith, love, and patience, can carry great burthens, &c.

6. Is helpful to many, and troublesome unto few. They are the useful persons in the family and place where they live: it is they can counsel

others in their doubts, help them in their straits; that can bear up the weak when ready to sink, that can hold others by the arm when not able to go up-right; that tend Gods little ones: and if it were not for these, what would Gods little ones do? They are so furnished with Patience, which God hath given them for the use of the weak ones in his Family, and though they are troublesome, or do that which might be a disturbance to them, they will not thrust them out: it is they that comfort the feeble, support, provide for, strengthen and confirm the rest: and were it not for these, what backsliding hearts should we have? &c. And they are comparatively troublesome to few (though while corruption cleaves to them, they shall sometimes:) It is not they that are censuring their brethren, that are stirring up divisions, and make all that feud that is in the Church. If they might be hearkened unto, and regarded, there would be quietness and composure, (for if ever there be peace, it will be by the strong ones:) but weak ones in grace are the burthens and troublers of the Family: you may know they are the weak ones in Gods house, in that they are those that are always crying, complaining, making firework in the Family, back-biting, censuring their Brethren, quarrelling with one or other, &c. these peevish troublesome souls, are the weak ones, &c.

7. The strongest in grace are the best able to stand, work, and suffer alone. Though in duty they should not be alone when they can have society, and though the rest are most humble, therefore are sensible they have need of others, and will not throw away any of their helps; yet if all forsake them, they will stand to it still: they go not to Heaven meerly for company sake; they be not Christians meerly because such and such are Christians; If all the world forsake Christ they will stick to him, unless Christ leave them to their own weakness. But the weak Christian hath a great deal more need of comfort and support, and lives a more dependent life: they cannot stand, work, suffer alone; if their Minister fall, they fall: if their Relations change, they change: if there be not some body at hand to confute an Adversary, they yield; if there be not some body to keep life and warmth, they grow cold in every duty; in affliction they can step on no longer then led by the hand, &c. Have Christians to

support, and to quiet, and to moderate their passions, and to teach them the Doctrine of patience: they can hold up no longer then they are refreshed with Cordials: what would become of you, should God let you stand by your selves, &c.

8. The strong Christian is one that can best live without creatures upon God alone (& a weak Christian is one that hath most need of the creature, and can least live upon God alone) under the censures of the godly, frowns of the wicked, without riches, honours, pleasures; can have the quietness and contentment in God, whether he have anything or nothing where ever he is, &c. The more necessity thou art in of having something besides God for thy consolation, the more weak thou art there must be supply: I know not how to be poor, disgraced, &c. this impatient soul is the feeble soul, Impatience is nothing but the fruit of weakness. The strong Christian can live upon God alone: therefore if men make as if they were undone, if lost in their estates; 'tis a certain sign of a lamentable weakness of a sick soul.

9. That is the best and strongest Christian, and most confirmed in grace, who is most employed and abides in the love of God, in love to God: That hath the fear of God, but goes beyond fear, and loves most, and abides most in the love of God: That makes it his great business to feed upon, and study the love of God to him, and to return love to him again. The more Gods love is on thy heart, and the more thou lovest in the fruit of that love, the stronger Christian. But he that lives most by a kind of constraining fear, though he may be sincere, he is but weak: where there is nothing but fear and no love, there is no sincerity; but where there is some little measure of love, fear is such a tyrant, that it will many times cloud it, so that almost all his life seems to be moved and managed by fear: and in this there is much loathness and unwillingness, and they had rather do otherwise then they do: according to the measure of love is the strength of grace.

10. He is the strongest Christian that hath most pure and most universal love to others, that can love all men, even an enemy, with true unfeigned love, even with such love as belongs to a Christian: that can love every Christian, and not a party only, with the pure and fervent love which belongs to Believers: that can love every child of God, and not those only that are of his opinion, or have done him good, but all, because they are children of God, with a sincere and special hearty love: That is the weak Christian that picks and chuses, that is staggering when he comes to loving an enemy; that takes in those that agree with him in judgment, and makes those almost only the object of his love; that would confine his affections to some narrow society, some little sect, party, or parcel of Believers, and cannot love Christians as Christians: And hence it is, division is the effect of enmity, or of weakness in Grace, for want of the universality of love. I would make no question to prognostick the healing of all divisions within this Nation, could I but advance all that are concerned in it to the right temper of Christian love: 'Tis the weak children in Christs Family that falls out, when we have not enough love to reach to all and to love a Christian as a Christian, &c.

Q. What must be done by those that are converted, to keep them where they are, to help them unto growth, to make them better, to further their confirmation, to secure their salvation; that they may after all attain the Crown?

A. I shall leave with you twenty directions; and as many as there are, there are not more than you must practise; and take them as if they were the last directions I shall give you; and take them as practicals, not as notionals, that you must live upon as long as you live.

1. See that the foundation be surely laid in your head and heart, in matters of your Religion: In your head, that is, that you well understand what Religion is, what the Christian Religion is: what God is, what it is for God to be yours, in his Attributes and Relations unto you: what he is, and will be unto you: what you are, and must be unto him: what sin is, how odious, wherein its evil consists: what is

sin, and what not: what sin hath done in the world, and what estate it hath brought transgressors into: what Christ is, what he hath done for mans recovery and redemption: what he hath wrought, gives and offers to the world: The end and design of God in the work of mans Redemption: The tender of the Gospel Covenant of Grace, freeness, largeness, & excellency of the grace of this Covenant: The end of our Religion, the everlasting glory that is revealed in the Gospel, what it is, how sure, and how great. When you understand these things, get a sound and dedicated belief concerning the Truths of the holy Scripture, revealing all these things: And think it not enough that the Scripture is true, or that you are resolved so to believe, but get the best grounds for your belief: be well established on those grounds: Read the Scripture much, till you are acquainted with, and relish the matter and language, and feel the power, and till all be delightful to your souls in reading: And be not ashamed to understand the Fundamentals: look to your Catechism: The Fundamentals of Religion you must understand and receive. And when you have got them into your head, be sure you get them into your heart, and never think any truth received as it ought, till it hath done some special work on your heart; till you believe that God is Almighty, Just, Holy, &c. and all the Attributes of God have made their holy impression on your heart: that the sanctifying knowledge of God hath warmed your affections, captivated your souls, that God be in throned in your hearts by the belief and knowledge of your minds: Know your selves so as to be humble: know Christ so as he may be sweet unto you, and exalted by you: set up Christ in your souls nearest to your hearts: know sin so as to hate it, &c. 'Tis the entertainment of the good things of the Gospel by the will, that is the principal part of your Religion. 'Tis a matter of lamentable consequence in all your lives, when there is not a sound work at the heart: how little life will there be from any truth in reading or hearing? The Fundamentals of Religion must be so received, as not only to have an old heart mended, but a new heart made. Thus understand, believe, and give up thy heart to that thou believest and understandest.

2 Know and remember the work of your Salvation, must be as long as your lives, and that you have never done, till you have done living. I give this direction, because I find something in Christianity, the remains of carnality is apt to hinder, &c. And some professors, when converted, they are reconciled to God, and safe, &c. but there's a great deal to be done after, &c.

3. Understand well wherein it is your confirmation, stability, rootedness and growth in Religion doth consist. The chief part of your growth in grace is not to know more things then you knew before; but to grow in the knowledge, belief, entertainment, and improvement of the same truths, that at first you did receive: (not that you may not, or should not know more, for the clear knowledge of the fundamentals, guide you unavoidably to the sight of many other Truths, which a darker knowledge of those Fundamentals will not discover to you.) 'Tis not additional to your former knowledge, but the clearer known, sounder believing, heartier entertaining and improving of the Truths you know at first; as the health of a man consists not in having every day variety of food, but in the parting and digestion of the same food, that's fittest for him: get but a more perfect conviction, or concoction of what you knew before, and this is your growth. You may grow in the knowledge of Gods Attributes by knowing them more clearly, orderly, distinctly, satisfactorily and believingly then before. There is a world of difference in the manner of knowledge, between a dark and clear knowing of things: grow in greater love to them, and greater skill in entertainment, improvement and practise of them.

4 Grow downward in humility, and inward in the knowledge of your selves; and above all, maintain a constant abhorrence and jealousy of the sin of pride: grow in humility, and fly from man: keep a constant apprehension of your unworthiness and weakness, of the odiousness and danger of sin, of spiritual pride (so called, because exercised about spiritual things:) of being puffed up with pride of anything in your selves, of being too confident in your selves: be low in your own, and expect not, nor desire others good thoughts of you.

Humility lies not in humility of opinion, of speech, garb, or carriage: but in opposition to high thoughts of our own parts; gifts, godliness, when we think of these above their worth: still remember, Psalm 25, Prov. 26:19, Isa. 57:15, John 20:29. as ever you would grow in grace and be confirmed Christians, keep a low esteem of your selves, be mean in your own eyes, be content to be mean in others, and hearken not to secret flatterers, that would puff you up. Take heed of anything that would puff you up, &c.

5. You must understand that you are Disciples in Christs School, where Ministers are his teachers and guides: the Ordinances his means for his peoples good, and the Scripture, the book you must learn: therefore keep in this order keep under these guides, commit your souls to those that are faithful, and fit for souls to be entrusted with: and when you have done, with humble submissiveness to their teaching, keep in this School under those Officers in their Discipline, and dwell in the Catholique Church and Communion of Saints, and understand the duty of Pastours and people, Heb. 13:17,18. 1 Thes. 5:12. Obey them, that have the rule over you: If God had seen the poor Christians sufficient to support themselves, he would never have made it the duty of all to be marshalled and rankt in several schools, ranks, orders, and all to walk in this order to heaven. If you with-draw from under Christs Officers, and Ordinances, you are in danger of being snatcht up as straglers.

Q. What shall we do? who shall we take for our guides, if God take them away? &c.

A. 'Tis not the denial of publick liberty that loses that relation between a Pastour and his flock, nor any word from man should cause a poor soul to trust its self for guidance of salvation to one that is not able: a mans soul is not to be hazarded upon damnation, by being deprived of the Officers and Ordinances of Christ, and cast upon the conduct of a blind guide, meerly for the pleasuring of a meer man.

6. Be sure you understand the nature of Church-union, and necessity of maintaining it, and abhor all ways that are truly Schismatical, that would rent and divide the Church of Christ. As you must not under pretence of avoiding Schisme, cast your soul upon apparent hazard of Damnation, so you must maintain the necessity of Church-union and Communion: when Christs Members walk in Communion with Christs Members, supposing that which is singular to the generality of judicious men; Take heed of anything that would with-draw you from the communion of the generality of those that are found in the faith. Take heed of with-drawing from the main body of Believers. Christ is the head of his Church, he will never condemn his Church; walk in those substantials Christs Church hath walked in Divisions amongst Christians is a sin God hath described as odious and tending to the Ruine of Christians. Be very suspicious of any that would draw you from the main Body of Believers, and keep communion with the Universal Church of Christ, with the generality of the godly in love and affection, &c.

7. Be sure your own hearts and ways be the matter of your daily study; and when hypocrites have their work abroad, let yours be much at home; while they make it their business to censure this and that man, let the main of your business be in pressing the inward of your own hearts, in keeping all right between God and you. Observe your hearts inclinations. If any inordinate inclination after anything, set a special guard: mark which way your thoughts go, that you may know your inclinations by your thoughts. In an especial manner preserve tenderness of conscience, fear of sin, loathfulness to displease God. Let Truth have the mastery; maintain such a conscience that dares not sin to save your lives. Be sure you sin not willfully Obey the light.

8. Be sure to keep up continually a lively apprehension of the state and place of your everlasting happiness, to live by faith upon the unseen world. Know where your happiness lies, and what it is, that you grow not to carnal apprehensions of your happiness, live upon Heaven, and let that be it that shall animate your faith to duty, and

all that you may still be weary of vexation, and sensible of the vanities here below: Let your conversation be above. Be confirmed in your apprehensions of the certainty and excellency of eternal blessedness; grow more in heavenly mindedness, & in satisfaction of soul, in the hopes you have of these things.

9. Understand the nature, method, and power of temptations, how to resist them, and live in watchfulness. Be not a stranger to Satan and his methods of tempting, what you have to watch against and oppose, where you must be armed. Understand the nature of Christian watchfulness; keep up a constant resolution and courage in resisting, especially the temptations you carry about with you, of your calling, constitution, company, and of the times: set them down, remember them, keep a special observation of them all; and say, this and this it is I am in danger of; and 'tis my integrity and Salvation that's in danger, and here place special guard, and make it your business to resist. The principal cause of Christians negligence in this, is the security of their consciences, and love of their sins; did you know your danger, you would better look after your safety, 2 Cor. 2:11.

10. Especially understand how much the flesh and carnal self is an enemy to God and your Souls, and how much you are engaged by the Christian Covenant to live in a warfare against your selves, and against your flesh. You must not think the life of life-pleasing is consistent with Religion; understand how you are bound to take the flesh for your enemy, to watch against it, and to live in a continual combat with it, Col. 3:5. The flesh is your chiefest enemy: the very senses themselves are all grown inordinate, and the work of Faith is very much seen in its exercise this way: If you get an opinion, that you may eat, and drink, and cloath, &c. and do all things to gratifie your selves, &c. then no wonder if you find but little encrease in spirituals, while you grow so carnal. Understand and practice the duty of self-denial, self is the very heart of sin; read is not under pretense of liberty in Religion.

11. Give not way to a formal, heartless, seeming Religiousness, customariness, without the life: but keep your souls in a continual seriousness and awakedness about God, immortality, and your great concernment. If Duty be dead, take heed lest that incline you to a deadness in another, and so grow a customary deadness. Take heed of spiritual sloathfulness, that makes you keep your hands in your bosome, when you should be doing for your soul; stir up to, and in duty, when you have but little time for life eternal: do not pray as if you prayed not, nor hear as though you heard not; but when upon Duty, doing Gods service, do it with all the seriousness and vigour you can. To grow lazy and negligent is the declining way: use such considerations as may stir you up, Rom. 12:11, Tit. 2:14.

12. Remember always the worth of time, and greatness of your work, and therefore so value time, as not negligently or sloathfully to lose a moment; it will quickly be gone, and when you are at the last, you will better know its worth: hearken to no temptation that will draw you to any trifling, abusing, wasting of your precious time; if thou hast no argument against thy sports, trifling pleasures, &c. but this, it loses my time, take it for a greater argument then if it lose thee thy money, friends, or anything in the world, your youth, your morning hours, especially the Lords day; lose not any part of it, but improve it with your selves and families; lose not a moment of the Lords day, nor any of thy precious time, thou canst spare and redeem: if thou hast lost any be humbled for it, and be careful to redeem the rest: look back; do you approve of the time that is past? could you not have spent it better? remember what you have, let that quicken you; look before you, remember what is to be done, and do the first which must be done; and then leave trifles to that time you have to spare: it is ignorance and idleness, and not want of work, that makes any think they have time to spare, Eph. 5:16, Col. 4:5.

13. Make a careful choice of your company; you cannot travel well to heaven alone, especially when you may have company, thrust not your selves into every company, Eph. 5:7. converse as much as you can with those that will help you, that are warm when you are cold,

knowing when you are ignorant, believing when you are doubtful, &c. especially for your constant companions, live with those that will be a frequent help to you; Masters, chuse the best servants, that fear God: servants chuse to live with those that will help you in the fear of God; For Husbands & Wives make choice of those that will intend upon Religion; take heed of being unequally yoked, and of thinking to get well to Heaven, while you presume to unite your selves with those that with great advantage will hinder, not help your Salvation.

14. Keep a constant guard upon the tongue, especially take heed of those common sins that disgrace hath not driven out of the World, but have got some kind of credit amongst some Professors; namely idle talk; that wastes precious time, makes us unfruitful to one another, back-biting especially, can they put but a religious pretence upon it, or if they back-bite those that differ in opinion. Remember that terrible passage, Prov. 18:28, James 1:26, Psalm 39, Psalm 35:28. avoid idle talk, back-biting, &c. watch over your tongues; and if they are by nature addicted to a laxity of tongue, and multitude of words, there lies a double obligation on you in point of danger and necessity above all others to keep a careful watch over your tongues, you should rather speak fewer words than others: and if you find your selves inclined to speak against and behind his back, reprehend your selves and avoid it.

15. Learn the holy skill of improving every condition that God shall cast you into; learn how to live to God in every condition: if you have skill and heart, there is advantage to be got by all; that prosperity may strengthen you in God, encourage you in his service, that adversity may wean you from the world, help you to repentance, raise you to God, and give you more then it took away, know the danger and duty of every condition, study them before they come upon you, that they do not surprise you; learn to know what's the danger, duty, and particular temptation of every condition, and in that condition you are most likely to expect a fall into: prepare for affliction as the common lot of the Saints, take it as no strange thing when it overtakes you; know how to abound and how to want. A

great deal of a Christians safety and comfort lies in this, to study the temptations and duty of every condition before it come, that so you may have your remedy at hand, and fall to your work, and commit your selves to God.

16. Be as conscionable and strict in the duties of your relations, and dealings with men, proportionably as in the duties of holiness, more directly to be performed to God; make as much conscience, care, study, diligence, about being just that you wrong no man in buying or selling, as you do in duties of holiness, hearing, praying, receiving. In your trading make conscience of justice and faithfulness, as well as in the Worship of God, and in your own personal behaviour; in your calling be diligent, not sloathful in business, &c. And so in the duties of your Relations; O that Parents knew what a charge lies on them concerning the soul of their children, &c. so Masters, look to your servants, & be as conscionable in doing your duty for their souls good, and being faithful to them, and compassionate over them, as in your duty to God: keep up family duties with life, seriousness, diligence, and vigour: the life of Religion in the world must be kept up very much in families.

17. Make it your study and care to do all the good you can in the world, let doing good be the principal part of your business, think that the safest and happiest life in which you can do greatest good, suffer not opportunities to slip out of your hands; take them where you have them, and seek where you may have them; look not only where you may get a good, but where you may have opportunity to do good to others: every Talent must be answered for, your knowledge, health, &c. use it as you will answer for it, and know, 'tis one of the greatest mercies in the world, for God to give you hearts in doing good with that he hath given, Heb. 13:16. not for applause, but be good husbands for God, and consider which way you may attain your ends best, by what you give or do. Thus be rich in good works.

18. Live still as before the living God, approve your hearts to him, as knowing you stand or fall unto his judgment: Avoid carefully all

offences unto men, for the Lords sake, and their conscience sake, take heed of scandal, and receive all the good from others you can, but stick not too much on mans approbation: dis-regard not suspicions, or reproofs of godly men, but make not mans praise to be any part of your reward; it is a small thing for me to be judged of men. Be not much troubled at it if you cannot please all: the bawlings of the malicious should not disturb a soul that is quietly housed with God: that soul is not well stablished in faith, that can be so disturb'd and distemper'd by the wrath or words of malicious men. Remember, God himself pleases not all: the most of the world are enemies to their Maker, upon the account of his holiness, justice, &c. and canst thou think to please all? withdraw from the world and your selves unto God, for the consolation of his approbation, and for your felicity: this will save you from hypocrisie, and keep you from the temptations and vexations of the censorious world.

19. Be every day as serious in your preparations for death and judgment, as those that are always certain that it will come, and know not the moment when it will come, (Matt. 24:29.) Use often to think seriously before-hand, what death is, what thoughts, what tryals death will put a man upon: what temptations usually accompany our approaching death: what you shall most need at such a time as that: what thoughts are likeliest to possess you then: what you are likeliest to wish for when you must needs dye, about spending your time, expending your estate, conversing with others, &c. Ask your selves, What will I wish I had done, or been when I come to dye? Think what will be most dreadful to a dying man, for thus you have time to escape his judgement. Will it not be to think on a life lost in vanity, drencht in worldliness, unreconciled to God, or at least in utter uncertainty of his love? God hath not fore-shewed what will be a dying mans terrour to torment thee, but to get out that terrour; that which will be most terrible at death, conquer and destroy it presently. They that were ready went in with the Bridegroom, and the door was shut, (Matt. 25:10.) Oh happy thou, if while the door is open, thou be found ready to go in; woe, if when the door be shut, thou hast thy preparation to make, thy graces to seek.

Bethink what you will, either wish, or fear when you come to dye, and when you will say, this should have been done, &c. let it be now done.

20. Rise speedily after every fall by sound repentance, and a fresh recourse to the Bloud of Christ, Covenant of Grace, and his intercession. Lye not secure in any sin, into which thou art lapsed, take heed of delaying and trifling, when thy particular repentance should be exercised. Renew thy Covenant, & after thy rising deal faithfully with thy self and God, favour not thy sin, nor flesh, go to the quick, leave no corruption at the bottom: If called to make restitution, to shame thy self before men by confession, stick not at it: take the plainest course, that is the way of God: And let not any thought of shame, dishonour, or loss hinder it: for the more it costs thee to rise from sin, the likelier it is thou art sound in thy Conversion, and the more comfort thou wilt have, otherwise the fears and pains of thy disease will be upon thee, when the thorow cure would have prevented it: quarrel not at any mans reproof, though they miscarry in it, have mentioned thy faults with passion, &c. take that which is good and be thankful. And after every fall sit not down in perpetual distress, but as Christ takes the honour of thy cure, take thou the comfort of thy cure when recovered. See thou art truly risen by repentance, and returned to him whom thou hast dishonoured.— Thy care must be to see thou be sincere in thy-return, and then walk comfortably. See that Satan make not thee walk so as to rob thee of thy comfort, and God of his honour.

Thus having given you twenty Directions, I shall reduce all to these eight Particulars.

1. Do not think strength of grace will be got with ease: you must do that, that in other things is done for the attaining of strength, increase and confirmation: A man cannot attain knowledge in Law, Physick, or any Art, without studying, diligence, unwearied labour and patience through that time that is necessary to attain it. Set your selves to the reading of the Scripture and other good Books; study

good truths: think not to attain mastery in a day: And if ever such a conceit come in your minds, that you are strong confirmed Christians, do not easily entertain it, there must be time, industry, and diligence: ordinarily suspect the conceit you may have of strength and confirmation; you must grow by degrees: Gods method is to begin like a grain of mustard-seed: we are not born men: labour in the proper means with patience, infused gifts are given according to the manner of acquitting them: God gives as if our acquisition did attain it; never think of having this without patience, labour, and diligence.

2. Grow up in the Church of God, and under his Officers and Ordinance, and among his people: Do not transplant your selves from the Garden and Vineyard of the Lord, if you will thrive; no prospering in the Commons where weeds will choak, &c. Keep within the Church of God, in the communion of his People, among his Servants, under the guidance of his Ministers, for that is the duty of Ministers; to bring up, train up, and help the weak ones, till they grow to be strong: they are to be Gods Nurses, and helpers of the weak in the House of God: do not think to prosper by breaking over the hedge, under pretence of any right of holiness whatsoever, following any party that would draw you to separation.

3. Make it amongst others, the principal study of your lives, to study the love of God in the Redeemer: the nature of the New Covenant, and the infinite goodness revealed in the face of a Mediatour: how it was his design to attract the hearts of men to the love of God, by revealing his infinite love in the Redeemer, unto which end Christ came for, even to represent Gods goodness in sinners hearts, of their being reconciled to him, and ravishing them with his love: Study the glory and ravishing love of God, and unspeakable goodness in a Redeemer.

4. Live not by sense, or upon worldly hopes, nor in the exercise of it: See that you live a mortifi'd life; take heed of glutting your selves with creatures, or letting your hearts out to any creature, or letting

any creature be too dear to you: live not too much on any sensible thing, or upon any worldly hopes or expectations. Shut your eyes to the world, let not your desires run out to the world, and live as much as you can upon the world to come.

5. Let holy self-suspicion always make you fearful of temptation, and keep you out of the Devils way: Would you keep your standing? grow better and strong in grace; let not the pride of your hearts, or confidence of your strength, make you meet among any unlawful communion, see any enticing spectacle, or thrust your selves upon temptation: you are never safe if you thrust your selves upon temptation: think with yourself, my weakness is great, I must not gaze upon this enticing object, lest my heart take fire; I am not so strong as to be able to stand against such, &c.

6. When you cannot attain to that heat of internal affection you would, be sure you walk uprightly with God: sin not wilfully; keep your garments clean: set his Law before your eyes; Sin not wilfully for a world: be but found in the way of duty, and God will bless you, and meet you in that way: be as exact in obedience, as if you had that frame of soul you desire.

7. In a special manner keep all your bodily senses and desires in subjection; mortifie the flesh, keep under your carnal desires in a due subjection to the spirit; let none of your senses take the reins out of your hands; keep a dominion over your senses.

Lastly, all your life long, be longing to die: Let the work of your life be to learn to die. Consider what necessity to the safety and comfort of death, to consider frequently, what assaults will be made upon dying men, that you may every day fortifie against it; to consider what graces and duties will be most needful and useful then, that you may be most conversing with, and exercising those graces and duties. He that hath well learnt to dye, is no weak Christian. The strength of your Grace lies in the exercise of these things; faithfully practise them, and you will stand when others fall; you will have comfort

when others cast away their comfort, you will dye in peace when others dye in horreur.

10. Dr. Jacomb's Forenoon Sermon

"And he that sent me, is with me: the Father hath not left me alone: for I do always those things that please him."- John 8:29.

These are the words of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are spoken by himself: and they are spoken of himself; though yet in a sober and modest sense they are applicable to all his Members: that which Christ here affirms, is that the presense of God was always with him, and this is first propounded, He that sent me is with me, and then it is amplified, and the Father hath not left me alone; and then thirdly, the reason of this is annexed, for I always do those things that please him.

I shall speak but very little of the words as they do refer to Christ: he tells us where his Father was with him, he did not leave him alone in all the troubles and difficulties that he met withal in the finishing the great work of mans Redemption; still God was with him: It is true, there was a time when Christ was without the sensible manifestation of his Fathers presense, when he cryed out, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why, but yet even then in truth and in reality his Father did not leave him; for though he had not the evidences of his Fathers presense, yet he had the influences of his Fathers presense. It would take up much time to shew you how in all particulars the Father was present with Christ; I will only speak this one word, and instance in this one thing, Gods assisting presense was always with him, both in his active, and also in his passive obedience; and indeed he had that work to do, and those miseries to suffer, that if God had left him, if he had not been mightily assisted by the Divine Nature, Christ as meer man, could neither have done,

nor have suffered what he did; but the Father was with him, and to support him, Isa. 42:1. Behold my servant whom I uphold. You shall find that Christ did act faith upon this, in Isa. 50:7. The Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded, vers 9. The Lord will help me. So to the same effect is Psalm 16:9. And you shall find this made good to him in Scripture, in his greatest necessities.

Take a double instance.

In the first place, after he had been engaged in the combat with Satan, you read in Matt. 4. the strongest combat or duel that ever was fought; wherein you have the Prince of Peace and the Prince of darkness; the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, and the roaring Lion that seeks how to devour; both of them putting forth their utmost strength, and endeavouring to overcome each other: Now I say in this combat, the Father did not leave Christ, but he helps him; for he sends an Angel to minister unto him, Matt. 4:11.

So in Christs bitter Agony in the Garden, just before his bitter Passion and death upon the Cross, the Father did not leave him alone, for he sent an Angel unto him to strengthen him, Luk. 22:43. and so in several other places, and in several other things I might instance; but I shall pass this by. I but now why did the Father thus stand by Christ? he gives you the reason of it in the Text, because he always did the things that pleased him: This I shall open in a double respect.

First, Christs undertaking of the work of our Redemption; it was very well pleasing unto his Father, that poor lost undone sinners should be brought back again unto God, and restored unto his love and favour: I say the Father was infinitely well pleased with Christ in this undertaking. Isa. 35:10. The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand; the pleasure of the Lord, that is the work of our Redemption; wherein God the Father took great pleasure or delight; therefore when Christ was publickly in the eye of the world to enter upon this great work, the Father sends him out with this witness. This is my

beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. He speaks not of this well-pleasing only to his person, but also of his well-pleasing as unto his undertaking.

Secondly, as the work itself was well pleasing unto God, so Christ managing of this work, was all along pleasing unto his Father; & that doth appear in this, that Christ in all things kept to his Fathers Commission, and to his Fathers Command: I say in all things he kept to his Fathers Commission: he did nothing here upon earth, but what was within the compass of his Commission; for saith he in the verse before the Text, I do nothing of myself, but as my Father bids me: So also he acted in conformity to his Fathers will; that was the rule and square by which Christ ordered all his actions; his eye was still upon his Fathers will; whatever he willed him to do, that he did; whatever he willed him to suffer, that he suffered; and thus he always did the things that were pleasing to his Father: but I do not intend further upon the words in this reference; for my design is to bring down the words unto ourselves, to those that are the Members of Christ; for there is the same disposition of heart in all Believers to please God: In all things to please God; this was the frame and temper and carriage of Christ; so it is the frame & temper of every true believer: and this is a part of our likeness unto Christ; as you know there is a blessed resemblance & similitude between Christ and his Members; they have the same Spirit that Christ had, only in a different proportion; for he had it without measure; they have the same Grace as Christ had for substance, though not for degree; Of his fulness we all have received grace for grace; that is, as many interpret it, Grace answerable unto grace: As the print in the wax answers to the print in the Seal, & as face answers to face; so grace in believers answers unto that grace that was in Christ; they are to shew forth the vertues of Christ, 1 Pet. 2:11. Now this was the grace and vertue and holiness of Christ, that he always did the things that pleased his Father. Why this is in all believers, only with this difference; it was actual performance in the one, it is but endeavour in the other; it was perfect in the one, it is sincere, but imperfect in the other.

Christ always did things that pleased God, a Believer endeavours always to do the things that please God, he doth not always do so; witness David in the case of his uncleanness, when he displeased the Lord, as it is in 2 Sam. 11.

The Observation I intend to speak to, shall be this:

They that please God, and endeavour always to do the things that please God, such God will be with; such the Father will not leave alone; especially in times of suffering and trouble, for I will bring it that at case.

Indeed God will not leave such at any time; for that promise is exceeding full, Heb. 13:5. I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. I do not know any one promise in all the Bible, that is exprest with such an Emphasis as that promise is; such a multiplication of Negatives in the Original. But especially God will not leave such in an afflicted and suffering condition.

In the prosecution of this, I will speak to four things:

First, I will shew you when a man may be said to do the things that please God.

2. I will confirm the truth of the doctrine.

3. I will shew you in what respects God will be with them that desire to please him in a suffering condition.

4. I will give you the grounds and reasons of it; and then I shall come to an Application.

For the first, we please God in what we do, when we act. 1. In a suitableness to Gods nature. And 2. In subjection to Gods Law: For pleasing of God lies in these two things. As that pleases a man which is suitable to his disposition, and is correspondent with his command: We do the things that please God, when we do the things

that God doth; and when we do that which God commands: when we hate sin, as God hates sin; when we are holy as God is holy. You shall find it in Col. 1:10. That you may walk worthy of God, unto all well pleasing. Observe, this walking worthy of God, is walking suitably, or walking answerably to God, Matt. 3:8. Bring forth fruit worthy of Repentance, or bring forth fruit answerable to Repentance; So to walk worthy of God, is to walk suitable to God, to his nature: Now then observe what follows, that you might walk worthy of God to all well-pleasing, then we please God when we walk suitably unto God: So also when we act in a blessed conformity to God, to his law; for nothing can please the good God, but what is good: Now the Law being the measure, and standard of all goodness, nothing can be good, but what bears conformity to this Law, which is the will of God. God is well-pleased, when his will is observed: As you know, you that are Masters, your servants please you when they do your will. That inference of the Apostle, for this is very opposite, Rom. 8:8. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. What is this same inference grounded upon, because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be; so that they that are in the flesh, cannot please God. Why? because there is that principle in them, as carries out a real enmity to the Law and Will of God; it is as if the Apostle had said, They will not be subject to Gods will, not obedient to Gods command; there is a principle of enmity in them against these things, & so cannot please God: God is pleased when his will is fulfilled, & his commands observed; to please God, is in all things so to act, that whatever we do, we may express a likeness to Gods nature and a blessed subjection to Gods revealed will, and this is the first thing.

A second thing is the proof of the Doctrine; they that thus please God, he will be with them, he will not leave them alone; especially in an hour of tryal: For, my Brethren, assure your selves of this, that which the Father did for Christ, he will do for all his Members, 'tis true, Christs sufferings being greater than ours possibly can be, and so his relation to God being higher than ours is; he a Son by eternal Generation, we only by adoption; he had the presense of God in a

more glorious manner than we can expect; but yet in our Sphere according to the measure of our tryals, and according to our capacity, we shall as really have the presense of God with us, as Christ had with him; that as we are partakers of Christs sufferings, so we also shall be partakers of Christs support; he that will be present with believers in heaven, as he is with Christ, he will be present with believers here on earth, as he is with Christ in all his sorrows and sufferings.

Now for the confirming of this comfortable truth, I need not speak much: Many promises you have in Scripture for it, and whatever God hath promised, he will certainly make good: Turn to that one promise instead of many, Isa. 43:2. When thou passest through the water, I will be with thee; through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. And you shall find too that the Saints have experienced it in all ages, God hath made it good.

Jacob was a man that met with many sharp tryals, God exercised him with many troubles, you shall find that when he was going to Padan-Aram, and was in a very afflicted condition, Gen. 28 15. God comes to him, and saith, Behold I am with thee. Gen. 31:5. His father frowned upon him, but the God of his father helped him: Joseph, Gen. 22:20. his master took him, put him into prison, a place where the Kings prisoners were bound; he was in the Prison, but the Lord was with Joseph. The Prophet Jeremy was thrown into a Dungeon, but the Scripture saith, God was with him. The three Children was thrown into the Furnace of fire, but there was a fourth with them, and that was the Son of God, Dan. 3:25. Paul when he was brought to his trial, all men forsook him, but God stood by him. 2 Tim. 4:16. So the Christians in all their sharp sufferings, 2 Cor. 4:9. they were persecuted, but not forsaken; persecuted by men, but not forsaken by God. God hath abundantly made out this, and doth so still that he will never leave those alone in a time of suffering, who desire unfeignedly in all things to please God.

Now the third thing is to shew you in what respect God is with such: why this presense of God is an active presense: God is not meerly with his people, but he is with them in an active way: for this is a certain truth, God is working when the Saints are suffering, I will open this in several particulars.

First, God is with such in his teaching presense. Gods correction and Gods instruction they usually go together: and where there is the chastening's of Gods hand, there is also the teaching of Gods Spirit. Psalm 90:12. Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, and whom thou teachest. Christ though he were a Son, yet learned obedience by the things that he suffered: God teacheth his upright ones many lessons in a time of adversity, which they never learned in a time of prosperity. For we are like idle boys, or bad Scholars that learn best when the rod is over us: In a prosperous condition God speaks to us, and we mind him not, Jer. 22:21. I spoke to thee in thy prosperity, but thou wouldest not hear: and this hath been thy manner from thy youth upwards: in prosperity God speaks once and twice, as Job speaks, but we will not hear; but in the time of adversity God opens the ears, Jud. 8:16. As Gideon taught the men of Succoth with thorns and briers; so doth God teach his people, by affliction, and oh the many blessed truths that they learn, when they are under the Rod, when they want liberty! Oh what a mercy is it to have liberty then, when they have not Ordinances as before! what a mercy is it to have Ordinances then! Oh what an evil thing is it then for them, that they have departed from God! God teaches them these things then: sin is never so bitter, mercy is never so sweet as in a time of suffering: Oh how vain and empty is the creature then! Oh how sweet is communion with God then! I say such things as these God teaches then.

Secondly, God is with such in his guiding presense, Psalm 73:24. Thou wilt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me unto glory. When Israel was in the Wilderness, then they had the cloud to guide them. It is a blessed thing to live under the conduct and direction of the wise God; we never have so much of this as in an

hour of tryal: indeed the people of God never fly so much to God for direction, as such a time as Saul, when he was in distress then he calls for the Ephod; and thus it is with us under affliction, then we look to God.

Thirdly, God is with them in his preserving and hiding presense. God is the Saints hiding place, their shield, their buckler, their rock, their defense; the Scripture expressions are many to hold out Gods protection as to his people: God hath a constant care over them to preserve them and save them; oh but especially in a time of trouble: as the Mariner is never so careful of the Ship, as under a storm; and God is never so careful of his Church and people, as under affliction. Jeremy is in Dungeon, now God saves him: Daniel is in the Den, now God saves him: The three Children in the Fire, now God saves them: Peter is in Prison, now God saves him: The mother never tends the childe so carefully as when the childe is sick; and Providence is never so tender to the People of God, as under a suffering condition.

Fourthly, God is with them in his comforting Presense, 2 Cor. 4:1. Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, and usually we have most of consolation from God, when we have most of tribulation from without; as our sufferings do abound, so our consolations doth abound much more: The childe that is beaten when it is well, is cherished when it is ill; when persons are sick, then you give them Cordials: God gives the best of comforts in the worst of times; when the burden is heavy upon the back, then the peace of conscience is great within, the worse it is without, the better it is within: when men discover most of anger, God discovers most of love.

Fifthly, God is with such in his strengthening presense, to enable them and to support them to undergo whatever he is pleased to call them unto; this is the way of our good and gracious God; he always gives out strength, as he layes on affliction, he never leaves his children alone in this respect, he will be with them to support them: though it may be not to deliver, yet he will certainly be with them to support: the Rod and the staff they go together, Psalm 23:4. the

afflicting Rod and the supporting staff: when one is upon the Saint to afflict, then the other hand is underneath the Saint to support: Isa. 41 10. I will uphold thee, I will strengthen thee, fear not, I will help thee: yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. This David found, I cryed unto the Lord in my distress he answered me, and strengthened me in my inward man, Psalm 138:3. Oh! when men afflict, God supports: when men puts the children of God into the deep waters, then God takes them by the chin, and holds them up, that they shall not sink and be drowned.

Sixthly, God is with them in his sympathizing presense: Oh he hath a tender sense of all the sorrows and calamities of his people! Oh it grieves him that they are grieved! they that touch them touches the apple of his eye: in all their afflictions he is afflicted: Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? every blow that is given to them, God bears a part of it himself: as they are sensible of Gods dishonour, so God is sensible of their suffering; it pains him to the very heart to see his children wronged and abused by a malicious World.

Seventhly, He is with them by his sanctifying presense: all their troubles are to do them good, and to make them good: and therefore the Furnace it is but to refine them from their drosse: the pruning-hook of affliction it is but to cut off their luxuriant Branches: God takes the sharp knife into his hand and lances them, but it is only to fetch out their corruption. By this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away his sin.

Eightly, God is with them by his quickening presense, to make their Prayers more fervent, to make their requests to the Throne of Grace more Importunate. The Children of God cry most to him when they suffer most from men, and their prayers are best when their condition is worst: Prayer shortens Affliction, and Affliction heightens Prayer: God is with them to hear their Prayers. Oh the prayer of the Afflicted that comes up to Heaven! God hears the sighs and groans of his oppressed ones, their tears pierce the Heavens,

they call upon God in time of trouble, and pour out their sorrows before the Lord, and he doth hear them.

Ninthly, God is with them by his raising presense, to raise up their hearts higher, to elevate their souls, and bring them more near to himself. Gods people when they meet with troubles in the World, Oh! nothing so sweet unto them as the enjoyment of God: then no life so sweet unto them as the life of Faith; then they relish a sweetness in the promise: then every smile of God, oh how welcome is it? then all the affections of their souls center in God, and run to God: as in Winter-time all the sap of the Tree runs to the root: in Summer-time it spreads itself in the body, but in the Winter goes to the root: when a man is sick, all the blood goes to the heart; so in a suffering condition, all the affections of the soul go to God.

But now what are the reasons why God will not leave his people that thus desire to please him?

Why, God loves them, therefore he will not leave them; persons we love, we cannot leave, especially when they are in a distressed condition; and as God hath set his love upon them, so they have set their love upon him; they love him, Psalm 91:15. you have there an expression,

Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore I will deliver him: He shall call upon me, and I will answer him, I will be with him in trouble. God is a God of bowels, of great pity and compassion, and therefore he will not leave his people in a time of distress; you know bowels how they stand in you towards them that are in misery; it goes to the heart of a merciful man to leave a person in misery: Oh how great are the bowels and compassions of God! It Ephraim my Son, is he a pleasant Child? Oh my bowels are turned within me, I will have mercy on him.

2. Such as please God, shall have his presense under sufferings, because now they need God most: if God will not leave his people as

to temporal supplies, because they need such and such things: they need meat, and they need cloathing: surely much more God will not leave his children, as to spiritual supplies, under times of distress, because then they need God. Oh what can a Believer do, or what can a Believer suffer when God leaves him, his strength is in God; his support is in God, his comfort is in God, his All is in God: and therefore if God now leave him, what will become of him, he needs God at all times, but never so much as when his condition is dark and troubled. What was Sampson, that man of so great strength, when his hair was gone? and what is a Believer, when his God is gone?

3. God loves to see his people chearful in a time of suffering, and therefore he is with them; he loves not that they should walk dejectedly. When God is present, Paul and Silas can sing in Prison: the Apostles can rejoyce, that God honours them to be reproached for him. When God is present, the people of God are not only chearful under tribulation, but can glory, their cross is their Crown; but if God be with-drawn, what can there be? drooping hearts and pensive sorrows.

4. God will not leave them, because they will not leave him; God will not leave them, because they suffer for his sake: were they not tender of Gods glory, and careful to please him, they might be free from suffering as well as others; but it is for Gods sake they suffer: For thy sake we are killed like sheep, all the day long.

Lastly, it is thus, because God will make it appear to all the World, that he puts a difference between them that desire to please him, and other men; God hath a value for such: do but see how Mases argues the case with God, Exod. 33:13. and so on, where he comes to God with a great request, that God will shew him his way, that he might know it; Why, saith God to him, my presense shall go with thee. Moses said unto him, it is well thou art pleased to promise so great a mercy; If thy presense go not with me, carry us not hence: for wherein shall it be know that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? It is not in this, that thou goest with us? Observe, Moses

pleads with God, how his favour and love, and mercy should be with them, unless he were present with them! and so God he walks with his people in trouble; for how should the world see God regarded them and did favour them, unless he manifested his presense unto them in a time of trouble and affliction!

11. Dr. Jacomb's Afternoon Sermon

"And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone: for I do always those things that please him."- John 8:29.

I was upon these words in the morning; having spoken something to them as they refer to Christ, who spake them here of himself; I then brought them down to his Members, Believers, and so propounded this observation from them. That whoever they are that desire to please God, to do the things that are pleasing to him, God will be with such, and the Father will not leave such alone, especially in a time of suffering, and trouble. In the prosecuting of this point, I spake to four things, which I shall not now repeat, but come to the mark which I intend at present; and that is, to make some Application. 1. Let me endeavour to prevail with every one of you; so to carry your selves in your several places and capacities, that whatever you do, you may please God.

It was a blessed testimony that was given of Enoch, Heb. 11:6. Before his Translation he had this Testimony; that he pleased God; Oh! how happy will they be at the great day of Judgment, which shall be singled out by Christ, before Angels and Men; and Christ shall say of them, this was the man, or this was the woman that pleased God! There is a great deal of pleasing in the world, but there are but very few that make this their business, to please God; therefore I would have you shun that which is sinful, and press after that which is matter of Duty.

1. There are some that mind nothing but to please themselves, to promote their own interest, to love their own ease, to indulge themselves in their own carnal delights, but they never mind the good of others, or the pleasing of God; the Apostle speaks of, and against these, Rom. 15:1,2,3.

2. There are others that look no farther than the pleasing of men; if they can but keep fair with men, and shun the displeasure of men, that is all they aim at: but my Brethren, what a poor thing is it to have man to be your friend, and God to be your enemy? to have the smiles of a poor dying perishing worm, and to lye under the frowns of the great God!

Indeed there is a good pleasing of men, to please them for their Edification, as the Apostle speaks, Rom. 15:2. and so the Apostle speaks of himself, 1 Cor. 10:32. Even as I please all men in all things, that is, in all things that are of an indifferent nature, not simply evil, nor simply good, in all things.

This Apostle was of a yielding and complying spirit, that he might thereby the better insinuate himself into the affections of men, and be more instrumental to the glory of God, in the work of the Gospel, 1 Cor. 9:22. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some; and this I do for the Gospel sake.

But now in matter of Duty, such things as are expressly determined by God, and so are either good or evil; in these things the Apostle would be no pleaser of men: If I should please men, I should not be the servant of Christ. Gal. 1. It is good to please others to their Edification, but we must not please others to their own ruine and condemnation: It is good to please men when we can so do, and not grieve God. Instead of pleasing men, let it be your constant care and best endeavour in all things to please God: my Brethren, this is a duty of so great importance, that was I now to take my leave of you, and should certainly know that I should never speak to you more, as we are come very near to it, for though I speak to you as a living man, yet I speak to you as a dying minister; this I say, is a duty of that weight and importance, that I know not what to press upon you more material then this; consult but two places of Scripture, Col. 1. For this cause we do not cease to pray for you. What was the thing the Apostle in this his constant Prayers, did beg of God for them? It was

this, that they might please God: and when he was taking his leave in the winding up of his Epistle to the Hebrews, Now the God of Peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight.

I need not go beyond the Text for Motives to stir you up to these Endeavors: For,

Motive. 1. First consider what that God is, which I would have you endeavour to please. He is that God which made heaven and earth, that God before whom all the world is as nothing, but as a little dust in the balance, and as a drop of water to the bucket; that God whom Angels adore and worship; that God who by a word from his mouth is able to bring the whole Universe into nothing: will you not study to please this God? But further, consider what this God is to you; He is the Fountain of your being, he is the God of all your mercies, he is your Creatour and Sovereign, he is your Maker and Law-giver. It is he that by a smile can make you happy, and by a frown can make you miserable; it is he that hath Heaven and Hell at his disposal, who openeth and none can shut, who shuts and none can open. He that must judge every one of you, either to eternal blessedness, or else to eternal torments; it is he in whose hands your breath, your life, your soul, your All is; will you not endeavour to please this God? as the Prophet argueth in point of fear. Isa. 51:12. Who art thou, that art afraid of a man that shall dye, or of the Son of man that shall be made as grass, and forgettest the Lord thy maker? Oh poor Creature! who art thou that goest about to please a mortal dying man, and dost not go about to please the great God, thy Creator and Sovereign!

2. Consider that relation wherein you profess your selves to stand to God: he is your Master, you his servants: he is your Father, you his children: he is your Lord, you his subjects: You know all that are in close relations will study to please them that are above them; as the servant his Master, the childe his Father, the subject his Prince: All

persons that are in a state of inferiority, will study to please their superiors, especially when they do depend upon them. Oh! how infinitely is God above those relations. Alas, there is but a very little distance betwixt you and your servants, and yet you expect they should please you, will you not therefore please God? especially considering your dependance upon him.

3. You shall not lose by pleasing God: that is enough to put us upon this: He that pleaseth God profiteth himself: in that very act wherein we please God, we profit ourselves: men can do but little for us, yet for what they can do, we study to please them. Let me open this in a few particulars.

1. If you will sincerely endeavour in all things to please God, God will give you a gracious return to all your prayers. Oh what a mercy is this for a man to have his prayers answered by God! 1 John 3:22 Whatever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his Commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. Never expect that God should hear any prayers, if we do not endeavour to do those things that please him.

2. Do you please God, then he will please you: mercy pleaseth us, and duty pleaseth God. Now when we please God in a way of duty, he will please us in a way of mercy: If we order our ways so as to please God, he will order his ways so as to please us.

3. Great is the benefit of pleasing God, even as to men: and this Solomon sets before you, Prov. 16:7. When a mans ways please the Lord, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him; and he hath such another expression, Prov. 22:11. He that loveth pureness of heart, the King shall be his Friend: the meaning of this Scripture is this, when we keep close to God, and walk in compliance with his Will, and make it our great design to please him, he will give us to find favour in the eyes of men. He that maketh God his friend, God will make that mans Enemies to be his friends. Men are possibly full of anger, revenge, and exasperation; be it so: Do you desire to please

God? God can turn their hearts towards you; God can sweeten them in their spirits, and take away that venome that is in them; so you know he did in the case of Esau to his Brother Jacob.

4. This is the way to Heaven and Happiness; God will be pleased before the sinner shall be saved, Heb. 11. Enoch before his translation had this Testimony, that he pleased God: there is no way to Heaven but this, the Child pleases the Father, and then the Father gives him the Inheritance. So it is here.

5. Let me return to the Argument in the Text; God will never leave them alone, that desire sincerely to please him. Methinks this should be a very prevailing motive to you, especially now; please God, and he will never leave you, no not in a time of distress and trouble. Here is the great difference betwixt a faithful God, and a false man.

In time of trouble and adversity men leave us and forsake us; in time of prosperity then they flatter us, and pretend a great deal of friendship and kindness: but as no man looks upon a Dial when the Sun is under a cloud; so these very men that pretend so much of kindness and friendship, if so be we do but come under a frown, or into trouble, then their friendship and kindness is at an end, as Paul said; No man stood by him when he came to be tried before Nero, all men forsook him, but God did not forsake him. The wise man hath an expression. Prov. 17:17. A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity; but where shall we find such a friend, or indeed such a brother? But now if you will please God, he will stand by you, when all men leave you, when you have the greatest need of God, he will then stand by you; if you be in a Prison, he will be with you; if you be banished, he will be with you: if sin doth not part God and you, certainly no affliction shall part God and you.

Study to please God; oh! is it not a sad thing for God to leave you? that is the saddest of all; when we lose God, then we lose all, Hos. 9:12. Woe unto them when I depart from them. What are all the

mercies if God leave you? no more then if a man had a fair pleasant House, and should never see the Sun more.

Oh do the things that always please the Lord! and he will never leave you; under mercies, under afflictions he will be with you, and then your mercies shall be very sweet, and your afflictions shall not be very bitter. You know how earnest Moses was, Num. 10:13. with his father-in-law Hobab the Midianite; Leave us not I pray thee, forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou mayest be to us as eyes. Oh keep God to you! especially when you are entering into the wilderness of trouble; God will be to you instead of eyes, he will be your Counsellour, your Comforter, your Guide, your Treasure, your Portion, your All.

I might add one thing more in the last place.

Study to please God, because he is so easie to be pleased, this is a motive to us to endeavour to please those persons who are easie to be pleased; a child that hath a father that is easie to be pleased, a servant that hath a master that is easie to be pleased, will study to please them. Sincerity pleaseth God, though in the midst of much infirmity; he is so gracious and merciful, that whatsoever a poor sinner doth but desire to please God, he will accept of those desires: If we can but please God, it is no great matter whether we please men or not.

I shall conclude this branch with 1 Thes. 4:1. We beseech you brethren, and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that as you have received of us, how you ought to walk and please God, that you would abound more and more.

Use. 2. By way of direction, I should here shew you how you are to please God. I told you in general in the morning, this pleasing of God lyeth in two things.

1. In suitableness to his Name.

2. In subjection to his Law.

If you will please God in all your actions, look to this, that what you do may bear some resemblance to his Nature, and hold forth obedience to his Law.

Consult the will of God, and in all things act in conformity to that will, do not allow your selves in the Commission of any known sin, for that will certainly displease God: as it was said of David when he took Bathsheba to Wife: but saith the Text, the thing displeased the Lord. Do not Bank any known duty, for that will displease God.

In a word, be holy in all manner of conversation.

This being too general, I shall not insist upon it; only in a word more particularly.

Do those things now, now make conscience of those duties which now lie upon you, in the doing of which you will certainly please God: and they are such as these.

Be stedfast in the ways of God, in the midst of a back-sliding and apostatizing age, stand fast to the Law of God, Phil. 4:1. Contend for the faith which is delivered to the Saints, ver 3. of the Epistle of Jude.

Be not ashamed to own Christ before all the world; if you be ashamed of him on earth, he will be ashamed of you in Heaven; and wo be to that sinner whom Christ is ashamed to own.

Reckon reproaches for the name of Christ, better than the pleasure of sin that is but for a season

When God calleth you to it, assert the purity and spirituality of Gospel-worship; do not place Religion in a sew shadows where the substance is neglected; but chiefly minde self-denial, mortification, crucifixion to the world, keeping up close communion with God, love

the people of God whatever the world say or think of thee; for God is highly pleased when he seeth his Children loved.

Keep up Religion in your Families, whatever scorn or contempt is cast upon you. Oh that you would labour to be of Abrahams spirit; I know, saith God, he will command his Children and his Household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, Gen 18:19.

I do not know any one better means for the keeping up Religion in this Nation, than for Masters of Families to be consciencious in the discharging of this duty:

Be good in bad times; be patterns of good works to those that shall behold you. Let no reproach or obloquy make you to abate your exact walking with God; whatever you meet withal in the ways of holiness and a strict life, say, if this be to be vile, I will be more vile. Make conscience of a strict observation of the Lords Day; take heed of that Sacrilege of stealing away holy times; of prostituting that to common and civil uses, which is impropriated and dedicated to the service of God.

Pray for, and love all those that have been instrumental for your spiritual good in the work of the Ministry, whatever dirt is now thrown in their faces, and though you never get more good by them.

Forget not to distribute to the necessities of Gods people, that are many of them in a low condition; for this is a sacrifice of a sweet odour, and well-pleasing to him. Carry your selves with all patience and Christian meekness towards them that wrong you: pray for them that are your enemies, and when you are reviled, revile not again, but commit your selves to that God who judgeth righteously.

Do your duty to your superiors, and to those that are in Authority.

So carry your selves that it may be with you as it was with Daniel; they had nothing against him, saving in the matter of his God.

Bank not any duty for suffering, choose the greatest of suffering, before the least of sin.

In a word, so walk as it becometh the Gospel. And finally, I speak to you as the Apostle spoke to them, Phil. 2:16. Hold forth the word of life, that I may rejoyce in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, nor laboured in vain.

The third use is for comfort, to all those that do conscienciously endeavour in all things to please God: the comfort lies in this, you may suffer, but whenever you suffer, the Father will not leave you alone. Pleasing of God does not secure a man from suffering from men, sometimes it rather exposes a man to suffer from men: But now though it does not prevent suffering, yet it takes away the sting and venome of suffering; it makes it to be like Sampsons Lion, when it was slain, he found nothing but honey in the belly of it: Oh! the presense of God in a time of affliction is exceeding precious, it turns gall into honey, thorns into roses. Be not troubled in your thoughts about what you may undergo: if God be with you, all will be well: if God comes when the Crosses cometh, the weight of it will not hurt you: what is a Prison when God is there? My brethren, though estate leave you, relations leave you, all your comforts leave you, so long as God doth not leave you, it will be well: therefore do not fear, be not dejected, or discouraged. Isa. 43. 1, 2. Fear not, O Jacob, why so? when thou passest through the water, I will be with thee: We have more reason to be afraid of prosperity with Gods absense, than of adversity with Gods presense. A good God will make every condition to be good; it is not a prison but a palace where God is; they that do the things that please God, whatever condition they may be brought to, the Father will not leave them alone. Ministers may leave you, the means of Grace and Ordinances in a great measure may leave you, your creature-enjoyments and comforts may leave you; but here is a God that will never leave you: Oh! bless his holy name.

Fourthly, is this pleasing of God, a duty of so great importance and benefit? then be tender and charitable in judging of those that do

differ from you and others, upon this account, because they dare not displease God. I may in this caution, aim at myself and others of my brethren in the work of our Ministry: but I am not here at present to take my last farewell; I hope I may have a little further opportunity of speaking to you: but if not, let me require this of you, to pass a charitable interpretation upon your laying down the exercise of our Ministry: there is a greater Judge than you, must judge us all at the great day; and to this Judge we can appeal before Angels and men, that it is not this thing, or that thing, that puts us upon this dissent, but it is conscience toward God, and fear of offending him. I censure none that differ from me, as though they displease God: but yet, as to myself, should I do thus and thus, I should certainly violate the peace of my own conscience, and offend God, which I must not do, no, not to secure my Ministry, though that either is, or ought to be, dearer to me than my very life: and how dear it is, God only knoweth. Do not add affliction to affliction, be not uncharitable in judging of us, as if through pride, faction, obstinacy, or devotedness to a party, or which is worse than all, in opposing to Authority, we do dissent; the Judge of all hearts knows it is not so: but it is meerly from those apprehensions which after prayer, and the use of all means do yet continue; that doing thus and thus, we should displease God: therefore deal charitably with us, in this day of our affliction: If we be mistaken, I pray God to convince us: if others be mistaken, whether in a publick or private capacity, I pray God in mercy convince them: but however things go, God will make good this truth to us; in this work he will not leave us, and our Father will not leave us alone; for it is the unfeigned desire of our soul, in all things to please God.

12. Dr. Bate's Forenoon Sermon

"Now the God of Peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting Covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ: To whom be glory for ever and ever." - Heb 12:20, 21.

It would give light to these words, if you consider the scope and design of the Apostle in this Epistle to the Hebrews: the summe of which is, he writes to them that he might animate their spirits against apostacy from the Doctrine of the Gospel; they were liable to this from you and others, upon this account, because they dare not displease God, I may in this caution aim at myself and other of my brethren, this upon a double account.

1. Partly in respect of those persecutions to which they were exposed; for the Jews were filled with a brutish zeal, for the Ceremonies of the Levitical Law, and exprest the greatest rancour against those, who lest Moses to follow Christ: This is the reason why the Apostle lays down so many preservatives against their revolting from Religion; and he spends one part of this Epistle in a most passionate Exhortation to perseverance, and doth in the tenth Chapter insinuate himself into them: You have already tasted the first-fruits of affliction, ver. 3:4. You took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in your selves, that you have in Heaven a better and an enduring substance. This is that temper that Martyrs have exprest, who have not only parted with their goods, but with their lives for the Gospel: When they came to the Stake, they would not so much as shed a tear, to quench those flames wherein they should ascend to God, as in a fiery Chariot: You took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in your selves, that you have a better and an enduring substance. Thus he insinuates himself, by representing what they had done, to encourage them to perseverance: and partly he fortifies them against Back-sliding, by those terrible judgements which he threatned against Revolters, as you read Chap. 6:7.

2. As they were liable to this Apostacy upon the account of Persecution, so upon the account of the unsettledness and instability of their own spirits. There were several of those who had given up their names to Christ, who did compare the Ceremonies of the Law with the purity of the Gospel: Now the Apostle, to secure them from this mixture, his great design is to represent the vanity and infectiveness of all the Ceremonial Law, and to express and prove the virtue and efficacy of the Lord Jesus his death, which was the substance of all the shadows. And this takes up one great part of his discourse with them.

Now in these two verses he sums up, by way of Recapitulation, all that which he had discoursed of at large, and in them you may observe these two things.

1. A description of God, to whom he addresses this Prayer.
2. The substance of the Prayer itself.

The Description of God, that he amplifies by these two things:

1. From the Attributes and Qualities of God, (if I may so express it) Now (saith he) the God of Peace.
2. From the effects of his power and love; That brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the Sheep.

And these Titles, they are not here set down by the Apostle to adorn his discourse, meerly as an ornament, but they have all a peculiar efficacy, as to the obtaining of the request which here he makes for them.

I shall begin with the first, the Description of God from that Attribute. (Now the God of Peace) the Title that is used in the Old Testament frequently is this, (The Lord of Hosts) but in the New he is called, The God of peace. There were darker representations of the mercy and love of God than, the more full discoveries of his grace

were reserved till the coming of Christ. Their discoveries under the Old Testament were but as the Day-star, which ushered in the Sun of Righteousness. Now this title of the God of Peace imparts two things.

1. That he is the Author of Peace, and works it.
2. That he loves and delights in peace.

First, that he is the Author of it: And if you consider Peace in all its notions and kinds, it is a fruit of God: and that which descends from him.

1. Peace in Nature is the harmony that is between all the parts of the World, the union that is between the disagreeing Elements that is from God: for without him, the whole Creation would presently disband, and return to its first Chaos of confusion.

2. Civil Peace, which is among the Societies of men, that which is so amiable and lovely, and which needs no other foil to commend it, and set off its lustre, than the miseries and cruelties of war; this peace comes from God likewise. Every rash hand is able to make a wound, or to cast a Fire-brand, but it is only the God of Peace that is able to heal breaches, and to allay those storms that are in a Nation. You know those showers which render the Earth fruitful descend from Heaven, from God; so all the counsels of peace descend from above. The fiery Exaltations ascend from the Earth, Counsels of War & disturbance, proceeded from the devilish hearts of men. Or,

3. If you consider that Rational Peace, which is in the spirits of men: that is, when the understanding exercises a coercion and restraint over our licentious appetites, when all our inferior Faculties are under the empire and conduct of Reason; this proceeds also from God: For, since the fall, there is a great deal of tumult, many riots and disorders in the soul of a man: Reason hates a bad Guide, and our Appetites those are evil instruments, and so many times hurry Reason from its regular actings. But,

4. much more if you consider Spiritual Peace, that peace doth not only import an Agreement of a man within himself, but the Agreement of the soul with God.

This is the fruit of the Spirit, and it is only God that is able to convey this peace to us. And upon a particular account this Title is given to him, by way of eminency and property: as,

1. He is alone able to allow and dispence this peace unto us, for all our sins are injuries committed against him, against the Crown and Dignity; all the Arrests of Conscience are made in the Name of God, and therefore 'tis only he that can speak peace. As in the civil state, it is an Act of Supremacy to give a pardon: only he that can condemn is able to speak pardon; so it is our God that is our Judge, provoked and incensed by us, he hath a judicial power to cast Body and Soul into Hell fire: is alone able to speak peace, and pass a pardon for us in the Court of Heaven, and this is experienced by a wounded spirit: It is just with such a person as with a Malefactor, who stands condemned at the Bar, he cannot receive encouragement from any of his spectators, till the Judge speak peace unto him: So if an Angel from Heaven should come and speak to a wounded Spirit: it were impossible, unless God did order, command, and dispence it, that the Spirit should receive any peace, because our sins are immediately committed against him.

2. He is alone able to reveal and discover it; there is nothing harder in the World, than to calm and quiet a disturbed Conscience? it must be the same power that makes light to spring out of darkness that must cause a chearful serenity in a dark and disconsolate Soul. I know there is nothing more easie than that false peace which is so universal in the world; for the most amongst us cheat themselves with presumption, instead of peace with God, and security instead of peace with Conscience, but that peace which is solid and true, can only be revealed by God himself. We have an instance of this in David, Psalm 51. although Nathan had told him from God, thy sin is pardoned; yet notwithstanding he saith, Make thou me to hear joy

and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoyce. He still addresses himself to God, that he would cause him to hear the voice of pardon and reconciliation: for his soul could not be quiet by the voice of the Prophet. There is so much infidelity in the soul of a man, that when he comes to take a view of his sins in all their bloody aggravations, only the Spirit of God himself, is able to allay the terrors of the Conscience: And this he doth by an over-powering Light, when he doth in an imperative and commanding manner, silence all the doubts of the soul, and reestablish it in peace with God. Certainly, he that shall but consider the terrors, the faintings, the paleness of a wounded Conscience, when you shall see a person disrelish all the things of this World upon this account, fearing lest God is his enemy, when all discourses that are addressed to him are ineffectual, and but like warm cloaths, to a dead carkasse, cannot inspire any heat into him. This shews, only God is able to reveal peace. So Job, If he hide his face, who is able to be at peace? There needs no other fury to compleat the misery of a man than his own accusing Conscience: Conscience is a verier Devil than the Devil himself, and able more to torment and lash the creature. Therefore, if that be once awakened, 'tis only God, to whose Tribunal Conscience is liable, which is able to speak peace to the soul. Now you see in what respect this Title [The God of Peace] is attributed to him as he is the Author and Worker of it.

2. As he loves and delights in peace. This is that which is so pleasing to him, that he adopts those into the Line of Heaven, who are Peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God, Matt. 5:6. This characterizes persons to be his Children, to be allied to him. God he only delights in the reflection of his own Image; for those things that we admire in the World, and delight in, do not affect his heart: He delights not in the strength of the Horse, he takes no pleasure in the legs of a man: the Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy. Nothing attracts his eye and heart, but his own similitude and resemblance; and therefore where he sees peaceable dispositions, that is that which endears the soul to him, and makes it amiable in his eyes. You may judge of his

delight in peace by this: It is that grace which in an especial manner prepares us for communion with him: for we can never really honour or enjoy him, unless we bring to him those dispositions which (if I may so speak) are in himself. And therefore it is no wonder that those have little peace of Conscience, who make so little Conscience of Peace. You know when God appeared to Elijah, he did not appear in the storm, nor in the fire, but in the small still voice, and when Elisha was transported with anger, he was fain to allay that passion by Musick, that so he might be prepared for the holy motions of the Spirit, he called for an Instrument, and then the Spirit moved in him; I bring it for this end, to shew, how God delights in Peace, and he will only maintain communion with those that are of calm and peaceable spirits. So much way as we give to anger, so much proportionably do we let in the Devil, and cast out the God of peace.

Now, the reason why this Title is given to God, is upon a double account, partly with respect to the Bloud of the everlasting Covenant, which made peace between God and us; partly with respect to the Covenant itself, which is founded in that Bloud.

1. In respect of the Bloud of the everlasting Covenant. For it was the bloud of Christ that hath sprinkled Gods Throne, and made peace in Heaven. You shall read therefore when Christ came into the World, 'tis said, (Luke 2:14.) that the Heavenly host appeared and sang, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, &c. Since the fall God and man are enemies, there is a reciprocal enmity between God and man: God hates the creature as it is unholy, and man hates God as he is just, the avenger of sin, the Author of the Law: Now Christ was the Umpire that composed this difference, he was God and man in one person, and so being allyed to both, he was a fit person to reconcile both. He was (as Job speaks) a days-man between us. He hath paid every farthing that was due; for he did not compound with God, but paid the utmost that was due to him; He it is that hath reconciled us to God by the power of his spirit, in changing and renewing our Natures, and Creating in us those dispositions which are like to God; so that his bloud is the foundation of this peace. And

now, God appears to us not as a Consuming Fire, but as a Refreshing Light, full of calmness, serenity, and peace towards us. Christ hath brought more honour to God by his obedience, than we brought dishonor by our transgression; and therefore without any injury to God, he might be at peace with us. You know all our sins were but the acts of finite Creatures, and only infinite in regard of the object against whom they were committed. But the Blood of Christ was of infinite value in regard of the Subject; for, he was God, and the enriching union of the Deity conveyed such worth and value to his blood, that he was able to appease God, and not only to free us from condemnation, but to make us the favorites of God. We are not only pardoned, but preferred upon the account of his Blood.

2. He is the God of peace, as with respect to the blood of Christ, which is the purchase of peace; so with respect to the Covenant which is made between God and us, [Through the blood of the everlasting Covenant,] there are three sorts of Covenants amongst men; some are Covenants of Friendship and Amity, some are Covenants of Trade and Commerce, and some are Covenants of Assistance and Help. Now all these qualifications meet in this Covenant which is made between God and Believers: it is a Covenant of Peace and Friendship, for now we stand upon terms of amity with God. Those who were strangers and enemies are now reconciled. And there is between God and us perfect peace; there is a League (as the Scripture speaks) between God and the Creature. It is the Covenant of Trade, there is now a way opened to Heaven, we may now ascend to God in duties of holiness, and God descends to us by the excitations of his grace and influences. And it is a Covenant of Assistance, for he promises not only to give us the reward of the Covenant, but to secure unto us the condition, he promises to enable us to discharge the condition of Faith and Repentance. Now upon this account of that Covenant which is founded in the blood of Christ, he is the God of Peace to his people.

1. Use is by way of Conviction. This may discover to us how distant their temper is from God, who are enemies to peace. We un-man

ourselves; We unchristian ourselves so far as we are opposite to this blessed temper of peace. Certainly as disturbed Water cannot make any reflection unto us of that face that looks into it; so when our spirits are disturbed by animosities, exasperations, heats and divisions, 'tis impossible for us to see the Image of God, as he is the God of Peace. And certainly there is no more doleful consideration in the World than this, That man whom God made so sociable a creature, who hath all the engagements and endearments laid upon him, which may cause him to live in Peace and gentleness towards those who are of the same nature with him; yet that in fierceness of our hearts, should exceed those of the most Savage creatures. Man comes into the World naked, and altogether unarmed, as if he were designed for the picture of Peace; but could you look into the hearts of men, you would find there such tumults, such divisions, such seeds of enmity against their fellow-creatures, that Tygers and Lyons are Calm and peaceable in comparison of them. Now how is this distant from the temper of the God of peace? 'Tis very strange to consider that when promises are made to bury all differences as rubbish under the foundation, that nevertheless the great Work of many persons should be only to revive those former animosities, to make those exasperations fresh and keen upon their own spirits; but is this to imitate the God of peace? These to promote divisions and disturbances amongst us, clothe their enemies with the Livery of shame and reproach, that so they may be baited by their Fury, that make it their design to represent that Party which they think is dissonant from them, with the most odious appearances (you know this is the old Art) and those showres of Calumnies which are in the World, they usually precede the storm of persecution. The Devil was first a Lier, and then a Murtherer; and those who are of this Seed, they follow his Art. In the Primitive times, all the Persecutions of the Heathens arose from the reproaches of Christians: so it is now. It is an easie thing to blast the name of those persons, who are design'd for ruine. But if the contending Parties would consider, (if I may call one Party contending, which is only liable to Penalties, and is resolved to bear them patiently) how unlike this is to that God of peace, methinks it should allay the rancour that is in mens spirits,

and make an atonement between all the differences and divisions that is amongst them.

2. If only Peace come from God, you may from hence take a tryal of that peace that is within you, (for hither to I have been only discoursing of civil peace) whether it be an effect of this God of Peace. I know nothing more common in the world than presumption; there is a false Peace which doth not arise from the knowledge of a mans happiness, but from the ignorance of this misery: Peace, which is only like a Torch to shine in the night, or like Players that glitter only by Torch-light: so is the false peace men cherish in their bosom, meerly upon this account, because they do not bring their souls to the light of the Word, they never had it from this God of peace, because,

1. God never speaks peace to a soul, but in the way of holiness and obedience: And therefore you shall find 'tis the counsel of the Scripture, Acquaint thy self with God, and be at peace.

Our peace is found in the way of Duty; and there are none who are more blessed with the peace of conscience, than those who with the greatest fervour, frequency, and delight, maintain communion with God in holy duties. For, a friendship among men is cherished and pre | served by visits and conversations, so our peace with God is preserved by those visits we make to heaven in our prayers.

2. That peace that comes from God, always causes in us a war with sin, for Gods Covenant with us is Offensive and Defensive; and therefore it is impossible any person should have true and solid peace, that waking tranquility of soul, which is the reward of holiness and obedience, that entertains sin; for every sin thou dost wilfully commit, 'tis an act of hostility against God, 'tis that which makes him thine enemy, and makes thee an enemy to him, As Jehu said, What peace, so long as the whoredom of thy mother Jezabel and her witchcrafts are so many? So what peace can there be, so long as thou dost indulge thy self in sin, and make it thy business to gratifie thy

outward senses, though it be to the displeasure of God? 'Tis the greatest mercy in the world to rob such persons of their peace, and to discover to them their danger; they are only capable of true peace, by the knowledge of that which is false. Therefore bring your selves to this tryal: whether or no doth that peace which now you please your selves in, cause in you an eternal hatred of sin? doth it set you at a distance from your most beloved lusts; then it is that peace that springs from God. The greatest part of the world are in an estate of War with God, though they do not feel the effects of that war. True indeed, God doth not always draw the sword, either of Famine, Pestilence, or War, against a Nation, and yet they may be acting in a most hostile way against God: So for a person, God may not blast thy estate, or send diseases upon thy person, or raise a tumult in thy conscience, and make a conspiracy of thy thoughts and passions against thy peace: thou mayst be quiet within, and yet have war with God; because, as in the world there may be a Truce, when there is no peace, the War may still continue, though there is a Truce between two Princes: or rather, there is not a Truce between God and the sinner, but as a Town that is besieged for many days, may not feel the Battery of their Enemy, because he is undermining them to blow them up at once; so God doth not many times make his battery against sinners, but he is under mining them, and the fall at the last will be dreadful, if there be not a composition.

Use. 2. By way of exhortation; let me press you all to follow peace, it is a duty which the Gospel enjoyns with the greatest force of words and expressions. The Apostle when he is to seal up his affection to them, he doth it with that prayer, 2 Thess. 3:16. Now the God of peace himself give you peace always, by all means: What strange expressions! First, he gives you; hear the Title of the God of peace, and then he saith [Himself] the God of peace himself. There's a great deal of force in that word; peace is so excellent a blessing, and there is such an abhorreny in our corrupt nature to it, that it is only the Lord himself that is able to effect it: As if the Apostle had said, the Lord must bow the heavens, he must come down himself to create peace among you; and to express the greater vehemency of his

desire, he saith, Give you peace always, by all means. So another Scripture, pursue peace, follow peace with all men; a word that imports our pursuit after it, though it runs from us. This is the strain and tenour of the Gospel, and this becomes you as Christians. When Christ came to purchase our peace, he came as a Lamb, an innocent and meek Creature; Behold the Lamb of God. When the holy Spirit descended to seal the priviledge of peace to us, he descended in the form of a Dove; a Gaul-less creature, in whom there is no rancor nor bitterness. What a strong engagement should this be upon all of us to pursue and promote peace? And for your encouragement consider:

1. That in the times of the Gospel, all the promises do as it were empty themselves into this blessing, the blessing of peace. Thus Isai. 11:6. you shall find there a gracious promise respecting the times of the Gospel. The Wolf also shall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard shall lie down with the Kid, and the Calf, and the young Lion, and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them; and the Cow and the Bear shall seed, their young ones shall lie down together, and the Lyon shall eat straw like the Ox. That which I observe from thence, is this, that God here promises to cause an universal peace and unity under the Gospel, though it be as difficult as to perswade the most disagreeing natures to a peaceable cohabitation: For here the Scripture instances in those creatures between which there is the most natural, and therefore the most fierce animosities. The Lord will reconcile men, though their differences be never so great. What is too hard for the God of Peace to effect? Is not God of infinite power, of infinite love? then it should quicken us to pursue peace. 1. By prayer to him, because he is able to effect it; certainly that God that was able to bring Order into the World, when it was a meer lump and mass of confusion, is able to bring peace, and to unite our spirits.

And it is observable, the greater our differences and divisions are, the more will the power of this God appear in reconciling them. 'Tis said in the Psalm, that Gods throne is in darkness; that is, his ways of Providence are very difficult for us to trace and find out; and

therefore when our divisions are at the highest, he is able by one word to allay the storm. This should encourage us in Prayer. This is the course of God to glorifie himself, by putting a stop to the greatest troubles when nearest to us, and to work out one contrary by another. To give you some instances, that so we may encourage our Faith, and quicken our Prayer to God for this blessing, consider how still God hath made difficulties the way for enjoyment: For instance, the promise that Sarah should be the mother of a child; but he made way for that by her dead Womb, for all that numerous Progeny which like the Stars of the Skie descended from her. That he first maimed Jacob, and then gave him the blessing. He brought Joseph from the Prison to a Princely Palace. First David was harassed with troubles, and then his head was deckt with the Imperial Crown. So if you look into the Kingdom of Christ, who would have thought that a few Fishermen-men should have advanced the Empire of Christ in the World? Had you lived to have seen those despicable beginnings, when a few unlearned men were the Heralds and Preachers of Christ, how would this have caused you to fail and sink in your spirits! and yet the Gospel hath been Preached in all parts of the World, and that by a few Fisher-men. The Providences of God are like those plated Pictures, if you look one way upon them, there is the appearance of a Serpent; if you look on the other side, there is the appearance of an Angel. So here, many times God is pleased to suffer exasperations to go very high, that so his power may appear more eminent in the composure of them. He it is that enables the faith of his people to draw Water out of the Rock, when the Fountain is dry; that makes meat to come out of the Eater (as in Sampson's Riddle) that is able to bring a peaceable harmony out of devouring differences; and therefore it should quicken our prayers to him.

2. To make us more serious in our endeavours after peace. Consider what a dishonour it is to the Gospel, that those that profess themselves Sons of the same God, Members of the same Christ, Temples of the same Spirit, should be at deadly jarrs one with another; It is strange and unnatural that Lillies should prove Thorns to one another; that those who are Saints in pretence, should be

Devils in practice to one another; that Gods Diamonds should cut one another; this is very strange; yet thus it is. But now especially it is most sad, when Religion which should restrain and bridle our passions, is made fuel and incentives of them: How farre distant is it from the counsel of the Apostle, Rom. 14:10. where he speaks concerning their lesser differences, one values one day above another, another esteems every day alike? what's His counsel? he speaks as a person that was fill'd with bowels and compassion: Oh, saith he, let not him that doth not esteem the day, judge him that doth: For we shall all stand before the judgement seat of Christ, there we shall appear all upon a level, stand upon equal ground, and receive our final doom from him: This therefore should calm our Spirit. Why may there not be some differences in judgement, without division in affection? for it is as impossible that all judgements should be of the same extent, as all our faces to be of the same colour and figure. Therefore consider what an injury it is to our Profession, how doth it obscure the glory of God, and lustre of our Religion?

3. Doth not the publick enemy rejoyce over us, I mean the Papists? do they not warm themselves at the sparks of our Divisions? For you know the old Maxim of Divide and Reign: therefore it should compose our spirits, and quicken us to labour after union. Unmortified lusts are thence, whence all Wars and Enmities springs in the World. The Apostle Paul when he would compose their differences, he doth not lay, down Rules to decide their controversies, but to correct their secret passions, pride, self-seeking, revenge, &c. This being the seed of all disturbances in the Church: And although these Lusts may not be conspicuous and visible to the eyes of men, yet they are certainly the fuel of our distempers.

The sum of all is this, those that have the Spirit of God, they cannot but mourn and be sensible of these divisions, I know a great part among us are unconcerned: some rejoyce, those that are rather buried in the affairs of the World, and incumbred with much business, or those that are steeped in the pleasures of sense, are altogether unaffected with these things, stand as Newters,

disregarding all events: But the Saints of God cannot but mourn over them, when our divisions hinder the progress of the Gospel, & are serviceable to nothing but to the Kingdom of darkness. Therefore I beseech you, let what hath been spoken quicken you in your prayers to God, to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, (that's the least effect of our love and desires after peace) and by all endeavours to labour to bring back peace to us, that we may see that prophesie fulfilled in our time, that the Lord should be one, and his Name one amongst us.

13. Dr. Bates's Afternoon Sermon

"Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the blood of the everlasting Covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ: to whom be glory for ever and ever." - Heb. 13:20,21.

The Apostle describes God by the effects of his power and love, [That brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus] The Resurrection of Christ from the dead is one of the most transcendent testimonies of Gods love and power towards us.

1. Of his Love, because as the Anger of God was that which crucified our Saviour, so on the contrary, it must be his Love that should raise and restore him. Christ when he died, he looked upon God as an Enemy, as a Judge; and as those colours which we see conveyed to us, are answerable to the Medium through which we see them; as, if we look through a coloured glass, we see the object of that colour: So the Lord Jesus, when he was upon the Cross, looked upon God through the black-cloud of our sins, and through the red cloud of his

Fathers wrath, and so dyed as a Sacrifice to Divine Justice. But when he was raised from the Grave, that was the testimony of Gods love to him, and of his love to us; for he died as our Surety, he was arrested for our Debt, he was cast into the Grave, as into a Prison: But by his Resurrection he was redeemed from Prison and Judgement. And therefore you shall find, when Christ was: risen, he salutes his Disciples with this, Peace be unto you, Luk. 24:31. There was the dawning of peace at the Incarnation of Christ, for then the Angels sung, Peace upon earth; but the compleat Sun-shine of peace was at his Resurrection, when he had made full and compleat satisfaction to Gods Justice: for this was a clearing of him before all the World, when God raised him from the Grave. And in this respect it was very agreeable for the Apostle to say, The God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus.

2. It was the effect of Infinite power. You know it is naturally impossible for a dead body to quicken himself, to revive; but for the Lord Jesus, who had the load of the sins of all the Elect upon him, who was, as it were secured in the Grave by Gods Justice and Power, for him to rise again: This must be an effect of Infinite Power in the Great God. Thus raising of Christ, sometimes 'tis attributed to the Son, being God equal with the Father: But here 'tis attributed to God: and therefore when the Scripture would speak with the greatest magnificence of the Power of God, it expresses it thus, That power which raised Jesus Christ from the dead. When Christ wrought deliverance for the lost world, (all those who were committed to his charge.) This could be no less than the work of an infinite Power. And upon this account also it is very proportionable to the design of the Apostle, for that prayer he makes to God is for that which only can be accomplished by Infinite Love, and Infinite Power, i.e. to make the Christian Hebrews perfect in every good work to do his will.

I come to a further description. He that brought again from the dead [our Lord Jesus.] the Title of the Lord Jesus was only given to our Saviour after his Resurrection, he was called Lord before, and Jesus

before: but these two Titles were ever united till after his Resurrection; they came to see the place where the body of the Lord Jesus lay; the reason was this, because the Resurrection of Christ was a solemn Proclamation to the World, that Christ was the Son of God. 'Tis true, this Title was given him immediately upon his conception, but it was never compleatly declared to the World, till after his Resurrection; for before, Christ was a Prince in disguise; the beams of the Divinity was abated by the vail of his Humanity; but then he was declared by power to be the Son of God.

It followes [That great Shepherd of the Sheep] for the opening of this;

1. We will consider this Title of Christ.
2. The Person for whom this Title relates.

First, This Title [The great Shepherd] 'Tis a wonderful condescension in Christ, that he will take upon him the Title of a Shepherd, that which rather expresses Love and Care, than Power and Dominion; yet he is pleased to assume this Title to express his affection to us. For the opening of it, wherein he appears to be the great Shepherd, I shall lay down these particulars.

1. He is great in the Dignity of his Person; for, he that is Lord of Angels, is become the Shepherd of the Sheep; and the humiliation of his person in this respect, is the exaltation of his Office: It is looked upon in the World as a mean and low employment, to have the care and inspection of a Flock; but now herein appears the love of Christ, he was pleased to become our Shepherd, that so he might secure and bring us to the Fold of Heaven, and there make us to feed upon those Pastures, and to drink of those Rivers of pleasures which flow from the presense of God.
2. In the derivation of his Authority: That Authority which is communicated to him, whereby he is our Shepherd: and that is originally from God himself; It is not by any mediate deputation, but

from God himself. He is our Shepherd, and hath a Title to his Flock upon a double account.

1. They are committed to him as his charge and custody, John 6:37, &c. All the Elect of the world were given by God the Father to Christ, not by way of Alienation, but by way of Opigneration, as so many pledges which he was to bring to grace and glory: And this charge he doth most fully execute, for there is none missing of those committed to him.

2. They are given to him by way of Reward and Recompense for all his Bloud and Sufferings, Isai. 53:10.

The Lord put such a value on souls, that he purchased an interest in them by his own blood; and he thinks himself exceedingly recompensed for all his pains on the Cross, Agonies in the Garden, Temptations in the Wilderness, &c. if souls will submit to his care. And here observe the course of Heaven, God would endear souls to Christ upon all Reasons, by vertue of his command, and that charge he gives to them, and by vertue of his own purchase.

3. If you consider, the extent of his care and affection, For all the Saints of the World, those who are dispersed in all places, in all ages, they are all his Flock; and therefore 'tis the Royalty of his Administration, John 10:16. There shall be one Fold, and one Shepherd. As Christ is the only Catholick King, so he is the only Universal Bishop; For all other Shepherds have but particular Portions of his Flock committed to their charge, and they should be such portions as they have regard to, and are under their inspection, And at the last day, all his sheep shall congregate together, and stand at his right hand. All the Saints of God that are now scattered, as so many Stars in the Firmament, shall be united in one constellation, when they shall appear in glory before him.

4. In respect of his endowments and qualifications, which fit him for the discharge of his Office. And

1. Take notice of his affection and love to us, and that is the wonder of Heaven and Earth, Christ laid down his life for his sheep. Joh. 10:11. This is strange, that Christ should be a sheep for the slaughter, that he might become our Shepherd, that he should be a sacrifice before he could take his Office upon him: Other sheep lay down their lives for the Shepherd, but Christ laid down his life for the Sheep. So great was his love, that it brought him from Heaven to seek and find those that were lost; he left a Palace to come to a Wilderness; a Throne of Heaven to come to a Fold here upon Earth. We read of David that he exchanged a Sheep hook for a Scepter; but Christ quite contrary, he exchang'd a Scepter for the Rod and Staff of a Shepherd. It was said by one, There is nothing so conspicuous in Christ, as the prodigality of his love to us. Oh! do but consider how great love that was that should make him to die for us, that he might bring us home to his Fold. We were all of us like erring sheep, who had strayed from him, and fell to the Lord of the Soil, as strange Cattel; we were gotten into the possession of the God of this World; the Lord Christ would buy us off from thence; though we forfeited our right in him, yet he would not lose his right in us, but he laid down his life that he might reduce us to his Fold, that of Wolves he might make us Lambs, and sit us for the comforts of his Presense.

2. In respect of his exact diligence and inspection over them. When but one Sheep went astray from his Fold, we read, he left the ninety and nine, and went and sought for that One, Luke 15. where we have that Parable, to express the diligence and watchfulness of Christ over his Sheep. There is no person, be he never so mean, never so obscure, though lost in the number and account of the World, if he be one of Christs Sheep, he is always under his inspection and watchfulness. We read of the High-Priest, that he carried the names of the Tribes upon his Brest-plate; the Lord Christ carries the names of all his Sheep in his heart: therefore, Rev. 13. speaking concerning the Saints, all that dwell upon Earth, whose names are written in the book of Life. His diligence and care is so exact, that he hath all their names writ in his Book. He that tells the Stars, counts their hairs, and always exercises the most watchful providence over them for

good. You know Sheep are either liable to rage, or erring, and wandring; Christ's diligence is such that he protects them from the rage of Satan, reduces them from all their wandrings, and brings them home to himself.

3. In making proportional all their services and sufferings, to those degrees of strength which he gives to them, Isai. 40:11. He shall feed his Flock like a Shepherd, he shall gather his Lambs with his Arms, and carry them in his bosome, and shall gently lead those that are with young. Christ always makes a proportion between the Services, Sufferings, and strength he calls them to. He it is that with that tenderness speaks to Peter, Peter lovest thou me? feed my Lambs. He hath provided for them the most ample, and most satisfying nourishment, the Ordinances of the Gospel, the Word, the Promises, which are the breast of Consolation; these are all provided by him for his people. And in this respect he is the great Shepheard, for he doth not only allow them means, but blesses the means to them: he is able to enlighten the dark mind, he can make pliable the stubborn Will, and he can spiritualize drouzie affection, which all other Shepherds in the World are not able to effect.

4. He is the great Shepherd, if you consider his power to preserve them from danger; not only those dangers which respect Satan (for that fell under his care before) but those diseases to which they are liable, which threaten ruine: Other Shepherds possibly may cure diseases, but not defend them from danger. Christ it is that gives eternal life to his sheep, he begins the life of holiness, which though at present is but a spark in the Sea, yet he keeps it alive till it shall break forth into a triumphant flame. That life that is encompassed with so many enemies, and liable to so many weaknesses, the Lord Jesus will bring forth judgement to victory, and will make them to be powerful over spiritual and eternal enemies.

The summe is this: the Lord Christ is so perfect a Shepherd, so complete, as to all the qualifications of that office, that the Prophet David breaks forth into exultation, Psalm 23. The Lord is my

Shepherd, &c. and then afterwards expresses all those provisions which are made for him by God as a Shepherd, He makes me to lie down in green pastures, he leadeth me beside the still waters. So that you see, Christ, whether for diligence, love, tenderness, for preserving us from danger, for securing us to life eternal, he is only the great Shepherd, he is the God of Shepherds as well as the God of Sheep, and all other Shepherds are but inferiour to him, and must be accountable to him for the Souls of his Sheep, which are more valuable than all the world.

It follows, The great Shepherd [of the sheep] I shall not spend any time in making any resemblance between the People of God and the Sheep; Only,

1. They are Sheep in respect of their Innocency. You know, of all creatures the Sheep are unarmed: other creatures, either they are armed with strength, or skin, or swiftness to guard themselves, and offend others; but the Sheep hath neither the strength of the Lion, the craft of the Fox, nor the swiftness of the Deer, and of all creatures is most weak, inoffensive, and most liable to dangers and injuries. Of all persons, Gods people are most liable to danger, and when out of Christs protection, the weakest persons in the world.

2. In respect of their Meekness. A Sheep is an Emblem of Meekness, that's their temper, and therein they imitate Christ, who hath propounded himself to be their pattern, Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly; both these qualities are exprest by the Prophet, Isa. 11. where speaking concerning the times of the Gospel, he saith, The Lamb shall lie down with the Wolf; Now, where the Prophet expresses their safety, there he expresses their Innocency and Meekness. This is the reason why the Prophet saith, for thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are counted as sheep for the slaughter; because of all creatures most liable to injuries, that which doth least resent them: And where-ever the grace of Christ comes, it sweetens the most cruel nature, and polishes the most rough disposition, and makes them to be like Christ, meek and lowly.

3. In regard of their Profitableness; for of all creatures, they are most profitable, the food as to their flesh, the cloath as to their fleece. And the people of God, however they are exposed to the contempts and injuries of the world, they are the most profitable: for were it not for them, the whole frame of Nature would fall into pieces, the Stars would fall like leaves in Autumn, and all the Elements would fall into confusion; we see it by one Lot, who kept showres of fire and brimstone from falling on Sodom, till he was got out of it. And it is the people of God, for whom this frame of Nature is continued, and when they are brought into the fold of Christ, the Justice of God will have a solemn triumph over all the world.

4. As they are liable to wandring; sheep are wandring creatures, and when strayed, not able to reduce themselves. And in this respect the people of God are sheep, they have a thousand allurements to draw them from the ways of God: and if God should not guide them by his eye, 'tis impossible they should go in the way that leads to Heaven. Therefore David saith, I have gone astray like a lost Sheep, seek thy Servant; Psalm 119:176. This shall suffice to make the Parallel and Resemblance of the people of God to sheep.

The second Argument is this, That he hath design'd Christ to be the Shepherd of the Church, The great Shepherd of the Sheep; this is another argument and evidence that he is reconciled to us, and that he is the God of Peace: For when God gave Christ to be our Sacrifice, and raised him up to be our Shepherd; these are the most clear Testimonies of his Love: For, although Christ now sits in Heaven, and all the Angels of God worship him, yet he doth not disdain to exercise the same care, and to express the same Love to his People, that he did when he was upon the Earth. All the Offices of Christ express Gods love to us, for he feeds us as a Prophet, died for us as a Priest, Governs and defends us as he is a King; and all these meet together in this Title, feeding of us, dying for us, desending of us; as he was God, he loved us; as he was Man he died for us. This doth express the effects of his two Natures in this Title; and therefore an admirable evidence that God is at peace with us.

It follows, [Through the blood of the everlasting Covenant.] The blood of Christ is that which cements God and us together: For you must remember, our original peace with God was broken; that peace we have with him now, is called Reconciliation; it is as a broken bone, which well set, is stronger than before, because Nature conveys most liberal supplies to the weakest part: so now being reconciled to God, through the blood of his Son, we stand upon surer terms with him, than we did in Innocency; The Blood of Christ speaks better things for us, than all our Sins speak against us; it speaks peace to our souls, & that in Heaven purchased by his death. Christ died as a Testator, and bequeathed to the Church a Legacy of Peace; he lives as the Executor of that Covenant, and now in Heaven conveys to us that blessing of Peace, which he bequeath'd in his death. And as our Peace was founded in his Blood, so it is conserv'd by his Intercession; he appears in the Court of Heaven as our Embassadour, to make up all those differences which fall out between God and us; for you know, Amity and Friendship is kept between Foreign States, by their Residents and Agents, that are kept in their several Courts; so we have an Agent in the Court of Heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ, that was raised from the dead: And as a Believer falls into sin, which is a breach of Peace between God and us, so that Peace is made up by the exercise of repentance on our part, and by sprinkling of Christs blood upon us, on Gods part. The renewed exercise of Repentance, and application of Christs blood, preseryes that peace that is between God and Believers. And (to sum up the force of the Argument) when we had fallen from God, and it did not consist with the Majesty of God to make peace with us, without satisfaction, then was he pleased to pay our Ransom out of his own Treasury, and Redeem us by the blood of his Sonne; So that all his Attributes might shine forth in their Lustre, and glory in our Salvation, and that upon sure terms we might be able to challenge an Interest in his Favour and Love.

It follows, Through the blood of the [Everlasting Covenant.] It is called an Everlasting Covenant in two respects.

1. In opposition to the Old Covenant, which was made with Adam in Innocency; but that Covenant which secures to us the reward of that Life Eternal, did not secure to us the Condition, that was perfect Obedience; and in reference to this Old Covenant, sometimes the Gospel is called a New Covenant, sometimes a Better Covenant, because it supplies all weakness in the first Covenant; not as if the Law of God was weak and faulty in respect of its self, for the Law is Holy, Just, and Good, but weak in respect of us; for it is impossible that that Covenant, by the breach of which Sin and Death came in to us, should reconcile us to God, and appease his anger; and therefore God contrived another Covenant for us, a Covenant in the Gospel, that was made with us in Christ, and this is called an Everlasting Covenant, because it remains forever, the tenor of it shall not be changed; for, the First Covenant is only abrogated and made null, while frustrated as to the intent it was first given.

2. It's called an Everlasting Covenant, as it brings to those that are parties in it an everlasting Glory: so the Lord Jesus his blood is called an Everlasting Redemption, for it ransoms the souls of men from that Eternal Death to which they were liable, and gives them a Title to Everlasting Life; for this Covenant which now God hath made with us, it not only secures the Reward, but the Conditions to which the Reward is made; for God saith, I will plant my fear in your hearts, that you shall not depart from me.

I have now gone over the Title, and that in order to the Prayer which follows, [Make you perfect to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight,] the general sum of it is this: That God of Peace who is reconciled to us in his Son, as he is the Father of mercies to us, so he is the Fountain of Holiness to us; and in this respect we can only expect from him the treasures of Grace, as he is the God of Peace; for God, as he is our Judge, dispences to Sinners nothing but revenge; there is nothing to be expected but the curse of his Law, the Execution of that sentence of death from him. For, although the World despise holiness as a base and contemptible thing, they had rather be ungracious, than inglorious in the eyes of

men, and upon this account they are afraid to be Holy, lest they should be the publick scorn and contempt of the place wherein they live: although holiness is of so low a price in the world, yet in Heaven, next to God, Christ, and the Spirit, Holiness is the most rich Jewel, that God can bestow upon us; and therefore we must first look upon him as the God of Peace, before we can beg any grace from him. And this is the Reason why the Apostle represents God by these Titles, that he might encourage the Hebrews to believe God would grant this request. When Christ dyed for us, it was not his design only to quiet our consciences, but to quicken our souls, not only to free us from Damnation, but from the Domination of sin: And therefore you shall find these two are joyned together, Tit. 2:14 Who gave himself for us that he might Redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. The death of Christ, as there was a value in it to purchase Gods favour, so there was a vertue in it to restore to us Gods Image. And the account of his dying for us is it, that we must expect the least degree of Grace and Holiness from God. And this is the reason why the Apostle prefaces this, Now the God of Peace, &c.

I know you expect I should say something as to my non-conformity, I shall only say thus much, It is neither fancy, faction, nor humour, that makes me not to comply, but meerly for fear of offending God. And if after the best means used for my illumination; as prayer to God, discourse, study, I am not able to be satisfied concerning the lawfulness of what is required; if it be my unhappiness to be in error, surely men will have no reason to be angry with me in this world, and I hope God will pardon me in the next.

14. Mr. Watson's Forenoon Sermon

"A New Commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you." - John. 13:34.

We are this day called to a Love-feast; and nothing can be more suitable than to treat of Christian Love; Jesus Christ hath given us a great evidence of his Love to us, he bled Love at every vein; therefore we are to imitate him, and as becometh Christians, to Love one another. 'Tis a general complaint, how true I know not, that this is the great Grace that is defective among Christians. Although they pretend much Love to Christ, yet they have little Love one to another.

I have in former Sermons discoursed concerning Faith, how that by Faith we must receive Christ in the Sacrament; and now I shall speak something of Love; Love is needful at a feast, it is requisite when we sit down at our own Table. I remember it is said of Augustin, He would not suffer any to feast at his Table that came in a Spirit of Rancor, and sate down in passion. Sure I am, they are not fit to be Guests at Christs Table, that come not in a Spirit of Meekness and Love. It is true, we are to eat the Passover with bitter herbs, but they must be the bitter Herbs of Repentance, not the bitter Herbs of Malice, Wrath, and Fury; we must come here with bitter Tears, not with bitter Hearts: hear what the Text saith, A New Command I give unto you, &c.

Wherein, first, you have the Command, A New Command I give unto you; It is not left to our discretion, but, we are bound to it by vertue of a Command, A New Command I give unto you.

Secondly, this Command is enforced by Gods own example, as I have loved you. It is called a new Command, but Love is an old Command, this Law is written in the Nature of Man. It is engraven in every mans heart by Nature, and it is an old Command, because found among Gods antient Statutes, the antient Records of his Law; I, but 'tis a new Command too, because pressed by a new Example of Christ, As I have loved you, so do ye love one another.

Doct. Christians ought to make Conscience of this duty of loving one another. Confident I am, we shall never see Religion thrive in the World, until we see this Grace of Love flourish in the heart of Christians.

Nor the illustration of this proposition, I shall do these two things;

First, shew you the truth of this Love:

Secondly, the extent of this Love.

First, Truth of this Love; If you love one another, saith Christ, see you do it purely, not dissembling, but from the heart. 1 John 3:18. My little Children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth; dissembling love is like painted fire that will never warm; we must not be like the Bee, that hath honey in her mouth, but withal hath a sting in her tail; we must not pretend to love, to have honey in the mouth, but withal have the sting of malice in the heart; no, said the Apostle, let us love in deed and in truth.

Secondly, Extent of our Love; this Fountain of Love must run in three streams.

1. We must love all men, love their persons, although we must not love their sins, we have all the same make, the same lump and mould, and therefore must love; there is a natural Love, that every creature bears to his own species and kind.

2. Our love must especially stream out to the Saints of God the household of Faith. It is with our love, as it is with our fire, you keep fire all the day upon the Hearth, but upon special occasions you draw it out larger, so our Love must always burn to all: I but to the Saints you must draw out the fire, inlarge your affections, we must love as God loves, he doth especially love the Saints: love every creature with a common love, but especially the New Creature; and indeed there is that in every true Saint, that may excite and allure our Love. What are the Graces of the Spirit, but so many pearls to adorn the Bride of

Christ? What is holiness in the heart, the imbroidery and curious Workmanship of the Holy Ghost? here is enough to entice and draw out our Love: and Beloved, if we love the Saints for their Graces, then we love all the Saints.

And here I beseech you consider these six particulars.

First, we ought to love the Saints in what condition soever they are, although they be poor in the world, low in their condition, for commonly so it is. They that have the lowest hearts, have the lowest condition too. I read of the King of the Moors, that he was offended at the Christians because of their poverty: and truly when wicked men do fleece the Saints, it is no wonder if they be poor: methinks grace in a poor man, is like a Pearl that lies in the dust, or like a cloath of Gold that is hid under Rags; you must love the Gold, that is, the Grace, notwithstanding the Rags. The poorest Saint alive hath the Angels riches; the poorest Believer is a Member of Christ, and shall we not love him? we love the picture of a friend although it be hung in a mean frame: we must love a rich Christ in a poor man.

Secondly, we are to love the people of God although they have many weak infirmities: shew me the man that is perfect, and let him throw the first stone, even the best. Saints like the Stars they have their twinkling, they have their blemishes and their failings: in some there's too much pride, in others too much censoriousness, in others too much rash anger and passion, but we must love the Grace that is in them, notwithstanding the infirmities that are in them: you love Gold though in the oar, and mixed with much impurity; a Saint on earth, is like a Diamond that hath its flaw, like to the Rose that is sweet and perfumed, but yet hath its pricks. The best Saints have some mixture and infirmity, and we must love them for the good that is in them: this is our great fault, we are apt to over-look all the good, and so take notice of the stain and blemishes in them; as those that see a little stain in a piece of Scarlet, despise the cloath for the stains sake; so do we. But God doth not do so by us, he is pleased to over-look many sad failings, he seeth the Faith, and winks at the failings of

his people; you that cannot love a Brother because you see an imperfection in him, would you have God do so by you, would you have him damn you for every blemish of sin?

Thirdly, we must love the Children of God, though weak in parts; all are not born Politicians; But though the Saints of God have not always so good intellectuals as others, yet if they have good Vitals, and the life of Faith in them, love them for that Grace; you do not despise your Children because they are weak, but you love them because they are your Children. Oh! do not despise a Saint because he is of low parts, but love him as he is a Child of your Heavenly Fathers.

Fourthly, we are to love the Saints of God though in some lesser things they differ from us, if they keep the foundations of Religion, and hold the Head, Christ; yet we are to bear other things: one Christian hath more light than another, and shall we un-saint all that cannot come up to our light? Its great wisdom to separate between the precious and the vile: O what a blessed place will Heaven be, because there our light shall be clear, and our love shall be perfect. And that is the fourth.

Fifthly, love the Saints of God when reviled and persecuted; a bleeding Saint should be the object of our love. Onisiphorus, saith Paul, was not ashamed of my chain; a sign he loved Christs Graces in Paul. Christ Jesus loveth no Saints more than his persecuted Saints, his Martyrs have the highest Thrones reserved in Heaven for them: we must love to see Christs Livery upon a man, though sprinkled with bloud: he that is ashamed of a persecuted Saint, will never suffer for a crucified Jesus.

Sixthly, we must love the Saints of God, though their Graces may eclipse and out-shine our Graces. Beloved, in the sweetest fruits worms are apt to breed, and in the best heart, the worm of pride is apt to be breeding; if God doth not keep us, we shall not only envy anothers Graces, if they out-shine us, but their persons too. What

though anothers Graces do out-shine yours? yet love him, because the eminency of his Graces bringeth much honor to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And thus my Beloved, I have shewn you how you must love all the Saints, 1 Pet. 2:17. Love the Brother-hood, love the whole Fraternity of Believers. Oh! that this sweet spice of love might send forth its perfume among Christians, that we could turn all our heart-burnings into heart-breakings, and quench the fire of Divisions and Contentions, and keep the fire of love burning upon the Altar of our hearts. And my Beloved, as we must love all the Saints, so we must shew this love by the fruit of it, for God doth not value that love that is invisible; the fruits of our love to the Saints must be these four.

Four Fruits of Love to the Saints.

1. We must shew love to them by prising their persons above others, Psalm 15:4. spoken of a man that shall go to Heaven, In whose eyes a vile person is contemned, but he honoureth them that fear the Lord: the wicked are so much rubbish and lumber, but the Saints are called the Jewels, Mal. 3:1. and we must prize these Jewels above all the Lumber in the World; as they said of King David, thy life is worth ten thousand of ours, 2 Sam. 18:3. so is a Godly man above a wicked man; God he will give Kingdoms to ransom his Saints, Isa. 43:3. I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Aethiopia and Sheba for thee: and thus should we set the highest rate upon the Saints of God, for that is to love them.

2. We must shew love to all the Saints of God, by vindicating of them, when they are traduced and slandered; its a great sin to slander a Christian, its to go to pollute Christs Image, the wicked their throats are open Sepulchres, to bury the names of the Righteous in; now you that are Christians must not be ready to receive a false and groundless report of a Saint, but rather vindicate them, for that is to love them.

2. We shew our love to the Saints, by praying for them; you know not what good your prayers may do them: Ministers must pray for their People, and the People must pray for their Ministers; for prayer commands God himself, Isa. 45:11. Prayer is the golden Key that unlocks the Heavenly treasure of Gods bowels. Oh pray one for another; we should not strive one with another (as is too frequent) but pray one for another.

4. Shew your love by being ready according to your abilities to relieve their wants; to love one another is to be a well-wisher to him, and to do all the friendly Offices we can one for another; there are, my Beloved, many of the dear Servants of God in the Ministry, that have been already reduced to misery and want, and abundance more are like to be reduced to great necessities; Now I beseech you to show your love to the houshold of Faith, for that is a sign of your true love to God, and to the Brother-hood, that when as myrrh drops freely from the Tree, so works of mercy drops freely from the heart. If Jesus Christ should stand in the midst of the congregation, and say, shew your Love to me by your good works; I believe no heart here would be so hard as to deny Jesus Christ; Why, remember whatsoever you give Ministers, and to his Members, he takes it as given to himself.

That is the second, Our Love must extend to all Saints.

3. Our Love must reach to our enemies, we must love them that do not love us, Luke 6:1. Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you. I confesse, a mortal enemy, I would be loath to make a bosom friend. But though policy teach us not to trust our enemies, yet piety teacheth us to love them: Christ, he did pray for his enemies, and he shed tears of compassion for them that afterwards shed his bloud. So much for the Doctrinal part. Now for a word of Application, and I have done.

USES.

And first, this may serve to reprove those, who seem in other things to be excellent, and profess much love toward Christ and his Gospel, but have no love to the Saints of God: there are some that upon this very account, have for these great many years absented themselves from the Lords Supper, because they pretend not to be in charity. This is a double-dyed sin, a sin with a witness; its a sin not to come, and its a sin not to be in charity. But let me say this to them, surely such kind of Christians are a shame to their profession. What, doth not the Gospel teach you charity and love, as well as faith? Surely that Christian hath no grace in his heart, that liveth out of charity with his Brother; for as the Philosopher saith, All the vertues are linked together, and tyed as with a string, and where there is one, there is all: and where one is wanting, there is no vertue: so I say of the graces, they are linked together, and where there is one, there is all: and where one is wanting, there is none at all. Saith Augustine, Thou braggest of thy faith in Christ, but shew me thy faith by thy love to Christ, for Faith and love cannot be separated: For as in the Sun, there is light and heat, and these cannot be separated one from the other, so faith and love is twisted together, and where there is one wanting, the other is wanting: as he that did so engrave his name on the Buckler of Minerva, that whoever went about to take out his name, spoiled the Buckler: so Faith and love are so inseparable, that if you go to take away the one, you spoil the other. Oh! remember and mourn for it, thou that sayest thou art not in charity: it's a sad symptom thou art not in a state of Grace, Titus 3:5 For me ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers Lusts and pleasures, living in malice, envy, hateful, and hating one another, that is, before conversion we were swelled with poison of malice and wrath; but when once the grace of God came, then it was otherwise; that man that hath not Love and Charity in his heart, surely he hath nothing of God in him, for God is Love; he knoweth nothing of the Gospel savingly, for the Gospel is a Gospel of peace; he hath none of the wisdom which cometh from Heaven, for that is meek and gentle, and easie to be entreated.

If there be any on the other side, that are not in charity, and yet will come to the Lords Table, remember this, you get no good by the Ordinance, you do but defile the Ordinance. The Apostle calls it, the leaven of malice; it doth sower all your Holy Duties, Sermons, Prayers, and Sacraments; it is a little gall imbitters a great deal of honey: So where there is a little of this Gall of malice and hatred, it imbittereth and spoileth all the honey of your Graces and Duties. The Apostle bids us in prayer to lift up pure hands without wrath, 1 Tim. 1:2. I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up pure hands without wrath and doubting. What the Apostle speaketh of the duty of Prayer, I may say of the Lords Supper; when you come to see the Body and Blood of the Lord, Lift up pure hands without malice bitterness and wrath. That is a sad speech of Augustine, He that is full of rancor and malice, he is a man-slayer: Nay: the Apostle saith it in the first Epistle of John 3:15. Whosoever hateth his Brother is a murderer, and ye know no murderer hath Eternal life abiding in him; Do not think this Ordinance will profit you, if you do not come in love to the Saints; suppose a man drinketh down poison, and afterwards taketh down a Cordial, surely this Cordial will do him but little good; so thou that drinkest down the poison of wrath and malicē into thy soul, and comest afterward to drink down the Cordial of Christs blood in the Sacrament, why certainly this Cordial will do thee but little good.

EXHORTATION.

Therefore to conclude by way of Exhortation; I beseech you in the Lord, that you would remember this Text this day, when you come to the Lords Table, read over this Lesson, A new Commandment I give unto you, that you love one another as I have loved you; come to the Sacrament in love to Jesus Christ, and in love one to another, be not full of bitterness, but full of bowels; the primitive Saints were of one heart; you all expect I know one Heaven, and will you not be of one heart? this I believe is a great reason, why the Sacrament hath no more profited many receivers; you know if there be a stopping at the stomach, the meat taken in will never concoct and nourish; why thou

that hast wrath and anger, and malice at thy heart, there is an obstruction as it were at the stomach, and therefore it is that the bread of life doth not nourish thy Soul. Why Christians, are not we all Souldiers under one Regiment, under Jesus Christ, the Lyon of the Tribe of Judah, and Captain of our salvation? Are not we all Branches of the same Vine? and are we not all Members of the same Body? and shall there be a schism or rent in the Body?

I shall only say this, we should do all as the Serpent: Naturalists observe the Serpent, that before he goes to drink at the waters, he casts up his poison; so before you come to the Table of the Lords Supper, cast up your poison of bitterness, wrath, and malice, and then Christs blood will be both a Medicine to heal you, and a Julip to refresh you.

15. Mr. Watson's Afternoon Sermon

"Having these promises, dearly Beloved, let us cleanse ourselves." - 2. Cor. 7:1.

It is the Title that I intend now by the help of God, to insist upon, that sweet Parenthesis in the Text, Dearly Beloved, wherein you have the Apostle breathing forth his affections unto this people: he speaks now as a Pastor, and he speaks to them of his spiritual Children.

Dearly Beloved; where you have,

First the Title, Dearly Beloved.

Secondly, the Exhortation to Holiness, let us cleanse ourselves.

Thirdly, the means how we should be cleansed and sanctified, Having these Promises.

It is the first of these that I intend, the Title that the Apostle gives to his Children, Dearly Beloved.

From hence observe this Doctrine:

That the affections of a right Gospel-Minister towards his People, are very ardent.

Dearly Beloved, there are two things in every Minister of Christ that are much exercised; his Head, and his Heart; his Head with labour, and his Heart with Love; his Head with labour in the work of the Ministry; if done aright, it is a work fitter for Angels than for men; it is our work to open the Oracles of God, even those sacred profound things that the Angels search into; and if God did not help us, we might soon sink under the weight of such a burden; and as a Ministers head is exercised with labour, so his Heart is exercised with Love, and it is hard to say which of the two exceeds, his labour or his Love: Thus is it here in the Text, My Dearly Beloved.

In these words we have St. Paul laying siege to these Corinthians, and labouring to make a happy victory, to conquer them with Kindnesse; Dearly Beloved, St. Pauls heart was the spring of Love, his lips were the Pipe, the Corinthians were the Cistern into which this spring did run: this Holy Apostle was a mirrour and a pattern of Love towards the sinning Corinthians; Pauls tears did drop towards the praying Corinthians, his Love did burn; Holy Paul was a Seraphin, his Heart did burn in a flame of affection to his People: How many passages do we find scattered in his Epistles? he tells his People, which sometimes he did write to, and sometimes he preached to, he looked after their souls more than their silver, 2 Cor. 12:14. We seek not yours, but you: as a tender Nurse cherisheth her child with the Brest, so St. Paul gave his People the breast-milk of the Word, in 1 Thess. 2:7. this man of God did not only bestow a Sermon

upon his People, but was willing to impart his very soul to them if it might save theirs, 1 Thess. 2:8. We were willing to have imparted to you our own souls, because you are dear unto us: Such was St. Pauls affection to his people, that without a complement he loved them more than his life. Phil. 2:17. and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your Faith, I rejoyce with you all; that is as if he had said, if it be so, that my bloud be poured forth as a sacrifice, if my death may be any way serviceable unto you, if it may help forward the strengthening and confirming of your Faith, I am willing to die, I rejoyce to do it: so full of affection was this Apostle, that he could not choose but love his people, though the more he did love, the less he should be loved: In 2 Cor. 15. Oh! how did Paul sweeten all his Sermons with Love? 2 Cor. 12. if he reprov'd fin, yet he was angry in love, he dipt the Pill in Sugar, Gal. 4:9, 10, 11. How turn ye again to weak and beggarly Elements? ye observe days, and moneths, and years, I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed on you labour in vain: Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am. See how St. Paul chides their sins, and yet at the same time courts their souls; no sooner did he lanch the wound, but presently he poured in Wine and Oil into it; so did Paul love his People, that he would not justly give any offence to the weak Believer, 1 Cor. 8:13. If meat make my Brother to offend, I will never eat flesh more while the world standeth. Paul was like some tender Mother, who forbears to eat those meats that she might, for fear of hurting the child that she gives suck to. Thus you see he was a spiritual Father made up of love; and surely my Brethren, this affection in some degree, is in all the true Ministers of Jesus Christ, they are full of sympathy and bowels unto those over whom the Holy Ghost hath made them Overseers.

I shall only glance at the Reason, why it will be thus, and why it should be thus, that such flaming affections there should be in all Christs Ministers to their People.

It will be thus, for these two Reasons briefly.

First, from that Principle within, that teacheth love; Grace doth not fire the heart with passion, but with compassion; Grace in the heart of a Minister files off that ruggedness that is in his spirit; making him loving and courteous. Paul once breathed out persecution, but when Grace came, this Bramble was turned into a spiritual Vine, twisting himself about the souls of his People with loving embraces.

Secondly, there will be this ardent love in a Ministers heart, from the spiritual relation that is betwixt him and his People; he is a spiritual Father, and shall we think him to be without bowels? 1 Cor. 4:15. Though you have ten thousand Instructors, yet have ye not many Fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel. Some he begets unto Christ, others he builds up in Christ. Doth not a Father provide cheerfully for his Children? Can a Father see bread taken from his Child, and not have his heart affected with it? Is it not a grief to a Parent to see his Child put out to a dry Nurse?

Thirdly, There should be this ardent love and affection in all Gods Ministers, for this reason, because this is the liveliest way to do most good; knotty and stubborn hearts will soonest be wrought upon with kindness. The fire melteth the hardest metal: the fire of love, with Gods blessing, will melt the most obdurate sinner. A Boanerges, a Son of consolation; who comes in the spirit of Love, is the fittest to do a piece of Gospel-surgery, to restore and put such a one in joynt again that is taken with a fault, Gal. 6:1. Restore such a one with the spirit of Love and Meekness. Thus much in short for the Doctrinal part.

Give me leave now to make some Application.

And first, here are several Inferences that may be drawn from this:
As

First, See here the right Character of a Gospel-Minister: He is full of love, he exhorts, he comforts, he reproveth, and all in love; he is never angry with his People, but because they will not be saved; how loath

is a Minister of Christ to see precious Souls, like so many Jewels, cast overboard into the dead sea of Hell; a conscientious Minister would count it an unhappy gain, to gain the world, and lose the souls of his people; he saith as the King of Sodom to Abraham, Give me the Persons, and take thee the Goods, Gen. 14:21.

The second branch of Information is this; are true Gospel-Ministers so full of Love? then how sad is it to have such Ministers put upon a people as have no love to Souls? The work of the Ministry, it is a labour of Lope: Oh! how sad it is to have such in the Ministry, that can neither labour nor love, that are such as are without bowels, that look more at Tyths than at Souls, it must needs be sad with a people in any part of the world, to have such Ministers set over them, as either poisons them with error, or do what in them lies to damn them by their wicked example: How can the Devil reprove sin? How can the Minister cry out in the Pulpit against drunkennesse, that will himself be drunk? Rom. 2:22. Thou that teachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man ought not to commit Adultery, dost thou commit Adultery? We read that the Snuffers of the Tabernacle, were to be made of pure Gold, Exod. 37:23. those who by their calling are to reprove and snuff off the sins of others, they should be pure Gold, holy persons. In the Law, God did appoint the lip of the Leper should be covered, he ought to have his lip covered, he should not be permitted to speak the Oracles of God, who though he be by Office an Angel, yet by life is a Leper.

Thirdly, see from hence the happiness of a Minister, who is placed among such a people as give him abundant cause of love; how happy is he that can say to his people from his heart, my dearly beloved: And here let me speak by way of encouragement to you of this Parish; I find St. Paul commending the good he saw in his people, 1 Thess. 1:3. We are bound to thank God always for you Beloved, because your Faith grows exceedingly. Here Paul is commending his People; in imitation of the Apostle, let me at this time speak a commendatory word to you; I have exercised my Ministry now among you for almost sixteen years, and I rejoyce and bless God that

I cannot say, the more I love you, the less I am loved; I have received many signal demonstrations of love from you, though other Parishes have exceeded you in number of houses, yet I think not for strength of affection: I have with much comfort observed your reverent attentions to the Word Preached; you rejoiced in this Light not for a season, but to this day: I have observed your zeal against Errour: and as much as could be expected in a critical time, your unity and amity, this is your honour; and if for the future there should be any interruption made in my Ministry among you, though I should not be permitted to preach to you, yet shall I not cease to love you, and to pray for you; but why should there be any interruption made, where is the crime? some indeed say, that we are disloyal and seditious; Beloved, what my actions and sufferings for his Majesty have been, is known not to a few of you: but however we must go to Heaven through good report and through bad report, and it is well if we can get to glory, though we pass through the Pikes, I shall endeavour that I may still approve the sincerity of my Love to you; I will not promise that I shall still preach among you, nor will I say that I shall not; I desire to be guided by the sil | ver thred of Gods Word and of Gods Providence, my heart is towards you: there is you know an expression in the late Act, that we shall be now shortly, as if we were naturally dead; and if I must die, let me leave some Legacy with you before I go from you, I cannot but give you some counsel and advice for your souls, and I hope there is no hurt in that: There are my beloved, these twenty Directions, that I desire you to take special notice of, which I would leave as advice and counsel with you about your Souls.

First, I beseech you, keep your constant hours every day with God; the Godly man is a man set apart, Psalm 4:3. not only because God hath set him apart by election, but because he hath set himself apart by devotion; give God the Aurorae fitiam, begin the day with God, visit God in the morning before you make any other visit; wind up your hearts towards Heaven in the morning, and they will go the better all the day after: Oh! turn your Closets into Temples, read the Scriptures; the two Testaments are the two lips by which God speaks

to us; these will make you wise unto salvation: the Scripture is both a glass to shew you your spots, and a laver to wash them away; besiege Heaven every day with prayer, thus perfume your houses, and keep a constant intercourse with Heaven.

Secondly, get good Books into your houses, when you have not the Spring near to you, then get water into your Cisterns: So when you have nor that wholesome Preaching that you desire, good Books are Cisterns that holds the waters of life in them to refresh you. When Davids natural heat was taken away, they covered him with warm cloaths. 1 Kings 1. So when you find a chillness upon your souls, and that your former heat begins to abate, ply your selves with warm cloaths, get those good Books that may acquaint you with such truths as may warm and affect your hearts.

Thirdly, have a care of your Company, take heed of unnecessary familiarity with sinners, we cannot catch health from another, but we may soon catch a disease; the disease of sin is very catching: I would be as afraid of coming among the wicked, as among those that have the plague. Psalm 106:35. They were mingled with the heathen, and learned their works: If we cannot make others better, let us have a care that they make not us worse: Lot was a miracle, he kept fresh in Sodoms salt water. My beloved, take heed of the occasions of sin, evil company is an occasion of sin. The Nazarites in the old Law, as they might drink no wine, so they were forbidden grapes, whereof the wine was made, as you read in Num. 6. to teach us, that all occasions of sin must be avoided; evil company is belluo animatrum, the Devils draw-net, by which he draws millions to Hell: how many families, and how many souls have been ruined and undone in this City by evil company? many there are that go from a play-house to a Whore-house, and from a Tavern to Tyburn.

Fourthly, have a care whom you hear; it is our Saviour Christs counsel, Matt. 7:15. Beware of false prophets that come to you in sheeps cloathing, but inwardly are ravening wolves. Let me tell you, the Devil hath his Ministers as well as Christ, Rev. 12:15. The Serpent

cast out of his mouth water, as a flood over the woman; that is, as the Learned expound it, Satan by his Ministers, and Emissaries, cast out the flood of Arian Doctrine to drown the Church. There are some, who by the subtilty of their wit have learnt the Art to mix error with truth, and to give poison in a Golden cup. Take heed who you hear, and how you hear, be like those Noble Bereans, that searched the Scriptures whether the things that they preached were so or not, Acts 17:11. Your ears must not be like sponges that suck in puddle-water as well as wine, but your ears must be like a Fan, that fans out the chaff, but retains the pure Wheat; you must be like those in the Parable, Matt. 13:48. that gathered the good Fish into vessels, but cast the bad away; the Saints are called Virgins for their wisdom: they will not let everyone defile their Souls with error, they have a judicious ear, and a critical palate, that can distinguish between truth and error, and put a difference betwixt meat of Gods sending, and the Devils Cooking.

Fifthly, study sincerity, Psalm 51:6. Behold thou desirest truth in the inward part: Be what you seem to be, be not like Rowers in a Barge, that look one way and Row another: Do not look Heaven-ward by your profession, and Row Hell-ward by your Conversation; do not pretend to love God, and yet love sin: simulata Sanctitas, duplicata Iniquitas, counterfeit Piety is double Iniquity. Let your hearts be upright with God: the plainer the Diamond is, the richer it is; and the more plain the heart is, the more doth God value his Jewel; a little rusty Gold is far better than a great deal of bright brass; a little true grace, though rusted over with many infirmities, is better than all the glistering shews of Hypocrites; a sincere heart is Gods current Coin, and he will give it grains of allowance.

Sixthly, as you love your souls be not strangers to your selves, be much and often in the work of self-examination; amongst all the books that you read, turn over the book of your own heart, look into the book of Conscience, see what is written there, Psalm 77:6. I commune with mine own heart: set up a judgement-seat in your own souls, examine whether you have grace or not, prove whether you are

in the faith, be as much afraid of a painted holiness, as you would be afraid of going to a painted heaven: do not think your selves good because others think so: let the Word be the touch-stone, by which you try your hearts: let the Word be the looking-glass, by which you judge of the complexion of your soul; for want of this self-searching, many live known to others, and die unknown to themselves.

Seventhly, keep your spiritual watch, Matt. 13:37. What I say unto you, I say unto all, watch; if it were the last word I should speak, it should be this word, Watch. Oh! what need hath a Christian to be ever upon his Watch? the heart is a subtile piece, and will be stealing out to vanity, and if we are not careful, it will decoy us into sin: we have a special eye upon such persons as we suspect; thy heart is a suspicious person: Oh! have an eye upon it, watch it continually: it is a bosom Traitor, Job set a watch before his eyes, Job 31:1. We must every day keep sentinel, sleep not upon your guard: our sleeping time is the Devils tempting time: let not your watch-candle go out.

Eighthly, you that are the people of God, do you often associate together, Mal. 3:16. They that feared the Lord, spake often one to another. Christs Doves shall flock together: one Christian will help to heat another: a single coal of Juniper will soon die, but many coals put together will keep life in one another. Conference sometimes may do as much as Preaching; one Christian by good discourse drops holy Oil upon another, that makes the lamp of his Grace to shine the brighter. It is great wisdom to keep up the Trade in a Corporation. Christians by meeting often together, setting good discourse on foot, keep up the Trade of godliness, that else would decay and soon be lost; is not the communion of Saints an Article in our Creed? do not then live so asunder, as if this Article were blotted out. The Naturalists observe there is a sympathy in Plants, they say some Plants bear better when they grow near other Plants, as the Vine and the Elm; the Olive and the Myrtle thrive the best when they grow together: it is true in Religion, the Saints are trees of Righteousness, that thrive best in Godliness when they grow together.

Ninthly, get your hearts screwed up above the world, set your affections upon things above, Col. 3:5. We may see the face of the Moon in the water, but the Moon is fixed above in the firmament: so though a Christian walk here below, yet his heart should be fix'd above in Heaven, there is our best kindred, our purest joy, our Mansion-house; Oh! let our hearts be above, it is the best and the sweetest kind of life: the higher the bird flies, the sweeter it sings, and the higher the heart is raised above the world, the sweeter joy it hath. The Eagle that flies in the air, is not stung by the Serpent, those whose hearts are elevated above the lower region of this world, are not stung with the vexations and disquietments that others are, but are full of joy and contentment.

Tenthly, trade much in the Promises, the Promises are great supports to Faith, Faith lives in a Promise, as the Fish lives in the water, the promises are both comforting and quickning, they are mitralia Evangelii, the very breast of the Gospel; as the Child by sucking the breasts gets strength, so faith by sucking the breast of a promise gets strength and revives; the promises of God are bladders to keep us from sinking when we come into the waters of affliction, the promises are sweet clusters of Grapes that grow upon Christ the true Vine: O! trade much in the Promises, there is no condition that you can be in, but you have a Promise, the promises are like Manna, that suit themselves to every Christians palate.

Eleventhly, to all you that hear me, live in a Calling. Jerome gave his friend this advice, to be ever well employed, that when the Devil came to tempt him, he might find him working in his Vineyard. Sure I am, the same God that saith, Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy, saith also, Six days shalt thou labour. The great God never sealed any warrants to idleness; an idle Professor is the shame of his Profession: 2 Thess. 3:11. I bear there are some (says the Apostle) that work not at all, but are busie-bodies, such we exhort, by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work. Solon made Laws to punish idleness; and Cicero saith of an idle man, Spiritum trahit,

non vivit, he draws his breath, but doth not live, he is not useful; but a good Christian acts within the sphere of his own calling.

12. Let me entreat you to joyn the first and the second Table together, Piety to God, and Equity to your neighbour, the Apostle puts these two words together in one verse, Tit. 2:12. That we should live Righteously and Godlily: Righteously, that relates to Morality; Godlily, that relates to Piety and Sanctity, always remember this, every command hath the same Divine stamp and authority as another command hath. I would try a Moral man by the Duties of the first Table; and I would try a Professor by the Duties of the second Table: some pretend Faith, but have no Works, others have Works but they have no Faith; some pretend Zeal for God, but are not just in their dealings; others are just in their dealings, but have not one spark of Zeal for God; if you would go to Heaven, you must run both sides of the Table, the first and the second Table, joyn Piety and Morality together; as we blame the Papists for blotting out the second Commandment, let not the Papists blame us for leaving out the second Table.

13. Joyn the Serpent and the Dove together, Innocence and Prudence, Matt. 10:16. Be wise as Serpents, and harmless as Doves. We must have innocency with our wisdom, or else our wisdom is but craftiness, and we must have wisdom with our innocency, else our innocency is but weakness: We must have the harmlessness of the Dove, that we may not wrong others, and we must have the prudence of the Serpent, that others may not abuse and circumvent us, not to wrong the truth by silence, here is the innocency of the Dove: not to betray ourselves by rashness, here the wisdom of the Serpent: How happy it is where these two are united, the Dove and the Serpent, the Dove without the Serpent is Folly, and the Serpent without the Dove is Impiety.

14. Be more afraid of sin then of suffering. A man may be afflicted, and yet have the love of God, but he cannot sin, but presently God is angry; Sin eclipses the light of Gods countenance, in suffering, the

conscience may be quiet. When the Hail beats upon the Tiles, there may be musick in the house, and when there is suffering in the body, there may be peace and musick in the conscience; but when a man sins wilfully and presumptuously, he looseth all his peace. Spira abjured his faith, and he became a terrour to himself, he could not endure himself, he professed he thought Cain and Judas in Hell did not feel those terrors and horrors that he felt. He that will commit sin to prevent suffering, is like a man that lets his Head be wounded to save his shield and helmet.

15. Take heed of Idolatry, in 1 John 5:21. Little children keep your selves from Idols. Idolatry is an image of jealousie to provoke God, it breaks the Marriage-knot asunder, and makes the Lord disclaim his interest in a people: what kind of Religion is Popery? it is the Mother of many Monsters. What soul-damning Doctrines doth it hold forth, as the meriting of Salvation by good works, the giving of pardons, the worshiping of Angels, Popish indulgences, Purgatory, and the like; it is a soul-damning Religion, it is the breeder of ignorance, uncleanness and murder: the Popish Religion is not defended by strength of Argument, but by force of Arms; keep your selves from Idols, and take heed of Superstition, that is the Gentleman-Usher to Popery.

16. Think not the worse of godliness, because it is reproached and persecuted, wicked men being stirred up by the Devil, do maliciously reproach the ways of God: such were Julian and Lucian: though wicked men; would be godly on their death-beds, yet in the time of their life they revile and hate Godliness, but think not you the worse of Religion, because it is reproached by the wicked. Suppose a Virgin should be reproached for her chastity, yet chastity is never the worse: if a blind man jear the Sun, the Sun is never the less bright. Holiness is a beautiful and glorious thing, it is the Angels glory, and shall we be ashamed of that which makes us like the Angels? there is a time coming, when wicked men would be glad of some of that holiness

that now they despise, but they shall be as far then from obtaining it, as they are now from desiring it.

17. Think not the better of sin because it is in fashion, think not the better of impiety and ungodliness, because most walk in those crooked ways; Multitude is a foolish Argument, Multitude doth not argue the goodness of a thing: the Devils name is Legion, that signifieth a multitude. Hell-road is this day full of Travellers, esteem not the better of sin, because most go this way, do we think the better of the Plague, because it is common? the plea of a multitude, will not hold at Gods Bar, when God shall ask you, why did you prophane my Sabbath? why were you drunk? why did you break your oath? to say then, Lord, because most men did so, will be a poor plea. God will say to you then, seeing you have sinned with the multitude, you shall now go to Hell with the multitude: I beseech you, as you tender your souls, walk Antipodes to the corruptions of the times, if you are living Fish, swim against the stream, dead Fish swim down the stream, Ephes. 5:11. Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

18. In the business of Religion, serve God with all your might, Eccles. 9:10. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for there is no device or work in the Grave whither thou goest. This is an argument why we should do all we can for God, serve him with all our strength because the Grave is very near, and there is no praying, no repenting, in the Grave, our time is but small, and therefore our zeal for God should be great. David Danced with all his might before the Ark, and so should we act vigorously for God in the sphear of Obedience. Rom. 12:12. Fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord. Take heed of a dull lazy temper in Gods service, you must not only say a prayer, or read a prayer, but you must pour out your souls in prayer; not only love God, but be sick of love to God, God in the old Law would have the Coals put to the Incense, Levit. 16:13. and why so? to typifie that the Heart must be enflamed in the worship of God; your prayers must go up with a flame of Devotion. I confesse Hell will be taken without storm, you may jump into Hell with ease, but it is all

up-hill to Heaven, and therefore you must put forth all your might, Matt. 12:11. The violent take Heaven by force. Heaven is not taken but by storm, do you not see men zealous and very active for the Devil, and for their Lusts, and shall they take pains for Hell, and will not you take pains for Heaven?

19. Do all the good you can while you live to others; God hath made every Creature useful for us, the Sun hath not its light for itself, but for us, the Fountains run freely, and so doth the myrrh drop from the Tree: every Creature doth as it were deny its self for us, the Beast gives us its labor, the Bird gives us its musick, & the Silk-worm its silk. Now hath God made everything useful for us, and shall not we be useful one for another? O labor to be helpful to the souls of others, and to supply the wants of others: Jesus Christ was a publick blessing in the World, He went about doing good. We are Members of the Body politick, nay, we are Members of the Body mystical, and shall not every Member be helpful for the good of the body? That is a dead Member that doth not communicate to the good of the body. O labour to be useful to others while you live, that so when you dye, there may be a miss of you, many live so unfruitfully, that truly their life is scarce worth a prayer, nor their death scarce worth a tear.

20. Every day spend some thoughts upon Eternity. O Eternity, Eternity: all of us here are ere long, it may be some of us within a few days or hours, to lanch forth into the Ocean of Eternity. Eternity, Eternity is status interminabilis, says Boetius; no Prospective-glass can see to the end of Eternity. Eternity is a summ that can never be numbred, a Line that can never be measured: Eternity is a condition of everlasting misery, or everlasting happiness: if you are Godly, then shall you be forever happy, you shall be always sunning your selves in the light of Gods countenance: if you are wicked, you shall be always miserable, ever lying in the scalding furnace of the wrath of the Almighty. Eternity to the godly is a day that hath no Sun-setting: Eternity to the wicked is a night that hath no Sun-rising. O I beseech you my brethren, every day spend some time upon the thoughts of

Eternity. The serious thoughts of an Eternal condition would be a great means to promote Holiness.

1. The thoughts of Eternity would make us very serious about our Souls. O my Soul, thou art very shortly to fly into Eternity, a condition that can never be reversed or altered, how serious would this make us about our Heaven-born souls. Zeuxes being once asked why he was so long in drawing of a Picture, answered, Aeternitate pigno, I am now painting for Eternity. Oh how frequently would that man pray that thinks he is praying for Eternity. Oh how accurately and circumspectly would that man live, that thinks upon this moment hangs Eternity.

The thoughts of Eternity would make us slight and contemn all the things of this World, what is the world to him that hath Eternity always in his eye? Did we think seriously and solemnly of Eternity, we should never over-value the comforts of the world, nor over-grieve the crosses of the world.

1. We should not over-value the comforts of the World, worldly comforts are very sweet, but they are very swift, they are soon gone, the pleasures of the World are but for a season, just like Noah's Dove, that brought an Olive-branch in her mouth, but she had wings, and so did presently fly from the Ark; so are all outward comforts, they bring an Olive-branch, but they have wings too, with which they flie away.

1. The thoughts of Eternity would make us not to over-grieve the crosses and sufferings of the world. What are these sufferings to Eternity? Our sufferings, says the Apostle, are but for a while, 1 Pet. 5:10. what are all the sufferings we can undergo in the world to Eternity? Affliction may be lasting, but it is not everlasting. Our sufferings here are not worthy to be compared to an Eternal weight of Glory.

And thus my Beloved I have given you these twenty Directions for your precious souls: I beseech you treasure them up as so many Jewels in the Cabinet of your breast. Did you carry these Directions about you, they would be a most excellent Antidote to keep you from sin, and an excellent means to preserve the zeal of Piety flaming upon the Altar of your hearts.

I have many things yet to say to you, but I know not whether God will give me another opportunity; my strength is now almost gone: I beseech you, let these things which I have spoken, make deep impressions upon all your souls. Consider what hath been said, and the Lord give you understanding in all things.

16. Mr. Watson's Farewell Sermon

"Say ye surely it shall be well with the just, for they shall eat the fruit of their works." - Isai. 3:10,11.

""Woe be to the wicked, it shall be evil with him: for the reward of his hands shall be with him."

This Text is like Israels Pillar or Cloud; it hath a light side, and a dark side: it hath a light side unto the Godly, say unto the Righteous, it shall be well with him; and it hath a dark side unto the wicked, Woe unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him; both you see are rewarded, Righteous and Wicked; but here's a vast difference, the one hath a reward of Mercy, the other a reward of Justice.

I begin with the first of these, say unto the Righteous, it shall be will with him.

This Scripture was written in a very sad and calamitous time, as you may read in the beginning of the Chapter. The mighty man, and the man of war shall cease, the prudent and the ancient, both Judge and the Prophet shall be taken away: This was a very sad time with the Church of God in Jerusalem.

If the Judge be taken away, where will be any equity? if the Prophet be removed, where will be any Priests? the whole body Politick was running to ruine, and almost in the Rubbish; now in this sad juncture of time, God would have this Text to be written: and it is like a Rainbow in the Clouds; God would have his People comforted in the midst of afflictions; Say unto the Righteous, it shall be well with them.

The great Proposition that lies in the words, is this:

That howsoever things go in the world, it shall be well with the Righteous man; This is an Oracle from Gods own mouth, and therefore we are not to dispute it, its Gods own Oracle, say unto the Righteous, it shall be well with him.

I might multiply Scriptures, but I will give you one instance, in Eccles. 8:12. Surely I know it shall be well with them that fear God.

I know it; It is a golden Maxime not to be disputed, it shall be well with them that fear God.

For the illustration of this, consider two things.

1. What is meant by the Righteous man.
2. Why, howsoever things go, it shall be well with the Righteous.
 1. Who is meant here by the Righteous man.

There is a threefold Righteousness, a legal Righteousness; and so Adam in this sense was said to be Righteous, when he did wear the

Robe of Innocency: Adams heart did agree with the Law of God exactly, as a well-made Dial goes with the Sun; but this Righteousness is forfeited and lost.

2. There is a Moral Righteousness, and thus he is said to be Righteous, who is adorned with the Moral vertues, who is prudent, and just, and temperate, who is decked with the level of Morality: But

3. There is an Evangelical Righteousness, and this is meant here: this Evangelical Righteousness is twofold.

1. There is a Righteousness of Imputation, and that is when Christs Righteousness is made over to us: and Beloved, this Righteousness is as truly ours to justifie us, as its Christs to bestow upon us.

2. There is a Righteousness of Implantation, which is nothing else but the infusing of the seed and habit of Grace into the heart: a planting of holiness in a man, and making him a partaker of the Divine Nature: this is to be Righteous in the sight of God, a Righteousness of Imputation, and a Righteousness of Implantation.

The second thing is to shew you, why, howsoever things go in the world, yet it shall go well with this Righteous man; it must be thus for two Reasons.

1. Because he who is Righteous, hath his greatest evils removed, his sin pardoned, and then it must needs be well with him: Sin is the thorn in a mans Conscience, now when the thorn is pluckt out by forgiveness and remission, then it is well with that man.

Forgiveness in Scripture is called a lifting off of sin, Job 7. Lord, why dost thou not lift off my sin? so the Hebrew word carries it; it is a Metaphor taken from a weary man that goes under a burden, he is ready to sink under it, now another man comes and lifts off this burthen; even so doth the great God, when the burthen of sin is ready to sink the Conscience. God lifts off the burthen of sin from the

Conscience, and lays it on Christs shoulder, and he carries it; now he that hath his burthen thus carried, it is well with him howsoever things go.

Forgiveness of sin and pardon, it is a crowning Blessing, it is a Jewel of a Believers Crown, pardon of sin is a multiplying mercy, it brings a great many mercies along with it: whom God pardons, he adopts, whom God pardons, he invests with Grace and Glory.

So that this is a multiplying mercy; it is such a mercy that is enough to make a sick man well, Isa. 33:24 The Inhabitants shall not say I am sick; the people shall be forgiven their iniquity: The sense of forgiveness takes away the sense of pain, and then it must needs be well with the Righteous, for his greatest evil is removed.

2. However things go, it is well with the Righteous; because that God is his portion, Psalm 16:5. The Lord is the portion of my inheritance; the lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places: in God there are all good things to be found, and all that is in God is engaged for the good of the Righteous, his Power is to Help, and his Wisdom is to Teach, and his Spirit is to Sanctifie, and his Mercy to Save. God is the Righteous mans portion, and can God give a greater gift to us than himself? God is a rich portion, for he is the Angels riches; God is a safe and sure portion, for his Name is a strong Tower, he is a portion that can never be spent, for he is Infiniteness: He is a portion can never be lost, for he is Eternity. Thou art my portion forever, Psalm 72:26. and surely it is well with the Righteous that hath God for his portion. Is it not well with that man that is happy? why, if God be our portion we are happy, Psalm 144:15. Happy is the people whose God is the Lord.

Thus I have cleared up the Doctrinal part. For the Use to this,

Here is abundance of comfort for every Godly man, for every person serving God in this Congregation, God hath sent me this day with a Commission to comfort you.

Oh! that I might drop in the Oil of gladness into every broken heart and rejoyce every troubled spirit. Oh here is good news from Heaven Say unto the Righteous, it shall be well with him.

But here is a question must be answered, you'll say to me, but how doth this appear, that it shall be well with the Righteous? for we often see it is the worst with them in this world, he is deprived of his comfort many times, he loses his very life in that quarrel, he is made the very reproach of the world oftentimes; how then is it well with the Righteous?

To this I answer, yet still it is well with the Righteous, though he meet with trouble in the world, and one follows on the neck of another, yet it is well with the Righteous; as will appear in these three or four particulars.

1. The troubles that the Righteous man meets with, they turn to good, and so it is well with him; that is a most famous Scripture in Jer. 24:5. Whom I have sent out of this place unto the land of the Chaldeans for their good. Gods own Israel were transported into Babylon among their enemies: but it is for their good, saith the Lord. The troubles of the Righteous are a means to purge out their sin. I have read a story of one who running at another with a sword to kill him, by accident his sword run into an Imposthume and broke the Imposthume; thus all the evils and troubles of the Righteous serve but to cure them of the Imposthume of pride, to make them more humble; when that the body of a Saint is afflicted, his soul, that revives and flourishes in Grace.

At Rome there was two Laurel-trees, and when one withered, the other did flourish: so when the body is afflicted, yet the soul that Laurel, doth revive and flourish.

God doth distil our of the bitterest drink his Glory and our Salvation, saith Jerome, that, that the world looks on as a punishment, God makes a medicine to heal the sore; why then it shall be well with the

Righteous. The rod of God upon a Saint, is but only Gods pencil whereby he draweth his Image more lively on the soul. God never strikes the strings of his Viol but to make the Musick sweet. Then it is well with the Righteous.

2. In the midst of all the trouble that doth befall the Righteous, yet still it is well with them in regard of those inward heart-revivings that God doth give them.

We see a godly mans misery, but we do not see his comfort: we see his prison-gates, but we do not hear the musick that is within his Conscience. God doth sweeten to his People outward trouble with inward peace; it is the Title that is given to God, 2 Cor. 7:6. God that comforteth them that are cast down. The Bee can gather honey as well from the thistle and from the bitter herb, as from the sweet flower; the Child of God can gather joy out of sorrow: out of the very carkass sometimes the Lord gives honey; when the body is in pain, the soul may be at ease, as when a mans head-akes, yet his heart may be well; thus it is well with the Righteous: God gives him that inward comfort that revives and sweetens his outward pain.

3. In the time of trouble and calamity, yet still it is well with the Righteous: because God doth cover his people, in the time of trouble, he hides them in the storm, God hath a care to hide his Jewels, and will not let them be carried away; and thus he makes good that Scripture literally, Psalm 91:4. He shall cover them with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust, no evil shall touch thee.

God oftentimes verifies this Scripture literally, He makes his Angels to be his peoples life-guard; to hide them; and defend them, when a floud was coming upon the world, God provided an Ark to hide Noah, when Israel is carried and transported into Babylon, God hid Jeremiah, and gave him his life for a prey, Jer. 39:11. and in this sense the Saints of God are called hidden ones, Psalm 83:3. Why so? not only because they are hid in Gods decree, and hid in Christs wounds, but oftentimes God hides them in a time of danger and

calamity: they are hidden ones, he reserved to himself seven thousand that had not bowed the knee to Baal. The Prophet knew not where there was one, but God knew there were seven thousand. In this sense, it is well with the righteous in time of publick misery.

I but you'll say, sometimes it fares yet worse then all this, sometimes the righteous they die and perish, they are carried away in a Tempest, why? yet still it is well with the Righteous, and that in a two-fold sense.

1. Many times God doth take away the Righteous by death, and that in great mercy: he takes them away, that they shall not see the misery that comes upon a Nation. Virgil the Heathen Poet saith, They are happy that die before their Countrey: his meaning was, they die before they see the ruine of their Countrey: and truly God many times takes away his people in mercy, that they may not see the ruine that is coming on a Land; you have in Scripture for this, 1 King. 14:13. He only of Jeroboam shall come to the Grave in peace, because in him there is found some good things towards the Lord God of Israel, God puts him in his grave betimes in mercy, because he should not see the evil coming upon the Land: and there's a parallel to this, 2 King. 12. last. It is spoken of Josiah, I will gather thee unto thy Fathers, thou shalt be gathered unto thy Grave in peace, and thine eyes shall not see the evil I will bring upon this place. Josiah he dyed in Battel: how then was it said he went to the Grave in peace? We must understand the meaning of it is this; Josiah went to his Grave in peace, because he was a holy man, and he had made his peace with God, and so he went to his Grave in peace; and because he should not see the evil approaching, God gathered him to his Grave in peace.

Jerome speaking of his friend Nepotian (you must observe Jerome lived to see some troubles before he died) saith he, Oh! how happy is my friend Nepotian, that sees not these troubles, but is got out of the storm, dies and is arrived safe in Heaven.

Luther died in mercy before the trouble in Germany broke forth: and thus you see the Righteous though they die, yet it is well with them, God takes them away in mercy that they may not see approaching evils.

2. Though the Righteous die, and are taken away, yet it is well with them, because death cannot hurt them: Death can neither hurt their body nor yet their souls, and then it is well with them.

1. Death cannot hurt their bodies, the body of a Saint it doth not perish, though it die; the bodies of the Saints are very precious dust in Gods account: precious dust, The Lord locks up these Jewels in the Grave, as in a Cabinet; The bodies of the Saints lie mellowing and ripening in the Grave till the blessed time of the Resurrection. Oh! how precious is the Dust of a Believer, though the world mind it not, yet it is precious unto God. The Husbandman he hath some Corn in his Barn, and he hath other Corn in the Ground: why? the Corn that is in the ground, is as precious to him, as that is in the Barn: the bodies of the Saints in the Grave, are Gods Corn in the ground, but the Lord makes very precious account of this Corn: The bodies of the Saints shall be more glorious and blessed then ever they were, at the Resurrection. Tertullian calls them Angelical bodies, in regard of that beauty and lustre that shall be upon them. As it is with your silks, when they are died of a purple or scarlet colour, they are made more bright and illustrious then they were before; thus it is with the bodies of the Saints, they shall be dyed of a better colour at the Resurrection, they shall be made like a glorious body; Phil. 3:20. thus it shall be well with the righteous, their bodies shall not perish.

2. It will be well with the Righteous at death, as to their souls too. Oh it will be a blessed time! methinks it is with a Saint at the time of death, just as it was with Saint Paul in his voyage to Rome, we read that the Ship did break, but though there were so many broken pieces, yet he got safe to shore; so though the Ship of the Believers body break by death, yet it is safe with the passenger, his soul that gets safe to the Heavenly harbour: Let me tell you, the day of a

Believers death, it is the birth-day of his blessednesse, it is his Ascention day to Heaven, the day of his death, it is his marriage-day with Jesus Christ. Faith doth but contract us here, in this life is but the contract, but at death the Nuptials shall be solemnized in Glory, they shall see God face to face, it will be Heaven enough to have a sight of God, saith Austin: when the Saints shall enter into joy, here joy enters into them, but then they shall enter into it: they shall drink of these pure Rivers that run from the Everlasting Fountain.

And thus you see, it will be well with the Righteous, however things go, though trouble come, though death come, yet it will go well with the Righteous. And Oh let those that are the people of God comfort themselves in these words! Oh what an encouragement is this to all you that hear me, to begin to be Righteous! this Text may tempt us all to be Godly, Say unto the Righteous, it shall be well with him; when things are never so ill with him, yet it is well with him.

We would be glad to have things go well with our Relations, and in our Estates; why? when the Righteous things go well with us, thy person is sealed, thou art Heir of all Gods Promises, thou art Christs favorite, thou hast Heaven in reversion, and is it not now well with thee? If you would have Happiness, you must espouse Holiness. Say unto the Righteous, it shall be well with them: and thus much of the first Proposition, the Godly mans comfort in life, and death, it is well with him.

But now if all this will not prevail with you, to make you leave your fins and become Righteous, I must passe in a few words to the next branch of the Text, to scare men out of their sin, to affright men out of their wickednesse, Wo unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him.

This my Beloved is the dark side of the cloud.

It may cause in every wicked man that hears me, a trembling at the heart.

Wo unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him.

The Proposition that doth resist out of these words, is this:

Doct. When things seem to be well with the wicked men, it shall be ill with them at last, though they have more then heart can wish, yet it shall be ill with them at last, Eccles. 8:13. It shall not be well with the wicked, nor shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow; because he fears not God, it shall not be well with the wicked, the God of truth hath pronounced this.

It is as true as God is true, it shall not be well with the wicked.

Now that I may a little clear this to you, I shall demonstrate this to you in these four particulars.

1. It is ill with the wicked in this life.
2. It is ill with them at death.
3. It is ill with them at the day of Judgement.
4. It is ill with them after Judgement; it shall be ill with the wicked.

It is ill with the wicked in this life; a wicked man that hears me will hardly think so, when he hath the affluence and confluence of outward comforts, when he eats the fat, and drinks the sweet, he will hardly believe the Minister that shall tell him, it shall be ill with him, but it is so.

For is it not ill with that man that hath a curse? yea, the curse of God entailed upon him, can that man thrive that lives under the curse of God?

Flouds of bloud and wrath hang over the head of a wicked man, he is heir to all the Plagues written in the Book of God.

All Gods curses are the sinners Portion, and if he die in his sin, he is sure to have his Portion paid him.

Wo unto the wicked, every bit of bread he hath, he hath it with a curse, its like poison'd bread given to a dog: every drop of Wine he drinks, he swallows down a curse with it; wo unto the wicked, there is a curse in his Cup, and a curse upon his Table. God saith wo unto him: we read of Belshazar, Dan. 5:4,5. that he did take the Wine, and commanded to bring the Gold and Silver vessels out of the Temple, and then they brought the Golden vessels that were taken out of the Temple, out of the house of God that was at Jerusalem, and the King and his Princes, and his Wives and Concubines drank in them.

Belshazar was very jovial, in the midst of his Cups he was merry, but wo unto the wicked; for in the same hour came forth the finger of a mans hand, and reach'd over the Candlestick, upon the plaister of the Wall of the Kings Palace, and the Kings countenance changed, and he was troubled; there was a hand and a woe written on the wall: let a sinner live till he come to an hundred years of age, yet he is cursed, Isa. 65:20 his gray hairs, they have a curse upon them.

2. 'Tis ill with the wicked, not only in this life, but 'tis ill with him at his hour of death, and that in these two respects,

1. Death puts an end unto all his comforts.

2. Death is the beginning of all his miseries.

1. Death puts an end to all his Comforts, no more indulging and pompering the flesh, then no more cups of Wine, then no more Musick, Revel. 18:22. The fruits thy soul lusteth after, are departed from thee. All things that are dainty and good, are departed from thee, the voice of the Harper, Musician, and Trumpeter, shall be heard no more in thee.

As it is spoken of the destruction of Rome, so you may say of the wicked man, no more joy and gladness, no more mirth and musick, all a sinners sweet Spices, his scarlet Robes, his sparkling Diamonds, they all at death depart from him.

2. As death puts an end to a sinners mirth, so it lays a foundation for all his sorrow: Alas, before death begins to close a sinners eyes, the eye of his conscience is first opened, every sin at the hour of death, stands with its drawn sword in its hand: those sins that did in life delight him, now they affright and terrifie him, all his joy and mirth turns into sadness: as sometimes you have seen Sugar lying in a damp place, it doth dissolve and run to water: thus all the Sugar-joys of a wicked man at the hour of death turns into water, into the water of tears, into the water of sorrow.

3. It shall be ill with the wicked man at the day of Judgement, when he is seated before Gods Tribunal, then he shall leave judging of others, and shall stand at Gods Bar, and be tryed for his life.

I read concerning Felix, when he heard Paul speak of Judgement, that Felix trembled. Josephus observes, that Felix he was a wicked man, and she that lived with him, her name was Drusilla, whom he inticed from her Husband, and lived in uncleanness with her: now when Felix heard Paul preaching of Judgement, trembled. Now if he trembled to hear of Judgement, what will he do when Judgement comes? when all his secret sins shall be made manifest, all his Midnight wickedness shall be written on his fore-head, as with a point of a Diamond? At the day of Judgement shall be these two things.

First, there shall be a legal Trial.

Secondly, the Sentence.

First, a legal Trial. God will call forth a sinner by name, and say, stand forth, hear thy charge, see what thou canst answer to this charge.

What canst thou say for thy Sabbath-breaking, for thy Murders, and Drunkenness, and Perjury? for all thy revenge and malice? for all thy persecuting of my Members? what dost thou say, Guilty, or not Guilty?

Thou wretch, thou darest not say thou art not Guilty; for have not I been an eye-witness to all thy wickedness? do not the Books agree, the book of thy Conscience, and the book of my Omniscience, and darest thou offer to plead not Guilty? How will the sinner be amazed with horror, and run into desperation?

Secondly, after this legal process of Tryal, follows the Sentence, Go accursed into everlasting fire; what, to go from the presense of Christ? in whose presense is fulness of joy, to go from Christ with a curse, why, saith Chrysostom, that very word Depart, is worse than the torment itself. And remember this, you that go on in your sins, when once this sentence is past, it cannot be reversed; this is the most Supreme Court of Judicature, from which is no appeal. Here on earth men remove their Causes from one Court to another, from the Common Law unto the Chancery; Oh! but at the last day of judgement, no appeals to remove the sentence, for this is the highest Court.

4. It will be ill with the wicked that die in their sins after the day of judgement: Oh! then there is but one way, and they would be glad they might not go that way; any way but to prison. Oh! but there is no way but to Hell, Luk. 16:23. In Hell he lifted up his eyes. Hell, 'tis the very center of misery, 'tis the very Spirits of Torments distilled out: The Scripture tells us, that in Hell there are these three things; there is Fire, there is Darkness, there are Chains.

1. Hell is called a place of Darkness, Jude 13. To whom is reserved blackness of darkness: Darkness you know is the most uncomfortable thing in the world; a man that goes in the dark, he trembleth every step he goeth.

Hell is a black Region, nothing but blackness of darkness; and it must needs be a dark place where they shall be separated from the light of Gods presense. Indeed Augustine, he thinks there shall be some little sulphurous light there: but suppose it be so, that light

shall serve only that the damned may see the tragedy of their own misery, and see themselves tormented.

2. In Hell, as there is Darkness, so there is Fire, it is called a burning Lake, Rev. 2:15. Who was not found written in the book of Life, was thrown into the Lake of Fire. You know that Fire is the most torturing Element, it makes the most dreadful impression on the flesh. Now Hell is a place of Fire.

It is disputed among the Learned what kind of fire it is, and I wish we may never know what kind of fire it is. Augustine and others affirm that it is Material fire, but far hotter than any fire upon your Hearths, that is but painted fire compared with this. But I do rather think that the fire of the Damned it is partly Material, and partly Spiritual; partly Material to work on the Body, and partly Spiritual, which is the wrath of God to torment the soul: that is the Lake, the burning Fire: Oh! who knows the power of Gods anger? who can dwell with these burnings? it is intolerable to endure them, and impossible to escape them.

3. In Hell there are chains, chains of darkness. Those sinners that would not be bound by any Law of God, such shall have chains of darkness to bind them.

Quest, what should be the meaning of these phrases, Chains of darkness?

Answ. I suppose it may be this, to intimate unto us, that the wicked in Hell shall not have power to walk up and down, which perhaps might be a little ease, though very little; but they shall be chained down fast, not to stir, they shall be fastned to that stake with chains of darkness; Oh! this will be terrible indeed. Suppose a man should lie always on a Dounbed, and might not stir out of the place, it would be very painful unto him: Oh; but to lye as the Damned upon the wrack, always under the torturing scorchings of Gods wrath, and to be tyed, and not to move, how dreadful are the thoughts of this? and

this is the condition of the wicked, they are under fire, and darkness, and chains.

And to add unto the torments of Hell, there are these two things more to shew you, that it shall be ill with the wicked, let them dye when they will.

The first is the Worm.

The second is the Serpent.

First, there is the Worm to torture the damned spirits, and this is no other than the Worm Conscience; Mark 9:44, Where their worm never dieth. Oh! how dreadful will it be to have this Worm?

Melancthon calls the tormenting Conscience, A hellish fury. Conscience will be just as if a Worm full of poyson were feeding upon the heart of a man. Those Sinners that would never hear the voice of Conscience, they shall feel the worm of Conscience. And then,

Secondly, as there is the Worm to torment, so there is the Serpent, that is the Devil, who is called the Old Serpent, Rev. 9. As there is the biting of the Worm, so there is the stinging of the Old Serpent.

First of all, The Damned shall be forced to behold the Devil. I remember what Anselm saith, saith he, I had rather endure all the torments of this Life, than see the Devil with bodily eyes: But now this sight the wicked shall see whether they will or no, and not only see, but they shall feel the stinging of this Old Serpent the Devil.

Satan is full of rage against Mankind, and will shew no mercy, as he puts forth all his subtilty in tempting of man, so he puts out all his cruelty in tormenting of Mankind. And this is not all,

There are two things to set out the Torments of Hell.

First, These Agonies, and Hell-convulsions, they shall be forever: take that Scripture for proof, Rev. 14:11 And the smok of their Torment ascended for ever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night. Thus it is in Hell, they would dye, but they cannot; the wicked shall be always dying, but never dead; The smok of the Furnace ascends for ever and ever. Oh! who can endure thus to be ever upon the wrack? this word ever breaks the heart. Wicked men, now think the Sabbaths long, when will the Sabbath be over? they think a Sermon long, and think a Prayer long; but oh! how long will it be to lie in Hell for ever and ever? after millions of years their Torments are as far from ended, as at the first hour they began.

Secondly, which is another aggravation of Hell torment, the damned in Hell have none to pity them; it is some comfort, some ease to have our Friends to pity us in our sickness and want; I, but they have no friends. Mercy will not pity them, Mercy is turned into Fury. Christ will not pity them, he is no more an Advocate for them. The Angels will not pity them; but they rejoyce when they see the vengeance; they insult and glory when they see the Justice of God executed upon his enemies. Oh how sad is this! to lie down in the scalding furnace of Gods wrath, and none to pity them; when they cry out, God will laugh at them. Oh! hear this all ye that go into sin, it will be ill with the wicked; Oh! therefore turn from your sins, lest God tear you in pieces as a Lion, and there be none to help you.

Now for Application.

Oh! what an affrighting Word is this to all wicked men that go on desperately to sin, and add drunkenness to thirst? never such an inundation of wickedness as now; men sin as if they would spight God, and dare him to punish them; men sin so greedily as if they were afraid Hell gates would be shut up ere they come thither: Oh! how manfully do many sin? they go to Hell strongly in their wickedness? Oh! these are in a sad condition: Is it not sad at the hour of death, and at the day of Judgement, and after Judgement with them? wicked men live Cursed, and they die Damned; sinners are the

very mark that God will shoot at, his standing mark, and he never misses this mark: you know what the Scripture saith, there shall be weeping, and there shall be gnashing of teeth. And saith Latimer, that is sad fare, where weeping is the first course, and gnashing of teeth is the second course.

Quest. Whence is it that there is this gnashing of teeth?

Answ. First, it doth arise from the extremity of Torment the wicked suffer: they are not able to bear it, and know not how to avoid it.

Secondly, the wicked gnash their teeth in Hell at the Godly to see them in Heaven, them whom they persecuted, and scoffed, and jeered, to see them in Heaven, and themselves in Hell, they are mad at it, Luk. 13:18. When they shall see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the Prophets in the Kingdom of God, and they themselves shutout; they shall gnash their teeth at this. How may this amaze a wicked man? if all the curses in the Bible will make a man miserable, he shall be made so,

The second Use is this.

Take heed that none of you here be found amongst the number of the wicked; take heed of being of this black Regiment that wears the Devils colours; and fight under his Banner, the sinner and the furnace shall never be parted: Oh! take heed of those sins, which will bring you to Hell fire.

There are (saith Bernard) fiery sins which bring men to Hell fire.

What are those fiery sins? why, the fire of malice, the fire of passion? and the fire of lust and concupisense, and the fire of Revenge; these fiery sins, bring men to fiery plagues, to Hell fire.

When you are tempted to any wickedness, think with your selves, O! how can I bear the fierceness of Gods wrath forever? how can I lie in

the wine-press of Gods wrath forever? Oh! take heed of those sins that will bring you into this place of Torment.

I have read a story of a Virgin, who being tempted by a young man to commit folly, saith she unto him, Grant me but one request, and I will do what thou desirest; what is that, saith he? Do but hold your finger one hour in this burning Candle, no, he would not do that. Saith she, Will not you for my sake hold your finger an hour in the Candle, and will you have my soul lie burning in Hell forever. Thus she rebuked the Temptation.

Doth Satan tempt thee to wickedness, hold out this Text as a shield to the Devil to quench his fiery Darts; say thus, Oh Satan! do I embrace thy Temptations, I must be under thy Tormenting to all Eternity, Oh! therefore labour to be Righteous, It shall be well with the Righteous.

But take heed of sin, it shall be ill with the sinner.

I will conclude all with that saying of Austin, when a man hath been vertuous, his labour is gone, but the pleasure remains; when a man hath been wicked, the pleasure is gone, but the sting remains.

17. Mr. Lye's First Sermon

"Therefore my Brethren, dearly Beloved, and longed for, my Joy and Crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly Beloved." - Phil. 4:1.

My Beloved, I do very well remember that upon the 24th of this instant month, in 1651. I was then under the sentence of banishment; and that very day did I preach my Farewel Sermon to my people

from whom I was banished, because I would not swear against my King, having sworn to maintain his just Power, and Honour and Greatness; and now behold a second Trial; then I could not forswear myself, the God of Heaven keep me that I never may: I am apt to think I could do anything for this loving Congregation, only I cannot sin; but since Beloved, there is a sentence gone out against us, that we that cannot subscribe must not subsist; this is the last day that is prefixed to us to Preach; I shall now speak to you (God assisting me) if my passion will give me leave, just as if I would speak, if I were immediately to die; Therefore hearken my Brethren, dearly Beloved, and longed for, my Joy and Crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly Beloved. Paul was now a prisoner at Rome, for the Gospel of Christ; 'twas his second imprisonment, and he was not far from being offered up a sacrifice for the Gospel he had preached. This Gospel the Philippians had heard him preach, and the godly Philippians having heard of his imprisonment, they sent so far from Philippi to Rome to visit him, and to supply his wants. A gracious temper, which I hope the Eternal God hath given the Saints in London, and for which, if for anything, God hath a blessing in store for them. Paul is not so much concerned in his own bonds, as in the Philippians Estate: Epaphroditus tells him that there were Heresies, and false doctrines got in amongst them, but yet the Philippians stood fast: and herein Paul rejoyces, writes this Epistle, bids them go on, stand fast, keep their ground, and to be sure not to give an inch, but to stand fast, knowing that at long run, their labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

I shall without any more ado enter upon the Text; in which you have two things considerable.

A most melting Compellation, and a most serious Exhortation.

1. A melting Compellation, my Brethren, dearly Beloved, &c.
2. A serious Exhortation, and in it first, the Matter of the Duty, stand, and stand it out, and stand fast. Secondly, the Manner. First, so

stand, so as you have stood, stand fast. Second, In the Lord, stand so, and stand in the Lord, in the Lords strength, and in the Lords cause; to stand in your own strength, would be the ready way to fall, and to stand in your own cause, for your own fancy, would be the ready way to expose your selves to all manner of Temptations: Therefore my brethren, dearly Beloved in the Lord, stand, and so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly Beloved.

In the next place, by way of Observation from the words; and if there be any wicked Catchers here, let them know, that I shall speak no more then I shall draw from, and is the mind of my Text; I would not give occasion to be a greater sufferer then I am like to be. But for the words.

First, For the Melting Compellation, my Brethren, my dearly Beloved. Paul was an Apostle, and an high Officer in the Church of God, and he writ unto the Philippians, to all the Philippians, to the poorest of them; and see how he bespeaks himself to them, (my Brethren) from hence take this observation, That the highest Officers in the Church of Christ, though they are indeed by Office Rulers over them, yet by Relation, they are no more then Brethren to the meanest Saint. Here we have no such Rabbis, to whom we must swear, because they say we must swear it. Paul calls them Brethren, and so writes to them, Gal. 1:2. and James a Scriptural Officer, one of the highest Apostles Christ ever made; saith, Hearken my beloved Brethren, Jam. 2:5. So Peter an Apostle of Christ, Wherefore the rather Brethren; and John the beloved Disciple, Brethren, I write no New Commandment, &c. 1 John 2:7. Well then,

1. If this be so, that the highest Officer in the Church, such as Christ approves of, are but Brethren to the meanest Saint, then certainly they are but Brethren to their fellow Officers; If no more Relation to the Toe in the Body, then no more to the Eyes: If there be any of a light Spirit would bear Rule, that love to have preeminence, I would desire them to read two Scriptures, the first is, Luke 22:26. the second, Matt. 26:27. Doth Christ say, whosoever will be chief among

you, let him be one that will Domineer over your Estates, over your Persons, over your Consciences, doth not Christ say so? no, but Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your Minister, —let him be your servant. Even as the Son of man came not to be ministred unto, but to Minister, and to give his life a Ransom for many: You have this also, Luke 22:25. And he said unto them, the Kings of the Gentiles exercise Lordship over them, (i. e.) over their slaves, over their vassals, but ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he that is chief as he that doth serve. Sure if Paul be but a Brother to Philip, then he is no more to Timothy.

2. If the highest Officers in the Church of Christ be but Brethren to the meanest Saint, then 'tis not for those Brethren to Lord it over their fellow Brethren, Lord it over Gods Heritage; remember 'tis Gods Heritage. I hope your Consciences will bear me witness, that I have laboured as much as in me lies, to be a helper of your joy, not to Lord it over your faith, 2 Cor. 1:24. to press or cause you to believe this or that, because I believe it, if this may be allowed, then may I turn Papist tomorrow. Saith Christ to him that would have had him speak to his Brother, to divide the inheritance with him, Man, who made me a Judge over you? Luk 12:14. So say I, Man, who made thee a Tyrant, and Lord over thy fellow Brethren? 1 Pet. 5:3. Neither as being Lords over Gods Heritage, &c.

3. If the highest Officers in the Church of Christ be but Brethren and no more, then there should be no discord between those Brethren. Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity: and truly I may comfortably speak that, and it is one of the greatest comforts I have in the World. I hope we have lived together in love, blessed be God: Let us not fall out, saith Abraham, the elder, to Lot his younger Cousin, for we are Brethren, Beloved, the discords between Pastor and People, have made the best musick in the ears of the Jesuits.

4. Are Pastors; nay, the highest Officers that Jesus Christ hath, and doth own in the Church, but Brethren? Oh! then let those Brethren if they will appear before the Bar of their Father in Heaven with comfort, take care of offending the souls of Brethren: for at the hand of every Brother, God will require the soul of his Brother, Ezek. 33:6. His Bloud will I require at the Watchmans hand. We that are called by some the Dogs of the Flock, what shall we prove dumb Dogs? what a comfort will it be to my dying Brethren this day, if they can but say, Lord, we are clear from the Bloud of our Brethren? the Officers of Christ should never behave themselves so, that they should give their people occasion to say, we are Brethren to Dragons. But Jer. 9:4. Take ye heed every one of his Neighbor, &c. I would commend one Scripture to all my Brethren in the Ministry, 1 Cor. 8:13. A Scripture that I would have writ in letters of Gold on the Lintel posts of all Ministers doors. Wherefore if meat make my Brother to offend I will eat no flesh while the world stands, lest I make my Brother to offend. Rather then to endanger my soul, led away with all these Toys and Gew-gaws.

2. From the terms of dearest affection, dearly Beloved, longed for, &c. Take this Observation, that it becomes the highest Ministers, much more the lowest, to bear a most tender, vehement, ardent, melting affection, towards that flock or people that God hath committed to their charge. Thus Paul to the Philippians in the Text: My brethren, dearly beloved, &c. You shall find Paul in all his Epistles, in a thawing frame to his people, melting in love unto them: the Corinthians were so in his heart, not only to live with them, but, if God called him, to die for them, so abundantly did he love them, 2 Cor. 12 15. That he would very gladly spend, and be spent for them, carried them in his heart, and earnestly longed after them all. As for the Thessalonians, 1 Thess. 2:8. He, as a Nurse, tendereth and nourisheth them as Children, and is so affectionately desirous of them, that he is willing to impart to them not only the Gospel, but his own soul, because they were dear to him. Then,

1. Is this so? ought the Pastors so to love their People? Give me leave to bespeak you in the words of Job, (in respect of those hundreds of Ministers, that are to be plucked from their people:) Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, Oh ye my friends! for the hand of God hath touched me, Job 19:21. What will nothing serve but plucking out our very eyes? our very heart (being so much the objects of the peoples love?) how sad is it for the Father to be pluckt from the Child, the Shepheard from the Flock, the Nurse from the Child? this is a lamentation, and ought to be for a lamentation, that there must be a parting between David and Jonathan, who loved one another as their own souls; this cuts them to their very heart. And this I may say in respect to myself, I bless God, I cannot say as she of her Husband, A bloody Husband hast thou been unto me: but a loving Congregation have you been unto me. I know none of you have desired my destruction, nor to taint my name; never did I hear three in this Congregation speak of pressing anything against me, that was contrary to my Conscience, nor can I say, that there are four in this Parish that did ever deny to pay me my legal due, blessed be God for such a people; you have not encroached upon my Conscience, as I hope I have not upon yours. Pastors must love their people, do not blame them if their hearts be almost broken, when they are to part with such a people.

2. Must the Pastor love his people? then the people must love their Pastor. Tis true, it lies in the power of man to separate Pastor and People, but not to separate their hearts; I hope there will never be a separation of love, but that will still continue; if we do not see one another, yet we may love one another, and pray for one another, I hope a Husband doth not cease from loving his Wife because she is absent from him. But Oh! for my Brethren, hundreds of them think that you are undone, but you are not undone, though you cannot see as far as other men, you may live in love and keep your conscience quiet.

3. Must Pastors love their People? then you may see from hence what should be the grand object of the Pastors affection, i. e. the People,

not what the people have. This is the great enquiry, what's the Benefice worth? what is the preferment? do they pay well, &c. Whereas we should not seek so much the Fleece as the Flock, we should not take oversight of a Congregation for love of their pay, but of their souls; not, 'tis an excellent good living, as one said I have heard of, let me have their Tythes, and let their souls go to the Devil; but as the Apostle, I seek not yours, but you, 2 Cor. 12:14. And I hope there be many hundreds can say, it hath been the peoples souls they have more loved and affected, than anything that the people had.

4. Once more: We must love them, and love them tenderly; why, and yet leave them? Yes my Beloved, we are so to love our People, as to venture anything for them, but our own damnation. I come not here to throw fire-brands, I bless God I have a most tender affection for all my Brethren in the Ministry; and though I am not satisfied myself, yet I condemn no man; I believe there be many of them do as conscientiously subscribe, as deny to subscribe. I protest in the fear of God, I cannot subscribe, perhaps it is because I have not that light as others have; for he that doubts, saith the Apostle, is Damned. My Beloved, I hope you would not have us sin against God and our own consciences: it is not my Living that I desire, but my Office to serve my Lord and Master; but if we should, to keep communion with you, lose our communion with God, this is the ready way to have all our labour and pains lost; but as David said, (and Oh that I could speak it with as good hopes as David!) Zadock, carry back the Ark of God, If I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both it and his Habitation, &c. 2 Sam. 15:25. Brethren, I could do very much for the love I bear to you, but I dare not sin; I know they will tell you, this is Pride and Peevishness in us, and are tender of our Reputation, and we would fain all be Bishops, and forty things more: but the Lord be witness between them and us in this. Beloved, I prefer my Wife and Children before a blast of air of peoples talk; I am very sensible what it is to be reduced to a morsel of bread: let the God of Heaven and Earth do what he will with me, if I could have subscribed with a good conscience, I would; I would do

anything to keep myself in the work of God, but to sin against my God, I dare not do it.

3. My Joy and Crown; therefore my dearly Beloved and longed for, my Joy and Crown, my present Joy and future Crown: my Joy which I value more than a Crown, my principal Joy. Hence observe this Doctrine, That the fixed, standing, flourishing growth of Saints in Gospel practice, and Gospel obedience, is, or ought to be, matter of transcendent Joy to their Pastors. It was so to the Apostle Paul; Paul heard how they stood, though there was a plague amongst them, yet they were not infected; and though he was in the Gaol ready to be beheaded, yet this was his Joy and Crown, that his people did stand; and I hope my Brethren, it will be our joy and crown to hear of your standing and growth in Gospel-knowledge and profession: And,

1. If this be so, as John said, I rejoyced greatly, that I found of thy Children walking in the truth: It should be the prayers and endeavours of all Pastors, really to love the souls of their People, and to pray for them: that when they cannot look after the souls of their Children, yet that good Nurses may be lookt out for them; What a joy was it that Moses's Mother was made his Nurse? and who can tell, it may be, though not out of any merit of ours, yet of their own clemency, our Governours may give us to be Nurses over our own Children: but if I cannot Nurse my Child myself, I will wish it well, and as good a Nurse as I can: far be it that those that are to succeed, should not prosper: Lord, it shall be the prayers of thy servant, that those that are to succeed, may have a double and trebble portion of thy spirit, that they may be both painful and faithful, &c.

2. If the peoples growth in grace and knowledge, be matter of Joy to a faithful Pastor: then what do you think of those that hinder their thriving? I shall give you two Scriptures, John 12:19. The Pharisees therefore said among themselves (they durst not speak publicly; but who was it against? why, it was against Christ) perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold the world is gone after him. But we will order him for that, we will lessen his Congregation; if we cannot do

that, we will shut the doors against him; see Matt. 23:13. Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites, for ye shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men: what! shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men! what the Pharisees, that pretended they had the Keys of Heaven, and to be the guides! I, that it is, because there is not room enough in Heaven for us and them too? No, faith Christ, there is no such matter, for ye neither go in your selves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. I dare not tell you at this time, what it is to shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men, you may better imagine it than I can speak it; but thus did the Pharisees, they would not go in themselves, nor suffer them that were entering to go in. I remember when I was a Child, we had such a Minister, that would one Lords day preach up Holiness, and the next Lords Day preach against the practice of Holiness.

And now my Brethren, I come in the next place to speak to the last part, Stand fast; and because I see a Hurricane a coming, keep your ground, stand fast, and live in the Lord here, that you may live with him hereafter.

18. Mr. Lye's Second Sermon

"Therefore my Brethren, dearly Beloved and longed for, my Joy and Crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly Beloved." - Phil. 4:1.

From this Scripture you have these three Doctrines,

1. That the highest Officers of the Church of Christ, though they are Rulers of them, yet they are but brethren to the meanest Saints.
2. That it becomes a true spiritual Minister of Christ, to have a most vehement, ardent, strong, melting, tender affection, to that flock or people which the providence of God hath committed to his charge.
3. That the fixed, standing, flourishing, and thriving of that flock in the profession and practice of Gospel-knowledge and obedience, is matter of transcendent joy and triumph to such a godly Pastor.

The fourth, which is that I would now prosecute, is this, that it is the grand and indispensable duty of all sincere Saints, in the most black and shaking seasons, to stand fast, fixed, and stedfast in the Lord.

This is a grand thing St. Paul had to say to the Philippians, when he was ready to have his head cut off; for so it was, he was beheaded for the testimony of Jesus: this is all he had to say, when in Goal, and in Bonds, and that under Heathen Romans; you are now my Joy, you are now my Crown; Oh! do but stand, and my Joy, which is but two notes above Gamut, will get to Ela: Oh! do but stand, and my Crown is studded with Diamonds: we live if you stand, though we dye when you stand. It is the great and indispensable Duty, &c. Whether these are black and shaking seasons, I have nothing to say, but I am wholly now upon your Duty Beloved, and for Gods sake let the words of a seemingly dying Minister prevail with you. There is a kind of a Maxim among some, that in case a person dye seemingly and revive

again, that the last words that was heard of that person, when in a rational temper, are the only things that that person will remember, when brought to life again. It is most probably Beloved, whatever others may think, but in my opinion (God may work wonders) neither you nor I shall ever see the faces of, or have a word to speak to one another till the day of Judgement. Therefore I beseech you hear me, as those that would, and may live with me to Eternity: mark your Duty, I have spoken something concerning the Pastors Duty in the morning; now for the peoples. It is the indispensable duty of all sincere Saints, to stand fast, &c. I confess, I have a love for the whole Auditory; I have a mess for them, but my Benjamins mess is for those I once called my own people: you are my Benjamins, I wish I had a greater than a fifth for you. This proposition I shall first prove, and then secondly improve.

In the worst of times, in the most shaking seasons, and if I do not greatly mistake, there is an hour of Temptation threatned by God, now beginning to be inflicted: if ever you would stand, stand now; and for your comfort let me but hint, that a Christian may stand comfortably, when he falls sadly, that is, he may stand by God. when he falls by man: I knew that a great many years ago.

First then, it is our duty to stand. There be Scriptures more then enough to prove this to be your Duty, Col. 1:12. Stand perfect and compleat in all the will of God. Phil. 1:27. Only let your Conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ; that whether I come and see you, (alas poor Paul, thou come and see them, thou wast beheaded before thou couldst come and see them, but) or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together (not to pluck out one anothers throats, no more of that: but striving together, not against one another, but) for the faith of the Gospel. So 1 Cor. 15:58. Therefore my Brethren be stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. 'Tis our Duty to stand. But

2. Wherein must we stand fast? I have no new Doctrine to preach now, I shall but mind you of what I have formerly spoken, when you would not believe. I confess I do not begin to be of a new judgement now: and should I be continued in the Ministry, (a mercy I can hardly hope for) I should be of the same judgement, and preach this Doctrine, Stand fast.

God will certainly bring the people of God in England, to his own terms, or else fare them well for ever. What is that we should be stedfast in? I would advise to a stedfastness.

1. Of Judgement.

2. Of Resolution.

3. Of Faith.

4. Of Conscience.

So stand fast in the Lord in your Judgement, in your Resolution, in your Faith, in your Conscience.

1. I would advise you to a stedfastness of Judgement. Strange Doctrines are the greatest Fetters that do assault a sound Judgement; they are like waves, if they do not split they will shake the Ship to purpose: therefore your way is, to cast Anchor well, to stand firm on the Rock of Truth, I had almost said all in a word Protestant truth, though the market may rise somewhat high, yet stand firmly there; while strange Doctrines, like so many impetuous Waves, are beating upon you, break themselves in pieces they may, but if you stand, can never hurt you. I am not to begin to warn you against Popery, not that I have the lest reflexion on anything in the World, but on the Scriptures. I am apt to think, the wound of the beast must be healed; however, do not you spread a plaister for the Beast, to heal his wound: Be no more children tossed to and fro, carried about with every wind of Doctrine, with every wind of windy Doctrine, by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness, that can cog

the die; notable Gamesters there are in the world, but you must stand steady in judgement, you must be firm to your principles: I would have you Stars not Meteors, for Meteors are carried about with every blast of wind. I hope better things of you, I shall pray God would make you stedfast in judgement. First be sure to get good principles, and secondly be sure to stand in those principles that you have got. And though I cannot say but some Tares are sown among this Parish, yet I bless the Lord for the generality; I hope I may say, I have an Orthodox Ministry.

2. 'Tis not enough to stand in judgement, but we must be stedfast to our Resolution, 1 Cor. 15:58. Be stedfast, unmoveable; such as stand firm on some basis and foundation that doth not totter and stagger: if they find you staggering, to be sure the next moment they look upon you as falling. Be as they say, of one or both of the poles of the heavens, though all the world turns, the poles are immoveable. If I mistake not, you may see a great turn in the world, and behold, at this day the greatest turn, that ever was in England; but yet you must not move, you must not stir, be true to your Resolutions, but just to your first Love; go on in the Lords work, let nothing take you off. If I have preached any false Doctrine among you, witness against me at the day of Judgement; but if the things I have preached be true, stand to the truth; if you do not witness against my Doctrine, (mine 'tis not) but rather witness for it; remember if you leave it, that very Doctrine will witness against you at the day of judgement. Oh! the excellent Hero, Queen Hester, thus and thus will I do, and if I perish, I perish. You cannot imagine against how many thousand temptations a stedfast resolution will guard you.

3. There's a Stedfastness of Faith too; when we so believe, as that we do not waver, or do not deviate. Will you give me leave to propose to you (my dear friends, though my Congregation I cannot call you) that question which our Saviour did unto the Jews, (whom he hated, though I love you) The Baptism of John, whence was it, from Heaven, or of men? The Doctrines you have heard, have they been from Heaven, or from men? Answer me, if from men, abhor them;

man is a false Creature, man would make merchandize of your faith and Souls: but if from Heaven, why then should you not believe them? I bless the Lord, my Conscience bears me witness, I never did so far propose a Doctrine to you, I would have you believe without Scripture: if the Doctrines have been from God, believe them; if not, abhor them, and any of those that shall dare to bring a Doctrine, but dare not bring the Authority of the Scripture to warrant them. You may not be like those in Jam. 1:6. That wavereth like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind, and tossed. The most godly man may stumble in his way, (i. e.) tread awry; but a wavering minded man is never settled concerning this way. Blessed be God, I am not now (on this day, that looks as like my dying day, as can be in the World) to begin to fix upon a Religion, fix upon my way; I know my way, if God will but keep my steps, and guide me in that way. If God be God (I appeal to your Consciences) worship him; if Baal be God, worship him, do not stand in disputing and doubting; do not say, shall I? shall I? if the ways you have found be the ways of God, follow them; God hath but one way to Heaven, there is but one truth; if Baal be God, follow Baal, do not stand wavering; do not consult with flesh and blood; 'tis an infinite mercy that God will give any of us to leave Relations, Estates, Congregations, anything for Christ; 'tis an infinite mercy we do not split upon a Rock: Be sure to be either for God or Baal; a godly man many times halts in his way, but never halts between two opinions.

4. Stedfastness of Conscience: Indeed the genius of my Ministry hath lain this way, and here I could casily lanch out, but I must be short. I would speak a word in season to those that are weak, it becomes you to be stedfast in conscience; then have a God-decreeing, a Christ-redeeming, a Spirit-quickenig, a Gospel-promising, a Heaven-prepared, a God infinitely more ready to save him, then he can possibly be desirous to be saved by him. Be stedfast in Conscience against the guilt, the filth of sin, against the temptations of Satan, &c. Let us draw near with full assurance of Faith; you can never believe Gods love so much, as Gods love doth engage you to believe, &c. I might add,

5. You must be Stedfast in Conversation; 'Tis not the running well, but the running out; 'tis not the fighting, but the conquering that gives you Title to the Reward; for you to give a great deal of milk, and throw it down all at length with your foot, may argue you to have a good dugg, but a bad foot. Never give those Beasts of Babylon occasion to say, that a man may be a Child of God in the morning, and a Child of the Devil at night; that we contradict that Doctrine by our conversation, that we be stedfast,

But why must we be stedfast?

Alas, why? would you have me marshal up all the Reasons? bid me count the Stars, or number the Sands on the Sea-shore: There is not an Attribute in God, not a Precept, Promise, or Threatning in the word, not an Ordinance, not a Providence, there is nothing in God, or in the Devil, or in Sinners, or ourselves, but all would give a contribution of Arguments to prove the Saints should be stedfast. I must but hint at a few things. First, I would argue from Jesus Christ. Believers, you love Christ, and therefore you love the Honour of Christ; now the honour of Christ is highly engaged in our stedfastness. We never cast a deeper blot on the Honour of Christ, than when we grow unstedfast; I need not tell you so, the Jesuites, those meek Papists will tell you so, those that delight in nothing more than in milk of the Virgin Mary, and in the bloud of Saints; they have enough if you be unsteady.

1. You dishonour Christ in his sufferings, pray tell me, Believer, why did Christ sweat bloud? why did he dye? why did he undergo what the wrath of Devils could inflict, but for this end, to make you stand in conquest triumphing? Thus I remember as Joshua, Jos. 13. Come put your feet upon the neck of these Kings, &c. So Christ hath dyed that you might live, that you might stand; and what dishonour to the Eternal Saviour of the world, to a dying Saviour, to see a flying Christian. It was never heard of, that Souldiers should fly before a conquered Enemy, whose legs were cut off, whose arms were broken, whose swords were taken from them.

2. 'Tis a dishonour to the Spirit of Christ, the same Spirit that was with Christ, in all his Agonies, this very Spirit he hath given to Believers, that he might bring them through with some victory, therefore when we stand not, it is an high dishonour to Christs Spirit.

3. It is a dishonour to Christs Truth: Oh! let but a Saint fall, and what dishonour doth it bring to the Truth: I have but thought of some late experiments of poor Ministers, that I have heard of, carried about in triumph, look here is the man, that hath done this, that, and the other thing; and now look here is his—I cannot excuse Noah for his Drunkenness, yet methinks it is the part of a Cham, to shew his Fathers nakedness. I remember that one hath told me (it is a great truth,) that Religion never suffers greater wounds than by the hands of her professed Friends. Oh! what advantage have the wicked Papists taken against us by the falls of English Professors, both in principle and practice.

4. It is a very great dishonour to Christs all sufficiency.

Tell me man, is thy Christ able to protect thee against all evil? and is he able to supply thee with all good? or is he not? if he be not, then deny him, and whatsoever thou hast said concerning him; if he be, then stand close to him; In the Mount he will be seen.

2. I would argue from Saints; the infinite advantage, that at long run (I do not say presently) will redound to those that are steady in judgement, in resolution, in faith, in conscience, in practice, so far as all these are conformable to the word of God, and no further. The greatest advantage appears upon these four grounds.

1. Whatever you think, a steady Condition is the safest Condition.

2. The fullest Condition.

3. The strongest Condition.

4. The freest Condition.

Oh! that I could beat this into my heart, as well as it is in my head: The safest condition in the midst of dangers; the fullest condition in the midst of wants; the strongest condition in the midst of assaults; the freest condition in the midst of straits: I profess in the presense of God, I have felt these things, and knew them to be truth many years ago.

1. It is the safest condition; never do the Saints take hurt, but by declining, moving from their centre; while at their centre the Devil cannot touch them; departing thence, is like the poor Bird from her nest, every one hath a fling at them. Remember this, let but a man once leave his Scriptural station, and what Temptation is he able to stand against? it is just like a man thrown down from the top of an house, no stopping till he come to the bottom, 1 Joh. 5:18. He that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and the wicked one toucheth him not.

2. It is the fullest condition. Oh my Brethren! Saints living stedfastly on their foundation, are continually supplied by God, as the fountain doth continually issue out itself into the streams; I know it is best living upon a single God. How many thousands be there yet living in England, that can tell you, they never injoyed more of God, than when they enjoyed least of the Creature. Some have professed to me, their Prison was to them as a Palace, that were troubled more with these things, than ever you were, and the God of Heaven grant you never may.

3. It is the strongest condition. A man that stands stedfast, is like a man on a Rock, the waters come, they may dash themselves in pieces, but never shall be able to dash him in pieces, he is fixed on a Rock, and therefore stands. A man that stands steady to his Scriptural Principles, is like Sampson with his Locks about him, let all the Philistines come, what cares he, he is able to conquer them all.

4. It is the freest condition. A man that deserts his principles, is a save to every Condition, afraid of every Humour, of every Aspine leaf

in the world, thinks all those are Informers that converse with him, is afraid of some Promooter or other: But he that stands fast, where the Spirit of God is, there is liberty and freedom: such a man in chains as Paul at Rome, is in a far freer condition than others, not in that restraint. Well then, 'tis rational that you stand; but it may be your lusts and interests can hardly swallow these things; if you stand you shall not fall; nay, if you do not stand, be sure you shall fall at last. The next thing I would do, is to apply this truth. Is it the most important Duty of all sincere Professors in the most shaking seasons, to stand stedfast in the Lord? Then

First, by way of Lamentation.

1. Over our own Souls.
2. Over hundreds of Congregations.

Lord, we do say hundreds, nay thousands of Congregations, that are this day, though they do not accompany us in person, yet mingling tears with us, and especially as I hear in the West of England.

1. Over our hearts. We must stand; that is our Duty. Oh how should it cause us to lye low! by reason of the instability of our hearts, and their cursed declining from the true foundation every day. Alas Beloved, this is that God complains of, they are a Generation whose spirit is not stedfast with God; and therefore we have very much reason to complain of it: Oh what an unsettled people have we been! today we have been apt to cry Hosanna', Hosanna, to the son of David: tomorrow our note is changed, crucifie him, crucifie him, give us Barnabas: today the Lord is God, tomorrow Baal: anything is God, provided we may keep our Estates. Oh Lord! what wilt thou do with such a people as this? certainly it is a lamentation, and ought to be a lamentation, believe it beloved, I can now count seven years, if not something more, wherein I have most clearly expected the days I now see; no way but the severest ways to be taken with such a false people as we have been. Judge in your own thoughts, whether we

have been true to God or man, to Saints or sinners, to the Church of God at home or abroad; whether or not this be not matter of Lamentation?

2. With respect to our Congregations. (It is not against the Law yet to call them our Congregations) This I confess, I can rather weep than speak too; I cannot speak my heart is too big for my head here. Lord, is it the duty of people, of saints to stand, to be steadfast? how then should we mourn over their poor souls, that because their Pillars are taken away, must needs for ought we know Fall, unless thou dost support them: what Lord, dost thou complain of a flock of sheep that are scattered? there is no wonder in it, their Shepherd is gone. Do you look on it as a strange thing, to see a poor Ship tossed here and there in the Sea, when her Pilot is destroyed? why mothers, is it a strange thing for your children to fall, and knock their arms, legs, their brains out? why their mother is taken from them: Oh poor people! good God provide for this Congregation, I, and for this City, that (let defacing, abominable wretches say what they will) is certainly one of the best Cities God hath in the world; and therefore they hate it so desperately, because God loves it, and because they hate that God that loves it. I bless God, I can speak of my own people, they are not a mad pestiferous people for the most of them. How many thousand have their hearts at their mouths, now at this time before God in England? Alas, alas, that we should have our Seers carried away from us; but what think you, when poor people shall be exposed to greater temptations, to an Ulcer in the very Kidneys, to a Plague in the very Heart, or Head; you now fear it, but when you feel it, what then?

2. By way of Exhortation, Beloved, I remember good Jacob, when he was come into Egypt, ready to die, calls his Children together, and before he dies, blesseth his children. I cannot say you are my children, but I can say in the strength of God, you are dearer to me than the children of my own bowels. I remember what poor Esau said, hast thou but one blessing my Father? bless me, even me also, Oh my Father! Oh Beloved! I have a few blessings for you, and for

Gods sake take them as if they dropt from my lips when dying; it is very probable we shall never meet more while the day of Judgement; whatever others think, I am utterly against all irregular ways; I have (I bless the Lord) never had a hand in any change of Government in all my life; I am for prayers, tears, quietness, submission, and meekness, and let God do his work, and that will be best done when he doth it. Therefore be exhorted to stand fast in the Lord; my own people hear me now, though you shall never hear me more, be exhorted to stand fast in the Lord: you are not a schismatical, heretical people; I do not know the least person among you inclining to Popery: therefore be exhorted, as ye have been a people that have waited upon the Ordinances of God, that have not persecuted your poor Ministers, that have made it your design and business to live lovingly, quietly, and as it becomes Christians; (I am confident a Minister may live as comfortably among you, as among any People in England) So be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as you know that your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord. Here I had prepared, I confess, several arguments to have moved you to this stedfastness.

1. I could have told you, that withdrawing of any one of you back, you will meet with great temptations, which will very much unfit you for Heaven. If any man or woman draw back, my soul (saith God) shall have no pleasure in him: I could have urged you with examples from the Heathens. Alexander being in Indea, bid them tell him the greatest rarity in their Country; Sir, go tell them, say they, when you come to Greece, there are many here that cannot be forced by the prowess of Alexander to change their minds: I know there are some here, that cannot be easily persuaded to change their Religion. Saith Lactantius, our very women torment their tormenters: I would never desire a more able Disputant, than a woman against a Monck.

I could tell you of those injoyments God hath put on you, our miseries have been great, but our mercies have been greater; I could tell you of six troubles and of seven; of six, wherein God hath stood by, and of seven, wherein he hath not forsaken; and the truth is, he

cannot forsake his people, he may forsake them as for comfort, he will never forsake them as for support; let him lay on a burden, he will be sure to strengthen the back.

3. I hope, it is not dangerous if I tell you, you are engaged to God; there are vows upon you, Baptismal vows, to say no more, you have sworn to God, you have lifted up your hands; you are those that have undertaken that you would be true to God to your lives end: if these vows have been any way strengthened, Oh! remember Zedekiahs case, Ezek. 17:18,19. Seeing he despised the Oath by breaking the Covenant (when lo he had given his hand) and hath done all these things, he shall not escape: therefore thus saith the Lord God, as I live, surely mine Oath that he hath despised, and my covenant that he hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his own head. Remember it, you may play fast and loose with man, you must not think ever to carry it away, by playing fast and loose with God.

4. If you should not stand, you lose all you have wrought, all your prayers, tears, professions, practises, sufferings, are all gone if you give out at last, &c,

5. While you stand by God, God hath promised to stand by you; and the truth is, I have but one God, it is no great matter for all the tiles in Worms: There be a thousand Devils, but all those Devils are in one chain, and the end of that chain is in the hand of one God: Oh! God will shew himself strong, 2 Cor. 1:6▪ 9. For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro through the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them, whose heart is perfect towards him.

Quest. But what shall I do to stand?

Answ. 1. If ever you would stand, if ever you woul'd be firm standing Christians indeed, take heed you be not light and proud Christians; a feather will never stand against a whirl wind; error and profaneness are most apt to breed in proud hearts. The Proud and Blasphemers are put together; (2 Tim 2:2.) Be but humble Christians, that's the

way to be standing ready Christians; if ever you would be steady in your stations, you must below in your own eyes, do not you go and judge. And now, we shall have another kind of Religion come up, as we have had it a great while, such a man cannot be an honest man, alas, he is a Presbyterian, he is an Independent, he is an Anabaptist, &c. Now, all your great business will be, such a man cannot be good, an honest man, for he doth not Conform; on the other side, he cannot be an honest man, for he doth Conform. These are poor things; I bless God, I lay not the stress of my salvation upon on these: It is true, I cannot in conscience conform, but I do not lay the stress of Salvation on it, as I did not lay the stress of my Salvation on my being a Presbyterian; I confess I am so, and have been, it hath been my unhappiness to be always on the sinking side, yet I lay not the stress of my Salvation upon it. It is my Conscience, but it may be I have not so much light as another man, and I profess in the presense of God, could I conform without sin to my own Conscience, I would; if I should do anything against my conscience, I should sin and break my peace, and conscience, and all, and never see good day: do not then spend the strength of your zeal for your Religion in censuring others. That man that is most busie in censuring others, is always least employed in examining himself. Remember good John Bradford, he would not censure Bonner, nor Gardner, but saith he, they called Jo. Bradford, the hypocritical Jo. Bradford, &c. I do not speak this, as though I can or did in Conscience approve of those things, for which I must suffer, that I cannot approve of them, but take off people from those things, that are so far from the foundation: look you but to the main things, look into your own hearts, examine them, and then you need not be much persuaded to look about to others.

2. You must take heed you be not loose Christians, will you remember one thing from me, (the God of Heaven grant you never live to see it verified.) a loose Protestant, is one of the fittest persons in the world to make a strict Papist. Tell me not of his Protestantism, being a drunkard, it is because his King or Countrey are Protestants where they live. There is no Religion in a loose liver: if ungodliness

be in the heart, it is no difficult thing for error to get into the heart. A loose heart can best comply with loose principles: see, if they will not be of any Religion in the world thats uppermost; let the Turk prevail, they would soon be of his Religion.

3. Take heed of being a worldly Christian: Oh! this is the David, that hath slain his ten thousands. A worldly heart will be bought and sold upon every turn to serve the Devils turn. Come to a worldly heart, and but promise him thirty pieces of silver, he will betray his Saviour. The Temptations of the world are great upon us, at this time, you that are Husbands, and Parents, know it; the world is a great temptation; but if we be overcome by the world, and the world not overcome by us, we shall never be able to overcome any one Temptation that is offered to us. Therefore that's an admirable support, In the world you shall have Tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world: I have overcome the world for you; and likewise I have overcome the world in you. Oh Lord! if thou wilt but overcome the love and fear of the world, if thou wilt but arm us against the smiles of the world, then come what will, we shall stand stedfast.

4. Take heed you be not Hypocritical Christians, i.e. take heed you do not receive the Truth, and only the Truth, and not receive the Truth in the love of that Truth, Thess. 3:10. You have received the Truth, but have you received the Truth in the love of that Truth which you have received? want of this, is that damnable occasion to Popery; And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the love of the Truth, that they might be saved, &c. It is just with God that they should fall into errors, whose hearts did never love real Truths; better never received the Truth, then to receive it, and not in the love of it.

5. Take heed of being ventrous and God-tempting Christians; What is that? when do I tempt God? I tempt God when I run into a Pest-house, and say, God will preserve me from the Plague. Take heed of running upon temptations to sin, whether it be in principles or in

practice. I could tell you of two Spiritual Pest-houses in England, if I had time; for principles one, and for practice another: I do not say that I mean Play-houses, on the one hand, or Mass-houses on the other hand. Certainly Brethren, I read of Julian, that wicked bloody Apostate, that he sunk into that his Apostacy first, by going to hear Libanius preach, mistake me not, I am not against your going to hear the Ministers of Christ, for a man may be a true Minister, though he be a bad man; all the World can never answer the instance of Judas, who was a true Minister, though a bad man; while I plead for the truth of his Ministry, I do not spread a skirt over the wickedness of his life. The Scribes and Pharisees set in Moses' chair, hear them.

But that which I mainly aim at, is this, do not you go, and run, and venture your selves upon temptations: you have heard of a superstitions or idolatrous Worship, you have a months mind to see this, and what if so be when you are found in Satans way, Satan should lay his paw on you, and claim to you, what do you there in Satans ground? would you be found when you come to dye, in a Play-house, or in such a place, where the true God is Idolatrously worshipped? It is a great truth, if you would not be found in the Devils power, do not be found in the Devils pound. Brethren, we must know Satan is busie enough to tempt us, we need not go to tempt him. Eve lost all that she had by hearing one Sermon, but it was from the Devil. Therefore, if you would not have you pockets pickt, do not trade amongst Cheaters, 2 Tim. 6:3, 5. If any man teach otherwise, &c. (than that ye have received, and we Preached) from such withdraw thy self, that is a good, honest, laudable separation, from such withdraw thy self.

6. Where God doth not find a mouth to speak, do not you find an ear to hear, nor an heart to believe, (pray mind it, this I am sure is of concernment) this is one of the grand points in my Cards or Compass, on which I hope I shall venture all. If any man come with a Doctrine, not according to the Word of God, let him carry it whither he will, what have I to do with it? either you come from God or no, if you do, shew me his Word, and Ile believe it, if not, open your pack

where you please, &c. where God doth find a mouth to speak, where you have not a Precept, Promise, Threatning or Example in the Word of God, let them talk their hearts out, it is nothing to me, to my Religion, to my Salvation.

Object. But what ground have you for this?

Answ. Jesuit, I will tell you my ground: this is my great hold I have against Popery, could they convince me of this, That I must believe with an implicit faith, because they say it, I think it would not be long before I turn'd Papist.

Quest. But why must I not believe it with an implicit faith?

Answ. Look you into these three great Scriptures, Matt. 15:2. Why do thy Disciples transgress the traditions of the Elders? The Jews come and tell Christ, he was not a true Son of the Church of the Jews, he was disobedient to the Church of the Jews; why? thou hast Disciples that walk not as they ought; what do they do? they commit an unpardonable sin, they transgress the traditions of the Elders, they break one of the greatest Commandments: whats that tradition? They wash not their hands when they eat bread: This was the great sin, and they charge it on him, eat with unwashed hands; why bring you in this Tradition? What have you to say to it? what is that to the purpose? prove Jesus Christ that there is anything in the word of God that is against washing? but prove you out of the word of God, where they are bound to wash before they eat? if you will give out your imposition, make out your institution, & let me tell you, you talk of Tradition, but first you set up an Altar God never thought of; and secondly, you pull down Gods Altar; Why do you all transgress the Commandments of God by your Tradition? for God Commanded, saying, Honour thy Father and thy Mother; and he that curseth father or mother let him die the death; but ye say, whosoever shall say to his father or mother, it is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, and honor not your Father or Mother, he shall be free; thus have ye made the Commandment of God of none effect by

your Tradition: ye Hypocrites, you were told of it long ago, well did Esaias prophesie of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me, They draw near, wash their hands, wash their cups, and have filthy souls, they honor me with their lips, &c. But though their principle, their heart is bad, their worship is good, is it not so? no, in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. So then my Brethren, remember, all those that teach for Doctrines, the precepts of men, in vain do they worship God. Here's an innocent Command, not against the Word of God; but this Command you must wash before you eat, if you do not wash, you do transgress the tradition of the Elders: but let you starve Father and Mother, if you give but to the Church, to a Nunnery, Friery, &c. it is all one; so that all those that will for Doctrines teach the traditions of men, will render the Commandments of God of none effect, in vain do they worship me. Look therefore where ever God doth not find a tongue to speak, do not you find an ear to hear, nor an heart to believe. Christians, if you expect Christs benediction, always call aloud for Christs institution, so Col. 2:18,19. one of the greatest steps you have against Popery, Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of Angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, &c. Deut. 12:13. What things soever I command you, observe to do it, thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it. There are no Wens in the body of Gods Precepts, therefore none of them to be cut off. You must not deal with Gods Ordinances, as that Tyrant Proustes did with men, if they were too long for his Bed, he would cut them shorter; if too short, he would pull their limbs out of joynt to make them longer. Never think your selves in conscience bound to lend an ear to that which God doth not find a mouth to speak.

7. Would you stand fast? beware of shaking Doctrines: what are those? there are a great many of such Doctrines, that are shaking; give me leave to instance in three or four.

1. As you love your souls, beware of Doctrines that tend to, and preach up licentiousness, looseness, and prophaneness: should any tell you, you may lawfully violate and prophane the Sabbath, do not believe it; the doctrine of the Gospel, is a doctrine of godliness: it teacheth us to deny ungodly and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godlily in this present world; therefore if you find any Doctrine at any time, that should have the least tendency to encourage you in any sin, know 'tis a doctrine against the Gospel

2. Where ever you find any Doctrine that shall tend to the lifting up of a mans free will, and debasing of Gods free grace, know, it is a wicked doctrine, and against the genius of the Gospel; perhaps the Papists will tell you, you are alive, Paul tells us we are dead: they say that we can do anything, many things that we talk to the world, we cannot do; they say, That we can save ourselves and close with Christ if we will, whereas the Apostle tells us, 1 Cor. 1:14. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned. It may they will tell you, a natural man may love God with his heart really, as so, and savingly, whereas the Apostle tells you, Rom. 8:7. The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject unto the Law of God, neither indeed can be. Remember it in all those doctrines wherein we agree with those whom we call Pelagians, and Arminians, so far we agree with the Jesuits, and the worst of Papists.

3. As you would avoid Hell, avoid all those doctrines that would lift up self-righteousness, and debase the righteousness of Christ; I fear I shall never be in that capacity that I would, to stand you instead in this particular. I confess I am against forty things in Popery, but my soul is here engaged; if that doctrine be a truth, I never expect salvation by God; either I must be saved by Christ alone, or else I must never be saved by Christ at all: though Christ will never save me without sanctification, yet Christ never intended my sanctification should merit his salvation; be as holy as you can, as if there were no Gospel to save; yet when you are as holy as you can, you must believe in Christ, as if there were no Law at all to condemn

you. Come and tell me of the merit of Saints, &c. I will believe that truth, when I believe the Whore of Babylon to be Christs Spouse, see Phil. 3:9, 2 Cor. 5:21.

8. Why should you stand? you must be praying Christians: I confess when most of my strings are broken, there is yet one holds; there is a Spirit of Prayer (remember Atheist) among the Saints of God, I can pray yet and I had rather stand against the Canons of the wicked, than against the prayers of the righteous. Oh! pray that you enter not into temptation; or, if we enter into temptation, Lord, let not the temptation enter into us; pray, if possible, let this cup pass from me, but if not, let it not poyson me, but let me be bettered by it, and in due time deliver me from it. I believe, it would be a great temptation to you, if it should be said to you, you shall trade with no man any more, &c. you have enjoyed these and these comforts, bid them adieu forever, you shall have no more to do with them; this would be a temptation. Temptations and Tryals are great, and certainly where they are so, prayer should be strong. There is no relief to be expected on earth, all our relief is to be expected from God, and that's to be obtained by prayer. Pray that God would be pleased above all things in the world to make you sincere: would you be stedfast in your profession, you must be sincere in your practice. To him that hath shall be given, that is a comfort; to him that hath but truth of grace, to him shall be given growth of grace. Would you be steady Christians, then make it your great work to attend the Ordinances, that God hath prescribed to make you steady Christians: you were told of this many years ago, concerning attending the Ordinances of God.

Quest. Pray what are those?

Answ. 1. There are secret Ordinances: it may be thou canst not be so much in the Pulpit as thou wouldst; Oh! be more in thy Closet; it may be thou shalt not have so many opportunities to hear so many Lectures, be more conscientious in thy meditations in secret: it may

be thou shalt not have that freedom with God in publick, be more earnest with God in private.

2. Mind your families more than ever; you have your Children and Servants call aloud upon you. How many grave faces do I see at this time, that can tell me, Sir, I remember some twenty or thirty years ago, you could not pass the streets, but here was one Family repeating the Word of God, another singing the praises of God, another praying to God, another conferring concerning the things of God; at that time we had not so much foolish absurd excursion into streets and fields as now. O! for the Lords sake begin to take them up now, let the Amorite, Perisite, and Jebusite do what they will, but oh! for you and your children, and your servants, do you serve the Lord; up again with those godly Exercises; when we cannot hear a Sermon, then read a Sermon; if we cannot hear a Sermon well Preached, our Godly Parents would engage us to read a Sermon well Pen'd; if nothing new, let the word repeated and meditated call to mind what you have heard; Oh! reduce your selves to your Christian frame; let the debauched Atheists know, that they have something among you to be feared; that's your prayers: let them know, that though you have not those opportunities you have had, yet you will improve those you have. And you Masters of this Parish, for Gods sake, keep in your Servants on this day more than ever, you are to be accountable for their souls; and they will give you a thousand thanks when they come to age, especially at the day of judgement; Oh! then blessed be God I had such a Master, blessed be God I had such a Mistriss, blessed be God I had such Parents.

Quest. But then for publick Ordinances, what would you have us do?

Answ. 1. Where ever Christ doth find a tongue to speak, I am bound to find an ear to hear, and an heart to believe. I would not be mistaken, I bless the Lord I am not turned out of my Ministry for being a Schismatick I know Schism is a sin, nor know I any of my Brethren that are so; do not mistake us therefore, do not go and tell the Jesuits we are Schismaticks, for we are none: But this I would

advise, (I speak as though I were dying) do whatsoever lies in your power, to hear such whom you think to be godly: beg of God, be earnest with him that he would give Pastors after his own heart, and whom God hath sent: not such as may daub with untempered mortar, and not such as may prophecy lies in the Name of the Lord; not such as may be clouds without water, but such as may be guides of the blind, burning and shining Lights, faithful Stewards. What shall you do? what did you twenty or thirty years ago? what did the good old Puritans do? they were not Schismatics. But as much as lies in you possible, hear them whom in your conscience God doth hear; Oh! then expect the Word of God should come to your hearts, when you have ground to believe it comes from your Pastors heart: I must confess, I intend to do the same, when put into the same condition with you; I acknowledge I am bound in Conscience to hear the Word of God, but I must take care whom I hear, hear those by whom God speaks, I hope God will grant several such.

Take but this advice more, and I have no more to say. Whatever abuse you find either in Paster, in People, or where-ever you find it, do not go as your old use have been, to rail, caluminate, back-bite, and speak behind their backs, this is wicked and ungodly; but do every one according as God prescribes us that are members of any visible Church; what's that? If I know anything against my Brother, do not go and make a sputter and a noise, and back-bite; but take the rule of Christ, If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him of his fault between him and thee alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother; but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, and if he neglect to hear them, tell it to the Church, and leave the bloud at their door, thou hast freed thine own soul. I hope by Gods grace I shall do so. Thus I have now spoken something from this Scripture, I cannot speak what I desire; for besides the exhausting of my Spirits, there is something to be done after, viz. a Funeral Sermon: I sh•ll say no more, but only this; The God of Heaven be pleased to make you mind these plain things; I can truly say this, I have not spoken one word that I remember, which I would not have said to you if I had been a dying, and being to go to God as

soon as gone out of the Pulpit, and the God of peace be with you; only mind that one thing, When God doth not find a tongue to speak, do not you find an ear to hear, and an heart to believe.

19. Mr. Mede's Farewell Sermon

"Grace be unto you, and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ." - 1 Cor. 1:3.

You will wonder, possibly, that I should pitch on the Apostles Salutation for my valediction, and make that the conclusion of my Preaching, which he made the beginning of his Writing, and therefore I have made a double Plea for it. I find that this was a Form of Blessing peculiar to this Apostle, both in the beginning and end of this Epistle; for as there is scarcely one Epistle but begins with it, so many end with it likewise; as in Eph. 6:24. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. So in 2 Thes. 3:18. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your all. So that I find the Apostle to use it frequently at the beginning and end of his writing; I thought as I made it the matter of my prayer for you in the beginning, so I might make it my farewell to you in the ending, and therefore Grace be unto you, & peace from God our Father, & from our Lord Jesus Christ.

Besides this, as Jacob said to his Benjamin concerning his Venison, when his Father asked him, how he found it so quickly? he answered, because the Lord thy God brought it to me: The same I may say of this Scripture; for considering of what subject I should speak in my last labours here among you, the Scripture came to my thoughts, and opening the Book came immediately to my sight; and therefore I may say God brought it to me; which I no sooner looked upon, but methinks I saw the Apostle on Mount Gerizim, and his mouth filled with blessings; for what greater blessings can a man wish, than that which comprehends all blessings, and that is grace and peace. Being

therefore now to part, I thought to go to the top of the Mount, and leave with you grace and peace from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ. In which words there are two generals.

1. A double Blessing desired.

2. A double Spring discovered.

1. A double Blessing desired; and that is grace and peace. Grace is of all Blessings the richest, peace is of all comforts the sweetest; both these the Apostle begs for the Corinthians; and so do I for you. Beloved, Grace be unto you, and Peace from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Here is a double Fountain discovered; and that is the Father and the Son, God and Christ. The Father is called the God of Grace: the Son is called the Prince of Peace; not that Grace is from the Father without Peace, not Peace from the Son without Grace, but both Grace and Peace are from God the Father, through the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Order of the words is worth nothing, Grace be to you and Peace; First grace, then peace, for there can be no peace without grace, nor grace, but there will be peace: but there can be no true peace but from God, not from God, but as he is a Father, not from God as a Father, but as our Father, and he cannot be said to be our Father, but through our Lord Jesus Christ: and therefore he said, Grace be unto you, and Peace from God our Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ: both are manifested as a golden Chain linked together, not grace without peace, nor peace without grace, but both enjoined together, to cram the believers Souls with grace and peace. Now from the Order of the Words, we might raise several Observations.

1. That Peace is the fruit of Grace.

2. That Grace and Peace are both from God.

3. That Love which is the spring of Grace and Peace, is from God as a Father.

4. That we share not in his Love, but only as he is our Father: All is from Propriety.

First, Our Father, then grace and peace from God our Father.

5. That God is our Father only through Christ.

But before we draw anything from the Text by way of Observation, we will speak to the terms by way of Explication. Grace be unto you: What is here meant by Grace? This is a sweet word, it perfumes the Breath, it cherishes the Conscience, it warms the heart, it ravishes the Soul; as the Spouse was ravished with the rays of Christs glory, so Christ revives the Soul with one of his gracious rayes discovered to the heart: Grace is the life of the Soul, thou art dead till Grace quickens thee, thou art lost till Grace find thee, undone till Grace saves thee; Grace is the Manna of Angels, the spiritual Bread which those that are holy in being are nourished with, and subsist by: Angels live on Grace, and stand by Grace; Man that shares in the Grace of God is made fellow Commoner with Angels, eats Angels food, and shares in Angels blessings: Grace is the substance of the Scripture, the end of the Law, the fulness of the Gospel: Gregory calls it the Heart and Soul of God, I am sure Grace is the Heart and Soul of the Word; 'tis a little Word, but it comprehends all good: here is more than Homers Iliad's in a Nut-shell, 'tis the Epitome of all the good in Heaven an Earth; name any Word that signifies good in the Soul here, or hereafter, but it is found in the Index, in this little word Grace: Grace comprehends Gods love to us, and our love to God, and as Gods love to us is the sum of all Mercy; so our love to God, is the summe of all Duty; Grace is the new birth of the Soul, whereby it takes up another nature, a new nature, a spiritual Godlike nature; as Christ was born and thereby took on him the nature of man, and was made flesh; so man is born by grace, and thereby takes upon him the nature of God, and is made Spirit: and here you have at once the

great mystery of Grace in the lowest debasement of a Saviour, and the highest advancement of a Sinner, for the Lord Christ could not be more debased, than to be born; it was nothing so great an abasement for Christ to dye, as for him to be born, for being once made man, it is no wonder for to die, but being the great God, it is a wonder that ever he should be made man. Lo here is the debasement of Christ; yet if he had been born to a Crown, to Honour, it had been something, but he was born to shame, to sorrow, and death; but man by grace is born to a Crown, to a Kingdom, he hath a title to all the glory and blessedness of heaven, from the first moment of his new birth; So it is in the Text, Grace be unto you and Peace.

Peace, in Scripture, is a very comprehensive term, it carries in it all happiness. It was the common greeting of the Jews, Peace be unto you. Thus David by his Proxy salutes Nabal, peace be to thee, and thy house; and the Apostle here alludes to this form of salutation, that he might mix new Testament mercy to old Testament manners; he first stiles Grace, before peace; as Jacob did with his Venison, he made it a savory meat, such as Isaac loved. Peace is the glory of Heaven, in the bosom of God, and brought into the world in the arms of Angels; the first peace you read of in the Gospel, was peace by the Administration of Angels, Luke 2:3,4. And suddenly there was with the Angels a multitude of the heavenly Host, praising & saying, glory be to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men. And when our Lord Christ first sent out his Disciples, this was the Doctrine that he bid them preach, Matt. 10:12,13. When you come into a house, salute it, and if it be worthy, let grace and peace come upon it. Mark here by the way, our Lord Jesus Christ is no enemy to good manners, he would not have Christians to be Clowns, which is the use of some among us, who would have their Religion quarrel with good manners; no, but In whatsoever city or town you enter, salute it, and let grace, peace come upon it: that is, wish peace to them, saying, the peace of God be upon this place, upon the head and hearts of all in it. So that peace is both a Gospel-salutation when Ministers and people meet, and it's a Gospel-valediction, when the

Minister and the People parts. So did the Apostle, and so do I now, Grace be with you and Peace.

I observe in Matt. 10:13,14. our Lord bids his Disciples when they enter into a house, If the house be worthy, to let their peace come upon it, but if they be not worthy, let grace, peace return unto you. Instead of leaving peace with them, to shake off the dust of their feet against them: that is, to shew that God will shake them off as dust, and tread them under feet as fuel. My Brethren, your diligent attendance on the Word at this place hath comfortably prevented that part of my charge, to shake off the dust of my feet; for, how beautiful have the feet of a poor worm been unto you, being shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Christ? And therefore seeing our Lord Jesus Christ said, If they be worthy of their peace, abide with them; on this account, I wish to you, grace and peace from God our father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ. But what is that peace? Its the beauty of Union, the harmony of the Creation, the pleasure of Life, the feast of a good Conscience, 'tis that which makes life sweet, and death easie: Peace sweetens all our possessions, and all our afflictions, without this the fulness of the world is a burden; with this, poverty and emptiness is a pleasant Companion: without this, our bread is graveled with sourness, and our water mingled with bitterness; with this green Herbs become a feast, and our water is turned into wine; peace, it is the most beautiful creature in the world, And therefore it is beloved of all, courted of all, many seek her but few there be that enjoy her, they do not go the right way to find her; for, In the ways of Righteousness is peace. Peace is the seminary of all blessings temporal, as Grace is of all blessings spiritual, in grace you have implied all Holiness, in peace all happiness; in grace all inward, in peace all outward blessings, grace and peace are the Alpha and Omega of all blessings, as God is of all beings; no blessing comes before grace, and no blessing lasts longer: Then see in this phrase of speech, the Apostle wishes upon them, as I do upon you all, the blessings both of time and eternity, and yet he wished not more to them, than God promised to give them, 1 Tim. 4:8. For godliness hath the promise of this life, and that which is to come; grace be unto

you, and peace, &c. not one without the other: though a man may have peace without grace, as in a time of disquiet, or temptation, and a man may have peace without grace, as in a secure and unregenerate Condition; grace without peace is often found in a troubled conscience; and peace without grace is often found in a seared conscience, as grace without peace is very uncomfortable, so peace without grace is very unprofitable; like Rachel, beautiful, but barren: therefore the Apostles desires ye should have both Grace and Peace: we say, the Sun and Salt are the most useful creatures in the world; the one for shining, the other for seasoning. (My Brethren) grace and peace are the Christians Sun & Salt; grace is the light of their souls, and peace is the savour of their comforts; grace shines through all their faults, and Peace seasons all their mercies. The blessings of God are become as twins, as Christ said of the Spouse, Cant. 4:2. She is like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which come up from the washing, whereof every one bear twins, and none is barren among them; grace and peace here are knit together by the spirit of God in a sacred knot not to be untied; as Castor and Pollux, when seen together, portend happiness to the Marriner: so when Grace and Peace are found in a soul together, they portend the highest security and blessing to the Believer; they are said in Scripture to be bound together; where God gives the one, he never denies the other: if he gives you the upper spring of Grace, he will give you the neather spring of Peace, for they go both together. If he gives you the Dew of Heaven, you need not question the fatness of the Earth: if his right hand be full of mercy, his left hand shall not be empty. Therefore grace and peace be with you from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

Grace hath a double sense, either for the grace of God to us, that justifies us, or the grace of God in us that sanctifies us: Now there is a different flowing from each of these, but still it is grace and peace.

First, justifying grace, hath a peace attending that, Rom. 5:1. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God. So far as we have confidence in justifying grace, there remains no conscience of

condemning sin. As there can be no bitterer War than between conscience and the ear, so there can be no sweeter Peace, than when Mercy and Peace meet together, and when Conscience and Peace kiss each other: The former is the taste of Heaven, the latter is the perambulation of Heaven; both which the Believer shares in upon his Justification by faith. If Christ had peace, who was made our sin, needs must the Believer have peace, who is made the Righteousness of God in him.

Secondly, Sanctifying grace hath a peace attending it, and this peace differs from the former, as the Root from the Fruit. The peace of Justification is a radical Peace, the root of Peace; but the Peace of Sanctification is the bud, the blossom of the Tree: the former flows from the bloud of Christ sprinkled on the Conscience, the latter from the conformity that is between the Word and the Will, between the Commands and the Conscience; As many as walk according to this Rule, grace be unto them and peace, Gal. 6:16. So that Peace is the fruit of sanctifying Grace. Now as the bloud of the Pascal-Lamb, (which was a token of peace) was not to be struck on the posts of the Egyptians, but upon the posts of the Israelites; so neither is the bloud of sprinkling, which brings perfect peace, to be struck on the Posts of the carnal Sinner, but on the Posts of the true Believer, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile; no Grace, no Peace, that is Gods Law. How can a sinner have peace in a state of sin, when God and conscience, when Word and conscience, when Law and conscience, and all the Attributes of God are against a sinner? No Peace saith my God to the wicked. Pray mark that chapter, it begins with the peace, and ends in no peace. In ver. 2. it is said, He shall enter into peace, that is, the Righteous: in the last verse, there is no peace to the wicked. It is the state of Grace that is the only state of peace. And thus I pass from the double Grace desired, Grace and Peace; to the double Fountain discovered, God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

But here's a question to be answered, If Grace and Peace be from God the Father, then how is it said to be from Christ? and if from

Christ, how then from God the Father?

Answ. It's a known Rule, that the transial external works of God are attributed to all the three Persons in the Trinity; the same works that are attributed to the Father, are also attributed to the Son; and the same works are attributed to the Son, the same also to the Father: so Grace and Peace are here ascribed both to God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ; that is, they are both from Mercy, and from Merit. From Mercy on Gods part to us, from Merit on Christs part for us; they are from God the Father, because he wills them to us, from God the Son, because he works them in us: they are from God to Christ, from Christ to us; they are from God the Father originally, and from Christ derivatively, and to us actually: God the Father is the fountain of all Grace and Peace, Christ as Mediator is the Conduit of all Grace and Peace; Man in union to Christ is the cistern into which these streams of Grace and Peace runs; God wills Grace and Peace to us, & Christ works them in us; God gives Grace & Peace to be applied to the Creature, this is from the love of the Father, but the Application of this peace to the soul, is from the Merit of Christ the Redeemer: Thus you see there's a double spring of this double blessing. Time will not serve me further: The only Observation, is;

That all the Grace and Peace which Believers share in, is derived from God the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ: these three things opened will clear this;

1. That Grace and Peace are the Believers privilege.
2. That the Fountain of this grace and Peace is from God the Father.
3. That it is not given out from God the Father but through Christ.

First, That Grace and Peace are the Saints privilege; if Grace is, then Peace is. But Grace is the privilege of every Believer, and that whether you look upon it as taken from the love and favour of God to us; this is the Believers privilege. God can as well forget Christ at his right hand, as cease his love and favour to the soul of a Believer; the

Believers title to all their blessings arises out of this never-failing love of God; or if you aske grace for the fruit of Gods love to the soul, still it falls to the Believers privilege, Vocation, Justification, Adoption, pardon of Sin, purging from Sin, strength against sin, Holiness, Faith, Love, Obedience, Perseverance; all these are the privileges of every Believer; nay, a man cannot be a Believer without any one of them, they are as essential to the Being of a Christian, as reason to the Being of a man.

Secondly, As Grace, so Peace is the Believers privilege: There is peace external, peace supernal, peace internal, and peace eternal: There is peace external, this peace with men; there is peace supernal, that is peace with God; there is peace internal, that is peace with Conscience: all these three are to be had here upon earth; and then there is peace eternal, and that is only to be had in Heaven. The Apostle here doth not exclude the former, but chiefly intends the latter: peace with man is a good thing to be desired, but peace with God and Conscience is much more to be desired. Peace with God is the spring of all things both within and without, both below and above, both in time and eternity: so saith Job, if he gives peace, who then can make trouble? Now this peace is the Saints privilege. it is a Legacy left to every Believer, by the last Will and Testament of a dying Redeemer. Will you see a copy of his Will, then look in Job. 14:27. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you. There is, it seems, a peace in the worlds power to give, and there is a peace of Christs bestowing. Now Christ would have us here not to mistake the worlds peace for his, for the difference is very great; for first, the worlds peace is a false peace, it is counterfeit coin, it hath not the current stamp of Heaven on it; but the peace that Christ gives to a Believer, is true peace, and perfect peace:

Thou will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee.

Secondly, The Worlds peace is an outward peace, it is but skin deep, it wets the mouth, cannot wash the heart, Prov. 14:13. In laughter the

heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness. The worlds peace is but the shell of peace; their Conscience lowers, when their countenance laughs: but the peace that Christ gives, is an inward and spiritual peace, Psalm 4:7. Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased. Thou hast put gladness in my heart: Peace is that gladness, or peace smooths the brow, but this fills the breast, as the sinner hath trouble within, in the midst of all his peace without: In the world you shall have trouble, but in me you shall have peace.

Thirdly, the worlds peace has only a neither spring arising out of the Creature, out of worldly comforts, therefore it must needs be unclean; for an unclean fountain cannot bring forth clean water. But the peace of Christians has an upper spring, it flows from the manifestation of the love of God in Christ: it is from the sprinkling of Christs bloud on the conscience, it flows upon the workings of Christs Spirit upon the Soul, which is first a Counsellor, then a Comforter. Oh how pure must this peace be in a believers soul, that flows from so pure a spring!

Fourthly, the worlds peace is a peace given to sinners, it is a peace in sin, and it is a peace with sin, as the Prophet Isaiah tell us, It is a Covenant with Hell, and an Agreement with Death (God delivers us from that peace.) Again, Christs peace is given to none but believers, it is their privilege only, a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy, Prov. 14:10. The heart knoweth his own bitterness, but a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.

Fifthly, the worlds peace is a fading, dying, transitory thing, it withers in the Sand, the tryumphing of the wicked is but short, and the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment, Job 20:5. Solomon doth elegantly liken it to crackling of thorns under a pot, which is but a blaze and is gone, Eccl. 7:6. so is the sinners peace, it is for a spurt and is soon gone, but the peace that Christ gives to Believers, is a durable and abiding peace. Your joy no man shall take from you, it appears in life, in death, and after death: first it is our peace in life,

grace brings forth present peace. It is said of the Primitive Christians, they walked in the fear of the Lord, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost, Act. 9:41. It is a remarkable expression, Psalm 19:11. In keeping thy Commands there is great reward: He don't say for keeping them, which respects the end of the work, but in keeping them, which looks at the work itself: My brethren, every duty done in sincerity, reflects a peace in conscience, as every flower carries its own sweetness. It is possible, I grant, a Believer may not always find and feel this peace; few do, some seldom find it, few find it always: the remains of corruption bringing forth to interrupt, or temptations to hinder, and Gods dissertation may darken and hide it, and a Believer may seem to be totally lost: yet in this condition, which is the worst a child of God can be in, he hath a double peace: first, a peace in the promises, in this very condition, and what you have in Bonds and Bills you account as good as money in your pockets. Secondly, he hath it in the seed, Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart, Psalm 97:11. Grace is the seed of Peace, which Christ hath sown in the furrows of the soul, and therefore peace shall spring out of the furrows of the soul. Indeed this seed springs up sooner in some than in others, yet every Saint shall have a reaping time sooner or later, Psalm 126: He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him: If he stays long for the fruit, he shall have a greater crop at last, if he reaps not now, he shall be sure to reap hereafter, Psalm 37. Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace. Secondly, by this peace which is the peace of a Child of God, it is a peace at death; Grace will Minister to us then, and that Ministration shall be Peace; the sinners peace leaves him when he comes to the grave; though in life it fills him, yet in death it leaves him. A Believer hath a two-fold spring of peace, the first is from above him, the other from within him: That spring that runs with peace above him, is from the blood of Christ sprinkled on his conscience: the other that is from within him, is from the sincerity of his heart in the ways of Obedience. My Brethren, when we lye on our death-beds, and can reflect on our sincerity in all Gods ways, this will be peace at last, so it was in

Hezekiah, Isai. 38:3. Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which was good in thy sight. There's nothing makes a death-bed so hard and so uneasie, as a life spent in the service of sin and lust, and nothing makes a death-bed so pleasant as a life spent in the service of Christ: Grace will bring forth Peace, if not in this life: yet Thirdly, it will be sure after death: if time brings not this fruit to ripeness, yet Eternity shall, Grace in time, will be Glory in Eternity, Holiness now will be Happiness then; whatever it is a man sows in this world, that he reaps in the next world: be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap; he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting, Gal. 6:7, 8. When Sin shall end in sorrow and misery, Grace shall end in peace, in joy, in glory; well done thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Master. Matt. 25:21. Whoever shares in the Grace of Christ in this world, shall be sure to share with the joy of Christ in the next world, & that joy is joy unspeakable▪ & full of glory; I will wind up all in a three-fold Application, by way of Exhortation, to three sorts of persons.

1. To such as have this Grace and Peace.
2. To such as have this Grace and no Peace.
3. To such as have neither Grace nor Peace.

First, to such as have both Grace and Peace; Ile speak to them in two or three things. First, admire thankfully the Father & the Son, the Fathers Grace, and the Sons Love, for both had a hand in this, therefore bless both the Father for willing it to us, and the Son for working it in us; Grace and Peace are the fruits of Gods eternal Election, for this blessing the Father gives, but the Application of it to us is the fruits of Christs redemption and intercession. How can you think of Hell and Damnation, and see yourself freed from it? And how can you think of the dreadful fury and vengeance of God,

yourself not under it? How can you look on your state change, your heart renewed, Grace ratified and reconciled, and your Conscience quieted? How can you think of these things, but must admire the love of the Father in giving this to you, and the love of the Son in purchasing this for you? All Grace and Mercy that is given to us, is by Christ purchased for us; Grace and Peace are fruits of the redeeming blood of Christ purchased.

Secondly, do not envy the conditions and possessions of the men of the world; they have riches and honours, profits and pleasures, but they neither have Grace nor Peace, therefore do not envy their happiness. There is a story of a Roman that was condemned by a Court-Marshall to dye for breaking his rank to steal a bunch of Grapes; and as he was going to his Execution, his fellow Souldiers laughed at him, and others envied at him that he should have Grapes and they none: Now (saith he) do not envy me for my bunch of Grapes, for you would be loath to have them at the rate I must pay for them. (My Brethren) You that are the children of Grace and Peace, do not envy at men of the world, at their riches and their comforts, their pleasures; for I am sure you would be loath to have them at the price they pay for them; for the end of these things is death.

Thirdly, do not complain of the worst condition that the providence of God shall cast you into; in this it maybe you shall suffer hard things, but remember, so long as thy soul is secure, never complain of hard things. (My brethren) as God your Father brought you into a state of Grace and Peace, and thereby secured his love to your souls in Christ, can you complain of hard things? So let the joy of the Lord be your strength, Rejoyce in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoyce, Phil. 4:4.

The second Use is, to such as have neither Grace nor Peace: May not I say, I speak to many such? I would I might not. Are there not many that are without Grace, and therefore must needs be without peace? They may have the worlds peace, but they have none of this peace; let

me beg of you to get out of this Graceless state. Oh that you would believe the words of a dying man, for so I am to you, and such words use to be remembered. Oh remember this as a testimony I leave with you, that love of Sin, and lack of Grace, will ruine and destroy every soul at last. But you will say, how shall I get a share in this Grace and Peace?

I answer, First, break off all your false peace: we can never have true peace with God, when we content ourselves with false peace; you will never seek that peace which Christ hath purchased for you, while you content your selves with that cursed peace which the Old man hath wrought in you: Oh therefore break off all false peace, which is not the fruit of grace.

Secondly, labour to see and be convinced of the miserable, and of the naked condition your souls be in, for want of the righteousness of Christ for a covering, without this, soul, thou art miserable, wretched, poor and naked: be convinced also what a miserable thing it is to have God our enemy; God is the sinners enemy, It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Oh be convinced of thy nakedness without Christs righteousness, and thy emptiness without his fulness.

Thirdly, labour to go out of your selves to Christ for grace and peace: Surely in the Lord, shall one say, I have righteousness and strength; I, there it is to be found. Labour for a thirsty frame of soul, for the promises run far to such, That he will fill the hungry with good things: go to Christ, soul, beg, pray, never leave God till he hath given thee an interest in Christ, for none can come to me, except the Father draw him: there is no pardon for the least sin out of Christ, but there is pardon for the greatest sin in Christ; one sin can damn the soul out of Christ, but no sin can hurt the soul in Christ. Oh go to Christ, soul, never give rest to thy eyes, nor slumber to thy lids, till thou hast made peace with God in the blood of Christ. One sting of the fiery serpent was mortal, without looking upon the brazen Serpent; so one

sin will damn a soul out of Christ, but no sin can damn a soul in Christ.

Fourthly, to such as have grace, but no sense of peace, this is the counsel I would leave with all such, Be much in the exercise of grace: frame much, believe much, use grace much, for the exercise and improving of grace will produce peace. There are ten duties which are to be the sphere of grace in activity, and in performing of them we shall have peace:

First, Make Religion your business, the main design of your lives; be Christians to purpose, be not only Christians by the bye, but let your conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ, Phil. 1:27.

Secondly, put forth renewed Acts of Faith on Christ every day, and remember it is as much your duty to believe in Christ today, as if you had never believed before. O live by faith every day, and this will bring peace to you.

Thirdly, maintain a constant communion with God daily: this communion with God is mans chief good; the happiness of a Child is in communion with his Father, and the happiness of a wife is in communion with her Husband, and this is the happiness of a Believers soul, communion with God the Father, through Christ our Head and Husband. The seed of peace, it's true, it is sown in the soul in Union, but then it takes root downward, and brings forth fruit upward. Spiritual peace will never be obtained if communion with God be not maintained: that gives comfort in the midst of all sorrows, and satisfies all doubts, and recompenses all wants. Lo this is the fruit of communion with God.

Fourthly, be good at all times, but of all, best in bad times; many Christians lose their peace, by remitting of their grace, and let loose the reins of Religion, to avoid the censures of a crooked generation. A Christians zeal should be like winter fire, that burns the hottest when

the air is coolest: or like the Lilly, that looketh beautiful though among thorns; so should a child of God though among sinners.

Fifthly, in all conditions choose suffering rather than sinning: If ever you would have peace, choose suffering rather than sinning; he that values peace with God, or peace with conscience, he must make this his choice. Daniel rather chose to be cast to Lions than to lose the peace of his conscience: the three Children chose rather to burn in the Furnace, than to bow to the Image. One said, He would rather go to Hell free from sin, than to live in Heaven with guilt on his Conscience. (My brethren) let me a little enlarge, because sufferings may overtake us; for Persecution is the genius of the Gospel, therefore let me leave for short Rules with you concerning sufferings.

See that your Cause be good, your Call be clear, your Spirit meek, and your End right. Sufferings cannot bring our peace without either of them, but with them all our sufferings shall be peace.

First, let your Cause be good: It's not the Bloud, but the Cause that makes a Martyr: it is not for every cause a Christian should engage to suffer: every cause will no more bear suffering, than every little stream will bear a ship: nor will Christ let go sweetness to every suffering, 1 Pet. 4:15. Let none of you suffer as a Murderer, or as a Thief, or as an Evildoer, or as a Busie-body in other mens matters. To suffer thus, is neither Christian-like nor comfortable; some suffer rather as Malefactors than as Christs Martyrs.

Secondly, let your Call be clear: It's not amiss to have a good cause without a Call: some may suffer for the cause of God, and yet sin in suffering for want of a Call. Christ calls not all to suffer; to some it is given, to others it is not: if thy Call be clear, thy Peace will be sweet, though thy sufferings be never so great. But you will say, how shall I know when I am called to suffer?

Answ. 1. When Truth suffers by our silence, then are we called to suffer.?

2. When our lives will be the denial of Christ, then are we called to deny our lives for Christ.

3. When sin and suffering surrounds us that we cannot get out, but we must either run through sin or suffering, then I may safely conclude, That Christ calleth me to suffer, and in this cause we may expect the peace and sweetness of his presense.

Thirdly, the third direction for suffering is this, Our spirit must be meek; so was Christ, he went as a Lamb to the slaughter.

It is possible a man may be right in his cause, and yet sinful in his carriage: and if so, no wonder if Christ be not sweet to us. To be fierce, and raging, and reviling in suffering, it is not becoming humanity, and therefore much less like Christianity. A Christian should be like Christ, Act. 5:41. And they departed from the presense of the Council, rejoycing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his Name.. It becomes those that are found in the spirit, to give blessing for cursing: the more of Christs spirit is in our sufferings, the more comfort and joy we shall receive from our sufferings.

Fourthly, see that your End in suffering be right: If it be self or singularity, or schism, then Christ cannot be sweet to thee. Some have died that their Ends may live. Socrates died in the defence of the Truth, and to prove that there is but one God, but whether he died for Honour, Applause, or for Gods sake, I think it is not hard to determine. But let thy Cause be good, thy Call clear, thy Spirit meek, and thy End right, and then you shall have peace in all your sufferings: that is the fifth thing. Choose sufferings rather than sinning.

Sixthly, if you would have peace, be much in studying the Scriptures: for as God is the God of Peace, and Christ the Prince of Peace, so the Gospel is the Gospel of Peace, which God hath given to thee to lead thee in the ways of peace, Great peace have they that love thy Laws.

Seventhly, take heed of Apostacy, either in Doctrine or Principles: Though a Believer is freed from Apostacy in the state of grace, yet he is not freed from Apostacy in the degrees of grace. He may fall sinfully, though he cannot fall finally. Demas fell by one, St. Peter by the other. Pray with David. Psalm 17:5. Hold up my goings in thy paths, that, &c.

Eighthly, Make the Word of God your rule in all things: be sure you have a Scripture warrant for all your practises; but especially keep close to Scripture in matters of Gods worship.

There are endless discourses about the Mode of Gods worship; I have no disputing time. It is good in difficult cases, always to take the surest side: (for instance) if I follow the traditions of man for the worship of God, I may; but if I keep close to the directions of God in the Scripture, I am sure I cannot sin; for this is the sure word of Prophecy, to which you do well to take heed, therefore in such a doubtful case, Gods will is, that we take the surest side: go to the Law and to the Testimony: labour to be fruitful and grounded Christians.

Ninthly, keep up the power of Godliness, do not let Religion down into a lifeless formality: The righteous shall flourish like a Palm-tree: He shall grow like a Cedar in Lebanon, those that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the Courts of our God, Psalm 92:12, 13. My Brethren, it is as much a duty in them that have grace, to improve it, as for them that have no grace to get it. If you sit under the daily means, the daily waterings of God, and do not grow, do you think this will be peace in the latter end? surely no, (my Brethren) your fruitfulness under the Gospel is of very great concernment. It's unfruitfulness that makes God lay his Vineyard waste. It's fruitfulness that procures the forwarding of your account in the day of grace.

Tenthly, observe that excellent rule of the Apostle, Phil. 4:8. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever

things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any vertue, and if there any praise, think on these things. And now, my Brethren, I commend you to God, and to the Word of God, that is infinitely able to make you wise to salvation, with this Benediction which I shall make my Valediction, Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

20. Dr. Seaman's Farewell Sermon

"Now the God of Peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepheard of the sheep, through the blood of the Everlasting Covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be Glory for ever and ever, Amen."- Heb. 13:20,21.

The Apostle, being now upon the conclusion of this Epistle, after a very large discovery of Jesus Christ, in all those things that belong to his Person, concerning his Nature, as God, as Man, and concerning his Offices, especially concerning his Priestly; and concerning the blessings and benefits, especially in matters of Sacrifice, doth in this last Chapter insist on matters Hortatory; and in the words, draws near to a conclusion, which contains a Prayer, wish, or desire, which he puts up unto God, in the behalf of them, in order to their good and benefit. Now the God of peace, &c.

In which words, there are two things considerable.

1. The matter, of the Apostles Prayer.
2. The grounds, which he doth insinuate for Audience.

In the things he desires, the Matter of the Prayer is laid down in v. 21 and is summarily and generally propounded in several expressions; yet nevertheless, so as they have their Specialities belonging to them. In the beginning he shews what he aims at, make you perfect, &c. In general it refers to their Sanctification, and that they be thoroughly sanctified, as to their inward man, and outward conversation, as to those things that belong to them, in the habits of their minds, and Eternal carriage.

The Grounds which the Apostle uses, by way of insinuation for Audience, are contained in the words of the 20. verse, wherein we have a very large description of the Person prayed unto; The God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, &c. He describes him under such notes and marks, as serve much for enlargement, and enforcement, in the matter of prayer.

But here a Question may arise; Seeing Grace is the thing the Apostle principally desires, and 'tis usual with holy men, both under the Old and New Testament, to chuse out such Attributes, as sure most with their particular occasions, and are most agreeable to those requests they have, why he doth not apply himself to God, as the God of all grace, but rather, the God of Peace?

Therein first, the Apostle seems to make use of that same liberty which belongs to holy men. As there is in the General, a Liberty left to Gods People from God himself: Paul in this place makes use of that liberty he had, as to the manner of prayer, using such a description of God, as seemed good to him at present. But secondly, if he be the God of Peace, it follows, he is the God of Grace. If God hath glorified himself so far among the Hebrews, as to reconcile them to himself, by the blood of Christ, then there is no question, God will proceed further; and having provided for those things which appertain to their Justification, no question but he will for those things that are necessary to their Sanctification. Therefore, the Apostle argues plainly from Justification, to Sanctification; He that justifies his people through the Blood of Christ, Sanctifie you by the

spirit of Christ, make you perfect to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, &c. So desires we should be Sanctified, on the consideration of our Justification; having provided for Justification, by the blood of Christ, followes Sanctification by the spirit of Christ, 1 Thes. 5:23. And the very God of peace sanctifie you wholly, &c. that God who is ally'd to you, the God of peace, and hath provided for you Peace, I desire he would further provide Sanctification; for Sanctification is nothing else, but the effect of that grace, which is procured for Believers through the blood of Christ. There is no access to God, for Sanctification of our Natures, until we prevail with him for the Justification of our persons, and he first shews himself to be a God of peace, by way of Justification, before a God of Grace and Sanctification: But to proceed.

First, for the description of the person; wherein take notice of him.

1. By one of his Attributes.

2. By one of his special works, whereby he hath manifested that Attribute.

1. The Attribute of God, is implied, under those words, that he is called the God of peace. The Gracious God that provides for reconciliation between himself and sinners; that finds out ways and means to win those who are by nature Children of wrath, to be the Children of God. There is no peace, but God is Author of, whether natural peace, or civil peace, or political peace, he is pleased to provide for them: but there is a transcendent kind of peace, which doth with a peculiarity belong to Gods people, i.e. Spiritual peace between God and sinners, and that inward peace that we enjoy, if our conscience hath been troubled with terrour of sin, Wrath, &c. Peace belongs so to God; as none of the Creatures can have any Glory of it, Psalm 4:7. The peace, is Gods peace: none can effect it, or devise it, but God; and with respect to this, he is more especially called the God of peace; because he hath found out a way to make

reconciliation between God and his sinful perishing Creatures, 2 Cor. 5:19, Ephes. 2:14. &c. Col. 1:13.

2. There is a special Work of God attributed to him, that the Apostle takes into consideration, i.e. That he brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting Covenant; wherein we have many words, and every word its weight; and we shall scarce be able to weigh every one so, as to take the full sense and emphasis of them. In the words there is,

1. Something implied.

2. Something expressed.

1. Something implied; namely, That the Lord Jesus Christ was sometimes in the state of death; and that being in the state of death, it was not any ordinary power, way, or means, could ransom him. He was in the state and condition of the dead: he was, for a while, under the power and dominion of Death: his body, for the space of three dayes, lay in the Grave, and in that sense, he was under the dominion of death, as all dead men are. The Great Shepherd of the sheep could not have his own life, in some sense: no interest he had in God, by vertue of Sonship or any of his Offices, could save him from death, though the Son of God, and Head of the Church; and Christ looked upon it so far from being below him, as he thought it necessary for him, and it was his glory, J•. 10:11, 12. I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd gives his life for the sheep: but he that is an Hireling, and not the Shepherd: whose own the sheep are not, seeth the Wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep and fleeth, &c. Hirelings they have no spirit or principle in them, that they should lay down their lives for the sheep: but he so much respected his Fathers glory, and good of his flock, finding there was no way to bring them to salvation, as he denyed himself in all other respects, for their good: so in this respect lays down his life for them. And herein the Church of God seems to have a deadly kind of wound, to be at a deadly loss, Zech. 13:7. I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. But herein lies

the wonderful goodness and wisdom of God, he is pleased to improve, as the life, so the death of Christ, for the good of his Church, Luk. 24:16. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things? it was very expedient that seeing the sheep could not otherwise be saved but by the Shepherds dying, that the Shepherd should lay down his life for the sheep: and seeing no other way to make reconciliation to God, it was very expedient Christ should die. Therefore 'tis to be taken notice of, that it doth not mis-become the Head, therefore not the members of the body. They must be content to lay down their lives for the Flock, for so did the great Shepherd.

2. Something expressed. Where, take notice,

First of the person spoken of.

Secondly, of that which is given us to be taken notice of in particular.

1. The Person to be taken notice of, is, our Lord Jesus Christ. That which we have considerable, is, First, The Title that belongs to him in his Church: in this regard, called, The Great Shepherd of his sheep; The Shepherd of the sheep, yea, the great Shepherd of the sheep. Whatsoever glory was to be communicated to any Member of the Church, it was first put into the head, before they were to be made partakers of it. Some were to be made inferior ranks, Ephe. 4:11. but it was not fit any should have such glory, to be called Shepherds, before he had that honour of him. Therefore 'tis the Great Shepherd, he that is Shepherd not of a particular Congregation, but of the whole Church of God, he is the Saviour of all his body, he hath the full number of all the Elect, both among the Jews and Gentiles, committed to his charge to save.

2. What betides this great Shepherd, through Gods grace towards him, that is, that he is brought again from the dead, i. e. that he doth attain to a state of Resurrection, and here take notice of this by the way, for consolation; The great Shepherd of the Sheep doth dye, but the great Shepherd of the Sheep rises again. Herein argues Gods

love, that though he would suffer him to dye, yet not to see corruption, Psalm 16:10. because he is the great Shepherd, therefore he must dye; but because he is the great Shepherd, therefore he cannot continue in the state of the Dead; Death must not triumph over the great Shepherd of the sheep, no, not by any means. As it was necessary that he should dye, much more that he should rise again. We read Rev. 11. concerning two Prophets: when they had finished their course they dye, and their dead bodies are cast into the streets, &c. but we read also of their resurrection. There is a twofold state incident to those persons, one state of dying, another state of rising; and so it is not peculiar to Christ only, but to others with him. The great Shepherd of the Sheep dies; no wonder if the little Shepherds dye too. But the great Shepherd is raised, so shall the little ones in their order, and in their time, 1 Pet. 5:6. When the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Resurrection is that which Christ exemplifies first in his own Person, in order to assure all his members, they shall attain to the same state with him; and God is as easily able to provide, when he sees expedient, to raise them from the dead, as to suffer them to dye. Christ he brought again by a high hand, and in a tryumphant manner; he did not with so much sorrow and trouble to himself, and his Disciples, go to, but as triumphantly come from the grave: So can God, with a word, in a moment bring them to life again.

2. By what means the great Shepherd comes to have this honor conferred upon him, that he should be raised from the dead? There was worth enough in his person, but 'tis not altogether ascribed to this; but (through the blood of the everlasting Covenant) i.e. by, and in, the virtue and efficacy of it: he had died as a Priest, and his blood was a blood of sacrifice, and it was shed for the remission of sins, and salvation of souls; because Christ did die for so noble an end as this, and in such a manner as that his death became a sacrifice, and did seal the everlasting Covenant, wherefore Christ is the Mediator; therefore with consideration of this blood of Christ and of the ends, uses, and benefits of it: hereupon it is that Christ is raised from the dead. In Zac. 9. the resurrection of Christ was prophesied of, but by

vertue of his blood-shed, so that Christ was more fit to be raised, who dyed for such noble and honourable ends, as the glory of God, and salvation of his people, in the vertue of that Covenant God hath made, and in the vertue of the blood of Christ, shed for the sealing of that Covenant.

Now, what this Covenant is, is worthy to be considered, because of its Epithets, called here Everlasting Covenant: There was a Temporal Covenant God made with the people of Israel, and that was sealed and confirmed by the blood of Bullocks, &c. Christ took not on him this Covenant, he did not bind men to stand by those terms contained in the Covenant; for indeed, Christ came to make void. There is an Eternal Covenant, and that is nothing else but those terms of grace and favour, which are proposed to us in the Doctrine of the Gospel, which amounts to this, whoever repents shall be saved: he that repents and forsakes his sin shall find mercy; and that he will be merciful to all on these conditions in all parts of the world; for these terms God will not repent of. If men repent they shall have the benefit of it, and whoever believes shall be saved. 'Tis called [Everlasting] because God will abide by it, both here & hereafter: the states of all shall be determined according to the terms of this Covenant. Now Christ shed his blood to procure those terms contained in that Covenant: for the case of poor sinners was so miserable, that they could never come to have all their sins pardoned, and their Souls certainly saved, unless Christ had died and shed his blood, and so to satisfie Gods justice, that it might be free for him to be merciful, where he would be merciful. The Covenant is founded in the blood of Jesus Christ, that blood being the blood of the Everlasting Covenant; therefore the Apostle so magnifies it, of all the great and Gospel-blessings that belong to the New Testament, to the condition of a child of God, there is not any like unto this, the blood of the Everlasting Covenant; they that come to this, and have the benefit of this, they shall be surely justified, and eternally saved in the vertue of this blood. In the business of being saved by Faith, it contributes nothing more, but as 'tis an Instrument to bring us to be made partakers of the benefit of this blood: we are saved not by

virtue of our believing, but by the vertue of his blood; so that, 'tis not so much the Act, as the object of Faith that saves, Christ rose in the vertue of his blood; & all our comforts and hopes are founded in his blood. The blood of Christ was of so much value with God, as that he will raise him from the dead, and 'tis of so much vertue to us, that through it we shall have Justification, and Sanctification, and Salvation, God being so good and gracious a God to Jesus Christ and his Church; hereupon the Apostle emboldens himself to desire his further manifestation of his love, that where he hath so bountifully provided for the justification of sinners through the blood of Christ, that he would provide for their sanctifying by his Spirit. Hence observe,

1. God is with some singularity, the God of Peace.
2. To the end that God might shew himself to be the God of Peace, he hath provided an all-sufficient Saviour for his people, here called the Great Shepheard of the flock; and God being of a gracious disposition towards them, provides to that end Christ shall take care of them, and to all those things that pertain to their eternal welfare.
3. It was expedient this person should dye, though the Great Shepheard; Nay it was necessary, that it might be so much more verified and manifested that he was the great Shepheard of the sheep, that he should lay down his life for his flock.
4. It was as necessary that Christ should be raised from the dead, as that he should dye. Therefore his continuance was but a temporary, nay a momentary time to him. Now Christ is risen, yea, all power in Heaven and Earth is committed to him; and if he was able to do anything for his people before, much more now.
5. The Resurrection of Christ doth arise partly from the tenour of the Covenant God made with man, and partly from the virtue and benefit that was in the blood of Christ. God put himself into a Covenant, Christ was Mediator of it, and in vertue of that Covenant sinners

must be saved; but the Saviour must first save himself, raise himself from the dead, and then hath all power committed to his hand, &c. There are two things that I would have you further observe and carry away.

1. That Christ is indeed the only Great Shepherd of the sheep. Whatsoever others there are, they make to his own interest, whosoever there be that may possibly intitle themselves under the name and notion, yet this is undeniable, that Christ is the only Great Shepherd of the Sheep: therefore in the concernments of the Church, there is none Christians should honour as Christ; and whose voice they ought to hear before his, or by whom they should be ruled and governed, but by him. If Christ be the great Shepheard, then the Church must hear his voyce, for my Sheep hear my voyce, &c. And if he be the great Shepherd, then the Church must be ruled by him, for the Shepherd must have the ordering of the Flock, and the Flock must be at the disposal of the Shepherd. And then thirdly: The Flock of Christ must be careful to please him, (for fear he set his Dog upon him) that we provoke him not to exercise his correct | ing power. He hath his correcting power. He hath his Rod of Discipline, (as well as his Staff and Crook) which is to performed by others as seems good to him, for he hath many ways to let loose the Devil on his own Children. Satan had a desire to afflict Job, and God gave way to it, &c. The Church of God, is Gods Spouse, and there is a great deal of love between the Husband and the Wife, between Christ and the Church: Yet Psalm 4:5. this she is solemnly charged withal. God hath made Christ a head to his Church, therefore his Church must be ruled by Christ; and 'tis not for the Church to say, the inferiour Shepherds would order me thus and thus, we must in the mean while say, but what doth Christ say in such cases? It is not for the Church to go aside by the Flocks of his companions, Cant. 1:7. The companions of Christ pretended to be Shepherds of the sheep as well as he, but have not that power Christ had: They have their societies, and would have the ordering of them; but the Church desires to know where she may hold Communion with Christ, that she may not turn aside by the Flocks of her companions. There are many

Disputations among inferiour Shepherds; but this is out of all dispute, that Christ is the great Shepherd of the Sheep. That great man at Rome never pretended higher, then to be the Vicar of Christ, and Successor of Peter: now we know that the Principal is much more to be regarded then the Vicar; therefore if Christ be the Great Shepherd, surely the Sheep of Christ must hear his voice before all other Shepherds, especially since Christ hath spoken so signally in the case, My sheep hear my voyce, and they follow me, a stranger will they not follow, for they know not the voyce of strangers. And God having so solemnly commanded, Matt. 17:5. This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him. The Great Shepherd must be heard before all little Shepherds. The little Shepherds have their divisions, Acts 20:29. After my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the Flock, also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away Disciples after them. True Shepherds are always careful to make Disciples for Christ, and to bring all Disciples to Christ, All Johns work was to make Disciples, to put them over to Christ, not to make Disciples to him, but to make over all his Disciples unto Christ. If any man will gather, he must gather for Christ, not himself, others would draw men to any matter or manner of Doctrine, Government &c. But our eye must be upon Christ, and our ear open to his voice, and our hearts awed with his will and mind in Scripture, made known to his Church; and they love not Christ as they ought, that desire not to hear his voice before any others in the world, for he is the great Shepherd of the sheep.

2. Though he be the great Shepherd of the sheep, ye he died; and though he die, yet because he is the great Shepherd of the sheep, he is raised again. The great Shepherd dies, the little Shepherds must not think much of it, if they be called to die: We must be contented, if it be exemplified in us, if occasion serve; for if God spared not the great Shepherd, what have the little Shepherds to plead for themselves that they should be spared? If the case fall out, while Habour to serve the Church as I can, I come to suffer for the Church in the end, I do reioyce, and I will reioyce. And truly we had need to

pray for such a spirit as this; for, if this was in the great Shepherd of the sheep, it will very well become the little Shepherds. But against the fear of death here's the comfort. The great Shepherd of the sheep dies, yet is raised from the dead; so shall the little ones; not one Member of the flock, death can always triumph over him. In this respect Christ will have all his Members to be raised, in that he got the victory over death; for Christ arose as the First Fruits, and ascended into Heaven as a fore-runner. Though we may have denial as to the advancing of Christs service, &c. yet the resurrection of the dead is that we must take into our thoughts, and 'tis our solid comfort, God will one day bring all the sheep together into one Fold, and David shall be their King, and have the ruling and ordering of them to all eternity. There is a Resurrection to little Shepherds: when we come to lay down our natural lives, we-can look for no other recompence for it but our Resurrection, and the thoughts of it must be our comfort. And oh! how doth this encourage us to come unto God, though sin be heavy upon us? Remember, there is a God of Peace, that takes to himself his Name, for this very end, that sinners may know for their encouragement, that Reconciliation is wrought out between God and them, through Jesus Christ; and if they will but come and take hold of the blood of the everlasting Covenant, Christ hath said, they shall have all the blessings and benefits promised in the Covenant of Grace, and that the blood of Christ can procure for them; they shall have forgiveness of sins, and salvation of Soul. Therefore, when we consider Christ hath dyed to have a Flock, and for saving of the Flock, and to make himself the God of Peace through his blood, this should:

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It remains, we come to confider of the matter of the prayer: this is very full, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, &c. Here we are to observe two things: First, The matter of the Apostles desire. Secondly, The measure of it. The matter of his desire, is, That the Hebrews may be made perfect in every good work to do the will of

God, i. e. That they may be fully and throughly regenerate, sanctified throughout, both in soul and body, and that they may be furnished with all graces, and enabled for every duty. Take notice of every one of the Expressions: First, make you perfect: 'tis the duty of Christians to perfect every good work, to cleanse themselves from all the impurity of flesh and spirit, and to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord, 2 Cor. 7:1. Secondly, in every good work, in matters of Piety, Righteousness, Charity, Sobriety; for within these heads, most of these things may be comprehended that belong to Christians, they will go a very great way to make a perfect Christian, but that Christian cannot be perfect, that is not sanctified in every one of these. Thirdly, to do his will; that you may be ready, cheerfully willing to do his will on all occasions.

But how is it possible flesh and blood should attain to this? that they should be perfect in every good work? Why, saith the Apostle, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ. Working in you: You see thereby all our works depend on God, and 'tis in vain for us to build on any Foundation but this; for 'tis God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure, &c. Col. 2:12. through the faith of the operation of God; working in you, or doing in you, or causing in you, or making in you, that which is well-pleasing in his sight. Our work is to depend on Gods work; our outward working, depends on Gods inward working.

Again, that which is acceptable in Gods sight, but 'tis only through Jesus Christ; good works themselves, though never so good, agreeable to the Law and Gospel; yet if God look not on our persons and works through Christ, they will not serve the turn, ye cannot be accepted; working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ. Will God be pleased with nothing, but only for Christ Jesus his sake? and if it do not please Christ, it will not please God. 'Tis truly, plainly, verily so. That which God cannot accept of through Christ, he doth not accept at all; but now things are so ordered, that God hath put all things into Christs hands; Christ Jesus hath the ordering of the Worship and Government of the Church; he

hath the making of all the Articles of the Christians Creed; a Christian is bound to believe nothing, but what Christ teaches, as necessary to Salvation; so that in Christ we are compleat, if we believe as he teaches us to believe; and if we worship God as he teaches us to worship God, and have such order and government concerning his house, and walk so as we desire in all things to please our Lord and Master, and have him before our eyes; then are we returned unto Christ, the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. But if we present God with any kind of Creed, Model of Worship, or Government, that hath not Christs Image and stamp upon it, God will say, as Christ concerning the money, Whose Image or Superscription doth it bear? If we can say Christ's; the way of worship we have learned from Christ, that Order and Government in the Church we have learned from Christ, then the Father and Son will own it: If it have Mans superscription upon it, not Gods or Christ, I cannot tell how we should presume it can be acceptable to God, through Christ; for God hath so confin'd himself, he will not be pleased, but through Christ; and that all Matters of Religion in the New Testament should be ordered according to Christs mind, as the Old according to Moses. 'Tis necessary we enquire after Christs mind in what we do: If we can do anything, and in doing it, are sure it will be acceptable to God through Christ, well and good; otherwise not. This is the Apostles prayer, That God would make them perfect in every good work to do his will, working in them that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ.

The Doxology. Whether we refer it to God or Christ, 'tis all one; we have no body to honour and glorifie in the Church but God through Christ: We cannot tell how to divide those that are so nearly united. Therefore when we glorifie God, we glorifie Christ. And this we must observe: God hath ordered all mens concomments so, that we have nothing to plead for our Souls salvation, but Gods grace: the Rule in his Word, his Gospel that he hath made known to us: and therefore let the Word of God dwell in you richly, in all wisdom. There is a great deal of Do in Gods Church, about This and That: he that must determine the business is Christ; and there are but two ways: the

determining things for the present, and for the time to come; hereafter by questioning the matter of fact; for the present, by making of our Rule. When the question comes concerning the matter of fact, there he receives our Rule: What hath Christ said? how hath Christ provided in things of this nature? It's plainly so and so: but in dubious matter and customs, and the like, I know not how to answer them, when we shall come to answer Christ, when he shall put the question; Did you not know whom you was bound to fear? Did I speak nothing at all in the case, neither generally nor particularly? Could you not by any means come to understand my mind? I doubt we shall not be able to answer this. But we must say we found a certain state in the Word; but having laws and customs among ourselves, therein were at a stand. Why (saith Christ) was your Laws and Customs above, or below my Word? Must your Law be ruled by my Word, or my Word by your Doctrine? Did not all Christians hold out this, that the Word of Christ was above all authority, in the matters of Christ? Shall the Members of the Body become greater than the Head? Therefore you could not be ignorant in this case: your own professing me to be so great, in all my Natures and Offices; but when you come to practice, then you will deny me. Shall we be able to answer this? We must consider of this, that if we would please God it must be through Christ; and then we must carry ourselves, as directed by Christ Jesus in his Word; and nothing can take us off that principle, no pretence whatsoever; for Christian Religion is such a thing in the nature and substance of it as Jesus Christ is the Author of. Therefore if Christ be the Author, all that belongs to Christian Religion, as to its substance, we should account nothing of moment in Religion, but only that which we can ascribe to Christ, as the Author of it. The care of the Church is in the hand of Christ, whatsoever providences are let in on the Church, to exercise or try the Church, all must be born patiently; but every Member must worship him: God hath made Jesus Christ a Shepherd, &c. In what he finds fault, we must not justifie: what he commands, we must approve; what he calls to be done, we must practise; what is not his, we must not own as his. Much may be drawn from this, both for instruction and consolation, that Christ is the great Shepherd:

though he die in his Members, he shall rise in his Members: I may say, though he die in his Ministers, he shall rise in his Ministers, Isa. 59:21. As for me, this is my Covenant with them, saith the Lord, my spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put into thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor cut of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seeds seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth, and forever. This is a part of the Covenant, that the Word and Spirit of Christ shall be continued among the Members throughout all Ages: God will provide, his children shall not live without a Spirit, neither without his Word; God hath engaged himself for both, for the one as well as the other, that there shall be a super-addition, and perpetuating of them: and herein we must depend upon the faithfulness of the great Shepherd of the sheep.

21. Mr. Venning's Farewell Sermon

"Let us hold fast the Profession of our Faith without wavering, (for he is faithful that promised.)"- Heb. 10:23.

That Christians are greatly concerned, not only to believe, and to make Profession of their belief, but to hold fast their faith, and the Profession of it, is that which I have already proved unto you; the several Obligations that lie upon Christians hereunto, have been in one or two Sermons handling among you: the great Obligation here annexed is, (for he is faithful that hath promised.) From whence, and from other places of Scripture, I have deduced several Arguments, and propounded them unto you: the last of which was this; None can promise us better than God can; none can threaten us worse than God can, and therefore it concerns us to hold fast; If any man can do more for you, or against you than God can, leave God, and cleave to that person; but seeing that is impossible, let it be as impossible for you to leave God: Can anybody promise you better than Heaven? and that God hath promised to them that do believe. Can any threaten

you with worse than Hell? and that God hath threatned to them that do not believe. I shall now proceed to touch the remaining Arguments that are behind, and give you a few helps, with which I shall conclude this discourse at this time; I pray God I may not say Preaching too: There are several Arguments to be drawn,

First, From the Subject concerned, Us.

Secondly, From the Object, the Profession of our Faith. And,

Thirdly, From the Act, with the Qualifications, Hold fast without wavering.

First, From the subject concerned, Us; Let [us] hold fast, whatever others do; if they let go Faith, and God, and Heaven, and Souls, and All, yet let us hold fast. Whatever the Apostle speaks of, or to Believers, there is a very great Emphasis in the word we, or us, as in the first of Tim. 6:8. saith he, Having Food and Raiment, let us be content. Indeed he might have said, let every man be content; but the Emphasis lies in the us: if nobody else will be content, yet let us: for a Christian lies under more Obligations to all manner of vertue, than any other man doth. If Nature will not be content with little, yet let Grace; Let [us] be content. So here, let us hold fast our Profession: It may be others will let it go; I, but let us hold it fast: let us among whom, let us upon whom, let us in whom such mighty things have been done by God, let us hold fast, or else it will be an intolerable upbraid, and condemnation to us. That it will be both, see but two Texts of Scripture: the first is in Matt. 11:20, 21. Then began he (that is Christ) to upbraid the Cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not. Wo unto thee Chorazin, wo unto thee Bethsaida, for if the mighty works that were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in Sackcloth and Ashes: but I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, at the day of Judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto Heaven, shalt be brought down unto Hell; for if the mighty works which have been

done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto thee, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom, at the day of judgment, than for thee. Pray, do but mark, what an upbraid their is, and what ground, because mightier works had been done among these, than among others. Now it seems to be a little excusable, that they, where these mighty works had not been done, did not repent; and therefore, their punishment shall be more tollerable: but it will be more inexcusable for them, among whom less mighty works have been done. If they do not comply with the design of God, their condition will be far more intollerable: They that have been lifted up to Heaven, as it were, that have as it were seen Christ crucified before there eyes, for them to Apostatize and turn away from Christ, of how much sorer punish | ment shall they be thought worthy? Certainly, these very persons, that have great and mighty works done among them, & upon them too, great Convictions and strong Resolutions, and yet they shall Apostatize: Oh! how will God upbraid these persons? Now see that other Text, that speaks as dreadful as this, Heb. 6:4, 5, 6. For it is impossible for those who are once enlightned, and have tasted of the Heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the power of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them to repentance: Seeing they crucifie to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. It is the greatest disgrace and affront that man can put upon Christ, to Apostatize from him, (it is not half so much not to own him) for by that they crucifie him again, and put him to an open shame: it is as if they told all the world, that this Christ is not worth a believing in, and it were but to throw away their time and happiness to believe in him. Well then, let us that pretend to such enlightnings, and say, we have tasted of the Heavenly gift, and of the good Word of God, and of the first Fruits of Heaven, let us hold fast, lest we come under this upbraid and condemnation.

But more particularly, let us hold fast, as we are concerned to do, if we consider.

1. What we were before Faith.
2. What we were by Faith.
3. What we shall be at the end of Faith.

1. What we were before Faith: What were we before Christ was preached, and before we believed? What were we? Why, much worse than if we had not been: considered in our case and state, it is better not to be at all, than to be a sinner: it were better not to be a people, than not to be the people of God. Now, what were we before Faith? Why, truly, we were not a people: so the Scripture tells you, They that were not a people, are now the people of God; so that, if we were not the people of God, we are, as if we were not a people.

We were; What were we before Faith? Dark. We were the darkness itself, as the Apostles expression is, in Ephes. 5:8. saith he, Ye were sometimes darkness. The very light that was in us, was Darkness, corrupting our Understandings and Imaginations; the Understanding dark. We are dead, yea, under the worst of deaths: dead in sin: You, saith he, that were dead in sins and trespasses, hath he quickned. How were they dead in sins? Did they not live in sin? Yes, saith he, wherein you walked. Why? what is their Death? To live in sin, is to be dead in sin; all the while the Prodigal lived in his sin, the Father said of him, he was dead: My Son that was dead is alive.

We were; What were we before Faith? Why, we were children of wrath, as well as others.

Now, Beloved, consider how many abide thus to this day in darkness: Dead in sin, and Children of wrath. When you are, or pretend to be, translated out of this Darkness, into the marvellous light; will not you hold fast? You that were dead, as well as others, and now live, is this your requital of God, that you will not let it go? Oh! I beseech you have a care of that.

2. Let us consider, what we are by Faith: and that will be another obligation upon us. We were not so bad before Faith, but we are better by Faith. We were not in so miserable a case before believing, but we are in as happy a case when we do believe. Why? what are we? we are alive, and Children of Light, and Children of God.

We are alive: You hath he quickened, saith he, or made alive; and, My Son that was dead is alive. Now, what is the work of the Living? It is to praise God, The Living, and the Living, they shall praise thee, as I do this day. Now if this be the work of the Living, then consider, if we hold not fast our Faith; if we Apostatize, we are so far from doing the work of the Living, that is of praising God, that we do all the dishonour we can to God; we do the work of dead men: Yea, we are twice dead.

We are Children of the Light: Ye were in darkness, but now are light in the Lord. Now it is very observable, what the Apostle speaks concerning the children of darkness, and the children of the light, 2 Thes. 5:5. You Believers, saith he, are all the children of the light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness; but what follows? therefore let us not sleep as do others: but let us watch, and be sober: why? for they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunk be drunk in the night: if any stagger, that is the work of the night, this is not the work of the day: Now every Apostate that wavers, he is like a man that is drunk, so that he acts clean contrary to the children of the day. Saith he, they that are drunk, are drunk in the night; but saith he, let us watch and be sober, and let us who are of the day, put on the Breast-plate of Faith, and for a Helmet the hope of Salvation.

We are by believing, the Children of God, Gal. 3:26. For we are all the children of God by Faith in Christ Jesus: now, Beloved, are we weary of so honorable a Title, as being the children of God? why, we are the children of God by Faith in Christ Jesus. Will any body part with so great a Title as this? why, if we are weary of being God's Children, whose can we be? none but the Devils: and had we rather be the

Devils Children than Gods? there are but these two, either you must be Children of God, or the Devils children; now you are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus: oh therefore let us hold fast the profession of our Faith, seeing by Faith we are the Children of God.

3. Let us consider what we shall be at the end of Faith: why, we shall be saved, 1 Pet. 1:4,5,9. verses compared, He hath begotten us to an Inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fades not away, reserved in Heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last times; and in the ninth verse, saith he, receiving the end of your Faith, even the salvation of your souls; so that, it seems, to be weary of believing, it is to be weary of being saved; not to hold fast Faith, is not to hold fast Salvation; for, saith he, you are saved by Faith, and the end of your Faith is the Salvation of your souls. Can you be contented to be damned? can you have patience to think of going to Hell? Now, put all these together, and will you not hold fast? you that before Faith were but darkness, were but dead, were but children of wrath, who by Faith are made children of light, are made alive, and the children of God; and who at the end of Faith, shall receive the salvation of our Souls: And shall not we hold fast? shall we leave this Faith? but then secondly,

A second Argument in the Text shall be drawn from the Object, and that is two-fold; there is faith, and the profession of this faith, that is to be held fast; and there are Arguments from both; First Faith, hold fast faith: why are we so greatly concerned, and so highly obliged to hold fast Faith? I will give you this one reason for it, it is the most holy Faith; There are many things may be called Faith, that may not be called most holy Faith: there are many faiths that are at least called holy: Turkish faith, is by them called holy faith: the Romish faith, is by them called holy faith: I, but this is the most holy faith; there is an expression that Jude hath, to commend faith to us, in the 20 verse of his Epistle, But ye beloved, building up your selves on your most holy faith, &c. Let other pretenders be as holy as they can, they can never rise to the holiness of this, this is the most holy faith,

it is so holy in so high a degree as to be beyond compare. I, but now, what is it that may denominate this faith to be the most holy faith? why, it hath for its Author the most holy God; it is the gift of God, and the work of God, if we take it for the Act of faith: and the doctrine of God, if we take it for the doctrine of faith. There are, as the Apostle saith, gods many, but we know but one most holy God: there are that will be called your Holiness in the world; but this is the most holy God, a God that is glorious in holiness; yea whose glory is to be holy. There is nothing stamps glory on any subject like holiness: what is the difference between the Angels in Heaven, and the Angels in Hell, but Holiness? that is their glory, the holy Angels; and that is their shame, the sinful Angels: and what was it that made Canaan a better land than another? was it not the holiness? it was the holy Land: what was it that made the Temple? a better place than another? was it not because it was the holy Temple? Yea, it is the glory of all the Attributes of God, that they are holy. His Justice would look like severity, but that it is holy: His Power would look like Tyranny, were it not holy: His Love would look like fondness, were it not holy: His Patience would look like a toleration of sin, were it not holy: therefore it is said, the Lord God glorious in holiness. Now this most holy God is the Author of this Faith, and so it is a most holy faith, it being the Word of the most holy God; and will you leave, and not hold fast this most holy Faith?

But then besides, it may be said to be the most holy faith in this sense too, that it is its nature where ever it comes to make the subject in whom it is, most holy: saith the Apostle, you hath God chosen, to wit, by Faith, to be a peculiar people, a holy Nation, Acts 15:2. it is said, He hath purified their hearts by faith, and he will give them an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith. It may be called the most Holy Faith, in these two respects.

First, Considering the operation and effects it hath upon the hearts and lives of them in whom it is: it makes them a holy People, beyond all the people in the world: And then upon this account too, as to the ultimate effects of it, that it admits us into the most holy places. You

know the Holy of Holies in the Temple, was a Type of Heaven, and Jesus Christ is said to enter into the Holy of Holies, that is into Heaven. Now this doth admit us into the most holy place, where the most holy God is, saith the Apostle, having therefore boldness to enter into the holiest, by the bloud of Jesus. Alas, in the time of old they could go but into the outward court: but now, saith he, we have all this boldness to enter into the most holy place by the bloud of Jesus. Shall we leave such a Faith as this? shall we not hold fast the most holy Faith, that is from the most holy God, that makes the most holy people, and that admits us into the most holy place? Where do we find such another Faith as this is? if you leave this Faith that is so good in itself, a Faith that doth so much good to us; and, which is better, that makes us so good: for it is much better to be made good, than to have good done unto us; and beloved, what will it avail us, if God should do us good all our days, if we be not made good? if we should have the good of health and wealth, and long life, and yet not be made good all this while, it avails us not: now this is the nature of Faith, it is good in itself, it doth good to us, and it makes us good: therefore beloved, let us not lay it aside, until we can find a better, and that we shall never do, unless we can find anything more holy than God.

But secondly, the second Branch of the Object is, the Profession of our Faith. It seems, Beloved, it is not enough to hold fast our Faith only, but the Profession of it: why so? truly there is this in it: the profession of faith, is as necessary as the faith itself; mark that. See this from the mouth of that great Apostle, I may say from the mouth of God himself, Rom. 10:9, 10. That if thou shalt with thy mouth confess thy Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved; for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation: An unprofessed Faith hath no salvation annexed to it; you see the Scripture maketh it as necessary to our salvation, to profess our believing, as to believe. Now beloved, if it be necessary to believe, and necessary to profess, its then necessary to hold fast Faith; and consequently as necessary to hold fast the

profession thereof; without Faith there is no salvation, faith the Scripture; and saith this Scripture, without the profession of this Faith, there is no Salvation: now to say, I will keep faith, I will only part with a little profession, it is all one in Scripture, as to part with Faith itself; for why, the Scripture faith, If thou believe with thy heart, and confess with thy mouth, thou shalt be saved: so that as long as faith continues, profession is to continue, or there is no salvation; faith without profession, will do no more for you, than profession without faith: therefore observe what the Apostle speaks, Heb. 3:13. saith he, We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end: not else.

Thirdly, A third Argument is drawn from the act with the qualifications, let's hold fast without wavering; Now there are two things, to name no more, that are hugely obliging in this very act, with its qualification; first, it is a manly act to hold fast that which is good: and it is a childish act to let it go. I say it is a manly act; it argues something of a great soul, and of a great understanding, and of a manly resolution, to hold fast that which is good, but it is childish to let it go, and therefore see how the Apostle puts these together, Ephes. 4:13, 14. saith he, speaking there, That God hath given some Prophets, some Apostles, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for edifying of the work of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Now he comes in the 14 verse to add, That we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereas they lay in wait to deceive: it is not for a man to be tossed to and fro with every wind of Doctrine; for a child to be bought out of a Pearl with a bauble, is no great matter: but for a man, what a shame is it? why, we should be men, not children, tossed to and fro with every wind of Doctrine: now beloved: you know the Scripture calls upon us in such Language as this, Be courageous, and

quit your selves like men; be not children, that will dance after every pipe, tossed to and fro, and always unstable.

Secondly, It is not only a manly act to hold fast that which is good, and childish to let it go: but it is a Christian act, a proper Christian act, a right Christian act, it is that which doth distinguish a true Christian from a hypocrite and a counterfeit; you know it is a character of a Godly man, he is a praying man: there went up two men into the Temple to pray, the one was a hypocrite, the other a Publican; now, what is there then in prayer, that doth distinguish these two men? why faith Job, will the hypocrite pray always? no not he. I will warrant you, that is well, he held out in the profession of God and of his Worship and Service; the Saints are always said to pray: but as for the hypocrite, will he pray always? no not he; for here the true children of God, they will hold fast; but Hypocrites and Formalists, they will let go. Now mark here, the Apostle makes this distinction, Heb. 10. ver. last; But we are not of them who draw back to perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of their souls; that is, of them that believe to the end: for the end of our Faith is the salvation of our Souls: now pray you mark by the way, what you draw back to; when you draw back, you draw back to perdition; they that go backward, go to Hell. How, saith he, we are not of them that draw back to perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of their souls: that is, of those that believe to the end; and this is the difference he makes between them that are the People of God, and them that are not, that to the end holds fast, the other lets go. Thus I have given you an account of the Arguments that are couched in these words, drawn from the Subject, the Object, and the Act, with its qualifications. I think I promised you a few helps, with which I shall conclude, take them in these three or four particulars.

First, would you hold fast? (I cannot but believe it to be all your desires) well then, if you would hold fast, let me beseech this of you, take heed of all, and every sort of men, that make Religion a Trade to get money, by which perhaps you will say, are there any such in the world? Oh, I would there were not. See that 1 Tim. 6:3, 4, 5. where

the Apostle acquaints you with such men, saith he, if any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesom words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the Doctrine which is according to godliness, the wholesom Doctrine, the healing Word: what then? in the 4. verse, saith he, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doating about questions, and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the Truth; supposing that gain is Godliness, or as most read it, that godliness is a gain, a meer trade to get money by; from which withdraw thy self: If you be not baptized, they will tell you, you are not a Christian; and baptized you shall not be, unless you pay for it: they will tell you, cat flesh you must not at such and such times; but if you will pay for it, you may: they will tell you, you must not sin by no means; but if you will pay for it, you may, and have a pardon for it when your have done, such a one as they can give. Oh I beseech you, whenever any make use of Religion to get money by, take heed of them, faith the Apostle, from those that make godliness a Trade to get money by, withdraw thy self, and know, that godliness with contentment, is great gain. Doubtless, godliness is the best Trade in the world, if closely followed; but the worst, if wordily followed; but to take up a Profession of the Christian Religion, meerly for pomp and state, and to get gain; Oh rueful! Is Christian Religion made use of for such ends as this? Oh! take heed therefore as ever you would stand fast in the Faith, and hold fast the profession thereof, take heed of all, and every sort of men, that makes use of Religion to get money by.

Secondly, take heed of the error of the wicked, lest you fall from your own stedfastness: this advice you have from the Apostle Peter, 2 Pet. 3:17. Ye therefore Beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware, lest you also being led away by the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness; the error of the wicked, is like to make one as wicked as they: pray, what was this error of the wicked? It was this; there were a generation of wicked men, that said, It was in vain to serve God, for, say they, Where is the promise of his coming? Only, Beloved, it was as much as to say, there was no reward for

godliness, nor no wages for ungodliness. Oh! take heed of this error of the wicked▪ it is a wicked error, and none but wicked ones hold it, to wit, That it is in vain to serve God: therefore keep this still in your hearts, that, Verily in keeping his Commandments there is great reward; if there were no more but the very work, it is great honour to us, that we may be servants to such a God; but, Beloved, Be stedfast and unmoveable, knowing that your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord. Mal. 3:13. there is the like instance: Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord, yet ye say, what have we spoken so much against thee? this God is always quarrelling with us, and laying things to our charge; what have we said? in the 14 verse, Ye said it is in vain to serve God, and what prosit is it that we have kept his Ordinances? we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts, and now we call the proud happy, yea, they that work wickedness are set up, yea, they that tempt God are even delivered: well now, what follows? They they that feared the Lord, spake often one to another: as if they had said, let not these things take anything off the edge of our affections, or quench any flame of our love: did God take any notice of this now, that he had any such friends in the world? yes, saith he, God hearkned, and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his Name, and they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my Jewels, and I will spare them, as a man spares his own son that serves him: there is a time coming the day will declare, whether it be serving God or the Devil: well then beloved, as ever you would hold fast the profession of your Faith, take heed of the error of the wicked, never think it vain to serve God, though you may lose b• it; for, if ye lose for him, ye shall never lose by him.

Thirdly, Would you hold fast the Profession of your Faith? then lay up the word of Faith in a good and honest heart, Luke 8:15. It is said there of the good ground; they are they which have heard the Word, kept it, or hold it fast: where do they lay it up now? in a good and honest heart: so that you must pull out his heart, before that you can pull out the Word, and will any man suffer his heart to be torn from

him? you never hold it fast till you lay it up in a good and honest heart; if it be only in the hands, as a Bible in your hands, or in the head, it will be gone; but if it be in your hearts, you will never let it go: therefore observe, saith he, Having heard it, they keep it, and hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bring forth fruit with patience: they had a great deal of sufferings to bring with patience; for, if they were not under suffering, what need were there of patience?? Well, beloved, consider a little further, as to this, the Connection between the verse preceding the Text, and the Text, saith he; Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled with a pure conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith: the purity of the heart is the best preservative of the Faith. 1 Tim. 3:9. Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience; a good and honest heart will never part with the mysteries of faith,

Lastly, would you hold fast the profession of your Faith? then look much to, and often consider Jesus Christ, the Author and finisher of your Faith. David had got the faculty of walking with God, and how was it? saith he, I will keep thy loving kindness before mine eyes, that I may walk with thee. Oh! if we do but keep the loving kindness of God in Jesus Christ before our eyes, we shall certainly keep the faith. Saith the Apostle, having a high Priest over the House of God, let us draw near, and let us hold fast; a high Priest, that is Jesus Christ, our great high Priest, Heb. 3:1. Wherefore, holy Brethren, he partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle, and high Priest of our Profession, Christ Jesus. Heb. 4:14. Seeing then that ye have a great high Priest, that is passed into the Heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our Profession, Heb. 12:2. Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despised the Shame, and is set down at the right hand of the Throne of God!. Oh! let us be thinking of, and looking to this Jesus. You will say, what shall we think of him? Oh! think of this condescension in the world, of that vouchsafement, which, as was never the like of his; how he humbled himself, and suffered being God for man: Think how he became poor that was

rich, that we that were poor might become rich; think how he became a curse, think how he became sin for us, think what a good Confession he made before Pontius Pilate, even to death, and was obedient to the death: Think how he conquered death by dying, and how he rose again by his Almighty power, and ascended into Heaven, and ever lives to make intercession for those that come to the Father through him: Think how he lived here on earth in a sad condition, and joyed in it, so that it might be for our good, and shall we leave such a Christ as this? Oh! can you look upon Christ, and leave the Profession of your Faith? It cannot be: keep Christ before your eyes, make him your pattern, and you will not, you cannot do amiss. He that saith he abides in him, ought to walk as he walked: he walked in obedience all his days, and was obedient to the death: So must we, we must walk in all obedience all our days, though we dye for being obedient. You see now, how many Arguments there are for our holding fast the Profession of our Faith. There are many now that might be added, but the time is past; therefore I shall shut up all in the words of Jude, from the 20 ver. of this Epistle to the end, But you, Beloved, building up your selves on your most holy Faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep your selves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life, and of some have compassion, making a difference; and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and present you faultless before the presense of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God and Saviour, be Glory and Majesty, Dominion and Power, now and forever. Amen.

22. Mr. M. Newcomen's Farewell Sermon

"Remember therefore how thou hast received & heard, and held fast, and repent." - Rev. 3: 3

I Began this Scripture the last Lords Day in this Congregation. I told you then, there were three Doctrines obvious in the Text; the first was,

Doct. 1. That it is the Duty of Christians, to remember those Truths that: they have heard and received.

Doct. 2. That it is the Duty of Christians, to hold fast the Truth that they have heard and received.

Doct. 3. That continued repentance, is the Duty of Christians, as well as initial Repentance. Remember therefore how thou hast received, and heard, and hold fast, and repent.

The first of these Doctrines, I applied myself to, and applied to the people last Lords-Day, and shall not now say anything of it; but proceed to the next Doctrine, that it is the Duty of Christians, To hold fast the Truths that they have heard and received. That which the Apostle enjoyns on Timothy, in proportion, the duty of all Christians, 2 Tim. 1:13. Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me in Faith, and Love, which is in Christ Jesus. The whole entire body of Divine Truth. Hold it fast against all opposition whatsoever. Now if they that are themselves Teachers of the Truth to others, must hold fast the Truth, according to the Plat-form that hath been delivered to them; then much more is it the duty of private Christians, who are supposed, not to have that latitude of Parts and Gifts that Teachers have: And therefore you shall finde, that Christ requires this not only of the Pastors, but of the Members of his Church: Rev. 2:24. speaking not only to the Angels, but to the Body of the Church: But to you, I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this Doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan as they speak, I will put upon you none other burden, but that which you have already; bold fast till I come. As if he should say, this is all I require of you my people, keep your selves, and hold fast that which you have till I come. And so in Rev. 3:11. Behold I come quickly, hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take away thy

Crown. As if he should say, That Divine Truth, that thou hast heard and received, it is thy Crown, thy excellency, therefore hold it fast. This duty of holding fast the Truth, it is thy Crown, thy excellency, therefore hold it fast. This Duty of holding fast the Truth, is urged in many other places of Scripture, under other expressions; as that of continuing in the Word of God. Christ says, if ye continue in my Word, then are ye my Disciples indeed. And continuing in the Faith, Acts 14:22. Paul and Barnabas visiting the Churches, exhorted them to continue in the Faith: And so those terms of being rooted in the Truth, of standing, and standing fast, and many others, they all inforce this Duty. Now for the better handling of this point, I shall do these four things.

First, I will shew you, what Christians are to hold fast.

Secondly, how they are to hold fast.

Thirdly, why they are to hold fast what they heard and received.

Fourthly, I will apply it.

First, What Christians are to hold fast: the Doctrine says, they are to hold fast the Truths they have received. Now Truths are of two sorts.

1. Some are Natural and Moral.

2. Some are Supernatural and Divine Truths: called Truths of God; because they come from God, and conform the Mind and Soul that receives them, to the Image of God.

2. Now, though it is true, it is good for a man to be right in Moral things, and to know, and cleave to that which is Truth in Morality; yet the Truths that we are here called upon to hold fast, they are Divine Truths, Supernatural Truths, Truths in Religion, Truths in the things of God.

Secondly, Again, Religious and Divine Truths, Truths of God, they are either such as are so in name, and in the estimation of some men; or else they are such Truths as are Truths of God, in the truth and reality of the thing. Now, when I say that Christians are to hold fast the Truths they have received, the meaning is not, that whatever any man, or company of men offer as Truths, should be received, and held fast; for then we must hold fast many errors: But whatever men call Truth, or offer as Truth, we must examine it by the unerring rule of Truth, that is, the Word of God. In these things it is a clear Canon which we have, 1 Thess. 5:21. Prove all things, hold fast that which is good. Prove them by the Word of God, and if they hold Truth by that, then receive them, and hold them fast. Divine Scripture-Truths we are to hold fast.

Thirdly, Scripture-Truths, Truths that are grounded, and warranted in the Word of God, they are either such as are immediately and expressly laid down in the Scripture, or such as are mediately contained in Scripture, and by deduction drawn thence. Now those Truths are immediately and expressly laid down in Scripture, we are without dispute to receive and hold: But those Truths that are drawn thence, we may make use of our Reason to examine them by the Word; and so far as we see them to be drawn from Scripture, we are to receive them, and hold them fast.

Fourthly, Divine Truths from Scripture are of two sorts: Either the great and weighty things of the Truth of God, and of Religion, which we call Fundamental Truths; or else they are those things that are of less weight than Religion, and yet Truths of God. Now we are not only to hold fast those Truths of God, that are the Fundamental-Truths; as that there is a God, and but one God; and that there is a Trinity of Persons in Unity of Essence, Father, Son, and Holy-Ghost; and that there is but one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus, and that he is both God and Man in one Person, and that he hath given full satisfaction to Divine Justice, for all that by faith close with him, and the like.

These are the great points in Religion; these we must be sure to hold fast. And not only these, but even the lesser; those truths of Religion that, comparatively, are far less than these, we must hold them fast. You know what our Saviour says of the Commands: there are some that are the first and great Commandments, and there are others that are the lesser: But, whosoever shall break one of the least of Gods Commandments, and shall teach men so, the same shall be least in the Kingdom of God. So, whosoever shall renounce the least Truth, God will be even with him for it. For those Truths of God which are little and small, comparatively, they may be of great weight and consequence in their Sphere. Luther said, Let Heaven run together as a scrawl, rather than one filing of Truth should be parted with. Surely those servants of God, the Martyrs, were not so prodigal of their lives, but they knew what they did when they suffered for such Truths, as men now call Trifles, and not worth standing for; the least Truths of God must be held fast.

Thus you see what we must hold fast, Divine Truths, Scripture Truths, whether greater or lesser: we must hold fast what we have received. I should, but that I fore-see the time will prevent me, answer an Objection: Is there nothing to hold fast but Truth? Doth not the Apostle bid the Thessalonians, in the second of the Thessalonians, the second Chapter, and the fifteenth Verse, Hold the Traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our Epistle. The Papists make much of this place for their unwritten Traditions. In a word: know this, though there were some Doctrines of Faith, and matters of Practice, which, when Paul writ this Epistle, were not expressly to be found in Writing, that had been Preached by the Apostles; yet this will not in the least infer, that now, when the Canon of the Scripture is compleated, there should be such unwritten Traditions, to which we are to give up our Faith.

I go on to the second thing, and that is, to shew, how we must hold fast the Truths of God, which we have heard and received.

First, in your Judgements, being fully resolved and settled in your Judgements concerning them, not wavering about them, nor suffering ourselves by any means and ways, to be removed from our stedfastness in them. Says the Apostle, 2 Pet. 3:17. Seeing you know these things, beware, lest you also being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness. Take heed you be not removed in your Judgements; hold fast what you have received, and suffer not every Wind to blow you off from them.

Secondly, we must hold fast the Truths we have heard and received in our Wills and Affections, in our love to the Truth; we must receive the Truth in the love of it, or else we should never keep the Truth. Love is the strongest hold-fast in the Word, no man will part with that which he loves: What makes the covetous man so unwilling to part with his Money, but because he loves it? What makes the lustful sinner so unwilling to part with his Lust, he will part with Heaven, rather than his Lust? Why, it is because he doth so love it. If men did love the Truth, they would hold it fast.

Thirdly, you must hold the Truth in the profession of it, Heb. 10:23. Let us hold fast the profession of the Truth, or of the Faith, without wavering. We must not only believe with the Heart, but confess with the Mouth, if we would be saved: When Peter denied his Master with his Mouth, and said, I know him not, I am persuaded, he denied him not in his heart. It is a dangerous thing in word, or outward profession, to renounce the truth or any part of it. Hold fast the profession of the Truth.

Fourthly, We must hold the Truths of God fast in our life and conversation: this the Apostle calls, Walking in Christ; and holding forth the Word of Life, in a blameless and harmless Conversation. We must hold fast the Truths of God in our lives.

Fifthly, We must do all this constantly, hold fast the Truth in our Judgement and Affection, Profession and Conversation, constantly and at all times; as David, I have inclined my heart to perform thy

statutes always, even unto the end; We must not only in times of calmness and serenity, when we may have all the peace and applause of the world, hold fast the Truth and Profession of it; but in stormy times when Truth may burn a mans fingers if he hold it, yet even then we must hold it fast.

Sixthly, we must hold fast the Truths we have received resolutely, against all oppositions whatsoever, whether of friends or foes. Paul would not bate an inch, no not to Peter his Brother, his elder Brother in Christ, and in the work of the Gospel; he resisted him to the face, and gave no place to him, no, not for an hour.

Thus should we hold fast the Truth that we have heard and received in our Judgment, in our Wills and Affections, in our Profession, and in our Lives and Conversations. And thus hold them fast constantly, and resolutely against all opposition, on the right hand, and on the left, both of Friends and Foes; and that for these Reasons, which is the first thing I have to do; which is to shew you, Why we should hold fast the Truth of God.

First, for the excellency of Divine Truth; it is more precious than Gold, better than Rubies, and all that you can desire cannot be compared with Truth. And it must needs be so, because it is the immediate issue of God himself, who is the Fountain of Truth, and the Fountain of all Perfection and Glory. Natural men have said, Truth is the daughter of Time. Divines say, Truth is the daughter of God. Divine Truth is the child of God, the Issue and Birth of God. And whosoever therefore God hath pleased to deliver this Truth unto, they must be tenderly careful that it be not deflowred and violated.

Secondly, it is our duty to hold fast the Truth that we have received, because we have received it under the notion of those things that have a kind of constancy in them. I say, we have received the Truth under the Nature of those things that have a kind of constancy and perpetuity in them. The Scripture speaks of the Truths of God, as an

heritage, Thy Testimonies have I spoken for mine heritage, saith David in the 119 Psalm Though a mans personal estate may be alienated, yet that which is his heritage, this is unalienable in Law; it is a wrong done to his Posterity if he parts with that: Truth is the inheritance of the Saints, therefore they are to hold it fast. Again, in Scripture the Truth of God is called a Thing committed to mans trust, 2 Tim. 1:14. That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us. That good thing! What was that! Why, the form of sound words, which in the verse before he had bidden him hold fast; this is but a Reduplication of the same thing on him: the Body of Gospel-Truths that was committed to thee, hold it fast; that good thing, a good thing: the Author of it is good, and it makes us good; all that is contained in it is good matter, and it tends to a good end, the saving of our souls. This, saith he, hath been committed to thee, therefore keep it, that it may be re-delivered, and redelivered entire and whole; and re-delivered to the same person that did commit it to us, else we cannot be faithful to our trust. The Truth of God is committed to our trust; we must so keep it, that we may redeliver it, and re-deliver it entire and whole; and re-deliver it thus entire and whole to him that committed it to us, even to God. This is the duty of all Christians thus to keep the word. There is a committing of the Truth to all the Church and Saints of God; as Jude tells us in his Epistle, verse the third, that ye should contend earnestly for the Faith, which was once delivered to the Saints; the Faith, that is the doctrine of Faith, the Truth of the Gospel, which was delivered to the Saints. We have but one Gospel, and it was delivered but once; God means no more to deliver his Gospel, and the Truth of it, therefore you had need strive hard to keep them, and hold them.

Thirdly, we should hold fast the Truth that we have received; because if we do not hold it fast, we do wrong God, and if we wrong ourselves, and we wrong the Truth, and we wrong our posterity.

1. It is our duty, to hold fast the Truths we have received; because if we do not, we wrong God; for Truths are more Gods, then ours: They

are ours as to the use of them; but they are his, as he is the Original and Author of them. Truths are Gods Jewels; there is never a Truth of Religion, but God owns it as his; and for us to barter away any of these Truths of God it is Sacrilege, it is a robbing of God, it is a wrong to God. This is that God complains of, by the prophet, in the second of Jeremiah, the eleventh and twelfth verses. Hath a Nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but my people have changed their Glory, for that which doth not profit. Be astonished, O ye Heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord. The Prophet, indeed speaks of a total forsaking of God, and all his Truths; but there is, in the forsaking of every Truth, a proportion of wrong to God.

2. It is a wrong done to the Truths of God, when men having received the Truth, and embracing it, hold it not fast, but cast it off, this is a wrong to the Truths of God. We say, it is less reproach to a man when he comes to my house, to shut the door against him, and not receive him in at all, than when he hath been in a while with me, I turn him out; all the world now think I find cause to be weary of him. They who have shut their hearts against the Truth, and never gave any entertainment to it, they are less injurious to it, than they that have received it, and professed it and yet turn from it. These tell the world, that the Truths of God are not so sweet, and worthy of their entertainment, as they supposed them to be.

3. This is an injury and wrong to ourselves; this is a wrong to our Credit and reputation. Now, though we may make Credit our end in Religion; yet we may make use of our Credit or Reproach, as an argument to hold fast the Truth; and this is injurious to our own Souls, John 8:31. Then Jesus said to those Jews which believed on him; If ye continue in my word, then are ye my Disciples. Indeed, here Christ doth seem to distinguish his disciples; he hath some that are so in name, that are not so in Deed, and he hath some that are so in Deed and in Truth; and of these he gives a character here, If ye continue in my Word. You now profess to believe my Word; but if you hold fast, and continue in my Word, then you are my Disciples

indeed: But if you continue not in my Word, you have the name of Disciples only, and that will not save you. You can never be saved, unless you be indeed the Disciples of Christ; and you can never approve your selves to be the Disciples of Christ indeed, if ye continue not in the Truth, 1 Joh. 2:24. Let that therefore abide in you, which you have received and heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning, shall remain in you, ye shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. Hold fast the truth of God which you have received, then shall you continue in the Son: If the Truth of God, which you have received and believed, remain in you, and be held fast by you, ye shall continue in the love of the Father and Son, but not else; according to what he expresseth again; Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the Doctrine of Christ, hath not God, therefore he cannot be saved; he that abideth in the doctrine, hath the Father and the Son. Therefore as you would be saved, hold fast the Truths you have received.

Now here (but I have not time to speak to it) is a Case of Conscience; Whether every error doth cut a man off from God? I Answer, no, God forbid: But this we cannot speak to now.

Fourthly, they that hold not fast the Truth of God, are injurious to their posterity. Our fore-fathers holding fast the truth of God in the day of their trial; and sealing it with their bloud, was the means of transmitting the purity of the Gospel to us their Posterity; and if we, in our Generation hold not fast the truth of God, but carry it loose in our Consciences and Judgements, and we let it fall out of our hands and hearts, we forfeit the Truths of God, not only from ourselves, but also from our Posterity. Thus you see, we shall wrong the God of Truth, and the Truth of God; we shall wrong ourselves and our Posterity, if we hold not fast the Truth we have received. Thus we have the reasons of the Doctrine.

Application.

For Application: here first, I might bewail the general want of the care of the performance of this Duty, which hath appeared many years in this Land.

We have had little care of holding fast the Truths we have received. For holding fast the truth of our Judgement, How many are there, whose Judgements have been perverted with many Errours?

This is that which the Apostle calls A turning aside to another Gospel, in the first of the Galatians, and the sixth verse. And so for holding fast the truth in the love of it, How many are there that have failed in that, which Christ calls, The forsaking of the first Love, Revelations the second, and the fourth verse?

And we should hold fast the truth in the profession of it; and how many are there that have failed in that? this the Apostle calls, in the tenth of the Hebrews, A drawing back unto Perdition.

And for holding fast the truth in the practice of it, how many have failed in that? that have been Professors, and now are grown loose and debauched. This the Apostle Peter calls, A turning aside from the holy Commandments. All these things call for our lamentation.

Exhortation.

But the whole work that I will apply myself to, is, to exhort every one of you, to the care of this duty, To hold fast the Truths that you have heard and received. Hold them fast in your Judgement, hold them fast in your Will and Affections, hold them fast in your Lives and Conversations, hold the Truths you have received constantly; and hold them against all opposition on the right hand, and on the left, from friends and foes.

To press this upon you, I think I shall need to use no other Motive, than what I have laid down before you in the Doctrinal part; only this one thing more, and that is, take notice how urgent the Spirit of God is in pressing this in Scripture.

Now, saith Mr. Hildersham, If in those days, when the Apostles were yet living, who taught the people of God with more Power and Demonstration of the Spirit, than any of us do, or can. Yes, if then they had need of such Exhortation to continue in the Doctrine, and to abide in it, to stand fast, and hold fast the Word and Truth of God; how much more needful are these Exhortations in our days?

If any say, no, there is not more cause; for then the Magistrate was a mortal enemy to the Gospel, and the Professors of it; but we are (thanks be to God) under a Christian Magistrate, who doth not oppose, but Countenance the Gospel, and the Professors of it. If any makes this Objection, I will give you Mr. Hildersham's Answer to it, which I find in a Sermon of his, printed in the Year, One Thousand Six Hundred Thirty and One; which is now One and Thirty years ago; saith he, Though, through the great mercy of GOD, we in this Land enjoy the Gospel in great peace, and have it countenanc'd by Authority; and though through the Religious Disposition of the KING, we may have great hopes of the continuance of the true Religion, and seem to be freed from all fear of the altering of it; Yet (says he) there is need of this Exhortation in these dayes, and that for these Reasons.

Reas. 1. First, Because of the great danger we are in of being over-run, or over-spread with Popery, and the Fiery trail before we are aware: For, sayes he, The great increase of Papists that we daily hear of, and the great declining of many, who are ready to receive an Errour that shall be offer'd to them: These things give us a just cause to fear the danger of Popery over-spread | ing us.

And Brethren, if it were so in his time, so many years ago, what is it now?

Reas. 2. Secondly, sayes he, if so be there were no danger of Popery, yet, sayes he, there are so many Errours newly sprung up, that do shew how needful this Exhortation is.

Reas. 3. Thirdly, sayes he, there is such a general decay of the love of Religion in all places, and amongst all sorts of people, and so much irreligiousness every where, that it is the general disease of the Nation.

Therefore he concludes, that in these times of ours, though Religion hath the Magistrate to countenance it, yet there is as much need of pressing this Exhortation, as ever there was; namely, To hold fast the Truths that we have heard and received.

Now, if you ask what you shall do, that you may be able to hold fast the truths that you have received? I will give you some directions.

First, if you would hold fast the Truth that you have heard and received, get into Christ, be rooted and established in him. Brethren, it is not all the Learning in the world, and Abilities that a man can have, that will enable him to hold out, and hold fast the Truths that he hath received, if a time of tryal come, unless Christ be his Bottom and Foundation, unless Christ be his strength. If a man stands upon his own legs, his own Parts and Abilities, to argue and dispute, and repell objections; alas! these things will fail in a day of tryal. Prison, Death, and a Stake, are such Arguments, Brethren, that all the Learning and parts of the world cannot answer, but only Christ and his Spirit, and grace in the heart. Therefore, if you would hold fast the Truth which you have received and heard, and not be beaten off from them in the day of tryal, get into Christ, be rooted and established in him, then shalt thou stand, nor else.

2. If you would hold fast the Truths that you have heard and received, then take nothing upon trust in matters of Religion: whatever Preachers you hear, or whatever Books you read, take not things upon trust, but examine them, and prove them by the Scriptures, and judge what foundation and warrant they have from the Scripture, and accordingly receive them, or receive them not. It is observable in 1 Thes. 5. When the Apostle sayes, despise not Prophecyings, in the next word he sayes, prove all things, and hold

fast that which is good; as if he should say, though I would not have you despise Prophecy and Preachers, yet I would not have you to take things upon trust, in matters of Religion, but prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.

3. If you would be able to hold fast the truths that you have heard and received, get a clear, distinct, and certain knowledge of what is truth; that which you would hold fast, get a clear, assured knowledge that it is the truth of God, 2 Tim. 3:14. Continue thou, in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of. If a man would continue in the things that he hath learned, he must be assured of them, that they are the truths of God. But how shall a man be assured that such and such things are the truths of God? He may know this; first, by the consonancy of them to the word of God: Secondly, by the power of them on his heart, to convince, or humble, and quicken it.

4. If you would be enabled to hold fast the truths you have heard, and received, then get a valuation and esteem of the truths of God. Such as David had, Psalm 119:72. The Law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of Gold and Silver. Better in itself; all the Gold and Silver in the world, all the riches in the world, will never do a man so much good as that; and better in my estimation, I value it more, I had rather part with all, than with the Word. A man that is of this mind, he will hold fast the truth: Oh! that there were such a heart in every one of you, as to say, The words of Gods mouth, they are better than estate, and better than liberty, and better than Wife and Children; if there were such a heart in us, this would enable us to hold fast the truth of God, and part with all rather than them.

5. If you would hold fast the truth that you have received and heard, then make conscience to practice according to what you know; make conscience to obey the truths of God: obedience is the sinew of constancy. Christ saith, Luk. 6:48. Whosoever hears these sayings of mine, and doth them, he is like a man which built his house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation upon a Rock; and when the

floud arose, and the streams beat vehemently upon that house, it could not shake it. Mark ye it could not be shaken: the conscionable practical hearer, and receiver of the truth of God, he is the man that is like to hold out, and to hold fast the Word; he that hath been a careless Hearer, and never made conscience to hear for obedience and practice, he is blown over presently; it is a sad passage I have met with in that Reverend man, M. Hildersham, and to me it seems to have much weight in it; What hopes, says he, can we have of many of our Hearers in England, who are willing to give the Word a hearing, and outwardly profess it? but what hope can we have, but that if a time of trial come, they will turn Papists, or profane, or anything; for they never loved the Word when they heard it; and they never obeyed the Word, but lived in known sins; they take up a form of godliness, and hate the power of it; what hope, but that if a time of trial come, these will fall from the truth?

6. If you would be able to hold fast the truth that you have heard and received, then take heed of receiving the least truth of God; take heed, I say, of knowing, and willing forsaking the least truth; and knowing, and willing giving way to the least error; as the committing of the least sin, may render a man abominable unto God, as you find in Levit. 11:43. You shall not make your selves abominable with any creeping thing; that is, with the eating any creeping thing. Now this was one of the least Commandments that God gave out, for the not eating of such & such things: yet by transgressing this, the people might make themselves abominable: the committing of the least sin may make a man abominable to God; so the embracing of the least error, and the forsaking of the least truth, may make a man abominable to God: the least truth forsaken knowingly, and the least error embraced knowingly, becomes a great sin: and a little error makes way for a greater: if once a man gives way to one error: a thousand will follow after. If we would hold fast the whole body of truth, we must take heed we forsake not the least truth; if we forsake God and his truths, whether in lesser matters or greater, and if we turn back again to Popery, and conform

to the Papists in lesser matters (saith Mr. Hildersham) know, of a certainty, that Popery shall return again.

7. If you would hold fast the truths you have heard and received, then shun all such persons as would go about to draw you off from the truth of God; shun all Seducers, confer not with them; have nothing to do with them and their ways, Prov. 19:27. Cease, my Son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge; thou hast been instructed in the words of knowledge, and, if any would instruct thee otherwise, and seek to draw thee off from the words of truth and knowledge, have nothing to do with them: Cease, my Son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge. Now my Brethren, this advice I judge to be more seasonable, because it is in my apprehension, that this present providence of God, in taking off at one stroke so many of his Servants (that have endeavoured in uprightness of heart to instruct you, and the people of God) from this work, it is on my heart to think and fear, this will give a great advantage to Seducers, to seek to corrupt you, and draw you off from the truth to their party. When the Shepherds are smitten, there is a great opportunity given to the Foxes & Wolves to make a prey of the flock: when God makes it dark, and night, then all the Beasts of the Forest creep out: as the Psalmist saith, Psalm 104:20. When there is a night and cloud on the Ordinances of God, then all the Beasts of the Forest will go forth; many will undertake to be your Instructors, and say here is Christ, and there is Christ; but believe them not: remember the things you have heard and received, and hold them fast: cease from the instructions of those that would turn you aside.

8. And lastly, if you would be able to hold fast the truths of God, then commend your selves and the truths you would hold, to God in Prayer, and beg of God to hold you, that you may keep his truth: Put up those requests to God, that David doth Psalm 15. Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not; and in the 119 Psalm, Be surety for thy Servant for good, hold thou me up, and I shall be safe, and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually. And thus

my Brethren, I have done with this Doctrine, and this Sermon, and as far as I know, with my Preaching in this place. The day is at hand, wherein I, and many others of my Brethren shall be (through not naturally dead, yet) civilly dead, dead in Law, dead as to the work of the Ministry. And, as I told them of this particular Congregation the last Lords day, so I tell you; know what I would be willing to speak to you, if I lay on my death-bed, and had the exercise of Reason and Memory that I have now: look, I say, what I would say to you, if I now lay on my death-bed, the same I shall speak to you now, through Gods assistance; and first, I would, and in some measure do give thanks to God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, that hath called me, a poor unworthy Creature, not only to the knowledge, but to the Preaching of the Gospel of his Son Jesus Christ, and that in this place, and in this part of the, and hath pleased in mercy to continue life and liberty to work here, almost Twenty six years. Secondly, I would be, I am in some measure, thankful to God, and to his people, both of this Town, and of the Neighbor-hood, for a great deal of love and respect, and encouragement, that they have given to my Person and Ministry here; and particularly I do acknowledge myself to be greatly obliged to my Reverend Brethren, the Neighbor-Ministers, for the much love I have received from them, their readiness to help me, in supplying my place in the time of my sickness or absense, and sweet society I have had with them: I believe you think it is no easie thing for me to speak, or think of parting with such an Auditory and society, the like to which I never look to have on earth again. But seeing for my sins, and your sins, God will have it so, we must submit, and lie at his feet: that which he hath made crooked, who can make streight? But before we part, give me leave to speak a few words to you; something by way of Request, and something by way of Advice: by way of Request, I would speak this.

First, that if any of you have found any benefit by my poor Ministry, that if any of you have been enlightned, or awakened, or strengthened, and built up in the truth, and encouraged in the ways of holiness, by any thing that God hath put into my mouth to speak

to you, let God have the praise, and let me have some room in your hearts, and prayers, however God shall deal with me.

My second Request is, that wherein soever you have seen any failings in me, or any failings in my Ministerial duty, that you would please to pass it by, and to help me in prayer to God, for the forgiveness of them. These are my Requests of you, and that which I have to say to you, by way of Advice is much the same, with what I said to this particular Congregation the last Lords Day. Take it in these particulars.

1. I would advise you and entreat you, that we may all of us lay to heart this present dispensation of God towards us, and the Nation, in this respect, that we may be sensible of it. I remember, when I was young, and my famous Predecessor, Mr. Rogers, was taken off from his Ministry in this kind, though but for a few weeks, these parts were wonderfully sensible of that providence, and laid it to heart, and were much in Humiliation and in Prayer; and I think I may say, they received an answer again within some weeks. Now Brethren, though he was worth some hundreds of us; yet now it is not the laying by of one man, but of multitudes, fifty in one place, and threescore in another, and fourscore in another, and this not by a single Bishop, but by an Act of Parliament, which makes the wound the wider, and the more incapable of cure; and shall not we be sensible of this? shall so many precious vessels be laid by, as vessels of no pleasure, and none take it to heart?

Shall so many burning lights be quenched together, so may Wells of the Water of Life be stopt up together, and this not be laid to heart? I beseech you consider and be sensible.

2. In the deepest and saddest sense you have of this providence of God, watch over your own spirits, that you lay the blame of it nowhere so much as upon your selves. Some blame the times, and charge it on their iniquities; others are apt to blame us Ministers, and charge it on our niceness and singularity. Might my advice take

place with this people, I would desire, that every one of us might lay the blame nowhere so much, as on ourselves, for certainly, we have procured these things to our selves. I find our Predecessors the Martyrs, when by a Law Religion was changed in the Nation, and Idolatry set up, they lay the blame not on the Lawmakers, but on themselves, and their own hearts. One of them saith, all this is come upon us, because we did not love the Gospel; we were Gospellers in lip, but not in life: Much more doth it become us, whose sufferings are far less, to blame ourselves more than we blame any others.

3. My third Advice is this, and I beseech you take it in love, for it is out of love that it is given you; if you should perceive at this time a difference in opinion and practice among us, that are the Ministers of the Gospel in this Nation; standing, and sticking at things that others can digest, and do; and others doing things, that some of their Brethren cannot come up unto: Be not offended, thus it hath always been from the beginning; it is no new thing. Thus it was in King Edwards dayes. If there be any of God's servants that are Learned and Holy, and Faithful, that do now for the enjoyment of their Ministry, yield a conformity to all that is enjoyed, I doubt not but many of them are grieved, that they cannot have the exercise of their Ministry without this: and we who cannot come up to this, are grieved that we cannot come up to it: the one, and the other have grief enough; add not your censures to this grief, that is already upon them. It hath been all along a merciful providence of God, that when some of his servants could not satisfie their consciences, and come up to the things that have been imposed upon them, without injuring their Consciences; yet others have had a greater freedom given them, that they could yield; and if not so, What would have become of the people of God? Therefore in those things, acknowledge there may be some providence of God, for good to you in it.

4. My fourth advice, I shall deliver to you wholly, in the words of that holy man and Martyr of God, Master Bradford, in his Letter to the City of London, saith he, Let us heartily bewail our sins, and repent of our evils, let us amend the evil of our lives, let us every one be

diligent in prayer, and attend with reverence on the reading, and hearing of Gods Holy word; let us reprove the works of darkness, let us fly from Idolatry, and which is the particular I would indeed commend unto you, Obey the Magistrate, and them that are set over us in the Lord, in all things that are not against the Word; and when they command anything contrary to the Word, let us answer, It is meet to obey God, rather than man. However (saith he) resist not the Magistrate, nor seek to avenge your selves, but commit your case to God; be patient, and submit to all that are in Authority over you: but resist not, rise not against Authority; but wait on God, till he pleaseth to cause the Light to rise, and shine again upon you. This is my fourth advice.

5. Now it pleaseth God, that Hearing opportunities, at least, some of them are taken from some of us, from many of us, for a time: My Advice and Counsel is, that the less now you hear, the more you will read; read the Word of God much the more, and take all helps for the right understanding of what you read. The Book of Annotations is a great help to enlighten you to understand the Scripture; and next to the reading of the Scriptures, what spare hours you have, I would advise you to bestow your time in reading of the Book of Martyrs; a Book that hath formerly been more prized, than of late in England. Especially, read that part of it which contains the History of Queen Maries dayes; they will inform you of the great controversies that are between us and the Papists; and they will inform you what you shall answer; the reading how cheerfully they went to Prison, and to the Stake, will imbolden you against the fears of sufferings, and death; and the reading of their Letters, will be a great means to edifie, and build you up. This reading of the Scriptures, and other good Books, is my fifth advice to you.

6. My sixth Advice to you is, that seeing God hath taken away your Week-dayes opportunities of hearing the Word here, and in other places, you would be careful that the world may not devour Gods Portion; I mean that portion of time, which some of you have bestowed in hearing these Lectures. It was a good speech of a

gracious Woman, now with God, when Mr. Rogers was silenced: Well, said she, by the grace of God, the World shall never have those hours that I was wont to spend in hearing heretofore: her meaning was, she would spend them in her Closet in holy duties. It was an excellent resolution, and worthy of our imitation; and if I might after twenty six years labour here in the Ministry, now at my parting obtain thus much of you, that you having been pleased to be constant hearers here, would lay a Law on your selves, that so much time as you formerly spent in coming hither, sitting here, and returning home, that you will spend that time at home, either in praying, and reading, and meditating in your Closets; or else in praying in, and with your Families, and instructing of them: If I might but obtain this of you, at my parting, I shall believe that the Devil and his Kingdom would be losers by this our parting; if you would spend this time weekly in holy Exercises, reading and praying for your selves, and for the Nation, and for your Families, which you were wont to spend in coming to these Lectures, and in attending here, and returning home; and that is my sixth Advice to you, and therefore let me intreat this of you.

7. And my seventh Advice and Counsel is this, that seeing it pleaseth God to take away from you so many of your publick Instructors, that you would every one of you that are head• of Families, be so much the more instructing and teaching your Families: Be so much the more in this, by how much the less is done in publick. Read the Word in your Families, and catechise your Families, and see that they may understand them: You have many helps for this, as Mr. Perkins, Mr. Ball, and the Assemblies Catechise.

8. And the last advice I have to give you, is this, that you would still continue your reverence of, and love to, and care for the observing of the Lords Holy Sabbath. It is that, my Brethren, wherein God hath been honoured in this Town, and in these Parts, I think as much as in most places in the World; and I pray do so still: And when you have not publick Ordinances, and publick helps for the sanctifying of the Lords day at home in your own Congregations, if you have the Word

and Ordinances in any comfortable manner abroad, Travel for it, I say, travel for it; and when you have them not at home nor abroad, be so much the more earnest, and fervent, and abundant in your family and secret Duties, in the sanctification of the Lords day. I have some fears, lest if time should come to pass, that the Magistrates should connive at the profaning of the Lords day, giving way to Sports and Recreations on it, and Preachers should cry down the strict observation of the Lords day, and the like; I am afraid we have many youth, that in these parts, notwithstanding all the instructions that have been given them, would be ready to dance after these Pipes, and run into the profaning of the Lords day: Therefore you that are Governours of Families, remember the charge that God hath given you more expresly concerning this, than in any other thing that I know of: Thou, nor thy Son, nor thy Daughter, nor thy Man-servant, nor thy Maid-servant, nor thy Cattel, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates, shalt thou suffer to violate the day of the Lord: Therefore, know your Authority, and do your duty; and put on the Holy Resolution of Joshua, Whatsoever others do, I and my house will serve the Lord; so say you, Whatsoever others do, I and mine will sanctifie the Lords day, and keep it holy. So do, and the blessing of God shall be on you all the week long. And now, Brethren, I commend you to God, and to the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified.

23. Mr. Brooks Farewell Sermon

"All that I shall do, shall be to answer two or three Queries, and then I shall leave a few Legacies with you, that may speak when I am not advantaged to speak to you."

The first Query is this; What should be the reason that men make such opposition against the Gospel, against the plain, powerful,

conscientious preaching of it? This is not the principal thing that I intend, and therefore I shall only touch upon the reason of it.

1. Mens hatred and opposition ariseth against the Gospel, because it doth discover their hidden works of darkness, Joh. 3. They hate the Light, lest their deeds should be removed: the Gospel brings their deeds of darkness to light: and this stirs up a spirit of hatred and opposition against the Gospel.

2. Ground is this; Because sinners under the Gospel cannot sin at so cheap a rate, as otherwise they might do. The Drunkard cannot be drunk at so cheap a rate; nor can the opposer and persecutor oppose and persecute at so cheap a rate as they might do, where the Gospel doth not shine in power and glory.

3. Because the Gospel puts persons upon very hard service, upon very difficult work; pulling out a right eye, cutting off a right hand, offering up an Isaac, throwing over board a Jonas, parting with Bosom Lusts, and darling sins. Herod heard John Baptist gladly, till he came to touch his Herodias, and then off goes his head. As they say, John 6. This is a hard saying, and who can abide it? and from that time they walked no more with him; this is a hard Gospel indeed, and at this their blood riseth.

4. Because of the differing and distinguishing work that the Gospel makes among the Sons of men, it softens one, and hardens another that sits next to him; enlightens one, and strikes the other blind; it wins on one, and enrageth another. The same Sun hath different effects on the Objects on which it shines. The Gospel puts a difference between the precious and the vile, and this the vile cannot bear. It was never good dayes (say they) since such and such must be Saints, and none else; we have as good hearts as any, and this enrageth them.

Lastly, it is from Satan; Satan knows that the very tendency of the Gospel is, to shake his Kingdom about his ears; Satan and Antichrist

know that their Kingdom must down by the power and light of the Gospel; and therefore Satan and men of an Antichristian spirit, do all they can to oppose, and shew their hatred against the everlasting Gospel; and this makes them to be in such a rage against the Gospel.

Quer. 2. When the Gospel goes from a People, what goes? I shall give but a touch here.

1. When the Gospel goes, Peace, Plenty, and Trading goes. 2 Chron. 15:3, 5. and 6. compared. Now for a long season Israel had been without the true God, and without a teaching-Priest. Why? They had Priests, but they were Jeroboam's Priests, as you may see, chap. 13. verse 9. Have you not cast out the Priests of the Lord, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites, and have made you Priests after the manner of the Nations of other Lands? so that whosoever comes to consecrate himself with a young Bullock, and seven Rams, the same may be a Priest of them that are no gods. A little business will buy a Priesthood, and so they are said to be without the true God, without a teaching-Priest, and without Law. Mark what followes, and in those times, there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations were upon all the Inhabitants of the Country; and Nation was destroyed of Nation, and City of City, for God did vex them with all adversity.

3. Safety and security goes, when the Gospel goes; so in the Text but now cited. The Ark was taken away, their strength and safety was gone. When the Jews rejected the Gospel, the Romans came and took away both their place and Nation, John 11:48, If we let him thus alone the Romans will come, and take away both our place and Nation. About forty years after, Titus and Vespasian took away their City; they cried, if we let this man alone, the Romans will take away our Nation; and this was the ready way to bring the Romans upon them.

4. When the Gospel goes, Civil liberty goes; when the Jews slighted the Gospel; and turned their backs upon it, they quickly became

Bond slaves to the Romans.

5. When the Gospel goes, the honour and glory, splendour and beauty of a Nation goes. It is the Gospel that is the honour and beauty of a Nation; and when that goes, all the glory goes: As old Eli said, when the Ark was taken away, the glory was departed from Israel, 1 Sam. 4:22, Jer. 2:11,12,13. Hath a Nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit; that is, the Worship of God into the Traditions of men. What is it that lifts up one Nation above another, but the Gospel? Above all Nations of the Earth, England hath been lifted up to Heaven.

6. When the Gospel goes, all soul-happiness and blessedness goes. The Gospel, you know, is the means appointed by God to bring Souls to an acquaintance with Christ, to an acceptance of Christ, to an interest in Christ, to an assurance that he is theirs, and they are his. Now when this goes, all soul-happiness and blessedness goes.

7. When the Gospel goes, the spiritual presense of God goes, for that still goes with the Gospel. There is a general presense of God, as the Psalmist speaks, Psalm 139. Where shall I go from thy Spirit? Whither shall I fly from thy presense? This presense of God reacheth from Heaven to Hell; in that sense God is included in no place, nor excluded out of any place. But alas! What is this general presense? When the Gospel goes, the special presense of God goes. This leads me by the hand to the third Query.

Query 3. And that is this; Whether God will remove the Gospel from England, or no?

It is the fear of many, but I humbly suppose, no: whatsoever darkness may be upon it, yet that God will not remove it; if you please, I will offer a few things that signifie something as to my own satisfaction, and it may be so to you.

1. The rooting that it hath got in the hearts of sinners and Saints, in the Judgment, Affections, and Consciences both of sinners and Saints. Certainly, it hath got so deep a root in the hearts of many thousands of Saints and sinners, that it shall not be in the power of Hell to raze it out.

2. The glorious anointings that are to be found upon many thousands of Gods servants in this Nation, to preach the everlasting Gospel, and who would be glad to preach upon the hardest terms, keeping God and a good conscience, to preach it freely, as the Apostles of old did. And certainly, God hath not laid in the Treasure, that it should be turned into a heap of confusion, but that it should serve to the end for which he laid it in.

3. The ineffectualness of all former attempts and designs to destroy the Gospel. You know what endeavours of old there hath been to darken this Sun, to put out the light of Heaven, in the Marian dayes, and in other dayes since them; and yet it hath not been in Prisons, Backs, Flames, Pillories, nor anything else to extinguish the glory of it. And then,

4. All Designs and Attempts to extinguish the everlasting Gospel, have turned to the advancement, flourishing, and spreading of the Gospel.

5. God never takes away the Gospel from a people, till the body of that people have thrust the everlasting Gospel from them. When, indeed, they have been so bold, as to thrust away the everlasting Gospel, God hath been severe unto them: But till the body of a people have thrust away the everlasting Gospel, God hath not taken it away from them, 2 Chronicles, the 36. Chapter, from the 15th verse to the end, God sent his Messengers early and late; they abused, slighted and scorned them, till there was no remedy. So in the 35. of Jeremiah, from the first to the twelfth; it is a famous Text for this. So in the thirteenth Chapter of the Acts, and the 45, 46, and 47. verses (Acts 13:45,46,47); Because you have thought your selves unworthy

of Salvation, Lo, we turn to the Gentiles; till the Jews came to thrust away the everlasting Gospel, the Lord continued it to them.

6. The spreading of the everlasting Gospel, is the special means appointed by God, for the destruction of Antichrist: First he is to be consumed by the spirit of his Mouth, then destroyed by the brightness of his coming; the spirit of Faith and prayer in them that would be willing to lay down anything rather than part with the Gospel, God will not put his blessed Church to the blush, he will not make them ashamed of their confidence.

7. Are there not multitudes of the Children of Believers that fall under many promises? And will not God make good his engagements to them? I will circumcise your hearts, and the hearts of your seed; and the seed of the Upright shall be blessed, &c.

8. The strange and wonderful affections and tenderness, that God hath wrought in his children to the Gospel: What melting's and mourning's, and what a spirit of prayer hath God put upon his people?

9. There are many young tender plants and buds of Grace; such in whom the spirit of God hath stirred a hungering and thirsting, and longing after the great concerns of Eternity. I would, upon these grounds, and others of the like import, hope and believe, that the Lord will not remove his everlasting Gospel, however he may correct his people for their trifling with, and slighting the glorious Gospel. I have several times thought, what a day of darkness was upon the World, in respect of sin and superstition: When Christ brought the everlasting Gospel, what a day of darkness and superstition was on the whole Earth? But you know what the Apostle speaks, 1 Cor. 1:21. For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God; it pleased God, by the foolishness of Preaching, to save them that believe.

When it is nearest day, then it is darkest. There may be an hour of darkness, that may be upon the Gospel, as to its liberty, purity and glory; and yet there may be a Sun-shining day, ready to tread on the heels of it. And so much for the resolution of these Queries.

I shall proceed, as I said, and leave some Legacies with you; which may, by the finger of the Spirit, be made advantagious to you, when we are not advantaged to speak unto you.

Leg. 1. The first Legacy I would leave with you shall be this, secure your interest in Christ; make it your great business, your work; your heaven, to secure your interest in Christ. This is not an Age, an Hour, for a man to be between fears and hopes, between doubting and believing.

Take not up in a name to live, when you are dead God-ward, and Christ-ward. Take not up in an outward form, and outward privileges. They cryed, The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, that had no interest in, or love to the Lord of the Temple. Follow God, leave no means un-attempted, whereby your blessed interest may be cleared up.

Leg. 2. Make Christ and Scripture the only foundation for your souls and faith to build on: as the Apostle said, 1 Cor. 3:11. Other foundations can no man lay than that which is laid, even Jesus Christ. Isa 28:16. Behold, I lay in Sion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a corner stone, a precious stone, a sure foundation, Eph. 2:10. Since it is a very dangerous thing, as much as your soul and eternity is worth for you to build on this authority, and that; on this saying, and that; take heed.

Leg. 3. In all places and company, be sure to carry your soul-preservatives with you: go into no place nor company, except you carry your soul-preservatives with you; that is, holy care and wisdom. You know in infectious times men will carry outward preservatives with them; you have need to carry your preservatives

about you; else you would be in danger of being infected with the ill customs and vanities of the time wherein you live; and that is a third.

Leg. 4. I would leave with you, is this; Look that all within you rise higher and higher, by oppositions, threatnings, and sufferings; that is, that your faith, your love, your courage, your zeal, your resolutions, and magnanimity rise higher by opposition, and the spirit of Prayer: thus it did, Acts 4:18,19,20,21,29,30,31. compared. All their sufferings did but raise up a more noble spirit in them; they did but raise up their faith and courage: So Acts 5:40,41,42. they looked on it as a grace, to be disgraced for Christ; and as an honor, to be dishonored for him. They say, as David, If this be to be vile, I will be more vile. If to be found in the way of my God, to act for my God, be vile, I will be more vile.

Leg. 5. Take more pains, and make more conscience of keeping your selves from sin than suffering; from the pollutions and defilements of the day, than from the sufferings of the day: this Legacy I would beg that you would consider, take more pains, and make more conscience of keeping your selves from the evil of sin, than the evil of punishment, from the pollutions and corruptions of the times, Acts 2:40. Save your selves from this outward generation. Phil. 2:15. The children of God must be harmless, and blameless, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. Heb. 11. speaks full to the point in hand. Rev. 3:4. Thou hast a few names even in Sardis, that have not defiled their garments, and they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy. White was the habit of the Nobles, which imports the honour that God will put on those, that keep their garments pure in a defiling day, Rev. 8:4. And I heard another voyce from Heaven, saying, come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. If you will be tasting and sipping at Babylons cup, you must resolve to receive more or less of Babylons plagues.

Leg. 6. I would leave with you, is this, be always doing, or receiving good: Our Lord and Master went up and down in this world doing

good, be was still doing good to body and soul, he was acted by an untired power; he still doing or receiving good; this will make your lives comfortable, your deaths happy; and your accompt glorious in the great day of the Lord. Oh how useless are many men in their generation! Oh that our lips might be as so many Honey-combs, what we might scatter knowledge!

Leg. 7. I would leave with you, is this; Set the highest examples and patterns before your face of grace and godliness for your imitation: in the business of Faith, set an Abraham before your eyes: in the business of Courage, set a Joshua: in the business of Uprightness, set a Job; of Meekness, a Moses, &c. There is a disadvantage that redounds to Christians, by looking more backwards than forwards. Men look on whom they excel, not on those they fall short of. Of all examples set them before you that are most eminent for grace and holiness, for communion with God, and acting for God: next to Christ, set the pattern of the choicest Saints before you.

Leg. 8. Hold fast your integrity, and rather let all go, than let that go: A man had better let liberty, estate, relations, and life go, than let his integrity go; yea, let all Ordinances themselves go, when they cannot be held with the hand of integrity, Job 27:5, 6. God forbid that I should justifie you till I die; I will not remove my integrity from me, my righteousness I will hold fast, and I will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live: look as the drowning man holds fast that which is cast forth for to save him; as the Soldier holds fast his Sword and Buckler, on which his life depends: So (saith Job) I will hold fast my integrity, my heart shall not reproach me; I had rather all the world should reproach me, and my heart justifie me; than that my heart should reproach me, and all the world justifie me: That man will make but a sad exchange, that shall exchange his integrity for any worldly concernment: Integrity maintained in the soul, will be a feast of fat things in the worst of days; but let a man lose his integrity, and it is not in the power of all the world to make a feast of sat things in that soul.

Leg. 9. That I would leave with you, is this, let not a day pass over your head, without calling the whole man to an exact accompt. Well, where have you been acting today, Hands? what have you done for God to day, Tongue? what have you spoke for God to day? This will be an advantage many ways unto you: but I can only touch on these Legacies.

Leg. 10. Labour mightily for a healing spirit. This Legacy I would leave with you as matter of great concernment. Labour mightily for a healing spirit: away with all discriminating names what-ever, that may hinder the applying of Balm to heal our wounds: labour for a healing spirit; discord and division becomes no Christian. For Wolves to worry the Lambs, is no wonder: but for one Lamb to worry another, this is unnatural and monstrous. God hath made his wrath to smook against us for the divisions and heart-burnings that have been amongst us. Labour for an oneness in love and affection with every one that is one with Christ, let their forms be what they will: that which wins most upon Christs heart, should win most upon ours; and that is his own grace and holiness. The question should be, What of the Father? What of the Son? What of the Spirit shines in this or that person? and accordingly let your love and your affection run out: this is the tenth Legacy.

Leg. 11. Be most in the spiritual exercises of Religion. Improve this Legacy; for much of the life, and comfort, joy, and peace of your souls is wrapt in it. I say, be most in the spiritual exercises of Religion: There are external exercises, as hearing, preaching, praying, and conference; and there are the more spiritual exercises of Religion, exercises of Grace, Meditation, Self-judging, Self-tryal, and Examination. Bodily exercise will profit nothing, if abstracted from those more spiritual. The glory that God hath, and the comfort and advantage that will redound to your souls, is mostly from the spiritual exercises of Religion. How rare is it to finde men in the work of Meditation, of Tryal and Examination, and bringing home of truths to their own Soul?

Leg. 12. Take no truths upon trust, but all upon trial, Thes. 5:21. So 1 Joh. 4:1, Acts 17:11. It was the glory of that Church, that they would not trust Paul himself. Paul that had the advantage above all for external qualifications; no not Paul himself. Take no truth upon trust, bring them to the balance of the Sanctuary; if they will not hold water there, reject them.

Leg. 13. The lesser and fewer opportunities and advantages you have in publick, to better, and enrich your Souls, the more abundantly address your selves to God in private. Mal. 3:16, 17. Then they that feared the Lord, spoke often one to another, &c.

Leg. 14. Walk in those ways that are directly cross and contrary to the vain, sinful, and superstitious ways, that men of a formal, carnal, lukewarm spirit, walk in; this is the great concernment of Christians. But more of that by and by.

Leg. 15. Look upon all the things of this World, as you will upon them when you come to die. At what a poor rate do men look on the things of this world when they come to die? What a low value do men set upon the pomp and glory of it? Men may now put a mark upon them, but then they will appear in their own colours. Men would not venture the loss of such great things for them, did they but look on them now, as they will do at the last day.

Leg. 16. Never put off your Consciences with any plea, or with any argument, that you dare not stand by in the great day of your account. It's dreadful to consider, how many in these dayes put off their conscience. We did this and that for our families, they would have else perished: I have complied thus, and wronged my conscience thus, for this and that concernment. Will a man stand by this argument, when he comes before Jesus Christ at the last day? Because of the Souls of men, many plead this or that. Christ doth not stand in need of indirect wayes to save Souls, he hath wayes enough to bring in Souls to himself.

Leg. 17. Eye more, mind more, and lay to heart more, the Spiritual and Internal workings of God in your Souls, than the External Providences of God in the World. Beloved, GOD looks that we should consider the operations of his hand; and the despising the works of his hands is so provoking to him, that he threatens them to lead them into Captivity, for not considering of them. But above all, look to the work that God is carrying on in your Souls: not a Soul, but he is carrying on some work or other in it, either blinding or enlightning, bettering or worsening; and therefore look to what God is doing in thy Soul. All the motions of God within you are steps to eternity, and every soul shall be bless'd or curss'd, saved or lost, to all eternity; not according to outward dispensation, but according to the inward operations of God in your Souls. Observe, what humbling work, reforming work, sanctifying work, he is about in thy spirit, what he is doing in that little world within. If God should carry on never so glorious a work in the world, as a Conquest of Nations to Christ; what would it advantage thee, if Sin, Satan, and the World should triumph in thy Soul, and carry the day there?

Leg. 18. Look as well on the bright side, as on the dark side of the Cloud; on the bright side of Providence, as well as on the dark side of Providence. Beloved, there is a great weakness amongst Christians, they do so pore on the black side of Providence, as that they have no heart to consider of the bright side. If you look on this black side of the Providence of God to Joseph, how terrible and amazing was it? But if you look on the bright side, his fourscore years reign; How glorious was it? If you look on the dark side of the Providence of God to David, in his first years banishment, much will arise to startle you; but if you turn to the bright side, his forty years reign in glory, How amiable was it? Look on the dark side of the Providence of God to Job; Oh! how terrible was it, in the first of Job? but compare this with the last of Job, where you have the bright side of the cloud, and there God doubles all his mercies to him. Consider the patience of Job, and the end that the Lord made with him: do not remember the beginning only, for that was the dark side; but turn to the end of him, and there was his bright side. Many sins, many temptations, and

much affliction would be prevented by Christians, looking on the bright side of Providence, as well as on the dark.

Leg. 19. Keep up precious thoughts of God under the sowrest, sharpest, and severest Dispensations of God to you, Psalm 22:1,2,3. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? O my God, I cry in the day time, but thou hearest not, and in the night season, and am not silent; There was the Psalmist under smart dispensations: but, what precious thoughts hath he of God under all? But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praise of Israel: though I am thus and thus afflicted, yet thou art holy. Psalm 65:5. By terrible things in Righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation.

Leg. 20. Hold on, and hold out in the ways of well-doing, in the want of all outward encouragements, and in the face of all outward discouragements. It's nothing to hold out, when we meet with nothing but encouragements; but to hold out in the face of all discouragements is a Christian duty, Psalm 44. Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of Dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death; yet have we not dealt falsly in thy Covenant; our heart is not turned back, neither have we declined from thy ways; 'tis perseverance that crowns all. Be thou faithful to the death, and I will give thee a Crown of life, Rev. 2:10. And he that endureth to the end shall be saved, Matt. 24. It's perseverance in well-doing that crowns all our actions. If you have begun in the Spirit, do not end in the flesh: do not go away from the Captain of your salvation; follow the Lamb, though others follow the Beast and the false Prophet.

Leg. 21. In all your natural, civil, and religious Actions, let divine glory still rest in your souls, Rom. 7:8, 1 Cor. 10,11. In all your hearing, in all your prayings, let the glory of Christ carry it: in all your Closet-duties, let the glory of Christ lye nearest your hearts.

Leg. 22. Record all special favours, mercies, providences, and experiences. 'Tis true, a man should do nothing else, should he

record all the favours and experiences of God towards him; and therefore my Legacy is, Record all special favours, peculiar experiences. Little do you know the advantage, that will redound to your souls upon this account, by recording all the experiences of the shinings of his face, of the leadings of his Spirit; many a Christian loseth much by neglecting this duty.

Leg. 23. Never enter upon the trial of your estate, but when your hearts are at the best, and in the fittest temper. 'Tis a great desire of Satan, when the Soul is deserted and strangely afflicted, to put the Soul on trying work: Come see what thou art worth for another world, what thou hast to shew for a better state, for an interest in Christ, a title for Heaven: this is not a time to be about this work: thy work is to get off from this temptation, and therefore to pray and believe, and wait upon God, and be found in all those ways, whereby thou mayst get off the temptation.

Leg. 24. Always make the Scripture, (and not your selves, nor your carnal reason, nor your bare opinion) the Judges of your spiritual state and condition. I cannot see my condition to be good. I cannot perceive it. What? must your sense, and your carnal reason be the Judge of your spiritual state? Isa. 8:20. To the Law, and to the Testimony, if they speak not according to his rule, it is because there is no light, no morning in them. John 12:24. The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge you at the last day: The Scripture is that which must determine the case in the great Day: whether you have grace or no, or whether it be true or no.

Leg. 25. Make much conscience of making good the terms on which you closed with Christ: You know the terms, How that you would deny your selves, take up his Cross, and follow the Lamb wheresoever he should go: Now you are put to take up the Cross, to deny your selves, to follow the Land over Hedge and Ditch, through thick and thin, do not turn your backs on Christ: the worst of Christ is better than the best of the world: make conscience of making good your terms, to deny yourself, your natural self, your sinful self, your

religious self; and to follow him: and if you do so, oh! what an honour will it be to Christ, and advantage to your selves, and a joy to the upright!

Leg. 26. Walk by no rule but such as you dare die by, and stand by in the great day of Jesus Christ. You may have many ways prescribed to worship by: but walk by none but such as you dare die by, and stand by, before Christ Jesus: walk not by a multitude, for who dare stand by that rule, when he comes to die?

Make not the example of great men a rule to go by: for who dare die by, and stand by this, in the great day of account? Do not make any authority, that stands in opposition to the authority of Christ, a rule to walk by: for who dare stand by this, before Jesus Christ? Ah! Sirs, walk by no rule, but what you dare die by, and stand by, at the great Day.

Leg. 27. And lastly, sit down, and rejoyce with fear, Psalm 1. Let the righteous rejoyce, but let them rejoyce with fear: Rejoyce, that God hath done your souls good by the everlasting Gospel: that he did not leave you till he brought you to an acceptance of, to a closing with, and a resignation of your souls to Christ, and the clearing up of your interest in him. Rejoyce, that you have had the everlasting Gospel in so much light, purity, power, and glory, as you have had for many years together. Rejoyce in the riches of grace, that hath carried it in such a way towards you. And weep that you have provoked God to take away the Gospel, that you have no more improved it, that you have so neglected the seasons and opportunities of enriching your souls. When you should have come to Church-fellowship, anything would turn you out of the way. Oh! sit down and tremble under your barrenness, under all your leanness: notwithstanding all the cost and charge that God hath been at, that you have grown no more into communion with God, and conformity to God, and into the lively hope of the everlasting fruition of God. Here are your Legacies, and the Lord make them to work in your Souls, and then they will be of singular use to you, to preserve you so, that you may give up your

account before the great and glorious God with joy. Labour to make conscience of putting these Legacies into practice, of sucking at these breasts, which will be of use to us, till we shall be gathered up into the fruition of God, where we shall need no more Ordinances, no more preaching, or praying.

24. Mr. Collins Farewell Sermon

"Contend earnestly for the Faith, &c." - Jude 3

These words contain two parts:

1. A Duty exhorted to.
2. The manner of the management of Duty.

The duty exhorted to, is, to retain the faith delivered to the Saints:

The manner of its management is, that we should earnestly contend to keep it.

I opened the terms, what's meant by Faith.

It is not so much the grace of faith, but the Doctrine of faith; not special faith, whereby we apprehend special mercy upon a promise made to the Elect, but the Fides quae creditur, the whole substance of the Doctrine of Christ, as to things that are to be believed, and duties that are to be practised.

But why is it said, the faith that was once delivered? (that is) invariably, irrevocably, once for all. To the Saints, respects the privilege the Saints of God had in the faith that God had left: 'tis the faith of the Gospel, committed as a Treasure: And the Church is called a Candlestick, not only to hold out the light, but to hold the

light: whence the Church is called the Pillar, or the ground of truth: not that they are to make Doctrines, but to hold forth the Doctrines of Christ, even as Tables and Pillars, upon which Proclamations are hung and held forth to be made publick: so is the Church of Christ, 'tis that in which the Truths of the Lord Jesus are kept, and will be kept from one age to another.

But what's the import of the word [Earnestly contend?] It's a word used only once in the New Testament in the Composition: The word in the root is frequently used, and imports a struggling with might and main, as those that use to run at games. It is used for Jesus Christ in his sufferings, He was in an Agony; the same word from whence this word is compounded. The Apostle would imply such a contention, such a struggling to keep the faith of the Gospel, as one word in the English is not able to express it, and Interpreters very much differ what's the import: The best do centre in this, that we should contend for the Faith, as men that would contend to keep their very lives.

The Proposition is this, that it is the duty of the Saints of God to maintain an earnest contention, to struggle for, and to keep the Faith that was entrusted with them: Wherein doth this contention consist?

1. It is not a carnal contention; the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual, the Saints are not called to contend for the Faith with carnal weapons, with carnal power and force: (not by might and power, but by the Spirit of God) force and power, and a fleshly Arm, Prison, Pillars, and Chains, and taking away of mens comforts and Estates upon the account of the Faith of the Gospel, hath been the usual way of Error's defending itself: Prayers and Tears are the Churches Weapons.

2. 'Tis not a contention of uncharitableness. This Contention allows no murdering, either of the bodies or souls of men: Christians are so to contend against Error and sinful Practices, as to love their persons, and pity those they contend with. There are some opinions,

that there is no way to shew a holy way of zeal against, nor to be able to destroy them, but by a holy separating from the persons: there were such to whom it was not lawful to say God speed, or receive them into their houses: but yet this in order to the saving their souls: Saving some, plucking them as brands out of the fire.

But positively, this holy contention it consists in these four things.

1. In managing the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, against Errors and sinful Practices, to be able to confute them mightily, as Apollos did, out of the Scriptures, shewing the Jews that Jesus is the Christ.

2. By Prayer: for to pray down sinful opinions and practises. That we mean when we pray, Thy Kingdom come, that the Gospel may run on and be glorified: that these nights of darkness may be dispelled: that Truth may shine to the perfect day.

3. By holy practising against them: by holding forth the Word of Life in your Conversations: by striving together by a mutual provocation for the Faith of the Gospel, in respect of holy walking.

4. By being able to suffer for them.

The reasons of the Point I gave you.

I shall now sum up all in a word of Exhortation, to press every one that bears the name of a Saint, to take up this Exhortation of the Apostle, earnestly to contend for the faith that was once delivered to the Saints. The sum of all is, to beg that you would be valiant for the Truth of Christ; that whatever hath been delivered to you consonant to the truth, agreeable to the faith delivered to us, that you would struggle might and main, by all Christian courage, by argument, practice, prayer, by suffering, rather than let go those truths that God hath taught you by his faithful Ministers: that Christ hath been preached to you: those Scriptures you have in your hands; those Doctrines you have learned by experience, by prayer, by searching

the Word: those ways of Worship God hath taught you; those patterns of his house, and out-goings and returnings there, that he hath taught you; be exhorted to hold them fast, and not let them go: (Contend earnestly for the faith, &c.)

It is to be lamented, that there is so sad a spirit of indifferency among Christians, as we find at this day. Many do so carry it, as if there were nothing in the Gospel of Christ that were worthy the owning by practising, or worthy owning by suffering. This luke-warm indifferent temper hath done the Church of God a great deal of mischief formerly; and if admitted now, will do you as much mischief again. It hath been one of the sins which the Lord at this day is judging and punishing his poor people for, that our zeal hath been so hot against one another for meer circumstances, and so cold when we are like to lose the substance: that our contentions rise so high in matters hardly of any moment, and our spirits work so low when they are to gain the great things for which Christ suffered, & which he delivered to us. It is my work therefore to beg you, that you would put on a holy resolution, that there may be no contention among us (for we are Brethren) but only that contention, who may most retain, & evidently witness the Faith that is delivered to us: It is the trust God hath committed, and he doth expect and look how we will manage it with courage and confidence, to keep the Faith of the Gospel. There are very great oppositions against you, and there ought to be great resolutions of Christians to maintain themselves against such oppositions. It is a very sad thing that Christians should see the Faith and the ways of the Gospel of God, as it were taken from them at any time – **** a page missing from source document *****

and they have not one word to speak, nor anything at all for to venture in suffering for the wayes and truths of Jesus Christ: Moses had such a holy zeal, that when Aaron was an example to the people to lead them to Idolatry, he contended with him earnestly to his face. The zeal of Gods servants is so small now, that though Balaam be about the work, we have not a word to speak; Though the small

Prophets of Antichrist be about the business, yet no Christian hath courage to speak. The holy Apostle Paul, when Peter walked with an uneven foot, and began to Judaize, he tells us, he did resist him to his face. Shall Paul resist Simon Peter, and shall not the Saints of God resist Simon-Magus? shall they resist Hymenaeus and Philetus, and shall not we contend with Alexander the Coppersmith? 'tis but suitable to what God expects; and the Exhortation here given us, that we should maintain with might and main, as that which is our treasure, which we will not let go, the Faith once delivered to the Saints.

To put you upon this, I might encourage you with several things. All the Reasons mentioned are as so many Motives to this holy spiritual contention: Shall I tell you of three words further?

1. The mercy of God delivering the truth to you, should engage you to this holy contention: 'tis such a mercy as is a Non-such mercy, Psalm 147. the two last verses, He hath given his Judgments to Jacob, and his Statutes to Israel; He hath not dealt so with any Nation. How many of the greatest part of those that we call Christians in the world, are put like Sampson to grind among the Philistines? Superstition, Popery, Idolatry, Will-worship, such things as Jesus Christ never delivered to his Saints, having both their eyes out, the Scripture light that should have shewed them the truth, taken from them; and their Consciences that should teach them, carried in the pocket of some base Priest, that dare not think any other than what he will tell them. How many are there, even of the very reformed of the world, who only get upon some broken plank of Ship-wreck'd truth, whereby they swim to the Lord Jesus? But God does not deal thus with us: you have had the whole Counsel of God revealed to you, a glorious light set up in the Nation for a hundred of years past, which hath been like the light of seven dayes: For these twenty years past the running to and fro of men, hath increased knowledge: you have learned the truth from Gods faithful Ministers: you have received it with much affliction, with many temptations: it hath cost Jesus Christ dear to send it, it hath cost you dear to receive it, and

will you let it go? Your sin above all others will be most provoking to the Lord Jesus.

2. I might tell you that 'tis a time, wherein many let go the faith, and methinks the Lord Jesus does by his poor and unworthy messenger speak to this great Congregation, as sometimes he did to his Apostles, Will ye also go away? There are many that have been forward and eminent Professors of the Faith delivered to the Saints, that have made Ship-wrack of Faith and a good Conscience; will you split upon the same rock? God hath kept the truth for you, and kept you in the truth hitherto, and is coming to see whether you will cleave to it, and keep it or no. We have been sucking at the breasts of the Ordinances, and dandled upon the knees of Providences, and gone on in a smooth way of Profession: but what will you do now, when you must come possibly to suffer persecution for it? to keep the faith, you may lose your Liberty, Life, Estate. And there's a great deal of hazard upon this account, because it hath pleased God so to dispose it, as that those that should be your guides into truth, the Lord is removing them into corners. Possibly while they have been with you, you have kept the faith; but what will you do when they are gone? While Moses was with the people they cleaved to the Lord; when once he was gone into the Mount, they fell into their Idolatry, and worshipped a Calf. While Paul was at Ephesus the flock kept pure, but (saith he) I know after my departure grievous Wolves shall break in, not sparing the flock, &c. So, while you have heard of God, who sends voices and warnings to scare away the Wolves and Foxes from you, possibly you may keep the Faith; but what will you do when God removes them?

3. God hath ever had in all ages of his Church, a word of his Patience to be kept, to try his Saints; and therefore it does concern you for to be valiant for the truth. In all the series of Gods dispensations with his Church, there hath been something or other of the faith of Christ, that hath cost them resisting to blood, to sacrifice their lives, to lay down all that they have for it by suffering. Now even as they, so we; if not in the same thing, yet in the same faith: we have still some word

or other of Gods patience to keep, therefore we need to have on the Armour of Light; you must wrestle with the fiery Tryal, for there is some Jewel that Jesus Christ puts upon you to wear, that Persecutors and Persecutions, Heresies and Hereticks will scratch at, which you must hold out with loss of life to keep; and this must be till the latter part of the rage and reign of Antichrist is out; and even as you keep that, so will God keep you, Rev. 3:10. As you honour the word of Gods patience, so God will honour you: As you are faithful to him, so will he give you the Crown, and no otherwise: Hence therefore it concerns us all to be armed with a holy confidence and resolution, as to this spiritual Warfare, in contending for the faith delivered to us.

But the great thing I shall speak to, is; Wherein may Christians be helped in this holy struggling and contention?

I shall only mention five or six things, some to fit you for it, others to help you in the management of it: I shall name them mixtly, and not distinct.

Rule 1. First, bring all Doctrines that are offered you to believe, and all practises that are put upon you to practise, to the Scriptures, the Word of God; try them there, whether they be to be retained, or to be rejected. You will have this double advantage by it;

1. To discover what is right, and what is wrong.
2. To have on the best part of your armor, whereby to contend against it.

1. To discover what is right, and what is wrong; for the Scripture alone is the Touch-stone of Doctrines, and the Trial of Spirits: The Scripture does discover itself, and doth discover all things that are contrary to it: when you are bidden to try all things, 'tis not by practising all things, as some poor giddy-headed Christians of late days have done; who have made the practising every opinion, to be their trying of it, till they have run themselves into all Opinions: but 'tis the Scripture you are first to try, and then to practise; who are

like the noble Bereans, that were more noble than those of Thessalonica, because they searched the Scripture. To bring the Truths that have or shall be taught you, or the Doctrines that shall be imposed upon you, to the Word of God; to see whether they be according to the Truth, or no: for false Doctrines and false Worship, of all things they hate the Scripture most: they are alike false coyn, or false Jewels, which go best in the night: false coyn will not endure the Touch-stone, nor false Jewels the day: no more will false Doctrines the Scripture; therefore it will be a great way to discover them.

2. It will be a great way to vanquish them, Eph. 6. Above all, take the sword of the Spirit: the Word of God is the sword of the Spirit, by which we slay Heretical Doctrines; and by which we are to slay sinful practises. All those stones that the Davids of God have flung at the Goliaths of Error, they have been taken out of the Brook of the Scriptures: therefore reduce all Doctrines offered you to believe, all Worships that are taught you to practise, to the Word of God.

1. All Doctrines that are taught you to believe, reduce them thither; there's no profession of Faith to be built, but the stones must be fetched from that Mountain: If you believe Divine Truths, but not because the Scripture propounds them, your faith is but humane: If you believe anything the Scripture doth not speak, your faith is Diabolical: the Word of God, and your faith, must run parallel: All that is written, you must believe, and you must believe nothing but what is written: This was the Rule of the Old Testament, Isa. 8:20. To the Law and to the Testimony; to the Law, that is, to Moses; and to the Testimony, that is, to the Prophets: if they speak not according to these, there's no light in them. When anything was offered to Christ by way of enquiry, his common answer was, How readest thou? Luk. 10:26. How is it written? When the Apostle Paul would redress the abuse of the Lords Supper, he does not carry the Corinthians to these and these Fathers, to this and that use and custom, but brings that, how it was delivered from the Lord: he reduces them to the Institution; What I have received from the Lord, that I have delivered unto you. The Word of God is perfect, in respect

of Doctrine, and in respect of Worship. So that whatsoever is offered you to believe, you must try it by perfect rules; for 'tis given by Divine inspiration, to make the man of God perfect and wise unto Salvation: it is such a Canon about Doctrines to be received, as nothing must be added nor taken from it, Rev. 22. Therefore it's called a Testament: Now no man dares adde to another mans last Will and Testament: Who shall dare to adde a faith to the Faith of Gods Elect, to that which Christ hath delivered? I will give you this as a certain Observation, that there never was any thing of false Doctrine brought into the Church, or anything of false Worship imposed upon the Church, but either it was by neglecting the Scripture, or by introducing something above the Scripture.

2. Bring hither all practices of Worship, as well as Doctrine, to be believed: try the wayes and forms of Christs house, by the Word of Christ: he shews us the patterns thereof, the our-goings, and returning's thereof: he was faithful in all his house, even as Moses was, who did not leave a pin of the Tabernacle, but did appoint it. There is nothing decent and comely in the Church, which is so much pleaded for, but what comes in by Christs institution. What-ever you worship without a warrant from the Word of God, or by what-ever means you worship without a warrant from the Word of God, you worship you know not what, John 4:20. 'Tis Will-worship; and by the same Rule you receive one Will-worship, you may receive twenty; 'Tis vain worship, it will never reach the end of your Communion with God: (for he is a Spirit, and seeks such Worshippers:) it will never bring you to the enjoyment of God: therefore in point of Worship, bring it to the Word of God; and as to Faith and Worship, say, Hitherto, my Faith, and my Worship, shalt thou go and no further. This rule rightly improved, will dis-entangle you from the hooks, and take you off from the baits of those cunning Fowlers (for to such the Apostle doth compare them in the New Testament) who seek to betray souls from the simplicity of Gospel-faith. Never any did invent false Doctrine, but to put up them, they put down the Scripture, and they put out the eyes of Christians to make them bend to it. Before they use other means to compel them, their great work is

to darken the light, or the truth; and in the room of the Scripture to be your rule, they set up other Rules: which, because there are three marvellous Popular, I desire to mention them in opposition to this Rule I have given you.

There's a three-fold rule men would set up to deceive poor souls: The Name of a Church: Ancient Customs: The Generality of those where they live.

1. The specious Name of a Church, to make that a Rule to Doctrine and to Worship. It was the plea of the Popish Party in the Marian dayes; What! will you not believe the Church? hath not the Church power to make Institutions and Canons about this, and that, and the other? will you not believe the Church? will you go out from the true Church? Thus do men that go about to deceive; nothing like it, as to the catching and deluding many poor souls, by making the Church their Rule. It was the way of the Popish Party of old, and if Antichrist ever hath power again over the Church of Christ, in that measure and degree it has had, you must expect it again; therefore let me caution you against it. Can we enquire who this Church was? It was only the decree of the proud Church, Antichrist of old, and the Antichristian Clergy, who, (as you may read in their Stories) would lord it over the faith of Gods heritage. I must tell you, the Name, and Custom, and way of the Churches of Christ, is a reverend holy thing, even of that that is a true Church: 'Tis a weighty Argument, when the Apostle saith, We have no such Custom, nor the Churches of Christ: And therefore I do fully close with him that said, No sober man will go against reason: No Christian against the Scripture: and no peaceable minded man against the Church: But then the Church must shine by a Scripture-Light: If that be a Rule, it must be ruled by the Scripture; the Churches power is not Authoritative, as to give Laws against the Laws of Christ; it's only ministerial, we do believe the Scripture for itself, and not because of the Church: we receive the Scripture by the Church: Hence therefore when we set up the name of a Church, let us see whether that Church walk in the way of Christ, whether she be his Spouse or no, whether she doth act according to his Institutions,

whether they bring his light, yea or no; then submit: for it is not what a Church practises, but what they are warranted to practise: not what they hold for a truth, but what they are warranted to hold as the Word of Truth: The Word was written after the Church, but as it is the Word of God, it's before it. This therefore will break the snare, if you be set upon by the specious name of the Church; look that the Church hath warrant from Scripture-Institution, and then submit to Church-Institution.

A second Rule I observe men would set up to betray poor souls from the faith once delivered to them, is Ancient Custom: (our Fathers worshipped in this Mountain.) When they would hold forth that which the Scripture is short in, they will send us to such and such customs, of so many hundred years standing. It is to be bewailed that the date, the standing of false Doctrines, and false Worships, is so ancient; for though at first they were but Innovations, yet to succeeding Generations they become old: And 'tis a very great truth, That what is the most ancient, is the most true; and therefore there lies a great snare in this. Therefore when Antiquity is pretended, if you find not their hoary heads in the way of Righteousness, there is little reason for you to reverence them, or comply with them, no more than there was reason so suddenly to be taken with the Gibeonites mouldy bread and clouted shoes: When matters of Antiquity are pretended, say as Ignatius, Jesus Christus est mea Antiquitas, Jesus Christ is my Antiquity; so say, Truth is my Antiquity: for though an opinion hath been practised a thousand years, yet men may have the Word of Truth in their hearts that is ancients than all.

A third Rule that men would set up, is, The general course of the World, or Place, the generality of those where they live: This was that the Popish Party did often mention to the witnesses of Jesus Christ; What! will you be wiser than others? Can't you do as others do? must you be singular? And this is a taking Rule for to make you conformable to those things possibly the Word of God will not warrant, if you bring not this custom to the Word of God: 'Tis not

what the most do, but what we may do: 'tis not what the practice of all in general is, but what ought to be the singular care, and strict holiness of Christians in particular, that the Word of God will allow: Christians are not to be conformable to the present World, Rom. 12:1. The Word will tell you, It is no more safe to follow a multitude to do evil, than it will be sweet to be in Hell with a great company: The Word will let you know, the secrets of the Lord are with a very few, and those, them that fear him: as for the whole world, it lies in wickedness: The Word will tell you, The wayes of Jesus Christ, and the profession of Jesus Christ, is commonly called a Sect; it is everywhere spoken against, and men hate it everywhere: Therefore set up a Rule in your hearts, in your houses, in your meditations, in your practise.

Rule 2.

Be very well rooted and established in the faith that hath been delivered to you. I observe one of the great reasons why Christians so easily let go the profession they have made, is, because they were never well built upon it, nor established in it. There are many Christians, that, through their own itching ears, heaping up Teachers to themselves, have never been rooted or established in the truth; the Lord pittie them and keep them this day: Many Christians that have attended to establishing means, yet never seriously considered nor laid things to their heart, but are like those the Apostle speaks of, Heb. 5:12. that had need to learn the first Oracles of God. How many among us profess with the highest, but have little ground for their faith? only (with the Jews) the Traditions of the Elders, the custom of the place, Education, and because such a party of men say so, because nobody denies it, because Ministers commonly preached it; but to have any solid and serious ground, they are yet to seek. 'Tis not with the things of God, as with other Arts, as Logick, Rhetorick, Astronomy; in these Arts the principal is presupposed to be proved; no man goes about to prove there is Reason, that there is Number, that there are Heavenly Bodies, because sense and experience shews it. But 'tis quite otherwise in the things of God: for you are not only

to run away with the notion, that there is a God, that this God is one, and that these are his Words and his Works; but you are to know this by experience, because the knowledge of these things comes by infusion, by faith, by a belief that God is: For by faith we believe the Worlds were made by the Word of God, Heb. 11:3. It is that therefore I would press you to, that you would labour for an established Spirit: Do not only hear the things of God, but see them; the first will but blinde you, or at best leave you at great uncertainties; the last will settle you. What was the reason of the holy Apostles zeal, when they were under the greatest threatnings of the High Priests, and were forbid to speak in the name of Christ, and to speak of Justification by faith, and the Resurrection of Christ from the dead, and forgiveness of sins by him? (things that are further remote from sense and reason) the Apostle will tell you, Acts 4:20. We cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard. Hence it is that poor silly women, that in respect of their Imbecillity and Infirmitie of Sex, the terrours of the fire and faggot, might have been such to have brought them to Apostacy, yet they confounded the great Doctors and Rabbis when they were brought before them; they were able to burn, though they could not dispute; they beheld things that were invisible. It's an excellent thing not to take up the Word upon notion, upon opinion, but to have an established heart through Grace. I shall direct you in two words.

1. Get the Lord by Prayer to teach you every truth; what Jesus Christ teaches once, is everlastingly taught; no word is abiding, but what the Lord Jesus teaches himself. Look as it is with Satan, when he comes to seduce men from the truth, he will present such a fine notion without, and commonly he darts in some dazzling light within, so that you never knew a Heretick take up a false opinion, but it was with a marvellous deal of sweetness and comfort: so when the Lord Christ teacheth by his Spirit, he comes with that light, that sweetness, savour, and relish of truth, as will be impossible for you to let it go: Hence when Christ would confute the Pharisees, who had the witness of his Father in his work, he saith, Joh. 5:37. Ye have

neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape: It's an excellent thing to see the shape and hear the voice of God.

2. Be well rooted upon Christ, or else you will never be established in any •ruth of Christ: If you miss the Lord Jesus by the Grace of Faith: you will never hold fast the Doctrine of Faith: you are built upon the Doctrine of the Apostles, (not their Persons) upon which the Lord Jesus is the Corner-stone: he that does not know Jesus Christ himself, will certainly lose his Faith: What's the reason the stony ground in time of Persecution fell away? why, they had not root, they were not planted upon the Lord Jesus.

Rule 3. Thirdly, those truths that God hath taught you, and those wayes of Worship God hath committed to you, love them as your lives, love them above your lives; for no man will ever contend to hold them, if he do not love them. Things of low price and esteem, are presently let go; he that loves the Word above his life, will let life go rather than the Word: If you receive not the Word out of love, every Imposter and false Prophet, every fear and terrour of men will rob you of it: Hide the Word in thy heart, saith Solomon, Love the truth dearly. It was a great speech of Calvin, never did any one Apostatize from the truth of Jesus Christ, but it was because he did not love the truth: And I add this, that never did any Apostatize from the wayes and truth of Jesus Christ, but it was because they did not receive them in love, or else they have lost their love; for there's a decay of affection, as well as having no affection: if you love them, what will you not suffer for them? (but more of that by and by.)

Rule 4. Fourthly, guard all the truths of God, and those wayes of God that have been taught you; guard them strongly, especially truths that are most material and fundamental: for leading truths are like Captains of Armies, if they be routed, the whole rout follows them. There is great opposition that will be made against your faith. The whole power of darkness, of Antichrist, of his seducing spirits, likely and probably enough, will overspread the whole face of Christianity once more: for she must sit as a Lady, before she be desolate and

forsaken forever. The Apostle bids you beware of Dogs, beware of the Concision, beware of Evil workers, guard your selves against them, guard the truths you have learned, by Argument, by Scripture, by Reason, that you may have wherewithal to confute them by the word of truth mightily, out of the Scripture, as the Apostle did.

Three things you are to guard against.

1. Your own deceitfulness, especially in a rash and sudden forsaking of those wayes that have been taught, and the profession you have taken up; for Christians would never be so mad to Apostatize, were they but seriously deliberate, about the weight of them, Gal. 3:1. O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that you would not obey the truth, &c. and 1:6. I marvelled what ailed you, that you soon turned away to another Gospel. One would have thought they might have spoken with Paul first, and sent to him, and reasoned the case with him: There's a marvellous bewitching in false Doctrines, to take men presently, who are not watchful over themselves. It is in disputations and practising truth, as it is in contentions: if you make a Judgment before you hear both parties speak, you judge unrighteously: if you forsake the wayes and truth of Jesus Christ, before you can hear what can be said for them, you do unrighteously.

2. Guard them against the lusts of your own hearts. The great work of a Christian, is contention; it is not so much against Antichrist, those that are without him, as that which is within him. If all Here | tical Doctrines and wayes were rooted out of the World, not only the being, but the memory, the heart is bad enough in one day to set them all o• foot again; therefore guard the truth: Men of corrupt minds will presently grow reprobate, as to the Faith, 1 Tim. 3 6. Such Doctrines and Worships as shall suit with our lusts, as shall suit with exalting Self, and laving Christ low, as shall suit with an easie way to Heaven, when the Scripture saith, Straight is the Gate; as shall suit with self-preservation: So I might secure my Estate, my Liberty. I would suspect such Doctrines as these, before I take them up for the wayes of Christ.

Guard the truth against false Teachers, such as shall come among you in Sheeps cloathing, yet are Wolves in heart; men that creep in at unawares among you, to subvert souls: I will not here describe them, you know them well enough by their fruits: only this let me tell you in opposition to those; though you cannot come at the publick Ministry, or those God hath set over you, yet make Conscience for to take fences, to take defences from them, as you may by their Counsel, Prayer, Help, and Assistance, for to guard you against false Teachers. When the Church of Christ is in the Wilderness, you will find this is that the Holy Ghost advises them to, Cant. 1:8. You are to guard your selves by communion one with another; as to go forth by the footsteps of the Flock, so also you are to go and feed your Kids by the Shepherds tents; for though 'tis not the work that God calls for, to pin your faith upon their sleeves, yet 'tis your duty to enquire of the Lord by them; for he is the Messenger of the Lord to you.

Rule 5. Arm your selves with Resolutions to suffer for the faith of the Gospel, and for the wayes of Jesus Christ; As you should love the truth above your lives, so labour to be made willing to part with Life, Estate, Liberty, anything for to keep the wayes of Jesus Christ. It is not the honour of the Gospel of Christ to hear Christians to break out into murmurings, passions, discontents, contentions that are carnal and sinful; your work is, humbly, meekly, and patiently to lie under the hand of God, and under the hand of man too; that becomes Christians. Suffering is that that will restore the glory of Religion, that will keep the truth delivered to you, that will honour the Cause of Christ best of all: follow the example of blessed Paul: his expression is worthy of consideration, 2 Tim. 2:9. he gives a charge of keeping and propagating one of the most glorious truths, (that Jesus Christ was risen from the dead) yet a thing that is farthest off from sense and reason, (wherein I suffer trouble:) Mark, Paul does not say, wherein I make trouble; no, but wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, unto bonds, but the Word of God is not bound. If this blessed and glorious Apostle would have had the faith of God bound, and have contented himself with sinful silence, and not propagated the Gospel, Paul might have been free; but Paul would not have the

Word of God bound, therefore Paul would suffer for it. Shall we go higher a great deal than this? You have the glorious commendation of the Lord Jesus Christ upon this account, that he gave a free and full account of the Doctrine of his Father, and of his glorious person, before Pontius Pilate, a bloody Persecutor. It was not by saying to his Disciples Fight; nor by saying, My Kingdom is not of this World: but he gave a glorious confession before the face of Pilate, of the righteousness of his Truth, Doctrine, Gospel, and of his Person. Fear to ensnare the freedom of the Truth, with your own Liberty; do not ensnare it to your own lusts, nor to the will of any man. Oh! that we could study, and improve these Scriptures more! it would make us fear God more, and man less. This is that that would make us to say, as holy David did, Psalm 119:161. Princes have persecuted me without a cause, but my heart standeth in awe of thy word: for he that hath the most fear on you, and upon you, you will be more afraid to fall into his hands. It is a childish thing for a Christian to tread down the belief of any Doctrine, or practise any Worship for fear of man, who hath no more power to hurt us, than we give him ourselves by our fear; Fear not him that can kill the body, &c. It was the way of Gods people formerly, that they came to divide between duty commanded by God, and commanded by Man. You may read in all the dayes of Antichrists persecution, from the beginning they came to divide in matter of obedience to God and his truth; and worship and obedience to Man. Christians! nothing but a suffering spirit will help you to this, for there is no other way of Obedience in this case to Authority, but to suffer under it meekly, patiently, as Lambs: This made the three children to divide between the command of the King, and the command of God: What sayes Nebuchadnezzar? Every knee that bowes not, shall be cast into the Furnace: Very well; As for that matter, say they, O King, we are not careful to answer thee; for we will not bow down, &c. What, will they not obey him? Yes, they will obey him; by suffering, as becomes Christians, and is the example of Christ: as if they should say, Truly we are terrified with the burning Furnace, but we are terrified with Hell too: We are terrified by the threats of the great King, but we are likewise terrified with the threats of the great God: He is able to deliver us out of your

torments, you are not able to deliver us from his torments: so in the case of Daniel. Arm your selves with this Resolution of suffering, and lying down patiently and meekly under those things that you cannot do, so that God may be honoured by your holy resolution upon this account: for truly, you never do contend successfully for the faith of the Gospel, till you contend by suffering; for it is said, They overcome by the blood of the Lamb: You never make Religion your business, till the world see you can let such great things go, as Life, Estate, Liberty, to keep it: then wisdom is justified of her Children. You never glorifie the truths of God so much by practice, or writing, as by suffering for them. Those glorious truths against Popish justification, mixing of works with faith, Transubstantiation, Purgatory, Idol-worship, against all those things that were superadded contrary to God's Institution, there is such a glory upon the truths, that is hard for the Popish power ever to darken them again, because we see them written in the honourable and blessed scars of the witnesses, and burnings of those glorious Martyrs. If you would take one another by the hand, when God takes away our faithful Guides, and say, Brethren, Sisters, Friends, come let us hold together; there's no way in the world to hold on together like suffering; for the Gospel really would get more advantage by the holy, humble, sufferings of one gracious Saint, meerly for the Word of Righteousness, than by ten thousand Arguments used against Hereticks, and false Worship. Compare Phil. 1:12,13,14,27,28,29. verses. How are Pauls bonds a furtherance of the Gospel? Paul no doubt was called an evil doer, that sowed Heresie, and was hated everywhere; (saith he) Many of the Brethren of the Lord waxed confident by my bounds, and were much more bold to speak the Word without fear. Here's the great encouragement: and that's in the 27. verse, and he speaks it as one that was leaving of them, only let your Conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ, that you may stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel, and in nothing terrified by your Adversaries, for unto you it is given, not only to believe, but also to suffer, &c. It is given to you as a duty, given to you as a priviledge. O that you would confirm one another, and in slippery times hold up one another by the hand; do it in going after

Gods call, and in this way, suffering for those truths you cannot otherwise hold and maintain.

Truly Christians, you had need be armed with Resolution; for the world is always counting the things Gods people have suffered, for very little, and they count it prudence not to meddle therein. Those men that have easie, soft terms to comply, that they have a latitude to do anything, I believe some Christians are of that opinion, that they would even think the Saints of God were ill-advised to venture their All upon those truths they see others dyed and suffered for.

It is a sad thing, many Christians study; to draw out the lines of obedience as far as the honesty of the times will give them leave, but no farther: that they would go on with the Lord Jesus to the High Priest's Hall, and there deny him: or that would be willing to do anything for Christ, but are willing to suffer nothing for Christ: you do very little honour Jesus Christ in this, and you will very little honour your selves at the last. It is upon this account that Christians if they see even against plain conviction of Conscience, and the Word, that there are super-instituted things broken in, as in conscience they cannot submit to, yet they cannot comply, why? they may be used lawfully, though not superstitiously: But saith the Apostle Paul, Do I yet strive to please men? Gal. 1:10. Am I then the Servant of Christ? You cannot be the Servants of Christ, if you strive to please men. Wo be to you that please men, and displease God: He that would be my Disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross, &c. (What's that?) deny Wife, Children, Relations, Comforts, he must be willing to go out of all: Those duties the Lord Jesus Christ is most glorified in, they are either those our floathful hearts are most unwilling to do, or that our fearful hearts are most unwilling to suffer for: Therefore arm your selves with resolutions to suffer.

I intended to have taken up four Appearances and Coverings that Saints usually take up for to hide themselves, as under a covert, to beat down the Gospel-warrants and commands, to suffer for the Faith delivered.

1. The motion that a Christian hath of indifferencie of things, that they are but toyes and trifles, that they may be done, or not done. It is not my work to tell you what is indifferent, or name anything in particular. As I remember in the Book of Martyrs, the usual Argument was, why cannot you worship the Idol? why cannot you bow down as well as others? it is a small matter: cannot you shew your outward reverence, and keep your heart to yourself? Indeed if there were any thing that is indifferent, a Christian hath a marvellous latitude in point of Doctrine, in point of Worship: I would caution you therefore. The term of indifferent, I suppose it is devised as a Pillar to rest the Conscience on, which otherwise would startle, and look with a broad face upon them. Things that come under this notion, had need well to be weighed and considered: If they tell you plainly they came out of Rome, and had the Plague of Popery upon them: they came from Hell, were hatched there, and the curse of God is upon them; nobody will entertain them. They must pretend they came from the Church, from the Apostles, descending from the Scriptures; and hence they are entertained with the freedom and willingness, as that most Christians take no notice, but fall down under them; and so the very power and life of Religion and holy practice is eaten out. The Devil hath three wayes whereby he makes men seek after him. First, commonly he doth cover holiness with other names. Secondly, He perswades that sins are but little. Thirdly, That they may repent hereafter. The first is suitable to my purpose, that vertue or grace is covered with other names: therefore if a man be holy, he is called precise; if zealous, he is said to be rash; and if it be really a sin, it shall come under the name of indifferency, a toy, a trifle, and things of that nature: therefore you had need be cautious; for it is not so much what name the sin has, what title it goes under, as what it is really. As to things of Doctrine and Worship I know there is no medium; every man must give an account to the Lord what he does; therefore I do not tell you what is indifferent, and what not; but search the Scripture, take heed what you receive for indifferent.

The second thing Christians will say is, I hope without danger I may comply with them, considering I bear them as my burthens. This is very like the young man in the Gospel; he came to Christ, and would have him come up to his terms; and when Christ told him, yet he lacked one thing, Go and sell all, &c. he went away sorrowful: So, many Christians they would follow Christ, but they cannot, because there is not such security in it, but they will go away sorrowful: Thou Hypocrite! Art thou willing to forsake all for Christ, yet canst not leave life, liberty, and some of these small things? Will you wound the name of Christ, and pretend to be sorrowful for it? I conclude, thy pretense shall not excuse thee; for so was Pilate loth to crucifie Christ; and, as a means and expedient, he calls for water and washes his hands, saying, I am innocent from the blood of this just man: But do you think God excused Pilate? no more, will he you: Whatever is brought to you, is either forbidden or commanded by God: If forbidden by God, why do you meddle with it? If commanded of the Lord, why are you burdened with it? why do you it heartily? for the Lord loves one that is chearful in his service: Neither man nor God is pleased with such.

A third thing, which satisfies many, is, That they may follow in some things the opinions of wise men, holy men, and good men; That they may do as they do. I shall say but these two words: First, Many men are reputed good, wise, and honest, that are not so: A man may be accounted an honest man, that yet may be covetous: he may be accounted a very good man, yet be really corrupt in heart, and in his lusts; therefore 'tis good to try men: I dare not trust mine own heart, (unless God give strength of grace, and assistance every moment) lest I should betray the truth of Christ upon some advantage: when the Devil would set abroach an evil opinion or practice, it's his common way to turn it up in some clean Vessel. Men of civil honesty and goodness: You read the old Prophet drew the young one in, though expressly forbidden by God himself: When you do not fear a young Christian, it may be the example of an old Minister shall draw you; therefore it's good to mind who you follow. Secondly, Grant they are all good and real, they are men fearing God, (as there are some;)

yet God will not let his people know all his mind. There are some that would, but cannot know all his mind and will; the Lord is free and voluntary, he reveals things necessary to salvation; but for other things he withholds. But what is your rule? Call no man Master: you are to follow no man further than he follows Christ: And indeed for a man to follow the examples of others, wherein they sin and do not know it; it is just like the case of holy Noah, (who was a gracious man) and knew not the strength of the Grape, he was drunk with his own Vineyard: But what's the fruit of it? his Son Cham saw his nakedness, and discovered it: If good and holy men taste of the intoxicated Wine that is too strong for them, and know it not, will you sip after them? unless you will discover your nakedness, and proclaim it from Generation to Generation, and make your selves Chams, not sons of the Prophet: Therefore I know not what warrant you have to follow such examples.

The fourth things is this; Christians usually do no good by standing out. Answ. Whether we get good, or do good or no, we are to do our duty. The Lord will honour you for suffering for the Truth, 2 Thes. 1:2,3,4,5. And by suffering you shall confirm the Saints, and bear testimony; you shall witness against all false Doctrines, and false Worship, before the whole world. By your humility and Patience, when you suffer not as evil-doers, but as those that suffer for the Word of Righteousness, the Word of Truth, for holding fast the Lord Jesus and his Faith, that is more precious than Heaven and Earth, than any created thing: this will make your name as a sweet savour to all Generations; when those that Apostatize, Persecute, and oppose Jesus Christ, their memories shall be left as a curse to the people of God.

25. Dr. T. Horton's Funeral Sermon

"But we have this Treasure in Earthen Vessels, that the excellency of the Power may be of God, and not of us." - 2 Cor. 4:7.

There is nothing so excellent or compleat in this World, but hath its diminishment and qualifications; and something that doth rage it, and abates it of the excellency thereof; not the things of this World only, but spiritual things in some sort, as to enjoy them, and partake of them in this life, have their inconveniencies and disparagements annexed, and are mingled with something that abates of their worth; an instance of which we have here in this present Scripture which the Apostle Paul signifies to us concerning the enjoyment of the Ministry of the Gospel of Christ. He had in the Verse before the Text, told us the great priviledge that both Ministers and others had in having the glorious Gospel, viz. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, shining into our hearts; the consideration of which, is of great encouragement to us: yet adds this as a qualification of it; viz. But we have this Treasure in Earthen Vessels, &c. That which doth qualifie it, is, That this excellent Treasure hath its conveyances through weak and mean persons, men of frailty and mortality. In the words there are two main parts:

I. The Dispensation of it.

II. The Account of it.

I. The Dispensation itself, This Treasure we have in Earthen Vessels, &c.

II. The Account of it, That the Excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

I shall begin with the first, the Dispensation itself, which hath two branches.

1. The Depositum, the thing laid up.
2. The Repository in which this Treasure is laid up.

First, The Depositum, or thing laid up, which is a Treasure; and what is this Treasure, but the Gospel of Jesus Christ? The Gospel is a Treasure according to a two-fold consideration.

In respect of the 1. Matter of it.

In respect of the 2. Ministry of it.

Both make up a Treasure. The Matter of it, the things of the Gospel are rich things; and the conveyances of it, the Ministerial gifts and ability, by which the Gospel is administred, do make up the Treasure: 'Tis a treasure in both respects.

1. In respect of the Matter of it; therefore it is, we read of the Riches of Christ, of the Riches of the Gospel. The Scripture makes mention of three things, wherein the Gospel is agreeable to a treasure.

2. A Treasure is a thing of dignity and worth; 'tis not a company of Pebbles (though many) that will make up a Treasure; Treasure consists of things of worth and dignity: and thus is the Gospel: in it are contained excellent and admirable truths, the Mysteries of salvation by Christ; the Doctrine of the Gospel brings glad tidings of peace and reconciliation with God in Christ: there we have the gifts and graces of God, there we have glory and immortality, &c. and those things in the Gospel are administered to us: there is no Science in the world brings such Treasure as this.

2. The Gospel is a treasure for variety, and abundance, and plurality. 'Tis not one thing of worth, but many that make up a treasure: if few, yet much worth must be comprehended in them; so in the Gospel we

have the manifold wisdom of God, the rich Treasures of wisdom and knowledge. The Gospel, though it be but one for substance, yet 'tis many for improvements; 'tis a chain of many links, one faith, but divers articles of it; so it is a treasure in that respect.

3. 'Tis a Treasure for its closeness; We do not open a Treasure to everyone, but it is kept close. The Gospel is a secret mystery, hidden, not revealed to every one: it is not discovered to carnal worldly men; though it may be reveal'd to them in the outward proposition, yet not in the spirituality of it. But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding? saith Job 28:12. The peace of the Gospel is a treasure hid in the field, not found by everyone.

2. The Gospel is a treasure in respect of the Ministry of it, so the Apostle hints, it is not only, but a shining light, which shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the Glory of God, &c. 'Tis a treasure in this respect, viz. In the discovery and shining of it, the conveyances, the several gifts and graces of the mystery, by which the Gospel is conveyed to us, makes us a treasure; and as the Ministry is a treasure, so the opportunities and advantages thereof are. Thus, the Gospel and the Ministry thereof is precious, and ought to be esteemed and made use of by us. We should highly account of the Gospel, and put a high value on it, for it is a treasure; yea, it is a treasure in the want of other treasures, they are rich that are made partakers of it: Silver and Gold have I none, (saith St. Peter to the Cripple) but such as I have, I give it thee: this is the priviledge of Ministers; though it may be, poor in respect of themselves, yet are rich to others. These excellent riches are committed to us, and accordingly we must not only make use of them ourselves, but make them known to others; the Gospel is a treasure not for us to keep, but to discover, reveal and manifest to others: to give the light of the glory of God, &c. This is the work of the Ministry, we have indeed this treasure, but not for ourselves only, but for others: We are to keep it, to preserve and maintain; it but so, as to be diligent to impart what is committed to us for the edification of others: Every Scribe

instructed to the Kingdom of Heaven is as a good householder, bringeth forth things new and old.

The Gospel is a treasure, therefore we ought to carry ourselves answerable to it: As

1. We must labour for it, be diligent in the search of it, dig for it as for hidden treasures. Lift up thy voyce for understanding, &c. Pro. 2:2,3,4. Dig for it: you know there is a great deal of pains-taking, and labour used to get Worldly treasure. What will not men venture for it? they will go over Sea and Land, go through fire and water, expose themselves to all dangers for earthly treasure, make unto themselves Friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, pass away a great deal of time, and take a great deal of care for it.

2. Esteem this treasure, this heavenly wisdom, this Evangelical knowledge, even the Gospel of Christ: labor to understand it, and have the efficacy wrought upon your hearts.

3. Rejoyce in it; how do men rejoyce in earthly treasure? so should we, as the Merchant in the Gospel, when he had found the Pearl of price, rejoyced exceedingly; so we ought, as being made partakers thereof. I greatly rejoyced at thy word, even as one that had found great spoils, (saith David) so should we rejoyce alwayes in this treasure. 'Tis said of those that sate under John Baptists ministry, that they rejoyced but for a while, and that is the condition and misery of many. The City of Samaria, when they had received the Gospel, 'tis said, they had great joy, Acts 8:9.

4. Be careful to keep and preserve it, for it is a treasure, and therefore we must treasure it up in our hearts: and the rather, because it will keep us. It keeps (as Chrysostom saith) the house where it is; other treasures cannot secure us: Discretion shall preserve thee, and understanding shall keep thee, Prov. 21:11. Thus you see the excellency of this spiritual wisdom. So much for the first thing considerable in the first branch, viz. the Depositum, the Treasure.

The second thing considerable is, the Repository, i. e. Earthen Vessels, or Vessels of Earth, Earthen Pitchers: these are the Repository, but have this treasure in Earthen Vessels, &c. Earth is a word of diminution, and disparagement, and that in three regards;

1. In regard of its meanness and baseness.
2. In regard of its foulness and pollution.
3. In regard of its frailty and transitoriness.

'Tis passing away in all respects; these Earthen Vessels in the Text, is to be understood, the Apostles and Ministers of Jesus Christ, in regard of their outward man, are so called, and are so according to this threefold notion.

I. In regard of their meanness: their outside is mean, either for person, or sometimes for estate, body, and outward deportment. This was the condition (you know) of the first Ministers of Christ, mean and ordinary persons outwardly God made use of. Nay, our Master, our blessed Lord and Saviour, was mean, in regard of his humane birth, and so reckoned of by most men according to his birth and parentage. So it is with the servants of Christ, they are in their persons generally base, mean, low, and accordingly rendered despicable to the eyes of the World.

II. In regard of foulness and pollution; Ministers are called Earthen Vessels, they have many weaknesses, they are men subject to the like passions as others. 'Tis true, the Ministers of Christ have greater advantages than others, in regard of their education, knowledge, gifts, and employments, being more free from those defilements and snares that others are entangled in: yet through the remainders of the flesh in them, they have many infirmities: so Satan watches them more than others, lays more snares for them in regard of their parts and employments; so that they are more subject to his temptations than others. Satan hath a desire to sift them (as the Apostle Peter) as wheat) because he knows they will draw many after them: so that

they must needs be subject to many weaknesses and infirmities. Sometimes God makes use of the worst sort of men, even the most vicious and malicious; first he changeth them, and then makes use of them as instruments of glory. The Apostle Paul was a Vessel of Election to carry the name of Christ unto the Gentiles: yet in times past a great persecutor. So it pleaseth God to make use of such, that the excellency of the power may be of God, &c.

III. Ministers are called Earthen Vessels in the regard of the frailty and mortality of their persons, and Earthen Vessels are soon crackt and broken. Ministers are subject to many infirmities of body: This Heavenly light of the Gospel, shineth often through Lanthorns of glass, with some broken. Ministers have weak and frail bodies; Timothy had his bodily infirmities, and Trophimus was left sick at Miletum, 1 Tim. 4:20. and Epaphroditus was sick nigh unto death, Phil. 2:27. and Paul had need of Luke the Physician, probably in regard of his sickness. Thus the servants of God are subject to many infirmities. Besides the reasons in the Text, there are other reasons, why God will have it so.

1. That they may be more compassionate, and more sensible of the weaknesses of others: for likeness of condition breeds sympathy in affection. Men are apt to pity those in the like condition with themselves; so our Lord took our nature upon him, that he might pity us; he took flesh and bloud upon him, he was tempted in all things like unto us, but without sin, that so he might succour those that are tempted: So his servants, many of them are much tempted, which may breed in them a sympathy of affection to others, that are in such a condition.

2. God will have it so, that Ministers may have the more experience of the Truths they preach to others concerning an afflicted condition; those that have had no sickness, or other affliction, cannot preach from experience of such truths that concern such a condition; they cannot preach so feelingly and savory as others; when they have been under affliction, they will know what affliction is, both in the nature

of it, and the comforts of it, and Gods gracious assistance therein, and so they may speak comfortably, and be enabled to comfort others, as the Apostle Paul speaks.

3. God is pleased so to order it sometimes for their humiliation, to keep them low, that so they may not be lifted up by reason of extraordinary manifestations and impartments; thus St. Paul had given him a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him, lest he should be exalted above measure, 2 Cor. 12:7. A thorn was given him, &c. ('tis twice repeated both in the beginning and end of the verse) that so this thorn in the flesh, might keep out pride in the heart, that so they may have a more low, meek, and humble frame of spirit, and thereby fitted and prepared for greater services. And

4. That they may be also more conformable to those they have to deal with. Israel desires Moses to speak to them, (and not God) why? because he was like unto them, and would therefore compassionate them; from whom they therefore desired to receive the commands of God. Thus it pleaseth God to deal with his servants, that as they may pity those they have to deal with, so likewise to draw the affections of their people unto them, to make them more loving, and the more to attend on their Ministry, seeing they are so fleeting, and going away; it pleaseth God that Epaphroditus should be sick even to death, to endear the Philippians more to him, chap. 2:25, 28. that their love and tenderness may be drawn forth the more by discovery of his frailty. Let us improve this.

Use 1. First, as to Ministers, see how the condition is with us in our Calling; We are Earthen Vessels, taken out of dust; We should often consider our frailty, to make us more humble, more meek, and more compassionate to others, more diligent in doing good, that we may make amends for our frailty and natural weaknesses that are upon us: We must not think much of it, it being no more than in former times: it was the condition of the Apostles themselves, they were Earthen Vessels, they had such weaknesses, men subject to the like passions as we.

Use 2. Secondly, as for the people, this may improve in all the notions and considerations of an Earthen Vessel.

First, in regard of the meanness; you must not esteem the Gospel according to the Vessel, according to the disparagement of the Vessel; a Vessel of dishonour, in respect of its matter, may be a Vessel of honour, in regard of the Gold that is in it; those members of the body that are weak, and in themselves less honorable, we afford a great deal of honor upon them, in seeking and cloathing them: So the Ministers work and employment, and the Doctrines they bring, are excellent, and of great use; when all is done, we have that we serve for: according to the imployment we are put to, we are honorable, though outwardly mean. Wicked and base men are called Filii Terrae, they are Sons of the Earth, Job 30:8. Children of Fools, yea, Children of base men; they are viler than the Earth, i.e. Men of no account (as one saith) the Earth groans under such ungracious persons; but gracious persons are Vessels of honor; as it was said of the Giants of old, so it may be said of these, They are men of Renown, and so we shall esteem of them. Worldly men look at the outside, and so esteem of them; so was Christ dealt with, Is not this the Carpenters son? So those Teachers in Corinth endeavoured to render Saint Paul his presense weak, and his speech contemptible, 2 Cor. 10:11. that so they might make his Ministry contemptible also. But this glorious Treasure is in Earthen Vessels; You know (saith Paul) Gal. 4:13. that through infirmity of the flesh, I preached the Gospel unto you at first: This was their commendation, v. 14. But my temptation which was in my flesh, you despised not, nor rejected, but received me as an Angel of God, even as Jesus Christ: All his weaknesses, and whatever was matter of discouragement, they did not despise, but honorably entertained him, even as Christ himself. So it was the commendation of the Thessalonians, 1 Thess. 2:13 That they received not the word as the word of man, but (as it is in truth) the Word of God, looking to the mighty God to make it effectual; so should all others do upon this consideration.

2. Seeing Ministers are Earthen Vessels, in regard of moral infirmities which adhere to them, in respect of their corruptions and weaknesses judge of them as men, but esteem of what is righteous in them; though they have great advantages against sin, yet notwithstanding, they are not totally exempted and free from sin; as they are Ministers, so they are men.

3. In regard that Ministers are Earthen Vessels in respect of their frailty. Seeing then they are so frail and transitory, therefore accordingly you should make use of them, deal kindly and affectionately with them, in that they are quickly broken. What is sooner broken than a Glass, or an Earthen Vessel? Ministers are quickly taken away, and therefore you should be tender of them while you have them. Where are all the Fathers? Do the Prophets live forever? The Word of the Lord indeed endureth forever, but the Preacher of it doth not; the Gospel is eternal, but the Dispenser is mortal; the Calling is lasting, but the Minister is transitory; and therefore you should carry your selves with all tenderness and respect to them: take heed of grieving their spirits, seeing they are so soon broken. Endeavour also to improve by them, and to get as much good as you can by them. It is a great argument, to work while it is day, because the night comes, when no man can work: whilst God affords means and opportunities, make use of them: we are but Passengers; therefore this is a great ground for you to get all the good you can by Ministers, seeing they are frail.

Lastly, by way of Improvement: Take notice of the wayes of God, as different from mans; God puts excellent Treasure into Earthen Vessels: we keep treasure in Strong Holds, in the strongest Repositories. Gods wayes are not as our wayes, he goes another way than we do; he makes use of the poorest, meanest, and most frail Creatures sometimes; he layes aside many times men of greater abilities, parts, and quality, and makes use of weaker to do this great work. Chrysostom makes an Expostulation, if it be excellent Treasure, why in Earthen Vessels? therefore it is a Vessel of Earth,

because an excellent Treasure. Thus Gods wayes are unsearchable; this is the Improvement.

Now besides this interpretation given of it, there is another that will not be impertinent. Some understand by Earthen Vessels, the Expressions, Words, and Phrases of the Ministry, through which the Doctrines and Truths of the Gospel are conveyed; this is agreeable to what went before: Some false Teachers in Corinth pleased themselves with eloquent and enticing words of worldly Wisdom, and so endeavoured to render Pauls preaching despicable, in regard of the plainness of it: Therefore (saith the Apostle) we have this Treasure in Earthen Vessels, i. e. familiar conveyances, that so we may easily understand it.

Thus I have explained this Earthen Vessel, and so have done with the first considerable part, viz. the Dispensation itself, This Treasure we have in Earthen Vessels: I come now to the second, viz.

II. The account of this Dispensation, That the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. Which words may be considered two wayes.

First, either absolutely, as lying in themselves. Or,

Secondly, Connexively, to the words before going.

1. Take them absolutely as they lie in themselves, and two things are exhibited.

1. The excellency of the Gospel and Ministry itself, called Power.

2. The Author and Original of it, laid down two ways, positively of God, and negatively, not of us.

1. The excellency of the Gospel and Ministry thereof, called Power: There is a great deal of power and efficacy in the Gospel, 'tis in its nature, powerful and efficacious; so the Ministry of it, Rom. 1:16. I

am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. See 1 Cor. 2:4. Paul's preaching was in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power, &c. 'Tis called the Arm of Gods Power, the Sword of the Spirit, Ephes. 6:17. 'Tis quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged Sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the Soul and Spirit, &c. Heb. 4:12. and many other places. We may conceive it to be so, according to the various effects and consequences of it, viz. as to

1. Conviction.

2. Conversion.

3. Consolation.

1. 'Tis powerful in regard of Conviction, 'tis a word of Conviction; and one part of the work of the Ministry is (by the Spirits co-operation) to convince the World of sin, to open mens eyes, to shew them the vileness of their ways; to discover such courses to be sinful; the Conscience is awakened by the Spirit in the Ministry of the Word; herein 'tis powerful and efficacious: There are divers instances in Scripture, how powerful the Word hath been in point of Conviction; in Felix, the Apostle Paul preached to him of righteousness and judgement to come, &c. he trembles: The Judge at the Bench trembleth at the Word delivered by the Prisoner at the Bar: So powerful is the Ministry of the Word, as to discover our sinfulness. So the Disciples going to Emaus, their hearts burnt within them, when our Saviour opened to them the Prophets, &c. So it was with St. Peters Auditors, Acts 2. they were pricked in the heart when they heard this; he did preach to them in the power and demonstration of the Spirit, and plainly discovered that sin that they were more especially guilty of, and when they heard that, they were pricked in the heart, &c.

2. It was a Word of Conversion also; Conviction is one thing, and Conversion in another: Sometimes men may be convinced, and yet

have no change wrought in them; therefore Conversion is another work; it is a turning men from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God, &c. To receive an inheritance among them that are sanctified. Herein is the Word powerful, viz. in Regeneration: I have begotten you (by the Word) to a lively hope, &c. Of his own will hath he begotten you, &c.

3. It is a word of comfort and consolation, it is a powerful word, and able to comfort the heart: and the Ministry is very effectual herein (when set on by the Spirit) to quiet, satisfie, and pacifie the Consciences of men, which declareth the remission of sin, and whosoever's sins are forgiven, must needs be comforted. Indeed it is not in the power of men to forgive sins, yet they can speak a word of comfort in season by the administration of the promises (the Spirit of God going along with them) and then they are not only declarative, but operative. Where (I say) it pleaseth God to bless and sanctifie the Word, it is effectual for quieting of the minde, for pacifying of the conscience, and settling of the troubled soul. Thus you see how powerful the Ministry is; and seeing it is so, this should teach us how to behave ourselves under it; it is powerful in itself, and powerful in its dispensation, and hath none of that weakness (mentioned before) of the dispenser of it; 'Twas with you (saith St. Paul) in much weakness, and in fear, and in trembling, 1 Cor. 2,3,4. And my speech — was in the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power. These may seem to be contradictory; but 'tis answered, the Word is powerful in the demonstration of the Spirit, though delivered by one of humane weakness, as before is declared. This spiritual power we should look at, and labour after; which power doth not consist in matter of elocution, the inticing words of mans wisdom; nor in matter of voice, which indeed is a good thing, and suitable to the nature of the matter: A quick and powerful delivery is of great efficacy and power, for the setting home of truths. Yet this doth not make a powerful Ministry; for a whisper in the ear may cause a thunder-bolt in the conscience; the power lies first in the nature of the matter; the matter consists in the nature and condition of Mankinde, the certainty of the Judgement the necessity of Christ, the Covenant of

Grace•, and the graces and priviledges thereof, &c. These carry a great deal of power and effiacy with them, when they are carefully and frequently dispensed, and Gods Spirit going along with them, so they become powerful: for the Ministry consists not in empty notions and speculations, that will only fickle the fancy, but never reach the conscience. Moral discourses, though they be of great use, yet if we rest in them, they leave us as they found us. Evangelical truths (which are manifold) are to be delivered in the Ministry. Now as the matter of the Ministry must be powerful, so the expression must be powerful; there should be suitableness of expression to the matter, i. e. with gravity, sobriety, and affection, &c. Strong lines make but weak preaching, and take away the efficacy: but delivering truths in the demonstration of the spirit, and in power, that is most effectual: when we speak feelingly, and from our hearts, it comes then (through the blessing of the Lord with it) with power. This is then to learn us of the Ministry, viz. 1. Use.

Let us be careful, that the matter of our Ministry be powerful, so that the handling and dispensing thereof be powerful, that so it may come home to the conscience; thus we should deal with all: The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails, fastened by the Ministers of the Assemblies, &c. So our words should have a force and power in them. This, as the Apostle says, is mighty and powerful, to the beating down of strong holds, &c.

Use 2. Secondly, in reference to hearers; seeing the Ministry is powerful, you must then submit your selves to the power of it. Many people are Sermon-proof, and think to stand out against the power of the Word; but if it comes in power to the conscience, they will not be able to resist it; as it is said of them in the Gospel, they were not able to resist the Spirit by which he spake (viz. Stephen.) And for those that desire the conversion of others, what course should be taken by them for that end? but by good counsel, instruction, prayer, and good example, to endeavour them; and more especially to bring them to the Word, and administration thereof, which God hath sanctified for this end.

So much for the excellency of the Gospel, viz. The excellency of the power, &c. I come to the second.

2. The Author of it. 1. Positively, it is of God. And 2. Negatively, it is not of us.

First, Positively, it is of God, and that in all the considerations of it, in the full extent of it, it is of God. So the Ministerial gifts, the performances of it, and the success of it, are all from God.

First, Ministerial gifts are from God, it is he that makes us able Ministers of the New Testament; There are (saith the Apostle Paul) diversity of gifts; to one is given the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge, by the same spirit, &c. 1 Cor. 12:4, 5, 6. It is God that bestows every good gift.

Secondly, The performance also is from God; his grace concurs and assists therein; the habit and the act are both from him; God gives gifts to men, and he enables them to dispense them. Ministerial employments are not only for general, but particular applications; and so need not only general, but particular assistances; That I might be enabled (saith Saint Paul) to fulfill the work, &c. the Lord stood by me, and strengthened me, that my preaching might be fully accomplished.

It is God that makes the work powerful, efficacious, and successful: Alas! when we have used our best endeavours, all the success is from him, he must make it effectual; it is said, our Saviour went about doing good, for God was with him, inclining him to the work, and assisting him therein: So he is with all his servants; their griefs, employments, and success thereof, are all of God, not of us.

Object. But it may be objected: Is all from God, and nothing from us? Are we not said to concur with him? and is not then the power partly ours?

Answ. I answer, no: 'Tis of God, and not of us; we are indeed subjects of the Ministry, the Recipients thereof; persons employed in the work, and therefore are said to be workers together with God, 2 Cor. 6:1. But the power and efficacy thereof is from God alone: Paul and Apollo were but Ministers, 'tis God that giveth the blessing. It is not of us in two respects. 1. It is not merited by us, it is not of our deserving, nor of our procuring. 1. It is not of our deserving; the best, and most accomplished, do not merit: I received a mercy (saith Paul) to be faithful: He accounted it a mercy to be employed, and to be faithful therein. 2. It is not of our own procuring, we do not obtain it by our own power; as Peter said in the recovery of the lame man, It is not by any power and holiness of ours, that this man is restored, &c. And so it is not our gifts and industry only, that will make our Ministry powerful; and therefore in this work let us be looking up to God, and desire him to assist us, as Moses said, If thou goest not, O Lord, up with us, wherefore should we go hence? So say I, if the presense of God be not with us, what can we do?

And further, when we do partake of any measure of ability, see where we must determine it: Not unto us, Lord; not unto us, but unto thy Name be all the glory. We must not sacrifice to our own Net, nor give the honour to our own industry, but wholly give praise to God, because the excellency is of God.

2. But in the second place, if you look upon the words reflexively, or as having their connexion to the words going before, and so agree and hold together, and thus you may read them: Therefore is this Treasure in Earthen Vessels, that the excellency of the power may be acknowledged to be of God, and not of us: If it were in Angels, or had we never so strong bodies, yet the excellency of the power of God would not be so clearly seen, as it is now, being laid up in poor frail Vessels: Here is the power of God, here is the lustre and glory of God most manifested; for so much the more apparently it will be seen to be from God, by how much the weaker the instrument is that is employed by God. Therefore if anything doth act beyond its own power, it must have some foreign powers for the producing such and

such acts: therefore when we see any great matter done by poor frail and contemptible persons of Earthen Vessels, this doth plainly shew the excellency of the power to be of God, and not of Man; therefore look from Man to God, it is God that doth these things; We should over-look Earthen Vessels; we should (I say) over-look men that are these Earthen Vessels, and look to God that makes the Ministry powerful in such conveyances as these are.

Furthermore, it may satisfie us of the Ministry, in that we are Vessels, viz. men of frailty, &c. We are apt to be discouraged; and to think hardly that we are followed with so many weaknesses, that we have a hard matter, that when we have taken such pains in the work of the Ministry, we should be thus rewarded: but this should satisfie us, the more weakness in us, the greater honour will come to Christ: This Treasure we have in Earthen Vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. The weaker the Vessel, the more honour will redound to Christ.

Furthermore, this may take off the servants of Christ from unwillingness unto those works and performances which God calls them unto, by reason of their weakness: Thus it is when God call• to any work or employment, the servants of God are apt to plead their own inability: Moses sayes, he is not eloquent; Jeremiah sayes, he is a child; Jonah says, he is a man of unclean lips. Thus we have their delays, their excuses, whereby they endeavoured to discharge themselves from that work that God call'd them unto, by their own weakness, &c. But God refuses such excuses; for who makes the blind to see, and the dumb to speak, but God? It is he that touched Isaiahs lips; it is he that said to Jeremiah, Do not say, thou art a child, for I have sent thee, &c. This I say then is a consideration may encourage Ministers in their work, that the weaker they are, the more honour and glory will redound to Christ; for he said unto me (saith the Apostle) my grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Not that it is an encouragement, or argument, for any to take upon them the great work of the Ministry, without sufficient qualifications and abilities: But where there is not that

degree of ability as is desired, where there is a true sensibleness of their weakness, this may be an encouragement to them, that God delighteth to shew his power in them, that by so much the more they are weak, so much the more honour he will gain. For a conclusion, it comes to this, viz.

That we lay no stress upon any outward things.

There is no stress or happiness in these outward things; those that seem to be of some concernment, as strength of body, and other outward qualifications, that are of remark; yet consider, they are fading and transitory; this should teach us, in the enjoyment of outward things, a great deal of humility: though we are Vessels of Gold, in regard of the treasure and improvement; yet in regard of ourselves, we are Vessels of Earth, and so should be in respect of humility. Let us look upon all these things, as given to us of God, even for this very end, that we may be more serviceable to him, and his people.

So I have done with the two general parts of the words, and so with the whole Verse, viz. We have this treasure in Earthen Vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

Do we begin again to commend ourselves? (saith the Apostle Paul, 2 Cor. 3:1.) Or need we Epistles of commendations to us? Ye are our Epistle in our hearts, &c. But this is applicable to the present sad occasion now before us.

This Reverend and blessed man of God, Mr. James Naton, was a Person of great note and eminency among us, and well known in this City, and in this place, where he spent his labour and pains many years. I could give large accounts and testimonies of him (if need were) from my own knowledge of him, having been acquainted with him many years. He was not only a Minister, but the Son of a Minister, his birth and education suiting together. He look'd upon it not only as an honour, but an engagement, to be careful to walk in

those steps set before him, and to continue the work of the Ministry begun by his religious Father. Certainly the Children of godly and holy Parents, cannot come off so cheap in their carriages, as others; they have greater accounts to make, as having greater examples set before them, greater advantages of Prayer, Exhortation, &c. and so greater engagements; this was thought on, and observed by him. And as he was the Son of a Minister, so when he came to years, and was sitted, he took upon him the Ministry: as he was one of great abilities, so accordingly he discharged them faithfully and conscientiously. He was a spiritual, powerful, conscientious Preacher; he preached by his life: for as (Erasmus saith) we should not only love to speak truths, but we should digest truths on our own hearts, before we commend them to others, and so they will be the more effectual. He was a man of a very meek, sweet, and humble spirit; a man of a great humility, and of great meekness in the midst of great abilities, which was a great Ornament in him; a man full of tenderness and condescension to others; a man of a very yielding and melting frame of Spirit, soon dissolved into tears. It was the saying of one, that a good man is full of tears: so this good man was full of tears, not affected, but very real, and hearty, drawn from the fulness of his Spirit; as the Apostle Paul saith, he served the Lord in much humility, and many tears. This was remarkable, that in these times our Reverend Brother was full of tears in delivering his Doctrine, which was suitable to the age we live in, being full of sin and calamity; there is much need of a bewailing spirit to bewail the iniquities and miseries of the times; they that cannot bewail themselves, need the tears of others. He was a man of great integrity, and single-heartedness; in his exhortations he had much of the simplicity of Christ, as the Apostle Paul speaks. In reference to the Ministry, he had no worldly and base affection, he had no carnal designs therein; but his chief design was to bring Souls home to Christ, that was his chief business. What the Apostle saith of himself, may also be said of him, that in simplicity, and godly sincerity, he had his conversation in the world, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully, but by the manifestation of the truth, commending himself to every mans conscience in the sight of

God, 2 Cor. 4:2. He was a man had ability to speak a word in season; he was very compassionate to wounded spirits, he himself having been much afflicted. He was a man much in communication with God, and had much acquaintance with God, and was careful in improvement therein: He was a Jacob in wrestling with God, a Moses, that stood in the Gap, an Elijah that prayed earnestly; the whole Land was the better for such a person, being much with God; the made many addresses to him, and had much holy familiarity with him. And as in his publick performances he was very faithful and beneficial, so in his Family and privately, he was very fruitful and serious. In a word (not to multiply much in this kind; you need it less in this Auditory, but only by way grateful memorial) there was much of God and Christ in him, and he was a great example to his fellow-servants; there was much of this Treasure (spoken of in the Text) in this Earthen Vessel; as, in the matter of it, he was one of a Gospel Spirit; and in the conveyances of it, he had great abilities for the work of the Ministry, and discharged it with a great deal of success. As he had this treasure in an Earthen Vessel, so his Vessel, his frail body, was no disparagement to him, but the advancement of the treasure, in setting forth the power to be of God; his outward man was much weak and worn away, but his inward man was upheld by the grace of God. His first work in the Ministry was in that place where myself have relation to; he was an assistant to my Predecessor (being then past labour) Mr. Richard Couder, and performed the work so well, that he was exceedingly beloved of Mr. Couder, and well beloved of the Parish, and other places. He left a good impression behind, and I found good effects by the foundation there laid. The Apostle Paul indeed desired not to work there where another had laid the foundation, but I thought it a great advantage that the foundation was laid by such a Master-builder. He was called into the Country to Rughy in Warwickshire; there he continued very fruitful, and did much good. For some occasion he removed, & returned into the City, and came into this place, where he continued about 18 or 19 years, discharged the work of the Lord carefully: I need not say much of his carriage in this place, I appeal to your own consciences. I may say of this servant of Christ, as the Apostle Paul

said of himself, 1 Thes. 2,10,11,12. Ye are his witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblameable he behaved himself among you: as you know, how he exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you (as a Father doth his Children) that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his Kingdom and Glory. Therefore there lies an engagement upon you to walk answerable to the truths he delivered, and to follow his steps, considering the end of his Conversation: I shut up all in the words of the Apostle Paul to the Philippians, chap. 4. v. 9. Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in him, do: and the God of Peace shall be with you.

26. Mr. Beerman's Farewell Sermon

Beloved, I know you are not ignorant, that I am called by Authority to depart from you, which for Conscience sake we must obey; and were it not for the breach of Conscience, I think I could be content to undoe myself to stay with you. I shall now in love and tenderness take my leave of you all, with that large portion of Scripture, in the 20th. of the Acts, from the 17th. Verse to the end; they were Paul's parting words to the Ephesians.

Verse 17 and so forth.

"And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the Elders of the Church, and when they were come unto him, he said unto them, Ye know that from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, with many tears, and temptations, which befell me, through the lying in wait of the Jews, and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but having shewed you, and taught you publickly, and from house to house, testifying to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance

towards God, and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ; and now, behold, I go bound in the Spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every City, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me, but none of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the Ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God; and now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the Kingdom of Heaven, shall see my face no more. Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore unto your selves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you Overseers, to feed the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood; for know this, that after my departure, grievous Wolves shall enter, not sparing the flock: also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away Disciples after them; therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years, I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now Brethren I commend you to God, and to the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you, and to give you an inheritance among all those that are sanctified. I have coveted no mans silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, your selves know, these hands have ministered to my necessities, and to those that were with me. I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring, ye ought to support the weak, remembering the word of our Lord Jesus, how he said, it is more blessed to give than to receive. And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all, and they all wept sore, and fell upon Pauls neck and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more; and they accompanied him unto the Ship."

Beloved, I have read unto you the words of a departing Minister to his Hearers. The case being my own, I thought I could not pitch upon a more fit place to take my Farewell withal. I shall not stand to open

all these words, only speak a word or two at parting, as Paul did to the Ephesians; and I shall only hold forth something to you by way of Analysis of it, and thereby you may judge of the Analogy of it. In this parting speech of Pauls you have two parts.

1. Pauls carriage to them.
2. Their carriage to him.

First, Pauls behaviour towards them, that was very pious, as you may read from verse 17. to verse 37.

Secondly, the peoples behaviour towards their departing Minister, which you have in the two last Verses. Wherein is observable,

1. Their Love.
2. Their Sorrow.

First their Love, expressed by kissing him, and accompanying him unto the Ship.

Secondly, Their Sorrow, expressed by their weeping, they could not part with such a Minister with dry eyes; but saith the Text, they all wept sorely, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. They wept, and they all wept, and they wept sorely; a sore weeping when this Minister and this People parted. From whence note this, that there is occasion and matter of great sorrow when people lose a godly Minister. Paul was not the first Minister that ever parted. People, nor the Ephesians the first People that ever lamented at the departure of a faithful Minister. See how the people lamented Samuel, 1 Sam. 25:1. And Samuel died, and all Israel were gathered together, and lamented Samuel; O that brave, that powerful preaching Samuel is gone! How did Elisha lament Elias, catching hold of his garments, and cried out, My Father, my Father, the Chariots of Israel, and the Horsemen thereof. Christ himself, when he saw the children of Israel scattered abroad

upon the Mountains, as Sheep without a Shepherd, how did his bowels yern towards them? But to name no more, take St. Stephen (Acts 8:2.) when Stephen was departed, dead and gone, devout men carried Stephen to his grave, and made great lamentations over him; they could but lament to think that that noble, couragious, and heart-dauntling Minister should never preach more before them. When Christ was put to death, how did his followers lament him! Is it not a lamentable sight to behold a poor weather-beaten rotten Ship, without mast or tackling, in a tempest? Good Lord, what will become of the Ship and Mariners? Is it not a sad sight to see a flock of Sheep invironed with a band of Wolves, and no Shepherd to protect them? Thus it is with the people when their Minister is gone. Ministers themselves have wept and lamented, when they have thought of departing from their own people, and that for these two causes.

First, because they knew they would corrupt themselves.

Secondly, because they knew they would suffer others to corrupt them.

First, because they knew they would corrupt themselves. Moses he knew this (Deut. 13:29.) he is there leaving the world, and the people thereof. Call unto me the Elders of your Tribes, that I may speak a word in their audience, and call Heaven and Earth to record against them, for I am sure that upon my departure you will utterly be corrupted, and turned from the way that I have commanded you, for behold I being yet alive with you this day, you are rebellious against God, how much more then after my death? I assure you it is cause of lamentation to think on this. Thus it was with Joash while Jehojadah that good Minister lived with him, and instructed him in the way that he should walk, he kept to the worship of God; but after Jehojadah died, he turned Idolater, and persecuted the sons of Jehojadah, (2 Chron. 24:21.)

Secondly, they knew that after their departure they would suffer others to corrupt them. This was that that made Paul use these words

to the Ephesians, (v. 29.) For I know that after my departure Wolves shall enter, not sparing the flock. And therefore well may you mourn when a faithful Minister is taken from you. I shall say no more, only a word or two to Pauls speech, wherein you have.

First, Paul speaking to God for them.

Secondly, Paul Speaking from God to them.

First, he spake to them from God, and then prayed to God for them. I shall divide his speech to them from God, into these two parts.

First, he spake something by way of Vindication of himself.

Secondly, he spake something by way of Exhortation to them.

First, you may observe in Paul's Farewell-speech, something by way of vindication of himself; and it is not amiss for a Minister, when he is to depart from a people, to say something in vindication of himself: there are enough that will, when his back is turned, lay falshoods & scandals to his charge, which they never durst do to his face; Samuel knew this, and therefore provided for it, (in 1 Sam. 12:1.) And Samuel said unto them all, Behold, I have hearkened to your voice, and have made you a King; now behold the King walks in and out before you; I am old, and of gray-hairs, and must now leave you. I have walked before you from a child to this day, and now witness against me before the Lord, whose Oxe have I taken? or whose Ass have I kept? whom have I done wrong to? or whom have I hurt? and of whose hand have I received a bribe, to blind mine eyes therewith? He stood here upon the justification of his life and carriage towards them, that he had not been a self-seeking, or oppressing man unto them: And thus did Paul vindicate himself to the Ephesians; give me leave to divide Pauls vindication into four or five parts.

First, he tells them that he had constantly preached amongst them, notwithstanding all the afflictions which encountred him (v. 19.)

Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, with many tears, and temptations which befell me through the lying in wait of the Jews.

Secondly, He vindicates himself by telling them the matter of his preaching, (v. 20.) I have taught you publickly, and from house to house: you know, I may fitly apply this to myself, for I have not only taught you publickly, but in many of your houses also. But,

Thirdly, He vindicates himself, by telling them the matter of his preaching; and I bless God it hath been my method ever since I preached among you, (v. 21.) Testifying to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ; and this is my rejoycing (now I may preach no more) that I have spent my time in declaring unto you the Fundamentals, and grounds of salvation, and not in frivolous Ceremonies.

Fourthly, He vindicates himself by declaring the impartiality of his preaching, (v. 27.) I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Oh, my Brethren, though I cannot say, I have declared all the counsel of God; yet this, through grace, I can say, that I have not shunned to declare any of it.

Fifthly, Paul doth clear his Doctrine, and withal himself, by telling them he had preached freely, (v. 32. and 33.) I have coveted no mans silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye your selves know, that these hands have ministred to my necessities, and to those that were with me. I bless the Lord I can with a good conscience safely say, I have coveted neither your silver nor gold, neither am I a penny the richer for what I have received of you; it was not a desire of anything of yours, that made me first accept of this place; yet this shall I say for your honour, that you have richly and liberally bestowed your favours upon me. But as there is something in his own vindication; So

Secondly, there is something by way of Exhortation to them (v. 18.) Take heed therefore unto your selves, &c. Paul, before he leaves them, hath something from God to say to them; from whence I note

this, That the Ministers of God, before they quite leave, have something to say to them for God. It was thus with the holy men of old; Jacob, when he was dying, called all his Sons before him, and to everyone he gave counsel and blessing. David, when he was upon leaving the World, and he knew he should not live long, he called all Israel unto him, and saith thus unto them, (Chron. 28:8, 9.) Now therefore in the sight of all Israel, the Congregation of the Lord, and in the audience of our God, keep, and seek for all the Commandements of the Lord your God, that you may possess this good Land, and leave it for an inheritable to your Children after you forever. And thou Solomon, my Son, know the God of thy Fathers, and serve him with a perfect heart; and with a willing mind, for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: If thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will east thee off forever. Thus you see it hath been the custom of holy men of old, when they were leaving the World, to say something to their people; so now here, I am come unto you this day as a dying man; (for you know when this day is gone, I must no more preach among you) and I know you are here come, to see what I shall leave you for your Legacy; which that I may do, take these twenty things, as counsel and advice from a dying man; and O that they may remain with you when I am dead. First, I shall give you ten by way of Caution; and secondly ten by way of Counsel. My Cautions are:

First, Beloved, I beseech you, as you tender the welfare of your souls, take heed of breaking the Sabbath day, of prophaning the Lords Day. It hath been observable, that where ever Religion hath flourished among any people, there they have ever been careful, and conscientious of the Sabbath day: And, on the contrary side, where Religion is gone to decay, and people grown to prophaneness, there they are always loose on the Sabbath day. Pray remember, I hope you will remember, for God calls upon you, and commands you so to do, (Exod. 20. ver. 8.) Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Do not you take so much liberty as some will give you. Whosoever you are that refuse thus to do, I will leave this assertion upon you, "Thou

wretched man, hath "God given thee six dayes, and reserved but one for himself, and "wilt thou rob him of that too? What if he had given thee but one, and kept six for himself, would you be so vile, as not to keep them? How much more then, when God hath given thee so much preeminence in time. This is the first, be conscious in keeping the Sabbath day.

Secondly, take heed, and beware of Idolatry; this was Johns Caution to his beloved Children (1 Epist. 5. v. 21.) Little Children keep your selves from Idols. There is no sin to which, nor no sin by which we are more in danger, than Idolatry.

1. There is no sin to which we are in more danger, than Idolatry; Moses back was no sooner turned, but the people made them a brazen Calf, and bowed down to it, and worshipped it as their brazen God, (Exod. 32. v. 4.) Jehojada was no sooner dead, but Joash returned to Idolatry. If we were not prone this to sin, what is the reason all the World turns Antichristians so universally?

2. As there is no sin to which we are in more danger, so there is no sin by which we are in more danger, than Idolatry. I do confess if you will keep your garments clean, and undefiled with the mark of the Beast, it may be you may come under shrewd temptations; yet I entreat you as a dying man, as you love your souls, and for Gods sake, flee from Idolatry, notwithstanding your temptations that happen to you, he will support you, if you flee, and withstand the thing you are tempted to, (1 Cor. 10:13.) There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, and will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able to bear, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it: Now see what use the Apostle makes of this promise; in the next Verse he follows with these words, Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from Idolatry, Seeing God will uphold us; let us withstand any temptations, to this end, that God may uphold us. This is the second Caution.

Thirdly, take heed of Apostacy, of a degenerating back-sliding spirit, that you do not fall off from the truth and ground of the wayes of God, which ye have known and professed. It is true, it may be for standing to your Principles, you may lose the love of man; I acknowledge it may be so; but hear what God saith, If any man fall back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him: If thou goest on, mans soul may have no pleasure in thee; but if thou fallest back, Gods soul will have no pleasure in thee: Thou doest by Apostacy declare to all the World, that thou hast made trial of the wayes of God, and thou dost not find them to be as thou thoughtest they were, nay, not so good as others. Oh, take heed of scandalizing the ways of God, hear how God complains of those that so do, (Jeremiah 2:10.) Go unto the Isles of Chittim, and behold, and send unto Kedar, and take diligent heed, and see whether there be such a thing: Hath a Nation changed their Gods, which are yet no Gods? But my people hath changed their glory for that which will not profit. Hear, O Heavens, and be astonished at this: for my people have committed two evils, they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed to themselves broken cisterns, that will hold no water. Whatever it is that would lead thee to Apostacy, beware, and fly from it, especially evil company (of which I shall speak more anon) let your love to Christ be augmented, and love of your selves abased; for unless you love Christ very much, and your selves very little, I cannot hope that you will stand to your Principles.

Fourthly, Beware of Covetousness; it is Christs Caution (Luke 2:15.) Take heed and beware of Covetousness: Here is a Caution, with a double Action, take heed, and Beware. Believe me, Brethren, it stands us upon so to do, for it steals upon us before we be aware of it; There is no person will deal more injuriously with a Christian, than a Covetous man will; He will betray his Life (if it were in his hands) into Enemies hands for Money, as Judas did. A Covetous man will injure Christ in his Ordinances, he will not come at them, for the love he bears to the World will not suffer him; truly (quoth he) I have lost this, or that, while I was hearing a Sermon, I'll go no more, I must stay at home, and look after my business; I could give you many

instances of this, but time will not give me leave; I shall only touch this one: What was it but the love of this World that kept those who were bid to the Marriage Feast of the Great King of Heaven from coming? One had bought a piece of Ground, and he must needs go see it; another had bought Oxen, and he must go to prove them; a Third had married a Wife, and therefore he could not come. Of all persons in the World, a Covetous man cannot, nor will not endure to bear the Cross of Christ. (Philippians 3:18.) For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you weeping, that they are the enemies of the Cross of Christ, whose end is destruction; Who are these? what manner of persons are they? why, they are such who make their belly their God, whose glory is their shame, and who mind earthly things. A covetous man he will lye, with Ananias and Saphira; he will steal, with Ahas; he will murder, with Aban; he will betray, with Judas: what will he not do, to attain his covetous desire? This is the fourth, Beware of Covetousness.

Fifthly, you that have not taken warning yet, I beseech you take warning now: Have a care and avoid evil company (Ephesians 5:11.) Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them, and be ye separated from them. Never go into a wicked mans company, if, before you go, you have not a probability of doing good, or getting good. Consider with thy self, is there any likelihood that thou by thy wholesome reproofs maist do him any good; if there be, then go on; if not draw back, avoid them, flie from them, for their steps tend to perdition. By wicked company, these two things have been effected,

Good men made Bad.

Bad men made Worse.

Good men have been made bad by wicked company. Jehosaphat that good King, is an example of this, who by the company of wicked Ahab, was drawn to fight against those whom God favoured, and to help Ahab in his wicked enterprise.

Bad men have been made worse by evil company: Ahab was made worse by the Instigation of his wicked Wife Jezabel. Oh, can you bear when you are in their company to hear them blaspheme the holy Name of God, and not reprove them? Truly, if you can, it is a sign you are not so good as you should be.

Sixthly, my sixth Caution is this: Oh, have a care of having the least finger on your hand against a Saint; it is dangerous to have a thought, word, or act against the people of God; it is dangerous to have a thought amiss of them, (Psalm 62:3.) They imagine mischief against a man, (that is, against a Saint) therefore they shall all be slain, for their bare imagination they shall all be cut off. It is dangerous to speak against them, how durst thou (saith God to Miriam) to speak against my servant Moses? and immediately he smote her with a leprosie as white as snow: it is dangerous to act against them; and it is forbidden by God, (Psalm 105:5.) Touch not mine Anointed, nor do my Prophets no harm. Perhaps you would say, you would not do them any harm, if you thought they were Gods people; Oh, but take heed lest they prove Gods people, and then it were better for you, if a Millstone were hung about your neck, and you cast into the Sea, than to offend the least of them.

Seventhly, let me beseech you all to take heed of complying with this sinful World; whoever doth, do not you; but take up that good resolution of Joshuah's, As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. Though all else forsake God, yet will not I, yet let not us: I beseech you (saith he) that you would not conform your selves to the fashions and manners of this wicked world. Oh take heed of conforming your selves to the conversation of this world, but walk harmless, and shine as lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation; if we will comply with the world, I mean, to be as most of the world are, that is, temporizers, time-servers, preferring the pleasing of Man before the pleasing of God, then we must lye in wickedness, as all the World doth, (1 Joh. 2:16.) For all that is in the World is either the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, or the pride of life; and these are not of the Father, but abideth in the wicked one,

the Prince of the power of the Air, after whom the men of the world walk. This is the seventh. Take heed of conforming your selves to this World.

Eightly, take heed of a hasty spirit when you are under sad dispensations; when you are under sufferings you are apt to seek, and close with relief, come it which way it will, and on what terms it will. Let me beseech you Christians, to have a care of such a hasty and impatient spirit, (Esa. 26:18.) He that believeth maketh not haste; that is, he maketh not haste to get out of his afflictions. The people of Israel were of hasty spirits, and murmured, because they were kept so long in the Wilderness, for which God slew an innumerable company of them. Saul was of a hasty spirit, and by it lost his Life and Kingdom. Jacob's Mother no sooner told him his Fathers intent, but he was resolved to have the first blessing, though he cheated his Brother, and lyed for it, and so told his Father that he was his eldest Son; but he himself was afterwards deceived by a lye, with having the eldest Daughter given him instead of the younger. Take David for your example, he waited Gods time, the Kingdom was promised to him after Saul's death, and when Saul pursued him, you know David had him twice in his power, and with ease might have destroyed him, but he would not, Far be it from me (saith he) that I should touch the Lords Anointed; let God smite him by the hands of his Enemies, I will not. It is far better to be Gods Bondslave, than the Devils Freeman. Do not use any the least action whatever, in any indirect way, to deliver thy self, but patiently sit down, and wait Gods good time, which, when once come, thy deliverance will assuredly come with it. Take heed then of a hasty and sullen spirit under afflictions; some men, when God takes away any comfort from them, are of so sullen a spirit, there is no pacifying of them: God will now this day take something from you, which I believe you would willingly keep; will you therefore be of so sullen a spirit, that, because you cannot enjoy all, you'll not injoy any, but will rob your selves of all? What though you cannot enjoy your Minister any longer, will you not make use of the Ordinances of God? I beseech you refrain this

spirit, and let the deprivation of one mercy, be a means to make you make better use of those that are left.

Ninthly, my ninth Caution is this, Take heed of an ungodly Minister; I speak not to any mans person in particular, neither can I because I know not as yet who will succeed me; but whosoever he be, if he be wicked, beware of him; for if he be ungodly, the people will follow him; for, like Priest, like People: And I pray God deliver you from such Ministers, as for Doctrine, do teach the traditions of men; and cry Peace, Peace, when sudden destruction hangs over their heads; Such Ministers may please you, but believe me they will never profit you; but at last you will find, that through the Vale of Security, you are led to the Pit of Perdition. They will tell you, you need not be so strict and diligent in your conversations; nor Heaven is not so hard and difficult to gain, as some would make you believe: believe them not, but remember, that without holiness none shall see God; and that neither Fornicators, Adulterers, Idolaters, Thieves, Murtherers, Covetous persons, Drunkards, Revilers, nor Extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of Heaven.

Tenthly and lastly, take heed you be not found professors of the Gospel only. Christ, when he was preaching to a throng of people (as I am here this day) said unto them, take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is Hypocrisie. Oh, that I had no cause to say, the leaven of the Pharisees is among you! I mean that there are many here that are but bare Professors! let me ask you that are only Professors this one question; Is Religion good, or bad? If it be not good, what is the reason thou art not ashamed to profess it? if it be good, what is the reason thou dost but profess it? By thy bare professing, thou lovest the love of Man; by no more than professing, thou canst never gain the love of God; so that on all sides thou art like to be miserable: The World will hate thee for being so good, and God will hate thee for being no better. What a sad thing is it, that thou lovest thy comforts in this life, by professing so much; and thy comforts in the life to come, by no more than professing? Thus you have heard what I have to say by way of Caution: I shall now speak to

you by way of Counsel. The former ten were Negative, these shall be Positive.

First, I intreat you all, that above all things, you would mind the one thing necessary: that you would not trouble your selves so much with many things of little concernment, but mind the great thing for which you came into the World. Oh my friends, will you spend your time for that which will not profit you, and your money for that which is not Bread? Look after Grace, labour to get an interest in Christ, of which you being unprovided, you will be undone forever, & it will be better for you, you had never been born: Oh! gain Christ, and then you will be fitted for all times, all troubles, and all conditions that can happen unto you; you will be endued with all wisdom, and with all riches; if you gain not Christ, all that God doth to you, and for you, will nothing at all avail you.

Secondly, my second Advice and Counsel unto you is this; That you would live, as you would die; live today, as if you must dye tomorrow.

Let me ask you, would you be content to dye in the state you are in? If my Soul doth not desire to be in a better state when I come to dye, than now I am in, I may very well sit down satisfied; if not, then surely it greatly concerns me to look after a better. Would any man be content to dye a Drunkard? I ask you that are Drunkards, I do believe you will answer no; why then do you live in Drunkenness? How know you that God will spare you when you are drunk, until you are sober again? We may read of many that have dyed in their drunken fits. God doth not always send his Herald to warn thee, before he sends his Serjeant to arrest thee. How knowest thou but Death may strike thee on a sudden? What will then become of thy Soul? Oh Beloved, I beseech you live not in that you are unwilling to dye in. Balaam was not such a Wretch, but he could cry out, Good Lord, let me dye the death of the righteous.

Thirdly, lay up for suffering times; there are few of you I believe are so bad husbands, but will lay up for a rainy day; I mean against a

time of sickness comes, wherein you will be unable to work; are you thus careful to maintain your bodies? and will you be careless of your souls? O be careful to provide for stormy weather; you have winter garments for your bodies to preserve them from cold, oh let patience be your winter garment, to preserve & keep your selves warm in afflictions; I know that he that will live godlily in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, and that through tribulations and sufferings we must enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; shall I not then provide for them? But you may say, what, doth persecution attend all the godly? A man may escape them, as well as suffer them? Put case afflictions should not come, thou wilt be never the worse for being provided for them; for he that is fit to dye, is fit to live; & that man that is fit to suffer afflictions, is fit to live without them. It was Paul's Exhortation to the Ephesians 6:10. Finally, my Brethren, put on the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand the wiles of the Devil. And it is wisdom in a man, to provide for a misery before it comes. There is mention made of a Nation (the Spartans, I think) that useth to chuse their King, as we do our Lord Mayor, every year, & whilst they are in their annual Government, they lived in all abundance of state, have all the fulness their hearts can wish; but when their year is over, all their pomp & glory is over too, & they banisht into some obscure remote place for ever, where they spent the remainder of their lives in great want and misery. One King (knowing this) being called to rule over this Nation, made such use of his time wherein he reigned as King, that by his provident living, he heaped up so much treasure, and sent it before him to the place where he knew he should be sent, as maintained him all his life time. Thus it is, God hath appointed to everyone a time to live in, and that bur a short time too; and in that time he hath appointed afflictions to attend us, if we will live godlily in Christ Jesus; it is not wisdom in us then to provide for them? Take heed then, to avoid sufferings, you do not commit sin; to commit sin, to avoid suffering, is as if a man should run out of the mouth of a barking Dog, into the mouth of a devouring Lyon; What is the wrath of man to the wrath of God? Man can but destroy the body, and no more; but God can destroy both body and soul into Hell fire to all eternity.

Fourthly, my fourth word of Counsel and Direction is this, be serious in serious things; when you come to perform serious things, do them seriously. I do not know that ever I saw a man fall asleep while he was telling of Money, for if he should, how could he tell whether it were right or no? Yet alas! too many sleep when they should be taking Truth, not only by natural sleep, but also by spiritual sleep; they are so careless in receiving the Word they hear, and so lazy withal, that rather than they will try the Word they hear, they will take all for truth the Minister tells them. Beloved, I believe you will scarce put so much confidence in a man, as to receive a summ of Money without telling it, because he saith it is right; and yet will you receive all that your Minister tells you is truth, for truth, without trying it? You must not be sluggish in your working for God, but put forth your selves to the uttermost: You must make the Kingdom of Heaven suffer violence, and take it by force. But then.

Fifthly, the fifth Direction which I shall give you is about hearing the Word, how you must behave your selves when you hear. I take it for granted you will hear, I hope you will; for brown bread is better than none, and a little is better than none at all; yet I intreat you take these two words of Direction.

First, Try the Word you hear by the Truth.

Secondly, Try your selves by the Word.

First, Try the Word you hear by the Truth; if it be not consonate to that, believe it not, let who will preach it. Paul exhorteth the Galatians so to do, (Gal. 1:8,9) But though we, or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Doctrine unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. How Paul, accursed? sure you speak too high; what if an Angel, must he be accursed? sure you will call in your words again: Nay, instead thereof, he repeats them over again, as we said before, so I say again; If any one preach any other Gospel, than that which you have received, let him be accursed. If any man pretend a Revelation from Heaven, and cannot

bring Scripture for what he saith, do not believe one syllable. Take the noble Bereans for your Example; they would not believe Pauls Doctrine, until they had searched to see whether it were so or no.

But then, as you are to try the Word you hear, by the Truth; so try your selves by the Word: You hear as a Truth, that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Now try your selves by this Truth, and see whether or not you walk after the Flesh, or after the Spirit: I have likewise two Directions about the preaching of the Word.

First, do not you receive the Word for the persons sake that brings it. I am apt to think that many of you will receive a Truth of one mans bringing, which you would not receive of anothers: and thus ye receive the Word of God with respect of persons, which you ought not: But first, receive the Word for its own sake; and secondly, receive the Person for the Words sake, (1 Thess. 5:12,13.) We beseech you, Brethren, to know them which are over you, to admonish you, and labour among you in the Lord, and to esteem of them very highly in love, for their works sake.

Sixthly, my Direction in the sixth place, shall be concerning the Times we live in; and I shall tell you how you ought to behave your selves, in two particulars.

First, blame thyself most, that the Times are so bad; there is a general complaint about the sadness of the Times, but no particular; every one puts the cause away from him, and instead of accusing themselves, are always accusing others: Ahab he said to Elisha, thou art he that troubled Israel; Elisha said unto Ahab, Thou art he that troubled Israel; Adam said to God, The woman which thou gavest me, did give to me, and I did eat: the Woman she said, the Serpent beguiled her: Thus do we put it off from ourselves to others. No man saith with Jonas, my sake is this come upon you, I am the cause of all this; no man saith, what have I done? Would you have the Times mend? Oh, then every soul of you condemn your selves, and amend

your wayes; the Times would not be so bad, if we were not so bad: would you have the effect cease, then seek to remove the cause. But then

Secondly, pray not so much for better Times, as for better Hearts; for had you never-so-good Times, and not good Hearts, your blessings would be cursings; good Times without good Hearts, will but fatten you the sooner to the slaughter.

Seventhly, if you cannot do the good you would, then do the good you can; many people are so sullen, that because they cannot do all they would do, they will do none at all. I beseech you be not of this temper; what though you cannot serve God in publick, will you not therefore serve in private; why may you not do as S. Austin was bid to do; take up and read? This will be a reading and praying time with you; and now you cannot hear as formerly you have done, oh, pray more, and read more; and the less you have in publick, the more you may have in private; you may read and pray, we are not forbidden that yet; let us then make use of them.

Eighthly, my intreaty is unto you all, That you would be careful and circumspect in your conversation, (Ephes. 5:15,16.) See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the dayes are evil. Walk as becometh the Professors of the Gospel, and labour to be blameless towards God and Man. Oh, what notice will there be taken, when any Professor doth but slip aside, and do anything amiss; it is the joy of wicked mens hearts to see it, and how diligently do they watch for it, and often wish it? We have a Proverb, that one man may better steal a Horse, than another look on: I am sure a wicked man may better commit seven sins, than a Professor one: For it is the failings, the bad lives of Professors, that makes Religion ill spoken of, and hinders many a weak soul from closing with it: Sure think they, their Religion cannot be good, their Conversations are so bad: Let us therefore be wary and careful in all our actions.

Ninthly, mourn, and lament for the sin you cannot hinder. It was said of Lot, (2 Pet. 2:8.) That his righteous soul was vexed with the wicked Conversations of the Sodomites. Oh, that we were but so good as we should be, then sure it would grieve us more than it doth, to see the wicked and abominable lives of those among whom we live: Though thou dost not blaspheme God thy self, yet it is thy God that is blasphemed, and shall not that trouble thee? How canst thou but reprove them whoever they be? When a sick man seeth his Wife, Children, Friends, and Physitian, lamenting his condition, sure it will make him think his condition is worse than he thought it, or very bad at least, or else why do they take on so, if there was no cause of fear? Thus, it may be, thy reproof may work upon a wicked man; If when thou hearest him blaspheme God, thou lamentest his condition, and puts him in mind of his sad estate, it may make him lay that to heart then, which he never did before.

Tenthly, the last thing that I have to beseech of you, is, that you would love one another: I have not at all sought to proselyte you to my way, but whatever you see in whoever it be, that is of God; Oh, love it, be he of what profession he will, he is a godly man: O then love him; you cannot love God, if you do not love his people; Let brotherly love continue, (1 Joh. 1:20.) If any man saith he loveth God, and hateth his Brother, he is a lyar, and the truth is not in him: For if he loveth not his Brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? We believe, saith John in the next Chapter, That Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and he that loveth the begetter, must also love him that is begotten. You would be loath to do otherwise in civil business: Will you refuse commerce with a man, because he is contrary to you in opinion, because he is not a Freeman of our City? Be not then so far from loving one another, as to bear hatred one to another.

Thus you have heard what I had to say unto you by way of Caution and Counsel: O that they may make such impressions on your hearts, that they may be your continual practice in your lives and conversations. I shall now close with the words of St. Paul, (2 Cor.

13:11.) Finally, Brethren, farewell; be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you. And the Lord grant, that both ye and I, when we come to the Judgment-Seat of God, render up our account with joy, and receive an immortal Crown with Christ in Heaven; until which Day, I beseech Almighty God to keep you, and preserve you in his fear. Amen.

27. Mr. Craddacott's Farewell Sermon

"—And heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of Peace shall be with you."- Phil. 4:9

From this Verse we may observe three Doctrines:

That the People's eyes must be taught by the Ministers holiness of life, as well as their ears by the Ministers soundness of Doctrine.

Paul did not preach one thing, and practice another; he practised as he preached, and he both practised and preached the fore-mentioned Duties in the verse before the Text. And to this end the Lord appointed a Ministry to be perpetuated through all Ages of the World: And it is the Lords appointment, that the peoples ears should be taught with sour'd Doctrine, to the matter and manner of it: and it is the Lord appointment, that the Peoples eyes should be taught by the Minister, holiness of life, as well as their ears, by their soundness in Doctrine; and this is necessary for the Minister himself, and necessary for the people: No marvel then that a faithful Ministry is the Butt of the Devils malice, of his craft and cruelty; and that the Devil hath in all Ages attempted and endeavoured utterly to overthrow the Ministry, or to poyson and fly-blow it shamefully; and this is the method whereby Satan hath endeavoured to fly-blow the Ministry. Why, then see the folly and madness of those people, who

affect, or cry up those Ministers, who do not teach their people with sound Doctrine, or a holy life; and whether there be no such Ministers, which do not teach their peoples eares with soundness of Doctrine, or their eyes with a holy life? and whether there be not such a people as do cry up such Ministers? and whether or no such people are not guilty of spiritual folly and madness? judge ye.

Doct. A Ministers soundness in Doctrine, and holiness of Life and Conversation, doth lay a very great obligation on a people, to a due conscientious practice of every commanded duty. The Apostle, we see, maketh his Preaching and Practice an argument to excite the Philippians to the fore-mentioned commanded duty, as in the Text, and the verse before the Text.

As first of all, the Appellations and Titles given in Scripture, to such Ministers whose Doctrine is sound, and whose lives and conversations are exemplary holy.

They are called, 1. The Salt of the Earth, as Matt. 5:13. read that, saith Christ to those great Teachers of the Gospel, and Dispensers of his Oracles, and in them to their Successors. Salt hath two things in it; namely, Sharpness, and Savouriness; and thus Ministers, First, must rebuke sharply, that people may be sound in the Faith, as Paul enjoyns Titus, as in Titus 1:13. And secondly, Ministers must speak savoury things to every person, and to every palate, that their people may be savoury both in heart and life; but to be as unsavoury as stinking Carrion in the Nostrils of the Almighty God, under such a sa | voury and seasoning Ministry, this is woful. It is the nature of Salt, to cause barrenness where it seasoneth not; Therefore we read of Abimelech in Judges 9:45. That he sowed the City with Salt: So that people who live under a sharp and savoury Ministry, and are not seasoned therewith, and preserved from putrefaction in their sin and corruption thereby, their case is very dangerous.

They are called again, The Light of the world, in Matt. 5:14. read that. As for their Doctrine, The Salt of the Earth; so for their lives, The

Light of the world; and they must therefore lead convincing lives, as Job. 5:35. read that: It is there said of John the Baptist, our blessed Lord and Savior gives him this commendatory Character, or Testimonial, That he was a burning, and a shining light; burning in himself, and shining to others. Or, as it was said of Basil, Thundring in his Doctrine, and Lightning in his Life and Conversation. Now if good Ministers be the Light of the World, then hence we may infer,

1. Inference. First, That without a godly, and faithful Ministry, the World lyeth in darkness, ignorance, error, sin, and misery. It is said of Galilee, in Matt. 4:16. That the people that sate in darkness, saw great light; read that. Why, had they not Priests and Levites? I answer, they had indeed sorry Priests, but they had not a faithful Ministry; and therefore the Evangelist tells them, They sate in darkness, yea, in the region and shadow of death, notwithstanding the sorry sottish Priests they had: But when they had a faithful Ministry, they are said to see a great light. Again, if good Ministers be the Light of the World, then we may draw this Corollary, that to be offended at the Light of a faithful, a powerful Ministry, argues and speaks a very sinful and wretched frame of heart. Nothing is so excellent, but some will be displeas'd at it, and with it, as Eccles. 11:7. Even the Light itself, we know is offensive to sore eyes. And thus the burning and shining Light of a godly and faithful Ministry is offensive and terrible to some; but who are they? Sore diseas'd souls, the Lord knows. The Ark of God, which was the monument of his presense, whom did it smite with Emrods, but the Philistims? What then, is the Ale-house more easie to thee, than thy Pew is to thee, in this place? than a Conscience, Soul-searching Sermon? What art thou offended at a powerful faithful Ministry? Oh fearful Plague-tokens!

2. To do all that men can do to put out the Light, this is worse. It is the most horrid hellish Plot that can be designed or named; and of this I am sure the Church of Rome cannot plead Not Guilty, which, like the Scribes and Pharisees take away from the people the Key of Knowledge, and shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men. How

terribly doth our blessed Lord thunder-strike those stupid Pharisees for this, Matt. 23:13? And as did the Pharisees, so did the Papists: For,

1. Heretofore they made it a moral sin to read Gods Word.
2. Afterwards, they clogged the liberty they granted with such cautions and restrictions, as that very few escaped of those that were within the reach of the Inquisition.
3. Those cloggs contented not, but now it is thought fit utterly to deny liberty, and can there be a more horrible hellish Plot assigned than this? to take from people their knowledge of salvation?

And thus the Church of Rome, whether they have Church-snuffers or not, to be sure they have Church-extinguishers, and various means to put out the Light; Oh fearful is this! as in Joh. 3:19,20. That is the reason men hate the light, because their deeds are evil.

Again, if good Ministers be the light of the world, then hence may we draw this Conclusion, that it concerns people very nearly to believe in the light, and to walk in the light, and to work while the light lasteth; as our blessed Savior exhorteth in Joh. 12:35,36. read that. God sets up his Ministers as Lights, as Candles, on the Candlesticks of his Church, to awaken men, and to light men unto eternal life: And ought not people to pray hard, and to work hard while the light lasteth? God removes many times the Candle and Candlestick, and makes the Sun to go down at Noon-day, as Amos 8:9. so darkens the Earth at clear day. Good Ministers they are called the light of the world, and they are called.

3. Stars, as in Rev. 3:1. And who are meant by the seven Stars, Rev. 1.? they are the Angels, that is, the Ministers of the seven Churches. Now the Stars are said to affect those inferiour bodies:

1. By their influence. And thus godly and faithful Ministers, by the influence of their lips, they feed many with the bread of life.

2. By their regular motives of their lives, they confirm many.

3. By the light of both they confirm many.

One while their employment is to instruct poor souls, and so they are like stars shining in a dark winter-night; Another while they are to converse in their courses, Judg. 5:20. Now to enjoy and live under the Ministry of such Stars, and yet to walk in darkness, and to have fellowship with the works of darkness, to remain unconvinced, unconverted, unhumbled, unmortified, unfruitful, this is woful, this is a very lamentable state.

4. They are called the Lords Messengers and Embassadors, Mal. 2:7. and the Ministers of the Gospel; for indeed the Ministers of the New Testament they are nowhere called Priests, they are called Embassadors for Christ, 2 Cor. 5:20. Godly, faithful Ministers are the Lords Messengers and Embassadors in matters concerning the soul, the precious, immortal, never-dying soul of man, not in the matters of this life, but for the soul. Now this is no mean employment to treat with God for the Soul.

5. They are called the Lords Husband-men. Gods Church is his Husbandry, 1 Cor. 3:9. and Ministers are Gods Husbandmen; naturally we are like a barren Wilderness; Now the Lord sends his Husbandmen to those barren Wildernesses, to make a fruitful Paradise: Now for Gods Husbandmen to plow, sow, and harrow, and yet no fruit, no crop, Isa 5:6, When Gods Vineyard brought forth no fruit, I will take away all their rainy clouds, saith God, you shall have clouds, but you shall have clouds without rain; you shall have Ministers still, but such as shall never do your souls any good.

Well, you see the Titles given to them in Scripture; they are called the Salt of the Earth, and the Light of the World, and Scars, and the Lords Messengers and Embassadors, and Husbandmen; all which doth import a very great obligation lying on a people, who live under

such a Ministry, and who live under, and practice every commanded duty.

2. Inference. Secondly, Dangerous and fearful is the state of those, who have enjoyed, and lived under, and have not been wrought upon by such a Ministry. And this will appear, if we consider,

1. How fearful a sentence the Lord Jesus Christ hath given to those that live under, but despise, and profit not by the Ministry of his faithful Servants, Matt. 10:14,15. And do not think that Christ said this touching the Ministry of the Apostles only, certainly the Lord Christ would have it to be understood of the Ministry of all his faithful Servants, whom he sendeth to teach his people, Joh. 13:20. whomsoever he sends; and so, He that despiseth whomever I send, despiseth me. Then is the Message of the Lords faithful Messengers received aright, when people do not only hear it, but receive it, and bring forth fruit, as our blessed Lord speaks of good hearers, Mark 4:20. Those are they that hear and receive the fruits sown in good ground. And thus our blessed Lord expounds himself, Matt. 11:24. he telleth us there, that they of Capernaum shall be in a worse case than they of Sodom and Gomorrah; and why? because they repented not at Christs Sermons and Miracles; they were not to be seen in their lives, notwithstanding Christs Ministry, notwithstanding Christs preaching, and his miracles among them, they did not amend their hearts and ways: O how fearful a sentence hath our Lord Jesus Christ denounced against such!

2. If a People be not wrought upon by such a Ministry, what hope can such a People have, that anything should do their souls any good? For is not the Ministry of Gods faithful Servants, the power of God to salvation, and the ministration of the Spirit, 2 Cor. 3:8? That is, that Ministry whereby the spirit of grace and holiness is infused into the hearts of the Fathers chosen ones in Christ Jesus. The Poets speak of excellent Musicians, who, by the power of their Musick, made stones to leap into a wall. A godly faithful Ministry hath done more, it hath taken the stone out of mans heart, and hath given them new hearts;

it hath made all the Commandements of God easie to a poor soul, because it loves its Father, its Redeemer, and Comforter. There is a kind of obedience in a godly faithful Minister; and if this will not do, nothing will, as in Luke 16:31.

3. Is not the cause of the non-proficiency of such a people, under such a Ministry, in themselves? Oh men do hinder the fruit of the Word in their own souls, the powerful operation and working of the Word on their own souls! The Lord prophesies that sentence on the Jews, Matt. 13:14. he lays all the blame on themselves, and assigns their own sins as the reason and cause of it, as in Verse 13. And thus our blessed Savior expounds the Parable of the Sower, shewing how many that hear the Word, are never the better for it; and he layeth the blame on themselves, as in Luke 8:14. What then, hast thou not profited under the Ministry of the Lords faithful Servant? Oh lay the blame on thy self.

4. Consider, Hath not the Lord himself a hand in the proficiency, or non-proficiency under such a Ministry? Surely the Lord hath a chief hand in making the Ministry of his Servants fruitful, or not fruitful, to them that enjoy it. Now to enjoy, and not to enjoy, is it not a fearful sign, that you are not of God? as John 8:47. Is it not a sign, that thou are not of Gods elect, at least of Regeneration? But you will say, Did not the Jews hear Gods Word? Yes, they did, with their bodily ears; but they heard it not with saith, submission, and fruitfulness; and therefore our blessed Savior tells them, they were not of God, that is, they were at least in an unregenerate, if not in a reprobate condition. And so Joh. 10:26. Ye are those Goats (saith Christ) that must stand at my left hand in that great day; and then Unbelievers shall reflect on themselves, not on Christs Ministry, by the mouths of his Servants.

But if any should say, what then, will you say that all of us are Reprobates, that are not wrought on by your Ministry? I say not so; for that seed which hath been sowed on you, may •o your souls good hereafter, though it hath done them little or no good as yet. But

secondly, that I may boldly say, that if any of you dye in your present state, unconverted, unregenerate, you will carry with you to your grave, as fearful marks of reprobation, as we can finde any in the whole Book of God. John Baptist compares the Ministry of the Gospel to a Fan, in Matt. 3:12. When the Lord Jesus maketh use of the Ministry of his faithful Servants among the people, when he maketh use of those Fans, it will appear who among them are Wheat, and shall be gathered into the Lords Garner; and who among them are Chaff, and shall be cast into fire. And now, whether the present state that you have lived under, and are not yet wrought upon by a faithful Ministry, be not very dangerous, judge ye? And so much may suffice for the Doctrinal part.

If so be then, That a Ministers soundness in Doctrine, and holiness of life and conversation, doth lay a great Obligation on a people, conscientiously and duly to practice every commanded duty. Then first of all, the first Use we shall make of this Doctrine, shall be by way of Tryal and Examination, and that in two particulars.

First, Whether you in this Parish, in this place, you here before the Lord, do make conscience of the due practice of every commanded duty.

Secondly, Whether the Ministry you have enjoyed, and lived under, doth not lay a great Obligation on you so to do?

For the first of these, whether you here before the Lord, do make conscience of the due practice of every commanded duty, in obedience to Almighty God? you may try your selves by these three excellent Ingredients.

First, Universality; Canst thou in the witness of thy conscience say, that through grace thou dost every, as well as any part of the Lords revealed Will, so far as thou knowest it?

2. Uniformity; Dost thou do all without prejudice or partiality?

3. Ubiquity; Art thou the same at home as abroad? in thy Closet, as well as in the Congregation? and dost thou mind inward and secret, as well as open and outward holiness? What saith Conscience to this?

As first, have commanded Duties a Throne in your own Souls and Conscience? Secondly, have they a Throne in thy Family?

First, have commanded Duties a Throne in your own souls and consciences? Are your hearts fully possessed with the power of those divine and heavenly Truths, which you have often heard, which hath been again and again inculcated upon you, as it was upon the Thessalonians, 1 Thes. 1:5? their carnal principles were confuted, their passions moderated, their lusts mortified, their self-ends confounded; are yours so? Have commanded Duties a Throne in your souls and consciences? Oh that all your consciences could give a satisfying answer to this Query.

Secondly, have commanded Duties a Throne in your Families? Do you make conscience of Family-duties? Are your houses Bethels, that is, houses of God, house of Prayer? Are your habitations of holiness and righteousness? Do you make conscience of relative, as well as of personal duties? Oh that all your consciences could give a satisfying answer to this Query!

But now the second Branch of this Use of Tryal and Examination is this, Whether the Ministry you have enjoyed, and lived under, doth not lay a very great Obligation on you, to put in execution every commanded Duty, as Rom. 10:6,7,8. that is, the Word of Faith we preach; read that place. And may not we take up that with some variation, and say, You have heard of the disease, the misery and remedy. When the great God shall arraign thee at the great and fearful Day, and shall say thus, Thou rebellious Wretch, why didst thou not forsake thy evil ways, thy drunkenness, thy tipling, thy covetousness, thy snuffling at Purity; thy inveterate heart and spirit against my holy ways and Ministers? why didst thou not forsake thy evil ways? wilt thou be able to say, Lord, I lived under,

1. A soul-betraying, non-resident Minister, one that made it his business to fleece indeed, not to feed the flock: Or

2. under a soul-poysoning Innovator: Or

3. under a soul-pining dry Nurse: Or

4. under a soul-guiding Guide: Or

5. under a soul-unsettling Temporizer: Or

6. under a soul-destroying Discountenancer.

1. Canst thou say that thou livest under a soul-betraying, non-resident Minister, one that made it his business to fleece, and not to feed the flock? one that looked after the wool and fat of the flock: the fleece, but never minded the flock: but non-residency hath been hitherto decryed, as that as breeds a Minister idle and erroneous, or licentious? but wilt thou be able to say, Lord, I lived under such a Minister, that was a soul-betraying Minister, one that was greedy of Livings, and had perhaps two, or three, or four, but so bad a man, that the worst was too good for him? or wilt thou be able to plead? or canst thou say,

2. Lord, I lived under a soul-poysoning Innovator, one that was for formality more than reality of true Worship; one that preached such Doctrine as did not season, but poyson and destroy the souls of his Hearers: such are Romish Teachers, Jesuites, Priests and Seminaries, who so affect the outward pomp, as they neglect the inward power of it? Wilt thou be able to say, Lord, I have lived under the Ministry of such an one, who was more zealous for the formality of thy worship, than the reality: more zealous for those things that will not endure the tryal of the Lords day of appearance, than for the substance of Religion? Or,

3. Canst thou plead that thou hast lived under a soul-pining dry Nurse, one that did not, nor could not feed us with the sincere milk

of the Word: one from whom thou never heardest a soul-solid, a soul-working Sermon all thy life? I appeal to your Consciences, have you not heard often of your miseries, and Gods mercy, and Christs merits? Have you not heard often of the necessity of a holy life? Oh the convictions, informations, exhortations, perswasions, directions, you have enjoyed and lived under! Hath not thy state by nature been ripped up, and the Anatomy, (not of the Council of Trent) but of Gods Book, been shewed to thee? What shall I say, Hath not Hell and Damnation to all rebellious, and Heaven and Salvation to all true penitent Souls been preached unto you?

4. Or canst thou say that thou livedst under a Soul-misguiding Guide, as 1. A blind Seer, a blind Watchman, a blind Leader of the blind, one who knew not Heavens way? Canst thou say thou livedst under such a Creature that is not to be found in Christs Catalogue, an Idol-preacher, as in Psalm 135:16, 17. verses, read that. Or 2. If not ignorant, yet one so Vicious, that he pulled down more with his foul hands, than he built up with his fair tongue? Canst thou say thou livedst under one, who by his Conversation gave his Doctrine the lye? Wilt thou be able to plead thus at the great day? or wilt thou be able to say,

5. That thou hast lived under a Soul-unsettling Temporizer. What would he not do, rather than he would lose his Living? which made me think Religion to be but a fantasie. Wilt thou be able to say at the great day, Lord, it was my sad lot and portion to live under the Ministry of such a one, who turned his Fiddle to the times of every one? I, Or

Lastly, wilt thou be able to say thou livedst under a Soul-destroying discountenancer of all purity and holiness; one (perhaps) though no Dunce, or Drunkard, yet a prophane scoffer; one that preached holiness, out of his Pulpit, and Parish, and House, and the like.

But first of all, we can through grace, appeal in this case both to the Lord, and to your selves, that it hath not been so with you.

2. Consider how inexcusable you will be, if you live and die in your ignorance, impenitency, and unbelief.

1. Consider, we can in this case appeal both to the Lord, and to your selves. 1. To the Lord; we are able with an humble boldness to appeal to him, and say, Lord, thou knowest we have given this people warning, Ezek. 3:18. Now blessed be the Lord, we can humbly appeal to his Majesty, O Lord, thou knowest we have warned the wicked to turn from his wicked way, and the profane from his profaneness, and the superstitious from his superstition, and the schismatical from his schisme, and the formal from his formality, and the civil honest man from resting in his mortality. O blessed be thy name, we have endeavoured to take off this people from all their Sandy, quagmiry Foundations? Lord, thou knowest our Prayers for them. And so,

2. To appeal to you: And this was a very great comfort to St. Paul, that he could appeal to the people themselves, as Acts 20:26,27. This was a great comfort to him: and blessed be the God of Grace, it is a great comfort to us, that we can take you to record, that we are pure from your blood, we have not ceased to declare all that the Father hath shewn to us; we have not been afrighted by any man, or mens frowns, nor debauched to conceal any part thereof by any mans smile.

3. Consider how inexcusable you will be, if you live and dye in your ignorance, impenitency, and unbelief, Ezek. 3:10. Observe it, if you miscarry for eternity, the blood of your souls will not be charged on us; Nay, it will be on your own heads; And therefore the Apostle Paul, when he preached Christ to the Jews, and they opposed and blasphemed, their blood was upon their own heads, as Acts 18:5, 6. Oh consider it! if your Ministers have been faithful, they are clear, and free, and guiltless; the Lord will never charge the blood of souls on them. Consider it therefore, how speechless will you be at the great day, if you live and die in your sins? may not the Lord say of this place, as he did of Capernaum, Matt. 11:23. For thou hast enjoyed the Ministry of many of my Servants. Dare any of you meet

us in the day of Judgment, under whose Ministry you have lived in an unregenerate estate, and say that you have lived under a soul-betraying, non-resident one; or under a soul-poysoning Innovator; or a soul-pining dry-Nurse; or a soul-misguiding guide, or a soul-unsettled Temporizer; or a soul-destroying discountenancer, in an unregenerate estate? the Lord will then make you to know what it was to have a faithful Labourer among you, as Ezek. 33:33. Then, when you shall be convinced in your own Consciences, you shall then say, You heard all those things, and we cannot say we were unwarned, either in sin or danger; we had precept upon precept, but we slighted all warning, and exhortion, and direction; therefore now are lost and undone everlastingly. So much may serve for the first Use.

The second Use is a Use of Direction, which will fall into many very sutable and practical particulars, whereto I do beseech you to hearken unto, as the words of a dying man do commonly take the deepest impression on the surviving hearts. Now this may be, for all that I know, my last words to you in this place, therefore I beseech you to hear me: An interruption, a suspension of my weak worthless pains and labor among you there will be, for any thing I know, from this day; but observe, it is no resignation from me, or my Reverend Brother; and therefore what other dissolution of the property and relation between your Pastor and you, there may be, as of that mutual intercourse, I shall not account, o• call it forfeiture of his place, whatever others may call it, let them call it what they will. Then hearken to my words, as the words of a dying man, yet not dead, but alive, and perhaps shall not die, but live, and declare the Word of the Lord, and hold forth the Word of the Lord to you many a time in this place, when-ever it pleaseth God to set open a door for me.

If it be so, That the Ministers foundness in Doctrine, and holiness of life and conversation, do lay great obligation on a people, duly and conscienciously to practice every commanded duty; Then from this Doctrine I would suggest and leave with you several words and hints

of counsel: And on that the Lord God of Heaven, would effectually engage and set them home on every one of our hearts.

My first Counsel is this, that when the Lord taketh away such Ministers whose Doctrine is sound, and their lives exemplary holy, you would then be duly apprehensive, and deeply sensible, both of the inflicting cause, and also of the meritorious deserving cause thereof.

1. For the inflicting cause: and that is the Lord himself, Isa. 3:1,2, Who is it that taketh away from the people the natural staff, and the civil staff, the spiritual staff, saith the Prophet? The Lord, the Lord of Hosts. Whoever it be that is the Instrument, it is certain, it is the Lord himself that is the principal efficient cause of this judgment on a people; and this will appear, if we consider.

1. The Lord hath threatned this judgment on a rebellious people, Amos 8:11,12. I (saith the Lord) will bring this judgment on them. A most dreadful spiritual judgment! Gods Word is the spiritual food of our spiritual lives; and therefore, as the granting of it is a blessing indeed, so the with-holding of it is a judgment. This ireful, dreadful judgment of the Lord, we see, threatens; yea, that is not all, the Lord hath not only threatned it, but

2. Inflicted it; as the Lord takes away his faithful Messengers and Embassadors.

1. Sometimes by death, out of the world, out of the Land of the living. And thus the Lord took away the Prophet Enoch, Gen. 5:24. And,

2. Sometimes by removal. Thus the Lord took away the Prophet Jonas from Israel, and sent him to Nineveh, as Jonah 1:2. And thus Paul and Barnabas went away from the Jews, and turned to the Gentiles, as Acts 13:4.

3. Sometimes by deprivation. A time there was, when the good Priests and Levites were forced to flee their own places and

possessions, 2 Chron. 11:13,14.

4. Sometimes by suspension. Thus a time there was, when it was said to the Seers, see not, and to the Prophets, prophesie not, Isa. 30:9,10. Thus a time there was, when people would have Pastors, but would not endure faithful Jeremiah; and a time there was, that there was a Law made, Look ye speak no more in the name of Jesus, Act 4:11. And a time there was when Paul and Timotheus, and Silvanus, were forbid to preach to the Gentiles, 1 Thess. 2:15:16. Thus we see the Lord himself hath inflicted this dreadful Judgment on a people: and the Lord hath divers wayes, and methods, and means to inflict it.

3. Consider, The Church and people of the Lord hath been very sensible of the Lords hand in this judgment, as we may see in Psalm 74:1. and 9. verses compared. Why, what is the matter? as if they have said, God was wont heretofore to give us signs and tokens, he would even work miracles for us; the Lord would send us some Prophets to converse with, and instruct us; we had those that could tell us how long our troubles should last; but now we see no sign, the Lord leaveth us as it were to the wide world, and how sensible was the Lords Church in this judgment? as ver. 1. of that Psalm. This is the first endeavour, We are to be duely sensible, and deeply apprehensive of the afflicting cause of such a judgment; and that is the Lord himself.

2. Of the meritorious Cause, and that is sin. Say not we, it is long of such and such, but it is long of ourselves, we may thank our selves for this, and we appeal to your selves, whether this judgment may not be charged?

1. From the general inflexibleness and untractableness of people under the Ministry of the Word: For this very cause the Lord plagued and poured his vengeance upon the ten Tribes, as in 2 Kings 17. from v. 13. to 19. The Lord testified against Israel by all the Prophets, and by all the Stars, saying, turn you from your evil wayes, notwithstanding they will not hear. And for this very cause did the

Lord afterwards plague all Judah, as Jer. 20:17,18,19. And for this very reason did the Lord Jesus Christ remove Paul from Jerusalem, because the people were a stiff-necked people, and they would not receive Pauls testimony concerning Jesus, as Acts 22:18. Paul had a great desire to stay at Jerusalem, as appeared by his reasoning with the Lord, as ver. 9, 20. But what saith the Lord Christ, ver. 21. Now can England, can London, plead not guilty of this heinous provocation, a general inflexibleness, untractableness under a Conscience-ransacking, a Conscience-searching Ministry. What shall the Lord do with such a people, under such a Minister? Is it not just with God to let them alone that are prophane and superstitious? Let there be like People, like Priests? Let the blind lead the blind, and let the wicked rebellious Minister lead a wicked, loose people, that both may perish together everlastingly.

2. The unfruitfulness, formality, lukewarmness, declining of Gods own people; and for this the Lord threatens the Church of Ephesus, Rev. 2:4,5. I have (saith Christ) somewhat against thee, thou hast left thy first love; though not absolutely for nature, yet eminent for measure: And can England, can London plead not guilty of this sad provocation? Now indeed we cannot but observe, and approve of your flocking to the Lords Ordinances, as Doves to the holes of a Window; but did you do so some Months ago? Oh your voluntary and fearful distractions, avocations, diversions from the Worship and Service of God! And is it not just with the Lord to take away that abundance, and choice of Spiritual helps a people had, when they approved not of them; yea, when they undervalued, and despised, and abused them? Oh the Lord God help us all to affect our souls, and lay ourselves low before his All-seeing Majesty, for our provoking him to do this! and endeavour to be duly apprehensive, and deeply sensible of the inflicting cause, and meritorious cause thereof.

2. Take heed of a prophane delight in loose, lewd, wicked, dissolute Ministers. And here we will premise two or three things. 1. Too many people are too ready to cavil at many Ministers without a cause.

The life of our blessed Lord and Saviour, was it not traduced? Did not some say he was a friend to Publicans and Sinners? We see Christ was cavilled at, and quarrelled with by some: And thus the holy Apostles, their lives were traduced, they went through evil report, as well as good report, 2 Cor. 10:2. And thus Athanasius, who was traduced for an Adulterer by the Arians; and so Luther and Calvin are represented and reported by the Papists, as if they had been the vilest Creatures in the World. The wicked man cavils at, and finds spots (at least doth what he can to find spots) in the Sun; and some, who are not so wicked: do look for an Evangelical perfection in Ministers, and all theirs, their Wives, and their Children, and their Servants, and their Company: How ready are people grossly and uncharitably to censure a Minister for any, yea, the least they discern in him, or his; and is this their Vertue? nay, is it not their Vice and Corruption?

2. It is no breach of the Churches peace, no argument of a contentious and unquiet spirit in a Minister, to speak vilely of vile Ministers, and enemies of the Churches peace. Why, who are they? John Baptist tells us, he calls them Vipers, a generation of Vipers: why, were they not Preachers? Matt. 3:7. And will you say that John Baptist was a man of a contentious Spirit, of an unquiet Spirit? And who were they whom our blessed Saviour calls a Generation of Vipers? Matt. 12:34,38,39. And who were they whom our Saviour calls a Generation of Vipers, and an evil and Adulterous Generation? were they not Preachers? and it is very observable, both John Baptist, and our Saviour did call those Preachers thus, even in the hearing of them who were their ordinary hearers; and do but observe what strange terms of disgrace St. Peter gives them, 2 Peter 2:12. to certain Preachers in his time, verse 14. what strange terms doth the Apostle give to those Teachers, whose pernicious wayes many would follow, as in verse 2. of that Chapter. But did not the Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses's Chair? and did they not preach some good Doctrine? insomuch that Jesus Christ bids the people hear them, and observe what they said, though not what they did, as Matt. 23:1, 2, 3. Therefore may some say: It seemeth strange that Christ should thus

disgrace the Scribes and Pharisees; was not this the way to make their Ministry contemptible?

First, it is very clear and undeniable, that there was a Generation of pitiful sorry Teachers, as in Matt. 9:36. Why, did not the people enjoy the Teaching of the Scribes and Pharisees; yes, they did; but the Scribes and Pharisees were Idol-Shepherds, they knew how to feed their Flock, and therefore Christ lookt on the people as Sheep scattered abroad, for all the Scribes and Pharisees. They did not understand that there was heart-murder, or heart-adultery, until our blessed Saviour instructed them: The Scribes and Pharisees, they did but strike at the bough only, but our Saviour Preached with authority, and not as the Scribes did. And withal, I answer,

2. That beyond all peradventure, our blessed Saviour saw, that although the Scribes and Pharisees did teach some truths, yet by their Life and Doctrine they did more mischief than good; and therefore the more credit they had among the people, the more mischief they were like to do: And therefore from hence our blessed Lord and Saviour calls them a Generation of Vipers. But I hope you will not count it an argument of the breach of the Churches peace, to speak vilely of a vile Ministry; It was no more than John Baptist did, and than our Saviour did.

Thirdly, no mans sin deserves so sharply to be reprov'd, as the sins of Ministers; because his sins of all others, are the chief sins committed in a Land; at the Sanctuary of prophaneness too too often begins.

Therefore when Gods people met in their publick Fasts, they made solemn Confession of those sins of the first Magnitude, by which they had most provok'd the Lord; they do make Confession chiefly of the sins of their Magistrates and Ministers, Neh. 9:33,34. The Jews there bewailed the sins of their Magistrates and Ministers, as the particular cause of their plagues. Oh the sins of Teachers are the Teachers of sin, and therefore no mans sin deserves to be so sharply reprov'd, as

the scandalous sins of Ministers. Now if you love your souls, take heed and beware of a prophane, delight in lewd, loose, dissolute Ministers. We send the Lord complaining of the wickedness of the Prophets, and of the Priests and People, as Jer. 5 ult. the people, did take a prophane delight in false Prophets, and in polluted Priests; and so likewise in the Prophet Micah 2:11. the people, although they did oppose the Prophet Micah, and other true Prophets, yet they did approve of and delight in false Prophets, such as were of their own leaven, their own way and mould, such as would flatter them, and promise them wine and strong drink: and are there not many such people in the world, that had rather hear such a Minister, than such as preach close-walking with God, and of getting to Heaven under pain of damnation? Will you cry up, and will you prophanely delight in a Ministry that shall preach peace, peace to all prophane rebellious people; in short, such a one that will poison you in Doctrine, or in his example.

Fourthly, take heed and beware of a sinful Idolizing of godly, faithful Ministers; the Apostle decries this with much zeal, ardency, and servency of Spirit; what is Paul's planting, and what is Apollo's watering? 1 Cor. 3:5,6. As excellent gifts, parts, and graces as these men had, yet they look higher: so it is your duty to look above mens parts, and above mens gifts and graces; Paul and Apollo cannot give increase; Paul indeed may plant, but there is no rooting indeed in these plants, but by Christ. And read v. 7. It is God and he only that can give increase: As Elisha's Servant could carry his Masters staff and lay it on the dead child, but the child could not be raised to life, until Elisha came himself; thus godly faithful Ministers can but lay Gods Message before you, but unless the Lord set it to the heart, never a dead Soul can be raised from the death of sin, to the life of grace and holiness. Remember godly and faithful Ministers, although they have the Lords Sword, yet they have not the Lord Christs arm; and alas, what can the Lord Christs Sword do without his Arm.

Fifthly, take heed of being leavened with prejudice against the Ministry of the Word, because of the misdemeanors or miscarriage of

the Minister. Surely the efficacy of the Word and Sacrament doth not depend on the quality of the Minister. It is the Word of the Lord that converts, not the person of the Dispenser or Speaker. A seed that is sown in a good soil, may, yea will grow and thrive, although perhaps the Sower had a very dirty hand, 2 Cor. 3:2,3. The Apostle tells the Corinthians, that they are, saith he, The Epistle of Christs Ministry by us; the hand is Christs, Ministers are but the Pen. Hence it was, that the Ministry of the Scribes and Pharisees was not to be rejected, but to be esteemed; so long as they sailed not in the substance thereof, and hence the Apostle rejoyceth that Christ was preached of the false Apostles, Phil. 1:15,16,17,18. though out of envy; take heed therefore and beware of a total separation from dissenting of, and forsaking Church-assemblies; and yet I conceive it is a very rare thing for unconverted Ministers to convert some. For what saith the Lord by the Prophet Zephaniah, Zeph. 3:1,2,3,4. Ob saith the Lord to Jerusalem, that hath such Prophets and such Priests, woe to such a City, to such a Country, to such a Parish. And what saith Christ himself in Matt. 15:14. Let them alone; oft-times it falls out so, that it made Archbishop Abbot speak in a Lecture of his, and profess, that his heart did even bleed within him, to think of the precious Souls of many people, who had such Ministers, that if they had not been in the Ministry, they would not have been fit Hogherds for Swine. And yet we must remember not to tye the efficacy of the Word and Sacraments, to the goodness or badness of a Ministers person.

Sixthly, take heed and beware of being leavened with prejudice against all Ministers, because of the Vileness, and monster-like unbeseeming Carriage of some Ministers. It hath been granted over and over that some Ministers evil, licentious Carriage and Conversations, are notorious; the Lord knows, too many Ministers have Esau's hands with Jacob's voyce; what then, must this redound to the general disgrace of all Ministers? because some Professors of the Law live lawless, must therefore all be censured and condemned for the lawless Livers? because Judas was a Devil, and a Son of Perdition, will you therefore say that all the Disciples of Christ were naught? Perhaps you do know some Sir Johns, some blind Seers,

some blind Watchmen, who know nor Heavens way, some blind Droans; or secondly, some that carry themselves insolently, as Jer. 20:1,2. Pasher did: or thirdly, some that are too like that evil servant in the Gospel, as Luk. 12:45. or perhaps you know: Fourthly, Some apostarizing Demas's, who embrace this present world and revolt from their principles and profession, as 2 Tim. 4:10. Or perhaps you know, filthy, some aspiring and climbing Diotrefes, as 3 John 9. perhaps you know some such as these I have instanced, what then? is there any Profession as it were, but it hath a certain scum? why then in the face of some, who thorow grace are free from these miscarriages, take heed and beware of being leavened with prejudice against all Ministers, because of the vileness and miscarriage of some.

Seventhly, be earnest with the Lord for a godly, faithful Ministry, whose labour and pains among the people the Lord useth to bless; The Lord Jesus Christ is the greatest Patron of all Livings, as a reverend man now in Heaven, once said; He can present whom he will to a parish, and he can restore whom he will to their people, as Acts 12:5,6,7. as he did Peter out of Prison by the peoples prayers; and thus when Paul was in prison at Rome, observe how he writes to Philemon 22 of his Epistle, and thus when the Author of the Hebrews was restrained from preaching, observe what an Exhortation he useth, Heb. 13:12-18. Oh pray therefore! pray for godly faithful Ministers; their pains, their labours, the Lord useth to bless among a people, as Mal. 26. we read that the Lord blessed the labours of Levi, so that he was an instrument in the Lords hands to turn wicked men from their iniquities; and v. 5. so it was said of Barnabas, that by his Ministry, much people were added to the Lord, Acts 11:24. And if we would have godly faithful Ministers; as we must pray for them, so we must first repent us of our sins, Jer. 3:14,15. repent we must for our sins, and particularly our contempt of the Ordinances and worship of God. Secondly, we must prize the Gospel more than we have done; the Gospel loves to come and stay where it is welcome. Of all the 7 Churches of Asia, the Church of Philadelphia was the best, that Church used the word best, and that Church enjoyed the word

longest. Be earnest with the Lord for godly faithful Ministers, whose pains and labours among the people the Lord useth to bless and prosper.

7. Be earnest with the Lord, that the refining work of a National-Reformation, a City, a Country, a Family-Reformation, a Personal-Reformation, may begin at the refining and purging of Ministers. None will deny, but that there is a great need of a Reformation; there is none of you but will confess, that the Seed of Leaven had need sometimes to be winnowed out from amongst us, as 2 Chron. 29:48. Hezekiah began at the Priests and Levites, Hezekiah began his reformation at them; and thus at our first reformation, the Protestants, did then affirm, that there could never be any good reformation, unless they begun at the Court of Rome: and it is very observable, that when the Prophet speaks of the Lord Christs coming as a refining fire, and as Fullers soap; this also is prophesied of refining the Sons of Levi, Mal. 2:2. when he shall purifie the Sons of Levi, when he shall purge them as Gold and Silver; as it was in Judah, in the reign of that good King Hezekiah, 2 Chron. 29:34. The Priests were too few there; and as it was in Judah then, whether it be not so in England now I affirm not, but leave you to judge. But a Ministers soundness in Doctrine, and holiness of Life and Conversation, should lay a great obligation on a people, duly & conscientiously to practice every command to duty. And this may suffice for the second Doctrine. Come we now to the third Doctrine, deducable to be handled from this Text, and that is, That in the due practise of commanded duties, Gods People may warrantably and confidently expect much of the gracious presense of the God of peace, even in the worst of times. These things think on, saith the Apostle, v. 8. These things do, saith the Apostle in the Text, and what then? The God of Peace shall be with you. In the due practice of commanded duties, Gods people may confidently expect much of the gracious presense of the God of peace in the worst of times; then take counsel from this Doctrine, that you may have the gracious presense of the God of peace with you; and if this Pulpit were my death-bed, I should give such counsel as this following to you.

First, Crown the Prince of Peace, the Lord Jesus Christ in your hearts and lives; I say, Crown the Prince of Peace, the Lord Jesus Christ, in your hearts and lives; receive him as your Lord and King, set a Crown on his head here in your hearts and lives, and he will crown you with peace in this life, and set a crown of Glory, a crown of Immortality on your heads in the life to come. If you have Christ, you have all things, all heavenly graces, and spiritual comforts, all temporal blessings; if you have Christ, God will and can give you all things that are good for you; without Christ you are not, and you can do nothing that is acceptable to God. Therefore this is my first counsel to you, Crown the Prince of Peace, the Lord Jesus Christ in your hearts and lives.

Secondly, then maintain a constant, and a conscientious intimate communion with the God of peace. It was good counsel which Eliphaz gave to Job, Job 22:21. Would you have much of the presence of the God of peace? Oh! then frequently fall down and lie at the foot-stool of the Lords Throne, for grace and for peace; and when you do so, be not unmindful of us, who have been often your mouths to God, and Gods mouth to you. And to engage and encourage you herein, consider.

First, the Lord Jesus Christ hath promised to be with his poor Ministers always, even to the end of the world. Matt. 28. ult. If always, not in the Pulpit only; no, the Lord hath promised to be with his faithful Servant, out of the Pulpit, as well as in the Pulpit; in the prison sealing the truth, as well in the Pulpit preaching the truth? Oh then will you put this in suit by prayer, that the Lord Christ will be with his poor Ministers to the end of the world.

Secondly, we shall not fail to pray for you, 1. Sam. 12:23. Our sequestering from our preaching-work from you, will give us advantage to lay our more time to fetch sighs from our hearts in praying-work for you; and I trust the Lord will give us hearts, so to improve our time for you, as Samuel said, so God forbid we should sin against the Lord in causing to pray for you, as Peter did to the people with a promise, as 1 Pet. 5:10. And not only for you. But

Secondly, even for such as have treated us somewhat uncivilly and unkindly, to say no more of them, although their number be very inconsiderable; but such I trust we shall not forget in our prayers: As Moses fell down on his face for the children of Israel, when they treated him very unkindly, and spit in his face; I trust we shall not forget Moses's prayer for the people: and so when they danced before their Idol, Jeremiah wept for those in his time, as Jer. 13:17. And that we shall not forget Jeremiah weeping for you: And I trust likewise, that we shall remember Stephen being on his knees for his Persecutors, pouring out his life and prayer together, Acts 7:60. I doubt not but my reverend Brother, and myself shall remember Pauls willingness to spend, and to be spent both in prayer and preaching for you all. Though the more abundantly he loved, the less he was beloved, 2 Cor. 12:15.

Thirdly, maintain and nourish all tenderness in your Conscience all your dayes: Oh! go not without, much less against the dictates of Conscience, rebel not against the light of it; beware of stifling and suppressing a warning Conscience, lest a warning Conscience prove a gnawing Conscience, and prove a tormenting Conscience. And consider. First, Remorse of Conscience, hath an eye against all sin past. Secondly, Tenderness of Conscience, which hath an eye to all sin to come. Take heed then of all calmness of heart.

Fourthly, take heed of Apostatizing. Chrysostom hath a notable saying, namely, That Ministers have a greater trouble, because they never find their work as they leave it, as other workmen do. Oh! in how short a time doth a poor Minister find all his work put out of frame and order? Did not Moses find it so? Exod. 32:8. Moses had no sooner turned his back as it were, but the People were turned out of Gods way, of worship: And did not Paul find it so? Gal. 1:6. The Galatians were quickly removed, Paul was but lately gone from them, and they were quickly apostatized. Now this cometh to pass;

First, it is by reason of a crafty, subtle, deceitful Devil, as in the Gospel we read, While men slept, the enemy came and sowed tares,

Matt. 13:25. And who this Enemy is, we may see in Christs expounding the Parable, ver. 39.

And secondly, partly by reason of mens own deceitful hearts, as Heb. 3:12. observe it. There is an evil heart of unbelief in the best, it dwells in the best, but it reigns in the wicked; And what is that? one of these evil hearts of unbelief, in apostatizing, in departing from the living God.

Thirdly, it is partly by reason of deceitful Workers, as the Apostle calls false Apostles. It is partly by reason of such: Then take heed of Apostatizing, either from truth of Doctrine, purity of Worship, or practice of Conversation.

First, From truth of Doctrine. Be not weary of old Truths; take heed, and beware of itching after novel Doctrines; take heed and beware of admiring this or that Opinion, which, as new Lights, drop down from Heaven, but indeed is but as the smoak of the bottomless pit.

Secondly, From purity of Worship also. Let not your zeal be cold, but kindled against every bracelet of the Scarlet-whore. How often doth the Apostle call the People Adulterers, and Adulteresses, because they Apostatize from the Word and Worship of God.

Thirdly, In Practice and Conversation. Prize the Gospel, love it, and live accordingly to it: With constancy look on every motion of thy soul, and every action of thy life is a step of life, or a step to death; as a step towards Heaven, or a step to Hell, Heb. 10 31. To close this Counsel, the Author of the Hebrews bringeth in the Lord protesting against Apostatizing. If any man draw back from Gospel-principles, and Gospel-worship, or from a Gospel-conversation, saith the Lord, If any man draw back thus, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. Tremble then at this, thou Apostatizer, whoever thou art, where ever thou fittest or standest, My soul shall have no pleasure in thee. I loath and abominate that person, saith the Lord.

5. All of you then study peace, and particularly you who do unfeignedly set your hearts and faces towards Heaven, study peace and follow after it; though it run from you, pursue after it. You profess your selves to be them that are truly searing God, and truly honouring the King, and truly loving one another; Oh then seek peace.

You who do unfeignedly set your hearts and faces towards Heaven, study peace always, and decline all dividing principles and practises among you; and that you may not either breed or feed circumstantial differences, or substantial divisions, consider, God is the God of peace, our Saviour is the Prince of peace, our Comforter is the Comforter of peace, our Calling is the Calling of peace, our Way is the Way of Peace. Oh that we may so live in Peace, that the God of Love and Peace may dwell with us; and that the God of Peace may live with us here, that we may live with the God of Peace hereafter!

28. Mr. Bull's Forenoon Farewell Sermon

"And I will send the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever."- Joh. 14:16.

The Observation that I commended to you out of these words, was this.

It is the great work for which the Spirit of Christ is given by God, to comfort the hearts of his people.

You may remember, that I have formerly opened the truth to you, and have shewed you what this spiritual comfort is, that the Spirit of Christ works in the hearts of his Disciples. I gave it you in this Description.

It is that inward, spiritual satisfaction that the heart of a gracious person finds in, and through Jesus Christ, in all the various dispensation• of God towards him, whereby he is enabled to go on in

cheerfulness in the way that God would have him, whether it be by a way of doing, or of suffering. And herein I shewed,

1. The nature of the spiritual satisfaction.
2. The Author of it; It is God by his Spirit.
3. The Object of it; God through Jesus Christ.
4. The proper subject of this inward spiritual comfort; the people of God.
5. And lastly, the effects of the spiritual comfort; it is to strengthen the heart both to do, and to suffer.

I came the last time to shew you how the Spirit of God doth this.

1. He doth it as an enlightening Spirit, by shewing where comfort is to be had, by opening the eyes of the understanding, as he did Hagar's bodily eyes to see the Well of Water.
2. He doth it as a quickning Spirit, bringing the Soul into that capacity to take in the comfort; for what comfort can a dead man receiver? a Cordial and Puddle is all one to a dead man.
3. He works this inward spiritual satisfaction, by discovering the truth of his vital Principle in the Soul: for a man may have a principle of grace and spiritual life in him, and not know it; that though he has the spiritual comfort, yet it is all one as if he had it not.

Now this is the great Question that is debated in the heart of a child of God, Whether he be regenerated and born again? Whether he hath grace in his soul, that grace that will qualifie him for glory? and if he was satisfied as to this, he would not be a moment without comfort: But he is afraid that he is dead in sin, that he is a stranger to the life of grace: hence ariseth all the Spiritual troubles: Now the Spirit of God comes in, and resolves the case, comes into the soul by his

bright reflections, and fills our souls with comfort: Now we have received not the spirit of the World, but the Spirit which is of God.

4. The Spirit of God is a comforting Spirit, as he openeth the vein of godly sorrow in the soul: Truly this is the next way to spiritual comfort, when a man can once spiritually mourn for sin, Matt. 5:4. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Godly sorrow opens the vein, and lets out the matter that hinders comfort, and causeth inward trouble in the soul: A gracious man takes a great delight in godly sorrow: Oh! it's matter of marvellous comfort to a Child of God, when he can kindly mourn for his sins.

5. The Spirit of God comforts the soul as he is a mortifying Spirit. Thus he takes away that that is the ground and matter of Believers trouble, mortifying that sin that is the cause of his sorrows, pride, unbelief, inordinate love to the World.

6. The Spirit of God works comfort in the hearts of his people by setting their own spirit to seek for comfort in Gods own wayes.

The last thing that I did for the explication of the Doctrine, was to add some Propositions, and they are such as these:

1. Many a gracious heart that hath fellowship with the spirit of God in his sanctifying work, may feel and find none in his comforting work. The Sun may operate where it doth not shine: A man may be in a state of Salvation, when it doth not feel the joyes of Salvation, Isa. 51:3. You shall find those that fear the Lord, and had the comforts of the Holy Ghost, yet walked in darkness.

2. Even those gracious souls that have the fellowship of the comforting spirit today, may want it tomorrow: This is not daily bread, while the Saints are on this side Heaven. The Solstice of a Christians comfort doth not last all the day long, they are not feasted with this every day; they have the night as well as the day, there is a night as well as a day in the heart of a gracious soul: as it is natural in the common course of nature, the Sun may shine today, but it may be

clouded tomorrow. Thus it was with that holy man, Psalm 30:7. Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong; thou didst hide thy face and I was troubled. And God doth this in infinite wisdom, to put a difference between Earth and Heaven; this valley of tears, and that state of Glory; that so the hearts of Gods people may be kept in frame of longing after the state of Heaven; God will have his people be groaning here, that his people may groan after that condition when all sorrowing and sighing shall flee away. God reserves perfect comfort to be the reward of perfect holiness; while our graces are imperfect, we must make account that our comfort will be so too; Tears will be never wiped from our eyes, till sin be quite taken out of our hearts.

3. Those that have had this spiritual comfort in their Souls, they may lose not only the impression of the Spirits comfort, but they may feel the impression of Gods anger. Haman complains, That the wrath of God did bang upon him, and that the terrors of God had out him off. A gracious heart hath real grounds of Consolation, though he hath not present sensible comforts.

A child of God hath always that, that if he did see, he could not be without comfort; the Promises are his support, he hath the first fruits of the Spirit, and right to eternal life: A Child of God shall always have so much to keep up his hopes and affiance upon God; A Child of God, in the darkest condition, though he doth not see enough to make him rejoyce in God, yet he sees enough to make him trust in God: though he walk in darkness, and see no light, yet he trusts in God. Job sayes, Though the Lord slay him, yet he would trust in him. David was in great trouble, while he was in that disquiet expostulation, why art thou cast down, O my Soul! and why art thou disquieted within me! trust in God.

5. Those that have inward comforts from the Spirit, may at the same time have little comfort from Gods outward dispensations. It may be dark without, when it is light within; while Stephen sees nothing but blood here below, he saw Heaven above: And Christ tells his

Disciples, In the world they shall have tribulation, but in him they shall have peace.

6. And lastly, though this be one great work of the Spirit of God, to comfort the hearts of Christs Disciples, yet there are some special seasons wherein the Spirit of God gives out this comfort. There are seasons of sadness, there is a season of heaviness, and there is need of it: There is a time to weep, and a time to laugh, a time to mourn, and a time to dance. I shewed you some of the Seasons.

1. One special season of the Spirits comforting the renewing Soul, is presently upon the Souls first salvation. After the spirit is become a Spirit of Adoption, presently it becomes a Spirit of Consolation; after the Spirit hath come into the soul in the Law, it then nextly appears a Spirit in the Gospel.

2. Another season when the Spirit gives out this comfort, is just before the Lord layes upon his people any great affliction. When was it that Christ was transfigured, and his face did shine as the Sun? it was immediately before his bloody passion. Christ was first taken into the Mount, before he was lifted up upon the Cross. When was the voice heard, this is my Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased? but just before he was led into the Wilderness, to be tempted When was Paul lifted up into Heaven? it was immediately before Satan was sent to buffet him. Thus God gives his people something beforehand to support their Spirits, that they may not faint; the Disciples were full of comfort, Acts 5:41. And when was this? immediately just before they were carryed before the Council, and whipt up and down like Vagabonds and Rogues, for preaching the Gospel.

3. Another Season when the Spirit gives out this Comfort, is in the time of suffering. God comes in the nick of time, especially if a man suffer for righteousness sake, if this suffering be upon the account of Christ, he seldom sails to send the Comforter for the relieving of his Spirit, 1 Pet. 4:13. But rejoyce in as much as ye are partakers of

Christs sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

Bodily confinement, and in ward straits are the time of the souls greatest enlargement. John had his vision in the Isle of Patmos. When a Child of God is brought to a piece of bread, then is the season for God to feed him with heavenly Manna; Jacob had glorious Visions, while he was flying from the wrath of his Brother, when he had nothing but a heap of Stones for his Pillow. It was in the Wilderness that God speaks to his Church thus. I told you of Mr. Glover, a Prisoner, who found no comfort in the time of his imprisonment; but when he was going to the stake he cryed out, He is come, he is come, meaning the Spirit, the Comforter.

4. Another season of Comfort is, after some special exercise of grace, godly sorrow-for sin, free actions in the pardon of sin, and new Engagements, and Resolutions, and Promises of more close walking with God, after declining from him.

5. Another season of Comfort is, After some great Tryals and Afflictions. Light is then most pleasant, when we newly are come out of a dark place; after Thunder comes Lightning; after a Storm comes a Calm: God led his people first into the Wilderness, and then into the Land of Canaan: It is often so in Gods Dispensations towards his people, their greatest Afflictions go before their greatest Deliverances: And therefore let not the Saints of God despair when they are at the lowest, when they walk in darkness, and see no light, yet let them trust in the Lord.

6. Another Season of comfort was, when men were conscientiously diligent in their particular Callings, then they walk with God. To this I gave you an instance in the Shepherds, they were faithful and diligent in their Callings, they were watching over their flocks by night, and then the Angel comes and tells them, To you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord, Luke 2:11. A company of poor Shepherds, keeping of their Sheep, God

appears unto them, and manifesteth his comforting Presense, when the Scribes and Pharisees, notwithstanding all their long prayers, and their strict Rites and Ceremonies, hear not a word of him.

7. Another Season of comfort is, when we are either preparing for, or in the spiritual act of some duty. When grace is exercised to prepare the heart to pray, and in attendance upon such an Ordinance, then oftentimes the Spirit of God is with them, to let poor souls in their endeavors finde acceptance with God. Hannah had been praying to God; But what melody did she finde in her heart! When Mary sate at Christs feet, how doth Christ fill her heart with comfort, sealing up her salvation to her! I now come to close with some Application.

Use of Information.

Use. If it be the work of the Spirit of God to comfort the hearts of Christs Disciples, then by way of Information I gather this, that a poor soul is very hardly settled and satisfied in point of Comfort. Sure it is a hard matter to comfort a poor soul, when one of the Persons of the blessed Trinity must be employed on purpose to do it. This is an office belonging to the Holy Ghost, when he is to be the Paraclete, the comfort of the Holy Ghost. This sure is a hard matter to comfort the wounded spirit, when the soul is full of the spirit of bondage. Oh! the hesitates, the jealousies, the doubts and fears, the objections that a poor soul makes against his spiritual peace and comfort! now it begins to take comfort, then it doubts again; now he believeth, and takes courage, but anon he is afraid; there is a great deal ado to fasten comfort upon a poor soul, 2 Cor. 1:22,23. What a heap of Words are there together, and it is all little enough to comfort a poor soul! Now he that establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God, and hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the spirit in our hearts. It is not without much tugging and drawing that the soul is first brought to believe, and then, when it doth believe, it is a hard thing to perswade it that it doth believe: There is a strange kind of squemishness upon the heart, he thinks that there is no comfort to be taken that doth belong to him. Luther

says, it is a harder thing to comfort a troubled Conscience, than to raise the dead. Surely it must be as hard, when nothing but the same power must do it.

The soul is hardly convinced; but all the glad tidings of the Gospel, are golden streams, and all the Promises are but pleasant Fancies, without any Reality; but that these things should belong to him, this he cannot believe, for want of faith: So that the Spirit of God is fain to come in, and end the controversie, before the soul will be satisfied.

2. If it be the work of the Spirit of God to comfort the hearts of his people: Then all the comfort of Christless and graceless souls is nothing worth, there is no true peace, for they are not the Disciples of Christ, which are the proper subjects of this comfort; they will not hearken to Christ; nor learn of Christ, but they cast his words behind their backs, and break his bands asunder.

Those that do not learn Christs Precepts, and follow Christs Canons, and obey Christs Commands, they are none of Christs Disciples; and to be sure, they have not the Spirit of Christ, which is the Efficient in this comfort; and without the root, there cannot be the fruit; for this inward peace is the fruit of the Spirit. And therefore what comfort they have, it is either a sinful comfort, which to be sure will end in sorrow, or else at best, it is but a carnal comfort, which will soon vanish like the crackling of thorns under a Pot; There is no peace, saith God, to the wicked; there is no peace with God, as long as you are at peace with sin.

3. Here they are stumbled with the Riddle, That the people of God should be sorrowing, yet always rejoycing; As sorrowing, yet always rejoycing: The carnal world think this to be a contradiction; though they be troubled without, yet they have peace within; though they have matter of sorrow in respect of outward affliction, yet they have fellowship with the Holy Ghost the comforter, which gives peace in affliction, joy in sorrow, light in darkness, which fills thee with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.

Secondly, If the Holy Ghost be the only Comforter of the hearts of Gods people; then let me exhort every one of you to labour for an interest in this Comforter. Friends, I beseech you be restless till you have got some evidence of the Comforter in your souls, by the inhabitation of the Spirit in your hearts; without you have an interest in Christ, there is no comfort, no true comfort to be expected, no comfort in prosperity, no comfort in adversity, no comfort in life, nor in death, no peace with your consciences: Men may make a shift to keep themselves at quiet for the present, by lulling conscience; they may have a kind of peace from a false principle; Ah, but what will you do when storms arise? what will you do when death and affliction comes? Jonas lay quietly asleep till the storm came: O my friends, we must shortly lye a dying, the Lord knows how soon; O what will you do for comfort in a dying hour? all other comforts may forsake you, and before that time you may meet with sorrow and heavy afflictions, so that all your friends in the world will not do you good; your friends may fail, your hearts may fail, and then no comfort but the comfort of the Holy Ghost will do you good; the time may come, that all your friends may prove miserable comforters, when God comes to deal with the soul, to set sin home upon the conscience, to lay sin before us, then what will you do? We are all guilty of sins of omission, and sins of commission; when these come to be charged upon the soul, what will you then do? then no plaister of comfort will stick, but those of the Spirits laying on, unless the Spirit seal up the pardon of sin, the love of God to the soul, nothing will quiet and comfort the soul; however men may be merry for a time, yet there is a time of sorrow that will come, when they shall reflect upon their ways, when they shall see nothing but sin behind them, and terrours before them: Oh! what amazement will seize upon their souls! they have no interest in God, in Christ, they have no interest in the Promises; there is nothing that will comfort you, unless you have an interest in the Spirit.

But then, what shall I do, that I may get this comforting Spirit into my soul?

First, Thirst earnestly after it. The Promise is made to those that thirst after it, Isa. 44:3. Thirst after him in his convincings, in his humblings, in his sanctifying mercy: Oh let the desire and longing of thy soul run out this way! no matter for an Estate, no matter for Friends and outward comforts, if thou hast the Spirit of God, thou hast that that is paramount to all outward comforts.

Secondly, Pray earnestly for the Spirit. You are not so willing to give your children that they want, as God is to give his Spirit to them that ask it. Cry mightily, Lord, give me thy Spirit; and cry to the Spirit, and say, as Laban to Abicam, Come in; so pray the Spirit to come in to thy Soul.

Thirdly, if you would have this Comforter to come and abide with you, You must resolve to become Christs Disciple. It is only for such that Christs prays that God would send the Comforter: You must hearken and obey him, and follow him wheresoever he goeth. You know the terms upon which you must be Christs Disciple, Matt. 16:24. He must deny himself, and take up his Cross, and daily follow Christ. He must deny himself. There is two selves in a man, nay, three selves, and they must be denied, but however the first two must be denied, if you intend to be Christs Disciple.

1. A mans righteous self. If anything that we are, that we have, or can do, from our works or duties, anything of our own, all must be denied in point of Justification.

2. Sinful self. A mans corruptions must be denied, pride, passion, and love to the world.

3. Natural self. Friends, estates, relations, credit, and honour, and outward comforts, these may be denied; you may be called to part with them, but if they come in competition with Christ, they must be denied.

2. You must take up the Cross of Christ, rather than forsake his honor, or disobey his commands. You must resolve to follow Christ

wheresoever he shall lead you, either in a way of active or passive obedience; you must take up Christs load, you must undergo his burden.

Now Christians, are you resolved upon this? now sit down and consider what it will cost you to be Christians; and if you would have the best, you must be contented with the worst; and if you are resolved upon this, then you are the true Disciples of Christ, and you are under the promise of his comfort, and Christ is praying the Father to send you another Comforter, who shall abide with you forever.

2. Use of Exhortation.

2. Use Is of Exhortation, wherein I shall apply myself to the true Disciples of Christ, those that have had communion with Christ in his sanctifying Presense; labour after communion with him in his comforting Presense, To all others that are without the Spirit of God, I may say, as Jehu to Jehoram, What hast thou to do with these things.

Labour to be convinced of the need and want of Christ; but such as have been partakers of the Spirit of Christ as a sanctifying Spirit, labour after communion with him as a comforting Spirit; and to this end I shall stir you up to this,

1. By way of Motive.

2. By way of Comfort.

First by way of Motive. Though you have some comfort, it is but little in comparison of what you may have, and in comparison of what you may stand in need of, though a Saint would not change the saddest hour of his life for the sweetest hour in his former condition. If the Saints of God did enjoy the comforts that they might, oh what blessed lives might they live! but they are so full of trouble, as if there were no Holy Ghost the Comforter. The people of God are oftentimes

troubled without a cause, as that holy man, why art thou cast down, oh my soul? He could not render a true account of his trouble, he was sad, but he could not tell why or wherefore.

2. When there is cause, they are apt to be troubled without measure. In those cases, where it is a sin not to be troubled at all, the people of God are apt to be troubled over-much, as the Israelites in their bondage in Egypt. It were a sin for them not to be troubled, but they were so full of troubles, that they could not hearken to Moses and Aaron. And so the Disciples in the Text, it were a sin for them not to be troubled for the absence of Christs body; but so to be troubled, as if God could not comfort them without him, this was their weakness: And to come to our Cases, it were a sin to slight this Dispensation of God that is coming upon us, if we should not be troubled for the loss of the Ministers of Jesus Christ: but to mourn before God under the sense of this Dispensation, to mourn so much, as to think that when these are gone, all are gone, to be so much troubled, as not to hearken to the words of the Text, That we have a Comforter. I remember an admirable expression of a Child to his Mother, when his Father was dead, to shew, That out of the mouths of Babes and Sucklings God can manifest his praise. Why Mother (says the Child) though my Father be dead, yet God is alive: May not I say so to you: Though your Ministers be as it were naturally dead, yet is not God alive? Is not the Spirit of God alive? Though you have some comfort, yet you have little in comparison of what you may have, if you seek for it.

2. Study the excellent nature of the comfort, how little soever a man hath of this spiritual comfort, it will sweeten his condition, be it what it will be. When a Man hath communion with the spirit God, he hath comfort in all conditions: then, though a mans condition be never so bad, yet it is very good, Heb. 3:17. Though the Fig-tree shall not blossome, though the fruit be not in the Vines, the labour of the Olive shall cease, and the Fields shall yield no meat: the Flocks shall be cut off from the Fold, and there shall be no Herd in the Stalls, yet will I rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation. He can

fetch Hope, and ground his Faith upon the Promises, though the Providences and Dispensations of God be never so mysterious, the comfort of the Spirit doth make up the want of all other comforts: The comforts of Ordinances are sweet comforts, Sermon-comforts are sweet comforts, Sacrament-comforts are sweet comforts: Ah, but the comfort of the Spirit can supply the want of all these! All outward crosses cannot hinder these inward comforts: a man that hath these inward comforts, may have a Feast with bread and water, a little of this comfort is able to sweeten a whole Ocean of sorrow: In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comfort delight my Soul, Psalm 94:10. So that when the hearts of God's people are filled with sad thoughts, what will become of themselves, what will become of their Families, what will become of the Church of God, what will become of the Ministry of the Gospel, and of the Ordinances of Christ? they are full of sad fears, and distracting thoughts, when they have a multitude of thoughts, in the midst of all, these spiritual comforts can comfort and refresh the Soul: Oh labour after a greater share of this comfort.

God hath cast us upon sad times, wherein we shall have need of more than ordinary comfort: We are like to have troubles without, if we have not peace within, it will be very sad: we are like to lose much of Christ's bodily presense, I mean in his Ordinances: how many of those Messengers that present the person of Christ, and stand in his stead? If we should not enjoy the other comforter, our estates would be doleful: If we have darkness without, and darkness within, how sad will that darkness be.

3. Labour to get more communion from the Spirit of God. This will raise and sublimate your natural comforts, and turn them into Spiritual comforts. A man can never relish these outward comforts, till he come to taste the ravishment and sweetness of the holy Ghost, till he taste the love of God: these give them a higher lustre than the men of the world; though they enjoy much comfort, yet they do not enjoy half that a child of God doth; the little that the righteous hath, is better than the great revenues of the wicked; to a Child of God a

dinner of green herbs is more savoury and pleasant to him, than the stalled Ox, because a Child of God hath better sauce with it.

Worldly men they smell to their flowers, it is the only godly man that sucks out the honey; that all things are given to him in love, out of this he sucks comfort: A gracious heart sees all these outward comforts, that they are purchased with the blood of Christ, and therefore these should do him good, and he may take comfort that he hopes for what he hath not, as well as for what he may have; and he may take comfort in his condition, be it what it will, he sees all is for his good; such a one believeth what he readeth not: So he believeth Gods ways are ways of Truth, though some more sweet, and some more bitter.

4. Labor after communion with the Spirit in his comforting work, is another. This is the best preservative against all intanglements of sin whatsoever: It is a great hour of temptation, and if our comforts do do not lie above the world, we shall be greatly insnared by the world; If a man eat sweet-meats, he cannot relish ordinary food: so while these sweet comforts lie upon the soul, he cannot relish these ordinary things in the world: What, do you tempt me with those things, saith a child of God? What are these to the comforts of the Holy God? The heart of man will seek comfort one way or another; and if he hath it not from the Spirit of God, he will seek it some other way; if he hath not comfort from the Spirit of God, he will seek some sparks of his own kindling; rather than they will sit in darkness without comfort, they will light their candle at the Devil's fire: And as he delivereth from temptation on the right, so he delivereth from temptation on the left hand: he that is filled with the comforts of the Holy Ghost, what are sufferings to such a man? he hath that within will carry him through all danger, here is that comfort, and that life by Christ, which may ease us in our greatest crosses; this will make a child of God speak of the sufferings of this world as a light matter. Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, shall work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory: They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, because in Heaven they had a better and

more enduring substance, Heb. 11:35. Some were tortured, receiving no deliverance, because in Heaven they had a better substance. Oh, if you would be kept from the snares of the World, let your comforts be above the power and danger of temptation from anything here below.

3. By way of Direction. How shall we have communion and act faith upon the Holy Ghost as your Comforter? the Holy Ghost is designed and appointed by God the Father to this Office: now you know none love to be slighted in their Office; and if we do not act faith upon the Holy Ghost, we slight his Office; therefore we should have recourse to him in a way of believing: as we should act faith upon Christ for the pardon of sin, so we should act faith upon the holy Ghost, for a sense of that pardon

2. Go often to Jesus Christ, and beg him, and beseech him to entreat the Father for you. Go to God the Father in the name of Christ, and beg it upon the account of Christs Prayer and Intercession, that he would send the Comforter: and you have a good argument to enforce the Petition, the very same as the Disciples, That Christ would, when he went away, Pray the Father, and he should send you another Comforter. Christ tells them, that some there were that would kill them, and in so doing, think they did God good service; therefore Christ, in compassion to them, in the state that he left them in, prays the Father that he would send the Comforter. So now we must go to God; those Ministers that were wont to comfort us, are now to be taken from us; our Barnabas's sons of consolation, their mouths are to be stopped, though Ordinances are now to be damned up, the Houses of God made places of defilement, our Teachers are removed into corners, our Troubles encrease, and we have none to tell us how long; the light of our eyes, the comfort of our hearts, in respect of outward means, are going from us: whither shall we go? we want Bread for our Souls, we want cordials for our Hearts, Blessed Saviour pity us! and since thou wilt not come to us in thy own presense, as thy Embassadors to come to us by thy Spirit, do now in Heaven as thou didst on earth, Pray the Father for us; do not leave us so many

Orphans, without Father or Mother, but send thy Spirit to refresh our Souls: See how we are hated and reviled, and we must suffer these things now, Let us have thy Spirit.

3. If you would have communion with the Spirit of Christ in his comforting work, Take heed you do not lay up your comforts in the Creature, this is to seek for the living among the dead: those that rejoyce in the Creature, rejoyce in a thing of nought: and you that have an interest in God, God will not take it at your hands, if you seek it anywhere else, no, not in Ordinances; though God would have you to seek comfort in Ordinances, yet he would not have you to seek comfort from Ordinances.

4. Set down, and be much in duty, Psalm 63:5,6. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips, when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night-watches. If you look at the beginning of the Psalm, you shall finde that this Psalm was penned when David was deprived of the Ordinances of God. Many a man complains that he lives uncomfortably, no wonder, when he little thinks on Christ.

5. Be much in the exercise of grace. Then they that walked in the fear of the Lord, when they walked in the comfort of the Holy Ghost.

6. Take heed of quenching and grieving the Spirit, your Comforter, by neglecting his motions, or by acting anything against the minde of the Spirit: Do not sin against him as your enlightning Spirit, that will hinder him as your Comforter.

I close with a word of comfort to the people of God. If it be one of the great works of the Spirit of God, here is matter of great comfort to those that stick close to Jesus Christ.

Sure your comforts will be satisfying comforts, and sufficient, because they are comforts of the Spirits working. The Lord Jesus hath promised to make up the want of his bodily presense, by sending his Spirit: He was now going from them, and tells them, that

he could not stay: and this was sad news to the Disciples, who were ready to break their hearts, and the best comfort that he could afford them, was to tell them, that he would send the Comforter. If Christ can comfort his people in the absense of himself, surely he can comfort them in the want of all other comfort that relate either to soul or body; and so in the want of mercies, in the want of outward Ordinances, he can comfort the soul. It is the Spirit of God that can comfort in the use of these; and, if he will, he can do it in the want of them: he can comfort us in the wilderness, where no water is; when he doth deny the means, he can comfort us without, where he denies us the stream, he can make us drink at the Fountain.

7. And lastly, the people of God find hereby, that their comforts are abiding. Your liberty, your friends, ah, Ordinances of, and Ministers may be taken from you, your Ministers may be banished, your Ministers may be imprisoned: but here is a Comforter that abides forever. And though they may keep your Ministers out of the Pulpit, yet they shall not take the Comforter out of your hearts: So that when I shall not preach any more to you, I shall pray the Father, that he would send you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever.

29. Mr. Bull's Afternoon Farewell Sermon

"And now, Brethren, I commend you to God, and to the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified." - Acts 20:32.

The words are part of St. Paul's Farewell-Sermon, or Discourse to the Elders of the Church of Ephesus, one of those famous seven Churches of Asia, that we read of in the Book of the Revelations. It is not to be doubted, as Calvin doth comment upon the place, but though the Apostle speak immediately to the Elders, yet he doth comprehend the whole Church in the Speech.

Our holy Apostle had been a long time with the Church, preaching among them, taking pains with them, both in publick and private, as you may see in the 20 verse, and declares to them the whole counsel of God, verse 27. and now being called away, taken off by Divine Providence, by the will of his Master, the last and best office that he thought he could do for them, was, to commit them to the care of God, and to leave them in his arms, and to recommend them to his Grace.

It would be more then the time would permit, to look over the whole Apostles Sermons, which is partly Narrative, and partly consolatory: Narrative, to put them in mind in what manner he had preached to them, from ver. 17. to ver. 27. and it is partly consolatory: from the 27. to the Text, wherein the Apostle could hold no longer, but his love constrains him, and makes him break forth into the pathetical wish, or rather prayer, and now, Brethren, I commend you to his Grace. As if he had said, I am just now going from you, not knowing that I shall see your face any more: now I am a dying man, as to my conversing with you, any more: Now I am departing, this is the best Legacy I can bequeath unto you, to commend you to God and to his Grace. And if he speaks to persons as standing in the same relation with God and

Christ, and having the same Faith, and the same elder Brother: As if he should have said, you are as dear to me as my own flesh, as if you were my Brethren by Consanguinity, and it is my sorrow that I must leave you; but as it is my greatest grief to part with you, and must leave you, yet this is the comfort, that I shall leave you in safe hands, I do not leave you to the wide world, I do not leave you as Orphans without a Father, as Sheep without a Shepherd, but I commend you to God and his Grace.

O happy words! Though I must leave you, yet, I trust, God who is able, will keep you. As God is present everywhere by his Essence, so by his gracious presence more especially, God is present with his people. I commit you, I commend you to God, I commit you to his care, to his keeping, so the word signifies; so Pavenelus interprets the words, I trust you with God, I leave you as a Depositum in Gods hands, as a dying man leaves his Children in a Friends hands to look after them: as Christ did his Mother in Johns hands: So the Apostle leaves the Ephesians in the hands of God and the Word of his Grace; that is, the Gospel that he had declared to them. The Word of God in Scripture is often called his Grace, 2 Cor. 6, Eph. 3:5 because it is a declaration of the free Grace of God to poor souls, and because it is the Spirits instrument to work grace in the hearts of sinners.

This is remarkable, that after the Apostle had recommended them to God, he adds this word, of his grace: He doth not think it enough to mention Recommending them to God, but to the Word of his grace. The expression is not for Euphoniae gratia, it is no tautology, it is not for more than needs, but to shew how needful and necessary the word of Gods grace is, as well to the building up, as for the converting poor sinners: and though God can build up a Saint immediately, yet ordinarily he doth it not but by the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you. Beza and Calvin refer this clause to God, answering to that of the Apostle 2 Cor. 9:18. God is able to cause all grace to abound in you. But Erasmus refers this word to the Word of Gods Grace which is able to build you up. And this Construction is favoured by those two places of Scripture, and may

very well be meant both in 2 Tim. 3:15. Jam. 1:21. both which places attribute to the Word of God, as this doth: And in the second place, Receive with meekness the ingrafted Word, which is able to save your souls. So that both these words may be referred to this cause; The word of God, and the Word of his Grace; to God, as the Principle; and to the Word of his Grace, as the Instrumental cause to build them up: As much as if he had said, I commend you to the Grace of God, which is able to build you up. The Apostle tells them, that he left them to such a God, as through the Gospel was sufficient to build them up, till he brought them to the full fruition of the Saints in light.

The Apostle commends this to his Church, that were ready to weep, and fay at his departure, O Paul! God hath made thee a happy Instrument of laying a good Foundation among us, of doing a great deal of good to our souls, and we may bless God that ever we saw thy face; but now, alas! thou art going from us, we are afraid all thy pains will come to nothing; we should hope, that if God had pleased to continue thee among us, then we should have been built up; and surely, if God had intended good to us, and brought us to Heaven at last, he would not have taken thee from us. No, sayes the Apostle, be not discouraged; though I leave you, yet I commit you to God, and to the word of his Grace. If I be here, it is God alone that must build you up; I am but a poor, weak Instrument in the hand of God: And when I am gone, God can build you up by some means or other, and carry you over, or thorow all oppositions, temptations and discouragements, till he hath fitted you for himself, and given you an inheritance amongst them that are sanctified.

Thus have you the words explained in this familiar Paraphrase; and being thus opened, you may take notice that

The words hold forth the special care of this blessed Apostle of Jesus Christ; Though he must leave them, yet he takes care to leave them in safe hands, that was able to give a good account of them; You have the Apostle making a deed of trust for the securement of the Saints at

Ephesus after his departure; or, if you will, you have the Apostles last Will and Testament.

1. You have the Person making over this Trust, St. Paul.
2. You have the Trust itself, and those were the Saints at Ephesus.
3. You have the Trustees, those to whom the Trust is committed; and they are two-fold.

1. To God.

2. To the Word of his Grace.

3. Here is the time of making this Trust, Now I am leaving of you.

4. Here is the commendation of the Trustee, from the power and ability of him to manage this Trust, and this is expressed in two particulars.

1. He is able to build up: And then,

2. To give you an inheritance: As if he should have said, I will leave you with such who are able to build you up. I might raise a multitude of Observations from the words: As first of all,

Doct. 1. That it should be the care of a faithful Minister, when he is by the providence of God taken from a people, to recommend them to God; and to the Word of his Grace.

2. As it is the duty of a faithful Minister to do it, so it is his comfort, that he may do it; that he may leave his people in the hand of God, who is able to build them up in grace.

3. It may be the comfort of any Church of Christ, that when they are deprived of faithful Ministers, that yet they are left in the hands of God.

4. Though God can by his infinite power perfect grace, and bring men to Heaven without the use of means, yet we have no ground nor warrant to expect one or other, but through the Word of Gods grace.

5. And lastly, though there be a glorious inheritance purchased and prepared by Jesus Christ, yet it is to be expected by none but those that are built up, and sanctified. Or thus.

None must look for an inheritance hereafter, but such as are born of the Spirit, and built up in grace.

I might speak to many more; but I shall gather all that I have said into this one general Proposition, which is this.

Doct. That the best Farewell that a Gospel-Minister can give to his people that he loves and labors amongst, when he by the providence of God is taken from them, is, to commend them to God, and to the word of his grace.

Thus doth our holy Apostle: When he was taken from his people, and left to preach to them no more, he recommends them to the hands of God. And thus doth a greater than St. Paul, even Jesus Christ himself, The great Shepherd of the Sheep, as St. Peter calls him; when he was leaving the world, and could no longer preach to them, he commends them to God, John 17:11. And now, says Christ to his Father, I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thy own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are. And in the fourteenth, I have given them thy word: He commends them to God, and to the word of his grace.

In the prosecution of this Truth, I shall explain these particulars.

1. Shew you what it is in a Minister to recommend his people to God.
2. What it is that he should recommend them to God for.

3. Why he should be so careful to recommend them to God.
4. How he should recommend them to God.

Lastly, Apply it.

First, it is to leave them in the hand of God, to give them up unto Gods care and keeping, as I shewed you in the opening of the words: To recommend them to God, is, to do that for them effectually which he would fain do Ministerially, if he had been suffered to continue among them. As when a dying Father or Husband commends his wife and children to some surviving intimate friend, it is a leaving, a committing them to that friend, to deal, and to do for them, which he would have done, if he had lived.

Now let us consider what it is that a faithful Ministers design and endeavors are to do for that Congregation that is committed to his charge. These four things especially every faithful Minister endeavors to do while he is amongst his people.

1. Their Conversion and Sanctification.
2. Their Building and Edification.
3. Their Protection and Preservation.
4. Their Comfort and Consolation.

First, Their Conversion and turning to God. This is that a faithful Ministers heart is set upon, that he may convert poor souls that are in a sinful state; that he may turn poor souls to God; that by often preaching, and praying, and counsel, he may bring them into a state of salvation, Rom. 10:1. The Apostle there speaks of the Romans, that they were the people of God in profession: ah, but this was not enough, fain he would that they should be the people of God-in truth; that is the hearty desire of every faithful Minister, not only to bring his people to the outward profession of godliness, but to the work

and power of it in their hearts; not only to have the name of Christian, but Christianity itself; and this is the end of all his studying, to get them to God by little and little, till Christ be formed in them, Gal. 4:11. My little Children, says the Apostle, &c. S. Paul travels in birth with the Galatians from a state of nature, to a state of grace, he would get grace wrought in their hearts, he would get them ingrafted into Christ; and this is the end of his commending them to God, which he would fain have done, if he might have been suffered to preach to them. This is the language of a Ministers heart; Lord, Lord, thou knowest that it was the desire of my soul, that every one of this people should be made holy by thy Word; I would fain have begotten them by the Ministry to Jesus Christ; but now by the providence of God I am taken off before my work is done, and thou seest yet there is a great many in the gaul of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity, in a state of death, and I am now likely not to do anything more: Now it is my care, that those that belong to thy Election of grace, may be gathered home to thee.

2. To build them up in knowledge and faith. He endeavors that those that are already sanctified, may be further built up in their most holy faith; Where there are the most eminent Saints, yet there is a great deal lacking. The Apostle gives great commendation of the Thessalonians, 1 Thess. 3:10. They were a famous Church, and there were a great many eminent Christians, yet there was something lacking in their faith, and in their knowledge. Christ speaks to one of the most eminent Apostles, Oh thou of little faith! Though the Foundation-stone be laid, yet there is a superstructure behind, and this is the work of Christ, the building them up, Eph. 4:12. This is the end of every faithful Minister, to make his people fit for Heaven; he would be feeding of them, that they may grow to the full measure of the stature of Christ: And therefore every godly Minister desires that he may be the Finisher, as well as the Author (under God) of their Faith, that they may be built up to Christs heavenly Kingdom.

3. A Minister's aims are, that his people may be kept from danger. The people of God, after they are effectually called, they are

continually in danger, they are as a Lilly amongst Thorns, as Sheep among Wolves, as a besieged City in the midst of her enemies.

They have enemies without, and enemies within: enemies without, the Devil is their adversary.

1. They are in danger, in respect of the Devil, who is a very potent enemy, a roaring Lyon, and a malicious enemy, malicious against God: and industrious enemy, He goes about seeking whom he may devour; he compasseth the earth, to do what he can to keep souls from Christ; he is a subtle enemy, that hath his stratagems to catch and ensnare poor souls. Now it is the endeavor of every true Minister of Jesus Christ, to secure his people by his counsel, and his prayers; for we are ignorant of his devices, 2 Cor. 2:11. As if he should say, I have most experience of the Devils subtilty, Satan sets to oppose them most; and this is one thing, to rob Ministers of their meditations, of their prayers; and therefore it is the design of Ministers to strengthen their people, in regard of Satans temptations.

2. They are in danger in respect of seducers, that lie in wait to deceive.

3. They are in danger by the World, lest they should be frighted by its opposition.

4. They are in danger by their corrupt lusts, that war against their souls: Therefore every faithful Minister warns his people of those, that their souls may be secured; this being that that a faithful Minister would do among his people while he is with them; when he is taken from them, he commits them to God to be secured from all danger, as Christ in that place before, Father, keep them in thine own hands.

Lastly, every faithful Minister seeks the comfort and consolation of his people. It is their desire to comfort the feeble hands; they are not Masters of your grace, but helpers of your joy, 2 Cor. 4:12. Where the Gospel appears in power, many will stand in need of comfort, under

doubts, fears, and afflictions; and this is the desire of every faithful Minister of Jesus Christ, at their departure from their people, to support the weak, to resolve the doubted, to succour the tempted; and when he is taken from them, and can contribute little to this work, he recommends them to God. A departing Minister may say to his people, If God has made me an instrument of comfort to your souls, you have cause to bless God for it. Now I can do no more, I must recommend you to God, who (I hope) will be the God of your comfort, when I am gone.

2. This is the best office that a Minister can do for his people when he is taken from them, and that whether we look upon Minister or People, certainly it is the best office that a Minister can do for his people, to commend them to God.

1. God is omnipotently, infinite able.

2 God is gracious and faithful, therefore willing to do it.

First, God is infinitely able to manage this trust, he is God all-sufficient, Gen. 17:1. sufficient to make himself happy, much more to make his people happy.

1. God is all in all in the enjoyment of mercy.

2. God is all in all in the want of mercy.

First, He is all in all in the enjoyment of mercy. When a people hath a faithful Minister placed over them by the providence of God, he can do nothing of himself, 2 Cor. 3:6. Our preaching is from the assistance of God; and when we have done all, we cannot make this effectual, we cannot give the success; Paul may plant, Apollos may water, but it is God that must give the increase, 1 Cor. 3:6. Why do you keep such a stir? One would have this Minister, another that; One would have Paul, another would have Apollo, another Cephas; Are they not the Ministers of God, by whom you have believed? Our profit depends not upon the parts and gifts of a creature, but upon

the blessing of God; it is God that puts this heavenly Treasure into the heart, and it is God that must disperse it for the use and benefit of his people. The most eloquent Apollos cannot persuade obstinate sinners to lay hold upon the Gospel; they may speak to the ear, but it is God that must carry the Word to the heart, either for conviction, or conversion.

Secondly, God is all in all in the want of means. Let the instrument be never so weak, if it be in the hand of God, it shall prove effectual: God can make a poor Fisherman instrumental to catch three thousand souls at one time; and God chuses to do his work by weak Instruments, that the praise may be of God: It is not the Minister's parts or gifts, but only the power of God that strengthens the soul, and sanctifies, and builds them up, and comfort them. God is able to convert all unconverted sinners in a Congregation; God can say, Ephata, Be opened.

2. God is able to build up those that are converted, God is able to make all grace abound, 2 Cor. 9:8. Those that have little grace, God is able to make it increase; God is the God of all grace, God can make every Saint perfect, entire, lacking nothing; he can fill all the void places of the heart.

3. God can keep us in all tryals and troubles; God can keep up his people in the midst of Apostacy, Matt. 16:13. The gates of Hell shall not prevail against them. God can keep them, that all the power of Hell shall not hurt them.

4. God is able to comfort the most disconsolate soul. Ministers may speak comfortable words, but they cannot speak them further than to the ear; but God can speak them to the heart: I will allure her into the Wilderness, and speak to the heart. God can comfort the poor soul, let the case be never so sad, 2 Cor. 1:4.

2. As God is infinitely able, so he is infinitely gracious, and faithful. See his Name in Exod. 34. Full of power and tender mercy. Is not

God willing for the Conversation of poor sinners, as willing as Ministers? yea a thousand, and ten thousand times more. Hear how patiently God speaks, turn ye, why will you dye? Hear and live. He calls upon men everywhere to repent.

Secondly, God doth not only desire it, but purpose it, and resolve it. God that hath begun a good work, he will finish it; and so for their preservation, he hath said, That the gates of Hell shall never prevail against them. Of all thou hast given me, I have lost none, John 17:11. Though God may suffer his people to be led away for a time, yet they shall be brought back again, and shall be kept through the power of God unto salvation: Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but not one jot or tittle which God hath spoken.

How willing is God to comfort all his comfortless ones? What Mother can be more pitiful to her sick child, than God is to them that are under affliction: Though a Mother forget her sucking child, yet God cannot forget his people. And then he is the Father of all comfort, and there are many gracious promises God hath made to this purpose, that they may be as so many Aquavitae pledges of Consolation to his people: So that this will appear, that it is the best Office of a Minister, both to Minister and People, to commend them to God.

1. To Ministers, it is the highest expression of their love: What greater testimony of their love can they shew to their people, to do all that for them, that he would willingly have done, and ten thousand times more? Is it not an expression of love from a dying Father to his children, Dear Children, I am now dying, I can provide for you no more, I shall leave you such a Friend that shall provide for you in a more abundant measure than if I had been with you: It is the best demonstration of their Faith.

1. That he will not leave them to the wide world: and then

2. He will not take any one, he will trust his people with none but God, who is able and willing to give account of them.

3. It is the greatest satisfaction to his heart. A Minister leaving his People, can never be satisfied in his own breast, that he should leave them, and commit them, and not to know to whom; but when he knows with whom he hath committed them, when he hath delivered them over to God, that first committed them to him, this is a great quietment and satisfaction to a Minister's spirit: God layes the people as a depositum, and will require an account of them at the last day. Now when a Minister is taken from his people, he cannot be satisfied, till he hath delivered back his trust to God: Lord, here they are, and while I was with them, I did what I could; but now I am taken from them, here I surrender them back into thy hand; when I was in the world, I kept them in thy Name: And so it is best for the people to be left to such a one who will keep them in all their Dangers, and comfort them in all their Afflictions.

3. How should a people be commended to God?

1. By Exhortation.

2. By Prayer.

First, By Exhortation. Thus, the Apostle before and after my Text. And then by Prayer, for so doth Saint Paul. Calvin looks upon those Words, as a Prayer brought in, always making mention of you in my Prayers, Rom. 1:19, Phil. 1:4, Col. 1:3.

And I trust that I shall not only now, at this solemn departure, but as long as I live, still recommend you into the hands of God; though I shall not preach to you, yet I shall still make mention of you in my Prayers, that God would stablish, and comfort, and preserve you to his heavenly Kingdom.

4. Why doth the Apostle commend them to the Word of his Grace? For these two Reasons:

First, Because all the good that any people can look for, is from God; it is declared and laid up in the Promises, and in the Gospel; there is the Treasure of God, it is in the Gospel; The grace of God which hath appeared to all men, bringeth salvation, Tit. 2:11. We could never have known of the glorious mysteries of Salvation, had it not been for the grace of God; we could never have expected good, but from the Gospel: that is the great Magna Charta, wherein God hath made over whatsoever concerns the eternal good of his people. We have nothing to shew for grace, and comfort, and heaven, and glory, but his Gospel. That is the great deed of gift that God hath given to his People: poor sinners might look a Saviour, if the Word of God had not revealed it; those people have no ground to expect Salvation, if God had not declared it in his Gospel to bestow it upon them.

2. The Gospel is the only instrument by which God brings, and conveys all that good to the Soul that it stands in need of, all spiritual and temporal good that accompanies salvation.

God works nothing immediately to the Soul, but by the Gospel.

First, if any soul be converted to God, it is by the grace of God: And as Conversion, so Sanctification, that is effected by the word of God; so likewise is Edification, Salvation, and Preservation.

Use. I come now to the Application. It maybe I have been too long already: but Gods knows that it may be the last time that I may trespass in this kind: and I have the Apostles example, who preached at Troas till midnight, but I promise to have done in a great deal less time.

Use. In the Application I shall in the Apostles example, Commend you to the grace of God.

My Brethren, and dearly Beloved, and longed for, now God by his providence is taking me away from you, in the exercise of my publick Ministry, I commend you to God, and to the word of his Grace.

This I shall do, First, by exhorting and counsel; and then by Prayer.

First, By way of Exhortation.

1. In reference to God: and then
2. In reference to the Word of his Grace.

First of all, my Exhortation in reference to God, is, that you would commit your selves to God; If it should be so much a Ministers care to commend his people to God, it's good reason they should commend themselves.

1. A Ministers commending you to God, will be to no purpose, if you do not commit your selves. I shall alwayes make mention of you in my prayers, as long as God shall continue me in this valley of tears: I shall pray that God would build you up, and sanctifie you: I shall pray for you; but God will not hear my Prayers, if you do not hearken to my counsel, to commit your selves to God.

2. Consider, if you can so commit your selves to God, as to get God to take charge of you, you are made for ever.

1. God will be an All-sufficient God, instead of all the friends in the world: you shall not need any that shall provide for you to protect you; God will be All in All, instead of Father, instead of Mother, Houses, Lands, Relations; God will be better to you than ten Husbands, than ten Ministers; Ah, better than ten thousand Worlds.

God can sweeten all your enjoyments, God can provide for you, and make you happy in the midst of the wants of Creature-comforts; God is a Sun, and a Shield, He will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he with-hold from them that fear him.

God contains all in himself, Eminenter; get God, and you get all: Let the World frown or smile, let it turn upside down. Though the Mountain be thrown into the midst of the Sea, though the World be

set on fire, yet a Soul that is in Gods keeping is happy: God is a present help in time of trouble.

2. As God is an All-sufficient Friend, so he is a firm and fast Friend to them, My Father and Mother forsook me, but the Lord took me up, Psalm 27:10. My flesh and my heart fails, but God fails me not; though my Minister and my Friend leave me, yet God will not leave me; he is engaged by his own promise, truth; and faithfulness, I will never, (never, never) leave thee nor forsake thee.

If you do not forsake God, God will never forsake you: if once you have so committed your selves to God, as God accepts the charge, he hath undertaken that you shall never depart from him: It is part of the Covenant, and he is engaged to all the Relations wherein he stands to his people, as a Husband, as a Father, as a Master.

But you will say, how shall we commit ourselves to God, that God may have a charge of us? I will give you one Direction for all.

1. Take God to be your God, and give up your selves to be his people; if you will, before you and I part, heartily and unreservedly give up your selves to God, to be his people, it will be the comfortablest day that ever I saw, though in other respects it may be the saddest; As certainly God is your God, so certainly he will keep you; if you will avouch your selves to be Gods, I will avouch God to be yours.

1. You must take God to be the portion of your souls inheritance, lay up all your happiness in God; for if you chuse anything else for your happiness but God, God will have nothing to do with you, God will be All or Nothing: Your hearts must say as David's, Lord thou art my portion whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. He accounted all nothing for God: God was his happiness. God was his Portion, God was his All in All.

2. You must make God the center of all your love and delight: God will have all from you, or nothing; you must not divide your affection between God and the World, you must love nothing in comparison of

him, love nothing but in subordination to him; as you would have God to be wholly yours, so you must be wholly his.

3. You must take God to be the strength and shield of hearts; As you would have God to take care of you, you must cast your care upon God: If you place your hope anywhere else, there will be no sure hold, the Anchor of your hope must be cast nowhere else; if you lay your burden anywhere else, God will not lend a finger to help you; but if you place your hope in God, God will help you; your extremity shall be his opportunity.

4. You must take God to be the guide of your hearts; if you would have the privilege of God's guard, you must keep in Gods way; keep in Gods way, and you will be sure of Gods protection; do you keep Gods precepts and God will keep your person; do what God commands, and avoid what God forbids, and then you need not fear what will become of you. Let the World frown, and Friends forsake you, resolve that you will follow God wheresoever he leads you, then he will be your God all your dayes, and he will guide you here by his counsel, till at last he bring you to his glory: And this leads me to the second Exhortation, in respect of the Gospel.

Secondly, Brethren, I commend you to the Word of Gods Grace. I commend you to the Precepts of God, to be obeyed by you; I commend you to the Promises of God, to be believed by you.

1. Keep them, & hold them fast carefully it is your treasure, & life; keep it, and it will keep you; it is all that you can shew for Heaven: I leave it as a Depositem; if you part with it, take heed how you will answer it at the last day: it is the Talent which God hath committed to you, for which you will be commended for keeping at the great day. Hold fast the Word of God's grace; there is old tugging by the Devil and his instruments, either to pull you from the Word, or the Word from you. Let go any thing rather than the Gospel; let go your Friends, your Estates, your Lives, rather than let go the Gospel.

Study Gods Word, do not keep it by you for no purpose: Search the Scriptures, for in them you hope for eternal life. There's the Pearl of great price, there is Directions, there is Comfort; this Book of God will make you wise unto Salvation.

If you never hear Sermon more, you have enough by the use of the Bible to carry you to Heaven: There's Divinity, there is holiness and Heaven almost in every syllable, when you cannot have it preached to you. Be much in the study of it.

Then practice it conscionably; Be not only Hearers but Doers of it; let your conversation be such as becomes the Gospel. It was the Apostles advice to the Philippians, and its mine to you, Let your Conversation be such as becomes the Gospel. Let your Conversation become the Precepts, the Priviledges, the Promises of the Gospel. Having then thus commended you to God, give me leave before we part to commend God and his Gospel to you.

1. Make it your daily business to walk with God; make him the Companion of your lives; Converse with God every day in the inward of your hearts: He that is a stranger with God, God will soon be a stranger to him; and if you neglect God, one day you may be to seek him when you most need him.

2. Live in the daily exercise of Grace and Godliness.

1. Live in the continual exercise of Faith, live by it; you have need of the exercise of that Grace every day: You can as well live without food, as live without Faith; it is that Grace which feeds upon Christ.

2. Be much in the exercise of the Fear of the Lord all the day long; be afraid to sin against God; in the secret of your souls mind his presense, in all places, in all company, in all businesses.

3. Be much in the exercise of Humility; live humbly, and think better of others than your selves. Humility will exceedingly adorn your profession.

4. Be much in the exercise of Repentance: Be frequent and constant in Prayer, pray continually; do it spiritually, and do it exactly, as to the season of it.

5. Be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Whatsoever you do for God, do it with all your might; do not put off God with the skin, but give him the marrow.

6. Be careful, not only to keep up secret, but Family-worship: the less preaching there is in publick, the more catechising and instructing there should be in private. I know no more likely means than the setting up the worship of God in private Families.

7. Prize the Sabbath: be strict and exact in the observation of the Lord's-day. I have shewed you many times wherein the spiritual observation of it doth consist: it is your Seed-time, your market-day: it is a sign you shall one day celebrate an everlasting Sabbath with God in the highest Heavens.

8. Be stedfast in the ways of God in a back-sliding Age: Keep your ground; while others fall away, stand fast in the Faith: Be not ashamed to own Christ before all the world: reckon upon the reproaches of Christ, and count them greater riches than the Treasures in Egypt. Do not place Religion in a few shadows, when the substance is neglected: do not think that God will be put off with the skin without the substance: and by your holy Conversation, labour to put to silence the foolishness and ignorance of wicked men, that men may have nothing to accuse you but in the matters of Jesus Christ, that you may cut off occasion from them that seek occasion. Let no reproach make you lay aside holiness: and say, if this be to be vile, I will be viler still. And love all those that have been instrumental for your spiritual comfort.

Forget not to contribute to the necessity of the poor Saints; think that God hath given you your Estates for such a time as this, for this is acceptable to God. Bless them that curse you, pray for them that

despitefully use you, so shall you heap coals of fire upon their heads; when you are reviled, revile not again. Do your duty to your Superiors, to those that God hath set over you, and so carry yourselves as it was in the case of Daniel, that they may find nothing against you save in the matter of your God. In all things let your Conversation be as becomes the Gospel of Jesus Christ, That I may rejoyce in the day of the Lord Jesus, that we have not run in vain, and laboured in vain.

And labour to keep up that Christian love which in this place hath been more eminent than anywhere I know. I would preach St. John's Doctrine, Little children, love one another: And that my expression may be pathetical, I shall speak it in the words of the Apostle, in Phil. 2:1,2. If there be therefore any Consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

I now have but a word more, speaking of yours and mine own comfort under this sad Dispensation.

1. It is a Minister's comfort, that when he is taken from his People, he can yet Commend them to God, and to the Word of his grace, which is able to build them up, and to give them an inheritance among them that are sanctified.

And truly, my dearly beloved in the Lord, this is my great work now, when I am a dying to you as to my publick Preaching: My beloved, I am very sensible that it is a very sad and solemn thing for a Minister to be rent from a People that he loves as his own Soul, that he hath laboured among; for to bid adieu to those solemn meetings, wherein I have preached to you, wherein we have mingled our sighes and our tears before the Lord, wherein we have rejoyced and sat down before the Lord at his Table: Now to think that I must Minister with you and for you no more in these Ordinances, methinks it is a heart-breaking consideration, to think that I am now dying in this congregation, to

think that I now dying whilst I am preaching; but this is my comfort under these sad thoughts, that I can Commend you to God, and to the Word of his Grace; to one that is able to keep you, and to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified. Like a dying Father, I can commend you to the care of such a Friend, infinitely able to supply all that I could not do for you.

It is the comfort of a dying Father, when he sees his children weeping round about him, that he can commend them to a Faithful Friend, willing to do that for them that he desired to do, and a thousand times more.

I would hope that I have some children that I have begotten to Christ by my Ministry, towards whom my bowels yearn; but his is my comfort, that I can put them into the Arms of their and my heavenly Father, of their and my blessed Redeemer, to be kept in the power of God.

There are many poor souls that are yet in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity; and if the Lord had seen good. I would say have seen of the travel of my soul in their salvation; but I can commend them to God, who knows them who belong to his Election; he can either restore, or can do it by another hand; and you that are in any measure grown in Grace, I will be willing to be helpful to your joy, and instrumental to your comfort: But I commend you to God, who is able to give all grace to you, and to keep you stedfast.

It will be some alleviation of sorrow, though I must leave you, and dye to you as to my publick Ministry, that I hope I may a while go up and down, and converse with you, to be among you. The Lord grant this favour, that I may behold your stedfastness.

2. This may be your comfort as well as mine; this may be the comfort of all those poor Congregations that are like to be made Widows by the Metaphorical death of their Guides and Pastors; but I leave you into the hands of all Grace and of all Comfort.

This is a black day upon Israel, when so many faithful Ministers are slain at one blow; this is a day of gloominess and darkness in many Congregations, for so many Ministers to be beheaded in one day!

What hath England committed? Is it not some high Treason? If we look to the cause of it, why so many Ministers, are as dead in one day, as so many Children without a Father.

And if we look upon this cause what hath caused God thus to deal with us, we must complain, Oh! our unfruitfulness! Our fearful unthankfulness under the mercies of God: This will be the Emphasis and sting of our grief; and this should be the matter of our grief.

And then, if we consider the sad Prognostick, what it doth seem to foretell: It is a sign, that when God lays aside so many faithful Ministers, of some scourge or calamity that is coming upon us.

But you that can lament this Judgment, you that can lament the sad deprivations of these powerful Ordinances; Remember, that though your Minister be dead, God can raise you up others in their stead; and where the way of instruments are wanting, He can do it without them; and those that are begot in Christ, shall be preserved; and those yet unbought in, who belong to the Election of Grace, shall in Gods due time have the effectual work of the Spirit wrought upon their Souls. For he is able to build you up, and to give you an Inheritance among them that are sanctified.

And though I take this solemn leave of you, as to this publick Exercise, yet if the Lord shall open the door, and take of those bands of Death that the Law hath laid upon my Ministry in regard of Conscience, who cannot Conform (for which our publick Ministry is suspended) I shall chearfully and willingly return to you in this place.

But now, though you're dying Minister, in respect of the Exercise to his publick Ministry, is leaving of you, yet I commit you into a safe hand, I commend you to God, and to his Grace. Amen.

30. Mr. Pledger's Farewell Sermon

"I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty (but thou art rich;) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the Synagogue of Satan." - Rev. 2:9,10.

Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer; behold, the Devil shall cast some of you into Prison, that ye may be tried, and ye shall have tribulation ten dayes: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a Crown of life.

In the former Verse you have the Superscription and Description of this Epistle: the Superscription by the mouth and hand of John, to the Angel of the Church of Smyrna (that is) the Ministry of the Gospel, or the College of Presbyters: As the whole Tribe of Levi in Malachy is called the Angel of the Lord: so here, the whole Tribe and Office of the Ministry is called the Angel: Angel is not a term that signifies a single Person, but a name of Office. Then for the Description (These things saith the first and the Last, which was dead and is alive.) He is described by his. Eternity, by his suffering, and by his reviving. I shall not speak of this, nor of the Verses following the Text. I shall speak of the Inscription or Narration of the Epistle in these two Verses, wherein you have,

1. A Commendation.

2. An Admonition, a piece of Heavenly Counsel.

1. You have a Commendation: I know thy works, &c. I like well the pains that thou takest in my service for my Servants sake; I know how thou hast suffered: I take all well, I consider all the reproaches that are vomited out against thee.

2. Then you have the Counsel. 2. Fear none of these things. 2. The Arguments to set it on.

1. 'Tis the Devil that shall trouble you: he is the prime Agent, he that never took a good Cause: Thou hast certainly God for thee, if thou hast the Devil against thee.

2. This Devil shall be checked and restrained.

1. As to the number of them he shall deal withal: [The Devil shall cast some of you into Prison] He aims at all, but he shall come short of many.

2. In respect of the kind of the Affliction [Cast some into Prison] He aims at our Souls, to disturb the peace of them, to cast us into Hell;] but it shall be but into Prison.

3. For the design of this Affliction [Not for destruction, but to try us] It shall not be as Wood in the fire, to be consumed; but as Gold in the fire, to be tried.

4. For the term of duration; it shall not be forever: [But for ten dayes] for a time, a set time, for a short time; perhaps thou shalt lose thy life, but be thou faithful unto the death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

Before I finish, I shall endeavour to shew the whole light of this Text, in these six or seven Propositions.

Pro. 1. First, Jesus Christ takes notice of all the works, and trouble, and losses that we endure for him. There cannot be a godly word spoken, but the Lord hears it, takes notice of it; not a day of humiliation, not a tear, not a prayer, not a sigh, not a cup of cold water, but the Lord sets it down: Item, at such a time thou didst lose such a thing, hazard such a concernment. Now this knowledge lies in two things:

1. It implies an Approbation.

2. A Recompence: I know what thou doest, what thou sufferest; so as to approve it, and so as to recompence it.

Now then if God takes notice of what we do and suffer for his Name, then either we must say, He hath not good enough, or not time enough to bestow that good upon us, or not faithfulness enough to perform his promise, before we can be moved from his service.

Pro. 2. Secondly, I observe, Believers in their poor condition, when they have lost all, they are rich: I know thy poverty, but thou art rich. The only wise man is the only rich man, (so saith the Philosopher) but the Believer is the rich man, (so saith the wisdom of God in the Text.) And the riches of a Believer lies in five things.

1. In his interest, he hath a God for his portion: Faith doth unite and implant into the Lord Jesus Christ; so that we are become spiritually rich to the utmost degree of happiness: saith David, the lines are fallen to me in a pleasant place, I have a goodly heritage. All that rich love of God, which is stronger than death itself: a rich Covenant of Grace shines in the Promises as so many Pearls; he will not withhold anything that is good, nor suffer any thing that is evil to fall upon us, that shall not turn to good. How rich are they that are rich in God!

2. Believers must needs be rich in their relations: Our Communion is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ: They are married to Christ, and have an Interest in him, they must certainly contract very honourable Allies, the brother of Jesus Christ, a Member of Christ: she that marries a Prince or King, is a Queen: What title of Honour shall we give to her that is espoused to Jesus Christ?

3. The Believer is honourable in his possessions: To name but two, possession of Grace, possession of Peace: Grace and Peace, there is your riches; so the Lord salutes you in his Word: the least dram of Grace is more than all the World. And this is the character of one that hungers and thirsts after Christ. And then for comforts which

are grounded upon grace and the work of grace: for the spring of grace is a spring of joy: In the world you shall have trouble, but in me peace: And, in the midst of my troubled thoughts (saith David) thy comforts delight my Soul.

4. A Believer is rich in regard of his expectation, that Reversion, that blessed hope that is reserved for him. A Believer his character is, to long and look for the appearance of Christ: The Believer is rich in the everlasting Kingdom of glory.

5. A Believer is rich in the things of this life: he can live above these things, he can be content without them; contentations is your riches: you shall want nothing that is good: Why then, have we not enough? And if we have enough, why do we nor see our riches? Because God doth not shake down the Acorns from the Tree of common providence, which he does to the herds of the World, but feeds us with Childrens bread, shall we therefore repine? Let us see our riches even in the things of this life. He that believes on Christ, is in such a condition as can know no want: He that is not in Christ, cannot be rich: He that is in Christ, cannot be poor. Judge not of his condition by what he appears to be outwardly. A Believer is worth as much as the Promises come to, which are his Charter; as much as the Kingdom of Heaven comes to, which is his Reversion.

Prop. 3. Christ takes notice of all the reproaches and blasphemies of his Adversaries: I know the blasphemy of them that say they are Jews and are not, but are of the Synagogue of Satan. Christ counts himself reproached when his Servants and wayes are reproached: The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me. A Christian doth quarter Arms with Christ: Therefore, all the reproaches of the black mouths they are especially taken notice of by Jesus Christ. There is not a word they can speak, but is presently recorded among the memorandums of Jesus Christ. Repent, if it be possible, that the word in thy tongue, the thought in thy mind may be forgiven; I say, if it be possible, though a malicious Scoffer does seldom return.

Prop. 4. Whatever the Children of God suffer at any time before the Grave, they may suffer still [I know thy works and tribulation (nay, yet the wind is not yet over) in the next verse thou shalt suffer.] After great expenses of blood and treasure, still more heavy calamities: the water of Tribulation doth rise higher and higher, till the Believer resists unto blood, striving against sin: you must expect it, you must go with your lives in your hands, resolving upon the greatest trouble, to wade through a deep flood of calamities, not one piece of the Cross excepted.

Prop. 5. Christ usually gives notice to his people in their sufferings; he tells us beforehand. So Joh. 16:7, Matt. 24:9, Acts 9:16. There never did besal any great trial, but the Church of God had notice of it: Abraham had notice of the ruine of Egypt: So the Antichristian trouble must come upon the Church, rise higher and higher, specially in the last days: they are set down exactly in the Book of the Revelations: And the reasons are,

1. That Gods people may not be offended when troubles come, Joh. 16:1. I told you, that you might not be offended. Look for them that you may not be terrified by reason of the unexpectedness of them.

2. That he might convince us that there is nothing befalls us without his privity: he that foresees them, must needs see them; he that forecasts them, must needs have the ordering of them; not a hair of your head falls to the ground without his Council, without his hand.

3. That we might provide for them: know you not the coming of the Son of man? When Christ comes with notable mercies, usually he sends his Harbingers; we must therefore be as Noah: being warned of God, believing his word, he was moved with fear, and built an Ark.

Prop. 6. Whatever troubles come upon the people of God, they have no cause to fear: Fear none of these things thou shalt suffer: be careful for nothing: (it is very comprehensive) there is a fear that we cannot be without, and there is a fear we may not admit: A fear there

is of dependence, this furthers our preparation, prayer, renouncing ourselves, flying to the Lord Jesus under his wings: that is a blessed fear of trouble, that makes us to come nearer to God: But then there is a fear of despondencie, Apostasie, a fear of Distraction, so as to be dismayed, discouraged. There is no ground of salvish fear as to God; no ground of a fear of man, of anything that man can do to us: And the Reason is,

1. All our sufferings are ordered by a Father: 'tis the potion that thy Father gives thee to drink: whatever bitter ingredient there is in it, still its of thy Fathers procuring: why, wilt thou suspect it to be poyson, and be afraid of it? no, be encouraged.

2. Fear not, Christ stands by thee in all thy sufferings: The Angel stood by Christ in his Agony to comfort him: but Christ stands by us in our Agony, in our contending for the Faith: Fear not (saith God) O worm Jacob, I will be with thee: He is alwayes with us, though sometimes as to sense 'tis otherwise: nay, if Christ be nearer to us at any time, 'tis when trouble is most near us. (O Lord be not far off, for trouble is near, saith the Psalmist.) That trouble is blessed that engages God to be nearer to us, that engages us to come nearer to God.

3. Fear not: Whatever 'tis that we suffer, there shall be sufficient strength given to bear it, to go through it: God will never lay more upon thee than he will enable thee to bear: and if thy strength be increased proportionably, it is all one to lift a pound weight, and to lift an hundred pound weight.

4. Fear not any of these sufferings, because none of them shall hurt thee; God hath said, he will stave all evil from thee (no evil shall come nigh thy dwelling) and he that fears the Lord shall not be visited of any evil, Prov. 19:23. No hurt shall come, nothing shall come to thee amiss (that is, as to thy Soul, and the Soul is the man; there shall be no impairing to thy Soul, to thy best interest; thou shalt lose nothing but that thou canst not keep, nothing that enters

into the other world to make up thy happiness; thou shalt lose nothing to do thee good; no loss of communion with God, no loss of Grace, Peace, and Comfort; thy interest shall not be shaken, thy Communion shall not be diminished.

But why do I speak of no hurt? there shall come a great deal of good by these troubles. When God calls thee to suffer, and thou wilt put him off with doing, make it up that way, God loses by it, and thou dost lose that thou dost; but if you will buckle yourself to that service God calls for; active when 'tis active, passive when 'tis passive; this is that piece of godliness that is great gain. Thou wilt either live or die, and shalt gain both ways; if thou livest, thy Graces shall be better, the Spirit of God shall be upon thee; if thou die, thy Glory, which is weighty, shall be double; the weightier the Cross, the weightier the Crown: be content to go as Christ did, from the Cross to the Crown. Let us strive against our carnal Lusts, those sew things that are ready to choak our faith, disparage God, and cut the sinews of our endeavours to any service God calls us to.

1. Consider our troubles are like to be great: here is the Symptom of Gods displeasure upon us, here is the pouring out of such a providence among us, as is usually attended with destructive Judgments. Sodoms calamity was coming; when one Lot was discharged: Germany's calamities was coming, when one Luther was taken away; Lord then what woe is this, to sweep away so many faithful, painful Labourers at once! but it is our duty to suffer patiently, and not complain.

2. As our troubles must be great, so many will fear, and in fearing faint; we see it come to pass, and you will find it more and more: There are those that run with the Foot-men, that will not keep pace with the Horse-men, that may be left behind, and be trod under foot: our troubles are likely to rise according to all we can learn from Scripture and Providence, and very many there be that will shrink.

3. Consider it is a very difficult thing to stand stedfast in a day of evil; you cannot name any of God's Children, but when they have indeed come to it, their carnal sears have been working so, as their feet have almost slipt, they have been almost gone, but that for the promise of God, that he would ••y no more upon them than he would enable them to bear.

O but you will say, what will become of the publick interest, of the name and Church of God? and what shall become of my private interest?

I answer, you have no ground of fear (according to Scripture) in either of these respects.

First, as to the publick Name of God, the interest of his Church, of his truth, of righteousness, or of a real Reformation, the interest of our prayers and hopes, be not afraid.

1. God bears a dear respect unto his People: they are represented in Scripture by all names that may import dearness and nearness unto him: the interest of his glory is bound up in his people: he calls Israel his Glory: We know the interest of men is that which moves the world: but the interest of God, of his Glory, no doubt will be the ground of safety and security unto us, even till God takes us to Heaven. For the interest of Gods Justice God made Hell; and for the interest of his mercy and grace, he gave Jesus Christ to die, to take effect here among the children of men; Do you think God will forget his interest?

2. Remember, Gods ways are in the deep: you cannot tell what God is doing; when you think thoughts of destruction and confusion, my thoughts towards you, saith God, are thoughts of peace: And truly God he does not save a Soul, nor does not promote the salvation of his Church in any eminent degree but it is in a way that is cross and contrary to the sense and expectation of flesh and blood: insomuch you know the darkness of our condition has been the entrance upon

deliverance; as just before the day dawns, it is the darkest of the night; when God looked and there was none to help them, says he, My arm brought salvation.

Thus it was with you that are effectually called: you have received the sentence of death; the entrance upon your deliverance, is the darkest time of your condition.

3. God can do great things, Joel. 2. Fear not, thy God, O Sion, can do great things. 'Tis a disparagement that we offer to God, we ascribe more to the Creature than we do to God, when we give way to carnal fear; fear not what man can do, because of the power of God which is his shield and buckler; Is anything too hard, too heavy for God? And when God does great things, he usually goes on to do greater; though he may seem to suffer his work to be thrown back to confusion, and his people may be ready to say, we thought he had redeemed Israel, that degree of Reformation shall not be lost. You know in Luthers time, take any special degree of Reformation in the Church, and it seemed to be opposed by the gates of Hell: when it was brought upon the stage to any hopeful degree, when it was taken as it were utterly out of sight for a while: but it was never lost: thus God is but making way for his own glory to appear in these great works.

O, but you will say, What shall become of my particular? It is enough God hath promised that we shall not want anything that is truly good, and that nothing that is evil shall fall upon us, and lye upon us: though we do not see deliverance, it shall be: whatsoever our sad thoughts and tremblings of heart may be, yet give God the glory of his Word: Take these few directions:

1. Strive to strengthen thy Faith. Faith is that which lays hold on Christ, and Christ is your strength: therefore Faith is said to do that which Christ doth: let every day drive thee to a renewed Act of Faith: Take heed, be not shaken in the Faith of the Cause, be not shaken in the Faith of Christ (*fides causae, fides Christi*) Be not shaken upon the Cause, which upon utmost examination we find to be according

to the Word, hold that: Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but not one jot and tittle of this Cause. And then do not shake in the faith of Christ, that is, in your laying hold in your applying your selves to him, in your resting and settling upon him; beg of God to strengthen your Faith.

2. Get more Self-denial: we must forsake all, we must not accept anything. A man would part with his life, as easily as with a pin off his sleeve, if he had but some considerable growth in Self-denial.

3. Get a great deal of love towards that Christ that loved us with love stronger than death: get love of that Christ that may be stronger than life. Let nothing in the world be of any consideration with you, so as Christ be magnified in your bodies: love will breed courage, and cast out fear: slavish fear before God, carnal fear before me.

4. Get a true insight in, an account of suffering and troubles whence they are: they issue from the same love with redemption of your souls from Hell, and your glorification: God doth everything in pursuance of the purpose of his love: he doth everything according to the platform and pattern of his thoughts towards us from eternity. Consider what troubles are, and to what end, not to destroy, but to try: to wean from the world, to fit for heaven.

5. Get an insight into the vanity of the Creature: you reckon the Creature some great matter, and that is the reason of your love, and of your fear.

6. Get the fear of God, that may over-rule other fears: Fear not him that can but kill the body, but fear him that is able to cast Body and Soul into Hell-fire.

7. Keep a clear conscience void of offence towards God, and towards men: by a heart-abasing confession of what is past, and the application of the blood of Christ; and by mortification and watchfulness therein, keep your selves from evil for the time to come.

8. Get a better assurance of eternal life; a glimpse and sight of this would make a man run through the very flames of hell. How comfortable was Stephen, when a shower of stones was about his ears, to see Jesus standing at the right hand of God! I wonder how they dare to venture their life, that have no ground of a better life: but for those that have a well-grounded hope of the mercy of God, they say, we reckon these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, to work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Fear not any of these things which you shall suffer.

Prop. 7. Christ does limit Satan, he hath him in a string, him and all his instruments: (The Devil shall cast some of you into prison, &c.) Every word hath its weight: who shall do it? the Devil: What shall he do? cast you into prison. How far! some of you: How long? ten dayes: For what use? that you may be tryed. Christ as he hath Satan in a chain of providence, so he hath a chain of Restraint; it is Christ that sets a circle about him, he cannot cause a hair of thy head to fall: he is in the hand of Christ; they are as truly under him and his hand, as they are against him: If God let alone his Enemies, what shall they not do? If God let alone his People, what shall they do?

2. God has a special Providence about the things of his Church by way of Eminency, by way of Premission, and ordination.

3. You will not deny but there's power enough in God to destroy all that are against him, and to limit; and all shall make to the praise of God, and to his peoples good.

4. The Lord is exceeding merciful; he cannot hold when the Enemy comes to insult, to blaspheme, and revile: Now will I arise, saith God, and set him at liberty from him that puffeth at him: there is not only a judging of their Enemies hereafter, but a judging of them here: the world shall say, Verily there is a God that rewardeth righteousness, verily there is a God that judgeth the earth.

5. God hath a special design in hand: therefore just so far as he will carry on the design God hath towards his people (which is always a design of Faithfulness) just so far shall the enemy go, Isa. 10. The Enemy means not so, he means to cut off people, not a few; but Gods end was otherwise, and he will over-rule them: this is the comfort, there is a set time, there is an end.

There is a difference between the afflicting of God's people, and judging their Enemies: in the intention, and extension: one is for ruine, the other in proportion: one is a light affliction, the other a load. And then for extension, one is forever, the other, is for a time, for ten dayes. Then our affliction shall have an end, I and a comfortable end, the end of our sins, and the end of our sorrows? God will restore comforts to his mourners; let us be mourners during the time of mourning: God will quickly cloath us with garments of praise: there shall be an end of sufferings, never an end of our joy and glory.

Prop. 8. To conclude in a word, Be faithful to the death: Be faithful in your Promises, in your vows and purposes, your covenants of obedience and reformation; persist in the doctrine of the Gospel, and the worship of the Gospel, and the Ministry of the Gospel, and Offices Christ hath fixt in his Church: be faithful by your most earnest, zealous desires before the Lord: Be faithful to the death: he will never let you see death till all your fears are conquered: he can presently take them away; he will certainly be present with you in all your troubles. And remember, God in tender mercy and faithfulness, for the present accepts thy unfeigned purpose to be constant and faithful to him to the death.

31. Mr. P. Lamb's Farewell Sermon

"Jesus answered and said unto him, if a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." - Joh. 14:23.

The departure of Jesus Christ unto his Father, from whose bosom he came into the World, was very sadly resented by his Disciples, whose mixt passions produce a very great disturbance and trouble upon their Spirits.

The inward Anxiety, and unconcealed grief of the Disciples, move the Bowels of their more affectionate Lord to pity their case, and provide for their relief, and give them instructions how to express their love unto him in his absense, not so much in carrying blubber'd eyes and heavy hearts, as by remembring and observing the Counsels and Instructions that he hath given to them, while he was present with them. So that this whole Chapter is fill'd up with Counsels and Comforts, Directions and Consolations.

First, Directions and Counsels, especially in the 1:13:15. verses.

First, To the exercise of Faith, verse 1. Ye believe in God, believe also in me. And this is the life, even a life of Faith, which we must live, till we come to the enjoyment of Christ, by which we fetch comforts in all troubles, and strength against all tentations, from Jesus Christ.

Secondly, To the duty of Prayer, ver. 13. which is the proper duty of an afflicted State, as Jam. 5:13. Is any afflicted? let him pray. By Prayer the Soul empties his Complaints in Gods bosome, and finds ease by telling him of all the trouble and grief that attends his state; Prayer hath that divine excellency, that, like a heavenly Charm, it speaks away trouble, and speaks in comfort; as 'tis said of Hannah, 1 Sam. 1:18. She prayed, and went away, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad; And thus our Prayers alwayes speed, when they be made by the help of the Spirit, and offered up to God in the name of Christ, 13, 14. Verses.

Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name, that you shall receive.

Thirdly, To obedience in the 15. verse, to do the work committed to them: If ye love me keep my commandments. You cannot better express your love to me, than in keeping my words. Nor is there a more certain way for men to find comfort, than this, by keeping his commands: for then, though they cannot enjoy his Person, yet they shall not miss his Promise.

Secondly, The Consolation which he gives them in the 2. ver. &c. the 16. ver. &c. and the 23. ver. &c.

First, In the 2, 3, 4, ver. &c. From the place whether he was going, to his Father and their Father, his Home and their Home; whence he did intend to come again to them. So that his going from them, was but a Recess, or with-drawing for a time, until he came: For in ver. 3. I will come again, and receive you to myself; as rendered in the Greek, I come again, in the Present Tense, to intimate the certainty of his coming to them again, as if he were already come; which in ver. 28. of this Chapter, Christ tells them, should be matter of great joy to them. If ye loved me, ye would rejoyce, because I said, I go unto the Father.

Secondly, From ver. 16. The promise of the Spirit, which shall supply his absense: such a Spirit as shall reach them, comfort them, and be instead of All to them, give them such Joy, Courage, and Peace, as the World can neither give, nor take away, ver. 27. Peace I leave with you, my Peace I give unto you, &c.

Thirdly, In the 23. ver. in the Text, we will come and make our abode with him, while you keep my words, which is the great promise here.

If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

The words of the Text are an Answer to the Question of Judas, (not Iscariot) Lord how is it, that thou wilt manifest thy self unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus Christ gives the Answer, If a man love me he will keep my words, &c. To him the Promise is made, That the

Father will love him: They love him that keep his words; and to these he hath said, He will manifest his love to them, and make his abode with them. In which word there are three parts considerable.

First, A Supposition, if a man love me, &c.

Secondly, A position, which is the effect of that love: He will keep my words.

Thirdly, A promise, which is two-fold.

First, Of the Father's love, My Father will love him.

Secondly, The Co-habitation of the Father and Son with such a Person, we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

The Observations that I intend to insist upon, are two:

First, that it is the duty and special property of them that love Jesus Christ in sincerity, to keep the words of Christ.

Secondly, That God and Christ will make their abode with them that keep his words.

First, Of the first of these; That it is the duty and special property of them that love Jesus Christ in sincerity, to keep the words of Christ.

If any love me, he will keep my words, he will do my will, walk in my ways, treasure up my truths and counsels.

This Doctrine requires three things to be spoken to in their order.

1. That Jesus Christ must be truly loved.
2. What it is to keep his Words.
3. Why it is both the duty and property of them that love him to keep his words.

First. That Jesus Christ must be truly loved; there is such an indispensable necessity for this, that the Apostle says, 1 Cor. 16:22. If any man love not the Lord Jesus, let him be Anathema Maranatha, let him be accursed.

But because everyone pretends highly to love Jesus Christ, and but few that love him indeed, I shall shew two things more briefly.

1. Who is he that truly loves him.
2. Why we should all truly love him.

First, who is he that truly loves Christ.

First, He truly loves Jesus Christ, who, upon the discovery and tender of Jesus Christ in the Gospel, as King, Priest, and Prophet can willingly deny all for him, as the Merchant, Matt. 13:45,46. sold all that he had for the goodly Pearl. And so Paul, Phil. 3:8. accounts all dung, his parts, his righteousness by the Law, his greatest excellencies; he loves Christ in deed, and not in shew only, who can leave the world, his dearest lusts, his best righteousness for Christ.

This is a true conjugal love, Psalm 45:10. Hearken O daughter, and consider, and encline thine ear, forget also thine own people, &c. When Christ sees that we have such love to him, that we will part with all for him, then he sees a beauty in us that delights him.

Secondly, He truly loves Jesus Christ, who having received him will rather lose all, than part with him again; who accounts Jesus Christ better than his best things, as he sayes, in Matt. 10:37. He that loves Father or Mother more than me, is not worthy of me, &c. therefore sayes the Spouse, Cant. 8:6. Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm, let me be so united to thee, that I may never be sever'd from thee. It is a very hard lesson, and an irksome duty for the best of men, to part with friends, liberty, peace, life, all these, or either of these sweet mercies; but to part with Christ, nothing can perswade, or enforce the soul that truly loves him; that's a thought

more cruel than the Grave, witness the holy Martyrs, a whole cloud of witnesses; that notable and eminent Galeacius, Marquess of Vico, &c.

Thirdly, He that truly loves Jesus Christ, takes abundance of delight in communion with him. No pleasure like the kisses of his mouth, no sweetness like that of his bosome; all his ways are peace, and his paths pleasantness; Christ makes every condition comfortable, there is no comfort of life, but in that little enjoyment of Christ that the soul hath in his life: 'tis communion with Christ, converse with him, that is all my comfort and pleasure in the world. O how doth the Spouse take care that he be not disturbed, in Cant. 2. I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the Roes and the Hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my Love, till he please. The words are an allusion to one that would not have her Friend disturbed, and speaks to her companions, and charges them by all that is dear and pleasant to them, not to break the rest of her best Beloved, and shews the wonderful delight the soul takes in communion with Jesus Christ, and the special care that it alwayes hath, that no tentation break in, nor corruption break out, to interrupt that sweet communion, or occasion Christs departure, who will not for any profit commit any sin, or cause Jesus to depart from him.

Fourthly, He that truly loves Jesus Christ, having lost the sight of him, is never satisfied, till he come to the re-enjoyment of him, is alwayes at a loss, and is never quiet till he enter into acquaintance and communion with him, as in that of Joseph and Mary, they having lost their Son, went seeking till they found him; So Cant. 3:1,2,3, &c. By night on my bed, I sought him whom my soul loveth, I sought him, but I found him not: I will rise now and go about the City, in the streets, and in the broad ways, &c. I said to the Watchmen, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth? &c. By all which is expressed the sedulous care and industry of a living soul seeking after Christ.

First, By night in her bed. Jesus Christ hath her best thoughts; in her closet and private duties of Prayer, serious Meditations, spiritual Ejaculations, and secret self-Examinations: in all these the soul enquires: As one that loves the world, by night his meditation is of the world; so the man of pleasures and honours is pursuing his lusts in the night season; the wicked man is contriving mischief upon his bed: so the soul that loves Christ, his are still at work after Christ.

Secondly, I will rise now and go about the City, &c. (i.e.) I will betake myself to all publick Ordinances, and shew more zeal and life in my duties, and in these I will make enquiry.

Thirdly, I asked the Watchmen, the Ministers of the Gospel, which are, or should be as faithful watchmen, that watch for our Souls, and be able to speak a word in season, &c. So nothing will satisfie the Soul that truly loves Christ, without him; and no means shall be neglected till she enjoy him.

Secondly, why must he be thus beloved?

First, because he is lovely, altogether lovely.

First, Lovely in his Life, observing all the will of God, there was a wonderful beauty upon him, if we behold and can understand, that hidden glory of an untainted Holiness, and exact conformity to the will of God.

Secondly, Lovely in his Death, never more lovely and amiable to the believing sinner, than when he was most despicable in the eyes of rebellious sinners. O then he appears most beautiful and desirable, when he hangs on the Cross, there making our Peace, procuring our pardon, obtaining life and glory for us, by that shameful death.

Thirdly, Lovely in all his Graces, each Grace a matchless Jewel; Rocks of Diamonds, Mountains of Pearl, not worthy to be mentioned with the least of his excellencies. If he put a little of this Grace upon any Soul, though he be never so vile, cloathed with corruption; as in

Ezek. 16. from the 9 to the 16 Verse. Yet he may be made beautiful by his comeliness.

Fourthly, Lovely in all his Ordinances, in which the more immediate sight the Soul hath of him, the more he is taken with his Beauty; No wonder he is called in Hag. 2:7. The desire of all Nations.

Secondly, Because of his deserving love; We love him, because he first loved us.

Consider in his love, these four particulars.

First, He laid down his life for us, such a love will deserve love, and life too; John 15:13. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Secondly, He lives now in Heaven for us, Heb. 7:25. He ever liveth to make intercession for us. He is there minding our necessities, agitating our affairs; by his sitting there, we have Liberty of coming thither; his sitting there in glory, we have our standing here in grace.

Thirdly, he accounts that as done to himself, that is done to them that are his, Zech. 2:8. He that toucheth you, toucheth the Apple of his eye, and Matt. 10:40,41,42. &c. He that receiveth you, receiveth me: and so he said to Saul, Acts 9:4. Why persecutest thou me? when he was with commission from the High Priest, dragging the poor Professors of Jesus Christ to the prison.

Fourthly, He longs to have us with him, John 17:24. Father I will that where I am, there they may be also, to behold my glory. He is not satisfied without their Company: and is always imparting his most secret counsels to them, John 15:16. Henceforth I call you not Servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doth; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.

Thirdly, because otherwise we shall not regard his words which is intimated in the Text, If we love him, we shall keep his words; but if we love him not, we will not keep his words; It is want of Love to Christ, that is the cause of the abounding of every sin; for if we did love him, we should keep his commands, which is the second particular.

Secondly, what it is to keep the words of Christ?

First, there is a Natural and Mental keeping of the words of Christ: and so we must keep them, that is, Remember his Words, his Promises, Counsels and Appointments.

The Memory is man's storehouse, or cabinet, that should be kept Sacred for the truths of Christ; so the Disciples kept the word of Christ, when they remembered his sayings; and David, Psalm 119:93. I will never forget thy precepts, for by them thou hast quickened me, (i.e.) I will keep thy precepts; for what we forget we lose, and what we remember, we keep. And thus, as Friends take pleasure to look sometimes on the love-tokens of their absent friends; So may we have singular comfort and refreshment, to see the heart of Christ in the counsels, promises, and appointments left with us.

Secondly, there is an Evangelical and Practical keeping of the words of Christ. When we do believe promises, and obey commands; Promises not believed, and precepts not obeyed, are as water spilt on the earth besides the Vessel that should receive it, Heb. 4:2. but when they are believed, they be as liquor put into the Vessel for its proper use. Hence saith Christ, Luke 11:28. Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it. Then we keep the words of Christ, when we believe his promises, observe his precepts in all our conversation, and walk by his appointments and institutions in all our duties.

Thirdly, why? it is their Property and Duty that love Jesus Christ, to keep his words.

First, Because true love is comprehensive: He that loves Christ truly, loves also all that is his; He that loves him that begat, loves him also that is begotten: The nearer any thing is to Christ, the better it is beloved, and then we love the Word, when we keep it as a special pledge of his love; To have his Word, and a heart to keep it, is a double blessing: and indeed, such a gift is the Word of Christ, as wordy to be loved for itself, and kept for the Givers sake.

Secondly, because true love is Operative, It is the principle of Gospel-obedience, 2 Cor. 5:14. The love of Christ constraineth us. Where there is the disposition of a Son, there will be obedience to the Fathers commands so where there is spiritual love to Christ, it will set the Soul on work, and quicken it to keep the words of Christ. As is said of Faith, Shew me thy Faith by thy Works: So, shew thy love to Christ by thy works; as Faith without works is dead, so is love without obedience.

Thirdly, because keeping the words of Christ gives the clearest and surest testimony of the truth of our love to Jesus Christ. Probatio dilectio | nis est exhibitio operis, Obedience is the most lively testification of love, as Christ said to Peter, lovest thou me, &c. shew it in this, in doing thy duty, Feed my sheep. So Christ tells us in the Text, Where the fire of love is in the breast, there the flames of duty and service is in the hand, Joh. 15:14. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. In the 1 Joh. 5:3. In this is the love of God, that we keep his Commandements.

Use 1. For Exhortation.

First, to a mental keeping of the words of Christ, according to that word, Heb. 2:1. We ought therefore to give the more diligent heed to the things which we have received, lest at any time we let them slip. And that we may not forget, but keep in our memories the words of Christ;

First, consider, that all the promises and counsels which Jesus Christ hath made known to us, are not only for the present, but for the future use, Isa. 22:23. Hearken and hear for the time to come. We should hear as if we were to hear no more. The Cordial which hath sometime revived us, must not be lain aside, lest for want of it another time, we faint quite away. The reason why they were ready to faint under afflictions, Heb. 12:5. was, because they had forgotten the Exhortation, which speaketh to them as to Sons. For this cause Jesus Christ often bids his Disciples remember the word he had spoken to them, and knowing their frailty, promises his Spirit, Joh. 14:26. and that (says he), shall bring to his remembrance.

Secondly, consider, not to remember the words of Christ, is a sad sign of our dis-esteem of Jesus Christ. We usually remember Precepts,

Counsels, and Sayings, according to the authority which the person hath with us, from whence they come. It is a very great dishonour to Jesus Christ, when he shall cast his words behind our backs. Did we honour Jesus Christ as our King, Lord, and Law-giver, we should be more careful to remember what he hath spoken to us. We often blame our Heads, as if the fault lay only there, that we do not remember the words of Christ, when indeed the fault lies most in the Hearts, that we have not more and esteem of Christ there.

Thirdly, the time will come, when we shall dearly repent every Truth forgotten, that we did not endeavour to seal instruction upon our Hearts.

First, when God shall with-hold instruction from us, because we have refused it, the time may come, when, as Amos 8:12. Men shall run to and fro, and seek the Word of the Lord and shall not find it; and then we shall see the worth of the Word, that now we prize not.

Secondly, When God shall call us to account for all Sermons, and Instructions we have received, as he will certainly do; though we

forget, yet he will remember, and he will ask how we have kept, and improved the Word he hath spoken to us.

To help us in keeping, or remembering the words of Christ,

First, let our hearts be affected with the worth and excellency of the Word, that it is more precious than Gold or Silver: and then we shall keep it as choyce Treasure. That which a man prizeth, he will keep in safe custody, and have often in his eyes, as David sayes of the Word, Psalm 119:97. O how I love thy Law, it is my meditation all the day long. If a man account the Word as his Treasure, he will not forget it, as Jer. 2:32. Can a Maid forget her Ornaments, or a Bride her Attires? This they forget not. Yet because we account the Word as excellent and necessary as these, therefore it follows, yet my people have forgotten me dayes without number.

Secondly, apply every word of Christ to your own Soul: though men will not keep what is anothers, yet usually they keep what is their own; while men carve away the Word to others, as if it concern'd not them, it is no marvel if they keep it not: but if we accounted every word as spoken to us, and our portion, we should hear and keep it. Men remember the news which concerns themselves. We should hear Christ speaking, as Job 5:27. Hear thou this, know it for thy good.

Thirdly, meditate often upon what you have received, as Mary pondered the sayings which she heard, in her heart. The way to keep anything safe, is to have a constant eye upon it. Meditation is the Souls serious retiring into itself, to take a view of all that of God that is laid up within itself.

Fourthly, hasten to do all that you have heard and learned, Psalm 119:16. It is said by David, I made haste, and prolonged not the time to keep his Commandements. A man will not easily forget his Trade; for if we daily obey commands, and believe promises, we cannot

easily forget the commands and promises given to us: which last direction leads me to the second Exhortation.

Secondly, it may exhort us to keep the words of Christ with an Evangelical and Practical keeping. Keep the Word as a man keeps his Rule; or the Souldier keeps his Weapon; let not the Word depart from thee, and do not thou depart from it, by forsaking the appointments and commands of Christ.

First, Consider, that if we do not keep the words of Christ, by obeying, and a suitable walking, we do but in vain pretend love to Jesus Christ, as they that had no more of Christ, but to call him Lord, (Matt. 7:21.) Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, &c. So, not everyone that sayes he loves me, but he that doth my Word, he is my friend.

Secondly, consider, what a sin it is to pretend love to Christ, and not so truly to love Him, as to keep his Words; 'tis Hypocrisie, they be Christs false friends: an open enemy is less dangerous than they, Ezek. 33:31. They hear my words, but they will not do them, their heart goes after covetousness: They be false to themselves, and delude their own souls with a bare profession and hearing, Jam. 1:22. Be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own souls.

Thirdly, consider, what judgment they incurr, and who can tell how great it is? 'Tis called a beating with many stripes, when the least stripe from that hand can break the loyns, Luke 12:47. He that knoweth his Masters will and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes.

Fourthly, consider, this is the clearest evidence of our interest in Christ, of his love to us, that we keep his Commandements. By this we know that we love him as our Christ, when we do not only love him as a Jesus, a Saviour, but obey him as a Lord, and follow his

Law. When God shall write his Law in our hearts, is not this an evidence that Christ is ours?

Fifthly, Great and many are the encouragements which he hath promised to them that keep his words. There be many blessings in the Word, but they only have the blessings for theirs, who keep his Word, James 1:15. Whoso looketh into the perfect Law of Liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the Word, this man shall be blessed in his deed; he shall ask what ye will and have it, Job. 15:7. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you.

That we may do the words of Christ,

First, let it be the aim and intention of our Souls, when we come to hear, to turn hearing into doing. Say as Paul did, Acts 9:6. Lord what wilt thou have me to do? and Cornelius, Acts 10:33. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.

Secondly, beg of God to give you such a heart, that you may not only say, as the people in a good humour once to Moses, all that thou shalt speak unto us, that will we observe and do; but find your hearts such as in Deut. 5:29. O that there were such an heart in them that they would fear me, and keep my Commandements always, &c. it is he by whom the Word is made (as James hath it), A fruit-bearing word. Begin all your hearing with prayers, and conclude them with prayers, because 'tis of the greatest concernment.

Use of Comfort.

First, if we keep this Word, this Word will keep us. It will keep us in the worst of times, yea at all times, Prov. 6:22. When thou goest, it shall lead thee, when thou sleepest it shall keep thee, and when thou awakest it shall talk with thee. If thou keep his Commands, his Commands will keep you; if you keep his Promises, his Promises will bring you to Glory.

Secondly, if we keep his Word, we shall not want present comforts. The present gratuities which we have from Christ, should be enough to encourage us, if there were no future reward, Psalm 19. In keeping them there is great reward.

Thirdly, Jesus Christ promised a blessedness to such persons; they shall be a blessed people, Rev. 1:3. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this Prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; and so in Luke 11:28. Blessed are they, &c. and with the best of blessings doth he crown them in the Text, My Father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him; which is the second Observation.

God and Christ will make their abode with them that keep his Word.

In which Observation, we shall take notice of these three particulars:

First, How God and Christ do make their abode with them that keep his Words.

Secondly, Why God and Christ will make their abode with such.

Thirdly, what an excellent blessing it is to have God and Christ abiding with us.

First, How God and Christ do make their abode with them that keep his Words, in which these three particulars must be shewn.

1. How God abides with his People.
2. How Jesus Christ abides with them.
3. How both God and Christ will make their abode with them that keep his Word.

First, How God, the first Person in the Trinity, is said to make his abode with them that keep his Word.

And this will be two wayes seen.

First, it is not here to be understood of his common or general presense, as he is the infinite God, and being Omni-present, fills Heaven and Earth: for so he abides with all the works of his hands; yea, so he is with them that fear him not.

Secondly, it is here properly understood of Gods abode by way of special presense, as he is a gracious Father: therefore Jesus Christ doth first express the Fathers love, and then his abode, as the product and fruit of his love, My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, &c. He will come and abide with his, as a God in Covenant with them, therefore hath he put it into a promise, in 2 Cor. 6:16. I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my People.

Secondly, How Jesus Christ will make his abode with them that keep his Word (which will be shewn also, First Negatively, Secondly Affirmatively).

1. Negatively: It is not to be understood of a carnal or corporal presense of Christ, (as Papists imagine) as if the flesh of Christ could be in all places, whom the Heavens must contain till the time of the restitution of all things: for so sayes the Apostle, 2 Cor. 5:16. acknowledging, if he had known Christ after the flesh, yet so he knows him no more.

2. Affirmatively: He makes abode with his people after a spiritual manner; God the Father makes his abode with his Servants, as a Father to them; Jesus Christ abides with them, as the Head of his Church, as it is in Eph. 5:25. He is the Head of the Church, and the Saviour of his Body. God abides with us in Christ, Jesus Christ abides with us by his Spirit.

A learned Author shews four wayes of Christs abode with Believers.

1. Politice, ut Rex in Regno, As a King in his Kingdom; and so he gives Laws, as the only Head and King of his Church; protects them, and orders all their affairs.

2. Oeconomice, ut pater in Domo, As a Father in his House, and so he takes care, and makes provision for his people, as a Father for his Family.

3. Ethice, ut Ratio in Howine, As Reason in a Man, which is the light that directs man in all his actions: Jesus Christ directs and leads his people.

4. Physice, ut Anima in Corpore, As the Soul in the Body, which animates and acts the whole man, without which the Body is a dead and liveless Trunk; so Jesus Christ doth quicken our Souls, by whom we have spiritual life.

And, that he is the Head of the Church, and thus abides with them,

First, consider he hath all grace, and life in him: John 5:26. As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; Therefore the Psalmist says, Psalm 36:9. With the is thee Well of life, and in thy light shall we see light.

Secondly, from him is all grace and life conveyed out unto us, Joh. 1:16. Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. Yea, whatsoever we receive from the Spirit of God, we have from him originally, as in Joh. 16:15. For he shall take of mine and shew it unto you.

Thirdly, how God and Christ are both said to make their abode with them that keep his Word. And this I shall shew to be, three wayes.

First, by their special providence and inspection with them, and so we may see them in several Scriptures abiding with them, as in Zech. 1:8, 9, 10. verses. There's Jesus Christ among the Myrtle trees, which represent the Church. And in Rev. 1:13. He is there in the midst of his

golden Candle-sticks. And David tells us of his experience of Gods presense with him, Psalm 73:23. I am continually with thee, thou upholdest me with thy right hand. And the Apostle Paul, 2 Tim. 4:7. The Lord stood by me. Indeed the eyes of the Lord are upon the Righteous, and he hath said, he will not leave them.

Secondly, they make their abode with them in the Gospel, and Gospel

Ordinances: where these be continued in their power and purity, there the Tabernacle of God is among men; and when these are taken away, Ichabod, the Glory is departed: We may say, God hath forsaken us. As the Ark was a type and token of Gods special presense with the Jews, so the Gospel and Gospel-Ordinances, are a signal token of Gods abode with us; for in these we may see him, in these we may enjoy him, by these we may be made like to him, as in 2 Cor. 31:18. But we all with open face behold, as in a Glass, the glory of God, and are changed into the same Image, from Glory to Glory, even as h• the Spirit of the Lord.

Thirdly, they make their abode with them in the Spirit, which proceeds from the Father and the Son; So they may both be said truly to abide with us, while we have the Spirit, the Comforter which proceeds from the Father and the Son as a pledge of their love, Joh. 15:20. When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father: I will send him, says Christ, even the spirit of truth, which < in non-Latin alphabet > , which proceedeth from the Father: There is an < in non-Latin alphabet > , a Procession of the Holy Ghost, from the Father and the Son to the People that keep his Word; and thus Believers are said to hold fellowship with the Father and the Son, in the first Epist. of John 23. It is by the Spirit we are drawn; being drawn we come; being come, we are enabled to walk with God in Christ: It is the Spirit that doth for all us. As in the Echo, the Aire being moved by the voyce, returns the same sound by its own motion: So in all our Communion with God and Christ; the Soul being moved by the Spirit, returns answer by vertue of the Spirits

motion in us: Come, says the Spirit; I come says the Soul, being taught by the same Spirit.

All the works wrought on the Souls of men in order to Salvation, are wrought of God and Christ in us, but by the Spirit; As in these three special particulars.

First, by the Spirit they instruct and teach; The Spirit is an enlightening Spirit, a Spirit of Judgment and of Burning. The Spirit reveals the counsels of God, the great Mysteries of the Kingdom; leads into all Truth, makes men wise to Salvation.

Secondly, by this Spirit they quicken and comfort the Souls of men, Rom. 5:5. It is by the Spirit that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts. Our cold and frozen spirits are warmed and made fit for action, and by this Spirit we are awakened: Hence the Church prays for the breathings of this Spirit, Cant. 4:16. Awake O North-wind, and come thou South, blow upon my Garden, that the Spices of flow out.

Thirdly, by his Spirit they do strengthen, and establish the hearts of men in the ways of Holiness, thus they are made strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might: strong to resist temptations; strong to suppress corruptions; strong to perform duties: by this Spirit they are carried through all difficulties; by this Spirit their infirmities are healed; they are made to persevere, and kept stedfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, and sealed up to the day of Redemption.

Thus God and Christ do make their abode with them that keep the Words of Christ, till they come to make an everlasting abode with them in Heaven.

And according to the workings of this Spirit more or less in the hearts of men, God is said to be present, or absent from his people.

Secondly, the Reasons why God and Christ will make their abode with them that keep his words.

First, because of their special love to, and care of them that keep his words. Indeed all the care of God is concerning his people that he hath in the world: therefore in the second Commandment, he is said to shew mercy to thousands of them that fear him, and keep his Commandments, that do not cast his words behind their backs, and forsaking his Appointments, follow their own Inventions: So that if we faithfully keep his Word, he will abide with us in our work: And this is the great Reason in the Text, My Father will love him; not but that he loves his Elect from Eternity, but he will manifest his Love to them, and therefore he will make his abode with them, as the people of his Love; for in Deut. 32:9. The Lords Portion is his People, and Jacob is the Lot of his Inheritance. And in Mal. 3:17. they are called his Jewels, and men will abide with their Treasure.

Secondly, because of the near Relation that is between God and Christ, and them that keep his Word. That is a very full place of Scripture for this purpose, Matt. 12:50. Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in Heaven, the same is my Brother, and Sister, and Mother. What nearer Relation can there be than these? So near are they to Jesus Christ, that keep his Word, observe his Will, and be true and faithful to his Appointments; and sure, such near Relations will desire Cohabitations on both sides.

First, God and Christ are said to stand Related in a Paternal Relation.

Secondly, they are said to stand Related in a Conjugal Relation.

First, God and Christ stand in a Paternal Relation to his People.

First, God is their Father, and they are his Sons and Daughters; And this the Church doth acknowledge in Isa. 63:16. Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not, thou O Lord art our Father, &c. And with this the Lord comforted mourning Zion, Isai. 49:14, 15. But Zion said,

The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me: But God says, can a Woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the Sons of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet I will not forget thee: Behold, I have graven thee on the palms of my hands, &c. My abode is with thee.

Secondly, Jesus Christ is their Father, Isai. 9:6. The everlasting Father. Therefore he promiseth his Disciples in this 14 John 18. I will not leave you, Orphans, or Fatherless children. He is the most affectionate tenderhearted Father: None so good, none such a Father as he.

Secondly, God and Christ stand related to them that keep his Word in a Conjugal relation; and God hath laid a special command of cohabitation upon persons in this relation, The man must dwell with his own Wife.

First, God is related as a Husband, and will not God dwell with his People, when he hath espoused to himself? I will betroth thee unto me forever (Hosea 2:19.) Yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness and judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies; I have even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness. And in Isai. 54:5, 6. For thy Maker is thy Husband, &c. For the Lord hath called thee, as a Woman forsaken, &c.

Secondly, Jesus Christ is the Husband of his People, as we see in the whole Book of Canticles. And so in Ephes. 5. from the 29. Verse to the end of the Chapter. Now where shall God and Christ make their abode, but with their espoused Ones? Doth Jesus Christ delight to lodge anywhere more than with the Wife of the bosome?

Thirdly, because of Gods faithful Covenant, he will make his abode with them that keep his Word. If we keep the word of his Promise, he will keep the word of his Promise; Revel. 3:10. Because thou hast kept the word of my Promise, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come on all the world, to try them that dwell

upon the earth. It is called a word of patience, because it teacheth Patience, and especially because it requireth it in all them that will observe it. And this is Gods Covenant. Now, what is the Covenant? Jer. 32:40. And I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me; and such a sure and infallible promise of abode can never be violated by a God, keeping Covenant; God may hide himself for a moment, turn away in a little wrath from his people (Isa. 54:8. &c.) but with great mercy will he gather them, and shew them everlasting kindness; Yea, his promise shall be as thē waters of Noah: that, as the waters of the great Deluge shall never cover the World anymore; so, he will never forsake his people utterly. It shall be more possible for the mountains to depart, and the hills to be removed, than that he should finally depart from His. The frame of the World may be disordered, but the frame of Gods heart towards his people, can never be changed. When the men of the World think God hath forsaken them, he is near to them, and cannot cast off his people; He may sometimes give them up for their sins into the Enemies hands, but cannot give them away: this gave the Church that confidence in Mich. 7:8. Rejoyce not against me, O my Enemy, when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me. And this did bear the head of the New Testament-Saints above water, 2 Cor. 4:8, 9. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted; but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. And whence is it, that Distress doth not follow our Troubles? Despair our Perplexities? Desention our Persecutions? Destruction our sad Dejections? Sure it is, because God is faithful, always with us, and will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear, &c.

Thirdly, what a special blessing it is, to a person or people, to have God and Christ to make their abode with them.

The excellency and desireableness of this abode of God and Christ with Believers, may be seen in these three particulars.

First, it is better than all outward mercies, and earthly blessings.

Secondly, this will more than supply the want or absence of all other comforts.

Thirdly, all our happiness doth lie in this, Gods presence with us.

First, the abode of God and Christ with a soul, is better than all outward mercies, or earthly blessings whatsoever. God was wont to tell his people heretofore, as in Deut. 28. That if they would keep his commandments, they shall be blessed in their basket, and in their store; that he would give them peace, the fat heritage of Jacob, and to ride upon the high places; all goodly mercies: But now he doth encourage them by a blessing of far greater worth, I will love you, I will make my abode with you. It is so high and transcendent a favour, that Moses preferred it before the goodly Land of Promise, Canaan, the Land flowing with milk and honey, as appears by that passage in Exod. 33:15. If thy presence goes not with me, carry us not up hence. Though Canaan be never so desirable a good Land, yet rather let me abide in this vast howling Wilderness with God, than go without thy presence thither. A wilderness condition with God in the Tent, is better than all pleasures and honours without God in the Palace. Hence David in the midst of all his royal pomp and greatness, desired this, as the complement and perfection of all, Psalm 101:1, 2. O when wilt thou come unto me?

Consider these two Particulars:

First, that there is no beauty nor desirableness in the fairest outward prosperity, if God and Christ do not make their abode with us. If we have all the World, and cannot see the abode of God and Christ on our Tabernacle, in their special Providence, in Soul-refreshing Ordinances, or by the comforting Spirit; We may look on all, and say as Hiram did of the Cities Solomon gave him, they be Cabul, Dirty things. If we cannot find God and Christ thus with us, in the midst of our glory, The glory is departed.

Secondly, Consider, there is no misery, nor unhappiness in the worst afflictions, if God and Christ be there; in the Furnace there is no Death, in Captivity no Darkness, in Prison no Sadness, in Death no Hell. Jesus Christ tells us, he will not leave us comfortless; He never told us, we should not meet with tribulations, but sayes, In the world we shall have tribulation; and as surely, that in him we shall have consolation. His people may be in the World friendless, harbourless, pennyless, but he assures them, they shall never be comfortless.

Again: This abode of God and Christ with his people, will more than supply the want or absense of all other things. Jesus Christ, when he would throughly encourage his Disciples against all the hardships, and discouraging fears they might meet withal after his departure, gives them this one precious Cordial or Catholicon, in Matt. 28:20. Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the World: When you are cast out of the Synagogues, had before Magistrates and Rulers for my Names sake, scourged, hated, imprisoned: for all these things shall they do unto you; let this comfort you; Lu, I am with you alway, to the end of the world,

Indeed: This abode of God and Christ with his people, is everything to the Soul; which we may see in these three particulars:

First, their Presense is a Sanctuary, and sure Hiding-place.

Secondly, it is a sure Light and Guide to them.

Thirdly, it is a Store-house and Treasure of all Provisions.

First, the abode or presense of God and Christ, is instead of a Sanctuary, or sure Hiding place; as Psalm 84:11. For the Lord God is a Sun and Shield, &c. and in Isa. 8:13. says the Prophet, Sanctifie the Lord God of Hosts, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread, and he shall be for a Sanctuary: Do you set God before you, and he will set himself by you; and where the great God goes, there goes a Guard of Angels. Psalm 34:7. His wings be a Covert, and his hand a Canopy, with which he hides from the Storm, and from Rain.

And that he is a mighty Saviour;

First, consider his Omnipotency; He can do whatever pleaseth him; He can make the worm Jacob to thresh Mountains, and the Mountains to become a plain before Zerubbabel, Zech. 4:7. All the Nations of the Earth are but as the drop of the Bucket, or dust of the Balance, compared with him; and all hearts are in his hands. Therefore, says the Prophet, in Isa. 26:4. Trust in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength, or, the Rock of ages. He is no broken Reed, but that strength in which we may confide: As David says, Psalm 46:1,2,3. Si fractus illabatur Orbis, If the world be dissolved, God is our refuge and strength, &c. therefore we will not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the Sea, &c.

Secondly, consider his Immutability; We have standing comfort in the unchangeableness of this God, Mal. 3:6. I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. And for this we have the experience of David, Psalm 9:10. They that know thy Name, will put their trust in thee, for thou (Lord) hast not forsaken them that seek thee: and the Churches experience, Isa. 63:9. He bears them, and he carried them all the days of old. This great unchangeable Saviour saves his people these four ways.

First, he will save and preserve them from evils, and will be a Chamber of safety, when the indignation is abroad, to hide from the storm; Ezek. 11:6. Yet will I be to them as a little Sanctuary in the countries where they shall come. I will be with thee, is God's great Promise, and his People's Security; it was Joshua's Guard, and Jeremab's Brazen-Wall.

Secondly, he will save his people in afflictions, as he did the three Children in the burning Furnace. Thus he delivers in six troubles, and also in seven, as 'tis promised in Isa. 43:2, 3. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee. When thou walkest through the fire, thou

shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee; for I am the Lord thy God, the holy One of Israel, thy Saviour. Job's experience is an everlasting proof of this, that when the Lead is consumed, the Gold is preserved in the Furnace.

Thirdly, he will save or deliver out of afflictions, 1 Cor. 10:13. In the midst of all temptations, he will make away for us to escape them. Many are the troubles of the Righteous, but the Lord delivereth them out of all. He is Emmanuel, God with us; Our Redeemer from Hell, and from trouble.

Fourthly, he will save by afflictions, and by the evils they meet withal. Prov. 29:15. The Rod and Reproof give wisdom; and, as David says, it was good for me that I was afflicted. All things shall work for good. 2 Cor. 4:7. These afflictions work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory. The Vessel is usually covered with dirt, by the cleanser's hand, that it may shine with the more brightness; So, by afflictions, God makes us partakers of his Holiness.

Afflictions and outward evils come alike to all, but with much different effect; All men fall into afflictions, Good and Bad: but as the Israelites and the Egyptians went both into the Red-Sea, and the one was drowned, and the other passed through to Canaan; so the Righteous and the Wicked fall under Calamity, the one finks through unbelief, and the other passes through safely, And by Faith and patience comes to inherit the Promise.

Secondly, The Abode or Presense of God and Christ with Believers, instead of a sure Guide and Light unto them; They can never want a Guide, who have God with them. As the Pillar of a Cloud by day, and of Fire by night, was unto Israel in all their March, the same and more is God to his People in all their Pilgrimage.

Consider three things.

First, consider, That Man cannot be without this Guide; The best of man have very great need of the presense of God to lead them, that

they be not misled, and that they don't saint in the way; What can the Sheep do without a Shepherd? Such is God to his, Psalm 23:1. Without God's abode with us, it is as Children without a Father, and none to direct them, and so left to run themselves into mischief. What is the World without a Sun? Jer. 10:23. The way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

Secondly, consider, that it is our great wisdom to commit our way to the guidance of this God and Christ; Every wise man will commit his way to God; and not move a step without him; as Moses in the Conduct of Israel, would not move a foot without God. That was a good Petition, or rather Resolution of David, in Psalm 73:24. That shalt guide me with thy Counsel, and afterwards receive me into Glory; I am resolved be guided by Gods Counsels: and an excellent and imitable practice of Isaac in Gen. 26:24, 25. that where he had met God at Beer-sheba, and where God had blessed him, there he pitched his Tent; so we should move as God leads.

Thirdly, consider, that if God undertakes to guide us we shall not miscarry, he will certainly bring us safe to Heaven. Our feet may be almost gone, but shall not be altogether gone. Psalm 73:2. My feet were almost gone, my steps had well-nigh slipt. So it may be with the choicest of Gods Servants; but in the 23. verse, Nevertheless, I am continually with thee; thou hast holden me by my right hand.

The more dark and dangerous the times be, the more we should desire Gods abode with us; the nearer a night of trouble or of death is to us, the more earnestly beg his stay, as the two Disciples, Luke 24:29. They constrained Christ, saying, Abide with us, for it is towards evening, and the day is far spent.

Thirdly, the abode or presense of God and Christ with his people, is instead of a Treasury and Store-house of all Provisions. Where Jesus Christ is, and where God makes his abode, there is a Spring-head of comforts that cannot be drawn dry, Isa. 33:16. Bread shall be given them, and their waters shall be sure, who have God with them. So

was God to Israel, Deut. 29:5, 6. He fed Israel in the wilderness forty years, their cloaths did not wax old. You have not eaten bread, neither have you drunk wine, or strong drink, that ye might know that I am the Lord your God.

Consider three Particulars here.

First, Consider, God is such a store, that he is alwayes full; He hath an Autarchy in himself, and says to his creatures, as in Psalm 81:10. Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it; Ask what you will, and there it is to be had. There be full treasures of temporal and spiritual good things with them, with whom God and Christ do make their abode. As the Ark of God brought all kind of blessings to the house of Obed-Edom, so when God comes, he brings all things; Deus meus & omnid; My God, and all things. When Jesus Christ came to Zacheus, he tells him, this day is salvation come to thine House; that is, both temporal and spiritual preservations and deliverances; Salvation doth consist in the total absense of all evil, and in the presense and possession of all good.

Secondly, God and Christ have left with us the promises of the Covenant to live upon, till we come to the inheritance of the purchased Possession: These be like the Widows Cruse, that never fails; this, like the Manna, will not be with-held while we be in the Wilderness, till we come into Canaan, to feed on the fruits of that Land, Heb. 13:5. That is a sure Promise, in which we may by faith see present supplies, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee; and in Phil. 4:19. (We may possess in that Promise whatever we want) My God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory, by Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, God hath given us his Son, and Jesus Christ hath given us himself, as an ensuring pledge of all mercies contained in the promises, Rom. 8:32. He that spared not his own Son, but gave him for us, how shall he not with him freely give us all things? He that hath not spared his Son, will not withhold any mercies; He that hath

given us the best of blessings, will not withhold smaller mercies; He doth always tell his people, as in 2 Cor. 12:9. My grace is sufficient for you.

Thirdly, the abode of God and Christ with Believers, is their Heaven upon Earth. All our happiness is in the abode of God and Christ with us.

First, consider it is a wonderful mercy of the great God, that by his common Providence, he is with the works of his hands, which is mans safety; and David admires at this, Psalm 8:4. Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

Secondly, consider it is a mercy, of the greatest worth, and to be forever admired, that God and Christ do not only visit us by common Providence and Inspection, as his creatures, but make their abode with us, as with children and friends. O this is our glory; God doth not come with a short life, for a day, for a few dayes, but makes an everlasting abode. The Church complained when she thought God was departed, because he had been with them, and made so short a stay, Jer. 14:8. Way shouldest thou be as a stranger in the Land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night? &c. But when she remembered the Covenant of eternal abode, she comforts herself, Yet thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us. To be ever with the Lord, is all we can hope for, and it is mans contemplative happiness, to converse in his thoughts with that glory.

First, consider Jesus Christ hath promised this as our great glory, and full reward; I will take you to myself, they shall behold my glory, 1 Joh. 3:3. We shall be like him, we shall see him, as he is.

Secondly, this abode, with God and Christ is the highest Option and aim of all the people of God. This was Paul pressing in that he might attain to the Resurrection of the dead, (i.e.) the state of them that are risen, and with God and Christ; Therefore resolves after a long

debate, with himself, Phil. 1:2:1: To be with Christ is best of all. And David in Psalm 73 at the latter end, professes, He had none in Heaven but God, and there was none upon Earth that he desired in comparison of him.

Use, First, of Lamentation, and laments three sorts of persons.

First, let us lament such as be without God and Christ in the world, all ignorant and ungodly persons; yea, this is the sad case of all the Sons of Adam, ever since he sinned and lost communion with his God; They be brought forth in the world with their backs upon God, and with God's face against them. What was Cain's grief? How was his heart hurried into a world of inconceivable distempers, and distracting thoughts, when he must be turn'd out of Gods presense, from the enjoyment of God in his Ordinances? Gen. 4:14. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day, (says poor Cain) from the face of the earth, (but this is as nothing) and from thy face shall I be hid, (and now where is my comfort and safety?) It shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me, shall slay me. Such persons be as Lambs in a large place, Hos. 4:16. without a keeper in their most plentiful state; What hope have such to escape Hell and Destruction?

Consider these particulars.

First, consider, it is a very sad case, when God and Christ withdraw, or depart but for a moment, 'tis a sad and intolerable moment, as we see in the complaint of Christ, when God withdrew himself from him; My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? and in the example of David, Asaph, and Heman, in Psalm 77. and 88. and the whole Church laments in Jer. 14:8.

Secondly, Consider, if God and Christ do never come to make their abode with us here, we are never like to make our abode with them hereafter; and then it were better we had never been born. Psalm 73:27. They that are far from the shall perish. And this is Hell, to be separated from God and Christ, 2 Thes. 1:8,9. They (i. e. the wicked)

shall he punished with everlasting destruction from the presense of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. It is Heaven wherever God is in his special abode, and that is Hell where he is not present in his mercy and grace.

Second Use of Lamentation.

Let us lament over a worse sort of men and they be such as in Job 21:14. That say to God, depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways; that refuse the Word of Christ, and be weary of God and his Ordinances, and so reject God, as if one house could not hold them both; as in Isa. 30:10, 11. Who say to the Seers, see not; and to the Prophets, prophesie not, &c. Cause the Holy one to cease from before us. They that stop the mouths of them that speak the Word of Christ, or turn away their ears from hearkening to that which is spoken, say in effect, Let God be gone, let Christ depart from us.

First, consider what an ill frame of spirit it is, for men to refuse the presense of God. Was there ever wickedness like this? that the great God should be as an unbidden guest with his own creatures, and have no better entertainment than Christ with the Gaderens, who besought him to depart out of their Coast; yea, which is far worse, rejected, as Christ was by the possessed in the Gospel, Matt. 8:29. What have we to do with thee? Art thou come to torment us before the time?

Secondly, consider it will be a very terrible day when God and Christ depart from such persons: God threatens it as a sore judgment upon Jerusalem, Jerem. 6:8. Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my soul depart from thee: When God departs, in comes all judgments; for it follows in the Text, Lest I make thee desolate: Desolation comes as soon as God is gone; yea, says the Lord, Hos. 9:12. Wo to them when I depart from them: And though he depart from such, by removing his Counsels, Gospel, and Ordinances, He will still be with them in judgment; when he is far from their affections, he will be nigh to

their Consciences; then he will shew his terrour and his wrath; and then they shall finde that as there is not a sweeter promise than this, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee; so not a more terrible judgment than this, I will not love thee, nor abide with thee.

Thirdly, A Use of Lamentation.

Let us lament ourselves, who have had God and Christ making their abode with us for many years in their special Providences, Gospel-Ordinances, &c. Yet have we not improved so glorious a Presense, so rich a mercy; especially we have cause to lament this four-fold neglect.

First, that we have so little acquainted ourselves with God and Christ, so little prized and observed their presense with us, that we have learnt no more of God and Christ, but are yet strangers to them; so that Jesus Christ may say to us, as in John 14:9. Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me Philip? so he may say to us, Have I been so long time with you in my Providences, Ordinances, and by my Spirit, and yet have you not known my Goodness, my Faithfulness, my Name, my Laws and Ordinances? Sure it is with most of us, as with Jacob, Gen. 28:15,16. The Lord was with him, when he was in his Dream; and when he awaked, he said, Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. So God hath been with us, but we have been in a dream, or in a sleep all this while; but when God shall awaken us, we shall say with him, God was in this place, and we knew it not.

Secondly, we may lament ourselves that we have so little conformed to God and Christ. God hath been with us, but we have refused his company, as Ephes. 2:12. And had our conversation as without God, and without Christ in the world: Oh, when God and Christ shall depart from us, it will be a heart breaking to us, and we shall dearly repent the least miscarriages.

Thirdly, we may lament, that we have not lived more upon God and Christ, to trust in them, and depend upon them for Life and Salvation, and made him our Counsellor, Guide and Strength, and lived upon his All-sufficiency; we have not made them our Sanctuary, our Treasury, our Happiness, though they have been with us, in whom are all things. Yet have we lived at so poor a rate, (as to our spiritual comforts) as if we had been under the Hypocrites Curse, Job 20:22. In the fulness of his sufficiency he is in straits: Or guilty of that vanity mentioned in Eccles. 6:2. To have Riches and Honours, &c. and not a heart to use them. To have faith to use them for our comfort, we have even starved ourselves at the fullest Table, and Spring head of plenty.

Fourthly, we may lament ourselves, that we have not taken more pleasure in the enjoyment of God and Christ in the Gospel and Gospel-Ordinances; accounting all Company and delights, solitariness, in comparison of the joy and comfort that is in the abode of God and Christ: especially, when God expects we should rejoyce in him, and hath promised to abide with such, Isa. 64:5. Thou meetest him that rejoyceth, and worketh Righteousness, and remembreth thee in thy wayes.

Two Uses of Exhortation.

1. To get the presense of God and Christ with us.
2. To endeavour to keep God and Christ abiding with us.

The first Use of Exhortation.

Let us be exhorted above all desires, to desire Gods presense; And above all getting, get God and Christ to make their above with you. Oh, with what ardency and heat of desire doth David express himself, Psalm 27:4. One thing have I desired of the Lord, that I will seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his Temple: and so in Psalm 42:1,2. As the Hart pants after the water-brooks, so

panteth my soul after thee, O God; My soul thirsteth for God; when shall I come and appear before God? O when wilt thou come unto me? And in a multitude of such like Pathetick breathings after God.

And that we may the more earnestly desire this mercy, the abode of God and Christ with us: consider three particulars.

First, consider, the presense of God and Christ is the special favour and honor that God bestows only upon his own people. By this was Israel distinguished from all the world, Exod. 33:16. My presense shall go with thee; and in the last verse of the last chapt. of Ezekiel, it is the Church only that is called Jehiah-Shammah, the Lord is there; her Founder, Preserver, and Governor.

Secondly, Consider, that they that have God and Christ with them, dwell continually at the Fountain-head of consolations, as David says, Psalm 23. I shall want nothing, the Lord is my shepherd, my cup runs over: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. This Fountain keeps our cisterns full, our channels run shallow sometimes, but never are they dried up, Hos. 14:5. I will be as the dew unto Israel, he shall grow as the Lilly, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon: they shall grow up as the Lilly, beautiful and fair, and as the Cedar, well rooted and established: He that hath the Sun hath Light; he that hath the Well, must needs have Water; Ille possidet omnia, qui possidet possidentem omnia: He hath all things, who hath him from whom all things come.

Thirdly, consider, that when all comforts leave us, God will not: when friends forsake, and riches profit not in the evil day, God is a present help in time of trouble, and loves to shew himself in dubiis & arduis, in the greatest difficulties, and on the mount of straits. Jesus Christ says truly to us, what Peter said rashly to him, though all forsake thee, yet will not I.

Object. I have found God and Christ gone from me, says the soul, when I have had need of him.

Answ. First, That God and Christ may, and do sometimes hide their faces from their dearest friends.

Secondly, though God and Christ do sometimes withdraw from us, yet every interruption of communion is not a separation: The Sun doth not cease to be, when it ceaseth to shine. Grace may suspend its acting, but doth not lose its being. God will not finally forsake his people.

Thirdly, God hath very many gracious ends, why he sometimes withdraws, and they are always in mercy to his people, Sad providences producing sweet effects.

Directions and helps how to get the presense of God and Christ with us.

First, Repent and humble your selves because of all your sins, that you have at any time rejected the counsels of God, and refused grace and mercy, and neglected opportunities of doing your souls good, and drawing near to God; Repentance and resolution against sin, come like John Baptist, to prepare a way and a place for God and Christ to come to, and make their abode in: Of the Hearts and Houses of impenitent sinners, we may well say, God is not there. The way to have God to turn unto us, is to turn away from sin, as Ephraim, Jer. 31:18,19,20. He bemoaned himself and repented, and God came to him as to his dear Son, and to his pleasant Child.

Secondly, believe in Jesus Christ, and by Faith get an interest in him: It is by Faith only that we get an entertainment to Jesus Christ: It is by Jesus Christ alone, that God and man come together. No man hath seen the Father at any time, but the Son, and he to whom he doth reveal him; and he that hath the Son, hath the Father, Rom. 5:1. Being justified by Faith, we have peace with God.

Thirdly, own Jesus Christ in all his offices, as your King, Priest, and Prophet.

First, as your King, let him have the Sovereignty of your souls, that he may rule over you. If Christ be your King, God will be your Father; God loves to come where Christ hath his Throne.

Secondly, as your Priest, that his Righteousness may give you the advantage of communion with God, without which we cannot come near to him, and he will not come near to us.

Thirdly, as your Prophet, that he may shew you the way; if his Spirit be your Guide, and his Word your Rule, you may be sure his Promises shall be your portion, even this Promise in the Text, They will come to you and make their abode with you, even God and Christ.

Fourthly, seek earnestly after God and Christ, in the use of all appointed means, till you come to see and enjoy their presense with you.

Here shall be shewn these two particulars.

1. Where we may seek God and Christ.
2. How, or after what manner we must seek them.

First, where we must seek after God and Christ.

First, we may finde them in the works of Creation; these will represent God and Christ unto us; the power and wisdom of God and Christ, by whom the World was made; In omni re aspeciabili quaedam ex | tant vestigia Dei: In all the visible Creatures, there be some prints of the invisible God; so that he which lives altogether without God, must needs be without excuse, having God so near him.

Secondly, we may finde them in the Word, 2 Cor. 4:6. The glory of God shines there in the face of Jesus Christ, and to them that are conversant in the Word, God hath promised to reveal himself: Isa. 66:2. To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a

contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word. And the Apostle gives this direction, Rom. 10:6,7. Say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into Heaven, that is to bring Christ down from above: or, who shall descend into the deep, that is to bring up Christ again from the dead. But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that is, the word of faith, which we preach.

Thirdly, we may finde them in Prayer, Jam. 4:8. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you: If you will be strangers to the duty of Prayer, to the Throne of Grace, God will be a stranger to you; he hath promised to draw nigh to them that draw nigh to him: and so in Exod. 20:24. In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.

Fourthly, we may finde them in the communion with the people of God: Where two or three are knit together in my name, there will I be (says Christ) in the midst of them. Therefore Jesus Christ directs us to go up by the soot-steps of the flock, and they enquire wisely, Cam. 6:1. that say to the Church of Christ, whither is thy beloved gone, that we may seek him with thee? And when the two Disciples went to Emmaus, communing of Christ, he came and joyned himself with them.

Secondly, How, or after what manner we must seek God and Christ?

Take these four following Directions:

First, Affect your selves with the worth and excellency of this presense of God and Christ, carry a high esteem of them in your hearts: think with your selves how safely they are immured, as the Prophet said unto his servant, There is more for them, than can be against them: Isa. 33:16. Their place of defence is the munition of rocks, &c. O what sweetnesse and satisfaction have they within, with whom: God and Christ abides! as the Spouse doth express it, Cant. 1:3. Because of the savour of thy Oyntments, thy Name is as Oyntments poured forth, therefore do the Virgins love thee. Thy

Name of Mercy, Wisdome, and Faithfulness, how doth it refresh their hearts, that have the presense of God and Christ? O sweetness and satisfaction beyond expression! and then conclude, *Si tanius quaerentibus, O quantus possidentibus!*

If he be so good to them that seek him, how good is he to them that enjoy him!

Secondly, labour to affect your souls with the great want and need that you have of the presense of God and Christ, while men do think in their hearts they can be well enough without God and Christ, they will never seek after them, but say, as in *Jer. 2:31*. We are Lords, we will come no more unto thee; that is, we have strength enough of our own, we need no more of thy support: and thus David brings in the wicked, priding themselves, in *Psa. 10:4*. The wicked through the pride of his countenance, (as in the Original, through the pride of his nose) will not seek after God. God is not in all his thoughts: when these proud Laodicean spirits will not seek, the poor, hungry, desolate soul, that sees a need of God and Christ, finde them.

Thirdly, quicken your selves to much diligence in seeking. The Prophet complains, No man stirreth up himself to seek the Lord. It is a business of the greatest concernment, and must not be attended with a cold indifferency, but as one set on by a true love, and where that is, *Non qui | escit amor, sed quaerit amatum*; Love will be restless in the pursuit of the thing, or person beloved. See with what heat men seek the world, with much more heat seek God and Christ. We must do as the woman that had lost her groat, she lights a candle, sweeps the house, seeks diligently; so we must set up the light of the Word, and to work with the besom of a serious repentance, and thorow-reformation, and diligently enquire. Thus David with a very vigilant eye, seeks him whom his soul loved, *Psalm 132:4, 5*. I will not give rest to mine eyes, nor slumber to my eye-lids, till I have found out a place for God, &c.

Lastly, resolve with your selves never to give over, till you come to the perfect and full enjoyment of them, as Job said, I will wait all the days of my appointed time: so do you seek all the days of your appointed time; if we would finde God and Christ, we must all seek the days of our lives. They that will finde what they seek, must seek till they finde. As God in the Creation did not rest till he had man, so man should not rest till he hath found God; and as in the Redemption Jesus Christ did never cease seeking, till he found all the lost sheep of the house of Israel; so we should never give over, till we have made God and Christ our own.

This should be the work of our lives, and upon this work I must leave you.

For now I must tell you, that (perhaps) you may not see my face, or hear my voice any more in this place; yet not out of any peevish humor, or disaffection to the present Authority of the Kingdom (I call God and Man to witness this day) it being my own practice and Counsel to you all, to fear GOD and Honour the King; but rather a real dissatisfaction in some particulars imposed, to which (notwithstanding all endeavors to that purpose) my conscience cannot yet be espoused; Wherefore, I hope in this, and in all my abode with you, I may say (without ostentation) with the Apostle in 2 Cor. 1:12. Our rejoycing is this, The testimony of a good Conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, we have had our conversation in the World, especially to you. And as he saith in Acts 20:26, 27. So, I take you to record this day, that I have endeavoured to be pure from the bloud of all men; for I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God, both by my life and Doctrine; because I knew this very well, that (as one says) *Suadet loquentis vita, non oratio*; that the Preachers life, is the most lively Preaching.

I shall only add this (my Friends) that though my Lips be sealed up that I may not speak from God to you, yet I shall not cease to speak to God for you, as ever I have done: And though I cannot have you in my eye, yet I shall lodge you in my heart; and asking nothing of you,

but your Prayers, shall hope to meet you daily at the Throne of Grace, and that at last we may enjoy one another in Heaven.

And because they say, the words of a dying man makes the deepest impression, before I am altogether civilly dead, I shall give you one Exhortation more.

Secondly, let it be your endeavour to keep God and Christ with you, that they may make their abode with you in their hearts and houses, that whatsoever you loose, you may not be undone.

In the General.

First, take heed you do not slight, or abuse his Providences.

Secondly, do not despise or neglect his Ordinances.

Thirdly, be sure you do not grieve his spirit.

Secondly, observe more particularly these ten Directions, which I would leave with you.

That God and Christ may make their constant abode with you;

First, endeavour to please God and Christ, and to walk as the Gospel commands, in all well-pleasing. And for this purpose, Observe these three Rules.

First, entertain God and Christ like themselves. Now they are come to you as Solomon did his Temple, which he had prepared for God; The Heaven of Heavens cannot contain thee, much less this poor Tent; so with the most humble frame of spirit, admire his greatness, and infinite condescension, for he is the King of Glory, as in Psalm 24. And so give him suitable entertainment, for he will dwell with the humble and contrite spirit, If Elizabeth wondred at the visit which Mary gave her, with a Whence is it that the Mother of my Lord is come unto me? then admire that the Lord himself should come, not

only to visit your hearts, but to make such a gracious abode with you. And, as the Centurion said unto Christ in the Gospel, I am not worthy thou shouldst come under my roof. So acknowledge your unworthiness of so rich and unparallel'd a grace, that God and Christ should come in unto you, to abide with you.

Secondly, wait upon God and Christ with all readiness of minde, to observe every intimation of the will of God to you. Stand always ready as Servants wait upon the hand of their Masters, saying in your hearts, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? or, what wilt thou have me to suffer? It is the frame and posture which Christ commends unto his Disciples, Luke 12:35. Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning, to do his will, as it is done in Heaven.

Thirdly, take pleasure and delight in the company and society of God and Christ above all the pleasures in the world. Do nothing without first calling God and Christ into the action. Remember this in these four cases especially.

First, pray God and Christ along with you into all your spiritual duties, that you may be sure to perform them all according to the mind of God. None knows better what will please God than himself; do not enquire so much what others say, but what God appoints; 'tis not what this or that man says, how we must serve God, but what God says himself; as Augustin said to the Manichee in another case, *Nec egote, nec tu me, sed ambo audiamus Apostolum*: So, hear what God and Christ says to us, as to the performance of all our duties: If we will entertain God and Christ, and have their company, we must set before them such savory meat as they like, lest we be like them (Matt. 15:9.) of whom Christ says, in vain do they worship me, &c. and our service be like theirs, of which the Lord said, who hath required these things at your hands? O what was that great evil the people were guilty of, for which there comes that heavy judgment, Psalm 78:60. He forsook the Tabernacle of Shiloh, the Tent which he placed among them. Sure it was some great guilt; in the former ver.

we find it to be their Hypocrisie, Apostacy, and Idolatry; any taint of this kinde, will make the jealous God forsake our solemn meetings.

Secondly, pray God and Christ into all your Civil affairs. The Greeks with God in their entrance upon every work, was a commendable practise. It is reported of Publius Scipio the Roman, that he would always go first to the Capitol, and then to the Senate; so we should begin our Civil employments with spiritual duties: And do as Abrahams servant, when he was to take a Wife for his Master's Son, he took God along with him; and thus to abide with God, is to have God to abide with us. Therefore says the Apostle, 1 Cor. 7:20. Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he is called, and in the 24. Verse, Brethren, let every man wherein he is called therein abide with God, and God will abide with him.

Thirdly, pray God and Christ to your Tables at your eating and drinking, for man doth not live by Bread only. If these be guests at your Tables, you must needs have cheer enough; there's more sweetness in a morsel with them, than in all dainties without them, and then you may be sure also your Tables shall not be a snare unto you. Theophrastus reports of the Heathens, that they did first, and then, they did first Sacrifice, and then Kill, lay on their meat, entertain and eat. And it is the Apostles rule, seeing all things come of God through Christ, That God and Christ should not be unbidden guests: but, as in 1 Cor. 10:31. Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the Glory of God.

Fourthly, pray God and Christ along with you in the morning when you rise, and at evening when you lye down: visit him morning by morning, and evening by evening; this is the way to have a prosperous day, and a safe night: David took this course, Psalm 4:8. I will both lay me down, and take my rest, for thou Lord only makest me dwell in safety; and this gave Jacob such a pleasant dream, Genesis 28. that having God with him, he was all night within view of Heaven.

Secondly, love God and Christ above all, and then God and Christ will not depart from you; for, He shews mercy to thousands of them that love him, and hath made over himself, and heaven, and all, to them that love him. It is reported of Ignatius, that his love was such to God and Christ, that he had the name of Christ, *Cordi ejus insculptum*, graven upon his Heart. It is such a Heart love that he requires; for he is a jealous God, and will have all our love.

If we love anything better;

First, it will steal away our hearts from God: And

Secondly, it will take off the heart of God from us, so that God and Christ will set themselves against us.

Thirdly, if we would have God and Christ to make their constant abode with us, delight we in the society and fellowship of the People of God, with whom they dwell; never be ashamed to converse with them, whom God and Christ do own for theirs. The Apostle's Argument why we should entertain strangers, in *Hebr. 13:2*. (Because thereby some have entertained Angels unawares) is but mean and inconsiderable to this reason, why we should entertain and own the Saints of God: for thereby we are sure, to entertain Christ, as in *Matt. 25:40*. For this cause the Gibeonites made a League with Israel, for we have heard that God is with you. And there is a promise in *Zech. 8:23*. That ten men out of all Languages shall take hold of the skirt of a Jew, saying, we will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you. *Malachy 3:16*. They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkned and heard it, &c. He was with them, and indeed, God dwells in the Tabernacles of the righteous.

Fourthly, if we would have the constant abode of God and Christ with us, let us keep our selves clean from sin, our hearts pure, our consciences undefiled, and, as the Apostle says, void of offence towards God and towards men; very careful not to sin against God, and very circumspect not to sin against man; that this may be our

comfort, that the world must needs say of us, as they did of Daniel, That they could finde nothing against him, save in the Law of his God, as in Daniel 6:5. Whatever others do, beware of sin. Say as Joshua, I and my House will serve the Lord. Watch against sin, chuse any suffering, rather than the least sin.

Consider in that choice two particulars.

First, consider in all your sufferings, God will be with you, but in any of your sins, he will not abide with you; as in the example of Israel, Exod. 32:23. When the Calf was got into the Camp, God forsakes the Host of Israel, When Saul forsook the Lord, the Spirit of the Lord forsook him. That was an excellent saying of Azariah the Sonne of Obed, in 2 Chron. 15:2. And oh that all England could hear it, hear thou me Asa, and all Judah, The Lord is with you, while you be with him; If you seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.

Secondly, consider, 'tis an act of high presumption, reflecting much upon the purity and holiness of God, for men to imagine that God will own and prosper them with his presense while they go on to do wickedly, in their Whoredoms, Drunkenness, Blasphemy, and all manner of Prophaneness, which God can no more own, than disown himself. So they foolishly promise themselves Peace, Deut. 29:19. Though they walk in the imagination of their hearts, and adde drunkenness to thirst: But the Lord will not spare, but his anger and jealousie shall smook against them, till he hath brought them down from their high mount of a sinful and carnal confidence. Therefore the Prophet reproves that wicked People, Micah 3:11. where the Judges, the Priests, and the Prophets were corrupted. Yet they say, is not the Lord among us, none evil can come upon us, Therefore shall Zion be plowed as a Field, &c. as Abner said to Joab, This will prove an evil thing and a bitter in the latter end: as Galen says of Meats, *Quae dulcia sunt, facile in bilem & amaritudinem convertuntur*; Sweet Meats generate choller and corrupt matter; so sin, that is a sweet morsel now, will be shame, death, and hell at last.

Fifthly, with an humble acknowledgment of former barrenness, under Gods gracious presense with you, resolve and endeavour to be more fruitful. God never left his Vineyard, and pull'd up the Hedge, and commanded the rain not to fall upon it, in Isa. 5. till it became barren, or did bear corrupt fruit. The exil'd Confessors in Queen Maries days, confessed that (as Ursin says in the Preface to his Catechism) the cause of their present suffering, was their former barrenness, and unprofitableness under the Gospel. And a sad example of this is Jerusalem, over whom Christ laments: O Jerusalem Jerusalem, thou, &c. if thou hadst known in this thy day, &c. but now they are hid from thine eyes: and when once a People grow up to this heighth, to reject the Gospel, then expect some fearful Judgment. Read the last Chapter of Chronicles, the second Book, and at the 16. Verse, and them you will see, when the wrath of God is like to break out upon a people without remedy.

Sixthly, if you would have the continual abode of God and Christ with you, Let God have all your thoughts, let him be your meditation; this is the way to have the best company when you be alone: David would meditate of him day and night, and professed the meditation of him should be sweet to him.

Here consider two particulars:

First, consider that no place, state or condition, can hinder the soul of this way of secret communion with God and Christ; this priviledge could not be denied to a benighted Jacob, to an imprisoned Jeremy, to an exil'd John in Patmos; by this (says Jerome) Solitudo fit Paradisus, a man may turn a Wilderness into a Paradise; and therefore we read in Cant. 11:12. how the Spouse invites Christ to go with her, as Isaac did into the Fields to meditate, Come let's go into the Fields, and lodge in the Villages.

Secondly, consider in these secret silent visits of the Soul, God and Christ do take abundance of delight; our Night-thoughts, our Field-thoughts, our Closet-thoughts, are very welcome to them; yea, when

we can do no more but think of God, our very thoughts shall be an accepted service, Cant. 2:13. He loveth the Fig-tree that putteth forth her green Figges. The ripe fruit is in the bud: so, holy endeavours in pure breathings and desires, God accepts, when our Infirmary, or the Iniquity of the Times may be such, that we can do no more.

Seventhly, if we will have God and Christ to make their constant abode with us, then let us walk humbly with God. He that beholds the proud afar off, will be nigh to them that humble their Souls under his mighty hand, Isa. 57:15. Thus says the high and lofty One, that inhabits eternity, whose Name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also, that is of an humble and contrite spirit.

God hath two Heavens in which he dwells.

First, his Glory dwells in the high and holy place in Heaven above.

Secondly, his Grace dwells in the humble and lowly spirit. Here will I dwell, says God.

Eighthly, if you would have the constant abode of God and Christ with you, be sure to look to your Hearts, that you walk in your uprightness: be true to the Word of God, be true to your profession. There is not in the world a more lively representation and image of God, than the heart of the upright: therefore God loves so much, when he hath drawn his likeness upon them, to walk with them, therefore David resolves, Psalm 101:2. I will walk in the midst of my house with a perfect heart: O when wilt thou come unto me? This was the comfort of the Apostle, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, he had his conversation in the world; God will be with such, and such shall be with God, Psalm 37:37. Mark the perfect man, behold the upright, the end of that man is peace: And thus God appointed Abraham to walk, that he might be with him a God in Covenant, Gen. 17. Walk before me, be thou perfect, and gives him this encouragement, I am God all-sufficient: God's all-sufficiency being sufficient to keep the soul upright, being rightly improved.

There be two things which usually bias the soul away from God, and makes it warp from its holy principles. First, the Frowns; Secondly, the Flatteries of the world.

Against both which, there is a sufficient remedy in the All-sufficient God.

First, that which often perverts the soul from the truth, is the fear of troubles and wants; If I keep my integrity (says the soul) I shall be undone, I shall lose my estate, embroil myself in many troubles; perhaps a Prison, Exile, or Death comes next. But what force is there in this tentation? if we hear on the other hand God saying, if thou wilt be upright, fear no troubles, no wants, I am a God All-sufficient, as in Job 22:25. to the end of the Chapter, The Almighty shall be thy defence, (then fear not force) Thou shalt have plenty of silver, thou shalt gather gold as dust, and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the Brooks. Then fear no wants.

Secondly, there is another thing in the world that hath a very great influence upon the spirit of a man, to pervert him, and turn him from his integrity; and that is the hopes of preferment, and greatness of the world: But this is but a poor bait, if we look upon the All-sufficiency of God: Doth the world promise thee Riches? God will out-bid the world, and give Eternal riches. Will the world give Pleasures? God will give better; with him is fullness of joy, and pleasures for evermore. Will the world give Gold? God will give Diamonds. Will the world give all its glory? God will give thee the glory of a better world, rather than that shall be a snare unto thee.

Ninthly, pray much, pray continually; God will be in the hearts and houses of his praying people, when he hath a curse in store for Prayerless Families, in Jer. 10:15.

And especially pray for these two things.

First, That God will abide with you and the Kingdom in his Gospel, and pure Ordinances: that you may dwell in Bethel, and not in

Bethaven, a house of vanity and grief. Pray that God would not remove his Candlestick from you, not utterly extinguish the light of the Kingdom.

Secondly, Pray, and I shall pray with you, that God will give you a faithful Pastour after his own heart, not according to your hearts, that he may teach you by his Doctrine and his Life too; a faithful Teacher, to go in and out before you, to shew you the Word of the Lord; one that may be among you, as it was said of Athanasius, that he was Magnes & Adamas.

1. Magnes, as a Load-stone, to draw your souls with a gentle hand and melting heart from your sins Heaven-ward.

2. Adamas, as an Adamant, of an invincible courage and zeal against all sin and prophaneness; one that will not spare sin that he may save your souls.

Pray that God would give you a Star, a Star out of his right hand, not a churlish Orion, that brings a cold, barren, and cloudy Winter, but a benevolent and friendly Pleiades, that there may be many Sons brought in to God, and your souls may finde a continual spring, and that you may be as Trees of his own planting, and may flourish in the Courts of the House of our God, and may bring forth fruit in old age.

Tenthly, and lastly, if you would have the constant abode of God and Christ with you, conform; conform universally and fully to the Gospel of Christ, consent and assent unfeignedly to all the Truths and Doctrines thereof, that you may walk worthy of God, and all that grace which hath been revealed to you; for Christ hath said, if a man keep his Word, the Father will love him, and both Father and Son will come, and make their abode with him. Wherefore I shall conclude this Exhortation with that of the Apostle, Phil. 1:2,7. Only let your conversation be such as becometh the Gospel of Christ, that whether I come and see you, or else be absent from you, I may hear

of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one minde, striving together for the faith of the Gospel.

And to shut up all with that in Acts 20:32.

And now Brethren, I commend you to God and to the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

32. Mr. Sclater's Farewell Sermon

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God; and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him. Little Children, keep your selves from Idols." - 1 John 5:1, 21

This general Doctrine I have already delivered unto you from this Text, which indeed is the marrow and substance of the whole Chapter; That Gospel-believing is a duty, which they that really perform, are highly priviledged by, to their greatest advantage. I have spoken concerning Gospel-believing, and that is a duty, and that they that do really perform it are highly dignified and priviledged by it, as hath been made to appear from the Chapter; that which remains to be done, and shall be, as God enables the work of this morning, is to make improvement of this Doctrine, which is one of the most material and momentous Doctrines that can be preached to us. Gospel-believing it hath most precious priviledges entailed upon it; Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, that Jesus is the Son of God, that Jesus is come in the Flesh; is born of God, knows God, and shall be eternally blessed of God, and with God; surely then the world runs upon a very great mistake. I have hinted something already to that purpose, but I have left the more full discussion and discovery of the matter until now. Why, who is there among the generality of common Professors that is not very pregnant to hold forth this to be their Faith? If so be that it should be put to the Question, Friend, what is your Faith? What belief are you of? Why? not one in a thousand, I think, but will be apt to say, why truly, I will give you this account; There is a Gospel which is preached among us and in the world, and this Gospel doth hold forth this for true Doctrine, that Jesus the Son of Mary, that was born at Bethlehem, is the Christ, is the Messiah which was promised by the Father, and which the world did live in expectation of so long, This Jesus I believe is the Son of God, this Jesus I verily believe is come in the

flesh, and he is come to be the Saviour of the world: This is the Belief, and that which is the common Profession that is made by the generality of people. Why, but will you consider now, this Text, and other Scriptures do speak fully to the purpose; Whosoever doth believe this, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that he is come in the flesh, whosoever believes this, is of God, is born of God. And it doth clearly appear, and may be most convincingly made out, that many thousands that profess their belief concerning these things, yet notwithstanding are not born of God. Why, certainly there must needs be a great fallacy in the business: Gospel-faith and Believing, it is not so common a thing as many take it to be, and therefore if this be Gospel-faith, and that which doth interest persons in such great and precious priviledges, truly it concerns us to look well to it, that we be not mistaken concerning this belief. Now this I would say, there is something in it to be considered with respect to the time wherein Christ appeared visibly to the world, and the after-times wherein the Apostles did hold forth these great Doctrines of the Gospel concerning Christ. And this we are to say, that in such a time as that was, when this was the critical point as it were, the discriminating thing, in such a time for any to make this Profession, and to hold forth this to be their Faith and Belief, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, it was of high signification; and might very well, as to man, beget a comfortable confidence and hope concerning such persons, that certainly they were born of God, as to man, and according to rational Charity it might be very comfortable that such persons as did thus believe, and profess this to be their Faith and Belief, there were some blessed beam upon their Souls; for mark you, it hath been thus in the world, and among the people of it concerning matters of God and Godliness, that there hath been such and such a Truth, that hath been the Critical Truth, as I said; that hath been, as I may so say, the Shibboleth whereby people are distinguished one from another. I allude to that passage in the Book of Judges, concerning the Gileadites; they made a profession of themselves to be such and such, and they were put to it to pronounce Shibboleth; they that could not speak out the word, and clearly pronounce it, they were not judged to be persons that they professed themselves to

be; but they that could do it held their liberty; so such and such a Doctrine is ordered out to be a distinguishing point, upon the account of the desperate opposition that the world makes against it; and upon this account the Priests, and the Rulers, and the rest of the world were desperately bent against Jesus; they called him Jesus, but could not endure him to be called Christ the Son of God; it was an Act and Decree amongst them, That whosoever should confess Jesus to be Christ, should be put out of the Synagogue, should be excommunicated. Now for persons at such time, wherein it was as much as their liberty, it may be their lives were worth, to own that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, for persons now •t such a time to own this Jesus, that was in so mean a condition, to be the Christ, there is very much in it, infinitely more, than for persons now to take up this profession.

Why? because this Doctrine hath obtained in the world, and it is a Doctrine among Papists as well as Protestants; there is no such danger now for persons to be of this belief. But shall I say this, that for all that to believe this really according to the right account, and true genuine interpretation of Gospel-believing, the case is the same with them and with us at this day, setting aside the consideration of times and time; the danger then, and the encouragement now; the Case is the same, Gospel-believing of these truths according to a genuine interpretation of Gospel-believing, it is the same now as then, and then as now: And therefore we must consider and look further.

I would put these few things to your Consciences; You profess this to be your Faith, you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, that he is come in the flesh; these things you profess to believe, & if you do so indeed you are highly privileged people, blessed of God, & shall be to all eternity but do you not mistake, Do you believe this, that Jesus is the Christ? How came you by this belief? What account can you give of it? How were you brought over to this belief? Did you not come to this Faith and belief by common report? You were born to this Doctrine; you look upon it as that which is the benefit you

have by your being born in a Nation, and among a people that profess the Name of Christ, and this hath been instilled into you by Education, and upon this account you take it: Did you ever buy this truth? It is a Truth, that Jesus is the Christ, how came into be yours? Did you ever buy this Truth? Buy it? I say buy it. For the very Truth is, we are never able to make a good Title to any Scripture-Truth, until such time as we can say, we have bought it: How, why, by serious meditation, studying the Scriptures, search | ing into them, seriously pondering and weighing of them, crying mightily to God, that he would manifest them to us, and encountering temptations from without, and from within, being at a point, willing to engage liberty and estate, and life, and all for this Truths sake: Can you say, we have pondered, and are so fully satisfied about it, as that if all the World should come in a way of contradiction, and rise up in opposition to us, and come with fire and sword to beat us out of this Truth, yet we are resolved to stick to it? Can you give such an account of your selves, That you have not taken it up upon a common report, but are able to say, there hath been an inward Revelation made of these things to your Souls, that there hath been a sanctified work of the Spirit upon your understanding, that you come to see into the mystery of these Gospel-Testimonies? Is there an habitual frame of Spirit wrought in you, whereby you are carryed out to close with every Truth of God, and to close with it upon this account, because of a Divine Authority stampt upon it? When we give assent to common Truths, but not with a common spirit, but in the strength of an inward conviction, we assent to it upon the account of an Unction that we have received from the Holy One; and we assent to this and that truth upon the account of a Divine Authority which we see to be stampt upon it, and withall we finde that there are suitable workings of our heart in the loves, and desires, and delights of them, to these Truths (as there will be a kindly working of the heart, where there is a right assent suitable to the Truths assented to;) as if there be a Threatning, the Soul assents to it, and will tremble before God: If a Promise be made, or a Gospel-Revelation, it will be accompanied with a holy rejoycing in God, that ever he should make such a Promise or Revelation; and then there will be a holy resolution of

Spirit, Come what will come, I will never part with this Truth; I have bought the Truth, that was my duty; and having bought it, I will never sell it, that is my duty too; can we give such an account as this? But then withal, let me a little further improve that which I have already spoke from the Chapter.

You say, this is your belief, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of GOD; but can you give an account of those priviledges that are entailed upon this belief? For you must know that the priviledges which belong to such, will serve as evidences that they are such.

Now if you believe, it is your priviledge to be born of God; and this being born of God must be the evidence of this belief. Can you give an account of your being born of God? If you are not born of God, you do not believe, That Jesus is the Christ. Can you give an account of your overcoming the World? Are you such as are enabled to stand out in opposition to the Errours, and Heresies, and corrupt Doctrines and Practises that are in the World? Can you bear up against the lust of the Eye, the lust of the Flesh, and the pride of Life? If you are in slavery to the World, in bondage to the beggarly Rudiments of the world, you are mistaken, if you believe That Jesus is the Christ: For, he that believeth, according to the true interpretation of Gospel-believing, That Jesus is the Christ, doth overcome the World, and by vertue of this belief, he is enabled to get a conquest over the World, and over the Corruptions that are in it through lust.

And then again, you profess to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God: Oh! but are you able to give an account that you have believed into this Jesus, and upon this Jesus? For that is it the Text holds forth: He that believes that Jesus is the Christ, doth believe on Jesus the Christ: Are you by vertue of this believing which you profess, drawn out to a closing with Christ? Do you roll your selves upon him? Own him for Righteousness and Salvation, and are willing to yield your selves up in subjection to him? You believe Jesus to be the Christ; but do you believe on that Jesus whom you profess to be the Christ? Now this being thus laid down as a Foundation, I

would infer thus, and so go on to a farther branch of this Application; Either you do really believe with a Gospel-believing the Truths and Doctrines concerning Christ, or you do not: Why, they that do profess they do, but in truth they do not, there is a clear and manifest contradiction which this profession meets withal, and that upon the accounts I have formerly given, as alas, this profession suffers contradiction generally; generally the Professours of this Faith, That Jesus is Christ, doe clearly make a flat contradiction; and I am very confident that there are thousands, that if they should be put to the trial, Will you stick to this truth? If you do, it shall cost you the losse of your Liberty, and Estates: Nay, your Life shall go for it. Oh! I am very apt to think, that you shall have thousands that will turn their backs upon this Profession, renounce this Profession. Now concerning such, this I would say,

First, That the condition of such persons as are not right in Gospel-believing, is a most mournful and miserable condition; however it may be with them in other respects, yet it is sad to think what a condition they are in: for consider first of all, they that do not perform this great duty of Gospel-believing, according to the truth and reality of it, I will tell you what they do, they do give God the lye, they do, by interpretation, tell God to his face that he is a very Liar; and what higher blaspheming can there be, than to give the lye to the God of Truth! everyone will be apt to bless themselves, and say, Oh far be it from me, God forbid that I should be charged with such a horrid impiety as this! Oh, but Brethren, the very truth is, it is a very common thing by interpretation to give the lye to God: and all that do not believe according to that Gospel-believing that you have heard, do tell God to his face that he is a Liar. How doth that appear? Why take a little help, such I am able to give you; To profess that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, that he came to be the Saviour of the World, is ordered out to be our Righteousness, is sent of God to preach Liberty to captives, to heal diseased souls, and to deliver poor creatures from the bondage of the Devil; these things people generally profess to believe: but mark you now, they never come to Christ, nor never set in with him upon this account, and to this

purpose, O Lord thou art the Jesus, the Anointed of God; I come to thee for life, I am a poor dead creature, I am in a state of unrighteousness, and thou art given to be for righteousness; Lord I flye to thee for it, I am a poor diseased creature; the Plague is set upon my soul, and thou art appointed to heal the Soul of the Plague; I come to thee for healing.

There is not one of thousands that come thus to Christ. Will you now see how the lye is given to God? I profess for my part, saith one, I know no such matter (Jesus is the Christ, and I profess to believe so, and he is appointed of God for such and such things; he is sent to preach liberty to the captives; I know not that there is such bondage. Christ came to save sinners; alas, I know no need of any such salvation by him, he came to heal diseased Souls; I am well enough, what need have I of Christ? What is this but to give the lye to God? He that receives not Christ, makes God a liar; for he doth in effect say, Lord, thou sayest so and so concerning the World, I know nothing of all this, and so the lye is given to God. And is it nothing to give the lye to the great God, the God of Truth? And I tell you, while you profess this Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God, and in the meantime flye not to him, you believe him to be the Son of God, and that all authority is given unto him, and you will not subject to his authority, why you give the lye to God, and is this nothing?

2. Consider the sad condition of such as believe not according to a right Gospel-believing, they are such as are liable to the dreadfulest touches from the Devil that possibly can be: He that believeth is born of God, overcomes the World, and is enabled to keep himself, that the wicked one doth not touch him with a mortiferous touch: But I tell thee, whatever thou art, that are under the power of unbelief, thou are in danger of a dreadful touch from the Prince of Darkness: And if thou livest and diest in a state of unbelief, thou wilt fall under the power of condemnation. I remember what our Saviour speaks, and consider well of it: You stand out in opposition to my Doctrine, but I tell you, Except you believe I am he, you shall dye in your sins; a dreadful word, you shall dye in your sins, and what then? be damned

eternally: this is the condition of all such as are in a state of unbelief: But then on the other hand, in case we be able to give a good account of our believing that Jesus is Christ, the Son of God, and of our believing on him concerning whom these Testimonies are given. Oh what cause have all such to rejoyce in their condition, the condition of such persons is happy beyond all expression and comprehension, that have owned these Truths, owned that Jesus of whom these faithful testimonies are given.

Now all the Chapter, according to the account I have given you, comes in to the purpose of comforting and rejoycing the hearts of such persons. Here is your comfort now, really believing according to a right interpretation of Gospel-believing, this is your priviledge, you are the persons that are born from above, you are the persons that shall be enabled to overcome the world, to bear up against all opposition that Men and Devils can make against you; you are the persons that have the witness within you, and you shall be able to bear up against all the contradictions of sinners; you are the persons that have Christ, and have eternal life by him: you shall have it, nay, you have it already; He that believeth on the Son of God, hath eternal life; he hath it in the beginnings of it, and shall have it in the compleat state of it, being brought over to Gospel-believing, you may come with boldness to God in a way of Prayer, with holy confidence, that whatever else you ask believing, you shall have a good account of it; God doth not neglect any believing Prayer of a believing Soul. And all the priviledges of the Gospel are entailed upon you, and you are entitled unto them, and you shall have the benefit of them while you live, and when you dye, unto all eternity; well may it be said of such a person, Blessed is he and she that hath believed with a Gospel-believing, Gospel-Truths, and Testimonies concerning Christ, and on Christ, on whom those Testimonies are given, for there shall be a full and perfect accomplishment of whatever God hath spoken with his mouth concerning such.

And then lastly, if the Grace of God hath brought us over to a closing with Christ, of whom these Truths and Testimonies are given; why

the last branch of the explication is but this, that you would but justifie your believing, and labour to manifest the reality of your believing, according to the Gospel, by a suitable walking; this is that that shall be the closing up of this application.

Oh Brethren, let us consider well, our Saviour tells us in Matt. 11. Wisdom is justified of her Children: Why, if ever we mean to approve ourselves to be Wisdoms Children, our care must be for to give in our Justification of Wisdoms sayings, and for to carry it in a congruousness, and suitableness unto that Gospel-believing which we profess to be by grace brought over to. Why, but what is that you will say? why, consider the Text, and see what remains of the Chapter. I shall make it out, give it out to you in this way.

Why first of all, this one special duty that lies upon you, that you would study your mercy, and know what God hath been to you, and done for you, and how highly you are dignified, and not be always in a fluctuating state, and upon the questioning and disputing point, but to come to some well-grounded confidence, that you may be able to say, we know that this and that is our condition, and this and that is our dignified priviledge, that we are planted under.

Do but mark how the point in hand doth charge this upon us, in the thirteenth Verse of this Chapter, these things have I writ to you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life. Here is your duty according to what the Text itself doth charge upon you; if you be such as by grace are brought over to a Gospel-believing, the Apostle John that did write this Epistle, and I from it, preach unto you, in the Name of the Lord, and by authority from him, that this is your duty, to know that you are persons that have eternal life, that you are such as Christ by his Bloud hath made a purchase of eternal life for; that he hath by his Bloud once for all entred into the holy place, that is not made with hands, that he may prepare for you, and that you might have the possession of those blessed Mansions, that he hath made preparation of

Eternal life it is yours, and you may be bold to claim it, and you are bound to hope and rejoyce in the expectation of the full enjoyment of it, and not to be always upon the question, and disputing point, but to go on with a holy confidence towards God, according to what the Apostle expresses, 1 Cor. 2. We know that when this earthly Tabernacle shall be dissolved, we shall have a House not made with hands, &c.

But then, a second thing that I have to charge upon you is this, that you would acknowledge with all thankfulnesse and enlargednesse of heart to God, the riches of his mercy, and grace to you, that hath been pleased to call you out of an unbelieving world, and bring you over to the Gospel, and to the participations that are by Christ, according to the Gospel: Oh! this you should set your hearts upon joy admiring the riches of his grace, and say, Lord, why shouldst thou manifest thy self to us, and not to the World! That many thousands should live and die in the total ignorance of Christ, and the Gospel-mysteries, or else live and dye in an empty profession; and yet that God should be pleased to pitch upon me! This is that the Text doth hint unto us in the nineteenth verse of this Chapter. Oh! saith he in a triumphing manner, we know that we are of God, and that the whole world lyes in wickedness, Oh! our mercies, and the riches of Grace that hath appeared to us, while the whole world that lies in wickedness, is put into the Malignant one, lies in the Devil, for he is the Malignant evil one, while the whole world lies in the Devil in malignity! Oh! It is a sad condition, infinitely more sad, than for a man to lie in the most noisome stinking Ditch, or in the loathsomest kennel, why this is that that heightens the mercy to poor souls that are called by grace according to the purpose of God, that while the whole world lies in wickedness, and so are like to lie: yea, and to lie in Hell to all eternity, that God should please to lay you in the bosom of his Son, and to take you into the arms of his mercy; this is that, that should heighten our thankfulness. I may make use of that expression which we find in Acts the fourth, when Paul and Barnabas came unto a company of heathens, and they saw what great things were done by them, and took notice of the gracious spirit that they

discovered; sure, say they, The Gods are come among us in the likeness of men. Considering the state of times, and what a height of wickedness many at this day are grown up unto the dreadful swearing, blaspheming of God and his ways: truly judge of it your selves, whether we may not say the Devils are come among us in the likeness of men. Why now, Oh! how should we heighten our love and thankfulness to God, that should please in free grace to bring us over to close with Jesus Christ!

But then as many as are brought over to Gospel-believing, this is your duty to study, and endeavour what you can your advantages in faith; and so the Apostle gives it in charge here in the Chapter in v. 13. These things have I writ to you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may believe on the Son of God. This is that you should set about, if God hath brought you over to a closing with Christ, and an embracing of the Testimonies concerning him, believe more and more, labor for your advancement, and let it be your prayer, Good Lord encrease our faith: labor that you may be clear in your apprehensions of gospel-mysteries, and that you may be more strong in your adherence to Christ, of whom those Gospel-testimonies are given, and that you may not only come to have an adhering faith, but to an assuring faith; that you may not be like waves tossed and tumbled up and down, but that you may come to be rooted and established, and grounded in your faith, that you may not come to be unsettled by Heresie, corrupt Doctrines, or the Apostacy of others, but that you may be stedfast and unmovable.

Yet further, fifthly, this is to be given in charge to such as do believe according to the Gospel, that they carry it suitably to a believing state, as in those particulars that I have insisted upon, so in a deportment congruous and suitable to the privileges which belong to believing: You are born of God, carry it as men and women that are so indeed: what I born of God? the sons and daughters of God? What and not live according to God? and not study conformity to God? I remember what he speaks there concerning Amnon, how is it, that

thou bring the Kings son, art lean from day to day? How is it, that we that profess to be the sons and daughters of God, are lean and lank, not more improved? that we do not shew forth God and express Christ? This lies in the beginning of the Chapter, if you be born of God, remember that you be born of him that is the God of Love: And therefore you are to manifest this birth, and your believing, and your being born of God, by loving God, and by loving them that are born of God; He that believeth is born of God, and be that loveth him that begat, loveth him that is begotten of him. The God of love doth beget a people of love; a loving God, a loving people; and this is that you should express your believing by, and your adoption by, by the love you bear to God, and the children of God.

A hateful, spiteful spirit, where it doth discover itself, speaks those persons not to be born of God, but of the Devil; carry it as Believers, as persons of God, by studying a conformity to God, and by keeping his Commandments, subjecting your selves to his authority, not living according to your lusts, but according to the laws and rules which God hath given you, saith the Apostle here, this is the love of God, that we keep his Commandments.

It is not a love in word, and in tongue, but in reality, a love discovering itself by a conscientious care to hold conformity to all the will of God; and if any should object, this is a hard saying, who can bear it? saith the Apostle. No such matter, there is never a believing soul will say the Commandments of Christ are grievous or burdensome: No, they are light to them that are brought over to the faith of the Gospel.

And the last thing I have to charge upon you, upon the account of your Gospel-believing, and being brought over to a closing with Christ, it is this, and so upon the matter I have given you an account of the substance of this precious Chapter, having reduced it to that general Doctrine I propounded before: I say the last thing is this, That you would walk suitable to a believing state, by being very careful concerning your Worships that you do perform, that they be

according to God, and according to the Gospel; and this is that which the Apostle closes the Chapter withall in the 21. verse, Little Children, keep your selves from Idols, Amen. As I take it, in the former Translation it was Babes, Babes, keep your selves from Idols; here it is Little Children. I observe in this Epistle the Apostle makes a distinction of Believers into three Ranks, as you shall finde in the second Chapter, I write unto you little Children, I write unto you young men, and I write unto you Fathers; in the close of this Epistle he concludes with this charge to little Children: now whether he includes all the rest under this Title of Little Children, I forbear to dispute; but sure I am, it is a duty lies upon one and the other, whether they be Babes, or young men, or Aged Fathers in Christ. Whatever our rank or condition be, I am sure of this, this is a great duty that lies upon all that will approve themselves in Godliness, and be brought over to the Faith of the Gospel, that they look to their worship, and that they take heed of Idols; as if he should say, He that is born of God, he keeps himself that the wicked one doth not touch him. Oh Little Children, shew forth that spiritual ability that by Grace you are furnished withall, by being able to keep your selves from Idols.

It might be said, what is this to us? Are we in danger of Idols? True, well might the Apostle give in such a Charge to them in those times, when the greatest part of the World were in a state of Heathenism, and in estrangement from Christ, and the mysteries of the Gospel: But this I say, it doth really concern Christians in Gospel-times, that have had the breakings out of the Gospel-light, and the knowledge of the Gospel-mysteries, to be careful of this Charge, that they keep themselves from Idols: there were the Idols of the Heathens: grant it, and so still there are a generation of people that our souls should mourn over to consider their state, and are wrapt up in ignorance of God, know nothing of the true God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, and it is the state and condition of the Jews at this day; and what a sad condition are they in? Grant it they worship not Idols after the manner of the Heathens, yet they worship not the true God, because they worship not God in Christ; for, saith the Apostle, Whoever sins,

and abideth not in the Doctrine of Christ; he hath not God; He that abides in the Doctrine of Christ, he hath the Father and the Son: And so the Jews at this day, they not abiding, not owning the Doctrine of Christ, they have not God, because they have not the Father and the Son; this is their condition: and thus I say, there were not only the Idols of the Heathen: Oh! but sadly be it spoken, there are Idols among Persons pretending to Christ, and Gospel Faith, and the Doctrine concerning Grace by Jesus Christ.

How many Idols and Idolaters are there? I might tell the Covetous person is an Idolater, the voluptuous person, and the self-justitiary sets up his own Righteousness, and Idolizeth that: But I say this there are Idols among Christians; Papists hold forth the Name of Christ, but, yet what woeful Idolatry is there among them? There was the Dragon worship in the time of the Heathens, and in the room of that, there is come up the Beast-worship, and of that worship the generality of the world runs upon; and it concerns us to keep from Popish Idolatry, it being the grossest Idolatry that ever was, because there is the suitest petence of Worshipping Jesus and yet they turn him into an Idol: What else means their worshipping and bowing to Image, their Breaden gods, and the like? Oh therefore it concerns us to keep ourselves from Idols; and there is a Scripture, if it were but well studied, would cause trembling of heart, and make all that have any care of their souls, to look about them; that Scripture I refer you to, is in Rev. 13. compared with Rev. 20. In Rev. 13:11. whereas before there was Dragon-worship, it is said here, I beheld another Beast coming out of the earth, and he had two Horns like a Lamb, and he shake as a Dragon, and he exerciseth all the power of the first Beast before him, and causeth the Earth, and them that dwell therein, to worship the first Beast, whose deadly wound was healed: now look at verse 8. says he, and all the dwellers upon the Earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the World. Oh! it is a terrible word, and that that should make us to fear and tremble, lest in any kind we should be drawn into the worship of the Beast; for as many as were not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb, they were drawn

into the Worship of the Beast. This is that that should make us keep ourselves from Idols, from whatsoever hath but so much as a tincture of Superstition and Idolatry, and the rather, considering that other Scripture, Rev. 20:15. And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life, was cast into the lake of fire: All that are not written in the Lambs Book of Life, are prevailed to perform the worship with the Beast, and not being writ there, must be tumbled into the Lake forever.

This therefore concerns us to keep from Idolatry, from whatever hath a tendency that way, and that hath any tincture of Superstition upon it; and consider with your selves, that our Duty is in matters of Worship, and in things concerning the Worship of God, to see to it, that we keep a humble dependance upon God, that we walk not according to the will of Men, but according to the will of God; You were bought with a price, be not servants of men. We are to walk by a Line, by a Plummet, and what is not warranted by the Word of God, or maintainable by Argument drawn from it, we should not close with.

And for the closing up of all, do but consider how this Chapter; and the things that I have spoken to you, and preached from it, how they do all influence this Exhortation, Little Children, keep your selves from Idols; see to it, that you approve your selves in holy Worship to God and the Lord Jesus. Do but argue thus; You profess to be Believers, and is it not your duty to answer to this profession? Your Faith is a pure Faith, and an obediential grace; it is a grace that will tutor you to hang upon Christ, and his appointments and Institutions; and therefore being Believers, study to keep your selves from Idols, and whatever is not consonant to the will of God concerning Worship.

You believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, keep your selves from Idols in this respect; for he is come into the world, and hath shewed the pattern of his House; and then you are born of God: carry it like a people that are born of God, that are high born, and credit

your holy profession, by keeping a dependance upon that God, of whom you are born: and then being Believers, you are born of God, and have overcome the world, and therefore shew forth your heroick spirit, by standing out in all opposition to Idols, and whatever is contrary to sound Doctrine, and the power of godliness.

You have an Unction from the Holy One, and this engages you to look to it, that you keep your selves from Idols: And then we know (saith he) that the Son of God is come, and hath given us understanding that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. And thereupon he brings in this, Little Children; keep your selves from Idols: as if he should say, this is the true God, God in Christ, Jesus Christ the Son of the Father, this is the true God, and he hath eternal life with him; other gods are false gods, and what benefit will you have by following them and performing worship to them? Nothing but eternal death: false gods can bestow no eternal life upon you, but this is the true God, and he can give you eternal life: And therefore Little Children keep your selves from Idols.

And now yet one word more. I would not occasion any discomposure of spirit that is not becoming you: But this I must say, for ought I know, you have the words of a dying man, and we use to say, that the words of dying men are apt to take somewhat a deep impression; I mean a dying man, not in properness of speech according to nature; and if it should be so, I hope there would be cause of rejoycing on my part: but I speak the words of a dying man in respect of the Ministerial Office.

I suppose you all know there is an Act come forth by Supream Authority, and it is not for us to quarrel at all, but to submit to it, and hold correspondency with it so far as we can, with a good conscience; and there being many Injunctions, that many, besides myself cannot comply withall, therefore we are willing to submit to the Penalty inflicted.

This I say, you have for many years had the benefit of my poor Labours; I have fulfilled near up towards forty years, and have performed my service to God, Christ, and his People, and I bless his Name, not without acceptance and success. My work, so far I know, in this course, as in the weekly course, is now at an end; my desire is, that you whose hearts have been inclinable to wait upon God in the way of my Ministry, may be kept faithful to God, and that you may have the blessing of the everlasting Covenant coming upon your Souls, and that you may have the power of this Doctrine, held forth in this Sermon, put forth upon your hearts; that as you do believe that Jesus is the Christ, that as you profess these things, you may carry it suitably to your profession, that you may walk in love to God, love to Christ, and love to one another; that you may labour to manifest a noble generous Spirit in overcoming the world in Errours, Corruptions, false Doctrines, and unwarrantable Worship; that you may in all things labour to approve your selves: And little Children keep your selves from Idols, Amen.

33. Mr. Gaspine's Farewell Sermon

"Fear not little Flock, for it is the Fathers good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." - Luke 12:32.

In this Chapter we have the sum of a precious Sermon which our Saviour makes to his Disciples in the presense of the multitude. In which we have,

1. Several cautions in the first twenty verses of that Chapter.
2. Some exhortations from thence to the end of it. The Cautions are these.

First, to beware of Hypocrisie, in the three first verses, Beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisie; and the motive

wherewith he backs this caution, is this, that all things should be opened and made known hereafter, how closely soever they may be carryed, and how secretly soever their sins may be committed here. Men may think to varnish over the fowlest of their actions by a fair and plausible pretences, and so to hide their iniquities from the eyes of God and men; but they are much mistaken; for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, nor hid, that shall not be known, ver. 2.

Secondly, He warns them to beware of timorousness and fearfulness in publishing his Gospel, from the beginning of the 4 to the 12. Verse, I say unto you, my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that they have no more that they can do; but I will forewarn you whom you shall fear, fear him, who after he hath killed, hath power to cast into Hell. I say unto you, Fear him.

Thirdly, He cautions them to beware of covetousness, and this caution of his was occasioned by one that desired Christ to speak to his brother to divide the inheritance with him, verse 13. Upon this Christ takes occasion to caution them against covetousness, verse 15. And he said unto them, take heed and beware of covetousness. And that he might set out the folly of this sin of covetousness, he doth elegantly set it forth by a Parable of a rich man, who was coveting after more and more of the world, and was casting, plodding, and contriving how to pull down his barns, and to build greater, and how to encrease his Estate in the world, when God said unto him, Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee; and whose then will these things be which thou hast provided? from ver. 15. to 20.

Having given them these cautions, he proceeds to give them several exhortations, as to seeking after the Kingdom of God, to giving of alms, to watchfulness against the coming of Christ to Judgment, and several other duties which I shall not now insist upon.

The Text contains that exhortation of Christ, wherein he exhorts them to undauntedness and resolution in the ways of God. Fear not

little Flock, for it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you a Kingdom.

The words may be divided into these two parts:

First, here is an Exhortation.

Secondly, the reason of this Exhortation.

First, an Exhortation, Fear not little Flock: In the which here is,

1. A very loving compellation, in the words, little Flock.
2. The Exhortation itself, fear not.

In the reason of the Exhortation, viz. For it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you the Kingdom, we have these things considerable.

First, here is your Donor, your Father.

Secondly, here is the Donum or gift itself, which God will bestow upon his people, and that is the Kingdom, which is meant the Kingdom of Heaven.

Thirdly, the persons on whom God will bestow this Kingdom, and that is You, you my little flock.

Fourthly, the manner of God's bestowing the Kingdom of Heaven upon his little Flock, and that is by gift, it is your Father's good pleasure to give, &c.

Fifthly and lastly, the motive that prevails with God to give the Kingdom of Heaven to his people, and that is his own good pleasure, it is your Father's good pleasure, &c.

So that you see every word hath its weight: Here is very much profitable matter contained in a few words; and many useful and profitable observations may be observed from it; as,

Doct. First, That Christ's Flock is but a little Flock, a very little Flock; Fear not little Flock.

Here be two diminutive words in Original: First, which signifies little; and then the word which also signifieth a little flock: Christ's Flock is a little Flock, very little in comparison to the rest of the World; the number of those that truly fear God, that are sincere Christians, and that are by a true and lively faith really engrafted into Jesus Christ, is very small in comparison of the profane, the hypocrites, the unconverted and unsanctified, that are only Christians by an external profession, that have only a form of godliness, but deny the power of it: The way to Heaven is narrow, and the gate strait, and there are but few that finde it, Matt. 7:13,14. There may be many that make fair pretences to Religion and Holiness in a time of prosperity; but there are but few that will stick to Christ and his holy ways in discouraging times; there may be many that are rotten professors, but few that are sound in the Faith.

2. Doct. That God is a believers Father; or that every sincere Christian is a Child of God, and hath God for his Father; It is (saith Christ to his Disciples) your Fathers good pleasure to give you the Kingdom.

3. Doct. That every true Believer is interested in the Kingdom of Heaven; the great God will bestow the Kingdom of Heaven upon Believers.

4. Doct. That the Kingdom of Heaven is the free gift of God, It is the Fathers good pleasure to give you a Kingdom. The Kingdom of Heaven comes not to a Believer by his own merits, nor by his own deservings; but by God's free gift; the free grace of God is the great motive, it is God's good pleasure so to do. The Saints cannot merit heaven by their holiest actions, though they walk never so closely with God: no, no, the Kingdom of heaven is God's free gift unto Believers.

5. Doct. Lastly, That the consideration of a Believers interest in the Kingdom of heaven, should make him chearful and couragious in the practice of holiness, and keep him from being dismayed and discouraged at all the afflictions and tribulations that he meets withall in the world, this Doctrine is gathered from the Exhortation in the Text, and the reason of it taken together; the Exhortation, viz. Fear not little Flock; the reason of the Exhortation, viz. For it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you the Kingdom; intimating, that this one consideration that God will bestow the Kingdom of Glory upon his people hereafter, should make them with all willingness and chearfulness to wade through all the calamities and incumbrances of this frail life. A Believers heavenly interest should make him rejoyce in the midst of all his tryals and tribulations that he meets with from the hands of men here on earth.

I shall chuse out the second and last of these observations to go on upon, not having time and liberty to insist on them all; that observation then which I shall first of all insist upon, is this, viz.

Doct. That God is a Believers Father, or that every true and sincere Christian hath God for his Father, and is a child of God: It is your Fathers good pleasure.

Before I come to the confirmation of this Truth, I shall shew how many ways a people or person may have God to be their Father, and they may be his Children.

First, A people or person may have God for their Father by Creation; as God is the great Creator of the World, and they are his Creatures, in this general sense God is a Father to all the Men and Women in the World; to this refers that Scripture, Mal. 3:10. saith the Prophet there, have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us? but it is a more peculiar son-ship that belongs to Believers; they have God for their Father in a more special and peculiar manner than this is.

Secondly, A people or person may be the children of God, and God may be their Father by profession: Thus God was a Father to the Jewish Nation of old, because they among all the Nations of the World did profess to own the Lord for their God, and to serve and worship him; and in this respect God doth profess himself to be a Father to Israel, Jer. 3:9. I am a Father to Israel, saith God, Ephraim is my first-born: And thus God is a Father to all those that do profess his Name. But if this be all the claim that we can lay to God as our Father, that he is so to us, and that we are his children only by an external profession, this will not entitle us to the Kingdom, that eternal inheritance that God hath laid up for his people in the life to come; it is therefore yet in a more peculiar manner that Believers have God for their Father.

Thirdly, A person may have God for his Father by adoption and regeneration; and thus true Believers, and only such are the children of God, and God is their Father, 1 John 12:13. To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God: These are the sons of God, the strictest and most peculiar sons that shall be made partakers of all the priviledges of the children of God, viz. those that receive Christ into their hearts by faith, and such as are truly regenerate and born again; these are the true and genuine children of the most High, the heirs of God, and coheirs of Jesus Christ, as the expression is, Rom. 8. these are the children of whom it was spoken, 2 Cor. 6. last. I will be a Father unto you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having thus shewn unto you the several respects in which we may have God for our Father, I shall come to the confirmation of it, and shall prove that Believers have God for their Father in this special and peculiar manner; there are abundance of Scripture-proofs for this, in which Jesus Christ speaking to his Disciples, calleth God their Father, Matt. 5:16. Let your light so shine before men, that they seeing your good works, may glorifie your Father which is in Heaven. And ver. 48. Be ye perfect as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect, Matt. 6:8. Your

Father knoweth what things you have need of, before you ask them, Matt. 18:14. Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in Heaven, these little ones should perish, Joh. 20:17. Go tell my brethren (saith Christ) that I ascend to my Father, and to your Father, to my God, and to your God. By these and other Scriptures we may see that God is set forth to Believers under the relation of a Father to them: And as God is called in Scripture a Believers Father, so they are called sons, Gal. 4:6. Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. Again, 1 Joh. 3:2. Now we are the Sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be; when we shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is, Gal. 3:16. The Apostle speaking to the unbelieving Galatians, saith, we are all the Children of God by Faith, which is in Christ Jesus. I shall no longer insist on the confirmation of this Doctrine, but shall come to the application of it.

Use. Is it so, that all true believers are the children of God, and have God for their heavenly Father, then the first use may be of comfort and consolation to the godly, in that they are so nearly related to the great God; believers by virtue of their son-ship, having God for their heavenly Father, have abundant ground of comfort and consolation upon these several accounts.

First, They are under his fatherly care and providence: fathers take care for their children, to provide them things necessary, as meat, drink, and apparel; *ab iisdem alimur ex quibus generamur*, is a true Maxim; We are nourished of those of whom we are begotten; Fathers when their children ask bread, will not give them stones; nor when they ask fish, will they give them scorpions, Matt. 7:9. He that provides not these things for his children, is worse than an Infidel, 1 Tim. 4:8. and hath God commanded this from Parents towards their children, and will not God much more provide for his children that are truly regenerate and born again, and that have his Image by faith engraven on their souls? he would do it much more abundantly,

Matt. 7:11. If ye being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to those that ask him? This then is one great priviledge that believers are made partakers of by vertue of this relation, having God for their heavenly Father; God will certainly provide good things for them, both for their being and well-being here and hereafter; and they may come to God as a Father, with holy boldness of faith for all things that they shall stand in need of; God takes care for those that are strangers and enemies to him, and makes his rain to fall upon the unjust, as well as upon the just, Matt. 5:4, 5, He giveth them rain from heaven, filling their hearts with food and gladness, Acts 14:7. And will he not much rather feed his own children? he giveth food to all flesh, Psalm 136:25. And will he not much rather take care for his own children that are engrafted into him by faith, that do love and serve him: if God's bounty be largely extended to those that are strangers and enemies to him, even to those that go on in sin and wickedness, as many times it is, then certainly he will kill the fatted Calf for his own children, as the Father of the prodigal did for his returning Son. Nay, in this the great God exceedeth earthly Parents, as far as Heaven is above the earth; for natural Parents they give good things to their children when they ask them; but God the Father of Spirits will do much more abundantly for his children, above what they are able to ask or think: the Petitions of God's children may be large, their desires and thoughts larger than heir Petitions; for we are not always able to express outwardly, what inwardly we desire; but God will do more abundantly for his people beyond all these. Let us look into the Word of God, and we shall there see what noble provision he hath made for his people, what food, yea, angels food he hath provided for them; what a feast of fat things (I mean of spiritual dainties and delicates) he hath dressed for them; for their bread, they shall have the bread of life, he that eateth thereof, shall never hunger, John 6:48. they shall have their fill of that hidden Manna laid up in the Sanctuary. We read of Benjamins Messe Gen 4:3. last, That it was five times as much as any of his Brethren; but the children of God, their food that they shall have from their heavenly Father, shall be a thousand times better, and more satisfactory than that which shall be

given to the men of the World; they shall have their measures heaped up, pressed down, and running over, Psalm 34:10. The young Lyons shall lack and suffer hunger, but the children of God, those that cry unto God their Father, shall want no good thing; but especially spiritual good things, they shall be sure to have their fill of these, and shall be satisfied with them, even as with marrow and fatness; and for their drink, they shall have the heavenly Nectar, the water of Life, the blood of Jesus Christ, the which whosoever drinketh, shall thirst no more, John 4:14. they shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of his house, he will make them drink of the River of his pleasures; for with God is the fountain of life, in his light they shall see light, Psalm 38:8, 9. there is a River, the streams whereof shall make glad the City of God, Psalm 46:4. and his Children shall drink of this River of Water of life, clear as chrystal, proceeding out of the throne of God, and the Lamb, Rev. 22:1. it is for these especially that God hath provided the spiritual milk of the Word, that they may grow thereby; they shall suck sweetness out of the promises, those rich breasts of consolation; and for their apparel, the Children of God may say as the Prophet, Isa. 61:10. I will greatly rejoyce in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation; he hath, covered me with a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with Ornaments, and as a Bride adorneth herself with Jewels. What shall I say? they shall be clothed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ, a garment without spot or blemish, white as snow, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of those.

Thus you have the first ground of consolation to Believers, upon the account of having God for their Father, he will certainly provide for them those things that shall be necessary, both in this life, and in the life to come.

Secondly, Is God a Father to Believers? then another ground of consolation is this, that he will defend them from their enemies: How mightily doth it provoke natural Parents to see their Children abused? How quickly will their eye affect their heart, and stir them

up to come in and rescue them? So will the Lord do for those that are his children by Adoption and Regeneration; he will defend them, he will be a wall of fire round about them, so that all their enemies, both spiritual and temporal, shall not be able to do them any real hurt: the Devil, and all his wiles and temptations, the World and all its tempting allurements: yea, all the policy and malice of Earth and Hell, shall not be able to work their ruine; the Lord is on their side, and they have more for them, than they have against them. Upon this consideration it was that David tells us in his Book of Psalm, Though I walk (saith he) in the valley of the shadow of death, yet will I fear none ill; for thou, O Lord, art my Rock and my Fortress, and my salvation eke forever.

Would we not account him unworthy the name of a Father, that would suffer his Children to be beaten and abused, and destroyed before his face, and not act in their defence? and will God suffer his dear Children so to be? No certainly, He that toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eye, Zech. 2:8. and God accounts what is done to them, as if it were done to himself in person; In as much as ye did it unto those little ones, ye did it unto me: Will Christ say one day as he tells us? Matt. 25:40. and, in as much as ye did it not unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it not unto me, ver. 45. Beloved, there is a time coming, when the great God will reckon with ungodly men, for all the injuries and wrongs which they have done to his people, as if they were done to himself immediately.

Oh! consider of this you that are true Believers; are you environed round with adversaries, either spiritual or temporal? you have God for your defence, a God infinite in power, which is able to defend you from the hardest assaults of your most potent and politick Enemies; his Name is a strong Tower, the Righteous fly unto it, and are safe. Are you encountring with great temptations? The Lord being your Father, he will protect you, and not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able to bear, but together with temptation, will make way for your escape, that you may be able to bear it, 1 Cor. 10:30. the Lord knoweth that his Children are liable to many temptations from

Satan, from the world, and from their own corruptions, and that they are subject to many afflictions and tribulations from the hands of men, and therefore he will be sure to be with them, and to be a very present help to them in the time of trouble.

Thirdly, Is God a Believers Heavenly Father? then there is a comfort for them, that God will pity them and compassionate them in all their afflictions; a tender Father pitieth his Children when they are in any calamity; as for instance, in sickness how will the groans of a Child go near the heart of a loving Parent? How do the Agonies of pain in the Child, cause grief and sorrow in the Parents heart? What means would not a Parent use to procure the health and ease of a Child? My life is bound up in the life of the Lad, says Jacob concerning Benjamin. Oh Absalon, my son, my son, would God I had dyed for thee, says David concerning Absalon. What sympathizing and sallow-feeling will a dear and tender Parent have of the miseries of his Children? And as a Father pitieth his Children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him, Psalm 103:13. The Lord is very pitiful, Jam. 5:11. The pity and compassion of the Lord towards his Children, is excellently set forth in that Scripture, Jer. 31:20. Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he a pleasant Child? I speak against him, I do earnestly remember him still; therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy on him, saith the Lord; The bowels of the Lord do exceedingly yearn towards his people in all their afflictions and distresses, and he is full of pity and compassion towards them.

Fourthly, Is God a Father to all true Believers? then here is also for their comfort, that God doth, and always will love them, and take delight in them; He loves them with an everlasting love, they are his chosen Jewels, and he will certainly one day polish them, though he suffer them to be among the rubbish of the World for a while; They are his pleasant pictures, and he delights to be looking on them, the eyes of the Lord are upon them that fear him, and upon them that hope in his mercy, Psalm 33:18. God takes pleasure to be viewing the new creature which he hath framed by his own Spirit in the hearts of his people, and his own Image which he stamped upon them; and

herein the love that the Lord beareth his Children, infinitely exceeds the Love that earthly Parents bear to theirs, in that he loveth them continually: Earthly Parents they love their Children, but their love may be withdrawn from them again, and is often times; but the love of God will never be withdrawn from his love; whom the Lord loveth, he loveth to the end; and although his loving countenance may be eclipsed for a time, and they may lose the sense of his love to them, by their failings & sinful infirmities, yet the Lord loves them still; There is nothing shall be able to separate Believers from the love of God, Rom. 8:25. and onward: the Apostle Paul putteth the question there, (saith he) Who shall separate us from the love of God? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword, as it is written. For thy sake are we killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter: Nay, (saith he) in all these things we are more than Conquerors through him that loved us; for I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. It is not all the troubles of the world, nor tribulations, nor any thing that can render Believers less lovely in the eyes of Christ: It is not all the Devils in Hell, that can withdraw Gods love from his children, although they do endeavours it by enticing them to sin by their temptations, and then by accusing them to God for sin; yet all this will not rout them out of God's love: though the Devil do labour to pick a quarrel between God and his people; yet it is not principalities nor powers, it is not all the power of Hell that shall be able to withdraw Gods love from them.

Fifthly, Is God a Father to Believers? Then they may take this for their comfort, that he will continually be mindful of them. Parents do remember their Children, and are mindful of them: so the Lord, he remembreth his people and will never forget them, Isa. 49:15. Can a Woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the Son of her womb; yea, they may, yet I will not forget thee: Earthly Parents, though it be but rare, yet they may, and

sometimes do forget their children; but God, he is more tender and mindful of his Children, than earthly Parents are of theirs; yea, they may, yet will not I forget thee, &c. Though Gods people do too often forget him, yet he doth never forget them, but remember them in all their conditions, even in their low estate, God is mindful of them, Psalm 136:23. Who remembred us in our low estate, for his mercy endureth forever.

Lastly, Is God a Father to Believers? Then they may take this for their comfort, that God will provide an inheritance for them hereafter: Fathers provide portions and inheritances for their Children for hereafter, so doth God, Rom. 8. Now saith the Apostle, we are the Sons of God; and if sons, then heirs, heirs of God, and coheirs with Jesus Christ: How often is the Kingdom of Heaven called an inheritance, the inheritance of the Saints, or them that are sanctified, Acts 20:32. and 26:8. There is an eternal inheritance laid up for the Children of God for hereafter; yea, the Kingdom of Heaven is their inheritance, and it is now preparing for them, John 14:2. and they shall have assuredly one day an abundant entrance into their Fathers Kingdom; the Children of God while they are in the World, they are as Heirs in their minority, they have not yet the possession of their inheritances, but it is theirs, and they shall have it in reversion; but hereafter when they shall leave this earthly Tabernacle, then they shall have the possession of it. Every true and sincere Believer, he is an Heir to a Crown, even a Crown of glory that fadeth not away; Their lines are fallen to them in a pleasant place, they have a goodly Heritage; the Lord is the portion of their Inheritance, Psalm 16:5, 6. It is the hope of this Inheritance of theirs, that carrieth on the souls of the Saints in the whole course of their lives; and maketh them joyfully and willingly to wade through all their troubles and difficulties that they meet with in their way to Heaven. It is the consideration of this their portion and inheritance which they are entailed to by having God for their Father, that makes them forget the things that are behind, and press forward towards the mark for the price of the high calling which is in Jesus Christ; it is their acting faith upon this, and having an eye to the recompence of reward, that

makes them run with patience the race that is set before them: as knowing, that when they have finished their course, they shall receive a Crown of Life, which the Lord the Righteous Judge shall give them at that day.

Here the godly have the earnest of their inheritance, which is the Spirit of God, Eph. 1:14. After that ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy Spirit of Promise, which is the earnest of our Inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his Glory. Here Believers have the promise of their inheritance: The Word of God is a Believers Patent for his inheritance, in which God doth as it were by promise make over Heaven, and Happiness, and Glory to true Believers, to be enjoyed by them forever in the Life to come; but hereafter, then they shall have the fruition and possession of it.

Would you know what a glorious Inheritance this is, that the children of God by believing are entitled to? 1 Pet. 1:4. It is an Inheritance uncorruptible, undefiled, which fadeth not away. They are Heirs to a Crown of Glory, they are heirs of God, and coheirs with Jesus Christ, which is the Heir of all things: believe it Friends, it is such a glorious inheritance that the Children of God are entitled unto, that all the Inheritances and Possessions in the world are but a trifle in comparison of it; to set out the beauty and excellency of the Saints inheritance, is a task fitter for some Angel, than for a mortal Creature

For eye hath not seen, neither hath ear heard, neither hath entred into the heart of man to conceive what the Lord hath laid up for them that fear him, Isa. 64:4.

Thus you see what abundant cause of comfort Believers have upon this consideration, that God is their Father, and that they are his children in every condition of their lives, in every trouble either outward or inward; howsoever it be with a regenerate Christian, one that is a true child of God, he hath cause to take comfort in this.

First, Is a Believer in want here in the World? is he in distress, and driven to straights, not knowing what course to take for the supplying of his natural wants (as Gods people are driven to such conditions sometimes) he can go to God as unto a Father, and make his wants and necessities known to him; he both can and will finde out some way or other for a supply for you: He that hath promised so large a portion hereafter in Heaven, will not deny so much of this World as is necessary for you in your way to Heaven; Your Father knows what good things you have need of, Matt. 6:8. God which is the Believers Father, knows what things they need, and he is ready to hear them, and knoweth how to help them.

Secondly, is a Believer in danger? is he environed about with his Enemies on every side, and compassed about with those that seek his hurt? Oh! what comfort is this that he can go to God as unto a Father for help, even to him that is Almighty, and able in a moment to defend them from their most powerful and politick adversaries? is a godly man in danger, and hath he Enemies that do wrongfully seek his life, as David had? Psalm 31:13. yet he may have the same confidence that David had in that condition, and say as he said in the following Verse: Yet I trust in thee, Oh Lord, I said, thou art my God, my times are in thy hand, deliver me from the hand of mine Enemies, and from them that persecute me.

Thirdly, doth a Believer finde his corruption within, to rebel against the regenerate part? Doth he finde the Law in his Members which is warring against the Law of his minde, to lead him into captivity to the Law of sin and death? Doth he finde his sins to be very strong within him, and that they begin to draw him away from God? Oh! what comfort is this to a Child of God in this condition, that he can go and complain then to his heavenly Father, and be confident that this Father will hear him, and help, and make him more than a Conqueror over all the Enemies of his.

Fourthly, art thou that art a believer, in doubt, and knowest not what course to take? go to thy heavenly Father for direction: he is the

infinitely wise God, and he will be sure to direct thee for the best.

Fifthly, art thou slandered, reviled, and reproached in the world, and made the common scorn and derision of the Ungodly? go to thy Father, thy heavenly Father, and complain to him; he will certainly clear up thine innocency, as the light at noon-day, and wipe off all the reproaches that are wrongfully cast upon thee.

Sixthly, art thou that art a Believer, wronged by men, and knowest not how to right thy self? go to thy Heavenly Father, he will certainly set all things right one day: neither is it all the power and policy of thine adversaries, nor their riches, nor any thing that shall be able to pervert him, and hinder him from redressing thy wrongs, and from doing thee right.

Seventhly, and lastly, Dost thou finde thyself to be in a state of languishing, thou that art a Believer? for to such I am speaking all this while: Dost thou finde thy natural strength to decay, and thy sickness to encrease, and thy pains to grow upon thee? putting thee in minde that thy body must be shortly laid in the grave; telling thee that thou mayest expect within a few days or hours to lay down thy earthly Tabernacle, and to encounter with the pangs of death? Oh happy soul then, that canst make thy approaches to God, as unto a Father; and breath out thy soul into the bosome of thy Heavenly Father; and say as Christ did when he was on the Cross; Father, into thy hand I commend my Spirit: Believe it Christian, thou that art truly such, it will afford thee more comfort than that God is thy Heavenly Father, and thou his Child by Adoption and Regeneration, then if thou wert related to the greatest Prince, and the puissant Monarch in all the world.

Thus I have done with the first Use, which is a Use of Consolation to the godly, upon this consideration, that they are the Children of God, and that he is their Heavenly Father.

2. Use for Caution.

Secondly, If it be so, that all true Believers are the Children of God, and that he is their Father; then this should caution wicked men to beware how they meddle with Gods Children: Oh! have a care of afflicting, wronging, persecuting, hurting of the people of God, lest you be found fighters against God; have a care of anoying, and troubling those that are so near and dear to God, that are so tender to him as the apple of his eye: beware of vexing and molesting those that are so nearly related to the great King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; you may think it may be that you may do what you will to the godly, because they are low and mean in the world, as many of them are; But I must tell you, as mean and as low as they are in your esteem, they are near and dear to God: carnal men may think they may oppress, and wrong, and do what they please to the people of God, because they are weak, and not able to help themselves; but little do they think how nearly the great God doth account himself concern'd in their affairs; little do the great ones of the world consider, what heavy reckoning will be laid to their charge one day for injuring, wronging, and molesting the poor servants of God; if they did, surely we should not have them so busily imployed therein as they are. Thus for the second Use.

3. Use for Examination.

Thirdly, is it so, that Believers have God for their Heavenly Father, then here is matter of Tryal; how shall we know, whether God be our Father or no? and whether we be his children in this peculiar manner, by Adoption and Regeneration? It is true, God is a Father to us by Creation, and we are his Children by Profession; but if this be all the relation that we bear to God, this will not entitle us to holiness and salvation, without we are regenerate and born again, and are become his Children by Regeneration, and God be our Father by vertue of the new Covenant: We are all by nature the children of wrath, Ephes. 2:3. How shall we know then, whether we are gotten into the state of Son-ship, by Adoption and Regeneration, and whether God be our heavenly Father? there are many that pretend that they have God for their Father, when as yet they are under the

Dominion of their lusts, and are strangers to a work of true conversion and regeneration, and enemies to a life of holiness, and a groundless presumption, that men are the Children of God, when there is no such matter, hath proved the bane of many thousand souls. I shall therefore give you these characters, whereby we may know, whether we are the children of God in this peculiar manner or no.

First, whose Image do you bear, do you bear the Image of God? or else do you bear the Image of Satan? Those that are the Children of God by Adoption and Regeneration, they are such as bear their Fathers Image; the Image of God which is created in righteousness and in true holiness, is ingraven upon their souls: they are such as do bear the Image of the heavenly Adam, 1 Cor. 15:49, And they have put on the New man which is created in knowledge, after the Image of him that created him, Col. 3:10. And it is so with thee, dost thou bear the Image of God? hast thou a new and holy nature put into thee, inclining thee to all holy duties, and avoid all sin? art thou renewed in holiness, then thou art a Child of God, and God is thy Heavenly Father? but if it be not thus with thee, if thou hast not this new and holy nature wrought in thee, but thy old corrupt nature is predominant, inclining thee to sin; whatsoever groundless presumption thou mayst have, yet thou art no true Child of God by Regeneration and Adoption.

Secondly, wouldst thou know whether thou art the true child of God or no? by whose spirit art thou led? by the spirit of God, or by the spirit of Satan; they that have God for their Father, are led by the spirit of God, Rom. 8:14. As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the Sons of God: try thy self then by this, art thou led by the spirit of God? Dost thou live after the flesh, and not after the spirit? Dost thou mind the things of the spirit, and not the things of the flesh? if so, then thou mayst comfortably conclude that thou art the Child of God, and that he is a heavenly Father: we may know our Sonship by our spirit, if we are the Sons of God by Adoption and Regeneration, then we are led by a spirit of God, which is a spirit of Prayer, Rom.

8:15. A spirit of liberty, making us free from the dominion of our lusts, and from the slavery of sin and Satan, 2 Cor. 3:17, John 8:32. A spirit of love to God, and to the people of God, 1 John 5:2.

Thirdly, we may know whether God be our heavenly Father or no; by this do we labor to set forth the honour of God? Children, they are very tender of the honour of their Parents; this is a great duty to honour earthly Parents, Exod. 20:11 much more should we honour God, which is the Father of Spirits; If I am your Father, where is mine honour? (saith Christ) if God be our Father, where is that honour that we should yield to him? if we are the Children of God by Regeneration and Sanctification, then we are tender of the honour of Christ? it will make our hearts rise to hear his Name blasphemed, or taken in vain: his Sabbaths prophaned, his Worship corrupted by human mixtures: his Creatures abused unto excess, his Commandments broken: these things will grieve and trouble us more than anything, if we are Gods Children in truth; But if we can see God dishonoured by the unholy lives of carnal men, his Commands trampled underfoot, and yet not be grieved at this: but canst close in with those that make it their business to dishonour God, then thou art no Child of God in this particular sense: the great dishonour that is brought to God in the world, is a sad sign that there's but few, very few, that are in truth the Children of God: and the abounding and increasing of all sorts of sin, whereby God is exceedingly dishonoured: drunkenness, swearing, Sabbath-breaking, uncleanness, lying, extortion, oppression, scorning and deriding at Holiness, contempt of Gods Ordinances, Persecution of his faithful laborious Ministers and People; I say the abounding of these and such like abominations is a very sad evidence, that there are very few that have God for their Heavenly Father, in this special and peculiar manner, and that are his children by Adoption and Regeneration.

Lastly, wouldest thou know whether God be thy Father, and thou his child by this? whether thou art couragious in the ways of God, and in the practice of Godliness? they that have God for their heavenly Father, they have a noble and Heroick spirit; they are such as will not

be ashamed, nor afraid to lead a holy life; notwithstanding all the mocks and taunts, and threats of the world: they that are of a base timorous spirit, that are afraid of owning the ways of holiness, for fear of being reproached, reviled or opposed by the prophane world: they that are afraid to cleave to the wayes and people of God in discouraging times, they are not of the right strain; say not then that thou art born of God; unless thou canst prove thy noble extraction, by thy noble and heroick courage & resolution; notwithstanding all the trouble, calamity, & persecution thou maist meet with in the world. Thus much for Examination.

4. Use for Exhortation.

Fourthly, Is it so, &c. Then here is a word of Exhortation.

First, unto those that are Unregenerate, that have not God for their Father in this peculiar manner: and that is, that they would never be in rest, till they come to be united unto Jesus Christ, and to have him to be their Father by Regeneration; it is a sad thing to be void of this, when we cannot go to God as to a Father, and cannot expect anything from him, as from a Father. Oh! how little do thousands think of this, whether they are the Children of God, and have God for their Father, or no; they care not for it, they make not out after it: Or take it for granted, when they have no true and real ground so to do. Oh! then labour to get into this state of Son-ship; close with Jesus Christ by a lively, operative, heart-purifying faith, that thou maist thereby be invested into Gods family, and become his Child; consider, that before thou art thus by faith ingrafted into Christ, thou hast woeful Parents, thou art a child of disobedience, Ephes. 2:2. A child of wrath, Verse 3. A child of Satan, John 8:44

Secondly, here is a word of Counsel and Exhortation to the Godly, that are the Children of God by Adoption and Regeneration.

First, to those my first council is, that you would make it your greatest care and diligence to please your Heavenly Father, and have

a care of sinning against him; consider, that the sins of Gods Children, are very grievous to him, said Caesar to his son Brutus, when he saw him among his betrayers; What, and thou my son? so will God say to his children, when they grieve him by sin: what, and thou my son? my child, one whom I have Adopted my Heir; what, will you sin against me? I thought you had had more love; have I loved you so much, and do you love me so little? hath my spirit comforted you, and will you grieve it? have my bowels yearned towards you, and will you kick against them? have I been crucified for you, and will you crucifie me again afresh by your sins? The nearer the Relation is that the soul beareth to God, the greater is the aggravation of the sin against God.

Secondly, labour to shew forth your noble extraction, by your noble and raised affections; it is beneath the son of a Prince to be taken up with trifles, it is beneath one that is heir to a Kingdom, to set his affections upon low and base things, things of nought; So it is beneath the Children of the great King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, to let their affections run out inordinately after the world, and the enjoyments thereof; they are born from above, and therefore should set their affections upon things above, and not on things on earth, Colos. 3:2. What an unsutable thing is it for a Christian, to be taken up with the inordinate love of the world? it is a Degradation to the heirs of Heaven to have their minds taken up only or mostly with Earth, and earthly Vanities, they are, ad majora nati, born to greater things: it is unbecoming such to soil their affections with Earth, which are born to an inheritance incorruptible, which fadeth not away. Oh, that the children of God, and such as do profess themselves so to be, would manifest their holy and heavenly extraction, by their holy and heavenly affections: and that such as are the Sons and Daughters of God by Adoption and Sanctification, would not walk so far beneath that Relation.

Thirdly, Labor to imitate your heavenly Father: Be you followers of God as dear Children, Ephes. 5:1. Be ye merciful as your heavenly Father is merciful; be ye holy as he is holy, be ye compassionate as he

is in all things; labor to imitate your Heavenly Father, it is a Christians honor to be like God, and to imitate him.

Fourthly, labour more and more to obey your heavenly Father: our natural Parents, may require obedience of us, and it is our duty to give it them; much more may him that is the Father of spirits require it of us, and it is much more our duty to give it him: Walk as obedient Children, 1 Pet. 1:14 Yea, you must obey him chearfully too; The obedience of Children is herein differenced from the obedience of slaves, in that slaves are drawn to their duty out of a slavish fear, but children come to it willingly, out of a filial affection. Oh therefore let your obedience to God be chearful and voluntary: Take delight to do the will of your heavenly Father.

Lastly, submit to your heavenly Fathers chastisements; this is the Exhortation of the Apostle to the Hebrews, Heb. 12:5,6,7. My Son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loveth, be chasteneth, and scourgeth every Son he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with Sons, for what Son is he whom the Father chasteneth not: But if ye are without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye Bollards and not Sons: Let us not then murmur and faint under our afflictions and chastisements, but let us submit to them, and labour to grow the better for them. Thus much for the first Observation? That God is a believers heavenly Father; the other observation that I proposed to insist upon from this Text, was the last of the five mentioned in the beginning, and it contains the chief sum and scope of the whole verse, and is most suitable to our Times, and to this Occasion, you may remember was this.

Doct. That the consideration of a Believers interest into the Kingdom of Heaven, should make him chearful and couragious in the practise of holiness, and keep him from being dismayed at all the trouble and calamities that he meeteth withall in the world: Fear not (saith Christ) little flock, for it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you the Kingdom. In this Observation, there is two things supposed.

First, it is supposed in this Doctrine, that believers have an interest in the Kingdom of Heaven: This I need not now stand to prove, having spoken to it already in the handling of the former Observation: God being their Father, he hath provided an eternal inheritance of glory for them, in his eternal Kingdom.

Secondly, It is supposed in the Doctrine, that believers are like to meet with opposition from the world; they are diligent in the practise of godliness, are driving a Trade for Heaven: they shall be sure to meet with abundance of trouble and hindrance from the world, and the Prince of the world; this is a truth exceeding manifest, both from Scripture and experience: We shall be hated of all men for his names sake, Matt. 10:22. And because Christ hath chosen his people out of the world, therefore the world hated him. John. 15:19. And experience makes this evidence in all ages of the world; those that are godly & walk with God, they have been sure to have their portion of afflictions and tribulations, from the hands and tongues of the malicious and ungodly world, & my design is to shew, what little cause the Servants of God that have an interest in the Kingdom of Heaven, to be afraid or dismayed at any of these hindrances and oppositions, that they meet withal in their way to Heaven. For the handling of this Doctrine, and the fitting of it for our improvement by Application; I shall speak to these three things.

First, I shall shew you by some instances from the word of God, how the Saints that have had an interest in the Kingdom of Heaven, have been encouraged in the ways of God, and have had their spirits born up in their lowest condition, and in their greatest tryals and troubles here below.

Secondly, I shall shew you that believers are deported from despondency; and being dismayed under their sufferings upon the consideration of their Heavenly interest.

Thirdly, I shall give you some Reasons, why believers, that have a Title to the Heavenly Glory, should be courageous and undaunted,

and not dismayed at all their eternal Trials and Tribulations that they meet withal from the world: and so shall come to the Application.

First, For the first of these, I might give you many instances from the word of God, of the courage and magnanimity of the heirs of Heaven in their Tryals; as David, how couragious was he in the Lord, even in his lowest condition, Psalm. 46:1,2,3,4. God is our refuge and our strength, a very present help in Trouble; therefore (saith he) will we not fear, though the earth be removed, though the Mountains be cast into the midst of the Sea, though the Waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the Mountains shake with the swelling thereof, Selah, Psalm. 118:6. The Lord is on my side, I will not fear what man can do unto me: David he had put confidence in God, and therefore was not afraid of man; where the fear of God is, and where the hope of glory is, there the slavish fear of man will quickly vanish away: this no doubt was that which made the three Children not to be afraid of the fiery Furnace, nor Daniel of the Den of Lyons, Dan. 3:16. and 6. We have a notable example to this purpose, Hab. 3:17, 18. Although the Fig-tree should not blossome, nor fruit be in the Vine; though the labour of the Olive should fail, and the fields should yield no meat, though the flocks should be out off from the fold, and there should be no herd in the stall: yet will I rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The consideration of his heavenly interest, and that God, was the God of his salvation, was that which not only kept the Prophet from being dismayed, but also made him to rejoyce in the absense of all creature joys and comforts; the want of these worldly things, were not able to abate his heavenly joy, which he had in the God of his salvation. The consideration of their heavenly interest, and their title to the everlasting glory, was that which made the Apostles of Christ so couragious and comfortable under all their sufferings that they underwent for Christ: This was that which made the Martyr Steven so fearless and undaunted, when he was on the brink of death, and when the stones flew about his ears, when he could look up into Heaven, the place of his Inheritance, where he was going, and take a view of that Heavenly glory, Acts 7:55. A believer that can look up by an eye of faith upon Christ and Heaven and take

a view of the unseen world, the place of his eternal rest and felicity, will be able in some measure to undergo with comfort, the sharpest and bitterest persecutions that the malice of Men or Devils can expose him to; This was that which made Paul and Syllas sing praises at midnight, when they were shut up in prison, and their feet in the stocks, Acts 16:25. This was that which caused the believing Hebrews, to take joyfully the spoiling of their goods; even the consideration of their interest in the Kingdom of Heaven, Heb. 10:34. For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing that in Heaven, you have a better, and a more enduring substance; Their knowledge of this their interest in the Heavenly riches, made them willingly to part with the earthly riches for the sake of Christ.

Secondly, the next thing to be spoken unto, is this; to shew that the people of God, upon this consideration of their interest in the Kingdom of Glory; have been deported from fear and despondence, and exhorted to courage and magnanimity in the ways of God: Upon this consideration it is, that Christ exhorts his little flock in the Text, not to fear, because that God would give them the Kingdom of Heaven. How often are the Servants of God in Scripture, deported from fear, Isa. 41:10. Fear not, I am with thee, be not dismayed, I am thy God. Vers. 14. Fear not thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel: I will help thee saith the Lord thy Redeemer. Isa. 50:7, 8. Fear ye not the reproach of men, be not dismayed at their revilings, for the Moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool, but my Righteousness shall be forever, and my Salvation from Generation to Generation: And again, Vers 12. Who art thou that shouldest be afraid of a man that shall dye, and of the Son of man that shall be made as grass, and forgetteth the Lord thy Maker, that stretched out the Heavens, and laid the foundation of the Earth? And our Saviour in the New Testament, to the supporting of Believers under their afflictions and tribulations; tells them, that it is a blessed thing, thus to be dealt withal by the World, Matt. 5, 10, 11, 12. Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and

persecute you, and speak all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake: rejoyce and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven. And Luke 6:22. Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate from you their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil for the Son of mans sake, rejoyce in that day, and leap for joy, for behold your reward is great in Heaven. The consideration of our interest in the Kingdom of Heaven, should keep us from being dismayed, though we are hated, persecuted, reproached by the prophane world, but should make us rejoyce rather, and leap for joy. Thus much for the second thing, which is, That the people of God are deported from fear and despondency, and exhorted to courage and magnanimity in the ways of God, from the very consideration of their interest in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Thirdly, I shall give you the Reasons why Believers, those that have an interest in the Kingdom of Heaven, should not fear not be dismayed at any outward trouble, opposition, or tribulation that they meet with in the world.

First, it is very unsutable for one that hath secured the heavenly interest, and his title to eternal glory, to be dismayed at thing of nought: how unsutable is it for one that is an Heir of Heaven, to be excessively grieved and disconsolate, because he meeteth with some rubs in his way thither? Oh how unseemly is it for a child of light to walk in darkness and heaviness, because somewhat of the world falls a cross to his expectation or desire: for one that is to enjoy eternal happiness in the life to come, to be dismayed and perplexed at every petty cross that he meeteth here below? how unseemly is it for a child of God, and Heir of Heaven, for one that shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the Heavenly glory, to go up and down drooping at inconsiderable crosses and light afflictions, which are but for a moment.

For a worldling that hath all his good things here, and hath no other portion but in this life, to be grieved and perplexed at his external

losses and troubles; this is not so much for such a one to be grieved when he is thwarted in his designs, and when the world falls a cross to him, this is but sutable and agreeable to such a one, because he hath placed his Hope, his Contentment, his joy and delight in these things: and therefore being deprived of them, he is deprived of his best things, his Portion, his All.

But for a Child of God, one that hath an interest in eternal life and glory, to be cast down and dismayed at such small things, as the affliction, trials and tribulations of the world: Oh what an unseemly thing is this, as if their Heavenly interest did not give them greater cause of joy and rejoycing, then those external worldly afflictions, do give them cause of sadness and disconsolation.

The Frantick mirth of the prophane World, that are in the high way to Damnation, and the groundless perplexities of the regenerate Children of God, are both alike, unsuitable and unseemly, although not both alike dangerous.

To see a Worldling, that hath nothing else to comfort and support him, but the fading enjoyments of this present life, to be merry and jovial, as if all were well; and on the other hand, to see a believer that is an heir of Heaven, to live in a drooping and disconsolate state, because of these outward troubles, is cause of pity and lamentation.

Secondly, as it is unsuitable for a child of God that hath secured his eternal state, and made sure of his heavenly interest, to be dismayed at the afflictions of the world, so it is very unwarrantable; believers are commanded to be much in holy rejoycing; Rejoyce (saith Christ to his Disciples) because your names are written in Heaven, Luke 10:20. Be glad in the Lord, Oh ye righteous, and shout for joy, all ye upright in heart, Psalm 32:11. Rejoyce in the Lord, oh ye righteous, for praise is comely for the upright, Psalm 33:1. Rejoyce evermore, 1 Thes. 5:16. Oh how exceeding unwarrantable is it then for those that have an interest in the heavenly Glory, to be discouraged at their

outward afflictions, by which they do disparage Religion, and frighten away others from the doors of grace.

Thirdly, it is irrational for one that hath secured his interest in the Heavenly Kingdom, to be afraid of his worldly afflictions and tribulations, seeing all the losses and crosses in the World, are as nothing comparatively to such an one: Let a Child of God but weigh and ponder such things aright, and compare the cause of joy that he hath, by virtue of his heavenly interest on the one hand, with the cause of sorrow that he hath, by reason of the crosses of the world on the other, and he will see, that he hath a thousand times more cause of joy, than of sorrow; and therefore the thoughts of his heavenly interest, should swallow up those of his worldly troubles and disappointments. I reckon (saith the Apostle Paul) that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us, Rom. 1:18. And the same Apostle tell us elsewhere, our light afflictions which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 2 Cor. 4:17. Now, is it not unreasonable for a believer to be grieved and disquieted with those light afflictions which shall be recompensed with an eternal weight of glory? What can a child of God lose, as long as his God, his portion, his interest in Heaven is safe and secured to him? What are all the losses that he can sustain in the World, as long as he is interested in the Eternal Kingdom of Glory?

I must tell you, Believers, ye that walk holily and closely with God, and have a title to the Kingdom of Heaven, for you to be grieved and discontented because all things do not concur according to your desires in the World, is unreasonable and absurd; as if a rich man that hath a great Estate, and fair Houses and Orchards, should be disquieted because the winde bloweth away a few leaves from his Trees.

Is not the Kingdom of Heaven that thou art entitled to, enough to make thee amends for all thy troubles and calamities in the end? Art thou troubled by the profane World, and vexed up and down by thy

Enemies, and not suffered to rest in quiet? And is it not enough for thee that the Kingdom of Heaven is the place of thine eternal rest and happiness, where thou shalt be forever advanced above their reach? Art thou exposed to the loss of thy place and estate in the World, and will not an incorrupted Crown of glory, and an eternal inheritance among them that are sanctified, make thee amends for those petty losses that thou sustainest here? Art thou the off-scouring of the World here? and is it not enough that thou shalt be glorified in the presense of Saints and Angels hereafter? Art thou slandered and reproached by the World? And is not this enough to support thee that thou shalt be acquitted at the bar of Christ? Dost thou suffer the loss of liberty? And art thou under restraint and imprisonment, and is not this enough to comfort thee, that thou art free from the captivity and dominion of sinne? and art rid of those chains and fetters by which so many thousands in the World are led captive by Satan at his pleasure, and that thou art free from the prison of Hell? Put case (which is the greatest trouble that a godly man can undergoe in the World) thou art to lose thy life for the sake of Christ, and of a good Conscience, however a Believers interest in the Kingdom of Heaven should keep him from being dismayed at that loss; an eternal life of happiness and glory will be enough to recompence thee a thousand-fold for loss of this frail life. Thus you have the third Reason, it is irrational for a Believer that hath an interest in the Kingdom of Heaven, to be dismayed at those outward crosses and losses that he sustains in the World, because they are very little and inconsiderable while their God, their portion, their heavenly interests is safe and secure to them.

Lastly, one that is an Heir of Heaven, and hath a title to the Heavenly Kingdom, should be couragious in the ways of God, and not be daunted at his outward troubles, because of the short continuance of them, as the joyes and pleasures of the World are but for a little moment of time, so the sorrows and tribulations of the World are but for a small moment of time; neither the troubles of the godly, though they may be sharp, yet they are but short, death will quickly put a period to them all, all the tryals and tribulations of the Saints will be

at an end when they come to enter into their everlasting rest. The Saints in Heaven are perfectly freed as from the evil of sin, so from the evil of suffering; they will be out of the reach of their most powerful and malicious adversaries. Now what little reason hath a Believer that hath an interest in the Kingdom of Glory, to be dismayed at his worldly troubles, which shall so soon be done away, when he hath a title to everlasting happiness to support him? Who is there that would be dismayed at the sufferings of a few years or weeks, if he were assured of an eternal weight of glory to make him amends for it. Thus much for the Doctrinal part.

Use 1.

Is it so, that a Believers interest in the Kingdom of Heaven should make him chearful and couragious in the wayes of God, and keep him from being dismayed at the sufferings and afflictions that he meeteth withal in the World? Is it so, that one that hath a title to Heaven, hath cause of joy in the midst of his greatest sorrows and troubles? Then

First of all, Here is matter of tryal and examination for us to try our selves whether we have a title to Heaven or no: We would all rejoyce to have somewhat which might effectually support us, and bear us up under troubles and afflictions in the World, and it is sad when we are in trouble, if we have nothing to support us; but if we have secured our heavenly interest, and have cleared our title to the Kingdom of Glory, we have then the greatest ground of comfort and joy in the World, and we may upon right grounds rejoyce under the sharpest tribulations that we meet with from the hands of men. I shall therefore give you some marks and characters how we may know, whether we have an interest in the Kingdom of Heaven, or no. And here I might refer you back to those characters propounded in the application of the former Doctrine; if we can truly say that God is our Father by Adoption and Regeneration, and that we are his Children, then we may safely conclude, that we are some of those that have an interest in the Kingdom of Heaven; if we are the Children of God,

then we are coheirs of God, Rom. 8. are entitled to Heaven; try then whether you can conclude that you are the Children of God. But because I know not whether ever I shall have liberty to speak to you again from this place, I shall propose some other characters also to help us to pass a right judgment upon ourselves in a matter of so great concernment.

First, then whosoever thou art that wouldest try thy title to the Heavenly Glory, thou maist try it by this: If the design of thy life be to glorifie God, and to promote their Heavenly interest, then thou art one of those that are intituled to the Heavenly Inheritance; if thou drivest a Trade for Heaven, and if that the obtaining of Heaven be the principal part of thy care and business, and the great design that thou drivest at in all thy actions, then by this thou mayest try thy title to Heaven. Apply now this home to thy soul, what Trade and design art thou now driving in the world? Is it thy main business here to promote thy temporal or thine eternal state? Art thou striving more after Earth or Heaven? If thy design here be after Riches, Honour or Greatness in the World? and makest all thy actions subservient to thy design, then thou art none of those that have a Title to Heaven; But if it be the business of thy life, and the Trade that thou drivest in the World to advance Gods glory, and thine eternal salvation, and dost care for no more of this World, than may tend to promote Gods glory, and thine eternal happiness; then thou maist safely conclude that thy name is written in Heaven, and that thou hast an interest in that Kingdom. It is the grand mistake of Thousands of souls everywhere, that they pretend to seek after the Kingdom of Heaven, but they seek it only by the by, and their main design in the World is somewhat else, as to grow Rich, or Great, or Honourable here; They do not make it their principal business, and their great design to secure their Title to Heaven; But the look upon Heaven only as a reserve for them, when they can enjoy the World no longer; And therefore they will have some glances, and some faint endeavours that way; But if ever we will enter into Heaven, we must first of all seek Gods Kingdom and his righteousness, Matt. 6:33, Luke 12:31.

Secondly, wouldest thou know whether thou hast a Title to the Heavenly glory, or no: Thou mayest know it by thy heavenly mindedness: They that have an interest in the Heavenly Kingdom, they have Heavenly hearts; if their Treasure be in Heaven, their hearts will be there also, Matt. 6:20,21. Lay up for your selves treasures in Heaven, where neither Moth, nor Rust can corrupt, and Thieves break through and steal; for where your Treasure is, there will your hearts be also. And is it so with us, are our hearts taken up with the Heavenly glory? Are our meditations and contemplations much on Heavenly objects? Or else, are they taken up only or mostly with earthly vanities? Are our hearts on our Riches, Pleasures, &c. Or else are they placed upon Heaven, and Heavenly things? If we have a title, to the Kingdom of Heaven, our hearts, minds and affections, will be Heavenly, and taken up with Heavenly Objects, Col. 3:1,2. If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the Earth.

Thirdly, wouldest thou know whether thou hast an interest in the Kingdom of Heaven, or no? How dost thou like the employment of Heaven? if thou likest the employment of Heaven, then thou mayest comfortably conclude, that thou hast an interest in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Canst thou say thou delightest to be employed in serving, and in glorifying God, and in worshipping of him in spirit and truth, according to his word? Canst thou say in truth, that thou delightest to do the will of God here on earth, as it is done by the Angels in heaven, and the spirits of just men made perfect there? Dost thou take delight to be employed in that employment that the Saints of heaven are, and shall be forever employed in? Dost thou take pleasure to adore, and praise, and magnifie the ever blessed God? Dost thou take pleasure in the duties of Religion, and rejoyce to be conversing with God in prayer, and in other holy exercises, and to be enjoying communion with him? if it be thus with thee, as I have now described: this, this will evidently make out thy Title for Heaven.

Many Thousands pretend that their designs are to go to Heaven, and they presumptuously conclude that they have an interest in that Kingdom, when as they like not the Heavenly employment in themselves or others, and they care not to get acquaintance with God here on earth, and are strangers to the duties of Religion, and to a life of holiness, and perhaps spends an hour in a week, or it may be in a month in secret prayer, or in other holy exercises; and it may be neglect the worship of God in their Families too; but if we are unacquainted with the employment of Heaven, which is to praise and magnifie, worship and adore God; if thou delightest not so to do, thou canst not conclude that thou hast a Title to Heaven: but if thou hast an interest in the Kingdom of Heaven, then thou dost most of all delight in that employment which hath most of Heaven in it.

Fourthly, if thou hast an interest in the Kingdom of Heaven, thou hast a special love to the heirs of Heaven; and thou hast a near and dear affection to the people of God though they be despised, rejected, scorned, and persecuted by the prophane world; and thou dost delight in the company of those on Earth, which are like to be thy companions in Heaven, and thou hadst rather have the society of those howsoever mean and low in the world, that have the trueth of grace in them, than of all the stately and glittering gallants of the World, that are strangers to a Life of holiness; and the more holy and heavenly they are in their hearts, and lives, the more amiable will their company be to thee, 1 Job. 3:14. Psalm 15:4. Put thy self to the question whether it be thus with thee, or no, and thou shalt finde out thy title to heaven thereby.

Lastly, if thou hast a title to Heaven, then thou art so far at a point with all the riches, and pleasures, and enjoyments of the World, as that thou wilt rather forgo them all, than forsake Christ; and rather part with them all, rather than they shall hinder thee in thy way towards Heaven; and if thou art brought so far at a pinch, as that thou must either forsake thy interest in Christ and Heaven; or to forgo thy worldly accommodations; thou art very willing to forgo them all that thou mayest stick close to Christ, and go forward in thy

way to thy Heavenly Inheritance; thus it was with the Apostle Paul, Phil. 3:7, 8. But what things (saith he) were gain to me, those I accounted loss for Christ; Yea, doubtless I account all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do account them but dung that I may win Christ; And is it so with us then, when riches, honour, and pleasure do stand in competition with Christ, and hinder us in our progress in grace and holiness; are we willing and ready to cast them away, as we would cast away Dung; if it be thus with us in reality, then we may conclude we have a title to Heaven, and an interest in the eternal glory. By these things, Beloved, you may try whether you have an interest in Heaven or no. Having finished the Use of Examination, I shall come to the next Use, which is the last that I shall speak unto, which an Use of Exhortation.

Is it so, that the consideration of a Believers interest in the Heavenly Glory is enough to bear up his spirit under all the trials and tribulations of this Life, then, Oh that you which cannot upon Trial finde, that you have a title to Heaven, that you would labour after an interest in the Heavenly Glory; if thou hast no interest there, what good will all the enjoyments of the World do thee? how quickly will all thy comforts and pleasures leave thee? and what little cause hast thou to rejoyce in the abundance of outward things, if thou hast no title to the durable riches? if thou art void of the riches of grace here, and hast no title to the riches of Glory hereafter; what wilt thou do in a day of Tryal, and in an hour of trouble and calamity? What wilt thou do when Losses, Crosses, Troubles and Vexations shall compass thee about, if thou hast not an Heavenly interest to support thee under them? What wilt thou do, when Pains and Anguish, when Diseases, Sickness and Death shall seize upon thee, if thou hast not a Title to thy Heavenly inheritance? These things will certainly and speedily come upon us, how far off soever we may put them in our thoughts; the proud looks of the lofty will quickly be turned into an earthly paleness; though they look as big, and carry themselves as high, as if they had a protection from Hell and the Grave; and those bodies which we now take so much care to please and pamper, will

shortly become a feast for Worms; though they may be adorned with all the Ornaments that the pride of man can invent, and friends, and riches, and will but accompany us to the Grave, and there leave us; and Oh what will then become of us, if we have no interest in Christ and Heaven, and can no lay claim to the everlasting Glory.

If you ask me, how we shall do to secure our interest in the Kingdom of Heaven? I answer, it must be by a through closure with Christ by saith, and chusing of him for our Lord and Saviour; God hath ordained that those that are united to Christ by faith here on earth, that they shall be with Christ; and live with Christ in Heaven: Heaven and Glory is the Dowry that God giveth with his Son Jesus Christ; and they that will Marry the Heir shall have the Inheritance; and if we are Christs, then all will be ours, 1 Cor. 3:22,23. Whether of Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or things present, or things to come, all is yours, and ye are Christs; They that have an interest in Christ, have a Title to all. Let us therefore contract ourselves to Christ: resolving to be no longer our own, but his; and to live no longer to ourselves, but to him; let us chuse him to be our Lord and Saviour, and take him upon his own Terms as he is offered to us in the Gospel, to be our King, Priest, and Prophet; and when we are once thus united to Christ by faith, we shall be coheirs with him of the heavenly Inheritance; all this will be ours when we are Christs by a self-resignation, and submission, and when Christ is ours by a believing choice and election; when we have thus made choice of Christ upon his own terms to be our Lord and Saviour, our portion and our all: and have given up ourselves to him to be wholly his, and at his dispose: this will undoubtedly give us a sum and an unquestionable title to Heaven.

Secondly, the next address that I have to make, is to those that are the Heirs of this Kingdom, and have a Title to this Heavenly Inheritance. Is it so, that a Believers interest in the Kingdom of Heaven is enough to bear up his spirit under all his troubles and afflictions, and to keep him from being dismayed under his sorest Trials and Tribulations that he meeteth withal from the World; then

the Exhortation that I shall give to you, is the same that our Saviour giveth in the Text: Fear not little Flock, for it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you the Kingdom. You that have an interest in the Heavenly Glory; Oh be not dismayed nor affrighted at those outward afflictions and tribulations that you meet with here below; it is true, God doth often exercise his dear Children with Trials, Afflictions and Tribulations; this is the way by which God doth discipline his Children, while they are in their Minority here; this Believers must count upon beforehand; but there is not any of those things that should make a believing Christian dismayed, seeing his eternal concernments are so safe, and his Heavenly interest is secure.

And there is no Trouble nor Cross that the Saints can meet withal, but that we are somewhere or other in the Word of God exhorted not to be afraid of it. Do we meet with reproach from men, is that the Cross we undergo? this indeed is heavy, insomuch that the Psalmist complains, that his heart was broken by it, Psalm 69:20. Yet the Servants of God, the Heirs of Heaven, are cautioned not to fear that, •a. 51:10. Fear not the reproach of men, nor be afraid of their revilings: or is the affliction that thou meetest withal, imprisonment for the sake of Christ and of a good Conscience, this is likewise grievous and heavy to be born; yet the Heirs of Heaven are exhorted not to fear that neither, Rev. 2:10. it is Christs advice to the Church of Smyrna, Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer; behold the Devil shall cast some of you into Prison, that ye may be tryed, and shall have Tribulation Ten days; be thou faithful unto the death, and I will give thee a crown of life. Those that have interest in the crown of life; imprisonment for the sake of Christ, if God should call them thereunto: nay, put case thou wert to suffer death itself for the sake of Christ, this is the greatest and sorest of all sufferings: yet the servants of God are cautioned not to fear that neither, for it can be but a bodily death, and it will make way for a better and happier life, Matt. 10:28. Fear not them that can kill th• body, but are not able to kill the soul. Whatsoever the sufferings be, thou that art a Believer, and hast an interest in the Kingdom of Heaven, thou art exhorted not to be afraid of it.

Oh Christians! I beseech you act faith upon your Heavenly Interest; I might tell you it can never be more seasonable so to do than now; the more you act faith hereupon, the more you will be enabled to live above the frowns of a troublesome and vexatious world. Oh look up by an eye of faith upon the recompence of rewards, and you will be able to prefer the afflictions of the Saints, before the vain and transitory pleasures of unregenerate sinners, which endure but for a moment, and to chuse the greatest affliction before the least sin, as Moses did, Heb. 11:25,26.

And let the joy that is set before you make you to endure the Crosses of this world, and to despise the shame, as the Captain of your salvation hath done before you; and let the hope of the Glory of God make you rejoyce, notwithstanding all the scorn and contempt that you meet with from the world.

But because of our frailty and aptness to be afraid and dismayed at afflictions and tribulations, I shall see before you some considerations, which if well weighed, might (by the blessing of God) do much to the curing, and removing of those fears and discontents that are apt to seize upon us when we are exposed to Trials and losses in the world.

First, Consider Christians, you that have secured your heavenly interest: are you in sore Troubles, and do you meet with hard dealings from men? it may be you may bring more glory to God by our afflictions, losses and crosses in the world, than if you should always be in a quiet, prosperous, and serene condition: it may be God may have a greater Revenue of glory by thy troubles and tryals, than by thy prosperity in the world: and shall we not be willing to be in such a condition ▪ howsoever unpleasant to our corrupt flesh, in which we may be most serviceable for God, and bring most honour and glory to him? It is a sign that we have little love to God, or indeed to our own souls, if we do not prefer the Glory of God before our own ease and carnal contentment; what do we but mock with God in our prayers, when we pray that his Name may be glorified, if we are

dismayed and discontented when God is glorified by us in our sufferings, because they are tedious and irksome to our flesh: If we are unwilling that God should be glorified by our sufferings: If we are unwilling to honour him in an afflicted state, why do we then in our prayers pretend to beg that God may be glorified? Oh, how much is God glorified many times by the sufferings of his people, when as he is dishonoured by the secure and sensual lives of many thousands that are in prosperous, calm; and quiet condition in the World! I might give you many instances from the Scripture, to such that the sufferings of Gods people, have tended very much, to the setting forth of the high praises of the Lord. Oh, how much have the sufferings of the Israelites been all along! of Joh, of David, of Hezekiah, of the three Children, of Daniel: and so under the New Testament; how have the sufferings of Stephen, Paul, Silas, and the rest of the Apostles and Martyrs, resounded to the honor and glory of God, for whom they suffered!

Indeed, Gods people do more honour and glorifie God by their sufferings, than by their doings for him. Let us not then be dismayed, though we may be in a troublesome and suffering condition; seeing this is a condition, in the which we are most capable of doing service for God, and of bringing most honor and glory to him.

Secondly, Thou that hast an interest in the Kingdom of Heaven, art thou in an afflicted suffering condition in the world? to bear up thy fainting spirits, consider, that affliction and tribulation, is that, by which God is pleased to cleanse and purge his people from sin: Afflictions are like Black-soap, which doth seem to soil the Cloath, and make it more filthy, yet it purgeth and cleanseth it, and maketh it more white at length: it is as the fire, into which the Gold may be thrown, yet it is not consumed, but refined and purified, thereby it loseth only its dross; so the Saints are not quite consumed by their afflictions, but sanctified, and they lose only that filth, dross, and rust, that doth mix itself with grace in their hearts; by this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, saith God, speaking of afflictions: and

this is all the fruit to take away his sin, and shall we be unwilling to have our sins purged?

It is true, as for those that are Reprobates, God usually lets them alone to go on and die, and perish forever: when as yet, God is pleased to correct his people, and to cast them into the Furnace of affliction, because he intends mercy to them: and surely it will be known one day, that there can be no greater Judgment befall poor Creatures, than to be let alone without chastisements, to take their own swing in sin: and Oh how many thousands are now in Torment, for that they were let alone in their sins, and never chastised by Afflictions in their Life time: when as Gods people are chastened of the Lord, that they might not be condemned with the World, 1 Cor. 11:32. And which is easier to be born, external tribulations in this life, or eternal torments in the life to come; one of these two will certainly befall every man and woman of us; either we shall be chastened here, or condemned hereafter: the wicked are oftentimes let alone here they are not in troubles as other men. Psalms 73. but they are condemned with the World: The Godly, they are often chastized of the Lord here, but it is in mercy to them, that they may be purged from sin, and not condemned with the world. And David tells us, that by his afflictions he was reduced from going astray, and brought back again into the Fold of God, Psalm 119:67. Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now have I kept thy precepts. And shall we be dismayed at the means whereby we are kept close to God, and are kept from falling away from God? A man is willing to take a bitter medicine to purge away that disease which would otherwise kill him; Nor is he troubled at the working of his Physick, though he have many painful gripes, so long as it tends to the removing of those obnoxious humours and diseases which would otherways bring him to his grave: And shall Christians be afraid of the bitter Cup of Afflictions, which by Gods blessing purge away their sins, which are the diseases of their Souls, and so preserve them from eternal death? Thy trials here are to purge thee, and cleanse thee, that thou mayest not lie in Eternal torments in the world to come. And shall Christians be dismayed at that which tends to their Eternal health and

Salvation, and to the keeping of their Souls from Hell? We should rather rejoyce to be in that condition whatsoever it be; by which we may be most purged and preserved from sin. Standing pools do usually contract filth and mud: So those Christians that are settled upon the lees in a prosperous state and condition, they do very frequently get filth and corruption; The people of God are never made the freer from sin by their freedom from outward afflictions. This then is the second consideration to keep the Saints from being dismayed at their afflictions in the World, because thereby they are purged from sin which would otherways prove the bane of their souls.

Thirdly, you that are the heirs of Heaven, and have an interest in the Eternal Glory, you are in affliction and tribulation in the World, be not dismayed; For consider, that the thing do tend to the exercising and increase of our graces, and to the making of you eminent in Grace and holiness: And will you be daunted at that which tends to the making of you more holy? Will you be grieved at that which tends to the increasing of your faith, patience, humility, heavenly-mindedness, and to the making of you more eminent for holiness and godliness? Believers are usually greater gainers by their afflictions in the World, than by their external prosperity; yea, many times they are losers by their prosperity, when as they have been great gainers by their troubles and adversity. Oh how many have gained in grace and holiness by their losses in the World: the servants of God were never more eminent in grace, than when they were least and lowest in their outward estate: true graces are the diamonds that shine brightest in the darkest night, and these shine clearest in the obscurest night of adversity.

The Saints in Scripture were then most eminent for holiness, and godliness, and all other graces, when they lay under greatest troubles and tribulations from the World, and how exemplary in holiness, and how eminent in faith and heavenly-mindedness were the Martyrs, when they were afflicted, tormented, imprisoned, burned and persecuted with the most grievous persecutions from the hands of

wicked men: when as the prosperity and pleasures of the wicked did tend to the hardening of them in their sins,

Did we seriously consider how great hinderers, riches & pleasures, and worldly prosperity are to grace and holiness, we should not be so discontented at our mean and afflicted condition in the World, nor so over-desirous of those accommodations which have proved the bane of so many, and the hinderers of their salvation; peace and plenty, honor and prosperity, doth very often increase pride and covetousness, security, and earthly-mindedness; when as affliction, tribulation, want, reproach, being sanctified by God, doth tend to the exercising and increasing of patience, humility, and a heavenly conversation; and upon this consideration the Apostle Paul gloried in tribulations, because it wrought in him the grace of patience, Rom. 5:3. and not only so (saith he) but we glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, &c. There are many souls now in torments for that pride, security, worldly-mindedness, and other sins which were nourished and fostered up in their prosperity in the world: and many souls now in heaven which were helped forward in their way thither by the exercise of those graces which were nourished and encreased by their adversity, crosses, and calamities here below. Be not therefore dismayed and discontented Christian with that condition, though it be grievous to thy frail flesh, which doth tend to the encreasing of grace and holiness.

Lastly, thou that art a believer, & heir of heaven, art thou in affliction, be not dismayed, because these things being sanctified by God will tend to the fitting of thy soul for, and to the bringing of thee nearer to heaven; afflictions and tribulations do tend to the uniting of souls closer to Christ, and to the fitting and preparing them more and more for eternal glory; and hence it is that God hath ordained that through many tribulations we must enter into glory, Acts 14:22. God doth discipline his dear Children by sorrows and troubles here, and so fit them for to reign with him hereafter, and shall we be dismayed at such a condition that doth tend to the fitting of us for our Heavenly Inheritance, and to the bringing of us nearer to Christ

and Salvation? Oh let not afflictions nor tribulations dismay you that have an interest in the Kingdom of Heaven to support you, but let the consideration of your Heavenly interest keep you from fainting at all your afflictions and tribulations that you meet with in your way to Heaven.

And now beloved hearers, give me leave to trespass a little more upon your patience, seeing this is like to be the last opportunity that I shall have to speak to you from this place, being prohibited to preach, unless upon such terms as I confess my conscience dares not submit unto; being therefore enforced to lay down my Ministry, I thought good to let you know that it is neither out of singularity nor stubbornness in opinion, which many it may be may conjecture, but because the things required are such as my conscience cannot close withal; could I see a sufficient warrant from the Word of God for those Ceremonies and other things that are enjoined, I should readily submit unto them; for I can take the great God to witness with my conscience that nothing in the world grieveth me a hundred part so much as to be hindred from the work of the Ministry, and to be disabled from serving my great Master Christ in that employment: but seeing I cannot finde my warrant thence, I dare not go against my conscience, and so do evil that good may come thereby. Those strict prohibitions recorded, Deut. 42. and 12:32. Prov. 30:6. and in other Scriptures, wherein we are prohibited to make any addition to Gods own institutions in his worship, and the terrible threatnings pronounced against those that shall transgress in this particular, hath such impression: upon my heart, that I dare not give my assent nor consent to anything in Gods! Worship which is not warranted from his word; but I think it the lesser evil of the two to expose myself to sufferings in the world, rather than to undergo the checks and reproaches of a wounded and grieved conscience.

Dearly beloved, While I had liberty to speak unto you, I may say with the Apostle Paul, Act. 20:27. I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God; but according to that strength and ability that God hath given me, have laboured to instruct you, and to press

home upon you those great and saving truths which are of necessity to be known and practised, in order to salvation. And as the Apostle Paul writ to the Philippians, Phil. 1:8. So may I say to you, that God is my record, how greatly I have longed after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ: your conversation unto God, and eternal salvation, is that which I have had in my eye; for this I have prayed, for this I have preached, for this I have studied; neither is there anything more joyous to me, than to hear of any of my hearers that are walking in the truth, and that have set their faces towards Heaven.

But seeing God is pleased (for ends best known to himself) to suffer my Mouth, together with the Mouths of many others, my Dear and Reverend Brethren in the Ministry to be stopped, I desire to leave a word or two with each of you, which I would have you to look upon as the words of a dying Minister, or of a dead Minister, in a civil sense; and therefore suffer them to take the deeper impression upon your hearts; I shall therefore direct a word or two to three sorts of persons.

First, To those that do much rejoyce at this time, and that have earnestly looked and longed for it; to such who hug themselves, and make merry because the troublers of Israel (as wicked men account the Ministers of Christ to be) which have told them of their sins, and reprov'd them of their carnal, sensual, unholy lives, are not suffered to preach, nor to trouble them with the unpleasing Doctrines of repentance, conversion, mortification of sin, and other truths which they dislike; to those who look upon the faithful, laborious, convincing preachers of the Word of God to be their enemies, because they have told them the truth, and could not sooth them up in their sins; and rejoyce as the inhabitants of the earth did rejoyce over the Witnesses, and make merry, Rev. 11:10.

To you I say, whosoever you are, that none have more need of our labours, and of our preaching than you; and if you were but acquainted truly with your own state in which you are (which is a state of death and wrath, without you repent, and turn, and become

new creatures) you would be of other minds than now you are: and turn your mirth and jollity into mourning. Consider, that is never the better with any City when the watchmen are removed, nor for a traveller when the light is gone which should direct him in his way; and it cannot be but sad, when so many thousands of godly Ministers, which by their doctrine and lives have been as Lights in the world, shall be extinguished and silenced: believe it Sirs, there is no good groping out our way to Heaven in the dark, when as we know not whether our next step will be in Heaven, or Hell in eternal joy, or misery. A Sick man is never the nearer health, because his Physician is not suffered to speak to him of the danger of his Disease; and carnal and ungodly men are never the nearer their salvation, because their faithful Ministers are not suffered to preach to them of the evil and danger of their sins, which are the hinderers of it. I shall commend to your consideration that one Scripture, which I would have you be often reading, and thinking on, as it is recorded, 1 Pet. 4:17,18. The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of Christ; and if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly, and the sinner appear? If God begin with his faithful Ministers to chastise and afflict them; Oh what then will become of the wicked and ungodly world! if the godly drink fust of this Cup, it is because the wicked shall drink the dregs of it.

A second sort of persons which I shall speak to, are such who are halting between two; that are like Agrippa, almost persuaded to be Christians; that have some convictions upon their consciences, of the excellency of the ways of God, but yet their interest leads them another way, they are unwilling to expose themselves to any troubles or tribulations, by going against the stream of the world, they are afraid that if they should be diligent in the duties of Religion, and should walk holily and closely with God, that then they should be reproached and scorned, or persecuted by the World, and therefore they will go on a little way, but no farther than that they may retreat back again with ease and safety as to their carnal and worldly interests; to such whosoever you are I must tell you, First, that you

must go beyond the common sort of the World, unless you will intend to come short of Heaven, you must not take the example of the multitude to be a sufficient warrant for you to walk by; the broad way, though it be to your corrupt natures the most pleasant way, yet it is not the safest, but the most dangerous way; and the narrow way of holiness and godliness will be found at last to be the way leading to life, though there be but few that finde it, Matt. 7:13,15. they that are afraid of making too much ado for Heaven, they are like to have nothing at all to do with Heaven; it is a Christians duty, and should be his care, not to be conformed to the world, but to be transformed by the renewing of their minde, that they may prove what is that good, and acceptable and perfect will of God, Rom. 12:2.

Secondly, you must not stick at afflictions and crosses in the World if you intend to go to Heaven. Christs cross is the first that must be learnt by Christs Disciples, Luke 14:27. you must account upon it before hand, that if you will live godly in Christ Jesus, you must suffer persecution, 1 Tim. 3:5. You must not be afraid of the reproaches of the ungodly, nor flinch at oppositions and tribulations, if you intend to be everlastingly happy: the fearful are in the forefront of them that march to Hell, Rev. 21:8. but the fearful and unbelieving and abominable, &c. shall have their part in the Lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. The fearful you set down in the front in that black List there mentioned; But the Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.

Thirdly, the end will pay for all; the Kingdom of Heaven will make you amends for all the tribulations that you meet with in your way to Heaven.

Lastly, I shall speak a word to those that fear the Lord, and are diligent in the practise of godliness, that are very much grieved that their faithful Teachers would be removed into corners, my advice that I have to give you besides what I have spoken before, is the same with Pauls to the Philippians, Chap 4:1. My brethren dearly beloved

and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord my dearly beloved. Consider your Heavenly interest, and let that bear you up under all your worldly troubles and persecutions: let not the terrour nor threats of men nor devils make you stir a part from the Doctrine which is according to godliness, though you may be scorned and afflicted by men, yet the day will come when you will be publicly owned and honoured by the Lord of glory, and when Christ which is your life shall appear, then shall you appear with him in glory? be not affrighted at the sufferings of your Ministers, though they should be far greater than now they are; nor discouraged at the backsliding of hypocritical professors, who having formerly made fair pretences to religion and reformation, yet are turned with the dog to their old vomit again and by their so doing do declare that it is their carnal interests only that they look unto, and therefore they will be for religion and reformation, so long as that may be promoted thereby, and no longer: but labour to imitate the heroick courage of Joshua, who resolved that he and his House would serve the Lord, though all Israel should forsake him and backslide from him. Stand fast, I beseech you in the faith, quit your selves like men, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand in the evil day; and having done all to stand, let not the enmity nor opposition of the ungodly make you to forsake the duties of Religion, and the ways of holiness; think not the better of that way, or of those persons meerly because they prosper in the world, nor the worse of those meerly because they are persecuted and afflicted. What were those that were tortured not accepting deliverance, that had tryal of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea moreover of bonds and imprisonment; that were stoned, that were sawen asunder, that were tempted, that were slain by the sword; they that wandered about in sheeps-skins, and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented, Heb. 22:35, 36, 37. They were such of whom the world was not worthy, vers. 38. True holiness and the fear of God are never the less lovely in Gods account, because it is rejected, scorned, and condemned by the wicked world; and sin and prophaneness is never a whit the more pleasing unto Christ because it is in fashion, and practised by the greatest or most of men.

Finally my brethren, commit your selves and your way unto the Lord, and wait patiently for him, he will command deliverance for you in his own time. Snatch not after deliverance by any preposterous and unlawful courses, before God holdeth it out to you, lest you provoke him to detain it the longer from you.

To conclude all, I shall take leave of you in the words of the Holy Ghost, recorded, Acts 20:32, Heb. 13:20,21. And now brethren, I shall commend you to God, & to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified. And the God of peace which brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting Covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever.

34. Mr. G. Evanke's Farewell Sermon

"Nevertheless not my will, but thy will be done." - Matt. 26:39.

The Subject of this Chapter is a sad Story, and Tragical Relation of a dying Jesus. In the beginning of this Gospel, you may see him coming into the World in a Shower, Mat. 2:13. And now in the end of it, you finde him going out in a Storm, Matt. 27:22.

Alas! that so good a Ghest should find so bad a welcome, and that the Lord of Life should so soon be put to death. When the Angels, those Heavenly Choristers first sang that Christmas Carol, of a Saviour that was born into the World, Luke. 2:10,11,12,13,14. one would have thought the World should have fallen a dancing after such Evangelical Musick, and that all hearts should have [like the Babe in Elizabeths womb leapt for joy, at the news of a new born Prince: But it was quite contrary; for instead of joyning in that Heavenly Quire, in gratulating the happy arrival of this young King into their Country; they take the Alarum of his Birth as if an Enemy had landed

in their Coasts: And hereupon Herod presently heads an Army; goes out against him, and makes the poor Prince to fly the Country, Matt. 2:13,14.

But though the meanest of his Birth, Extraction, and Descent may give them distaste at first, yet when he begins to display his Divinity among them, by working such amazing Miracles, as none could work, and Preaching such moving Sermons as none could ever Preach: Oh, then they will recant their Error, and own their Saviour, and the joyful shout of a King will be heard amongst them; as it is expressed in Numb. 23:21.

Truly one would think that it would have been thus; but oh no! the Rocky hearts of these Marble wretches would not yield, nor melt, nor thaw, nor take impression, but still they continue in their unbelief and hardness of heart, disowning the Lord that bought them, and consulting his death, who was contriving to bring them to life.

All the displeasure he would have done them, was to take their sins from them, Matt. 11:28. And all the pleasure they meant to shew him was to take his Life from him, Mat 26:59.

All the hurt that ever Christ did them, was to pray for them, Father forgive them, forgive them. And all the good they ever did him, was to cry, Crucifie him, Crucifie him. And Crucifie him they did before they could sit down.

Whose Death and Crucifixion is described and represented to your view,

1. By the Antecedents, or things before.
2. By the Consequents, or things following after.

The Antecedents were,

1. The several Preparatories to it, Chap.

2. The judicial progress about it, Chap.

The Prerogatives were,

1. The Jews conspiring, ver. 3, 4, 5.

2. Judas his Covenancing to affect it, 14, 15, 16.

3. Christs own preparing and fitting himself for it, that he might without relucting submit to it, and without the least Symptome of disponding, encounter and go thorow with it. And this is the Argument of the latter part of this Chapter at large, and of my Text in short.

Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me, yet not my will, but thy will be done.

Which words I may call, the pious Souls sequestering itself for dying: or, Our Saviours Preparatory to his Passion: Wherein you have two Observables.

1. Here's an humble Petition presented, Let this Cup pass.

2. Here's an hearty Resignation promised, Not my will, but thine be done.

I. First, A humble Petition; Let this Cup pass from me. Our Saviour was at this time very apprehensive of Death, The sorrows of the Grave engulfed him about, and the pains of Hell had taken hold upon him: in this dark condition and Spiritual Damp that his Soul lay in, he gets himself out into the Garden alone, and there he fits weeping under the Juniper-tree; and like dying Hezekiah, he lays prostrate, and spreads his Condition before the Lord, imploring him Samaritan-like, to shew him some pity in this his Extremity, Father, saith he, Let this cup pass from me.

Now in that Christ betakes himself to God for help in this hour of heaviness, you may learn hence, It's better to intrust and interest God, for our help and comfort, than man: For man, yea, the best of men, are but men, and when they have done the best for us, it may be they can do no good to us.

When the man (in the Kings) had made his misery known to his Neighbors, and cryed to them, Help, Help, you know what an answer he got, How can we help, except the Lord help?

When Job had told over the sad story of his great losses to his three friends, expecting some redress to so unparalleled grievances, you know how long they sate by him, without giving him one word of Counsel, or administring the least word of Comfort, which forced him into that passionate Resolve, Miserable Comforters are ye all.

When Judas lay under the Convulsions and Corrodings of a grumbling Conscience, and ran to the Priests for Absolution. A look thee to that, was all the comfort he could get from them. Ah! that mans condition is most to be pitied, who runs to none but man for pity. When all is done, God is our surest stay; He is usually the last, but always the best Refuge? Therefore when we have read over the sad Lecture of our Losses, and poured out our wants and wrongs into the bosom of our safest and firmest friends, then is this Apostrophe, this Turn, the sweetest Turn the Soul can take, when it can Turn to God [as you see Christ doth here] & say, Father, if it be possible, let this cup, this cross, pass from me.

II. Secondly, Here's an hearty resignation, in these words, Nevertheless not my will, but thine be done. And if he had said, 'tis true, it's Ease which this Nature, this Humane Nature of mine would have, but if thou Lord, art otherwise resolv'd to continue me in pain, I have no more to say, but only this, thy will be done.

It was the saying of a good Woman in her Sickness, when askt whether she was willing to live or die, answer'd, I am willing to do

whether God pleaseth. But said one, if God should refer it to you, which would you chuse? Truly said she, if God should refer it to me, I should e'n refer it to him again. Here's the picture of Christs patience (drawn here in this Text) where, as you see, he refers to his Fathers pleasure, not my will, but thine be done: Paraphrastically thus; If thou wilt have me suffer a while, lay load on me, and spare not; If I must be spit on thus shamefully, and buffeted thus basely, and that by my own Creatures, whom I could send to Hell with a word speaking if I must climb to the Ladder, and be hung up in Gibbets as a Spectacle of sadness to my Friends, and Object of laughter to my enemies; If it be so that my Honour must lie in the dust, and my Bloud lie in thè dust, and my Sacred Body go to bed with Worms, if it must be thus, let it be thus, and no otherwise than just thus: in a word, if he that never stole anything, unless it were mens sins from them, must now be numbered with Transgressors, and hang'd with Thieves? if the Redemption of the World be so costly, that I cannot hug a poor soul to Heaven with me at a cheaper Rate, I am content to come up to Gods terms, and to buy the life of the Nation though it be with my own death. Thus much is meant in this Expression: Thy will be done.

From which Branch, we may shake this Fruit into your Lap.

Dostr. A gracious soul will endeavour the crossing his own will, when he sees that it crosses Gods. Or thus,

A true Christian dare not [at least ought not] to gratifie his own Humour when it stands in opposition, or cometh in competition with Gods Honour.

In the improvement of which, I shall

1. Premise some Presidents of it.
- 2 Annex some Reasons to it.
3. Infer some Use from it.

The first President I shall pitch upon is Abraham, Gen. 22, 2. Here God calls Abraham out to very hot service, even to lay the Sacrificing, Knife to the throat of his dear Child. Come, saith God, take thy Son, thy only Son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and offer him up for a Burnt-offering Alas! how many considerations might have stept up into Abrahams head, at this time to have made him refuse obedience to a Command so grievous and ungrateful to flesh and bloud. Alas! Lord, Isaac is my son, the only staffe of my old Age: And if my Son die, it will be enough to bring my gray Hairs with sorrow to the Grave. Nay more, Isaac is my (only) Son, I have none else to keep up my Family, and to preserve my Name in everlasting Remembrance, and if he die, all the hopes I have of a Flourishing Posterity dies with him. Nay more, Isaac is the Son of Promise; In his seed all Nations are to be blessed; Christ the Messiah, is to come of his Life; Sions Deliverer is to spring out of his Race, and if he die, the World for ought I know must want a Saviour, and Israel his Redeemer. Besides, if Isaac must be sacrificed, is there none to lay bloody hands upon him, but myself? Must an indulgent Father, be his own Childs Executioner? Must I that gave him life, be the cruel Instrument of taking it way? Thus Abraham might have Expostulated the Case with God; But no, no instead of Replying, he falls to Obeying, Gen. 22. ver 3. without either disputing the Justice of Gods Precept, or distrusting the truth of his promise, for he considered, That God was able to raise him up again from the dead, Heb. 11:19.

See here an eminent piece of Self-denial; his sin must go, his Son must go, anything, yea, everything must go when God calls for it.

It was Abrahams will, and wish too, that Isaac should live; but Abraham would not own his will, when he saw it did not own Gods; and what lost he by it?

Take this Christian, as an Axiome, and put it as an Article into thy Creed, that there's never any loss in obeying God, let the command be never so dangerous, costly, or difficult; the way to keep Isaac, is to

give up Isaac, and the way to enjoy thy will, is to deny thy will. The promise is clear, Matt. 19:29.

A second President you have in David, 2 Sam. 15:26. who in that great Cross, his chasing from the Crown, thus expressed himself; Behold here I am, let the Lord do with me as seemeth good in his sight: As if he had said, If the Lord please to change the Nature of my unnatural Son Absalom, who seeks to Usurp the Crown, and Ravish the Kingdom from me, and to settle and re-establish me on the Throne again: If God please thus to honour me, it shall content me; but if he use his Negative Vote, and deny me that mercy, saying, I have no pleasure in thee, I will be content still; Let him do (saith David) what seemeth good in his sight; Not what seems good in my sight, but in his. His will shall be my will, and his pleasure, my delight. See what another self-denying Saint here is, that God and he, should have but one will betwixt them both. If God would favour him, he would be for it; and if God would afflict him, he would not be against it. Which disposition mindeth me of that passion which I have read of Socrates, when a Tyrant threatned him with death, I am willing to dye, Socrates; Nay then, replied the Tyrant, you shall live against your will; No, said Socrates, whatever you do with me, it shall not be against, but with my will.

O friends, I question whether some of you, who pretend to Grace, may not go to School to this Heathen, who had no other Pilot but Nature, to steer him; Could not the Tyrant, by altering the mans condition, make him to alter his Countenance? and is your condition up and down, as your comforts or discomforts ebb or flow? did natural Qualifications make him quietly submit to Fortune, and shall not Theological considerations make him acquiesce in a Providence? Did the Spring-head of meer Reason, rise so high as Contentation? and shall not Religion, like the waters of the Sanctuary, rise as high? O Christians, lye down at the foot of Gods Mercy, saying, thy will be done.

1. Otherwise you will grieve God.

2. And you will gratifie the Devil.

3. And lastly, you will no way advantage your selves.

Reas. 1. First, I say you will grieve God,* See Heb. 3:10. Wherefore I was grieved with that Generation, saith God, What Generation was that, which God was thus grieved with? Look but into Exod. 16:8. and you'll finde it was a murmuring Generation, a dissatisfied, and discontented Generation.

It's a grief no doubt to a godly Parent, to see his Child discontented with his allowance, and Esau like, slight his birth-right. Ah! God is not pleased to see his Children displeased; nor contented, to see them discontented; I read in Psalm 35:27. That God takes pleasure in the prosperity of his people: But I nowhere read, that he takes pleasure in the discontent of his people. No no, this passion, drove God himself into a passion against the Jews of old, because, saith he, you have not walk't thankfully before me in the use of my blessings, therefore you shall serve your enemies in hunger and nakedness. Whereas on the other hand, it pleaseth God to see his people truckle under the Cross, and yet content to be ground betwixt the Teeth, and wounded with the Tongues of malicious Neighbors, and yet content: To see and hear the delicious Accents of his dying Martyrs, when in their extreamest tortures, they cryed out nothing but [Holy Jesus, Holy Jesus.]

To see and hear patient Job sitting on his Dung-hill, and bearing his burthen bravely, mingling his Groans with Praises, and justifications of God; this, this please God like an Anthem Sung by Angels, in the morning of the Resurrection, and therefore he hath Crowned him with the Wreath of Glory, In all this Job sinned not.

II. Secondly, By discontent, you gratifie the Devil. When Nero (that he might the better conceive the flames of Troy) had set Rome on fire, he sate down and sang Songs unto it. Oh, the Devil is never so merry, as when he sets us on fire with compassion? Consuming and

Smudging our lives away in the smoak of discontent: Such a fire makes the Devil a Bone-fire.

And this was his aim in afflicting! Job, not to make him a poor man, but an impatient man: But he was basely mistaken, for when he expected that Job should have fallen down to blaspheme God, Job on the contrary falls down and blesseth God. The Lord hath [freely] given and [justly] taken away, blessed be the Name of the Lord.

Ah! how black lookt Satan at the fall of the Expression from Jobs lips? How did this gaul and gravel a malicious Devil? Certainly this one word of Jobs, did wound Satan more, than all the afflictions wounded Job.

Ah friends, get but your wills to buckle under the will of God; and in all Overture of condition to acquiesce in a Providence, and this double advantage will come of it, God will have his end, and Satan will miss of his.

III. Thirdly and lastly, you can no way advantage your selves by Discontent, but may disturb your Conscience, and hugely prejudice your own peace. As the Prisoner in Iron hurts himself more by striving to shake them off than the Fetters would do by being on. So many a man, makes the Cross bigger to himself, than ever God made discontent being a greater affliction to him, than the affliction it greater I say, by how much it sits nearer to the Spirit, than any outward crosses do, or can do. I remember what Seneca writes of Caesar, who having appointed a great Feast for his Nobles and Friends, and it falling out that the day proved exceeding foul, even so as nothing could be done; and being extreemly displeas'd at it, in the height of madness took their Bows, and shot at Jupiter, in defiance of him, but it happened that their Arrows lighting short of Jupiter, fell down upon their own heads, and wounded them mortally. Thus is it in the point in hand, our murmuring, and impatiency are as Arrows shot, not at Jupiter, but at Jehovah, at God himself; hence said Moses, Exod. 16:8. to that Murmuring Generation, Your murmurings

are not against us, but against God; which Arrows may wound your selves deeply, but they never hurt God at all; they wound your Consciences with guilt, and your hearts with disquiet, and oft times causeth God to wound you too with punishments, which [if it had not been for your murmurings] he would never have brought upon you.

Miriam murmured, and God smote her with Leprosie. The Israelites murmured, and God sent Serpents among them; they stung God with fierce Tongues, and God stung them with fiery Serpents. Never then let a people murmur against their Maker more, but quietly submit to his

Providential proceedings, lest otherwise by struggling and striving against God, they do but make their bands stronger, and their condition worsen; Like the silly Partridge, which by her fluttering breaks her wings, but not the Net: My advice then friends, is this, whenever God binds the Cross upon your backs, or tyes or stakes you down to a sick bed, or any other sad or unseelie condition; since these Cords of his you cannot break, lye down gently, and suffer the hand of the Lord to do what he pleaseth, swallowing down this bitter Pill which he forceth down your throat for the health of your Souls.

I come now to the second thing; Viz. the USES of the Doctrine.

And upon enquiry I finde two sorts of men Reproveable.

1. Those that do their own will.
2. Those that do the Devils will.

First then, it speaks Terror to those that do their own will; such were the Israelites, 2 Sam. 8:5. they would needs have a King to rule over them, this was their will, and their will they would have, although they know it jarr'd, and extreemly interfear'd both with the will of God; and his Prophets, yet still the cry of the Rabble, and the vote of the multitude was this, Nay, but we wil have a King, ver. 19.

The like you see in Rachel, Gen. 30:1. Give me Children, or I dye. Albeit she saw that her Husband could not, and that God would not humour her, yet still she cries, give me Children, or I dye, Willful woman! if thou canst live in pleasure, wilt thou needs dye in a pit? chusing rather to have thy body killed, then thy will cross'd?

This is the case of all Mankind, till Grace work a change, and till God of an unwilling, make us a willing people in the day of his power: Till then, we have a will, which is not only blemisht with an indisposition, but also byass'd with an opposition to Gods; for saith Paul, that Doctor of the Gentiles, Rom. 8. It is not subject to the will of God, neither indeed can be. Mark, it is not subject, nor can be subject; what more can be said to abase the natural pride of man? as he hath such a mind as neither understands, nor can understand the things of God, 1 Cor. 2:14. So he hath such a will as neither is subject, nor can be subject, Rom. 8. Thus lies fallen man, lost man, degenerated man; thus lies he lockt up in obstinacy, darkness, and unbelief, minding his own things, doing his own will, and damning his own soul, until God spring in, as the Angel did to Peter in prison, and bring him news of his spiritual enlargement out of that dead and damning Estate, to which he had thrown, and enthal'd himself, body and soul, forever.

O thou heavenly Samaritan, that once poured in Wine into the half dead Traveller, draw near, draw near, here's a Church full of souls, not half dead, but wholly dead, their eyes closed they cannot, they cannot see thee, their hearts grown stiff, and cold, and hard, and have no feeling of thee, unless in mercy thou speak a Resurrection word, and make them live again to praise thee: Oh let this be the time of life, Oh let it be a time of love, apply unto their festered sores this saving salve of Christs Bloud, that they putrifie not to death, nor languish in despair; drop into their wounded souls the sharp Wine of thy wrath, search them, and pour in also the supplying Oil of thy tender Mercy to heal them, that so both them and their wills (which further than they are driven will not go) may be brought into a Conformity to thee and thy will.

Secondly, it speaks terror to those that do the Devils will. It was an Indictment which Christ prefer'd against the Jews, and may I fear, too truly be laid to the charge of many Nomical Christians, John 8:44. Yeare of your Father the Devil, and the works of the Devil you will do.

Adam, when the will of God, and the will of the Devil hung in equal ballance before him, we know how ready he was to chuse the wrong Scale; God said, Touch not the forbidden fruit; Satan said, Take and eat the forbidden fruit; and you know the sad event of that affair. Now if Adam was at the Devils beck in the slate of Creation, when his Nature was not depraved with sin, nor his Soul debauched with lust, who in the state of Corruption can say, my Heart is clean.

Object. It may be some will Object, none is so devoid of Grace sure, none gone so far in the Stupification of their Conscience, as to do the will of the Devil?

Answ. Ah poor soul! I could wish that the party here concern'd be not nearer than thou art aware of; put thy hand into thy bosom, and it may be, thou mayest resolve the Objection thy self; Thou wouldst possibly take it ill, should I come to thee [as Nathan did to David] and clap thee on the shoulder with this Arrest, Thou art the man. I confess this would be more than my Commission warrants me to do, yet give me leave to whisper one word or two in thine ear.

When thou makest a lye, whose will dost thou? Gods, or the Devils? not Gods, for God saith, put away lying. Surely lying is the work and will of Satan, whom the Scripture Records for a Lyar from the beginning: Again, when with Jezebel thou paintest thy self with pride, and standest sacrificing many a precious morn to the Idol in the Looking-glass, whose will art thou doing at such a time? sure not Gods, for in Isa. 28:1. you have him declaiming against such practises, Wo to the crown of pride, to the crown of pride. When thou art acting the good-fellow upon that Ale-bench, and with thy drivling Oaths damning all that are wedded to the Rules of Sobriety, and

dares not break off thy drunken Fraternity, whose will art thou doing? and in whose work art thou imployed at such a time? Certainly not Gods, he calls no such Conventicles, nor allows no such Societies; witness that Alarum, which he sounds under the window where such Swaggerers fit, Joel 1:5. Awake, awake ye drunkards, weep and howl all ye drinkers of wine; for the time is at hand when your sweet draught shall be cut off from your mouth. In a word, when thou art sinning, whose will art thou doing? not Gods; for he saith, Cease to do evil, and learn to do well. Certainly while it is thus with thee, the words of Christ are applicable to thee, Thou art of thy Father the Devil, and the work or will of the Devil thou wilt do, John 8:44.

Use. 3. Thirdly, is it so, then ever make Gods will the Standards of yours, and think not to bring down his will to yours, but resign up your will to his. That Epitaph would not become a Christian Tombstone, which was found Engraven upon a Misers Monuments, Here lies one against his will; the blessed Apostle was of another minde, when he said, I have learnt in whatever state I am, therewith to be content. Many can be content in an Honorable Estate, or in a wealthy Estate, or in a plentiful or prosperous Estate: but to be reproacht, and yet content, to be bely'd, and yet content; to be affronted, and wrong'd, and yet content, in such Estates as these to be content, is far above Nature, and none can do it, but he that hath learnt it, I have learnt, saith Paul.

But alas! how few Scholars hath this Great Doctor St. Paul in his Heavenly Academy! Children can learn to be proud, can learn to be covetous, can learn to be undutiful to their Parents, can learn to lye and swear, before they have well learnt to speak. But he must be a Man, nay more than a Man, that can learn to love an Enemy, to forgive an injury, and with Paul, to be content with every Contingency.

For the Lords sake [MAN] ply this lesson well, if thine Enemy lay thy Honour low, intreat the Lord to lay thy heart as low, and be content:

If Authority bring thy Estate down, beseech God to bring thy Spirit down, and be content; when thy comforts runs a tilt, and thy blessings runs dregs, then let patience have her perfect work, and be content, feast upon thy own Lentiles, quash thy penitential tears instead of luscious Wine, and count thy sins instead of pounds, keep thy heart at home, and suffer not thy ambition to climb up beyond thy Makers pleasure.

Mahomet, when he could not make the Mountain come down to it, he went up to the Mountain: So when thou canst not enlarge thy Dominions to thy minde, then confine thy minde to thy Dominions; and when thou hast more, be the more thankful, and when thou hast less, be content. This is the third Use, Make Gods will the standard of yours.

Now if you put Pauls Query, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?

I will answer the question, & tell you; what God would have you to do.

1. God would have you obey his Command, and live piously.
2. God would have you bear his Cross, and suffer patiently.

First, It's Gods will you should live piously. For the proof of this you may read, 1 Thes. 4:3, 4. This is the will of God, what is? even this, saith Paul; your Sanctification, that every one of you should possess your vessel in holiness? Mark this, in holiness, and if so, what will become of all those befooled and abused souls, who debauch their vessel with uncleanness, and defile themselves with drunkenness? If Belshazar was so severely punished for disseminating and prophaning the Vessels of the Temple dedicated unto God, of how much sorer punishment shall these wretches be thought worthy, who have adulterated and defiled the Temple of the Holy Ghost? He drank intemperately to the honour of his Idol, only in dead Vessels of Gold and Silver; But these in doing thus, abuse living Vessels, living bodies, and living souls; such Vessels as by Baptism were markt out

for God, and separated and sealed to his holy service, they abuse and prostitute to a Lust, to a Whore, to the Devil. Ah! who can but weep, and weep again to see how much of our English Bloud is poyson'd with these beastly Enormities at this day; and how many of our [otherwise hopeful] Gentlemen, who might do God and their Country much service, and be a great help to the publick good, and peculiar blessing to the place where they live, do basely and unworthily melt away their youth, and Emascuate their spirits in drunken Societies and Effeminate Embraces.

Alas, that so many Noble Births, so many sparkling Wits should be prostituted to Satans service, and imployed in carrying on Satans cause, while they know it not; If they had found a Golden Chalice (as Augustine observes of Lucinus) they would have given it to the Church; But God hath given them a Golden Wit, a golden Head, and golden parts, and in these golden Cups, and Challices, they drink themselves to the Devil, both body and soul for evermore.

Ah deluded and degenerated Gentlemen! think with your selves seriously, what answer you will make to your Judge at the general Audit-day, for taking the Members of Christ, and making them members of an Harlot.

Never see my face more, said Joseph, unless you bring your brother Benjamin with you. Oh friends, never think to see Gods face to your comfort in Glory, if you carry not holy bodies, and holy souls, and holy affections with you; God tells you his minde in Heb.— Follow peace and holiness, without which you shall never see the Lord, You may go to Heaven without a peny in your purse, but you shall never come there without holiness in your heart. Heaven is a City where Righteousness dwells, and therefore though God in his wonderful patience to poor lost man, suffer the Earth to give the ungodly a little house-room a while, yet sure I am, he will never cumber Heaven with such a crew.

Before Enoch was translated to Heaven, he walkt holily upon Earth, else God had never desired his Company so soon as he did. And before the Saints departed, commenced, and took their degree of Glory, they kept their Acts, and performed the exercises of grace, and so must you, the Scripture is plain, Without Holiness, none shall see the Lord. It's true, none goes to Heaven for his Holiness, and this shews the Insufficiency of Holiness; But it's as true, that none goes to Heaven without holiness, and this argues the necessity of holiness; And therefore though it be no plea for Heaven, yet it will be your best Evidence, and will you have your Evidences to seek, when you should have them to shew? Ah then! as you value a portion among the Saints in Light, and hope to live in Heaven, when you can live no longer upon Earth: Be holy, as your Father which is in Heaven is holy.

Caesars money must be known by Caesars Image and Superscription, and so must the Christian at the Reckoning day, by the Terror of his Conversation. Not everyone that saith Lord, Lord, but he that doth the will of the Lord shall be saved, saith Christ; Your works must be your witnesses, and your deeds must declare whose you are, and to whom you belong: And therefore begin to live that life now, which you intend and hope to live forever; and continue not one day longer in that condition, in which you would not die, and appear at Judgment in; Therefore go home and dress your selves, not with good Cloaths, but with good works; and while others are querying what they shall eat, and what they shall drink, and what they shall put on; study you how to live, and how to dye, and to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, making no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lust thereof; And when others are projecting how to improve a barren piece of ground, let your contrivance be how to improve a barren minde; and as their care is, that their fields should not lye fallow, so let it be your study, not to let your hearts lye fallow; and the rather because you see that this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that every one of you should possess his Vessel in holiness, 1 Thes. 4:3,4.

Now, that this is the will of God, will appear upon a two-fold account.

1. First from the price, with which he hath redeemed us to it:
2. And secondly, from the Promise which he hath made to Reward us for it.

1. The price he paid down upon the nail, was his own blood, Tit. 2:14. He gave himself for us, that he might Redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people. Had man kept his primitive holiness, Christ might have kept his life, and have spared his pains; It was mans lost Righteousness, lost Holiness, that Christ came to recover. But this is a Point that needs pressing rather than proving, which I shall undertake to effect by these ensuing obrestations and intreaties. I beseech you, upon the account of these three Considerations, that you would approve your selves a holy Nation, a Seed which the Lord hath blessed.

I beseech you

1. For my sake.
2. For your sakes.
3. For Christs sake.

First, for my sake, who am to come to you as a Petitioner and Messenger from the Lord, and the sum of my desires is this, I beseech you in Christs stead, that you would be reconciled to God. I am not courting you for your silver, but for your souls; and what will you grant me, if this be denied me; O the Lord make you a willing people in the day of his power.

God hath sent me to you (as Jesse to David) with this Present in mine hands, and these Breathings in my heart after your Salvation; O may they but prove serviceable and successful to your souls, and I shall bless God that hath put it into mine heart thus to visit you? But if you will not hear, nor fear to do no more so wickedly, My soul shall weep in secret for you.

Is it not sad to a tender Physitian, to see his Patients to dye under his hands; much sadder sure to a poor Minister, to see souls drop to Hell, one by one under his Pulpit, and cannot help them, cannot save them; this must needs be a heart-sadding sight to one that's sensible of the worth of souls. It costeth the Mother no small pains to bring forth a living Child. But ah the bitter Throws of that Minister that travels all the yearlong, nay, all his life long, with a dead Child, a dead-hearted people: That spends his strength, and like a Candle, Swails out his life amongst his Parish, and is forced at last, to take up the Prophets complaint, Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the Arm of the Lord revealed?

O my dear friends, think solemnly and seriously, what answer you intend to give me, before I leave you. Christ will not always cry; Come; the Spirit will not always cry, Come, neither must I; the time is at hand, when you will say one to another, we had a Preacher, we had a Teacher, we had a well-wisher, and a lover of our souls amongst us; but we did not improve and profit under him as we might, and therefore God hath sent him away from us, as he did Jonah to Nineveh, when Jerusalem despised him. O hear me then while you may, and pray with me while you may; and accept of the tender of Salvation from me, while you may; Yet a little while, and you that have seen me, shall see me no more; and you that have heard me, (as Job saith) shall say, where is he? It's but a little, and those Seats shall have other Hearers, and this Pulpit have another Preacher; It's but a little that you have to hear, and I have to speak in this place, and shall not my Dying words, be Living words to you? shall my Farewel-Sermon be a forgotten Sermon? and the last request I am like to make to you, be repulsed and slighted by you, O my dear Neighbors and Friends, of whom I travel till Christ be formed in you; Awake, and live, seek the Lord before the Grave and Hell shut their mouths upon you, and before the Servant of the Lord, sent now to warn you, take his last leave of you, and see your faces no more.

I am wounded, I am wounded, to think this Sermon should be Concluded, before all your Souls be Converted, and to leave any of this Congregation, walking on in Hell Road, when I am gone; Oh that I knew but what to do, to get you to do that today, which must be done, or you may be undone tomorrow.

If it were to follow you home, and there to beg your Conversion on my bare Knees, as a Child begs his Fathers blessing: If it were to go to my Closet and pray, and there to wrestle with God, as Jacob did for you, my loving Parishioners, till I get this answer I have blessed them, and they shall be blessed, Nay,

though I were sure to go to Prison as soon as I come forth of the Pulpit, yet I should think all well bestowed, could I but see you begin to turn this Sermon into practice, and to follow peace and holiness, without which you cannot see the Lord.

Oh what a joyful hours work would I esteem this, and how heartily would I bless your God and my God, that prospered his Word in the mouth of his servant, making it a Salvation Word to as many as our Earwitnesses of it this day.

This is the first Argument, I beseech you for my sake. Little do you think what a joy it's to your Minister to see his Children (as St. John speaks) walking in the truth. And on the contrary, what an affliction, to see you walk in Error, and Sin. Little do you think what a comfort it's to me to think of making this account to God at the Judgment Day, here are the Children which thou gavest me, and I have lost none. And on the other hand, what an aching it is to my heart, to think of bespeaking God at that time, on this manner, Here are none of the Children, O Lord, none of the Souls that thou didst commit to my trust, for I have lost them all. But I hope better things of you, though I thus speak.

II. Secondly, I beseech you for your own sakes. Who will have the worse of it, if this advice be not followed, you or I? Alas, though it

may be matter of Grief to me, yet not of Guilt: God will reward me according to my labour, not according to my success. We are, said the Apostle, A sweet Savour of Christ in them that perish, mark, in them that perish, as well as in them that be saved. Though the Patient dye, yet the Physitian must be paid: So albeit the people dye in their sins, yet Gods Ministers may comfortably conclude with the Prophet, Isa. 49:4. Though I have laboured in vain, and spent my strength for nought, yet surely my Judgment is with the Lord, and my work (namely, the reward of my work) with my God.

Ah my friends, it's you that will have the worst of it one day, if this Sermon be not faithfully followed, and obeyed; Read at your leasure Ezek. 3:16,17,18, and see whether I speak truth or a lye; It's you that must have the reward of punishment; It's you that must stand or fall, that must be the Subjects of the pleasures of Heaven, or the Objects of all the pains in Hell; and should not you then be as much concern'd for your selves, as I am for you? Now you enjoy your health, and the sad Accents of a dying sinner are not heard in your habitations, but will it be always thus? Now each of you sit under his Vine with delight, and there is no carrying into Captivity, nor no crying in your streets, but will such times last always. Now you can hawk, hunt, swear and drink, and then you think you are qualified like Gentlemen; but will this last always? Suppose thou hadst a Crown on thy Head, how long wouldst thou wear it? Suppose thou hadst a Scepter in thy Hand, how long wouldst thou hold it? They are sick at Rome, and dye in Princes Courts, as well as at the Spittle; yea, Kings themselves cannot keep their Crowns on their heads, nor their heads on their shoulders, but must stoop when death strikes, and go as naked to their Beds of Dust, as other men; and in that day all their thoughts, their projects, and their pleasures perish with them; only their guilt of their sins, which were the Ladders, by which they did climb up to the top of their pleasures, the top of their honors, and preferments will dog them into another world. Hence said Abner to Joah, 2 Sam. 2:26. Know'st thou not that these things will be bitterness in the end? You will now have your sweet-meats, and your sweet drinks, your sweet pleasures and pastimes, let the Minister say

what he will, but do not you know that this will be bitterness in the end? In Hell all the Sugar will be melted off, wherein the Pill of your sins and temptations is wrapt, and then the note you'll sing will be that of the Emperor, O quantum ob quantillum! O what an eternity of pain have I for an inch of pleasure, or an Ell of sinful delight! As the Malefactor said to his Neighbor, dost thou envy me my Grapes that I have stolen? Alas, they I cost me dear, I must dye for them? Ah envy not at the pleasures of a poor sinner, they'll cost his soul dear one day; what doth Dives his Wine-cellar advantage him now in Hell, while he cries out for a Cup of cold water, and cannot have it: O Sirs, you cannot now conceive while you sit in health and ease, what different thoughts you will then have of a holy, and unholy life, and with what gripes of Conscience will your undone Souls, look back on a life of Mercy, thus basely, and blockishly slept away, dream'd and sin'd away. I beseech you then, and that for your own sakes, that you would not for a few fleshly pleasures, which are passing away, incur the torments of Hell, which shall never pass away.

III. Thirdly, I beseech you for Christs sake. And me thinks when I beg of you in Christs name, and for Christs sake, you should not say nay; If you love me, saith Christ, keep my Commandements, Joh. 14:15. See with what perswasive Rhetorick he presseth this Duty, if you love me, saith he, do it? O Christians! what may not the love of Christ command you? If it were to lay down your blood for him, would you not do it? and will you not be persuaded to lay down your Strifes and Divisions, your Animosities and Corruptions for his sake?

As Absalon said to Hushai, 2 Sam. 16:17. Is this thy kindness to thy friend? Such a friend as Christ hath been, is, and ever will be? Certainly that Indictment will one day be prefer'd against you, which the Apostle pronounceth with tears in his eyes, Phil. 3:18. You are enemies to the Cross of Christ; as if he had said, Christ came to destroy the works of the Devil, and you by your loose walkings destroy the works of Christ, the Image of Christ, and the Interest of Christ in the Soul? Christ laid down his bloud to Purge you, and you unworthily lay down your selves in sin to Pollute you, and so become

guilty of denying the Lord that bought you, and trampling underfoot the Bloud of the Covenant. What Ear doth not tingle, and what doth not tremble at such a horrid and flagitious Act? I beseech you then be tender of Christs honour, and be holy for Christs sake, whose heart you see, or may see by what follows, is engaged and concern'd to promote holiness among you.

Consider

1. His strict Command calls for it.
2. His servent Prayer implyes it.
3. His holy Example teacheth it.

First, I say his Command calls for it, Matt. 5:16. Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works; that is, lead such convincing lives, that the world may witness and certifie with you, that you are certainly a choice Generation; a Seed which the Lord hath blessed. Here's a Command you see, now where's your obedience? will you make Conscience of it, or will you not? will you swear Allegiance to it, or will you not? shall it pass for an irrefragable Rule of Life, or shall it not.

It was Pompey's boast, that with a Word, or a Nod, he could awe his Souldiers to anything; and shall God command, and go without? shall Gods word have less authority then Pompey's?

I read much of the blind obedience of the Papists to their Rulers, even in things scarce credible, but that themselves have publisht them.

One Masseus a Franciscan, tumbled himself in the dirt, and crawled like a Child, because that St. Francis told him, that unless he became as a little Child, he could not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Jesuites are so framed to Obedience, that whatever service they are enjoined by their Superiours, though never so abominable, they must accomplish it. Yea, if the blessed Virgin vouchsafe her presense to one of the brethren, if his Superiour call him, he must presently break from her, and go at his bidding; although it be on a bloody Errand, and wondrous design, with a hundred more Fopperies of this nature.

What do I reckon these for, but to assure you, that these who have paid such homage to man, will rise up one day out of their Graves to condemn us, who are less careful in our obedience to God Almighty: They shut the eyes of Reason to obey their earthly Superiours, and we dispute, if not deny our Allegiance to our Heavenly Law-giver.

God bids us believe, and we distrust; God bids us obey, and we dispute; God bids us remember our Creator in the dayes of our Youth, and we forget him even in our age; God bids us learn of him, to be meek and lowly, and we learn of the Devil to be proud and haughty; God bids us be sober and watch unto Prayer, and we surfeit with excess, and sleep at Prayer; God bids us forbear, and forgive one another in love, and we reproach and persecute one another with much opposition and hatred. In a word, God bids us be content with what we have, and we unthankfully murmur for what we want.

Ah sinners, God sees and hears you all this while, and his hand is setting down in the Table-book of his Remembrance all your undutifulness and disobedience, and when the Book shall be open'd, how think you will these Indictments be answer'd?

II. Secondly, Christs servent Prayers calls for holiness, John 27:17. Sanctifie them with thy Truth, saith he. Should you hear a Minister with abundance of zeal press a Duty upon his people in the Pulpit, and as soon as he gets home, you should go under his Closet Window, and hear him hard at Prayer, begging of God a blessing upon his labours that day, you would easily believe the Minister was in earnest: So here, our Saviour hath no sooner done his Sermon, but

you finde him at Prayer, John 17:17. and what he most insisted on in the Pulpit, that he enlargeth most on in his Closet; Father, saith he, Sanctifie them.

III. Thirdly, As Christs Prayer, so his Pattern and Example shews his desires to have his people a holy people; Was not he a lover of holiness in others, and a true practiser of holiness himself; was not he the Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile, no sin, no spot? and why was he so? doth he not tell you, John 13:15. I have given you an Example, saith he, that you should do as I have done? He was content to have his Honour laid in the Dust; his Credit or Bloud laid in the Dust, but it was for an Example of all self-denial to you: Again, he was content to take a Towel and a Bason in his hand to wash his Disciples feet, John 13:14. but it was for an Example of Humility to you. In a word,

He was so Heavenly upon Earth, so mortified to all worldly interests, and liv'd so convincingly before men, that his very enemies were forced to own his Divinity, and to say, that he could not possibly do such things, unless God were with him; now all this was for an Example of holiness to you; I have given you, saith he, an Example, that you should do as I have done.

O then set Christ in his holy Example before you, (as one would set the person whose Picture he intends to draw) and labour to draw every line in your life, according to your Copy. O this would be a sweet way indeed to maintain the power of holiness: when you are tempted to any vanity, or extravagancy, then set Christ before you in his holy walking, and ask thy soul, Am I in this speech like Christ? do I in this action write after my Copy? Did Christ, or would Christ, if he were to live again upon Earth, do as I do? and live as I live? Would not he be more choice of his company? more watchful over his words than I am? Were ever

Cards and Dice seen so frequently in his hands as in mine? Did he ever ruine his Debtors by extracting his right, or Defraud his

Creditors by detaining their rights? O friends, study Christs life more, and you will sooner learn to amend your own.

Well, I'll conclude this Discourse with one word of Counsel. Is it Gods will that you should be a holy people, then let your wills be so too, and be holy in all manner of conversation.

The last words that Mr. Bolten spoke to his Children on his deathbed, were these; I charge you my dear ones, as you will answer it at the day of Judgment, that you live so, as that you meet me not at that time in a state of unregency.

Beloved, I have not many words to speak to you, for the hour of my departure hasteneth; therefore I will compose what I have to say, in this dying request. You and I like Elijah and Elisha, are at the point of parting; I do therefore require of you, and in the Name of God Conjure you, so to improve this Sermon, this opportunity, this hours discourse, that we may take comfort at our next meeting, and rejoyce to see one anothers face at the Judgment day, which we shall never do, if we appear there in a sinful and unsanctified estate.

Oh that the Lord would make me an happy Instrument to convey Converting Grace into your souls this day; so that as Sampson slew more at his death, than he did all his life before; so I may save more with this dying speech, than ever I did with an that's gone before. I have read of a rich Florentine, who being to die, called his sons together, and thus bespoke them; It much rejoyceth me, now upon my Death-bed, to think that I shall leave you all wealthy. But oh my friends, it would rejoyce me more if now at my departure, I could leave you all gracious, and if before I die, I could see Jesus Christ to live in you.

Awake, awake you Sons of sleep, and hear what concerns your peace, before the time come when you shall hear no more. Let not your hearts run after Fields, and Vineyards, Houses, and Orchards, for

before thy fruit be ripe, thy flesh may be rotten; before thy next Harvest be ready for the Sickle, thy soul may be ripe for Judgment.

Up then and be doing, thou know'st not what a punctillio thy time is reduced unto; thou hast gone over some mens graves to day, and it may be, others may go over thine tomorrow; Or, if God spare thee with life and health, yet if thou neglectest Gods call this Sabbath, God may neglect to call thee the next; It is well known how many merciful Messages Pharaoh had brought him by Moses, and what fair and frequent warnings he had to amend his life, but when all this would not do, Moses took his leave, and he saw his face no more.

Beloved, I have appeared many a Sabbath amongst you, and once again am I come as a Collector, to gather souls for God, and to try how many hearts I can hug to Heaven with me. Oh consider now in time, what you resolve on! stand out against the offers of Mercy this day, and God knows whether ever you may hear him again knocking at your doors upon the like Errand; God makes short work with some in his Judiciary proceedings; If he finds a repulse once, sometimes he departs and leaves that dismal curse behind him, Luke 14:24. Not one of those that were hidden, and would not come, shall ever taste of my Supper; they were but once bidden, and for their very first denial, this curse is clapt upon their heads, Not one of them shall taste of my Supper; It's not said, they shall never come where the Supper stands on the Table; but they shall never taste it. Poor souls, you may sit under the Ordinances, and you may come to Sacraments, and Sermons, where Christ is brought in, both as first and second course; but through the efficacy of this Curse, never taste; as David saith, How good and gracious God is? Why, because, when I called, saith God, you refused, and when I stretched forth my bands, none regarded, therefore I will now give you to eat of the fruit of your own doings, and fill you with your own devices, Prov. 1:24,31.

Therefore consider of it, and give up your names to God to day, lest tomorrow be too late; his Manna is ready if you come in time to

gather it, but if you linger, he hath his Sun to melt it away, and it's gone.

Thus have you had the first Particular open'd to you, and urged upon you, namely, That it's God's will you should obey the Command, and live holy.

The next follows, which is this:

I. It's Gods will you should bear the Cross, and suffer patiently, 1. Pet. 3:17. It's better saith Peter, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well-doing, than for ill: Now, if the will of God be so sometime, that you should suffer, albeit for well-doing; than let your wills be so too, and quietly compose your selves to a suffering condition.

It's said of the Israelites, that at the Commandment of the Lord they journeyed, and at the Commandment they pitched; whence it may be inferred, That it is God that assigneth to us, and ordereth for us the several Vicissitudes of Fortune, and changes of Condition; our pitching here or there, is from a Providence, whether in a fair house, or a foul, in a great living, or a small, in a barren soil, or a fruitful, and where ever, or whatever it be, it is above our desert, and therefore should not fall below our thanks.

I read of one, who was never the more proud, when dignified with Honour, nor never the less patient, when disgraced with Slander: Oh this even temper, is an excellent temper, when a man can so eye his wants, as not to be puffed up with his Receipts, and so Eye his Receipts, as not to be cast too much down in the sense of his wants; And this is that frame of spirit, which I would fain have both myself and you, to come up to; and therefore if God please hereafter to make a Gap in thy Estate, let not that open a Gap to discontent, but remember Jobs carriage in the like case, and joyn with him in that penitential prostration of his, I will hear the indignation of the Lord, for I have sinned against him. If God strike thee with Dumbness, strike not thou God again with thy Discontentedness, but remember

speechless Zachary, and be content; If God open the mouths of thy Enemies, or wicked Neighbors against thee, do not thou open thy mouth against them, but think oft on Davids words, I opened not my mouth, said he, because thou didst it. Yet David opened not his mouth to recriminate them, nor vindicate himself, but took all in good part, because he knew that God did it. I shall now propound some considerations to contentment under the Cross; I can only propound them, it's God that must prosper them to you.

1. Consider for your comfort, God will be with you in your troubles.
2. Consider, you shall be with God after your troubles.

I. First, God will be with you, Isa. 43:2. When thou passest through the water, I will be with thee; Mind, I will be with thee; fear not drowning then, so long as God is in the Ship.

Thou carriest Caesar in thy Barque, said the Emperour to the trembling Marriner, and therefore be not afraid; O Christian, thy God is with thee in a suffering time, and how canst thou be afraid of that condition wherein thou hast Gods company? I will be with thee in six troubles, and in seven, saith the Lord, and surely it cannot be ill with that man, with whom God is. It's infinitely better to be able to say, God is with thee, than to say, peace is with thee, or health is with thee, or honour is with thee, or credit, or friends are with thee, for in these you have but some particular good, but in God you have all good; and this is the first, you have an excellent Scripture for it, Heb. 13:5. Be content with such things as you have, why? For I will never leave you, nor forsake you; though your Riches may leave you, and health may leave you; yet will not I.

Oh what an argument is this to force contentment in every condition, to consider that he will not leave us comfortless, but will come unto us: Cheer up then my drooping soul, thou shalt never want, so long as thy God hath it; For by the Promise thou hast command of Gods purse, and mayest be sure of his presense.

Let others repine, do thou rejoyce, and let such as be without God in the world, shark and shift, live by their wits, but in all straights do thou live by Faith.

O beloved, you know not how soon God may call for your comforts one after another, and bring you as he did his people Israel, out of a fat Land, into a famishing Wilderness, where no water is, no comfort is; what will you do in such a case as this? If you please, I'll tell you, when your hearts fail you, and your friends thus fail you, let not your hearts fail you, nor your faith fail you, for you have a faithful God which will never fail you, but will be instead of all things to you, from himself alone.

As Joseph said to Pharaoh, without me God, will provide an answer for Pharaoh. So may I say in this case; without silver, without gold, without fair houses and rich furniture, God can provide for the welfare of his people. Though your means be gone, yet your God is not gone; and if you cannot be contented now, it will argue that it was not God, but your means that did content you then.

Well, this is the first, Consider God will be with thee in thy troubles, and that upon a two-fold account.

1. To behold thee.

2. To uphold thee.

I. First, to behold thee, God sees the wrongs, and hears the grievances you undergo for men; though your friends looks off you, yet your God looks on you, Exod. 3:17. I have seen, I have seen, saith God, the heavy Burthens and Taxations that my people undergo in Egypt. As if God had said thus, I have seen, and so seen, as that my bowels are turned within me, and I can no longer hold my peace.

What a gracious God have we, that owns his people in such a low condition, wherein none will own them; for, saith God, I have seen, I have surely seen the troubles of my people that be in Egypt. Fear not

afflictions then, for they cannot chase God from us, nay, they are rather advantages, wherein God doth ordinarily discover himself most comfortably to us; which brings me to the second Particular.

II. As God will be with you in your troubles to behold you; so secondly, to Uphold you; Cham lookt on his Fathers Nakedness and laught, but God looks on a Christians trouble, and helps: The eyes of the Lord run to and fro, saith the Prophet; what to do? To shew himself strong in the behalf of his people: Where God hath a seeing Eye, there he hath a helping hand too, if man can but finde a believing heart to lay hold upon it.

David is a witness of this truth, when he saith, In the dry that I cryed thou answeredst me, and gavest me strength in my soul; as if David had said, It's true, O Lord, thou assaultest me, and that's my trouble; but it's as true, that thou assistest me, and this is my comfort; In the day that I cryed unto thee, thou answeredst me, and gavest me strength in my soul.

Object. I, saith the scrupulous Christian, would God do this for me? if he would put strength into my soul, strength of Faith, strength of patience, strength of Grace, then I should bid a freer wellcome to the Cross when it comes; But alas! instead of this strength you speak of, I finde nothing but weakness upon weakness, a weak faith, a weak assurance, weak patience; all weak.

Answ. I answer briefly, hast thou not strong Grace? and doth that discourage thee? it may be thou art not tryed with strong afflictions, let this quiet thee; hast thou not as much patience as another? it maybe thou hast not yet as much need of it as others; their patience is greater than thine, because their troubles are greater than thine. In a word, thou said'st thou hast not a Martyrs Faith, it maybe thou needest it not yet, because thou hast not a Martyrs Fire; a weak Faith may serve for a light Cross; when God calls thee to hotter services of

Christianity, fear not but he will be at thy back, not only to behold thee, but as you have heard, to Uphold thee, 2 Cor. 15. As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, saith Paul, So also our Consolations abound in Christ: See here, as men lays on troubles, so God lays in comfort: Hence it was that Davids heart did not fail him, when all his friends forsook him, 1 Sam. 30. And David encouraged himself in his God, saith the Text; It was sad with him at this time; Zicklag was burnt, his Wives taken captive, he lost all, and like to have lost the hearts of his Souldiers too, [for they speak of stoning him.] In this condition that David was now in, he turned his face from the Creature, lookt up to Heaven, and encouraged himself in his God; when all other visible helps shrunk from him, then his God clave to him, and he to his God.

Oh Christian, live upon the Comforter himself, in the want of other comforts; If thou canst not say, that God is thy God, it is thy sin; but if thou canst say, he is thy God, and yet not content, it is thy shame; for if God, an All-sufficient God, will not suffice thee, will not content thee, sure nothing will.

II. Secondly, You shall be with God after your troubles, This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise, said Christ to the present Thief; as if he should have said, I am with thee, bearing the Cross, and thou shalt be anon with me wearing the Crown, and therefore be satisfied; a parallel Scripture to this you have in Rom. 8:17. If we suffer with him, we shall reign with him, said Paul; who will not now willingly act a sufferers part a while, when he remembers what a blessed Exit his sufferings shall have at last: Daniel was brought out of the Dungeon, and immediately preferr'd at Court; Joseph of a slave, became the chief man of the Kingdom: Ah, what a Banquer did God provide for Paul and Silas in Prison; and Jacob being banished from his Fathers House, what a comfortable Vision saw he at Bethel: better provision sure, than if he had been sitting at home at his plentiful Table.

But albeit the Lord treats not all his Children as he did these; yet are they all sure of his comfort: Glory shall be the end of their sufferings, and Heaven their habitation for evermore; they have Christs Certificate under his own hand, Rom. 1. If you suffer with me, ye shall reign with me.

Oh that so much of Heaven, were Revealed and Unveiled to you, as to see something of those Eternal Joyes, which they that be dead in the Lord, have received for a few momentary sufferings in their life-time; Hungry Lazarus feasting, lame Mephibosheth dancing, and all the Colledge of Martyrs and Confessors striking up their Harps, and Chanting forth that Epiphaneia of praise, Rev. 7:10. Salvation, salvation unto our God, which sits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb forever. Oh who would not rejoyce in their sufferings, with such Musick in their ears, and such a sight as this in their eye!

Let this then beget contentment, it's in with such at present, but good news will be next, Gods Rod, like Jonathans Rod, hath Honey, nay, Heaven at the end: Look up Christians and see, that the Cloud, while dropping on you, is rolling over you, stand but in the shower a while, and fair weather will be next, even an everlasting Sun-shine of glory. When you have suffered a while, saith Peter, 1 Pet. 5:10. the Lord will make you perfect, that is, your sufferings are not a killing you, but a perfecting you.

Poets tells us that the Hill of Olympus is so high, that on the top of it is always a Calm; Beloved, it's hard climbing up the Rocky and Rugged Hill of the Cross, but when you are once come up to the Top, you shall be in a Calm, and say as Peter did on the Mount, it's good to be here, good to get Heaven at any rate.

And this is the second Argument to work Contentment under the Cross; God will not only Come to you in your troubles, but you shall Go to God after your troubles, God will make your afflictions to be Inlets into glory, and your Cross a Ladder to climb up to Heaven; and therefore fear not afflictions, they are not such Bugbears as the flesh

fancieth them to be: Which seriously thought on, would be enough to make thy soul ambitious of suffering, saying as one did once, I am afflicted, till I be afflicted.

A Child that's going home will never complain of bad way. O Christian, thou art going home to Heaven in a way of suffering, every affliction, every Cross sets thee one step forward to thy Fathers house, and wilt thou complain of bad way? one beam of Gods face in Heaven will dry up all thy tears; hence saith the holy Prophet, Rev. 21. There shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for all these things are passed away.

Thus have I given you two helping Considerations to melt your wills into obedience to Gods will, and to run the Race that is set before you with patience; therefore I shall be at the pains to help you a little further, Consider,

1. The Cross is necessary, and must be born,
2. Your Cross is easie, and may be born.

I. First, I say it's necessary, God hath laid it on, and who can take it off; As Balaam said, God hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it. So may I say, God hath crossed, and thou canst not repeal it; and therefore let it be born bravey I. Now it is unavoidable necessary upon a double account

1. In regard of the Precept.
2. In regard of the Means.

First, you have a Precept for it, Luke 9:35. He that will be my Disciple, let him take up his Cross and follow me.

Secondly, it's necessary as a Means to the obtaining the End. Christ the Captain of our Salvation was made perfect through sufferings, and so must we, Heb. 2:10. Ought not Christ first to have suffered,

and then to have entred into his rest? saith Luke 24:26. yes, he ought, and so ought Christians; For, through many tribulations we must enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

A hot burning Furnance was a pleasant path, in which the three Children walkt to their Caelestial Country, while Belshazars Coaches like a Sedan, conveyed quickly into the dwellings of Furies, and habitation of Devils; A fiery Chariot hoysed up Elijah to Heaven, where as a Feather-bed ushered Dives down to Hell: Therefore be not afraid of suffering for God, for he can give an happy issue when he pleaseth.

II. Again, as the Cross is Necessary, and must be born; So it is Easie, and may be born; And that

1. Absolutely.

2. Comparatively.

First, Absolutely, and in itself; Hence said Christ, take my Yoke upon you, for my Yoke is easie, and my Burden is light; Never then call that Cross heavy, which Christ hath called easie and light.

Art thou pained with the Gout or Colleick? that's a light burthen; and the Boyes of Spain bore so much, and more without complaining that their Cross was heavy; for I read that they would at their Altars endure whipping and scourging till their very Entrails saw the light through their torn flesh without crying.

These Children rejoyced in their sufferings like men, and this was their glory; but you that are men, you weep in your sufferings like Children, surely this is your shame.

Again, are you sick? this is a light burthen, and so light, that the least childe in the Town can bear it: In a word, whatever thy Cross be, if it be Christs Cross, it is a light one, and therefore not to be complained

of; Take my Yoke upon you, saith he, for my Yoke is easie, and my Burden is light: And indeed, there is no burden

can truly be called, or by Christians can be counted heavy but sin; and this is a burthen which makes the whole Creation to groan under it; take away sin; and a man's life will be no longer a burthen to him; this is the heavy burthen; as for other burthens, they are light, and that first, absolutely. Secondly, they are light comparatively.

1. If you compare them with the pains which Christ endured.

Or, Secondly, With the pains of Hell which you deserved.

First, if you compare them with the pains that Christ endured, look but into Isa. 53. and you shall see that whole Chapter spent in relating that bloody Tragedy which Christ acted for the Salvation of the World; He was despised and rejected of men, saith the Prophet; He hath bore our Grievs, and carried our Sorrows, ver. 4. He was wounded for our Transgressions, and bruised for our Iniquities: And thus the Text runs on in Teares. O what a suffering-Race did he run, that he might overtake us before we got to Hell.

Methinks I see what haste he makes on this suffering-Errand, and hear him cry to his Father while yet afar off, Lo, I come to do thy will, O my God. See here how the heart of Christ, like an Eccho, rebounds to his Fathers call.

When his Father spoke to him to undertake the Redemption-Work of saving a lost and undone World, he did not reluct nor answer with Moses, Exod. 4:13. I pray thee send some other on this Message; but, Lo I come (saith Christ) to do thy will, O my God.

And now Christians tell me, Doth not thy dear Lord deserve thus much from thee, to endure a little for his sake, who hath endured so much for thine? What though thy afflictions cost thee Tears, Christ's afflictions cost him blood; and though thou lovest the comforts of

this Life, this is nothing comparable to Christ's loss, who lost life itself.

Ah! what loss can match this loss? and whose sufferings like his sufferings? Do'st thou sigh under the sense of thy grievance, thus, My soul is sorrowful; But Christ went further, and said, My soul is sorrowful to death. Matt. 26:38. Do'st thou cry, My God, my God, why hast thou afflicted me? But Christ said more, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? consider this, and leave complaining.

Secondly, Your Cross is easie, if you compare it with the pain; of Hell, which you have deserved. Ah! there's never a one of you but would be in Hell before tomorrow, if God should give you your due; there are many there for those very sins which you live in: Dives is in Hell for making an Idol of his Wealth; have none of you done so? Haman is in Hell for pride; and are you not proud? Sodom is in Hell for contempt of the Prophets of the Lord, and for neglecting the day of Peace, and the day of Grace; the day of Gods patience and striving with them; and is not this Englands sin at this very day? The old Word is burning in Hell, for burning in lust on Earth; and was this sin ever more predominant than in this juncture of time? Herod hath been lying in Hell a thousand and six hundred years, for taking John Baptists Head from him.

Ah England! England! Is not this thy charge? Hath not this been thy practice these late years? And art thou not plung'd deep in thy own blood-guiltiness? Herod did but cut one mans Head off, and he is gone to Hell for it: Oh what an Hell may est thou look for, who hast got so many Heads, and drunk the Blook of thousands of the Saints, and faithful Servants of the most High? What City is there wherein there is not some Noble Births, some of Englands Worthies Sacrificed to the bloody itch, and Bedlam Surges of a Civil War? (I had almost said of an Uncivil Peace:) What Town is there wherein there is not some Families repeating over the Lamentations of Jeremiah, and saying, I am the man that hath seen affliction by the Rod of his wrath: Sion doth mourn, Judah is gone into captivity, the

prophets sigh, the sheep are scattered, and wo is my soul because of murderers!

How many of the dear Children of God are crying for bread? (for the powerful Preaching of the Word amongst them) and there is no bread to be given them, nor the pleasant voice of their faithful Ministers to be heard amongst them; and they left to lament over their silenced Ministers, as King Joash wept over the dying Prophet, 2 Kings 13:14. O my Father, my Father, the Chariot of Israel, and the horse-men thereof; Will not God visit for these? Will he not be avenged on such a Nation as this? Yes, yes he will; Israel's woe, may be England's warning, Amos 4. Thus will I do unto thee; and because I will do thus unto thee, therefore prepare thy heart to meet thy God, O England. But this is a digression.

That which I am to speak to, is this, you are to bear the Cross contentedly, because whatever you do Endure, it is nothing to what you deserve, or to what the damned in Hell Endure.

In Hell there is variety of torments, and extremity of torments, and eternity of torments; not one way, but a thousand wayes to make a poor soul miserable, everlastingly miserable? And who can bear variety? Who can bear Eternity? Who can bear Eternity of torments? Yet all this you must bear, if ever it be your lot to lie in Hell.

Here it may be you want one mercy, but blessed be God you have another in lieu of it; you want health, but you want not friends; you want money, but you want not a Christ; you want an Estate, but you want not a contented mind; though your life be not absolutely made up of comforts, which is your misery; yet it is not altogether composed of crosses; and is not this a Mercy?

And thus is your life checqu'rd with blacks and whites, so that you have never such cause of Mourning, but withall you have some just ground of rejoycing; but in Hell there's nothing to be seen, but objects of sorrow; and nothing to be heard except inducements to

grief; not one merry day, and one sad, not one hour of pain, and another of ease; not one cross, and one comfort; but all crosses and curses do meet there like lines in their proper center. Compare now your sufferings with the sufferings of Hell, and let this quiet you.

That School-boy thinks he gets well off, when deserving a Rod, he escapes with a Reproof: What a mercy then may you count it, that when you deserve a Curse from Christ, you escape with the Cress of Christ; afflicted on Earth, when you might justly be tormented in Hell.

Think of it then, are you corrected? It's the Lords mercy that you are not consumed. Hath God taken away your health from you? it's well you escape so, he might have taken away your life from you, and your Christ from you, and where had you been then?

In a word, how much soever God takes from you, it's less then you owe him; and how little soever he leaves you, it's more than he owes you; therefore instead of murmuring that your condition is so ill, bless God that it is no worse, saying with Ezra, Ez. 9:13. Thou, O Lord, hast punisht us less than our Iniquities have deserved.

35. Mr. Cooper's Farewell Sermon

"Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do; and the God of Peace shall be with you." - PHIL. 4:9.

THE Amannensis, or Pen-man of this Epistle, was Paul the Apostle, who being Prisoner at Rome, takes occasion from the benevolence of the Philippians sent unto him by Epaphroditus for the supply of his wants there, to confirm them (by this Epistle) in the Faith, notwithstanding his bonds, to encourage them in godliness, and walking worthy of the Gospel, but especially in stedfastness, unity

and lowliness of mind; to warn them against certain perverse Zealots of the Law, who mingled Works with Faith in point of Justification; and (in a word) to quicken them to the practice of all Christian duties.

My Text falls under the last of these heads, wherein our blessed Apostle being about to Epilogize, and drawing towards a conclusion, endeavours to Epitomize his whole Epistle, and to give them in a few words the sum of all his Apostolick Advice, which was, that they should live up to their knowledge, practising with all faithfulness the things they had both learned, and heard, and received from the Lord by him.

Those things (saith he) which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do; and the God of peace shall be with you.

In which words you may observe these two things:

1. A Precept, holding forth the duty and employment of a Christian: Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do.
2. A Promise, holding forth the priviledge and encouragement of a Christian; And the God of Peace shall be with you.

First, For the Precept; it holds forth the duty an employment of a Christian, and that is, to live up to his knowledge, to transcribe the Law of God into his life, and to practice with all diligence what ever he hath learned, and heard, and received from the Lord, whether by precept or example.

Secondly, For the Promise; it holds forth the priviledge and encouragement of a Christian, and that is, that doing what he knows and exercising himself in the practise of what he hath both heard, and learned, and received from the Lord, he is sure to have God's presense with him, not only in regard of his Essense, for so he is

everywhere, and with every man present; neither can he be otherwise; but also in regard of his grace and savour.

Doct. Those that walk in obedience with God, he will always be graciously present with them.

The God of Peace will vouchsafe his gracious presense to all those who have heard, received and learned, whether by Precept or Example, the Truth as it is in Jesus, are careful to do accordingly.

Such as yield obedience to God's holy Will, endeavouring to practice what they have heard, and to live up to the Truths they have learned, shall never be forsaken, but God will always afford them his gracious presense.

If any man practice what he knows, (provided that he know the Truth as it is in Jesus) if any man walk in obedience with God, endeavouring to express what he hath heard, and learned, and received from him, by the holiness of his life and conversation; the Lord will be graciously present with that man, as a Pilot to guide him as a Rock to sustain him, and as a Fountain of living water, to minister all fulness to him.

In the prosecution of this Doctrine, having shewed you how the Lord will be present with them that walk in obedience with him; I shall give you the Reasons evincing it, and so come to the practical improvement of the whole, by way of Use and Application.

First, therefore by way of Explication; The Lord will be graciously present with those that walk in obedience with him, these eight wayes.

1. By way of gracious Acceptation: Never did any man yet study to approve himself to God, in a way of dutiful obedience, but the Lord also was present with him in a way of gracious acceptance. A wicked man, not studying obedience to God, finds no acceptance with him in ought that he doth; the sighs of a wicked man are unsavoury, his

solemn Sacrifice is as dung, and his prayers are abominable; God will not come near him, for his breath is infectious. But for those that live up to their knowledge, God highly favours them, and takes all that they do in good part.

Not a good word falls from their lips, but is recorded, Mal. 3:16. Not a tear drops from their eyes, but 'tis taken up and bottled, Psalm 56:8. Their weak prayers sound like melody, their broken sighs smell like Incense, Gen. 8:21. and their very stammerings seem Rhetorical, Cant. 2:14.

When all the glistering shews of hypocrites, evaporate and come to nothing, yet they that study to walk in obedience with God, are crowned with acceptation.

We oftentimes come to God with broken prayers; but if we be such as make it our care to practice what we have heard, and learned, and received, God will count our weak performances as a most grateful present, 2 Cor. 8:12.

2. By way of Direction: The Pilot by his presense in the Ship, and by his Skill and Activity, turns the Rudder of the Ships, and guides the course thereof, steering a right course towards the desired Haven: So God as a spiritual Pilot, is present in the Ship of every obedient Soul, guiding it by his Counsel, and enabling, it by the direction and guidance of his own holy spirit, to steer a right course to the Haven of Eternal Rest. By nature we understand not the things of the Spirit of God, neither indeed can we, because they are spiritually discerned; but, saith Christ, if any man will do his will, he shall know of the Doctrine, whether it be of God, John 7:17. Knowledge is the Pilot, to guide us in our obedience; if Zeal be not according to knowledge, it's will-worship; and there is no better way to become knowing, than by doing and practising what we have already learned.

The disobedient and ungodly are in darkness until now; neither can they discern as they ought, what concerns their everlasting peace;

but the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, endeavouring to do what they know; and he will teach them the way that they should choose, Psalm 25 12, 14.

Oh then, how great is this priviledge, that God will resolve our doubts, acquaint us what is his Will, and give his Spirit to lead us into all necessary Truths, when we make it our care to answer our knowledge with suitable practise! He that doth not what he knows, shall not shortly know what to do; but he whose life is correspondent to his light, God will never leave to sit in Egyptian darkness.

3. By way of preservation; God is always present with those to keep them from evil, who study obedience to him in that which is good. If God's people abstain from drunkenness, swearing, Idolatry, and the like abominable impieties, which inevitably drown the soul in perdition, let them not rob the Lord of his glory, in ascribing it to the goodness of their natures, but let them ingeniously acknowledge it to proceed from the goodness of God, that preserves them more than others, and many times prevents their falling into those fins which by nature they were prone to, as well as the rest.

Thus David was kept from murdering Nabal; Noah from partaking with the old world in their wickedness; Lot from following after the abominations of Sodom; Joseph from consenting to the lude inticements of his impudent Mistris; and those three Jewish Worthies, from falling down to worship before the golden Image which Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon had set up, Dan. 3:16,18.

When therefore, Gods people consider. Judas bursting asunder, through black despair, Julian dying with revenge and rage against Christ; Achitophel dispatching himself for very madness, because his oracle was not received, one blaspheming, another sinfully, plying with a wicked world, and a third running into all excess of riot: Oh! let them then also consider the goodness of God, and the power of his Grace in preserving them from the like.

Every one of Gods people, did not the Lord preserve them by his Grace, and keep off temptation, would soon be a Gain, or Achitophel; Yea, a Devil incarnate. Oh then! think with yourselves, if the Grace of God did not keep off such a sin, such a lost, such a temptation, how had it swallowed us up, as the Whale did Jonah.

4. By way of Corroboration; Those that walk in obedience with God, doing what they know, the Lord is still present with them, assisting them by his Grace, and strengthening them in all their weaknesses. Whence it, that a Christian is able to do duty, to resist temptations and to scorn, as well the smiles as the frowns of a deceitful world; whether seeking by promises, to draw into sin, or by threatnings, to deter from duty, but through the Presense of God strengthning him Phil. 4:13.

Paul hath, as one observes, a kind of Omnipotency, and to him, with every good Christian, all things are possible because possible to the Grace of God, who is with them.

The strength of a Christian lies not in himself, but in God assisting him: the Bird may as well flie without wings, as he resist a temptation, perform duty acceptably, mortifie any lust, or do anything prevailing without the Presense of God strengthening.

As Sampson, while God kept him, and was present with him, no Philistine was too strong for him: So, while God is present with us, assisting us by his Grace, we cannot fall, and when he keeps us not, we cannot stand.

5. By way of Protection; Such as do what they have heard, and learned, and received, with them God is present, not only as a Sun for Direction, but also as a Shield for Protection, Not only to do them good, but also to defend them from evil, Psalm 84:11. Pharaoh King of Egypt followed Israel, but he and his mighty men were drowned, and Israel escaped, for the Lord was with Israel. Saul hunteth David as a Partridge upon the mountains, but Saul, perisheth, and David is

made a King; For the Lord was with David. Haman hateth Mordecai, resolving to have him hanged high enough, because he would not stoop low enough: But Haman himself is hanged, and Mordecai is advanced, for God is with Mordecai.

And thus if we study to walk with God, he will give us protection, and be present with us, to deliver us out of all our troubles. For the Lord, whom we serve, is stronger than All, and if he be present with us, who can be against us? Rom. 8:31.

Nemo nos loedit, nisi qui Deum vincit. He only who can overcome God, can bring evil upon those that walk in Obedience with him; neither is any man delivered from evil, but through Gods protecting him.

When therefore, we see one disgraced, another slain; One diseased, another cut off by the stroke of Death, one lose his Estate, another his Liberty, and we our selves delivered from the like Calamities, how can we choose but ascribe it to Gods goodness, protecting us therefrom?

6. By way of Communication; The wicked are estranged from God, but the Righteous have access into his Presense, and in all the methods thereof he lets out himself, communicating of his Grace and Goodness to them. Such open to him, and therefore He comes in to sup with them, that they may sup with him. Rev. 3:20 Such are often drawing nigh to him in Duty, he therefore draws nigh to them in a way of Mercy, and gracious Communication, Jam. 4.

If they meditate, they meet with God, and what a blessed Contemplation is that? If they hear his Word, they meet with God, and what a joyful hour must that be? If they receive the Sacrament, there also they meet with God in Christ, and what a soul solacing Feast is that? If they bow their souls in Prayer, there they meet with God; And oh! what an heaven upon earth is this?

Oh! Little do any of you (that are yet disobedient) know what secret Debates, what spiritual Incomes, what Heavenly Elapses, and soul ravishing contentments, Gods people find in Communion with him! They study obedience with him, and therefore he is graciously present with them, communicating himself to their souls in every Ordinance: So that those who are willing and obedient, they eat the fat of Ordinances; they have other joyes, other pleasures, other delights to be feeding upon, and solacing their souls withall, in the duties of Gods Worship, than what the world is aware of.

Such are satisfied with the fatness of Gods House, they sit down under his Shadow, with great delight, they find his Fruit sweet to their taste, and one days communion with the Lord, it is better to their souls, than a thousand elsewhere.

7. By way of Occultation: God is an abiding place for his people, their Refuge and Fortress in times of trouble; Those that keep close to God, to do what he loves, the Lord will keep close to them to hide them from what they fear. In the time of trouble, saith David, He shall hide me in his Pavillion: In the secret of his Tabernacle shall he hide me, Psalm 32:7.

God hath secret Chambers of Providence wherein to hide his people in time of danger and publick calamities.

Isa. 26:20,21. Come my people, saith the Lord, enter thou into thy Chambers, and shut thy Doors about thee; Hide thy self as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be ever-past. When danger pursues Gods people, he teaches them to run to himself, as a most inviolable Sanctuary. The Name of the Lord, saith the wise man, is a strong Tower, the Righteous runneth to it, and is safe, Prov. 18:10.

A Child of God never dwells so securely, as when God himself hides him under the Ark, in the most secret place of his own Sanctuary. For the nearer to God, the farther from danger.

8. And Lastly, By way of Supportation. Though God be not always so present with his people, as to hide them from suffering, yet he will always be present, to support them under their sufferings, how many and grievous soever. As, without Gods leave, no Affliction can overtake us, so when it doth overtake us, God will not leave us: But if we walk in obedience with him, the Lord will also be present with us, to support us under all our pressures, Isa 47:10. Fear not, for I am with thee, be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee, with the right hand of my Righteousness. Here, you have God engaging his Almighty Power, to that if that be sufficient, he will be sure to bear you up under all your burdens.

Though God will not always deliver his people out of trouble, yet he will still be present with them, supporting them, that they may not despond, not sink under the burden,

Isa. 43:2 When thou passest through the waters. I will be with thee, and through the Rivers, they shall not overthrow thee: When thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.

If at any time an ungrateful World cast Gods people into the waters of great tribulation: yet the Lord will be present with them bearing them up (as it were) by the chin, that they may not sink, nor be utterly overwhelmed therein.

Secondly, Thus I have shewed you how God is present with those that live up to their knowledge: As an Altar of Perfume, causing them to find acceptance, both in their persons and performances with himself As the Sun which gives them light in darkness, as a wall of fire which defends them in the assaults of all their Enemies; as a fountain of living water; communicating streams to refresh them, when all their Vessels, like Hagers, prove empty bottles; as an Ack to hide them in from the deluge of all distresses; and as a living Rock, sustaining them under all their pressures or burdens, how many or

great soever. Come we now therefore, to give you the Reasons, why God will vouchsafe to be graciously present with them, who walk in obedience with him, according to what they have heard, received, and learned, whether by precept or example.

1. Because those that are present with God in a way of obedience, the Lord is engaged by promise, to be graciously present with them, 2 Chron. 15:2. Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah, and Benjamin, the Lord is with you, whilst you are with him. Those that are present with God in a way of Duty, he hath here promised to be present with them in a way of Grace and Mercy.

'Tis our Duty indeed, to keep close to God, and to walk in obedience with him, though after all he should reject us, and give us no reward: But, for but better encouragement, God sweetens his Commands with promises, tying our Work and our Wages, our Duty and Reward together.

So, that present with God in a way of obedience, according to the condition, he cannot but be graciously present with us, according to the mind and true intent of the promise: For the Lord is not a man that he should lye, nor the Son of man, that he should repent, Numb. 23:19.

2. Because, such as walk in obedience with God, do engage him to be present with them, by depending fiducially upon him. Trust, is a kind of engagement when there is no promise: but what is it to trust upon God, who hath made so many promises of being present with those that keep close to him.

Common ingenuity will teach us to stand by those that put confidence in us; And will not the goodness of God much more incline him to be graciously present with his own people, who place their whole trust and affiance to him?

3. Because such stand related to God, and are become his people. The Lord hath set apart the Godly for himself; and that propriety he hath

in them, engageth Him to be graciously present with them, Psalm 4:3.

Though there were nothing to move him to make such his people, before he did; yet there is something that may engage him never to forsake, but to be graciously present with them, now he hath made them his people; and that is, his propriety in them, because they are his people.

Hath he chosen us, and will he again reprobate us? Hath he set us apart for himself, and will he cast us off? Hath he purchased us, and will he reject his own purchase? Hath he married us to himself, and will he not cohabit with us, but instead thereof, be divorced from us, notwithstanding he hath told us, he hates putting away? Mal. 2:16. Hath he, in a word, of his own good pleasure, made us his people, and will he repent of his choice, with drawing from us, instead of being graciously present with us? 1 Sam. 12:27.

And lastly, Because God is concerned in point of Honour to be graciously present with them; Such stand by God asserting his interest and Glory in the world; And is he not then concerned, in point of Honour to stand by them?

To practise what we have heard, and received, and learned of God, is to run the hazard of reproach, disgrace, and persecution in the world: Now all this being done upon Gods account, and in obedience to him, How can it stand with his Honour, to stand aloof, and not to be graciously present with us in the midst of so many dangers? Thirdly, Having thus given you the Proof, let us now come to the Improvement of the Doctrine by way of Use and Application.

First, by way of Information; we may hence take notice of these ensuing Particulars.

1. How sad and deplorable their condition is, who having heard, learned, and received the things of God, are not careful to do accordingly. You that have heard, you that have been taught how you

ought to walk, and yet practise not what you have learned, most dreadful, and lamentable is your condition? For God is not graciously present with thee, but departed from thee. What though thou hast Riches with thee, and Honours with thee, and Friends with thee; If God be not with thee, but sets himself as an Enemy against thee; Can thy Riches thy Honours, and thy Friends profit thee in the day of his wrath? Can they keep off the stroke of his Indignation? Can they make thee happy, who through the want of Gods gracious presense, are compleatly miserable?

Oh! that all you who are still disobedient, living contrary to the many precious Truths and wholesome Instructions which you have heard, received and learned, had but your eyes open to behold to what certain, great, and unconceivable misery you are every moment for want of Gods gracious presense, obnoxious!

Who, alas, can stand by you, if God be not with you? Who is there that can give you comfort, if He frown upon you? Or, who can relieve your Souls, when assaulted by men, tempted by Devils, and grievously tormented by the estuations of your own Consciences, if God depart from you? the happiness of man consists in Communion with God, and all those are compleatly miserable, with whom the Lord is not present.

2. The great safety and blessed security of all those that endeavour to walk according to what they have heard, and learned, and received of the Lord. Not to do as the most do, not to run with the men of the world into the same excess of Riot, but to walk circumspectly, endeavouring to answer our knowledge with suitable practice, this doth usually enrage the world against us; However, if God be with us, what can all the world do against us? Rom. 8:13.

Such walk with God in a way of Duty; Whatever therefore the world and ungodly men may attempt to the contrary, yet Gods presense with them therein, will make it a way of safety.

However, then, some timorated Spirits may think by dissembling conscience and giving way to sinful compliances to secure themselves; Yet we may hence see, that there is no such security as in walking with God in a way of Duty.

Communion with God in a way of Duty, is a sure Sanctuary of Refuge; As no stranger can enter into it, so Gods people have most while they dwell in it. Psalm 27:5.

By dissembling Conscience, and waving Duty, we run our selves upon a thousand dangers: But by diligence in the wayes of God, and being faithful in all the duties of his worship, we betake ourselves to the Name of the Lord, in which, as a strong Tower, we are sure to find safety Prov. 18:10.

3. The desperate folly, and fool-hardiness of all such as set themselves against Gods people, opposing them in the practice of what they have heard, and learned, and received of the Lord. 'Tis usual with the World, then to trample upon the Righteous, when surrounded with Afflictions; they will grieve where God wounds, they will persecute where God smites: But wherever the condition of Gods people is, yet the Lord is still present with them; neither can the ungodly of the World oppose them in well-doing, but they enter a quarrel with God himself.

Why then do you pride your selves against those, like Moab, with whom God is present? And, why do you strive to abase those whom God will exalt? Jer. 48:26,27. Are you stronger than the mighty God of Jacob? And can you be present to hurt those, with whom God is present to protect and save?

Oh, how great is the folly of wicked men, whom nothing can hinder from prosecuting their bloody thoughts against the righteous, nor withhold from opposing them in the practice of what they have learned! Do they know of a certainty that God is with the righteous, that no weapon formed against them shall prosper, and that the

Lord, by his presense, will secure them against all their Enemies? Why then should they still be kicking against the pricks.

4. What reason all those have to sit down satisfied with their portion, who make it their care to practice what they have heard, and learned, and received of the Lord. Though possibly they have neither Riches nor Honors, nor Friends in the World with them; yet they have God with them, as an inexhaustible treasure, to supply all their wants, as a Crown of glory upon their heads, and as an everlasting Friend, who will never fail them, Heb. 13:5,

What then though a Christian want other things, is it not enough, that God, over all, blessed forever, is still graciously present with him, and become his portion? Shall he inflict himself for want of Star-light, who hath the Sun in its full strength shining upon him, or be disconsolate for the loss of some broken Cistern, who may go at his pleasure to the Fountain-head, where waters are sweetest?

Oh, how unsuitably were it for you that live up to your knowledge, endeavouring to practice what you have learned, to grow despondent and repining for want of creature-comforts, when God, your Creator, is alwayes present with you, to comfort and solace your souls in every condition!

Had you nothing but God's gracious presense, and an interest in him for your portion; yet this were as much as happiness comes to, & sufficient to make you everlastingly blessed. For happy is that People, whose God is the Lord. Psalm 144:15.

Secondly, by way of Exhortation; Let me now prevail with you all, those things which you have heard, and learned, and received, to do them; Oh! walk in obedience with God, would you ever enjoy his gracious presense.

Many precious truths have been preached among you; many heavenly Doctrines have been set before you, many wholesome lessons and faithful Admonitions have been given you; let me now

therefore (being, for ought I know, as a Star, setting and rising no more in this Horizon, like a Lamp going out, and shining no more in this your house of Sacred meeting, and as a dying man, whose last breath is now expiring) persuade you for your own good, to remember what you have heard, to hold fast what you have received, and to practice what you have learned.

Oh! let this be the main of your care, that as the Truth, as it is in Jesus, hath been delivered to you; so you may be delivered up to it, expressing the soundness of your knowledge, by the holiness of your lives and conversations.

Oh! this, my Brethren, is the one thing necessary; you may hear much, and yet be strangers to God; you may learn much, and yet never come nigh God; you may receive many wholesome instructions at his hands, and yet at last be punished with everlasting destruction from his presense; but now, if you practice what you hear, if you live up to what you have learned, and transfer be into your lives those wholesome instructions you receive from God he will never forsake you, but will always be graciously present with you. But that I may not leave you half persuaded, give me leave to acquaint you with the excellency of God's gracious Presense, in these following particulars.

1. Consider, such is the presense of God with those that walk in obedience with him, that it will make them in all things to thrive and prosper. The Ark received into Obed-Edom's house caused all that he had to prosper: So the Lord received by obedience into the heart, and graciously present there, makes the whole man prosperous. He makes him prosper in the inward man, and he also makes him prosper in the outward man. Where God is graciously present, there can nothing be wanting, neither for soul, nor for body; but the man is successful, and prospers in all his undertakings, Psalm 1.

Without God's gracious presense we can profit by nothing; without this, health is not profitable, nor riches profitable, nor Ordinances profitable; the choicest means of Grace, without God's presence, are

but as breasts without milk, as bottles without water; nay, they are not only a dead letter, but the savour of death; without Gods presense they will damn us; many go loaded to Hell with Ordinances. But, &c.

2. Consider, such is the presense of God with those that walk in obedience with him, that it transforms them into his own likeness, making them holy as he is holy. As the Sun will change the colour of those that are much in it; so a man cannot be near to God, but this will make him in purity and holiness like God.

And do you not desire to have such a beauty put upon you, and thus to be adorned with the Robes of Righteousness? Why, do but strive to walk in obedience with God, and he also will be graciously present with you, making you of Bryars and Thorns, Lillies and Roses, of Lyons, Lambs; of deformed, he will make you comely; and of filthy, he will make you clean, adorning your souls with the Jewels of Holiness, Col. 1:13.

Without the presense of an holy God, you can never be holy; and without holiness you can never see the Lord with comfort, Heb. 12:14. 'Tis only Grace that leads to glory. For, no holiness here, no happiness hereafter.

3. Consider, such is the presense of God with those that walk in obedience with him, that it can quiet their souls, turning every storm that arises, into a blessed calm.

When the heart is full of doubts and distresses, accused by the Law, pursued by the Adversary, and condemned by itself; then doth God by his gracious presense still the raging of the sea, give quiet to conscience, and lay the storm.

Nothing but the breast will quiet the child; so nothing but the breasts of God's gracious presense can quiet a distressed soul, Rom 5:1.

Would you therefore be at peace, and have quiet in your own consciences? would you have a sweet calm, and a sabbath of rest from all your spiritual agonies? Walk then in obedience with God, endeavouring to practise what you know, that he by his presense may work your desire.

4. Consider, such is the presense of God with all that obey him according to what they have heard, and learned, and received, that nothing can intercept it, nor withhold it from them.

If they go up to Heaven in prosperity, God is there, making all their enjoyments conduce to their everlasting advantage; if they be forced to make their bed in hell and lie down in sorrow, God also is there, turning their sorrow into joy; if they be glad to take the wings of the morning and to fly for their lives into the uttermost parts of the earth, God is also there, bringing them back at length out of Egypt, the Land of their Captivity, into Canaan.

Oh then, if anything can make you obedient; let the hope of God's gracious presense prevail with you to be so; your Honors, your Riches, your Friends, and all your creature comforts may be easily withheld; these are but as the shining of the Sun, which every discontented cloud may intercept: But if you walk in obedience with God, there is nothing can intercept his presense; nor hinder you from having communion with him. Are you banished from your own habitations, and forced to sojourn as strangers in a strange Land? There will the Lord be with you, as with Jacob at Padan-Aram, Gen. 28:15.

Are you shut up in close prison, and lie under restraint, that your Friends may not visit you? There will God also be present with you, as with Paul and Silas, compassing you about with songs of deliverance, Act. 16:25.

Are you (in a word) as men appointed unto death, cast into an hot fiery Furnace? There likewise will the Lord be present with you, as

with Shadrach, Meshech, and Ahednego, not suffering the flames to kindle upon you, Dan. 3:27.

5. Consider, such is the presense of God with those that obey him according to what they have heard, and learned, and received, that it makes them rejoyce with joy unspeakable, and full of glory, 1. Pet. 1:8.

Many traduce Religion as a thing that makes men melancholick; but his estate is of all mens most joyful, who walking in obedience with God, doth enjoy his presense; for where can the soul find those comforts which do fill it with gladness, and crown it with delight, but in God? His presense is a Christians musick and Festival, the Nectar and Ambrosia whereon he delights to feed.

You may sooner taste honey, than tell how sweet it is; so you may taste what joy and gladness God's presense puts into the soul, but can never express it. Would you then have your souls overflowing with gladness? Would you have them rejoyce with joy unspeakable and full of glory? Then walk in obedience with God, and his presense will do it.

6. Consider, such is the presense of God with all that obey him according to what they have heard, and learned, and received, that it sweetens every Cross, and makes them not only rejoyce, but to rejoyce in tribulation, Rom. 5:3. Amaritudines mundi dulces reddit. The Wine of God's presense can sweeten the bitter Waters of Marah. Let sickness come, let reproach come, let persecution come, yea, let death itself come, yet the sense of God's gracious presense takes away the sting out of all these.

Such is the power of God's gracious presense, that it takes away the bitterness of afflictions from all that walk in obedience with him, gives them honey out of the belly of Lyons meat out of the Eater, and sweet out of sour.

If then you desire to see light in darkness, to have your Prison turned into a Paradise, and the flames of Martyrdom into a bed of Spices; See then that you walk in obedience with God according to what you have heard, and learned, and received.

Prosperity without God's presense is full of trouble; but trouble with the presense of God is full of comfort.

7. Consider, Such is the presense of God with those that obey him according to what they have heard, and learned, and received, that it doth not only rejoice their souls, but gives them full satisfaction.

The Sun satisfieth the eye with light, the Fountain satisfieth the thirsty with water; so God satisfieth (by his gracious presense) all that walk in obedience with him.

Outward comforts do sooner cloy than chear; and sooner weary than fill; they can no more satisfie the heart, than a Triangle can fill a Circle: But when once God comes and vouchsafes his gracious presense, Now the soul is at rest, now it's come to its centre, and with Jacob it can say, I have enough. For with whom God is graciously present, to all them he is an all-sufficient portion.

8. Consider, the presense of God with all those that obey him in what they have heard, and learned, and received, is such as shall endure forever. Your Riches, your Comforts, your Friends may be with you to day, and be gone tomorrow; but with whom God is once graciously present, to them he continues the presense of his grace, his love and his favour forever.

God may (indeed) withdraw the light of his countenance for a time; but totally, and forever, he will never desert those that walk in obedience with him.

All things without God are full of vanity and change; only the Lord will never utterly absent himself from us, if once he be graciously present with us: He is a faithful Friend, loving at all times; his favour

is a Sun that knows no setting: and his presense a Well of comfort, springing up to eternal Life, John 4:14, 13:1.

So that if you regard a Treasure that shall never be taken from you, that favour which shall never end in frowns, make sure of God's gracious presense, by walking in obedience with him, according to what you have heard, and learned, and received from him.

9. Consider, such is the presense of God with those that walk in obedience with him, that it's every way suitable and correspondent to their souls necessities.

Whatever the soul can desire, whatever it stands in need of, may be found in God's gracious presense; this is beauty to adorn; this is gold to enrich; this is balm to heal; this is bread to strengthen; this is wine to comfort and make glad the soul in the time of heaviness.

Are we in danger? this is a shield: Are we disconsolate? this is a Sun: If in a word) we be pursued by any calamity, this is like the munition of Rocks, an hiding-place against the storm, and a Tower wherein we may find safety.

If then God's gracious presense be thus proper to our wants, and so suitable to all our necessities, how ought we to labour for it, by walking in obedience with him, according to what we have heard, and learned and received from him.

10. And lastly, such is the presense of God with those that obey him, according to what they have heard, and learned, and received; that it fit them for everlasting Communion with him in Glory.

God's people they go from Communion to Communion; from Communion with God in a state of grace, to Communion with God in a state of glory. For with whomsoever God is graciously present here, they shall hereafter enjoy his blissful, soul-ravishing, and beatifical presense to all Eternity.

If then you desire to be with the Lord forever, where you shall see his glory, enjoy his presense, and be satisfied with pleasures at his tight hand for evermore; then see that you walk in obedience before him. For those only shall enjoy God's presense in a state of glory, with whom he is now present in a state of grace. There is no commencing Saints, either Militant on Earth, or Triumphant in Heaven per Saltum: If we draw not nigh to God in a way of obedience here, we must hereafter be punished with everlasting destruction from his presense, and from the glory of his Power.

Thus by Divine assistance I have shewed you the excellency of Gods presense, with all such as obey him according to what they have heard, and learned, and received from him: Now then, do not deprive your selves of so glorious a privilege, but see that henceforth you walk in obedience with God, giving diligence to practise those things you have learned.

But that you may not at length be disappointed, neither finding God graciously present with you here, nor enjoying his presense in glory hereafter; be sure that in doing what you have heard, learned and received, you observe these following directions.

1. Be sure that of all which you have heard, and learned and received, tither of me or of any other, you practice that only which you find to be of God, and according to the unerring Rule of his Word.

We have one Heavenly King, and must therefore observe one Law; we have one God, and must Worship by one Rule; We have one Shepherd, and must be commanded by one Voice: We have (in a word) one Head, and must follow upon that account one direction.

All that builded Noah's Ark, builded by one pattern; so all that intend to build themselves an Heavenly and Spiritual House to GOD, must build by one Rule. All Israel travelled to the Land of Canaan by the light of one fiery Pillar: So all that will travel to the Heavenly Canaan of God's gracious presense, must make his Word a light to their feet,

and a lanthorn to their paths. All the passengers in a Ship sail by one Compass; so all that will steer a right course to the Haven of Eternal Rest, must keep close to the unerring Rule of Gods Word, as their only Compass, Phil. 3:16.

For it's Gods Prerogative to prescribe, and mans duty to conform; our service is no service, nor will God be present with us in anything that we do, farther then we have heard, and learned, and received it from him, Matt. 15:9.

Let then every man amongst you that desires Gods presense, either in grace here, or in glory hereafter, be like those noble Bereans, examining the ground of their Faith, and obedience. Oh, do not offer to God a sacrifice without eyes; your Religion must be Scripture-Religion, and all your obedience commanded therein, would you ever be accepted of God in what you do.

2. Be sure that whatever you have heard, received and learned, you do it cordially without dissembling.

The obedience of the life without, when integrity of heart, and the life of grace is wanting within, finds no acceptance with God, nor will he ever be graciously present with those who only draw nigh unto him by an external conformity.

Obedience without the heart, and to practise what we have heard, and learned, and received, but not in sincerity, will bring neither glory to God, nor comfort to us.

Do not then dissemble any longer with the God of Heaven: Oh be not industrious to plot your own death, and through your hypocrisie go to Hell in the way of duty; but whatever you have heard, whatever you have learned, whatever you have received, be sure that you do it heartily as unto God.

3. Be sure that whatever you have heard, and learned, and received, you do it universally, without any reservation.

True obedience is universal; doing many things, and neglecting others, will not save; one leak in the ship of thy Soul, is enough to sink it in eternal perdition, Psalm 119.

The hypocrite will walk in some of Gods Statutes; but with David you must have respect to all his Commandments, if you ever desire the Lord to be present with you as he was with David.

Every duty (therefore) commanded, be sure that you do it; and every sin forbidden, be sure that you shun it as Hell itself.

Many wholesome Doctrines have been taught, and many soul-saving Truths have been made known among you; well, of all that you ever heard, received and learned, let nothing fall to the ground, but bring all into practice, would you ever enjoy Gods gracious presense.

4. And lastly, of all that you have heard, and learned, and received from God, be sure that you do it constantly, without going over. The Lord is with you (saith the Prophet, speaking to Asa and all Juda) while ye are with him; if ye seek him, he will be found of you, but if you forsake him, he will also forsake you, 2 Chron. 15:2.

If we desire that God should always be present with us in a way of Mercy, we must still strive to be present with him in a way of duty; and if we would not have God cast us off, and forsake us in the end, we must be careful not to forsake him, but to hold on with God in a way of obedience to the end.

He that shall endure to the end (saith Christ) the same shall be saved, Matt. 24:13. As God condemns no man before he sins, so neither will he crown any man before he overcomes. We must Conquer, before we can Triumph; win the garland before we can wear it, and obtain the Crown of Eternal Communion with God in glory, by patient continuance in well-doing, Rom. 2:8.

Let me then, once for all (as a lover of your souls) beseech you whatever you have heard, whatever you have learned, whatever you

have received from the Lord, that you practise it, and that to the end. Oh remember what you have heard, give diligence to practise what you have learned, and whatever you have received from the Lord, whether concerning principles of Faith, or precepts of Life, be sure that you hold it fast, that no man take your Crown, Rev. 3:3.

Knowledge without an answerable practice, will not avail you; and the practice of what you know, without perseverance therein to the end, will but aggravate your condemnation, and serve to sink you the deeper in the pit of eternal perdition, 2 Pet. 2:21.

Take heed therefore that you be not carried away with the error of the wicked; let no thought arise within you of departing from the living God, but press on towards the Mark, hold fast your Integrity, persevere in obedience to God, according to what you have heard, and learned, and received from the Lord, and see that you break through all discouragements for communion with him.

In God you have a living Spring when all your bottles are empty; in him you have a sure Sanctuary, when all your Refuges and hiding-places in the World are laid level with the ground; in him you have a glorious Sun, when all the blazing stars of your creature comforts are extinguish'd, and disappear: In him (to be short) you shall find everlasting friendship, when all your friends according to the flesh, are put to perpetual silence in the grave.

Oh then, be careful that you cleave to this God, that you repose your selves wholly upon him, and that you constantly (without giving over) walk in obedience with him, according to what you have heard, and learned, and received; that so enjoying God's gracious presense here in a state of grace, you may hereafter enjoy the presential, soul-satisfying, and open vision of himself in a state of glory.

36. Mr. Wadsworth's Farewell Sermon

"Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, do the first works: or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy Candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."- Rev. 2:5.

These Words, with the foregoing verses, I have insisted largely upon already. And in the Words I told you, there is,

First of all, A severe threatning in these words, I will come unto thee quickly, and I will remove thy Candlestick out of his place.

I have told you what is meant by Candlestick. A Candlestick I told you signifies the Church of God, or a Company, or a Society of people met together to worship God in Spirit and in Truth. As if he should say, I will smite thy Shepherds, and scatter thy Flocks; I will take away mighty Lights, and I will leave thee in Egyptian darkness; I will cut off my Ordinances, which are my golden Pipes to convey the Water of Life unto you.

But you will say, why is the Lord so angry with Ephesus?

It is, Because of the Churches sins; It is, because thou hast not loved me as once thou didst. Want of love to Christ is a sin that deserveth to be unchurched; that deserveth that God should take away your Ministers: For, what is our preaching for, but to gain your Loves to Christ, and to hate the Devil?

Secondly, In the second place, I shewed you what the works of this Church of Ephesus were; They had been very laborious in the external Principles of Religion, in promoting the Salvation of Souls; but yet notwithstanding they had gone so far, yet they had not done what they did out of a right Principle, that is, out of pure Love to

Christ; this makes the Lord so angry, that he threatneth to unchurch them.

Well, but is there no remedy to prevent this heavy Judgement? He that holds forth the Rod tells you a Remedy. As if he should say, Oh you Ephesians, if you will love me better, and if you will be more painful in the great Work of your Salvation, if you will but repent of your sins, I will not bring those heavy Judgements upon you, which I threatned to bring upon you.

I have told you the greatness of the sins that his Church was guilty of. I have likewise shewed you what a great Curse it is for the Lord to take away the Gospel from a Nation; I told you that it is a big-bellied Curse; it is a curse that hath a great many other curse embowelled up in it.

I told you when the Gospel goes, God goes; and when God goes, Christ goes; and when Christ goes, the ministering Angels of the Covenant go, the Candlestick goes, and the Lights they go along with it.

What then follows, when God goes? Then the Devil he comes, yea, legions of Devils come; and then there follows the Plague, Pestilence, Famine, Sword, and all other manner of evils. God doth not go alone, neither doth God remove his Candlestick alone. I do not tell you that God threatens you to pull down all your Lights, I would not terrifie you by telling you that God is a departing from you, when he puts out some of your Lights: But yet I must needs tell you, that when God doth deprive you of so many hundreds, of as Pious, and as Laborious, and as Learned (some of them) as any are in the Vineyard; I say, when God deals thus by you, I cannot think that it is in mercy to you, but in judgement.

The Church of England is a great People, and there are many poor souls in it, that are as Fire-brands in the fire, that have great need to be pluckt out; and as there are, blessed be God, many eminent

Ministers at this day in England, to snatch such poor souls, as fire brands out of the fire; Yet I say, that where there is one, we have need of ten.

But though our disease is dangerous, yet it is not desperate: there is one way for us to prevent those heavy judgements that the Lord doth threaten to inflict upon us; and that is by Repentance; by a serious Repenting of the sins past of our lives, and to amend what hath been amiss in us.

I shall now come to make some Application of what I have formerly delivered unto you.

Use 1.

In the first place, Is this a Truth, That Repentance is the only way and means to prevent the Judgements of God, that are threatned against a People by God for sin. Then first of all, I would have you to observe the cursed nature of this cursed thing, called sin: Sin must be repented of, or it will destroy us, it will destroy our bodies, it will destroy our souls, it will destroy our Kingdom: this is the cursed nature of this thing called sin.

My beloved, I think it is one of the hardest things that is, to understand the exceeding sinfulness of sin, to understand that deadly Poyson that is in it; it is for want of the true knowledge of it, that causeth that deadness of heart that you so much groin under. Thus you see that sin (that thing which we so much slight) what a terrible thing it is. Alas, what think many of us of a vain word, or an idle thought, or swearing an Oath: what a trifling thing it is to neglect Prayer.

But let me ask you, that think sin to be so slight a matter, what is the reason that God is so angry that he made man? What is the reason that many a sinful Church, hath made God repent that ever he made them a Church? I say therefore consider the exceeding venom that there is in sin: Oh take heed of sin, it is a Child that although it be

conceived in joy, yet it shall bring forth sorrow in the end. Cursed be the day that ever sin was born into the world. Sin, it is so vile a thing, that it makes God for to cry out at it, and Jesus Christ for to cry out at it, and makes them to say, they will be gone: If you continue in your sins, I will take away my Ministers, and leave you in darkness.

Tush, say you, what is sin? I say, it is the venom and poyson of our natures, it is that which is, as the hand to unsheath the sword, and to thrust it into our own bowels. Sin, it is as a millstone that is tied about our necks, that will pull us both soul and body into the bottom of that Sea of the wrath of God, from whence there will be no recovery; sin is a Plague that will follow our posterity after we are gone out of this world; sin, it is a worm upon the Tree of life, that eats up the fruit of it; sin it is that, which makes the Lord to take away the Gospel from amongst us; sin it is a devilish charm within us, that drives away God, and Christ, and the Gospel from amongst us: This is the evil of that cursed thing called sin. Oh, do not you make a little matter of it: do not you say, when you have been drunk, what harm is there that I have drunk a cup too much? do not say, what harm is there in my telling a lye, or swearing an oath? Oh my beloved, what a sad thing is this sin, that it should cause God for to throw Angels out of Heaven into Hell! Pride cast Angels into Hel; take heed it doth not so by you. Sin made God to destroy all the old world; sin made God to repent that he had made the world; sin made God for to burn Sodom & Gomorah; sin made God for to threaten Ephesus to remove his candlestick from among them.

Therefore I say, do not think sin to be a small matter; make Conscience of the least of sins; believe God, that it is a vile thing; consider with thy self what a vain labour this labour of sin is; it is a vain troublesome work; when you commit it, you must resolve for to die the death, or to undo it again. Sin, it may well be called the Labour in vain. When thou art a doing anything that is evil, thou must repent of it, or else it will undo thee. Sin is a long thred of the sinners spinning, that when he hath spun it out he must sit down in sorrow, and labour to undo his work again.

While thou art a sinning, I can compare it to nothing better, than to the journey that Joseph and Mary made to Jerusalem, and left Jesus Christ behind them.

My beloved, it is a sad journeying without Christ in your company: when you go on in sin, you must return again, or else you will lose your souls. This I say is the labour in Vain of sinners, they are doing a work that they must undo again; they are running a race that they must run back again, or else it will undo them You are gathering up of sticks that will help to burn you; you are whetting a knife that must cut your own throats; you are spinning a thred that must hang you.

Oh my beloved, little do you think that you are doing this, when you are sinning! Do not you say therefore, that sin is a little matter, for God will damn thee soul and body for it: he that will damn thee for lying, he that will damn thee for neglect of praying, he doth think that these sins are great matters: Will you lay these things to heart? I shall speak but a few words more, and I shall have done, and God knowes whether ever I shall speak to you anymore.

I say, take heed of sin, and do not you go away with light thoughts of it.

Use 2.

Is Repentance the only way and means for to prevent the Judgements of God, which are threatned by God for sin? Then from hence you may learn the excellency & the usefulness of that Grace of Repentance.

Oh what an omnipotent grace is this? it is a grace that can do anything with God. Why, what can this grace do? what can it not do? This grace of Repentance it can redeem your morgaged blessings, it can repossess you of those blessings that you have foolishly played away Repentance can make God to stay here in our Kingdom when he is a departing. Repentance, it is a heart-breaking for sin, & it

breaks the heart of God likewise; when thy heart yearns for sin, his heart yearns towards thee; as thou mayest see in the yearnings of God's bowels towards Ephraim, Jer. 31:18, 19, 20. I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus, Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke; Turn thou me, and I shall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God. Surely after I was turned, I repented: and after I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed yea even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth. Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord.

Ephraim, that was a Tribe, one of the Tribes of Israel you hear, hath the voice of a penitent sinner; he smites upon his thigh, which is a sign of great anguish of spirit; here you have the penitent, here you have the weeping shame-fac'd sinner: But in the verse following, you have God standing and looking on; saith God, Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels within me are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him.

If thy heart breaks, thou seest that God's heart will turn towards thee. Oh the excellency of Repentance, that doth so much prevail with the God of heaven! It is these dews and heavenly showers that must revive your almost dying withering blessings. Repentance, it is that holy Oil that must recover our Lamps that are going out: Oh the excellency of Repentance!

From hence you may gather, what an excellent priviledge a penitent heart hath with God: It is the mourning lamenting sinner that is like to do England good; these heard hearted sinners, they cannot recover an almost lost Gospel, they cannot fetch God again; but a penitent heart can. My beloved, how can you live without such a Grace? your Souls want it, your Families want it, three Kingdoms want it; the great want in England is broken-heartedness,

Use 3.

Is Repentance the only way to prevent the Judgments of God, Then you may from hence gather, that when God either hath his Plugues upon a people, or continues in threatning his Judgement upon a People, it is a sign that those people are very guilty of impenitency, and that this people have not yet repented of their sins.

If God threatens thee, O England, Scotland, and Ireland; If God threaten thee to give thee up to hardness of heart, and blindness of mind (doth God do it at this day?) then I say, O England, Scotland, and Ireland, you are impenitent people at this day. If you see a Kingdome groaning under the Judgments of God, it is a sign that they have not made use of those remedies that would have cured them.

This is my Charge against England, we have been a stiff necked People.

Oh London, London, how long shall God wait on you before you repent? how often hath God threatned to remove the Gospel from among you? how often hath God visited you with great and grievous Sicknesses? how many thousands have been killed by the Sword? how many Widows and Fatherless Children have there been left desolate? God hath visited you this year with Mercy, and yet you repent not. Oh my beloved, is not this sad? If God come to punish you after you have received so many mercies from him, take heed that God doth not rid his hands of you.

Why fit you as if you had no hand in these things, you careless Masters, that never pray in your Families, nor never teach your Families to pray? It is for your sins that God doth threaten to remove the Gospel, and to take away his Ministers. Will you repent of your sins? If you do not, sad will be your ends: God may cut you off from the face of the Earth, and raise up unto himself a generation out of

your loyns, that may serve him better than ever you have yet done; and God may cause you to die in a wilderness.

Oh the hard heartedness of the People of England! Oh the Swearing the Wickedness, the Superstition and Prophaness that is grown up amongst us! That I may say, as the world was once drowned by water, so it is now almost filled with wickedness. Oh you sinful wicked Generation, is this your requital to God for all his Mercies? Deut. 32:6 Do you thus requite the Lord, O foolish People and unwise? Is not he thy Father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee?

May I apply this to you? Is this the thanks you return to God, that hath been as a Father to you▪ that hath bought you, and made you? When your sins grow so high, do not you think but that the wrath of God will grow high too.

Objection.

I, but you say, why do you speak to us of these sins? speak to them that commit such sins.

Answer.

My beloved, have you repented of your sins? Are not you grown hard hearted with the rest of this generation? Let me ask you, have you repented of those sins that you are guilty of? Yes, say you, we hope we have. Let me try you a little with these few things.

First of all, have you thought upon the wickedness of your wayes? Have you set your sins in order before you? Have you called to mind the manner of your Lives and Conversations? Sin is never left until it be soundly laid to heart.

A repenting Man is one, that the World sayes, is a moping Man or Woman; he is one that will look himself in the face of the Gospel an

hour to find out his spots; and when he hath found them, he falls a weeping.

Secondly, if you have repented, as you say you have; what hath been your mourning for Sin? You came crying into the world, your mother said. Since the first tears that you shed, how many tears have you shed for your sins? When were you alone in your Chambers? When have you done as Ephraim did? How often have your Cheeks been wet with your Tears? how many Handkerchiefs have you wet with your Tears for your Sin? Oh my Beloved do you think that God will not humble you for your sins? God will humble you, before he exalts you God will bring you to the brink of Hell before he brings you to Heaven.

Thirdly, if you have repented of your Sins, as you say you have; Then, what Reformation is there in your lives? what sin have you left? What sins are they that you have forsaken?

Have you observed that you are more humble than you were heretofore? Do you observe that your hearts are more in Heaven than they were before? Do you observe that you pray more, and delight in prayer more, than you have done? It may be you are ready to try out that you are well; Well, but have you repented? Alas, you talk you have repented of your Sins, when it may be that you know not one sin that you have left. Didst thou once Swear by the holy Name of God? and art thou now afraid for to take his Name into thy mouth, but with great reverence and adoration?

Fourthly, have you repented of your sins, as you say you have done? Then, what Resolutions have you taken up for your future obedience? Is it your resolution for to seek God more in prayer, than ever you have yet done? Will you watch your hearts in prayer more than you have done? will you take more care of your Family? Will you give them an example of a holy heavenly Life?

Fifthly, have you repented of your Sins, as you say you have? Then, how much are you troubled for the sins of others? Do your hearts mourn in secret for the Wickedness and the Abominations of the places where you live?

And now, I beseech you, do not you flatter your selves in your wicked sinful courses; If you do then I say, take heed that God doth not send his Judgments upon you: And if you repent not, doubtless God will bring some Plague upon England, ere it be long.

Consider this, O England, and do not provoke God to depart from you; For, if you repent of your Sins, you may expect to live quietly in the Land of your Nativity, and go to your death beds in peace and rest: But if you will not repent of your sins, then, I say, expect nothing but Cursings instead of Blessings from God: If you will repent, do it today; God knows how long it may be before you have such another day.

But I have one word to you this afternoon, and it is, for ought that I know, the last words I have to speak to you. I have one Question to ask you, before I depart out of this Pulpit, with thoughts, for all that I know, never to return into it any more.

My Question is this; Will you repent?

The welfare of your souls depends upon it, the welfare of the Church depends upon it; the welfare of three Kingdoms depends upon it.

My beloved, it is no trifling now, Will you repent, I ask you? It may be hereafter God will give you up to hardness of heart, and blindness of mind; and if you go on in your wickedness, Hell will follow after it.

Well, I say, Will you repent? I ask you the Question, and I ask you no other Question than I have asked my own self, before I came into this place. I ask you again, Will you repent, every man & woman amongst you? For Jesus Christ is angry with you, and he takes away many of your Lights from amongst you.

That God is angry with you, it is plain, for God would never else have taken away his Ministers from among you.

I doubt not but God hath made use of some of those that are to speak no more in the Name of Jesus, to the snatching of you as fire brands out of the fire; and in bringing you from the kingdome of Satan, unto the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ

Well, will you repent? If you will not, you sins lye at your own doors; do not think its a hard Question, when I ask you, if you will repent? There are two places where there is no Repentance; the one is in Hell: it were a vain thing for me to go to the gates of Hell, and cry to them, Repent, for their day of Grace is past, and their doom is passed upon them; I do verily think that there is more sorrowing in Hell for sin, than there is here upon Earth: but their sorrow is not sanctified sorrow. If the damned in Hell were delivered out of Hell, they would sin again: if they lived eternally, they would sin eternally. But I am not speaking to men in hell, nor to women in hell, but I speak to you that are here upon earth.

But there are a people to whom the day of Grace is set while they live to whom the Sun of Righteousness is set, and their day is filled up with darkness: I look upon the Heathen as such, I look upon the Jews as such I look upon the Turks as such: I dare not say of any man or woman living, that can come within the hearing of a Sermon, that God hath given any one up to such a reprobate mind.

Now my beloved, if it be not thus with any of you, that your day of Grace is not past, as I am confident it is not, Then I beseech you in the Name and Fear of God, that you would repent. The dying words of dying men and women, do usually prevail with those that hear them: The dying words of Fathers and Mothers, do use to prevail with their children: My beloved, if you have any love to God, if you have any love to your souls, remember my last words: I say, Repent of your sins. It may be God hath made me instrumental, to the plucking of some of you as Fire brands out of the fire, and in building

of some of you up in the most holy Faith: Remember what I say, I have chosen this as my last words that ever I shall speak to some of you.

Object. But may some of you say, you bid me repent, how can I do it? I can no more repent than the dead man can arise.

Answ. It is true, O sinner, that thou sayest: But though thou canst not repent when thou wilt, yet if thou wilt but endeavour to set thy self about the work, it is probable that God may give thee a repenting heart: therefore I say, take heed of shutting thy self out from mercy.

Object. But say you, why do you then press us to such a work, when we cannot do it of ourselves?

Answ. Mark here, when I say unto you, will you repent? That is, will you make use of the means that God hath appointed for your Repentance? Will you reckon up all the sins you have committed against God? will you reckon up all the times that you have been drunk, or that you have sworn an Oath? will you reckon up all the sins that you stand guilty of between God and your own souls? and will you go to God and beg of him, that he would be pleased to pardon them?

But say you, what if we do not? If you do not, then you are still in your sins, and there is no peace to you; there is no inward peace to your souls, there is no true peace to your Kingdom.

But that I may prevail with you, I shall give you some grounds or motives to press this Argument more home upon your consciences.

First of all, Repent; because Jesus Christ hath commanded you under great Penalties, if you do not.

My beloved, consider a little with yourselves, who it is that speaks unto you here in my Text.

It is not I, but it is Jesus Christ; and doubtless Christ would never have persuaded you to this work of repentance, if it were not necessary.

This book is the counsel of the Physitian of your Souls, & the Physitian of your Church, and the Physitian of your Kingdom. He that saith unto you, repent, saith, if you do not, Your sins shall not be blotted out. He that saith unto you repent, saith, if you do not, Eternal death shall follow.

Repent, I say, or if thou dost not, wo be unto thee; wo unto that man that ever he was born; wo unto thee, it had been better thou hadst never seen the Light: Thy Parents that bore thee, they may repent that ever thou were born. Oh my beloved, it is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God! Oh my beloved, if your Parents should see any of you carried in a Cart to the Gallows to be hanged, it would make them to repent that ever they brought you forth into the world! How much more then do you think it would trouble them for to see you thrown body and soul into Hell, there to be tormented with the Devil and his Angels forever. I say, repent, or else God will take away the Gospel from among you; repent, or God will take away his Ministers from among you.

The truth of it is, I have made it the greatest part of my work, ever since I took the Office of a Minister upon me, for to get people upon their knees, & when I could prevail so far with them, as to get them upon their knees, I thought with myself, that then the work was half done.

Secondly, Repent; for Christ hath encouraged you with many precious promises, if you will repent.

Object. But say you, this is a hard work: What! shall we ever go with tears in our eyes? what will God give us for our reward?

Answ. My beloved, your Reward is great; would you know what you shall have? For your sorrow, you shall have Crowns of Glory, you

shall have Joy unspeakable; if you will but repent of your sins, God will blot them out. Me things it should make thy heart for to ake, to think how God will deal with thee at the day of Judgment how God will say, before all the holy Angels, and before thousands of righteous Persons, look what a hypocrite stands there. God will then make known the most secret sins, before men & Angels, that thou wouldst not have men to know now.

Oh repent therefore, that your sins may be blotted out, and you shall never hear more of your sins; repent, and you shall be saved; repent, and you shall escape Hell.

Thirdly, repent, because God hath waited a long while upon you, how long hath God stayed at your doors, asking you if you wou'd repent? how long, O thou proud man or woman, hath God waited upon thee? how often hath God come, and stood knocking at the doors of your hard hearts, you that are given to Taverns and Ale-houses, and rioting? how long will it be before I shall see you leave these Taverns and Ale-houses? and let me see you upon your knees in your Closets.

Oh thou gray headed sinner, God hath waited long upon thee, it may be ever since thou wert fifteen or sixteen years old; as I have known many eminent Christians at those years, which hath made me much admire at it. Oh thou sinner, God hath waited upon thee all this while, when wilt thou repent, Rom. 2:4. Or despisest thou the Riches of his goodness, and forbearance and long suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth to Repentance?

There is not a blessing thou hast from God, but it hath this written upon it, repent of thy sins. Wilt thou think of what I say unto thee; when God puts thy bread into thy hands, he saith unto thee, Sinner, take this bread, eat it, and repent: when God puts the cup of Beer into thy hand, he saith unto thee, Sinner, take this beer, drink it, and repent; when thou arisest in the morning, he saith unto thee, Sinner take this suit of cloaths, and put it on, and repent: Every mercy that thou receivest from thy God, calls thee to come along with me; Come,

wilt thou leave thy sins and go along with me? wilt thou leave Hell, and go along with me? My beloved I will desire you to bear a little with me, because I am so urgent in pressing this great work of Repentance: It is the last time that I shall speak to some of you, and therefore I am something the more earnest with you: the Lord grant that they that shall come after me, may far exceed me in this work.

Fourthly, consider, if you will return and repent, God will return to you; if you will leave your sins, God will not be angry with you; if you will have the means of grace, God will give you the means of grace. My beloved, God never goes from you until you go away from him, God hath intreated you to return, and God hath promised to return to you.

My beloved, you have heard the Parable of the prodigal Son, how he ran away from his Father, but at last when he was ready to perish with hunger he returns to his Fathers house again.

So, my beloved, God is your Father, but you are Prodigals; all the sins that you have committed against God is Prodigality. But yet, let me tell you, if you are willing to come to Gods feet, he will take you about the neck, if you are willing to forsake your sins, God is willing and ready to pardon your sins; if you have been a wicked, sinful, rebellious people, yet if you will turn to the Lord, he will turn to you.

Fifthly, repent; because, if any misery doth come upon thee, the fault shall lye at thine own door: I say, repent, for if God doth bring a Judgment upon thee, thou mayest thank thy self for it.

Art thou a notorious sinner, and God layes his afflicting hand upon thy Family, thy Family may thank thee for it, that the Lord is pleased to deal by them as he doth. Many a Family may curse the Head of their Family, Oh thou drunken Master, God doth send a Judgement upon thy Family, they may thank thee for it: and I tell thee, if any evil come upon the Church, it is thy fault; thanks be to you lyers, thanks

be to you Swearers, thanks be to you Drunkards, that the Gospel and Ministers are a going.

Sixthly, repent; because God sendeth his Messengers unto you for to intreat you to repent: I am sent unto you this day, to intreat you to repent, now wo be to you if you neglect my message. You know that it was one reason why God took away his Prophets and Ministers from Jerusalem, because they would not hearken to their Message, as you may read, Matt. 23:37, 38, 39. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; How often would I have gathered thy Children together, even as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her wings, and you would not? Behold your house is left unto you desolate: for I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord.

I know thee Jerusalem, thou hatest and killest my Prophets that are sent unto thee; when I come to thee again, thou shalt say, Blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord.

Oh that you could apply this to your selves, Oh London! how often would I have gathered thee, as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her wings, but thou wouldst not, But thou hast killed my Prophets, and cast them into prison Well, we are now taking leave of you this day; I, and my Ministers are leaving of you, but when we come again unto you I will have you to be of another manner of temper then now you are.

Well, if all that I have said, will not prevail with you, I am sorry that nothing would prevail with you but the flames of Hell. Oh then you will say, Oh that we had but hearkened to the voice of God's Messengers that are sent to us! Oh that we had our rousing Ministers to awaken us!

I have one of Advice to you that are the people of God, whose hearts God hath humbled, and I shall have done.

First, I advise you that God hath humbled for sin, now to look to your selves, God will not now lead you, you must learn now to go alone: If you would keep tender hearts, then be afraid of sin: as well of the least sins, as of the greatest: Be afraid of a vain thought; and if thou takest heed of a vain thought, thou wilt be afraid of telling a lye; and if thou takest heed of telling a lye, thou wilt be afraid of swearing an Oath.

Secondly, if thou wilt keep tenderness of heart, then lye under the best Ministry you can get; that there is a difference between some mens. Preaching and others, is plain by the effectual working of their Preaching upon the hearts of their hearers.

First, take heed of a blind ignorant Minister; If the blind lead the blind they will both fall into the ditch. If one that understands not what sin is, nor feels not the guilt of sin, Preaches Repentance, it is ten hundred to one, if ever God doth work upon your hearts by his Preaching.

Secondly, take heed of, fly, shun, avoid an idle drunken Minister, if you would ask me, what we shall do in such a case?

I Answer, keep such a one out of your Parish, if you can; if you cannot, then I advise you to take heed how you hear him.

First, because all such Ministers, are no Ministers at all. No, what and are ordained? No, because they are not sent from God. And let me tell you, that men have no power to Ordain such to Preach the Gospel, as are not sent by God. I do verily believe that God never sent any Minister for to Preach the Doctrine of Salvation, but such as God hath endowed with gifts and abilities to speak; and if there be any Ministers that have not those qualifications that are fit for a Bishop to have, then they are none of Gods Ministers, although they are made Ministers by man, 1 Tim. 3:1,2,3,4,5,6,7. This is a true saying, If a man desire the Office of a Bishop, he desireth a good work. A Bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife; vigilant,

sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach, not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre, but patient; not a brawler, not covetous: own that ruleth well his own house having his children in subjection with all gravity. For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God? Not a Novice, lest being lifted up with Pride, he fall into the condemnation of the Devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without, lest he fall into reproach, and the snare of the Devil.

Here is all these excellent qualifications that a Minister of the Gospel ought to be endowed with.

Secondly, I say that those Ministers that are not endowed with these qualifications but are ignorant drunken Ministers, it is generally observed that people grow more wicked, and that their hearts grow harder, while they live under such a Ministry.

Object. But how if we are forced to hear such, and we can do no others wise; if we will not hear them our purses must pay for it.

Answer. To this I answer, I wish that every place had an eminent Minister, that you might gather up Manna at your own doors; But if your Minister be wicked and prophane, he is no Minister of Christ, and in such a case, you must rather hazard your purses than you souls.

But the Doctrine that he preaches it is good: 'Tis true, it is so, if it do not come out of a stinking vessel. The water that is drawn out of a sweet Well, if it be put into a stinking cask, it will smell of the cask. But I would not have you to be quarrelsome.

A Third advice that I shall give you is this, be sure that you ply the company of those that are of a tender heart: It is a true saying, Birds of a feather will flock together. Take heed of being in the company of such as will swear, and of living with such as scoff at religion. It's true, a tender holy heart may live among wicked company, as Lot did

in Sodom; but let me tell thee, there's danger, they'll tempt thee to be like them.

Lastly, my advice is this, be sure that the Bible be much in your hand, you that can read, and beg of God to give you an understanding heart. When God bids you to be holy, think of Heaven. Let the Bible be much in your hands, and let God see you much in your Closets.

37. Mr. G. N.'s Farewell-Sermon

"For I am persuaded, that neither Death nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor Height, nor Depth, nor any other Creature, shall be able to separate us from the Love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." - Rom. 8:38,39.

IF divine Providence shall make this the season of our separation, it is good for us to part with each other, in the meditation and consideration of that, from which those that are Gods shall never be divided; that is, the Love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. The Apostle is very confident of it, I am persuaded.

We shall conclude the Chapter with our present Employment, and therefore shall not stand long discoursing on every particular; but first briefly open them unto you, and after improve them.

First, we meet with the Apostles Confidence a strong perswasion; from whence we may learn Confidence belongeth unto a Christian; yea it is the priviledge of the Gospel: Col. 2:2. That their hearts may be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assuring of understanding, &c. This is what you may daily stand in need of, therefore be persuaded to press toward it. The Apostle calls to give all diligence to make your calling and Election sure. Great diligence it is you give to assure the title of your earthly

possession; is it not of far greater concernment, to assure your Calling and Election, unto an everlasting enjoyment of divine Love? And that you may do this, remember to live,

1. Lest unto this present World.

2. More in heaven.

For then will you be more acquainted with the concernments and counsels thereof: Do but draw up your hearts out of the cares, pleasures and delights of this present world, which choak the Word, and ye also may come to joyn with the Apostle in saying, I am persuaded nothing shall separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Secondly, The Apostle is persuaded, neither Death nor Life can do this. Death in its self hath in it by reason of its terrors and torments, a great tendency to separate those from Christ, which have not real firm hold of him: but those that have seen everlasting love, and thereby have had love begotten in them unto Christ, (that love also being everlasting) have something that will cause them never to depart from him. Death is Christs servant; he did abolish it; and carry it Captive in his Resurrection, and then as it were renew unto it its Commission, to bring his Beloved out of the world unto him: Therefore with what terrors soever Death cometh, it is granted to him by the Commission of the Prince of Life; and this is only to shew, that neither its terrors not torments can overcome the love and life of Christ Jesus in the soul, but they remain still everlasting.

Neither can Life separate us: Although a love unto Life, and a fear of Death, are of like power to separate from Christ. It doth sometime happen, that we see persons out-live their goodness, and how much better had it been for such to have died sooner? But the Apostle is confident, neither Life nor Death, could separate him from Christ. This ye shou'd expect, the tryal of every Christian, whether there is anything he feareth more then God, or loveth more then Christ; yea

even his own life: And it is only Faith that makes this union with the love of Christ, that neither life, nor death, can separate from him. Did we understand the small value of this outward life, we should not adventure our everlasting health for it.

Thirdly, neither Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers. These are Powers on which are built several gradations of Angelical eternal Dominions; and in each Dominion are multitudes of Angels, divers of which rebelled against God, and these only he here mentioneth; for the other would not endeavour to make any separation from Christ: neither are these able, though Angels in the highest gradation of evil spirits, because stronger is he who comes to save us, than he who attempts to destroy us: Yea Christ's derivative power is greater than the power of evil: 1 John 2:14. I have written unto you young men, because ye are strong, and the Word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.

Fourthly, nor things present: These were the Opposition, envy and malice of the Jewe, they called the wayes of the Christians Heresie, and resolved to extirpate them under a sense that thereby they did God good service. 2. Opposition from the Gentiles, who lived in common prophaneness, and so contrary to the Christian Profession. 3. That which the Apostle a mentioneth with more regret, the Divisions among the Christians themselves, some glorying to be of Cephas, some of Apollo, and false Brethren also watching to betray them; yet the Apostle saith, while in the view of all these round about him, did perswade him, all these could not separate him from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Fifthly, nor things to come. And this not only in reference unto the time of the Apostles life on earth, but after also, so that the Apostle wrote not only for his own faith, but of those also which were to be true Christians hereafter: and he saw there was to come a time of Apostacy, wherein men would give out Doctrine of Devils, and Wolves which should not spare the Flock; but here was Faith which all these things could not separate from this love in Christ. Many

times things to come are greater terrors then things present, because fear consults what they would be, and that is apt to multiply things in the imagination, and render them also greater than indeed they are: how many soever therefore of these may come upon us, let us see, that they have not power to work this separation, in the Apostles example.

Sixthly, neither height nor depth. Heights have in them a great power to separate from Christ, high Gifts. Saint Paul himself saith, there was a Thorn given me in the flesh, lest I should be exalted above measure. God would not have sent that remedy, had he not been in danger. And therefore Paul would not have his Bishop a Novice, 1 Tim. 3:6. One newly planted in the faith, lest when he is lifted up in his Office, he lifted up in pride also, and fall into the Devils condemnation, being cast down for lifting up himself too high: To fall by pride is a dangerous snare to separate from Christ Jesus: These God beholds afar off but giveth more grace to the humble. It is a great grace to have exaltations in temporals or spirituals, which leads us into no danger. Nor depths; this is that the Psalmist tells us. Psalm 44:9. &c. But thou hast cast us off, and put us to shame, and goest not forth with our Armies: Thou makest us to turn back from the Enemy, & they which hate us spoil for themselves: Thou hast given us like Sheep appointed for meat, and hast scattered us among the Heathen. Thou sellest thy people for nought, and doth not increase thy wealth by their Price. Thou makest us a reproach among our Neighbours, a scorn and derision to them which are round about us. Thou makest us a by-word among the Heathen; a shaking of the head among the People: My confusion is daily before me, and the shame of my face hath covered me: For the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth, by reason the enemy and avenger. All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsly in thy Covenant. The deep distress could not separate them from the Love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Seventhly, nor any other Creature. Let it be what it will, so it be but creature, and not God, it cannot separate from the love of the

Creator: Exalt Creator in your hearts, and creature will be but little in your eyes.

Eighthly, shall not be able. There are many enemies want nor will, but they shall not be able. So it was with the enemies of Gods King in the Psalm, Psalm 21:11. For they intended evil against thee: they imagined an evil device which they were not able to perform.

Ninthly, to separate us. To make us without the love of God in Christ Jesus: they may drive us and turn us into it, but not beyond it, there the malice of Man and the Devil leaving those that are truly Christs; And this because it is,

1. The Love of God.

2. In Christ Jesus.

It must be something able to turn the Divine affections, which nothing can do, nor alter the love of God in Christ Jesus: because it is not built on our worthiness, or stability, but on Christ: And none can cause the Father not to love his son: And if ye keep close unto Christ, not running into the vanities, glories, and sins of this World, then are ye comprehended in Love wherewith God loveth his Son. Ye see the extension of the Apostles Faith, and the firmness of it; this is written for our instruction, and Jesus Christ is the Author and Finisher of that Faith, the issue whereof is this perswasion: Therefore look not on it as a thing impossible to be attained; it is your priviledge if you seek it, Isa. 43 23:44 1, 2. Thou hast not brought me the small cattel of thy Burnt-offerings, neither hast thou honored me with thy sacrifices; I have not caused thee to serve with an offering, nor wearied thee with incense. Thou hast bought me no sweet Cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy Sacrifices; But thou hast made me serve with thy sins, Thou hast we ariod me with thine Iniquities: Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant, Israel whom I have chosen. Thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee: Fear not, O Jacob my servant,

and Jeshurun whom I have chosen; for I will pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods upon this dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my Blessing upon thy Off-spring. This speaketh to us the Gentiles, who serve not with Sacrifices. If they thirst after this spirit, it shall be pour'd out upon them and then shall they be persuaded, let the World and the Devil say what they will, that they are God's. This is the priviledge of every true Christian, that hungers and thirsts to be led in the true way of Righteousness and Peace.

The EXHORTATION.

If it be thus; let it be matter of encouragement and consolation: for whatever ye be separated from, yet if ye be truly Gods, you have something never to be taken from you; to wit, The love of God in Christ Jesus. God will not, Man nor Satan cannot I may be separated from you yea from each other, body from soul; yet 'tis comfort to hear there is something that can never be taken from us: It should stir up our minds to consider whether I have union with it or no, or whether it is attainable by me: and this is certain, it may be had: If you forsake the sin and vanity of the world, you will naturally fall into the arms of everlasting love, from whence ye can never be removed. It is a good thing to have good thoughts of God, to be well persuaded of him, as the Apostle here, who is confident of his goodness. Love readily and naturally uniteth to love; and good thoughts of God are from a seed of Gods love to us and in order to the establishing of us in this love, let us leave with you a few Exhortations.

1. In order unto your daily Conversation.
2. In order unto the particular Divine Providence now ending of our Ministry unto you.

First, as to your conversation.

1. Think not your own Sins little.

2. Think not your own Righteousness great.

3. Always resigned unto God, humbly submitting unto his mercy.

Think not your own Sins little: He is in danger to sin against this love, that is not sensible he hath done enough already to separate him from it; ye that have done the least sin, hath done enough to condemn you forever, Rom. 5:17. For if by one mans offences, Death reigned, by one, &c; it may be understood by one offence: And if you think thus do not think any sin little.

2. Think not your own Righteousness great: This is that we are very apt to do, to think our selves less sinful, and more righteous than indeed we are: But the Church saith, all our Righteousness is as filthy rags. Consider things thus: ye have done enough forever to forfeit your interest in this Love: ye can never do enough to deserve it. Therefore,

3. Always cast your selves upon it, that you may receive it. If your lives have been blameless, think your selves to want as much Mercy to save you, as any prophane one: Jew and Gentile wanted one and the same Grace.

Secondly, consider to be serious in the daily Consideration of,

1. Your Thoughts.

2. Your Words.

3. Your Actions.

1. Your Thoughts. Live less abroad and more at home: I mean in your own hearts, a man never cometh to see himself desperately wicked, until he cometh to see the heart. Christ saith, from the heart doth proceed murder, adultery, &c. It may be upon a small vexation some can wish Death to any: this is murder in the heart: so for Adultery, or the like: The sin in Gods sight is there, look but in there, and you will

find that shall make you despair of anything, but the mere mercy and forgiveness of Christ to make you righteous, and in beholding of it, seek for the cleansing of it from him.

2. Your Words. It is Christ himself who saith, by thy Words thou shalt be justified and condemned: Wherefore we pray you, think there is more dependeth on words than generally is accounted: they are not only wind, but of such a nature as either driveth us nearer, or wafteth us farther off from this Love, from which we are never to be separated. The tongue is set on fire of Hell: Be careful of thine own words, if thou wouldst grow acquainted with the Word of God.

3. Your Actions. Be not persuaded to live at a venture. Consider, Christ saith, I must work the works of him that sent me; for this cause came I into the world. Let everyone ask himself this Question, why came I into the world? Christ said, he came not to do his own Will, but the Will of him that sent him: Remember therefore in all your actions, you are moving toward, or off from this eternal Love.

Thirdly, consider how mere a necessity there is.

1. Of your Repentance.

2. Of your Forgiveness.

3. Of your becoming a new Creature.

1. Of your Repentance. Christ saith, Unless ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Do not continue thinking such or such an one hath deservedly met with this or that punishment, but still consider Christs words, Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Cast in your mind, if you have anything to repent of, or ever had; then whether if it be an indifferent thing, or no, your repenting; and if not, at what time ye did repent, what accidents did accompany your Repentance which you yet remember?

2. Of your Forgiveness. Woe is the portion of any that have sinned, and find not forgiveness from the mercy of God: you will find then it is more needful to be forgiven, than to be either great or rich, or the like in this world, or for any to go out to condemn another. That also you may obtain Forgiveness, Forgive.

3. Of your becoming a new Creature. It is not enough to be forgiven but ye must be new Creatures: It is the new Man shall never be separated from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Consult with flesh and blood and that will never teach you to believe, but an ignorant, presumptuous Faith. This concerneth me not to have my thoughts plunged about this or that worldly care, but to become a new Creature in the renewing of the spirit of the mind.

Fourthly, Consider ever.

1. To follow Peace.

2. To follow Holiness.

3. To exercise Patience.

1. To follow Peace. Two of these you have in the Hebrews, Heb. 14. Follow Peace with all men, and Holiness, without which none shall see God. Do not esteem it your interest to contend: Let the Peace of God rule in your hearts. Fret not thy self because of evil doers. It is an easie matter to sin in our Anger, a rare thing to moderate anger against sin, so as not to sin in that anger.

2. To follow Holiness, Refuse Peace that cannot be enjoyed without Holiness. It is upon the view of God, I shall see what kind of love he is; and Christ saith, Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Resolve to follow holiness, not greatness, riches, &c. And he that will do so, Christ saith, shall suffer persecution in this present world. Wherefore it will be good to consider.

3. To exercise patience. Let us add upon that account,

1. Love not the World.

2. Love not your own Wills.

3. Value your own Souls.

1. Not the World the Text saith, 1 Joh. 2:15. Love not the World, neither the things that are in the world If any man love the world, the Love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the Lust of the flesh, the Lust of the eye, and the Pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the World: And the World passeth away, and the lust thereof, but he that doth the Will of the Father abideth forever. The love of this world maketh a man to be in respect of the Prince of this world, as a Bird in the Fowlers snare. There is no way sooner to sin away their everlasting Love, than to love this present World.

2. Love not your own Wills. That person is neither prepared to do for God, nor to suffer for him, that hath not learned something of this lesson of Self-denial. There is no divine service but in doing Gods Will, and that I cannot do but by parting with my own; delivering up my self unto him, to be led and guided by his holy Spirit. Christ saith, if any man will be my Disciple, let him deny himself, take up his Cross and follow me.

3. Value your own Souls. The great care and consult is for gratifying the body: if but part of that time were spent on the soul, which is on the needless care of the body, it might render it in a far better and more goodlier posture. Let everyone think, I carry that in my bosome is of more value than the whole world neither can the whole world recompence the loss of it: and if we have such jewels, let us take care to secure them. A careless common spirit doth not become a Christian. Let none imploy their time in disputing this or that vain Opinion, but spend it on your souls.

Secondly, in order unto the particular divine Providence now ending of our Ministry unto you.

1. Whatever happeneth on this account, let it be your exercise to cry out for the holy Spirit of Christ, & he will grant you a greater supply, than you may expect from any man whatever. So Christ comforteth his Disciples; Though I go, yet I will pray unto the Father, and he shall send you another Comforter: and he biddeth them pray for it also. Even so as for what concerneth us, this we cannot be denyed to pray that God would send out his holy Spirit among you, and upon you; and while we may speak unto you, we desire you to pray for it also. Our work did lye but to bring men to Repentance by conviction of sin, to believing by the shewing of Righteousness; and to convince of both by Christs conquest over sin. This Christ sheweth, his holy Spirit, the Comforter, can do, Joh. 16:8,9,10,11. And when he is come, he shall reprove the world of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment. Of sin, because they believe not on me: of Righteousness, because I go to my Father and ye see me no more: of Judgment, because the Prince of this world is Judged. This is a suitable and sufficient reply, 1 Joh. 2:27. But the Anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you; and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same Anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth and is no lye: and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. That Anointing was the Spirit pour'd out on our Head Christ Jesus, and ran down the skires of his garments: not that instruction should cease, but this Spirit can either fill it administred, or supply it being wanting. And the withdrawing of this present Ministry, may be to cause you to pray more incessantly for this Holy Spirit day and night. And Christ promiseth, The Father will give it to them that ask it.

2. Be more frequent in your converse with the Scripture. It is the Pillar of Truth; and by a frequent converse with it also, you will find a pure mind stirred up to remember,

3. Be more frequent in Meditation: Let not the world swallow up all your time, so as not to meditate on your Souls, the Scriptures, and Heaven, the meditation on Gods Law, keepeth us from the Counsel of the ungodly, from standing among sinners, or sitting down in the seat of the scornful, Psalm 1. It is worthy of our wonder any should read the Scriptures, believing them indicted by a holy Spirit, and yet scorn Holiness, Religion, &c.

4. Be more usual in personal, private and family Duties & Devotion. God doth call those that know how to address themselves unto him, to a more earnest, private devotion. Jacob was alone when he wrestled for a blessing. There are particular seasons in which God calleth his people into a retirement, Isaiah 26 20, 21. Come my People, enter thou into thy Chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thy self as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be over-past. For behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the Inhabitants of the earth for their iniquities. So also, Zech. 12:11 12. And in that day shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the Land shall mourn, every Family apart: the Family of the House of David apart, and their Wives apart; the Family of the House of Nathan apart, and their Wives apart; the Family of the House of Levi apart, and their Wives apart: all the Families that remain, every Family apart, and their Wives apart. In that day there shall be a Fountain opened to the House of David, and to the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, for Sin, and for Uncleanness.

If I cannot serve God in one way, let me not be discouraged, but be more earnest in another. You may also now think it is a time for you to exercise what you have learned God is calling you to see if you have not lost all the advantages he hath allowed you: ye have been a long time learning; as if God should say unto you, Let me now see if you can do or endure, and if you have forgot all, yet Christ hath made a promise, the Spirit shall bring again to remembrance, when there is occasion for it. Consider also, Christ is touched with the feeling of the infirmities of a people in such a condition. Let none of you be

troubled in your hearts: you believe in God, believe also in Christ Jesus: He saith, in my Fathers House there are many Mansions, and in them many wayes of dispensing of his Grace. Read the 14, 15, and 16. Chapters of John. Christ hath promised to give Pastors according to his own heart, that shall feed his Flock with Truth and Understanding. He can finde one, or frame one, that shall fulfil his Ministry better than a weak Instrument. He is the great Bishop of our Souls, and is never non-resident: He hath alwayes a care of his Flock. Think therefore of his care who hath promised not only to be, but to give unto you Pastors. The 34. Chap. of Ezekiel is but a Comment on that promise. Let not your hearts be troubled, but let us commend you, yea, each other to God, and let him do what is good in his own eyes.

38. Mr. G. Thorne's Farewell Sermon

"Wait on the Lord, and keep his Way." - Psalm 37:34.

Not knowing whether ever I shall speak to you more from this place, being willing to leave a word in season, I shall recommend to you what in answer to prayer I have received of the Lord for the directing me in my course in this gloomy dark day; being well assured that as many of us as work by this rule, and fall by this compass (however we may be scattered by the tempestuous storms we meet with here in the Sea of this World) shall shortly arrive at, and meet in our desired Port, the Haven of Eternal Rest and Happiness; What therefore the Lord hath said to me, and that with a strong hand, that say I unto you in the Name of the Lord; Wait on the Lord, and keep his Way.

The scope of this Psalm, is to direct the People of God, and to encourage them to keep on in the course of Godliness at such times, as when the Wicked prosper, flourish, and grow great, and the godly are afflicted, trouble, persecuted, and oppressed: And there are two general parts of the Psalm intermixtly spoken unto throughout. The one is for Direction; The other for Encouragement. The text

appertains to the former part. And the sum of the Directions may be reduced unto two Heads.

First, that they take heed of such inward Commotions, and Perturbations of Spirit, as through the remainder of Corruption they are subject unto; and by the temptations of Satan, and the provocations of wicked Men, they will be put upon through this occasion: More particularly he forewarnes them to take heed of Envy, Vers 1, & 7. and of Anger, Vers. 8. And what need there is at such a time to watch against the exorbitant workings of these Passions, none that observe their own hearts, can well be ignorant; such being the unworthy insolent, and provoking Carriage of the Wicked, toward the poor people of God, as is able, as we may say, to move a Saint. Hence that of Psalm. 73:23

But as for me, my feet were almost gone, my steps had well-nigh slipt; for I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked: Attend therefore to the Counsel of the Holy Ghost. Fret not thy self because of evildoers, neither be thou envious at the workers of iniquity. Fret not thy self because of him that prospereth in his way, because the man that bringeth wicked devices to pass: Cease from anger, and forsake wrath. Fret not thy self in any wise to do evil.

Secondly, that they so carry themselves towards the Lord in keeping on in their way of following him, as becomes those that firmly believe and steadfastly hope in him for his Salvation, there are many particular directions to this purpose, vers. 3. Trust in the Lord, and do good, vers. 4. Delight thy self also in the Lord, ver. 5. Commit thy way unto the Lord, ver. 7. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him. ver. 27. Depart from evil, and do good; and here in that text, wait on the Lord, and keep his way.

These words contain Advice and Counsel for the People of God, and it is considerable, either with respect to the troubles and temptations of the people of God in general; or with respect to that particular that

is immediately touched on before the text, ver. 33. The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him. Upon this something is spoken by way of encouragement to the Righteous, ver. 33. The Lord will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged. Though he may let him fall into the hands of the Wicked, he will not leave him there; though the Wicked may sit in Judgement on him, and pass sentence against him, yet the Lord will not condemn him; yea, when he is judged he is chastened of the Lord, that he should not be condemned with the World. Thus for the encouragement of the Righteous.

2. There is something by way of direction in the words read: Wait on the Lord, and keep his Way.

From the words, consider under this double reference, we have this profitable point of Doctrine.

However it go with the truly Godly in this world, more especially when the Wicked watch the Righteous to do them a mischief, it is their best way to wait on the Lord, and keep his way.

I shall not spend time to shew you who are truly Godly, and who are Wicked. It is said of the Godly man, ver. 31. the Law of God is in his heart, such then as from the Law of God in their hearts have respect to all his Commandments, walking in all the Statutes, and Ordinances of God blameless. Luke 1:6. such are truly Godly: And such as from the dominion of sin in them, are evil Doers, workers of Iniquity, walking according to the Lusts of the flesh; and of the mind, according to the course of this world, of the Prince of the Power of the Air, &c. they are wicked.

In the handling of this point, according to my wonted method, I shall speak first to what is supposed, and then to what is expressly laid down.

Here are two things supposed in this point: the one more General, the other more Particular.

First, In General; 'Tis supposed, that the condition of the truly godly, may be full of troubles, afflictions and distresses in this world, for when 'tis said, However it may go with the truly godly, the meaning is, how evilly, how badly soever, though they be never so much troubled, afflicted and distressed; wherein it is supposed that it may go very ill that the truly godly may be full of troubles, sufferings and distresses: this not only plainly held forth in Scripture, in such texts as these, Psa. 34:19, John 16:33, Acts 14:22. but so sadly experienced in all ages, that we need not spend time in the clearing of it.

Secondly, more particularly; It is supposed, that is the manner and guise of the wicked to watch the Righteous to mischief them: so verse. 32. and verse 12. The wicked plotteth against the just; (or as the margent practiseth) i. e. his wit and skill, his labour and judgment is employed against him: and vers. 14. The wicked have drawn their sword, and bent their bow to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation. so Psalm 64:2. the Psalmist prays, Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked, from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity, who whet their tongues like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words, that they may shoot at secret in the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not. so we read in that Isai. 29:20,21. of those that watch for iniquity that make a man an offender for a word that lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate and that turn aside the just for a thing of naught. Thus it hath been over since the beginning. So wicked Cain watched righteous Abel to kill him, Gen. 4:8. and Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass that when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against his brother Abel, and slew him. And thus have Cain's brood done all down along (for he was of the wicked one; 1 John 3:12.) so hath Esdu watched righteous Jacob Gen. 27:41,42. comforting himself, that he should shortly have a time to do him the mischief that he intended him so Saul watcheth righteous David, 1 Sam. 19:11. Saul sent messengers to David house, to watch him and stay him in the morning: And so did others, his wicked adversaries, watch him, as you have him complaining, Psalm 38:12. They that seek after my life, lay snares for

me; and they that seek my hurt, speak mischievous things, and imagine deceit all the day long. And Psalm 140:5. The proud have laid a snare for me, and cords; they have spread a net by the way side; they have set traps for me. So did Jeremiah's Familiars, as he calls them, Jer. 20:10. For I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side: Report say they, and we will report it: all my familiars (or as in the Margent, every man of my peace) watched for my haltings; saying, peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge of him. While they pretended friendship and peace, they intended nothing but mischief, even the taking of their revenge on him. So the Presidents and the Princes, watched righteous Daniel to mischief him, Dan. 6:4. where first they seek to find occasion against him, concerning the Kingdom, they would gladly have found any occasion against him, to have accused him of Disloyalty; Sedition, Treason, Rebellion, or at least falshood and unfaithfulness; but here they could find no fault, his very enemies being Judges, ver. 5. In the next place, therefore they plot, to find occasion against him from the Law of his God; and therefore enticing the King to make a Law against the Law of Daniels God, they quickly catch him. So you may see the Scribes and Pharisees watched the Lord Jesus, that Just One Luke 67. And the Scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the Sabbath day, that they might find an accusation against him. It seems they had a Law against doing good on the Sabbath day. So, Luke 20:19, 20. And the chief Priests and the Scribes, sought to lay hands on him, and they feared the people; for they perceived that he had spoke this parable against them, and they watched him, and sent forth spies, which should fain themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him to the power and authority of the governour. They endeavour to trapan him, that they might give him over to the secular Power. Time would fail to show how they watched the Apostles, and the Saints, all down along throughout all Ages: Neither need we search the Records of former ages, in this matter, for evidence, our own times affording pregnant proof, more then enough in this thing; and as it hath been, and now is, so it will

be to the end of this wicked world, the guise and manner of the Wicked, thus to watch the Righteous to do him a mischief.

1. For that there is the same principle of hatred and enmity in the Wicked against the Righteous now, as ever, yea, and ever will to the worlds end. That enmity that we read of in Gen. 3:15. is a lasting enmity, as long as there is any of the seed of the Serpent in the world, it will work; it is an enmity in nature, Prov. 29:27. He that is upright in the way is an abomination to the wicked; and the wicked must cease to be wicked, ere this will cease to be: As there are some Creatures that have an enmity in nature, as the Woolf and the Sheep, so that enmity is propagated to all of the kind that partake of that nature: So is the enmity that the children of the wicked one have against the children of God: As therefore the Wolf need not be taught to watch to devour the Sheep, it being natural to him; so the wicked need not be taught to do the Saints a mischief, having a principle within them inclining, and instructing them thereunto.

2. There is the same necessary ground and occasion of their hatred of them: though there be no just ground of the wicked hatred of the righteous, (hence David speaks of their hating him without a cause, Psalm 69:4 that is, without just cause on his part) yet there is a necessary ground of their hatred, and that continueth now as heretofore, and will continue as long as there are any truly godly, and what that is, you may see in that. Psalm 38:20. They also that render evil for good, are mine adversaries; because I follow the thing that good is. The true ground and reason of their being adversaries unto David, was this, because he followed that which they hated.

Thus our Saviour shewing his Disciples how they should be hated of the world, acquaints them with the true cause and ground of the worlds hatred, John 15:19. If you were of the world; the world would love his own; but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. And that this is the proper ground of the worlds hatred, is most manifest, for that the same person, whom the world loved while he was of the world, when

called out of the world into the Kingdome of Christ, then is he hated of those that before loved him; as in Paul. And if a person that profeseth himself the Disciple of Christ, and is hated of the world, shall forsake the assembly of the Saints, and turn back from the way of righteousness, and run into the same excess of riot with the prophane world, none more the worlds darling then he. So that it is Godliness, Holiness, and true Religion, that is the true ground of the worlds hatred. So 1 Joh. 3:12. Not as Cain who was of the wicked one, and slew his brother; and wherefore slew he him? because his own works were evil, and his brothers righteous. This was the true cause of his hatred; and while that the cause remaineth, while godly men continue to walk in the ways of godliness, the wicked will continue to hate them.

3. The Devil, whose Children these wicked ones are, 1 John 3:8.

Is still as malicious and industrious as ever, to put them upon this. We read of Satan in that, 1 Pet. 5:8. that he goeth up and down like a roaring Lyon, seeking whom he may devour; and as far as the Lord permits him, he acts wicked men in whom he ruleth, Ephes. 2:2 to do what mischief they can to the Godly; yea, and in the last times he is so far from abating his rage, as that we read, his wrath groweth the hotter, because he knoweth he hath but a short time, Rev. 12:12.

While therefore the principle of enmity, which is in the wicked against the Saints, remaineth, and while the ground of their hatred continues, and Satan is as industriously stirring them up as ever, nought else can be expected, but that they watch the righteous to do them a mischief.

But now, what shall the righteous do? shall he render evil for evil, and watch the wicked that he may mischief them? God forbid: what shall he forsake his righteousness, and leave off to be godly? no, in no wise. But if you would know, O ye Saints and righteous Ones, what to do in this case, I am sent of God at this time to instruct you, that it will be your best way to wait on the Lord, and keep his way.

And so I come to what is expressly asserted in this point, That however it go with the truly godly here in this world, more especially when the wicked watcheth the righteous to mischief them, it is their best way to wait on the Lord, and keep his Way.

Here I shall speak by way of Explication, in shewing,

1. What it is to wait on the Lord.
2. What it is to keep his way.

First, to wait on the Lord, is taken more largely, or more strictly.

1. More largely. And so it is the same with serving the Lord attending and following the Lord, and takes in the whole duty of the Saints; waiting on the Lord as a Soldier on his Captain, or as a servant on his Master: Psalm 123:2. Behold as the eyes of the Servants look to the hands of their Masters, and as the eyes of a Maiden unto the hand of her Mistress; so our eyes wait on the Lord our God. So in that: Hos. 12:6. Turn thou to thy God, and keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually.

2. More strictly. And so it intends a patient expecting the Lords Salvation. 'Tis the continual exercise of Faith and Hope; It is Faith and Hope seekt out: so here, Vers. 7. Rest on the Lord, wait patiently. So Psalm 130. when he cries out of the depths, as he says, v. 1. then v 5 I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his words do I hope: My soul waiteth for the Lord, more then they that watch for the morning; I say, more then they that watch for the morning. We have both these together in that, Lam, 3:25, 26. The Lord is good to them that wait for Him; to the the soul that seeketh Him. There it is taken as largely as seeking after God but it followes, It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the Salvation of the Lord: there it is taken for the continued exercise of hope; for a patient expectation of the Lords Salvation.

Secondly, what it is to keep the Way of the Lord: here mind; The way of the Lord may be understood; of that way wherein he walketh towards his People, which is aptly stiled, the way of his Providence, or, in that way wherein he requires his People to walk towards him; and is properly stiled, the Way of his Precepts,

1. Here is the way of Gods Providence, in which he walketh towards us: of which, that Psalm 18:30. speaketh; As for God, his Way is perfect. So Psalm 25:10. All the Paths and Wayes of the Lord, are Mercy and Truth unto such as keep his Covenant, and Testimonies.

Now if it be thus taken here, then to keep his Way is diligently to attend his Hand, and to observe his Carriage, and ordering, in all that befals his People, more especially in all that trouble that comes on them: For whatever trouble comes upon the People of God and whoever be the instruments of inflicting, the Lord hath his way in it, Matt. 6:9. ordering it, as to the kind, as to the measure, as to the season, as to the continuance, and as to the ends and fruits.

Now, to observe the Lord's Hand, and to attend his Way, in ordering his Providences, and our troubles; this is to keep his Way. So Isa. 26:8. In the way of thy Jugements we have waited for thee: as if he had said, We have waited on the Lord, and kept his Way.

2. There is the way of God's Presepts; in which he commandeth his People to walk: And thus is this phrase most commonly taken. So 2 Kings 21:21. where it is said of Amon: He forsook the Lord God of his Fathers, and walked not in the Way of the Lord: i.e. not in the Way of his Commandments. Thus David spake of the way of his Precepts, in Psalms 119:27. Make me understand the Way of thy Presepts: And if it be taken thus, then to keep the Way of the Lord, is to walk in his Statutes and to observe his Commandments to do them. So Gen. 18:19. the Lord testifies of Abraham; I know him, then he will command his Children and his houshold after him, and they shall keep the Way of the Lord, to do Justice and Judgement. So in Job. 23:11,13. My feet have held his steps, his Way have I kept and not

declined, neither have I gone back from the Commandments of his lips: So to walk in his Ways, and to keep his Commandments, are the same, Deut. 26:17. and Psalm 119:1,2.

So that the sum of all is; However, it be with the truly Godly, more especially when the wicked do watch them to do them a mischief, their best way is, to attend on the Lord, to follow him, to walk on in the ways of his Commandments; so eying the hand of the Lord in all that befalls them, as that they patiently expect, and quietly wait for the Salvation of the Lord. Thus for Explication.

I now come to the Demonstration, which shall be dispatched by clearing, that it is the honestest, the wisest, the safest, the most comfortable, and most honourable Way.

First, this is the most innocent, just and honest Way; yea truly, this is the only good, honest and right Way.

I am to shew what is the best for a Godly man, to whom no way is good, but what is just and honest. There are indeed other ways which a man may take when he is in trouble, through the wickeds watching him to do him a mischief, whereby to escape the mischief intended him; but they are not just and honest. I shall instance in these.

1. By sinfully complying with the wicked in their ungodly ways, thereby to abate the edge of their wrath: This was the way Peter took when in the High Priests Hall, he not only denyes his Master, but backs his denial with an Oath; yea, being among a cursing crew that should seem would not believe him else, he falls a cursing and swearing that he knew not the man, Matt. 26:74.

2. By sinful shifting or shuffling through Lyes or deceitfull Equivocations, to avoid the mischief intended: This was the way that Abraham took to escape the mischief that he thought at one time the Men of Gerar might do him, Gen. 20. and that the Egyptians might do to him at another time for his wives sake: wherein, though Abraham did not tell a down-right untruth, as he excuseth the matter

to Aebimelech, yet he did sinfully shuffle in making use of a deceitful Equivocation for his safety.

3. By angrily and revengfully rendering Evil for Evil, thereby thinking to pay the wicked in their own Coyn, and to avenge a mans own quarrel This was the course that David was about to take against Nabal. had he not been prevented by Abigals wisdom, 1 Sam 25:33.

4. By basely deserting the Place that the Lord hath put a man in, and requires him to abide in This was that which Shemaiah would have put Nehemiah upon; but he refused to hearken to him, in Nehem. 6:10, 11. not but that a man forsake his place, not only of habitation, but also of publick station and employment, in some cases when that the Lord calls him off; but this is of no base deserting; Base deserting is, when out of cowardliness, and base fear, a man withdrawes himself from his place, in which, and at that time, when the Lord requires him to abide, that he may provide for his own safety: This was the way Moses would have taken, when the Lord was sending him to deliver his People, had the Lord left him to himself, as you may see at large in the third and forth chapters of the Book of Exodus.

5. By rebelliously and traiterously stepping out of the place that God hath set a man in. This was that way they tempted David unto, in 1 Sam. 24:4. and which Abshai would have taken, had not David hindered him, 1 Sam. 26:9. Now none of these wayes are just and honest, being all of them contrary to the Command, and a departing from God to the Creature; as I shall clear particularly.

First, that sinfully to comply with the wicked to abate the edge of their wrath, is contrary to the Command, is clear from these Scriptures, Ephes. 5:7. Be ye not therefore partakers with them; that is, with the wicked, with the Children of disobedience: Now one way of partaking with them, is by sinful compliance: hence vers. 11. Have no fellowship with the unfruitfull works of darkness; have you no hand, do not you bear a part, be not drawn in to comply in these

things: To this purpose, is that. Rom. 12:2. Be not conformed to this World. Nonconformity to this world, is a Christians duty.

Secondly, that sinfully to shift and shuffle through Lyes and deceitful Equivocations to provide for ones safety, is contrarie to the Command of God, clear is that, Gen. 20:9. where Abimelech reproving Abraham for his practise, tells him, thou hast done things to me that ought not to be done.

Thirdly, that to render evil for evil, and to avenge ourselves, is against the Command of God; clear is that Prov. 20:21. Say not thou, I will recompence evil, but wait on the Lord, and he shall save the. 1. Thess. 5:15. See that none render evil for evil to any man Rom. 12:17. Recompence to no man evil for evil: and 19. Dearly beloved avenge not your selves.

Fourthly, that basely to desert the place that God hath put a man in, is against the Command of God; clear is that, 1 Cor. 7:24. brethrin, let everyone wherein he is called, therein abide with God. and as in the condition wherein, so in the place whereunto; till God remove him.

Fifthly, that rebelliously to step out of a mans place, is against the Command of God, is clear from Eccles. 10:4. If the spirit of thy Ruler rise up against thee, leave not thy place; for yielding pacifieth great offence. Subjects are here directed how to carry themselves when that the spirit of the Ruler rises up against themselves counsel that the Spirit here gives is. That they keep their place, not in a way of rebellious opposition, but in way of yielding subjection; leave not thy place as a subject, containe thy self within the bounds of thine own calling and condition, bridling all disloyal passion, and forbearing all unlawfull attempts, to ward off the wrath of the Ruler: he speaketh not against a prudent withdrawing from a storm, as David from Saul, Elias from Ahab, and Christ from Herod, but against a disloyal and rebellious defection; as Israel to their Tents, 1 Kings 12:16. So that whatever the provocations be that the Rulers give, Subjects must

submit themselves, by yielding active obedience in all things which they command according to God, and by patiently enduring what they inflict on us, though for righteousness sake; keeping ourselves in the same humble, obedient and loyal temper, whatever provocations we meet with to the contrary.

And that in all these wayes there is a departing from God the Creature arising from a distrust of his All sufficiency to provide for us in his way, and from a conceit of our own wisdom to provide better for our safety, is most manifest: therefore these wayes being contrary to the Comand of God, and injurious to his All-sufficiency, are not just and honest; but to wait on the Lord and to keep his way, this is the good the right, and the honest Way. See 1 Sam. 12:23. where he tells them, that He will shew them the good and right Way, and what that is, he acquaints in the next verse, Only fear the Lord, and serve him in Truth, with all your heart, which is to the same purpose, with wait on the Lord, and keep his way; that is, the honest and good Way, in which the Lord commandeth his People to walk, 2 Chron. 6:27. His Commandments being holy, just, and good, Rom. 7:12. The way of his Comandments must needs be good, just, and honest; and his Cammandments being the Rule, the goodness of a way lyes in its conformity thereunto; and this is the way that is agreeable to the Command of God, as in the Text.

2 This is the wisest way: When a man hath many wise, subtile, and powerful enemies watching to mischief him; he had need behave himself wisely. Hence when our Saviour sends forth his Disciples as Sheep among Wolves, Matt. 10:26. he says to them, Be wise as Serpents, and innocent as Doves, he adviseth them to the wisest, as well as the honestest way. Now however carnall men do think some one of the forementioned wayes to be the wiset, yet it will be apparent, that to wait on, he Lord, and keep his Way, is the wisest course; by these two arguments.

First, it is the Way which the truest and highest Wisdom, the Wisdom of God doth direct unto, so here in the Text So in that Psalm

27:14. he complains of his enemies, and of false witnesses that were risen up against him, that did breath out cruelty, vers. 12. and then by the Spirit he commends to himself and others, suitable advice in such a case, vers. 14. Wait on the Lord. So Exod. 14:13. there Pharoah and all his Hosts are at the heels of the poor Israelites, and he counts of nothing but of destroying them, Exod. 15:9. and they for their parts knew not how to escape: Now sayes Moses to them, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord. So that whatever distress the People of God are in, this is the way the Wisdom of God directs unto; for what the word of God in the Scripture directs to, that the Wisdom of God directs, as is clear from that, Luke 11:49.

Secondly. This is the way that the wisest men have taken. David was a wise Man; we read of him 1 Sam. 18:30. that David behaved himself more wisely then all the Servants of Saul, so that his name was much set by: Now this was the way that he took, as you have him speaking in that Psalm 18:21. I have kept the wayes of the Lord, and not wickedly departed from my God; for all thy judgements were before me: and I did not put away his statutes from me, &c. So Psalms 119:110. The wicked have laid a snare for me, yet I erred not from thy precepts.

Daniel was a wise man; hence that Proverb, Ezeck. 28:3. Wisen than Daniel; and he took this course when that his Enemies had laid a snare for him to take away his Life: yet (Dan. 6;10.) he declined not from the way of the Lord, but waited on the Lord, and kept his way, as aforetime; as you may there rend.

Yea, Jesus Christ, the Wisdome of God, he took this course, as you may read, Luke 13 where when certain of the Pharises came; saying to him, Get thee out and depart hence, for Herod will kill thee, vers. 31. He answered vers. 32. Go ye and tel that Fox, Behold, I cast out Devils, and do cures today and tomorrow: that is, I will do the work of my Father: I will follow what he hath sent me about, and keep his Way, whatever becomes of me. Thus you see it is the wisest way.

Thirdly. This is the safest way: when a man is beset with the wicked that seek to mischief him, 'tis a time to look after the safest way: now to wait on the good Lord, and to keep his Way is the safest course a man can take: Pro. 10:9. He that walks uprightly, walks surely. And 28 18. Whose walketh uprightly, shall be saved. I know carnal wisdom thinks otherwise; and mocks at this: But I am speaking to the People of God, who are capable of receiving and understanding what I shall offer, and to the moths will appear to be the safest way by these two Particulars.

First, This is the readiest way for the People of God to escape that mischief which the wicked devise, and intend against them, Prov. 18:10. The Name of the Lord is a strong Tower; the Righteous fly to it, and are safe: But how do they fly to this strong hold but upon the wings of Faith and Hope, whereby they wait on the Lord? and being fled for refuge to this strong hold they are safe, and continue safe by abiding there, which is by keeping the way of the Lord: Hence that, Prov. 16:7. When a mans wayes please the Lord he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him. Now for those whose wayes please him, who wait on him, and keep his way, he maketh even their enemies to be at peace with them, these several wayes.

1. Sometimes by changing their hearts, and by making them even of Enemies to become Friends. So we find he changed the heart of Ahasuerus that whereas his enmity was so enflamed by the misinformation of Haman, as that he had signed the Decree for the utter destroying of the People of God; yet afterwards he grants unto the Jews to gather themselves together, and stand for their lives, to destroy, slay, and cause to perish all the power of the people of the Province that should assault, both little ones, and women, and to take the spoile of them for a prey. So he changed the heart of Nebuchadnezzar, with respect to the three Worthies; whom in the heat of his fury he commanded to be cast into the fiery Furnace, heated seven times hotter than aforetime; yet afterwards his heart is turned towards them, as that he greatly promotes them in the province of Babylon; as you may reade Dan. 3. So the Lord changed

the heart of Paul, who of a persecuting Saul, became a preaching Paul, Gal. 1:23. abounding in love to Christ and his members, as he did before in rage and cruelty against them.

2. By restraining sometimes their envy and fury; so that though their hearts continue as full of bitterness, malice and revenge, as formerly, yet he bindeth up their hands, so as that they cannot execute the mischief they intend against his people. So Psalm 76:5. The stout-hearted are spoiled, or disarmed; they have slept their sleep; and none of the men of might have found their hand. All which expressions tend to shew the restraint that is laid upon them; and by whom, you may see, vers. 6. At thy Rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the Chariots and the Horses are cast into a dead sleep: Hence that, vers. 10. Surely the wrath of men shall praise thee; that is, as much of it as he suffers for to break forth; for the remander of wrath wilt thou restrain. We have a notable example of this in Laban, Gen. 31. who is not only rebuked by the Lord in his hot pursuit after Jacob, with a charge not to hurt him, but is over-ruled to tell Jacob how the God of his Father spake to him, as you may read, vers. 29, whatever be the fury and the rage of the enemy, he can say unto it: Thus far shalt thou go and no farther, as Job 38:11.

3. He maketh their enemies to be at peace with them, sometimes by inclining them to use his People well, and to treat them peaceably after that they have them in their power and under their hand, Jer. 15 11 The Lord said, Verily it shall be well with thy remnant: verily; I will cause the enemy to treat the well; in time of evil, and in the time of affliction. So we read, Psalm 106:46. He made them to be pittied of all them that carryed them away captives.

4. Always by over ruling what they do against them, so as that it shall not hurt them, So Isa. 54:17. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper. But of whom is this spoken? it follows there, this is the heritage of the Servents of the Lord: It may prosper to put them to smart but not to hurt them: As the Lord promised Paul, Acts 18:10. I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee. So

he promiseth all his, in that Isa. 41:10 So that the readiest way to escape the mischief that our enemies design against us, is, to wait on the Lord and to keep in his way, whatever carnal wisdom thinks or suggests to the contrary: It is true, this is the way to be hated, and to have many enemies, who from their malice and rage, will devise and design much mischief against us: but Rom. 8:31. If God be for us, who shall be against us? that is it matters not who they are that are against us. This then is the safest way; hence Prov. 1:31. Whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely.

I know this seems a Paradox to the men of the world, and they think some other ways to be more safe.

First, some think that sinful compliance is a safer way: but their error will be manifest to any that duly consider,

1. That hereby they do more encourage the wicked World against them, whilst they partly comply, but will not run into the same excess of riot with them. So Lots compliance with the wicked Sodomites in offering them his Daughters, did but encourage them the more against him, Gen. 19:9. And they said, Stand back: which words may either refer unto Lot, and then they hold forth how they were enraged by his motion: and this agreeth with the following wordes: And they said again This one fellow came to sojourn, and he will needs be a Judge; Now will we deal worse with thee, than with them; and they pressed sore upon the than: so far were they from being appeased by his sinful compliance, as that they grew the more furious against him.

2. Hereby you provoke the Lord to withdraw the Covert of his Protection from you; while you wait on the Lord, and keep his way; you have the promise of his Protection, 2 Chron 15:2. but if by sinful compliance with the wicked, you forsake him, he will forsake you: you forfeit his Protection, had not Jehosaphat's compliance with Ahab like to have cost him his life? 2 Chron. 18. and hear what the Prophet sayes to him, 2 Chron. 19, 2. Shouldest thou help the

ungodly, and love them that have the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord: And through the wrath of the Lord that is upon men for their sinful compliance, those very evils are brought upon them sometimes, which they think to escape: As notable is that instance which Mr. Fox gives account of, one Richard Denton, in Queen Mary's dayes; who by his sinful compliance with the wicked World, in disowning the Truth of the Gospel, thought to escape burning; and was afterward burnt in his own house, according to that of our Saviour, He that will save his life shall lose it, Matt. 16:25.

Secondly, Others think, that to avenge themselves in paying the wicked in their own Coyn, doing mischeif unto them, is the safest way, but their error will be manifest, from that of our Saviour, Matt. 26:52. Put up again thy Sword into its place; for all they that take the sword, shall perish by the sword: this way in which they think to provide for their safety, is in the judgement of our Saviour, the ready way to their ruine.

Thirdly, Others think by Shuffling Lying and Equivocating, to provide better for their safety; then by keeping the way of the Lord; but however, some present security sometimes hath been obtained by such waye, yet in the end they are most pernicious and destructive for us: Prov. 19:5. He that speaketh lyes, shall not escape: and vers 9. He that speaketh lyes shall perish. And for such as comfort themselves as they Isa. 28:25 We have made lyes our refuge, and under falshood have we hid ourselves: Mind what the Lord saith to them, vers 17. Judgement will I also lay to the line, and righteousness to the Plimmet; and the shall sweep away the refuge of lyes; and the waters shall ever flow the hiding place: and your Covenant with death shall be disanulled, and your agreement with Hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass thorow then shall on be trodden down by it; and then where is your safety? they think to secure themselves from the wrath of man; but they mind not how to be secured from the wrath of God.

Fourthly, Others think by basely deserting their places, to provide better for their safety, than by following the Lord, and keeping his way. But the hazzards David was in when he took this course, 1 Sam. 27 may convince these men of their mistake, especially if they consider that he that leaves the place God hath set him in, out of base fear, is sure to carry his fear with him where ever he go, if not (in the place he promised himself greatest security) to meet with the evil he feared: As the Lord threatens them in that, Jer. 42:17, There it shall come to pass, that the Sword which ye feared, shall overtake you there in the Land of Egypt; and the Famine whereof you were afraid, shall follow close after you in Egypt, and there ye shall dye.

Fifthly, Others think it a safer way rebelliously to step out of their places for the overturning the power of those that are in Authority over them because they grant power to the wicked to oppress and mischief them: But had peace that slew his Master? the experience of all ages testifies how ill they provide for their safety, at the long run, who take this course: let that instance suffice which we have in 2 Chron. 25:3.

So that whatever men may think, there is no such way to escape the mischief intended against us by the wicked, as to wait on the Lord, and keep his way.

2. It will yet further appear to be the safest way, for that it is the ready way to have good by all their troubles, by all that the wicked do against them: Wait on the Lord, and keep his way, then no matter though the wicked watch against you to do you a mischief: for they shall not only prove abortive in all the mischievous designs they are big with, as Job. 5:12. but according to his promise, all shall work together for good, Rom. 8:28. for he that hath promised, is infinite in Power, Wisdom, Godness and Faithfulness, to over-rule all the devices and designs of his and your Enemies, so as to make those things that are in their own nature against you, to work together for your good: As you know what Joseph says, in that Gen. 50:20. As for you, ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, to

bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Thus doth God over rule the malice and revenge of men for good to his People; but they must then wait on the Lord, and keep his way; as you may see Psalm 81:8, &c. For all the paths of the Lord are Mercy and Truth unto such as keep his Covenant and his Testimonies. When the wicked smite and oppress the people of God, they are the Lord's Rod, Isa. 10:5. wherewith he chastiseth his People: And that of the Apostle holds in this, as well as in other chastisements, Heb. 12:10. He for our profit, that we might be partakers of his Holiness; as also what-follows in verse 11. Now no chastisement for the present seemeth joyous but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yielded the fruit of Righteousness to them which are exercised thereby; so as that they wait on God in the Way of his Judgements, and keep the Way of his Commandments. Thus I have cleared it to be the safest Way.

3. This the most honourable way; though it were a safe way, yet if it be not an honourable way, it is not the best way: That proved a safe way that David took, in 1 Sam. 27:1,2,3. but it was a dishonourable way; however, under the power of temptations he concludes it best; yet afterward he finds, by wofull experience, his mistake. It was a safe way that they advised Nehemiah to, in Nehem 6:10. but because it was dishonourable he would not take it; vers 11. And he said, should such a man as I fly? and who is there, being as I am, would go into the Temple to save his life? I will not go in: He would not so dishonour his place. To run hazards in an honourable way hath always been more eligible to Spirits truly noble, then sneakingly to provide for safety in a bale dishonourable way. Now the way that is before you, is the most honourable way, as will appear in these following particulars.

First, 'Tis the way of true valour and courage, when the wicked watcheth to mischief you; when the wicked, even your Enemies and Foes come upon you to eat up your flesh, as Psalm. 27:2. then to wait on the Lord, to stand your ground, to follow the Lord, to keep his way; This is an argument of a brave and gallant Spirit Was it not a proof of a heroick and brave Spirit in Paul, when he sayes to them,

Act. 21:13. What mean you to weep, and to break my heart? for I am ready, not to be bound only, but to dye a Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus. When men are bold and daring in a wicked way, and will resolutely keep on, whatever difficulties or opposition they meet with this is not true valour, but a mad hardiness, and desperate stoutness of spirit: But when men are courageous and undaunted in following the Lord, stedfastly keeping and walking on in his way, maugre all opposition that Satan and wicked Men make against them this is true valour and galantry of Spirit. Such brave and heroick Spirits were they mentioned, Heb. 11:35,36 37. who have this honourable Testimonial of the Lord vers 38, of whom the World was not worthy: Persons, whereof everyone was more worth than the World, or too excellent to abide in the World, being worthy of better and greater honour than the world could give them.

4. 'Tis the way by which you shall most victoriously triumph over all your enemies: wait on the Lord, and keep his way, and you shall go on conquering and to conquer, over Sin, Satan, the World and Antichrist; over all our enemies; Though, God you shall do valiantly, for he it is that shall tread down all your enemies. Psalm 108:13. For this is the victory that overcommeth the world, even your Faith, 1 John 5:4. Through Faith, whereby we wait on God, and keep his Way, we shall overcome the world, that is, Satan and all his wicked crew, with all the instruments of mischief they make use of against us. Hence that, Rom. 8:37. In all these things we are more than Conquerours, through him that loved us: and this honour have all they, that wait on the Lord, and keep his Way.

3 'Tis the way by which you shall bring most honour to God, to the Lord Jesus Christ the Captain of your Salvation. That the people of God are employed in service whereby God is honoured, that reflects honour upon them; and the more God is honoured, the more honour have they that serve him: the Queen of Sheba counted Solomon's servants happy, who waited continually upon him, 1 King. 10:8. how much more honourable is it to wait on the Lord, in that a greater than Solomon is here? Now wait on the Lord, and keep his way;

herein you will greatly honour the Lord. As they that dissent and forsake the Lord and his wayes, when it comes to any hard service, do greatly dishonour him; as if there were not enough to be had to make amends for all their hardships they endure; so they that follow the Lord, and heep his way, through sharp oppositions and sufferings they greatly honour him in the world: to cleave to the Lord, and follow him, when all the world are about our ears for his sake; to keep his Way, when that his Way is everywhere spoken against; to continue faithful in his service, when nothing but bonds and persecutions attend us for it; this commends his Service, and tendeth much to the honour of his Name and Wayes.

4. This is the ready way to true Honour; As the wise man hath it in that, Prov. 27:18. He that waiteth on his Master, shall be honoured: So wait on the Lord and keep his Way, and you shall be honoured, and that with true Honour, even that honour that is of God. In that John. 5:44. our Saviour distinguisheth between that honour that is of men, and that Honour that is of God; and that is the true Honour that is of God: For as they say, Honor est in honorante, non in honorate, in him that honoureth; and then that is true and highest honor that is from the only true God, that high and only One. Now, this honour have all they that waiting on the Lord, and keeping his Way, do honour: Him that honoureth me, I will honour: and sayes our Saviour, John 12:26. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall my servant be: and what honour that is. you may gather from that Col 3:4. and it further followes, if any man serve me, him will my Father honour: Thus it appears to be the most honourable way.

5. Lastly, this is the most comfortable way. It must be granted, 'tis a way that is attended with sufferings, tribulations and distresses, 2 Tim. 3:12. and yet it is the most comfortable way, as will appear, In that,

1. It is the ready way to have peace, inward peace, the best peace in the midst of all the trouble the world can bring upon you; in that,

Joh. 16:33. the Lord Jesus saith to his Disciples, that in the world they should have tribulation, but in him they should have peace. And to wait on the Lord, and keep his Way, is the ready way to attain his Peace, as appears from Isa. 26:3. Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee. That which rendered perfect peace, is [Peace, Peace] in the Original, the reduplication, according to the Idiome of the Hebrew, denoting the excellency, perfection, abundance, and duration of Peace. But to whom is this promise made? saith the text, to him whose mind is stayed on the Lord, and trusteth in him; and in verse 2. to the righteous Nation which keepeth the Truth: which, according to the point in hand, may be exprest, to them that wait on the Lord, and keep his Way. So Psalm 119:165. Great Peace have they that love thy Law, and nothing shall offend them.

2. 'Tis the ready way to have the Holy Ghost, who is styled the Comforter, to abide with us. What more comfortable way, than that wherein we may be sure to have the Comforter to be with us, to abide and continue with us? Wait, on the Lord, and keep his Way, so shall the Comforter abide with you forever. Express is that of our Lord to this purpose, John 14:15,16. If you love me keep my Commandments; and I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter; that he may abide with you forever. So, ver. 23 If any man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come and make our abode with him. So that this is the way to have Father, Son and holy Ghost, to come to us, and abide with us.

3. The Comforts which are to be had in this way, are true, solid, substantial and abiding Comforts, such as fill the soul with inward joy and mirth, under the forest outward trouble, so as that they can sing in prison, and leap in the flames. Notable is that expression of the Apostle, 2 Cor. 3:4 I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyfull in all our tribulations in following the Lord. He tells us in the next verse, that his flesh had no rest, that he was troubled on every side, and yet exceeding joyfull: yea, he tells us in another place, 2

Cor. 1:5. that as his afflictions did abound for Christ, so his consolations did abound by him.

4. This is the way to arrive speedily where the wicked shall trouble you no more, where there shall be no more sorrow nor weeping, but where you shall have respect rest and peace, fulness of joy and comfort for evermore That of the Lord Jesus to his Disciples, Luke 22:28,29. is plain for this, Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations and I appoint you a Kingdome, as my Father hath appointed unto me: with John 10:27,28. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. As Caleb and Joshua waited on the Lord, and kept his way, following him fully, and so entered Canaan, and had a peaceable and comfortable possession there, Josh. 14:14. so they that wait on the Lord and keep his way, shall have abundant entrance into that heavenly Canaan, 2 Pet. 1:11. where there is fulness of joy; and fulness for evermore, Psalm 16:11. and thus it appears to be the most comfortable way, to conclude: this we say, all is well that ends well. Now, Psalm 37:37. Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace.

Thus then we have cleared, that however it go with the people of God here in this world, more especially when the wicked watch them to do them a mischeif, 'tis their best way to wait on the Lord, and keep his way; for that is the honestest, the wisest, the safest way, and the most honourable and most comfortable way. And though I doubt not but enough hath been spoken to perswade and prevail with those that have an understanding to discern, and a heart to perceive what hath been set before them: yet I question not, but carnal reason hath many things to object, and such as may prevail with carnal hearts to disbelieve all that hath been spoken, so far at least as to prefer the wayes of carnal wisdom before this way of the Lord: But I rest satisfied with that answer of our Saviour, Matt. 13:11. It is given to you to know the mysteries of the Kingdome of heaven, but unto them it is not given.

Thus you have the Doctrinal part of the point: I proceed to the application; and we shall make use of this.

1. To admonish and forewarn all the followers of Christ that have own'd engag'd, and walk'd in the way of the Lord, to take heed that they be not stumbled, moved, and turned out of the way of the Lord. The Apostle in Heb. 12:13. adviseth them to make straight paths for their feet, lest that which is lame should be turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed.

There is some lameness remaining with the best; with some more, with some less; but with all some; it lies therefore in all to take heed lest they be turned out of the way. Hence that of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 10:12. Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall; and let him that thinketh he is stablished and settled in the way of the Lord, take heed lest he be offended and turned out of the way. Oh that a holy Jealousie in this thing may possess and fill all your hearts.

More particularly, I would forewarn you to take heed lest you be offended, through some things, and by some persons, in this day of temptation.

1. Take heed lest you be offended at the Cross: Our Saviour in the Parable of the Sower, Matt. 13. tells us of some, who though they hear and receive the Word for a season with joy, yet when tribulation or persecution ariseth for the Word, by and by they are offended. How is this fulfilled in our days: how many are there, who while the way of the Lord was the way of Preferment, did profess and walk in it; who now that it is opposed & everywhere spoken against; do decline and forsake it? Be you admonished to take heed, lest the stumbling-block of others sufferings, especially of faithful Ministers, do turn you out of the way: The Apostle laboureth much in removing this stumbling-block, as you may see, 2 Cor. 1, Phil. 1:1, Thes. 3:3. Therefore I do the more earnestly forewarn you of this; and take heed lest what sufferings come on you for the Gospels sake, do turn

you out of the way: you are no Disciples for Christ; unless you take up your Cross and follow him, Luke 14:27.

Take heed lest you be offended by the falls and apostacies of hypocritical Professors: this is that Satan and his instruments will lay before you to turn you out of the way of the Lord: our Saviour doth therefore forewarn of this, Matt. 24. so likewise his Apostles, 1 Tim. 4:1, 2 Pet. 2:1,2. and 1 John 2:19.

3. Take heed that you be not stumbled by the scorn, contempt, and reproach that is cast on the way of the Lord, and those that walk in it. This is that Satan & his instruments will lay before you; that the way of the Lord and his followers are everywhere under reproach and contempt: for as they said to Paul, so hath the false Church said to those that teach the way of the Lord truly, Act. 28:22. For as concerning this Sect, we know that everywhere it is spoken against, the Original is, Heresie: the way of the Lord is commonly thus branded in the world; and they that walk in it are counted a company of Sectaries and Hereticks. But this should not stumble us no more then it did Paul, who there (v. 23.) boldly teacheth this way, and (Acts 24:14.) freely professeth it. But this I confess to thee that after the way which they call Heresie, so worship I the God of my fathers.

4. Take heed you be not offended at the Prosperity of the wicked, especially when he bringeth wicked devices to pass: This was that had almost turn'd the Psalmist out of the way, Psalm 73:2,3. As for me, my feet were almost gone, my steps had well nigh slipt, for I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. To see those that despise hate, and persecute the way of the Lord, and those that walk in it, to prosper and flourish; while those that love it, own it, and walk in it, are in an afflicted and suffering condition; this not only overturns formal Professors, but many a time puts sincere Believers to a stand. Hence that advice in Psalm 37:7. Fret not thy self because of him who prospereth, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass: and as vers. 8. Fret not thy self in any wise to do evil.

2. Take heed of such persons, as by whom if you be not the more watchful, you may be so offended, as to be turned out of the way More particularly.

1. Take heed of your selves. This is that our Saviour calls for, in that, Matt. 16:24. If any man will come after me, let him deny himself. Our greatest danger is from ourselves, while we have within a deceiver and a traitor, who is still conspiring to turn us out of the way, take heed therefore of your own selves, consult not with flesh and blood, Gal. 1:10.

2. Beware of Satan. This is that which the Apostle suggests, 2 Cor. 3. I fear by any means lest as the Serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. And out of the like fear concerning you, I beseech you beware of Satan, and the rather, for that, as the Apostle saith, vers, 14. Satan is transformed into an Angel of light.

2. Beware of false Teachers. This is the advice of our Saviour, in Matt. 7:15. Beware of false Prophets, which comes to you in sheeps cloathing, &c. And though I cannot say, I know, with the Apostle in Acts 20:29. yet I am greatly afraid, that after my departing shall grievous Wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock; and that of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciple after them.

4. Beware of worldly Friends, such as will counsel you to spare yourselves, such as savour not the things of God, but those that be of men. This our Saviour calls for in that of Luke 14:26. Answer them as Christ answered Peter, Mat 16:22, 23.

The proper use of this Point, with respect to the people of God, is, to exhort and perswade them, to wait on the Lord, and keep his way, however it be, whoever they are that watch and plot against them, however they may prosper in bringing wicked devices to pass; however, they may prevail in oppressing the poor Saints, yet this is

the Exhortation that I have received from the Lord for you, Wait on the Lord, and keep his Way. There are two branches of the Exhortation, I shall speak to both of them distinctly.

And because the latter of them is the main, and the former a help thereto in bad times, I shall invert the order of the Text, and speak to what is here, the latter in the first place, and the other as time will give leave.

1. However it go, Saints, though the wicked watch to do you a mischief, yet keep you the Way of the Lord, diligently observing the way of his Commandements, the way of your duty to walk therein. For as much as it hath been the design of my preaching all along, to expound the Way of God to you, and to instruct you in the way of the Lord; And I am now directing my speech to the Saints of God, who know, own and profess the way of the Lord; I shall not spend much time (while I have so little left) in recounting to you what I have taught you concerning the way of the Lord, only in general, that way of truth and righteousness, the way of faith and holiness which I have taught you from the word, is intended. You know the way of Gospel-Doctrine, Gospel-Fellowship, Gospel-worship, Gospel-Discipline, and Gospel-Conversation, which I have preached, and you have received. And here beloved, I call God to witness, in whose Name I have preached to you, that I have preached the way of the Lord sincerely and faithfully, as I have received of the Lord by the teaching of his Spirit through the Word; I therefore beseech and entreat you, out of that hearty love I bear to you, and that affectionate care I have for you that as you tender the Glory of God, your own Peace here, and eternal Happiness hereafter, and the spiritual and eternal good of others, that you will remember how you have heard, and received, and keep the way of the Lord.

In the prosecuting of this, I shall speak to these two things.

First, Open this duty in a few particulars.

Secondly, give you some directions to help you herein.

For the first of these, take it in these particulars.

1. Be exhorted to keep the way of the Lord in your memories: So Rev. 3:3. Remember therefore how thou hast received; and heard, and hold fast. I am speaking to those that have received the knowledge of the way of the Lord, that they retain what they have learned, and that they maintain an actual remembrance of it: and the rather take heed to this, every one of you, with the greater diligence, for that you are

like to be deprived of the help of your Remembrancers, viz. the faithful Ministers of Christ, 1 Tim. 4:6. you have had their help a long while, in putting you, from Sabbath to Sabbath, in remembrance; but this is taking from you: as the Apostle in another case, Heb. 2:1. Therefore ye ought to give the more earnest heed to the things ye have heard, lest at any time ye should let them slip.

2. Keep the Way of the Lord in your judgments and Consciences: I am speaking to those whose judgments are enlightned, and Consciences renewed, to approve of the Way of the Lord: As therefore the Apostle unto them 2 Pet. 3:17 Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware, lest ye be led away with the error of the wicked and fall from your own stedfastness. So say I, seeing ye know the Way of the Lord, and approve of it, beware lest being led away with the error of the wicked; and your own judgements being thereby corrupted, and your Consciences defiled, you fall from your own stedfastness: and I the rather press this, for that, as the Apostle hath it, 2 Cor. 11:3. I fear lest by any means, as the Serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

3. Keep the Way of the Lord in your Profession: I am speaking unto those, who, as Rom. 10:10. with the heart, believe unto Righteousness; and with the mouth, make confession unto Salvation: And you have the Exhortation in the words of the Apostle, Heb.

10:23. Let us hold fast the profession of the Faith without wavering: Be not ashamed of your profession; as our Saviour speaks, Mar 8:38. Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my Words, in this adulterous and sinfull generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the Glory of his Father, with his holy Angels; with Matt. 10:32,33. Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in Heaven: But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in Heaven.

4. Keep the Way of the Lord in your hearts and affections, loving, rejoycing, and delighting in the Way of the Lord: The keeping of it in your memories, judgements, and profession, will be but in vain, unless you keep it in your hearts. Lay up and hide the Word of God in your hearts; let the desire and delight of your soul be in the Way of the Lord; with the Psalm 119:111. Thy Testimonies have I taken for mine heritage forever, for they are the rejoycing of my heart: 'Tis the Character of the Godly man, Psalms, 1:1, 2. He delighteth in the Law of the Lord; and in his Law doth he meditate day and night.

5. Keep the Way of the Lord in your lives and conversation; walking therein conscientiously; observing the Commandments of God, to do accordingly: I am speaking to those who have chosen the way of the Lord to walk in; and they may read what the Lord saith in that, Deut. 5:32. You shall observe to do as the Lord your God hath commanded you: you shall not turn aside to the right hand, or to the left: you shall walk in all the Wayes that the Lord your God hath commanded you: and to as many as walk according to this rule, peace shall be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

Having this opened this Duty, take these few Directions among the many that might be given.

1. Let the Spirit of Christ be your guide and principle: I am speaking unto such as have the Spirit of Christ: Now if you consult that Ezek 36:27. You shall find that the Lord promiseth his people, that he will

put his Spirit within them: and to what promise? viz. both to incline, enable, and guide them to walk in his Statutes, and to observe his Commandments to do them. There is no entering into the way of the Lord, but by the Spirit, Joh. 3:3. we all naturally being gone astray, wander from the way of the Lord, and it is the spirit only that can, and doth reduce men into this way; and the best being but lame, and having not only a principle of halting in, but declining from it, there is no walking in this Way, but by the assistance and guidance of the Spirit. Let therefore the Spirit of God be your guide; it is comprised, that he shall lead you into all truth, John 16:13. Let the spirit be your principle: walk in the Spirit, Gal. 5:16, then you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh; but shall keep the way of the Lord.

2. Make the Word of God your rule. I have heretofore, from that John 6:39. and 1 Tim. 3:15. and several other places, cleared to you, that it is given of God for this end, to be the rule both for Faith and Practice Keep therefore unto this, and by no means depart from this, if you would keep the Way of the Lord. Here you have the Lord revealing his Way, and that clearly and plainly, so that the most simple, that apply themselves to it, may understand it: the Scriptures are a perfect and a constant rule: Therefore, as in that, Isa. 8:26. To the Law and to the Testimony; if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no Light in them. There are some that make the Light within their rule and that in opposition to the Word: but the Light in such is Darkness: for if they speak not according to this Word (if it be but diverse from, though not directly opposite unto it) then there is no light in them. Indeed the Light within, that is Conscience enlightned, is a rule; but it is, Regula, Regulata, a Ruled Rule: There is Regula Regulans, and Regula Regulata, A Ruling Rule, and a Ruled Rule: The former is a Rule to the latter, by which it is to be tryed and approved: The Word of God is a Ruling Rule, and Conscience is a Ruled Rule, which is to be obeyed, as far as it speaks according to the Word, and no further. If therefore you would keep the Way of the Lord, do not despise Conscience, do not neglect the Light within, but make it not thy Rule; make the Word of God thy Rule; admit not of anything that is belonging to the Way of the Lord,

that is not grounded upon, or not warranted by his Word. If you would keep the Way of the Lord, hold fast to what is written, stick to the Word.

That saying of Austin is famous:

Sive de Christo, sive de Ecclesia, sive de quacunque alia re non dico si nos sed si Angelus sed coelo vobis annuntiaverit praeterquam quod in Scripturis accipistes, Anathema sit: Not to say, If we, but if an Angel from heaven shall preach anything of Christ, or of the Church, or of any other thing besides what ye have received in the Scripture, let him be accursed. Like to that, Gal. 1:8, 9. The Word is the heavenly Compass whereby we may be directed to steer our course aright to the Haven of happiness: Keep you to the Word, while one says, this is the way, and another that: Try all things by the Rule of the Word, and make that your Rule to walk by. Hence, when Paul was taking his leave of the Church at Ephesus, in that Acts 20. in his Farewel-Sermon; that after his departure, they might keep the way of the Lord: you may read, what he commends to them, verse 32. And your brethren, I commend you to God, and the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and give you an inheritance among those that are sanctified: He commends the Word of God to them. So, Beloved, now that I may no more speak to you from this place, for the teaching of you the right and the good way, I recommend to you the Word of the Lord; which will be a light to your feet, and a Lanthorn to your paths, to guide you in the Way of the Lord, till you attain the end of your Faith, the Salvation of your souls. What knowledge I have of the way of the Lord, what I have taught you of the way of the Lord, I have been taught by the Spirit of the Lord, through the Word: and though you want the great help of a plain, powerful, and faithful Ministry for the future, yet let not those that are sincere, in desiring to walk in the way of the Lord, be discouraged by those who would make them believe, that the Word is hard to be understood: for that, as it is more from malignity in us, than difficulty in the Scriptures, that the most do not understand them; so they are easie to be understood by them that sincerely

endeavour; it being not only most plain and clear in teaching the way of the Lord, but also appointed to enlighten the eyes, and make wise the simple, Psalm 19:7,8. Yea, the entrance of it giveth light: it giveth understanding to the simple, Psalm 119:130. And how weak and simple soever any of the Saints may be in worldly matters, and in the Worlds account, yet of them all is that spoken, 1 John 2:27. But the anointing which ye have received of him, abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lye, even as it hath been taught you, ye shall abide in him. Though they corrupt and pervert this Text, that make use of it to the disannulling of all Ministerial teaching; for if John had meant so, to what purpose did he write this Epistle? yet when God depriveth us of this help, this Scripture affords support and comfort to the Saints, that by the Spirit in them, they shall be enabled to understand what he teacheth in the Word, so as to abide in the Lord and in his Way, as they have been taught.

Having then the Spirit for your principle and guide, let the Word be your Rule, and you shall keep the Way of the Lord; according to that promise, Isaiah 35:8. The wayfaring-men, though fools, shall not erre therein.

3. Let the example of Christ be your pattern, that you may keep the Way of the Lord; set this Copy alwayes before you. He always kept the Way of the Lord; as he came down from Heaven to do the Will of his Father, John 6:38. so he did alwayes those things that did please him, John 8:29. He never departed in the least from the Way of the Lord: He knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. If then you would keep the Way of the Lord, learn of him, follow him, walk even as he walked: Indeed in the things that are proper to Christ, as God, or as Mediator, therein he is not to be imitated by us; but in the things that he did, or suffered as man, he left us an example or pattern, that we should follow his steps, 2 Pet. 2:21. Hence that Exhortation of his, Matt. 11:29. Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart. That then you may be directed as well as encouraged to keep the Way of the Lord, look to Jesus, and walk as you have him

for an example. Indeed, the Apostle exhorts to walk, as you have him for an example, Phil. 3:17. But knowing that he could give you but an imperfect Copy, he exhorts in that, 1 Cor. 11:1. Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. It may be of good use to us, to minde the examples of the Apostles and faithful Ministers of the Gospel, that have walkt on in the Way of the Lord before us: But forasmuch as there in none of them, even Peter himself, but went awry more or less; therefore make the example of Christ your pattern. Time will not permit to prosecute this at large: I shall only offer some few particulars from the example of Christ to you, such as may be most seasonable to further you in keeping the Way of the Lord.

1. It was the work and business of the Lord Jesus Christ to do the Will of his Father, to do what pleased him. As he came down from Heaven to do his Father's Will, as you before heard from John 6:68. so he made it his work and business. To this purpose is that, Luke 2:49. How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Fathers business? with that John 4:34. Jesus saith unto them, my meat is to do the Will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. If then you will keep the Way of the Lord herein, be ye followers of Christ; let it be your work and business to do the Will of the Lord, and to walk in all well-pleasing before him: Let the Exhortation be in the words of the Apostle, 1 Thes. 4:1. Furthermore, then we beseech you Brethren, and exhort you, that as you have received of us how you ought to walk and please God, so ye would abound more and more.

1. It was the practice of the Lord Jesus Christ, to look on all the sufferings that came upon him, as coming from the hand of his Father in accomplishment of his Word, and therefore quietly to submit to them. To this purpose is it that he tells Pilate in John. 19:11. Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above; He looks beyond Pilate, to him that was above. So John 18:11. The Cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? He overlooks the instruments, and looks on his sufferings, as a Cup put into his hand by his Father: And as he

observed the hand of his Father in the sufferings that came upon him, so he takes notice that they are in accomplishment of Scripture, Matt. 26:53,54. Thinkest thou that I could not now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve Legions of Angels? but how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be? and he takes notice that the Scripture had foretold that thus it must be, and that he must suffer, and enter into glory, as he clears it in that of Luke 24:25,26. Therefore though he prayed, if it be possible, as Matthew hath it; and, if thou be willing, let this Cup pass from me, as Luke hath it; yet he quietly submits to his Father's Will, with a, Not my will, but thine be done. And as Matt. 26:42. If this Cup may not pass away, except I drink it, let thy will be done. Thus you see how by looking to the Fathers hand, he willingly submits to what sufferings came upon him. That you may keep the Way of the Lord in the midst of all the sufferings you are like to meet with, herein following the Lord Jesus Christ, eying the hand of your gracious Father in all the sufferings that come upon you, of what nature soever, and by whomsoever inflicted; and whatever may be the ends of those by whom you suffer, yet that they are all ordered by him in accomplishment of his Word. Do ye not believe this? I know that ye do believe it by Faith; therefore improve it for the quieting of your hearts in all your sufferings. This is that the Apostle presseth the Saints unto in the 12th of the Hebrews, where he taketh for granted, that all kind of sufferings, (more especially such as come upon us by the contradiction of sinners) are fatherly corrections from the Lord, and so in accomplishment of the Word of God, according unto that Psalm 89:30,31. and therefore humbly to be submitted to: so Heb. 12:9,10. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of Spirits, and live? for they verily for a few days chastened as after their pleasure; but he for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness. Seeing therefore whatsoever befalls you in the way of the Lord, is by your Father's ordering in accomplishment of his Word for your profit, that ye may be partakers of his Holiness, submit your selves to him, eye your Fathers hand and end, and be quiet.

3. It was the practice of Jesus Christ in his state of humiliation, to give unto Civil Magistrates and Rulers what was their due, yea, to forgo somewhat of his Civil Right rather than to offend them: For giving unto Civil Magistrates their due, notable is that of Matt. 22:21. Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesars, and unto God the things that are God's. And as he taught them, so he practised himself; for he was not of those that say and do not, but his practise was always conformable to his Doctrine: When therefore they that received Tribute-money at Capernaum, came and demanded of him; he will rather recede from his Civil Liberty than offend them, Matt. 17:25,26,27. Now go ye and do likewise. If ye will keep the way of the Lord, give unto Caesar the things that are Caesars; be subject unto the King, and all that are in Authority: Let the Exhortation be that, 1 Pet. 2:13. Submit your selves to every Ordinance of man for the Lords sake. What is here meant by Ordinance of man, is clear from what follows; whether to the Kings as Supream, or unto Governors, &c. Be ye therefore subject, Saints, not only for wrath, but for Conscience sake, for the Lord's sake; and as Rom. 13:7. Render to everyone their due; Tribute to whom Tribute, Custome to whom Custome is due, &c. Such subjection to Magistrates as thwarteth not our obedience unto God; lies within the Way of the Lord: Yield therefore active obedience unto the King, as far as Conscience towards God will give leave: Fear God; and honor the King, 1 Pet. 2:17. Give all that honor to the King that is consistent with the true fear of God. Let nothing but Conscience towards God, hinder you at any time from yielding active obedience to all the King's Laws.

And here Beloved, I shall take occasion to open my heart sincerely to you. You know what is required of me if I will continue a publick Minister in this Kingdom: I hope no sober persons can think me such a humerous perverse Phanatick as to throw away my Maintenance, much less my Ministerial Capacity (which is much more dear to me than Livelihood, yea, than Life) out of a proud humor and vain-glorious fancy. In brief therefore, as I shall answer it before the great God, the searcher of all hearts, and the righteous Judge, Did not Conscience toward God forbid me, I would willingly and readily do

all that the Act requires. But seeing I cannot declare an unfeigned Assent and Consent, as the Law requires: As from the fear of my God I dare not; so from the Love you generally have to me, I know you would not have me dissemble with God and men. I do therefore humbly choose to submit to the Penalty, rather than by a hypocritical conformity (for such it must be in me, if any) to dishonor my God, wound my own Conscience, and dissemble with men; knowing assuredly that my God hath no need of my sin; And if he have any work for me in the publick Ministry, he will incline the King's heart to grant Liberty and Encouragement therein to me, with the rest of those who desire to be faithful in preaching of the Gospel; which that the Lord will grant, I promise myself the help of all your prayers, who have been favoured with any spiritual blessings through my Ministry.

4. It was the practice of Jesus Christ to be so far from making resistance by the Sword to keep himself from suffering, that he refused such help as was offered him that way: So Matt. 26:52. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy Sword into his place, for all they that take the Sword shall perish by the Sword, 'tis not all that use, but all that take the Sword without a lawful call. So John 18:11. Put up thy Sword into thy sheath: The Cup which my Father will have me to drink, shall I not drink it? If you would keep the way of the Lord herein, follow Christ so, as not to resist those that are in Authority, however unjustly you may suffer from them: for, 1 Pet. 2:19. This is thank-worthy, if a man for Conscience sake towards God, endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

It was the practice of Jesus Christ to be so far from avenging himself, as to render good for evil; to forgive his enemies, to seek their good and welfare. So in Luke 23:34. Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.

Thus follow Christ, according to that he teacheth in Matt. 5:34. Love your enemies; Bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you. And what the Apostle exhorteth in Rom. 12:19, 20. Dear

beloved, avenge not your selves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink, &c.

6. The Lord Jesus Christ had great compassion for poor wandering sinners, Matt. 9:36. Great love for his Saints, John 13:1. with tender pity towards them in all their sorrows and afflictions, Isa. 63:9. Herein also be ye followers of Christ, according to that Col. 3:12,13. Put on therefore as the Elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of minde, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another; if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

7. The Lord Jesus counted not his life dear, when that he was called to give it up in bearing witness to the Truth: as you have it in that John 18:37. he bears witness to the Truth when called to it, with the hazard of his life.

Herein follow Jesus Christ, in bearing Witness to the Truth of God, though with the hazard of your lives, as Paul doth in that Acts 20:24. Whatever mischief be threatned by wicked men, yet deny not, be not ashamed of the Words, Truths, and Ways of Christ; for 'tis the Word of the true and faithful Witness, which we have, Mark 8:36. Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and my words, in this adulterous and sinful Generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy Angels. And, Oh how sad, if this be thy portion! for if in that day Christ shall be ashamed of thee, Wo be to thee forever, thou shalt be wretched and miserable to all Eternity. But be faithful, courageous, and constant, in confessing him, and his Ways and Truths; for he hath said, Matt. 10:32. Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father that is in Heaven: And, Oh how comfortable, if this be thy portion! for if Jesus Christ confess thee at that day, Peace be to thee forever, thou shalt be blessed and happy to all Eternity: Though therefore thy confessing of him, be

attended not only with Reproaches, and Revilings, but with Fines, Bonds, Imprisonment, yea, Death itself; yet herein follow him, in bearing witness to the Truth, when called unto it, whatever hazard you run by it; yea, though it come to the drinking of the Cup that he drank of, and to the sealing of your Testimony with your blood; knowing that if ye suffer with him, ye shall also reign together with him. Thus if you follow the Lord, walking in his steps, in these and other Particulars, wherein he hath given us an example, you shall be sure to keep the Way of the Lord. And this shall suffice for the third branch of the Direction.

4. Let the Glory of God be your End, if that you would keep the way of the Lord: if you have sincerely entred the way of the Lord, then the Glory of the Lord is your last End; and if you would keep on steadily in this way, look to the Glory of God as your main End. Though it be possible for a man that hath the Glory of God for his End, to step out of the Way of the Lord; yet it is impossible for a man to keep the Way of the Lord, unless this be his utmost End: Yea though it be possible for one that is right in his End, to erre in this or that particular, so as to stray from the Way of the Lord, in some lesser matters that shall not prejudice his Salvation; yet it is impossible, that such a one should so mistake about the Substantials of this Way, as to turn aside, and to walk totally and finally in the Way that leadeth to destruction, and eternal perdition. Though the purity of the End, will not make amends for the viciousness of the means; yet where a man is right in his End, much Errour as to the means shall be forgiven him; yea, and to have the Glory of God for your End, in all your natural and civil Actions, way to sanctifie them, and to inscribe Holiness to the Lord on them. Thus may the meanest actions of your particular Callings become Religious, if they be done as to the Lord, in obedience to his Command, and with respect to his Glory: Therefore as the Apostle hath it, 1 Cor. 10:32. Whether you eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God: Make this your scope, and it will be of special use to guide you when the way is doubtful, being indeed propounded by the Apostle for that end: As a man that is travelling on Salisbury Plain towards the City; he comes

sometimes where there is no beaten paths, and sometimes where two or three ways meet; now to keep his eye on the City, is the ready course to keep him in the right way: So if a man were to draw a straight Line to such a Point, and hath not a rule to draw by, his readiest way is to keep his eye upon the Point. So when your way is doubtful, and you know not which way to take, take that which is most for the glory of God: where you see not your Rule, keep your eye on the glory of God, and it will be of choice use to keep you straight in the Way of the Lord. And so much for the first branch of the Exhortation.

2. Be exhorted to wait on the Lord, for without this you will not long keep the Way of the Lord, there are such troubles, distresses, and tribulations that attend the way of the Lord, that as the Apostle hath it, Heb. 10:36. Ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, you may inherit the promise. So say I, you have need of Waiting, that you may keep the way of the Lord, and continue therein to the end.

Wherein the Nature of this Duty lies, and what Encouragements there are to it in the worst of times, I have lately shewn you, when I preached on that, Lam. 3:26. It is good that a man hope, and wait quietly for the Salvation of the Lord. Whence I observed, that however it go with the people of God, it is good, it is best for them to hope and wait quietly for the Salvation of the Lord: I shall therefore only recommend this duty to you, as the work of this dark Day, and conclude with that of our Saviour, Luke 12:35, &c. And let your Loyns be girded about, and your Lights burning, and ye your selves like to men that wait for their Lord when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those Servants, whom the Lord when he cometh, shall finde watching. Yea, Keep the Way of the Lord, and wait on him: For, as ver. 42:43. Who then is that faithful and wise Servant, whom his Lord shall make Ruler over his Houshold, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that Servant, whom the Lord when he cometh shall finde so doing.

39. Mr. Calamy's Prayer at Aldermanbury

Oh most Holy! thou ever blessed Lord God, thou fillest Heaven and Earth with thy Presense: We pray thee fill all our hearts with the Presense of thy Grace and let it appear that thou art in the midst of us with that powerfull assistance of thy Spirit, that we may receive a token of thy love from thee at this time It is a singular favour that the doores of thy Sanctuary are open to us, and that yet we may meet together in thy Name; we pray the continue it to us and sanctifie it to us, that every Sabbath may add to our stature in Jesus Christ, We confess we have forfeited all our mercies; we have heard much of God, and Christ, and Heaven with our ears, but there is little of God, Christ, and Heaven in our hearts.

We confess many of us by hearing Sermons, are grown Sermon-proof: We know how to scoff and mock at Sermons, but we know not how to live Sermons.

It is a miracle of free grace, thou hast not taken the Gospel from us ere this time; but thou art a merciful God, and though we cannot please thee, yet Mercy pleaseth thee; and we have no argument to bring along with us to beg thy favours, but thy Mercy in Jesus Christ.

We pray thee that thou wilt glorifie thy Sovereignty; in being gracious to us, and pardon our many and great transgressions.

Thou makest use of the malice of men for thy Glory: Thou killest Goliah with his own Sword. O help us to put our trust in thee, thou that canst kill, and cure by killing.

Blesse these Nations of England, Scotland and Ireland, and find out yet a way to save us. Pour down thy blessings upon the head and heart of our Sovereign Charles, by thy Grace, King of Great Britain; thou hast done great things for him, let him do Great things for thee. Bless him in his Royal Consort, in his Royal Relations, in his Council.

Bless the Magistrates and Ministers of this Realm: Lord forgive us, for we live as if we had been delivered to work wickedness; we cannot sin at so cheap a rate as others do: we pray thee humble us under our great and grievous sins, give us repentance unto Salvation, and a lively Faith in the Blood of Jesus Christ: Quicken our graces, forgive our sins, make alive our Souls, let us be such as thou wouldst have us to be; make us Christians, not only by an outward Profession, but an inward Conversation, that we may live in Heaven, while we are on Earth, and come to Heaven when we shall leave the Earth. To that purpose, bless thy Word unto us at this time, and give us all grace to make conscience of what we hear, and how we hear, and all for Jesus Christ his sake, to whom with thy blessed Self and Spirit, be all Glory and Honour. Amen.

40. Mr. Nalton's Prayer at Foster-lane

Eternal, most Mighty, and most glorious Lord God, thou art God alone, and besides thee there is no Saviour or helper: our strength stands in thy Name, who hast made both Heaven and Earth: of our selves we are able to do nothing that is pleasing in thy sight; we can pollute thy Name, but we cannot honour thy Name; we can run away from thee, but we cannot run unto thee, unless thou dost powerfully draw us by the holy spirit. We can grieve thy spirit, but we cannot grieve for grieving of thy spirit.

Oh let thy strength be manifested in our weakness; look upon us with the favour thou bearest to thy children. Enter not into judgment with thy servants, for we cannot answer thee one of a thousand, not one thought of a thousand thoughts, not one word of a thousand words most of our actions have been reproveable, and the best of our services have been unprofitable: our omissions, commissions and presumptions have been multiplied intolerably. Oh! how often have we take your Name in vain, while we have been confessing our sins:

how often ha•• we run from confessing our sins, to the committing of sins? and from committing sins, to the confessing sin again, as if we had but mocked thy sacred Majesty. Though we know thy Favour is better than life, we have parted with it upon easie terms. Oh the pride and stubbornnesse that is in our hearts: All the mercies thou hast bestowed upon us, have not melted us into tears for our unkindnesse; and all those blows that have fallen upon our backs, have not beat folly out of our hearts. We have been unprofitable all our days; some have done thee more service in one year, than we in all our time: We have forgotten thee in the day of prosperity, and sung a lullaby to our own Souls: Oh that we could speak these things with broken and bleeding hearts! But as in the time of our ignorance we could sin without reluctancy, so now we can sin without repentance. Oh that thou wouldst smite the rock, that there might flow out tears.

We can do nothing by way of expiation, if we would weep out our eyes; nothing but the blood of Christ can take away our guilt. O that there might be a spring of that blood upon our souls at this time! Oh that that blood may at this time bring a report of love, and a message of mercy to us!

Do we beg any more than thou hast promised? Oh hast not thou accepted of that satisfaction that Christ hath made in his own person? If we had suffered the torments of Hell, it could not have made that satisfaction that Christ hath made. Give us the witness of thy spirit and thy Love and we will say we have enough: give us hearts of flesh; crush the head of the serpent in our souls. O Lord Christ, thou camest into the world to destroy the works of the Devil in our hearts and to build up the Kingdom of the spirit in us. Oh when shall we see the old man decay in us, and the new man to live more and more!

O be wisdom to guide us and Righteousness to cleanse us from guilt, and redemption to deliver us from the wages of sin: let us be nothing in ourselves, that we may be all in thee our saviour; Oh honour us so

far, that we may honour thee We pray thee strengthen our weak saith, quiet our consciences, we would not live a day longer, than that we may honour thee: tread Satan under our feet, fit us for our places and employments; let not our conditions be so low, but that our hearts may be lower: we are posting to death; Oh let sin die before, we die: let us know our names are written in the Book of Life, before thou take away our life.

Look upon thy servant, our dread Sovereign, Charles, of Great Britain, France and Ireland, King; oh enrich his Royal heart with all those saving graces of thy Spirit, in order unto a wise and happy Government of these Kingdoms. Look upon his Royal Consort, his Royal relations. the Lords of his Privy Council, and make them blessings to this Nation. oh, sanctifie thy good word; oh, give thy gracious assistance to us, both in speaking and hearing: let us hear it as that word by which we must be judged, that we may be convinced by it, and say, it is the power of God to salvation to every soul of us. Let our meeting be for the better to all of us, that we may be built up in the most holy Faith; and let us know we have not sought thy face in vain for Jesus Christ his sake, our dear Saviour, for whom we bless thy Majesty, to whom with thee and thy Spirit be praise for ever. Amen.

41. Mr. Jenkin's Prayer at Christ Church

Most blessed and holy Lord God thou art infinitely beyond our apprehensions, who wast infinitely happy before the world was made and wantest none of thy creatures nor their services to make thee more excellent than thou art in thy self: we daily want thee, thou never wantest us: thou art pleased to make use of ordinances, Ministers, Sabbaths, as thy Institutions to accomplish and bring about the great work of thy Glory, and mans Salvation: yet Lord thou dost not need them, thy Spirit is not made efficacious by these things,

but it is that that makes these things efficacious: though thou art pleased to tie us to them, when we may have them and duly enjoy them, yet thou dost not tie thy self to them. We desire in these our addresses to eye the happiness of Saints that depends upon him that depends upon none: we are here in thy presense by thy goodness and grace: O whither should we go but to thee? and how should we come but by thee? Oh strengthen our faith, kill our corruptions, inflame our love, give us assurance of thy love to our souls oh that God would teach us how to pray, that we may taste and see how good the Lord is this day, that our souls may be filled as with marrow, that we may by our own experience be able to say, It is good for us to draw nigh to God, and that a day in his house is better then a thousand elsewhere; that there may be a communion between us and God let there be a disunion between us and sin: we confesse we brought sin enough into the world with us, to cause thee to with-draweth, blessed self from us: and to cast such unprofitable servants as we are into utter darkness; we have been a long time in thy school, and yet how dull are we? we might have been teachers of others, but we need our selves be taught which are the first Principles of the oracles of God: we love less than we know, and we do less than we love; we have neither done that good, nor received that good which we should, or might have done and received: We have been trees that have cumbered the ground in thy orchard, but we have brought forth no fruit. Wo unto us that we have not known the day of our visitation: many of us have one foot in the grave, and yet we have lived without God in the world; we are wise in everything but in our own Salvation; we live as if Hell were a priviledge: those of us that have some knowledge of thee, have great cause to repent that we have walked so unworthily of God. Which of us pray continually, and fervently, or live the life of saith? we confess we neither take our afflictions humbly, nor our mercies thankfully nor want our comforts contentedly, nor fill up our relations fruitfully: We live as if Hell were a scare-crow, as if all the threatnings of thy word were an empty noise, as if there were neither sweetness in Heaven, nor bitterness in Hell. When we come into thy presense, where are our hearts? what earthly dispositions do we bring along with us? the sins of our

Prayers cry louder then the Supplications of our prayers; what hypocrisie and formality cleaves unto us? If thou dost not look upon the iniquities of our holy things with an eye of pittie, what will become of us? O Lord be pleased to smell a sweet savour of rest and peace through thy dear Son. O Lord, it is only his precious Blood that can sprinkle our hearts and quiet our Consciences, and no other thing: We do renounce our own Works, and we cry out in ourselves, Undone, undone.

It is through thy beloved Son that we are accepted: and therefore to that end bring us to him by a saving operation on thy part, and by our lively trust through the Covenant of Grace on our part: let there be such a unity between Christ and us, that all the powers of Hell may not be able to separate us from thee: speak peace to our hearts, still our consciences, say I have received a sacrifice for you, I shall befriend you, I will be just and faithful to forgive your sins; my Law is sully fulfilled by another, though broken by you: my Justice is fully satisfied by another, though provoked by you: my wrath is ceased by the means of another, though incensed by you.

Oh Lord what a cordial would this be! canst not thou amongst this great multitude of people espy some that through the Spirit of thy Son would worship thee in thine own way? speak peace to every such soul.

Is there any soul before thee, O Lord, to whom thou hast given the grace of desire? O lord give them grace according to their desire: and thou which didst regard us when we were running from thee, do not reject us now we are drawing near thee. And thou which bidst us believe by the command of thy Word, help us to believe by the operation of thy Spirit; draw us that we may be able to follow thee: thy loving kindness is better than life.

Some do say, who will shew us any good? But Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us, and thou wilt glad our hearts more than in the time when Corn, or wine, or Oil increaseth. Let it be fair

above head when it is dirty below; let us see one contrary in another; let us confute an eye of sense with an eye of faith; and when we come to see nothing here that can gratifie our senses, let us have something to quiet our souls.

We would fain be at war with sin, that we may be at peace with thee though we cannot return as much as we have received, yet help us to return as much as we can: give us repentance unto life, repentance from dead works; a mourning far greater for the remembrance of sin, than we have pleasure in the committing of sin: those secret distempers in our souls, that no eye sees but thine, let us cry out, Wretched men that we are, who should deliver us from this body of sin? And as the fear of condemnation doth decrease, so set the fear of transgression increase. And because O Lord, thou hast not made us to bleed with thy greatness, O Lord make us to blush with thy goodness; let us as truly desire that Heaven would enter into us into a way of holiness here, as we desire to enter into Heaven in the way of happiness hereafter.

Let us see that our kindness to sin is cruelty to our Saviour; let not that live quietly one minute with us, that would not let Christ live: let us see there is nothing small by which the great God is offended, and an immortal soul is damned. We are to be in the world but for a while, to take a turn or two and be gone: Oh that we might make it the business of our life to get into Christ; though it be the scorn of men, and burdensome to nature; yet this is that which will bring us peace at last. Let us be what we profess ourselves to be: let us love Christ, and evangelically keep his commandements: let us live by faith, let us keep thy Commandements, let us be above the world in the world; above the love of life, and above the fear of death: let not the smiles of the world allure us, nor the frowns thereof affright us from thee, but in all these things let us be more than conquerors through Jesus Christ: Let us love him much whom we cannot love too much: Help us to be above the power of Hell; let us ever say, My soul, it is good for me to draw nigh to God. Let us be willing rather to be faved with a few, than go to Hell in a crowd: let us live as if

Eternity were long, and life but short; let us thrive in holiness, and be brought nearer to thy self by every dispensation; let us in this our day know the things that concern our peace, before they be hid from our eyes, and know the time of our visitation; and though God suffer long, he will strike at last O Lord, bow the heavens and come down among us at this time, and be with the unworthiest of thy servants, and give unto him a door of utterance, and to thin great people a door of entrance, and let them be all taught of God; and let them truly find that the great God is teaching to the heart, when that a weak worm is speaking to the ear; let all the work be done by thee, and let all: he praise redound unto thee; and let him that is with us be greater than he that is in the world: behold us in the Son of thy love, smell a sweet savor of rest on these our poor prayers speak peace to our consciences, rebuke the tempter, tread him under our feet shortly, raise us up to newness of life: let us remember when that which is perfect is, that which is imperfect shall be done away. Hear us, and help us, through our dear Redeemer: let us live for him here, and with him hereafter, and all for his sake, whom not seeing, we love, in whom believing we rejoyce with joy unspeakable and full of glory: to whom, with thee, and thy Sprit, be Glory and Honour, now and forever. Amen.

42. Mr. Cradocott's Prayer at St. Sepulchres

Most glorious, and most gracious Lord God, who art God, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hast put thine own Name and stamp upon this Day, wilt thou be pleased to appear now, and prepare, and dispose our unprepared and indisposed souls for holy. Observation of this thine holy day. Will the Lord vouchsafe us the incomes of his spirit, and influences of his Grace, whereby we may be inabled to offer up spiritual Sacrifice, which may be acceptable to Jesus Christ;

Lord thou requirest, praying hearts, but thou hast not commanded us to use Prayer-books; and if thou wilt give us the Spirit of Prayer, we shall not need them, Lord, give us praying hearts at this time; let us find by, experience that the Sabbath is a day of Souls opportunity, that thine Ordinances are full of marrow, that thou hast not said unto thy Children, the seed of Jacob, seek my face in vain.

We acknowledge we are unworthy to lift up our eyes to heaven, we have cause enough to cry out. God be merciful to us sinners, undeserving, ill-deserving men and women; we acknowledge our natures are blots of all wickednesses; we are by nature enemies to thy Majesty, heirs of death, children of darkness, slaves to sin captives to lust, dead to sins and trespasses; how are our understandings darkned, and our hearts-hardened? what are our hearts but a store house of malicious thoughts? a brothel house of adultery? a palace of pride? we are by nature wholly flesh, totally opposite to the holy Laws of thy Majesty, and were it not for thy renewing and restraining grace we should break forth into as vile abominations as the vilest of men: our lives have been a continual piece of rebellion against God, who did make us, and doth feed and cloath us; all thy paths have been paths of mercy to us, but we have requited thee evil for thy good, and hatted for thy love: Oh foolish men and women that we have been I we acknowledge our Gospel-sins are of a deep dye: Thou hast not been a Wilderness or Land of darkness to us; we have been exalted to heaven in the means of salvation: but, Oh! how short do we come of knowledge to the time and means we have enjoyed; and our obedience comes short of our knowledge, we have not walked up to that light which thou hast given us.

We desire to lay ourselves low before thee, Oh do thou open our eyes, and present us to ourselves; show us the vilenss of our lives: Blessed be thy Name that thou hast laid help upon one that is mighty to save all that come to thy Majesty by him; and thou hast promised all that beleve on him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. Oh help us to receive him in all his Offices in our hearts; help us to give him the keys of our hearts; and help us to live and die to him that died for us;

and let our souls be united to thee by him, that his death may be ours, and his life ours, and his intercession ours: Oh let our unity to Christ be demonstrated to us by our communion with, and conformity to him in grace and holiness.

And we pray thee, dearest Lord, pardon our sins in the Court of heaven, and in the Court of our own consciences; besprinkle our consciences in the blood of Christ, and say to all before thee at this time, that desire to fear thee more, and serve thee better, Sons and Daughters be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven you.

And do not only justifie us, but sanctifie us, purge our consciences from dead works; inform our understanding: conform our wills to thy holy Will; let our hearts and lives be comformed to the Image of thy Son, that beholding thereof, we may be changed from glory to glory; and let us have more knowledge of thy will, that we may do thy will und suffer thy will with more patience, and be filled with the fruits of Righteousness, which are to the glory of God. Let us not be empty Vines that bring forth fruit to themselves, but let us bring forth fruit to God; whereby thou mayest be glorified: Oh plant that great grace of Self-denial in our souls, and let us take the Cross of Jesus Christ and follow him wheresoever he goes.

Remember all thine; extend thy favour to those thou hast cast on beds of sickness and let there be a saving change wrought in them, before that change by death shall come, and they that are drawing nigh their time of Travel, let the arms of the All-sufficient God be under them, and be better to them than their Faith or our prayers: and look graciously upon poor children entitle them to an inheritance that fadeth not away, make them a blessing in themselves. and a blessing to their Parents: And those that deare the conversion of Relations, that walk in wayes of perdition, do not let them find peace in any way against thy Majesty, and let them know that sin will be bitter in the latter end.

Look upon us that are before thee at this time, before we go hence, and shall be here no more: make thy face to shine upon us: let our coming together be for the better and not for the worse to any of us; let thy poor Servant be able to deliver thy Message plainly and powerfull and give thy People hearing ears and obedient hearts, and let us rejoyce that we did wait upon thee in thy Worship this day; and all For Christ his sake, in whose Name and Words we call upon thee.

Our Father' which art in Heaven, &c.

43. Dr. Manton's Prayer at Covent-garden

O Lord God, all that we can do is nothing of ourselves, we can do nothing; Oh let us have the gracious Assistance of thy Spirit as this time; let thy love constrain us; say unto us, Thou art our Salvation. Do not say that we shall fill up the measure of our Iniquities, and there shall be no hope for us. O Lord, we are ashamed that we have waited so long in thine Ordonnances, and have got no more profit to our poor souls; but we have given up our hearts to the pleasures and vanities of this world, that are but for a season; even those that thou hast drawn out after thee, do not walk worthy of thee (anseerable to that blessed hope of future Happiness) in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, Jesus Christ is to many of us become a stumbling-blook, and a reck of offence while our hearts are caried out after the world with such strong affections Oh! when shall we carry ourselves so, as those that profess themselves to be secke's of a better life: We come into thy presense now for strength, do thou manifest thy self to us; thou hast promised to pour out thy Spirit upon all Flesh; Oh let it be unto us according to thy promise.

O Lord, our hearts naturally are averse to thee, so that of our selves we shall never be able to do anything that may be well-pleasing to thee; but do thou regulate us by thy blessed Spirit, that we may

observe thy statutes and do them, and that thy Commands may not be grievous to us, that it may not be burdensom: for us to do the work of God; O Lord, when shall our hearts be made sound in thy statutes? we wait upon thee in the use of thine Ordinances, that we may have a new supply from thee, that at length we may come to see that thou art at work with us to save our soules; O help us to be followers of them, who with faith and patience do follow thee, & to do nothing unbecomming our holy Call: suffer us not to swerve from thy Commandments, but let us have a constant and earnest desire after thee.

Let the choicest of thy Mercies come down on our Sovereign Charles King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, let His heart be guided by thee, & let him always set the before his eyes that under the shadow of his Government, we may have Peace in all Godliness and honesty: Bless him in his Relations, in his Councils. Teach our Senators wisdom: Be with all thy Faithfull Magistrates and Ministers, let them be a terrour to evil doers, and an encouragement to them that do well. Be with us in the way of thy worship; we are here met together to hear and handle thy holy Word, Oh do thou command it to light upon all our hearts let it come in the evidence and demonstration of thy Spirit; and all for Christ his sake; for whom we bless thee: to him, with thee and thy holy Spirit. be Praise and Glory for evermore.

44. Dr. Anesley's Prayer at Giles-Cripplegate

Holy and great God of Heaven and Earth, such his the condescention of thy Grace, that thou art pleased to manifest thy special presense to thy poor creatures, though thou hatest sin with a perfect hatred, yet thou lovest sinners with an infinite Love; though thou art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, yet thou art pleased to manifest thy

Love to sinners that approach to thy service O Lord, when shall we admire enough thy Grace and Love, how thou art pleased to communicate thy self to a poor man. Dear Father, raise and fix our hearts, help us to mind the business that we come about, and to deal very faithfully with our own souls in the matters of eternal moment. Oh that we could pray so, that our prayers through grace might be returned upon us with a blessing. O that we could wait upon thee, to hear thy Word as the Oracles of God; let us hear what Christ will discover to us for our spiritual benefit: Lord grant that our souls may know what it is to be in the Spirit in the Lords day: Dear Father thou canst deal with such hearts as ours for the curing of them, we pray thee do it; we must needs acknowledge, hadst not thou laid help upon one that is mighty, that is able to save to the uttermost, we must have perished to all eternity, for we do not know any upon the earth more vile then ourselves: The very agravations of our sins, to render us monstrously abominable; the means of grace we have afforded us, the stirrings of thy spirit in us, the patience and goodness of God towards us, makes it a wonder that our hearts do remain so blockish. But dear Lord, we do find by experience, that our immortal souls are much debased; all the faculties of our souls are out of tune; our understandings are so dark, our conceptions of God are so low, our consciences are so benum'd, that the stirrings of them are scarce discerned or perceived; our affections are spent upon the creature, that we cannot gather them up again; our wills are perverse, our memories are apt to retain the dross, and let out all that is good: we pray thee for Christs sake, make an experiment upon our souls, what thou canst do, what sinners Christ can save; what corruptions the spirit of God can subdue in our souls; teach all our hearts, do not stand behind the wall and look through the lattice; do so much as may leave us without excuse; but good Lord put thy hand in at the hole of the door, and let thy fingers drop honey upon the handle of the Lock. And, oh; set open these everlasting Doors, that the King of glory may enter in: Subdue us entirely to thy self; do not ask our wills, whether we be willing or no, but make us willing: do not ask us what we would have but give us what thou knowst is good for us. Dear Lord, we pray thee deliver us from sin according to thy

hatred of it, and pour out thy grace upon us, according to thy love of grace, that our souls may be refreshed that we may find thy thoughts are above ours, as high as heaven is above the earth. Dear Father, it is thy promise, that those that wait upon thee, shall renew their strengths we have no might; the Devil bastles us, our own hearts are treacherous to us: The world intices us to sin against. God: oh! deliver us from all these enemies & especially from the plagues of our own hearts, that we may perfect holiness in the fear of God: give us spiritual blessings, whatsoever thou givest us, or whatsoever thou deniest us; thou knowest thou art rather willing to give us spiritual blessings, than any other mercies; and we want spiritual mercies most; Oh, oh give us spiritual Mercies, that we may say, This is the way of God in his Sanctuary: Where grace is not wrought, work it; where it is begun, increase it. Dear father, convince those that are not yet convinced: Make thy word a quickning word, an ingrafted word, to the saving of our souls; help us to hear as for our lives & as those that long after God. Hear Prayers for the King, bless him in his Royal Relations, and grant under him, we may live a quiet life in all godliness and honesty. Bless the Magistrates, and help them to remember, that causes one day must be heard over again. Help thy Ministers to keep close to thee in ways that are well pleasing. Be with us at this time. Lord, assist the meanest of thy servants, let our souls now find that thou dost magnifie thy word above all thy Name; do us good, receive us, quicken us, that we may live in heaven upon earth, that we may know what it is to be filled with the fulness of God, and know the heighth; breadth, depth, and length of thy love, that passeth knowledge. Communicate thy self to us as thou usest to do to thy people; let us feel thy presense; let us not think of anything, but the business, we are about; let us with singleness of heart, set ourselves to mind the concernment of our immortal souls; and all we beg for Christ his sake, who hath taught us thus to pray. Our Father, &c.

45. Dr. Bates his Prayer at Dunstons in the West

O Lord, thou art a most holy high God, the Glorious Angels when they stand before thee, cover their faces (yet they did never violate thy Laws) and if they, how much more need have we to do it?

We are sinful dust and ashes; our solemn Services are sin: We desire to approach thy presense, and to have an eye to thy glory in all our services and addresses.

We beseech thee give us a serious and a deep sense of our own hearts, and vile affections, that we may cast ourselves down at thy feet with all humility: We have infinite reason to be abased in our selves; our God help us. We came into the world with sin, and as soon as we did breath in the air, we infected it: there is an infection and pollution in all our faculties; what coldness is there in our affections and what unbelief in our faith, and our wills do stand opposite against thy holy nature.

We confess we have had ten thousand experiences of those corruptions that are within us; for our while lives are full of provocations against God.

How many vain thoughts, and how many rebellious actions! Blessed Father, we confess we are out of measure sinful, we have sinned against the clearest convictions of thy word, and the tender compassions of thy Gospel, against the most severe promises we have made of our service to God, against the checks of our own Consciences; we confess the sins of the Heathens, who live without God in the world, are small in comparison of ours, and we fear therefore a greater degree of wrath will fall upon us.

O Lord, how many ways hast thou used to reclaim us! what Arts hath thy blessed Spirit used! how many times hast thou approached to our

souls, and shewed us something of thy glory, and the glory of heaven, and the terrours of hell, the one to allure us, and the other to scare us. But, Oh! how many times have we grieved thy blessed Spirit, who came to seal us, and despised thy Son who came from heaven to earth, and liv'd a sorrowful life, and died a shameful death? how often hath he offered us grace and glory, if we would bow to his Scepter, but we have preferred a base lust before that excellency that he hath purchased us: Oh how often hast thou condescended so far, as to intreat us to be reconciled, how easie hast thou been to forgive! and how hard have we been to be forgiven! We confess thou mightest pass an eternal Doom upon us, for we are sensible of the dishonour that we have brought upon thy Name.

Do thou at this time strike upon all these rocks that are in thy presense at this time: give us hearts of flesh, let our repentance prepare us for conversion, let there be such a thorough conviction, that thy grace and Mercy may be admirable in our eyes.

We intreat thee hear us, pardon all our iniquities, let us be monuments of thy grace and favour, speak peace to our Consciences; convey those clear evidences of yourself unto us, that may inable us to scatter all our failings, that we may rejoice in God, and have hope of glory.

Let the image of thy Son be engraven on all our hearts, and let our souls be made subject to him; while we are in the world, preserve us from the evil of it.

If thou givest us outward happiness, give us that inward holiness: and if we do suffer, help us with patience to bear all, knowing we are in our journey and our passage to a better life; and let our whole time be spent in a serious Preparation to appear before thy Tribunal, and let us consider the unchangableness of that state hereafter.

Remember thy whole Church, make the Name of Christ glorious in the world; shed abroad thy light and thy truth: sever back-slidings,

and love us freely: Let thine Ordnances continue among us; and let thy blessing descend upon our sovereign Lord the King, of England, Scot and, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith; Incline his heart to thy Law, make him an instrument of publick good, protect his person. and give him prosperous affairs. Bless his Royal Consort, his Relations, his privy Counsel, let them promote solid Piety, and real Godliness. Bless the Minister of thy Word and Sacraments: Let their labours be precious in thy sight; and remember all afflicted ones: revive thy Mourners, and let thy grace answer all their fears. Let thy presense be in the midst of us, and help us to hear as our last; and let us be raised nearer heaven, and make thy word powerful and effectual to all our souls, and let thy word subdue our lusts; and all we beg for the sake of Jesus Christ; in whose Name and words we sum up our imperfect Prayers.

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

46. Dr. Jacomb's Prayer at Martins Ludgate

Blessed God, thou art a God blessed forever; thou givest Mercy to all returning and repenting sinners; thou art worthy to be praised by all that draw nigh unto thee,

Thou hast vouchsafed to us one Sabbath more; Oh that we might all of us be in the spirit upon the Lords day, that whatever we do, we may do it in the strength of God, that we may offer spiritual Sacrifices to God this day, through our Mediator the Lord Jesus.

It is a very great condescension, that thou shouldst suffer such as we are to come unto thee; O Lord, we are unclean, we are unclean, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, we are overspread with the leprosie of sin; all the faculties of our souls are defiled; our

understandings are darkened; our wills are corrupted; we have affections but they are carnal; we have hearts, but they are impure; we have consciences but they are seared: and as our inward man, so our lives are unholy; as the fountain is, so is the stream: besides that, our general guilt that we brought into the world, we are guilty of innumerable actual transgressions against thy holy Law: We think, O Lord, there are no greater sinners in the world than we; our sins are attended with many aggravations.

We have finned against Prayers, against vows and promises; we have had as much light shining before us, as any in the world have had: great is our unbelief Oh that we could lay these things to our hearts! We do refuse to come to Christ; we go about to establish a righteousness of our own, and neglect the righteousness of God by faith in Jesus Christ: how are our hearts glewed to the present things of this world! Oh! what do we do for thy glory? How unreformed are we under all the ways of God, that he hath taken to make us a holy people! Give us a sight of our sins O Lord; we confess sometimes we do make a formal confession but we do not find our hearts melted for sin as they should.

Oh take away from every one of us this heart of stone, & give a heart of flesh; give us tender hearts, make us sensible of all our departing from thee. Oh let us look upon him whom we have pierced & let us mourn that the Water of penitential sorrow may flow from us; we are strangers to ourselves, we do not see what a hell there is in our nature: Oh! how should we put our mouths in the dust, and loath ourselves, if so be there might be hope. O Lord convince us of sin, give us such a sight of sin as may make us flie to thee; give us such a sight of our own guilt, that ma•• prepare us for the Grace of God•; now we are stung with the fiery Serpents, help us to come to Jesus Christ our brazen Serpent; give us the holy Spirit to bring us out of the state of nature, to let that God that made us Creatures, make us new Creatures O Lord, we are thine own work, but we are dead in trespasses and sins; give us grace, and speak a word to them that are dead; put out thine Almighty Power, and draw some sinner to Christ

this day; and those that have any breathings after thee, Oh! thou that gavest them that desire, carry on thine own work in them; where thou hast begun a good work, carry it on; let sin, as the house of Saul, grow weaker and weaker, and grace, as the house of David, grow stronger and stronger: Oh! increase our faith; O Lord at this time we do not only stand in need of grace but of a great measure of grace. Oh! help us by faith to relie upon God, that thou mayest help us at last: Bless with us all thine; remember thy people from one end of the world to the other: Thy people are very low; this is a time of Jacobs troubles, the Bush is burning every day. Oh thou the Hope of Israel & the Saviour therof! shew thy self in mercy to these Nations We bless thee for all thy mercies that thy judgements do not seize upon us every day, that thou dost not sweep us away, that thou dost not rain Fire & Brimstone on England, as thou didst on Sodom: our sins cry aloud to heaven for vengeance: God is greatly provoked every day, & it is a miracle of patience that thou hast not destroyed us. God can pardon the sins of the Nation at once; but we are not fit for pardon; we do not humble ourselves; O Lord, humble us, give repentance to England from the highest to the lowest that we may return unto thee.

We desire to bless thee, that our Enemies have not had their wills over us: they said, they would pursue and overtake, and satisfie their lusts, but God did blow upon them, and they did sink in the mighty Water and thou hast yet preserved thy Church; we pray thee do not leave us, nor remove thy Gospel, whatsoever thou dost.

Pour down the choicest of thy blessings upon our Sovereign Charles, by thy Grace of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, Bless him with the Blessing of Heaven and Earth; make him a blessing to all of us: Bless him in all his Relations; the Lords of the privy Council. Look on them that have desired an interest in our, prayers, known to thee are all of them; know their souls in this time of adversity; make their beds in their sickness: Give Faith to them that complain of unbelief: give the Spirit of Prayer to those that complain they cannot pray: be a Councillor to those that wan counsel in their affaires,

either by Sea or Land, let thy blessing go with them wherever they go: Spare the lives of Children if it be thy will.

Prepare us for thy good and holy Word, let it be a savour of life unto life, and let it come with power unto us; Oh let us hear it as thy Word, not as the word of a poor man, but as the Word of God; and all for the Lord Christ his sake; for whom we bless thee; to whom, with thee and the Spirit of Grace, be given Glory and Honour for evermore.

47. Mr. Waltons Prayer in Walbrook

O Lord God, all our springs are in thee, it is good for us to draw nigh to thee through Jesus Christ; thou art all fulness, thou art the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in him our Father, thou art our light; thou givest us these blessed opportunities of enjoying communion with thy self, God blessed forever.

These mercies are forfeited mercies we have abused the blessings of thy House; we have grieved thy blessed Spirit; therefore it is just with thee to deprive us of these comforts, and to make us know the worth of these mercies by the want of them.

Lord, we desire to judge ourselves, that we may not be condemned with the world: Righteous art thou, O Lord, and just in all thy judgements: we confess we are unworthy to have any converse with so holy a God: we are polluted dust and ashes not worthy to tread thy Courts, and it is of thy mercy that we are not consumed; how often have we pluckt fruit from the forbidden tree! we have sinned presumptuously against the clearest Light, and the dearest love: always have we sinned; thy footsteps have dropt fatness, thou hast shewen mercy to us, but the better thou hast been to us, the worse we have been to thee; thou hast loaded us with thy mercies and we have

wearied thee with our sins, when we look into our selves, Oh the poyson of our natures, whatever the Leper did touch, was unclean. Thus do we by our spiritual Leprosie infect our holy things; our prayers had need have pardon, and our tears had need have the blood of sprinkling to wash them: how vain are our vows! how sensual are our affections! we confess we are untuned and unstrung for every holy Action; we are never out of tune to sin, but alwayes out of tune to pray: we give the world our male affections and our strong desires: we should use this world as if we used it not, and alwayes we pray, as if we prayed not; and serve thee, as if we served thee not: there is not that reverence, nor that devotion, nor that activeness of faith that there should be Lord, if thou wouldst say that thou wouldst pardon all our sins to this time, only judge us for this prayer, wo unto us; what breathings of unbelief and hypocrisie is there now, when we approach unto thee! we pray thee pardon us for Christs sake. Who can tell how oft he doth offend? we can as well reckon the drops of the Ocean, as number our sins; we have filled the number of the Nations sins, but we have not filled thy bottle with our tears: This is that that doth exceedingly aggravate our sins, that we cannot mourn for sin; we can grieve for our losses, but we cannot mourn for our unkindnesses we have crucified the Lord of life; sin hath not only defiled us, but hardned us: nothing can melt us but the love of Christ, nothing can soften us but the blood of Christ: O with-hold not thy mercies from us, O help us to eat the Passeover with bitter herbs. let us look on Christ, & weep over him; let us look on a broken Christ with broken hearts, and on a bleeding Christ with bleeding hearts let us mourn for our dis-ingenuity, that we should grieve that God that is always doing us good. Oh! humble us for our unkindnesse, and for Christs sake blot out our transgressions; they are more than we can number, not more than God can pardon.

Though we have lost the duty of children, thou hast not lost the goodness of a Father: Let us be held forth as patterns of mercy, so shall we trumpet forth thy praise to all Eternity. Whatever afflictions thou layest upon our bodies, let not our sins be unpardoned, let not sin and affliction be together upon us; let their be peace in Heaven,

and peace in the Court of Conscience: We have found this part of thy Word true. In the world we shall have troubles; let us find the other part true, in Jesus Christ we shall have peace. Oh let peace and holiness go together: make us new Creatures, that we may be glorious Creatures: Without Faith Christ will not profit us; when we can call nothing in the world ours, let us call Christ ours.

Lord, draw thine Image every day more lively upon us, a more lively hope, and a more inflamed love to Christ; let us have a spirit of courage and resolution; keep us from the fallacies of our own hearts; keep us from the defilements of the times; make us pure in heart, that we may see God that we may have Gospel spirits, humble spirits; meek spirits: as Christ did take our flesh, let us partake of his Spirit. Why dost thou imbitter the brest of the Creature to us, but that we should finde the sweetness of the Promises? There is as much in the Promises as ever; let us live upon God, let us cast anchor in Heaven, and we shall never sink.

Shower down thy blessings (even the choicest of them) upon the head and heart of our dread Sovereign Charles, by thy appointment, of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith; let him see wherein his cheifest interest lies; let him count those his best subjects, that are Christ's subjects: Bless him and his Royal Consort, in his Royal Relations, the Lords of his Privy Council; let them be a terror to evil doers, and encouragers of those that do well.

Bless all thy Ordinances to us, make them to be fulness of life to every one before thee: we are come this day to partake of them. Oh pour in Wine and oil into our souls, let us be a watered garden; let this blessed Sacrament be a poyson to our lust, and nourishment for our Grace. Hear us; be our God, follow us with mercy, crown us with acceptance and all for Christ his sake, whom not seeing, we love in whom believing, we rejoyce; to Christ, with thee and thy holy Spirit, be Glory, Honour, and Praise, now and forever, Amen.

48. Mr. Lye's Prayer at Allhallows Lumber-street

O Lord our great God, thou canst do all things, for thou dost dispose and govern all the wayes, and works and words of thy Creature to thine own praise; We thy poor Creatures, the workmanship of thy hands, the price and purchase of thy Sons blood do desire this morning to fall down and humble our selves at the Throne of thy Grace; we desire to lift up an eye of Faith to thee, that thou mayest dart an eye of Love to us: since thou hast commanded us to come unto thee, Oh bless us now we come: Let it not be in vain for any of us, from the high'st to the low'st, from the richest to the poorest, that we have sought thy Face this morning Blessed Father, pour down a spirit of Prayer, a Spirit of preaching, a Spirit of Rejoycing, a spirit of Practising in the midst of us; let us not only be enabled to know what to do, but to do what we know. Thou that distd cure the eyes of the blind with clay and spittle. Oh hee that natural dimness that is in the best of us: Thy Rod in the hand of Moses, brought water out of the Rock: Oh do thou strike upon those rocky hearts, that our adamantine hearts being softned, may gush out into Rivers of tears. Oh drown our sins in the Red sea of our saviours blood; help us to smite upon our thigh, and to ask ourselves what we have been, and what we have done? and humble us under the omission of any commanded duty and the comission of any for bidden sin; sins of thoughts, wordes and dieds; sins against the Law, against the Gospel, of youth, manhood, and old-age; sins before, under, and since conversion; sins against prayers, vows, promises, covenants and oaths. Oh Lord, if thou didst prefer thy Bill against us, we could not stand; if we were weighed in the balance of the Sanctury, we should be found too light: but holy Father, remember not against us our former sins, but rather have mercy upon us according to thy loving kindness; cross, and blot out our iniquities, blot them out so fully

and wholly, that it may be to us as to Judah in the promise, that the sins of Judah should be sought for and not found.

O bathe our souls in that Fountain that was set open for Judah and Jerusalem; though our sins have been as Scarlet, let them be as white as Snow; though they be red like Crimson, let them be like Wool.

We have read that a flood of sin brought down a deluge of water, that they covered the tops of the mountains. Oh let thy deluge of mercy cover the tops of the mountains of our sins.

It is the glory of a God to pardon great sins: We desire to turn unto thee with our whole hearts; do thou subdue our iniquities; let us be not only cleansed, but let us have the efficacy of the spirit of Christ to wash us from the guilt of sin, because we boast we are not under the Law but under Grace.

Be gracious to our Sovereign Lord Charles, King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland: It is thy promise that Kings shall be Nursing Fathers to thy children; grant that under the shadow of his Majesty thy people may be protected, that we may live a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty. Oh let thy people possess the Land from Dan to Beersheba. Oh give us Scripture-Magistrates, and Gospel-Ministers, as long as the Sun and Moon endures.

Let thy Word be sanctified to us; let it not be only as water, to get out our spots, but as a Refiners fire to purge our dross, and take away our tin.

And holy Father, where thou hast begun a good work, do thou go on and bring it to perfection; let not the light that is in us, be like the glimmering light of the evening, but as the light of the morning that shineth more and more to the day. Let our best wine be kept to the last; let the end of our lives, be the end of sinning.

Thou hast cast our lot in the midst of temptations of all sorts, thou hast brought many of us through the red Sea; but we are in the

wilderness with Zeba and Zalmunna, and those that dwell at Tyre, the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, and all the forces that Hell can make against us: Oh put upon us all the whole Armour of God. Now in these days of Errour, gird us with the Girdle of Truth: Oh now in these days of falsity, give us a helmet of Hope

Now the Devil darts at us, give us the Sheild of Faith: Oh, give us the Sword of the Spirit, of the word of God, that it may enable us to confute the gain-saying of foolish men.

Oh help us to pray with all manner of prayer constantly, fervently, faithfully, feelingly, that we stand and not fall, and that not in our strength, but in Gods.

To this end be with us, upon this thine own day; our Manna falls every day, and it is doubled upon the Lords Day: Oh let us be as thy servant John, in the Spirit upon thine own day; let God by his Spirit come into our spirits, understandings, consciences, wills, memories and affections, that all our conversations without, and affections within, may be obedient to thy Word.

Enable thy Servant to deliver thy Word faithfully: God forbid thy Servant should stand upon so sandy a foundation, as the Wisdome of Man: one iota of thy Word hath more wisdome in it, then all men and Angels have.

Good Father give thy people a hearing ear it is too much they have played by the light of the Candle, slighted thy Manna so long: Oh now therefore to day give us to hear and know, and believe, and do the things that concern our everlasting peace: Hear us for Christ his sake: to whom, with thy blessed Self and Spirit, be glory now and forever:

49. Mr. Caryl's Prayer at Magnus-Bridgefoot

Oh our Father, what a priviledge is this that we may draw near to thee! all our springs are in thee: the Creature is but a dry heap a barren wilderness, 'tis but a Cistern, and a broken Cistern, It hath no water of its own, nor can it hold that which is poured into it: Oh that our hearts were taken off and dis-engaged from all things on this side thy self, that we could say with thy Servant, Whom have we in heaven but thee? and on earth there is none that we desire in comparison of thee: Then, though our flesh and hearts fail us, yet God would be our portion forever.

We pray thee manifest thy Grace to us at all time, and especially at this time, that we may come before God in this publick worship as we should: Let us see thy goings out in thy Sanctury, and let us be satisfied with the fatness of thy house, and drink of those pleasures that are for evermore,

Lord, we have given thee cause to withdraw from us; for we have not laboured to be fruitful under means: and therefore thou in judgement mightest make them hereafter to be fruitless unto us: and because we have taken no pains to get good by them, thou mightest justly say, they shall do you no good. We have heard much of thee, but we know thee but little: we acknowledge thou mightest judge us because we know so little: and thou mightest punish us, because we do so little of what we know, according as that faithless Servant was punished, which knew his Masters will, and did it not.

Oh where be those manifestations of God that we have had? Have we had not the light of the knowledge of God shining to us in the face of Jesus Christ? But we have not rejoyced in this light, but have compassed ourselves about with sparks of our own kindling and therefore it is just we should down in sorrow; and yet thou lengthenest out thy patience to us, and yet we have one opportunity

more to come unto thee. Oh, we pray thee, let us understand the things belonging to our peace, before they be hid from our eyes: let our souls be bound in the bundle of life with Christ Jesus: We pray thee, that that Spirit of thine may strengthen us, that the Spirit may guide us, and lead us into all truth: leave us not to our own strength, nor to our own counsel, but shew us the secrets of thy Word and Works: Thou hast promised, Thy secret shall be with them that fear thee, and thou wilt shew them thy covenant.

And as thou dost give us thy Sabbaths, so give us to thrive by them; and help us to grow as the Herb, and sent forth our fruit as Lebanon.

Let thy Word come with power one every one of us, that it may not be as the beating of the air, but let it fit us for Duty that we may honor our God in the midst of these changes, until we come to that place where there is no change; and all for the sake of our dear Lord Jesus, to whom, with Thee and the blessed Spirit: be Glory and Honour now and forever.

50. Mr. Venning's Prayer at Olaves

Oh Lord God, thou art the Fountain of Life, yea, thou givest to all Life; It is necessity draws us now unto thee, and we acknowledge it is a very great favour that thou wilt admit us to come into thy presense: Indeed the services we do, are not worthy thy acceptance, thou gettest nothing by them, but the gain of godliness is to ourselves. But wo unto us what a loss, and what a curse will it be to us, to have a form of Godliness, and yet be ungodly? Oh Lord, how should this indear thee, and thy word and thy service, that thou wouldst have us do good for our own sakes! thou turnest our obedience into priviledges; thou hast made the means of our happiness a part of it: If there were no other glory but to glorifie thee, oh what a glory would it be to be found doing thy will! there is a sweetness to be

found in it more than in the Honey or in the Honey comes. It is a great happiness to be conformable to God, to be loving to God, to be like to God, is the greatest happiness that we can be capable of; if we were now in heaven; we could not have other happiness, but this in a greater degree. O Lord, how should our souls be drawn forth to acknowledge thee? may we not cry out in admiration, Lord what is man? and among the sons of men, what are we that thou art so mindful of us? Thou mightest have displayed thy Word to many thousands in the world, and we left ignorant: But blessed be thy Name, thou art pleased to admit even us also thereunto: Oh let it not be a small thing unto us, seeing we may yet live to serve God. Oh Lord, in Christ it will be worth our while to live; and in him 'twill be worth our while to die: Oh that we may mind the end of living, and the end of dying that whether we live or die, we may be the Lords. Indeed, it were not worth our while to live, and spend so much time in the world, if it were only to have pleasure and honour, and gratifie ourselves to eat and drink, and to be merry; this is not worth our while: What would it be, O Lord, to die in our sin, and be eased of the miseries of this world, and be sent to the place of torment? But seeing thou hast provided for our living and our dying well, give us to improve these means, and that we may live and dye well, let not our affections though our bodies be upon the earth, though we converse with flesh yet let not our conversation be after the flesh, but let us be like them which have sent their hearts up to heaven, and do but tarry here to finish their Masters business, and then we shall go where our hearts are and where our dear Lord Jesus Christ is.

Indeed, Lord, we have cause to complain of our hearts, how we minde this world, as it never would have an end: and the world to come, as if it would never have any beginning: as if we had no souls to mind, or had no mind to look to our souls.

We live as if all those glorious Reports thou hast made, were but as a tale that is told; we have cause to be ashamed that we have the means and the names of Christians, and have not lived answerable to the discovery of the Lord Jesus Christ: Indeed we have cause to bear

our shame; & yet how few of us know what it is to be ashamed, to sigh over our sins, and groan over our iniquities I how few out of tenderness do mouru for sin, but as if it were indifferent to us, whether we have our sins pardoned, or the grace that we beg to be granted; and if we do beg to be pardoned, where are the souls that desire to be purged? If thou shouldst let us have our wills, Oh then we should think thou wert a good God; whereas it is thy great Love that thou dost deny us our wills: we poor wretched, we are up and down as the things of this world do come into us, and go from us; if God give us great things, then we think our selves in Paradise, and if God take from us, then we fall out with God himself, Oh! how I'll do we take it at thy hands, if thou dost not give us what we would, or take from us what we would, The doctrine of self-denial is a mere riddle to us; we would fain spend the strength of our youth in following the lust of the eye, and gratifie our sensual affections; and when we come to die it may be we would have a Lord have mercy upon us in our mouths, and think it strange if God should not give us what we ask.

O Lord, convince us now, that we may be willing to be crucified to the world, and to die to sin: Lord, we may flatter with our selves, but our hearts do but abuse us, while we think there is such contentment in the enjoying of this world; what is this when we come to die. Alas, if we were not besotted, content is sooner gained by self-denial, than by pleasing ourselves. Can we think we shall be at ease till we come to God? Is it like to be well with us while our wayes are contrary to the wayes of God? are not thy wayes the wayes of peace? Oh! how can we be at rest when our waies are contrary to thine? Oh! un-lust us; we had better part from our idols here, that that they should part us from God hereafter. Lord, if there were no other hell, this is damnation to be a sin, for this is the nature of sin to separate us from God. Oh help us to account the reproaches of Christ, better than the honors of the Cross of Christ, better than the Crown of the world. O shew us the sinfulness of sin, and the emptiness of the world, that we may take thy Counsel and mind thy Glory, and be ruled by thy Will: Oh how happy would it be with us if our souls were brought into such

a frame! We are, Lord, as yet great strangers to the life of God; Oh! let us know what it is to live with thee, and to thee, and with thee, that we may say, for us to live in Christ, and to die is gain; and that we may say, Whom have we in Heaven but thee, O Lord? We depend upon thee, let thy goodness be seen, do not put us off with the means of grace, but give us grace itself. And seeing thou art pleased to make use of such a poor thing as the preaching of the Gospel is, and seeing this is the means to bring our souls to eternal life, Oh let it be so to us, that we may repent from sin, and believe in the righteousness of the Gospel: Oh Lord, thou knowest all our frailties, and all our necessities: find out them that are dead in sins, and quicken them; find out the hard hearts, and soften them; find out the proud hearts, and humble them; find out the formalists, and bring them to the power of godliness and pour in wine and oil into the wounds of the wounded in spirit; and let the administration of the Gospel, be in the demonstration of the Spirit, that as the truth is delivered to us, we may be delivered to the truth, that while we touch the hem of thy garment, Vertue may come out from thee. Thou hast said that mercy pleaseth thee, we are sure it will pleasure us, Oh let us not lose our time, but do thou teach us to profit, and supply our wants, for the sake of our dear Lord; to whom with Thee and thy Spirit, be given more Glory, from now, unto eternity.

51. Mr. G. N.'s Prayer

To thee, O Lord Jesus, we commend ourselves: To thee who judgeth rightly, thy poor Servant resigneth, and commiteth this Congregation. The Lord pardon unto me wherein I have been wanting unto them: The Lord pardon unto them, wherein they have been wanting in the hearing of thy Word, that we may not part with sin in our hearts. Unto thee who judgest uprightly I commend them. The Bishop of Souls take care of them: Preserve them from the love

of the World: teach them to wait on thee, and to receive from thee whatever anyone or Family may stand in need of.

Provide them a Pastor according unto thine own will, only in the meantime give us that Anointing shall lead us out of our own wells and wayes, that we may walk in the wayes of Christ Jesus. The Lord Jesus say now amongst them, I am your Shepheard, you shall not want. Say to them as thou didst to thy Disciples, let not your hearts be troubled; you beleve in the Father, beleve also in me So far as we are able we put thy Name upon them: we name the Name of the Lord Jesus over them. The Lord Jesus bless them; teach them to follow Holiness, Peace, and a Heavenly Conversation. The Lord make them usefull to each other. The Lord Jesus be a blessing to them, and me and all ours. The God of Peace and Consolation fill them with blessings according as thou seest every one stand in need of. To thee, O Lord, we commend them, do thou receive them, that under thy counsel they may be preserved blameless, until the day Jesus, where we may all meet crowned with Glory. Amen.

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